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I

Any examination of the question of the other/s leads to the radical questioning of the foundations of Western thought. This question, which according to Wlad Godzich “figures as a leitmotif in many of the current discussions of knowledge,”¹ is related both to various critiques of the subject—a concept integral to Western humanism—and to the challenges to Western thought and politics created by the post-1950s liberation movements of diverse groups of others—those who are “other” by race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, for example.

The following is a brief outline of hermeneutic, ethnographic, epistemological, and postcolonial perspectives on the question of the other/s. It does not claim to be a comprehensive account of the specific historical processes which for the past four decades have governed the complex developments of theories and methodologies that address this question, nor of the pattern of interactions between them.

One of the characteristics of Western metaphysics is to deny the otherness of the other/s—or if not to actually deny its/their otherness, then at least to appropriate it, subsuming the *other/s* dialectically within the *same* of the absolute subject. “From its very beginnings philosophy has been stricken with horror by anything that is other and remains other, as if it had an incurable allergy to it,” the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas writes in his essay “Die Spur des Anderen” (The Trace of the Other).²

Levinas sees this appropriation of the other/s—which leads to its/their destruction—as a feature of Western civilization and of the Greek culture it is based on: “throughout all its adventures, consciousness finds its way back to itself *as* itself, comes home to itself like

Odysseus, who throughout all his journeys is heading only for the island of his birth."³

By contrast, Levinas conceives the other/s in terms of alterity, exteriority, distance: as something radically different—radical in terms of the illimitability of the other/s, which is something we cannot fully comprehend. Or to put it another way: the other/s is/are not other in a relative sense—other *than*, Levinas explains in *Totality and Infinity*.⁴ The possibility of a differentiation by category or type would in itself demand a level of commonality that would destroy otherness. The other/s do/es not limit the same but call/s for and create/s response/ibility. For Levinas the face-to-face relationship with the other/s is always an ethical relationship.⁵

What would it mean to experience an encounter with the other/s *as* other? It would not mean the denial of the same, for the same is experiencing the encounter. But it would mean the acceptance of the other/s from the outset. In such an encounter otherness could be experienced, but without the violence of comprehension that would reduce the other/s to the self. It is neither a relationship of knowledge nor a question of coming within close proximity of the other/s: "If you try to approach the rainbow too closely, it will disappear," as Theodor Adorno explains in his theory of aesthetics.⁶ This realization means, with respect to those who are of other cultures, that *their* culture should not be interpreted based on an orientation towards one's *own* culture, nor should it be experienced in terms such as "similar to" or "just like."

But how can this happen? Is not the encounter with the other/s an encounter in which I must observe the other/s in order to understand it/them: in other words, to separate the known, the familiar, from the unknown and unfamiliar as it relates to myself or my world?

Ethnology is the study of foreign cultures, of the experience of foreignness. It subsists on the difference between the same and the other/s, between one's own culture and the foreign culture. An ethnological model emphasizing writing as construction rather than representation was developed by author, ethnologist, and ethno-poet Michel Leiris. His alternative, surreal ethnography was a precursor to an ethnographic practice that is now called "postcolonial" (as represented by James Clifford).⁷

There is a connection between Leiris and Levinas. Leiris demonstrates how, when what you are trying to capture slips between your fingers, you are left with nothing but its shadow. What you are left with, from the ethnographer's viewpoint, has already become a

translation, something totally dependent on one's own language, one's own body, one's own resources of tradition and powers of articulation.⁸ This realization allows Leiris to distinguish between "the exotic" and "exotism." "The exotic" is a distortion of the other or its degradation to an object of projection. In ethnographic "exotism," which always sets limits on the other's/others' space, the search for the "truth" in a foreign culture refers to the authentic experience of otherness. This is a combination of developing an awareness about otherness and coming to terms with oneself.⁹ Whatever can be experienced about otherness—for we can never possess the original—is always dependent on one's own cultural background, one's own system of perception. This means that Leiris's ethnography is always an ethnography of one's own culture as well as of the foreign culture one is studying.

Now if the encounter between what is one's own and what is foreign is conceived as surpassing logic/reason, the validity of traditional scientific methods is called into question. The next step is the opening up of ethnography into ethnopoetry. But there is a danger here: The opening up into (surrealist) literature, the insight that one is left holding nothing but a shadow, could lead to a problematic ethnographic practice that, in the avant-garde tradition, may give itself "artistic license" to undertake the encounter with the other/s. David Thomas mentions this when he quotes James Clifford: "But is not every ethnographer something of a surrealist, a reinventor and reshuffler of realities? Ethnography, the science of cultural jeopardy, presupposes a constant willingness to be surprised, to unmake interpretive syntheses, and to value—when it comes—the unclassified, unsought other."¹⁰ As Thomas points out: "Why . . . reshuffle reality as opposed to contesting it in the name of other realities . . . What role is there in a surrealist ethnography for the cultural methodologies of other peoples?"¹¹ And finally, "reshuffling realities" takes on a problematic aspect if one forgets that these realities are being *lived* by others.

Leiris's approach is different after all, then, for he sees his own concept of local ethnology as something that can prevail over *White* ethnology. As he writes in "Ethnologie und Kolonisation" (Ethnology and Colonization) in 1950, local ethnology's purpose is "to further the interests and endeavors of colonized peoples as they themselves understand them."¹²

The hermeneutic and ethnographic perspectives I have introduced have this in common: they grapple with the ongoing process of constituting a self through an encounter with the other/s. The other is

other because it is focalized by an observer, by a self by whom, in turn, the others are used in the process of defining the self.

One of this century's most influential thinkers to address the question of the self/other is Michel Foucault. For Foucault, the role of the contemporary intellectual is not to invent a new episteme but rather to work toward facilitating a less hegemonic kind of discourse about what truth is. Like many philosophers in this century he re-examined and took issue with Hegel and his notion of a dialectical *Vermittlung* between self and other. In his project, called "archeology," Foucault focuses on certain discursive articulations of identity within rational humanism, which, unlike Hegel's *Aufhebung*, have resulted in socio-historical practices of exclusion. Any articulation of identity is understood in terms of exclusion and estrangement and otherness as always subjected to the same.

Foucault takes as his starting point several systems of categorization and various types of discourse—differing ways of constituting knowledge and power relations. For Derrida, however, as Corbey and Leerssen argue, "thought itself is a form of hegemony, totalitarian in its claims to understand, to comprehend, to force Otherness and Absence in terms of presence and understanding."¹³ Derrida thus conceives difference as a primary condition: difference precedes all multiplicity (which has always been a multiplicity of single details).

The various critiques of the Western subject have had a tremendous effect on critical interventions in diverse representational discourses that have constructed others *within* Europe—women, the insane, homosexuals, Jews—as well as others *external* to Europe. However, those theories have also been questioned and are perceived to have only limited value with regard to various groups of others, such as women and the colonized. Teresa de Lauretis, for example, criticizes Foucault's notion of sexuality, which is understood "as a construct and a (self)-representation, but not as gendered, not as having a male form and a female form, but taken to be one and the same for all—and consequently male"¹⁴—"hom(m)osexuality," as Luce Irigaray puts it.¹⁵ Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak, among others, writes of the textual figure of femininity in Derrida's deconstruction, criticizing his ahistorical usage of something that it is in fact "'determined' by that very political and social history that is inseparably co-extensive with phallogocentric discourse, and in her case either unrecorded in accessible ways, or recorded in terms of man."¹⁶ Spivak writes that, unlike Derrida's project, "the collective project of our feminist critic must always be to

rewrite the *social* text so that the historical and sexual differentials are operated together.”¹⁷ By referring to the “feminist critic,” Spivak addresses the question of position, the need to reflect one’s privilege of language and space. The question of the other/s is indeed a question of position, whether one resists referring to an extratextual reality or establishing new meanings, or focuses on spaces both discursive and social that exist, since practices have (re)constructed them.¹⁸

Many studies have appeared within the last two decades that show how, in the course of Western expansion and hegemony, the non-Western worlds were represented as Western scenarios. To mention only a few of these influential studies, each dealing with a specific group of “others,” constituted as such by the discursive practices and colonizing missions of a dominant European/Western group: Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), Peter Hulme’s *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1979* (1986), Tzvetan Todorov’s *The Conquest of America* (1988), Peter Mason’s *Deconstruction of America: Representation of the Other* (1990), and V. Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge* (1988). Said, for example, applies Foucault’s discourse analysis to orientalism; Mudimbe combines African perspectives with Foucault’s analyses of the connection among knowledge, discourse, and power; Levinas’s use of alterity inspired Todorov’s study of the conquest of America; Mason employs a deconstructive interpretation of ethnographic representations of the “New World”; and Spivak uses deconstruction in her readings of representations of women and the “Third World.” Spivak, like other scholars of colonialism, is suspicious of her own role as an investigator of non-Western origin, viewed, as she says, by indigenous theorists investigating “the matter of the colonies” as too committed to Western theories.¹⁹

Decolonization is a multifaceted process that deals with economic, social, political, psychological, linguistic, and epistemological phenomena. Decolonization as a critical practice developed in connection with the independence movements in colonies since the 1950s. Decolonization both as a process and as a critical practice is based on the conceptual set of opposites: center/margin, which describes the relationship of colonial or otherwise dominant powers to former colonies or developing nations. At the discursive level, it can be described as a combination of liberal and Marxist discourse. The various critiques of the subject and the poststructuralists’ questioning of the *fixed* nature of the relationship between center and margin led to the development of

“postcolonial criticism.” But in contrast to poststructuralism (or to what has been called “antihumanism”), the postcolonial project has *always* set itself a political agenda, a politics of location in order to develop a perspective for change.

Spivak, in her reading of the Subaltern Studies project, a postcolonial historical reconstruction of the Indian colonial “experience,” credits the participating historians with revealing the “limits of the critique of humanism as produced in the West,” that is, the Western neglect of how important it is for those who have been colonized to reconstruct their own subjectivity, experience, and identity.²⁰ But with regard to the very specific methodology of the Subaltern Studies group, she underlines the fact that even here there is a danger of objectifying the colonized/the subalterns, of allowing them to be taken hold of/brought under control—even if, as is the case here, the point is to reconstruct their self-determination. The task of rediscovering a subaltern consciousness is impossible if it is carried out as a project seeking “authenticity.” However, just because there is a question as to whether there can be an “authentic” voice does not mean that one must give up looking for one. To keep on looking for authenticity is legitimate, according to Spivak, so long as the restoration or reconstruction of a subject is carried on as a process of change that has a strategic purpose—*not* as something that makes a statement about the essence (of the subject). Denying the necessity of the “strategic use of essentialism” would mean acquiescing into complete non-representation such as that produced by poststructural discourse. Spivak suggests in her essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?”²¹ that the subaltern analyst or intellectual uses another form of communication—a “speaking to” in which the intellectuals/the elite would neither deny their discursive role nor presume the “authenticity” of the other/s and so would allow for the possibility of a reply from the other/s: the voice of the individual other would be understood not as an authentic statement (and thus a statement about the essence of his/her culture), but as something defined by a specific ideological position.

In his essay “Ethnic Identity and Poststructuralist Difference,” R. Radhakrishnan addresses what he calls the “postmodern paradox”: the privileging of the marginal while ignoring the need to empower marginal groups.²² The practice of privileging the marginal—a plurality of marginal positions—also produces the effect of undermining real difference, creating in-difference toward the specific marginal positions. Radhakrishnan proposes a theory that “divest[s] itself from economics

of mastery and yet empower[s] the ‘ethnic’, contingently and historically” (202).

Localization and empowerment do not necessarily mean a call for the rediscovery of the “original” culture, the “true” self. In *Wretched of the Earth* (1963), Franz Fanon already was emphasizing not the return to “pure” or “precontact” culture but the dynamic nature of all cultural formations.²³ This calls for a project of *developing* culture, which Fanon considered to be the task of the national liberation struggles against colonialism. The shift in opposition movements in the 1970s and 1980s toward the differentiation of marginalized groups—which allows for a multiplicity of voices and experiences—has been crucial in the development of a new notion of cultural identity and of the emphasis on a politics of location. Stuart Hall, among others, has pointed out that cultural identification need produce not an essence but rather a point in transition, a site, which is “subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power.”²⁴ Instead of being thought of as a historical *fait accompli*, identity is understood as a process that is never complete—something that falls within the scope of representation, not outside it.

Representations of otherness have participated in and continue to be a part of the production and reproduction of inequality and injustice. For those who are still struggling for better material conditions, a new model of politics that allows for heterogeneity and new alliances seems appropriate. To paraphrase Norma Alarcon (who also addresses the structural difference created by women’s specific locations, especially with reference to Chicanas): it is a model that not only accepts the continuous production of differences that destabilize collective identities but also takes into account the need for cultural identification and group solidarities. This model could overcome oppression through an understanding of the mechanisms at work in the practice of “othering” in the past and present.²⁵ This strategy responds to the double bind of those who have been marginalized (in this case the Chicanas): resisting de/color/ization, de/class/ification and de/gender/ing, as well as paternalistic “communal modes of power.” Exploring one’s location by examining the ways one has been positioned and by creating ways to re-position oneself allows for resistance and transformation. It also opens up the possibility of making *chosen* alliances within specific cultural and historical contexts and their power mechanisms.

The development of culture and identity as an ongoing process by which cultural identification as well as particularity/specificity are taken *provisionally*, as I suggest calling it, seems to be a project that would

empower those who have been oppressed and marginalized by various practices. To create, however, the potential for Western hegemony's history of exclusion and subjugation to come to an end, this process must be two sided, originating from colonial subjects and old Western subjects as well.

Those who in Western discourse have been constituted as other/s are no longer external or distant. They are im/migrating not only into the traditional immigration countries such as the United States and Canada but also into the colonizers' nations and into those countries in the process of building a "New Europe." I would like to imagine, for a moment, a "New Europe" that is a *developing* culture: an association not of *given* cultures but of *constructed* cultures, constructed in specific and diverse historical responses to specific social and political configurations, and one open to the reconstruction and development of a new open community that can draw on the multiplicity of cultural experiences as well as countercurrent voices that have been marginalized. In order for this to take place, "Old Europe" and its subjects must continue their process of decolonization based upon specific historical, political, and socio critical analyses of their inheritances. Only when this happens can languages of ex/change emerge, in a "listening to" and "speaking to" each other that invites response/ibility without reducing differences between others, and from which new conceptions of communal and political spaces can develop.

II

The following essays reconsider different theories and practices with respect to their implicit culture contact/otherness model and political implications. They focus on the ability of literature to perceive and acknowledge otherness and explore aesthetic experiences of the other/self, of otherness and cultural contact. They also investigate the conditions of and for the identification of individual and collective selves and of individual and collective "others" that are becoming more and more complex. They study the consequences of the homogenizing force of cultural domination and colonization and explore possibilities for transformation, and for articulation of alternative values and devising strategies for alternative practices.

Stephen David Ross, in "What of the Others? Whose Subjection?" investigates through a wide variety of discourses the dynamics of self/other as relations of subjectivity and subjection. These relations, where

subjectivity is inseparable from subjection, mark our monstrosity, the otherness of truth, which raises important questions. What of our subjection to the other, marked by its others? What are the others of the other? What are the limits of our responsibilities toward the others? And what if our responsibilities toward the others represented the limits of our world, perhaps as Western, perhaps as rational?

In "Response to the Other," Bernhard Waldenfels begins with the philosophy of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty as well as the ethnology of Levi-Strauss to discuss the preconditions for an encounter with the other without minimizing or even destroying it. A work of alienness (*Fremdheitsarbeit*), as he suggests, requires a change of attitudes toward the other/s, taking the other/s as a request or stimulus to which we respond and must respond in whatever we are saying or doing.

In "Xenophobia, Xenophilia, and No Place to Rest" Angelika Bammer addresses the conflicts of love and fear of the other as they are played out in academic cultural studies contexts. Paradigms of multiculturalism and diversity, she argues, do not necessarily preclude a complicity in the appropriation and degradation of Third World people. To engage in the problems of the encounter with others she concentrates on two opposing positions, one by Tzvetan Todorov, the other by Homi Bhabha. Todorov argues for certain "absolute principles" that allow for condemning or lauding certain forms of cultural behavior on the condition that we understand (our own) culture to be formed, and continually re-formed, by its relation of contiguity and contingency with others. In contrast to this position, Bhabha rejects any universalist framework. He argues for a concept of 'radical particularism' and a politics of difference, that is, a politics based on recognition of conflict and even incommensurability.

How do literary texts offer possibilities to uncover the dynamics of self/other, to encounter the other by resisting "othering"? But also, how may literature be an accomplice in reducing or excluding the other? Frederick Garber in his contribution, "Maelzel and Me," presents a reading of Poe's hardly known text "Maelzel's Chess Player" and E. T. A. Hoffmann's story "Die Automate." In his discussion he takes up the problems of self-constitution and fuses them with questions of alterity, the numinous and the human. He argues that the encounter with the anthropomorphic mechanized chess player and the automaton "Talking Turk" allows for a subversion of the binary self/other in favor of an insistence on *both/and*. Making use of Emerson's phrase NOT ME, Garber unfolds the dynamics of the pairing ME/NOT ME that always

establishes ME, but also simultaneously oneself as NOT ME and the NOT ME as ME. The acts of self-constitution emerge as manifold practices based on humans in relations.

In “It Has, Like You, No Name: Paul Celan and the Address of the Other,” Jason M. Wirth addresses the possibilities of poetry with special focus on Paul Celan in the context of the Kabbalah, Walter Benjamin, and Emmanuel Levinas. Celan continuously invokes in his poems an unspecified “you.” As dialogical language his poetry is a movement toward “something standing open, inhabitable.” It addresses the other but cannot name the other. Embracing the failure of the naming of the other, this address becomes the rehabilitation of speaking after language had to go “through the thousand darkneses of murderous speech.”

In “*Blutschande*: From the Incest Taboo to the Nuremberg Racial Laws” Christina von Braun investigates the change of the meaning of *Blutschande*. Where it originally designated the sin of intercourse with one’s own blood relatives, with siblings, father, mother, it comes to designate the sin of intercourse with alien blood lines, alien races in the texts of racist anti-Semitism. The author places this change in meaning into the context of a mythologizing brother-sister love in the literature since romanticism, in which this love appears as the “purest” form of the relationship between the sexes. The attraction to one’s own self-image, own’s own blood, is linked to the exclusion of everything that represents “otherness.” This indicates a complex change in the concept of the ‘self’ and also exhibits a secularization of the Christian image of salvation. The image of the “impure Jew” is constructed as a counter to one’s own image of purity. The “impure Jew” corrupts the Aryan race with his blood and leads it to ruin.

One aspect of Christina von Braun’s discussion of the sacrificial death of the other (real woman) that is inherent in the utopian ideal of love is further elucidated in Michael Stryck’s reading of Gilman’s *Yellow Wallpaper* and Duras’s *The Malady of Death*. In the context of the problem of Western thought’s totalizing structure—which fails to recognize the other in terms of itself and its infinity—developed in the works of Levinas, Blanchot, and Derrida, Stryck finds in the texts by Gilman and Duras a critique of the economy of the same and the optics of totality that results in blindness and/or violent neutralization of the other (woman).

Colonial discourse is the space in which fantasies of “otherness” abound. Susanne Zantop concentrates in her contribution, “Domestication of the Other: European Colonial Fantasies 1770–1830,” on a

crucial moment in European colonial history and a particular colonial relationship, that between Europe and its rebelling colonies in the Americas. She traces a series of shifts in the colonial paradigm that translate into changes in representation: from stories of unrequited love and guilt to stories of marital bliss; from tales of desire and abandonment to tales of permanent commitment. As Zantop argues, these shifts towards “love” and successful domesticity, seemingly an improvement over previous colonial models, in fact mask the violence of colonial appropriation only more effectively, while providing “legitimate” channels for pent-up colonial desire.

Literary representations of the other in colonialist writing are more often than not characterized by means of attributing restricted and deficient capability of language to the colonized. Konstanze Streesse, in “Writing the Other’s Language,” focuses on this stylistically recurrent and conceptually symptomatic reduction of the culturally other/s to a status of social inferiority within the colonial paradigm and sets them against contemporary narratives critical of colonialism and the various strategies of representing the language of the other employed in order to discontinue the tradition of the “manichean aesthetics” (JanMohamed). She argues that a paradigm of internarrative dialogue suggests itself as a possible means for the literary emergence of the self from its fantasies about the other.

Sander Gilman’s “The Jewish Nose: Are Jews White? Or, The History of the Nose Job” focuses on the body and how fantasies about race inscribe themselves upon it. Beginning with an analysis of the question “Are Jews white?”—which preoccupied much of the science of race in nineteenth-century Europe—he shows how fantasies about skin color, closely related to the representation of physiognomy, patterned European Jews to doubt the validity of their very bodies. The result is the generation of specific forms of aesthetic surgery, such as rhinoplasty.

Just as fantasies about race inscribe themselves upon the body, they also inscribe themselves upon texts and the canon, as Aaron Perkus argues in “The Instincts of ‘Race’ and ‘Text’.” Referring to an article by Henry W. Grady (1885), in which he defends the segregation of races in the New South by referring to the naturalness for races to stay apart (“race instinct”), Perkus parallels Grady’s argumentation with the arguments put forward by the National Association of Scholars in their defense of the Western canon. Perkus argues that their concept of texts and the canon is based on an understanding of a text as a given, independent from social and academic practices naming it as such.

Therefore, their defense of the traditional core curriculum based on “proven standards” can be read as a continuation of segregational politics based on “text instinct.”

There are an estimated fifteen million refugees worldwide, fifteen million persons who, if their story were to be told, would be eligible for refugee status in another country. Robert F. Barsky’s “The Construction of the Other and the Destruction of the Self: The Case of the Convention Hearings” analyzes the practice of the refugee hearing using Canada’s Convention Refugee Hearing as an example. By making use of the realm of discourse analysis and the works of Mikhail Bakhtin, he argues that refugee “hearings” are constructed in such a way as to virtually preclude by a process of othering and authoring any possibility that the subject’s true testimony can be “heard.”

Leaving one’s world and culture behind—voluntarily or involuntarily—means engaging oneself in a complex process of compromising one’s identity and otherness. Velma Pollard, in her essay on Olive Senior’s story “The Arrival of the Snake Woman,” discusses one of the rare examples that gives historical and literary reference to the East Indian in Jamaican society. Senior describes the integration of an East Indian woman into an early twentieth-century hill village in Jamaica populated largely by people of African descent. Historical fact as interpreted by the folk forms the background against which the plot is played out. The importance of the story lies in its identification and exposure of stereotypes associated with the other race of which Miss Coolie is a member.

Expressions of self-identity and “otherness” are central to the emergence and development of minority discourses. Eliana Rivero’s “The ‘Other’s Others’: Chicana Identity and Its Textual Expressions” focuses on texts by Mexican American women that emerged during the historical period of Chicano “Renaissance” in the sixties and that remain invalidated by the dominant critical discourse in Chicano literature. These texts bespeak an acute awareness of cultural otherness, of personal experiences of hybridism in the production of language and identity. This otherness responds to the experience of being part of an ethnic minority, and just as much to the consciousness of femaleness within their own particular cultural group.

The experience of exile informs the work of the scholar and poet Abena Busia from Ghana. Three of her poems are included here: “Migrations,” “Petitions,” “Achimota: From The Story My Mother Taught Me.”

Personal history, memoirs, photographs, family albums, and interviews are interwoven in Leo Spitzer's documentation of Jewish refugee experience in Bolivia in the 1930s and early years of World War II. Coming to the New World as persons who had been "othered" by anti-Semites in Nazi-dominated Central Europe, the refugees nonetheless carried cultural baggage with them that profoundly colored their own impressions of the people and physical environment they encountered in Bolivia. Reflecting on Central European popular and literary representations of "America," "Indians," and alien "others," as well as on popular and elite Bolivian notions about Jews and foreigners, Spitzer probes the role of images, stereotypes, and cultural memory as influences in the formation of cultural identity and as factors shaping cross-cultural communication and acceptance.

In "Isabelle Eberhardt Traveling 'Other'/Wise: The 'European' Subject in 'Oriental' Identity," Sidonie Smith explores the embodied positionalities of Isabelle Eberhardt, a European woman who decided to live in the desert of North Africa while adopting a male nomad identity. As Smith argues, the nomads of the desert offered Eberhardt a metaphor for her essential "self," that "otherness" she felt within her. As much as her life marks a transgression of a conventional European, specific woman's life, and as intensely as she embraces the "other," "nomad" self, even subjugating herself to the other in her marriage with her "native" lover, she also carries with her "cultural baggage," her European identity. Her journal shows the complex interplay of resistance toward European (women's) life and her identification and internalization, respectively, of Western individualism, concepts of 'romantic artist' and 'love', and preconceived images of Africa and the primitive past that involve her in the domestication of the other.

Ineke Phaf's contribution, "Nation as the Concept of 'Democratic Otherness'," concentrates on Carlos Fuentes' novel *Cristobal Nonato* (Christopher Unborn) in which a birth is announced as possible "Otherness from a New Body." This unborn project incorporates the reconstruction of a mutilated Mexico in 1992 as well as a series of critical questions on cultural politics in its history. Fuentes argues that its efforts of innovation have to be related to the democratic dynamics of "social selves" in an overall process of international modernization. The fetus named Cristobal finally succeeds in overcoming colonialism by symbolizing these future possibilities of unlimited transformational capacities already located in his genes. He functions as a memory-play in

order to prognosticate a “peripheral modernity” as the critical concept for nations and its languages on the American continent, with the history of Mexico—the New Spain—as an example.

The final contribution, “The ‘Other’ as the ‘Self’ under Cultural Dependency: The Impact of the Postcolonial University” by Ali Mazrui, explores the possibilities of overcoming cultural dependency in Africa by concentrating on the institution of the university. Virtually all universities in sub-Saharan Africa are based on Western models by structure, language, and curriculum. This produces not only academic dependency but a dependency that has an impact on the society as a whole; Mazrui explicates this in his discussion of the functions of culture and types of dependency. As he argues, in order to decolonize modernity African societies must be allowed to influence fundamentally the educational systems (domestication) that are to re-examine and reform students’ admission requirements, curricula, faculty recruitment criteria, and the general structure of the educational system in order to relate universities to both the economic and cultural needs of the society as a whole. Furthermore, to overcome cultural dependency on the West, strategies of diversification of the cultural content of modernity and of counter-penetration of Western culture by African culture are to be employed.

Notes

Translated by Elizabeth Naylor Endres

1. Wlad Godzich, “The Further Possibility of Knowledge,” foreword to *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, by Michel de Certeau (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), viii.

2. Emanuel Levinas, *Die Spur des Anderen: Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Sozialphilosophie* (Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1987), 211; “Von ihrem Beginn an ist die Philosophie vom Entsetzen vor dem Anderen, das Anderes bleibt, ergriffen, von einer unüberwindbaren Allergie” (trans. into English by Elizabeth Naylor Endres).

3. Levinas, *Spur*, 211; “durch alle Abenteuer hindurch findet sich das Bewußtsein als es selbst wieder, es kehrt zu sich zurück wie Odysseus, der bei allen seinen Fahrten nur auf seine Geburtsinsel zugeht” (trans. into English by Elizabeth Naylor Endres).

4. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 35–40.

5. Levinas, *Spur*, 225.

6. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (London and Boston: Routledge, 1984), 185.

7. James Clifford, "On Ethnographic Surrealism," in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 117–51.

8. Hans-Jürgen Heinrichs, "Einleitung" (introduction), Michel Leiris, *Die eigene und die fremde Kultur: Ethnologische Schriften*, trans. Rolf Wintermeyer, ed. Hans Jürgen Heinrichs (Frankfurt am Main: Syndikat, 1979), 38.

9. Heinrichs, "Einleitung," 38.

10. Clifford, "On Ethnographic Surrealism," 147.

11. David Thomas, "From Gesture to Activity: Dislocating the Anthropological Scriptorium," *Cultural Studies* 6, no. 1 (January 1992): –26; 16f.

12. Leiris, *Eigene*, 70; "den Interessen und Strebungen der kolonialisierten Völker, so wie diese selbst sie verstehen, zu dienen" (trans. into English by Elizabeth Naylor Endres).

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