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Reinventing the Colonial Fantasy in the Post-WWII era: Jovita Epp's *Amado Mio*

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Reinventing the Colonial Romance in the Post-WWII era:

Jovita Epp's *Amado mío*

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

Reinventing the Colonial Romance in the Post-WWII era:

Jovita Epp's *Amado mío*

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Master of Arts

Austrian playwright Jovita Epp's German language novel *Amado mío*, which takes place in post-WWII Argentina, is a modern adaptation of the traditional colonial novel. As such, the romances between the female main character, an Argentine of German descent, and her two love interests, an Argentine of Spanish descent (*Criollo*), and an Austrian Argentine, reflect the hopes and fears of persons and/or cultures caught up in the imperialist dreams of their nation. In the wake of WWII, Argentina becomes a space in which European(-descended) settlers can look back at Europe's "barbarism," questioning the imperialist worldviews that brought Europe to the brink of destruction. At the same time, these colonists search for European values that are salvageable from the cultural wreckage in Europe and employable in reconstructing a new identity in Argentina.

Keywords: German literature, Argentina, Post-WWII, colonial romance, Creole, German Argentine, Austrian Argentine, stagnant Other, colonial fantasy, colonization, imperialism, WWII, Europe's moral corruption, ideal colonizer, Germanic core values.

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Reinventing the Colonial Romance in the Post-WWII era:

Jovita Epp's *Amado mío*

“As Germans imagined their others both outside and inside Germany, they created themselves.”

--Susanne Zantop *Colonial Fantasies*

Four decades after Germany lost its official colonies abroad, the colonial romance remained alive in Jovita Epp's 1955 German language novel, *Amado mío* (My Beloved). Written in the aftermath of World War II, the novel draws on many aspects of the typical colonial romance but with some adaptations. Instead of a European male colonizer subduing the land or a female native, Epp employs a German Argentine heroine, who is faced with the choice between two potential lovers. Both of these lovers are depicted as colonizers and are key players in the design and construction of a small colony in Argentina. The first is a *Criollo* (Creole),¹ an Argentine² of Spanish descent. The second is an Austrian Argentine. In *Amado mío* the indigenous native is barely mentioned, and the *Criollo* assumes the place of the stagnant, and sometimes barbaric Other, becoming the entity against which German and Austrian immigrants are able to define themselves. This reformulation of the colonial romance, in which the Argentine woman of German descent must choose between two potential conquerors, raises a number of questions. Do the *Criollos*, depicted in the novel as the stagnating descendants of

¹ The term *Criollo* (Creole) is used in *Amado mío* to refer to the Argentine-born population of Spanish descent, also referred to as the descendants of Spanish conquerors and colonizers. Originally *Criollos* were the colonists born in the Americas to Spanish parents. With time, however, the term experienced many shifts that reflect the changing reality of the *Criollo* identity through the ages. For a comprehensive study on the transformation of the “criollo” concept through time in Hispanic American literature, see Vitulli and Solodkow.

² Argentines are persons born and raised in Argentina. This includes European-descended inhabitants, such as the *Criollos*, and *mestizos*, people of mixed European and Amerindian blood. The pure-blooded indigenous population is almost non-existent. Because of the massive European immigration to Argentina at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the majority (about three-quarters) of Argentines have European ancestry, making Argentina a country of immigrants. This mixture of cultural and racial backgrounds makes it difficult to use the term “Argentine” without further explanation. For that reason I use the terms “German Argentine” or “Austrian Argentine” or “Argentine of German descent” to specify the different European backgrounds.

Spanish colonizers, serve as evidence of German and Austrian cultural supremacy among European cultures, thus endorsing ideas prevalent in the Third Reich? Or is there some sense in which the condemnation of the European-descended *Criollos* in the novel turns the critical eye back on Europe, and specifically Germany, calling into question Germany's recent imperialist agenda?

In this article, I will explore Epp's reconstruction of the colonial ideal in the wake of WWII. While the war is rarely mentioned in the novel, it remains the ever-present backdrop against which Epp envisions a new future for Germans and Austrians abroad. Typical of the traditional colonial romance fantasy, Epp employs the romantic liaisons as the means by which she explores the successes and failures of the colonial ideals that have driven European and German colonization thus far, and might successfully drive them in the future. Although the novel never really questions the moral foundation of colonization or of Germanic³ core values, remaining racially charged, it rejects self-indulgent colonizing agendas, indirectly questioning Germany's recent imperialism while endorsing a more benevolent and non-aggressive type of colonization.

Edwiges Eleonora Epp de Hary, otherwise known as Jovita Epp, was born on December 22, 1909 in Meran, South Tirol. Epp came from an accomplished and well-known family: one of her grandfathers was the royal music director in Württemberg and the other was an industrialist, councilman and benefactor in Innsbruck.⁴ From 1916 to 1926 she attended the *Volksschule* and a *Lyzeum* in Munich and in 1931 she married Ernesto Carlos Hary, an Argentine rancher and architect of French descent. She immigrated to Argentina where she lived with her husband on a farm in San José, Córdoba and later also in the city of Buenos Aires. In Buenos Aires, Epp

³ The term "Germanic" as used in this article when talking about culture and core values, refers to German and Austrian culture.

⁴ *Internationales Bibliographisches Archiv* of June 16, 1969. See *Munziger*.

became the vice-president of the Ulrico Schmidl Institute, a German school, and a member of the Institución Cultural Argentino-Germana (German Argentine Cultural Institution) and of the Asociación de Escritoras y Publicistas Católicas (Association of Catholic Playwrights and Publicists).⁵

Epp's work consists mostly of popular novels set in South America –typically Argentina– and written in German. Epp wrote six novels published between 1944 and 1978, two of which were translated into Spanish.⁶ In addition she wrote two short novels, a ballet and a comedy.⁷ She also published articles, travelogues and short stories that appeared in the *Argentinisches Tageblatt* and in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, as well as in other newspapers and magazines in Argentina, Austria, Germany, and Belgium.⁸ She was granted the Gold Medal of Merit⁹ by the Austrian government, which is awarded for noteworthy achievements or services to the Republic.

In spite of being one of the most prolific of some twenty German language writers in postwar Argentina,¹⁰ Epp's work has scarcely been explored by literary scholars. Her writings are enumerated in several international bibliographies on German literature, and German Argentine histories of German literature in Argentina, and there are a few book reviews, but no secondary literature on her work has been published. This, however, is not surprising, since

⁵ Sosa de Newton 210

⁶ Epp's novels include: *Im Banne der Pampa* (1944), *Amado mío/Mein Geliebter* (1955, translated into Spanish in 1960), *Die argentinische Heirat* (1960), *Die brasilianischen Blätter* (1973), *Auf den Boulevards der Pampa* (1970) and *Santa Maria der guten Lüfte/Herederos sin historia* (1978, also translated into Spanish).

⁷ Epp's short novels are entitled *Die Frau des Fremden* (1956) and *Chelita*. Her ballet was called "El círculo de tiza" (1953) and her comedy was named *Gartenfest* (1956).

⁸ Biographical and bibliographical information on Jovita Epp is sparse, especially after the year 1969. The works enumerated above are all the works mentioned in the available sources.

⁹ *Goldene Medaille für Verdienste um die Republik Österreich*.

¹⁰ Other prolific German language writers of the postwar era in Argentina include Dr. Werner Hoffmann, O. Czierski and F. R. Franke, among others. According to Dornheim, the total number of German language authors writing in Argentina at any point lies between ninety and one hundred ("Deutschsprachige Literatur" 124). For a chronological list of these authors, see Dornheim "Die deutschsprachige Literatur in Argentinien."

studies of German literature¹¹ in Argentina (and *auslandsdeutsche* literature in general), especially in the postwar era, are sparse. Alexander Ritter attributes the postwar era lack of scholarly interest in this type of literature to the “ideologische Belastung” (215) *auslandsdeutsche* literature suffered during the war as consequence of National Socialism. The deficiency of bibliographical information on all the available works, and an appraisal of *auslandsdeutsche* literature as being aesthetically inferior also played a role (“Literaturwissenschaft” 216-17).¹² The assessment of Epp’s literature as belonging to the “popular” literature genre however, should not take away from the genre’s importance as a reflection of the cultural and ideological constructs that fueled colonial endeavors and immigration before and after WWII.

As a narrative re-envisioning of colonization by German-speaking peoples, Epp’s novel follows the life of an upper-class socialite in post-World War II Argentina, who must choose between two potential lovers. The plot of the novel begins in 1947, when widowed Luz Apelláns, a second-generation German Argentine, and the *Criollo* architect Daniel Montalbán begin a secret four-year illicit affair. In spite of their mutual attraction, Daniel and Luz’s relationship is marked by disappointed expectations, miscommunication, and lack of commitment, and is ultimately ended by Luz over Daniel’s architectural design of the colony church. Developing simultaneously to Luz’s relationship with Daniel is her friendship with Dr. Alf Momberg, a second generation Austrian Argentine who has just returned from a ten year stay in WWII Vienna. Momberg’s life ambition is the building of a tuberculosis colony in the Córdoba mountains for underprivileged Argentines. For the design of this colony, he recruits Daniel.

¹¹ German literature in Argentina includes literature written in German, regardless of the authors’ nationality.

¹² For other studies on the standing of *auslandsdeutsche Literatur* before and after the war see Ritter’s other articles. See Eberhardt for the standing of German literature in South America. For a more detail study on German literature in Argentina, see Dornheim.

Momberg encourages Luz to become a nurse under his tutelage and helps her in a process of self-discovery.

Amado mío is mostly narrated from Luz's perspective, consequently aligning itself with her worldview. As such, it portrays the *Criollos*, *mestizos* and even other European immigrants from a German viewpoint, frequently exaggerating their weaknesses while extolling Germanic attributes. As a hybrid of two cultures, Luz is able to see the faults of Germanic culture, while at the same time she is not able to escape a Germanic view of life and feel that her culture is superior to others despite its imperfections. Thus, she sees *Criollos* as indolent, childish and exploitive colonizers, while the German and Austrian settlers are represented by her as being industrious and vibrant. This representation falls in line with typical German colonial narratives that portrayed Germans as ideal settlers, hard-working, moral and intelligent, and contrasted them with other European colonizers and native others, in order to "define what was 'German' and what was 'un-German'" (Zantop 7). Friedrichmeyer, Lennox and Zantop point out that tales of the hard working German settler that renders the land fertile or tames the wild territory underscored Germans' belief that their culture was indeed more advanced and heightened their sense of worth (22). The image of a decadent native Other against which the enlightened European conquerors and colonizers measured their own superiority, thus validating their colonial endeavors, is characteristic of colonial narratives. In Epp's novel, the representation of the European-descended *Criollos* as the decadent Other, becomes a leitmotiv in the novel, the entity against which German and Austrian immigrants construct their own identity and onto which they project their fears about Germany's own moral corruption.

In *Amado mío*, the *Criollos* are portrayed as a European race that has become “orientalized.”¹³ They are given the role of the Other, normally ascribed to the indigenous natives of conquered territories in colonial novels, and they are attributed characteristics typical of the Periphery, such as imitativeness, irrationality and stagnation. This represents an interesting deviation from the typical colonial romance, since it projects the primitivism of the savage back on the colonizer, calling into question the clear divisions between the Center and the Periphery, between civilization and savagery. Indeed, if the “civilized” European conqueror is the new savage in Argentina’s colonial space, by extension, we might also question the very center of the civilized world. Epp’s novel stops short of criticizing Germany or any other European nation directly, but since the protagonist is set up to choose between two types of lovers, both of whom are European colonizers, the indirect criticism of some types of European expansionist projects is as unmistakable as it is unspoken. Although the novel does not criticize colonization, it does, however, question the premises on which colonization and expansionist projects like it are based.

Two *Criollo* characters serve as the prime examples of the cultured European savage: Darío Herrero-Graham, Luz’s cousin by marriage, and Daniel Montalbán. Both come from educated upper class families of European descent and both are described with words that mark them as part wild animal. Darío with his “Krokodilblick” (399) is the only truly despicable character in the book and represents a more brutal form of modern savagery. In fact, it is his technological prowess combined with his egotistical insistence on proving his own superiority

¹³ The term “orientalized” and “Orientalization” as used in this article express the degeneration of the Westerner (European) who becomes more like the Oriental (the non-European), as he loses some of the characteristics attributed to the Core and gains others attributed to the Periphery. The term Orientalism was coined by Said in his influential landmark study by the same name, which analyzes colonial discourse, in which the West (Europe) constructs an inferior Oriental Other (non-European) to validate his own colonizing agenda. According to this myth, “the Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, ‘different’; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, ‘normal’” (40); in other words, Westerners are “rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion,” while Orientals are “none of these things” (49). Orientalism is a type of discourse that is concerned with representing the ‘Other’ not according to the actual truth, but according to the way the Westerner perceives him. It therefore becomes more a reflection of the West itself than of the East or the “Other.”

that leads him to accidentally kill his own cousin (Jaime Castelhou) with his airplane. Perhaps, Darío's character is intended to mirror the technological savagery committed by Germany against its European cousins during WWII. But Darío is an exception, a particularly brutal and foolhardy conqueror.

Daniel, on the other hand, represents less of an anomaly. He is part savage, but without Darío's reckless maliciousness. An educated architect belonging to a reputable and wealthy *Criollo* family, he is more culturally refined than Darío, but still cannot mask his underlying primitivism. References to his "Orientalism" appear from the start. Luz compares him to a tiger (128), a predator (79, 128), and a scorpion (79). He is also associated with the primeval jungle (79) and is described as being wild and "urgewaltig" (111). In other places he is described as an Oriental prince (64, 122, 128, 129) and as a Don Juan (130, 146), passionate (80, 84, 103, 113) and vital:

[Luz] spürte die kraftvolle, verhaltene Lebendigkeit, die von ihm ausging, die physische Gesundheit eines wohlgenährten Raubtiers, eines Königs der Wälder, dem die besten Stücke zufallen. Und, gleichsam als Kontrapunkt, in seinem Blick etwas Weiches, Wärmendes, wie ein Versprechen. (79)

Daniel's wild primitiveness is tempered by his high-class upbringing and counteracted by his gentler sentiments. He represents an amalgam of primitive and cultured characteristics that reflect his mixed cultural (and possibly mixed racial) heritage. Daniel appears to represent the *Criollos* generally, depicted in the novel as a European race that has gone wild, or, perhaps, as a European who only thinks he has matured out of his infantile savagery.

With few exceptions, the *Criollos* in Epp's novel are portrayed as being indolent and exploitive colonizers. Argentina, which has many natural resources, is described as

underdeveloped. Instead of cultivating the land and rendering it fertile, the wealthy *Criollos* let it go to waste, selling off their lands one after the other to pay for their lavish lifestyle abroad. The *Criollo* culture is represented as lacking creative drive. Ironically, it is Daniel who notes that the repetitive structure of the cities gives evidence to the *Criollos*' indolence and lack of innovation: "Es ist die gleiche eintönige Wiederholung, die sich in unseren Städten widerspiegelt. Alle sind in Quadraten gebaut, und sobald sie sich vergrößern, bringen sie neue Quadrate hervor. Das ist alles, was uns einfällt" (262). The *Criollos* imitativeness goes hand in hand with their fickleness. The lecturer in the prelude states that Argentine cities "[erwecken] den Eindruck des Unfertigen" (17), an assertion supported by some lecture participants, who cite examples of "Prachbauten [...] die nie fertig werden, weil schon wieder neue Pläne für noch größere und noch schönere in Aussicht genommen wurden. Immer wieder sieht man Neues heranwachsen und noch nicht Altgewordenes zerfallen" (17). The novel therefore presents *Criollos* as childish stewards, incapable of satisfactorily finalizing any project because of their propensity to continuously chase after even bigger and more extravagant undertakings. The half-finished buildings in decay represent a people incapable of engendering a vibrant and assiduous culture.

The *Criollos*' cultural impotence is seen in *Amado mío* as a direct legacy of the self-serving Spanish conquest and colonization. The novel repeatedly exposes the main motive behind the Spanish Conquista as the search for riches. In the prelude, the professor tells about "den hohen portugiesischen und spanischen Herren, die dann ihr Vermögen in der Neuen Welt zu vergrößern suchten" (8). The conquest of the Americas by the Spanish, as depicted by the professor, is not aimed towards the improvement of the New World, but is based on a self-profiting and self-aggrandizing agenda. In a conversation with Daniel about the Conquista, Luz depicts the conquistadors as "ziemlich unnütz Verschwendende" who "nachdem sie den

Indianern das Land abgejagt hatten [...] amüsierten sie sich in Paris oder hielten sich einen Rennstall in England” (263). In Luz’s view, all the possessions forcibly appropriated through the Conquista were subsequently squandered away, thus mirroring a wasteful culture that grew corrupt with their increased power and wealth. In the same conversation Daniel corroborates Luz’s view, presenting the Conquista as the beginning of the decadence of the Spanish race: “als dann die Eroberung beendet war, begannen die neuen Herren ebenfalls zu stagnieren” (262). By portraying the Spanish conquistadors as corrupt, barbaric and self-indulgent stewards over the land, Epp’s novel exposes and condemns colonization motivated by an expansionist agenda.

However, while Daniel seems capable of recognizing the cultural and architectural failures of his own people, he seems unable to see these flaws in himself. Daniel’s church proves to be a prime example of the self-indulgent and immature thinking that characterizes *Criollo* colonization. Momberg commissions Daniel with the design and construction of his tuberculosis colony in the mountains of Córdoba, at the center of which there is to be a church. When the church is finished, Luz describes it as:

ein merkwürdiges Gebäude [...] Wie aus der Spielzeugschachtel eines Riesen genommen, stand es hingeduckt im Gras, mit einem langen weißen Turm, der wie ein spitzer Griffel in den Himmel stach [...] je näher sie dem Gebäude kam, desto spitzer wurde der Turm, desto winziger der schräg, abgedeckte Bau dahinter. Das kann nicht fertig sein, dachte sie, da fehlt noch das eigentliche Kirchenschiff. (406-07)

The spire is twice as high as the rest of the church and towers over the minute nave. The style of the building is, according to the commission members, a “stilisierte Gotik” (407), an adaptation of the French Gothic churches Daniel admires and has always wanted to replicate in the New World. However, the main purpose of the church appears lost in its distorted proportions and

pretentious appearance. Luz calls the church “etwas Präziöses, dem es an wirklichem Leben gebrach” (409). The church is another example of the *Criollo* propensity towards hollow forms, a tendency to imitate rather than create, to squander rather than build.

Like the half-finished and decaying “Prachtbauten” described in the prelude, Daniel’s church symbolizes a tendency toward self-aggrandizement. The ridiculously long and phallic spire represents Daniel’s obsession with his own manhood, and similarly, a colonizer’s obsession with his own national virility. However, as Luz points out, when one approaches the church, the pointier the spire appears and the smaller the building behind it, symbolizing an exaggerated attempt at manhood that has the opposite effect, since it makes the man behind it seem smaller and more absurd. When Luz sees the church she fully understands how its distorted architecture represents Daniel’s over inflated sense of self, and how Daniel is just an impotent boy imitating grown men while playing pretend in the sandbox. This is why she compares Daniel’s church to a toy. The reader of this novel can already foretell the outcome of such a building. One imagines it will fall in line with other excessively large, pretentious, and now crumbling structures so frequently described in the novel. And though there is no direct reference to Germany, the readers are bound to think of numerous other crumbling structures left in the wake of another pretentious but ultimately impotent man, a man whose delusions of greatness and obsession with ever larger conquests proved dangerous.

Ultimately, it is Daniel’s church architectural design that puts an end to his relationship to Luz. During the planning stage for the church, Daniel and Luz spend many hours discussing the architecture of the church. Although they do not agree on the design for the church –Luz wants a less pretentious and more devotion-oriented church– their mutual interest in it makes them feel a deeper connection to each other. Luz perceives the church as an expression of their love and of

their collaboration. For this reason, she is disappointed when she sees that the finished church is nothing like she had envisioned. It is not a collaborative project after all. It does not include any of her ideas:

Nein, es war nicht kleinlich von ihr, wenn sie ihm die Art, in der er seine Kirche gebaut hatte, übelnahm. Sollte diese doch ursprünglich ihre Kirche werden, ihrer beider Werk [...] abgesehen davon, dass sie sein Kirchenspielzeug scheußlich fand [...] es bewies, dass er sie nicht ernst nahm, dass er sie niemals ernst genommen hatte [...] Jahre, Jahre hatte sie ihn geliebt, und sie hatte nicht den geringsten Einfluß auf ihn gehabt. (409-10)

Though Luz admits to herself that she might be using the church as an excuse to break off the affair, she views the church as nonetheless representative of a larger problem in the relationship. No matter how long their relationship has lasted, it has never been a real partnership. Daniel had paid lip service to collaboration and shared goals, but in reality, he had no other objectives but his own. Her views, opinions, and suggestions were entirely ignored as he did not think of her as his equal. Since Luz ultimately rejects Daniel as her colonial lover, the novel suggests that such unequal unions are doomed to failure. In this case, the colonizer speaks of partnership with the colonized but maintains all power for himself. Not only is the structure he built a failure, it comes to symbolize the disenfranchisement of those colonized. Luz's realization: "Ich habe mich in Daniel geirrt" (409), puts an end to their troubled affair and opens up the possibility for a new kind of colonial romance.

In contrast to Daniel and as a rival for Luz's love, Epp introduces Dr. Alf Momberg, an Austrian Argentine, who has newly returned from a ten-year stay in Vienna. His character is constructed as the antithesis of Daniel's, and as the alternative to aggressive self-serving colonial paradigms. Momberg, having come from a background similar to Daniel's, is transformed by his

experiences in Austria during the war. Prior to his years in Vienna, Momberg was “[ein] junger, verwöhnter Snob” (437), who would have become a “Modearzt [...] mit einer teuren Praxis und luxuriösen Lebensgewohnheiten” (437). However, the ten years Momberg spends in Austria, some of these under the German occupation, transform his notions about the purpose of life and the path to greatness. Although at first sight the novel seems to suggest that Momberg is an ideal colonizer because of his European education, or because he is more European than other characters, there is in fact a more significant reason for his change. Unlike Daniel, Momberg has experienced firsthand the downsides of Germany’s colonial/imperial aggression. In no case does he speak of it directly except to reminisce about the hardships of the time, but he comes back with one main idea that shapes his character and that has become the mantra for the colony he dreams of building. The Austrian professor, who guides his research on tuberculosis, encourages him to conquer a land by abandoning any self-serving agenda:

“Dort drüben ist ein Land, wo noch viele Sockel leerstehen. Erobere dir einen. Aber bedenke, dass du dies nur als Dienender erreichen kannst. Und nur als Dienender wirst du da drin” dabei hatte der Professor sich auf die Brust geklopft— “eine Befriedigung fühlen, wie du sie als bloß Ver-dienender nie kennenlernen kannst.” (438)

Contrary to Daniel’s colonial objectives, Momberg abandons the desire for wealth, grandeur or glory. His colonial project seeks only inner satisfaction attained through the service of others. This colonial ideal transforms him from spoiled playboy into committed servant of the Argentine people. Since colonial projects for centuries, including the imperial agenda of the Third Reich, all served to enrich and empower the colonizing nation, Momberg’s ideas for his colony represent a radical departure from the colonial tradition. In fact, the reader might question if Austrian Argentine Momberg is pursuing colonization at all.

Momberg's colonial ideals shape both his character and his actions. In Epp's colonial fantasy, he seems to represent first and foremost the ideal colonizer, the embodiment of wholesome Germanic values. He is described as intelligent and perceptive: "*den Augen entging nicht leicht was*" (24). He is focused and exact in his work, using his "*zielsichere Tatkraft*" (361), and he is firm and undeviating in his beliefs, "*eine Mauer*" (476). Although he is Austrian, Momberg's intelligence, morality and strong work-ethic mirror the way in which German colonizers were depicted in colonial narratives before, during and even after the colonial period. Such colonial fantasies, described by Zantop as "stories of sexual conquest and surrender, love and blissful domestic relations between colonizer and colonized, set in colonial territory" (2), envisioned the encounter between the superior German colonizer and the native Other as an idyllic event, often in the form of a romantic liaison. Momberg symbolizes the gentle and benevolent colonizer, who has a benefic influence over the colonized, represented by Luz. Whereas Luz's relationship with Daniel proved to be a disappointment and a source of pain to Luz, from the start Momberg acts as a soothing and guiding presence in her life. Unlike Daniel, for whom Luz always remained foreign, Momberg seems to comprehend her better than anybody: "*Einen Augenblick hatte sie das überwältigende Gefühl, als habe er ihrem Denken und Fühlen den letzten Schleier abgerissen, so dass sie vor seinem klaren Blick keine Deckung mehr fand*" (443). It is Momberg's knowledge of Luz, gained through intuition and careful observations, that allows him to nurture her in ways Daniel never could. He becomes her undeviating friend, standing by her and supporting her through difficult times of her life: "*in den schwierigsten Augenblicken ihres Lebens war er immer dagewesen und hatte ihr die Hand gereicht*" (552). Though Momberg's attitude toward Luz remains somewhat parental, it is marked by respect. Momberg saw her strengths, admired them, and looked for ways to

encourage them: “Luz jedoch war geladen mit Energie. Sie knisterte. Diese Kräfte in richtige Bahnen zu lenken, erschien Momberg äußerst wichtig” (367). It is through Momberg’s influence and support that Luz becomes a nurse and gains a sense of self and direction. In Epp’s colonial narrative, Momberg’s selfless nurturing of Luz represents the way in which the ideal colonizer colonizes the territory. However, it is significant that Momberg is not German but Austrian, and that, although he still represents Germanic core values, he embodies an alternative way of using them for the benefit of other peoples and not for self-aggrandizement.

As the embodiment of an alternative and more benevolent colonization model at no point does Momberg take advantage of Luz’s weakness in order to gain power or control over her. Although his attraction to Luz is immediate, seeing her as a woman “die er gern zu seiner Gefährtin gemacht hätte” (484), his intentions towards her remain unselfish. He does not try to “conquer” her like Daniel did, but is sincerely interested in her wellbeing and happiness. Momberg never abuses the influence he has over Luz in order to attain personal satisfaction, although the opportunities to do so are not few:

Momberg wusste: In dem Zustand, in dem Luz vorhin gewesen war, hätte er sie überrumpeln können. Doch es interessierte ihn nicht, ein Liebhaber mehr zu sein. Mit Luz ersehnte er eine andere Vereinigung. Von ihr wollte er alles. Alles oder nichts. (485)

Contrary to Daniel, who never made his relationship to Luz official, thus relegating her to the role of mistress, Momberg’s intentions towards her are entirely upright. Momberg seeks a willing and equal partnership, not a conquest. His selflessness, moral firmness, maturity and temperance are the attributes that ultimately win Luz over, and establish him as an ideal colonizer.

Momberg's "virility" as a colonizer, his ability to carry out a vital and meaningful form of colonization, is repeatedly alluded to in the novel. Whereas Daniel flaunted his supposed virility, Momberg exudes a self-assured manliness that makes him attractive in spite of a less appealing physical appearance. In Agnes' words: "Dieser Momberg sah gut aus, obgleich er kein schönes Gesicht hatte. Aber er wirkte sehr männlich und überaus anziehend" (24). Momberg's appeal does not lie in an outward appearance like Daniel's, but in his inner character. While observing his hands, Luz notices that they are "kräftig und sensibel zugleich" (411). This mixture of strength and kindness is frequently used to characterize Momberg and it mirrors the way in which he colonizes in a determined but kind way: "Etwas Bezwingendes ging von ihm aus, Kraft, Hochmut und –Zärtlichkeit" (540). Momberg's manhood, representative of the engendering power of his colonizing ideals, is so evident that he does not need to prove it through feats of physical daring, nor through the construction of grandiose buildings.

Momberg's character and guiding ideals translate into a colony that privileges function over form, action over appearance. He chooses the Córdoba mountains not because of their aesthetic appeal, but because of the healing properties of the mountain air. The tuberculosis colony is a self-contained village, "ein ganzes Dorf" (161), with several *Liegehallen*, *Pavillons* and other functional buildings surrounding a church. In spite of the church's unfortunate architectural design, it nonetheless, stands exactly where Momberg intended it to be, in the place of gathering and also as the moral standard for action. That Momberg leaves the design of the church entirely in Daniel's hands, merely substantiates the assertion that he is not concerned with outward demonstrations of power and prestige, only the practical application of inner commitment and service. For Momberg, the purpose of the colony is much more important than its architecture.

Further differentiating his colonial aspirations from those of Daniel, Momberg's motives behind the construction of the colony are shown to be altruistic, as he wants to serve the needs of the poor and the sick. This is the principal difference between the form of colonization Momberg pursues and other self-indulging and destructive imperialist approaches such as the ones practiced by Spanish conquistadors, *Criollos* as represented in the novel or by the Third Reich. Whatever he possesses in terms of knowledge or resources are employed in the service of Argentina. Momberg's unselfishness goes so far as to employ the majority of his inheritance to build the colony. Moreover, he persuades the government and wealthy acquaintances to help fund it. As his friend the Baronin states: "er würde alle reichen Leute schröpfen, um in den Sierras ein Tuberkulosenheim für Minderbemittelte zu bauen" (151).

Luz's ultimate choice of Momberg over Daniel reflects the novel's advocacy for the colonization model Momberg employs in the pursuit of both colony and romance. Momberg represents a better model for conquest since in both cases his approach is neither self-interested, nor aggressive. *Amado mío* criticizes the aggressiveness of the first wave of imperialist colonization, as represented by the Spanish conquerors, in favor of a new wave of non-aggressive cultural colonization, embodied by Momberg and other German characters in the novel. Although the practice of colonization always denotes the desire for possession and control over the colonized, the characters in the novel do not envision it as something negative. The novel never questions the desires of the colonized people, but assumes that they want to be fostered by the colonizers, since they could not develop on their own, as demonstrated by the wild state in which the land and peoples still exist. Momberg's type of colonization attempts to invert the usual, destructive colonization model, encouraging the diligent building up of the colonial space for the welfare and improvement of those already inhabiting that space, and not

for the financial or political gain of the colonizer or the nation he represents. By contrasting Momberg's practical humanitarian colony with the design of Daniel's church, and by contrasting Momberg's empowerment of Luz with Daniel's mere possession of her, a clear picture emerges about how the novel envisions the expansion of European influence in the future.

In the process of questioning and criticizing aggressive and self-serving modes of colonization, the novel subtly turns the attention back on Germany's recent imperialism. The condemnation of the *Criollos* as stagnant European-descended colonial rulers ultimately becomes a means for exposing Germany's own failed imperial endeavors in WWII. Instead of directly portraying Germany's moral corruption, Epp projects it onto a South American country and its ruling *Criollo* elite. Using the familiar model of colonial romance, Epp inverts its function, and instead of presenting the stagnant Other as proof of Germanic racial and cultural "superiority," she uses him to turn the critical eye back on Germans themselves and on the excesses they committed against others during the war. By couching this criticism in a colonial romance, her criticism of Germany remains veiled, thus avoiding the alienation of her German readers, while at the same time challenging her readers to consider alternative roles for Germany and Austria in the global arena.

The projection of Germany's degeneration onto a foreign Other was a method frequently used in the wake of WWII by German-language writers, as Arlene A. Teraoka has pointed out. Teraoka demonstrates how these authors often used depictions of the uncivilized Third World as a means for self-critique of Germany and a reflection of their fears and desires for Germany and Europe. She argues that "representations of the 'Third World' appear as the products of a European consciousness that has become aware of its oppressive history" (168) and that by constructing decadent Others, the authors are reflecting the need "to construct a good European,

a nonfascist German” (169). Likewise, Epp chooses to project Europe’s moral decadence onto a foreign Other, but rather than choosing a Third World culture, she hits even closer to home by taking on the self-indulgent imperialism of other Europeans, thus highlighting the necessity for moral change and for regenerating the European identity.

Germany’s moral corruption is never directly referred to in *Amado mío*. At no point does the novel portray or question outright the German imperialist ideology that instigated the war, caused so much destruction, or perpetuated brutal excesses committed against others. However, the novel does portray a WWII Europe that is as savage and as stagnant as the native cultures in any “uncivilized” Third World nations. Agnes, Luz’s German sister-in-law, and Momberg, who lived through WWII in Germany and Austria, paint a dire picture, in which deprivation, hunger, death and fear rule. Agnes remembers “verdunkelte Städte, [...] Fahrten in überfüllten Zügen und Autobussen bei Fliegeralarm, [...] das ganze Dschungel jener Aufregungen und Schrecken eines Landes im Krieg” (19). The dark, the noise, the overcrowded trains and buses, and the “jungle” of emotions illustrate a Germany that has become wild and barbaric even at the height of its scientific and technological advancement. Momberg describes similar circumstances in Austria: starving and dying children, innocent victims of a horrific war. In these war-torn countries, culture and civilization are non-existent and have been replaced by irrationality and despair. Germany is portrayed in ways that recall the colonial narratives set in the dark jungles of Africa, or South America.

In the wake of WWII, Epp’s novel reflects the notion that Europe, because of the atrocities it committed during the war, is no longer seen as part of the enlightened West. In fact, both in real life and in the novel, numerous European emigrants look back on their native countries of origin with some distain for the hypocrisy evident in a “civilized” society at war

with other civilized nations. When the German-born Agnes reproaches Luz for her romantic liason with Daniel, Luz angrily replies: “Du tust gerade, als ob ihr in Europa weiß Gott wie tugendhaft wähet: Ich höre allerdings das Gegenteil” (112). Europe’s pretended virtue is unmasked, and the civilized nations are exposed as being as immoral, savage, and stagnant as the primitive Other. The line between the Core and the Periphery has become hopelessly blurred, as Europe develops characteristics typical of the uncivilized world. Teraoka writes:

In the postwar period, the view of Europe as the locus of political progress and enlightenment was replaced by the image of the West as colonialist oppressor. For Germans, this general European crisis of identity was compounded by the trauma of fascism and the defeat and subsequent division of the German nation. (163)

Germany’s loss of a place among the civilized world resulted in a crisis of identity that led Germans to question the very foundations of their national identity. Finding themselves under the moral scrutiny of other nations, many Germans sought to redefine their identity. As an Austrian postwar author, Jovita Epp also questions the premises upon which European and colonial notions about cultural superiority are formed. Upon realizing Europe’s corruption, Germans and Austrians in *Amado mío* seek to reinvent themselves in the colonizing space. Momberg succeeds because he is able to learn from the war’s tragedies. Daniel, on the other hand, remains caught up in the visions of past glory and hopelessly ineffectual in the modern world.

For Epp, the depiction of a colonial space in the postwar era reflects the necessity of beginning anew, and reconstructing an identity that conserves the good values at the core of Germanic culture, while ridding it of fascist ideas or self-serving agendas. From the ruins of the old life, a new one can be built. As Agnes states about her German friends: “sie hatten alle auf Trümmern neu gebaut, jeder in seiner Art” (522). South America becomes a colonial space upon

which European settlers could reconstruct their lives, and European artists could project their ideas about how those new lives should look. Writing on the shaping function of the colony, Zantop states:

As Germans imagined their others both outside and inside Germany, they created themselves. The ‘colony’ thus became the blank space for a new beginning, for the creation of an imaginary national self freed from history and convention –a self that would prove to the world what ‘he’ could do. (7)

Zantop further argues, “It was the New World and not, for example, the Orient or Africa that triggered fantasies of national renewal through conquest, and control of territory through colonizing and ordering” (44). South America as a “virgin” territory becomes a place of reinvention and regeneration that offers more freedom in the creation of the new Self. Epp portrays the vast and largely uninhabited Argentina as a place without history, or a dominant race/culture. The pre-Columbian indigenous inhabitants are simply dismissed in the novel as being “uninteresting” (11,72) and having no valuable legacy (72), a culture not worthy of being remembered or preserved. Although the novel remains charged with such racial and cultural prejudices, it nevertheless advocates for a more benevolent colonization in an attempt to redeem Germans from past faults. By putting their good values at the service of others, Germans can restore the salvageable roots of their culture and make amends for past wrongs.

The creation of a stagnant Other serves two functions: to indirectly explore and expose the imperialist ideology responsible for leading Germany down the path of war, while at the same time affirming some of the good core values of German and Austrian culture by presenting the diligent German and Austrian settlers as the ideal colonizers. Although these two functions seem to contradict each other, they share the same objective: the reconstruction of a benevolent

German identity. The ideology of the Third Reich, which corrupted and almost destroyed Germany, is alluded to in the novel through the self-serving conquest and colonization of the Americas through the Spanish and the *Criollos*. German and Austrian immigrants, however, are portrayed as being selfless and industrious, validating Germanic core values. While Epp's novel criticizes the self-serving and destructive agenda that fueled National Socialism, she still asserts the superiority of a Germanic culture as long as it is based on non-aggressive and benevolent principles.

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APPENDIX

Memo: BYU German Studies MA Thesis Formats

To Whom It May Concern:

In October of 2009, the members of the German Section of the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages unanimously voted to institute a new format for theses by MA candidates in our German Studies MA program. Students now may choose between two possible thesis formats in order to fulfill the thesis requirement of the German Studies MA program. The thesis attached to this memo has been written according to the requirements of the second thesis format below.

The first German Studies MA thesis format corresponds to the idea of the thesis as it has been understood in the past: a monograph-length (50-200 pages) academic work discussing a topic of German literature or culture as directed by a thesis advisor and committee. This thesis is written by an MA candidate under the direction of the thesis advisor and reviewed by two readers before the MA Exam. The MA candidate defends the thesis as a part of the MA Exam process. The thesis is evaluated by the committee and either passed, passed with revisions, or failed. After any eventual revisions, the thesis is passed by the advisor and then submitted electronically to the graduate division.

The second German Studies MA thesis format is a paper that is the length of an academic article, as appropriate for journals in the field of German studies (20-25 pages double-spaced). An MA candidate can only write this type of thesis when she or he is explicitly invited by her or his thesis advisor to co-author an article. An MA candidate may not present a fully- or partially-written article to an advisor and ask the advisor to join as a co-author. The topic of the article should be chosen by the advisor, and reflect an area of the advisor's expertise. First, the advisor assigns primary and secondary readings that will bring the MA candidate up to date on the most recent scholarly discourse about the topic. The advisor then meets regularly with the MA candidate to discuss the background reading and to outline the arguments of the article. To fulfill the thesis requirement, the MA candidate writes an entire first draft of the article, producing 100% of the prose. The advisor then helps the MA candidate to revise the article, still requiring the MA candidate to do all of the writing. Upon completion of a well-written revised draft, the student gives the draft to the readers on the committee. The MA candidate defends this second draft as her or his thesis at the MA Exam. The committee reads the thesis, hears the defense, and then decides whether the thesis should be passed, passed with revision, or failed. The MA candidate appears as the sole author on the draft of the article that is submitted to the graduate division as a thesis, and the advisor and the readers sign the document that passes the thesis requirements. After the student has completed and submitted the thesis project, the advisor adds whatever material is necessary and makes the needed changes and revisions in order to submit the final draft of the co-written article for publication. During this final revision, the advisor and the MA candidate continue collaborating on the article, and the advisor then submits

the article for publication. The advisor has the final say about the finished form of the article. On the final draft, the advisor is listed as the first author and the MA candidate as the second author. The eventual publication or rejection of the article has no bearing upon the thesis requirement of the MA candidate. The advisor and the MA candidate both list the article on their Curriculum Vita documents as a co-authored article.

If you have any questions about the German Studies MA Thesis formats, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Michelle S. James, Department Chair
BYU Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages

Robert B. McFarland, German Section Head

Christian Clement, German Studies MA Graduate Advisor