

Introduction: Mirrors, Labyrinths and Friends

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Several months ago I was approached by my great friend and frequent collaborator, Rodica Grigore, to work on a special literary edition of *Theory in Action*. Of course the request was not entirely unexpected because our friendship and collaboration began with the first literary edition of *Theory in Action*, ten years ago. The task was mine and I'd received essays from scholars from different countries, but one of those whose work was special to me was Rodica. She'd submitted an essay on a novel I'd read: *Silence*, by the late Shusako Endo. It is a historical novel set in Nagasaki that delves deeply into advent of Catholicism in Japan in the 17th century. After reading the essay my first impulse was to write to the editors and suggest that they invite the author to the editorial committee of the journal. As it happened they'd had the same idea and told me that they'd just done it a few days before. Since then we've contributed to each other's work on the journal.

After having been guest editor of a literary edition last year, Rodica was asked if she would like to do another, and then she invited me to work with her. Without a second thought I accepted. We were in constant communications, trying to narrow the focus thematically in a way that could spark interesting essays. We had thought vaguely about Borges, Fernando Pessoa, and a few other writers. Eventually we settled on

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