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THE *Translatability* OF CULTURES

Figurations of the Space Between

Edited by

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Robert Folkenflik, General Editor

The Black Hole of Culture: Japan, Radical Otherness, and the Disappearance of Difference

(or, "In Japan everything normal")

K. Ludwig Pfeiffer

"Japan is no longer the hermit of the East, but the most Western of the nations of the West."[1]

"The Japanese is thoroughly oriental in his pleasures, however he may follow the West in his ambitions."

"The Japanese in their heart do hate the West, but they are sharp enough to see that no nation can be a first-class power which does not wear trousers."

Conclusion: "There is generally, it must be confessed, method in Japanese madness, but it does look very mad to the unreasoning globe-trotter."[2]

The Fun Game of Cultural Comparisons

Cultural observation and comparison, even in their self-trivialization, can be amusing. Nor need we be overly concerned, as long as some semblance of descriptive, analytical, or theoretical rigor is maintained, with the decline toward tautology, less-than-elegant variation, or downright contradiction that analysis and comparison seem inevitably to fall prey to. We may well believe that there is a core to cultures that will, in the last resort, control and contain the play of perceived differences, hold at bay a potentially anarchic behavioral, mental, or affective scope. This looks like a natural intuition without which we rarely operate. We may

hold, with respect to American and Japanese modes of experience, for instance, that "most Americans dabbling in Zen look like Americans dabbling in Zen, and most Japanese applying Western individualism do so with a Japanese spirit underneath. The difference in the worlds is sharp and difficult to penetrate."[3] However "individualistic you are invited to be [in Japan], you are often invited to be individualistic for *somebody*." *Kosei*, for instance, the Japanese word for "individualism," would not denote western individualism (*kojinshugi*), of which the Japanese are "extremely suspicious."[4] But if there seems to exist a rocklike basis for judgments like these, the same holds true, conversely, for assertions concerning fundamental similarities. Marx was struck—without of course having ever been to Japan (but what does it matter, since Japan, according to many visitors, tends to become more, and not less enigmatic the longer you are there?)—by the similarity between Japan in the 1860's and medieval Europe: "Japan, with its purely feudal organization of landed property and its developed *petite culture*, gives a much truer picture of the European middle ages than all our history books."[5]

All this, however, instead of strengthening our belief in cultural identities and differences, might tempt us to conclude, provisionally, that, sophisticated theories and approaches concerning "transcultural understanding"[6] notwithstanding, there is hardly any difference, in principle, between Douglas Sladen's moderately witty to downright absurd aphorisms, and ambitious, serious cultural description. They become virtually indistinguishable, in particular, in authors who, precisely because of the very richness of their "intercultural" experience, are driven toward pronounced statements: The Japanese diplomat Ichiro Kawasaki, with his enormously variegated career, is a good example.[7] The almost ritualistic churning out of several-volume collections on Japan,[8] with their neat divisions into sectors like culture, society, state, economy, thought, seem to augur ill for the possibility of an escape from the sameness of and the repetitive distinctions made by cultural description.

Fatal Attractions: Givenness or Construction, Reality or Stereotype?

"Translation," linguistic or cultural, is one of the important metaphors we live by. It proceeds from a not just intuitively plausible assumption that, somehow, texts have meanings, that cultures possess identities definable, to a large extent, in terms of accumulated meanings. These may be pro-

duced by historical traditions, national or group affiliations and affinities, by the implications of rituals, practices, and the like. Translation, in this train of thought, does not aim at an integral preservation of these more or less fixed or fluid identities. But, in being conscious of its own perspectivism, in pointing out, also, layers of immanent otherness in the cultures themselves, translation will work out structures of mutuality and otherness, that is, of controlled correspondences and differences—structures to be distinguished, by virtue of the carefulness and circumspection of interpreting translations, from the frequently wholesale appropriations, deformations, from the subjection or even destruction of otherness in "real" history.

Attractive and justified as such an image of translation may be, it is unstable, both logico-semantically and historically. If we push it a little bit, we may swerve into notions of cultural dialogue and commerce preceding, or at least contemporaneous with, cultural identities. From there, it is but a small step to an image of cultural "heat" (*chaleur culturelle*), an image of "fundamental" cultural agitation, instability, turbulence, and whirlpool.[9] In such contexts, where culture is a process of transitory configurations, the usual range of connotations for "translation" will apply only intermittently—identity then being the exceptional product, and not the regular process. Instead of *cultural products and identities*, one would be interested in *conditions of cultural (image) production*, which may, or may not, have identifiable and in some way translatable entities as their result.

The preceding is a strategic, a theoretical move. It does not deny the possible "reality" of well-defined cultures. It amounts, however, to a *suspension* of cultural referentialization and, consequently, translation. It does so in the interest of a *conceptual experiment* with a "culture" traditionally held to embody a cultural essence in the highest degree—in an *enigmatic*, but, in spite and maybe because of that, *decipherable* (and by implication then *translatable*) way.

This article, in any case, is *not about* Japan. The intention is to be taken in a sense even more radical than Roland Barthes's precautions back in 1970 (warnings which, as usual, have gone largely unheeded). Barthes did not want to take the Orient and the Occident as "realities" "which one would try to approach and to oppose historically, philosophically, culturally, politically. I do not look with the eyes of a lover at an essence of Orient" (the latter, according to the experts, nonexistent anyway because of the vast "differences" between, say, China and Japan).[10]

Still, Barthes aims at the possibility of difference, mutation, indeed revolution in symbolic systems. The confrontation with "a fictive people" goes a first step toward a history of our own obscurity which might make manifest "the compactness of our narcissism." In looking at "Japan," the empire and epitome of empty signs, Barthes is not looking for different symbols, but for "the very fissure of the symbolic order." That breaking apart of the symbolic, of the deep structure of cultural difference, may not even show "on the level of cultural products."[11] The determination, however, to establish a cultural discourse of referential and comparative self-restraint, is hard to carry through. Barthes talks about cities, cuisine, haiku, theater not just in an inevitably descriptive way. He also does not try to hide that talk about "Japan" can be a form of western self-aggression. Thus, western cuisine, according to Barthes, is bent upon the domination, the "penetration" of food (the importance of knife and fork and of certain ways of using them). Japanese cuisine is devoted, on the other hand, to an art of "a nutritional circle,"[12] where the "tender" manipulations of the chopsticks both in preparation and consumption tend to (re-)create inviolate levels of life processes. Western puppet theater is haunted, if also fascinated, by the anxiety about the human automaton. Bunraku, the Japanese puppet theater (which uses large puppets with the manipulators and their actions remaining visible on the stage), looks for the "perceptible abstraction" of the human body. There is no opposition between animate/inanimate, not the hidden but basic hysteria troubling western fascination with the theater.[13] There is, finally, no transformation (or the illusionary enactment of it in western poetry) of "impression" into "expression" or "description" in the haiku. The consummation, devoutly to be wished and worked for in western languages, "the adequate relation between signifier and signified," occurs, in haiku, as an event, not as the result of an expressive effect frantically sought for. In the haiku, we recognize a repetition without origin, an event without cause, a memory without a subject, a speech act without moorings.[14]

Despite his intentions, though, Barthes's discourse waxes referential. To accept what he says would, on the other hand, seem to depend to a large, if indeterminable, degree upon the sym/antipathy one bears toward what appears, from whatever perspective, as (layers, parts of) Japanese culture. Moreover, if descriptive precision there is—and there certainly is, given our standards, a lot of it—Barthes's text also looks like a nostalgic—or, with respect to both poststructuralism and postmodernism—an anticipatory self-description of what some of us have become aware of as the deficits, the burdens of western cultural traditions. There are obvious similarities with Baudrillard's analysis particularly of the American scene and, to a lesser extent, of European contemporary cultural "realities." In those, the

collapse of the distinction between the signifier and the signified is always imminent. They come close to that Japanese reality in the haiku where "meaning is refused to the real; what is more: the real cannot even dispose of the meaning of the real." Shakespeare could still write (and Barthes quotes it): "When the light of sense goes out, but with a flash that has revealed the invisible world." Japan (according to Barthes) and the postmodern West (according to its prophets) have kept producing the flashes but done away with the revelation.[15]

There can be hardly any doubt, though, that Barthes's book ranks among the most sophisticated and undogmatic versions of a type of cultural discourse which *tries to convey a sense of cultural difference without falling prey to its referential traps*. It is reminiscent of some of the writings of Lafcadio Hearn (or Koizumi Yakumo) and their large stretches of unashamed "impressionism" and judgmental restraint. In Hearn too, though, that restraint gave way, or was based upon, a self-criticism of the West which made him live and die in Japan.[16] Hearn tried to capture, indeed to imitate, that "gentleness" of Japanese culture which seemed to demand more precise descriptions and explanations only when it changed abruptly into its opposite—forms of culturally determined and yet very immediate violence (including suicidal violence against oneself) or transcendental attitudes in Zen and Buddhism felt to be diametrically opposed to western transcendent(alist) religion and thought.

It might appear, indeed, that it was the advent of "Japanology" that brought about the hardening of cultural discourse into a referential one bound to find out, in the most rigorous fashion, facts designating some givenness of cultural characteristics and differences. In what became, and probably has remained, the classic work on Japan from the point of view of "cultural anthropology," Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946, reprinted in paperback 1989), that tendency was carried to the extreme of taxonomies and lists of cultural givens (in particular the "schematic table of Japanese obligations and their reciprocals," that is, various kinds of duties, including feelings, to various kinds of reference groups).[17] Ezra F. Vogel, himself one of the famous Japan experts (if more so in terms of the social and economic analysis of Japan as "Number One"), has commented that "the few Western social scientists who did field work [field work being apparently thought of as the methodological remedy] in Japan in the 1950s and the 1960s felt that Benedict's work was overdrawn. It made the Japanese seem too stiff, too bound by duty and social position, too concerned with their reputation."[18] Although my argument may seem crude, I take it that one of the main reasons for Benedict's (and similar) tendencies is the "fact" that the book was produced *under pressure*: the pressure, during the later stages of the Pacific war, to "know" as much as possible about the "morale" of the Japanese (why they were willing to fight even when they were losing, why they would be ready to die rather than to be taken prisoner, why some, though, when finally living as prisoners, would cooperate with the Americans to an extraordinary degree; more generally, why and when they were both very polite and brutal, submissive and innovative, robotlike and creative, etc.).[19] Benedict does not see that she is giving away a highly problematic point: "In June, 1944, I was assigned to the study of Japan."[20] Assignments (and academic studies may be seemingly neutralized institutionalizations of such assignments) cement the idea (to some extent, especially with respect to the past, justified and unavoidable) that cultures are to be *studied as entities* rather than to be *observed and interacted with as evolving*, partly in fact *emergent systemoid patterns*. It is the dubious implications of these and other, seemingly more neutral *assignments* that cultural studies (and especially their institutions) are still laboring under. Indeed, and not surprisingly, most of the studies on Japan of that period were done under the auspices of the military. In later academic writings, not obviously motivated by the needs of such "strategic" information, the intellectual urge (the professional-practical Platonism of intellectuals, as Arnold Gehlen said) to reach a level of cultural givenness through and beyond accumulated interpretations, remains undaunted. Hijiya-Kirschnereit declares the age of the self- and other-"exoticization" of Japan to be over. But her own descriptions, in particular those of social and cultural roles of women, are inextricably tied to an ideology of givenness for cultural structures and places.[21]

I am harping, from the outset, on the pressures besetting cultural theory and description, because we know, but tend to forget, that whole scholarly disciplines owe their existence to needs for "information" on the enemy, the competitor, and the like. In—not always—mitigated forms, motivational pressures loom large as the skeletons in the cupboard of cultural studies.

However: The temptation to see cultural cores and patterns, and therefore differences, as more or less given, cannot be uninhibitedly indulged in these days. The sheer mass of "research" on Japan in the library of the University of California at Irvine (where most of the work for this article was done) covers some 25 meters of shelves. It is not just because of these quan-

tities but certainly also because of their crushing effect that cultural studies have lost some confidence with regard to "realistic descriptions." Once a staggering amount of self-referential repetitiveness and variation is focused upon, once contradictions are seen to emanate quasi-automatically from cultural discourse, a methodological reorientation frequently imposes itself. The study of *images* of cultures and of their degeneration into stereotypes will then take precedence—alas, to no, or little, avail. The idea that cultures are nothing but images and stereotypes created around an empty reality cannot, particularly with respect to alien and therefore provocative cultures, be indefinitely tolerated. Thus, the referentiality of cultural discourse may operate more sparingly. But when it does, it cracks down again with a vengeance. Lehmann, in order to provide a controlling framework for his study of images of "modernizing" (westernizing?—this distinction is itself a difficult one) Japan from 1850 to 1905, speaks freely and indiscriminately of "cultural invasions" and "imports" from the fifth century onward—as if invasions and imports were the same (or anything definite at all), or as if their "impact" were clear.[22] The volume edited by Gregor Paul[23] aims, in its very title, at a neat separation of "cliché and reality of Japanese culture." Hijiya-Kirschnereit[24] simply keeps her descriptive passages and "theoretical" problems more or less (that is, seemingly, chapter-wise) apart.

The pressure toward reference in both descriptive and image-oriented studies has done away with more "cosmopolitan" forms of writing. "Cosmopolitanism" may, for present purposes, be defined as the *acknowledgment of difference in the absence of its givenness*—an acknowledgment, that is, of culture as transitory spaces for behavioral negotiations. We find writings of that kind in times in which the pressure to come to terms with the emerging and soon threatening world power Japan (talk of that had been going at least since the Japanese-Russian war of 1904–5) was not yet very strong or could still be handled by traditions of a cooler, yet sensitive *style* of cultural thought. Lehmann quotes highly impressive passages from the London *Times* of the first years of our century, in which differences are neither taken for granted nor denied altogether. Sir Henry Norman's book *The Real Japan* (1908) is both a serious and a humorous piece of work which, in spite of its fearsome title, navigates very intelligently between assertions of cultural cores, patterns, and differences.[25] Culture here emerges as a plurality of possibilities, as something which, apart from more or less stable organizational patterns of everyday life, will be constantly in the making—under real or imagined pressures. And even Sladen's aphoristic meanderings of 1903, of which some are quoted above,

handle culture and cultural difference with ease. Witticisms, apparent self-contradictions, or paradoxes serve to encircle Japanese culture discursively, but do not describe it as reality—the rest is "experience" as an interplay of belief, expectations, impressions, and skepticism.

Modern societies, perhaps from the nineteenth century onward, have been liberating themselves progressively from the grip of rhetorical, stylistic, behavioral—in sum, binding cultural—*rules*. These, however, had not predominantly defined culture as structures of meanings extending behind habitual practices and appearances. They were meant to provide a basis for its "graceful" performance and production—or for aggression against those who looked different and followed different rules (crusades, colonialism, etc.). Defoe's main distinction, to take but one example, in *Robinson Crusoe*, divides people into human beings (mainly Europeans, whether English, Spanish or other) and savages seen more as beasts than humans. Here as elsewhere, cultural interpretations were not in demand, not even when dangerous situations did not more or less automatically rule them out. Schiller's growing skepticism with respect to the chances of "grace" in an ideal culture of play, his leaning toward value- and meaning-charged forms of dignity and duty, can then also be seen as a tacit acknowledgment of a historic transition from cultures of rules, play, and aggression to cultures of self- and other-interpretation and their more intricate and indirect ways of action. Culture, as the graceful performance of rules, or as something aggressively imposed upon, freezes into series of serious definitional efforts in which grace is lost and legitimacy has to be continuously manufactured. While it certainly has not become impossible, it probably has become, since the nineteenth century, more difficult to instantiate the "cosmopolitanism" of an artist like Händel, who, coming from what might be seen as a heavily deterministic cultural background, was able to behave in Italy like an Italian and in England like an Englishman. (The same, even more surprisingly, seems to have been true of Händel's factotum, an ex–wool merchant from Franconia, who gave up his trade and followed Händel to England where his son then lived as [or like?] an English gentleman in Bath). And, given the usual gamut of opinions on Japan, it seems also difficult to visualize persons like the Würzburg-born physician Ph. F. von Siebold today, who, working for the Dutch (and changing the "von" of his name to "van" accordingly), took the rules of life in early nineteenth-century Japan for granted and left only because he was expelled for suspicion of espionage. In his case, as in many others, a definition of Japanese culture was fabricated by its government under a largely self-imposed and therefore imaginary pressure.[26] Since the

nineteenth century then, a generalized, though normally metaphorically diluted "Kulturkampf" may have encouraged, in the wake of national (military and economic) competition, substantialistic definitions of cultures. For those, especially in the academic context, linguistic and literary studies were frequently exploited. Intercultural negotiations—behavioral and otherwise—were condensed into cultural stereotypes, of which "national character" has become one of the more obnoxious forms.

A Dialectic of Sorts? The Manufacture of Identity and Difference Between Radical Otherness and the Vanishing of Difference

In this situation, we will not profit much by distinguishing layers of culture, on which stability and difference might be more easily predicated. The very term "culture" has undergone semantic evolutions, refinements, abstractions, and reconcretizations of various kinds in various "cultures." Since anything, however trivial, may be, but need not be, taken as a cultural token, equivalence or correspondence of levels and layers of various cultures appears highly improbable. Indeed, the term "everyday culture" was invented in order to handle what appeared as a collapse of the distinction between everyday life and (high) culture and therefore as a potential for the "culturization" of everything. One may—even as a man—interpret techniques and procedures of haircutting (to say nothing of hairsplitting) in Japan and Germany as culturally significant, because of obvious differences in ritualization and the corresponding psychosomatic implications. Studies have been conducted on changes in gift giving within the *changing* Japanese culture. Skiing can be viewed "cross-culturally," because differences in group behavior, body movement, and "individualism" seem to vary highly between Japanese, Koreans, and Americans.[27] The intricacies in the conceptualization and application of personal relations, in particular with respect to age, gender, and status, seem to differ as significantly as the culture-dependent forms of neurosis and its behavioral manifestations.[28] Social or psychological theories cannot explain these variations without referring to some notion of culture (or "sociability" as distinct from "society," a distinction made already by Simmel).[29] Differences, then, from everyday routines to performances and appreciations of high culture, certainly "exist." But the definite shapes they may take, the modes in which they become operative, the images into which they are manufactured and on whose strength we then tend to act, these are different matters altogether. Thus, it may occur that Japanese culture, different as it is, bestows

on westerners a sense of what has been called, for want of a better expression, "psychological security," a "sense of 'belonging,'" even if one can never really participate.[30] Tomlin, the British cultural attaché, who lived in Japan for six or seven years, expects, for these opinions, reproaches of sentimentalism (similar to those addressed to Hearn). But he does not shrink from asserting—in the twentieth century and for a country which, for many, has embodied and lived its form of postmodernism for a long time—that you "feel nearer to the essence of things. You feel that there *is* a natural life and natural order, which, perpetually renewed and sanctioned, are the font and condition of human happiness."[31] Gerhard Kaiser (a "Germanist" in Freiburg) extrapolates similar perspectives from an experience of the No theatre:

> Going home, the European remembers vaguely that No has exercised important influences on the European theatre of our century—on Gordon Craig, W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, Thornton Wilder, Paul Claudel, Bert Brecht, Marcel Marceau. Later he remembers the cultural anthropology of Herder in its humanitarian breadth. It can embrace even East Asia, perceived but dimly by its author. . . . Thus, in looking at what is alien, we are looking at potentials of ourselves. More lively than reminiscences in cultural knowledge is the anticipatory feeling of the European visitor that, once in Germany, he will feel nostalgia [*Heimweh*] for Japan.[32]

Risky as such language is, impossible even as it may seem it yet reflects the *almost paradoxical disappearance of difference in a context of its strongest presence*.

Tomlin's version of this paradox, "if it be a paradox," is that "this communal solidarity, this slightly introverted form of society, does not alienate the foreigner but attracts him."[33] Not every foreigner of course, and foreign women less so than men. In any case, the hoary question whether Japanese culture has changed but very slowly or been transformed radically under the "regular impact of culture contact—from ancient times to the present,"[34] whether there are hard and fast distinctions between authentic Japan and westernized Japan, receives Tomlin's again only seemingly paradoxical answer: "there has never been an authentic Japan which was not also a Japan avid to assimilate outside influence. That *is* the authentic Japan."[35] Periods of apparently total isolation (and this for more than 200 years under the Tokugawas) or, on the contrary, of sweeping westernization (immediately after the Tokugawas in the Meiji period) are then just extreme swings of the pendulum.

There is hardly a way to distinguish Japanese "culture" from "imports," "influences," "invasions," and the like. Chinese writing, art, ar-

chitecture, law, and administration since the fourth century, Indian Buddhism (in a time when this "religion" had declined both in India and in China), European thought and science from the early eighteenth century onward,[36] the wholesale "westernization" during the Meiji period, have established Japan as a test case and, indeed, continuous challenge for cultural theory and its semantics. Assertions of its radical otherness are encountered as frequently as discoveries of a basic commonalty with at least parts of the West (or, worse, the western and particularly the German "psyche"). There is, then, no cogent way to couch *cultural comparisons in the framework of core and difference*. It has been said, almost paradoxically again, that the feudal, isolationist Tokugawa regime from the early seventeenth far into the nineteenth century (when Perry's "black ships" finally broke that "isolation," which, according to Keene, had not been isolationist after all), "was in fact a protomodern society." "Feudal values, although they were definitely not the product of cultural contact with Europe, made it possible for Japan to accommodate the West and allowed the nation to begin the process of modernization quickly."[37] Cultural comparison thus runs into an impasse, once it tries, in its usual way, to conceptualize what may appear as both radical otherness and vanishing difference. Christopher speaks about subtle transformations in a process of "absorption" hard to generalize about. He sees that process at work even in the Japanese language. There is no consensus among linguists whether Japanese belongs to any of the established groups of languages (the most frequently made classification is with the Altaic languages, but even in that context Japanese seems remote). Yet this language has not only adopted a writing system totally alien to its own linguistic structure but also taken over massive numbers of foreign, particularly English, words. These words, in their Japanese use, will frequently strike foreigners as absurd; yet their use can also be seen as "both logical and serviceable."[38] Lots of customs which appear thoroughly and purely Japanese, are, from school uniforms (from Germany) to Pachinko (a type of gambling probably from the U.S.), not "originally" Japanese at all.

Although the expression sounds plausible, it is still hard to see, then, what it could mean that the Japanese today are very comfortable with western lifestyles and cultural practice (especially in the arts) and yet are so "at one remove."[39] As the recording of an impression, the statement appears irresistible. It may be true that, because they "borrowed" so much over the centuries, the Japanese are afraid of losing their cultural identity. But if this has provoked frantic efforts to define cultural identity, it certainly has not blessed these efforts with much success. There may be a comparatively high *ethnic* unity amongst the Japanese. There may exist, to be sure, a peculiar system of the individual's social obligations. But all this may be a persevering *analogy* to the role of *cultural rules* which I have attributed to a pre-nineteenth-century Europe. They need not, that is, *define* the culture, but provide a regularizing, normalizing frame for its *unpredictable, transitory production*. The Japanese may feel, "however inchoately, a great sense of commonalty." Depending on the way we see this, however, the fact that, for instance, Japanese who appear in commercials, "both live and animated, tend to have distinctly more Caucasian features than the general run of Japanese do,"[40] may appear both paradoxical, curious, or self-evident.

One can, of course, try and explain all this. The point, however, is, and is supposed to remain, that the comparative enumeration of cultural characteristics *runs into deep trouble exactly when it seems to encounter its greatest chances*. Thus, while it may be true that "few people are as fundamentally dissimilar as the Japanese and the Jews," this presupposes a notion of cultural "entity" very hard to sustain. The stronger the case for the assertion appears, the more it takes on aspects of national and cultural jokes altogether too familiar. Ben-Dasan asserts that "to Jews, the Japanese willingness to obey or disobey laws as circumstances and convenience dictate is basically unintelligible." On the other hand, "the Japanese regard the complicated regulations governing the lives of orthodox Jews as excessively strict and almost ludicrous in their irrelevance to what the Japanese consider the basic human experience."[41] This is uncomfortably close to Sladen's quip that it is "no use keeping the law in Japan. If a policeman wishes to lock a man up, he does not wait for him to be guilty, so what does it matter. The Japanese do not keep the law, they obey the police."[42] But it also neglects a massive body of opinion, both Japanese and western, that life in Japan is heavily regulated in analogous, if not identical, ways. Its rules can certainly be laid in the form of binding lawlike propositions. At the same time, of course, the laws of the legal system proper may be phrased in such a way as to allow for their continuous reinterpretation and reapplication under changing circumstances.[43] But then, similar assertions might be made with respect to the behavioral interpretation of Jewish laws which have to serve under highly different circumstances indeed. Also, on a different but probably fundamental level, the role of the mother in delineating a scope for social but also cultural behavior may be fairly similar in Jewish and Japanese culture. The definition of Japanese culture (and by

implication others) looks, then, at its best as a witty and pseudo-naive *game* (which the Japanese in particular seem to indulge in with zest), or, worse, as a sadly serious and therefore fallacious enterprise.[44]

The Indeterminateness of Culture and Hypothetical Rereferentializations

Cultures—apart from everyday routines—may be said to be the invention, manufacture, and partial implementation of "fictitious" (in Bentham's sense) cores and differences under pressure. Cultural discourse and theory are products of their latter-day institutionalization. They are, as it were by definition, the overstatement of the fictions under, again, softer and harder forms of pressure. This seems to hold in particular for those "informations" on culture which we obtain from members of a particular culture itself. Statements may be homogeneous to the point of tautology, or contradictory to the point of disintegration. Japanese academic colleagues in particular seem to like to play the game both ways. The result—a literal quote—can be seen in the subtitle of this article. There is no way of determining the status of that statement. It may be the logical corollary of the famous "relativism" often attributed to the Japanese, of their reluctance to commit themselves to well-defined positions, their dread of confrontation and distaste for explicit statement[45]—but also just their playful enactment. It may testify to a sense of how easily the appearance of situations, therefore the perspectives and feelings attached to them, and consequently the situations themselves can change. In a reflexive-reflective mood, we may also become aware, though, that questioning as a form of ascertaining an illusionary givenness may drive the notion of cultural coherence and consistency, which it is supposed to establish, to disintegration.

However that may be: The impression that Japanese culture is radically different retains an almost rocklike solidity. Frustrating behavioral deadlocks in trivial or complex situations form part and parcel of the cultural experience of both Japanese and *gai(koku)jin* (foreigner, outsider). This may start with the "meaning" of smiles (a notorious example). And it may mar intellectual "exchange." As often as not, westerners may have the feeling that there is nothing to exchange because Japanese *curiosity*—a kind of mythical cultural joker—eagerly absorbs everything and gives back nothing. Therefore the notion that Japanese culture is like a black hole, devouring everything, giving back nothing in return, has gained ground.[46] There is reason to suspect that whole discursive fields like the humanities, seemingly existing in more or less identical forms in Japan and in the West, stand in totally different relations to the domains of cultural or economic behavior. Finally, the categorizations provided by the language are so different that analogous cultural differences seem to ensue by necessity.

Yet the eagerness with which people tend to capitalize on the appearance of difference should give us pause. A gap, and a big one, between western and Japanese cultures certainly exists. But on which levels does it become amenable to theory, does it orient emotions and cognition, does it impose itself on the description of experience? I choose to revert heuristically to theories of *cultural origins* in order to circumnavigate—perhaps—the theoretical deadlock. Origin theories of course do not lend themselves automatically to the analysis of modern cultures. But in some of them there seem to reside impulses that might push the problem one step ahead. Jonathan Z. Smith, in a debate with Walter Burkert and René Girard on "violent" origins of cultures, has said that "the disintegration of culture began with culture itself."[47] Cultures, from that perspective, acquire a hypothetical to fictitious origin and basis when, for whichever reasons (conflicts, catastrophes, rivalries . . .), claims and assertions of identity and difference seem to be called for. That origin *may* lie in literal violence of which quite a lot certainly remains. We are not obliged, however, to adopt (Burkertian, Girardian . . .) notions of "real" violence. In a generalized sense, assertions of identity and difference are violent, or as Edgar Morin might put it, quasi-hysterical overreactions.[48] These are transformed into provisional practices and notions of culture in situations of real or imagined behavioral pressure. Indeed, Girard's theory of original violence and scapegoating—the scapegoat being in some "extraordinary" way "different"—can be taken as a version of *claims of difference in the absence of its givenness*. There may not have been, as Renato Rosaldo warns us, that original social chaos, disorganization, disruption, disturbance which provokes scapegoating as the imposition of radical difference for Girard.[49] But it is hard to visualize "culture contacts" without forms of pressure through which confusedly perceived "differences" are pushed into fictitious clarity. And I would like to follow Burkert in his assumption that elementary and seemingly highly distinctive forms of any culture, its rituals, are not so much "expressions" of some cultural core. They are rather, to some extent, institutionalized fictions invested with "as-if" qualities to fill out, by mythical designations, the threat of cultural void. From there, culturally distinctive but basically unstable religions derive—not the other way around, where one would derive the necessity of ritual as an illustration or enact-

ment of dogma.[50] Thus, if institutions are constructed to allow an always threatened cultural continuity to come into existence, Smith rightly questions "whether there are institutions that don't wink at all." He gives the example of the Ainu (taken to be the aborigines of Japan) who, with respect to a bear ritual, say "they actually nurse the bear. Now, surely they say yes, and surely they say no."[51]

A referentializing type of cultural description has come to dominate, it seems, because we tend to forget that cultural institutions can only be taken with a wink. But, on the other hand, even if we or cultural institutions wink at our-/themselves, fictitious and real gaps and differences do not simply vanish. A *decisionistic logic of cultural distinctions* will have to allow for *selective and hypothetical rereferentializations*. There is no discourse, though, to tell us beforehand when and how, and on which levels of our cognitive and psychic apparatus, of social or economic organization, distinctions are then made and imposed. Japanese culture, baffling and enigmatic once one tries to nail it down with descriptive consistency, may be taken as perhaps a very clear example of the *simultaneity of the absent* and the *fabricated*, the assiduously, studiously *cherished cultural core*.

I would assume, without holding strong beliefs on the matter, that there are explanatory plausibilities that may account for the types of pressure responsible for the Japanese situation. We may talk about a "natural" isolation of the islands (which went so far that for a long time even the northern island of Hokkaido was almost ignored), reinforced by an unusual absence of foreign wars over long periods.[52] This may have prompted feelings of both domestic, psychosocial security and protectiveness, anxiety with respect to the foreign cultures somewhere "out there," both an overemphasis of self-definition (*Nihonron*, *seishin*, the Japanese spirit) as well as its apparent counterpart, that insatiable curiousity—a curiosity so overriding so as to brush aside western concerns of consistency (the glaring example here being the coexistence and copractice of Shintoism, Buddhism, Christianity, and possibly more). Different standards of consistency may indeed have encouraged Japanese "philosophical" comparative studies in the relations between climate, culture, and rationality. Discredited as such approaches may have been after the eighteenth century in the West, they still seem to "teach" a lot not just about differences between the East and West, but for instance between the cultures of northern and southern Europe itself. Ben-Dasan invokes the seasonally regular pressures of a campaign-style agriculture based on rice in order to "understand" the Japanese sense of precise timing and long-term planning. With its concomitant

work ethic (supported from other sources as well), this may go a long way to explain Japanese *economic* success *culturally*.[53]

We might talk of the perennial population pressures in Japan, thus explaining what looks like a culture of conformity, duty, and shame—but also a culture of social lubrification where "natural" feelings are important, although rarely "expressed" (and where, therefore, the relations between encoding and existence may take on very different forms).

Whatever we may think of that type of explanation, the very *texts of Japanese culture*, in which self-description is provoked by the voluntary or enforced observation of the other, formulate the *complementarity of radical otherness and vanishing difference* quite clearly. I am not able, unfortunately, to explore this with respect to what remains perhaps the most striking example of a *Japanese use of otherness in the service of identity*: writing. Pressures to introduce writing made the Japanese turn to the Chinese writing system. This would have been a highly unlikely move in any functional linguistic or cultural system. In terms of grammar, word formation, and so on, Chinese and Japanese are utterly dissimilar. A blending, then, occurred that would be "comparable to the result you might get if you decided to write English in Arabic script and to create compound words in spoken English by jamming together three or four syllables from medieval Arabic." For each of the roughly 1800 *kanji* (much reduced from the tens of thousands that exist theoretically) still in use, multiple pronunciations have to be learned, thus handling both the Chinese and Japanese words and syllables for which they are used. To make the situation stranger, the Chinese system, though extremely work-intensive, does not suffice. The Japanese use two more phonetic scripts of 48 symbols each dealing with inflections and connectives which do not exist in Chinese, as well as foreign names and places. From a Japanese point of view, Chinese writing ought to have represented extreme otherness. Yet it was and continues to be used for "genuinely" Japanese purposes. Given the huge amount of time and energy to be invested, it might be preserved (also, if not exclusively) for the reason that it "feeds the cherished Japanese sense of belonging to a unique and impenetrable culture."[54]

Keene has printed excerpts from the writings of Honda Toshiaki (1744–1821) in which Honda complains about, among other things, the uselessness of Japanese writing, appropriate only for "idle and elegant pursuits," not for the "recording of facts and opinions."[55] But Honda's plea for western writing may be, again, nothing more than another effort to put difference to the service of an opaque, centerless identity. Keene notes

somewhat disapprovingly that Honda's admiration for the West "was always tempered by his fear that the foreigners might learn too much about Japan, and he showed himself more partial to isolationism than we would expect of so progressive a man."[56] Reading Keene's book about the Japanese "discovery" of Europe from 1720 to 1830, one is struck, above all, by the impression that, whatever the so-called cultural realities of Europe and Japan might have been, the pressures they exercised led to the *interchangeability* of "imitation" and "isolation" (i.e., identity) for Japanese culture itself.[57]

It does not help much, I think, to try and apply the jargon of systems theory to that situation—tempted as we may be to enjoy the identity and difference of identity and difference. Comparisons, however, do form part of deeply anchored intuitions. Their rephrasing, then, in terms of hypothetical rereferentializations of cultural openness under pressure may not be totally inappropriate. It is intended not only to make assertions of identity and difference more difficult, if not impossible (at least in their usual form). It should also signal caution with respect to talk about a global world culture, that degenerate form of what in former times was labeled cosmopolitanism. Sladen's remark of 1903—that Japan had become more western than the West itself, an impression certainly shared by many people strolling through the fashionable quarters of Tokyo today—is, in several senses, both true and false. In any case, it is deceptive because it remains chained to the seemingly simple point of view of the "observer." That concept may have been sanctioned by cultural anthropology and reinforced by systems theory. It may possess some epistemological and even "natural" plausibility. Still, it is a partly unfortunate concept. It distracts from the question to what extent cultures should be seen not only as objects of established descriptive or observational habits, but as loosely organized spaces for the negotiation of behavior and, by extension, of ranges of cognitive and affective orientation. For that, concepts of *cultural styles* might do better than latent or open notions of cultural meanings out there to be translated in situations of cultural contact. The negotiation of styles will not produce structures of meaning, but semipermanent, semitransitory patterns. Patterns certainly are potentials for meaning. But the amount of consistency meanings-in-situations may acquire to justify ordinary notions of culture is a matter for case studies. Cultural practices in Japan *may* provide examples for that, too.

J. D. Hodgson, former U.S. ambassador to Japan, has said: "It has been my experience that if you try to accommodate the Japanese in matters of style, they will try to accommodate you in matters of substance."[58] Cultural styles may be regarded as the conceptual successors to the *formalism* of cultural rules which—to risk a last rereferentialization—the West seems to have given up in favor of depth-interpretations of cultural meanings and values. Japanese cultural styles, on the other hand, might be seen as the negotiation, embodiment, as the implicit, therefore successful, preservation of norms.

Remarks on the Foreign (Strange) as a Figure of Cultural Ambivalence

Renate Lachmann

Cultural Mechanism: The Transformations of the Foreign/Strange

Cultural semiotics operates with an inventory of categories and concepts for the analysis of cultural processes that is meant to describe totally the techniques of self-interpretation and self-modeling (transformation, translation, transcoding) by which a culture attempts to stabilize itself. Such categories are *self-description*; *cultural metalanguage* or *metatext*; *cultural grammar*; *dynamic mechanism*. Among these the concept of a *semantic binarism* of the "own" (the native) and the "other" (the foreign, strange or alien) seems to be the most interesting for the purpose of this essay. The typology of culture that Jurij Lotman proposes starts out with the cardinal question "what does 'to have meaning' mean?"[1] and is dependent on studies analyzing the role of the text and the role of signs in individual cultures or in individual stages of a culture's development. The sign type (text type) preferred at a given time becomes the parameter for describing culture. Such a notion of culture (understood as a unified text governed by a unified code and as the sum total of all texts governed by such codes) develops specific modes of producing meaning. In general terms, it is thus necessary to ask how a culture functioning as a semiotic system relates to the sign and to semioticity. This relation to sign and semioticity is reflected, on the one hand, in the "self-assessment" (*samoocenka*) of a culture, in its descriptive system—that is, in the grammars it develops about itself—and, on the other, in the way the texts produced by the culture or relevant to it are evaluated with regard to their functionality. The questions regarding the character of the sign type and the text type are

related, for both questions are concerned with the problem of "semioticity" (*znakovost'*).

Lotman's typological models are constructed as dichotomies. The oppositivity of the cultural codes that he reconstructs and that can define both the diachrony and the synchrony of a culture is founded on the following criteria: How a culture models its relationship to extraculture; which role a culture ascribes to texts; and how a culture ascribes value to signs.[2]

To the extent a culture recognizes or denies semioticity, it draws a boundary line between itself and extraculture, which it defines either as anticulture (thus having a negative semioticity) or as nonculture (having no semioticity whatsoever). Cultural mechanism—that is, the displacement of one cultural type by another—takes place according to the same principle. Thus, in Lotman's concept, cultural dynamism reveals itself as based on the desemiotization of areas that have been accorded semioticity in the preceding stage of a culture and in the semiotization of new areas. The basic dichotomy that fuels this dynamic process is that between the "own" and the "other."

The Russian language has at its disposal a variety of etymologically akin expressions (with proliferating connotations) that represent the semantic field of the "other":

other = *drugoj*; *drug* = friend
strange (unfamiliar) = *strannyj*; *strana* = country (the "other" country); *čužoj*
foreign = *inostrannyj, čužoj*
peculiar = *čudnoj*
marvelous (miraculous) = *čudesnyj*
monstrous = *čudoviščnyj*
wild = *dikij* (with the connotations of wild and strange; compare German *wildfremd*)

From *strannyj* is derived *strannik* or "wanderer." A *strannik* deliberately leaves his or her social conditions, "leaves culture." One could term this an intracultural migration in which a person rejects his or her "own" system and institutionalized life in search of an asystemic authenticity and immediacy. This paradigm of intracultural self-exclusion (a prominent example is the moribund Tolstoy) is tolerated from the dominant culture's point of view. This is especially true of the fool in Christo (*jurodivyj*).

Viktor Šklovskij coined *ostranenie*, his term of estrangement (defamiliarization), from *strannyj*.

The philosophical term for alienation is *otčuždenie*, which derives from *čuždyj* (in German estrangement and alienation are closely linked etymologically: *Verfremdung/Entfremdung*).

The stranger (foreigner), *čužoj*, has an intra- and extracultural double status insofar as he or she either belongs to another country (the actual foreigner, who at the same time may be the enemy) or to the same culture. The foreigner within culture appears to be the representative of the otherworldly (as sorcerer, prophet, or shaman); he or she functions as the "other" of culture. Intracultural reactions to both—fear and defensiveness toward the "foreign" foreigner and respect and veneration toward the "native" foreigner—keep changing since the attributes of both phenomena either fuse or interchange: the sorcerer becomes an enemy; the foreigner a sorcerer. Identification of the concept of the other world as foreign country with that of the otherworldly, the beyond, makes the enemy connote the devil (*vrag*, cf. Latin *inimicus*). The axiology of "own" and "foreign" itself is subject to radical semantic shifts. "Foreign" takes on the attribute of true culture, "own" or "native" that of the precultural. This is especially true of the Kievan Rus after Christianization. The collision of native Russian (pre-) culture, its paganism, with Byzantine orthodoxy creates a generative pattern of antagonistic duality that seems to be the very matrix of Russian culture throughout the centuries. Double culture as an intracultural split paradigm is obviously a transformation of the dichotomy culture/extraculture.

In other words, Russia's contact/conflict with three foreign domains in the course of its history—Byzantium, Asia (Tartars, Mongols, later Siberia), and the West—is formally reflected within culture in such dualisms as unofficial/official, pagan/Christian, old believers/reformers, Slavophils/westernizers, political or religious orthodox thinkers/dissidents, and so on.

As far as the binarism especially of pagan and Christian is concerned, processes of mutual amalgamation (transcoding) and axiological shifts within the hierarchy of social and religious values take place in the course of which the "other" is incorporated and adopts the status of the "own." It must be noted that the pagan, as the representative of the intracultural foreign in this binary structure, axiologically fuses with alien religions (Islam and Catholicism, and, after the fall of Constantinople, even with Greek Orthodoxy), the priestly representatives of which are considered heretics. In this case, the pagan has a negative index. The positive evaluation of pagan as progressive, western, and enlightened leads to peculiar

forms of social behavior, such as the institution of serf harems established by Russian landowners in the eighteenth century.

From these constant axiological shifts and amalgamations of social forms and the interpretive discourses they engender ensues a radical destabilization of the cultural system as a whole. The dominant official culture reacts to its refraction (dismemberment) by introducing unifying concepts directed in the first place toward its own communicative system. The implementation of these concepts is effected by adopting a foreign communicative grammar: western rhetoric. As a consequence, all dissident/dissenting discourses are excluded and repressed. In order to delineate this process, the following digression might be useful.

Mikhail Bakhtin introduced the opposition between *edinyj jazyk* and *raznorečie*[3] to describe the fierce competition that may be observed (within a cultural realm gravitating towards homogeneity) between an official, legalized, unified language and the sum total of noncanonized languages. This opposition can be invoked to define the dynamics of the formation and alternation of norms in language and communication processes. It should be noted that the unification of a language, which indeed implies the unification of the entire communication permitted by it, represents the fundamental accomplishment of a cultural system. This unification may be conceived of as a process resulting in the evolution of definite norms regulating language; in this process, authorities are developed that articulate these norms. We may denote as such authorities the rhetorical and stylistic doctrines that emerge as forces working toward the formulation of norms in a cultural system oriented toward the unification of its verbal media. Such forces are activated in order to oppose those "decentralizing" and "centrifugal" forces of the languages that resist unification and canonization. Yet *raznorečie* always means *raznokul'tur'e* as well (that is, a multiplicity of coexisting cultures not yet brought into accord), and consequently the central danger to a culture in the process of consolidation. On the other hand, *ustanovka na edinuju kul'turu* ("orientation toward a single culture") signifies *ustanovka na edinyj jazyk* ("orientation toward a single language").

The tendency toward the unification of language and culture designates a particular state in the semiotic mechanism of a culture, which Lotman defines as the increase of internal "monosemy," or as the "intensification of homeostatic tendencies."[4] It is directed against the augmentation of ambivalence, which in turn means a certain quality of a system that Lotman terms "incomplete orderedness." At the same time, this internal and in-

complete orderedness of the system must be understood as providing the possibility for developing a dynamic that benefits from the "centrifugal" tendencies and for directing the system toward a state of "softening," in other words, to *raznokultur'e*.

In the attempt to decrease the polysemy, a culture develops mechanisms for description—or, more precisely, for self-description—serving monosemy and orderedness. This polysemy-decreasing process implies, at the same time, a reduction of the system's "informationality"; the attempt to bring about total orderedness ultimately terminates in "ossification."

Rhetoric (and stylistics) can assume a crucial function in such processes, namely, in affirming the movement toward a unified language. In order to be able to fulfill its functions, rhetoric must acknowledge all the extralinguistic social, aesthetic, and other values developed by the system; these are the values that have led both to the specific quality of a given concrete unified language and to its differentiation into styles and sublanguages, and that have determined the permissibility or impermissibility of communication forms. However, it is rhetoric that first actually articulates such values.

In the process by which a culture organizes or reorganizes itself, the rhetorical text actually achieves the status of a metatext in the form of a textbook or a treatise, and thus unquestionably is placed on the same level as those texts through which a cultural system attempts to describe itself.

Rhetoric, understood as a form of self-description of a cultural system (specifically, of its linguistic and communication systems), exercises a force that works toward both the self-organization of that system and its definite structuring as a semiotic whole. When a culture creates or adopts such metatexts as rhetoric in order to describe and organize itself, such an activity implies a normative claim with regard to the actual structuring—or the actual process of structuring—of the given culture.[5]

During the reign of Peter the Great, and in accordance with his reforms, western rhetoric adopts the status of an officialized communicative system and becomes a mighty and oppressive tool of communicative discipline. Deviating—dissenting—discourses are eliminated, in particular those considered to be unenlightened and schismatic.

Where the system undergoes a centripetal reorganization on the one hand, it opens to western culture on the other. The acceptance of the "foreign," however, is subject to a strict control: The foreigners have to carry out special tasks, are assigned definite functions, and live in separate communities. Foreign social habits are dictated; those who reject them (the representatives of old Russia) are persecuted or eliminated. Thus, with the Petrine reforms, the dualistic pattern gains a dramatic dimension. The reformer, Peter I, becomes himself a cultural symbol of ambivalence: creator of a new Russia *and* destroyer of the old, a god of enlightenment and progress *and* the devil himself, and so on. What happens is that the canalized reception of the "foreign" foreign is fatally doubled by the inverse process concerning the "own" foreign.

The concept of a clear-cut dichotomy as a generator of patterns for intra- and extracultural interpretation (translation) of the foreign with respect to the own rules out those (discultural elements) that are not subject to a dichotomous control.

Literature seems to assume this conceptual blank by interrogating and crossing out the well-balanced dichotomy concept and by converting/subverting the axiologies at its disposal.

Literature of the Fantastic: The Foreign/Strange as *Phantasma*

The collapse of rhetoric as a totalizing system allows excluded, "forgotten" discourses to reappear: The discourses of folklore, superstition, and the supernatural; the discourses of the old believers, the sectarians, the heretics, and so on. This collapsing process culminates in the rise of the romantic literature of the fantastic, the mise en scène of the "other" of culture. What is crucial in this respect is the double function adopted by the literature of the fantastic: the function of a discourse (textual) and the function of conceptualization (metatextual).

The literature of the fantastic pursues not only the project of creating alternative worlds (the supernatural, the marvelous, the adventurous) but, as Rosemary Jackson puts it in her study *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, it "characteristically attempts to compensate for a lack resulting from cultural constraints; it is a literature of desire, which seeks that which is experienced as absence and loss." And it "traces the unsaid and the unseen of culture: that which has been silenced, made invisible, covered over and made 'absent.'" Its excursion into the disorder or counterorder of extraculture "can only begin from a base within the dominant cultural order." "The literary fantastic is a telling index of the limits of that order. Its introduction of the 'unreal' is set against the category of the 'real'—a category which the fantastic interrogates by its difference."[6] Insofar as the real can be interpreted as both the presence of a functioning culture and the representation of the axiological model that controls its mechanism, the introduction of the other (the forgotten, repressed, unfamiliar, unseen) as an absence displaces its categories of presence and representation.

Fantasy could be termed the heretic version not only of the concepts of reality but also of fiction itself. It does not submit to the rules of fictional discourse a cultural system establishes or tolerates; it transgresses the exigencies of the mimetic grammar (otherness does not appear to be subject to mimesis); it disfigures the categories of time and space (fantastic chronotope) and causality. It discards and subverts the validity of fundamental aesthetic categories such as appropriateness (decorum, aptum). Furthermore, the counter- or rather crypto-grammar of the fantastic takes refuge in wild procedures of semiotic excess (hypertrophy) and extravagance (the ornamental, the arabesque, and the grotesque). Its plots abound in escalation, culmination, disruption, exorbitant happening and actions (the marvelous, the enigma, the adventure, murder, incest, metamorphosis, return of the dead). Its protagonists seem to be constantly troubled by eccentric states of mind (hallucination, anguish, fever dream, nightmare, fatal curiosity) and to be forced to face ghosts, monsters, lunatics, the return of the dead, and the horrible family secret. They become acquainted with parascience such as alchemy or esoteric knowledge and perform nonorthodox religious rituals (sorcery, etc.).

William Irwin, in *The Game of the Impossible: A Rhetoric of Fantasy*, defines fantasy as "a story based on and controlled by an overt violation of what is generally accepted as possibility; it is a narrative result of transforming the condition contrary to fact into 'fact' itself." However, the subversive function that ensues from such a violation of dominant assumptions and the overturning of rules of artistic representation can be associated already with one of the roots of the literary fantastic, which Bakhtin, in his study *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, considers to be the Menippean satire. His characterization of this genre, in the tradition of which he sees fantasists like Hoffmann, Dostoevsky, Gogol, Poe, Jean Paul, and others, might be helpful to sketch out the problem in question.

> Characteristic of the Menippea [the most representative works of this syncretistic genre, in Bakhtin's view, were fictions such as Petronius's *Satyricon*, Apuleius's *Metamorphosis* and Lucian's *Strange Story*] are violations of the generally accepted, ordinary course of events and of the established norms of behavior and etiquette, including the verbal. Scandals and eccentricities destroy the epical and tragical integrity of the world, they form a breach in the stable, normal course of human affairs and events and free human behavior from predetermining norms and motivations.[7]

The Menippea mixed this world with the underworld and upperworld, upset time order, "quoted" dialogues with the dead, allowed for states of hallucination, dream, insanity, metamorphosis, and so on. Both, the Menippea and the textual transposition of this postmythical and postritualistic communal practice of carnival,[8] inform a mode of writing which, as an analogon (and double) to that of the fantastic, can be termed carnivalesque. Yet in spite of the common features both modes of writing share, there is a crucial difference to be noted. Since hypertrophy, the grotesque, exaggeration, transgression, eccentricity, uncontrollable semantic shifts, and the toppling of hierarchies and axiologies are aimed at an interaction with the existing culture (conceived of as the official), it is not primarily absence or the other with which the carnivalesque mode of writing is concerned. It rather ludistically comes to terms with the "other," "strange" or "foreign," conceptualizing it neither as a mysterious nor as a threatening force, but treating it as a mask or converting it into parodic and grotesque figurations.

The "other," which the fantastic conceptualizes, has an ambivalent status: it appears to be extracultural/cultural; repressed/returning. It reports an absence and simultaneously insists on its presence. The fantastic as the impossible, antirational, and unreal cannot exist (despite its celebration of representational or fictional misrule, its commitment to disintegration and its utopism) independently of that world of the real, possible, rational which it seems to conceive as inescapably monosemic. In Jackson's formulation, the fantastic "exists in a parasitical or a symbiotic relation to the real."[9] The decomposition and recombination of real elements into arbitrary, nonexistent forms—an exercise comparable to that of dream-work—is threatening and disturbing not only because of the alternatives it proposes but because, as alternatives, these forms point to an occluded, covered memory (the unconscious of culture). The fantastic confronts culture with its oblivion.

All procedures of the mise en scène of the other (disproportioning, disfiguration, dislocation, dismemberment, disguising, and so on) can be reduced to the basic formal and conceptual device of *estrangement*. This, again, is an ambivalent, double-edged device which veils in order to unveil, shadows in order to uncover/rediscover. Its function is, in rendering strange and defamiliarizing conventionalized social and art structures, to trace the unseen, impalpable, and unperceivable. Its effect culminates in cognitive and aesthetic shock.

In order to highlight the disturbing and shocking effect the fantastic mode of writing exerted even on romantic readers/writers, it may suffice to quote some critical terms from Walter Scott's review of E. T. A. Hoffmann's fantasies (in particular *The Sandman*). Referring to Hoffmann's fancy, which he terms "wild" in contradistinction to a "moderate imag-

ination," Scott foregrounds such features as "mental derangement," a "morbid degree of acuteness," an "ill-regulated tendency to the terrible and distressing," the "violation of probability and even possibility of a capricious, eccentric genius," "oddity and bizarrerie." Against the backdrop of "the severity of the English taste," Scott delineates the "attachment of the Germans to the mysterious" which has "invented another species of composition, which, perhaps, could hardly have made its way in any other country or language." This may be called, as he suggests, the "fantastic mode of writing"

> in which the most wild and unbounded license is given to an irregular fancy, and all species of combination, however ludicrous, however shocking, are attempted and executed without scruple. In the other modes of treating the supernatural, even that mystic region is subjected to some laws, however slight; and fancy, in wandering through it, is regulated by some probabilities in the wildest flight. Not so in the fantastic style of composition, which has no restraint save that which it may ultimately find in the exhausted imagination of the author. This style bears the same proportion to the more regular romance, whether ludicrous or serious, which "farce" or rather "pantomime", maintained to "tragedy" and "comedy". Sudden transformations are introduced of the most extraordinary kind, and wrought by the most inadequate means; no attempt is made to soften their absurdity, or to reconcile their inconsistencies.[10]

Expressions such as "overexcited fancy" and its association with being on the verge "of actual insanity," the interrelation between fancy and the lack of right reason or sober truth, between fancy and absurdity, as well as Scott's comment on the "inspirations of Hoffmann" to "resemble the ideas produced by the immoderate use of opium"[11] suggest that in this mode of writing we can discern not only the return of repressed discourses but also the return of a repressed human faculty: *phantasia*. Phantasia accompanied by *mania* (*furor*) appears to be the wild counterpart of the sober and moderate operations of ordinary imagination.

It should be pointed out that Scott's negative concept of fantasy as excentricity and "mental derangement" set against the notion of accepted imaginative creativity encompasses all the attributes the analysis and theory of the fantastic have hitherto listed; furthermore, it anticipates the affinities of fantasy to the unconscious, a crucial topic in the psychoanalytical approach to this mode of writing.

And here again it is the binary figure of the unreal/real, absent/present, foreign/native, other/self-identical that lends itself to interpreting the gap (or the interplay) between fantastic transgressiveness and controlled fictional license. On the representational level, this interpretive figure culminates in the antagonism of *phantasma*/true image. Every image as a complex of signs is inscribed with an opposing sign, the *simulacrum*, a false or a dissimulating sign. By presenting the similar as potentially dissimilar, the simulacrum deprives the sign of the semantic legitimation stabilizing it. Thus, the simulacrum itself appears to be a split or a double sign (absent/present, false/true, invisible/visible, nonreferential/referential). Simulacrum is a concept documented in the classical rhetorical tradition ("Rhetorica ad Herennium," Cicero, Quintilian) which, together with *imago* and *effigies*, translates the Aristotelian concepts of *phantasma* and *eikon*; it participates in connotations that release both poles from the above-named opposition: simulacrum is both a true and a false image; it both refers to something and cancels that reference; it represents that which is absent and simultaneously disclaims it. By displaying its own falseness, the simulacrum always also questions its own position as representation; in other words, the image in this sense has its own touch of trompe l'oeil. (Compare the fata morgana phenomena in the literature of the fantastic: illusion, hallucination, and so on.)

The image of the other is, in the same sense, deceptive because it dissimulates that which is repressed, forgotten, or made absent by representing it in disguise or by rendering a disfigured and decomposed version of that which was or could have been a part of cultural experience. In Aristotle's treatise "On Memory and Recollection," the ambivalent representational status of the simulacrum is associated with the mnemonic dimension. The phantasma outlines an image for this absence, an image that attempts to fix and to conserve what is absent through similarity. Similarity itself, however, is characterized as a construct, an invention. The phantasma does not mean or denote what is to be remembered (what is absent) but simulates it (*similitudo* turns out to be *simulatio*). In this concept of inventing dissimilar similarities or simulacra, as resumed again by Quintilian, de-similarization is considered a *visio insana* which not only misses the object but renders it unrecognizable—that is, foreign or strange. The covert semantic affinity between the other as the repressed and forgotten and the other as the foreign and strange becomes overt in the transformation of the forgotten into a strange, mysterious, marvelous, or monstrous object, which seems to be the main topic of the literature of the fantastic. In other words, the other as phantasma adopts the function of the foreign/strange, and vice versa: the foreign/strange appears as the phantasma of otherness. That is why, in the fantastic mode of writing, most protagonists are depicted in their encounters with ghosts, specters, mon-

sters, corpses, and mysterious foreigners/strangers (strangers from without and those from within: sorcerers, witches, magicians, and sectarians).

Though some texts of the fantastic resort to hallucination, dream, and insanity as quasi-rationalistic explanations of the apparition of the strange, this is not only an index of motivation and legitimation of the fantastic reconciling it with the accepted rules of fiction but also an index of its undecidability (its inconceivability), its precarious status between representation and nonrepresentation. (The return of the repressed would be conceived of as return of something that has never taken place, as the hint at a void, at an absolute absence, or the absolute strange: the other.)

Some examples from Russian literature of the fantastic (romantic period) may illustrate both: the complicity between mystery and extraculture; and the constant transformation of that which is forgotten or repressed into the heterocultural—that is, the return of the own in the guise of the foreign and strange.

The plot of Pushkin's "Pique Dame" is centered around an enigma that remains unsolved. Esoteric knowledge communicated by the French magician and cabalist Chevalier de Saint Germain is introduced in the enlightened aristocratic society of nineteenth-century Russia. This knowledge refers to the secret of a card trick and is associated with the return of the dead (the apparition of the dead countess who, after having been abroad and in touch with Saint Germain had disclosed the secret) as well as with the animation of things (the pique dame on the playing card twinkles and thereby evokes the countess). The encounter with the mysterious causes the main protagonist Hermann (an enlightened man of German descent) to go mad and leave society.

Gogol's agent of evil force (sorcerer, devil) in "The Terrible Vengeance" is markedly characterized as the "foreigner," as someone who lived abroad, became acquainted with unknown customs and strange knowledge, someone who does not participate in the habits of the community of Ukranian Cossacks he returned to. (He dresses like a Muslim and eats like a Jew, and his religious ritual is pagan. Pagan too is the ritual of the Catholic Poles, the enemies of the Orthodox Cossacks in the same tale.) As the incarnation of cultural evil, the sorcerer tries to violate the incest taboo. As a consequence of the interference of evil, a whole Cossack family perishes. The narrative relates such a radical disturbance of order to past (forgotten) events which happened abroad.

In Gogol's "Notes of a Madman," insanity is enacted as a grotesque-comic exploration of the language of nonsense, or the discourse of the other of sense. The nonsensical man imagines (fancies) himself to be the king of a foreign country (Spain).

Nearly all Dostoevsky's main protagonists are cultural eccentrics. They do not represent the standard enlightened ideology but rather intellectual disorder, an asystemic subversion of the system; they appear to be heretics, sectarians, criminals, revolutionaries, fanatics, fantasts, fools in Christo. The disorder of eccentricity they engender ensues from their being schismatic persons within culture (for instance Raskol'nikov, whose name refers to *raskol*, which means schism). All of them are mysterious characters introduced as foreigners who spent some part of their lives abroad. In the course of Russian postromantic literature, we can trace the same function of the foreigner, the émigré, and those returning from Siberian deportation. (Siberia functions as extraculture in both senses named above: as nonculture [wilderness] and as anticulture, for it represents a threatening exile of alternative thought, revolutionary ideas, and so on. Siberian extraculture as the other world is associated with the otherworldly, as in Dostoevsky's *Notes from a Dead House*.)

The transformation of the forgotten or repressed into the heterocultural, however, does not take place within the confines of a clear-cut binary model but is acted out as a permanent transgression of the boundaries between present and absent, true and false, and it is this very figure of ambivalence that makes the fantastic mode of writing a conceptual force, disturbingly interfering with the models a culture produces in order to come to terms with its "other."

Pfeiffer: The Black Hole of Culture

1. Douglas Sladen, quoted in Jean-Pierre Lehmann, *The Image of Japan: From Feudal Isolation to World Power, 1850–1905* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), p. 20.

2. Sladen, *Queer Things About Japan* (1903; Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1968), pp. 123, 214, 16.

3. Bernice Z. Goldstein and Kyoko Tamura, *Japan and America: A Comparative Study in Language and Culture* (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1975), p. 174.

4. Brian Moeran, "Japan's Internal Cultural Debate," in Takie Sugiyama Lebra and William P. Lebra, eds., *Japanese Culture and Behavior: Selected Readings*, rev. ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986), pp. 62–79, 75.

5. Quoted in Lehmann, *The Image of Japan*, p. 102.

6. Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit, *Das Ende der Exotik: Zur japanischen Kultur und Gesellschaft der Gegenwart* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), chap. 3.

7. See Ichiro Kawasaki, *The Japanese Are Like That* (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1955), and *Japan Unmasked* (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1969), with 27 and 21 reprints respectively until 1987. See also the survey on the more recent literature on "transcultural understanding" in Hijiya-Kirschnereit, *Das Ende der Exotik*, pp. 139–221, particularly on "Japanese eurocentrism" and "European relativism," pp. 193–211.

8. See, for instance, Constantin von Barloewen and Kai Werhan-Mees, eds., *Japan und der Westen*, 3 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1986), and Ulrich Menzel, ed. *Im Schatten des Siegers: Japan*, 4 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1989).

9. Edgar Morin, *La Méthode 4: Les Idées: Leur habitat, leur vie, leurs moeurs, leur organisation* (Paris: Seuil, 1991), pp. 28–30.

10. Roland Barthes, *L'empire des signes* (Paris: Flammarion, 1970), p. 7.

11. Ibid., pp. 7–8.

12. Ibid., p. 42.

13. Ibid., pp. 71–72, 81.

14. Ibid., pp. 99, 104.

15. Ibid., pp. 110, 111.

16. See the interesting mixture of discourse types in Lafcadio Hearn, *Writings from Japan*, ed. Francis King (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984).

17. Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), p. 116.

18. Ibid., foreword, p. xi.

19. See ibid., pp. x, 1–3.

20. Ibid., p. 3.

21. See statements like "Men and women in Japan live largely in separate worlds" (*Das Ende der Exotik*, p. 102), the statistics of polls (p. 103), and the assumption that the numbers quoted will not have changed "significantly" since—an assumption hardly corroborated, for instance, by Walter Edwards, *Modern Japan Through Its Weddings: Gender, Person, and Society in Ritual Portrayal* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1989).

22. See Lehmann, *The Image of Japan*, chap. 1. See also the chapters on Yatoi (hired foreigners), their self-images, and the Yatoi images of the Japanese in Hazel Jones, *Live Machines: Hired Foreigners and Meiji Japan* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), on the one hand, and her almost statistically referential discourse on the other.

23. Gregor Paul, ed., *Klischee und Wirklichkeit japanischer Kultur: Beiträge zur Literatur und Philosophie in Japan und zum Japanbild in der deutschsprachigen Literatur: Festschrift für Toshinori Kanokogi* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1987).

24. Hijiya-Kirschnereit, *Das Ende der Exotik*; see chaps. 1 and 2 as contrasted with chap. 3.

25. Henry Norman, *The Real Japan: Studies in Contemporary Japanese Manners, Morals, Administration, and Politics* (1908; Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1973).

26. See Donald Keene, *The Japanese Discovery of Europe, 1720–1830*, rev. ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 137–38, 149–54.

27. See Harumi Befu, "Gift-Giving in a Modernizing Japan," *Japanese Culture and Behavior*, pp. 158–70, and Vincent R. S. Brandt, "Skiing Cross-Culturally," ibid., pp. 188–94.

28. For these topics see Takao Suzuki, "Language and Behavior in Japan: The Conceptualization of Personal Relations," and Yomishi Kasakara, "Fear of Eye-to-Eye Confrontation among Neurotic Patients in Japan," *Japanese Culture and Behavior*, pp. 142–57 and pp. 379–87.

29. See K. Ludwig Pfeiffer, "Kommunikationsformen als Lebensformen: Zum wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Ort eines Programms," in Pfeiffer and Michael Walter, eds., *Kommunikationsformen als Lebensformen* (Munich: Fink, 1990), pp. 15–36, 30.

30. Eric W. F. Tomlin, *The Last Country: My Years in Japan* (London: Faber and Faber, 1974), pp. 28–29.

31. Ibid., p. 16. The intricate question of postmodernism and Japan has been treated in various ways in Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian, eds., *Postmodernism and Japan* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1989), and K. Ludwig Pfeiffer, "Schwebende Referenzen und Verhaltenskultur: Japan und die Praxis permanenter Postmoderne," in Robert Weimann and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, eds., *Postmoderne—globale Differenz* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), pp. 344–53.

32. Gerhard Kaiser, *Bilder lesen: Studien zu Literatur und bildender Kunst* (Munich: Fink, 1980), pp. 172–73.

33. Tomlin, *The Last Country*, p. 29.

34. Ardath W. Burks, *Japan: A Postindustrial Power* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 27–28.

35. Tomlin, *The Last Country*, p. 156.

36. Cf. Burks, *Japan*, pp. 34–39, and Keene, *The Japanese Discovery*.

37. Burks, *Japan*, p. 77. Burks is presenting the "Reischauer line" of argument.

38. Robert C. Christopher, *The Japanese Mind: The Goliath Explained* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1987), pp. 48–49.

39. Ibid., p. 181.

40. Ibid., pp. 187, 181.

41. Isaiah Ben-Dasan, *The Japanese and the Jews*, trans. Richard L. Gage (New York: Weatherhill, 1972), pp. 3, 100.

42. Sladen, *Queer Things About Japan*, p. 49.

43. See Christopher, *The Japanese Mind*, pp. 167–69.

44. See in particular Ian Buruma, *A Japanese Mirror: Heroes and Villains of Japanese Culture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), pp. ix–xii and chap. 2; Hijiya-Kirschnereit, *Das Ende der Exotik*, p. 164.

45. Christopher, *The Japanese Mind*, p. 180; see also pp. 167–68.

46. See the use of this metaphor in Augustin Berque, "Das Verhältnis der Ökonomie zu Raum und Zeit in der japanischen Kultur," in *Japan und der Westen*, 1: 21–37, 32.

47. See Smith's remarks in Robert C. Hamerton-Kelly, ed., *Violent Origins: Walter Burkert, René Girard, and Jonathan Z. Smith on Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1987), p. 185.

48. Cf. Edgar Morin, *Le vif du sujet* (Paris: Seuil, 1969), pp. 143–45, and *Le paradigme perdu: La nature humaine* (Paris: Seuil, 1973), pp. 157–64.

49. See Rosaldo's "anthropological commentary" in *Violent Origins*, pp. 239–44, 241.

50. See Burkert, "The Problem of Ritual Killing," in *Violent Origins*, pp. 149–76, 154.

51. Hamerton-Kelly, ed., *Violent Origins*, pp. 186–87.

52. See Ben-Dasan, *The Japanese and the Jews*, pp. 12–19.

53. See ibid., pp. 48–49, and the very interesting book by Tetsuro Watsuji, *Climate and Culture: A Philosophical Study*, trans. Geoffrey Bownas (1961; Tokyo: Yushodo, 1988).

54. Christopher, *The Japanese Mind*, pp. 39–40, 42.

55. See Keene, *The Japanese Discovery*, pp. 207–8.

56. Ibid., p. 77.

57. See ibid., pp. 122–23, 160–61, 169–72.

58. Quoted in Christopher, *The Japanese Mind*, p. 174.

Miller: Border Crossings, Translating Theory

This essay was first published as Chapter 12 of J. Hillis Miller, *Topographies* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995).

1. "Travelling Theory," *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 226–47; the later lecture has been revised and published as "Travelling Theory Reconsidered," in *Critical Reconstructions: The Relationship of Fiction and Life*, ed. Robert M. Polhemus and Roger B. Henkle (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 251–63.

2. Paul de Man, "The Resistance to Theory," *The Resistance to Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 3. Mentioning de Man perhaps incurs a responsibility to say something about de Man's wartime writings. I have elsewhere said in some detail what I have to say about those writings. (See "Paul de Man's Wartime Writings" and "An Open Letter to Jon Wiener," *Theory Now and Then* [Durham: Duke University Press, 1991], pp. 359–84.) De Man's later writings, far from being continuous with the wartime writings, repeatedly attack just those positions—assumptions about literature and national identity—he held in the writings for *Le Soir*.

3. What is untranslatable is the contingent and intrinsically meaningless fact that in Italian changing a "u" to an "i" and making the "t" single rather than double changes "translate" into "traduce."

4. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminationen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1969), pp. 148–84; *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), pp. 217–51. My reference to this essay is an example of what I am discussing. Benjamin's essay has been widely influential in the United States. It is often cited and commented on. It has generated much new work in "cultural criticism." It may have been read more often in English than in the German original.

5. It is characteristic of our present cultural situation that this chapter in a preliminary form was sent by FAX halfway around the world, from Maine to Taipei, as soon as it was finished.

6. I have argued this in more detail in "The Work of Cultural Criticism in the Age of Digital Reproduction," in *Illustration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).

7. De Man, "The Resistance to Theory," p. 7.

8. Some preliminary sense of this tradition can be gained from the entry on Ruth and *Ruth Rabbah* (the aggadic Midrash on the Book of Ruth) in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*. See also the entry by Jack Sasson on Ruth in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 320–28; Yehoshua Bachrach, *Mother of Royalty: An Exposition of the Book of Ruth in the Light of the Sources*, trans. Leonard Oschry (Jerusalem: Feldheim, 1973); Edward F. Campbell, Jr., *Ruth: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*, Anchor Bible Series (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975); Jack M. Sasson, *Ruth: A New Translation with a Philological Commentary and a Formalist-Folklorist Interpretation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979); Evelyn Strouse and Bezalel Porten, "A Reading of Ruth," *Commentary* (Feb. 1979): 63–67; Shmuel Yerushalmi, *The Book of Ruth: MeAm Lo'ez*, trans. E. van Handel (New York: Maznaim, 1985); *The Book of Ruth; Megillas Ruth: A New Translation with Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and Rabbinic Sources*, trans. Meir Zlotowitz (New York: ArtScroll Tanach Studios, 1976). For an excellent discussion of some medieval Christian commentary on Ruth in relation to Chaucer's references to it, see Ellen E. Martin, "Chaucer's Ruth: An Exegetical Poetic in the Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women*," *Exemplaria* 3 (October 1991): 467–90.

9. I owe this knowledge to a conversation with Professor Moshe Greenberg of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and to a helpful letter sent by Dr. Esther Beith-Halahmi of Bar-Ilan University in Israel. I cite part of Dr. Beith-Halahmi's letter for the interest of its details.

> According to the only epigraphic "document" from Moab we have, the Stelle of Mesha King of Moab (2 Kings 3, Amos 2:1, and 2 Chronicles 20), which was found in Ancient Dibon by Samuel Klein in 1868 and whose fragments were bought by Charles Clermont-

Studies in English 82 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1934), pp. 5–6, considers Teufelsdröckh as a direct offspring of Jean Paul's humorous characters. See also Dennis Douglas, "Carlyle and the Jacobin Undercurrent in German Transcendentalism," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 80 (1976): 108.

13. This is equally reflected in Carlyle criticism, which privileges either the idealist or the empiricist component of this cross-cultural relationship. Tom Lloyd, "Towards Natural Supernaturalism: Carlyle and Dual Vision," *Philological Quarterly* 65 (1986): 479–94, gives a rather balanced view of this situation. See also Lloyd's essay, "Madame Roland and Schiller's *Aesthetics*: Carlyle's 'The French Revolution,'" *Prose Studies* 3 (1986): 39–53. Dibble indicates why the two components of Carlyle's thought are so intimately interlinked: "The conflict between 'English' realism and 'German' idealism . . . begins in earnest with Kant's first *Critique*, and it is there one sees most readily the rhetorical dilemma out of which *Sartor Resartus* came" ("Strategies of the Mental War," p. 90).

14. Harold Bloom, introduction to *Thomas Carlyle*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1986), sees Carlyle "in the tradition of Rabelais, Voltaire, and Swift, so far as his genre (or non-genre) can be determined, but he is less a satirist than the seer of a grotesque phantasmagoria" (p. 13). Tennyson maintains: "As always, Carlyle's method is, by exaggeration and caricature, to call attention to the truth" (*Carlyle and the Modern World*, p. 22).

15. It is equally hard to trace the Philosophy of Clothes back to Swedenborg, as tentatively suggested by James C. Malin, "Carlyle's Philosophy of Clothes and Swedenborg's," *Scandinavian Studies* 33 (1961): 155–68. Douglas is certainly right in stating that in this respect Carlyle's "basic orientation is Kantian" ("Carlyle and the Jacobin Undercurrent," p. 107).

16. For the intimate relationship between symbol and silence, see Camille R. La Bossiere, "Of Silence, Doubt, and Imagination: Carlyle's Conversation with Montaigne," *English Studies in Canada* 10 (1984): 63–64, 72. This essay appears to be one of the rare occasions in Carlyle criticism that draws attention to the circularity of Carlyle's interpretive procedure: "The thought of *Sartor Resartus* and its complex of core images take the reader on a circular odyssey, the chart of which plots the progress of the Carlylean imagination" (p. 67). However, there is still a difference between circularity and looping. For further evaluation of how Carlyle uses symbols in order to give voice to the unspeakable, see Findlay, "Paul de Man, Thomas Carlyle," pp. 176–77, 179.

17. For a different view of the assumed parallels between Carlyle and Hegel, especially between *Sartor Resartus* and *The Phenomenology of Mind*, see Dibble, "Strategies of the Mental War," pp. 97–102.

18. See Helmuth Plessner, "Die anthropologische Dimension der Geschichtlichkeit," in Hans Peter Dreitzel, ed., *Sozialer Wandel: Zivilisation und Fortschritt in der soziologischen Theorie* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1972), p. 160 and Jacques Lacan, *Schriften I*, ed. Norbert Haas (Olten and Freiburg im Breisgau: Walter, 1973), pp. 63–64, 67, 78.

19. Concerning the notion and function of routes or chains of reference, see Nelson Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), pp. 54–71.

20. Moore stresses Carlyle's commitment to action: "Action not only removes religious doubt, it creates faith and happiness and, in the form of work, creates order and belief in a dynamic society" ("Carlyle's 'Conversion,'" p. 674).

Motzkin: Memory and Cultural Translation

1. Lawrence L. Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991). See also Peter Hayes, ed., *Lessons and Legacies: The Meaning of the Holocaust in a Changing World* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1991); James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning in Europe, Israel and America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, forthcoming).

2. The phrase is Reinhard Koselleck's.

3. Reinhard Rürup, *Emanzipation und Antisemitismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1973).

4. David Vital, *The Future of the Jews* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990).

5. Gabriel Motzkin, *Time and Transcendence: Secular History, the Catholic Reaction and the Rediscovery of the Future* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992).

Lachmann: The Foreign as Figure of Cultural Ambivalence

1. Here and in the following passage I am referring to Jurij Lotman, "The Dynamic Model of a Semiotic System" (1974), *Semiotica* 21 (1977): 193–210, and Lotman and Boris Uspenskij, "On the Semiotic Mechanism of Culture," in *Semeiotike* 5 (1971).

2. See Renate Lachmann, "Value Aspects in Jurij Lotman's Semiotics of Culture/Semiotics of Text," in *Dispositio* 12 (1987): 13–33.

3. Mikhail Bakhtin, "Slovo v romane" (The Word in the Novel), *Voprosy literatury i ėstetiki* (Moscow: Chudožestvennaja literatura, 1975), pp. 72–233.

4. Lotman, "The Dynamic Model of a Semiotic System," p. 204.

5. See Lachmann, "Aspects of the Russian Language Question in the 17th Century," in Riccardo Picchio and Harvey Goldblatt, eds., *Aspects of the Slavic Language Question* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1984), 2:125–185.

6. Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (London: Methuen, 1981).

7. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

8. Cf. Lachmann, "Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture," *Cultural Critique* 11 (1988/89): 115–52.

9. Jackson, *Fantasy*, p. 20.

10. Sir Walter Scott, "On the Supernatural and Fictitious Composition; and Particularly on the Works of Ernest Theodore William Hoffmann," in I. Williams, ed., *On Novelists and Fiction* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 325–26.

11. Ibid., p. 352.

Iser: Coda to the Discussion

1. Eric Gans, *The End of Culture: Toward a Generative Anthropology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 20.

2. See Hans Blumenberg, *Höhlenausgänge* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), pp. 11–81.

Index

In this index an "f" after a number indicates a separate reference on the next page, and an "ff" indicates separate references on the next two pages. A continuous discussion over two or more pages is indicated by a span of page numbers, e.g., "57–59." *Passim* is used for a cluster of references in close but not consecutive sequence.

Adams, Henry, 135
Agrippa, Cornelius, 91, 322n19
Alexander Severus, 51f
Alexander von Roes, 57
Ambrose, 72
Amery, Jean, 271
Apuleius, 31
Aristotle, 291
Artaud, Antonin, 103–4
Asoka, 27
Assmann, Aleida, 1f, 4
Assmann, Jan, 1, 14–17, 19ff
Auerbach, Erich, 233, 235f, 340n24
Augustine, Saint, 50, 56, 68–74, 78–84, 88f, 104
Austin, J. L., 104, 213

Bakhtin, Mikhail, 65, 285, 288
Barasch, Moshe, 1, 14, 16–21
Barth, Karl, 89
Barthes, Roland, 188ff
Bateson, Gregory, 341n10
Batkin, Leonid, 65
Baudrillard, Jean, 188
Beauvais, Vincent of, *see* Vincent de Beauvais
Ben-Dasan, Isaiah, 197, 200
Benedict, Ruth, 190f
Benjamin, Walter, 68, 142, 153–66 *passim*, 179, 183, 210, 212, 328n7, 337n4
Ben-Porat, Ziva, 219
Bercovitch, Sacvan, 7f, 17, 129, 131f, 142f
Besserman, Lawrence, 11, 339n15
Bloch, Ernst, 179
Bloom, Harold, 107, 221
Blumenberg, Hans, 300
Boccaccio, 72
Boehme, Jacob, 91f
Borchardt, Rudolf, 175, 179, 182
Bowersock, G. W., 33
Brown, John, 110
Buber, Martin, 12f, 18, 169, 172, 176–85, 295, 332n14
Budick, Emily Miller, 14
Burckhardt, Jakob, 64
Burkert, Walter, 199

Caracella, 55
Carlyle, Thomas, 4f, 18, 245, 247–64
Cassian, 46
Cassiodorus, 72
Cavell, Stanley, 2, 6f, 10, 141, 143f
Celan, Paul, 271
Celsus, 30, 32
Chaucer, 68f, 72–84