SURROGATE NATURE AND CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN IDENTITY POLITICS: A POSTCOLONIAL READING OF SZABOLCS HAJDU'S *BIBLIOTHEQUE PASCAL* (2010)

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Silent night, Holy night
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin , mother and child
Holy infant so, tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, Holy night
Shepherds quake, at the sight
Glories stream from heaven above
Heavenly, hosts sing Hallelujah.
Christ our Savior is born,
Christ our Savior is born.

Silent night, Holy night
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth
Jesus, Lord at thy birth. [1]

[1] Mohr, Joseph. "Silent Night." 1818. Translated into English by John Freeman Young.

Abstract

In this thesis, I use a specific postcolonial framework to analyze the film *Bibliotheque Pascal* (2010) and then link my analysis to a larger political issue of identity politics and terms of citizenship taking place in contemporary Europe. I take a case study that examines the representation of the Transylvanian landscape and its women in a group of Hungarian films set in the region, as the grounds for my own close reading of the surrogate figure of *Bibliotheque Pascal*'s main protagonist, Mona. I use Jacques Derrida's surrogate term to work through a discussion on native belonging and foreign otherness in the symbolic register of the film, which I argue speaks to larger sociopolitical debates on European ideals of belonging. I demonstrate how the figure of 'the immigrant woman' is central to the hegemonic social imaginary of Europe and the European.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mónika Dánél for her beautiful article published in *Metropolis* 2011/03, which strongly influenced my theoretical framework for this thesis. I look forward to reading her other works in the near future. Of course, Anna Loutfi, my supervisor deserves special acknowledgement for her agreement to take on this project in the last moment. She provided valuable support and encouragement, without which I doubt I would have been able to complete this assignment. Finally, I would like to thank my family, my brother and father for their support during my MA studies, and mother whose spiritual force continues to be my compass down life's path.

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Introduction

Much like the author (Mónika Dánél) of the literature that inspired this thesis, I also have a personal connection to the land of Transylvania. Both of my parents are from the region and immigrated to the United States in the early 1980s. I have childhood memories of the place. I am familiar with the taste of the food, the fresh mountain air, and the serpentine roads that lead to it from the West. I am not a native (like Dánél), but a curious hybrid that grew up in a Hungarian (Szekler) diaspora. My own experiences and parents' stories of their 'home' spurred a large fascination of European culture and languages in me, which inspired me to move to Europe and continue my studies here.

Upon one of my first short-term trips to Europe, as a young adult in 2007, I participated in a study seminar, which took us through several European countries and capitals. It was through this trip that I first personally became aware of the politics of border crossing and such categories as: the Schengen zone, non-Schengen zone, European Union, the benefits of carrying a certain passport and being a certain nationality, visas, etc. After arriving in Berlin, our seminar group was destined to travel by bus to Wroclaw next. One of my classmates forgot to obtain a separate visa for Poland (this was in early September 2007; Poland joined in December the same year), which many of us Americans did not need, and she had to remain in Germany, in the Schengen, or she would risk not being readmitted. She stayed. Other final remarks on 'European' events that marked 2007, Hungary too entered the Schengen zone and Romania entered the European Union. I clearly remember the media coverage of these occurrences, which were met with much excitement and anxiety.

The film I would like to connect some of my first impressions of Europe and European society (and subsequent better understanding of it) is Szabolcs Hajdu's *Bibliotheque Pascal* produced in 2010. The film is a Hungarian-German coproduction, shot in Romania, Hungary, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The cast includes Hungarian, Romanian and English actors. The film's main actress is Orsolya Török-Illyés, who is of Transylvanian origin. *Bibliotheque Pascal* received much acclaim the year it was released at home in Hungary and abroad. It received several awards at the Hungarian film week (Magyar Filmszemle) and was screened at several international film festivals, including Berlinale and the Sarajevo Film Festival.

The plot of the film entails a young mother's, Mona's (Orsolya Török-Illyés) labor migration from rural Romania to metropole England. The film is set in the post 2000s. In order to regain custody of her 3-year-old daughter, Viorica (Lujza Hajdu), who the mother left in the care of her fortune-telling aunt (Oana Pellea), she must provide a testimony to a social worker (Ion Sapdaru) about her whereabouts in the past months. The story of her endeavors are chalked full of dreamlike sequences and fantastical depictions. The Liverpool brothel the heroine ends up in is a lavish interior architecture of male-fetishized literary fantasy. The owner of the brothel is Pascal (Shamgar Amram), a former street and circus performer turned business owner. The foreign women and men are immigrants smuggled over the border to England in hopes of a better economic future (if one follows the narrative of Mona's own labor migration). English is not their native language. The foreigners are condemned to take on character roles from the Western literary canon (Saint Joan, Desdemona, Lolita, Pinocchio, Dorian Gray, etc). The daughter has the gift of turning her dreams into reality. Her emancipatory mission entails Mona's deceased father (Razvan Vasilescu) coming to life as a marching band conductor in Romania, and going all the way to the Liverpool brothel to redeem the mother. Upon her return to Romania, Mona is give back custody

of her daughter despite her incred testimony. The film concludes with both performing the mother-daughter bedtime story ritual.

The interaction between social and symbolic categories in different classes and ethnic groups produce different genders from those of dominant classes (Wekker 58). Mónika Dánél, in her article titled, "Surrogate Nature, Culture, Women – Inner Colonies. Postcolonial Readings of Contemporary Hungarian Films", addresses the exoticization of Hungarian films produced in Transylvania, which often serves as the setting for stories of murder, revenge and incest (Dánél 65). I use Dánél's article as a theoretical framework to analyze the film *Bibliotheque Pascal* and then link my analysis to a larger political issue of identity politics and terms of citizenship taking place in contemporary Europe. I connect Dánél's insights on the representation of Transylvania and its women to Gail Lewis' analysis of the 'immigrant woman' found in her work "Imaginaries of Europe: Technologies of Gender, Economies of Power". Lewis argues the contemporary moment of this category ('immigrant woman') is central to the hegemonic social imaginary of Europe and the European.

In the first two chapters, I use Dánél's postcolonial theoretical framework, as an analytical toolbox for addressing the notion organic and foreign duality, or surrogacy, in the film *Bibliotheque Pascal*. In the first chapter, I introduce the specific colonizing logic at work in Hungarian films set in Transylvania. I relate this to a socio-historical context, which contextualizes the use of the forested landscape of Transylvania as a place shrouded in nostalgia for a more 'natural' or 'authentic' way of (Hungarian) being and existence. Then I discuss how the representation of a certain cultural society comes to be framed as a colonial relationship of the own and the other are transformed into a foreignness, the otherness of the own, through the representation of Transylvania as Hungary's inner colony.

In the second chapter, I take Dánél's use of the surrogate and use it for an in-depth reading of *Bibliotheque Pascal*. Through an analysis of the representation of the characters and the categories of nature and culture, foreign and organic, masculine and feminine in relation to the setting, I demonstrate how culturally gendered bodies and socio-cultural spaces are constructed. I break my analysis down into three parts. The first part concentrates on how the colonial relationship between own and other is set up in *Bibliotheque Pascal* through the work of underlining the lawless state of being in the Romanian setting. The rule of law is taken as a marker of civilization. Depictions of self-jurisdiction, violence, and 'ghettoized' technology are implanted into the geographically and culturally localized nature and are represented as the nature of the respective culture. In the second part, I focus on how the uncivilized society is embodied in the role of woman, who is wild, and in order to tame her wild sexuality and take on the role of the mother, male force must be exerted on her for her to be domesticated. If the female protagonists become travelers, as I discuss in the third part, then they are transported to the West, where their homeland becomes their stigma, and this empowers the Western male to hire them.

In the final, third chapter, "Contemporary European Identity: The 'Idea of Europe' and the Representation of the 'Immigrant Woman', I discuss how the interweaving of the public (nation-state and supra-EU state) and the private (domestic, intimate) work to construct a clear gender and cultural hierarchy, which need certain bodies to be marginalized in order to secure the upkeep of others. I use Lewis' container category of how 'the immigrant woman' is imagined to come from a patriarchal society that oppresses her. Her assimilation in the core is framed as a way to leave her oppressive domestic situation. Through the analysis of the symbolic film heroine, I demonstrate how the figure of the 'immigrant woman' works to destabilize ideals of Europe built on principles of merited moral, cultural and political legacy.

Chapter One: A Postcolonial Reading of Hungarian Films set in Transylvania

Film representation is influential in marking another culture's historical depiction. Mentions of Romania, or specifically Transylvania automatically evoke thoughts and images of Dracula (Dánél 56). Since the cultural turn, it is hard to separate the production of a film from how it represents a certain culture and to nature itself**.** A lesson or knowledge gained from postcolonial ethnography is the represented nature is no longer an *ab ovo* virgin land, but is tied to a culture, is a cultural vessel, or rather in reverse is culture's place (Dánél 57). According to postcolonial criticism, colonial identification is "Europe ['s] constructed self-image on the backs of its equally constructed Other -the 'savage', the 'cannibal'-much as phallocentrism sees its self-flattering image in the mirror of woman defined as lack. And just as the camera might therefore be said to inscribe certain features of bourgeois humanism, so the cinematic and televisual apparatuses, taken in their most inclusive sense, might be said to inscribe certain features of European colonialism" (Stam 4). It is with these opening remarks that Dánél situates herself in a (specific) postcolonial reading of contemporary Hungarian films set in Transylvania. She finds a similar colonial relationship of concepts of the own and the other transformed into a foreignness, the otherness of the own, through the representation of Transylvania as Hungary's inner colony. Transylvania is seen as the other, ancient and underdeveloped, yet longed for Hungary.

1.1 Transylvania as Inner-Colony in Hungarian Films

Grievous stories are implanted into the geographically and culturally localized nature and they are represented as the nature of the respective culture (Dánél 65). From the viewpoint of postcolonial theory, Mónika Dánél's study on films set in Romania, specifically Transylvania, examines the stereotypical images a group of contemporary Hungarian films [2] transmit about the represented culture. Dánél situates a specific local version of colonizing logic taking place in Hungarian films. This colonial relationship, which is classically framed by the Western, white man arriving to an undiscovered, virgin land does not hold up in the examined films. The colonial relationship between own and other is thus complicated by the study of several Hungarian films. Instead of the (White Western) foreigner arriving to the (native) landscape, it is the figure of the native son returning home to recapture the motherland, which gives meaning to the film's representation (Dánél 62).

The list of films Dánél's study include are: Zoltán Kamondi: The Alchemist and the Virgin (1998), Kornél Mundruczó: Little Apocrypha No. 2 (2004), Róbert Pejó: Dallas Pashamende (2005), Zoltán Kamondi: Dolina (2006), Csaba Bollók: Iska's Journey (2007), Kornél Mundruczó: Delta (2008), Peter Strickland: Katalin Varga (2009), Dezsõ Zsigmond: Witch Circle (2009), Szabolcs Hajdu: Bibliotheque Pascal (2010) (Dánél 65). In these films she takes the depictions of murder, incest and self-jurisdiction to frame the respective nature of the culture attached to the Transylvanian landscape. From her analysis of several films, she deduces the women of the

[2] The list of films Dánél's study include: Zoltán Kamondi: The Alchemist and the Virgin (1998), Kornél Mundruczó: Little Apocrypha No. 2 (2004), Róbert Pejó: Dallas Pashamende (2005), Zoltán Kamondi: Dolina (2006), Csaba Bollók: Iska's Journey (2007), Kornél Mundruczó: Delta (2008), Peter Strickland: Katalin Varga (2009), Dezsõ Zsigmond: Witch Circle (2009), Szabolcs Hajdu: Bibliotheque Pascal (2010) (Dánél 65).

landscape take on a surrogate nature. She takes this notion from Jacques Derrida's notion of the surrogate, where surrogate meaning is two-fold, bearing both the foreign and organic.

Transylvania acts as a lost motherland in these films on both a symbolic and social level. In the Hungarian post-socialist collective, Transylvania is often seen as a slice of the old 'Hungary', where a traditional and strongly agricultural-based way of life is still present. This is put in juxtaposition to a capitalistic, Westernized image of Hungary, which has taken to the consumption of foreign media and culture and left Hungarian traditions and customs to die out and disappear. Thus, a shroud of nostalgia is also placed over the depiction of the forested landscape of Transylvania. It becomes a place of the past and the representation of a more 'natural' or 'authentic' way of Hungarian being.

These notions of Hungarian authenticity and loss come to be symbolized by the women depicted in the Transylvanian landscape. Native son returns home in search of the mother(land), but he can't find his place and is not accepted (back) into the community, so he leaves and moves to the outskirts of the community. He builds a house there (as depicted in the film *Delta*) and shows his domination or authority over nature (Dánél 62). With the return of the native son and not foreign, white male to capture the land, his tie to the land in relation to the women, who are thus familial would symbolically indicate a kinship taboo of incest (Dánél 63). A mirror of this symbolic incest could be roughly translated into terms of harsh, untamed human existence. The Hungarian imagination of Transylvania paints it as the lost, wild wilderness land and the cradle of harsh daily living (Dánél 58). Hungarian culture defines itself through the use of Transylvania (Hungarian parts of it) as the other, ancient and underdeveloped. Dánél gives a quote from a film critique published in the Hungarian newspaper, *Index* by András Földes as evidence to her claim. In an interview with the Hungarian director, Csaba Bollók comments of the selection of

Transylvania for his film, *Iszka Utazása* (Iska's Journey). Bollók states his motivations for choosing Romania (Transylvania) as the setting of his art film are "it is still there where there is the amount of suffering and perspective which can provide recruiting grounds for an art film". [3]

Women in the landscape come to serve as substituted representations of the landscape. They embody the meaning of the land, which is intended to be the motherland and carries certain archetypes of womanhood, i.e. the Virgin Mary. However, through depictions of this Transylvanian (mother)land women are not virgins but occupied bodies (Dánél 64). The violent and lawless lay of the land comes to be embodied in women where nature and culture are part and parcel. Their motherhood is attached to the (backward) land, thus their sexuality is a wild one that must be tamed through male force (rape), in the respective culture's understanding, or their free will will carry them on the continuum as voluntary whore (Dánél 64). Notions of womanhood, mothering, and sexuality are complicated through the two-fold surrogate (organic and foreign) depictions of women in respective culture and of a respective nature.

1.2 Framing the Gaze in Bibliotheque Pascal

I would like to begin a close reading of *Bibliotheque Pascal* by demonstrating how the film deliberately positions itself within a colonizing logic. In film studies, the opening, establishing

[3] This is a rough translation of part of the full quote into English. Here is the quote in Hungarian. "Első gondolatom a lepusztult bányászfaluban guberáló gyerekek, az alkoholizmus öntudatlanságában kegyetlenkedő szülők, a közönyös kívülállók világában tapicskoló filmet nézve az volt, hogy a nyomorpotenciál csökkenésével a hazai művészfilmesek kénytelenek olyan helyekre költöztetni történeteiket, mint Románia. Ott még megvan az a mennyiségű szenvedés és kilátástalanság, ami elég egy belevaló művészfilmhez. Nem véletlen, hogy egyre több filmszemlés filmet forgatnak Erdélyben, legutóbb például Kamondi Zoltán mutatta meg, milyen is a valóság a hímzett etnosapkán túl". (Dánél 58) Taken from: Földes András: Töröcsik Mari az időgépben. http://index.hu/kultur/cinematrix/-kritika/bollok0204/

shot(s) serve(s) the important task of settling the spectator in the world the narrative is set to take place in. What is interesting about the opening of *Bibliotheque Pascal* is the audience is given two establishing sequences. The first is a meeting between Mona, the protagonist, and the child services worker. The audience learns that Mona has come to the state office in order to regain custody of her child, who was taken away after her labor migration to England from Romania. An investigation was launched after the trusted caretaker, Mona's aunt, was seen to endanger the child's health and wellbeing. After determining the child's safety was in jeopardy, the state took the child into their possession. In order to regain custody of her child, Mona must provide a testimony that entails her relationship with her daughter, the father, her financial circumstances, how the child came to the aunt, and what she did in England. Given her testimony, the social worker will formulate a report for Child Welfare and suggest a recommendation for the child given the information provided in the file and by the mother in person. Under this framework, the motivation driving Mona's narration is a quest that lies between being and (re)becoming (Viorica's) mother. In other words, in order to persuade the social worker to reinstate the child in her being, Mona must convey to him the essence of her own becoming and (once) being a mother. For this, she must direct his and our attention to the land of her origin, which brings up to the second establishing sequence of the film.

The work of the initial establishing shot positions the social worker and viewers as outsiders looking in on Mona's narration of becoming mother. What are the establishing shots, which settle us into the world of Mona's becoming? The initial shots directly following the multicolor written text of the film's title, feature a long, close-up shot of Mona gazing into the camera. Her long, unsettling gaze into the camera makes the viewer uneasy. She almost does not blink in her blank, somber stare into the lens. Her eyes seem to have tears coming from them, while her lips, ears,

and neck are strongly coded with feminine attributes, which make her face pleasant to look at. Most importantly, her stare into the camera reveals its presence, as well as the invisible presence of someone controlling it, and inherently our gaze in upon her. It is not until the very end of the film the 'absent one' behind the camera is revealed to us. The viewers see the director, Szabolcs Hajdu, seated on a couch of the Ikea display floor staring at a television screen, which projects the image of a sun setting just above a mountainous landscape.[4] The director has a pen in his hand, as well as a notebook and tea positioned, conveniently, on the coffee table in front of him. It is from this leisurely position, Hajdu jots down his impressions of the images in front of him.

The brief, initial counter-gaze as an opening shot, coupled with the acknowledgment of the subject of the gaze that dominates the film, gives strong evidence for a (post)colonial reading of the film. I will provide a further reading of the film in order to more clearly demonstrate my claim. The original image, of Mona's gaze from within looking out is met in the very last frame of the narrative by the image of a mystical landscape. Mona, the represented woman, and the landscape of Transylvania appear synonymous in the male subject's (Hajdu's) gaze. Moving past the opening extreme close-up shot of Mona, the initial background sounds of people having a conversation morphs into playful musical notes emitted by a saxophone. The extreme close-up, long shot on Mona's face is abruptly interrupted as the camera jumps positions behind her toward the direction of the music. Mona turns her head toward the music and a 180-degree camera pan brings another figure into the foreground of the frame, Mona's lover. He caresses Mona on the cheek and whispers

[4] In her article, "Surrogate Nature, Culture, Women-Inner Colonies: Postcolonial Readings of Contemporary Hungarian Films", Mónika Dánél claims the film *Delta* (Kornél Mundruczó, 2008) opens with a direct citation to classical colonial films, where the image of a sunrise over on the horizon of a nature landscape is typically depicted from the outsider position of an arriving boat (Dánél 62). This logic works in a slightly inverted way in *Bibliotheque Pascal*, where a sunset is featured at the end of the film.

something in her ear as she turns around to be positioned beside him. It is evident that Mona's lover is Roma and a saxophone musician. Soon, the town mayor arrives in his new Mercedes and the festivities are ready to kick off. The multicolor palette of the balloons in the public square shifts to a prominent nationalist tricolor of blue, yellow, and red in the framing of the mayor. The saxophone notes switch to a Romanian song in his presence as well.

Mona quickly makes her way to the stage. As she mounts the stairs, her lover pulls her back for one last kiss. It is in this shot the full body of Mona is shown in the frame. I will elaborate more on the symbolic, gendered representation of her body in the next section, but first look to complete my brief overview of the opening sequence. Mona greets the guests and thanks the sponsors of the event, especially the mayor stepping out of his Benz accompanied by two bodyguards. As Mona delivers her speech in Romanian, she is distracted once again by background noises coming from behind the stage. She spots her lover cheating on her with another woman. It is worth mentioning the other woman possesses a strikingly pale complexion and Aryan looks in comparison to the musician and Mona. This evokes questions of ethnic difference surrounding Mona. The announcer is clearly agitated by the actions she has just witnessed and quickly terminates her speech with a slip of the tongue. Her final words to the public fall out in Hungarian, exasperating her otherness.

Mona's speech is immediately proceeded by the band's performance of slow, blaring jazz music. As a revenge against her lover, Mona accepts an invitation to dance by a random man, and interacts with him in a provocative manner. Her lover can only look on for so long before he is compelled to jump off the stage and rip Mona from the random man's grip. During the music and dancing, the outward gaze onto the 'spectacle' is signaled from within the frame. Several members in the dancing crowd done sunglasses over their eyes to refract and/or avoid the outer (colonial) gaze cast upon them. A closer examination of which members of the crowd sport glasses, and

which do not, leaves space for a closer reading of ethnicity and sexuality, which I will address later in the body of the thesis. The climax of the scene, the fight, and the flooding of emotions are exteriorized in the drastic change of weather. A sudden downpour of rain overtakes the crowd. In the chaos, a young boy is stripped of his umbrella by the mayor's bodyguard and used to shelter him from the rain. Mona and the other woman also make grabs at one another. Most of the crowd flees for cover in the rain and chaos. The event begins to disseminate. Mona tries to salvage the day by convincing the mayor all is well and the rest of the day is perfectly planned. Her pleading is met by his stern warning, "don't ever show your face outside my office again!" and he exits. The musician calls out Mona's name, but she is gone. In the next shot Mona is located in the passenger side of a horse-drawn cart.

The man from the dance is driving the cart beside a river through the Transylvanian countryside. Young men are seen swimming in the river in the hot, summer sun. As they exit the water, their lean, tanned bodies gleam in the intense light that catches their torsos. One boy is seen wearing a home-crafted floating device around his waist made out of old, plastic beer containers. As he jumps into the river, he passes through the open slot of the cement safety railing on the bridge. The bottles brush up against the hard cement and emit a sharp, crumpling sound. The 'ghettoization' of the technology that encapsulates the boy calls for a further understanding of the logic at work in the film's representation of the nature of Romanian (Transylvanian) culture.

Chapter Two: Culturally Gendered Representations

In this chapter, I use the concept of the surrogate for an in-depth reading of the representation of the characters and the categories of nature and culture, foreign and organic, masculine and feminine in relation to setting. I look to demonstrate how culturally gendered bodies and socio-cultural spaces are constructed. I break my analysis down into three parts. The first part concentrates on how the colonial relationship between own and other is set up in *Bibliotheque Pascal* through the work of underlining the lawless state of being in the Romanian setting. The rule of law is taken as a marker of civilization. Depictions of self-jurisdiction, violence, and 'ghettoized' technology are implanted into the geographically and culturally localized nature and they are represented as the nature of the respective culture. In the second part, I focus on how the uncivilized society is embodied in the role of woman, who is as wild. This wildness is taken to be a sexual one and in order to tame her so she may take on the role of the mother, male force must be exerted on her for her to be domesticated, or she must be raped. If the female protagonists become travelers, as I discuss in the third part, then they are transported to the West, where their homeland becomes their stigma, and this empowers the Western male to hire them.

2.1 The Nature of Culture: Backwardness, Lawlessness and Balkan Masculinity

Grievous stories (murders, incest, self-jurisdiction) are implanted into the geographically and culturally localized nature and they are represented as the nature the respective culture (Dánél 60). The colonial relationship between own and other is set up in *Bibliotheque Pascal* through the work of underlining the lawless state of being in the Romanian setting. The rule of law is taken as

a marker of civilization. [5] While there is an indication that a state institutionalized legislative system is present in the space, the attempts of the society to enforce and abide by them are undermined. The loss of legal moral and manner could be seen as a general decay that paints itself onto the depiction of social conduct. I move to illustrate the interpretation of these claims through certain scenes in the film. I will then link this understanding to the concept of the surrogate and how Mona serves to embody the (degenerate) culture of her land of origin.

Again, the function of the establishing sequence serves to situate the audience in the world of the narrative, which is achieved in part by the selection of setting and it's depiction, then Transylvania, Mona's land of origin, may be taken as amateur crime-gangster folkland. The contextualization of the public event at the beginning of the film already gives implications of the 'uncivilized' manner in which persons in the community act. Infidelity, violence, and shoddy attempts to foster community support and cooperation (quick dismantling of 'organized' event and mayor's dispossession of umbrella from young boy) are the immediate 'reality' impressed onto the viewer's retina. This is immediately followed by a wide shot of the natural landscape of the Carpathian basin and the 'ghettoized' depiction of the technology in the landscape. Mona is transported by horse-drawn cart, a boy uses old plastic bottles as a floating device, and an old beat-up Dacia, with a plastic animal and rug tied to the roof accepts Mona's request to hitchhike to the Black Sea, or Constanta.

[5] Civilization etymology-1704, originally "law which makes a criminal process civil;" sense of "civilized condition" first recorded 1772, probably from Fr. civilisation, to be an opposite to barbarity and a distinct word from civility. "civilization." Online Etymology Dictionary. Douglas Harper, Historian. 04 Jun. 2014. <Dictionary.com http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/civilization>.

Once Mona arrives to Constanta, she attempts to relax on the sandy beach. She sits down to admire the sea and looks around, only to have several male members around her staring fixed at her. Two boys sitting to her left in shorts look over at her, in front of her directly before the sea are another two young men seated on a saddleless horse, and finally to her right is an overweight, bald man with big sunglasses seated on small, paddle boat. Mona grows uncomfortable from the gazes around her and decides to lay back and close her eyes. She removes some garbage from around her, an old beer can and black-and-white tube. Suddenly, a head, half-covered by a plastic shopping bag emerges from the sand. The bag has the recognizable 'thank you' design imprinted on it. He then pulls his arm out of the sand and is seen to be holding a pistol. He tells her to quickly put her belongings on her to cover him and lay back down as to not be conspicuous. A quick glance around to see if the cover is clear reveals the dilapidated state of the beach. Large concrete blocks are strewn at the bottom of the stairs leading to the sand. The beach house is vacant, boarded-up, and largely graffitied. A family is seen approaching the beach. It is a father carrying a child on his neck, another in his arm, and the third, oldest walks beside him holding his hand. The child in his neck holds his chin as a support not to fall back.

Soon a police officer arrives inquiring if Mona has seen a certain man. He shows her a picture. She asks if he has a profile shot. He presses for a yes or no. The boys to the left of Mona are still there, they most obviously would have seen a man popping out of the sand, but do not say anything to the police. Perhaps, they are together with the gun-wielder in the sand. The policeman stands up and removes his glasses to have a clearer scope of the area. Another police officer walks up beside him and looks over toward him. He asks the policeman with the photo, if he's been sleeping. His face has a mark on it. The police officer puts his hand up to his face and bashfully replies, he wasn't sleeping but thinking. The focus on catching the criminal quickly turns to a

mission of reprimanding the day-dreaming workforce of legislative enforcement. The officer orders the other policeman back to the station. The two leave the site without any further inquiry or surveillance of the area. They do not seem to notice the moving sand from the criminal's respiration right under their very noses. Instead of enforcing the well-being and safety of the public, they seem more absorbed by their own wills and desires. They forfeit their search for the lost fugitive and decide to return to the police station. The impression of an absence of state legislative power is formed through the presence of the policemen and the general depiction of the landscape. It appears the vehicles of state legislation are ill-equipped to deal with the systemic enforcement of lawful conduct and organization. What's more is an apparent de-authorization of state authority is suggested from within the authority itself. In other words, not even the police take themselves or each other seriously.

Under the cover of night, Mona and the gunman succeed in seeking shelter at a local campsite. Their obstacle from getting from point a to b is but a trifle. A parallel is drawn to the work of the policemen at the entrance of the campsite and a man playing table tennis next them. A shot of two policemen controlling the entrance of the campsite tracks over to a table tennis match between two components. In between them is a visual of Mona being held at gunpoint in front of a pop art style poster of a (punk) rock band. A young man is seen arduously engaging in the play of the match. He is standing in sporting clothes and leaning into his movements over the playing surface, while his opponent is portrayed to be sitting in a chair and talking on the phone in one hand, while holding the paddle in the other. The comical conversation of the seated opponent is overheard as he states, "I'm in the middle of a match. I'll beat him quickly and I'll come". Mona and the gunman arrive to their target point and quickly slip into a vacant cabin. When they enter the cabin, Viorel takes a few last glimpses out the window to see if they are followed. He sees

nothing and immediately breaks out in celebration. He thrusts his arms up and down, gun still in hand, and whispers in an excited voice, "You've tricked them! Bravo, Viorel, God loves you! You suckered the whole unit!" We learn the fugitive's name through his reference to himself in third person. [6]

Viorel proceeds to keep Mona as his hostage, even after learning that she has no loved ones from who he may claim ransom, and flee to Argentina in a helicopter. He is still convinced Mona is his trump card. He points the run at her in a playful display, that he will find a role for her in his game. She looks at the gun, he flips the gun around and signals for her to take it. Mona reaches out to take the gun, but Viorel jerks it back towards himself in alarm. He is surprised Mona would even consider reaching for the gun, and comments, "don't even think about it! Don't mess with Viorel, okay?" [7] It is apparent the fugitive has a very high opinion of himself and his abilities. However, the threat of being dispossessed of his gun reveals hidden fears and anxieties. Mona comments Viorel must be a major villain in order to have so many people after him and wants to know what he did. Viorel blames the media for blowing the incident out of proportion.

In the imaginary of the public sphere (socio-political space) there is the threat of male homosexuality, or more specifically of the loss of heteronormative masculinity. [8] Viorel has the

[6] This repeats throughout the scene. When he asks Mona what her name is, she responds, and even tells him his own when asked. He is surprised and inquires how she knows. He adds, "Viorel is a beautiful name, isn't it? Vio-REL!"

[7] I link this to the final chapter of "Technologies of Gender" article, where immigrant woman imagined to come from patriarchal society that oppresses her. Assimilation in core as way to leave oppressive domestic situation. This indoor shot of Mona and Pascal seems to fall into this logic, where masculine egotism empowers itself through the immobilization and control of woman/women.

[8] Male homosexually acts as a threat to the presence of the phallus in the public space, where male as first class citizen, privileged position of authority under the law is upheld through the upkeep of the phallus' visibility. Homosexuality seen as giving up the phallus and thus full citizenship. See David Halperin's Halperin, David M. "The Democratic Body: Prostitution and

authorities after him as a result of assaulting a male he caught publicly embracing another male. The male-on-male display of affection caused a violent disidentification reaction in Viorel, and the object of his disgust ended up in the hospital. It is apparent Viorel has strong insecurities about his own male sexual identity. Continuing with the logic of Transylvania as colonial other, which is framed through the impression of a space of present lawlessness, it seems perplexing that the state would be concerned about the loss of life of a gay man. Why would a space lacking 'civil' society (legislative processes) care about a figure that would upset definitions of citizenship (see Halperin and Weeks texts in last footnote)? Once again, the work of an external gaze is to be acknowledged in determining the shape of social matters. The media creates the figure of Viorel as major villain, a man that must be hunted down for murdering a civilian. However, it is not just any civilian. He happens to be a socially marginalized, or put it in harsh terms, deliberately persecuted human because of his sexuality. Obviously, the culture where this is happening is too uneducated or backward to see him as human being with rights like any other. The media (Western eyes) need Viorel to be the villain who supports the figure of 'Romanian' man.[9] It is under such visible proof the stereotype of machisto and sexually virulent oppressor comes to be asserted. In a society of

Citizenship in Classical Athens." *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality: And Other Essays on Greek Love*. New York: Routledge, 1990. 88-113. and Jeff Weeks' "Inverts, Perverts, and Mary-Anns: Male Prostitution and the Regulation of Homosexuality in England in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century". pp. 46-68 in *Against Nature: Essays on History, Sexuality, and Identity,* London: Rivers Oram Press, 1991.

[9] A similar line of reasoning is discussed (in the introduction of *Transnational Feminism in Film and Media)* about Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Babel*. On the way to Mexico, the boy of a Mexican domestic worker's (white) employers remarks that his mother told him Mexico is a dangerous place. The nephew of the caretaker responds, "Yeah, cause it's full of Mexicans. " (Marciniak 8). Marciniak, Katarzyna, Anikó Imre, and Áine O'Healy. "Mapping Transnational Feminist Media Studies." Introduction. *Transnational Feminism in Film and Media*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. 1-18.

self-jurisdiction, it appears the most violent and corrupt are the ones that rule. As a result, basic human rights cases can only be addressed through the policing of external eyes, otherwise the natives are left to the mercy of barbarians, like 'Romanian' man.

What is evident about the character of Viorel is he is self-reflexive of his image. He knows the media have "turned him into Bin Laden", yet he still chooses to play with this image of villian and make it his own, instead of rejecting it as false and fabricated. This is evidenced in the stakeout scene on the beach. [10] After coming out of the public shower with his gun, in a white suit, Viorel is faced with a police squad of loaded rifles pointed at him on the beach. He immediately puts his hands up and throws his gun away, but seems unphased by the threat in front of him. Instead of reasoning with the fire squad, that his profile has been conflated to an unrealistic size, and there is no need for nine-man firing squad to be on a stakeout after him, he launches into a sermon about his superpower abilities. The speech follows:

> God loves me. You can't harm me. You couldn't find me yesterday either. I just vanished, didn't I? I can fly away if I want to. I can send you to sleep if I want to, and you'll sleep until tomorrow. But I don't want to! I want to be punished. You can put those guns down. I won't bite. I want to do my time! Come on, put down those guns!

Amazingly, or not, the prophecy fulfills and the nine gunmen are seen to put down their guns in unison. Once they do, Viorel makes a dash for his gun and cover. He comes to a makeshift beach alleyway construction (exoticized setting of crime-gangster film genre), only to have his path

[10] Followed by a night of lovemaking with Mona after he seduces her with his dream of being a Godzilla-like figure in China, where he destroyed cities by stomping on them and setting them on fire with magnifying glass. No matter that he mistakes the setting of Godzilla in China, when the film is actually set to take place in Japan. May read this scene as, to this figure, all Asian countries are the same, indicating him as uneducated and lowbrow.

obstructed by a mirror-like wall. The slipperiness and size of the flat surface are too large for Viorel to surpass. Viorel submits to the destiny of the gangster, he is punished and gunned down in the sight of his own reflection. [11]

It is evident that Viorel's character is an infusion of Western (American) filmic representations of masculinity and a socio-linguistic dramatization of Romania (or Eastern/Balkan Europe). He embodies characteristics of both the cowboy and gangster, only the presence of a lit (Marlboro) cigarette is lacking from his lips. [12] In these terms, representations of cultural identities (of post-socialist societies) are a politics of visibility, where Western dominated imaginations of the East are negotiated through gendered terms of being (i.e lawful civilians or backward barbarians). The Western imagination of 'Romanian' culture may be appropriated by the members within the society through the consumption of these images. Viorel, the Romanian citizen, submits

[11] I take this notion from Robert Warshow's "The Gangster as Tragic Hero". Social and political organization work to shape conventions of a genre. America committed to cheerful view of life. The function of mass culture is to maintain public morale. Gangster as sociopath; brutal individual, refers to self in 3rd person, breaks moral codes for success. Gangster as spectator's alter-ego. "In deeper layers of modern consciousness, all means are unlawful, every attempt to succeed is an act of aggression, leaving one alone and guilty and defenseless among enemies: one is punished for success" (Warshow 585). The gangster is used as a tool to speak for the audience. Gangster must be punished. He is predestined to death and failure. Warshow, Robert. "The Gangster as Tragic Hero." *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*. By Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP, 2009.

[12] Viorel asks Mona for a cigarette. When she gives him a pack of rolling tobacco, he does not know what to do with it. She must roll a cigarette for him. Smoking is seen as a sign of masculinity. (Psychoanalytic film theory sees as a substitution of phallus) For example, in American context, the Malboro man is embodied by the character of the cowboy, the lawless figure, and his connection to the mythical landscape of the West (the untamed, uncivilized land). Or take the figure of the gangster in the crime fiction films of Hollywood, or the sympathetic gangsters of French film noirs from the 1950s on. Evident Western film genre conventions are at work in the formulation of meaning, and the construction of the bodies in the setting.

to the dominant gaze upon him and chooses to act like a 'Romanian' by appropriating the role of the gangster.

2.2 Woman as Embodied Culture: Mona as Surrogate (Homeland)

A film's production is not independent from how it orientates itself to the representation of the culture and the nature (Dánél 57). [13] Anthropology and postcolonial ethnography have shown that a represented nature can no longer be seen as an *ab ovo* virgin land, but is tied to a culture, is a cultural vessel, or rather in reverse is culture's place. In other words, the terrae incognitae is congruous with imaginative geographies (Dánél 57). Edward Said uses this in relation to encapsulate his central idea of orientalism: East is not generated from facts or reality, but from preconceived archetypes that envision all "Eastern" societies as fundamentally similar to one another, and fundamentally dissimilar to "Western" societies. This discourse establishes "the East" as antithetical to "the West". Such Eastern knowledge is constructed with literary texts and historical records that often are of limited understanding of the facts of life in given socio-cultural space (Sethi 2009).

The colonial relationship between the own and the other is transformed into the foreignness, the otherness of the own, thus the Balkans are represented as Europe's inner colony, its Wild East (Dánél 65). The spectrum of this colonial logic can be narrowed further in *Bibliotheque Pascal* (at least in the first half of the film) as an inner-colonizing of Transylvania, as Hungary's other. This can be seen through the representation of the film's protagonist. Mona acts as surrogate, a human vessel that encapsulates the nature, on a symbolic level, of lost (Hungarian) culture. This can be

[13] Dánél sets up this claim through citing the progression of cultural studies, since the cultural turn and 1970s cultural geographical overview (Dánél 57).

determined through a reading of her body. I look to dramatize this point briefly, and then move on to notions the foreign and organic, to emphasize how only female represented bodies are marked by their native culture, while male bodies do not carry their cultural origins on their body.

During the dream sequence in the cabin, the dark space of the room turns into an illuminated, golden beehive. Mona and Viorel are seated at the center of the room at a set table across from one another. Mona is dressed in a traditional Kalotaszegi costume, while Viorel comports a Spanish matador outfit. The walls and tablecloth become animated and tear at the seams, while Viorel's plate design along the edges blooms and a small metal ball dances around in circles in the middle of the plate.[14] In the scene, Mona is coded as a siren enchantress, whose sweet, choral voice, wine, and tender caresses intoxicate Viorel and render him defenseless to her charms. This is shown through the depiction of Mona's caress of Viorel's face, which quickly turns into a threatening reach of his gun and causes Viorel to wake up out of panic. The gun clearly functions as a prop that Viorel uses to assure and secure his (masculine) selfhood. The threat of not possessing the gun evokes strong feelings of insecurity in him, as his self-conception is strongly attached to the presence of the gun. It is evident Viorel's identity is firmly grounded in his sense of universal masculinity, as opposed to Mona's femininity. Mona's femininity is reduced to a localized, geographical location, the region of Kalotaszeg, Romania. Viorel on the other hand does not comport the traditional fabric of his place of birth. If so, he too would be clothed in a traditional folk costume. Instead, Viorel is outfitted in a universal (imaginative) sign of masculinity as gun-wielding matador.

[14] The animation of the table settings strongly resembles the surrealist filmic style of Jan Svankmajer.

The protagonist's heritage is encoded on her through the construction of her cultural identity. [15] However, Mona's cultural identity (in national terms) is double-edged. She is a hybrid. She is an embodiment of two cultures, thus an emission of a single cultural signal, must be taken as part and parcel with an 'other'. In other words, her organic habitation in a cultural sphere is, in reality, a co-habitation with an outside foreignness.

2.2.1 Organic and Foreign in Culture

Through an analysis of the organic and foreign qualities of Mona in a given (national) cultural representation I will try to illustrate how the foreign and organic, or nature and culture, blur together and in reality encapsulate one another. The engagement with the particularities of cultural belonging will be dealt with in broad brushstrokes. In essence, I aim to recreate a binary understanding of foreignness and organic belonging within two national, cultural paradigms, i.e. through 'Hungarian' and 'Romanian' eyes. In this sense, the division between the concept of the organic and foreign in a bound space aims to be dissolved.

In the first quarter of the film, to be more precise, until the beach setting sequences, Mona is seen to be wearing the same outfit. This outfit consists of a green sleeveless shirt, red folk dress, and white sneakers. Mona's body is wrapped in the same tricolor as the Hungarian national flag. The color palette of Mona's costume serves as a cultural marker of Hungarian belonging. Mona's biological ties of Hungarian ancestry are indicated in the fabric that wraps her body and flesh. Hungarian land is symbolized through the use of green on the national flag. Red is used to represent blood. This ideology is transferred onto the body of Mona. The impression of her natural belonging is emphasized through color symbolism. The cultural symbol of organic belonging is

[15] In films, costume, dialogue and actions are tools to externalize the internal.

especially made apparent in the red-colored clothing items of her outfit. The two most traditional, folkloric items, a folk dress and a red necklace, [16] are crafted out of red fabric and beads. Upon viewing Mona, in terms of cultural identification, it is evident she has ancestral ties to Hungary and may thus be deemed as natural citizen. However, the very elements that indicate her Hungarian kinship are the same items that render her eccentric. Why would she be wearing a folk dress as everyday garb on a hot summer day in contemporary society? Folk costumes are worn for special occasions, like national holidays or performances, and not meant for everyday use in contemporary terms. In this sense, the same attributes that render Mona as plain insider, also remove her from the register of the everyday and label her outlandish.

In a Romanian socio-cultural context Mona's ensemble gives way to a similar duplicitous articulation. In the dream sequence mentioned before, Viorel's imagination dresses Mona in a traditional Kalotaszegi costume. Kalotaszeg, or Țara Călatei, is a region in Romania, perhaps the region where Mona grew up. Kalotaszeg, as a geopolitically understood place is meant to belong to Romania. In turn, Mona's belonging to the land, externalized on her body, in form signals her organic belonging to the region and country. On the other hand, as indicated by Viorel after waking up and recalling the dream, the folkloric clothing also gives a strange quality to her presence. [17] In the mainstream contemporary imagination, the understanding and knowledge of traditional, folkloric customs is limited. It takes Viorel a while to spell out what was strange about Mona's presence, because it is not a culturally style that is au courant in popular Romanian society. The

[16] Hungarian term for necklace is garális. Usually worn in contemporary Hungarian for special events with folk costume or for Hungarian folk-dancing performances.
[17] "You wore strange clothes, some sort of folk costume."

utterance of Mona's strange presence in Viorel's imagination may be taken as indication of her foreignness of represented belonging through the Kalotaszegi costume.

Mona's difference is also marked through her presence of speech and detection of accent when she converses in Romanian. This is made deliberately apparent in the same cabin scene, when Viorel asks Mona for a cigarette. She leans into her bag and throws him a packet of rolling tobacco. He is perplexed and asks her what to do with the package. She tells him, "you roll one." Mona's foreignness is detected by Viorel and he begins to inquire about her origins, as she is clearly not Romanian. The rest of the dialogue follows below:

> Viorel: You've got an odd accent. You're not Romanian, are you?
>
> Mona: No.
>
> Viorel: Then what?
>
> Mona: Do only Romanians exist? There are Hungarians too. Or half and half.
>
> Viorel: You're half and half? You don't look like it. But your Romanian is great. Roll one for me! I can't! (Mona moves over to the bed to roll the cigarette) You're good at it, girl!
>
> Mona: There's nothing to learn. You either can or you can't.
>
> Viorel: It's a good-looking cigarette. Looks like it was made in a factory. It seems a pity to smoke it. Have you got a light?

The language that Mona is perceived to be most at home in, in turn, comes to define her essence. Mona is automatically labeled as a foreigner despite being born and growing up in the same geopolitical space as Viorel. Her foreignness is equated to a nature, a cultural style, that in turn marks her body through the vestige of the Kalotaszeg outfit. This style is seen as external to mainstream contemporary cultural practice. The undertone of an accent works in this same fashion. Mona's knowing and being fluent in the language signals a certain belonging, but her other language marks her Romanian fluency and presents her as a foreigner.

On the flipside of the organic and foreign materiality of the language representation, Mona is predominantly seen to be speaking in Romanian (and English in the second half) in the film. Little Hungarian can be heard throughout the film, but it does pepper in here and there at various points. It is mostly present when Mona communicates with her daughter. As mentioned before, the first utterance of Hungarian in the Hungarian film (as Hajdu is a Hungarian director and the film was a Hungarian production) comes at the end of the welcoming announcement of the opening public event. They are the last amplified words that drop out onto the Romanian audio space from a shaken Mona. In a distraught state, people usually turn to their native language as a way to communicate was is distressing them. The framing of the emergence of Mona's second language, along with the dream sequence, look to solidify the notion that Mona's native language is Hungarian, yet she communicates on a predominant basis in Romanian, given its dominance in her situated cultural sphere. Hungarian as native language and when spoken without an accent, designates Mona's insider belonging. However, the channel of communication she dominantly engages within requires a translation, given its unfamiliarity, thus designating her as alien.

2.2.2 Return to the Mother(land): Framing the Surrogate

The colonial logic of Transylvania as Hungary's 'other' stems from socio-political shortcomings (traumas) in Hungarian history. [18] [19] In the Hungarian post-socialist collective,

[18] The treaty, signed on June 4, 1920, at the Grand Trianon Palace at Versailles, France, reduced the size and population of Hungary by about two thirds. Romania received Transylvania, part of the adjoining plain, and part of the Banat, including Timisoara. Taken from: "Treaty of Trianon." *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th Ed.*Columbia University Press., 2012. Web. 3 June 2014. <http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/history/trianon-treaty-of.html>.

[19] It is not my intention here to enter into a discussion on national and regional histories, but to illustrate the mechanisms underpinning the shaping of Transylvania as the lost, preserved sibling of Hungary.

Transylvania is often seen as a slice of the old 'Hungary', where a traditional and strongly agricultural-based way of life is still present. This is put in juxtaposition to a capitalistic, Westernized image of Hungary, which has taken to the consumption of foreign media and culture and left Hungarian traditions and customs to die out and disappear. Thus, a shroud of nostalgia is also placed over the depiction of the forested landscape of Transylvania. It becomes a place of the past and the representation of a more 'natural' or 'authentic' way of Hungarian being. [20] Through a reading of the film, I will argue how Hungarian nostalgia and visions of Transylvania are intertwined in gender identity debates in a local colonizing logic. [21]

The representation of Mona, as a figure of femininity, functions in a similar register to the image of Transylvania, where 'authentic' womanhood is linked with motherhood. In the film's representation of Mona, her body is marked by motherhood even before she becomes pregnant. This is due to a certain type of colonizing logic at work, where the setting of Transylvania is used as a space to recapture the motherland. [22] Instead of having the landscape as the site of recapture by the male native,[23] in *Bibliotheque Pascal* the woman's body is substituted for the land. The establishing, colonizing shot in Hajdu's film features an extreme close-up of Mona's face. She is

[20] Can tie this into Mosse's discussion on Nationalism and Sexuality and the youth movement in Germany. Mosse, George. 1985. Ch1 "Introduction: Nationalism and Respectability" and Ch3 "The Rediscovery of the Human Body", in Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, p1-22, 23-47, 48-65.

[21] I then look to expand on this colonizing logic in a transnational context in a reading of the second half of the film.

[22] In place of a classical colonizing logic (foreign, Western man discovers and claims unchartered, virgin territory) in several Hungarian films (*Dallas Pahamende*, *Dolina* and *Delta* are listed) native men are seen to return to the territory in search of their mothers and a reassertion of belongings in a community (Dánél 63).

[23] See for example the establishing shot of *Delta*.

the surface to be reclaimed. In addition, the film is set up through the *female* native's return. Her return of the motherland is not a recovering of a land, but of her own self as becoming mother.

Hungarian land is symbolized through the use of green on the national flag. This ideology is transferred onto the body of Mona. The upper half of Mona's body is clothed in green. On her green shirt, in the center of her abdomen, is located a large, yellow circular dot. Small ovals also appear on the collar of her shirt (see Figure 1). The stitched together yellow and green fabrics leave a square seam around Mona's abdomen, indicating the womb or the space where her soon to be child will occupy. The symbolic metaphor of land and mother coalesce on the material site of Mona. They are inseparable from one another. Soon Mona's innate substance is seen to unfold[24] after her night spent with Viorel. Immediately after being impregnated, the green shirt disappears from the site of her body. During the beach shooting scene, Mona is alerted by the gunshots and comes to the doorway in only a bra. Immediately following Viorel's gundown, the green shirt that covered Mona's upper-body is replaced by a multicolor-stripped sweater. The symbols of (Hungarian) land and fertile woman are converted into a mother that comports multicultural life within her (as the father is Romanian, signs of Hungarian potential dissolve). The seed of unfolding fate takes fruition on Mona's body. A parallel-edited tracking shot of Mona walking down a road illustrates her metamorphosis. First she is shown on a rural road with trees in the background and dressed in the multicolor stripped sweater and red folk dress. In the subsequent shot, or the repeated action, her presence morphs into her holding her daughter's hand on an urban road dressed in the same sweater, but wearing brown pants and a multicolor vest.

[24] I read the yellow dot as an analogy to the monad. See Leibniz's *Monadology.* Scott, Alex. "Leibniz's Monadology." *Leibniz's Monadology*. N.p., 2002. Web. 02 June 2014.

Mona's metamorphosis is not only depicted through her clothing, but also through her hair. The tight, high bun she wears at the top of her head unravels through time. Her hair is initially pulled up and bound by thick black-and-white ribbons to form a bun. [25] This hairstyle changes into a loosely braided ponytail during her pregnancy, which is quickly succeeded by her hair being completely let down, with only the hair on the crown of Mona's head being loosely pulled back. Mona's hair stays let down for the rest of the scenes set in Transylvania and during her initial moments in the West. The unraveling of her hair may also be read as a metaphor of the unfolding of her fate as mother. [26]

In terms of Mona's living, she is seen to support herself by putting on puppet shows for a public audience. The content of the puppet show, as is shown through the carnival scene, consists of a folktale retelling of the past tragedies in Mona's life. Some of these hardships include the desertion of her father, the death of her mother, and Mona's meeting with her daughter's father. Beyond the whimsical façade lies heavy, realistic content. Mona's father left the family for a prostitute and her mother became ill from the desertion and died. This explains Mona's declaration of not having a father or parents from who Viorel can claim ransom and escape to Argentina in the

[25] Another reading of the symbolic value of Mona's bun can be taken from Dánél's article. Mona's bun may also serve as indication of her wild nature, where a woman of her own free will is equated to a wild horse. This representation is working through a stereotyping of a respective culture attached to a land. She brings in examples: horse-back riding, wild horses, aggressive men, love-making, killing, etc (Dánél 60, 62, 65). Domesticated woman would indicate her being tied to a house or a man, i.e. hair let down. Mona's free spirit and wild nature is represented in her bun, her pony(horse)tail, which is made very evident in the river scene when Mona is positioned next to the horses (see Figure 2).

[26] The mother's hair also serves as an important symbol in the representation of the mother-daughter relationship in *Aglaja* (Krisztina Deák, 2012). Csaba Mészáros gives a sociological reading of the gender identity politics symbolized through the representation of the mother's hair in the film in his article, "Cut Ropes". See Mészáros, Csaba. "Kortárs Online | Elvágott Kötelek." *Kortárs Online*. N.p., 30 Oct. 2012. Web. 20 May 2014.

cabin scene. The end of Mona's puppet-show fairytale also includes her meeting with the sandman. In the final shot, she is seen kissing a puppet scorpion that rises from the sand. This shot of Mona kissing the scorpion has the camera positioned from behind the puppet house looking through the hole meant for the scorpion figure. The scorpion kiss shot abruptly cuts to the shot of the back of a woman's head seen carrying an umbrella. The visual shot is audially overpowered by a voice outside the frame calling out a woman's name, "Melinda!". The setup of the shot gives the impression of the voice directing our attention to the woman. The woman turns and approaches the male figure. The figure is none other than Mona's father. This can be deduced from Mona's puppet show and a later meeting between him and Mona just after this scene.

The subject of the conversation between Mona's father and Melinda is sex work or prostitution abroad in Germany. Though the words prostitution and sex work are never uttered in the conversation, it is clear Mona's father is a pimp, or someone who deals in the management of sex work. He came back to Romania in search of another girl and if he does not supply one, life-threatening consequences face him. He reveals a stab wound to the prostitute. From the conversation and Melinda's make-up and outfit, it may be assumed she is prostitute. She declines the job offer, because she does not feel fit to handle the harsh conditions of the foreign work, and walks away from him after warm greetings of a "happy new year". An overview shot of Melinda walking away into the crowd from Mona's father, and the camera positioned behind his left shoulder, is mirrored by the immediate next bird's-eye-view mobile, crane shot of Mona walking into the camera, through the crowd, which positions itself once again behind the father's shoulder, who is now seated in a polyvinyl covered café. The two women are mirrors of one another.

The setup of the shot sequences in the carnival scene indicates a hidden dimension to the representation of Mona. Dánél indicates in her use of the concept of the surrogate in relation to

gender role play (performance), next to the role of the mother, the role of the whore is attached to the sphere of represented woman (Dánél 63). [27] Initial attempts to recapture the mother are foiled by the nature of the women in the setting of Transylvania. Women are not virgins, but occupied bodies. Given this interpretation, Dánél's claim of the representation of single, unmarried women in the respective culture as being built on the archetype of the wild horse resonates. This representation is working through a stereotyping of a respective culture attached to a land (Dánél 65). In other words, the cultural depiction of women from the Transylvanian landscape is equated to the nature of wild horses living on a wild land. The uncivilized society is embodied in the role of woman, who is wild, and in order to tame her wild sexuality and take on the role of the mother, male force must be exerted on her for her to be domesticated, or she must be raped (Dánél 64). [28] The hint of Mona being a voluntary whore in turn looks to reinforce her 'savage' sexual nature. Her free will and independence are incarnated into sexual deviance, or the fixed (sexual) identity of whore (prostitute). The sexually charged dance scene during the opening public event sets up this analogy. Mona's adherence to traditional coupling is disregarded in favor of (revengeful) freedom. The dance between Mona and the random (Neanderthal) man shows evidence to this claim. Her way of being is shaped by her society, the infidelity of her partner and her free-will spirit, which forces her to take on the role of whore. In other words, Mona is a product of the

[27] In the specific colonizing logic Dánél indicates to be framing Hungarian films set in Transylvania, the coming home of native attempts to recapture the mother(land). But, the mothers, or women are surrogates, as they are voluntary whores or raped.

[28] The emphasis of the interchangeability between force and rape comes from Dánél's deliberate phrasing of the surrogate concept. "Women are not virgins, but "occupied" bodies, surrogated mothers from forced/raped women." Dánél uses the phrasing "(meg)erőszakolt". Hungarian word for forced is "erőszakolt" Dánél places the prefix "meg" in front of erőszakolt indicating rape. (Dánél 64).

uncivilized culture of her respective native land (as discussed in previous section, see The Nature of Culture: Backwardness, Lawlessness and Balkan Masculinity).

The impression of Mona being a whore is implicated not only visually through the double of Melinda, but is also verbally articulated in the film. Viorel suggests it in the cabin, after he finds out Mona is (basically) an orphan. He is interested in how she makes a living. The conversation follows:

> Viorel: Then what do you do?
>
> Mona: I've got a business.
>
> Viorel: Are you a whore? (Mona turns to him with wide, stern eyes). No, you're not a whore. Just a bit crazy.
>
> Mona: Can I go now?

Mona is forced to stay and that night she is impregnated. What the audience sees and hears about that night, in the dream sequence and puppet show scene, are fantastical to say the least. Perhaps the articulated speculations by Viorel are not far off. In any case, they give some realistic weight to her fairytale narrative, [29] and force Mona to submit to a domestic relationship with her daughter.

Motherhood, however, does not keep Mona from her obliged role of the whore. In her savage, native land, not even the single mother of a three-year-old daughter girl is abstained from her role of the role of the whore. Mona is thrown (back) into the sphere of sex work by her own father. Her own father takes her to Germany with him, where she will be sold into foreign prostitution by a couple of gangsters that assassinate the father and traffic Mona, along with other

[29] At the end of the film, Mona's vision of the past is demanded to be revised by the social worker, if she is serious about getting her daughter back. In the second account of her labor migration, it is revealed she met her daughter's father on the street.

Romanian girls, to England. The father fabricates a story about having something wrong with his head, which obliges him to seek medical treatment in Germany. Mona goes with him under the impression that she will be gone only for a few days and leaves her daughter with her fortune-telling aunt.

2.3 Woman as Embodied Culture: Mona as Surrogate (England, Western land)

If the female protagonists become travelers, then they are transported to the West, where their homeland becomes their stigma, and this empowers the Western male to hire them (Dánél 65). Once plucked out the mythical, wild landscape of Transylvania our female protagonist travels West and finds herself in Liverpool, England. Upon arrival, Mona is wrangled out of a cargo container and ushered to a table where she is given the number thirty-seven. Mona is being auctioned for sex work along with other foreign women, a transgender man and a young Asian boy. Race, gender, class, sexuality and age discrimination and power dynamics are made hypervisible in the scene. After receiving her number, Mona is pushed down a catwalk stage and spotted by Pascal. Pascal tries to communicate in English to her to show her number, which fails and is then achieved through body language. Her foreignness is written on the ground (once again) (Dánél 64). Pascal walks up to 'thirty-seven's' owners and buys her. He admits she reminds him of his mum. After the deal has been made, another man walks up to inquire about the price of 'thirty-seven'. Pascal signals his ownership of her by throwing his cigarette lighter into his pocket. Mona is reduced to a mere (inanimate) object, because she bears the trace of foreignness.

On the drive to Pascal's place, he tries to educate Mona about the local culture. He points out a famous street of Liverpool, Penny Lane, and asks if she knows the Beatles' song attached to

the location. He begins to sing the song, Mona quickly looks over at him and then turns her head back to look out the window on her side of the vehicle. Here Mona is once again equated to nature, but a foreign nature that needs to be civilized, or educated. Mona's maternal quality is not lost in the core. She was selected for her maternal beauty. [30] The civilization and education of Mona continues chez Pascal (Pascal's library), which in fact is a brothel, where sex workers must play the roles of characters from Anglo-American literary works (*Dorian Gray, Lolita, Pinocchio*, etc). Mona is cast in the female roles of the historical martyr Joan of Arc and Desdemona from William Shakespeare's *Othello,* i.e. high culture. Mona and other cultural delinquents must learn the cultural script given to them, in order to ensure socio-economic (class) ascension. Transition from the high to low class, in relation to sexuality, is achieved through socio-linguistic performance.

Mona, as the foreign woman, is deemed as a threat to the socio-cultural class distinctions in the core. Her place is very evident in the social stratum. She and the other foreign sex workers are placed in the basement of the library. It is indicated spatially in the world of Pascal's library, where unassimilated figures belong in terms of visibility, i.e. invisible. They are only discernible as literary, historical figures. After learning her script for Joan of Arc, Mona has a guest, they recite their lines and she is violently raped. Once again, the 'socializing' and 'domesticating' of wild (foreign) woman is repeated. Pascal comes to her room to give her a shot of heroine and numb the pain. He tells her she doesn't know how lucky she is and that she could have ended up in a much worse place. Pascal claims he has only finest guests at his place, the crème of society, and lists such occupations as artists, dignitaries and actors. [31]

[30] On the sex trafficking open lot two description are uttered by Pascal regarding 'thirty-seven': "thirty-seven, made in heaven" and "I want her, she reminds me of my mom".

[31] The high-class, sophistication of his guests is indicated upon Mona's arrival to the Bibliotheque. At the top floor of the building is a massive library, shown to be the main guest room, where

Once injected with the heroin a sudden high, and sense of euphoria come over Mona. Now, in fluent English, she begins to turn the conversation around and badgers Pascal with her own set of impressions of him and his type. However, she is mistaken by labeling him as a rich, Western European and has-been artist who sits on a couch dreaming about being famous. For Pascal is not European, but comes from the streets of a slum on a Caribbean island, most likely an old colonial territory of the United Kingdom. Mona is taken by this piece of information and in her hazy, euphoric state the only impressions she is able to evoke about Pascal's land of origin is palm trees and the presence of the Spanish language. Pascal's description of his boyhood living and working on the streets in a slum pass right through her, as she is taken by her initial impressions of the Caribbean island life.

As the idea of the Caribbean continues to circulate through her mind, Mona asks Pascal to say something in Spanish. He asks her what he should say. She replies in a stern and earnest voice, "so why are you doing this?". After Pascal translates it into Spanish, she repeats the question in Spanish, triggering a social commentary by Pascal from the position of an outsider, that looks in from a marginalized, immigrant position. He explains his actions to be but a form of adaptation (or assimilation) to the needs of contemporary times, where one must provide what is demanded in order to survive. In this case, in order to survive as second or third world citizen, Pascal must exploit those in more disadvantaged positions in order to secure financial and cultural security and prestige. Mona does not understand Pascal's socio-political insights, because he divulges them in

customers are dressed in suits and dresses, engaged in intellectual conversations over books, the walls are lined with bookshelves, and public displays of both female and male same sex acts are featured on both sides of the room. The space is decoratively lit and audibly accompanied by a jazz soundtrack, strengthening the sophisticated vibe of the room.

Spanish, a language that is beyond her frame of comprehension in spite of the knowledge of another romance language, Romanian.

Pascal's exposition of the socio-political reality of (European) identity politics goes unveiled to the English listener and speaker in the diegetic space (Mona). [32] The foreign male moves on to a dream he had about Mona as his wife and the mother of his children. She does not understand and only comments how beautiful the (Spanish) language is. Indeed, these are the same cultural impressions that work to represent her symbolic value as 'object of desire', where nature, culture and women respectively localized in Romania are represented as surrogates of foreign (male) conceptions (Dánél 65). [33] Pascal's final embrace of Mona is met with a threatening, violent reaction. She bites off a chunk of his tongue, he panics and she tries to escape through the layers of the library. She fails and collapses at the door with the key in hand. [34] A tracking shot follows, which juxtaposes the imagery of Pascal's temporary loss of power and control (blood spewing out of mouth and panic) to the imagery of a pipedream of foreign sex workers confined to their lower

[32] "Diegetic", in the cinema, typically refers to the internal world created by the story that the characters themselves experience and encounter: the narrative "space" that includes all the parts of the story, both those that are and those that are not actually shown on the screen. Taken from: Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993. *Film Vocabulary*. Web. 3 June 2014. <http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/syllabi/w/weisenfeld/rel160/filmterm.html>.

[33] Upon Mona's arrival to the room of Joan of Arc, Pascal asks where Mona is from. She does not answer, so he guesses, among the two nationalities uttered is Romanian.

[34] The figure of the prostitute is often represented as a figure that works to transgress sexual and social boundaries. The fear of the notion of social strata transgression and erosion of the social distinction calls for legitimacy of social policing. Carter, S. "'This Female Proteus': Representing Prostitution and Masquerade in Eighteenth-century English Popular Print Culture." *Oxford Art Journal*22.1 (1999): 55-79. Rivière, Joan. "Womanliness as Masquerade." *Formations of Fantasy*. By Victor Burgin, James Donald, and Cora Kaplan. London: Methuen, 1986. 35-45.

chambers of distinguishable literary characters. The rhetoric of these images is meant to arouse the underlying gendered socio-cultural power dynamics at work in the conceptions of contemporary European identity.

Chapter Three: Contemporary European Identity Politics: The 'Idea of Europe' and the Representation of the 'Immigrant Woman'

In the previous chapter, I use Dánél's postcolonial theoretical framework, as an analytical toolbox for addressing the notion organic and foreign duality, or surrogacy, in the film *Bibliotheque Pascal*. Through an analysis of the representation of the characters and the categories of nature and culture, foreign and organic, masculine and feminine in relation to setting, I demonstrate how culturally gendered bodies and socio-cultural spaces are constructed. I focus on the representation of the woman's body, specifically the main protagonist Mona's body and demonstrate how it symbolically coded and constructed to embody the nature of her respective culture. When she travels to the West the visibility of her homeland becomes a stigma and empowers Western male to hire her.

In this final section, I look to open up my discussion of the film to a much-debated, broader political issue in contemporary European identity politics, where the concept of Europe and notions of otherness work to produce notions of European belonging. I will specifically focus on Gail Lewis' discussion on contemporary politics found in her article "Imaginaries of Europe: Technologies of Gender, Economies of Power" published in the *European Journal of Women's Studies*. Lewis focuses on the symbolic representation of the category called 'the immigrant woman'. She argues the contemporary moment of this category ('immigrant woman') is central to the hegemonic social imaginary of Europe and the European (Lewis 88). Lewis sets up a premise for the idea of Europe based on 'shared European values' that are a significant criterion of 'essential European identity' (Lewis 90). I will enumerate some of these principles and, like Lewis, aim to show how the representation and markings of the figure of the 'immigrant woman' aim to

undermine European Union politics of citizenship. As is evidenced by Lewis, the interweaving of the public (nation-state and supra-EU state) and the private (domestic, intimate) work to construct a clear gender and cultural hierarchy, which need certain bodies to be marginalized in order to secure the upkeep of others.

The concept of Europe and European identity are often grounded in claims that Europe is the "cradle of civilization" (Lewis 88). The borders or limits of this land mass, labeled Europe, is quite ambiguous, however the much circulated notion of Europe, as Lewis states, " [is] an 'old' culture, whose roots are embedded in centuries of tradition and make for an ancient 'western' civilization" is commonly acknowledged (Lewis 91). Where these lines of civilization are drawn and clear division of the European, refined self and the non-European other are drawn is something that deserves consideration. What's more how these lines are drawn and who is responsible for drawing them equally deserves some consideration. Though I do not wish to enter into a political, historical discourse, I do believe the mention of a few European (Union) events to be important is setting up my argument on a politics of 'othering' at work in European ideals of self.

The notion of European citizenry is claimed to be embedded in "centuries of tradition and merited moral, cultural and political legacy" (Lewis 91). Despite shifts in the geographical center of gravity, traumas and destabilizations, the socio-political fabric (of Europe) has faced the test of time giving it the claim to its "merited moral, cultural and political legacy" (Lewis 91). I move to a contemporary event(s) in 'European' legislature and history that clearly aims to demarcate where the stronghold of European morality and citizenry appear to be centered and demarcated. The year of 1992 represented a pivotal moment when the Maastricht Treaty established the European Union and the category of "Citizen of the European Union" (Lewis 90). This category of citizenry was developed from the provision for free movement of goods, capital, services and labor within the

area covered by the provisions of the Single European Act of 1987 (Lewis 90). The citizens of the nation-states that were a part of the European Union clearly sets up, what Lewis refers to as "a relation between Europe, as European Union, and others" (Lewis 90). This also brought on the identity of 'European Union Citizen', who upholds and abides by the deep traditions and principles of European principles and values. Some of these cornerstone principles being of freedom, of family and private life and respect for and promotion of tolerance, which homogenize the specificities of the nation-states and national cultures (Lewis 91). Lewis cites Article 6 of the Declaration of Fundamental Rights and Freedom, "Everyone shall have the right to respect and protections of their identity; respect for privacy and family life, reputation, the home" (Lewis 92). The mention of the family in the article draws an interconnection to familial order and the idea of Europe.

I look to demonstrate how the figure of 'the immigrant woman', taken from Lewis, works to destabilize ideals of Europe built on the adherence of these principles to certain bodies, specifically the principles mentioned in the article of: right and protection of identity, privacy, family life, reputation, and the home. While I acknowledge that Mona, the female protagonist, is not a full on immigrant, but more-so a migrant worker who after a short period of time returns to her native land, a clear assimilating process does go on in her time in England, in Pascal's library, and thus I believe find her suitable for the container category. The symbolic workings of her visibility also function on notions of otherness based on cultural, ethnic, and gender discrimination. What makes her figure especially important and drives to the heart of the European imaginary is her national citizenship. As a Romanian citizen, she too should be regarded and protected by the same legislative articles of the European Union institution. Romania joined the EU in 2007, which

makes them too European Union citizens, however clear struggles of legitimization and displays are marginalization are at play in claims of European distinction.

The acceptance of migrants has been taken as a sign of European excellence in term of terms of democracy and tolerance (Lewis 94). However, the visibility of the figure of the 'immigrant woman' and her acts of assimilation contest degrees of tolerance to her difference (Lewis 94). Upon Mona's arrival to England certain assumptions and meanings are ascribed to her body. After selecting Mona for her maternal beauty, Pascal gives an inquiry to Mona's motivations for coming to England. He deduces boredom as her main cause for uprooting. If given further analysis this would suggest that Mona has nothing to do and "just sits around all day", meaning she is used to being confined to a fixed, domestic space. Thus, her motivations for coming to England must be to 'liberate' herself from the clutches of a despotic familial and/or state culture (Lewis 94). In other words, Mona's search for asylum in the 'European' society is to escape the Neanderthal men that are depicted to rule the self-juridical, corrupt civil society of her (nation of) origin.

The 'immigrant woman's' state-of-being, in Pascal's eyes, seems to have benefited through his acceptance of her into his cultured and sophisticated society. Pascal's library may be seen as metaphor of the Europe, or the EU, and their 'liberation' of women through their welcoming and cultural education of them. However, the immigrant woman's role in the system is dependent on her assimilation. She must learn a cultural script and become another in order to be visible in the cultural space, this seriously undermines notions of agency in the union of Europe. This is a sharp contrast to values of tolerance and difference, where acceptance is dependant on change of cultural representation, which would signal an intertwining of gender and cultural citizenship. Acts of assimilation thus go in sharp contrast to the rights of EU citizen, which ensure right and protection

of identity. What is made visible in *Bibliotheque Pascal* is a system of erasure of personal identity is enacted in the presence of cultural difference.

Significantly, the site of struggles over the visibility of the 'immigrant woman' and the meaning ascribed to her is often her body. This is in relation to, as Lewis states "how she adorns her body, how she raises the children she bears, or expresses her sexuality-but the tension between tolerance and visibility runs through them all" (Lewis 94). Reduced to a chamber of prestigious (European) cultural space, Mona's socio-cultural ascension is framed solely through the struggles she occurs in domestic and intimate sphere. Her respect for privacy is completely violated. Her visibility is only reduced to the private sphere and she is denied access to the public. Even after her temporary dissolution of difference, through the mastery of the tongue of the civilized man, English, she is denied access to the door of ascension despite having the key in hand. Assurance of respect and reputation are denied Mona, as her permanence of ignorance and difference aims to be upheld despite 'assimilation' and proof of education, or the mastery of the English language. After her attempt to climb the levels of the cultural space, Mona's fate as cultural and sexual deviant are permanently sealed in final role she is casted to play and thus mark her life, Desdemona.

The character of Desdemona is from Shakespeare's *Othello*. Desdemona is a daughter of senator (esteemed paternal law), a highly respected public citizen, which she that betrays by eloping with Othello, a Moor, and ends up being killed by her later estranged husband under false knowledge of adultery. Othello is identified as a moor, a term used interchangeably with other terms such as 'african', 'ethiopian', and 'negro'. Obviously, the implications of the story work on the myth of woman punished for disobeying paternal law by mixing with the colonially inferior creature. In other words, (Desde)Mona's reputation rests on the private matter of who she marries, as her husband serves as a reflection of her considered privileges of citizenship, which in turn

influence her identity. In other words, Mona gives up her high regard as daughter of a senator and instead of ensuring the upkeep of her privileged identity, but entering into a private union with another prestigious public figure, she is gives way to the protection of the law, by being the wife of a lower citizen, Othello. In the end, she is punished for lack of regard for respect of paternal law and her reputation is put in jeopardy due to the accusation of a private matter. The divisions between the public and private sphere are blurred in the film, where the protection and condemnation of human lives is a matter of the public sphere. The rights and protection of a private life are denied to the figure of Mona, where clearly her private matters are a concern and threat to the public sphere, which thus work to reprimand her for her bedroom affairs, which pose a threat to civil society.

The invocation of the family in the article that concerns right to a home is out of Mona's reach. This is evidenced in the final scene of the film, after Mona has regained custody of her daughter. They are featured in a modern, new home eating dinner together (with imaginary food) and Mona putting her daughter to bed. The shot pans out as Mona is telling her daughter the 'xylophone' (multicolored musical instrument) tale, which turns out to be a fairytale version of her sex-trafficking. The subsequent shots, which is actually a single, long tracking shot that begins as a zoom out, reveals the kitchen and children's bedroom to be mere rooms of a display floor for an Ikea store. The European goodness or 'Ode to Joy' which is meant to symbolize contemporary Europe's "new constituency of solidarity and belonging" (Lewis 89-90) is substituted in Hajdu's conclusion of filmic (European) imaginary for another European musical classic, "Silent Night". The lyrics of the song are telling, the audioscape gives insight to the underside of European identity politics, where gender and ethnic/racial discrimination lie at the core of hegemonic European values and characters. The film leaves us with a post-modern image

of the colonial gaze. The director (white, European male) is seated on a living room couch with tea and pen in hand, as he looks onto the screened image of sunset in a mountainous landscape. The song lyrics, or audio element, of the shot offer a realistic social commentary on the 'home' politics of Europe, where the rights of humans ("right to respect and protections of their identity; respect for privacy and family life, reputation, the home") are but a digitized dreamscape of the "Holy Infant", otherwise known as the 'White' Savior. [35]

A fade out signals the end of the film and the audience is left with an empty, dark screen with a chorus of young Hungarian voices singing, "Csendes Éj, Szentséges Éj!" ("Silent Night, Holy Night!"). The impressions from these final moments of the film bring shivers down my spine, with the thought of the same future reality awaiting the young girl. Will the daughter's self-will and powers (as well as the rest of her generation) be enough to change the current trajectories of other humans like her? The daughter has the ability to project her dreams, which saves her mother from a tragic end towards the end of the film. The daughter brings Mona's father back to life as a marching band conductor who travels all the way to England to emancipate the mother. Once released, Mona and her literary character colleagues are depicted on an empty street despondent about what their next step should be on the dark, vacant street. The dark vision of Mona and her fellow peers looks to impress the (true) reality of the gendered power relations, that determine which bodies are marked and marginalized and which remain secure and invisible in their safe European (home) insider-ness. In sharp contrast to the despondent 'immigrants' on the street is a

[35] The lyrics that accompany the presence of the Hajdu (the director) sung by a choir of young Hungarian voices are, "Drága kisdedük álmainál, Szent Fiú, aludjál, szent Fiú aludjál!" („Holy infant so, tender and mild. Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace")

group of cheery regulars seated inside their local pub on the corner. They look out the window and comment in amusement to the spectacle of Mona, dressed in a black latex suit and mask. Perhaps the next generation will be able to rehearse ways of looking that are devoid of the 'colonial love' of the past and promote mutual understanding and the ability to reformulate and to create new realities.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I use a specific postcolonial framework to analyze the film *Bibliotheque Pascal* and then link my analysis to a larger political issue of identity politics and terms of citizenship taking place in contemporary Europe. I connect Mónika Dánél's insights on the representation of Transylvania and its women in a study of Hungarian films to Gail Lewis' analysis of the 'immigrant woman' found in her work "Imaginaries of Europe: Technologies of Gender, Economies of Power". Lewis argues the contemporary moment of this category ('immigrant woman') is central to the hegemonic social imaginary of Europe and the European. I use the concept of the Derrida's surrogate, taken from Dánél's insights, to encapsulate a logic of native belonging and foreign otherness that speaks to European ideals of belonging.

Certain problems and restrictions I encountered in the thesis writing process was a general lack of time to do thorough reading and research. I would have liked to have more time to engage with primary texts of Derrida's work on the surrogate as well as postcolonial studies texts that deal with representation, specifically in the field of film. I believe a more intimate understanding and knowledge of these subjects would have made for a richer project and writing process. Perhaps, it would have lead me to reconcepualize some things in my thesis, but given the extreme duress of time constraints this is what was born. After some brief reflection, I believe approaching the film through a more clearly developed intersectional approach would have strengthened my discussion of culturally gendered class divisions in European society. This could have been achieved through a more methodical separation and designation of the social and cultural categories of gender, race, ethnicity, class, ability and sexuality in order to better illustrate how their interaction signal social inequality, discrimination and systemic injustice. By pulling apart the interwoven strands of

identity formation in my methodological approach, I believe my symbolic use of the film to address broader social issues would have been more successful, and provided a better grounds for deconstructing claims of European belonging. Had I had more time to mull over the use of surrogacy in relation to a well-developed intersectional understanding of identity formations, I believe the strength and clarity of the writing and film analysis could have significantly been improved.

In all cases, I feel very lucky to have had some time to engage with this beautifully made film *Bibliotheque Pascal* and await future opportunities for broadening and deepening my research of it, as well as other films being produced in Hungary today by a new generation of filmmakers. I truly wish the filmmakers and film professionals of this small country were better supported and recognized by the society. Film can serve as a powerful tool for social commentary and raise awareness of systemic injustice. I remain hopeful about the future of Hungarian cinema with the latest success of Kornél Mundruczó's new film, Fehér Isten (White God), released this week after winning the Un Certain Regard Prize at the Cannes Film Festival this year. May his example serve as motivation for Hungarian society and other marginalized societies to take their mediated images more seriously.

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