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CULTURAL TURNS

NEW ORIENTATIONS IN THE STUDY OF CULTURE

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Cultural Turns

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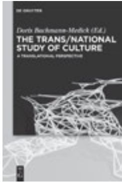

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Cultural Turns

New Orientations in the Study of Culture

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The contemporary fields of the study of culture, the humanities and the social sciences are unfolding in a dynamic constellation of cultural turns. This book provides a comprehensive overview of these theoretically and methodologically groundbreaking reorientations. It is the English translation of an influential German book that has been completely revised. The translation process has been unusually complex as it has involved translation not only between different theoretical cultures but also between different versions of the study of culture – between the German language *Kulturwissenschaften* and Anglophone cultural studies. As part of this complex process, the German text first needed to be rewritten by "translating" its reflections and findings into a different (Anglo-American) discourse. Only then could the linguistic translation work begin. The result is what I hope is a stimulating example of a cross-cultural translation between different theoretical cultures and systems of knowledge. It presents the first comprehensive and critical synthesis of cultural turns in the English-speaking world.

This highly complex project of translation(s) could not have been realized without cooperation and help from several sides. In the first place I would like to express my warmest gratitude and thanks to my translator, Adam Blauhut, for his highly sensitive and perceptive translation work, as well as for his dedication and cooperation. I am extremely grateful to the Karlshochschule International University in Karlsruhe – and especially to Michael Zerr and Stephan Sonnenburg – for generously funding the translation of this book. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC), Ansgar Nünning and my colleagues at Gießen University for providing me with a daily base and the freedom to consider and discuss questions related to the study of culture. Finally, I would like to express my thanks to the staff of the De Gruyter publishing house, especially to Manuela Gerlof for her willingness to publish this book and Stella Diedrich for her editorial assistance. My greatest thanks goes to Hans Medick, who not only provided inspiration and support for this edition, as for the German forerunner, but also enriched the extremely complex translation process with his stimulating ideas and valuable input.

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Introduction: Cultural Turns – New Orientations in the Study of Culture

1 Mapping the Study of Culture – German and Anglo-American Discourses

In the course of postmodernism, representatives of the humanities and social sciences proclaimed the end of the master narrative of emancipation and progress. But were these disciplines not also shaped by a grand narrative in the process? After all, we continue to hear talk of a sweeping cultural turn, a reorientation that – similar to a paradigm shift – has encompassed a wide variety of disciplines and originated in the wake of an all-powerful linguistic turn. Certainly, the linguistic turn has exhibited all the makings of a "mega" turn or even of a revolutionary paradigm shift, but has it really continued to dominate the development of theory, even in the study of culture, to such an extent that it has remained firmly in control of all the additional theoretical reorientations?

It is also possible to imagine and narrate a very different history of the humanities and the study of culture, one that, in marked contrast to the above model, is organized around not one but a variety of "cultural turns." These different turns, which have emerged since the 1970s on the heels of the linguistic turn, have produced a highly differentiated, dynamic field of cultural research. They have shifted perspectives, introduced new focuses and, as a result, opened up previously unexamined cross-disciplinary fields of inquiry. Offering specific new research incentives, they have also broken up the established theoretical and methodological canons. The first groundbreaking steps in this direction – e.g., the interpretive turn, the performative turn and the reflexive turn – emerged in the field of cultural anthropology, but as the innovative disciplines switched, additional new focuses arose: the postcolonial turn, the translational turn, the spatial turn and the iconic/pictorial turn. These set the stage for a material turn, an affective turn, a social turn, a digital turn, an environmental turn and all the other theoretical reorientations that are still underway (see the chapter "Outlook").

The master narrative of a comprehensive cultural turn has thus been undermined by the trend toward differentiation among these very different "cultural turns." With their striking changes in perspective, they have even challenged the validity claim of the linguistic turn itself. After all, they have taken us away from the emphasis on language and text in cultural analysis, from the dominance of representation and constructivism. But what have they actually led to? It is precisely these diverse perspectives that are opening up new horizons for the development of the humanities and the study of culture in the wake of the linguistic

turn. They are placing emphasis on self-interpretation, staging, corporeality and the power to act, on the politics of social and intercultural difference with their associated practices of translation and negotiation. They are focused on visual insights, image-perceptions and cultures of the gaze; spatiality and the spatial relations of social action; and the incontrovertible materiality of experience and history. Their scope extends to the latest challenges posed by theory within the framework of the emerging posthuman turn.

Not only does this alternative turn-based view of the study of culture have the potential to shed new light on the formation of the *Kulturwissenschaften* in German-speaking countries, it also has a bearing on the field of cultural studies in the Anglophone world, understood in its broadest sense as "part of a larger reconfiguration of critical analysis at the intersection of the humanities and social sciences … often under the sign of the 'turn'" (Grossberg 2010: 227). Surprisingly, it was initially the German theoretical discourses in the *Kulturwissenschaften* that became embedded in an academic landscape of turns. In the United States, by contrast, we have only recently seen cross-disciplinary references to turns – and then only in a scattering of essays, introductions and book titles as a "rhetorical trope" or an "intellectual movement" (Klein 2005: 37). A synthesizing and critically reflective account of cultural turns appears to be absent from the Anglo-American discussions and is not even found in the latest overviews and "renewals" of cultural studies (e.g., Smith 2011; Turner 2012; Rodman 2015). It is symptomatic that Simon During's work *Cultural Turns*, which was announced on Amazon around ten years ago, was never published and soon disappeared from view. Today, a systematic engagement with turns exists at best in rudimentary form, one example being the *AHR* Forum "Historiographic 'Turns' in Critical Perspective" (2012). Given this situation, a critical analytical examination of cultural turns and their interconnections could provide fresh impetus for discussions in cultural studies, the humanities and the social sciences, as this book already provided for the German-language discourse.

Since the 1990s, scholars in the United States, confronting the challenges of globalization, have sought to extend cultural studies beyond anthropology and open it to geography and world systems theory (see Dirks 1998). These efforts have certainly liberated the discipline from "the cultural turn" of the 1980s and 1990s. The "turn away from the cultural turn" (Hegeman 2012: 8) went along with a claimed "exhaustion of cultural studies" (3). In her book *The Cultural Return* (2012), Susan Hegeman maintains that both tendencies departed from the "conceptual centrality of 'culture'" (7) and the enduring understanding of culture as an encompassing (and almost totalizing) concept. Certainly, in the Anglo-American discourse, there have been various attempts to historicize the cultural turn. In the seminal work *Beyond the Cultural Turn* (1999), edited by Victoria Bonnell

and Lynn Hunt, the turn to cultural analysis is equated with the linguistic turn and linked to the "collapse of explanatory paradigms" (10) in the social sciences. The two editors argue that this collapse was closely paralleled by the "rise of 'cultural studies'" (10) – not least by its further differentiation in the United States after it was first established in Great Britain in the mid-1950s. This differentiation resulted in feminist, postcolonial, gay/lesbian and multicultural studies (10) and was associated with critical thematic issues of cultural research that seemed to neglect methodology because of the dynamic of the different turns. A few years after *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, Michael Denning, for instance, was still fixated on *the* cultural turn, describing it as a specific aspect of the interdisciplinary interaction between the humanities and the social sciences in the 1970s and 1980s – and also as a characteristic feature of the "age of three worlds" and the Cold War between 1954 and 1989 (Denning 2004: 2).

As regards developments "beyond the cultural turn," it is astonishing that the discussion in the Anglo-American world has not really moved beyond Hunt and Bonnell's suggestions. At the same time, though, the new perspectives offered by Hunt and Bonnell have paved the way for important developments, above all the incorporation of various dimensions of the social sphere into cultural analysis. A central feature of the discussion has been its continued focus on *the* general cultural turn as the main point of reference (starting with Chaney 1994 and continuing with "After the Cultural Turn," a special issue of *Criticism*, 2007, the special issue of *AHR*, 2012, and Roseneil and Frosh 2012). Nevertheless, the mushrooming number of specific turns in the U.S. discourse over the last few decades has made it necessary not only to rethink the claim of a powerful cultural turn in a more nuanced way, but also to systematically scrutinize the various emerging cultural turns in relation to one another as well as in a wider research landscape – focusing particularly on their methodological implications. A systematization and synthesis of findings was the goal of this book when it was first published in Germany. Now, with the release of a revised version in English, I hope to perform the same critical task for the Anglo-American discourse.

But why should such an undertaking begin with cross-cultural translation between theoretical cultures? Has this not been rendered superfluous by the emerging development of a transnational study of culture, a field that is no longer restricted to the country-specific traditions of Anglo-American cultural studies or German-language *Kulturwissenschaften*, but which integrates ideas from both? I believe the answer to this question is no. Furthermore, for this undertaking to be successful, it must start by giving greater recognition to the special characteristics of the respective academic traditions of knowledge and research (see Bachmann-Medick 2014) and only then attempt to situate common theoretical "shifts in orientation" in their very different scholarly environments:

In the German-language context, the *Kulturwissenschaften* initially tended to engage in fundamental historicizing reflections against the backdrop of the earlier traditions of historical cultural analysis in the first decades of the twentieth century (Max Weber, Ernst Cassirer, Georg Simmel, Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer). As discussed in the seminal work *Geisteswissenschaften heute* (Frühwald et al. 1991), the formation of the *Kulturwissenschaften* came to be seen as an outcome of the crisis of the German *Geisteswissenschaften* (human sciences) in the late twentieth century. Faced with the "global crisis of the humanities" and the "modernization" of American universities (Frühwald et al. 1991: 69), the contributors to this volume, known in German as a *Denkschrift*, or manifesto, sought to initiate a comprehensive "cultural turn" in the *Geisteswissenschaften* themselves, which until then had been trapped in the hermeneutical tradition of Wilhelm Dilthey and Hans-Georg Gadamer. This "redefinition of the *Geisteswissenschaften* as *Kulturwissenschaften*" (47) paved the way for a modernized field of cultural analysis that was distinct from the traditional, philosophical and canon-fixated *Geisteswissenschaften*. One progressive outcome of this process was the development of a cross-disciplinary conceptual framework and vocabulary that helped to bridge the fragmentation of overspecialized disciplinary research.

This initial "modernization boost" from the *Kulturwissenschaften* soon resulted in more permanent practices of self-reflection, the pluralization of disciplinary subject areas and their positioning in a broader international research landscape. From this perspective, the specific deficiencies of the traditional *Geisteswissenschaften* became evident for the first time: its representatives regarded culture as the expression of an individual *Geist* (intellect) that was ultimately itself only the product of a German *Sonderweg* of European intellectual history. In their eyes culture took the form of prominent cultural objects and works created by this singular *Geist*. By contrast, the study of culture, which encompasses both the modern *Kulturwissenschaften* and cultural studies, has increasingly drawn attention to materiality, mediality and the diverse forms of symbolic activity. Its goal is to identify how and in which processes and culture-specific manifestations intellectual and cultural goods are produced in society as a whole. This approach resulted in an interdisciplinary practice of cultural research that fostered a pluralization instead of a unification of meanings, attitudes, and modes of perception and articulation. It connected the *Kulturwissenschaften* to the international humanities, which at that time were in the midst of a similar transformation process.

It is above all this explicit commitment to pluralization and internationalization – linked to a critical cultural self-reflection – that has propelled the dynamic development of important cultural turns in the individual disciplines and across their boundaries. The turns reflect this pluralization of culture insofar as they

are not (exclusively) fixated on Western/European-influenced cultural processes and forms of expression. Furthermore, the expanded perspectives widely discussed in recent years, which explicitly assume “multiple modernities” (Shmuel Eisenstadt), have also allowed the study of culture to distance itself from a one-dimensional Eurocentric modernization concept. Ultimately, the increasing global engagement with cultural articulations outside Europe within the framework of “entangled histories” has provided a long-term incentive to break free of any limitation to the European canon of knowledge that many still consider authoritative.

But how can this transcultural dynamic and expansion of the study of culture beyond the grand narrative of one powerful cultural turn itself be narrativized? Or, to apply the spatial turn to the landscape of theory, how can it be mapped? The explicit aim of this book is not to present a history of the *Kulturwissenschaften* (see Kittler 2001) or to reconstruct the overlaps and differences between the German-language field and Anglo-American cultural studies (on these differences, see Assmann 2012: 19–28; Musner 1999, 2004; Lutter and Reisenleitner 2002). A more productive approach entails not only reconstructing the genealogies of cultural discourse, but also mapping them out with an emphasis on recent developments so that they can be used more directly to analyze contemporary research objects, subjects and texts. There are already a number of mapping approaches to the theoretical landscape of the study of culture, but none looks specifically at the dynamics of theory change that have resulted from the turns.

This shortcoming seems particularly evident in the U.S. theoretical landscape, where the debate has focused not only on changes in the concept of culture (Hegeman 2012: 6ff.), but also on the shift to thematic fields such as everyday and popular culture, cultural identity, media, globalization and transcultural communication. This debate is also addressing the shift toward established “methodological complexes” and “movements” of critical theory such as the New Historicism, cultural history, discourse analysis, new criticism, deconstruction, feminism, gender research, discourse analysis and, not least, the theoretical systems of prominent pioneers, actors and founding figures (Parker 2014: 5; Leitch 2014). Whereas in the German-language discourse we find a combination of such key points in the work of the historian Ute Daniel (2001), in the American discourse (e.g., the recent book by anthropologist Caroline Brettell) we see a mapping of the theoretical landscape on the basis of “anthropological conversations” with various disciplines: conversations between anthropology and history, anthropology and geography, and anthropology and demography. A historical turn (McDonald 1996), a spatial turn and a demographic turn have, among others, been derived from these conversations (hence their designation as “conversational turns”), but so far there has been no analysis of the turn phenomenon in general (Brettell 2015: 5–7). The same applies to a different structuring

principle – that of "models of cultural studies" (Grossberg 1999: 31) – that was proposed by Lawrence Grossberg in his "spatio-temporal map of the current state of cultural studies" (36). These models include culture as text, culture as communication, culture as difference, culture in the sociopolitical space, culture in relation to institutions, and culture in the making of everyday life.

Turns are constantly in play in these and other approaches to the mapping of theory in the Anglo-American discourse even when they are mentioned only in passing and hardly subject to systematic reflection. In addition to schools of theory, it is above all the complexes of social problems that have driven and structured the discourse over longer periods of time. This is certainly attributable to the fact that approaches in cultural studies – including anthropology as a cultural critique – have been less concerned with pursuing fundamental reflections due to their goal of exploring the new areas of research emerging from contemporary social and political fields (see the introduction to the second edition of Marcus and Fischer 1999). Such research focuses include "computer-mediated communication and visual technologies" (Marcus and Fischer 1999: xxiv), reorganizations of societies after revolutionary transformations (xxv) and the challenges of the "new technosciences" (xxvii). Nonetheless, the turn to these and other areas often narrows the study of culture to thematic fields. Here the present book deliberately embarks on a different path, asking questions such as: Has not the analysis of such controversial topics always been shaped by linguistic and conceptual preconstructions? How can these preconstructions be understood analytically? Which methodologies and categories should be used? In addition to the turns' thematic orientation, do we not need their proximity to specific methodologies that make accessible the formation of perceptual attitudes, analytical categories and operative approaches/concepts?

Examining the various cultural turns, we can recover methodological approaches that have often been ignored in the ongoing boom of the *Kulturwissenschaften* and cultural studies. A focus on these approaches can provide impetus for a long overdue reconceptualization of the study of culture. For example, on the basis of a reflective acknowledgement of the turns' new cross-disciplinary orientations, scholars can exploit the productive connections/connectivities between the individual disciplines by crossing boundaries, moving into "shared territories" (Klein 2005: 39), taking up international lines of research, recognizing the diversity of perspectives and devoting attention to fields of inquiry that cut across disciplines. Finally, turns in the sense of cross-disciplinary tools and impulses have the potential to promote the dialogue between the humanities and the natural sciences. At the very least, they have already reconfigured the theoretical landscape in the humanities and social sciences, though in the American context this process has been regarded not from the perspective of cultural turns,

but from that of "theory after 'theory'" (Eliott and Attridge 2011). Here we find claims of a post-1990s transformation of theory, a departure from old forms of theory organized along the lines of "schools," and transdisciplinary expansions into "new subfields ... relating to political change, living conditions, institutional practices and so on" (Eliott and Attridge 2011: 14) – in short, there has been a shift to much broader, more ontological and politically based embeddings of theory that are linked to fundamental questions of "being there." With the turns' conceptual tools, we can offer a more structured and pointed explanation of these new positionings and transformations of theoretical practices within broader constellations.

But what actually are turns? Are they not simply "new intellectual fashions" (Bonnell and Hunt 1999: 1) that give the knowledge process the appearance of a certain non-binding character and contingency? Or do they have the ability to guide knowledge in the sense of "historicizations or linguistic transformations of the Kantian a priori," as the late Heinz Dieter Kittsteiner maintained (Kittsteiner 2004: 164)? However we answer these questions, by introducing new principles and categories, by setting new courses and transforming theory, turns have brought about a significant restructuring of the "academic field" in the humanities and the social sciences – while also modeling this field as an arena of "symbolic competition" and potential conflict (Bourdieu 1984: 14).

The "Field" of the Study of Culture

As regards the historicization and contextualization of the cultural turns, an important role was initially played by the fact that these turns came to replace scientistic, positivist and economistic explanations of the social world and initiated a fundamental reassessment of symbolization, language, representation and interpretation. The cultural turns have elaborated the cultural relevance of language and text as part of a two-pronged model: on the one hand, as "culture as text" and, on the other, as forces driving and shaping social action, as "culture as a texture of the social" (Musner 2004). Both trajectories have opened up a complex field in which culture is seen within a political economic framework as a "transfer process" that "'translates' the social into the symbolic and thus imprints a texture upon it. In other words, culture imprints life-world meanings on the fabric of the social" (Musner 2004: 82). At the same time, with this return of the social within the texture of culture, the postmodern tendency to dissolve the "hard" dimensions of society into the "softer" spheres of culture, discourse and meaning has been rejected. This (postmodern) softening of a more comprehensive social analysis has repeatedly lured cultural researchers into a world of

signs, tempting them to adopt approaches that give enhanced status to pluralism and eclecticism, promote epistemological reflection and require a multiplication of difference instead of bipolar opposition. Ultimately, all of these developments culminated in the disintegration of grand narratives and overarching contexts of meaning, which were no longer seen as capable of accommodating the ever-increasing fragmentations of a globalized modernity.

The emergence of the multifaceted reorientations in the study of culture is by no means attributable only to a postmodern fragmentation. They also have a clear material-economic and social foundation. Drawing on Fredric Jameson's description of postmodernism as "the cultural logic of late capitalism," we can interpret turns in a general way as phenomena linked to a post-Fordist transformation process. However, a detailed examination is required to illustrate in a more nuanced way just how these different turns have emerged from changed social and political conditions and just how such links to reality are given clearer contours by the turns' focused perceptual stances. An overly generalized derivation of "the cultural turn" from the breakup of the major political systems or the old boundaries and blocs of world politics – as found in the work of Michael Denning (2004) – tends to distort this view.

Yet the turns also draw attention to the internal conditions of the "intellectual field." These conditions come more clearly into view when we examine the study of culture using Pierre Bourdieu's field theory: "By 'field' I mean an area, a playing field, a field of objective relations among individuals and institutions competing for the same stakes" (Bourdieu 1993: 133). From this perspective, the study of culture can be seen as a field of intellectual "fashions" in which dominant groups use "conservation strategies" and newcomers apply "subversion strategies" in order to acquire or defend their positions (Bourdieu 1993: 133). The symbolic capital that is concentrated in turns, research directions and overdetermined key concepts is an empirically observable phenomenon whose role in research policy should be taken quite seriously. Nevertheless, the scholarly fashions that Bourdieu has aptly described by analogizing haute couture and "haute culture" serve only to show how strongly the study of culture has been shaped by its own object of study. One should be careful not to derive a more general verdict from this observation – in contrast to Lutz Musner, for whom the end of the master narrative was sealed by "an overheated boom and an un(self)critical change of theoretical fashions" (Musner 2004: 77). In fact, it is precisely the Janus-faced character of these intellectual fashions – not only their innovative force but their associated conformative pressures – that has provided grounds for constructive criticism. After all, they function not only as drivers of innovation, but also as signposts that appear to point to the consensual pressures of research, despite all the competition between theories. Bourdieu himself criticized the trend toward

the "profound conformisms" of the intellectual world, which made him resist the "models and modes dominant in the field" (Bourdieu 2007: 106).

In other words, is it not the case that the dictates of fashion and the laws of "distinction" also apply to the various turns in the study of culture, particularly in the sense of Bourdieu's remark that "when the miniskirt reaches the mining village of northern France, it's time to start all over again" (Bourdieu 1993: 135)? This question touches upon the turns' tendency to build consensus and create mainstream movements. Given this tendency, it is of crucial importance not only to explain the cultural turns on the basis of a relatively autonomous intellectual field, but also to reconnect them to the social fields of habitus, competition, struggle, positioning, commitment to tradition and formation of tradition. Even though the turns are always related to the staking out and defense of academic fields – particularly as concerns research funding – they go far beyond their own self-positionings and functions in the field of academic self-assertion and theory formation. However, does this mean we should view them as overarching "approaches" (Bonnell and Hunt 1999: 1) as opposed to "research paradigms" in the sense of Thomas S. Kuhn's paradigm theory?

The Transformation of Theory – A Paradigm Shift?

Why haven't paradigms or Thomas Kuhn's "paradigm shifts" been the focus of our discussion from the start? Kuhn's theoretical and historical explanation of the developmental dynamics of science is based on a paradigm concept that he defines as follows: "A paradigm is what members of a scientific community, and they alone, share" (Kuhn 1977: 294). However, the transformation of theory in the humanities and the study of culture has occurred across disciplinary boundaries – i.e., across research communities in the form of clearly delineated scholarly groups – and has not focused on "more professional and esoteric research" (Kuhn 2012: 23). Cultural research has thus staked out an interdisciplinary field that has produced "a new object that belongs to no one," to quote Roland Barthes (see Clifford 1986: 1). As a result, no individual discipline can continue to claim exclusive representation.

It is precisely this expansion of scholarly communities across disciplinary boundaries that can be seen as a distinguishing feature of the contemporary *Kulturwissenschaften* and cultural studies. As a result, both have opened up a research field consisting of transdisciplinary constellations to which ever-new interpretive approaches can be added. For this reason alone, the model used by Kuhn to explain the development of scientific disciplines – one that is oriented toward "progress in the sciences" (Kuhn 2012: 165f.) – seems inappropriate. It is

based on the assumption of abrupt, even revolutionary, paradigm shifts that are not evolutionary in nature, but result from sudden "flashes of intuition through which a new paradigm is born" (122). Each successive theoretical "reconstruction" (85) of the field causes the previous traditional theoretical structure to collapse. The new structure replaces an old paradigm with a new one as soon as the old paradigm is no longer able to solve newly arising problems. Such "major turning points in scientific development" (6) create specific research focuses that are based on a "firm research consensus" (15). The problem is that this model is not applicable to the humanities and social sciences, where research premises are already "*constructed competitively* in relation to one another" (Strathern 1987: 285). Marilyn Strathern gets to the heart of the matter in her astute anthropological reflections on the paradigm problem:

> Paradigms provide rules for registering the nature of the problem and what its solution would look like. In the social sciences, however, the differences between the theoretical positions I have been talking about correspond to the formation of different social interests. (Strathern 1987: 285)

The study of culture and the social sciences can hardly be expected to share a common view of the social and cultural world, due not only to competing theoretical positions, but also to the "contradictory viewpoints" (285) and various "set[s] of views analogous to paradigms" (Strathern 1987: 291) that are held by different "theoretical generations" (Strathern 1987: 287). This point is exemplified by the specific theoretical generation that was active in the second half of the twentieth century. As Lynn Hunt claims in her recent book, this generation started by producing four overarching "paradigms" to map the landscape of historical research: Marxism, modernization, the Annales School and identity politics (Hunt 2014: 13–43). However, these paradigms dissolved under the impact of the cultural studies approach: "The four paradigms produced their own gravediggers" (Hunt 2014: 26). Hunt maintains that it was the field of cultural studies in which this "deadly" rejection of thinking within such (closed) paradigms came to be realized. But did cultural studies really fail to offer "a compelling alternative" (Hunt 2014: 39)? Is it not precisely the turns themselves that are now performing this alternative work by leaving paradigms behind and using their own specific plasticity and interdisciplinary mobility to cope with the multiplicities of cultural worlds?

Because they have departed from grand narratives and revolutionary paradigm shifts, the turns in the study of culture cannot be considered "Copernican." It is in a much more cautious, experimental and gradual manner that they have led to the breakthrough of new perspectives and approaches. It is therefore impossible to speak of a specific "worldview" of the study of culture, which is

fragmented into various turns (see Nünning 2005: 177–178). Although the genesis of these reorientations is clear and their effects are quite forceful, they are not irreversible. They have never been comprehensive, complete about-faces by researchers or entire disciplines. Rather, they have been attempts "to construct momentous shifts in scholarly attention as 'turns,' a reflexive trope that has come to take the place of 'paradigms'" (Farmer 2013: 1). But is not more in play than a simple shift in perspectives resulting from new "tropes"? At the very least, thanks to such systematic new focuses, the individual disciplines have the potential to enhance their connectivity by developing new concepts for cross-disciplinary research and by continuing to evolve on the basis of this research. Such developments have led to a methodological pluralism, a transcendence of boundaries and an eclectic appropriation of methodologies – but not to the formation of a new paradigm that completely replaces a previous one. If, for example, we speak of an anthropological turn *within* literary studies, as opposed to the anthropological turn *of* literary studies as a whole (see Bachmann-Medick 2004), a more pragmatic attempt can be made, based on the respective objects of inquiry, to examine the individual turns in terms of their applicability.

Lofty rhetoric about scholarly "revolutions" and the quest for paradigms is therefore out of place in the study of culture. By contrast, in *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (1999), George Marcus and Michael Fischer refer to "the play of ideas free of authoritative paradigms" (Marcus and Fischer 1999: x). However, although the turns are less strict, they are not so weak that, consistent with the postmodern slogan of "anything goes," they follow every new trend. A newly valued aspect of the turns is their experimental, open mode of understanding – their "critical and reflexive views of subject matter, openness to diverse influences embracing whatever seems to work in practice, and tolerance of uncertainty about a field's direction and of incompleteness in some of its projects" (x). Learning to live with such directional uncertainty and to use it in productive ways is an ongoing challenge in the study of culture. Although this challenge brings the risk of "blind alleys" (x), it also holds significant potential for unconventional investigations. In this sense, turns are "relatively ephemeral and transitional between periods of more settled, paradigm-dominated styles of research" (x).

The transitional, less settled turns encourage an understanding of the study of culture that deliberately and methodically pluralizes its research positions. On the one hand, this is achieved by rethinking established topics and methods in the individual disciplines with the goal of exploring an interdisciplinary research field "on their edges." On the other hand, such a pluralization takes place through the elaboration of a specific epistemological vocabulary. German cultural sociologist Andreas Reckwitz regards a distinct vocabulary as epistemologically critical for the "transformation of cultural theories," as his comprehensive book is titled

(Reckwitz 2000: 644). Clifford Geertz, by contrast, derives a "cultural vocabulary" in a more targeted fashion from the differential formations of a "world in pieces." As Geertz explains, "The vocabulary of cultural description and analysis needs also to be opened up to divergence and multiplicity" (Geertz 2000: 246). In fact, influenced by approaches in the study of culture (e.g., in historiography), new key categories have been developed, including not only discontinuity, break, threshold, border/boundary and difference, but more recently connection, inclusion, cultural borrowing and transition (on these new trends, see Bynum 2009: 80–81). These categories are increasingly replacing traditional coherence concepts such as author, work, influence, tradition, development, identity, mentality and intellect – with significant consequences for an entirely new perception of the problem. There has also been a rise in jargon-like terms such as globalization, modernization, hybridity and transnationality. However, even these general concepts can be analyzed in a more nuanced way with the help of the various turns, which have continued to provide new knowledge-guiding impetus along the fine line between analysis and jargon.

This book regards the specific vocabulary of the study of culture above all as enabling transdisciplinary translation processes between theory, methodological attitudes and research approaches – processes that are strengthened by "traveling concepts" (on such concepts, see Clifford and Dhareshwar 1989; Clifford 1997; Said 1983; Bal 2002; Neumann and Nünning 2012; Bachmann-Medick 2014; Langenohl 2014). Of course, cultural turns not only make it possible for concepts to travel between disciplines but also show how this migration produces global social contexts in which concepts are translated and adapted in new intercultural appropriations. As a result, the human sciences and the study of culture have gained a specific dynamic that would be wrongly identified merely as "theory transformation." Rather, this dynamic should be seen as a complex process involving the translation of concepts and theories, spurred by the growing global challenges of "blurrings" and the many differences and dislocations that need to be dealt with.

Refiguration through "Blurred Genres"

Such an approach, which is specifically aimed at the elaboration and translational relations of turns, reflects the "stress on connectivity" that Caroline Walker Bynum has highlighted as a characteristic of the modern humanities and historiography (Bynum 2009: 82). It stands in opposition to the conventional reconstruction of strands and schools of theory such as structuralism, poststructuralism, functionalism, hermeneutics and semiotics. Here a groundbreaking role

has been played by the development of modern cultural anthropology, which has undergone various turns itself. It was above all Clifford Geertz who heralded the start of the turns' rise to success – paradoxically, in a retrospective on the history of science. Geertz linked the development of the human sciences in the 1960s – particularly the emergence of symbolic anthropology – to

> more general intellectual trends – trends which in the following decades would, under such rubrics as the linguistic, the interpretive, the social constructionist, the new historicist, the rhetorical, or the semiotic "turn," become increasingly powerful in all the human sciences. (Geertz 1995: 114–115)

In a kind of autobiographical self-testimony, Geertz reconstructs the field of cultural research from the perspective of a contributor to the discourse and as one of its leading figures. In this reconstruction, though, he also argues historically by claiming that the basis of the turns was the "philosophical disquietudes" (Geertz 1995: 128) that could be observed in "an increasingly unsettled intellectual field" during the upheaval in the 1960s and 1970s (133). According to Geertz, it was above all cultural anthropology that faced new challenges due to the disintegration of colonialism, decolonization and the new articulations of the independent states of the so-called Third World. At the same time, he portrays the dynamism of theory and research in the human sciences as an "episodical and experiential" development as opposed to a progress-oriented process. Especially noteworthy is that, echoing Kuhn, he also refers to "disciplinary communities" (184).

However, in many critical ways, Geertz goes beyond Kuhn. This becomes particularly evident in the introduction to his book *Local Knowledge* and in one of the essays it contains, "Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought" (Geertz 1983). To be sure, his continued use of Kuhn's constructivism demonstrates that turns are not a matter of academic schools, that they represent research focuses and changes of perspective in which thematic focuses are distilled into methodologically significant investigative attitudes. Research, Geertz claims, is guided by self-created "paradigms." However, moving beyond Kuhn, Geertz grasps the research process explicitly as a meandering through turns, as an active shift from old to new explanatory patterns. In the case of the interpretive turn, there is a shift "from trying to explain social phenomena by weaving them into grand textures of cause and effect to trying to explain them by placing them in local frames of awareness" (Geertz 1983: 6). Geertz further elaborates this "activity of turning" on a metaphoric level and in the process explains how an interpretive turn occurred in his own career: "One makes detours, goes by side roads" (6). These detours and experimental trips down side roads — as well as the shifts and turns they involved – were facilitated by a specific form of representation, the essay: "For making detours and going by side roads, nothing is more convenient than the

essay form" (6). As Geertz emphasizes in "Blurred Genres," an essay central to the "culture shift" (Geertz 1983: 19), it was precisely the openness and aimlessness of the research process that fundamentally transformed the entire field of social scientific research, bringing about a "refiguration of social thought" with far-reaching consequences.

According to Geertz, such a refiguration is achieved via typical genre blurrings – e.g., philosophical reflections taking the form of essays and literature, as well as sociological arguments availing themselves of theater metaphors and role-playing models. However, it is primarily analogies such as theater, drama and text that in Geertz's eyes bring together individual researchers in cross-disciplinary intellectual communities. Such analogies, as well as the direct use of metaphors and concepts, are continuing to have an impact on the research landscape today. When natural scientists speak of "reading the book of life" or characterize genes as texts (see Kay 2000; Weigel 2002), they provide evidence that such analogies exist in modern genetic research as well. The same is true of modern brain research, which uses concepts such as mind, consciousness and free will in a literal sense, thereby "kidnapping" them from philosophy and incorporating them into a materialist theory of cognition. These analogies and transfers between disciplines are associated with enormous translational difficulties. While offering considerable epistemological opportunities, they challenge the boundaries of "disciplinary communities."

New Orientations through "Heightened Scholarly Awareness"?

Matters become problematic, though, when metaphorization extends beyond the practice of genre blurring and is used, among other things, to explain the emergence and sequence of the turns in the study of culture. In such cases, there is increased temptation to view the evidentiary nature of metaphorical images as an explanation. We see this happening, for example, when the German historian Karl Schlögel, in pursuing a literary mode of history-writing, draws on water metaphors to describe the emergence and resubmergence of turns. For Schlögel, these scholarly turns are "like running waters that seep away and continue to flow unnoticed underground only to return to the surface at some later point time – if at all" (Schlögel 2003: 61–62). It is not surprising that the plethora of organicist metaphors – e.g., "surfacing," "ripening" and "the eve and dawn of knowledge" – are incapable of explaining how shifts such as the spatial turn actually arise:

> Turns that show everything that was previously known to us in a new light cannot be decreed. They occur when the time is ripe, not earlier, not later. ... When the time has come,

> an interpretive monopoly ends and erodes and is deposed and shifted to another place, without any trace of the previous struggles or conflicts. (Schlögel 2003: 60)

Thus, according to Schlögel, when the time is ripe, we have a turn. However, once this turn is expressed in language, it is already complete. Yet “complete” does not mean “completely over.” It is all but impossible to identify the start and end of a turn by means of such metaphorical explanations unless we regard a turn as a mere shift in perceptual attitudes:

> The turn is apparently the modern way of referring to the heightened awareness of dimensions and aspects that were previously neglected. … It suggests that a multitude of very different perspectives are possible on the same subject. It is apparently an enrichment of the act of seeing, perceiving and processing. Turns (in the plural, that is) are evidently an indication that something is afoot: an opening, an expansion, a pluralization of dimensions. (Schlögel 2004: 265)

Heightened awareness is of course just one of the characteristics of a turn, and we also must ask why such shifts in scholarly awareness occur at specific moments in history. What are the “turning points” of each individual turn? This question – as Ansgar Nünning and Kai Sicks have asserted – is key to attempt to situate turns not only systematically but historically (Nünning and Sicks 2012: 5). But instead of concentrating on a single answer, we need to consider an entire range of possible questions. Is it not the generation-specific, political and economic constellations and principles of social flexibility that need to be taken into account as well? This, at any rate, is the claim made by the American historian William Sewell: “It is certainly plausible that the shift from Fordism to flexible accumulation lies behind the great wave of academic cultural turns in the 1980s and 1990s” (Sewell 2005: 59). When it comes to such questions, we find fundamentally different approaches to the cultural turns in different countries. In the German context, for example, the question of knowledge acquisition seems to have priority over political and economic explanations; in the United States, by contrast, we see the exact opposite. It is therefore all the more remarkable that in a kind of “self-referential turn,” the American humanities and cultural studies have one-sidedly ignored other, non-English discussions of turns, especially the German debate, although in the latter turns have long been subjected to detailed analysis (the *AHR* Forum on historiographic turns provides a good example of the meager attention paid to the German discussion).

Turns – A Shift from Object of Study to Analytical Category

Skepticism about metaphorical explanations of the emergence of turns should not be confused with a general rejection of metaphors and analogies in the human sciences and the study of culture. On the contrary, they are a characteristic widespread epistemological tool and mode of representation. Furthermore, it seems typical of the study of culture that its analytical categories are themselves metaphorized. This illuminates the characteristic course of turns. In the first formational stage, we see a discovery of new topics (e.g., ritual, translation, space), which receive special cross-disciplinary attention. On this object and content level, new research fields are explored. But at what point does a turn become a turn? In the past, too little effort has gone into defining and applying clear criteria, although such criteria exist and will be discussed in this book.

However, the current treatment of turns is different. In the U.S. academic community, the cultural disciplines are increasingly making use of a broad variety of turns. Despite these efforts, though, turns have not yet been explicitly developed into methodological tools or analytical categories. Rather, they have been described as "free-floating paradigms" between disciplines (Crane 2010: 170), as "a fleeting academic fashion" as opposed to "a genuine sea change" (Kompridis 2014), as "governing gazes" (Farmer 2013: 1) and as "a shared generational event or moment" (Surkis 2012: 719). It must be noted, though, that the discussion remains quite superficial if one expects nothing more from a turn than for it to serve as "a tool to bring into sharper focus trends that are under way or in the process of emerging" (Perl-Rosenthal 2012: 813). The epistemological potential of turns is considerable and extends beyond the simple observation of ongoing theoretical shifts. It should be more clearly highlighted, especially in the American debate. At any rate, now that a "turn talk" has finally begun in the United States, the time is ripe for this discussion to be conducted in a more structured and systematic fashion (see once again the extensive, critical debate in the *AHR* Forum 2012: xvi). A central question is the extent to which inflationary talk and the spread of ever new turns can be countered or stopped. Here it is indeed crucial to define clear criteria describing when a turn becomes a turn.

We can only speak of a turn if in its next formational stage the new research focus shifts from the object level of new fields of inquiry to the level of analytical categories and concepts – in other words, if the potential turn does not merely identify new objects of study, but becomes a tool and medium of knowledge itself. For example, as part of the performative turn, priority was given not only to analyzing and creating a "heightened awareness" of ritual, but also to recognizing social processes (such as social dramas) in new ways through the use of the tools of ritual analysis. Another important aspect was the examination of their proces-

sual structure. This shift from object level to analytical category involves a crucial transformation of the categorical level or even a conceptual shift. Here objects of inquiry such as ritual, translation and space are transformed into analytical categories that can be used to grasp phenomena in a way that goes beyond an understanding of them as traditional subject areas in the narrow sense. In such a process, translation, for instance, is expanded beyond the translation of languages and texts as a subject area and becomes a more general category of cultural translation and even translation as an all-encompassing social practice of mediation and negotiation. This type of conceptual shift triggered by a turn has a powerful effect because it is normally accompanied by the transformation of an initially descriptive term into an operative concept that can form and change reality (Welsch 1999: 200).

However, it is also characteristic of the dynamics of turns that during their emergence and dissemination, an analytical category is initially metaphorized. The metaphor of "culture as translation" – derived from Homi Bhabha's definition of culture as a process of translation and negotiation (see Bhabha 1994: 38, 172–173) – can be seen as an example. This metaphorization process lends a turn its special force, but the question of how powerful and assertive the new focus will be depends on the extent to which its epistemological potential as an analytical category ultimately surpasses its effectiveness as a metaphor. For the perspective of translation, for example, this implies a move beyond the new metaphor of a translational culture. Only if the dynamic of metaphorization can be slowed down does translation have the potential to become a specific analytical category. It can then be used to examine transfers of experience or even social translational processes (e.g., in cultural encounters or migration contexts). It can also be used to break up fixed units of cultural analysis (see the chapter "The Translational Turn"). In other words, an epistemological shift is necessary for turns to provide an analytical framework for understanding the constellations of the social problems from which they emerge – e.g., fragmentations or hybridizations caused by international migration flows, global space-time compressions, transnationalization, networks, as well as other social pluralization phenomena and "historiographic 'moment(s)'" (Perl-Rosenthal 2012: 812).

The social foundations of turns are thus made permanent by their specific theoretical development. After all, we should be able to verify whether a purported turn is really a turn on the basis of the trajectory it takes. Another important criterion is its cross-disciplinary dissemination and validity – i.e., its application across the majority of disciplines in the humanities and the social sciences. In addition, turns do not simply arrive out of the blue. Theory-forming micro-events, which are either actively strengthened or suppressed, play a critical role.

2 Changing Currents of Theory – Changing Pioneering Disciplines

This book addresses the thematic conceptual force of turns, which derives from a variety of conditions and tensions. But its focus is on the turns' ability to form new conceptual research perspectives that cut across disciplines.

The chain of turns was set into motion primarily by cultural anthropology, particularly by its American branch, which differs considerably from the German tradition of philosophical anthropology. Cultural anthropology of the Anglo-American persuasion does not assume anthropological constants or universalizable knowledge systems (on the specific differences between both schools of anthropology, see Barth et al. 2005 and also Lutter and Reisenleitner 2002). Rather, its research interests stem from an engagement with cultural differences. Cultural anthropology was long a foundry of important ideas for the other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. It allowed these disciplines to recognize cultural otherness and plurality and prompted them to study cultural differences in human behavior. It was cultural anthropology that thus contributed to the rise of a comprehensive "cultural turn" in the human sciences. This reorientation was highly differentiated. It initially took the form of an anthropological turn that unfolded across the social sciences (Lepenies 1981: 245) and ran parallel to both the "anthropologization of knowledge" (Frühwald et al. 1991: 51, 70) and the anthropologization process in literary studies and historical anthropology (see Brettell 2015: 73–85, 11–34; on the new formation of an "anthrohistory" between the disciplines, see Murphy et al. 2011).

These foundations in cultural anthropology proved to be especially fruitful for the internationalization of this turn and its insistence on otherness as a methodological principle. As is well known, though, anthropological research has long abandoned its focus on foreign cultures and, in the sense of a "repatriation," has increasingly turned its attention to both the familiar phenomena of modern industrial societies (such as organizations, see Cefkin 2009: 137ff.) and the multilocal interactions and networks of a "multisited ethnography" (see Marcus and Fischer 1999: xxiii, 111–136). As a result, in an analytical shift similar to the one made by the cultural turns, anthropology has moved beyond its traditional subject area – the regional focus of area studies – and assumed the status of a systematic discipline. In this form it has provided a crucial theoretical basis for cultural and intercultural reflections as a whole, primarily by developing cross-disciplinary analytical categories and offering conceptualization incentives through a "cultural critique." These far-reaching effects were triggered by the epistemology of an "ethnographic gaze" (Clifford 1986: 12), which itself was provoked by the confrontation with otherness and which, as a necessary defamiliar-

izing view, came to be directed toward the observer's own culture – toward social institutions, norms, values and habits. This defamiliarizing practice of cultural analysis has had a broad impact on the humanities and social sciences, not only as a simple intellectual exercise, but as an activity that is closely linked to social realities and issues. In Anglo-American cultural studies more than in the German-language *Kulturwissenschaften*, this practice has been driven by social processes themselves, by ethnic conflicts, minority and identity politics, civil rights movements and the experiences of migration and diaspora with their hybrid overlaps of multiple cultural affiliations. Given this stimulus, one cannot really say that the cultural turns have taken place in a laboratory of theory. Rather, they are clearly connected to social and cross-cultural processes that they in turn help to shape with their conceptual perspectives.

This critical defamiliarizing view of one's own cultural reality is continuing to inspire research into previously ignored cross-disciplinary subject areas. In the discipline of historical studies, these have included the histories of madness, boredom, disgust, dreams and memory. Here the history of everyday life and historical anthropology have done pioneering work. In literary studies, a similar function has been performed by literary themes such as honor, fetish, skin, love and violence, as well as by an expanded text concept that encompasses media, orality and performance and that stands in marked contrast to the field's traditional orientation toward the work of an individual author (Parker 2014). It is noteworthy that this expansion of subject areas – both in and beyond the disciplines of history and literary studies – has apparently resulted from the continued pressure to innovate. Admittedly, this has also led to a questionable fixation on specific topics.

By contrast, turns could be put to more productive use to reformulate the categories of the humanities themselves with respect to a deeper awareness of methodology and theory formation. In this context it could be shown in more concrete terms what a defamiliarizing view of a scholar's own discipline and culture can mean. Such an approach could even challenge scholarly categories in terms of their Western determinations and claims to both generalizability and universal applicability. For literary studies, this could mean revising the concepts of era and genre as well as the criteria for forming literary canons – especially in view of the embeddedness of literary history in the history of colonialism (see above all Said 1993 and "The Postcolonial Turn" in this volume). The new, post-colonially reflected discussions about world literature in the humanities and comparative literature embody this approach (see, among many others, Damrosch 2014).

In this book the engagement with turns should therefore be understood as an attempt to overcome the trend toward excessive thematic fixations and to make use of the turns' characteristic shift from objects of investigation to analytical cat-

egories. With the help of such an approach, it is possible to operatively transform thematically charged descriptive concepts into methodologically innovative analytical categories. As a result, in conjunction with the critique of categories and the expansion of methodologies, the study of culture can be taken to a new level. It can be given an overarching application framework that moves it beyond the development and expansion of new subject areas and creates productive systematic research perspectives. This is precisely what the turns promise. The central questions are thus: What additional turns can we expect in the study of culture? Are turns superficial scholarly fashions or do they embody more enduring research focuses? Where exactly are they situated in the international research landscape?

The use of the word "turn" is quite revealing from a transcultural perspective. The *Oxford English Dictionary* describes its complex semantic field and emphasizes its pragmatic life-world connotations, which continue to resonate in the narrower "research turn" concept (695–698). The corresponding German term *Wende* has the final-sounding ring of an epochal transformation or an "era-separating" event (see the entry on *Wende* in Grimm 1955: 1744). This means that *Wende* – much like Martin Heidegger's concept of *Kehre*, which can also mean "turn" (see Raulff 1987: 7) – has a moral and political emphasis. For this reason alone, it makes sense for German scholars to use the English term to describe the research turns in the study of culture, for it gives them a certain critical distance and allows them to join the international debate. Although the remarkable career of the English word "turn" in German-language discourses indicates an internationalization of cultural reflection, one might also ask whether there are not specific developments of full-fledged turns in German-language research that should be taken more seriously – particularly the turn associated with the memory concept (see Assmann 2012a; Erll 2011; Erll and Nünning 2008).

Nevertheless, the present book concentrates on the most important turns to have emerged from the international entanglements of various country-specific approaches in cultural theory. Especially striking is that in the French debate that began with the advent of the linguistic turn, there has been less talk of turns – or *tournants* – and a greater emphasis placed on the formative role that has been played by independent approaches to theory along other axes of discourse and along other boundaries of the intellectual field. Some of these approaches are situated in realms where, as Ulrich Raulff once emphasized with respect to the history of mentalities, "the lines followed by the turns, the tropics, as it were, intersect" (Raulff 1987: 8). They include intertextuality (Julia Kristeva), mentality/history of mentalities (Marc Bloch/Lucien Febvre and the Annales School), transfer (Michel Espagne/Michael Werner/Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink), *histoire croisée* (Michael Werner/Bénédicte Zimmermann), academic/literary field (Pierre

Bourdieu) and memory/sites of memory (Pierre Nora). In other words, after the linguistic turn, a range of discourses emerged in France that were not oriented primarily toward turns. In addition, from the outset, *science culturelle* did not decouple itself from the *sciences sociales* as an independent complex within the study of culture. Quite the contrary – as a result of the strong link between scholarship and society, the theoretical approaches broadened the narrowly defined path of the linguistic turn at a very early stage (see Chalard-Fillaudeau 2009; Bachmann-Medick 2014a).

The Linguistic Turn

All the reorientations in the study of culture must come to grips with a crucial "mega" turn – the linguistic turn. It sparked the so-called cultural turn, which can be described in general as the historic trigger of a dynamic process of cultural reflection. This book deliberately refrains from devoting a separate chapter to the linguistic turn. The reason is that it not only runs through all the individual turns, but has provided a powerful framework for the additional reorientations and shifting focuses that have built upon it. Ultimately, the linguistic turn has had a foundational function that is even seen by some as marking an outright paradigm shift. One of these scholars is Richard Rorty, who views it as part of "the most recent philosophical revolution, that of linguistic philosophy" (Rorty 1992: 3).

The linguistic turn emerged from linguistic philosophy. The word itself was coined by Gustav Bergmann in the 1950s:

> All linguistic philosophers talk about the world by means of talking about a suitable language. This is the linguistic turn, the fundamental gambit as a method, on which ordinary and ideal language philosophers … agree. (Bergmann 1964: 177)

This turn in linguistic philosophy was concerned not with concrete statements about reality, but with statements about a language that is suitable for making such statements. In 1967 Rorty billed this approach as a linguistic turn in an essay collection he edited titled *The Linguistic Turn* (1992). The conviction that the limits of language represent the limits of thought – that there is no reality beyond language or its use – produced an insight with far-reaching consequences. Any analysis of reality is linguistically determined and filtered:

> Since traditional philosophy has been (so the argument goes) largely an attempt to burrow beneath language to that which language expresses, the adoption of the linguistic turn presupposes the substantive thesis that there is nothing to be found by such burrowing. (Rorty 1992: 10)

In its initial form, the conception of language underlying the linguistic turn goes back to the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure (1916) – in particular, to Saussure's understanding of language as a self-contained synchronic system of signs (*langue*). A linguistic sign has an identity not in itself but in distinction to others. Just as apples, for example, are defined by the fact that they are not oranges, so too does "a" have an identity because it is not "b." In other words, linguistic signs are interconnected within a system of differences; they form a structure. Building on these insights from structuralist linguistics, proponents of the linguistic turn assume that reality is structured by language and, like language itself, should be understood as a system of signs, representations and differences.

The linguistic turn began with the understanding of the linguistic dependency and antecedency of texts and representations as fundamental epistemological conditions and transferred this to the other human sciences, far beyond linguistic philosophy. One of the turn's essential characteristics is its strict departure from positivism, which, well into the 1960s, attributed knowledge of reality to quantifiable data. By contrast, the linguistic turn assumes that it is impossible to access an "authentic" reality. Language cannot be used to describe an underlying reality that is independent of it. In other words, instead of describing reality, language constitutes it: all knowledge of reality is cast in linguistic statements and there is no reality that is not informed or shaped linguistically. This filter of linguisticality – upon which the text theories of the French philosophers Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida build – implies, for example, that a field such as historiography has access only to a textually and linguistically mediated world. Historiography is able to catch a glimpse of human experience only to the extent that historical documents permit it to do so. Thanks to this insight into the linguistic conditionality and facilitation of reality-experiences, findings about history and historical narratives, the linguistic turn has assumed the form of a narrative turn in the discipline of history (see Sarasin 2003; on the heterogeneous effects of the linguistic turn on historiography, Surkis 2012; Spiegel 2005; Clark 2004). Historical facts are always preconstructed by historians (White 1985, 1986) and the feelings and motives of historical actors must therefore be construed not as authentic articulations of individuals but as the result of linguistically mediated codes of emotion and action. Linguistic encodings occur upstream of the actors' personal intentions (i.e., their supposedly independent mental worlds). It is in this regard that the semiotic turn, which took place in the late 1960s, can be reconnected to its foundations within the linguistic turn (see the chapter "The Interpretive Turn").

Thus, all human knowledge, including scientific knowledge, is structured by language. A paradigm shift can be seen in the fact that language inserted itself between the subject and object in the traditional philosophy of consciousness.

The mentalist paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness yielded to the linguistic paradigm of linguistic analytical philosophy. In other words, the linguistic turn brought insight into the constructivism of reality. This naturally had significant consequences for the formative power of representations. The subject was now seen as an interface between discourses; as will be shown in the chapter on the reflexive turn, rhetorical patterns inform all scholarly representations. Furthermore, it was recognized that reality is man-made – i.e., that it is processed in and produced by symbols and that the cultural construction of reality is always accompanied by a potential struggle over the assertion of systems of meaning. Representations can thus generate realities. As part of this deeper examination of the sphere of cultural representation, a key goal has been to uncover the symbolic strategies used to represent social power relations. It is this perspective that the linguistic turn expanded as part of the discourse in the study of culture – by liberating it from its one-sided fixation on the structure of language (*langue*) and by increasingly focusing on the unexamined topics of speech event, current speech, communication and performance (*parole*).

Cultural Turns after the Linguistic Turn

The linguistic turn has been the common thread running through all the turns in the study of culture. However, it was increasingly dethroned in this general reorientation by new focuses that heralded the return of previously suppressed elements. In other words, these new focuses gradually reintroduced the dimensions of culture, everyday life, history and above all agency that had been ignored and hidden by the constraints of the linguistic turn. Although the dominance of the linguistic turn continues to be proclaimed or criticized in quite general terms (see Spiegel 2005; Clark 2004), the individual turns have produced independent approaches that place new emphasis on and transform the linguistic turn – approaches that have repeatedly provided new stimulus for research.

The linguistic turn was undoubtedly put to its first real test by the interpretive turn in American cultural anthropology in the 1970s. The “semiotic concept of culture” (Geertz 1975: 14) and the metaphor of “culture as text” that then came to prevail in cultural anthropology embodied a variation of the linguistic turn in the study of culture and social sciences. Until that time, cultural anthropology had had a social anthropological focus and, using the tools of structural functionalism, it had primarily examined social structures. With the work of Clifford Geertz, this focus shifted to interpretive cultural anthropology and a reevaluation of culture – though not understood in the traditional sense as a “complex whole” (Edward B. Tylor), but specifically as a system of signs and symbols that was inter-

pretable and engaged in self-interpretation itself. Every society produces specific forms of expression in which it interprets itself – e.g., presentational modes such as art, theater, rituals and festivals. It is precisely this public sphere of representation through which we gain access to cultural meanings. On the basis of this insight, the interpretive turn evolved into a cross-cultural extension of the field of hermeneutics, one that revolved around the question: "What happens to *verstehen* when *einfühlen* disappears?" (Geertz 1983: 56). After all, if we can no longer rely on our empathy with the intentions and purposes of the other in our attempt to understand unfamiliar cultural contexts, we must seek an objectifiable point of access to cultural meanings through signs and symbols – i.e., through "culture as text." As far as the culture concept goes, this phrase poses one of the greatest challenges of recent decades because it includes acts as well as texts. It has led to considerable unease concerning the dominance of textuality, language and discourse because it raises the specter that historical reality is nothing more than a mere text, that this reality is being distorted by a culturalist lens. This critique of culturalism has provided the greatest impetus for the applied theoretical development and expansion of the textual interpretive turn (on the challenges of textuality for the study of culture, see Bachmann-Medick 2012).

The first step in this critical direction was taken by the performative turn, which not only took up the textual approach but made it more dynamic. The transition from the interpretive to the performative turn is methodologically quite revealing because it shifted attention from text and meaning to representation and performative practice. Important dimensions hidden by the phrase "culture as text" returned: materiality, cultural dynamics, situational conditions and processes of dialogical exchange. It was through these categories that the omnipotence of the linguistic turn was undermined. Corporeality and the non-verbal dimensions of action came to the fore and there was also a stronger focus on historical actors, conflicts, transgressions and cultural subversion. In other words, there was a move toward categories overlaid by the bias toward discourse in the wake of the linguistic turn. The cultural anthropological analysis of ritual by Victor Turner and the linguistic speech act theory of John Austin further developed these practical categories for the purpose of cross-disciplinary application. For this purpose they also drew on analyses of expressive action and performance. The new key questions became: How is reality produced and staged? What performance structure do actions have – e.g., at festivals and carnivals, in cultural representational media such as sports, in political stagings and religion, as well as in drama and theater? The view of "culture as performance" requires the individual disciplines to explain the dynamism of social processes via the cultural sphere of expression. The focus on materiality, mediality and the creative force of staged social culture makes the more comprehensive process of cultural sym-

bolism accessible in terms of its concrete details. In the context of ritual, we see most clearly how closely the production of symbols is intertwined with actions and social practices. It is here that the important concept of liminality was first developed – a concept that was destined to have far-reaching consequences for the analysis of individual and social transitional processes as a whole.

There is no denying that the performative turn managed to introduce performativity, experience and practice as rediscovered categories of historical analysis and thus to replace the language- and text-based "grammar of action" that followed the linguistic turn (see Spiegel 2005: 18). However, in contrast to Gabrielle Spiegel (2005), we should not content ourselves with redefining culture as a performative concept. The reason is that additional turns were required to allow research in the study of culture to transcend the tensions between text and practice. Only with these turns was it possible to overcome the fixation on the old approaches of the linguistic turn. Naturally, this development went hand in hand with a shift in the discipline that was providing impetus. The reflexive turn, which transferred the expanding practice of (critical) self-reflection in cultural anthropology to other disciplines, once again drew attention to the fact that cultural anthropology had long served as a key discipline in the study of culture. The impetus for self-criticism in the study of culture emerged from the attempt not only to identify but also to cope with the "crisis of representation." This was achieved by critically examining the scholarly writing process itself and reconnecting representations (including digital transformations) to their complex environment. Scholars have, for example, brought to light the reception-related representational and narrative strategies pervading not only ethnographic monographs, but also cultural descriptions – strategies that include literary patterns, plots and the use of metaphor and irony. Such work has called attention to the considerable ability of authors to control and manipulate readers as well as to the dependence of cultural descriptions on the authority of the author or scholar (see Bachmann-Medick 2008a). In other words, it is no accident that the reflexive turn is also known as the rhetorical or literary turn. In addition, it is worth noting that cultural anthropology as the provider of impetus needed to undergo a literary turn itself in which it began opening to literary studies (Evans 2007).

Literary studies must also be seen as the initiator of the postcolonial turn in the 1980s. Following decolonization and its critical representation in the non-European literatures of the world, this discipline provided important cultural-theoretical insights and conceptualizations. Above all, it critically resituated questions of identity and representation along the axes of cultural difference, alterity and power. Influenced by the postcolonial turn, ethnographic self-reflection was also further politicized. The reflexive turn had already raised important questions about the authority of representation that touched on the dimensions of power,

rule and cultural inequality. In the wake of colonialism and in a world of unequal power relations, these questions were increasingly the subject of reflections on a global scale, embedded in a critical view of Eurocentrism. Such developments made the postcolonial turn the first reorientation in the study of culture that from the outset globally positioned its own set of problems and methodologies in a transnational framework of asymmetric power relations. Initially, the postcolonial turn was shaped by the concrete experience of decolonization, by postcolonial liberation movements and anti-colonial resistance. But this direct political activism was increasingly replaced by a kind of linguistic turn within postcolonial theory. The initial historical political impetus eventually led to a critique of discourse with its perpetuation of colonial power at the level of knowledge systems.

It is this epistemological dynamic that ultimately transformed the postcolonial turn into a real turn, for beyond colonial and postcolonial contexts, the postcolonial turn has forced the human sciences as a whole increasingly to question their own premises. A crucial factor has been its fundamental principle of recognizing and negotiating cultural difference and thus its renunciation of rigid essentialist definitions. As a result, it has undermined not only dichotomous attitudes toward knowledge but also the epistemological "violence" with which the master discourse of Western rationalism has established itself throughout the world. The postcolonial turn made its breakthrough in the study of culture by expanding this field on a global and transcultural scale. It has encouraged scholars not only to broaden the Europe-focused canon of objects of study in the humanities and social sciences, but also to rethink the universalizing Eurocentric claims of their scientific categories. Particularly striking here are the demands for both "cross-categorical translations" (Chakrabarty 2000: 85) and critical research into the way actual translation processes unfold in the field of intercultural conflict. Such demands suggest that a translational turn has already begun within the postcolonial turn.

And, indeed, a translational turn has been unfolding generally over the last decade. Beyond text and language translation, the category of translation has been developed as one of the basic concepts in the social sciences and the study of culture – and it has also come to be seen as an essential social practice in cultural encounters. There has been an ongoing effort in the study of culture to explore new methodological approaches to the "in-between spaces" that transcend dichotomous demarcations and binary epistemological attitudes. It is in the category of translation that these approaches have an empirical basis. Identity, migration and exile, as well as other cross-cultural phenomena, need to be viewed as concrete scenarios of interaction shaped by translation processes and the necessity for self-translation. Here the new translational concept of culture ("culture as translation") is given a practical footing – "as a repeated 'transla-

tion' of incommensurable levels of living and meaning" (Bhabha 1994: 38, 125). It is also worth emphasizing that we can gain more detailed insight into cultural in-between spaces if we examine them as translational spaces by means of a spatial approach.

Under the influence of historicism, the human sciences and the study of culture used to be dominated by the category of time. In recent years, though, attention has shifted to a reassertion of space. A spatial turn has been initiated primarily by the experience of global connectedness, but also by the postcolonial drive to recognize the simultaneity of different cultures and steer scholarship toward a critical re-mapping of the hegemonic centers and marginalized peripheries of the emerging world society. In these increasingly global times with their tendency toward placelessness, cross-border migration and flows of goods, problems associated with "location" have come strongly to the fore. As a result, questions about the "location of culture," as Homi Bhabha's well-known book is titled, have been linked to the demand to use the new focus on space to transform the understanding of culture itself. In the newly emerging field of "spatial scholarship" (Warf and Arias 2009: 2), space has become an indispensable analytical category, a construction principle for social behavior, a dimension of materiality and experience, as well as a highly effective representational strategy. Narratives and mapping practices are no longer unfolding along the temporal axis. As a result, they are no longer explicitly caught in the snares of evolutionism and assumptions of development and progress. Cultural geography has taken up the reins, in tune with political geography, urban planning and activism. For this reason alone, cultural analysis under the banner of spatial thinking has been strengthened vis-à-vis the constraints of the linguistic turn. Not everything can be taken as a mere sign, symbol or text. The world also consists of material and matter and is governed by power relations and spatial politics.

An even more powerful counter-movement to the linguistic turn – one that is more clearly delineating it at the same time – currently seems to be emerging with the iconic/pictorial turn. This shift toward a pictorial/visual perspective has been attracting attention since the 1990s, particularly due to our increasingly media-controlled societies. It is directed against the domination of language and the linguistic system and, in addition, against the logocentrism of Western culture. Its representatives are calling for a renewed awareness of the epistemological value of images that stems from their evidentiary character and "showing" function (on the pictorial turn, see Klein 2005: 123–127). As regards this turn, we can once again make out critical differences in the various scholarly systems of the study of culture. They are embodied by the distinctions between German-language image science (*Bildwissenschaft*) and Anglo-American visual studies. In other words, as part of the iconic turn in German-language research – driven by

the disciplines of art history, media theory and image studies – scholars have come to reflect on historical approaches to images and pictoriality, with a focus that extends to modern visual worlds (e.g., electronically and digitally created images with a relevance to image politics and the media, photos from surveillance cameras, etc.). Here we find an interface with the American pictorial turn, which is based not in "disciplines" but in "interdisciplines" or studies. In this context, visual studies and visual culture are broadening the spectrum to include a comprehensive regime of visual forms of perception (on the difference between the scholarly cultures shaping the iconic and pictorial turns, see Mersmann 2014).

The new visual perspectives are no longer confined to images as objects of perception, interpretation and knowledge. They are also focusing on the ability of images and other visual experiences to generate knowledge in the first place. What is at stake here is no longer an understanding *of* images, but, increasingly, understanding *by means of* images and visuality, the attempt to grasp the world through images and the specific cultures of seeing and the gaze. Here we once again find confirmation of the epistemological shift that is characteristic of a turn – the shift from the object level to the level of analytical category. It is precisely this shift that is leading to a productive connectivity with various other disciplines and approaches, including the new imaging processes, visualization methods and perceptual techniques in the natural sciences, neurosciences and medicine.

However, when we examine the chain of turns, we also find a clear conflict between the comprehensive field of gender research, on the one hand, and the turns' inclination toward a certain gender blindness, on the other. Readers may be disappointed to discover no separate chapter on a "gender turn" in this book, but would it really have been useful to discuss the universally relevant issue of gender under the heading of a single turn? There have of course been references to a turn toward gender, particularly in the work of the historian Joan Scott, who in her now classic 1985 essay attempted to establish "gender as an analytic category" as a further development of feminist research (Scott 1996: 166; Scott later questioned whether gender was "still a useful category" after all, see 2010). However, gender first needed to be conceived as a category of analysis in order for it to move beyond its traditional subject area, which was governed by assumptions about the dichotomous patterns of gender relations. Based on a critique of gender polarities, gender could then be used in a more general way to deconstruct hierarchical systems of inequalities and differences, binary oppositions, demarcations and power relations. Thus, gender was eventually transformed from "a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated" into an analytical tool for "signifying relationships of power" (Scott 1996: 169).

Although possessing all the features of a turn (a shift from a thematic field to an analytical category, cross-disciplinary application, etc.), gender is at the same time much, much more. In a basic and pervasive way, it runs through all the turns in the study of culture as a key epistemological axis that structures not only the social system but also the knowledge order – while taking a stand against essentializations, universalizations, identity claims and dichotomizations (see Bachmann-Medick 2008: 134). Here we find an important point of contact with the postcolonial turn; however, to a greater extent than the postcolonial and many other turns, gender, which is just as fundamental as language, has proven to be a basic category of the knowledge order itself. Gender should not be seen as one of the many "theory turns." This is precluded above all by its fundamental nature, but also by the broadening of the gender category itself, its transformation into an intersectional structural characteristic that works together with race, ethnicity, class, age, religion and other key differentiators (on the "intersectional turn" see Carbin and Edenheim 2013) – and that also has an impact through "queering," which initiated the cross-disciplinary "queer turn" (see Berger 2014).

The Impact of the Turn Orientations on the Study of Culture

The questioning of the hierarchized order of knowledge in both gender research and the postcolonial turn has drawn attention to the epistemological potential of the turns. Is it conceivable that the various turns are producing a new paradigmatic constellation that will permanently end the dominance of the linguistic turn? There are signs that the linguistic turn is being completed by the individual turns – that it is being modified and certainly also weakened in a transformation process that is proceeding on a turn-by-turn basis. At any rate, in the study of culture, the linguistic turn has long found its way into more complex research attitudes, ones that have gradually broken up the initial exclusive fixation on language and discourse. Such a highly differentiated study of culture is perhaps even becoming a comprehensive "life science" thanks to the way it is interconnecting language and other dimensions of perception and action – "comprehensive" because it is always self-reflexively justifiable and applicable to its own preliminary conceptual attitudes (on the application of this idea to literary studies as a life science, see Nünning and Basseler 2013). At the same time, this new field is more grounded in empirical research than its deconstructionist precursors. It remains to be seen whether, following Karl Schlögel's lead in the field of historical studies, we can claim that "turns are paving the way for the return of *histoire totale*" (Schlögel 2004: 265). It also remains to be seen whether the seemingly endless self-production of turns and reorientations in the study of culture will not

perhaps culminate in a new "mega" turn after all. There are already indications that the existing and still emerging turns are bringing the humanities as a whole into contact with fields such as biopolitics, economics, neuroscience and digitization. As has been shown by the latest manifestations of a posthuman, digital, economic and material turn, scholars can, with the help of such turns, better explore the study of culture with respect to its productive border zones. But the question also remains as to whether the study of culture can continue to derive its specific dynamic from turns. What will come after the period of cultural turns (see "Outlook")?

Nor should we be deceived into thinking that the turns introduced here are all completely new. In many cases, they are merely important "re-turns" of long practiced research orientations, ones that were insufficiently conceptualized or did not have an adequate theoretical focus. The belief that turns always take place in a linear chronological order is also mistaken. On the contrary, turns often occur simultaneously and are embedded in constellations and entanglements of other arguments. The development of theoretical approaches and research perspectives in the humanities and the study of culture is certainly not a question of a theoretical dynamic that has taken on a life of its own. Even if some of these reorientations first emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, it is only now that we are seeing just how closely related they are to the challenges of today's globalized world and the many ways in which they have succeeded in developing new analytical categories that can meet such challenges. Within this social framework, a range of basic concepts and approaches in the fields of sociology, political science, history, literary studies and cultural anthropology are being critically reviewed, including culture, identity, text, authority, translation, foreignness, alterity, representation, self-understanding/understanding of the other, interculturality and dichotomous thinking. The turns have also set into motion a radical transformation of the concept of culture and its various definitions. The broad understanding of culture as a "complex whole" – which goes back to the work of Edward B. Tylor (1871) and continued to resonate in the interpretive turn – has been further differentiated and sharpened by performance-oriented and practical concepts (see Reckwitz 2005). It has also been supplemented by the difference-based understanding of culture that has increasingly characterized the study of culture since the postcolonial turn.

In the end, one might think that the constellation of these turns and the others presented in this book is one of a conflict-free eclecticism and is thus in keeping with a postmodernism that itself refuses to be boxed into a "postmodern turn" (see Gingrich 1999: 275). As will become clearer in the individual chapters, though, the juxtaposition and proliferation of the turns has created ongoing conflict. These tensions have become particularly intense in Anglo-American cultural

studies and are affecting many current discourses. After all, it is not only the disciplinary boundaries of cultural studies that were crossed quite early on, but also the boundaries between academic discourse, on the one hand, and social and sociopolitical debates and culture wars, on the other. As early as 2000, Clifford Geertz described this contemporary shift in succinct metaphorical terms: "After the turns, there came the wars: the culture wars, the science wars, the value wars, the history wars, the gender wars, the wars of the paleos and the posties" (Geertz 2000: 17–18). In the United States, these culture wars have dominated political debates over definitions of American values (religion, family, etc.) – driven primarily by a conservative camp that is seeking to defend itself against the critical epistemological potential of cultural studies, which has constantly spilled over into the public sphere. Particularly noteworthy, though, is that the critical humanities and the study of culture are still achieving very little, due primarily to the impact of decisions in world politics, which often reveal a lack of awareness of the problems associated with cultural difference.

In the German-language discourse, turns have been more closely linked to the academic disciplines from the very start and have not incorporated the cultural reorientations of non-academic social processes and actors. In recent years, there have even been references to a reified "cultural turn" as a way of emphasizing the fact that the cultural dimensions of global fields of conflict are being exaggerated worldwide: "In the age of the 'cultural turn' people perceive everything in cultural categories and therefore respond culturally to politics" (Tibi 2006, 2012: 45). However, the analytical awareness facilitated by cultural turns enables us to investigate the reasons for such a real-world overcharging of the cultural sphere. Key factors include globalization losses, unequal economic conditions/power relations, failed translation processes and intercultural misunderstandings. The critical tools of the cultural turns are of crucial importance here – if for no other reason than to examine the claims of an increasing culturalization of (world) conflicts and to reveal the problematic understanding of culture behind them.

However, it should be stressed in conclusion that the cultural turns could use their set of critical conceptual and methodological tools in quite another way – namely, to initiate a "re-turn" to the individual disciplines. After all, the orientations in the study of culture are not replacing disciplinary work, although this is often assumed and criticized. Rather, they are being nourished and methodologically developed by the individual disciplines. This is making them into a basic framework for new practices of interdisciplinary collaboration.

Seen as productive re-turns to the individual disciplines or as providers of impetus for a reflexive political contextualization, the cultural turns can help us, on the one hand, to avoid the risk of a shift from "innovation" to intellectual conformism (Bourdieu) while, on the other hand, counteracting the typical signs of

the fatigue (and domestication) of theory production in the study of culture. In the witty aphoristic text "Borrrrrrring!" in the satirical work *Waiting for Foucault, Still*, anthropologist Marshall Sahlins (2002) critically links Kuhn's theory of paradigm shifts to the sequence of turns in the humanities and social sciences. According to Sahlins, it is not only the turns themselves that change, but evidently also the conditions governing the shift in perspective itself: the initial social commitment of the research turns has increasingly given way to considerations of economic utility that place the turns in the service of hegemonic power. However, as Sahlins points out, this is not the only dynamic characterizing the changing currents of theory and theoretical regimes in the study of culture. A rather dubious development is the inflationary trend toward viewing the social and cultural turns as paradigms that provide all-round explanations:

> In the social sciences, paradigms are not outmoded because they explain less and less, but rather because they explain more and more – until, all too soon, they are explaining just about everything. There is an inflation effect in the social science paradigms, which quickly cheapens them. (Sahlins 2002: 73)

Like out-of-fashion clothing, the turns could quickly become outmoded and worn. Have they not already become worn with time? And, reflecting the principles of a capitalist consumer economy, are they therefore not leading to the constant invocation and production of new turns? Despite their tendency to promote "routine research topics," "professional reconciliation" and a "foreclosure effect," as Gary Wilder has observed with regard to historiographical turns (2012: 723, 724), their potential as "radical interventions" (726) can and should be further exploited. For this purpose, though, it is essential to continue developing the turns into analytical categories. And a continuing attempt should be made – as in this book – to constantly translate them back into provocative, catalyzing research ideas that not only excel as theoretical frameworks but also prove fruitful in empirical case studies.

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Chapter I: The Interpretive Turn

The interpretive turn can be seen as an inspiring new orientation that has been responsible for setting the other cultural turns in motion. It bestrides all other concomitant or resulting varieties of the so-called cultural turn in the humanities and social sciences. Even if the interpretive turn emerged as far back as the 1970s, it still has an extraordinarily forceful presence, not least because it established a comprehensive, albeit controversial, text concept. It is through the metaphor of "culture as text" that this concept, in the first instance, typifies the enormously influential interpretive turn. It would thus also suggest the analysis of scientific or scholarly (re-)presentations in their textual character (see the chapter "The Reflexive Turn"). Ultimately this turn encompasses a new practice-oriented and media-conscious interpretation of the category of textuality, with which the study of culture is still concerned in the early twenty-first century. Alongside this expanded concept of text is the equally path-breaking category of "the other," with which anthropology (as *the* discipline of otherness) has helped to launch a more comprehensive interpretive turn that transcends disciplinary boundaries.

Traditional hermeneutic approaches in the study of culture and the humanities are still being confronted with the challenges posed by the experience and understanding of the other. This has led to a clear differentiation and modification of the category of the other, particularly in view of the globalizing dynamic that allows us to speak of an otherness of foreign cultures and societies only in a mediated way. Ultimately, interpretive cultural anthropology has triggered a fundamental re-examination of the concept of culture that is still ongoing; it was responsible for introducing the category of culture into social-scientific analyses of society and thereby largely supplanting the analytical category of "social system." It is in this connection that interpretive cultural anthropology has made its special focus on (cultural) meanings a key to opening up the social sciences and cultural studies to each other.

The interpretive turn has thus primarily been based on the insights of interpretive cultural anthropology, or ethnology, and in terms of both subject matter and methodology, it triggered momentous changes in the social sciences, humanities and cultural studies. Up until that point, anthropology had been primarily shaped by an omnipotent social-science approach based less on the understanding of symbols than on structural analyses; it therefore tended to make "scientific" generalizations. It was with the interpretive turn that text came to hold sway. And yet mere reference to the linguistic turn would be premature here, for textual access is expressly concerned with practical contexts and not with a skeptical fracturing of the relationship between language and reality. Moreover, it is distinguished by an innovative new process called "genre blurring." At least that

is what Clifford Geertz, the father of modern interpretive cultural anthropology, dubbed the increasing blurring of boundaries between the social sciences and cultural studies through analogy formation – meaning the proliferation of interpolative metaphors and interpretive models in both the social sciences and the study of culture.

In Geertz's seminal essay "Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought" (Geertz 1983: 19–35) this fundamental interpretive shift is addressed. What Geertz means is that anthropology and the social sciences have renounced laws, structures and functions as bases of social-scientific explanation. Taking their place was a focus on case studies, individual instances, details and above all interpretations. In short, social anthropology had been concentrating on social institutions, law, economics and kinship; cultural anthropology, on the other hand, directs its attention to systems of knowledge and interpretation. Instead of those technical and natural-scientific analogies, which had hitherto prevailed, analogies from the humanities increasingly came into play, above all the game, theater and text models. But "genre blurring" also means a transgression of limits at the level of scholarly and literary representation itself. For instance, philosophical treatises were increasingly written in the style of essays, theoretical ethnographical tracts appeared as travel accounts (e.g., Claude Lévi-Strauss) and fiction took on the guise of theoretical writing. Yet that which at first appears to be a mere stylistic device goes much deeper, for it indicates how strongly the interpretive turn valorizes the symbolic sphere of cultural (and then also scientific or scholarly) representation. This sphere is proclaimed the key medium of an interpretation of culture that works with metaphors – in fact, it was proclaimed *the* cognitive medium plain and simple.

1 The Formation of the Interpretive Turn

The historical and epistemological classification and mapping of the particular turns is crucially dependent on what kind of descriptive perspective one assumes. Thus a derivation of the interpretive turn from a philosophical perspective – as it is undertaken, for instance, in the "second look" of Paul Rabinow and William Sullivan (1987) – departs from the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer, the Frankfurt School and Paul Ricœur. A sociological derivation à la Anthony Giddens (1976/1993), on the other hand, stresses the tradition of interpretive sociology extending from Wilhelm Dilthey and Max Weber to Alfred Schütz and ethnomethodology. Another desideratum would be a placement in the history of the politics of science. This would be in reference to the decolonization processes beginning in the 1950s and the liberation movements in the so-called Third

World. For it was in considering these contexts that anthropology arrived at the cutting edge of examining both its imperial enmeshment and its traditional field research methods – with the result being a transdisciplinary critique of ethnocentrism.

For this reason it would seem obvious to develop the interpretive turn as guided by the emerging interpretive/critical self-conception of cultural anthropology itself. Here would ultimately be an experience of the other that reached beyond Europe and the West while at the same time marking out a self-reflexive context of knowledge. Both contexts would suggest the necessity of embedding the study of culture in an intercultural perspective from the outset. Both its valorization and clarification of the concept of culture as well as its self-reflexive and intercultural scope made cultural anthropology into a leading and influential discipline. It was cultural anthropology that initiated the so-called cultural turn in the social sciences and promoted the development of more comprehensive and cross-disciplinary research in cultural studies.

It is under the banner of interpretation that cultural anthropology has hopped the already departed hermeneutic train of phenomenology and interpretive sociology in a kind of "catch-up development" (Berg and Fuchs 1993: 19). But then cultural anthropology, of its own accord, diverted this train to the tracks of a broader interpretive turn. In its own ranks the concern was initially with displacing scientifically informed structural functionalism, which had previously prevailed in the social sciences and above all anthropology – particularly in the ambit of British structural functionalism, which took on critical mass at the University of Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s. One can only first speak of cultural anthropology in this connection when a broader interpretive turn – against the predominant fixation on structure – expressly aimed at winning back the cultural dimension (see Handler 1991: 608). From today's perspective this seems remarkable, particularly in view of the ensuing inflationary diffusion of the culture concept and a concomitant culturalist reductionism that still persists today. Yet why did such a change in direction occur at all?

The personal testimony of Clifford Geertz (one of the main protagonists alongside Paul Rabinow and David Schneider) indicates a long period in which the discourse gradually emerged – and not, for instance, a certain moment when an individual or collective decision was taken: "But what isn't true is that we all sat down someplace and said, 'Let's give birth to symbolic anthropology'" (Handler 1991: 608). Rather, interpretive cultural anthropology or symbolic anthropology emanated from those conflicts arising from discussions of the university curriculum. Along with the debates over German historicism (Herder, Humboldt) and hermeneutics (Dilthey, Schütz, Gadamer) and with respect to the sociology of Talcott Parsons, the pragmatism of John Dewey and Richard Rorty, another polit-

ically charged methodology came under scrutiny – the French structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss (on the eclectic context of the interpretive turn, see Marcus and Fischer 1999: 25–26). He embodied a new concept that still today is the prerequisite for whatever "turns" – namely, theory-driven research and the breaking up of the individual disciplines. In an interview with Richard Handler, Clifford Geertz asserted that Lévi-Strauss "opened anthropology up by providing a major alternative to British theory" (Handler 1991: 609). As Geertz put it: "He made anthropology an intellectual discipline … he related it to general intellectual currents in the world" (Handler 1991: 609).

Pointing the way ahead was a "worlding" of disciplines – to borrow a concept from Edward Said – the development of theory that should have a relation to the world at large. Yet structuralism, even in Lévi-Strauss's variant, remained a favorite "opponent" for the interpretive project, for in his attempt to reveal the laws of society through quasi-scientific laws and structures, he developed a formalist language. This increasingly detached itself from social discourses, from concerns with the intersubjective production of cultural meanings, from social practices and historical processes of change – similar to British structural functionalism and its scrutiny of societies through the lens of their regular social structures, their functions and institutions (for a critique on structuralism, see Ricœur 1969/2004). The prevailing global view in these approaches remained beholden to a "positivistic social science" (Handler 1991: 607). Thus there was still no renunciation of the scientistic model by the social sciences in sight; rather, there was an attempt "to integrate the human sciences within a natural-scientific paradigm" (Rabinow and Sullivan 1987: 5).

It was from this initial situation that the interpretive turn broke out in a new direction with respect to the integration of the social and natural sciences. Both sciences were to be linked up through interpretation and not, for instance, through the natural-scientific paradigm of behavioral observation or structural explanation (for the emancipation of the social sciences from the model of the natural sciences, see Rabinow and Sullivan 1987: 2ff.). Instead of seeking quasi-scientific explanations of societies – an option that is once more being earnestly discussed with the dawning of the "neurobiological turn" – a more "interpretive explanation" (Geertz 1983: 22) is being sought: What meanings do institutions, actions, images, events and customs have for those who themselves are bearers of these institutions, actions, etc. (Geertz 1983: 22)? Self-interpretations thus became important reference points for cultural analysis – local concepts and indigenous theories as well as culture-specific (self-)representations of experiences and belief systems – in contrast to cause-and-effect explanations, which are mostly embedded in the framework of large-scale general theories.

The discursive emergence of the interpretive turn within an eclectic spectrum of theories is the best evidence available that this turn and subsequent ones are not paradigms – particularly as they dissociate themselves from any claim that social-scientific and cultural-studies approaches can or should attain to paradigmatic status: "The time seems ripe, even overdue, to announce that there is not going to be an age of paradigm in the social sciences" (Rabinow and Sullivan 1987: 5). Indeed, the interpretive shift in cultural anthropology was therefore not marked by an accompanying paradigm shift because there was a historical run-up to it that was longer than one thinks. It goes back to the early twentieth century, when Franz Boas (the German-American anthropologist who became the "founder" of modern cultural anthropology) brought the German tradition of intellectual history to bear on American cultural anthropology. In opposition to the racism of the Social Darwinists and human biologists of his time, Boas stressed the wealth of cultural variants and was a cultural relativist who insisted on the intrinsic worth of every culture. This is the tradition – which has, however, been interrupted by quasi-natural-scientific efforts, namely through structural functionalism – to which Clifford Geertz is beholden. It is in no uncertain terms that he has taken up the anthropological research tradition – but with entirely new emphases after it had been ascertained that the interpretation of symbols had come to be shortchanged by the traditional research approach of "participant observation."

Geertz focused on the organization of social life through signs, symbols and representations as well as on their interpretation. This concern with the level of representation goes beyond the level of mere observation. But it retains its indispensable reference to meaning, as Geertz emphasizes, which contrasts the easy way in which strings of symbols established their independence in the wake of the linguistic turn (Geertz 1983: 30). And it is this reference to meaning that links up the humanities through a shared interpretive perspective. An important bridge here is the increasing exchange of analogies – the "genre blurring" between the social sciences and other human sciences that gives the social and cultural development of theory its distinct quality. Such an exchange of analogies, which also makes discernible social practices in their symbolic forms, denotes a destabilization of disciplinary borders. This was precipitated by a "textual movement" that enlarged to encompass "the rise of 'the interpretive turn'" (Geertz 1983: 23) – meaning the development of a social and cultural science based on hermeneutic cultural semiotics.

In this way important steps were taken to shift the focus of social analysis. Instead of being regarded as an elaborate machine or quasi-organism, society or culture now appeared as a serious game, as a drama or as a behavioral text (Geertz 1983: 23). Instead of causal explanations, determinations, powers and

functions, the concern was now with compliance with certain rules, the construction of representations, the expression of attitudes, meanings and social relations. Predominant here was initially the "game analogy," which is how the American sociologist Erving Goffman regarded social interaction – as role-playing complete with costumes, deception, plots, theatricality and masks; but also the "drama analogy," which saw the world as a stage and in which the social sciences developed ritual-theoretical approaches to "social dramas" (see the chapter "The Performative Turn"). According to Geertz, at first glance it might sound more plausible to construe the behavior of spies, lovers, kings or neuropaths as moves or performances and not as sentences of a text (Geertz 1983: 30). And yet it is the text analogy that has a crucial advantage in that it enables a "fixation of meaning from the flow of events" (Geertz 1983: 31), which goes beyond the signifiers and symbolism of actions and their own power of interpretation. Thus the text analogy still gives cultural studies and the humanities in general an indispensable, albeit extremely vague, common sign. It holds cultural analysis hostage to the "dangerously unfocused term" (Geertz 1983: 30) of the text and its interpretive scope.

2 The Meaning-Oriented Concept of Culture

It was at this point that Geertz's meaning-oriented concept of culture entered the picture. His varied impact in terms of thinking about culture has continued to the present day. For in contrast to structural functionalism, culture is no longer understood functionally as a means for the satisfaction of basic needs or as a system of assimilation. Rather, it is understood as the production of meanings and cultural encodings:

> The concept of culture I espouse … is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical. (Geertz 1975: 5)

Geertz's concern, therefore, is neither the genesis and formation of culture nor a historical approach to cultural analysis but the "fixation of meaning" within a cultural context of meaning. It is not the event-character of actions but their purport that is crucial. And herein lies an important difference to the approach of analytical anthropology, which seeks causal regularity in human behavior and thus brings inherently external scientific models and categories of scientific language to bear on a given object of study. Interpretive research, on the other hand,

attempts in the first place to extrapolate and interpret cultural meanings from the context of field research – and does so through the investigation of signs, symbols and interpretations that themselves are present in the culture under study.

Hermeneutic processes of understanding the other are being questioned here. Geertz does in fact take up hermeneutic methods, but at the same time he significantly transforms them. In his view, phenomena in other cultures, which in most cases deviate to a considerable degree from the transmission contexts of one's own culture, do not produce that "fusion of horizons" (*Horizontverschmelzung*) which seals the process of understanding in Gadamer's hermeneutics. Rather, one of Geertz's guiding questions is, "What happens to *verstehen* when *einfühlen* disappears?" (Geertz 1983: 56). And it is certainly no accident that in the English-language original the termini of German hermeneutics are employed – this question opening the way for a potential intercultural expansion of traditional hermeneutics. Adumbrated here is a hermeneutics that runs aground on the awareness of the other. It is with this setting of the course for the study of culture that it has become inconceivable that any future cultural understanding should make appeal to empathy and that a greater appreciation of intentions and motives should follow. On the other hand, the way has been cleared for access to cultural meanings on a plane that is public and intersubjective; namely, by means of signs and symbols – "culture as text" – if for the sole reason that cultural meanings are not begat in the heads of individuals but are embodied and produced in social practices and social relations.

Methodological Approaches: Synecdochic Mode, Contextualization, Thick Description

Changes of direction in cultural studies can only establish themselves if they are accompanied by pertinent methodical steps. Accordingly, the interpretive turn required a new scientific attitude. The global view of cultures was replaced by microanalyses. Societies and cultures were not studied in their entirety but from the perspective of their significant practices and institutions – e.g., Moroccan society from the perspective of bazaars, or the theatre state of Bali from the perspective of the cockfighting ritual. Detailed case studies were the focus. They required methodological interpolations incongruent with those of traditional hermeneutics – or with those of the structural-functional social sciences. Along with the synecdochic method of attempting to explain or interpret an entire culture/society from one of its significant sectors, processes of contextualization were the focus. Geertz's "new philology" – following the linguistic comparatist Alton Becker – shows what it means to re-inscribe texts with contextualizing interpre-

tations, to interpret texts with the help of other texts through the "multiple contextualization of cultural phenomena" (Geertz 1983: 33) – i.e., through symbolic constructivism. It is with this procedure that the division of textual exegesis from the interpretation of actions could be overcome in order to reconnect the interpretation and analysis of the social process of the constitution of meaning. Only then could one investigate how texts (even literary ones) developed socially as media of cultural meaning and thus function as a "social text" (Geertz 1983: 32).

One can concretely effectuate just such a methodological perspective at the level of a micro-investigation. For instance, literary or narrative interpretations of the self or the individual can be extrapolated with regard to their culture-specific meanings. So too can one integrate emotional concepts, religious notions and forms of communication emanating from culture-specific scenarios into larger behavioral contexts. To achieve this, a new attention to "local knowledge," to "local frames of awareness" (Geertz 1983: 6) is necessary. But contextualization goes yet further. It means an expansion from text to discourse. The example of the Orientalism discourse shows how fertile and necessary it is to correlate texts with a wider field of discursive practices and the formation of discourses. In his book *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said's critique of Orientalism showed that in the field of Orientalism, literary texts such as the novels of Jane Austen had long followed in the wake of colonial and imperial strivings, critically but also affirmatively, carried away by the groundswell of imperialistic expansion (Said 1993: 12–13, 51–52, 80ff.).

Lastly, contextualization is an essential component of a central method of the interpretive turn – namely, that of "thick description." Geertz programmatically explained this methodological metaphor in his seminal essay "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" (1975): the difference between thin and thick descriptions (here, too, the metaphorical gestus) goes back to the philosopher Gilbert Ryle. But Geertz was the first to make it well known. The thickness of a description refers to the semantic thickness of the material – that is, to the complexity and multilayered quality of cultural utterances, here embodied in the "deep play" of the Balinese cockfight. According to Geertz, because there are no essential differences but only those of degree between actions, goods, texts, tales and rituals, one requires a thick description to capture the specificity of a culture from the multi-dimensionality of its forms of expression. It is only through thick description that one can distinguish the culturally significant from the culturally insignificant. Geertz makes this clear with an example: Imagine that three boys are standing together. All three are rapidly moving their eyelids. The movement is the same, but not their respective meanings. In the case of one boy, it is merely an involuntary twitching of the eye (i.e., a meaningless reflex); in the case of the other, it is a wink, an intentional message, a sign that performs a meaningful

communicative function in public (winking as a cultural code); and the third boy is perhaps imitating the other two – parodying their winking and blinking. Whereas a "thin" description comprises only the movement of the eyelid, the "thick" description discovers a cultural sign.

There are other examples – for instance, an earthquake with its interaction of tectonic, religious and social dimensions of meaning – in which one could enlist the contexts, above all self-interpretations within a culture, to ascertain this array of meanings. A cultural anthropological approach avoids the large-scale analytical concepts that are imposed from the outside and instead performs micro-analyses of concrete individual cases. But this does not at all mean that only the surface of the empirical event is apprehended; rather, through a kind of deep drilling, thick description reveals its hidden cultural text – its long-enriched deep meanings, cultural encodings and interpretations. It is not the event as such that is described but rather what it says about a certain culture – its content, the meanings that have been inscribed in it. Geertz makes clear how much pre-understanding enters into the most elementary of descriptions, since "that what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (Geertz 1975: 9). Thick description is thus based on observation of the second order because it interprets the interpretations of others.

An essential feature of thick description is the development of theoretical insights from the concrete research fields of cultural modes of life: "Ethnography has become a way of talking about theory, philosophy, and epistemology while holding to the traditional task of interpreting different ways of life" (Marcus and Cushman 1982: 37). Thick description does indeed bear a striking resemblance to theory through the exactitude of its individual descriptions and the production of density and meaningful condensations through a specific process of what might be termed an "adding up." In cultural interpretations, an entire "ensemble" of texts must therefore be called upon so as to take in various interpretive perspectives (economic, psychological, social, aesthetic, etc.) and in this way to accumulate further layers of meaning – of course always in the attempt to disclose elements of self-interpretation.

And it is here that a problem emerges. How dense must a cultural description be in order for it to be conclusive? The answer remains as vague as is the validation of whether a certain interpretation is "correct." One guiding principle might be the extent to which a description employs experience-near concepts (love) or experience-distant, specialized analytical terms ("object-cathexis") to describe the same phenomenon. Interpretive cultural anthropologists use neither just the one nor the other – they reflect critically on the mix they employ (Geertz 1983: 57). Thick description concedes the incomplete and open-ended aspects of scientific

ethnographic observation, interpretation and description: "Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of 'construct a reading of') a manuscript – foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations" (Geertz 1975: 10). But the privilege of interpretation in anthropology is still used to overdetermine readability. It is thus the metaphor of reading that will have to be linked back to the fundamental assumption of "culture as text."

3 The Metaphor of "Culture as Text"

Development of the text concept in the interpretive turn marked a shift in the emphasis of the linguistic turn. "Text" became linked to its readability while at the same time going beyond its written form. With this new development of the text concept scholars abandoned the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, which did not interpret myths, death rituals and rules of marriage as texts but rather as codes that – like the linguistic system – were to be analyzed in terms of their inner structure and logic. By contrast, Geertz asked how texts as symbolic forms and cultural media of meaning organize perceptions and shape feelings in concrete social lifeworlds, and in his oft-cited essay "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" he put forward a case study of such that has now become a classic (Geertz 1975: 449).

This surplus dimension of texts that for their part interpret and model experiences had already been conceptually worked out in a fundamental exercise in textual hermeneutics by Paul Ricœur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text" (Ricœur 1973), to which Geertz refers. In his essay, Ricœur no longer explicitly ascribed the text to *langue*, or the linguistic system, but to *parole*, namely, linguistic usage (speech). Yet he did not discover anything like the evanescent speech event but rather how meaning can be fixed in a speech event through its textualization. The text has semantic autonomy. It can deploy a much broader spectrum of meaning than that which the author himself had in mind. Liberated from the distortions created by subjective intentions through the fleeting nature of action situations, the text opens up a public and intersubjective world of interpretability by means of its manifold references: "The concept of *Verstehen* is brought out of private minds into the cultural world" (Rabinow and Sullivan 1987: 12). This expansion of hermeneutics with respect to an understanding of culture entails neither empathy nor a focus on alien psychic conditions. Instead, it aims at a greater understanding of cultural contexts. Herein can be found an effective contribution by the interpretive turn to research that still has resonance today. For the concern here is not with excluding subjectivity from social and cultural analysis but rather with the attempt to make it accessible at an objectifiable level – namely, in considering how it is impact by overarching

structures of meaning that are by no means exhausted in subjective dispositions and intentions.

Clifford Geertz also drew on this text analogy: “The key to the transition from text to text analogue, from writing as discourse to action as discourse, is, as Paul Ricœur has pointed out, the concept of ‘inscription’: the fixation of meaning” (Geertz 1983: 31). Measured against such enrolments of meaning, it is still not a text analogy but a mere text when ethnographers or social scientists transform oral discourse into texts by writing them down. By contrast a text analogy is already to be located at the level of oral discourse, in the speech act, or even the actions themselves. The analogy also enables one – as Ricœur mentioned – to “treat action as a fixed text” (Ricœur 1973: 98). It is through such analogies that the reading of meaningful actions is thus equated with the analysis of written texts and that it becomes possible to extend the text concept in equal measure to such things as rituals, artwork, celebrations, clothes and string quartets. There is certainly no understanding of the text along the lines of literary criticism at work here (although this is being constantly asserted); rather, for Geertz “text” is a structural concept linked to the metaphor of a fabric. Such a text metaphor in no way leads to the assertion that culture and text are to be equated – a widespread misunderstanding – but to the demand that culture be treated from the standpoint of its multilayered readability and that suitable approaches be developed for a pluralization of intercultural complexities and partial cultures.

Action scenarios are therefore not identical with texts. But they can be regarded as analogous to texts and read accordingly. This is at the core of the social semiotic metaphor: social actions are constantly being translated into signs so that they can be ascribed meaning (see Gunn 1987: 9). But depending on their context, such signs can be interpreted in various ways. Ultimately, our deeds escape our control. They have consequences that we do not necessarily intend, they have meanings that go beyond the moment. And because they eventually assume an existence independent of the situation of their provenance, they release a (perpetual) change of meaning. Today, this enlargement of the text concept continues to be the backbone of the concept of culture as it has developed in the wake of the interpretive turn: culture is to be regarded as an ensemble of texts.

Self-Interpretation

What are the advantages of such a position? It is under the auspices of the text analogy that cultures or cultural practices can be investigated in terms of their various dimensions of meaning. But here cultural meanings refer to sedimented,

objectifiable structures of meaning that go beyond the subjectivity of intentions, beyond the fleeting quality of situational circumstances surrounding social action and beyond discursive eventfulness. It is in this sense that even a foreign cultural context can be objectified by having a text status conferred on it; and the purport of an action thus becomes detachable from the action as event. Seen in this way, the text offers interpretations of the world, it entails certain conceptions of the world, and it can ultimately be the springboard into new views of the world. Yet something important is lost – namely, alongside the fleeting situational moments, those often controversial voices in a culture, indeed the often contradictory processes involved in the cultural production of meaning. Culture here is not perceived as dynamic but as a system of meanings. This indeed has the advantage that it becomes possible to understand culture without empathy (*Einfühlen*). The other is retained by not placing oneself in the foreign culture; one must not aim to penetrate to the inside of people. Rather, one reads foreign systems of symbols by working out the semiotic means whereby humans perceive and interpret their own world.

It is also in this sense that the cockfight in Geertz's interpretation represents the example of an event where social hierarchies and collective emotions are "inscribed." It is for precisely this reason that this event is also readable as a "social text" for the Balinese themselves so that they may catch sight of their own (suppressed) feelings and collective cultural and social hierarchical conditions. The cockfight as text would thus seem to be so objectified and elevated above mere eventfulness that it is capable of rendering a "metasocial commentary." The cockfight's function, "if you want to call it that, is interpretive: it is a Balinese reading of Balinese experience, a story they tell themselves about themselves" (Geertz 1975: 448).

This link between the scholarly interpretation and the self-interpretation processes within the society under investigation is decisive for Geertz's argument, for it emerges as the guiding principle of the interpretive turn. Authors such as Gadi Algazi object that the actors in no way consistently followed those meanings and interpretations that they themselves barely perceived but instead followed social codes of behavior and "social usages" – culture thus appearing as a system of various courses of action (Algazi 2000). Yet methodologically speaking, this is about the attempt of a new, non-mentalistic research approach that shifts the concept of understanding from the subjective inner mental sphere to a public and accessible cultural sphere of signs. Cultures and societies – here is the insight – are first made accessible in their fabric of meaning at the level of representation; and from here, simultaneously, the performative turn is moored to the interpretive turn – indeed, it is already part and parcel of the same. But one can also see how reliant the interpretive turn is on the linguistic turn, for there is

no pure and simple event – that is, no *uninterpreted* event – underlying its representations. Every new representation discloses further "texts."

The valorization of the sphere of cultural representation can also be seen as the gateway to an intensification of the interpretive turn, as activated in particular by the *Anthropology of Experience* (Turner and Bruner 1986). This line of research is positioned, so to speak, "between" the interpretive and performative turns. It seizes upon Geertz's reference to the self-interpretation of cultures qua representation, but it attempts to attain concrete access to the lived experience in its specific articulations. For this purpose the researcher must peer over the shoulders, as it were, of the inhabitants of another culture in order to ascertain their indigenous concepts from "the natives' point of view" instead of imposing her own analytical categories on them from the start.

Thus in terms of that necessary distance which scholarly analytical concepts must have to their object of study, the anthropology of experience finds itself alarmingly close to the observed representations of experience and forms of expression themselves – close to their dramas, rituals and other performative and narrative genres:

> By focusing on narratives or dramas or carnival or any other expressions, we leave the definition of the unit of investigation up to the people, rather than imposing categories derived from our own ever-shifting theoretical frames. (Bruner 1986: 9)

Here one can see how the metaphor of "culture as text" comes into movement in its own field of interpretive research approaches and is set into motion in a performative fashion. In contrast to Ricœur and Geertz, there is not only a semiotic deciphering that is taken into account. The primary question here is how the meanings that govern our thoughts, feelings and desires can be expressed, how they can be painted, danced and dramatically processed by the various "ways of putting experience into circulation" (Geertz 1986: 375).

Critical Positions

The main criticism of the interpretive turn has not been directed at this assumed proximity to experience. Rather, it targets a certain way of reading "culture as text." There are three main foci here:

1. Criticism of the ascription of meaning through texts
2. Criticism of the concept of culture
3. Criticism of what one understands by a text

1. Criticism of the Ascription of Meaning through Texts

Criticism of the ascription of meaning attendant to "culture as text" has mainly proceeded from Geertz's cockfighting essay. To begin with, critics found fault with the fact that no real people are speaking and hardly any specific individuals make an appearance. At best there are types such as "the Balinese." Second, the cockfight is depicted – following Max Weber – as an ideal-type, as a diffuse total portrait in which subjects appear only as cultural representatives. Third, there is no dialogue with the Balinese themselves but only authoritative interpretations by the anthropologist, who himself remains invisible. Predominating here is a philological hermeneutical approach – a reading instead of dialogue. Or, as the reflexive turn would have it, the criticism is directed at a specific form of ethnographic authority that can emerge all too easily through the one-sidedness of the interpretive approach.

What is ultimately being criticized here is a typical form of ethnographic realism with its invisible author and presumption of a ubiquitous and omniscient narrator. The advance in knowledge of the anthropologist as well as her synthesizing overview not only lead to over-interpretations but to outright false ones – to transmissions or projections of meanings, for instance, the ascription of specific collective "social passions" (Geertz 1975: 444). This seems to be a general danger of the interpretive turn – that its ascription of (interpreted) meaning is often exaggerated. Who is to say what feelings the Balinese actually have? In his cockfighting piece, Geertz proliferates with unproven assertions such as the following: "Enacted and re-enacted, so far without end, the cockfight enables the Balinese, as, read and reread, Macbeth enables us, to see a dimension of his own subjectivity" (Geertz 1975: 450). Vincent Crapanzano goes after him:

> Who told Geertz? How can a whole people share a single subjectivity? Are there not differences between texts, commentaries, meta-commentaries, dramas, sports, string quartets, and still lifes? Has Geertz abandoned all of the analytic distinctions that have characterized the success (and the failure) of his civilization? (Crapanzano 1992: 67)

Geertz's interpretations subsist on ascriptions and projections that fail to convey any understanding of the phenomenon under examination from the perspective of the indigenous peoples; at best these examinations issue in the construed understanding of a construed perspective of construed indigenous peoples. Crapanzano thus criticizes the misuse of the author's ethnographic authority. What this ultimately means can be more precisely apprehended by looking at the reflexive turn and in particular at James Clifford's critique of ethnographic authority (Clifford 1988).

Another strand of criticism addresses the hyperbole of cultural analysis as being merely a reading of texts (see Bachmann-Medick 2012: 107–108). It is here that the interpretive turn certainly has the problem – at least in terms of its reception in continental Europe – of being linked to the hermeneutic tradition, whereas Anglo-American philosophy and social science tends to link it to pragmatism and thus understands the interpretive approach as a thoroughly social practice – as a practice turn, so to speak (see Hiley, Bohman, and Shusterman 1991: 11). But even in the world of the German *Kulturwissenschaften* and the social sciences there are approaches that understand the metaphor of “culture as text” as being of a practical bent without necessarily inducing a “practice turn” (Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina and von Savigny 2000). Within the context of a “practice-oriented understanding of texts,” cultural sociologist Andreas Reckwitz has pointed out that one needs to understand the metaphor not only as a reservoir of meaning but also as a template of meaning that can be employed as an “operational guide” (Reckwitz 2006: 606). Even so, “culture as text” comprises the challenge to develop a reading of perceived reality in which the interpretations are not detached from the social events and action contexts. Culture as text “is constructing a reading of what happens” (Geertz 1975: 18). The textual understanding here is action-hermeneutically charged. Admittedly, the interpretive turn reaches its limits insofar as it only examines texts for their meaning and not for their function – Michel Foucault’s agenda in his discourse analysis.

2. Criticism of the Concept of Culture

To some degree anticipating the writing culture debate of the reflexive turn, another strand of criticism attacks Geertz as a representative of ethnographic realism. In analogy to literary realism, Geertz is perceived as attempting to depict holistic entities, as presenting an indigenous cultural context by not only looking over the shoulders of the “natives” but by trying to see things through their eyes. This leads to such paradoxical constructions as the ethnographer as eyewitness via the gaze of the indigenes and in turn leads to the disappearance of all dialogue – which in other theories (not solely those of Mikhail Bakhtin) is regarded as indispensable, particularly with respect to the dictum of negotiating cultural differences.

Does not a dynamic understanding of textuality also require a more dynamic understanding of culture? Interpretive cultural anthropology’s notion of cultural meanings is still far too holistic. Even if this criticism might apply to Geertz’s semiotic concept of culture, it does not necessarily apply to the interpretive turn as a whole. It would be too simplistic to derive a thoroughly holistic concept of culture from Geertz’s position and then to codify it. But if one instead follows a

practice-theoretical way of reading in understanding a text (Reckwitz 2006: 606; Bachmann-Medick 2012) and additionally calls on Geertz's later utterances in his text "The World in Pieces" (2000: 218–263) – in which he explicitly dissociates himself from a consensus theory of culture – then one is hardly open to the criticism of holism. As regards the politics of textuality, Geertz eventually surpassed his own original understanding of a cultural whole in view of the global challenges and the fragmentation of text totalities:

> The view of culture, *a* culture, this culture, as a consensus on fundamentals – shared conceptions, shared feelings, shared values – seems hardly viable in the face of so much dispersion and disassembly; it is the faults and fissures that seem to mark out the landscape of collective selfhood. (Geertz 2000: 250)

Instead of texts, Geertz ultimately spoke of the deciphering of traces, networks, filaments, fields and forces.

In the end, the dust-up over the interpretive turn introduced a massive "culture shift" (Geertz 1983: 19) in the field of the social sciences. The catalyst for this was not least the discomfiture regarding the exaggerated claims of culture as a system of meaning, which motivated authors such as Lila Abu-Lughod to advocate "writing against culture" (1991) so as to avoid a concept of culture that takes no account of power relations and cultural change.

3. Criticism of What One Understands by a Text

The text concept that proceeds from the interpretive turn also emerges changed. On the one hand, alien cultural practices were translated into a "classic" text model – into the Western concept of texts fixed in writing (whereas Balinese society represents itself theatrically and orally). It may seem strange, but it is in this way that the ethnographer as authorial narrator could have saved something that, like the practices of Balinese society, would seem to be threatened by Western culture. On the other hand, the notion of "culture as text" is only too easily caught in the nets of cultural semiotics, for it takes as little account of the conditions behind the making of texts as the non-textualizable surplus of cultural articulations (sensory perceptions, sounds, smells, voices) and the substantial material aspects of culture.

In its transit through the interpretive turn this text concept would therefore itself seem susceptible to transformation. So, in the end, the theoretical program of the notion of "culture as text" is not being ousted; rather it has been enriched through an increasing complexity and diversity of the text concept that has now arrived in literary studies while taking media theory into account. Accordingly, the text concept, following but not copying Geertz, should be further differen-

tiated – with respect to the production of texts and their reception and (social) usage as well as narrative structures and medial prerequisites. The study of culture is by no means concerned only with interpretations but also with reception processes and procedures of medial communication and dissemination. With such expanded dimensions of texts and a text concept that has been overhauled in a medial way, one can work toward a better understanding of texts beyond that of mere portals granting access to the sphere of meaning. But questions still remain. Who speaks in the text? To whom? What about? What are the social circumstances? In answering these questions, the text concept must be newly charged – not least with the involvement of the text concepts of other disciplines.

4 The Interpretive Turn in Different Disciplines

One can only really speak of a turn after it has made entry into a number of disciplines, inspires an attitude of "thinking interpretively" (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2014: 5) and serves as stimulus for new methodological orientations. An early synthesis and profiling of the interpretive turn can be found in the anthology *The Interpretive Turn* (Hiley et al. 1991). This emerged from a summer seminar entitled "Interpretation and the Human Sciences" at the University of Santa Cruz in 1988 – a seminar in which Clifford Geertz took part. The new perspective envisaged here took up the interpretive or re-interpretive impulse that was transmitted to the other social and human sciences and to the natural sciences as well – after philosophy had detached itself from both its century-long "epistemological turn" (a rejection of metaphysics for the fundamental principles of knowledge) and from its "linguistic turn" in the twentieth century. However, in contrast to the structuralist independence achieved by the language system in the linguistic turn, attention was now more intensely focused on language as communicative interaction and channeled to interpretive actions in the humanities. But the interpretive turn first became truly sweeping in terms of its effects when it was applied to the natural sciences and, as with Thomas S. Kuhn, culminated in the conviction that there is no set of analytical categories and research concepts independent of context and a hermeneutic basis or paradigm contingency was equally ineluctable for the natural sciences (Kuhn 1991: 22).

So how does one concretely work with these various approaches of the interpretive turn? Its applicability can first be evinced in examining individual case studies in those disciplines where this turn has found great resonance. It is astonishing to what degree the interpretive turn has been disseminated via the metaphor of "culture as text" – including sport as text (Hildenbrandt 1997), technology as text (Beck 1997: 238–248), landscape as text (in cultural geography, see Meining

1979; Jackson 1989: 173), organizations as texts (Linstead 2003: 1) and, finally, genetics as text (Weigel 2002). More sustainable approaches can be found in literary studies, history, sociology and political science (on a methodological discussion of the interpretive approach in relation to qualitative methods see Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2014; Mottier 2005). It is the new conceptual language of the interpretive turn which still forms a solid roof over the basic culture-oriented reorientation of the individual disciplines and despite all the other challenges thrown up by the other turns. It is only comparatively recently that the interpretive turn has made any sort of impression in certain disciplines – and this, paradoxically, via the criticism leveled at "culture as text." The demand here, on the one hand, is that textuality refers back to social practices; on the other hand, that the interpretive approach not be confined to a holistic system of meaning. And so there is greater focus on interpretive challenges arising from multi-sited contexts, as well as on contradictory configurations, opposing discourses, interpretive conflicts and inner cultural differences.

With this new type of focus, which was only able to establish itself in the theory of culture, the interpretive approach spawned a network of cross-circuits among the various disciplines (Panourgiá and Marcus 2008). It opened the scholar's eyes for people's interpretive commerce with the world, the reflexive distancing that arises, and not least for the possibility of working out questions of meaning within dynamic action and interaction systems themselves. This perspective was then further developed, in part simultaneously, in the performative turn. In any event, all those scholarly disciplines that are challenged with understanding the other have been compelled by the interpretive turn not so much to explore a person's interior but to approach things at the level of expression and representation and to take seriously symbolic processing and make it the point of departure for any study. A recent example of working with an explicit interpretive approach, for instance, can be found in the context of global studies, where global climate change is perceived as a matter of value judgments, interpretive framings, different meanings and problematizations and also viewed as a political discourse (Methmann et al. 2013: 4–6). Global communication studies has also referred to Geertz's interpretive anthropology and its "commitment to the details of the ordinary and the local" for a new understanding of local-global connections (Kraidy and Murphy 2008: 339). For another field, psychology, an interpretive approach presents a particular challenge. Yet apart from the approaches of psychology that engage in comparative (cross-)cultural analyses, interpretive psychology (Straub et al. 2006) has not completely integrated the interpretive turn to this day, for the attempt to introduce interpretation as a methodologically controlled scientific process would still seem to be lagging behind the prevailing empirical investigative methods. Here, too, one clearly

sees how a turn only first gains entry into a discipline when the corresponding methods are formed.

Even if taking up the interpretive turn has largely been equated with consummation of a cultural turn, there have also been more targeted attempts at linking up with interpretive methods. For example the procedure entailed in thick description was seen as an attractive methodological impulse. Birgit Griesecke, for instance, usefully applied the method of thick description to Japanese studies by taking up the metaphorical chargings and admittances of fictionality via thick description, and thus pointing toward the "fundamentally unfixed framework in which the (ethnographic) description moves about" (Griesecke 2001: 188). It was precisely the essayistic movement and the flexible interconnections involved in these thick descriptions of Japanese self-interpretations and cultural ascriptions that incited a "new description" of Japan, above all with respect to the fictionalization or "invention" of Japan as a shame culture, a theater state and "wrapping culture." In terms of the latter, for instance, it led to astonishing insights into the complexity of meaning entailed in Japanese wrapping culture, including "linguistic wrapping" and even embracing tendencies to wrap scientific ethnographic theories and findings themselves in "idea apparel" (Griesecke 2001: 187). Also discovered was the considerable potential of thick description for intercultural comparisons

> insofar as one of its main concerns is to avoid sealing off locally observed phenomena in a forced demonstration of intracultural coherence [as can be the tendency in the discourse on Japan – DBM] and instead to pack these phenomena together in an intercultural and "impertinent" interlink so as to set into motion the interplay of identity and difference, out of which, if the description is successful, none of the participating sides will emerge unchanged. (Griesecke 2001: 188)

This cross-cultural comparative potential of thick description should be further developed. Other disciplinary perspectives have done the spadework for this:

In literary studies, for example, Geertz's reference to a "new philology" has had an especially strong impact. It has prompted an anthropological turn in literary criticism (Evans 2007) by introducing the field of literary anthropology, which from the very beginning has worked toward the creation of linchpins for intercultural connectivity. It is in this context that the text concept has been expanded in literary studies as never before, from open texts to texts that overlap with performances. These shifts have generally opened up philology to the study of culture and also prepared it to interculturally recognize various ways of understanding texts. The development of the concept of "open texts" (long before the digital turn and its new expanded understanding of texts) has above all borne fruit in investigating the "unstable texts" (Sabel and Bucher 2001) of medieval literature. But

it is also in other contexts that the text has come to be seen as a symbolic fabric that imparts meaning to actions, that is itself interpretive and that partakes of social self-interpretation (i.e., not solely connected to the author's imputed interpretation). Understanding "culture as text" thus also implies revaluating literature in its cultural function as a specific medium that creates reality by producing (and not only configuring) meaning (Bachmann-Medick 2004: 26). In Gabriele Schwab's words, "Proposing to read literary works as 'imaginary ethnographies,' I am interested in how literature records, translates, and (re)shapes the internal processing of culture" (Schwab 2012: 7). Texts are thus not only objects of interpretation but themselves act as media of cultural self-interpretation and the formation of concepts to guide actions. As was the goal of the late Horst Turk, the point is to more brightly illuminate literary texts at "the level of the construction of practices" and not just at the level of the "constitution of meaning" (Turk 2003: 8).

Following Clifford Geertz, similar approaches can even be found with respect to theological texts (Strecker 2003; on religion as a "structural principle" of action see Kippenberg 2001: 248). In an explicit embrace of the interpretive turn, scholars of theology are now reading New Testament exegeses as thick descriptions and, similar to literary texts, as condensed forms of ethnographic descriptions. Be it by thick description or by its supplemented and modified mode of "thin description" (see Bruster 2003; Love 2013), here too it is incumbent not only to seek a unitary meaning of the text but also to discover multilevel self-interpretations within the text itself. Phyllis Gorfain did an exemplary job of this in her interpretation of *Hamlet*, in which she interpreted the performance scene within the play – the "play within the play" – as a self-interpretation of the drama in which the plot of the drama is commented on in an open-ended process of reflection and interpretation (Gorfain 1986). Important here is less the elucidation of the play's meaning than the disclosure of the process of the constitution of meaning. In this way the text concept is broken down with respect to an open-ended process of the production of meaning, which can of course continue to be enriched from a variety of cultural perspectives – as was demonstrated by anthropologist Laura Bohannan in a text entitled "Shakespeare in the Bush" (1982).

In her interpretation of Gottfried Keller's novella *Die Berlocken* – here also drawing on Geertz and Stephen Greenblatt's poetics of culture – Gabriele Brandstetter looked for traces of textual self-interpretation (1999: 308, 322–324). She finds that the tale itself conveys interpretations of tensions in contemporary colonial discourse – and configures the encounter between European and non-European protagonists not only as a colonial conquest but also as a re-conquest of symbols of one's own culture that return in alien form in the cultural exchange. Culture is a world in which actions are permanently translated into symbols, and

thus it is the symbols – the otherness of the symbols in the context of various representation systems – that pose the greatest challenge to any cultural analysis. Yet in all attempts to uncover literary or cultural meanings through interpretation, that which is alien – and this an insight of the interpretive turn – still bears fruit, if only as an epistemological impulse stemming from alienation.

In the ambit of interpretive cultural anthropology the concern is always with accessing otherness and thereby seeking the new interpretive horizons that appear in literature, tales, drama, etc., or which, in the investigation of social phenomena, have already been marked out by the members of another society. Ultimately, this is about shifting the instance and authority of interpretation. It is in this sense, too, that thick descriptions of literature help to apprehend literary texts as media that in themselves contain condensed forms of ethnographic description and cultural interpretation in that they express the respective culture in its own conceptuality and vocabulary of self-interpretation – e.g., in its culturally specific understanding of character, emotionality and status hierarchy. In short, it is "literature as the text of culture," (Csáky and Reichensperger 1999) or more practically relevant, "culture as the texture of the social" (Musner 2004).

The heavy emphasis on meaning implied in the interpretive turn's understanding of culture thus translates into an ethnologization of literature. This focus has clarified the discussion as to the apposite form of literary criticism demanded by a study of culture that proceeds from cases of literary cultural description, but it has also resulted in a discussion that still is too one-sidedly fixated on themes, placing far too much emphasis on new and unusual subjects of literary analysis. Another line of development that might carry this forward is one that goes beyond contextualizing analyses of meaning and is instead more interested in the interconnectedness of "cultural texts" themselves. What is meant here is a "poetics of culture" in the sense of the New Historicism based primarily on the work of Stephen Greenblatt (see the anthologies on New Historicism by Veeser 1989, 1994).

The poetics of culture is derived from the interpretive turn, but it democratizes, as it were, this latter's understanding of texts by liberating itself from the connotations of a (European) art form. We are speaking not of "culture as text" but of "cultural texts," and conspicuous here is the clear de-privileging of artworks and literary texts in terms of their dense interplay with other cultural texts. But at the same time – and entirely in the spirit of the interpretive turn – the cultural sphere has been extended from art and literature to encompass practices, rituals, social relations, etc. Our understanding of the effect of such widely conceived cultural texts is based on their relationship of mutual exchange – similar to the micro-historical approaches in the humanities whereby (according to Hans Medick) various sources are purposefully placed in a rela-

tionship of interdependence and interchange so as to enrich their potential for new insights (Medick 1995, 2001). In these cases the interpretive turn has had a decisive impact, namely, the expansion of textual meaning from mental and intentional ascriptions of meaning to the recognition of the positionality of texts within a network of practices whose components are the texts – instead of using these other texts solely as contexts, which is the case in terms of the traditional text concept (Colebrook 1997: esp. 75). Culture proves to be a constellation of (cultural) texts in their exchange relationships. In this way it has become possible to juxtapose Shakespeare's dramas with reports from the colonies of the New World or with religious tracts on exorcism. The holistic notion of "culture as text" is no longer the defining concept but rather the dynamic emerging between cultural texts that share in shaping feelings and guiding actions.

The New Historicism has thus decentralized our understanding of text and interpretation. Crucial here is the impulse to go to the margins of the text, where the exchange with other texts can take place and where connections with the material world become possible. Whereas Geertz's centripetal interpretation in search of centers of meaning is essentialist in its attempt to understand the "inner nature" of a given society (Geertz 1975: 417), the New Historicism valorizes the marginality and contradictoriness of texts. Upgraded here are the exchange relationships, hybridities and negotiations – categories that became all the clearer in the course of the discussion in the study of culture – extending to the (anti-textual) approaches of new realism, material studies, new ontologies, etc.

It is true that at the level of its corresponding theory of culture the interpretive turn has not gone so far as to introduce the categories of alterity and "othering" into the interpretation process – as has, for instance, been the case with Mikhail Bakhtin (on Bakhtin in this context see Gunn 1987: 133). Nor does it emphasize the dialogical model and that of polyphonic experience (ambiguity, polyphony). It therefore misses the chance to purposefully work up interpretation as a form of action that might be understood in its practical role in intercultural conflicts and involvements. Yet it is at the level of thick description that the trails have been blazed for a more nuanced form of cultural analysis. Ultimately, the interpretive turn posits no general theory with respect to the interpretation of culture, the point being "not to generalize across cases but to generalize within them" (Geertz 1983: 26). The agenda here is rather that any study of culture must closely engage with concrete individual cases in a micro-analysis. As a result, it has become increasingly problematic to align one's investigation of a certain culture or cultural phenomenon with such overarching concepts as modernization, industrialization, integration and indeed globalization – concepts that have meanwhile taken on a life of their own. The advice to be heeded here is that we should constantly review such generalizations on the basis of empirical individual case

studies and use their own interpretive deep-drillings; and insofar as the attempt is still made to derive generalizations from case studies, we should always reconsider the relationship between these latter and the assumed overarching context. The obvious questions to ask are: What specific kind of context are we talking about? What theoretical or other framings are being introduced? What precisely is being excluded here? What are the assumed basic units of analysis? In what way is a certain context of cultural analysis produced? What are the central analytical concepts? Do they emanate from a purely scholarly tradition or do they interface with "indigenous" concepts of the "object" of study? In what way does the rhetoric used in the certain account distinguish itself?

Historians first confronted such questions in the 1970s when they began to distance themselves from the linear tradition of grand narratives and concentrated instead on illuminating multilevel constellations along with both the events and meanings of history. Robert Darnton was one of the early scholars to critically apply the interpretive turn in his ethnologically inspired historical anthropological case studies on eighteenth-century French culture and mentalities, arising from a seminar with Clifford Geertz (Darnton 1999). The new direction of historiography sought to "unravel an alien system of meaning" (Darnton 1999: 5) similar to a foreign culture, and draw closer to it by interpreting such phenomena as a cat massacre as an exotic event within the culture of French craftsmen in terms of its ritual multilayeredness. In contrast to the preponderance of quantifying approaches in the historiography of mentalities at the time (see the Annales School), the symbolic element in social interactions was given greater weight (Darnton 1999: 259). Methodologically speaking, the attempt was being made to adopt as far as possible the point of view of the historical subjects and to have the interpretation proceed from conspicuously puzzling passages in historical source material – from the "opacity in texts" (Darnton 1999: 262) and from "reading" their contents as the objects of an unknown culture (Hodder and Hutson 2004: 4) – also in the field of "interpretive historical archaeology" (Beaudry and Symonds 2010).

But among historians, conceptually speaking, the interpretive turn has been most deeply explored by Hans Medick (1995, 2001), Lynn Hunt and William Sewell Jr. (see Clark 2004; Ortner 1984, 1999; for a critical survey with a social positioning of texts, see Spiegel 1997). The focus of historical anthropological case studies has been on the dimensions of meaning and text – on the notion that the perceptions, attributions of meaning and self-narratives of historical subjects can constitute "facts" of history that are just as important as the subjects' socio-economic position or affiliation with a certain caste, stratum or class. In historical writing the interpretive turn has become particularly manifest with regard to the "question of 'How?' – which is always and ever the question as to meanings, the modes

of imparting meaning to one's life, and its various symbolic dimensions" (Daniel 2003: 577). This has led to a chain of interdisciplinary developments in terms of theory – to an increasing impact of approaches from cultural history on social history and on history in general and above all to the emergence of a history of everyday life, micro-history and historical anthropology.

These developments purposefully banked on the crucial importance that historical scholarship attributed to cultural self-interpretations and the experience of subjects. They were not least based on the insight that the personal narratives or "ego-documents" of historical subjects were of categorical importance as historical texts (Ulbrich et al. 2012; von Greyerz 2013). Going beyond Geertz here of course is the express pursuit of the social production and transformation of cultural meanings within certain historical constellations, which are characterized by social tensions and contradictions. In terms of a new history of global or "translocal" entanglements, connections and mobilities, which is much discussed at present (among others see Freitag and von Oppen 2010: 3ff.), these approaches from historical anthropology still seem to demand stronger methodological scrutiny or perhaps even a revision of their own interpretive approaches based on theoretically grounded local or micro-histories (Medick 2001; Cohen et al. 2011); at present they are compelled to deal more strongly with those forces represented by macro-processes of global history. Under these conditions of global intrusions on local spaces the "refiguration of social thought" will be in need of other vocabularies to fit to a "disassembled world" (Geertz 2000: 229): "The vocabulary of cultural description and analysis, needs also to be opened up to divergence and multiplicity" (Geertz 2000: 246).

In this relation between the vocabulary of cultural analysis and the vocabulary of the complex and dissociated social scenarios and actors themselves, the "double hermeneutic" comes to be expressed that has been described as follows by Anthony Giddens with regard to the "schools of interpretative sociology" (Giddens 1993: 163): "Generating descriptions of social conduct depends upon the hermeneutic task of penetrating the frames of meaning which lay actors themselves draw upon in constituting and reconstituting the social world" (Giddens 1993: 163). Thus even institutions could be interpreted as examples of hardened meaning. In his recapitulation of the various schools of interpretive sociology, Anthony Giddens shows how the pre-interpreted world has become an object of a type of sociology that links up with philosophical idealism and is consequently deficient in terms of its practical relevance because it fails to address the material conditions of action and power (Giddens 1993: 163). In this respect, too, the interpretive turn is thus revealed to be not entirely new but related to traditional modes of thought, whether still current or having already fallen by the wayside. Giddens, however, has not linked the schools of thought within the realm of

"interpretative sociology" to the culture concept (as was the case with Geertz) but rather to the tradition of *Verstehende Soziologie* spanning Alfred Schütz, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Jürgen Habermas. But taking these interpretive approaches as a critical starting point, Giddens gives their common concern with "meaningful action" (see the preface to Giddens 1993) a practical direction. Based on the recognition of the relevance of language not only as a sign system but also as a "practical social activity" (Giddens 1993: 25), the interpretive turn in sociology could thus result in a further pragmatist development toward culturalist practice theories (see Reckwitz 2002: 245), which in their shared anti-mentalism defined themselves on the basis of an interesting reconnection to the position of "culture as text" (Reckwitz 2002: 249). In the end, one insight resulting from the development of the various schools of interpretive sociology is that "if there has been a widespread interest, it was in sociology that Geertz was ultimately to find his new home" (Alexander et al. 2011: 4).

The turn toward the study of meaningful action and its symbolic analysis also established itself in political science, though rather late, in the 1990s. From then on "culture" joined "society" as a new category of analysis; cultural codes, readings and interpretations of the political actors through symbols, language and rituals came to be seen as essential in shaping (not merely representing) those actions and institutions that permeate the field of politics (see primarily Bevir 2010; Bevir and Rhodes 2015). It is in this respect that political science could indeed link up with forerunners from within its own ranks – for instance, Eric Voegelin and his demand to focus on the self-interpretation of societies. It is particularly with respect to interdisciplinary connectivity that new insights into the importance of culture and interpretive approaches have proven useful for economic analyses, which have, for instance, led to an expansion of game theory and rational-choice conceptions and to a reconsideration of economic practices through thick description (Gibson-Graham 2014: S147, S149). Fairly early on one finds, in the ancillary field of international relations, the notion of the "textual politics of international relations" (Der Derian and Shapiro 1989: xi) – meaning that the question as to the discursive and textual constitution and thus production of meaning has come to be seen in new ways in the context of international relations. A text-sensitive political understanding has emerged in which the representations and textual mediations of international politics (rhetoric, narrative, style of historically specific scripts of interpretation) have come to the fore. Worth mentioning here is the rhetoric of security, which represents a discourse of authority and control, focused above all on the control of foreign threats by the United States (on interpretive approaches in the field of global security studies see Bevir et al. 2014). In this connection it is also worth noting the analysis of sports metaphors as the prevailing form of representation in the sphere of conflict

research, security and war policy (Shapiro 1989: 12–13). The various approaches to cultural turns in political science are by themselves significant indicators of the profile of the study of culture. For they could help to more strongly enmesh cultural analyses with social and political processes, actors, interests and decisions – for instance, by taking "semiotic practices" as a lens to examine politics and concrete political actions and identifications from a meaning-making point of view (Wedeen 2002: 714). All this may serve as an antidote to the danger of culturalism, which can arise from an exaggerated deployment of the text concept.

5 The Interpretive Turn as "Cultural Critique"

"Pushing contemporary interpretive anthropology toward a more politically and historically sensitive critical anthropology" – this was the program of the anthropologists George Marcus and Michael Fischer (1999: xii), who attempted to elaborate the interpretive turn as a "cultural critique." This emphasis intensified the systematic redefinition of anthropology as a critical and self-reflexive discipline of otherness. No longer restricted to the purview of area studies, it motivated other fields of cultural research to adopt a new interpretive orientation. It was primarily the practice of foreignization that made it onto the agenda as not only a heuristic but a medium of cultural criticism. Interpretive cultural anthropology has shown how the interpretive turn can break the individual disciplines wide open in creating an interdisciplinary field of cultural critique (Gunn 1987; Marcus and Fischer 1999).

Linking up with the tradition of American pragmatism and the literary theories of Lionel Trilling, this came to be a new field for reflection that enabled a moral cultural critique through the process of making one's own culture "unfamiliar" while urging a readiness for scholarly attitudes to connect up with critical moral agendas as well as political ones, because as

> interpretivists, self-declared and self-understood, we were interested in work that reached beyond the narrowed confines of a fixed and schematized "scientific method," one that connected up with moral, political, and spiritual concerns. (Geertz 2001: 8)

But such a cultural-critique approach – in a bifurcation of the discourse, as it were – first clearly emerged as a critique of power relations and became politically pointed under the influence of poststructuralism and deconstructionism, at which point the unavoidable question still looms large as to just how the power of representation systems impacts human actions and spawns symbolical orders (see Pecora 1992: 60, who shows that Derrida's deconstructionism emerged in the United States in the 1960s parallel to the interpretive turn).

In this connection, for advancing the cultural critique, there are primarily two proposals or even full-fledged "techniques" (Marcus and Fischer 1999: 137) that would appear noteworthy, both first stressed by Marcus and Fischer, and that have been circulating through all other turns in the study of culture. The first is the technique of a "defamiliarization by epistemological critique" (Marcus and Fischer 1999: 137). This encourages scholars to redirect those insights gained in their analysis of experiences of the other from the periphery to critiquing their own European conceptual frameworks – i.e., their own utilitarian and materialistic mental premises (e.g., Marshall Sahlins in his book *Culture and Practical Reason*, 1976) or to a new vision of Western concepts of the individual. Along with such critiques of one's own conceptualizations, there is "defamiliarization by cross-cultural juxtaposition" (Marcus and Fischer 1999: 138), which aims at a self-critical comparison of concrete cultural findings. The prerequisite here is of course an ethnographic perspective on one's own cultural presuppositions even in scholarly work. An early example of this, according to Marcus and Fischer, was Marcel Mauss's classic work *The Gift*, "which uses comparative examples in order to pose questions about the moral reorganization of the French (and capitalist) political economy" (Marcus and Fischer 1999: 157). Such demands for defamiliarization have intensified and politicized the moralizing tendency of Geertz's interpretive cultural anthropology to such an extent that the study of culture which followed came under strongly normative pressure. This claim to normativity still clings to the study of culture today. But at the same time one already finds here, in the field of the interpretive turn, the fundamental practice of cultural comparison being applied, as it came to be required by subsequent research on culture in its effort to do justice to a globalized world.

With its cultural critique, the interpretive turn very early pointed to subjects and categories of analysis that went beyond traditional Eurocentric social science – in any event in George Marcus's and Michael Fischer's approaches. But Clifford Geertz, in his introduction to a synthesizing retrospective on the "school" of interpretive social research, also formulated the rudiments of this widening of intellectual horizons and the "deprovincialization" of non-European voices:

> Since the social sciences are undoubtedly, whatever we might wish or think appropriate, still predominantly a European and American enterprise descended from and located within "Western," "Enlightenment," and, some would say, "colonial" modes of thought, we have tried, with some deliberateness, to bring Asian, African, and Latin American – "non-Western" – voices into the discussion, to deprovincialize things. (Geertz 2001: 9)

Because this declaration of intent took place in the context of a "retrospective preface," it had the tendency – similar to a "second look" – to idealize matters. It is often the case that retroactively things will be dissected out that should have

been present in embryonic form from the start but without this having been made explicit let not alone truly developed in the early period of the respective turns.

Through our synopsis it has become clear that it was the interpretive turn that first pushed the humanities and social sciences to redefine their potential objects of inquiry as well as their methodological approaches (see the volume by Scott and Keates 2001). And so one has the vivifying paradox that, on the one hand, the interpretive turn fostered a blurring of the lines between the social and natural sciences, thus creating fertile ground for the renewed and present convergence of the humanities and the natural sciences – and indeed under auspices other than that of brain research. On the other hand, despite all the blurring of disciplinary lines, the interpretive turn also suggested the advisability of keeping the social sciences and the study of culture separate from the natural sciences in terms of their respective conceptual systems. It was deemed important to maintain the independence of its insights in relation to values, judgments, subjects, the unconscious and history as an epistemological prerequisite. In this way the social sciences and the study of culture laid open the particularity of the cultural dimension as both a mindset and a topic of research whose own interpretations are themselves caught up in the circle of cultural self-interpretation: "When we try to understand the cultural world, we are dealing with interpretations and interpretations of interpretations" (Rabinow and Sullivan 1987: 7).

This circle of interpretation can lead to an "interpretive universalism" (Ronen 2000) as long as objects only appear as the effects of interpretations and one is compelled to ask if there is in fact anything beyond language, texts and interpretation. Yet when one also regards ethnographic and other scholarly representations as interpretations of interpretations, then it is just a short step to a self-reflection implicit in the (anthropological) analysis itself – as can be seen in the reflexive turn. This then creates a conceptual bifurcation in the interpretive turn: on the one hand, there is an expansion of the category of textuality to include the practice of scholarly writing, the structure of texts and representation; on the other hand, there is a performative dynamization closer to cultural and social practices.

In terms of the interpretive turn itself, in its cross-disciplinary effects it has advanced and permeated discussions in the field of the study of culture, which makes it all the more astounding that interpretation has not become the central concept. By contrast, the careers of the twin concepts of "text" and "textuality" have been much more sweeping. The interesting thing is that by dint of its very power the interpretive turn seems to have gotten stuck in a hermeneutical bottleneck. It is solely as a *textual turn* that it takes on an array of methodological guises, for it has been mainly through development and elaboration of the textual category in connection with scholarly practice and in the context of the media that the interpretive turn has remained vital (see Bachmann-Medick 2012: 103ff.).

In any event, one can confirm Moritz Bassler's insight that it is the concept of the text that ensures the connectedness of cultural objects. It is therefore advisable that we continue to apply ever new perspectives in following his proposal "to take up the textuality theorem yet again and thoroughly thrash it out and exhaust it at both the theoretical and methodological level in the hope that it might offer a solid basis for future cultural research" (Bassler 2002: 103).

The chapter "The Interpretive Turn"
was translated by Kevin McAleer

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Chapter II: The Performative Turn

The performative turn has called attention to the expressive dimension of both actions and action-based events, including staged social culture. It focuses not on the cultural contexts of meaning or the idea of "culture as text" but on the practical dimension of the generation of cultural meanings and experiences. It seeks to understand the generative and transformative aspects of culture on the basis of events, practices, material embodiments and media forms. However, it is not only the increased attention paid to these elements of performance, representation and staging, to culture as performance, that have made the performative turn a milestone in the discourse in cultural studies. What is also groundbreaking is its specific contribution to the critical analysis of processes (see Turner 1985). After all, the performative turn represents an additional reorientation, a fundamental shift from the central concept of structure to the guiding idea of social process: "Performance is a paradigm of process" (Schechner 1987: 8).

Although this turn does not mark a paradigm shift in the strict sense of the word, its emphasis on processes continues and even strengthens the critique of structure put forward by the interpretive turn: both turns explicitly set themselves apart from the structuralist method of forcing symbolic systems – myths, rituals, relations, interactions, etc. – into binary oppositions. The critical distinction made here has run through all the additional shifts in the reorientation of the study of culture. Today it continues to determine the central criticism leveled by the humanities at the principle of binarity. For a productive analysis of the performative turn, including such initial effects, we must begin our study before the first "bursts of performativity" were triggered by contemporary theater studies (Fischer-Lichte 2001: 113).

An especially compatible field can be found in the analysis of ritual in the classic discipline of symbolic anthropology. This analysis has the potential to provide productive impetus for the performative perspectives of transnational cultural studies, even if it began within the boundaries of interpretive cultural anthropology. The continued effects of the interpretive turn are in clear evidence here. After all, even though the interpretive turn aimed at a hermeneutics of culture, it approached cultural meanings on the basis of publicly accessible spheres of staging and representation. The performative reorientation has built on this approach.

1 The Formation of the Performative Turn

Due to the one-sidedness of the text model and the interpretive turn's overemphasis on meaning, the social sciences have since the 1970s increasingly taken up the vocabulary of cultural performance. This vocabulary stems from a variety of sources, not only from the performance models of theater and the staged cultures of art, politics and daily life, but also from analytical approaches to ritual in cultural and social anthropology and from language-use scenarios in the pragmatic philosophy of language and in speech act theory. The development of this performative conceptuality extends into recent poststructuralist and gender-studies methodologies and current media theories. Even Clifford Geertz, as early as his seminal essay "Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought" (1980), referred to the "steadily broadening stream of social analyses in which the drama analogy is … governing" (Geertz 1983: 30). But has the rise of play and drama analogies really put an end to the dominance of the text? According to Dwight Conquergood, an anthropologist and performance studies scholar, the "performance paradigm is an alternative to the atemporal, decontextualized, flattening approach of text-positivism" (Conquergood 1991: 189). And Conquergood is certainly not the only one to see a distinct shift at work. Others have also referred to a "paradigm shift … from text-oriented to action-oriented observations" (Martschukat and Patzold 2003: 2).

In recent years claims of such a paradigm shift have also been raised whenever interdisciplinary research on the concept of theatricality has given a specific focus to the performative turn. However, when scholars overestimate "culture as staging" (Fischer-Lichte 2004: 7) and develop methods to study "culture as performance" (9), what we may be seeing is an overhasty retreat from the text model in cultural studies: "Shifting the focus of cultural studies – a field long centered on the text paradigm – to the theatricality of culture entails sensitizing cultural studies to the nature of culture as performance" (25). But even if performance has established itself as an innovative new concept in cultural studies, does this inevitably mean that we must leave the text model behind? From the perspective of theater studies, which clearly distinguishes between textual sources and their stage production or performance, the answer could be yes. But the matter can be regarded less strictly from the perspective of symbolic anthropology and comparative symbology, which initiated the performative turn in the first place.

At any rate, drawing a strict dividing line between the textual turn and the performative turn makes things appear too easy. It disregards the complex ways in which the various turns overlap in one and the same intellectual field, leading to hybrid forms that are particularly exciting from a theoretical point of view.

In the interpretive turn, a performatively expanded understanding of text had already emerged from the idea of "culture as text" and become legible in many forms of representation, including festivals, carnivals, rituals and other types of action. A performative perspective is also evident in Clifford Geertz's book on Bali as a theater state (Geertz 1980). Geertz sees a basic expressive aspect of stylization and enactment at work in Balinese culture, a way of thinking in social roles. Bali is therefore not only a "theater state" but "an enactment of hierarchy, a theater of status" (Geertz 1983: 63). Yet this insight alone did not lead to the concept of a more comprehensive performative turn. After all, here the performative finding is linked to a specific feature of the interpreted culture, to its cultural self-interpretation by means of expressive representation and stylization. A more fundamental shift in research perspectives can be brought about only by developing a special performative analytical vocabulary that dynamizes the conception of text and culture. It is in this sense that the performance approach of symbolic anthropology broke up the holistic understanding of culture as a closed system of meaning. Culture has come to be seen as a semantically open, performative and change-oriented process that can be grasped with the help of a specific vocabulary of behavior and staging – through a kind of "cultural pragmatics" that brings "meaning structures, contingency, power, and materiality together in a new way" (Alexander et al. 2006: 29).

It is this clearer connection to actions and events that has now gained attention, with ritual and the "social drama" serving as examples. However, the anthropological analysis of ritual has proved to be just one of the driving forces behind the performative turn. Since the 1970s, the field of ritual studies has profited from examinations of the ritual origins of theater (see Grimes 1985), but the matrix of the performative turn is much more complex than this. An equally important line in the development of performative theory has been the philosophy of language and, in particular, the action-based speech act theory of John L. Austin (1975). The key characteristic of Austin's theory is its significant combination of speech and action. Austin argues that in certain speech acts existing facts are not only reproduced through an utterance but are literally created by that utterance. Speech and action come together in performative utterances or speech acts such as promises, commands and baptisms. Here, too, the effects of linguistic utterances are linked to their ceremonial or ritual conditions, even if these are not precisely defined. Austin's speech act theory played a key role in triggering the performative turn by subjecting its initially language-centered concept of the performative to a "cultural-studies turn" that emphasized cultural performance (see Wirth 2002: 9 in a reader documenting the performative turn). "The 'discovery of the performative' in cultural studies rests on the idea that utterances can always be seen as stagings – that is, as performances" (Wirth 2002: 39).

With this specific staging aspect in mind, we can connect the discovery of the performative in the study of culture to another line of development that led to "bursts of performativity" – namely, to the performative turn in the arts themselves. Nineteen-sixties performance art, as well as action art, happenings, dance and experimental theater, all served as central arenas for a "dissolution of the boundaries of the arts" – arenas that emphasized the performative character of the aesthetic sphere and staged events instead of works (see Fischer-Lichte 2004b: 22, 2008). However, impetus for the performative turn came not only from art and theory but also from everyday culture (from the rituals of soccer, law, etc.; on rituals in youth culture, see Wulf et al. 2010). Particularly noteworthy here is the 1970s New Age movement with its appropriation of religious practices from foreign cultures. Additional pioneering developments include the theatricalization of everyday life through media stagings that have continued to the present and even extend to the computer as a "stage" for Internet presences (see Laurel 2014). A decisive factor has been the drastic theatricalization of our current media and the emergence of a "staged society" (Willems and Jurga 1998). This process is reflected in the spheres of political representation (see Meyer and Kampmann 1998) and generally in the "societies of observation and staging" in which subjects, after losing their fixed points of orientation, are forced to demonstrate group affiliation largely through self-stagings (see Soeffner 1997: viii). At any rate, the emergence of such everyday aesthetic and media phenomena has created a corresponding determinative field of society that goes far beyond the suggestion of a trend toward performativity in popular culture and that specifically benefits from the emergence of a theoretically focused performative turn.

It is this mixture of everyday culture and a shift in theoretical developments in cultural studies within the context of a broader "postmodern turn" (Benamou and Caramello 1977: 3) that eventually differentiated the performative turn into an intricate "spiral of performative turnings, conceptual flips" (Conquergood 1989: 87; on the pirouettes, detours, revolutions, etc., of the "performative turn," see also Davis 2008: Introduction). And yet we should continue to view these clear lines of theoretical development separately because the pioneers of the performative reorientation initially took different paths and set their own priorities. The resulting divergent generation of performance/performativity concepts in anthropology, speech act theory, theater studies and (poststructuralist) gender research, as well as in theories of ritualization and everyday stagings, did not produce a homogeneous mélange. Nor, within the performative turn, were they simply combined or interwoven in a postmodern fashion.

One accomplishment of theater studies is certainly that it brought together the initially loose strands of performativity in speech act theory (John Austin) and ritual and theatrical performance (Victor Turner). However, there has been no

attempt so far to set the various strands of theory in relation to each other – e.g., by taking a ritual-analytical approach to Austin's latent, undefined conception of ritual or, conversely, by examining the theory of ritual in ethnology and dramatic theory through the lens of speech act theory. These topics remain a desideratum for further performativity research. Nevertheless, even if these strands were to be brought together, one would have to refrain from reconciling the opposing interpretations and thus preserve a productive tension that could break ground for a more comprehensive performative turn. Only then could a performative attitude toward knowledge come into play that extends beyond the narrower field of theatricality research and makes it possible to describe language as action and culture as staging. Only then could the staged dimensions of social and societal practices come into focus and be accorded enhanced status. From here the broad spectrum of the performative perspective could come to include highly diverse fields, thus extending "performance 'beyond the established theatrical genres' onto a wider and rougher terrain that includes, among other things, 'armed conflict and comestibles'" (Pollock 1998: 1).

Performance and performativity have become fundamental new concepts in the humanities and social sciences (Muniesa 2014: 7–16). They refer to the characteristic of "being constructed" by language and reality and can be employed to analyze social presentations of the self, forms of political theatricality and even "theaters" of military conflict. How can actions be triggered by language and how is reality created and staged? Whereas the text category places greater emphasis on the sedimentation of meaning, here the question is what actions create (cultural) meanings. In other words, there is a new focus on the "power of the modes of human action to shape meaning" (Martschukat and Patzold 2003: 31). This explicit link between the constitution of meaning and the processes of performative action is broadly interpreted, yielding a more concrete understanding of the performance of texts, their reception by readers and their ritual development. Such an approach was originally proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin, who with his theory of carnival, the carnivalesque and dialogism was an important forerunner of the performative turn. Like Austin, Bakhtin worked on a specific refinement of the linguistic turn that replaced language as an abstract linguistic system with language as historical practice (see Pollock 1998: 22). In this context Bakhtin introduced the category of conflict and challenges by the other and thus the agency of critical dialogue. With considerable foresight, he blazed trails that later led from the performative to the postcolonial turn. As in the work of Homi Bhabha, there emerged an interest in performativity in the sense of a creative form of postcolonial representation and agency, a form that was conscious of differences. Ultimately, through the performative turn, a door was opened to expres-

sions and acts of cultural resistance (see Pollock 1998: 26; see the chapter "The Postcolonial Turn").

However, such a politicizing perspective is only possible for the performative turn if – as in the case of several new performative approaches – the view is not focused too narrowly on the production of meaning through action. It was only a prominent further "twist" of the performative turn that revealed this greater potential: the mobilizing force of social practices with respect to processes of social *change*. Elements of change result from the leeway inherent in the ritual practice itself, as is made evident by the analytical parsing of ritual into its specific processual form. In what follows, we will examine the performative turn in relation to the anthropological analysis of ritual, thereby emphasizing a perspective that has received too little attention in our discussion thus far, which has given greater weighting to its links to speech act theory within the philosophy of language (see Wirth 2002: Introduction). With his anthropological analysis of ritual, cultural anthropologist Victor Turner defined the performative turn in highly comprehensive methodological terms. In an "anthropology of experience" (see Turner and Bruner 1986) that drew on the work of Wilhelm Dilthey, Turner linked performance as a form of expression to structures of experience. But it was first necessary to assume the existence of an entirely specific "processual structure" in order to access them (Turner 1982: 13).

2 The Anthropological Analysis of Ritual – An Impetus for the Performative Turn

With his analysis of the ideal-typical processual structure of rituals, Turner opened up a new field of inquiry that extended far beyond traditional studies of rituals and revealed matrices for cultural innovation. His detailed analysis of ritual sequences is of great significance not only for ritual theory but also for cultural theory. This applies above all to his differentiated terminology. After all, the term "ritual"– similar to "culture" – has long been hackneyed, as it is often employed to describe any stereotypical, standardized, highly formalized and repeated sequence of actions. We speak of eating and discussion rituals, the rituals of brushing our teeth, going to bed and reading bedtime stories. But are they really rituals? How can rituals be distinguished from ceremonies? In a traditional ethnological sense, rituals are gateways to the sacred sphere. They embody a sacred dimension in a secular environment or, as French sociologist Emile Durkheim, one of the classic authors of ritual theory, once wrote, rituals represent the "holy." The performance approach conceptually extended rituals beyond this sacred sphere. In other words, we can also speak of secular rituals (Moore and

Myerhoff 1977), everyday rituals (Erving Goffman) and rituals as "social dramas" (Turner). But are not these rituals in fact ceremonies? The answer is no, provided that a specific definition of ritual holds true.

By definition, rituals must rise above the utility principle of social life. They are symbolic, expressive and cultic sequences of action, sacred intermediary phases in the continuum of everyday life and conventionalized symbolic modes of action that are charged with cultural symbolism. Ceremonies, by contrast, lack this aspect of being charged with deeper meaning and are not culturally overdetermined. An additional distinction made by Turner is pertinent here: "Ceremony *indicates*, ritual *transforms*" (Turner 1982: 80). In other words, ceremonies do not change anything but are merely a signal of something (e.g. social status) and function as signs. By contrast, rituals change and transform. They regulate transitions from one state to another. These transitions can be the states in which entire societies find themselves, such as the change of seasons; or they can be a subject's life-cycle crises and transitions from one stage of life to another, such as the rituals of adolescence or wedding and funeral rituals in individual socialization processes. The key point here is that rituals, at least in Turner's view, are always phenomena of initiation and transition.

Admittedly, Turner's analysis of ritual does not cover all ritualistic phenomena, and his strict formalistic distinction between ritual and ceremony is not always tenable. But he has provided a methodologically exciting principle for the continuation of the performative turn in other disciplines. The reason is that Turner developed a concrete set of methodological tools that can be used to describe culturally significant sequences of actions and representations in different societies on the basis of the common denominator of their staged structure. The object field that was opened up here is of course wider than suggested by the standardized, highly formalized and even routine courses of action that are in play in all forms of ritual. As a mere object field, ritual in a narrower sense was fractured by the performative perspective. This perspective renders visible a culturally important innovative potential: the transformative scope of ritual or "rituals as transformative performances" (Rao and Koepping 2000: 7–8). The "ritual process" described by Turner on the basis of the processual structures of ritual and the social drama initially proved to be only an object-based empirical launching pad for a more far-reaching experiment that aimed to focus the "conceptual lens of performance" on other areas of investigation (Conquergood 1991: 187). Attention was now clearly shifted to (cultural) change and transformation. Even today, this potential continues to receive too little attention compared to the staging aspect. Yet it can be used in current attempts to explore the scope for symbolic action in emerging global society – scope that renders malleable not only individual liminal experiences and transitions but also the transformation

processes of entire societies, including the transitional tensions that mark postcolonial situations.

Ultimately, the aim of the performative turn is to understand the pragmatic process of symbolization itself. It makes the analysis of symbols more dynamic. In other words, it is not enough to perceive symbols as carriers of meaning, as in the interpretive turn, or to attempt to decipher the meaning of individual symbols. Insight into the process of symbolization can come only from the historical context in which symbols are used and from studying their integration into processual forms. After all, rituals are the media in which symbolic action is staged and symbols are formed and changed. On the other hand, an analysis of the specific processual forms of ritual is required to help achieve a goal shared by ethnographers and literary and cultural studies scholars alike: "to catch symbols in their movement, so to speak" (Turner 1982: 23).

Victor Turner has undoubtedly been a leading figure in this dynamic performative reorientation. Focusing on the Ndembu, an African tribe in northwestern Zambia, he analyzed symbols and rituals on the basis of concrete fieldwork. His comparative symbology extended to the symbolic forms, ritualistic elements and staged culture of complex modern industrial societies – "from the Ndembu to Broadway," as Edith Turner put it in her brief sketch of her husband's intellectual development (E. Turner 1985: esp. 10). Turner was born in Glasgow in 1920 and died in the United States in 1983. He began teaching in America in 1963 in a career that spanned appointments to Cornell University, the University of Chicago and the University of Virginia. The son of an actress, he underwent a "theatrical turn" himself in the final years of his life. Working with members of a drama workshop in New York headed by Richard Schechner, a NYC director and theater studies scholar, Turner refined his performative approach into a literal "performance anthropology," reenacting in his ethnography seminars the rituals he had observed in African cultures. He incorporated his fieldwork experiences into role-plays so that participants could reenact and share foreign experiences. Here one can most definitely speak of a theatrical turn in ethnography (see Turner 1982: 89–101).

This culmination in a theatrical turn corresponds to Turner's pointed analysis of initiation rituals. In Turner's view, the active role of symbols in the social process is based not on the "exhausted husks" of structures (Turner 1982: 91) but on the heightened experience in ritual liminal states of human relations, feelings and "structures of experience" (63). The conditions of African tribal society serve as a point of departure for a comparative transfer and application of his findings to completely different contexts, whether to the initiation rites of the Franciscan order or 1960s hippies. Turner's studies of symbols and rituals therefore shed light on manifestations of staged social culture, which can be found in varying

degrees of elaboration in every society (on the wide range of ritualized contemporary cultural performance, see St. John 2008). They point to signs of a re-ritualization process in modern industrial societies, to a revitalization of initiation rites and rites of passage, or at the very least to a revitalization of the vestiges of ritual. However, beyond this object level, “ritual” and “social drama” – inspired by the “anthropology of performance” (see Turner 1987 and recently Korom 2013) – have developed into new, theoretically and conceptually enriched analytical categories since the 1970s and 1980s. It is only possible to speak of a performative turn once the concept of ritual is extended beyond the object field to the level of an analytical method (see Bell 1992: 14).

The common denominator of this turn is the staged structure of action, which is reflected not only in festivals, carnivals and the representational forms of sports and politics, but also in economic life and religion and not least in drama and theater. The “performance approach” can be drawn on to interpret it.

3 Liminality and Cultural Innovation

Ritual

Why are rituals necessary? The traditional answer is that they regulate the confusion and challenges associated with social transitions and transformations of individual statuses, as well as with risks and threats to the social order. Their ability to do so is perhaps the result of their own processual order, the phases of the ritual process itself. This, in any case, is the argument put forward by Victor Turner in his seminal analysis of ritual, which reinterpreted a pioneering work published in 1909 by French folklorist Arnold van Gennep (1961) and took up its three-phase model:

1. Rites of separation (*rites de séparation*): in this phase novices or initiates are removed from their familiar social environment, stripped of their former status and temporarily liberated from all social bonds.
2. Transition rites (*rites de marge*): novices now enter an intermediary liminal state in which they make contact with the sacred sphere, or at least with the central norms and symbols of a culture.
3. Rites of aggregation (*rites d’agrégation*): this phase reintegrates the subjects into a stable new position in society.

These three phases are not weighted equally in every ritual. For example, aggregation rites predominate in wedding rituals, while rites of separation are found primarily in funeral rituals. But it is the intermediate stage of rituals – the highly

symbolic borderline and transitional phase of "liminality" – that is described by Turner as a prominent state of experience and that thus takes on a special cultural relevance. Liminality has not only evolved into a basic performative concept, it has also played a central role in the further reorientation of the study of culture, particularly in the postcolonial and the spatial turns (on "liminality" as a central concept for contemporary societies, the humanities and the social sciences, see Thomassen 2014: 1ff.).

Initiation rites, in particular, exhibit typical liminal characteristics. In a state of liminality novices are often nameless and genderless but not necessarily sexless. Furthermore, they are temporarily severed from their previous social ties. They hover in a fragile intermediary existence outside social structures. Such "status-less" states can be found, for example, in transitions from lower to higher social positions. In all cultures – even in complex industrial societies – this transformative phase in the transitional processes of individuals and social groups represents a precarious ritualistic threshold, an interval

> of *margin* or *limen*, when the past is momentarily negated, suspended, or abrogated, and the future has not yet begun, an instant of pure potentiality when everything, as it were, trembles in the balance. (Turner 1982: 44)

Liminality is thus a disorienting borderline state of "betwixt-and-between" that is connected to the complex ordering of individual or social transitional situations such as puberty, status changes, new jobs, marriage and pregnancy. This liminal condition, which is often enacted quite literally by crossing a threshold or moving to a new place, is characterized by the temporary suspension of familiar everyday rules and the renegotiation of social norms, roles and symbols.

Liminality is a form of experience and action focusing on the state of being "in-between," which is currently held in high regard in cultural theory: here symbols with multiple meanings give expression to the indeterminacy and uncertainty of the threshold state between two life phases – for example, by confronting initiates with death, darkness and invisibility, but also with polysemantic superhuman forces, myths, demons, gods, magic, witchcraft and ghosts (e.g., Hamlet). However, such confrontations not only generate fear and alienation but also induce the novices or initiates to engage more intensely with their culturally specific symbol-laden worlds. Familiar social boundaries and complexes of symbols that were previously taken for granted are disrupted and their contradictions are made visible through alienation and play. Turner gives a vivid example:

> Put a man's head on a lion's body and you think about the human head in the abstract. Perhaps it becomes for you, as a member of a given culture and with the appropriate guidance, an emblem of chieftainship; or it may be explained as representing the soul as against

> the body or intellect as contrasted with brute force, or innumerable other things. (Turner 1967: 106)

The liminality phase thus temporarily creates productive scope for an "analysis of culture into factors and their free and 'ludic' recombination in any and every possible pattern" (Turner 1982: 28) – for a creative symbolic reversal of social properties and even for a deconstruction of symbolic classifications. What is decisive here is the manner in which such cultural scope is used. It is meant to promote experimentation, play, status reversals, irony and distortions, as well as innovation and changed sensory perception – through the practical application, even transformation, of symbols: "In liminality, new ways of acting, new combinations of symbols, are tried out, to be discarded or accepted" (Turner 1977: 40).

According to Turner, these possible interventions in the process of cultural symbolization – based on the scope the process offers for cultural self-interpretation and innovation – are at work particularly in the so-called liminoid (liminal-like) genres of complex societies: theater, literature, painting, music, as well as other areas informed by an anti-structural freedom of action, such as tourism (see Harwood and El-Manstrly 2012). In contrast to ritual liminality, these genres are characterized not by duty but by leisure. Even if Turner's concept has perhaps been trivialized through its reception – through its application, for example, to the "liminoid" world of the stock market (Goldinger 2002) – it must be noted that within the framework of liminoid genres, familiar symbolization processes can be mercilessly challenged or even subverted.

In other words, it was Victor Turner, and not Arnold van Gennep, who first invested the ritual stage of liminality with the capacity for cultural reflection and enhanced status as one of the driving forces behind cultural invention, innovation and change. He thus marked out an important counter-position to the structural functional interpretation of ritual. Turner was looking for an incentive to reorganize the social sciences before they "withered on the structuralist vine" (Rochberg-Halton 1989: 209) – in his eyes, rituals did not have a stabilizing effect on society or a passive function. On the contrary, he believed they held great potential for cultural change. Whereas Geertz attached importance to the condensation and sedimentation of meanings and the interpretive turn was considered incapable of providing impetus to analyze social change, Turner's dynamic ritual model has explicitly brought into play the transformative capacity of cultural meaning. However, the concept of culture itself has been changed along the way. After all, like all cultural turns in the humanities, the performative turn has produced a modification of the conception of culture. The study of "culture as performance" is now pursued beyond the object field of cultural performance/performativity (Conquergood 1989: 82–95). A new approach to "culture" has been

facilitated by linking the social dimension of both representation and staging to the dynamic nature of sequences of social action. It is precisely this link that can be seen in both the "social drama" and ritual.

Social Drama

Rituals are elements of social dramas. It is through rituals that social conflicts are integrated into a structured processual form, staged and ultimately regulated. Some concrete examples of social dramas are conflicts among relatives, conflicts over the succession to a throne, as well as conflicts associated with status reversals, rebellion, revolutions and war. The context of social dramas – or the application field of the corresponding analytical category – extends into almost all levels of everyday life: "I hold that the social drama form occurs on all levels of social organization from state to family," writes Victor Turner (1982: 92), highlighting the universality he claims for this concept (see Turner 1982: 61–88, 1985: 205–226; Edgley 2013).

Turner apparently coined the term "social drama" spontaneously – "a new term was needed" (E. Turner 1985: 5) – and then continued to develop the concept as an ideal-type with a fixed sequential order. Although the term has largely receded from view – as the sociologist Jeffrey Alexander confirms (2004: 547) – it continues to embody an exciting concept, for it emphasizes the way social life is determined by conflict. As a result, it can be applied more effectively to the tensions of the emerging global society than many of the harmony-based approaches in cultural hermeneutics. In any case, it goes beyond the simple dimensions of representation and expression, producing utilizable strategies for the resolution of social conflict and crisis management. The concept of social drama shows how the performative turn broadened the impact of the methodological tendency to draw on role models and theater analogies to analyze social action. The sequential pattern of social drama has, for example, been applied to spectacular phenomena such as terrorism, as shown by the study on Aldo Moro's kidnapping and assassination (see Wagner-Pacifici 1986). But as an analytical category, social drama has also been used within the context of scholarly and even intra-disciplinary debates. This can be seen in an essay about consumer research that explores the resistance among followers of traditional research approaches to the formation of postmodern interpretive reorientations (Sherry 1991: 551ff.). In a broader context, the metaphor of the social drama, precisely due to its greater methodological precision, can be drawn on to examine social conflicts more closely with respect to their progression and to identify conflict-resolution strategies. This more concrete approach can be found in recent attempts to focus the current dis-

cussion of rituals on strategies of crisis intervention or on the critical performative cultural politics struggling with (unequal) power relations (Conquergood 2013). These new themes have modernized the debate (for further approaches see Kreinath et al. 2006, 2007).

The ideal-typical progression of social dramas, which range from power struggles in groups to tensions in international relations, is marked by four phases:

1. Breach – breach of social norms, violation of rules, transgression of the law.
2. Crisis – the breach worsens and continues to escalate until a turning point is reached.
3. Redressive action – conflict resolution through legal proceedings, ritual acts, mediation mechanisms or military force.
4. Reintegration or irreparable schism – either reconciliation or recognition of the insurmountable break or separation.

Once again, a key element is the precarious liminality of the phase of redressive action. Even if in empirical cases of conflict there is no real resolution of the conflict in the sense of a reconciliation, the social drama, as a model, lives from the Aristotelian concept of a self-contained plot that is rooted in the theory of tragedy and has been tailored to suit stage dramas. This link to Aristotle poses a considerable problem. An assumption is made not only that the course of the drama is based on rationality and even self-reflexivity, but also that the conflicts of interest can be mediated by reference to shared overarching values:

> I tend to regard the social drama in its full formal development, its full phase structure, as a process of converting particular values and ends, distributed over a range of actors, into a system (which is always temporary and provisional) of shared or consensual meaning. (Turner 1982: 75)

But to what extent can we really work with such a model if it has been universalized beyond constellations of inner-cultural conflicts and applied to the tensions of intercultural relations? Can the events of September 11, 2001, for instance, be interpreted as a social drama? If we take Turner's basic condition seriously – the required connection to a "system of shared meaning" that is at least temporally accepted – the answer is probably no. In order to manage crises under global conditions, we thus need to develop models that are much more conscious of difference. The fragmented progression of rituals and the liminal experiences of breaches in global-living conditions are evidently forcing us to abandon the rigid processual structure of Turner's ritual schema. After all, as regards not only present but also past scenarios, Turner's approach seems too narrow to be able to grasp and analyze the striking performative power of the many unstructured components of rituals, not to mention everyday rituals and political ritualizations.

4 The Performative Turn in Different Disciplines

A ritual-analytical focus characterizes the performative turn not only in cultural anthropology but also in other disciplines. In contrast to the text model, the performative turn reveals the constructedness of social practices and the freedom that exists in shaping them. It is not the performance of what already exists that comes into play, but the formation of something new through performative processes. In the natural sciences, this type of performative scope – found on many levels, including that of knowledge acquisition – has increasingly attracted attention as the "performative foundation of scientific objectivity" (Kroß 2003: 254–255), primarily in science studies. Here performativity refers to the options that exist in shaping perceptions of facts and objects with respect to their social context of use – and particularly with the help of a broad cultural understanding of technology.

But the performative perspective has even more far-reaching consequences for the study of culture. It has led to the realization that research positions in the humanities and social sciences not only describe the self-creations of culture but also interact with or even produce these self-creations. Economists, for example, use formulas and models to analyze markets and end up creating these markets at the same time (see MacKenzie, Muniesa, and Siu 2007; on the "performativity turn" in management studies, see Diedrich et al. 2013; on brand performance through social media, see Singh and Sonnenburg 2012; also Bachmann-Medick 2016). There have been similar developments in the field of historical studies, where a new self-conception of "doing history" has emerged from examinations of "the productive capacity of human actions in history to constitute meaning" (Martschukat and Patzold 2003: 11). Here parallels can be seen to the practice of "doing gender" in gender studies, which considers even biological gender to be performatively constructed and constructable (Butler 1988: 525). It makes a difference, however, whether we proceed from performance while sticking to the idea of an (autonomously) acting subject, or focus on performativity and mount a poststructuralist challenge to the idea of intentionally acting subjects. This latter idea is associated with the claim that it is the utterance itself that first constitutes the subject – as in Judith Butler's gender performativity.

Finally, literary studies have emphasized the "notion of literature as performative" (Culler 2000: 507) and elucidated literary texts on the basis of their implications for action. The extent to which the performative turn may be seen as extending into literary studies is also revealed from the perspective of the philosophy of language – as in an essay by Jonathan Culler that marks out the range of the performative turn, starting with Austin's speech act theory and the work of Jacques Derrida and extending to Judith Butler's performative gender concepts

and queer theory. Pointing to Austin's emphasis on the creative function of language as the embodiment of action, Culler recapitulates the factors that have provided impetus for a performative redefinition of literature: "Literary works seem to bring into being ideas, concepts, which they deploy" (Culler 2000: 507). In literary texts, for example, the concept of (romantic) love is developed in specific contexts of action.

Applying approaches from the anthropological analysis of performance and ritual, we not only gain a better understanding of the communication structures of medieval and early modern literature as part of a "culture of presence" (Gragnolati and Suerbaum 2010: 3), we are also able to perform more effective examinations of the relationship between literature and social practice. This methodology demands that literary texts be studied in terms of their ritual components, which often reveals a critical fracturing of the ritual processual order with a fictionalizing, alienating intent. *Bildungsromane* and coming-of-age novels, in particular, can be read with fresh eyes with respect to ritual structures. But here, too, the category of ritual serves only as a vehicle for taking an intercultural perspective. Even the European individual is integrated into ritual structures and cultural encodings and is shaped by collective patterns of experience, as Friedrich Kittler's study of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* makes clear (1978). With an eye on Hopi puberty and initiation rituals, Kittler proposes that we view the Western education process that unfolds in European coming-of-age novels not as a highly individual educational path but as a prestructured, culturally specific process of socialization. The alleged special status of the European individual is thus relativized and, within the framework of this approach, rendered comparable to concepts of the person and the self in other cultures.

Stage dramas are of course especially well suited for ritual-analytical performance studies, as has been shown by the dramas of August Strindberg, which occupy a prominent position in the history of the treatment and transformation of ritual within dramas. *To Damascus* is a particularly revealing example of the literary adaptation of a full-blown transition and transformation ritual infused with liminality. However, we can also gain new insight by examining Strindberg's *A Dream Play* from a ritual-analytical perspective, particularly the scene showing the failure of a PhD ritual, which combines and contrasts very different rituals and ritual fragments. Here Strindberg transforms an academic drama into a liturgical event. As the victim of a dispute between faculties, the doctoral candidate becomes the savior who, wearing a crown of thorns instead of a laurel wreath, enters the sphere of a sacrificial and martyrdom ritual and the symbolic world of *imitatio Christi*. In this type of distorted initiation scene, which is characteristic of the literary treatment of rituals and can even extend to the mutilation of the ritual forms themselves, meaningful reintegration and the formation of a stable

identity appear impossible. For a poetic deconstruction of the traditional ritual process, Shakespeare's plays, in particular, are rich sources. Scholars have fruitfully analyzed the subversive manner in which they stage reversed or "maimed" ritual forms. This deformation becomes apparent, for instance, in the overdetermination of funeral rites and the continued presence of a state of liminality in *Hamlet* (Woodbridge and Berry 1992; Berry 2010).

In most cases the treatment of transition rituals in dramas is characterized by a fracturing of the linear sequence of the ritualistic order. Literature reflects on rituals, de-familiarizes or distorts ritualistic orientation patterns, parodies rituals or brings them into play as mere clichés. The focus is primarily on select ritual phases, particularly on the liminal transitional phase. A basic element appears to be that all rituals are left in the phase of liminality and stable meanings are thus suspended. In this way, literature and drama become media for critiquing ritual and forge a link to staged social culture.

It is not least the perspective of theater studies that has paved the way for a combination of these various performative spheres (see Harth and Schenk 2004; Brosius et al. 2013). In this respect, the field of theater studies has played a key role in promoting the performative turn (Schechner 2013). Erika Fischer-Lichte, a prominent theater studies scholar at the Freie Universität Berlin, has even argued that two variants of a "performative turn" are at work: initially the representation and performance-based self-conception of European culture at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and then a contemporary theory-driven performative turn in the humanities and social sciences. With respect to the first historical turn, she has hypothesized that "in the twentieth century, European culture underwent a transition from a predominantly textual to a largely performative culture" (Fischer-Lichte 2000: 3). Whereas a typical European textual culture emerged in the nineteenth century, performative currents came to dominate in the early twentieth century – e.g., through exoticism and the discovery of the "primitive," through the development of a culture of the body and corporeality, and through artistic dance, physical rhythmic acting, the theatricalization of public life, May Day celebrations, workers' festivals and sporting events. Reflecting the growing dramatization of society, these dimensions had an impact on the understanding and conception of culture. According to Fischer-Lichte, they even came to encompass the rediscovery of ritual through practices such as athletic competitions and political stagings in postindustrial societies. Fischer-Lichte regards the more recent, methodologically conscious performative turn in the humanities – which began in the 1990s – as a response to this historical performative turn (2000: 21): materiality, mediality and the formational dynamics of culture have come to the fore and even seem to be replacing the metaphor of "culture as text" (2000: 23).

However, it seems problematic to draw a parallel between the historical and methodological performative turns. After all, the new direction taken by the study of culture cannot be explained solely on the basis of an increasingly theatricalized historical and social reality. Rather, it reflects a new perceptual and analytical attitude that has allowed objects, actions and cultural processes to be seen in performative terms, not least from the perspective of their staging and performance dimensions, even if they are not theatricalized. Turner's ritual-analytical approach to performance has therefore been more far-reaching because it has proceeded systematically and, in terms of content, has not been tied to certain "eras" of the performative.

However, when Erika Fischer-Lichte shifts her attention to the methodological performative turn at the cusp of the twenty-first century, she places stronger emphasis on theater studies than on textual studies: "The new terms that were coined primarily in textual studies during the linguistic turn did not seem well suited for focusing on the special performativity of cultural processes and phenomena" (Fischer-Lichte 2003: 53). Ever since the 1990s, the field of theater studies has pioneered a new terminology and can more or less lay claim to the status of a "lead discipline" in this area (see Fischer-Lichte 2001: 113). American performance studies seems to differ from German performance studies in this regard because it has turned away from theater studies (see Carlson 2008). With this new vocabulary, the discipline in Germany has expanded not only the traditional concept of theater, but also the traditional ethnographic concept of ritual. Confronted with the dominance of terms from textual studies, theater studies has thus offered a repertoire of staging concepts, including performance, representation, staging, expression, perception, corporeality and mediality. As a result, the discipline has been able to further strengthen its ties to cultural and media studies, which were initiated in the 1960s by their own social-scientific turn and are now stimulating a wider conception of performativity that reaches into the spheres of cultural, organizational and technological performance (see Balme 2008: 94).

The application of the ritual-analytical perspective and the creation of a new terminology for the interpretation of literature, drama and theater have indeed served as the springboard for a more far-reaching performative turn. But of course such a turn becomes recognizable and can in fact only be set into motion if the central categories describing the object and content level become either perceptual cultural categories (reaching across the problem fields) or cultural analytical categories (reaching across disciplines) – that is, if these categories cross over into other areas in the first place. This is the case when the performative approach to power (Alexander 2011), the production of social "performative space" (Glass and Rose-Redwood 2014: 15), political performativity after the events of 9/11

(Brady 2012: 156–178, here 176) and a performance-oriented architecture (Hensel 2013) are the focus of reflections.

Considered from the perspective of culture studies in general, and not only from the vantage point of theater studies, a similar crossover is precisely what has happened with respect to the category of theatricality. After all, as a "performative gesture" (see the introduction to Neumann et al. 2000: 12), this category passed into the non-theatrical spheres of both social communication and identity formation and, as in the work of Gerhard Neumann, can be interpreted as a text-related "practice of meaning production" (13): "Theatricality as a generative element of meaning production … cannot be conceived in isolation from linguisticality and textuality" (13). In understanding theatricality as an implicit element of the textual process and viewing language or text as theatrical (because it stages meanings), this approach confirms the hypothesis expressed at the start of this chapter: text and performance need not remain strict dichotomies posited by the humanities. In a lucidly formulated argument, Neumann even emphasizes that on its own – i.e., without the support of theater studies – literary studies can contribute to the performative turn. After all, the theatrical implications of language in the literary text, or the "text as the 'stage' of linguistic performance" (15), are obvious. From this angle Neumann regards the concept of theatricality as "a strategic epistemic pattern itself" (16) – both as a form of thought and a cross-disciplinary element of discourse. As such, this central concept can help to lend clearer contours to the performative turn. The attendant process is characterized by an increased focus on modes of production, models, perceptual forms and acts of textualization – on the "productive repertoires" that historian Gadi Algazi in his own critical study sets in opposition to the conception of the text in the interpretive turn (Algazi 2000).

It was in a similar process that another central performative concept emerged in the intermediary space between literary and theater studies – that of "transgression" (Neumann and Warning 2003). Transgression has also been explicitly discussed as "a pattern of perception, description and understanding" (11). The term describes the practice of crossing over or dissolving boundaries, of carnivalization and the breaking of codes. It refers not only to creative "crossovers between, for example, the arts, media, discourses, cultural territories and time periods, often as a state of hovering between languages and genders" (10), but also to a performative "crossing of the boundaries of legalized or ritualized events" (10) within society itself. From the perspective of the study of culture, the decisive point here is not the performative excess produced by the concept of transgression beyond the textualization of meaning. What is innovative is the attempt to bring nothing less than a counter-concept to ritual into play. After all, while the purpose of ritual is to structure representative transitions in a disci-

plined manner, transgressions are much more inclined to an inner "subversion" of prevailing codes. At the very least, they embody a form of knowledge "that operates outside normative (enlightened, rational, respectable) discourse" (Neumann and Warning 2003: 12). Through mimetic acts, metaphoricity and translation, transgressions may ultimately help to establish a cultural theory of boundary-drawing and boundary-crossing that is directed at traditional dichotomous orders of knowledge and forms of cultural knowledge that are accessible through textualization alone.

This corporal, material and subversive sphere of performance and transgression, which has been opened up by the category of theatricality, must be seen as including Judith Butler's well-known performativity theory in gender studies. Butler foregrounds the body in order to challenge gender as a (binary) biological category. Explicitly citing Turner's ritual studies, she regards gender as an active repetitive formation. In her view, gender identity is instituted in the body only through a "*stylized repetition of acts*" (Butler 1988: 519), a "citation" of prior sets of practices (Butler 1997: 51) and a "ritualized public performance" within a regime of sanctions and power relations (Butler 1988: 526). As a result, the body is de-biologized and seen as resulting from a process of performativity that involves the repeated and largely unconscious referencing of gender norms. Building on gender research and its "performative theory of gender and sexuality" (Culler 2000: 512) from the 1990s, this performativity approach has redefined the critique of and the idea behind the identity concept in the humanities and social sciences. The focus here is not on essentialist determinations of a clear, self-contained identity but rather on constructs and performative concepts of identity formation. Performative gender theory has thus given special impetus to the critique of identity because it has shown how (gender) identity, once considered stable, can be provided with wiggle room and broken up into multiple identities through action, repetitive acts, role-playing, the referencing of gender norms and even the fracture points of subversion.

What tends to become conceptually lost in Butler's work is illustrated by an example from historical studies that shows how the performance approach produces a new view of gender relations. In an essay about German naturism and the specific way people staged their own bodies based on ancient statuary in the early nudist movement in the early twentieth century, Maren Möhring investigates "the constitution of the body as a performative process" (Möhring 2003: 257, 2004). Following Butler, she concentrates on the imitation of a gendered model of the body, an "ideal body schema" (Apollo for men, Venus for women) which at the time still served a bipolar gender system. As in Butler's work, performativity is shown to be embedded in the constant repetition of norms that generate gender-specific characteristics. The decisive point here is that in the course

of the performance there always remains a degree of leeway in relation to the ancient statues. At the same time, such imitation provides freedom for change and freedom for a departure from normative rules and their re-creation.

Additional examples from historical studies also show how the performance and performativity perspective opens up a new view of certain phenomena (on the potential and limitations of the "performative turn" in historical studies with regard to a new "occasionalist approach," see Burke 2005: esp. 44–49). For instance, material-based studies from the field of medieval history and literary studies might be drawn on more heavily to expand our understanding of rituals. Of significance here are the limits of textuality in the Middle Ages, the "openness" of medieval texts, the activating effects of honor as status and the enormous importance of rituals of power, forms of submission and the ritual gestures associated with the staging of power and the homage paid by subjects. In this field ideas about rituals have been developed that are not merely tailored to theatricality or transitional rituals. Rather, ritual action is regarded as a text- and practice-linked behavior that acquires potential for change through repetitive chains of actions, gestures and words (see Althoff 2003: 13ff., 26.) – and through a symbolic physical sequence of movements (see Wenzel and Lechtermann 2001). Particularly in research on the Middle Ages, a broad attempt has been made to link the performative turn to a media-conscious "cultural history of perceptual experience" (Wenzel and Lechtermann 2001: 210) – i.e., to voice, posture and visuality. As a result, we are seeing links to the iconic and pictorial turns. It is in performance-oriented studies on medieval visual culture that "liminal spaces" between the verbal and the visual, the material and the immaterial, the spoken and the written, have been brought to the fore using the tools of the performative turn (see Gertsman and Stevenson 2012: 2, 7; Gertsman 2008). In these types of performative readings and in studies dealing with ceremonies of rule, the ceremonial is once again drawn into the sphere of the ritual and given enhanced status, no longer as a mere ornamental accessory, but as a constitutive element of the political and social order. Such research on the constitutive role of symbolic action, ritual and ceremony is no longer confined to the specific performative characteristics of pre-modern objects of study (see Stollberg-Rilinger 2011).

Remarkably, ritual-analytical and performative approaches can increasingly be found in modern historical studies. One such study interprets the death penalty in Germany and the United States in the nineteenth-century as a modern form of cultural performance in which a culture seeks to reproduce its specific norms, values and ideas about order (see Martschukat 2003, 2005). At the same time, the killing technique is viewed as a performance of modernity and a civilized society (Martschukat 2005: 62). Precisely because of its emphatically non-theatrical "staging of civilized killing" (Martschukat 2003: 244), the death penalty

expresses both modernity and progressiveness, with the electric chair embodying an alleged rationalization of the punishment. Using this staging practice as an example, one might plausibly argue that

> modern societies also produce and convey their understanding of themselves and the world in the form of ritual acts. The creation of a sense of community through specific ritualized behavioral patterns is thus not specific to pre-modern cultures, as the recent theory of performance and ritual shows. (Martschukat 2003: 229)

As a result, the performative turn has furthered efforts to overcome the dichotomy between pre-modern and modern societies. It shows that while a broadly applicable performative research perspective has drawn inspiration and elements from the anthropological theory of ritual, a rigid ritual concept no longer suffices to elucidate different expressive forms of symbolic communication through ritualized action.

5 Further Developments of the Performative Approach

In contrast to the traditional study of ritual, research concepts in theater studies such as staging, performance and bodily expression are not linked to highly developed processual structures. Does this mean that they are better suited for analyzing contemporary societies? Beyond Turner's theory of ritual, more recent research trends have stressed that the assumption of a linear and self-contained processual structure of rituals no longer represents an adequate interpretive model. Priority has increasingly been given to examining the disparate actions and counter-actions in complex and fractured ritual processes (Werbner 1989: 13, 139). A shift has been ascertained in the function of rituals, particularly against the backdrop of the phenomenon of globalization. Here liminality is revealed to be a highly precarious state in the transformation process of both individuals and societies, particularly in the transition from colonial to postcolonial societies and in the processing of experiences of globalization. This social transformation, in which traditional ritual structures are dissolved and even the tripartite division of rituals becomes unstable, has become an explosive topic for literature, drama and theater, especially in non-European countries (Elsbree 1991: 1, 4). Here liminality is treated as a conflict-ridden transition that can take the form of an uneven spatial passage. One example is Salman Rushdie's novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, in which liminality is conceived as the crossing of an "unseen frontier" (Rushdie 1999: 262) in the sky. It is experienced by the novel's main character, the Indian pop singer Ormus Cama, when immigrating from Bombay to England. Like the other travelers, he "came West and passed through the transforming mem-

brane in the sky" (427). For such "travellers between the worlds" (264) – and for migration situations as a whole – the phase of liminal experience and liminality is not a temporary and transitional one. Rather, it is a permanent and conflict-ridden state of displacements and "faults" (429), which is not necessarily replaced by re-assimilation. It is only through the lens of the performative turn that we can recognize such liminal distortions of immigration – "the liminality of the modern world where people are exposed to an unstructured or unfamiliar freedom, with no clear or meaningful incorporation" (Elsbree 1991: 136). This perpetual liminal state applies to the in-between living conditions of our world today, including liminal economies, warfare, environmental risks, etc. (Thomassen 2014: 218ff., 221ff., 227).

Even if in the emerging global society there is no longer any ritual security – e.g., the ability to rely on a stable ritual process and thus on a completed ritual – Turner's structured analysis of ritual continues to provide a few clear and stimulating ideas. One is that the performative turn should be further elaborated as a cross-boundary and cross-cultural approach and exploited for comparative cultural studies. After all, Turner never attached importance to specific rituals. He focused on analyzing their general and (as it were) ideal-typical processual structures – and, not least, on developing a "cross-cultural typology of processual units" such as ritual and social drama (Turner 1985: 172). With his method of ritual analysis he created a set of analytical tools that still can be used for a more precise analysis of the global contexts of staging. With an eye toward ritual structuring, Turner worked to create a "new transcultural communicative synthesis through performance" (Turner 1982: 19), which would make it possible to compare or even share cultural experiences across cultural boundaries. It aimed to do so not only on an analytical level, but also through their enactment.

However, what is crucial here is the course that is being taken. Just before his death, Turner paved the way for another path, a neurobiological approach quite unexpected for a cultural anthropologist. As controversial as it was, it was not pursued any further in research on rituals and performance, even though it might be gaining more relevance today. According to Turner, rituals are part of the evolutionary process; with this in mind the performative turn could lead to a new dialogue with neuroscience. Turner initiated this dialogue himself with his visionary understanding of the challenges posed by brain research: "I am at least half convinced," he claimed in "Body, Brain, and Culture," one of his last essays, "that there can be genuine dialogue between neurology and culturology, since both take into account the capacity of the upper brain for adaptability, resilience, learning, and symbolizing" (Turner 1987: 156–176, here 176). In this connection the performative turn may have new significance for brain research. Researchers

could, for example, take up Turner's proposal to "liberate" the brain – defined as a "liminal brain" (Schechner 1987: 12) – from neurophysiological determinism. At any rate, approaches have already emerged that aim at combining the neuronal network with theater models as part of a performative turn in brain research. Their objective is to understand the workings of the brain via the "drama of thought" (Baars 1998).

The universalist claims raised by this emerging "neurobiological turn" – claims that raised problems in Turner's work – can easily distract us from another issue. Descriptive and analytical categories are not neurobiological. They are always culture specific and used in a culturally dependent manner. Nevertheless, even here universalist presuppositions are made. For example, Talal Asad, an anthropologist of religion, has criticized the development of a universalist concept of ritual marked by a specific conception of religion and the constitution of an essential self. According to Asad, the term cannot be seamlessly applied to the ritual forms of Islamic societies (Asad 1993: 55–79).

In this problematic field, another possible course should be borne in mind – the global opening of the performance categories themselves. Despite the content-related and culturally specific restrictions of performative terminology, the formal processual structure of rituals holds great inspirational potential: it seems possible to examine performative practice largely as a cultural technique of crisis management that will become increasingly important in the emerging global society.

> If, as interventions, rituals are always related to the processing of potentially accepted experiences of difference (breaks, transitions, crises), then *liminality* – the constitution, extension, restriction, redefinition and legitimation of boundaries – is an additional important aspect. (Wulf and Zirfas 2004: 76)

The close link between ritual, liminality and the preservation and crossing of boundaries represents a terminological and conceptual terrain on which performance can be recognized, among other things, as a spatial phenomenon (see Fischer-Lichte et al. 2003; Glass and Rose-Redwood 2014; Tompkins 2014). However, this dimension becomes important only if the discourse in the study of culture as a whole – as in the case of the spatial turn – becomes conscious of the spatial implications of historical, social and political action. A specific spatial effect – especially when it comes to opening up global horizons of communication – requires new attention to the emerging alliances between the power of the performative and the power of new global media. In this context performative studies in sociology have investigated revolutions as specific theatrical performances, thereby bringing to the fore the decisive meaning of global digital and social media as a new performative force that forges connections to the world and

creates a global commitment. This has been one of the goals, for example, of the Egypt revolution in 2011 (see Alexander 2011a, 2011).

These current discussions within the scope of the performative turn suggest that both now and in the future it will be the categories of theatricality, transgression, media-driven performativity and especially liminality – as opposed to the still holistic category of ritual – that will enjoy broad application. New horizons for contemporary and future performative explorations are emerging, not only the performative dimension of the life sciences and the performativity of global experimental theater, but also the performative aspect of activism in public social spaces and the political arena such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy movement and enactments of violence and war (see Citron et al. 2014: 1–14). From such fields new performative concepts need to be developed for the cultural analyses of the contemporary overlapping worlds of experience and fragmented lifestyles that do not fit seamlessly into an integrative cultural context. For cultural anthropology and analyses in the social sciences and the humanities in general, this development has clear consequences. After all, in view of the increasing fragmentation of life and experiential contexts, the familiar narrative arcs in the study of culture will themselves need to be broken down. The performance aspect will thus necessarily permeate the staging of scholarly texts themselves (see Bruner 1986: 139). Through the reflexive turn, this aspect has in fact found its way into the politics of research. Thanks to James Clifford (1988: 49, relating to Turner), in particular, the performative turn has been stretched to such a degree that it is encroaching upon the self-reflection of scholarly research and representation: “No one writing today pushes the performance perspective so deeply into the politics of fieldwork and scholarly publication” (Conquergood 1989: 87).

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Chapter III: The Reflexive Turn/Literary Turn

Clifford Geertz once asked an apparently simple question – "What does the ethnographer do?" – only to answer, "he writes" (Geertz 1975: 19). As trivial as this might sound, it was revolutionary at the time because the most common response probably would have been: "He observes, he records, he analyzes" (Geertz 1975: 20). Writing as such, as well as the production of texts and manuscripts in general, had long been ignored or greatly underestimated. However, the specific mode of cultural description – the way something is represented – and the form of the text invariably have an effect on the thing that is represented. In scholarly representations, such inscriptions, which have always existed, are not only depicted, but concealed, supplemented, reinterpreted or lent greater depth. On this point Geertz went even further, arguing that ethnographic writings not only have the status of second-order interpretations within the meaning of the interpretive turn, but are also "fictions" in the sense that they are "something made or fashioned" (Geertz 1975: 15).

Every perception or representation of culture is pre-formed. All scholarly depictions of other, unfamiliar cultures are governed by the specific rhetorical and narrative traditions of the scholar's own culture. However, such self-reflexive insights into the structures of scholarly "representation" cannot automatically be derived from the linguistic turn. They have gone hand in hand with an independent new focus in the study of culture – yet this only happened after the oversize mantle of "meaning" that was initially spread by Geertz was cast off. Only then was the "'reflexive turning' of the anthropological gaze toward anthropology itself" (Sangren 1988: 405) further elaborated as the rhetorical or literary turn. These developments resulted in critical gender-based self-reflections on scholarly writing in general that still have an impact today and that include current approaches to an experimental or even poetical reorientation of cultural criticism (Stacey and Wolff 2013).

But this reflection on one's own texts meant a strict departure from the empiricism of (field) research. Such a departure alone makes the reflexive turn a phenomenon of a broader postmodern turn. It has been accompanied by the realization that the fragmentation of cultural life-worlds blocks access to foreign contexts of experience – that, in general, experience cannot automatically be converted into textual form. These insights have contributed to the so-called crisis of representation, which is, in fact, a much broader phenomenon, encompassing not only the poststructuralist drifting apart of signifier and signified, but also the asymmetry of power relations underlying every representation of the other and every description of culture – within anthropology and beyond.

1 The Formation of the Reflexive Turn

Recognition of the power relations inherent in representations resulted not only from the development of theory but above all from the influences of poststructuralism and deconstruction, particularly from the work of Michel Foucault. This recognition is embedded in a complex academic and political environment. It can be traced to the colonialist involvement of ethnography, which extends to the level of representation and to what one might call the "imperialism" of cultural representation. In this view, representations of "the other" always contain the more or less hidden violence of anthropological understanding. Together with the corresponding critique of colonialist discourse, the cultural anthropological critique of representation is "linked to the breakup and redistribution of colonial power in the decades after 1950" (Clifford 1988: 22). Decolonization caused an upheaval in global power structures that has continued to the present day, and it has given a boost – particularly in the postcolonial camp – to the critique of the Eurocentric monopoly on representation, especially in view of the increasing attempts at self-representation by societies outside Europe. But even within Europe and the United States, the debate on representation, by raising the issue of the representability and self-representation of minorities and ethnic groups, has opened up an explosive field of political conflict. These topics have continued to challenge scholars to critically rethink all "othering" strategies – especially the widespread practice of portraying other, non-European cultures as ahistorical (see Kohl 2002: 209).

In the late 1980s the so-called writing culture debate, which centered on the poetics and politics of cultural representation, emerged within the broader context of the interpretive and performative turns. It has its roots in the research seminar "The Making of Ethnographic Texts," which was organized by literary scholar and cultural anthropologist James Clifford in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1984. The findings of this seminar were presented in the groundbreaking anthology *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (1986), which James Clifford co-edited with George Marcus. As a kind of meta-anthropology, this self-reflexive approach gained a foothold in the cultural and social sciences far beyond cultural anthropology. Even after its twenty-fifth anniversary, it has continued, in revisited form, to challenge scholars in these disciplines to reconsider the forms and politics of their own representations (see "Writing Culture at 25," a special issue of *Cultural Anthropology*, 2012). In a wide variety of fields, this movement has paved the way for a critical revision of the traditions, conventions, rhetorical strategies and power implications that play an important role in descriptions of culture in (scholarly) texts.

In Geertz's work and in the course of the reflexive turn, the trust placed in the ability of scholars to objectively represent foreign people and cultures was

fundamentally shaken. Once again, the explanation lies not only in the development of theory. A key factor has been the changed political conditions, which have resulted from the increasingly complex interconnections and challenges of globalization:

> One of the major assumptions upon which anthropological writing rested until only yesterday, that its subjects and its audience were not only separable but morally disconnected, that the first were to be described but not addressed, the second informed but not implicated, has fairly well dissolved. The world has its compartments still, but the passages between them are much more numerous and much less well secured. (Geertz 1988: 132)

At first glance, the departure from the principle of binary opposites – from the attitude of "we versus others" – appears to be a renewed shift away from divisive dichotomous differences as a whole, which continued to be methodologically and theoretically reinforced by structuralism. Upon closer inspection, though, this departure is grounded in a world society that is no longer marked by separate differences, but has been compelled to recognize differences that are interconnected due to global integration – and even to acknowledge a "gradual spectrum of mixed-up differences" (Geertz 1988: 148). Not only Geertz's original approaches to self-reflexive textual analysis, but also the more heavily conceptualized self-reflexive and literary turns in ethnography are implicated in this upheaval in cultural anthropology, which has suspended the old familiarities – and, with them, the conventions of ethnographic descriptions and scholarly representation as a whole. In other words, practical political developments have spurred cultural anthropology to set a course that has been crucial for the study of culture – a course directed against the established, yet problematic, principle of dichotomous difference.

Admittedly, this dimension of the epistemological critique finds expression only in a much more concrete practice: in the self-reflections on scholarly writing and in textual analysis that is critical of writing as representation. The traditional reference point of cultural anthropological research has always been the act of describing foreign cultures on the basis of empirical fieldwork and participant observation. Now, though, researchers have come to acknowledge that this form of knowledge acquisition covers only a part of the research process. Increasingly, ethnographic investigation processes, modes of writing and the texts themselves are being considered as independent objects of analysis and employed for a self-critical reflection on scholarly activity. This self-reflection applies to all disciplines that deal with representations or that create cultural descriptions in the broadest sense, whether through writing, narration or representation. Ethnography and the study of culture in general have become "enmeshed in writing," as James Clifford (1988: 25) once wrote with respect to Geertz's traditional definition

of culture as "webs of significance [which man] himself has spun" and in which he is "suspended" or enmeshed (Geertz 1975: 5). Thus, the reflexive turn in the sense of a self-reflexive reorientation involves the process of text and meaning production not only in ethnography, but also in the study of culture and literature. Such a turn seems essential because it critically examines research activities in terms of their multiple dimensions – not only as writing, but as a form of encounter with other cultures, people or, in short, research "objects." How should the study of culture deliberate on the mostly hierarchical, one-sided relationship between the subjects and objects of knowledge? How and in what representational form can scholars appropriately write about foreign cultures or even their own? How, finally, do texts arise from the experiences of empirical fieldwork?

Clifford Geertz goes so far as to claim that anthropologists have been bequeathed not a research method – "Participant Observation" – but a "literary dilemma, 'Participant Description'" (Geertz 1988: 83). In his analysis of anthropologists as writers, he explicitly moves toward a reflexive turn, though he was later no longer to dominate this reorientation. Geertz distinguishes two types of cultural anthropological encounters: "facing the other" and "facing the page" (Geertz 1988: 10). Examining the ethnographic writings of classic authors such as Bronislaw Malinowski, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Edward E. Evans-Pritchard and Ruth Benedict, he was the first to focus on the structures of their own texts as novel-like constructs or, at the very least, as writings with pronounced rhetorical or literary strategies. In his study of Lévi-Strauss's work *Tristes Tropiques*, for example, Geertz traces the aftereffects of the symbolist tradition of Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Rimbaud, as well as the influences of French travel literature. This focus inspired Geertz's own poetic imagery, including formulations such as "[Lévi-Strauss's] by now famous rain-forest prose – dripping with steamy metaphors, overgrown with luxuriant images, and flowered with extravagant puns" (Geertz 1988: 27). With respect to Lévi-Strauss, the clearly problematic combination of travelogue, ethnographic study, philosophical discourse, reformist tract and literary prose demonstrates that it is worthwhile – both for this scholar's work and that of others – to investigate scholarly representations in terms of their devices and stratagems. Whereas Geertz sought to show the power of stylistic forms and literary modes of expression in ethnographic or scholarly texts, James Clifford encouraged a systematically sharpened focus. He called for scholarly (and literary) texts to be critically studied in terms of the forms of authority they contain and their often hidden claims to power – and to be categorized according to their respective authority status.

2 The Crisis of Representation

Within the framework of the linguistic turn, it was recognized that the experience of reality is always conveyed textually, that texts, language and signs are "upstream" of any supposedly authentic perception of culture. It was also acknowledged that signifiers run the risk of taking on a life of their own as chains of signs and thus of becoming disconnected from historical experience (as their signified). This is one of the insights that triggered the much-invoked "crisis of representation in the human sciences" (see Marcus and Fischer 1999: 7–16). One strand of this crisis is associated with semiotics and postmodernist theory, which posited the autonomy of the signifier from the signified. This strand ran parallel to the discovery of both the performative power of media worlds and their virtualizations (for this semiotic approach, see Nöth and Ljungberg 2003: 3).

More important methodologically, though, is the critique of representation that argued primarily from a historical and political perspective. The target of this critique was the practice of representation itself – i.e., the categorical, conceptual, linguistic and rhetorical presuppositions that inform scholarly representations and other types of cultural descriptions or are employed strategically by them. In this context the crisis of representation is expressed not only in the separation of the representation (as a construction) from the thing that is represented (as a reference to reality), but also in the author's inevitable involvement in power relations with respect to the represented object. It was primarily through the reception of Foucault's analysis of discourse that the crisis of representation came to be reflected upon in the reflexive turn and defined as a problem of the dependence of cultural descriptions on power. When other cultures are described from the perspective of Western scholarship, colonial and postcolonial power inequalities inevitably assert themselves and are often also expressed. The question remains as to what extent this power relationship can be guided, or even relativized, by the respective mode of representation – by its narrative stance, argument structure and narrative plot. But this question ultimately formulates the critique of representation so pointedly that it massively challenges the concept of representation per se in both the humanities and the social sciences.

James Clifford builds on Geertz's observation that ethnographies (and scholarly representations in general) are fictions in the sense of something that is made or fabricated. He even asserts that they are inventions or at any rate "partial truths," as Clifford titles his conceptual introduction to the volume *Writing Culture* (in Clifford and Marcus 1986: 1–26; see also Strathern 2004). But why should they only be "partial" truths? Omissions are made in all scholarly representations of cultural phenomena. Interpretive anthropology, for example, largely ignored the linguistic constitution of the reality that it claimed to objectively describe – along

with the linguistic constitution of scholarly representation in general. As a result, the incongruent contradictory voices of cultures were suppressed in order to produce a coherent picture of these cultures. However, the inadequacy of cultural translation remains evident in all such operations; there is always a "surplus of difference" in cultural descriptions which cannot and should not be assimilated. This idea, introduced by George Marcus, is based on the insight "that difference can never be fully consumed, conquered, experienced" (Marcus 1998: 186). There exists no final, monologically authorized meaning; there exist only "partial-knowledge" texts (189).

For this reason alone, any form of cultural translation is problematic that uses representation in an interceding manner as a way to speak on behalf of "the other." And for this reason, too, literary means of representation such as narrative strategies, allegories, tropes and metaphors are shown in a new light. They are revealed to be meaning-generating elements particularly because (as the example of Lévi-Strauss makes clear) they add their own nuances of meaning to the representation of culture. As a consequence, Clifford can claim that all representations of truths are brought about "by powerful 'lies' of exclusion and rhetoric" (Clifford 1986: 7) for the very reason that history, power relations and discourse affect an author's text without the author's being able to control it. All claims to ethnographic truths are thus necessarily incomplete. It is debatable whether we can ever escape this dilemma, which arises from a precarious tension – from the view that social realities can be rendered accessible via objective analyses of culture that run the risk of being distorted by the style of the representation. After all, even the selection of a systematic manner of examining an issue can lead to a restricted viewpoint, with specific elements suppressed. This dilemma can be overcome only if we are constantly aware that it is impossible to produce a comprehensive picture; that we can provide only partial truths, which always need to consider, in particular, the cultural dynamics of change. This awareness was lacking from the ethnography modeled on a realistic mode of writing with its claim to objective descriptions of culture.

As Clifford once stressed, "'Cultures' do not hold still for their portraits" (1986: 10). This insight has a distinct postmodern ring. It reflects not only the critique of holism, but also the general rejection of "grand narratives," "meta-narratives" and comprehensive views. Furthermore, it embodies the crisis of narrativity and points to the confidence that no longer exists in grand theories because of the fragmented relations of the globalized world. On the basis of this insight, a new positive self-localization of scholarly positions has been elaborated (as a specific incentive stemming from the reflexive turn). Donna Haraway, a historian of science, has addressed this issue from a feminist perspective, self-assuredly linking the "partial view" to "situated knowledges" (Haraway 1988) and thus

exposing a reflexivity that – to quote George Marcus once again – can be characterized as the "locational politics of reflexivity" (Marcus 1998: 201).

These two phenomena – the problem of fragmented, location-dependent cultural descriptions and the crisis of representation in general – are particularly revealing in terms of their clear historical and epistemological impacts. The dilemma of representation, which can be derived historically from the asymmetrical relationship between the colonizers and the colonized, is exacerbated on an epistemological level by an asymmetry between the knower and the known. Edward Said made this clear in his critique of Orientalism. In the dichotomous perception of the East that persisted for centuries, Europeans constructed a counter-image to themselves in order to give clearer contours to their own self-understanding. Theirs was a hegemonically distorted representation of foreign cultures, even an "invention." The ultimate goal, argued Said, was not knowledge of the East, but European self-knowledge, acquired through a fabricated counter-image. What we continue to see in almost every representation of the East today is the epistemological dichotomization that began taking shape in these early views – the strict opposition between the self and the other, between what belongs to ourselves and what is foreign, between Europe and the Orient. This suggests the danger of essentializing opposite poles, of assuming essential differences and using attributions of difference for ethnic exclusion. It was once argued, for instance, that the Orient was very different from Europe and therefore suitable only to a limited degree for cultural encounters among equals. Speaking not *with* but *for* the other became an enduring principle of one-sided hegemonic representation that asserted itself in European representational practice.

Said, however, "confused" the level of nineteenth-century colonialist discourse with that of an epistemological critique of discourse. This, in any case, is the critique that Clifford himself made of Said's analysis of Orientalism (1988: 268). The result was that Said distorted his own reference point, which was Foucault's analysis of power. Nevertheless, it is precisely the epistemological pursuit of the still controversial practices of dichotomization and essentialization that Clifford regarded as groundbreaking for the reflexive turn. As became critically clear in Said's work, scholarly and ethnographic representations are always tied to power. In the reflexive turn, power becomes a category of cultural anthropology and the study of culture as a whole. In this context, the critique of representation is given a political focus. It is now concerned with the power inherent in cultural discourse systems and the power to control, direct and manipulate representations – particularly in a world of circulating globalized representations that are visible in the powerful icons of consumerism and advertising.

Self-reflexive anthropology has therefore set itself the goal of analyzing scholarly representations with respect to such political conditions and the rhe-

torical devices and strategies that are wittingly or unwittingly applied on the representational level. This is why Geertz's initial question – "What does the ethnographer do?" – has done much more than provoke the response "he writes." It has been more precisely defined by additional questions such as "who speaks? who writes? when and where? with or to whom? under what institutional and historical constraints?" (Clifford 1986: 13) This complex of questions aims at a more detailed analysis of the "scene of writing," of representational patterns and dependencies in discourse. It has its roots in the realization that every scholarly and social scientific representation can and indeed must be seen as a socially embedded narrative act of text production. And as such it inevitably reflects the problems linked to the exercise of power, not least in the medium of authorship and representational authority.

Once the writing culture debate began, the problem of understanding foreign cultures receded into the background. Instead, attention was directed to the problem of their representability, even to the question of cultural representation as a whole. Reference was made not to the authenticity of the cultures to be represented, but to their participation in the far-reaching, controversial "activity of cross-cultural representation" taking place within the context of entanglements and overlaps between cultures (Clifford 1988: 22). In view of the representations of goods, images and films circulating in global society, such a project is particularly important but has yet to be realized. The reason is that it continues to lack the necessary reciprocity of representation. Faced with asymmetrical power relations and the one-sided exercise of representational authority, can cross-cultural representation be realized at all? As a concept, it at least provides a benchmark for the critical analysis of existing approaches, as well as for the study of potential alternative approaches that focus on both cultural descriptions and – in the broadest sense – cultural communication.

In his seminal and extremely stimulating essay "On Ethnographic Authority," Clifford (1988) proposes that this critique of authority be understood as a central incentive for self-reflections on scholarly representations. In this essay, Clifford charts the history of the current "crisis of authority." He appeals to readers to examine not only ethnographic texts, but also texts from other disciplines – even literary texts – in terms of their "authority." At the same time, he outlines various types of representational authority. His analysis begins with Malinowski's paradigm of fieldwork with its claim of providing "true" representations of foreign cultures based on eyewitnessing. It was from this paradigm that the widespread "synthetic cultural description" (Clifford 1988: 30) emerged. However, the negative effect of this synthetic cultural description is that it denies cultures outside Europe their own history and records them statically in writing, a tendency rein-

forced by the stylistic device of the "ethnographic present." Based on the "authority of observation," the use of the "free indirect style" and the corresponding attributions of thoughts, feelings and motives by an omniscient author, ethnographer or narrator, such traditional ethnographic cultural description follows the conventions of the realist novel.

The realist authorial claim to representation that is at work here – which aims to objectify perceptions of reality – is explicitly abandoned, even deconstructed, in the reflexive turn. In addition, the reflexive turn reveals the extent to which any view of reality is influenced by the manner in which reality is described – most clearly by the coherence claim of the ethnographic monograph. But even interpretive anthropology, which liberates the text from its discursive environment and takes it, so to speak, out of the "field," ultimately submits the text to the monological interpretive authority of the scholar. In other words, the interpretive turn "is based on the exclusion of dialogue" (Clifford 1988: 43; Crapanzano 1992: 67). This insight is reaffirmed in the reflexive turn, which set the stage for examinations of additional reorientations in the study of culture that focused on their own authority structures. Not only for this purpose but also for a study of the different modes of scholarly representation, we can draw on five basic styles of authority, which Clifford (1988: 53) distinguished as follows: hegemonic (colonialist), experiential (observant), interpretive, dialogical and polyphonic (collective). These modes mark a decisive shift in the study of culture: experience and interpretation as guiding concepts are now being increasingly replaced by new principles, or even by "paradigms" such as discourse, dialogue and polyphony (Clifford 1988: 41).

For Clifford in particular and for the development of the reflexive turn in general, one question was central that Edward Said omitted from his analysis of Orientalism. Whereas Said's striking critique of representation suggested no alternatives or possible counter-examples to hegemonic monological authority, the question was raised as to how the process of breaking up "monophonic authority" (Clifford 1988: 50) could concretely and effectively pave the way for further developments. This process has the potential to yield new forms of representation or a reflected-upon representational authority that makes itself the focus of attention. Such forms have already gained clearer contours and point to possible alternatives to dichotomous asymmetrical representational relations. Examples include the reflections in the various disciplines – not only the recent crisis of representation in the archeological production of images of the past (see Russel 2006: 19–26), but also the development of a dialogical anthropology that instead of representing reality merely provides dialogical constellations and collages through interviews and the withdrawal of the interpretive subject.

But this dialogical turn – a sub-turn of the reflexive turn, as it were, which has been pursued by Kevin Dwyer, Vincent Crapanzano, Stephen Tyler, Dennis Tedlock and others – also seems to be an illusion, even if it attempts to overcome the dilemma of asymmetrical representation. The main players in this field are renouncing the concept of representation to every extent possible and replacing it with the principle of evocation, whose purpose is to ensure a radical liberation from mimetic claims. This principle is supported by a dialogical tradition that goes back to Mikhail Bakhtin's principle of heteroglossia and his model of the polyphonic novel and that elevates polyphony to the status of a guiding idea for the production of scientific texts. A notable example of representational authority being distributed amongst several individuals is Kevin Dwyer's *Moroccan Dialogues: Anthropology in Question* (1982), in which interviews with informants are directly reproduced in order to show how the realities and meanings that the researchers set out to describe are created in the negotiated conversations between ethnographers and informants. Here relationally "negotiated realities" (Clifford 1986: 15) replace one-sided representations of cultures. What Dwyer brings to light as part of the dialogical turn are the breaks in field research and the ethnographer's always imperfect possibilities of self-control.

And yet the problem of the controlling authority also exists in dialogues, for it is always the author who holds the reins, serves as director and selects and reproduces the dialogue according to her own priorities. After all, even the dialogues in texts remain representations of dialogue: "However monological, dialogical, or polyphonic their form, they are hierarchical arrangements of discourses" (Clifford 1986: 17). In the end, they are unable to capture the lively complexity of the various strands of the conversation in often ambiguous and overlapping dialogical situations. In this connection German anthropologist Karl-Heinz Kohl, when discussing the problems and pitfalls of the dialogical turn, made a proposal that has yet to receive sufficient attention: despite all its problems, the dialogical approach should be developed in a specific direction, as a method of delineating different positions and thus as "a first step toward an anthropology of misunderstanding" (Kohl 2002: 225). Such an undertaking could provide a way to overcome the fixation on understanding and representation in ethnography and the study of culture in general.

What are the alternatives to representation and how can its crisis be resolved? Essentially, the writing culture debate inspired an experimental mode of writing that made anecdotes, personal experiences and bricolage techniques acceptable in scholarly texts. In this regard, the most radical and provocative representative of the reflexive turn has surely been Stephen Tyler, who suggested that the principle of representation be replaced by the principle of evocation. In Tyler's view, the loss of confidence in representation implies

"the end of description" (Tyler 1987: 89). His remark points to the failure of the Western ideology of objective description, which evokes a specific repertoire of key terms and tropological conventions and thus necessarily distorts complex sequences of actions by describing them: "When deeds become words they commonly assume some form of narrative sequence which suppresses parallel, simultaneous, or multiple perspectives" (Tyler 1987: 93). The violence inherent in representation challenges postmodern ethnography – for which Tyler argues – to engage in experimental writing and to use new fragmentary allegorical forms of representation:

> The whole point of "evoking" rather than "representing" is that it frees ethnography from mimesis and that inappropriate mode of scientific rhetoric which entails "objects," "facts," "descriptions," "inductions," "generalizations," "verification," "experiment," "truth," and like concepts which, except as empty invocations, have no parallels either in the experience of ethnographic field work or in the writing of ethnographies. (Tyler 1987: 207)

However, with this appeal for a non-synthesizing evocation, the reflexive turn can easily lead to the dead end of a radical utopia. After all, it responds to the skepticism about the referential discourse in the study of culture only at the meta-level of reflections on research.

The critical perspective proves much more open when it paves the way for a rethinking of the concept of culture itself. This seems to be currently underway in a recent "rhetoric culture" project – especially regarding the "creative role of rhetoric in the emergence of culture" (Strecker and Tyler 2009: 2–3). This new approach to a "rhetoric culture theory" echoes and supplements the writing culture debate and can be connected to earlier attempts to critically rethink the familiar conceptual repertoire of Western scholarship. With a similar motivation, Clifford originally promoted an "ethnographic surrealism" (Clifford 1988: 117–151) – i.e., a playful juxtaposition, cultural deconstruction and semiotic decoding process that has its correlate in the fragmentation of the postmodern global world (120, 129). Its objective is the destabilization of cultural familiarities and the conceptually critical extension of familiar categories. In Victor Turner's work and as part of the performative turn, a similar practice was attributed to the liminal ritual phase and was thus mainly linked to ritual patterns. Here, by contrast, experimentation with representational authority is part of a more comprehensive strategy of defamiliarization. It responds to the increasing disintegration of accustomed cultural contexts of meaning with new modes of narration and depiction and with changed forms of representation that are more closely tailored to newly emerging fields of conflict than to already existing cultural contexts. Thus, a broad area of study has been opened up that specifically extends the critical focus on authority into the sphere of (cultural) policy. This extension has sprung from a central

question that itself has become a focal point of postcolonial theory: “Who has the authority to speak for a group’s identity or authenticity?” (Clifford 1988: 8).

To be sure, it remains unclear in what alternative form a “shared” or “distributed” authority could be represented – and whether the critical demand for “plural authorship” will not remain a mere utopian vision. What has been set into motion methodologically, though, is a pluralization of the perspectives of study and the voices within a text. A multivocal awareness such as this opens our eyes to the polyphony of cultures and discourses – to heterogeneous, contradictory and oppressed “subcultural” discourses within social communication itself. In other words, it opens our eyes to a culture’s own voices and dissonances, which stand in opposition to the coherence claim of cultural descriptions – whether they address gender and queer discourses or the phenomena that seem to be invisible in society as a whole.

This focus on non-homogeneity has now found expression in an increasing multiplication of representational practices. It contrasts the bipolar corset of the crisis of representation, which was dealt with in the early writing culture debate. Ultimately, what is at issue here no longer seems to be the representation of others, but rather the representation of the self. It is no longer a question of research *into*, but of research *with*. At issue today are no longer questions of textual representation, but the development of alternative research practices to advance “an anthropology based on a collaborative exploration between anthropologists and the local people with whom we work” (Vargas-Cetina 2013: 15; White 2012). At the same time, such complex research practices must take into account entire networks of self-articulation: “In the age of the Internet, competing representations are the order of the day” (Vargas-Cetina 2013: 2).

3 The Reflexive/Rhetorical/Literary Turn in Different Disciplines

In this area as well, self-reflexive cultural anthropology continues to address questions linked to authorship, authority, the use of metaphor, narration, and narrative strategies. The examination of these questions, however, is not limited to ethnographic texts, but can contribute to the critical analysis of other areas of ethnographic representation, such as the exhibition of cultural artifacts in (ethnographic) museums (see, among others, Karp and Lavine 1991; Macdonald 1997; Clifford 1997: 188–219) – drawing particularly on the new conception of museums as translational institutions (Sturge 2014). But the study of the categories of authorship, authority and narration is also transcending the boundaries of self-reflexive cultural anthropology and gaining attention in other disciplines.

The representation-critical reappraisal of the positivist tradition of archival studies is just one example – "understanding archives as the problematic representations they are" (Kaplan 2002: 216).

What we are witnessing here is the interesting fact that cultural anthropology for the first time is being replaced by literary studies as a groundbreaking discipline, insomuch as it is undergoing a literary or rhetorical turn of its own. In other words, researchers are not only questioning the rhetorical strategies and stylistic devices (free indirect style, timeless ethnographic present, arrival stories, plots, etc.) that cultural representations use when adopting literary means of representation (irony, metaphors, tropes, allegories, etc.). They are also investigating the overall mode of scholarly texts, regardless of whether these texts are modeled on realist novels or philosophical reflections (see Marcus and Cushman 1982; Manganaro 1990). They must meet one key challenge: situating scholarly texts within a framework of existing representations, narrative models, intertextual references and rhetorical conventions. In this intertextual rhetorical constellation, we can see quite clearly why the reflexive turn has been dubbed a rhetorical turn in reflections in philosophy and scientific theory (for a discussion on the rhetorical turn in the field of contemporary art, see Rutten et al. 2013; in the social sciences, Brown 1992: ix, "Poetics, Politics, and Truth: An Invitation to Rhetorical Analysis," 3–8; Klein 1992). In this context an increasing emphasis is being placed on the rhetoric of scholarly studies in the various disciplines. For example, the influence of the reflexive turn is clearly visible when traditional cultural anthropological texts dealing with the representation of Islam (Clifford Geertz, Ernest Gellner, Fatima Mernissi, Akbar Ahmed) are examined in terms of their representational structures, authority status and rhetorical persuasion strategies (see Varisco 2005: 3).

A reflexive focus is also suggested when, in the various disciplines, scholars examine the literary strategies, metaphors, plots and literary genres that are situated "upstream" of all cultural perception and descriptions – yes, upstream of all scholarly investigation processes in general. By incorporating literary categories and appropriating investigative approaches from literary studies, the reflexive turn has thus virtually evolved into a literary turn. However, such a literary turn only concerns textual structures. It amounts to nothing more than the literarization of reality, even though it argues that reality is a construct. It urges us to examine texts in terms of the extent to which they paradoxically draw on fictional elements and literary/rhetorical strategies in order to build credibility. One example is the work of historical theorist Hayden White, to which the linguistic turn – or the postmodern turn in the discipline of history – has been repeatedly linked (albeit in undifferentiated fashion). However, it is in fact the reflexive turn that has emerged from the linguistic turn and manifested itself in the works of

its representatives, including not only Hayden White, but also Lionel Gossman, Dominick LaCapra, Michel de Certeau and Paul Ricœur (on the reflexive turn in historiography, see Jenkins 1997; on its link to the linguistic turn, Clark 2004). Here it seems telling that Hayden White, like James Clifford, is professor emeritus at the History of Consciousness Program at the University of California, Santa Cruz. However, he had already begun focusing on rhetoric and literary theory prior to the writing culture debate.

In what way, White asks, do historians construct history when they set it down in writing? This question touches on the linguistic rhetorical constitution of representations of history and their narrative structures and emplotments, which are used to infuse real historical events with meaning. After all, despite all its fidelity to facts, the writing of history is, according to White, marked by significant preliminary metaphorical decisions and tropical figures. As White argues in his *Tropics of Discourse* (1978: 62), it is focused on "the choice of a 'pre-generic plot structure' by which to transform a chronicle of events into a 'history' comprehended by its readers as a 'story' of a particular kind." A plot structure can, for example, take the form of a tragedy, a comedy, an epic, a romance or a satire (62):

> The provision of a plot structure, in order to endow the narrative account of "what happened in the past" with the attributes of a comprehensible process of development resembling the articulation of a drama or a novel, is one element in the historian's interpretation of the past. (62–63)

Thus, history-writing does not simply follow the sequence of social, cultural or political events. Rather, as Reinhart Koselleck explains in his introduction to the German edition of White's book, it remains caught up in the "sequential constraints of metaphoric language" (Koselleck 1986: 6) – in a tropological schema that structures the discourse of the respective scholarly text. This means that realistic representations of history are guided by metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony. In his major work *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1973), White draws on these tropes to describe the narrative modeling of sequences of events, concentrating particularly on traditional nineteenth-century historiographies. Like ethnographic self-reflections on representation, this work also crosses into the realm of literature. It blurs the distinction between poetry and history-writing and brings about a literary turn insofar as it deconstructs scholarly objectivity and exposes the poetical element in history-writing itself (for a discussion of a similar entanglement between ethnography and fiction, see Fassin 2014).

The rhetorical analysis of various historiographies in Hayden White's *Metahistory* has thus helped propel the development of the reflexive turn as a literary turn or even a narrative turn. After all, as in meta-ethnography, such analyses

reveal how scholarly representations are linked to the intellectual situatedness and historical context of their authors and how they are bound up in invention, fiction and partial truth. Like descriptions of culture, history-writing is explored in terms of its character as a construct and its ascriptions of meaning. The corresponding deconstruction of the linguistic pre-structuring process serves the primary purpose of explaining, on the basis of implicit poetical strategies, the persuasive power of traditional historiographies and their impact as realistic testimonies. This exercise in deconstruction has given rise to a broad skepticism about "grand narratives," comprehensive cultural representations and epochal accounts. Even in literature itself we encounter critiques of historiographical representation, one example being Julian Barnes's novel *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters* (1990). Here, under the guise of fiction, Barnes ironically examines totalizing syntheses of history; Hayden White, by contrast, deconstructs them theoretically.

Such fictional reflections on history in contemporary literature enhance the many contributions made to the reflexive turn by fictionalized historiography (as does Hayden White's examination of various historiographical writing styles). These contributions show how absurd it is to assign scholarly texts to a single category of discourse (White 1973: 429). The significant breadth of representational variation reveals a key feature of research in the study of culture. At the same time, though, the limits of the possibilities of representational variation are specifically reflected on in the discipline of history. Despite all its rhetorical and fictional elements, history-writing, like anthropology, is committed to its link to reality, to empirical places, institutions and practices. Paul Rabinow and Michel de Certeau are two scholars who have insisted on this social referentiality (Rabinow 1986: 251; de Certeau 1988: 21). But even with it, an important question remains unanswered: Just what are the boundaries of descriptive historiographical language as concerns the representability of – and the attribution of meaning to – the unutterable, barely representable experiences of the Holocaust (see, among many other examples, the classic volume Friedlander 1992)? It is here, in particular, that the linguistic turn in the discipline of history can be seen as reaching its limits (Ankersmit 2001: esp. 160ff.) – especially in cases where it does not embrace the self-representations and self-testimonies of historical subjects, which have the potential to undermine the textual fixations of scholarly representations of the past.

Like the history of science, literary studies – especially the field of comparative literature – has profited from the critique of representation by applying the literary turn to its own work and thus broadening its corpus of fictional texts to include other types of texts and manifestations of culture. Literary analysis can focus, for example, on how authority is bound up in culturally specific rep-

resentations – as Robert Weimann has shown in *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, a study of the interaction between early modern religious and literary discourses (Weimann 1996; see also Reynolds and West 2005). Constructs of the European worldview, argues Weimann, have for the most part drawn their authority from forms of representation that were tailored to campaigns of conquest and the control of the modern world. They were brought forth by an authoritative self that gained legitimacy by internalizing authority and that thus acquired new competence in fictional literary representation. In addition to historicizing the authority of the European subject, European culture and European literature, literary studies could in the future more comprehensively explore the transcultural potential of literary and cultural authority. Up to now no attempt has been made to elaborate authority as a key category of cultural and cross-cultural representation. We lack approaches that define authority as an organizational form for literary representation or as a representational strategy through which a literary text takes part in overarching discourses (as in the case of Orientalism with its authority of colonialist appropriation). In studies of comparative and world literature, the connections and power relations between various languages and cultures are increasingly being viewed as an important complex in which the "crisis of authority" is gaining ground. Most of all, scholars are challenging the European claim to superiority over other cultures, which for centuries was supported by the European representational technology of writing (see Todorov 1996: 252).

One insight from the writing culture debate that can be applied to this complex of problems is the recognition that "cultures" portray themselves by developing distinct articulations and codes that they can bring to bear in quite powerful ways. These emerging possibilities of self-representation have undermined the all-too-familiar one-sided assumptions of representation and representability in other disciplines such as translation studies. If, for example, we regard translation as a representation of other cultures (Bachmann-Medick 1997), we can no longer assume that translation involves a faithful transmission of an authentic original text. What is currently emerging as a problem in connection with the more recent postcolonial literatures of the world is not only the necessity of broadening the canon and displacing European aesthetic authority over evaluations and definitions, but, to an even greater extent, the power component of translation – due particularly to the unequal access to the global literary market and the associated control over the categories and means of representation (see the chapter "The Translational Turn"). The cultural-political conditions of the European translation monopoly are thus attracting new attention:

> In creating coherent and transparent texts and subjects, translation participates – across a range of discourses – in the fixing of colonized cultures, making them seem static and unchanging rather than historically constructed. (Niranjana 1992: 3)

The reflexive turn, by contrast, is oriented specifically towards assessing the role of power relations, stereotypes, the inequality of languages and attributions of meaning, all of which flow into the translation process (with regard to the specific postcolonial strategies of transcultural representation, see Bandia 2014). It is becoming evident, in particular, just how effectively translation processes can be guided by the dominance of images of the other. A classic example is the translational practice of Indian writer and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, who was pressured into translating his own poems from Bengali into English and "spiritualized" them in the process – i.e., adapted them to prevalent "foreign" European perceptions of Indian poetry. This raises the question: Are not literary translations also informed by a representational authority, by a power over languages and cultures?

Similar questions are now being directed at the roles of authority in literature itself – e.g., at the authority of the omniscient narrator, the control function of the "free indirect style" and the "ethnographic subjectivity" (Clifford 1988: 93) of literary characters, narrators and authors themselves. Focusing on Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* as an example, Edward Said provided a conceptual framework for analyzing such "patterns of narrative authority" (Said 1993: 70) within the context of colonial and imperialist discourse. In addition, there exists a broad spectrum of literary examples that have not yet been sufficiently explored from the perspective of the critique of representation. They range from German writer Hubert Fichte's ethnopoetical cultural descriptions to the depiction of the problem of authority and representation in postcolonial literary works such as the novel *Foe* by South African Nobel laureate J. M. Coetzee (1987; on the question of representational authority, see Greenfield 1995: 225).

The critique of representation continues to be one of the main focuses in the reception of the reflexive turn and the writing culture debate. The critique's continued strong bias toward textualism can be countered by promoting approaches derived from the "picturing culture debate" in the field of visual and media anthropology (see Ryan 1997; Ruby 2000). Such approaches show, for example, how European visual concepts have shaped representations of the other in photographs and (documentary) films. In the visual construction of other cultures, European visualization practices often need to grapple with a very different "pathic" understanding of images, which includes image concepts that are integrated into practices of spirit possession (see Därmann 2004: 66ff.). Here, beyond textualism, we find illuminating connections to the iconic turn. An additional dimension extending beyond the textual problems of the representation of the

other – namely, the emphasis on polyphony that has its roots in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and has led to reflections on the power of sound – has also been ignored. Paying closer attention to the acoustic dimension of (ethnographic) knowledge acquisition could help conceptually develop the field of evocation. Such an approach could question and challenge the prevailing principle of representation with its mimetic claim to represent only that which can be observed and seen as the sole foundation of cultural description.

The recognition that the age of one-dimensional realist representations is over and that such representations served an ideology of power has spurred experimentation with new forms of representation. In the future, the inevitable textualization of these forms should not be derived from observation alone – particularly in view of the fact that "the truth of vision in Western, literate cultures has predominated over the evidences of sound and interlocution, of touch, smell, and taste" (Clifford 1986: 11). Furthermore, scholarly representation should rely more heavily on sensory, spoken and acoustic elements: "It will be a text to read not with the eyes alone, but with the ear" (Tyler 1986: 136). Here polyphony and evocation are evolving into transitional concepts with the potential to broaden the reflexive turn into a kind of "acoustic" or "sensory turn" (see Lauwrens 2012). The first attempts at investigating "hearing culture" have been undertaken in the discipline of ethnomusicology and are currently being expanded in the new field of sound studies (Erlmann 2004; Bull and Back 2003; on the recent turn to sound history, see Morat 2014).

Additional extensions can be seen in the ongoing development of the reflexive turn. They are moving even further away from textuality and treating representation as a practice. When questions related to the writing culture debate are even considered relevant to the work on conflict (Zenker and Kumoll 2010: vii), it is an indication of just how much the discussion has broadened – from the generation immediately after the writing culture debate (see *After Writing Culture,* James, Hockey, and Dawson 1997) to the generation after its twentieth anniversary (see the volume *Beyond Writing Culture*, Zenker and Kumoll 2010; *Cultural Anthropology* 2012).

> From after to beyond: the critique of representation reaches here beyond the written text, beyond the discipline of anthropology, focussing on empirical reality instead of mere texts, posing the question "how to conceptualize the mutual implications and intersections between epistemologies and practices of representation." (Zenker and Kumoll 2010: 19)

As the conflict-ridden political category of representation reveals, a more comprehensive analytical category of representation has recently come into play.

Such a development could also prove fruitful for other fields of study, whether for representation-critical analyses of the empirical and narrative dimensions of

economics (see McCloskey 1985) or for science studies. In the natural sciences, for example, researchers could also explore how argument structures are interwoven with rhetorical inventions, persuasion strategies and forms of expression. Tracking the concrete relationship between knowledge acquisition, narrative representation and rhetorical persuasion is the specific focus of the emerging "rhetoric of inquiry movement" (Simons 1990: 8; Brown 1992: ix), which has drawn heavily on Thomas S. Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*: "Virtually all scholarly discourse is rhetorical in the sense that issues need to be named and framed, facts interpreted and conclusions justified" (Simons 1990: 9). However, in the natural sciences and the field of scientific history, reflections on representation have advanced so far that, beyond their focus on signs, they are working to perform a "practical analysis of representation" centered on "the experimental, instrumental, pragmatic and discursive aspects of the scientific production of symbols, on representation as a cultural activity" (Rheinberger et al. 1997: 11). Here the focus is no longer on representations as reflections, but on representation as a "transport phenomenon" (Bruno Latour) and "storage, transcription and translation" (e.g., of genetic information in ideas about "life as a text," see Rheinberger et al. 1997: 17). With the help of science studies, the self-reflexive critique of the research process has thus been disconnected from a fixation on texts and meta-reflection. Under contemporary conditions, calls have been made not only for much broader "collaborative concept work that stimulates studios, archiving, para-sites" (Marcus 2012: 441), but also for the use of websites, digital technology and alternative forms of communication. New modes of "writing" in a technoscientific world – including blogging, collaborative interviewing and public wikis (Kelty 2009: 186) – are relativizing and transforming traditional fieldwork, which has been a main reference point for the reflexive turn (see Faubion and Marcus 2009). Now that the shifts between different research scales (Marcus 2012: 434–435) and spaces of knowledge are drawing increased attention, we are seeing overlaps with the spatial turn. However, when visual forms of representation are studied in the natural sciences, there are also links to the iconic turn.

4 Further Developments of the Reflexive Turn

Even though the writing culture debate has now evolved into a variety of turns, it continues to provide incentive for critical scholarly self-reflection and a critique of representation. That this impetus has not had an impact on all fields is perhaps due to the fact that, because of its meta-orientation, the reflexive turn did not clearly establish itself as an explicit new focus like the other turns in the study of culture. Rather, one of its primary goals was to appeal for scholarly self-criti-

cism. This may explain why the reflexive turn has been appropriated and elaborated only hesitantly. After all, its primary thrust has been deconstruction and, unlike the other turns, it has not used positive incentives to persuade scholars to implement new methodological and thematic focuses. One might even suspect a form of avoidance behavior since ultimately each discipline faced the risk of seeing its authority undermined. Paul Rabinow apparently had this boomerang effect in mind when he sharply criticized Clifford's textualist meta-anthropology because of its "interesting blind spot, a refusal of self-reflection" (Rabinow 1986: 251–252). Steven Sangren, too, argued that the reflexive turn was being achieved in a manner that was hardly self-reflexive and that the insights it offered were not linked to the rhetoric and the authority claims of the critical meta-theoretical texts themselves. Sangren took on this task by pointing to the millenarian rhetoric and the sense of mission inherent in such texts, which deconstruct "the rhetoric of the deconstruction of the rhetoric of anthropology" (Sangren 1988: 409). In addition to pursuing this meta-meta-level, Sangren exposed the rite-of-passage function of self-reflexive theory based on its proponents' conviction that it was able to promote a quasi-purified "rebirth" of cultural anthropology.

Yet despite all this criticism, the reflexive turn has also been enormously helpful as a meta-turn because it calls other turns into question – yes, even turns in general. The reason is that it provides the vocabulary and tools that are needed to chip away at the authority of discourses and turns themselves (on this topic, see Bruner 1986: 139–140). However, such a "reflexive cultural criticism" (Sangren 1988: 424) could itself become the target of criticism if it concentrates its critique of authority and representation mainly on (autonomous) texts without connecting it to the authority structures of society and academic institutions. An important goal here would be to take a closer critical look at the authority behind entire scholarly discourses – e.g. those in the natural sciences versus those in the study of culture, or those in economics versus those in cultural studies. In fact, science studies has long been pursuing this goal. Such a perspective would of course render any fixation on self-reflexive textuality untenable.

However, the reflexive turn is having an especially enduring effect in another regard as well: it has paved the way for a new understanding of culture. Within the framework of the reflexive turn, culture is no longer seen as a unified objectifiable container of symbols and meanings. Rather, it is regarded as a dynamic network of relationships between communication practices and representations, through whose representational dynamics culture comes into being in the first place. In other words, cultural objects are not simply "givens," but emerge through (symbolic) interaction, through an "othering" that is influenced by the type of representation in question. But othering is also a practice that has been the subject of repeated criticism. For too long a time, "the other" was largely

objectified and rarely discussed as a subject that expressed itself autonomously and acted of its own accord. In the hegemonic European scholarship of the past, foreign cultures were usually placed further back on the axis of historical time. Instead of being perceived as coeval with other contemporary societies, they were presented as timeless and ahistorical, which was reinforced on the stylistic level by the language of the ethnographic present as the dominant mode of representation. "Denial of coevalness" is how Johannes Fabian describes this practice in his important work *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Published in 1983, this book is still extremely relevant today, particularly in view of the critique of the dualisms and dichotomies that have accompanied the ongoing processes of othering.

Turns provide a way of dealing with such dualisms and dichotomies. These are first elaborated and then abandoned. In the interpretive turn, an attempt was made to overcome the dualism between society and culture and the resulting conception of culture as a mere manifestation of social relations (see Sahlins 1999: 400). Certainly, the corresponding effort to link the concept of culture to social practices was undertaken in an age that had already turned its back on traditional dichotomies such as self/other and savage/civilized, but the principle of dichotomization as such – and the tendency toward essentializations and claims of authenticity – was not questioned for a long time. The reflexive turn approached this task in a more fundamental way by putting a transitional axis to productive use, one that covered the shift from the loss of traditional dichotomies to the emergence of a heightened awareness of cultural differences:

> "Cultural" difference is no longer a stable, exotic otherness; self-other relations are matters of power and rhetoric rather than of essence. A whole structure of expectations about authenticity in culture and in art is thrown in doubt. (Clifford 1988: 14)

It was precisely this strand of the critique of dichotomies and anti-essentialism that was pursued and further radicalized in the postcolonial turn.

These aspects of the critique of dichotomization and representation are currently setting the course for a new self-legitimization of the study of culture, one that is based on its specific modes of knowledge and perceptual and representational practices. But the self-critical perspective must be applied to the abstractions of the reflexive turn itself in order to make possible more concrete research positions. Here the most notable impetus comes from the critique of writing culture as a meta-anthropology that has ignored the foundations of empirical (field) research. An additional point of criticism is that, as a result of the reflexive turn, ethnography (together with other self-reflexive disciplines) is increasingly forfeiting its actual subject area – i.e., anthropology is merging to an excessive degree with literature. One result of this dilemma is the increasing demand for

a return to empiricism, which continues to inform approaches to a new realism today (see *Cultural Anthropology* 2012).

But there is another critical area – the gender perspective – where the reflexive turn has overcome its initial shortcomings and is gaining clearer contours. Like most of the other reorientations, this perspective came into play only at a later stage and, interestingly enough, only as a result of the criticism that it had been explicitly excluded from the start. In fact, in his introduction to the *Writing Culture* volume, James Clifford sought to justify the exclusion of feminist anthropologists by asserting that they were interested in their texts solely in terms of their content, not in terms of their (written) form: "Feminism had not contributed much to the theoretical analysis of ethnographies as texts" (Clifford 1986: 20). Clifford also made the problematic claim that women anthropologists – like indigenous male anthropologists – had not provided conceptual proposals regarding ethnological categories or the formation of theory in the study of culture. This claim invariably provoked strong opposition. For example, women cultural anthropologists such as Lila Abu-Lughod and Marilyn Strathern argued that feminists in particular had conceptually challenged the seeming existence of a (European) self and a (non-European) other, whose polarization lived on in the critique of representation in the writing culture debate. In her article "Writing Against Culture," Abu-Lughod referred to so-called halfies (e.g., Indian intellectuals teaching in the U.S.), who largely experienced the other as an extension of themselves (Abu-Lughod 1991). Adopting a more gender-focused approach, Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon wrote in their book *Women Writing Culture* (1995: xii) that in the future cultural representation should not be debated without explicitly emphasizing the contributions made by women.

Given the exclusion of feminist theorists and the tendency toward gender blindness in the formation of theory in the study of culture, one explanation comes to mind that applies not only in pointed form to the reflexive turn, but to all the other turns as well. The effort to restrict cultural anthropological self-criticism to "white male anthropologists" was apparently meant to ensure that the groups that had previously dominated the discourse continued to retain definitional authority, particularly at a time when cultural anthropology no longer had full control over the scholarly representation of foreign cultures. In the meantime, though, the question of gender in the context of a reconsideration of self-representations has become an integral part of the discourse in the study of culture. Here two strands of the argument have merged. First, the supposedly neutral role of gender in the study of culture and the retention of turns in the hands of men with their allegedly greater theoretical experience have been problematized to a greater degree than ever before. Second, whereas the conventional binary structure of representation, particularly the distinction between original

and copy, itself provides a central analogy for the binary structure of masculinity and femininity, it is only the gender perspective that emphasizes the fact that this binary structure implies a hierarchical relationship. In a representation, one thing stands for something else and transforms this something else (e.g., "woman") into a sign. This is true not only in aesthetic, but in political terms: the problematization of representation from a gender perspective provides a deeper understanding of the power of representation and the problem of speaking for others ("interceding" representation). But it can also be used for self-empowerment, agency and self-articulation. The gender-influenced politics of representation has been discussed with great clarity in connection with pornography and the pornographic depiction of women as sexual objects (Chow 2000: 41) – and also, more broadly, in connection with the reinforcement of gender stereotypes in the media.

As Rey Chow's epistemological critique has shown (Chow 2000: 41ff.), the reflexive turn has identified an explosive shift in the question of representation:

> Once the emphasis shifts to representation as an intersubjective activity – involving not only signs and their creators/users but also one group of people turning another group of people into signs – it is no longer sufficient simply to seek "objective" or "accurate" representations. (Chow 2000: 42)

This problematic shift in the view of representation applies to gender relations but has been more heavily contextualized by efforts to create a link to questions of ethnicity, race and social class. When we follow the internal twists of the reflexive turn up to the current discourse and, in the process, expose all the overlaps between the reflexive and the postcolonial turns, we also see that the aspect of power has become more heavily politicized and radicalized. After all, as the work of Hayden White has shown, the self-reflexive turn has remained primarily a domestic European turn and has encouraged self-reflections by Europeans on their own representational modes and texts. By contrast – as a kind of transition to the postcolonial turn – the universalist European project of history-writing from perspectives outside Europe has the potential to create a network of very contradictory histories, as exemplified by Robert Young's book *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (1990/2004: 2–3). This network of histories does not defer to any single Western formula – not even to the interpretive formula of Marxist theory, which needed to be dismantled before the new anti-colonial discourses of the liberation movements outside Europe could attract attention (see Young 2004: 6–7, on the political link to the postcolonial turn 1–31). At the same time, the repercussions of the self-reflexive/rhetorical/literary turn become clearly evident here because the pluralization of history into a wide range of histories reveals not only how historical texts and specific discourses (e.g., Oriental-

ism) generate knowledge, but also how they contribute to the construction, as a representation, of the reality they describe (Young 2004: 168).

This process reflects the fact that an entire "representational machinery" (Greenblatt 1991: 120) was historically rolled out by colonialist activities such as war, conquest, trade and travel. This machinery activated a persistent culture-specific, discourse-structuring "system of representation" (Todorov 1996: 226). In a critical historical manner, both scholars – Greenblatt and Todorov – have linked their critique of representation to the objects of study, to discovery scenarios, cultural contacts and travel accounts. They thus rescued the reflexive turn from the dead end of abstract meta-scholarly reflection. Referring to the discursive authority of travel literature, Greenblatt illustrates the practices of rule and the establishment of a historical European authority through specific strategies of representation. Representations and the power of a comprehensive European "representational machinery" were – and perhaps continue to be – modes of perception that guided the Europeans' contacts with the non-European world. The hegemonic claims of this machinery, which have prevented reciprocity and an exchange of representations, still prevail (Greenblatt 1991: 121ff.).

If we follow this path to the representational tensions between Europe and non-European countries, we inevitably arrive at the concrete level of the contacts and relations between these two worlds, which have been the focus of the postcolonial turn and its concept of entangled histories. Ultimately, as Martin Fuchs and Eberhard Berg conclude in their conceptual essay, "Phänomenologie der Differenz: Reflexionsstufen ethnographischer Repräsentation," all attempts to formulate an alternative mode of representation face limitations as long as "we do not juxtapose our tradition of representation with other representational traditions" (Berg and Fuchs 1993: 96).

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Chapter IV: The Postcolonial Turn

The considerable scope of the postcolonial turn and the set of problems associated with it are a direct result of the term “postcolonial,” which combines two strands of meaning that exist in a state of constant tension. On the one hand, as a critical historical category, “postcolonial” refers to the long-term structuring of global relations by colonialism, decolonization and neocolonialist trends. On the other, above and beyond its historical embeddedness, it has initiated a cultural theory that is focused on a critique of hegemonic Eurocentric imperial discourses and, under the influence of postcolonial studies, has trained its sights on Eurocentric knowledge structures and representational systems.

“Postcolonial” initially described the post-1945 phase of decolonization. In this context the prefix “post” has a chronological significance and a periodizing effect. It refers to the dissolution of European colonial empires and the changed self-conceptions of the newly independent societies, born of their effort to come to grips with the legacy of colonization and influenced by the experience of the violence inherent in the colonial relationship (Mbembe 2001: 102). Here postcolonialism is synonymous with the struggle for independence from colonial rule (decolonization). However, at the same time, the term refers to the rise of neocolonial dependencies. In other words, the historical concept of post-independence is no longer appropriate when a linear development is assumed. After all, the situation has now become much more complex. The effects of imperialism, which find expression in the continued existence of colonialist modes of thought and action in the newly independent nations, are obvious. In addition, a more complex understanding of postcolonialism has been provoked by the culturally diverse societies themselves – whether in Europe, the United States or Canada – particularly because of their multilayered conditions of (im)migration. This is why the field of postcolonial studies has become increasingly relevant to countries such as Germany and Austria, enabling them to discover the colonial components of their own histories.

The astonishing shift in meaning of the term “postcolonial” in conjunction with the rise of postcolonial studies in the 1980s was central to these developments. At that time the term evolved from a historical concept describing an era – one that was critical of imperialism – into a programmatic political concept that was critical of hegemonic discourses. It is precisely this more precise definition that is meant when we speak of the postcolonial turn. In this case, “post” is no longer synonymous with “after” or “the end of” colonialism. Rather, it describes the continued existence of colonialist structures, particularly cultural and economic ones (see Appiah 1991). The subject area has changed accordingly. In a conflict-ridden process marked by many contradictions, the postcolonial per-

spective has spread far beyond the cultures of the so-called Third World and the societies that had a direct experience of colonialism. Although this perspective has been clearly reinforcing a new national consciousness in these former colonial societies, it has also overcome its limitation to particular nations or states in favor of a more far-reaching agenda of cultural criticism.

The focus of the postcolonial project is not primarily to examine the effects of colonialism on non-European countries to the present. Its aim is to develop critical analytical categories that are capable of counteracting the ongoing problematic constructions of the other ("othering"). As part of this process, it has shed light on the power of hegemonic cultures to shape discourse while illuminating the increasingly autonomous self-representation of previously marginalized societies, ethnic groups and literatures. "Postcolonial" has thus become a systematic, politically charged concept that is applied in close connection with ethnicity, class and gender. But the breakthrough to a postcolonial turn in the study of culture was not achieved until the conceptual focus shifted to include a fundamental critique of the modern knowledge order and the universalizing hegemonic discourse of Western rationalism.

1 The Formation of the Postcolonial Turn

The postcolonial turn is not the result of independent theoretical developments, for it is clearly linked to a changing political economic environment – to the era of anti-colonial and neocolonial crises that began at the end of the Cold War. It is also associated with claims of a new world order under the leadership of the United States. These processes placed significant pressure on the postcolonial societies to adapt to the requirements of global capitalism (on the political economic foundations of the postcolonial reorientation, see Lazarus 2004: 37). The postcolonial turn was able to gain a foothold in this environment because it stressed the need for a cultural focus in contrast to the bias toward economics in the prevailing debate on development and globalization.

However, we need to go back further in time to understand the history of the postcolonial turn's origins (a highly informative source is the annotated bibliography in Riemenschneider 2004). This history has been influenced by two generations of theorists, each with their own priorities. The first generation coincided with a phase of decolonization that emerged from anti-colonial resistance movements and the liberation struggles for national independence. This initial situation, dominated by political activism, laid the foundations for the postcolonial movement. Robert Young's well-researched history of postcolonialism brings this context to life for the current debate (2001). In the preface to the second edition

of *White Mythologies* (2004), he gives a detailed political history of postcolonialism from the 1960s onward. In view of the continued existence of colonialism and neocolonialism, the need for such a history is obvious. However, these early developments increasingly faded in importance as the first generation's explanations – based on Marxist political economic theory – became lost in culturalist, even deconstructivist, self-referentialities. As a result, even the founding figures of the movement were soon neglected by researchers (see Williams and Chrisman 1994: 14). One reason for this abandonment was their nationally and ethnically charged positions, which included the type of "anti-racist racism" (Young 2001: 266) that characterized the négritude movement and Pan-Africanism of the 1930s/1940s. Among the leading intellectuals directly involved in the postcolonial project were not only Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Albert Memmi and C. L. R. James, but also the Martinique-born psychiatrist Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), who took part in the struggle to liberate the French colony of Algeria (for a more comprehensive discussion of Fanon, see Young 2001: 274–299). Surprisingly, from his Marxist position, Fanon directed attention to the subjective perceptions of postcolonial conditions as a way of articulating his own radical critique of colonialism. The psychoanalytical dimension of Fanon's influential work *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) was later taken up by Edward Said and Homi Bhabha.

Fanon's quest to define a new cultural identity for the postcolonial subject and his discovery of the factor of culture as a productive force virtually launched a "cultural turn" within the postcolonial turn itself. Robert Young underscores this development in his book on postcolonialism by titling one of the chapters "The Cultural Turn: Négritude" (Young 2001: 262ff.). Young goes on to historically link these two major strands of postcolonial theory. It is at this pivotal point that he sees the postcolonial turn's central shift from its initial historical political approaches to a cultural epistemological reorientation shaped by poststructuralism. It must be noted, however, that the anti-colonial intellectuals of the Third World – influenced above all by the mediating figure of Jean-Paul Sartre – contributed to the shared genealogy of postcolonialism and poststructuralism (on this topic and especially on Sartre's role, see Gikandi 2004: 100).

It was in this formational context that the postcolonial turn acquired its special appeal. Moving from the historical political level to that of discourse, it helped shape the overall development of the reorientations in the study of culture. Not only was it responsible for the politicizing imports of postcolonial experiential contexts to Western universities, it also initiated a self-critical "displacement" of European and U.S.-centered theoretical discourse. It was only under these conditions that postcolonial reflections were able to establish themselves as a turn in the first place, based on the realization that colonial power was and continues to be exercised through (Western) knowledge on both an economic

and discursive level. After all, even in the wake of decolonization, the Western system of knowledge remained in effect as its legacy. It supplied the weapons, as it were, of Western theory, which were then used to combat Western hegemony. In other words, in a quite paradoxical development, the "indigenous" postcolonial critique enunciated by the first generation of theorists and the anti-colonial discourses of the 1970s and early 1980s easily mutated into self-reflections on Western theory.

The best evidence of this mutation is provided by *Orientalism* (1978/1995), a manifesto of the postcolonial turn by Edward Said (1935–2003). At first glance this influential work deals primarily with the history of research, communication and writing about the Orient, but the example of Orientalism also shows how postcolonial criticism became a turn in its own field and how the analysis of Orientalism developed into a new "conceptual paradigm" for research:

> It was above all the idea of Orientalism as a discourse in a general sense that allowed the creation of a general conceptual paradigm through which the cultural forms of colonial and imperial ideologies could be analyzed, and enabled Orientalism to be so outstandingly successful, to establish a whole new field of academic inquiry. (Young 2001: 384)

This paradigmatic development of an entirely new research field takes us far beyond the study of the Orient and Orientalism. It follows a central perspective that Said – citing Michel Foucault – adopted in his theory of colonial discourse: the impetus to view knowledge and power as closely intertwined.

Thus, as in the reflexive turn, the complex conditions underlying the production of knowledge about the other are at the center of the debate, particularly questions about colonial and postcolonial representation. In the case of Orientalism, this debate revolves around Western projections of ideas about the Orient, whose purpose is to establish a hegemonic European discourse. Here it is the binary Western hierarchy of knowledge itself that has been critically examined as the predominant "paradigm." Due to this focus, the postcolonial critique has been liberated from its historical context and generalized. After all, it has provided an incentive to critically analyze relations that once were and continue to be characterized by unequal power. In Said's work, we already see the emergence of a postcolonial turn that parts with its initial economistic Marxist approaches because of its cultural-discursive focus as a fundamental critique of representation.

Said's seminal work *Orientalism* provided a foundation for the "Holy Trinity" (Young 1995: 163) of the postcolonial turn: Edward W. Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi K. Bhabha. It is from these theorists' approaches that the wide-ranging postcolonial debate – now introduced in a variety of readers (see especially Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2005; Mongia 2009; Brydon 2000;

Schwarz and Ray 2000; Castle 2001) – developed its special cultural-discursive and epistemological character. Whereas the first generation of scholars, influenced by Marxist perspectives, focused primarily on development theory, the second adopted postmodern approaches (on the relationship between postcolonial/postmodern, see Adam and Tiffin 1990). The progressive postcolonial vocabulary of the liberation and anti-colonial resistance movements ultimately gave way to a discourse on differences. From one generation to the next, a kind of linguistic turn occurred in postcolonial theory. Although the political activism pursued within the context of the postcolonial liberation movements was initially a driving force, it was eventually replaced by discourse, which was recognized as a constitutive element of colonialism and its successor systems.

This second developmental phase of postcolonialism began in the 1990s and was spurred above all by the further elaboration of the linguistic turn through deconstructivism. As a result, postcolonial ideas arrived in the "global metropolis," where they were most clearly brought to fruition. One might even argue that this version of the postcolonial turn was developed primarily on the territory of Western societies (see Gandhi 1998: 23–24) in order to examine the differential and participatory potential of their increasingly multicultural makeup. After all, the discursive postcolonial turn, which can be linked to the representation-critical impetus of the reflexive turn, relies as much on the power dependencies of cultural representations as it does on the importance of discursive power. One pillar of this argument is the deconstructivist concept of difference introduced by Jacques Derrida. For Derrida, there is no origin or original truth, only an infinite play of differences and contradictions. This idea was already present in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, who gave us the insight that linguistic systems consist of differences. That *différance* in Derrida's coinage does not refer to "essential" differences follows from his critique of Western metaphysical thinking, which, on the one hand, makes essentialist presuppositions while, on the other, employing binary oppositions. As a result, the identity of one thing is constituted by the exclusion of the other. This mode of dichotomic thinking in traditional Western metaphysics establishes set violent hierarchies (active/passive, culture/nature, male/female, etc.), which turn out to be highly problematic and assailable Eurocentric constructs. Directly affected by the experience of postcolonialism as an Algerian Jew, Derrida deconstructed this Western system of knowledge and representation from the perspective of a person who was excluded from it. But deconstruction itself, writes Robert Young, is implicated in decolonization: "Deconstruction has itself been a form of cultural and intellectual decolonization, exposing the double intention separating rational method from its truth" (Young 2001: 421). The deconstruction of polar opposites creates interstices of *différance* that already exist in the subject itself as the difference between the

speaking subject and the spoken-of subject who is subjugated by language and at times even remains nameless.

Postcolonial theory builds on this practice by deconstructing the Western knowledge and representational system. However, it does so in an experientially sated manner and with a stronger historical political focus than found in Derrida's philosophy. Despite its roots in the academic discourse of metropolitan spaces, this "deconstructive postcolonialism" (Syrotinski 2007) addresses the ambivalences of the postcolonial subjects themselves – their silences and state of being silenced, their linguistic and political self-expressions, their "drivenness" and mobility between cultures. It does so on the basis of the experience of migration with its layers of multiple affiliations.

An attempt to tease out the postcolonial aspects of Derrida's deconstructionism and to reinterpret these aspects along feminist lines can be found above all in the work of Gayatri Spivak, one of the pioneers of the postcolonial turn. Spivak translated Derrida's *Of Grammatology* into English and thus launched the reception of his work in the United States. In one of her best-known essays, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1985), she uses the Indian practice of *sati* (the immolation of widows) to illustrate the dual oppression of South Asian women, who are victims of both their native patriarchal society and Western imperialism (see Spivak 1988; for a contextualization, reprint and revised edition of this text, see Morris 2010). Spivak's essay examines the question of the authority, articulative capacity, self-representation and agency of postcolonial subjects, who in view of their colonial appropriation and construction as different are not regarded as independently acting subjects, but as the Other, as the objects of European discourse. Of course, her observations do not stop at this description of postcolonial subjects who cannot speak for themselves because they exist in a state of (subaltern) difference and whose identity is based on this difference. Rather, they raise a question that challenges the hegemonic attitude of the European humanities: Which discourses are able to represent the experiences of subalterns such that the subalterns are heard and listened to?

It is no accident that the question of representation is addressed here, for it was the field of literary studies that triggered the postcolonial turn in the first place. Developments did not begin with postcolonial theory; rather, the theoretical impetus came from postcolonial modes of writing, from the more recent (non-European) literatures of the world (King 1974; Walder 1998; Benson and Conolly 2005) and later on also from literary studies (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989 were among the founders of the postcolonial project). Thus, in the chain of turns in the study of culture, we see a striking shift in the pioneering disciplines, as was already signaled by the literary turn. In this case it is the field of literary studies that took the baton from cultural anthropology. After all, it was chiefly lit-

erary texts that played a central role in developing a new mode of self-representation for the independent nations. The same is true of drama, theater, film and other popular representational genres, although these were increasingly pushed to the sidelines by theory as the debate continued (for a critique of this displacement, see Featherstone 2005: 29–30). These genres of cultural representation allow us to understand how colonial experiences were and continue to be symbolically processed. It is in these media – particularly through language – that forms of opposition, self-empowerment and "agency" have arisen most clearly in the postcolonial nations and amongst postcolonial subjects.

As a consequence, the concrete textual work (in literary studies) has provided an important impetus for a cultural theory that is oriented toward texts and self-articulation. To a greater extent than in the hermeneutic interpretive turn, here the text concept has been politicized and transformed into a concept concerned with the politics of text production, textuality and even comprehensive discourse formation. And because the process of overcoming colonialism is still not over, what we are witnessing at present is not a retroactive attempt to set the framework for the postcolonial turn. Rather, the postcolonial turn is itself initiating the development of new analytical concepts that aim to explore internal contradictions, intermediary cultural spaces and the fragmented experiences of postcolonial subjects – in other words, rewriting, hybridity, difference, third space and identity.

2 Characteristics and Key Concepts of the Postcolonial Turn

Like the other reorientations in the study of culture, the postcolonial turn did not establish itself until its research approaches spread to other levels – until it moved beyond its historical embeddedness in the criticism of colonialism and was generalized such that it questioned Western power structures. For the first time in the history of the more recent realignments and reorientations in the study of culture, the Eurocentric perspective itself shifted: away from the West, toward the non-Western cultures that had previously been marginalized and were now becoming the focus of attention. This shift doubtlessly prompted a conceptual remapping of the academic and theoretical landscapes. At the same time, though, the new cartography was incorporated into European-influenced scientific language and the organizational forms of Western science; it was absorbed by the authority claims of Western theory.

Despite such appropriations, the postcolonial turn has not always been applied consistently enough to develop new methodologies. It has often remained trapped in an epistemological perspective that calls attention to the postcolonial

"situation" only in very general fashion. At the same time, this situation, characterized by migration, diaspora and exile, massively challenges familiar historical categories such as identity, nation, society and citizen (on the key concepts and main representatives of the postcolonial turn, see Hawley 2001; Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2013). The multiple states and situations of global subjects necessitate new investigative frameworks and analytical concepts (López 2001: 7).

Writing Back (Re-writing), Re-mapping and Critique of the Canon

Traditional European categories of analysis are geared toward autonomous cultural and literary production. They run up against their limits when they are used to investigate asymmetries between center and periphery, experiences of colonialism or the indigenous articulations of marginalized literatures and cultures. This central postcolonial insight springs from the perspective of non-European literary texts, but it also has a bearing on postcolonial theory as a whole. The claimed universal authority of European categories and theories with their genre demarcations, epochs and canonical formations is shown to be questionable. After all, these categories and theories are difficult to apply to narrative structures that incorporate orality or to circular, nonlinear plot structures and character development (as in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*; see Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989: 183). European linguistic standards and European criteria of aesthetic evaluation become highly questionable when confronted with non-European allegories, forms of irony, discontinuities and syncretic representations, with the inclusion in literature of voice, sound, noise and rhythm, with the use of untranslated words in texts that have already moved outside the traditional range of European motifs with their themes of exile and diaspora. Also questionable is the way literatures from regions as diverse as India, Africa and the Caribbean – and also from North America, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland – are being standardized to form an ensemble of postcolonial literatures. This standardization has been associated with the tendency to create canons of postcolonial authors, despite all the criticism previously directed at such canons. These authors include not only African recipients of the Nobel Prize in Literature such as Wole Soyinka, Nagib Mahfuz, Nadine Gordimer and J. M. Coetzee, but also writers like Chinua Achebe, Ben Okri, Margaret Atwood, Keri Hulme, Toni Morrison, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Anita Desai, Hanif Kureishi, Michael Ondaatje, Derek Walcott and Jamaica Kincaid (see King 1996).

The commonalities we can see at work here are those of the postcolonial self-positionings of these new literatures, which include Anglophone and Francophone texts and clearly triggered a postcolonial turn in literary studies as

they came to replace so-called Commonwealth Literature. Well into the 1980s, in tandem with traditional theories of development and the positionings of the Third World, the term Commonwealth Literature was used in literary studies to describe a new category of literary texts produced outside Europe and in former European colonies. What is at stake in the current discussion of "postcolonial literature," though, is not only a new label, but a fundamentally changed attitude, a shift from the divisive, exclusionary and marginalizing view of Commonwealth Literature to an understanding of the overlaps between centers and peripheries that goes beyond assumptions of fixed rigid differences (on this shift, see Huggan 2001: 231ff.). The dual goal here is 1) to expose the imperialist entanglements of the literary works from the colonial-period European canon and 2) to meet the differentiated requirements of the literary self-representations that have emerged from the postcolonial societies outside Europe.

Within this framework, there has also been a shift in the main focuses of the contemporary debate on world literature (on the postcolonial approach, see D'haen 2012: 133–173). Turning away from the Eurocentric orientation toward a canon that marked traditional discussions of world literature, the debate initially emphasized the "indigenous" significance of literatures for the respective national contexts of emancipation. One example is Fredric Jameson's much-discussed essay "Third World Literature" (1986; sharply criticized by Ahmad 1992: 95–122). This development was followed by another shift in perspective, and an attempt was made to redefine world literature from the periphery. Although the continued nationalizing efforts in this context should not be underestimated, the focus also came to include transnational and transcultural relations between literatures and global literary references. In their groundbreaking work *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), three Australian scholars of Anglophone literature – Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin – for the first time performed a theoretical analysis of the emerging contemporary literatures of the world with respect to their cross-textual significance. The three scholars systematically portrayed the literary strategies used to oppose imperialist discourse, taking to heart Salman Rushdie's dictum of a "writing back to the center." Their work shows that critical rewriting (or writing back) is one of the most important forms of cultural expression among postcolonial actors, even outside the realm of literature.

Narrative strategies such as these, which involve an explicit or implicit rewriting of European classics by the contemporary authors of world literature, "displace" the definitional monopoly that Europe has held on world literature by revealing, recasting and exaggerating the colonialist implications of European literature. Not only have these strategies been applied to Shakespeare's plays, particularly to *The Tempest* (Lamming/Shakespeare, Césaire/Shakespeare; see Loomba and Orkin 1998), but they have also led to other well-known pairings

(Coetzee/Defoe, Rhys/Brontë, Achebe/Conrad and Borges/Kafka). Caribbean author Derek Walcott's postcolonial odyssey *Omeros* (1990) – a self-reflexive history of the Caribbean that appropriates and rewrites the imperially integrated literary genre of the ancient epic – can also be attributed to this context (for a discussion, see Döring 2002: 169ff.). The attempt to rewrite European classics by infusing them with historical postcolonial experiences displaces and relativizes the universal claims and hegemonic enforcement practices of the Western canon of (world) literature and knowledge. It also reverses the hierarchy of characters and often gives subaltern postcolonial subjects the capacity to speak and act (see Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989: 189). For instance, a variety of Indian novels defamiliarize English as an imperial world language while calling into question tropes such as nation, identity and modernization and combining these with Indian myths, traditions and oral practices. Even the "rotten English" (North 2001) of murdered Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa can be seen as a practice of linguistic decolonization (on the linguistic dimension of decolonization, see the manifesto by Kenyan author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 2005).

In this way, a large number of postcolonial works have undermined the authority of hegemonic discourse and its claims to truth, integrated as they are into a more comprehensive practice of postcolonial counter-discourse. At the same time, they continue to use its narrative and rhetorical tools. However, even if this "shared rhetoric" is employed in new subversive ways, the strategy of "writing back" is much more than just a one-sided act of resistance. It is a highly complex practice of transnational and transcultural intertextuality (Döring 2002: 13ff.) – a practice of translingual writing as a mode of translation (Bandia 2014).

This literary-cultural independence strategy has led to an additional conceptual twist – the attempt to use cultural in-betweenness to critically re-map the asymmetrical relations between the center and periphery and thus to question the assumption of a polarized hierarchy of spaces with an unequal distribution of power. This literary practice is also stimulating a new definition of world literature with regard to "combined and uneven development" (Deckard et al. 2015). The cultural "location" of literary texts is at times even elaborated as an "imaginary geography." This is shown, for instance, by the Caribbean novel *Texaco* by Patrick Chamoiseau. In this work, the creolization of Caribbean cultures becomes a reference point for the author's own cartography, which takes aim at (French) spatial claims with their "Western logic" and "urban grammar" (see Bachmann-Medick 2007).

The postcolonial turn in literature has thus initiated a process of cultural theorization whose literary manifestation has also proven to be productive for the other turns in the study of culture. Despite recent approaches to an engaged "ethical turn" in postcolonial texts (Feldmann 2006: 13ff.), Salman Rushdie's

comments on the rise of a distinctly postcolonial novel as a de-centered transcultural “hybrid” continue to be revealing (Rushdie 1996). Well-versed in theory, Rushdie illustrates hybrid situations and the hybridization processes of cultures and cultural texts in nearly all of his works (on hybridity in Rushdie’s texts as a historical principle of palimpsest erasures and rewritings, see Schülting 1998). In the novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, for example, Rushdie asks:

> What if the whole deal – orientation, knowing where you are, and so on – what if it’s all a scam? What if all of it – home, kinship, the whole enchilada – is just the biggest, most truly global, and centuries-oldest piece of brainwashing? (Rushdie 2000: 176–177)

In another passage, Rushdie describes how “the West was in Bombay from the beginning, impure old Bombay where West, East, North and South had always been scrambled, like codes, like eggs” (Rushdie 2000: 106). And in *The Satanic Verses* Rushdie actively engages in the hybridization and blending of literary and religious texts himself – a fusion process that identifies central religious writings as “cultural texts” and thus relativizes them in their status as “sacred texts.” The explosive political nature of this critical hybridity is shown by the fatwa issued against him.

Hybridity

Hybridity is a central postcolonial concept with a dubious history. It has its roots in nineteenth-century biology, where it was used to describe crosses between different species that produced a third hybrid species (on the historical development of the hybridity concept, see Young 1995). In other words, by the time it was adopted by evolutionary and cultural theorists, it was a racially charged concept that discriminated against people of mixed ethnicities. With the introduction of Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of polyphony and the carnivalesque, however, this derogatory term began to evolve, ultimately acquiring a positive connotation in postcolonial theory. Ever since, hybridity has been used to describe the fertility of cultural mixing as opposed to the assumed positive effects of cultural purity. Biological identity and ethnic origin are no longer seen as key factors in understanding culture or cultural self-conceptions. They have been replaced by “place” and “displacement” – yes, even by the “location of culture,” as Homi Bhabha claims in his eponymous work, which is based in part on the hybridity category (Bhabha 1994). Echoing the spatial turn, Bhabha raises a number of questions: Where does “culture” take place? How can non-homogeneous constellations, asynchronicities and contradictory layers of tradition be used for cultural articulation? How can new forms of local, cultural and historical consciousness be

developed that do not remain caught in the linear trajectories of modernization theory?

Against the backdrop of such questions, hybridity has become a counter-concept to the postulate of a "dominant culture" (*Leitkultur*) and to the central categories of multicultural societies such as acculturation, integration and assimilation. Hybridity emphasizes the reciprocal interactions between different, even antagonistic, cultures and subcultures while giving enhanced status to practices of creolization and syncretism and to the previously neglected sites of cultural production. Linked to the postcolonial shift of the center-periphery axis, it represents a new understanding of cultural dynamics. Instead of placing this idea of cultural dynamics at the center of systems of cultural meaning – as was the case with the interpretive turn with its assumptions of cultural consensus – the concept of hybridity views marginal, border and overlapping zones, as well as interstitial spaces, as culturally productive. It sees the "displacements" that result from global networks and interdependencies as especially useful. In other words, "routes" are more productive than "roots," as James Clifford expressed it in his book *Routes* (1997). In this model cultures are produced liminally and are configured on their borders or in border situations. Revealingly, "location" here refers to cross-border migration movements and multiple voices instead of a "container" of supposed cultural authenticity that is based on fixed lines of tradition. But how is this hybrid? As Elisabeth Bronfen concisely expresses it:

> Hybrid is everything that owes its existence to a mixing of traditions or chains of signifiers, that combines different discourses and technologies, that emerges from the techniques of collage, sampling and bricolage. (Bronfen and Marius 1997: 14)

It was Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978/1995) that gave the hybridity concept its enhanced status. Building on the work of Frantz Fanon, who criticized the psychological consequences of the bipolar paradigm of white hegemonic discourse, Said stressed the cultural and epistemological effects of such thought patterns: the Orientalist projections of an antithesis to Europe did not provide any deep insight into Oriental cultures but served instead to more clearly define European culture. In his later work *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said attempted to undermine this assumed counter-polarity through a quasi-methodological hybridization. He trained his sights on "non-simultaneous" constellations and interactions, on cultural processes of imitation, appropriation and defamiliarization, on similarity, exchange and conflict, and thus on the hybrid ambivalence of the colonial relations themselves, beyond the one-sided power relations between colonizers and the colonized.

After Said, it was above all Homi Bhabha who extensively developed hybridity as a postcolonial concept (on this point, see Fludernik 1998). It now

became a pivotal factor that to a certain extent epistemologically qualified the postcolonial turn beyond the initial historical conditions of its emergence – as a process of turning from the historical descriptive level to the systematic programmatic level of analysis. It is the concept of hybridity itself that in this way was transformed from a descriptive term with an empirical historical foundation into an epistemological concept. It differs from the concept of multiculturalism in that it is tailored not to cultural diversity, but to cultural difference (Bhabha 1994: 34). Instead of claiming simple plurality on the basis of attributions and cultural specifications of meaning, it pays greater attention to the ambivalences of cultures on the basis of processes of action and intervention. The charging of historical social contexts of action with processes of signification and cultural coding produces a "hybridity" that reveals difference to be both a signification process and a "process of the *enunciation* of culture as 'knowledge*able*'" (Bhabha 1994: 34). Instances of cultural self-assertion and conceptualization from which social and historical practices are derived are thus seen as negotiable. In contrast to the perspectives of the interpretive turn, here cultural production is regarded not as a process of moving closer to an identity-promoting cultural consensus on meaning, but as an incomplete process of negotiation and reinscription that results from the overlapping layers of different, often contradictory, discourses.

The epistemological goal of hybridity is to identify constructive overlaps and intersections. With this approach it is possible to reformulate the monolithic categories of difference that we hear repeated like mantras in the study of culture (e.g., race, class and gender). Instead, these categories must be problematized whenever the specific location of a culture is attributed not to such classifications of identity or to fixed contexts of tradition, but to the scope for change inherent in intermediary positions:

> This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (Bhabha 1994: 5)

Here hybridity is not seen as a mere mixing of cultures. In a more precise and provocative manner, it is grasped as a translational situation, a boundary-crossing, an in-between space and an "activity of displacement" (Rutherford 1990: 210). Beyond simple mixing, the aim is now to locate the changing positions of the subjects – to identify those spaces that make it possible to articulate cultural differences – and in this way to tear down distinct barriers of difference such as ethnicity, class and gender (Werbner and Modood 2015). It was Bhabha who saw hybridity as having a subversive potential whose key factor was the position from which a subject speaks (or acts).

After all, in Homi Bhabha's eyes, "the subaltern can speak." In other words, Bhabha does not stop at critical descriptions of the postcolonial subject as a passive pawn subjected to the dominance of Western discourse, or at observations of such dichotomies. Rather, he regards migrants, artists and intellectuals as embodying hybridity insofar as they are able to move between cultures as members of world society and productively use or creatively develop their own multiple affiliations: "Once again, it is the space of intervention emerging in the cultural interstices that introduces creative invention into existence" (Bhabha 1994: 9). If access to diverse reference systems is derived from these multiple cultural affiliations, it is not surprising that this theory is seen by some as yet another invention of European intellectuals who are merely serving integrative Western power and capitalist pluralism. After all, in what way does Bhabha's concept account for the clear suffering caused by experiences of migration? In this regard, Bhabha can be criticized for exploiting only the productive side of hybridity and its constructive possibilities of "the re-creation of the self" (Bhabha 1994: 9; for a critique see Kuortti and Nyman 2007: 4). Artists and intellectuals are indeed able to use their complex existential border situations for creative translations and transformations more easily than can refugees, workers or asylum-seekers. Consequently, they can help eliminate deeply held prejudices and overcome social disparities that are based on ethnic or national affiliation, class and gender. The innovative capacity of liminality comes into play in such transitional situations from one cultural context to another, but in contrast to the ritual patterns elaborated in the performative turn, this form of liminality is not a temporary transitory process leading to the attainment of a new status. Rather, the complex fragmented nature of postcolonial conditions and migration situations creates a permanent state of liminality in which definitive integration or return in most cases does not take place.

Bhabha's hybridity concept is thus quite controversial. It does not adequately deal with the fact that hybridization approaches are threatened by nationalism and religious fundamentalism worldwide. In addition, existing power relations and social and economic inequalities are too easily blurred. Yet the concept of hybridity became extremely important for the postcolonial turn. It helped redirect the critical epistemological impetus emanating from the postcolonial reorientation to the level of a broader systematic cultural theory that emphatically pressed all disciplines to focus on the analysis of (cultural) differences rather than on an examination of identity. Hybridity represents a counter-concept to essentialist ideas about culture, nation, individual, religion and ethnicity – ideas that are frequently used (and abused) to distance oneself from and exclude ethnic "others." These ideas are also employed to fabricate enemies in world politics as part of an alleged "clash of civilizations" (Samuel Huntington) with its view of monolithic

cultures as sealed containers. The hybridization concept, by contrast, helps to identify the pivotal points at which such antagonisms can be negotiated and dealt with without being completely eliminated. Instead of essentializing differences, its goal is to understand them with respect to their conditions of inequality and to continually renegotiate them: "Culture does imply difference, but the differences now are no longer taxonomic; they are interactive and refractive" (Appadurai 1996: 60). Thus, postcolonial cultural theory presupposes not essential differences, but their capacity for interaction within a negotiation process. Should we therefore use the newly developed concept of transdifference (Breinig et al. 2002: 22ff.) to avoid being forced into this type of bipolar system from the start? However we answer this question, challenging ascriptions of symbolic difference from the perspective of the minorities' own claims of difference creates a tension in which a conflictual engagement with other meanings can produce entirely new findings.

Although the hybridity category is in most cases asserted emphatically, it has been developed by Bhabha only in an abstract, vague and universalist manner. For it to become more than just an umbrella term, it must be defined more precisely in terms of its different culture-specific manifestations (see Bachmann-Medick 2014: 119–136). It is in this sense that the reflections by Néstor García Canclini, an Argentine cultural theorist living in Mexico, have initiated an important discussion of hybridity and hybridization in Latin America (Canclini 2005). This debate is geared to the culturally hybrid situation of the region, caught between tradition, modernization and democratization, and contrasts with Francophone Caribbean self-descriptions with their comparable concepts of *métissage* and *créolisation* (see Glissant 1997).

In order to methodologically develop the central postcolonial concept of hybridity beyond self-descriptions of "mixed cultures" and to use it in other fields, Bhabha's concept, which has utopian implications and even "romanticizing tendencies" (Goldberg 2000: 80), needs to be connected in a more precise and critical manner to the analysis of actors, brokers, functions, institutions and intentions, each at their respective locations. The attempt by Jan Nederveen Pieterse to apply this concept to sociology, for example, makes use of region-specific hybrid formations to study "globalization-as-hybridization" instead of "globalization-as-homogenization" (Pieterse 2009: 86). As part of his study, Pieterse reveals the coexistence of the "diverse logics" of actors and organizations in their specific behaviors in border zones (e.g., free enterprise zones, tax havens, research stations; see Pieterse 2009: 98). There has also been a noteworthy attempt to use the hybridity category to study the situation of Latinos in the United States, including their border and diaspora culture with hip-hop and other hybrid forms of expression, and to chart the transformation of hip-hop from a local Latino subculture to a dominant form of American popular music (Zapf 1999, Pacini Hernandez 2010).

Third Space

In methodological terms, hybridization involves above all the exploration of a “third space” as a “liminal space, in-between the designations of identity” (Bhabha 1994: 4). This third space, or “in-between,” has two dimensions. On the one hand, the “intervention of the Third Space of enunciation” (Bhabha 1994: 37) can be seen as an interpretive methodology for critiquing dichotomies and binary categorizations. It does not synthesize two existing spaces, poles or positions, but instead posits initial situations that have always been mixed and impure:

> But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the ‘third space’ which enables other positions to emerge. (Bhabha, in Rutherford 1990: 211)

In this view, hybridity is a third space marked by a simultaneity of the nonsimultaneous that allows one and the same sign to be constantly reinterpreted, overwritten and cross-appropriated:

> So, for instance, postcoloniality is open to the contingent and hybrid articulations of the sacred-in-the-secular, psychic fantasy as part of social rationality, the archaic within the contemporaneous. (Bhabha and Comaroff 2002: 24)

In practical research, such ambivalences and reinterpretations, which have an impact on action, profoundly shake the foundations of conventional fixed units of analysis. It is this context to which discussions of an “epistemological turn” are linked – a turn in which, as the late Ulrich Beck once put it, “the units of research of the various social scientific disciplines become arbitrary when the distinctions between internal and external, national and international, local and global, lose their sharp contours” (Beck 2006: 17). The conceptualization of third space extends into epistemological fields such as these; furthermore, it can be enriched by the astonishing terminological and conceptual overlaps with other theories, all of which work toward the same goal and – from the perspective of the spatial turn – promote the capacity for self-assertion and the potential of postcolonial concepts. When the American urban planner and geographer Edward Soja first coined the term “third space,” he used it to describe a realm in which real and imaginary places existed simultaneously – due, for instance, to clusters of the imaginary in megacities such as Los Angeles. Henri Lefebvre’s “social production of space” is as much a part of this synergy of spatial theories as are bell hooks’s concept of “margin” and Michel Foucault’s “other spaces” and “heterotopias.” In light of comparable terms and concepts, the central postcolonial concept of third space has the potential to be further operationalized and elucidated beyond its emphatic initial model. It is thus

being transformed into a central category in the study of the transnational tensions between local, regional and global processes; and it can be productively used for a "sociology of the in-between" (Pieterse 2009: 89).

The significance of these underpinnings is shown by the far-reaching claim that the concept of third space can be employed to transform the concept of culture itself. From this vantage point, culture is no longer viewed as a system of meanings or a container of attributed traditions, but as contradictory layers of different, conflict-causing claims, articulations, self-conceptions and marginalized areas of discourse. This culture concept does more than expose what was previously unsaid and unconscious in individual cultures. It unleashes its greatest potential at the level of intercultural relations, because it triggers a search for overlapping hybrid spaces, for "contact zones" and pivotal points that can dissolve differences. However, such operations presuppose that we do not regard hybrid spaces as mere mixing spaces, but – taking differences and conflicts into account – use them productively as concrete translational spaces and examine them with an eye toward translational processes. An interpretation based on this idea gives Bhabha's postcolonial third space concept a further twist, positioning it as a methodological elaboration of the postcolonial turn. After all, a key factor in the study of culture is the extent to which a category such as third space can be developed beyond a mere figure of thought or metaphor into an analytical category that can accommodate the effective spaces of interaction and conflict in cultural contacts. Sociologist Jan Nederveen Pieterse gets to the heart of the matter with his comment that "hybridization is a factor in the reorganization of social spaces" (Pieterse 2009: 89).

The second dimension of the third space concept points us in this direction as well: here it is viewed as the conceptually and spatially based idea of a contact space, a mixing space, an intermediate overlapping space of boundary zones and boundary situations, a place of conflict within and between cultures in which boundaries (e.g., between the self and the other) can be destabilized. This type of third space does not emerge between two pure unmixed zones. It characterizes a cultural state that contains no such zones at all, but is made up of differing, contradictory layers of culture. Bhabha goes so far as to claim that culture is constituted by translation: "Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational" (Bhabha 1994: 247). This notion "de-centers" the metaphor of culture as text that has enjoyed widespread popularity since the interpretive turn: meaning no longer appears to arise primarily in the cultural center, but in in-between spaces where the dominant culture can be subverted (Wolf 2000: 137ff., 142; Simon 1997).

In methodological terms, this insight can be exploited to weight aspects of alterity more heavily than aspects of identity or even simple mixings. As a trans-

lation process, hybridization is associated with the demand that aspects of alterity be channeled into seemingly fixed semantic complexes so as to bring to light marginalized areas of experience and discourse. In other words, the methodological impetus from the postcolonial turn does not draw on predefined identities or cultural wholes. It investigates their character as constructs, deconstructs fixed units – even cultures – and shows how cultures are multilayered, contradictory and impure for the very reason that they are permeated by counter-discourses.

Identity

This translational understanding of culture extends to another central concept undergoing a critical examination within the scope of the postcolonial turn: identity. Here the discussions have centered not only on the crisis of representation – as in the reflexive turn – but also on the crisis of identity (see López 2001: 12). Although identity has long been defined based on origins, nature and unity, emphasis is now being placed on breaks, transitions, overlaps, transformations and other factors such as "unhomeliness" (Bhabha 1994: 9). As a result of this shift from identity to difference, the formation of cultural identity is now regarded as an articulation of difference. Cultural and political identity is seen as forming through a process of alterization and identification, through the activation of an alterity perspective that defamiliarizes the self and regards it as the other. What is crucial here, according to Bhabha, is "the performative nature of differential identities" (1994: 313). Bhabha argues that it is precisely the idea of third space that can overcome the dilemma of dichotomy and the rigid fixation of identity that dichotomous thinking causes. This new view has arisen because mass migrations and the global circulation of signs have made the dichotomous opposition between Europe and non-Europe untenable in the modern world (Bronfen and Marius 1997: 6). Today cultural signs "allow everything that was once localized, marginalized and suppressed as the Third World to return to the center of the self" (Bronfen and Marius in 1997: 6). At the same time, the aim is to understand the self as the other and as "other-directed." A new conception of the self and the subject has been emerging that is more connectible worldwide than the conception of an autonomous European individual: "The subject is the node and intersection point of all that it is permeated by: languages, orders, discourses, systems, perceptions, desires, emotions and processes of consciousness" (4). Hence hybridity is not seen as taking place between (different) cultures; it is viewed as an internal differentiation of a culture or even of the subjects themselves.

This postcolonial critique of identity has contributed to a revision of the identity concept that remains an important focus of research in the study of culture.

This critique must be seen as a result of the poststructuralist rejection of essentializations. But the emerging anti-essentialism has a problematic side as well because it encourages the separation of an academic postcolonialism from the concerns of political action. The continued development of the postcolonial turn and the deconstruction of traditional categories of substance have increased the danger that the significance of collective memory for a group's claims to cultural identity will be underestimated and the group will be dissolved as it becomes hybridized. This problem inspired Gayatri Spivak to develop her concept of "strategic essentialism." With it, she brushes her own critique of the essentialism inherent in subaltern studies against the grain, as it were, by redefining subaltern consciousness as a form of "strategic essentialism." In much the same way that Karl Marx once appropriated the concept of class consciousness for strategic purposes, here Spivak strategically assumes a subaltern "identity consciousness" in order to shift the perspective from that of a subaltern existence to that of a subject of history:

> It is in this spirit that I read Subaltern Studies against its grain and suggest that its own subalternity in claiming a positive subject-position for the subaltern might be reinscribed as a strategy for our times. (Spivak 1999: 217, on the concept of "strategic essentialism," esp. 204 and 214; see also Spivak 1987: 46–76, 197–221 and Spivak 1990: 25–49)

3 The Postcolonial Turn in Different Disciplines

This mixing of the level of theory with that of liberating political power struggles has not only generated considerable disseminative energy, but also caused problems for the further course of the postcolonial turn. Certainly one of its main achievements has been that, much more than the other cultural turns, it has produced a global network of authors and intellectuals and even established a new transcultural "discipline" replete with its own journals. These include *Interventions, Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Postcolonial Studies* and the online magazine *Postcolonial Text* (on the "expansion of the postcolonial theory market," see Huggan 2001: 228; Schulze-Engler 2002: 299–300). Thanks to this transcultural impetus, the study of culture has become more aware of those cultural aspects of decolonization and neocolonialism by which it is directly affected – and also of the need for a cultural critique, on the knowledge-systems level, of all hegemonic claims to universalization and binary structures. The reason we can speak of a turn here is that this reorientation has broken ground in a variety of disciplines. And it is these disciplines that have significantly expanded the postcolonial analytical framework beyond its initial context of decolonization and made it more

widely applicable – e.g., to early historical forms of colonies, empires and hegemonic relations.

It is no accident that this momentum has been boosted by developments in (Christian) theology, which from postcolonial theory has acquired a variety of cross-denominational analytical tools that it has used in particular for feminist postcolonial Bible studies (see Dube 2000; Moore and Segovia 2005; Stichele and Penner 2005; Segovia and Sugirtharajah 2007). With the help of these tools, scholars have begun to critically examine not only the origins of early Christianity, but also the supposed "essentiality" of religion and the basic universalist assumptions behind their own hermeneutic processes. In addition, they have illuminated the significance of the Bible for the colonial imagination and analyzed interactions between Christian and other religious practices, particularly in the Imperium Romanum. Additional objects of study include the impacts on theological discourses in non-European societies outside the framework of missionary history, the relocation of Western Christianity in constellations with other religious traditions (see Daggers 2013) and the problems linked to the canon of theological texts (Marshall 2005: 98; Sugirtharajah 2003: 3). Adopting such critical theological approaches and at times taking a comparative perspective, scholars have also helped to counteract the astonishing and increasingly problematic trend that in postcolonial theory the significance of religiosity and its underlying motivation are strikingly underweighted (Sugirtharajah 2003: 157ff.).

Studies could also be undertaken for other disciplines to investigate the extent to which these disciplines have incorporated the postcolonial turn and confronted its shortcomings. But for this to happen, the broad spread of the postcolonial turn in these different disciplines (see Brydon 2000, vol. 5: 1902–2056; Huggan 2008; Loomba et al. 2005) must offer more than just a "door-opening effect" (Schulze-Engler 2002: 303) – including expansions of the canon, ethnic awareness and the global positioning of the different disciplines – since such effects have often resulted only in a jargon of oft-repeated terms.

The many ways in which concrete empirical studies can prove fruitful in this context become clear in the discipline of literary studies, particularly in those fields in which its representatives have attempted to broaden the canon to include non-European literatures and have been forced to grapple with other ideas about literature and its uses – e.g., in ritual contexts, oral narratives and sound performances. But beyond this new focus on "postcolonial literatures," it only seems possible to speak of a postcolonial turn in literary interpretation if "postcolonial" is taken to mean not only the selection of a new subject area, but also a new and more generally applicable analytical attitude. This is why the most exciting disciplinary approaches are those that derive from postcolonial conditions and

histories a methodological analytical incentive to study literary texts in terms of hybrid phenomena and literary alterity strategies (see Fludernik 1998).

In the research on the "postcolonial Middle Ages" (see Gaunt 2009; Cohen 2000; Lampert-Weissig 2010), for example, we can find diverse approaches along these lines that aim to map out a "much longer history of colonialism" (Gaunt 2009: 172, 175). And a study of the "intimate alterity" of this "distant" past (Marzec 2007: 6, 3) has called into question the dominant role played by the discourse of modernity for European identity. In addition, an attempt to bring postcolonial questions to bear on the syncretic polyphonic poetry of Heinrich Heine has revealed historical forms of cultural hybridization (Gerhard 2002). In further case studies, postcolonial models of reading have explicitly been used not only to reinterpret the canonized authors of German literature and the European classics, above all Shakespeare (Loomba and Orkin 1998), but also, for instance, to gain insights into the interdependencies between British Empire and Victorian novels (Brantlinger 2009). In addition to extending subject areas, these studies have focused on the capacity of new analytical categories and methodological approaches to explore reading and writing strategies between cultures. They have emphasized, for example, the intersection of the perspectives of transcultural reading and memory in interpretations of contemporary German literary works that deal with German colonialism in Africa (Göttsche 2013). The emerging field of postcolonial narratology (Prince 2005) has also drawn on the postcolonial turn, expanding its formal categories and examining narrative strategies for staging postcolonial identities. Such strategies include imagological topoi, narrative techniques to construct representations of "the other," the power and authority of the narrator, multi-perspective narration, constructions of (colonial) space, border transgressions and even linguistic decolonization.

It is here that Edward Said's attempt to challenge the supposed autonomous status of literary texts and redefine them in terms of their entanglements with the imperialist project continues to provide exciting impetus. Said introduced the concept of "contrapuntal reading" (Said 1993: 66) in order to read English novels and the novels of imperialism – among them Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (see Collits 2005) and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* – in new ways against the (often ignored) backdrop of colonialism and slavery in India and the Caribbean. What does it signify, he asks, "when an author shows, for instance, that a colonial sugar plantation is seen as important to the process of maintaining a particular style of life in England" (Said 1993: 66)? This form of reading creates interpretive juxtapositions that suit the hybrid condition of culture. With a topographical sensitivity, Said made these juxtapositions the basis of his project to establish a "comparative literature of imperialism" (Said 1993: 18):

> That is, we must be able to think through and interpret together experiences that are discrepant, each with its particular agenda and pace of development … all of them coexisting and interacting with others. (Said 1993: 32)

It is also possible to read German novels such as Wilhelm Raabe's *Stopfkuchen* "contrapuntally" with an eye toward the concealed colonial experiences that represent the conditions of the text's production and provide a backdrop to the eeriness of the German *Heimat*, or homeland (Göttsche and Krobb 2009). The scope of contrapuntal reading is so broad that it can even be used to read the central texts of hegemonic discourses (interestingly enough, even those in the field of theology; see Sugirtharajah 2003: 16), as well as hitherto disregarded marginalized texts. This means that Said's reading concept already contained the seeds of the "entangled histories" perspective that has come to play such an important role in more recent approaches to global history.

The simultaneity of these discrepant histories can also be examined and elucidated using the tools of the translational turn. It is quite revealing to see how literary genres can be detached from a specific cultural canon and, like traveling concepts, transferred to other areas such as British-Caribbean relations. These processes of postcolonial intercultural intertextuality are at the heart of a case study carried out by Tobias Döring in the field of English literature. Focusing on Caribbean novels with their palimpsests and invented traditions, Döring's study also represents an interdisciplinary attempt to investigate the local specifications that many have criticized as being absent from the postcolonial turn (Döring 2002: 13, practicing a contrapuntal reading). At the same time, the intercultural cross-readings emphasized by Said have an explicit contextual link that adds a political focus to the critique of representation – continuing, as it were, the reflexive turn. Here the cultural and political spheres are placed in a close reciprocal relationship, with consequences for the further development of the other reorientations in the study of culture.

The methodological analytical tools of postcolonial studies remain fertile even when we move beyond the postcolonial objects of study in the narrower sense. Postcolonial approaches have, for example, attracted attention in comparative literary studies that address the literary treatment of migration conditions both in Europe in general (Brinker-Gabler and Smith 1997) and in Germany in particular. In the genre of migration literature, the bifurcations of the linguistic and cultural affiliations of German-Turkish and other migration literatures are now being interpreted as part of a "postmonolingual" hybrid situation (Yildiz 2012; Adelson 2005). One additional effect of the postcolonial perspective emerging in the field of literary studies is that there is no longer talk of literature by foreigners. Rather, migration literature has come to be recognized as German literature

and its authors have therefore been included in the contemporary German literary canon. Critics have now realized that national cultures and literatures are increasingly being created from the perspective of minorities. This also applies to the third generation of post-Holocaust Jewish writers in Germany. Their specifically hybrid identities – as viewed from the perspective of their novels (see Herzog 1997; Herzog, Herzog and Lapp 2008) – have formed in increasingly transnational contexts, not least in “diasporas of the mind” (Cheyette 2014). Another globalized perspective inspired by a postcolonial lens has expanded the “Jewish question” into a reconsideration of the crises of minorities by re-inscribing it into the non-Western context of Muslims in India (Mufti 2007).

In these and other examples, a postcolonial analytical approach is at work that examines how domination functions and how alterity is modeled. This approach is shifting the focus to instances of “imperial domination in non-Third World contexts” (Şandru 2012: 15). The back-projection of postcolonial analytical categories onto European conditions deliberately distances itself from the traditional postcolonial fields of inquiry by bringing to light postcolonial constellations within Europe – and by directing the postcolonial turn, for instance, to Italy (Ponzanesi 2012) or Germany (Schilling 2014; Naranch and Eley 2014). Regardless of whether these constellations are revealed in interpretations of “Balkanism” as a form of European Orientalism, or in analyses of the Habsburg Empire as a colonial empire and imperial project, the historical marginalization of Eastern European states in the face of hegemonic power relations and inequalities can have repercussions extending as far as the current eastward expansion of Europe. It is in this context that the postcolonial perspective has been applied to imperial projects within Europe (Müller-Funk 2005). Such moves reflect a tendency to pursue comparative postcolonial studies that analyze Central and Eastern Europe as forms of Orientalism within Europe itself (Hodkinson and Walker 2013).

Projects such as these are linked to translation studies in that they share an analytical focus on the assertion of power and power inequalities – a focus that has characterized translation studies in its own postcolonial turn (on postcolonialism and translation, see Tymoczko and Gentzler 2002; Niranjana 1992; Bassnett and Trivedi 1999; Simon and St-Pierre 2000; Robinson 1998; Petterson). An especially illuminating example is a case study by Michaela Wolf (2015) that addresses translation practices in the “postcolonial” multicultural space of the Habsburg Monarchy and places a similar emphasis on power asymmetries in translational relations. Building on the translational conditions of postcolonialism itself, scholars are currently viewing translation within the context of colonialism and showing how ideas and practices of cultural translation have been dominated by Western thinking throughout history.

By calling attention to power inequalities, the postcolonial turn in the discipline of history has challenged the totalizing approaches of Western historicism and its master narratives of linear progress and a global European modernity (Clark 2004: 181). In the past one major effect of this master narrative in the field of historiography was to continue the exclusion of non-European cultures from the course of history by postulating them as "people without history" (Wolf 1982/2010). Starting in the 1970s, the postcolonial impetus led to new ideas about a historiography that was no longer dominated by Eurocentric paradigms – particularly in the field of subaltern studies, which was initiated by "alternative" investigations of South Asian histories and documented in the twelve successive volumes of "Subaltern Studies" published between 1982 and 2005 (edited, among others, by Ranajit Guha). Affiliated scholars, some of whom later developed their own perspectives, include Dipesh Chakrabarty with his call to "provincialize" Europe (2000; see also the debate between Carola Dietze and Dipesh Chakrabarty 2008; Chakrabarty's autobiographical essay 2014) and Gyan Prakash, who wrote a concise account of the postcolonial turn taking place in the field of historiography (Prakash 1992, 1994).

Since the 1980s, this critical movement has continued to gain momentum, not least from the development of Latin American subaltern studies (Rodríguez 2001). The field of subaltern studies is pursuing two main postcolonial objectives: 1) to establish a form of historiography that considers the history of the European center in terms of its links and entanglements with the histories of the non-European periphery, and 2) to narrate history from the perspective of the inhabitants of this periphery and with respect to their own conceptions. In so doing, it has contributed to alternative forms of history writing that transcend essentialist Eurocentric concepts and categories such as religion, underdevelopment, poverty, labor, nation and the separation of the public and private sphere. A comprehensive aim is thus to question the historical master narrative that positions Europe at the center of the world and to replace this narrative with alternative accounts.

Postcolonial approaches have also been applied in various fields of the historiography of Europe. They have found their way into research on medieval and early modern history and even into the colonial contexts of the Roman Empire (Webster and Cooper 1996). In a general sense, they are also being used in forms of postcolonial archaeology (Liebmann and Rizvi 2008). In a variety of interesting ways, postcolonial approaches have led to the perspective that has recently been directed toward reassessments of German colonial history (Conrad 2011). However, even if the pertinent studies examine the (German) nation-state and/or the German Empire in terms of its entanglements with colonial and world history, it is not necessarily the case that they employ a postcolonial focus. Such a focus

comes into play only if 1) the transnational approach leads to a "contrapuntal" view of colonies and metropolitan spaces, 2) the research deals with questions related to the formation of nations and identities and the creation and staging of ethnic and gender-based differences (see the articles in the volume by Naranch and Eley 2014), and 3) the approach centers on the border transgressions initiated by colonialist and Orientalist imaginings and their continued impact on German history (Friedrichsmeyer, Lennox and Zantop 1998). Instead of concentrating solely on images of the other and simple constructs of alterity, the practitioners of postcolonial approaches in the discipline of history are examining concrete entanglements and mediatory actions of male and female agents, among them colonial officials, businesspeople, local politicians, scholars, translators and institutions. Instead of merely confirming that "colonial histories matter," here historical investigations are searching for "an analytical vocabulary for deciphering *how* they do so." This can be seen, for example, in the stimulating work by Ann Laura Stoler, who has brought the postcolonial perspective to bear on imperial studies and new conceptions of empire (Stoler 2013: 12).

The postcolonial turn gains a particularly broad scope when it extends the historical framework of study to include a transnational perspective and explores the respective interactive entanglements. This type of approach has been productively applied in *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus,* a collection of essays on the postcolonial turn in the discipline of history (Conrad, Randeria and Römhild 2013). These essays tend to hybridize world history, grasping it as much more than just a "European diffusion process" (47). They move beyond Said's tenet that all European perceptions of the non-European world are projections and that their goal has always been to produce Western knowledge, which is then used as an instrument of power. In contrast to Said, who challenged binary thinking but was unable to offer an alternative, their focus extends beyond knowledge and power. Nevertheless, Said's proposal to direct attention to "intertwined histories common to men and women, whites and non-whites, dwellers in the metropolis and on the peripheries" (Said 1993: 61) remains a pioneering methodological proposal. It has been further refined into an approach that explores practical interconnections and entanglements between Europe and the non-European world, particularly "entangled histories," "connected histories" (Subrahmanyam 2012), "entangled modernities" and histories of relations (Randeria 2002).

But how can such interdependent histories be understood analytically if modern European categories such as citizen, state, individual, subject, democracy, scientific rationality and the distinction between private/public are so tenacious that the postcolonial social sciences and the postcolonial study of culture are forced to use them, even in accounts of South Asian modernity and other phenomena? According to Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000: 6), these European categories

are inadequate, but uncircumventable. They must be de-centered and provincialized precisely in those places where the divergence between history as a Western code and history as a (subaltern) experience and memory is most striking. This also applies to the gulf between the Western concept of the modern individual and the concept of the modern Indian subject such as the Bengali widow who is at the mercy of a coercive system of social degradation and domestic violence. It is here that the categories governing the constitution of the European subject and the model of modernity underlying them reach their limits. Such categorical inequalities need to be considered when proposals are made to investigate and portray entangled histories beyond the European paradigm, whether it is in relation to representations in museums or in research on transatlantic slavery (on this topic, see Featherstone 2005: 176ff.). Is the postcolonial turn so broad that it can overcome Western theoretical language using non-European concepts? Such questions also need to be addressed in the proposals to promote East Asian Confucianism as an alternative to global capitalism that is not restricted to the individualist entrepreneur (see Dirlik 1997: 63–64, 71).

In other words, although it is still hardly possible to claim a reciprocity of relations, productive approaches to transnational historiography have been developed that no longer revolve around an autonomous Western history. Rather, they integrate European developments into a history of reciprocal, interactive relations between cultures and into various histories of memory:

> The dissolution of "History" as a universal descriptor, and the emergence of "histories" or "memory cultures", as local, competing descriptors, can be seen as positive for postcolonial cultures. (Featherstone 2005: 169)

The postcolonial turn has encouraged a new way of thinking about these matters by rendering such local histories visible as an integral part of the exchanges in global courses of history.

These interconnections are currently being investigated in science studies as well. Here, too, the postcolonial turn has reversed the direction of study. Researchers are no longer examining how the development of science in Europe was driven from within its borders. They are questioning how it was influenced by autonomous non-European (e.g., Chinese) scientific and technological traditions in the course of European expansion (Harding 2011). How was it possible for the modern sciences to emerge in Europe of all places? This question alone underscores the need to devote greater attention to the appropriations and exchanges of medieval and early modern knowledge in European-Islamic Europe. Clear support for the field of "anti-Eurocentric comparative ethnoscience studies" (Harding 1998: 33) would be the first step in this direction. Concrete investigations must be linked to reflections on differences in the under-

standing of science itself, to “empirical knowledge systems of other cultures” (Harding 2003: 63), which could disprove the widespread thesis of the unity of the sciences.

In this connection, (feminist) “postcolonial science theory” has shifted the focus to the power exercised by Western sciences and technologies in colonialism (Harding 2011: 5). On the one hand, this theoretical framework has enriched the study of culture by counteracting the postcolonial turn’s culturalism and tendency to exaggerate textuality and representation. On the other, its emphasis on unequal but reciprocal transnational transfers of science (see Abraham 2006) has laid the foundation for a new understanding of the methodology of cultural comparison. Instead of a systematic comparison of cultures, which can all too easily lead to global comparisons, here only partial comparisons are made. One of the characteristics of such comparisons is that they begin with smaller units of measure that can be derived from the history of intercultural relations. Nevertheless, this approach is still unable to answer one of the key questions raised by the postcolonial turn: to what extent can a transcultural terminology be developed that represents “entangled histories” such that they are not expressed only in a Eurocentric scholarly language?

On this level it is also postcolonial philosophy that is rethinking universalistic scholarly terms and concepts, particularly in the areas of human rights and ethics. An important role is being played by ideologies, culture-specific concepts of knowledge and the problems linked to the indigenization of philosophical categories (Eze 1997). From this philosophical perspective it is remarkable how concept heavy or even “cross-categorical” (Chakrabarty 2000: 83) such reflections on transcultural relations and transcultural comparisons continue to be. Focusing the postcolonial lens more sharply on performative axes between cultures could perhaps be a more effective way to overcome the dilemma of not being able to escape the use of Western terminology.

It is noteworthy that, like the discipline of art history, art exhibitions have been instrumental in establishing the postcolonial perspective. The criticism of a variety of shows, from “Primitivism and Modern Art” – held in New York in 1984 – to the explicitly postcolonial 2002 “documenta 11” (Enwezor 2002), has led to new examinations of the interconnections between art and colonial expansion with all the latter’s racist implications. Opposing cartographies of a global culture have emerged, influenced by the new themes of non-European art, including migration, globalization, inclusion and exclusion (Guasch Ferrer and del Val 2014). The critique of the universalization of the European art canon and its autonomous conception of art has paved the way for a postcolonial aesthetic based “not on the European concept of artwork, but on the transcultural circulation of objects” (Schmidt-Linsenhoff 2003: 281, 2010).

On the level of (aesthetic) performance addressed here, the postcolonial turn has brought to light new aesthetic forms and a fundamentally different conception of art, literature, theater and film. The same is true of the postcolonial turn in theater studies. At first glance, it may appear as if the postcolonial approach is concerned solely with new syncretic forms of non-European theater – i.e., with an extended subject area supplementing European theater. If we look more closely, though, the methodological challenge also becomes clear: aesthetic criteria must first be derived from the interactive, even ritual, practices of cultural performance. This becomes evident in the work of Christopher Balme, who has extensively examined "indigenous" concepts of theatrical syncretism in various countries and regions, from India and the Caribbean to South Africa and Australia. The related processes described in Wole Soyinka's theatrical essay "The Fourth Stage" – which cites Yoruba mythology and other ritual frameworks in Nigeria – represent just one of many additional examples (Balme 1999: 42). In such cases, by motivating scholars to study foreign theatrical forms and their own categories of syncretism, orality and liminality, the postcolonial turn has encouraged a transcultural expansion of the performative turn. The same applies to other performative genres, not only to postcolonial film (Sherzer 1996; Sampat-Patel 2001; Rings and Morgan-Tamosunas 2003; Weaver-Hightower and Hulme 2014), but also to colonial and postcolonial sports, which have become one of the postcolonial turn's most important research topics. Focusing on cricket as an "imperial game" (Stoddart and Sandiford 1998), scholars have, for instance, shown how an originally English instrument of power has evolved into a vehicle for emancipatory anti-colonial appropriation (Guha 1998; Featherstone 2005: 76; Hargreaves 2000; and the "cricket autobiography" by the postcolonial Caribbean intellectual C. L. R. James 1963).

The field of postcolonial studies owes this broad performative understanding of culture primarily to cultural anthropology, whose postcolonial transformation is reflected in the debates on the exhibition of foreign cultures in ethnographic museums (beginning with Karp and Lavine 1991). Initially, there was less of a postcolonial turn in cultural anthropology than there was a postcolonial critique of the discipline itself, its colonial involvement and the way it continued colonial structures in representations of foreign cultures. In the meantime, though, the postcolonial turn has produced a "multi-sited ethnography" (Marcus 1995) in which globalization and migration (Appadurai 1996), as well as diaspora (Clifford 1994) and hybrid spaces (Hannerz 1996), have been studied from the individual actors' perspective with respect to the deterritorialized experiences of migrant groups and the new spatial relations of transnational networks. Cultural anthropological investigations are essential for postcolonial studies because with their disciplinary expertise they are capable of exploring ethnic and country-specific

divergences from postcolonial and global developments. They thus facilitate a more precise localization of the postcolonial turn in a process that has been furthered by local case studies of a variety of topics, including the management of postcolonial urban developments in Asia (Phillips et al. 2003).

In the discipline of geography, too (Blunt and McEwan 2002), the discovery of a "complicity" with colonialism has provided critical impetus to postcolonial investigative perspectives: "The 'postcolonial turn' … constitutes the latest epistemological shift" (Proudfoot and Roche 2005; see also Lossau 2002; Blunt and Rose 1994; Ryan 2004; and, for a more general discussion, Cook et al. 2000). Even if it does not in fact prove to be the latest turn, its proponents have attempted to adopt and provide empirical underpinnings for the conceptual perspective of postcolonial theory, its questioning of intellectual colonization and its counter-model of non-polarizing third spaces. It is not only in third spaces that global experiences are grasped conceptually; they are processed and altered at empirical, colonially influenced sites and landscapes through specific material practices and social spatial relations (Proudfoot and Roche 2005: 34; Blunt and McEwan 2002). In this context, the focus has shifted from the dominant textualism of the postcolonial turn to modes of interaction, strategy, struggle and organization. Such practical approaches can be found in the postcolonial theory of international relations (Seth 2011) or in "postcolonial sociology" (see Go 2013), which is currently pressing for a reformulation of the global relations of social inequality. Organizational and critical management studies are also endeavoring to establish a postcolonial turn that gives more serious consideration to the practical political challenges of "workplace resistance research," the ethical and political strategies of management (Prasad 2003: 112) and the increasing hybridization of Western and non-Western concepts and organizational forms (Frenkel and Shenhav 2006). Such perspectives can be seen as contributions to a fundamental postcolonial rethinking of economies (Pollard et al. 2011).

Of course, a questionable gender blindness continues to exist – not only in management studies, but in all the disciplines that have participated in the postcolonial turn. At the same time, the postcolonial approach has much to gain from gender studies, especially since both fields are pursuing the same two goals: 1) from a historical perspective, to demonstrate the key alliance between gender and imperialism with respect to the marginalization of "the other" (McClintock 1995; McClintock et al. 1997; Mills 2005), and 2) from an epistemological perspective, to avoid dichotomies and binary systems such as the male-female polarity with its hierarchical implications. On the other hand, the postcolonial turn has provided critical impetus for gender studies. It has, for instance, supplied new intersectional tools to open up gender research to conflict studies and to explore new issues such as the role of gender in global conflict zones, war and terrorism

(Ponzanesi 2014). Most importantly, it has criticized the Western universalization of the field, which has resulted in women across the world being generalized into a (repressed) homogeneous group. As Chandra Mohanty, Rey Chow, Trinh Minh-ha, bell hooks and others have critically noted, Western feminism and gender studies tend to adopt a hegemonic position in relation to Third World women by conceiving of them as a powerless homogeneous group. In other words, women, as a monolithic group, are rigidly defined in terms of their objective status, mostly as victims. Feminist approaches outside Europe have sought to defend themselves against this practice by arguing that in this case the discursive category of "woman" and "gender" has been confused with the historical political meaning of this concept. As a result, women are denied historical and political agency as well as the capacity to use their local rootedness for self-definitions and self-representation. This critique of Western feminism (see the classic article "Under Western Eyes" by Mohanty 1997) essentially amounts to the charge that, as in the case of Orientalism, Western feminists have a need to rigidly portray Third World women as powerless objects in order to emphasize their own discursive self-conception as autonomous subjects. This postcolonial impetus is challenging the emerging field of transnational gender studies to search for points of contact in the sense of de-centered epistemological positions (see Grewal and Kaplan 1997). The accelerated circulation of key "traveling theories" or analytical categories across "knowledge gaps" – including "race-class-gender" in women's and gender studies – also needs to be rethought, especially within the context of an increased "academic capitalism" with its fluid theory markets (see Knapp 2005: 251).

4 New Critical Impetus for the Postcolonial Turn

The discrepancies and displacements in the field of transnational gender studies have raised a number of critical questions: Who are the actually proponents of postcolonial theory? Is it a project solely for and by cultural elites? It has clearly been advanced by intellectual immigrants who arrived and were successful at Western universities, the so-called "halfies" (Abu-Lughod 1991: 141) with "hyphenated identities": Indian-Americans such as Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Ashis Nandy, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Veena Das and Salman Rushdie; African-Americans such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Kwame A. Appiah and Achille Mbembe; and postcolonial Caribbean-British intellectuals such as Stuart Hall. Thanks to their work, postcolonialism has firmly established itself as a discipline in the academic "star system." If the postcolonial turn had been reduced to jargon and resulted in self-referentialities and tired formulae (see Huggan 2001: 258), this rise could easily have taken the reorientation down a cul-de-sac. This danger

is certainly greater for the postcolonial turn than for all the other reorientations in the study of culture, for its focus is highly ambiguous, especially since it must perform a balancing act between its function as a theoretical approach in the study of culture and as a practice of cultural political articulation. As a result, it tends, on the one hand, to normatively charge and empathically elevate its own research attitudes and, on the other, to engage in "meta-critical speculation" instead of connecting this speculation, in empirical case studies, to local political, economic and cultural findings (Benita Parry views this as the central task of postcolonial studies, Parry 2004: 80). As Benita Parry and above all Aijaz Ahmad (1992) have criticized from a Marxist political economic perspective, resistance and repression have been perceived only on the discursive level.

The culturalism charge that is directed at the study of culture as a whole thus seems particularly applicable to the postcolonial turn. After all, over the long term, its fixation on discourse systems has inevitably led to the suppression of economic conditions and a concentration on epistemological as opposed to social violence (Ahmad 1992: 74–75). The dominance of cultural theoretical arguments in the postcolonial turn has thus created an analytical imbalance that runs the risk of defanging postcolonialism as a critical project (Ahmad 1992: 20). In addition, as Benita Parry argues, this imbalance is creating an "indifference to social explanation" (Parry 2004: 74). To remedy such culturalist reductions of the critical analysis of colonialist discourse, Parry and others have called for renewed attention to be paid to the conditions of power and exploitation, to practices of social resistance, to the return of materiality (Parry 2004a: 6, and the critical introduction in Chrisman and Parry 2000) and particularly to the spatial materiality that promoted the emergence of the spatial turn (San Juan 1998: 16ff.).

But the critique of postcolonialism is not only based on the loss of a historical positioning and materiality. It also addresses the significance of postcolonialism in the context of globalization (Wilson et al. 2010; Dwivedi and Kich 2013). On the one hand, in a general way, this critique acknowledges "the future of post-colonial studies in global analysis" (Ashcroft 2013: 47). On the other, it asks whether critical postcolonialism does not in fact tend to become a new intellectual neocolonialism itself with its seamless fit into the dynamics of global capitalism and its neutralization of the originally critical postcolonial impetus. This function is suggested by the fact that, as Graham Huggan notes, cultural difference has become easily consumable, integrated as it is into the global circulation of goods and ideas. According to Huggan, even though "cultural otherness" continues to be recognized, it is becoming the hallmark of a "global alterity industry in which the commodified signs of cultural otherness become a currency to be negotiated and traded by metropolitan interest groups" (Huggan 2001: 259).

It is within this global scenario that Arif Dirlik situates postcolonial discourse. Particularly informative in this regard is his important essay "The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism" (Dirlik 1997: 52–83), which presents the postcolonial turn as an effect of the global dissemination of postcolonial epistemology. Because of this dissemination, though, we are seeing a blurring of the local and historical differences between the respective postcolonial conditions that are so crucial for postcolonialism (see Featherstone 2005:10). In other words, as Dirlik writes, the postcolonial turn is taking the same path as transnational capitalism. This observation is certainly supported by the fact that the postcolonial turn has been the first reorientation in the study of culture to spread not only across disciplines, but also across the world. In fact, what transformed it into a "turn" in the first place was its global dissemination, which made a significant contribution to the continued internationalization and globalization of the study of culture. Does this mean that the postcolonial turn must be seen as a critical response to the new demands of economic globalization? However we answer this question, the postcolonial turn – despite all its critical focuses, including its interest in re-mapping the hierarchical relations between the center and periphery – seems to have remained firmly in the hands of the European and Anglo-American centers of theory (Dirlik 1997: 52). According to Dirlik, who is one of the few scholars to emphasize and criticize this parallel development, such a function is entirely in keeping with the transformations of global post-nation-state capitalism. "Postcolonialism" is becoming a sign of the state of the academic intelligentsia and its complicity with global capitalism (Dirlik 1997: 54; see also Featherstone 2005: 13).

Even if some critics have pointed to the exhaustion of the postcolonial turn and therefore consider it time "to move beyond postcolonialism" (Jefferess et al. 2006: 1), one point is worth noting here. Although postcolonial approaches face the especially grave danger of being absorbed into globalization research and thus of abandoning the analysis of postcolonial inequality in favor of the supposition of a globalization dynamics spanning the world, the repeated proposals to extend the postcolonial turn to a critique of globalization have facilitated "a critique of the global conditions and oppressions" – a critique that targets "the militaristic and market-driven agendas of our time" (Jefferess et al. 2006: 1).

This means that with all its links to the globalization debate, the postcolonial turn could be further developed into an explicitly critical, methodologically based mode of analysis for cultural globalization. In contrast to the literary-textual "first-wave postcolonialism" that persisted until the mid-1990s (Huggan 2008: 15), a "second-wave postcolonialism" has emerged that is grappling with ecological crises, migrants, refugees and the spatial aspects of postcolonialism as the central dimensions of a newly differentiated notion of globalization. In

order to conduct such analyses, researchers could draw on additional reorientations in the study of culture and use new theoretical coordinates. Various new lines of thought could be considered, including the concept of empire (Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri) that goes beyond the imperialism paradigm and is no longer ensnared in centrism (see Parry 2004a: 93). Also relevant are approaches that take the postcolonial turn further in the direction of a "glocal" spatialization (even of literary texts) – i.e., in the direction of a spatial turn, as it were, within the postcolonial turn. They might achieve this aim, for example, by launching a spatial "semantics of roots, routes and rerouting" (Wilson et al. 2010: 2) or by inscribing an axis of globality and locality onto colonial/postcolonial relations (Riemenschneider 2005). Reference should also be made to the proposal of a "methodological cosmopolitanism" by the late Ulrich Beck (2006: 17). In Beck's view, such a cosmopolitanism explicitly encompasses the "postcolonial moment" (69) insofar as it calls for the inclusion of the excluded other in the researcher's own self-conception as an indispensable framework for any reflection in globalization research (70).

Postcolonial approaches to a "new imperial history" (Burton 2003: 14; Stoler 2013) offer additional coordinates by examining the continued relevance of nation-states in the wake of the "imperial turn" and by proposing a reconceptualization of area studies within this framework. Finally, we can make out the outlines of a global transformation of the postcolonial turn whenever scholars pursue postcolonial strategies in changed contexts of application – e.g., in the sphere of consumption (see Ashcroft 2001: 213). This and other possible twists of the postcolonial turn suggest that the central concept of hybridity needs to be elaborated more systematically so as to encompass the hybridization processes accompanying globalization and to also include transcultural media relations.

But even these repositionings and differentiations cannot alleviate the more recent signs of fatigue affecting this turn. Whether the "end of the postcolonial turn" is in the offing depends on the extent to which it can change its course and transform itself. First of all, the postcolonial approach needs to fundamentally rethink human beings in terms of their state of being and view them not only as political agents but as constituting "a geological force that determines the climate of the planet" (Chakrabarty 2012: 15) – that is, as being more closely linked to non-human forces and environmental constellations. The planetary crisis caused by global warming is exacerbating the problem of resource exploitation within the context of the political, social, cultural and economic inequalities worldwide. For this reason, the postcolonial analysis of the emerging conflicts of ecological imperialism needs to be redefined as postcolonial ecocriticism (see also Maxwell 2008; DeLoughrey and Handley 2011). It also needs to call attention to pivotal contemporary crisis zones such as "nuclear colonialism," "environ-

mental racism" and the unequal distribution of waste, pollution and other forms of ruination discussed by Ann Laura Stoler (2013: 11–12; see also Nixon 2011).

This more recent conceptual extension of the postcolonial perspective to include the large-scale planetary dimension and its uneven local impacts requires an additional shift, one marked by the urgent effort to "reconnect (and reroute) the ethical and the political with the aesthetic in the context of a recent 'turn to the affective' in cultural criticism" (Wilson et al. 2010: 2). This effort is accompanying the demands that we work toward a comparative postcolonial turn as a way to compensate for massive Anglo-centric distortions. As Simon Gikandi pointed out at a roundtable debate on the state of the postcolonial perspective, the

> absence from most of our reflections of scholars who work in the global South ... has made postcolonial theory (like all theory) a provincial American concern hiding behind the mask of universalism. (*PMLA* 2007: 649)

Communication must be activated within the various postcolonial cultures themselves, but unfortunately, this is yet to happen. Here it is African and Latin American postcolonialisms that are setting a course that could rescue the movement from the dead end of the dominant Anglo-American theory (*PMLA* 2007: 645; Moraña, Dussel and Jáuregui 2008).

This regionalization and historicization of the postcolonial turn is a response to the complexity of multilingual global relations. These processes could prevent the postcolonial turn from becoming trapped in the meta-language of its own theory. They have the potential to direct attention to concrete mediation and negotiation processes and thus to foster a new methodological awareness of "translation" as an emerging analytical category in the humanities and social sciences (see Bertacco 2014).

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Chapter V: The Translational Turn

It is no longer possible to ignore the need for processes of cultural translation and their analysis, whether it is in cross-cultural contact, interreligious relations and conflicts, the integration strategies of culturally and ethnically diverse societies or examinations of the interfaces between the natural sciences and the study of culture. The globalized conditions of world society, in particular, call for increased attention to the problems of cross-cultural contact and the obstacles and room for maneuver in our dealings with cultural differences.

The need for processes of cultural translation has already been studied from a postcolonial perspective with the goal of exposing possible arenas in which non-European societies can assert themselves when confronted with unequal power relations between cultures. In order to identify focuses for additional historical contexts of cross-cultural contact, the phenomenon of inter- and transculturality itself must be explored as a complex process of cultural translation. In fact, in a world of interdependencies and interconnections, translation is increasingly being liberated from the linguistic textual paradigm and recognized as an essential practice. It is emerging as a fundamental new concept in the social sciences and the study of culture. Whereas initial studies referred to a "translation turn" (see Bassnett 1998) or a "translative turn" (West 2002: 162), the term "translational turn" has now caught on (see Bachmann-Medick 2009, 2013; Bassnett 2011). Such developments are showing with particular clarity how translational attitudes toward research are gaining a foothold in the social sciences and the study of culture – and how, through a honing of their systematic theoretical framework, they are making a breakthrough to become part of a true turn. Conceptual summaries such as the following have contributed to this translational reorientation (see Bachmann-Medick 2009, 2012, 2014, 2015).

A translational turn in the study of culture presupposes a cultural turn in translation studies. Since the 1980s, the linguistic philological discipline of translation studies, which focuses on languages and texts, has clearly evolved into a discipline of translation research that is oriented toward cultural translation – i.e., toward the translation of cultures as well as translation between cultures. This culturally reoriented field of translation studies – which includes international translation studies that have focused on the study of culture from the outset (see among others Venuti 2000; Hermans 2006) – is becoming a pioneering discipline in the study of culture/humanities. Postulating an extended concept of translation, it has set in train a comprehensive translational turn not only on the interdisciplinary and methodological levels, but also between life-worlds. Translation is expanding to become a central action perspective in a complex environment, one that can be applied to all forms of intercultural

contact, the establishment of links between disciplines, and methodologically enhanced comparative approaches informed by a new view of cultural comparisons.

1 The Formation of the Translational Turn

The category of translation began its "career" in both the study of culture and the social sciences with the cultural reorientation of translation research dating to the late 1980s (see Bassnett and Lefevere 1990; Venuti 2000). At that time, the concept of translation was increasingly broadened beyond the transmission of languages and texts to include questions of cultural translation and even the analysis of complex and dynamic cultural life-worlds. Since then, familiar text-centered categories of literary translation such as original, equivalence and fidelity have increasingly been supplemented or even supplanted by the new central categories of cultural translation such as cultural representation, transformation, otherness/alterity, displacement, cultural difference and power. With the help of these categories, culturally expanded translation research has been liberating itself from the philological constraints of traditional translation studies. A concept of translation is being employed that broadens the perspective to include a more comprehensive translation of culture; however, it does not ignore textual, linguistic or representational dimensions (see the journals *Translation Studies* and *Translation: A Transdisciplinary Journal*). Nevertheless, it is only recently that efforts have been launched to further exploit the category of translation in terms of its cultural-studies potential – a project considered long overdue by translation studies scholar Lawrence Venuti in the late 1990s. In other words, the category of translation has overcome its marginal position and is currently becoming a central focus of research in the study of culture – "translation as a vital meeting point in the present state of knowledge for the humanities and the social sciences" (Ribeiro 2004: 8; Venuti 1998: 9).

But it would be an oversimplification to attribute the growing importance of the translation category to postmodern and postcolonial trends alone. The postcolonial debate undoubtedly laid the groundwork for a reevaluation of translation processes by breaking up fixed identities, critiquing the binarity principle in favor of hybrid mixtures and remapping and critically recharting the center and the periphery. These practices massively shook up entrenched Eurocentric practices of translation – yes, even the European monopoly on translation itself (see Niranjana 1992; Bermann and Porter 2014: 231–270). In addition, new translational requirements have resulted from globalization processes – despite or even because of the creeping tendency to make translation processes as invisible as

possible along the pathways of international communication. Translation processes can at times appear increasingly superfluous anyway, due to the global circulation of identical signs and the influence exerted by global icons on the world of consumption, the media landscape and international trade. Yet even here it is crucial to take translation processes into account, especially when the aim is to understand the breaks between the global level, on the one hand, and local reception, appropriation, resistance and creative new constructs, on the other (see Czarniawska and Sevón 2005).

However, it is above all the shifting political landscape that has provoked a new view of the category of translation. The dissolution of fixed borders, the surmounting of East–West differences and the rise of "multicultural societies" with the inherent risks of language conflicts and the exclusion of minority languages and marginalized cultures have all provided important impetus. The politics of difference, identity and exclusion, on the one hand, and contact zones and overlaps, on the other, are challenging us more than ever to look for mediation processes to create conflict-resolution strategies or to promote integration through translation (see Renn et al. 2002). But is this growing "particularism" worldwide, coupled with cultural translation, leading to a "new universalistic perspective," as Boris Buden (2005: 17) argues? It would seem more correct to hypothesize a growing threat to European/Eurocentric ideas, categories, models and theories. Be that as it may, the universalistic claims are being challenged with increasing vehemence, particularly outside Europe. That universalistic global transfers are possible is controversial. Rather, transfers must be regulated by translation, not only in a single but in all directions.

A number of factors have helped "birth" the translational turn, including global translational challenges, the impact of English as a hegemonic world language with its attendant standardization pressures, and the ongoing attempts in world society to articulate and assert difference. These factors are transforming translation into an anthropologically enriched category of the social sciences and an important "cultural technique" (*Kulturtechnik*). As such, translation is capable of initiating forms of cross-cultural contact that are antithetical to Samuel Huntington's scenario of a clash between cultural blocs (Huntington 2011): "Being-in-translation is an essential defining feature of the concept of culture itself" (Ribeiro 2004: 4). Offering a counter-perspective to Huntington's assumption of untranslatability, translation as a category appears to be gaining importance in two ways in cultural policy and international relations. On the one hand, the principle of cultural translatability is being upheld on the conceptual level. One example is Wolfgang Iser's essay "On Translatability" (1994), which introduced the concept of interculturality as a quasi-cybernetic exchange process based on "recursive loopings" and initiated an interesting debate on this topic

in the journal *Surfaces* (vol. 6, 1996). On the other hand, a counter-concept is being proposed on the pragmatic level: translation is activating methods of communication that deliberately build on the idea that cultures overlap and cultural differences are negotiable.

As a result, the extended conception of translation has penetrated deeply into the field of cultural theory. It is here that its cross-disciplinary potential – which unleashed the translational turn in the first place – becomes most evident. Can this turn ultimately be extended so far as to encompass transfer and exchange processes not only between cultures but between various disciplines? Can translation serve as a specific model for connecting disciplines? However these questions are answered, the category of translation could also have far-reaching consequences for methodology itself, whether for establishing interdisciplinary approaches or for reconceptualizing comparative literary studies that rethink the process of cultural comparison in light of translation. Nevertheless, in order to substantiate the thesis that such a far-reaching translational turn is underway, we must first review the different variants of this culturally expanded conception of translation and the problems associated with it.

2 The Cultural Turn in Translation Studies

It seems crucial for translation studies scholars to connect translations to practices, interactions and cultural representations, even when they claim they are dealing "only" with texts and linguistic expressions. They must question how texts represent culturally specific actions, meanings and worldviews. Interpretive cultural anthropology has brought the insight that cultural meanings can never be understood on the basis of textual elements, key concepts and symbols alone. They can be unlocked only by examining the more comprehensive context of the social use of these elements and their cultural self-interpretations. Nor should the translation of language and texts stop at the transmission of words and terms. These words and terms must be embedded in foreign modes of thought, cultural symbolization processes and different social "concepts" in order to make visible the complexity of cultural translation.

In order to illustrate these culturally specific dimensions of translation in more concrete ways, it is useful to point to the contextualization methods developed by cultural anthropologists in conjunction with the interpretive and performative turns (see Clifford Geertz, and Victor Turner). These methods explicitly link the interpretation of foreign rituals, emotional concepts and action strategies to cultural contexts of meaning and to the overall structure of society. In this context the act of translation as performed by the cultural anthropologist is seen

as a comprehensive transfer of foreign modes of thought, worldviews and practices. In direct analogy to Geertz's "thick description," Kwame Anthony Appiah has coined the term "thick translation" (Appiah 2000) to characterize such rich contextualization processes, which also encompass indigenous concepts of translation. In Appiah's work, American translations of African texts, oral literature and proverbs are cited as examples to show how thick translation can preserve foreignness.

Certainly, against the backdrop of interpretive cultural anthropology, attempts are still being made to understand entire cultures by interpreting meaning-carrying elements synecdochically and by thus shedding light on broader cultural contexts of meaning. However, text translations and their analysis can and should use contextualization methods in more differentiated ways. On the one hand, these methods are able to connect smaller units, symbols, forms of address, narrative structures and communication situations to larger historical contexts, conventions and patterns of thought. As a result, they can provide insight into cultural meanings – even at the risk of assuming stable semantic environments. On the other hand, they can more precisely define the concept of cultural translation by explicitly questioning its units and modes of integration. Is the goal to translate entire cultures or only certain aspects or key concepts? Is the focus on central cultural practices or on significant events and/or scenarios? What role is played by the cultural expectations of translation that are expressed in the form of stereotypes, exoticization and other projections of foreignness?

In other words, translations of texts clearly provide an important check and balance to the translation of culture, especially when they unfold within the contextualizing framework of a redirection of text to discourse. This latter phrase refers to the contribution made by translations to discursive practices and the formation of historical discourse. The history of (literary) translation can in fact be interpreted in new critical ways with an eye toward this specific contribution. Here translation reveals itself to be a cultural technique that is embedded in power and dependency relations as well as in discursive settings, e.g., Orientalism and colonialism (see Asad and Dixon 1985; Venuti 1998). In view of the colonial appropriation of literary texts, Edward Said, for example, not only proposed "a comparative literature of imperialism" and thus a revision of literary history (Said 1993: 18), but also argued that any attempt to rewrite the history of translation as part of a translational turn should address the critical question of the conditions and power relations under which both the authority of European translation and the "European translation privilege" (or even "monopoly") arose (see also Lepenies 1997: 102). It is here that the reflexive turn once again comes into play since as a strategy for fixing images of foreign cultures in the colonial process, translation largely served the practice of European representation. And

this practice – through the filtering, empowerment and fixation processes that were inscribed in its descriptions of culture – helped ensure that non-European societies remained outside the dynamics of historical action (see Wolf 2010).

We must therefore grasp the history of translation as part of colonial history and understand "the colonial history of culture as a cultural-policy history of translation in unequal power relations" (Bhatti 1997: 5; on translation as a medium of missionary conversion and colonization, see Rafael 1988). It is at the level of language policy that we see with particular clarity how deeply current translation practices continue to be implicated in this hegemonic history. The struggle of lesser languages against the dominance of world languages lends the problem of translation a special intensity; here, too, there is an increasingly urgent need to reconceptualize the category of translation. The new perspective of translation places greater emphasis on the critical question of whether it is still appropriate, under the conditions of enduring cultural hegemony and in view of linguistic diversity, to continue to associate translation with the harmonious idea of a bridge-building transfer capable of uniting different peoples.

Such trends in discourse and cultural policy that seek to extend the conception of translation beyond the linguistic realm thus represent much more than just a "cultural turn" in translation research. They have not only opened up entirely new fields of study for cultural translation, but have also made the leap, as it were, to a new view of the phenomena examined in the study of culture. As this development progressed, the claim was made – largely on the metaphorical level – that the "objects" in the study of culture have a translational character (culture as translation). This claim was then followed by the formulation of methodologically specific action-analytical approaches (translation as cultural/social practice). The three steps taken by the translational turn – which can be observed in all the other turns as well – are thus: an extension of the object field, metaphorization and, finally, the formulation of a methodology.

Two of the founders of international translation studies, Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, were among the first to establish an area of research that represented much more than a mere cultural turn in translation research (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990; see also Venuti 1998; Baker and Saldanha 2009). They also pointed to the possibility of a complementary "translation turn" in cultural studies (Bassnett 1998). However, it is only recently that, within the field of translation studies, there have been references to a "translational turn" (Bassnett 2011). Nevertheless, the extensive metaphorization of the category of translation indicates that a translational reorientation was set in motion long before it was possible to name it. This is most evident in the reconceptualization of culture as translation.

3 The Concept of Culture – Culture as Translation

The significance of the category of translation for the study of culture is by no means limited to the extension of the object of study to include the translation of culture and translation between cultures. Rather, the category of translation sheds new light on the translational character of cultural objects themselves, on their non-holistic structure, hybridity and complexity. With this in mind, translation is currently becoming an important analytical tool for addressing such processes as displacement, alienation, differentiation and mediation – with a benefit for cultural theory. After all, this conception of translation adds weight to the widespread criticism of the age-old European practice of determining essences and setting the self in opposition to the other. At the very least, the cultural disciplines, in all their turns, have pursued the common goal of moving beyond dichotomous boundaries and binary attitudes toward knowledge and exploring new methodological approaches to interstitial spaces. However, the study of such interstitial spaces can be productive only if they are viewed as translational spaces: as spaces where relations, situations, identities and interactions can be shaped through concrete cultural and social translation processes.

Such examinations of differences and boundaries and their markings and transgressions provide important reference points for scholars in various disciplines who are currently working – either directly or indirectly – to develop a non-dichotomous model of translation that no longer assumes fixed poles but stresses the reciprocity of transfers as well as the state of always having been translated: “Translation … is the agency of difference” (Haverkamp 1997: 7). Conceived in this way, translation resists the seeming purity of concepts such as culture, identity, tradition and religion and shows all claims of identity to be deceptive because identity is always infused with the other. This claim requires further specification, which cannot be based solely on the deconstructivist value attached to translation as a category of linguistic difference or to translation as the language-critical tip of an iceberg that assumes a differential character of language (on deconstruction and translation, see Davis 2014). As part of a conceptual and action-analytical translational turn, differences can be studied at the interaction level of interstitial spaces and transitions (Dingwaney and Maier 1995: 7). What then becomes noteworthy is the practical manner in which interdependencies and reciprocal influences are dealt with, particularly in post-national social formations overlaid by comprehensive cultural settings (Appadurai 1996: 167). Here, too, translational thinking represents a borderline phenomenon: “border-thinking” (Maranhão and Streck 2003: xvii) instead of “identity-thinking.” In this sense, the translational turn hones the diversification goals in the study of culture through its specific demand that scholars look for elements of

mediation in all contacts, transitions, mixtures, transfers, etc., in order to break up the seemingly smooth progression of transmission processes and to advance to the level of (cultural) differences.

This translational reorientation is probably most clearly reflected in the translational aspect of the concept of culture: culture itself is increasingly being seen as a process of translation – even in the sense of a new spatial paradigm of "trans" (= across) + "latio" (= Latin for "carrying") and thus in the sense of a moving or carrying across. This shift becomes apparent in the idea of "culture as travel" (Clifford 1997: 25) as well as in concepts of a cultural recharting of political landscapes ("cultural mapping") and in the construct of a "third space" (Bhabha 1994: 36ff.) as a specific action space for translation processes. With a foot in the spatial turn, the translational turn is leading to a fundamental revision of the conception of culture: the integrative holistic conception that prevailed in the past was too heavily influenced by a hermeneutics that sought to understand and translate cultural contexts of meaning. This new, more dynamic understanding of culture is more open to practices, negotiation processes and cultural transfer situations. With its translational emphasis, it draws attention to border negotiations, the productiveness of an external perspective and the rechartings of established routes of transfer. This new perspective has received an important impetus from the postcolonial approaches that call into question the theoretical and definitional monopolies long enjoyed by the North American and European centers of cultural research. It is impossible for European and North American cultures and sciences to remove themselves entirely from their own translational contexts; they must recognize their translatedness as well. A new understanding of the formation of culture could help them do so:

Cultures are not entities that, like objects, can be translated. They are constituted by translation and the complex overlaps and transfers of the entangled histories that have unfolded in the unequal power relations of world society. In this context, postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha has explicitly referred to a translational reconceptualization of culture: "Culture is translational" (1994: 172). Furthermore, cultures themselves are fundamentally informed by translation processes. This state of always having been translated is also the result of the global interconnectedness of media cultures and the critical relativization of nation-state claims to sovereignty. What we see here, however, is above all a cultural-theoretical concept based on a decentralized understanding of culture. Culture is no longer viewed as a special "original" life-world, but as an impure, blended, "hybrid" stratification of meaning and experience. The conflicts of transnational migration and exile, in particular, have called into question the idea of culture as a closed sphere that secures tradition and identity. More than ever, scholars are defining culture as an expression or the result of translation processes: "Culture

as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational" (Bhabha 1994: 172). Drawing on this concept of translational culture, Judith Butler argues that the category of translation is a key transnational category of cosmopolitanism that regards the formation of a world culture as an endless process of "cross-cultural translation" (Butler 2002: 49ff.).

However, before we too quickly embrace the catchphrase "translational transnationalism" (Apter 2001: 5) and view the politics of language and translation worldwide as a gateway to an enlightened cosmopolitanism, we should examine Bhabha's connection between transnational and translational in terms of its literal meaning. After all, leaving aside the simple wordplay, it points to a key task of transnational cultural studies that requires further specification:

> Any transnational cultural study must "translate", each time locally and specifically, what decentres and subverts this transnational globality, so that it does not become enthralled by the new global technologies of ideological transmission and cultural consumption. (Bhabha 1994: 241)

In this view, the purpose of the category of translation is to rethink culture and globalization in translational terms. Michael Cronin's talk of "globalization as translation" (Cronin 2003: 34) refers precisely to these decentralized global processes. Globalization is not experienced at the same time in the same way in every corner of the globe. Rather, certain elements of the global economy are translated into different appropriative and reinterpretive contexts subject to different local conditions.

For this reason, alongside texts, the translation perspective should more comprehensively address the broad spectrum of cultural practices, institutions, as well as legal and administrative systems, viewing them as objects, units and actors in the translation of culture:

> We need a more systematic consideration of the social preconditions and consequences of translating Western discourses on a range of social practices: law, banking, public administration, education, health, accounting, insurance, policing, war, mass communication, natural sciences, and so on. (Asad 1995: 329)

In other words, translation concerns not only the representational sphere, in which signs and symbols circulate, but also the social attempts to explore different types of institutional systems and to take into account the material side of exchange relations (Liu 1999: 4). On this level, though, translatability can be seen as the hallmark of the universalistic tendencies of the modern world:

> Like many of the other events that have shaped the modern world, global translatability has inhabited the same order of universalistic aspirations as the invention of the metric system,

> modern postal service, international law, the gold standard, telecommunication, and so on. (Liu 1999: 15)

By drawing attention to social interaction, institutional infrastructure and the conditions governing material, economic-political and media transmissions – viewed as the "deep structures" of (inter)cultural processes – the translational turn can offer the study of culture a way out of the culturalism trap.

In other words, if culture is understood as translation, it is not only in a simple metaphorical sense, for, in contrast to claims of identity, standardization tendencies and essential determinations, the translation perspective reveals concrete structures of difference: heterogeneous discourse spaces within society, counter-discourses within cultures and even acts of resistance. Cultural anthropology and postcolonialism have ultimately focused attention on differences and translations not only between cultures but within cultures and across cultural boundaries. This translated or multilayered aspect of cultures can be described as their hybridity (on this concept, see Bhabha 1994 and the chapter "The Postcolonial Turn"). At the same time, though, hybridity amounts to more than just a blending of cultures. It must be seen as an action space of translation processes. It would be fruitful, for example, to factor translation more heavily into the concept of hybridity in order to gain a clearer understanding of the processes through which differences form. In this context, the translation perspective is crucial to recovering elements important to the analysis of inter- and transculturality, including the all too easily overlooked or ignored aspects of differentiation, difference-exaggeration and alienation, as well as the elements of convergence and mediation (see Bachmann-Medick 2014: 129–130).

It is only the recognition of the diversity of intercultural interpretive and translational spaces that will lead to the discovery of new units of translation beyond nations and cultures. Only then will cultures no longer be regarded as the objects of translation, but as constellations of conflicts, differences, superimpositions and blendings. There is a need in this process to investigate individual translation scenarios in greater detail, paying special attention to the respective steps of translation, to blocks, breaks and conditions of success, as well as to the signs and reasons for failure. In other words, if the translation perspective is transforming the concept of culture itself – even going so far as to define culture as a practice of negotiating cultural differences – it is not the result of a conceptual impetus alone. This new view is based on the insight that translation must increasingly be recognized as a culturally vital practice or a cultural technique that is crucial for our engagement (itself necessary for survival) with antagonistic cultural affiliations, meanings and demands. The focus here is on being translated or on rendering oneself translatable in the face of disparate life situations.

4 Translational Pragmatics – Translation as a Social and Cultural Practice

In a post-national world it is crucial to take a pragmatic translation perspective, particularly since the anchoring of the individual in a local context is increasingly disappearing as a foundation for an assumed authenticity of social worlds and texts. Instead, the "imaginary homelands" discussed by Salman Rushdie are more frequently determining the collective imagination (Rushdie 1991). Examples can be found above all in literary works such as V. S. Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* (1979), in which an Indian living in Africa translates an African river into a representation of the Ganges and thus transforms it into a displaced reference point for transterritorial experience. Such hybrid shifts move beyond the territorially rooted conception of culture developed in cultural anthropology. By contrast, a process-oriented, translocal conception of culture grasps translation and the state of being translated as action forms in social life:

> Translation becomes visible as an existential process that directly impacts life perspectives and decisions. The "hybrid" personality is forced to translate in order to live. ... One task of future translation research is to examine, in the style of case studies, a broad spectrum of translation constellations that more clearly characterize translation as an interactive social event. (Fuchs 1997: 315)

Such initial approaches to characterizing and operationalizing the translation of culture and culture as translation are creating fertile ground for the methodological development of the translational turn. These approaches are based on the concrete activities of translators, cultural mediators and the individuals and groups being translated. By examining specific acts of translation, we can more clearly recognize not only entanglements and negotiations, but also destabilizations, misunderstandings and translational blocks in cross-cultural contacts. Other object fields in the study of culture should then no longer be treated as pre-existing units, but as interaction-dependent fields of relations or overlaps and as complex multilayered configurations that are dependent on mediation (e.g., ideas about the self and personal identity as relational concepts; traveling concepts as translation and negotiation processes). It is above all this action-related investigation of intercultural translation that can be used productively for the study of culture. Susan Bassnett was among the first scholars to emphasize the necessity of this type of translation perspective for a general theory of translation:

> Today the movement of peoples around the globe can be seen to mirror the very process of translation itself, for translation is not just the transfer of texts from one language into

> another, it is now rightly seen as a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures, a process during which all kinds of transactions take place mediated by the figure of the translator. (Bassnett 2002: 5–6)

So far there have only been rudimentary attempts in the study of culture and the social sciences to more precisely define the social interactive impact of translation. Here a "sociology of translation" (see Wolf 2006) should accompany the explicit elaboration of "translation as itself a social action. … Intentional social translation is an action intended to convey a message or achieve a goal" (Fuchs 2009: 29).

As a pragmatic concept, translation has been incorporated into the analysis of global migration movements. The first pioneering approaches taken by social scientists working with the category of translation can be found primarily in attempts to redefine migration as an ongoing transformation process that uses experiential contexts, personal attitudes, perceptions and demands to shed light on the multilayered nature of migrant identity formation – a process that, as a result, exposes translational spaces and room for maneuver (Papastergiadis 2000: 126; Karpinski 2012; Giordano 2014; Inghilleri 2015). This has made it possible to describe the complexity of migration processes in a more precise manner, not limited to the vantage point of the integration structures of multiethnic societies. In this context, requirements, conditions, practices, steps, consequences, emotional processes, etc., are brought to light that have remained confusingly clustered and opaque in concepts such as cultural encounter and intercultural communication. Translation is becoming a category that provides access to the specific "how" of intercultural exchanges and negotiation processes (Papastergiadis 2000: 125–126) – naturally still proceeding on the basis of linguistic communication attempts and misunderstandings, overlapping languages and multilingualism. Translation is providing a central concept for a new analytical vocabulary in the study of culture, one that lends itself well to an alternative conceptualization of the "turbulent flows" (22) of today's migration movements (involving people, things, ideas) and other forms of exchange in a global world (18). "In an age of global migration we also need new social theories of flow and resistance and cultural theories of difference and translation" (20).

This approach opens the door to a politics of translation that can cope with incommensurabilities (99) and clearly produces dissonance. The goal must be a "transformative theory of translation" (Maharaj 1995: 131) that reveals resistance to translation and potentially productive changes in meaning by bringing into play, in a stance of "faithless appropriation," the emancipatory translational axis that was previously blocked by the traditional equivalence claims of translation (Tsing 1997: 253). In other words, the translational turn explicitly conceptualizes

translation as a practice that can and should be faithless to an assumed original truth of a text or discourse (as in the authoritative discourses of feminism, environmentalism, human rights and other fields that claim to be "original"). Translation in this sense reaches beyond the equivalence of existing positions or spheres and serves as a medium through which various spheres and resources come into being and interact in the first place.

According to Zygmunt Bauman, it is not equivalence, but transformation that is the main criterion showing the necessity of cultural translation processes in global society. The potential of the translational turn can be seen in the fact that, in the study of culture, it exploits translation as a transformative principle in terms of its effectiveness for action. And once again, in the process, enhanced status is given to border zones and interstitial spaces as typical translational spaces:

> The meeting ground, the frontierland, of cultures is the territory in which boundaries are constantly obsessively drawn only to be continually violated and re-drawn again and again – not the least for the fact that both partners emerge changed from every successive attempt at translation. Cross-cultural translation is a continuous process which *serves* as much as *constitutes* the cohabitation of people who can afford neither occupying the same space nor mapping that common space in their own, separate ways. No act of translation leaves either of the partners intact. Both emerge from their encounter changed, different at the end of the act from what they were at its beginning. (Bauman 1999: xlviii)

In this way reciprocal change and transformation are declared to be the work of translation, rather than the reproduction of or fidelity to an "original" tradition, provenance or identity. Even on this concrete practical level, culture must be understood as translation insofar as translation suggests strategies for coping with complex situations that include, on the one hand, the act of translating back and forth between different cultural stratifications and affiliations, and, on the other, practices of reciprocal translation that aim to change what is meant to be translated.

5 Politics of Translation – Conflicts and Breaks in the Translation Process

As part of the translational turn, the category of translation itself is being conceptually modified and extended. One central view of cultural translation processes that extends from the study of culture to cultural policy has proved to be especially questionable: the widespread notion that translation forges ties and builds bridges. This view is reflected, for example, in the cultural-policy manifesto

Crossing the Divide: Dialogue Among Civilizations (2001), which was published within the framework of the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations and emphatically proclaims a dialogue among cultures as the "new paradigm of global relations" (Picco 2001: 26ff.): "'Bridging what separates us' – whatever that might be – is the first step in a learning process that will culminate in people understanding how to cope with and appreciate diversity" (23). Of course, the success of translation processes and their integrative function have been overemphasized in this way for quite some time, not only in research, but also in cultural theory and cultural policy. It would be more exciting and better reflect the real world to devote greater attention to examining the fragilities and differences in translational dynamics. The departure from existing translation processes provides a suitable way of approaching these questions because it does not postulate smooth transfers but instead reveals breaks, mistranslations and failed translation attempts while acknowledging them as necessary starting points for communication. In view of a cross-cultural hermeneutics that increasingly depends on multilayered translations, we must explicitly address misunderstandings, especially since the conditions governing multiple cultural affiliations and overlaps no longer permit simple transfers or linear directions of transfer. Nevertheless, previous studies of cultural translation can hardly be said to have covered this ground (see, for example, Budick and Iser 1996).

By contrast, translation studies informed by cultural anthropology demonstrate the limits of what is translatable, focusing, for example, on the difficulties of transferring into European textual forms the central texts of non-European cultures with their disparate structures of meaning and their roots in different life-worlds (Röttger-Rössler 1998). However, the largest obstacles to translation stem from the obvious translational strategies of power. This is why, from a postcolonial perspective, translation is becoming an increasingly pressing project for cultural policy. The power exerted by cultural and textual translation represents a crucial complex in which the critical interests of cultural anthropology and postcolonial theory intermesh. It is here that the anthropological problem of translation and representation becomes politically charged in the sense that attention is shifted to the "politics of translating ('Third world') cultures" (Dingwaney and Maier 1995: 3; also Spivak 2012). Along this axis of translation politics, an important practice in translating differences catches the eye, a type of translation that is addressed, for example, in the turbulent reception of Salman Rushdie's novels – "translation not merely across languages and cultural borders but among interest groups and discourses competing for hegemony within social arenas, be they local, national, or transnational" (Fischer and Abedi 1990: 108). It is not least this arena of social dissonance in which actors make use of the category of translation – whether for a "thick translation" of micro-phenomena

following revolutionary processes in countries such as Egypt (Mehrez 2012), or for the negotiations of everyday life and politics within and between cultures or cultural differences.

Such examples show how interculturality itself becomes a challenging problem when it demands a search for a universal basis of communication while at the same time keeping up the quest for specific cultural localizations. However, this dilemma of cross-cultural contact provides fertile ground for studies of translation issues. This line of research stands in direct opposition to the claim of a European translation "privilege" and its long tradition of translating foreign cultures and languages only into the European context. In the future, European translation research will confront new challenges as it attempts to accommodate a different perspective that regards translation processes as playing an important role for the self-conception of non-European, postcolonial cultures – beyond Eurocentric conceptualizations. Such a perspective encompasses not only the processes of hybrid identity formation resulting from translation, particularly in the multilingual societies of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (Bandia 2014; Hermans 2006; Venuti 1998: 159), but also the setting-into-relation or questioning of the hegemonic position of English as a world language and the world market it has shaped, whose asymmetric transfer conditions in the global economy are also being revealed by the translation category (Venuti 1998: 160).

6 Epistemological and Methodological Dimensions of the Translational Turn

The final step in the formation of a turn involves a conceptual leap. In the present case, as in all others, it will occur when the category of translation moves from the object level to the level of an analytical category. On this epistemological plane, the category of translation has already reinforced the current trend toward a critique of binarity in the study of culture. After all, as a category of interstitial space, translation embodies a counter-movement to binary thought and to ideas about identity that are rooted in essentializing determinations. In methodological terms, however, one should discuss translation as a largely unexploited model for connecting and creating overlaps between disciplines, with a view toward the possible transformation of these disciplines and their conceptual systems: "When concepts enter different genres they do not remain intact" (Beer 1999: 186).

In other words, translation in our global knowledge society is much more than a medium of cross-cultural contact or a process of intercultural engagement. It can also serve as a model for connecting disciplines that propels their compatibility and pushes them to explore their contact zones. In contrast to the

"smoother" category of interdisciplinarity, the category of translation focuses explicitly on differences, tensions and conflicts, even between disciplines and research fields. Such dynamic tension-filled contact zones are particularly fruitful when scholarly concepts are carried into new fields and thus transformed as a result of their being reformulated in other genres and contexts. Examples include the depiction of scientific ideas in literature and the analysis of emotion in neurobiology. The recent debate between neuroscientists and humanities scholars regarding "free will" can be seen as an especially relevant attempt to translate between disciplines and their respective conceptual systems. It would appear that such areas of contact, conflict and overlaps between disciplines can stimulate the development of comparative transcultural attitudes (see Bhambra 2011).

However, overlaps between disciplines are put to the most productive use when the methodological potential of the translation category is exploited in an even more targeted manner. This involves not only translating rigid general concepts into practical, operational ones and exposing the mediatory elements in intercultural situations, but also allowing for breaks, blocks and even possible untranslatable phenomena. What is implied here is the capacity of translation, beyond its use as a mere metaphor, to connect individual disciplines at important intercultural nodes by providing new incentive for comparative research. Important impetus has already come from James Clifford, who proposed that comparative concepts be viewed as "translation terms" (Clifford 1997: 11). Yet what does that mean exactly? Clifford assumes that we cannot simply transfer or compare cultural meanings and semantic differences. Rather, as in the case of so-called traveling concepts, "practices of displacement" (Clifford 1997: 3) come into play as well: mediations, shifts and translations.

On the one hand, these practices are relevant to the transnationalization of the study of culture, for if the study of culture is not to be globalized in a unilateral way, but transformed from its (European) periphery, it must – as Stuart Hall argues – avail itself of translation processes (Chen 1996: 394). An explicit translational perspective is also capable of exposing nation-specific differences and even untranslatable elements in the various approaches to the transnational study of culture (see Bachmann-Medick 2014a). On the other hand, incomplete equivalences are produced throughout world society and can be made more manageable with the help of explicit categories of translation. For this reason, Clifford suggests using the concepts of diaspora, migration, tourism, exile and particularly travel as "translation terms" within the framework of comparative cultural studies. He deliberately creates a frame of reference that is characterized not by abstract systematic units of comparison, but by specific problem fields and practices. This frame of reference can overcome the limitations of Eurocentric conceptual history, as is shown by the transformations – and not mere appro-

priations – that Western concepts have undergone in the modernization process of non-European societies. As a result, the transnational study of culture appears to be evolving into a multidisciplinary field focused on travel or transportation, one that has long stopped searching for the authentic origins of culture (“roots”), but instead assumes that cultures are constituted through transcultural migration movements (“routes”). Here we see “culture as translation” assuming tangible form in the emergence of transnational problem fields inhabited by new cross-border actors: cultural mediators, businesspeople, translators and tourists.

These developments are opening up broad fields of research within the scope of the translational turn. One of the most important questions is how effective it is to use the category of translation in comparative cultural work. Recent approaches in transnational historiography, for example, have looked more closely at the interconnections between Europe and the non-European world, with an emphasis on “entangled histories” (Randeria 2002; Conrad, Randeria and Römhild 2013), “connected histories,” histories of relations and a transnational, “multi-sited anthropology” (Marcus 1998). However, such research approaches, which are no longer dominated or conceived only by Europe, are also calling for a more radical questioning of the researcher’s own categories and their implicit or explicit universalizations. After all, the categories that are used for transcultural comparisons – not only time, history, society, power and work, but also modernization, capitalism and development – are neither stable nor valid across all cultures. By contrast, with the help of a critical translation perspective, the recognition of the historical instability of such categories can be used quite productively.

We could, for example, gain a much more immediate understanding of the relations and contacts between cultures by studying their history with respect to the active role played by translation – by examining not only interactions, exchanges and reciprocity, but also blocked translations and untranslatables. As a result, we could largely avoid the Eurocentric comparativism that has even seeped into the recent debate on world history. The historian Jürgen Osterhammel, for his part, regards the Western reference system as a prerequisite for transcultural comparisons:

> The possibility of transcultural comparison is based on the universal unity of the modern discipline of history. Its modes of thought and methodologies are … particular to Europe in terms of their genesis, but universal in terms of their applicability. … The systematic methodological universality of the modern discipline of history creates a homogeneous reference space across eras and cultures. (Osterhammel 2001: 41)

Nevertheless, this approach, which stops short of critiquing its own categories, ultimately only reproduces a Eurocentric framework of world historiography.

By contrast, by proposing that translation should be conceived not only cross-culturally but also "cross-categorically," that all universalizing Eurocentric references of comparison should be dropped and one should instead remain open to non-European categories, Indian-Australian-American historian Dipesh Chakrabarty has made it clear just how comprehensively the translation perspective needs to be developed. With the help of such "cross-categorical translation," it should be possible, for instance, to translate the Hindi word *pani* into the English term for water without passing through "H_2O" as the pre-existing category of the Western knowledge system (Chakrabarty 2000: 83). A shared arena for reciprocal cultural translation can be provided only by developing a comparative approach that does not over-hastily resort to general concepts of mediation or leave the assumed *tertium comparationis* unexamined. Transcultural historiography could use the new potential of the translational turn for this very purpose, although it does not yet seem to be doing so. In any case, the category of translation is proving to be a suitable concept for the comparison of cultures since it draws attention to the deep structures of comparison. As a result, it promotes intercultural comparative studies that question the categories of Western analyses and comparisons and critically expose the limits of their universal applicability.

7 The Translational Turn in Different Disciplines

This far-reaching translational turn in the humanities and social sciences should not be confused with the "translational turn" discussed in medicine, which describes the transfer of the scientific insights gained in medical research to new clinical therapies and pharmaceutical products (see Mittra and Milne 2013). Nor should it be conflated with the application of the translation category to the life sciences (see "Dossier on Translational Research in the Life Sciences," *Public Culture* 2013). In the humanities and social sciences, the translational turn entails a broader, cross-disciplinary adoption of translation as an analytical category with a new emphasis on the often challenging shifts between different (cultural) levels and contexts – whether in intercultural transfers or interdisciplinary activities.

Cultural anthropology has played a key role in this research field. In its ethnographic form, it is even considered the science of translation – or, more specifically, the science of translating foreign cultures: "Translation is one of the things that ethnographers undertake (together with analysis and description) in order to give readers an understanding of the beliefs and practices of unfamiliar peoples" (Asad 1995: 326, 1986; Bachmann-Medick 2006; for case studies, see Rubel and

Rosman 2003). However, the potential of the ethnographic science of translation has not yet been subject to sufficient reflection; nor can ethnography per se be seen as a precursor of the translational turn. However, in its own special way, the practice of ethnography has extended the concept of translation beyond the translation of language into the communication and representation of culture (Maranhão and Streck 2003). It has emphasized not only the necessity of contextualizing foreign cultural experiences, concepts, practices and so on, but also the problem of translating (field) experience into (ethnographic) texts and transforming cultural experiences into descriptions of culture.

In the course of the writing culture debate, the translation of fieldwork observations into texts was questioned from the perspective of a critique of representation. As part of this process, the reflexive turn led to a revaluation of the translation perspective. As opposed to finding equivalents to a cultural or textual "original," scholars increasingly focused on questions of translational rhetoric, conventions of representation and forms of narrative expression (metaphors, tropes, synecdoches). They also examined the historical and social conditions of discourse under which constructs and even "inventions" of the other crystallize in the transfer process. In other words, as soon as the research and writing processes themselves became the subject of study and the rhetoric of fieldwork accounts was recognized to be a central problem, translational claims came to be questioned. The assumption that ethnographic translation was able to provide an authentic understanding of foreign cultures was revealed to be fundamentally flawed. The notion of a cultural or textual "original" became questionable: it was recognized that the translation of culture can only be a representation of representations.

The notion that self-contained cultures can be translated as a whole also proved an illusion. "'Cultures' do not hold still for their portraits," wrote James Clifford (1986: 10) – to which one might add: or for their translation. Even critical translation in the sense of an attempt to represent the other is always only partial translation. It can deliver only "partial truths" (1ff.) once it desists – with its synecdochic claims – from constructing cultural wholes. After all, it was anthropologists themselves who through their own monophonic representational authority "froze" and created set written descriptions of cultures and texts, as Clifford points out in his seminal essay "On Ethnographic Authority" (Clifford 1988: 21–54). According to Clifford, translation, as the anthropological transmission of knowledge about other cultures, is strongly informed by realist literary conventions of representation (such as the convention of a timeless "ethnographic present" or a "free indirect style"). Within a system of opposites such as nature/culture and primitivism/modernity, these conventions follow an implicit evolutionism (Clifford 1988: 29, 47).

The use of rhetorical strategies also shows the enormous dependence of cultural mediation on the authority of the ethnographer. Against the backdrop of this critique and its insistence on the politics of representation, not only ethnographic texts, but also other ethnographic modes of portraying the foreign – including exhibitions and museums – can be read in new ways as "translations of culture" (Sturge 2006, 2014). However, it will only be possible to speak of a translational turn within this context if the focus of anthropology as a whole undergoes a clearer shift and ethnography as its constituent part is more precisely defined as a discipline that no longer aims at the translation of culture, but operates between cultures. "Going beyond boundaries" in this way, ethnography must come to redefine the key concepts with which it works, including other/foreign, participatory observation and cultural translation itself (see Pálsson 1993).

On the one hand, this translational attitude toward anthropological research has common ground with the reflexive turn in translation studies because the history of (literary) translation can also be examined in terms of how authority is asserted and exercised, particularly on the level of textual translation. On the other hand, it has an interface with the postcolonial turn in translation studies with its attempt to reverse the traditional directions of translation and promote reciprocal intercultural translations from non-European perspectives – guided by a critique of the polarizing practice of "othering" (Hermans 2006). Of course, such approaches thrive in particular on the positions on translation being assumed outside Europe. Scholars have increasingly drawn on Asian traditions with their very different, non-Western conceptions of translation. Here there is a clear link to a translational turn that emphasizes Eurocentric-critical modes of reciprocal translation and exchanges of theory (Hung and Wakabayashi 2005; Dutton 2002) – and that on this basis is generating new translational conceptualizations in area studies (Bachmann-Medick 2015).

In recent years these new global arenas of translation studies have served as the backdrop for demands to restructure entire subject areas such as comparative literature. The growing demand for translators and translations in the global political arena, particularly after September 11, 2001, has made the translation perspective indispensable, even critical, for a globally focused comparative literature: "Global translation is another name for comparative literature" (Apter 2006: xi; on comparative literature and/as translation, Bermann and Porter 2014: 347–438). As Emily Apter writes, new comparative literary studies should therefore position themselves within the political context of the "translation zones" that are becoming concrete reference points for the intellectual topography of a translational transnationalism. The focus here is on creolizations as hybrid speech conveyed by the media, on mistranslations, on phenomena that are untranslatable due to disparate parallel worlds or linguistic separatism (as dis-

cussed in greater detail in Apter 2013), and on forms of self-translation as specific textual strategies for enhancing participation in the global translation marketplace.

An additional discipline in which this translational departure from national historical paradigms is evident is that of history. Its practitioners also claim to have rediscovered translation in recent years, viewing it as a specific historical process (Richter 2005: 13; Howland 2003; Burke and Hsia 2007). A central role has been played by Asian studies scholars, who are using an "external view" to show that historical processes can be seen in a new light when grasped as translation processes. This is particularly true of colonialism, decolonization, missionary history and the transfer of concepts and theories through the appropriation or reinterpretation of initially Western concepts (e.g., central political principles such as freedom, democracy and human rights – see Bachmann-Medick 2013a). Transfers of concepts and theories, such as the asymmetrical transformation of the historiography of Western social history into an indigenized "social history with Chinese characteristics" and that latter's application to the modernization of Chinese society, are further examples of concrete translation processes and mediation activities (Leutner 2004: 71; also Burke and Richter 2012). In such cases, the category of translation has opened up a new view of intercultural relations beyond one-way hegemonic transfers. Translation, defined as "a transcultural act of transcoding cultural material" (Howland 2003: 45), is able to provide insight into entangled histories.

The shift to such perspectives is ongoing. Translation as a practice of cultural hegemony or a colonialist strategy of submission that leaves as alternatives only adaptation or resistance (Rafael 1988; Cheyfitz 1997) is being eclipsed by a new view of translation as a multilayered process of intercultural communication. Researchers, authors and the translators themselves are increasingly looking for creative reinterpretations. They are seeking the factors that challenge them to actively develop their own historical-political terms and concepts when faced with Western transfer activities (on this view see Liu 1995; Sakai 1997). In other words, the search is on for practices of explicit non-equivalence. As a result, with an eye toward translation processes, the boundaries of (European) histories of concepts and ideas are being transcended. This can be shown in the context of socio-legal translations by looking at the conditions that enable social justice. Here translation is being used as a framework to investigate how law changes in transnational transfers (Foster 2014: 79; Duve 2014).

But over and above what is still predominantly a metaphorical use of the translation category, translation is coming to be recognized as "a specific and material event in history" (Howland 2003: 60). This change in perspective has found expression, for example, in the treatment of early travel accounts, which

are no longer seen as the result of retrospective descriptive "translation work," but as shaped by the multivoiced and multipoled constellations of interaction and translation taking place between indigenous people, travelers, storytellers, authors and subsequent historians. All these actors contribute to "translating seen into scene" (Burghartz 2003). The category of translation offers a methodological tool for illuminating micro-processes of historical transformation: concrete steps, interactions, actors and cultural brokers in the processes of colonialism and decolonization, missionary activities, religious conversion and concept transfers (see Lässig 2012: 195, 198–199; see also Wolf 2014 as a concrete empirical study that reconstructs the Habsburg Empire as a multilingual translational space).

In addition to the disciplines of history and cultural anthropology, it is the study of religion, particularly non-European missionary history, where the elements of a translational turn have come to the fore (Clifford 1994). In this field the missionary spread of religion – e.g., the spread of the Christian religion to non-European local cultures – is being reevaluated as a translation process. Attention is being paid not only to textual translation, but also to the translation of images. The privileging of the text in past religious studies has been abandoned in favor of performative religious forms of expression as vehicles of religious transfer. These forms include, for example, devotional practices and the pictorial appropriation of the story of the Passion of Christ in cultures lacking their own tradition of realist representation (e.g., the Philippines). "The history of the global spread of Christianity is not only the history of ideas and doctrines; it is also closely connected with the history of image transfer, visual communication and the media" (Bräunlein 2009: 18). Here the concept of cultural translation has been employed as an "analytical tool for image transmissions and religious conversions in general" (Bräunlein 2009: 30). The novelty of this approach lies in the fact that participants in the translation process are no longer seen as mere passive recipients of European transfers, but specifically as individuals who help mold the translation process themselves. Here religious transfer is interpreted as translation – as transformation and reinterpretation, as the active appropriation of the performative visual practices of "image acts." For this reason, with a clear reference to Austin's speech act theory, there are overlaps between the translational turn, on the one hand, and the performative and iconic turns, on the other. In addition, "image-cultural translation studies" (Mersmann 2013: 415) are marking out the boundaries of an interesting application field for the category of translation – especially regarding image transmissions on a global scale and the development of transcultural imagology.

However, the most comprehensive translational turn in the discipline of history is taking place in areas in which translation is being examined as a

medium of epistemological investigation in order to explore positions of "displacement" in explicitly non-Eurocentric constructs of world history. In his work *Provincializing Europe*, for example, Dipesh Chakrabarty has provided an important translational impetus that can be used to challenge and create a new basis for an entangled-histories approach as well as for developing a perspective that extends beyond studies of cultural transfer. In what language and with what terminology can we write transnational history and make comparisons? The endeavor of "cross-cultural translation" clearly needs to be extended into the field of "cross-categorical translation" in order to ensure that the translation process begins on the level of the research concepts and analytical categories themselves. In this way, the European universalization can be challenged that still tends to dominate comparative and transnational studies today (see Chakrabarty 2000, 2014).

The category of translation is also being applied to gender research/gender studies on a comparable epistemological level (Federici and Leonardi 2013). On the one hand, the lens of translation reveals how gender roles are modeled through language (Flotow 2011; Federici 2011), which is seen as a (patriarchal) instrument of power. Here the greatest impetus has come from poststructuralist feminist translation theory (Gayatri Spivak). On the other, gender studies are working with a translational perspective that transfers these dimensions of language and textualization into practical political fields. This political transfer process is closely associated with the aim of deconstructing – through a process of "queering translation" (Spurlin 2014) – those categories and oppositions that continue to govern the formation of sexual and gendered identities and create political inequalities. Links to the postcolonial turn are highly visible here. Recognition of the precarious state of not being at home in the idioms of power has led to the view of women and migrants as "translated beings" (Simon 1996: 135). As in the translational turn as a whole, the focus here is on the destabilization of fixed cultural identities and gender roles – spawned in part by the shared performative potential of gender and translation studies.

Such "probing" translation processes are providing the foundation for new forms of cultural creation: "This altered understanding of translation as an activity which destabilizes cultural identities, and becomes the basis for new modes of cultural creation, is crucial to contemporary thinking" (Simon 1996: 135). However, engagement with a destabilization of "cultural identities" takes on more concrete form only when we examine the individual weightings of the processes of "actively translating" and "being translated" in specific cultural mediations, appropriations and transformations. In other words, translation encompasses much more than the linguistic relations between the hegemony of language and female subordination that have previously been overemphasized in (feminist)

translation studies (Flotow 1997). With regard to gender studies, a new understanding of methodology as a procedure of active and intentional cultural translation has recently come to the fore. Reading gender as a form of translation sheds light on the complex processes by which sexual difference is constructed while also providing new incentive to overcome the dilemma of the global transferability of Western-influenced gender discourses. It is for this reason that the translation approach is crucial for a transnationalization of gender research, though this is not yet taking place (see Shohat 2001; Mohanty 1986, 2003; Larkosh 2012). Such an approach could make it possible to embrace non-Western localizations and transformations in research on gender (see Alvarez et al. 2014) – provided that it does not rashly assume universalisms but instead concentrates on reciprocal translation processes, even on the level of the categories of investigation themselves (see Scott et al. 1997; Santaemilia 2005).

The translational turn, however, focuses not only on intercultural, but also on intracultural processes. In the social sciences, for example, we find noteworthy approaches aimed at a "systematic transfer of the metaphor of translation to a concept of social theory" (Renn 2006: 17). Both the non-integratedness of world society and the integration problems associated with modern societies reveal that "translational relations" are one of their fundamental characteristics. From an analytical viewpoint, this insight is important because it allows us to circumvent the dichotomy of integration (identity) versus fragmentation (difference) in the discourse on society. It is more reflective of human interaction to postulate translational relations between groups, milieus and subsystems than to claim that social systems are fragmented into scattered particles. The translational turn is confirmed by the fact that, beyond the content level, "the problem of the integration of society, in view of the high degree of differentiation, can be understood as a problem of 'translation'" (Renn 2006: 23). The translational character of social objects and phenomena encompasses the discipline of sociology itself. In other words, "sociology as translation" is the formula for a type of social analysis and theory that does not produce fixed representations of society, but takes part in "exchange relations between differences" and indeed even produces these differences.

The prerequisite for such a sociological theory of translation is the assumption of pragmatic struggles between social "language games" that foster the development of a practical hermeneutics. Grasping translation as an interactive social practice involves paying attention to transfers between ways of life as well as to translations of people, ideas and practices. Nevertheless, there is a real danger that the category of translation is extended too far and used in an overly inflationary manner and only in a metaphorical sense. It is therefore necessary to further develop the largely untrod fields of study in which translation is seen as a

social act, an "encounter" or practice of "association" – inspired by the translation concept in science and technology studies (see Langenohl 2014: 101ff.) – or as an "exploration of boundaries" and a negotiation of discourses (Fuchs 2009; Maranhão and Streck 2003).

Sociologist and anthropologist Martin Fuchs was one of the first scholars to take this path. Drawing on concrete fieldwork in India, he shows how in multiethnic Indian society translational spaces can be marked out that are rife with social conflicts and interreligious tensions. He examines self-articulation by untouchables as a translation process. In his view, the discourse on resistance in their Dalit movement has depended on the untouchables' attempt to translate themselves intentionally into a "third idiom" (Fuchs 2009: 31) – or, specifically, to translate their social concerns and demands not only into the social ethics of Buddhism as a universalist religion but, more importantly, into the secular language of law. It is here that their demands for social equality are accorded social recognition and rendered both negotiable and comprehensible – and here that acts of resistance find political expression.

A translationally sensitive sociology such as this not only raises the claim – based on an analytical perspective "from above" (Fuchs 2009: 303) – that counter-discourses exist within cultures. Through specific action-analytical studies, it also provides insight into the self-organized exchange and negotiation relations between group discourses, movements and people that in this case are highly different. This example is instructive for an examination of the textual turn in the social sciences in general as it uses recent translation research to overcome a translation concept that has been confined for too long to mere textual and discursive representation. On the other hand, this sort of sociological concept of translation attempts to elaborate translation as a practice of addressing other social groups and as a tool for analyzing attitudes toward a "reaching out" into other contexts in social life-worlds – particularly the "compulsion to 'translate' one's own perspective and way of life into the prevailing idiom" (Fuchs 2009: 316).

Furthermore, the above example elucidates a central finding of cultural anthropology and postcolonial studies – namely, that translations enrich intercultural dynamics only if they start with differences, semantic conflicts and opposition to translation instead of following the (harmonious) idea of building bridges between cultures. This finding underpins other new application fields as precarious junctures for translation (for various examples, see Bermann and Wood 2005). These include war and translation (Apter 2006: 12–22), violence and translation (Das 2002; Baker 2006; Bielsa and Hughes 2009), democracy in translation (Schaffer 2000), gay in translation (Harvey 2003), cities in translation (Cronin and Simon 2014; Simon 2012), race in translation (Stam and Shohat 2012),

translation in the realm of management studies (Czarniawska and Sevón 2005) and media/global news in translation (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009; Abend-David 2014). Finally, this finding is pertinent to the field of terror and translation (Bielsa and Hughes 2009) and the problematic practice of asserting power through acts of translation – e.g., by imperially defining as terror all forms of power deemed inimical to one's own system.

The social sciences, and particularly migration research, are currently attempting to analyze interaction situations in greater detail. Their ultimate goal is to verify what in most cases are still heavily metaphoricized conceptual extensions of the translation category by examining the potential of this category not only for a more detailed analysis of intercultural contacts, but also for the resolution of intracultural differences. However, these approaches have not yet been able to counter a central criticism of the emphatic excesses associated with more recent translation perspectives. Jürgen Straub gives one such criticism a constructive twist by attempting in an empirically grounded fashion "to apply the developed 'broad' concept of translation to social and cultural psychology" (Straub 2002: 373). His case study centers on the translation processes through which experiences of the Shoah have been negotiated. Here the problem lies in the difficulty still facing members of the post-Second World War generation in mediating between the worlds of the perpetrators and the victims as concerns the suffering that was actually experienced. The experiential discrepancies between both groups point to the inadequacies of assimilating forms of translation, which all too quickly equalize disparate realms of experience. In this area it would be more effective to use a translation model that engages with the foreign and the offensive (383–384).

Another critical translation perspective acknowledging otherness is connected to aesthetic forms of representation. In modern world literature and postcolonial art, cross-cultural contacts are depicted as translation scenarios that are structured as action situations. An example of a literary work that deals with such transit zones, which in today's world society are posing highly existential translational challenges, particularly for migrants, is Salman Rushdie's novel *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*. According to Rushdie, as part of "our migrant century" we have "entered a transit zone: the condition of transformation" (Rushdie 2000: 471). In this novel Indian rock singer Ormus Cama and female vocalist Vina Apsara experience migration as a complex process of translation and as an ongoing transformation full of liminal freedoms, transitional stages and moments of confusion. The two musicians immigrate from India to America via England. On a plane from Bombay to London, Ormus passes through "a stretchy translucent membrane across the sky, an ectoplasmic barrier, a Wall" (Rushdie 2000: 261–263). It is a membrane of air resistance, but also a membrane

separating cultures. Translation is thus not a simple transfer process, but a negotiation of resistance and an ongoing transformation process that results from the superimpositions characteristic of migration. In these "transit zones" of transformation, translation is a practice embedded in a critical engagement with the tug of war between antagonistic cultural affiliations, meanings and requirements. "Translated men," as Rushdie calls them (1991: 17), are human beings translated from one culture to another; however, in the process they also develop forms of self-translation themselves.

As a result, Rushdie's novel can be seen as engaging in a cultural anthropology of translation by emphasizing above all the multipolar nature of translation processes. Ormus embodies the ambivalent transformations resulting from the displacements to which his music is also subject. After all, Eastern music traditions are routinely translated into the American pop music heard round the world, and vice versa. These exchanges form the backdrop to the astonishing revelation in the novel that "the West was in Bombay from the beginning" (Rushdie 2000: 106). Here the multipolarity of translation is presented as a conflict-ridden process in which interpretations and different versions are replicated and multiplied. One result is that, as Rushdie puts it, "America is no longer the sole owner of rock 'n' roll" (386). Whether it is read as an act of cultural dispossession or an experience of fragmented worlds, the polyphony of reciprocal translation processes and the displacements of identity produced by migration are expressed here almost seismographically through the metaphor of the earthquake – i.e., through convulsions and upheaval rather than through the building of bridges.

Rushdie's novel is an example of a literary conception of translation informed by a world fragmented by the conditions of migration. Additional literary conceptions of translation are reflected not only in the content but also in the self-views and even the writing strategies of modern world literatures. In this context, translation – seen as a writing strategy that uses irony, calculated mistranslations, the critical reinterpretation of colonial topoi, etc. – sheds light on the widespread practice of "rewriting" the classic European works of authors such as Shakespeare and Defoe and reinterpreting their positions of authority from a postcolonial viewpoint (Ashcroft et al. 1989). Here a translational framework is created by the fundamental remapping of centers and peripheries, as is currently the aim not only of literature but also of artistic image translation.

The rewriting of (national European) images, traditions and central metaphors via image transmissions, visual deconstruction and transformations can be interpreted as an act of translation, as a methodological strategy of cultural reflection. A noteworthy example is the rewriting of a European cultural icon by the Nigerian English installation artist Yinka Shonibare – his "translation" of a national English painting into a hybrid installation in 1998. In Shonibare's

work, Thomas Gainsborough's 1750 painting of an aristocratic couple in the idyllic setting of country life is transformed into a sculpture entitled *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews without Their Heads*. Evoking the guillotine of the French Revolution, the postcolonial artist decapitates the symbolic protagonists of English colonialism, depicting them in African robes displaced from the pastoral context. Through such translation work, Shonibare shows the colonial inscriptions of entangled European/African histories. Here the process of rewriting takes the guise of a redressing and refashioning of European cultural traditions and uses subversive translation strategies to unearth the deep structures of colonial violence (Hynes 2001).

Interacting primarily with the postcolonial turn, the translational turn draws attention to the process of empowering the self through creative acts of translation. Interestingly enough, this perspective is echoed in a far-reaching observation on translation made by Hayden White in critical response to the trend toward reconnecting postmodern culturalism (spanning textualism, constructivism and discursivity) to "history":

> What is being recommended is a project of translation, understood as a transcodation among the various processes of self-construction (call it, if you wish, "autopoiesis") by which humanity makes itself in a constant revision of its own "nature" as self and other, society and antisociety, value and nonvalue, subject and object, creative and destructive, all at once and ever anew. This is, I submit, a much more "historical" conception of human nature, society, and culture than anything that any version of "history" has hitherto imagined. (White 1999: 321–322)

This view of translation as a "transcodation" carried out for the purpose of cultural self-definition is described in White's work only in passing and can perhaps be seen as a cultural-studies variation of what modern brain research calls "autopoiesis" (i.e. self-production) (Maturana and Varela 1980). However, it does not exhaust itself in the self-organization of neural systems. When expressed in the conceptual and descriptive systems of the study of culture, it points to active self-empowerment through cultural encodings and symbolic development – self-empowerment that historically breaks up any fixation on a basic anthropological condition. Here we can make out the outlines of a link between the translational turn and the neuroscientific turn that has previously gone unrecognized: the view that "neuroscience is a *translational discipline*" (Littlefield and Johnson 2012: 3).

If, beyond this link, a variety of possible overlaps with other turns becomes visible, it is certainly the result of the special connectivity of the category of translation. In contrast to the other central categories in the study of culture, including those of space and image, the translational turn is highly self-reflexive thanks

to its own cultural-studies practice as a translational activity (see the chapter "Outlook"). In other words, the category of translation is not simply being extended, generalized and rendered almost limitlessly applicable to diverse object fields. It is also becoming problematic – above all due to its metaphorization and inflationary use, which is blurring its contours. Not everything that is called translation generates a translational turn. We must critically examine on a case-by-case basis precisely whether and how the application of the translation category benefits knowledge acquisition or whether it is simply heralding the rise of a new metaphor. One aspect of this problem might be solved by the attempt to further ground the translation concept and make it a central category for empirical studies by relating it to the spatial turn.

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Chapter VI: The Spatial Turn

The spatial turn (Crang and Thrift 2000: xi) is a child of postmodernism. In the early 1990s American cultural theorist Fredric Jameson, a prominent exponent of postmodernism, extended his slogan "Always historicize!" (Jameson 1981: 9) to include a "certain spatial turn" (Jameson 1991: 154; see also Soja 1996: 204). He now urged, "Always spatialize." This new slogan was born of the realization that postmodernism with its spatially influenced self-definition was replacing modernism with its orientation toward time:

> We have often been told, however, that we now inhabit the synchronic rather than the diachronic, and I think it is at least empirically arguable that our daily life, our psychic experience, our cultural languages, are today dominated by categories of space rather than by categories of time, as in the preceding period of high modernism. (Jameson 1991: 16)

This analogization of daily life and the use of categories is striking. It implies that current life-worlds coincide with a period dominated to a greater degree by space, simultaneity and coexistences than by the categories of time, history and evolution (see Löfgren 1995). However, using this analogy, Jameson also deduces in an almost empirical fashion that in recent times "space" has become a central new unit of perception as well as a theoretical concept. The centuries-long subordination of space to time now appears to be over.

But the spatial turn still needs to show just how much it can overcome such dichotomies and to what extent it can develop theory at the frontiers of the study of culture. Does the spatial turn have the potential to free itself from the corset of the linguistic turn more radically than all the other turns? At first glance, the spatial perspective does indeed appear to be clearing a path that will once again permit research approaches targeting materiality, action and change, for here space is seen not primarily as a problem of discourse, but as a social construct. However, with its spatial thinking, this turn also appears to be a successor to the linguistic turn in that it has elevated the synchronic over the diachronic, the systemic over the historical, and the system of language over the successive use of speech. Simultaneity and spatial constellations have also been highlighted, and a temporally linked or even evolutionist idea of development has been suppressed.

The perspective of the spatial turn arises from this tug of war between discourse and social production processes. It is based on a conceptual redefinition of a category in the study of culture and the social sciences that extends to the level of spatial representation. A distinct rematerialization is also in evidence, which brings the risk of naturalization and reification. The tensions of the spatial turn are reinforced at the level of the individual disciplines. For the first time, (cultural) geography, as the study of space, has advanced to the rank of a pio-

neering discipline without its new status being used by the other humanities for an explicitly collaborative development of concepts. Nevertheless, the greatest tension exists between 1) the political (postcolonial) spatial perspectives, which view space as infused by power and authority and are promoting a Eurocentric-critical remapping of center/periphery, and 2) approaches in German-language research, which declare in succinct fashion that "the spatial turn involves focusing increased attention on the spatial aspect of the historical world, nothing more, nothing less" (Schlögel 2003: 68).

1 The Formation of the Spatial Turn

Recent discussions of the rediscovery of space as a central category in the social sciences and the study of culture presuppose the idea that the concept of space was lost in the first place. And, indeed, with the introduction of the paradigm of development and progress in the eighteenth-century Age of Enlightenment, the predominance of the spatial perspective was increasingly undermined by a temporal perspective in a process that was then intensified by the nineteenth-century colonialist ideas about human development in combination with progress-based conceptions of history. The emphatic turn toward space and spatiality that has occurred since the 1980s takes aim at the triumphant rise of a historicism marked by the prevalence of evolutionist conceptions of time, chronology, history and progress (see Schlögel 2003: 37ff.). In other words, simultaneity and juxtaposition appear to be replacing the categories of development and progress. Despite the distinction between geography and history that had already existed in the nineteenth century, this school of thought had some clear precursors: the historicism-influenced geopolitical approaches that were developed by Carl Ritter, Friedrich Ratzel and Karl Haushofer and were later exploited by the Nazis for their own geopolitical strategies (Schlögel 2003: 36ff.).

Because the spatial focus is linked to such geopolitical perspectives, the recent "return" of the category of space initially triggered vehement skepticism, particularly in German-language research – skepticism that was unknown in the other reorientations in the study of culture. The massive reservations toward geopolitical methodologies go back to the Nazis' ideologization and functionalization of the concept of space for propaganda and war policy during the Second World War. These practices found fateful expression in a racist blood-and-soil ideology and a violent eastward expansion of *Lebensraum* for a "people without space." One consequence was that after the Second World War, German social scientists neglected the category of space in favor of the category of time, although they could have drawn on the work of important sociological "spatial thinkers" such

as Georg Simmel (1997) and Walter Benjamin (2002). For a long time the negative repercussions of National Socialism radically disrupted spatial thinking and any attempt to connect history to geography.

However, since the 1980s, the concept of space has experienced a renaissance in the social sciences and the study of culture, inspired by international research. This reorientation has been facilitated by the political and social upheaval of the late 1980s, above all by the breakup of the Cold War blocs. The elimination of this spatial political polarity caused a shift in the entire constellation and mapping of the world and brought about a new focus on space whose origins went beyond the security strategies put in place to defend hegemonic rule. The critical discourse on the meaning of Central Europe, which had begun in the mid-1980s, conceptually promoted a shift from Central Europe to the east, followed by the opening of blocs and boundaries as the actual breakthrough (see Müller 2010). The related expansion of capital markets into the newly opened territories powered an economic globalization that increasingly revealed itself to be a new construction of space. The critical point here is the insight that global developments could no longer be controlled by individual nation-states but were characterized by constellations of interdependencies and networks of relationships. As a key feature of globalization, interconnections and cross-linkages have made the spatial perspective inevitable. Linked to the European ideology of evolutionary development and history as progress, the category of time is no longer capable of coping with such global synchronicities and the spatial political entanglements of the First and Third Worlds. However, the "spatial revolution" that followed the Cold War (Schlögel 2003: 25) – triggered by the fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of borders – has a flipside as well: the creation of new borders, spatial disparities, spatial claims and delimitations. Such developments have made a more in-depth examination of spaces and boundaries all the more pressing: "Any careful study of our surroundings indeed reveals a multiplicity of borders, walls, fences, thresholds, signposted areas, security systems and checkpoints, virtual frontiers, specialized zones, protected areas, and areas under control" (Boeri 2003: 52). Space is returning!

Or, as we might say with equal confidence, space is disappearing! After all, the simultaneous phenomena of global despatialization and delocalization are obvious. The rampant rise of telecommunications and other information media such as email and the Internet, their translocal dissemination, the compression of space through speed, the transcendence of distances – all have led to the perception of the world as a global village. Thanks to the World Wide Web, it is irrelevant where users live or log in. In a situation characterized by free-flowing information, translocality, rootlessness and placelessness, space appears to be playing a subordinate role. Economics, politics and the mass media are increas-

ingly following the lines of communication instead of remaining confined within ethnic, spatial, territorial or nation-state boundaries (Maresch 2003: 15). In view of the placeless quality of global relations, anthropologist Marc Augé has introduced the concept of transit spaces in the sense of "non-places" – a concept directed against territorialization and characterized by identity loss, ephemerality and provisionality (Augé 2009). "In Augé's view, transportation routes, means of transport, airports, train stations, supermarkets and amusement parks are the expanding inauthentic places of today's world and are unable to convey identity as 'authentic'" (Rolshoven 2003: 195, see also Clifford 1997). But there is also a counter-trend to such transit "identities" – the rediscovery of the local, of home, of connections to a specific place. This identity-stabilizing trend at times even encourages cultural separatism and the exaggeration of local and regional differences in processes marked by a multiplicity of conflicts.

For the perspective of the emerging spatial turn, these tensions between the dissolution and return of space are posing a challenge for critical reflections on space. But what concrete analysis can they be based on? Space is indeed not disappearing from public consciousness, the social sciences or the study of culture. Nor is it returning in an entirely new form. Rather, increased attention is being paid to various spatial perspectives and the recognition that new spatial concepts are necessary to unlock the potential of these perspectives for social analysis. In this context the rediscovery of the local, for instance, is not identical with the securing of safe havens from the demands of globalization. The "nostalgic paradigm" of Western social science that Roland Robertson has combated in his theory of glocalization is not resurfacing (Robertson 1995: 30). After all, in contrast to the previous conception of space and place in disciplines such as folklore studies, in this new view space does not refer to territoriality, a repository of tradition or even to home (Rolshoven 2003: 191ff.). Rather, emphasis is placed on the social production of space as a complex and often contradictory social process, a specific localization of cultural practices, a dynamic of social relations that points to the mutability of space. This view of the configurability of space through capital, labor, economic restructuring, social relations and social conflicts has been further reinforced by the transformation of cities and landscapes as the result of unequal global developments rooted in the spatial division of labor.

Nevertheless, the spatial turn does more than analyze current spatial conditions and generate new spatial differences. It promotes the formation of a critical understanding of space. But are its analytical powers sufficiently explained by the supposed placelessness of global relations, the changed constellations and shifts between center and periphery, or momentous events such as September 11, 2001? According to Rudolf Maresch (2003: 16), these events put an end to the view of the world as placeless and destroyed all illusions of cross-cultural spatial

links. By revitalizing the deep geopolitical structures of the past, they affirmed the "permanencies of space" (Maresch and Werber 2002: 7–30) – territorial categorizations and differences such as north/south and center/periphery. Chauvinism, nationalism and fundamentalism have remained powerful forces, but they have been more clearly "localized" – above all by the U.S., not only for targeted geopolitical and security-related strategies of space whose goal is international hegemonic spatial control, but also to protect resources and wage a cross-border war on terrorism. Such developments appear to mark a return to the traditional concept of space that is associated with the colonial division of the world and the geopolitics of the world powers originating in the nineteenth century.

However, the genesis of a critical scholarly understanding of space can be grasped only by looking at another line of development – the field of postmodern and postcolonial geography, which is working to establish a critical geopolitics and as part of these endeavors initiated the spatial turn. This crucial strand of the discussion on space has less to do with the events of September 11 than it does with a committed postcolonial exploration of (marginal) spaces. Its aim is to critically question the binary postcolonial Eurocentric mapping of the world into center and periphery and to institute a policy emphasizing local cultural practice and empowerment in opposition to the spatial hegemony of imperialism. It is a case of "the margin refus[ing] its place as 'Other'" (Soja and Hooper 1993: 190). In other words, a specific spatial policy marked the start of the spatial turn. One of its most important ideas is that the use of this new scope for action shifts the discussion of differences and "othering" within the study of culture from the simple discursive level to a pragmatic political plane, where it has a geographical foundation.

Postmodern geographers – particularly urban geographers and planners – have thus been a driving force behind this turn toward space. They include, above all, David Harvey, Edward Soja, Derek Gregory, Steve Pile and Doreen Massey (see the informative articles on key figures of the spatial turn in Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine 2004). This is why it is also possible to speak of a geographical turn. But however we label it, this turn ultimately dethroned cultural anthropology as the main provider of impetus in the study of culture. It is the nascent field of critical cultural geography – drawing on postcolonial approaches – that has laid the foundations for a new understanding of space without a territorial anchoring (see Crang and Thrift 2000: xi). At the same time, within the framework of a "radical postmodernism" (Soja 1996: 3), cultural geography has come to stand for a new critical geopolitics aiming for a spatial restructuring of world society – beyond a state-centered framework (see Agnew 2003: 13).

2 Spatial Concepts and the Turn toward Spatial Thinking

The spatial turn operates with spatial concepts that are often quite diffuse in nature. The variations and definitions of these concepts, as well as their categorization in the history of science, have been described elsewhere (Warf and Arias 2008; Finnegan 2008; Döring and Thielmann 2009; *History and Theory* 2013). Of course, the attempt to more precisely define and extend a concept of space that in German-language research has been heavily influenced by phenomenology (as in Löw 2001) does not in itself constitute a spatial reorientation. A crucial factor in any attempt to gain one's bearings in the world of the spatial turn is not the great variety of spatial concepts or the reflections on them, but rather the distinct interdisciplinary practice of assuming a spatial perspective.

A key factor here is the turn to a spatial mode of thinking in analyses in the social sciences and study of culture – a mode of thinking that needs to be investigated with respect to politicizations and depoliticizations, to naturalizations and symbolizations. Not every turn toward space can be regarded as a spatial turn. A certain cross-culturally applicable understanding of space is necessary: nearly all the approaches associated with the spatial turn have a common reference point, a concept of space elaborated by classic Marxist spatial theorist Henri Lefebvre (Lefebvre 1991; on Lefebvre and other French spatial theorists as founding figures of the spatial turn, see Conley 2012). Lefebvre drew attention to the production of space and its crucial link to social practice. He placed as much emphasis on the social formation of space as on the role played by space in creating social relations. It is therefore the "lived" social practices of the construction of space, covering both inclusions and exclusions, with which most spatially related approaches are aligned within the spatial turn. This is why urban and environmental planner Edward Soja – an exponent of a critical conception of space linked to Marxist positions within social geography – regarded the spatial turn as originating in Lefebvre's work (Soja 1996: 47).

Social Spaces and Imaginary Geographies

In other words, space is now no longer seen as a physical territorial concept but as a relational one. A central element in the spatial turn is not territorial space as a container or a vessel, but space as a social production process encompassing perceptions, utilizations and appropriations, a process closely bound up with the symbolic level of spatial representation (e.g., through codes, characters and maps). However, it is primarily the connection between space and power that has established itself as an important line of study. Michel Foucault's spatial concept

of "heterotopias" (i.e., "real places … which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia" [Foucault 1986: 24]) has become an important reference point – along with Pierre Bourdieu's notion of produced social space as a habitualized form of practice and positioning (Bourdieu 1985) and Doreen Massey's feminist focus on the "power-geometries of space" (Massey 1999, 1994). Although quite different in nature, these theoretical frameworks suggest not only that we should study the spatial effects of social strata, ethnicity and gender relations from the perspective of their exclusions and inclusions, but also that we should examine their capacity to liberate "other" concealed spaces. A corresponding concept of space has been developed from the viewpoint of urban studies and has been confirmed, in particular, in reflections on urban conflicts and power strategies and in the related discourses (Harvey 1989; Soja 2010, 2011). The spatial turn has been driven primarily by this concept of space.

It is in this sense, too, that geography has established itself as a discipline that is providing key impetus to the spatial turn – though only after it first opened to interdisciplinary approaches (Cook at al. 2000). A decisive aspect of the potential of the spatial focus to initiate a turn is that in light of more targeted, epistemologically based reflections on space in the study of culture, scholars have been reconceptualizing traditional cultural geography (see Hubbard et al. 2002: 62). The familiar, primarily essentialist spatial concepts of cultural geography are no longer definitive, nor does their macro perspective continue to predominate. They have been overridden by spatial concepts with a pointed focus on ideological landscapes, spatial presentations informed by power relations, and a micro perspective that highlights the effects exerted on space by subjects, bodies, interactions and social relations. A new cultural geography has thus emerged that more closely examines power relations through the category of space (Keith and Pile 1993: 220–226). The development of this field clearly shows that certain areas in the study of culture provide impetus for a turn only if they are simultaneously reconceptualized.

However, such processes can be rife with disagreement. The adherents of a specific turn do not always work toward the same goal and factional struggles within a turn are common. For example, Edward Soja, who argued from a distinctly postcolonial perspective, left himself particularly open to attack because he employed a geography of space that no longer corresponded to the traditional geographical discipline of space (Soja 1996: 92ff.). In his work, spatial thinking involves not only a critique of a Eurocentric geography that marginalizes other cultures and societies, but also a liberation from the dichotomies of a mode of constructing space that was practiced for centuries and was attacked in Edward Said's critique of Orientalism. This binary conception of space should not be underestimated as it continues to find expression in ghettos, apartheid regimes,

reservations, colonies and other exclusionary practices that are based on an essentialist bipolarity, even along the center-periphery axis (see Soja 1996: 87).

In view of the massive trend toward renewed demarcations and militant spatial claims, conflict-conscious reflections on space are becoming an important focus of the spatial turn. One example is the attempt to combine the spatial turn with research on violence, memory and trauma (see Schindel and Colombo 2014: 3) by investigating "topographies of exclusion, exception and state violence" and "the spatial manifestations of trauma and memory" (2). In view of such conflict-conscious reflections on the social dimensions of space, it is not very helpful here to invoke the postmodern dynamization of space with its overlaps, border transgressions and fluid transitions. What is needed are postcolonial approaches that shed light on the tension-filled spaces of conflict as well as their dependency on a hegemonic policy toward space. In postcolonialism the critique of the geography of both colonialism and imperialism implied above all a critique of the "mapping of empire" to which literary texts contributed (see the chapter "The Postcolonial Turn"). This critique was articulated primarily in the remapping and rewriting processes undertaken by postcolonial subjects to critically redraw a hierarchical map of the world marked by an asymmetry between the countries of the center and those on the periphery – i.e., the societies outside Europe. It was the postcolonial perspective that was responsible for politicizing the spatial perspective to such a degree that space took center stage as a fundamental category of power.

Within the framework of the postcolonial turn, Edward Said laid the groundwork for a new focus on the spatial geographical categories of an (imperialism-) critical "distinctive cultural topography" (Said 1993: 52). As Said explained,

> I am talking about the way in which structures of location and geographical reference appear in the cultural languages of literature, history, or ethnography, sometimes allusively and sometimes carefully plotted, across several individual works that are not otherwise connected to one another or to an official ideology of "empire." (Said 1993: 52)

Said mapped the spatial constellations of power, knowledge and geography in an imperialist context and, as part of this process, examined the tensions between the European power centers and the remote peripheral territories of the colonies – tensions that shaped both literature and cultural identity. Such perspectives of the spatial turn allow us to grasp the postcolonial rewriting processes in contemporary world literatures as embedded in geopolitical remapping strategies: "And today writers and scholars from the formerly colonized world have imposed their diverse histories on, have mapped their local geographies in, the great canonical texts of the European center" (Said 1993: 53).

This means that the spatial turn has been politically charged from the start. In other words, this new descriptive category in the study of culture focuses not

on empty space but on the overlaps resulting from the simultaneity of disparate spaces and territories. These overlaps can be aptly explained by Said's concept of an "imaginary geography," which refers to the charging of space with imperial inscriptions, hidden hierarchies, displaced experiences, discontinuities (particularly in relation to Said's native Palestine), constructs of the other and projections of counter-images (as in Orientalism). As Soja points out, such inscriptions and chargings of space are not visible on maps: "It is not always easy to see the imprint of this imperial history on the material landscape" (Soja 1989: 225). Strategic methodological processes are therefore required to analyze complex imaginative spaces. Said's model of "contrapuntal reading" is useful in this connection because in genres such as the novel it can expose subtexts and hidden connections to imperial power while also setting seemingly opposite phenomena into a spatial relationship or incorporating them into an illuminating juxtapositional constellation (Said 1993: 66–67). This process brings to light not only the hierarchy of localities, but also the unequal division of labor between European and non-European societies that is also shown in literary texts. A focused, critical spatial perspective is capable of analytically grasping a "complex and uneven topography" (Said 1993: 318) with its breaks and contradictions (in place of a synchronous spatial universe). With the clear boundaries of the old world order now eliminated, it is precisely this perspective that has become a point of departure for overlapping interactions and cross-cultural contacts across the globe.

Transnational Spaces

With an eye toward such postcolonial contexts, it is essential that the turn to space be closely connected to the phenomena of transnationalization and vice versa (see Jackson, Crang, and Dwyer 2004). The territorial concept of space no longer appears useful for the new spatial thinking. It coincided with a conception of space rooted in the nation-state, with a view of space and place as static "containers" of cultural traditions that, during the rise of the nation-state, confined culture to a national space with territorial borders. This concept of space has a problematic colonialist background and has been associated with the colonial positioning of the other. Yet the increasingly deterritorialized spatial relations and networks have transnationalized our understanding of space. It is only through such processes that we can, for instance, understand the interconnectedness of diaspora groups throughout the world and the cultural ideas they share despite their being dispersed across different localities.

It is cultural anthropologist and globalization theorist Arjun Appadurai who has linked the spatial turn to transnational spaces in the most comprehensive

fashion. While it is true that the boundaries of nation-state territoriality have dissolved, other territorial links have emerged, both transnational and local. Among them are institutional networks, global actors, financial markets and even international terrorism – in short, what Appadurai refers to as "global ethnoscapes" (Appadurai 1996, 2003). Such ethnoscapes are spaces that are molded by specific group identities in the diaspora and, despite deterritorialization and displacement, bond the scattered migrant groups together. In other words, they are the complex multilayered spaces of a trans- and multilocal civil society. Here Appadurai proceeds on the assumption – also germane to cultural anthropology – that the conditions of group migration have changed: "The landscapes of group identity – the ethnoscapes – around the world are no longer familiar anthropological objects, insofar as groups are no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or culturally homogeneous" (Appadurai 1996: 48).

Such empirically observable spatial dispersions have led to a conceptual rediscovery of space, which can be seen as deriving from one of Appadurai's central questions: "What is the nature of locality as a lived experience in a globalized, deterritorialized world?" (Appadurai 1996: 52). In Appadurai's work, the local is by no means limited to concrete physical space, because it is informed by the imagination of possible life plans that "come from elsewhere" and are conveyed by the mass media, films and other vehicles (Appadurai 1996: 54). Here, as in literature, a mostly fictive space is created consisting of "imaginary homelands" (as Salman Rushdie titles his essay collection) or – to use Rushdie's words again – "Indias of the mind" (Rushdie 1991: 10). However, it is precisely these globally disseminated imaginings and representations that fashion specific characteristics of place and locality. And it is precisely from the perspective of their transnational fictionalization that we must explore "what is real about ordinary lives" in local living conditions (Appadurai 1996: 54). Furthermore, local space is where global strands run together. It is hardly possible to speak of placelessness any longer because the local remains important as a sphere of conflictual social experience:

> The locality … the arena within which social affairs are resolved … is interesting precisely because of the ways in which contradictions, between classes, between races, between genders, are resolved, often with subtly different results from one locality to another. (Kirby 1989: 325)

Ideas about space and spatial boundaries are thus shifting and becoming more nuanced. The traditional bond between space, on the one hand, and social, collective and national identities and traditions, on the other, is being questioned, as are familiar boundaries. Borders and border transgressions, as well as "border as method" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013: viii), have been evolving into distinct

fields of research for the spatial turn (on "transdisciplinary border studies" see Silberman et al. 2014: 17; on borderlands history see Hämäläinen and Truett 2011). The same applies to the categories of interconnectedness and networking. Although the focus here is primarily on the problem of the formation and effects of transnational networks, one should also consider the epistemological history of networks, ranging from late modern "configurations" to more recent network technologies. The development and use of these categories has spawned a new understanding of space, particularly in Anglo-American cultural theory and its international variations. Through border transgressions and shifts, through negotiations, migrations, overlaps and the formation of network-like transnational "imagined communities," space is virtually becoming a metaphor for cultural dynamism. This new categorization of space takes into account the tensions between global and local phenomena and interdependencies.

Thirdspace

The new concepts of (borderless) space, spatialization and the localization of culture have become particularly prominent guiding principles. They bring more sharply into focus the complexity, overlaps and superimpositions of spaces, the asynchronicities of the simultaneous, as well as the spatial counter-constructs that critically undermine the assumption of a center-periphery hierarchy. Here the spatial turn has become caught in a vortex of conceptualization that can cause a great deal of excitement but easily loses its footing in the real world when the spatial perspective extends into spaces that are no longer only real, territorial or physical – or symbolically determined – but are both at the same time and are thus catapulted to an entirely different dimension. Foucault calls these spaces "heterotopias," Said subsumes them under "imaginary geography," Appadurai describes them as "global ethnoscapes" while Edward Soja, for his part, refers to them as "thirdspaces" or "real-and-imagined places."

The simultaneity of the asynchronicities associated with globalization, as well as the superimposition of different cultural affiliations resulting from migration, taps into complex concepts of space such as this, which are increasingly replacing the previously dominant temporal-historical model of space. Los Angeles is seen as a prototype of this synchronicity of life-worlds (Soja 1996) – as the prototype of an urbanization characterized by the spatial power of the center to centralize or decentralize society and to spatially structure social conditions (Soja 1989: 234). This becomes also evident in an "imaginary geography" that, among other things, reveals the colonial imprints of this city of immigrants on the basis of their clear impact on urban space; in the "heterotopias" of post-

modern geographies, as they are called in the prevalent jargon. Soja uses Los Angeles as an example of a "real-and-imagined place" (Soja 1996: 6) in order to elucidate his concept of the thirdspace, which has broad overlaps with the postcolonial turn. The term refers to a spatial concept that has been transdisciplinary from the outset – a space of extraordinary conceptual openness (Soja 1996: 5) existing beyond familiar boundaries, a "lived" and not fully chartable space of movement and community that unlocks new arenas for political action and space-based politics. As a concept, its goal is to move beyond all the codifications of real physical spaces with their territorially anchored deadweight of tradition. "Real-and-imagined places" are conceptualized as spaces that are simultaneously material and symbolic, real and constructed, and that are represented in concrete spatial practices as well as in images. With reference to its postcolonial beginnings, one could claim that this powerful concept of space, which aims to overcome the essentializations of previous ethnicity politics, has been an important driver of the spatial turn.

In addition to metaphorization, a phase of emphatic idealization is necessary, as exemplified by many of the other turns:

> Thirdspace [is] a limitless composition of lifeworlds that are radically open and openly radicalizable; that are all-inclusive and transdisciplinary in scope yet politically focused and susceptible to strategic choice; that are never completely knowable but whose knowledge none the less guides our search for emancipatory change and freedom from domination. (Soja 1996: 70)

However, like Homi Bhabha's concept of a thirdspace, this conceptualization does not remain a mere figure of thought, but has a spatially related physical foundation – derived from the complex urban effects of Los Angeles and other metropolises in the contemporary world, and also from the superimposition of various contradictory strata at a single place that is closely connected to illusions of space and can simultaneously be perceived as a "real-and-imagined place." Due to this spatial emphasis, it is perhaps possible to characterize thirdspace as an action-oriented intermediary space that can be drawn on to negotiate and resolve differences in diverse transitional cross-cultural processes, as well as in migration situations and gender roles.

Spatial Representation and Modes of Mapping

The spatial turn is oriented not only toward practices of unlocking and managing space, but also toward forms of spatial representation. In the debate on the topographical turn – a submovement, as it were, of the spatial turn – the emphasis

on forms and techniques of representation takes center stage. The map is a prominent medium here, yet it only became relevant to the spatial or topographical turn once it was methodologically implemented, reflected on and strategically deployed in a more comprehensive "mapping" process (on the development of a "spatial anthropology of mapping cultures," see Roberts 2012: 11; for an overview of the spatial turn, 15ff.). Of course, in this context, mapping is no longer associated only with maps in the narrower sense of the word, but has evolved into a general (metaphorized) organizational pattern, a model for structuring knowledge (see Tötösy de Zepetnek and Wang 2010). Examples include the mapping of the body and space (Diprose and Ferrell 1991), the mapping of film (Hallam and Roberts 2014: 1–30, 173ff.), the mapping of the future (Bird et al. 1993) and even the mapping of postmodernism itself (Huyssen 1992). These cartographic fields presuppose an extension of the physical map into "mental maps" – i.e., the symbolic and subjective charging of cartographic reference points with various meanings. Because of their capacity to superimpose (subjective) acts of memory on physical spatial structures, mental maps draw attention to the complexity of the spatial perspective and the interfaces between space and time. They bring mapping to the fore as a mental operation.

Nevertheless, the analysis of mental maps did not begin with the spatial turn. Once again, it was postmodern discourse that laid the foundation to conceptualize mental maps and "cognitive mapping" (Jameson 1988) – and also to understand space as a medium of exchange, language and symbolic chargings (with the contents of memory, imperialist attributions, etc.). At the same time, the production of space through symbolization processes has provided the spatial turn with a decisive twist because it has also shifted attention to the fact that maps do not merely depict natural geographical conditions, but express measurements and symbolic encodings that at times can represent manipulations. This characteristic, in particular, has resulted in their use as instruments of political power.

However, this operationalization of a critical, even political, perspective of space through mapping processes has been massively defused in a noteworthy German version of the spatial turn elaborated in the work of the historian Karl Schlögel. Schlögel's spatial focus is also grounded in maps, but here maps show the synchronicity of spatial relations in a topographical sense and, via close readings, render spatial conditions accessible as "visualizations" (Schlögel 2004: 263). The link to the iconic turn is obvious: "History reveals its visual iconographic side" (Schlögel 2004: 273). But what is also obvious is the accompanying depoliticization: according to Schlögel, maps represent the synchronicity and "unity of time, place and action" (Schlögel 2003: 40). What gets lost are the power analyses and the political-action perspective that were key aspects of the postcolonial spa-

tialization impetus that came from the concept of thirdspace. On the other hand, Schlögel's approach emphasizes two additional perspectives:

1) The spatial turn is given enhanced status as a new focus that seeks to represent the complexity of historical processes on the basis of the simultaneity and interwovenness of disparate spatial dimensions that were previously studied separately. It does so in a more comprehensive manner than any other turn: "The link to place has always secretly contained the appeal for a *histoire totale*" (Schlögel 2003: 10).

2) The spatial turn brings those qualities of the spatial concept to bear that resist the dematerializations of the linguistic turn. The events of September 11, 2001, in particular, reminded Schlögel "that there are indeed places – places that are not mere symbols, signs, representations of something … cities that can be hit, towers that can be brought to the ground" (Schlögel 2004: 262).

As a result, in Schlögel's work, the spatial turn is explicitly associated with a long overdue exploration of the materiality of places, an exploration that was suppressed by both textualism and constructivism: a delving, a searching for traces and lines of connection, an appeal for knowledge of places, for "eyewitnessing" and even for excursions as a beneficial practice in the discipline of history. With respect to the reflexive turn, what seems remarkable about this approach are particularly the consequences for the representation of history. After all, it requires historical descriptions of culture that define fields and mark out intersections or connecting lines (see Schlögel 2003: 51). In place of the "narrative(s) of evolution" (503), it calls for other forms of representation that accommodate the contradictory, conflict-ridden coexistence of different worlds – genre-mixed "narrative(s) of simultaneity," as Schlögel calls them (504).

Remarkably, this approach appears to have a political objective as well: to resurvey Europe. However, it represents a type of spatial surveying that is cartographic, devoid of people and, astonishingly enough, not conceived in terms of social actions or relationships. Furthermore, its focus on the "production of a new European space" (465) after the eastward or even westward expansion of Europe suggests the importance of distinguishing between two versions of the spatial turn.

The Anglo-American version of the spatial turn appears to be more closely connected to globalization and to large spaces governed by global spatial relations and spatial politics. By contrast – with the exception of the politically oriented approaches of cultural geography (see Gebhardt, Reuber and Wolkersdorfer 2003) – the German-language version of the spatial turn appears to be predominantly tailored to the aspect of Europeanization. Possibly supported by approaches from the history of everyday life and historical anthropology, it appears to give enhanced status to local and regional spaces of experience. Such

findings emerge when the spatial or topographical turn is linked to the regional origins of these representations of the spatial turn – that is, when the various theories about space are "localized" on the basis of the respective American or German discourses. When distinguishing the spatial turn in Anglo-Saxon cultural studies from its counterpart in the German-language *Kulturwissenschaften*, literary and cultural theorist Sigrid Weigel points to a corresponding mapping of space-related theories (Weigel 2009). Weigel argues that while Anglo-Saxon cultural studies begins with a critique of the history of colonization and seeks to elaborate the counter-discourses of ethnic minorities in the interstitial spaces between cultures, the German-language topographical turn (in literary studies and the *Kulturwissenschaften*) has other distinguishing features: it is anchored in the history of philosophy, tends toward historicization, focuses on concrete places and argues semiotically. However, Weigel's failure to give consideration to cultural geography with its important political impetus distorts the initial conceptual constellation that transformed "space" into a new and specific analytical category.

3 Space as an Analytical Category

It is crucial to emphasize that the mere quantitative concentration of research into "space" as a topic or object of investigation does not suffice to justify the claim that a spatial turn is in fact taking place. Nor is sufficient evidence to be found in the broad interdisciplinary dissemination of such research, which at times has led to a universal metaphorical concept with very blurry contours. Rather, like all the other reorientations, the spatial turn has required a qualitative leap toward a more precise methodological conceptual definition. This was achieved only after interdisciplinary cooperation decoupled the new focus on space and spatiality from space in a narrower sense, and the modes of thought themselves became spatially based, leading to a methodological process of spatialization – to the demand to "think geographically" (Hubbard et al. 2002). After all, space as such is not the focus, particularly since the aim is not to replace time with space. What is important is the perspective of spatialization, particularly "the spatialization of time and history" (Soja 1996: 170) in the sense of a new methodological attitude toward research. This final twist of the spatial turn can of course only be achieved when the epistemological potential of the spatial focus is released, as in Soja's orientation toward a "spatial hermeneutics" (Soja 1989: 1–2). Soja proposes that we broaden all acts of understanding to include a spatial dimension that allows us to encompass the synchronicity, juxtaposition and separation of disparate spheres of life as well as the asymmetries of distributions of power. Such a pro-

posal, which once again imposes restrictions on sequential history-telling with its temporal progressions, has a methodological foundation in Said's "contrapuntal reading" and the epistemological attitude underlying mapping.

How, then, does such a critical perspective on space and spatiality find expression in an interdisciplinary spatial turn? The inflationary talk of mapping in recent decades and the postcolonial charging of the category of space, in particular, seem not to have provided a sufficient answer to the question of new forms of perception and analytical categories. These issues need to be further explored in order to clarify whether the spatial perspective goes beyond a changed understanding of space, beyond the rediscovery of space as a prominent "object" in the study of culture and beyond the distinctions that have drawn attention since the 1980s, particularly from the feminist perspective, between private and public spaces, gender-specific spaces and body spaces. To what extent can we speak of a spatial turn above and beyond these extensions? The decisive factor here is that space itself has become a central analytical category, a principle for constructing social behavior, a dimension implying materiality and experiential proximity, as well as a strategy of representation. This complex spatial analytical category reaches beyond a narrative or temporal orientation; it no longer remains caught in the snares of evolutionism and development (see Crang and Thrift 2000: 1). The spatial turn's ability to assert itself has been shown by the extent to which it has entered disciplines that do not privilege spatiality (e.g., history). Above all, it has been shown by the extent to which the category of space initiated a shift toward a spatial revision of the concept of culture itself. Initial steps, though not much more, have already been taken in this direction.

The trend toward reconceptualizing culture in this way can already be seen in the spread of a new cultural-analytical vocabulary containing metaphors that are increasingly spatial in nature, such as marginality, edge, boundary, location, deterritorialization, center/periphery, mapping and recently also movement and mobility. This vocabulary provides the scaffolding for a

> conceptual model in the study of culture that brings together various levels and dimensions. The individual and the social, the affiliated and the non-affiliated, the local and the global, the concrete and the imagined, practice and representation – all can be conceived and described in terms of their interaction. (Rolshoven 2003: 207)

In other words, the spatial perspective makes it possible to analyze, as part of a comprehensive view, the incommensurable juxtaposition of elements of everyday life that were previously investigated separately – the interplay between structures and individual decisions. This prominent new approach even led, in the late 1990s, to the debut of a journal called *Space and Culture* (for a summary of the first four volumes, see Shields 2002). On the one hand, from the perspective of the

individual disciplines, this complex operative concept of space has been channeling the spatial turn into a (macro-)political spatial perspective and directing new attention to spatial politics, as it is particularly well suited for use as an organizational concept that is able to cope with the contingencies of the global world. On the other hand, it is calling attention to the concrete conditions of space on a micro-level, though at the risk of losing the initial political impetus and potential of the spatial turn.

4 The Spatial Turn in Different Disciplines

The interdisciplinary reconceptualization of space has gone so far as to use the reflections on space in various disciplines to define space as a fundamental element of social and cultural theory, to develop spatial methodologies and rethink the concept of culture in spatial terms. What is striking, at least in the international debate, is the way these reflections on space have been connected to global and social developments in areas such as tourism, migration, mobility, border conflicts, gender-specific and ethnic exclusion, the transformations of global cities and the monitoring of space. One emerging issue associated with the spatial turn is the political economics of space. Here a leading role has been played by geography, particularly by the field of political cultural geography, which has been reconceptualized in the course of the spatial turn. In the debate on the "spatial humanities," which aim for a "reintegration of geography into the humanities" (Bodenhamer et al. 2010: xiv, xv), the focus is not limited to the new geographical information systems (GIS) that inspired the claim that "GIS lies at the heart of this so-called spatial turn" (1). Moving beyond the widespread use of spatial technologies (Goodchild and Janelle 2010), the geographically informed spatial humanities also concentrate on the study of regional differences and localizations of the political – as well as on the question of "how political actors pursue geopolitics with the help of 'geographical imaginations' and 'strategic images of space'" (Gebhardt et al. 2003: 6). In this action-theoretical revision of cultural geography and as part of cultural geography's turn away from "existing" space, a central concern has been the social "making" of geographical spatial structures.

However, with explicit reference to the linguistic turn, scholars have also set their sights on the codes, signs and symbols of a geography of power that are attracting new attention not only in the field of spatial control (e.g., access checks at airport terminals), the worlds of shopping and experience, and contested urban spaces, but also in border conflicts and the practices of border formation and border crossings. Here, too, it would be helpful to read the codex of

the current discourse on space against the grain. For example, the continuing impact of the "container" concept of space on everyday life should not be ignored or conceptually suppressed, but acknowledged and reinvestigated, though of course without abandoning the accomplishments of the postmodern reconceptualization. After all, everyday essentializations – e.g., the continuing binary attributions between East and West Germany, between East and West in general and between the Global North and South – cannot simply be wiped away, nor can the discourse on space really escape them.

By referring back to the everyday constructs of space that cannot be seamlessly integrated into mainstream research in the study of culture, we can bring the global lens of restructured spatiality into sharper focus. The same is true of the specific lens of the "power-geometries of time-space," as developed by British feminist geographer Doreen Massey. Massey explores not only how spaces are organized and imagined with a gender-specific structure, but also how they are conceptually grasped and represented. It is only from this springboard that a new, more far-reaching focus can be attained, one that suggests a spatial turn and allows us to rewrite the history of modernity and globalization from a spatial perspective. Critical axes in this process are the structural hegemonic spatial breaks between the (Global) North and South, which continue to have an impact today. At the same time, these spatial hierarchies need to be explicitly contrasted by constellations of space in the sense of a "juxtaposition of dissonant narratives" (Massey 1999: 14) in order to respond to a trend that is still observable on a wide scale today, in which existing differences between (disparate) societies are often transformed by a "denial of coevalness" (Fabian 1983: 31) into a temporal sequence of advanced and stunted elements. In contrast to such "oppressive uses of Time" (Fabian 1983: 2), a clear focus on space expressly demands the recognition of simultaneity, coevalness and mutual entanglements in the tensions between differences (see Massey 1999, 2005: 13ff.). In a much less programmatic way, a stimulating German-language essay collection attempts to use empirical case studies to explore the relationship between globalization and space and between world and regional orders (Schröder and Höhler 2005).

Cultural anthropology, or the study of culture informed by cultural anthropology, has been contributing in its own way to extending the political dimensions of geography (see Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003). It has prepared for this endeavor by investigating the intercultural "contact zones" (Pratt 2003) that are created by specific social practices. Research in this field is exemplified by interdisciplinary case studies dealing with topics such as the oceans as productive contact zones (Klein and Mackenthun 2004). The main concern here – revealing a link to the spatial turn – is once again the nature of social and political space as a construct. Here, too, space is seen not as a container or a category of conscious-

ness that shapes perception, but rather as a result of social and political action that has its material correspondence in architecture, structures, etc. A ship, for example, can be understood as a "hybrid space" of cultural encounter (on the ethnography of the slave ship in this sense, see Rediker 2008: 12). The spatial turn has therefore resulted in the historicization of oceans and other supposedly ahistorical spaces. Faced with these contact zones, these overlapping and interstitial spaces, cultural anthropology and historical studies have been led away from holistic attitudes toward culture. As in other disciplines, enhanced status has been given to interstitial spaces, particularly in transfer research or in literary and translation studies with their analysis of translation as a transition, migration or passage, linguistic and otherwise (see Wolf 2012; see also some of the empirical case studies in "Spatial Analysis," a special issue of *Historical Social Research*, 2014). Contact zones thus shed light on the formation of space as a translation process and vice versa, showing links to the translational turn.

These case studies show that in cultural anthropology, history and other disciplines the attempt to extend the spatial category beyond the conceptual level has provided critical impetus for a more detailed specification and empirical grounding. It would now be helpful, for example, to examine the jargon-like talk of despatialization (a process that results from migration, virtual mobility and modern media technologies) using empirical studies of how people spatially reorganize their lives after becoming uprooted (see Löfgren 1995: 351). This project has the potential to focus increased attention on the polyphony of spaces: on the way local activities and social relationships are linked beyond any action setting to inscriptions of emotions, memories, histories, physical and mental appropriations, mental maps and semantic conflicts (see Rodman 2003: 207). Its objective could be a more precise investigation of space-creating practices using the special expertise of empirical field research and the cultural anthropological method of a cross-cultural comparison that begins with individual cases and interactions on the local level (see Hauser-Schäublin and Dickhardt 2003: 20–21).

Here a categorical shift from "space" to "place" has come to the fore – for instance, in new, small-scale reflections on the spatial character of workplaces and their impact on organizational change (Dale and Burrell 2008; Marrewijk and Yanow 2010). It is also evident in the claim "that organizational theory must perform a 'spatial turn'" (Vaujany and Mitev 2013: 2), as well as in the notion of "branded spaces" (Sonnenburg and Baker 2013: 15–17). An additional example is the (localizing) work by the historians and social and political scientists who endorse the spatial turn: "When political space is filled, as it inevitably is, by people, speech, activity, representations, memory, physical objects, this cultural action transforms space into a particular, constraining *place*" (Scott 2009: 1). But it is not only historians who are suggesting a concentration on "place" as a site

filled with historical action (Withers 2009; Jerram 2013; Schwerhoff 2013). In the field of religious studies as well, we are finding new approaches to a spatial analysis of religion that base their location of religion on the "places" of the body, communities, events and institutions (see above all Knott 2005: 29–34, 2010).

By contrast, the formulation of a "theory of cultural spatiality" – as proposed by the cultural anthropologists Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin and Michael Dickhardt (2003: 18) – requires a more comprehensive cross-disciplinary framework. Here the laudable effort to empirically ground the inflationary talk of space and to emphasize spatial materiality without naturalizing space should be reconnected to the programmatic conceptual level of the discourse on space. Without such a comprehensive shift, there is a risk that research will come to a standstill due to the one-dimensional, relational, action-analytical concept of space that Martina Löw has developed from a sociological perspective (Löw 2008) – a concept that has all too frequently been used in an unreflected manner in the study of culture and the social sciences.

In literary studies scholars investigated narrative space long before the advent of the spatial turn. With focuses such as the phenomenology and semiotics of literary space, they studied, for example, the encodings of space, its representational forms, spatial habits and practices, and the manner in which space is made accessible by narrative, charged with symbols and imaginations and transformed into a symbolic or "imaginary place." However, the "topographical" view of geographically identifiable places and spaces in literary texts – or the view of literary texts as these spaces' formational framework – is often the result of a thematic focus. Integrated into a cultural history of space, such focuses extend as far as the specific "topographical poetology" in the work of German poet Ingeborg Bachmann with its spatial inscriptions of memory and reminiscences (see Weigel 1999: 352ff.). However, places attract attention not only as a topic of literature. A more important question is how literary texts reflect and shape situatedness as an intercultural problem, or even as a problem in the study of culture; and how they explore their own (postcolonial) situatedness in modern world literatures – e.g., the way migrants' and transcultural literature is positioned within the interstitial spaces between languages and cultures. These reflections focus on rewriting strategies, the territorial disputes in postcolonial literatures (see Huggan 1994, exemplified by Australian and Canadian literature), mappings of the spatial turn in literary geography and "geocriticism" (Tally 2013: 112–145) and the new approaches to spatial aesthetics in contemporary culture (Papastergiadis 2010).

In his highly original and influential writings, Romance studies scholar Ottmar Ette tracks such literary reflections on space, particularly in the tense relationship between European and non-European (Caribbean) "literature on the

move." His book of the same title "interrogates literature regarding the evolution of spatial concepts" (Ette 2003: 9), examining its border transgressions and contributions to the dynamics of the complex new spaces in a deterritorialized, ever moving global world. Ette's approach is influential within the contemporary shift from the general focus on the spatial to a depiction of movements in space (Hallet and Neumann 2009; Fisher and Mennel 2010; Eigler 2012, 2014). His interest in space "on the move" extends into poetology and cultural theory, into the "travel structures" of the novel (Ette 2003: 26), the movement of reading as a "kind of travelling" (27) and the "spatialization of hermeneutical processes" (48), which describes the process of self-understanding as a movement through space. Theory can be set into motion only if it enters the world of its objects – e.g., the spaces of literature itself, the maps of a "literary geography" (Tally 2011: 49ff.) and the marginalized "landscapes" of contemporary world literatures with their theory-filled, spatially linked writing strategies.

In conjunction with these developments and the debate on world literature, the political perspective on space seems to be gaining a foothold in Germany, at least in literary studies. In this context it is precisely the literatures of the world that are shifting the Eurocentric map with their rewriting and remapping practices (see Bachmann-Medick 2007). The topography of realism and the successive opening of space, which has been an enduring descriptive principle in the study of culture, is increasingly being undermined. As described above, literary texts are serving as the media for an "imaginary geography." In *The Satanic Verses*, Salman Rushdie illustrates this transformation through his depictions of a hybrid space – i.e., through the "metamorphosis of London into a tropical city" (Rushdie 1988: 354). A topographical attitude toward narrative is also exemplified by the novel *Maps* by the Somali-born writer Nuruddin Farah (2000) and by the Caribbean novel *Texaco* by Patrick Chamoiseau (1997). These works use a narrative topography to integrate incongruent worlds into a constellation of synchronicity and to demonstrate how places are inscribed and charged with feeling and collective memory. Through explicit creolizations, they give expression to the subversive acts accompanying the formation of space, even at the level of the representational form. It is not least this transcultural unlocking of space that is making literature and art part of an overarching project of "cultural topographies" that is a central research field in the study of culture.

For literary studies, this theoretically enhanced rediscovery of spatiality and place, border transgressions and topographies, clearly represents a turn. It is overcoming the exaggerated emphasis placed on interior spaces and encouraging a revaluation of real spaces as both the theme and determinative environment of literary texts – exemplified, not least, in historical contexts such as Shakespeare's dramas as contemplations of spatial changes in early modern society (Dusta-

gheer 2013). However, this turn is more topographical than spatial for the very reason that it is connected to representations: to topography as an inscription (and description) of space. This type of literary topography, which harks back to Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space* (1958/1994), finds expression, for example, in the geographical localizations of the atlases of literary texts and philosophical writings (see Moretti 1998). These works in part explicitly take up the topographical tradition of Aby Warburg's pictorial atlas *Mnemosyne*, which presents the constellations of history as a visual process (see the chapter "The Iconic Turn/Pictorial Turn").

In *Topographies*, Hillis Miller, a scholar of English studies and comparative literature, links the situatedness of literary texts to the question of how topographical descriptions function in novels, poems and philosophical texts and what these descriptions mean (Miller 1995). A spatial or topographical turn is also (tacitly) at work here, because literary landscapes are not viewed as the predetermined objects of descriptions, but as the result of human or poetic linguistic activities, attributions and projections. It is the performative capacity of language that creates spaces that are more than behavioral environments. Topographical literature promotes a "transformation of empty place into world" (Miller 1995: 277). Through reflections on topography, literature communicates its own relationship to the world, its connection to the coordinates of historical reality. This localization work by literature is particularly illuminating for the textual territories of literary texts (Miller 1995: 56), and it is revealed in the translation of theory, as well as in literary theories and "traveling theories." Drawing on this spatial perspective, Miller enters the realm of the translational turn and at the same time draws attention to the topographical situatedness of theories, to their links to place and formational environment. One thing that must be borne in mind despite all their translatability is that theories and conceptual terms are culture-specific and location-bound and therefore cannot be seamlessly "displaced" across cultural boundaries.

Cultural topography also provides the overarching spatial framework for *Topographien der Literatur*, an important collection of conference papers that describe the topographical turn specifically from the perspective of German-language literary studies (see Böhme 2005). Here the point of departure is not predetermined spaces, places and arenas, but the production of space through topographical cultural techniques, mapping, representation, localization, movement, the formation of networks and so on. As editor Hartmut Böhme writes in the introduction, beyond the formation of a simple spatial view, the central categories of investigation are the physical materiality of space and its conveyance through various media: "Space is never simply there … because space is first and foremost material space – that is, burdensome and requiring effort" (Böhme 2005:

xvii). This approach seems to confirm the “down-to-earthness” of the German discourse on space in contrast to the conceptual flights of the spatial turn. Combined with an explicitly disciplinary perspective, it has resulted in a grounded treatment of the spatial turn. On the one hand, this is certainly impressive, yet it is doubtful whether this topographical understanding of space does justice to the contribution made by the world’s literatures to the formation of cultural topographies. When applied to the analysis of the border crossings of transnational literatures, the topographical understanding of space questions literature not only with respect to reflections on boundaries, travel contexts, histories of conquest and spatial movements, but also with respect to the fictional “invention” and reinterpretation of space-forming relations and even the participation of literature in political conceptual mapping strategies. In this regard, the localization of the authors’ own spatial perspectives lags behind the perspectives of a highly nuanced international discourse on space, especially when works cite only the “recently proclaimed topographical turn” (Böhme 2005: xii) in order to stake out a new territory in literary studies. The diverse methodological incentives provided by a widely ramified spatial turn can be used more extensively only if the understanding of space in literary studies is expanded to include a renewed (interdisciplinary) link to international theoretical developments.

Ultimately, such a transnational perspective could avail itself of the reflections on space in literary studies to advance a “theoretical project of mapping spaces” and initiate a discourse critical of a Eurocentric topography. One aim of such a theoretical project could be to explore the interstitial spaces from which minority discourses emerge. In her essay “On the ‘Topographical Turn,’” Sigrid Weigel has provided a number of guiding principles for such an endeavor (Weigel 2009). These could be applied to interpret literary texts in a more targeted fashion, shed light on the breaks between cultural identity and national territory in migrants’ literature, and create a new focus for the spatial descriptions of literary texts – as Weigel shows in an additional text addressing Ingeborg Bachmann’s “topographical poetology.” In Bachmann’s work, places and spaces are charged by the inscriptions of memory or they are transformed into interstitial spaces with respect to other arenas of memory (see Weigel 1999: 352ff.).

It is above all the concern with locations of memory that has been imposing on the discipline of history the necessity to act. Because historical research has always worked in a more chronological fashion, even when it has not confined itself to the temporal sequence of historical events, the category of space poses a particular challenge. In the wake of pioneering thinkers such as Fernand Braudel, who wrote a classic work on the Mediterranean world (Braudel 1995), there has been a growing tendency “to spatialize the historical narrative” (Soja 1989: 1). Alongside cultural geography, it is the discipline of history in which the spatial

turn appears to have had the most productive effects. However, it is only recently that explicit references have been made to this turn in Germany and other countries (see the forum on space in the journal *History and Theory*, 2013).

The approach taken to the places of history and sites of memory in works such as the extensive multivolume *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* overemphasizes the metaphor and "theme" of space (François and Schulze 2001–2003). By contrast, the contributions to the essay collection *Ortsgespräche* investigate space as a key category for a history of communication that has yet to be fully conceptualized (Geppert et al. 2005). Starting with spatialization practices, the essays in this collection explicitly draw on the spatial turn to explore the changed mechanized spatial structures of the nineteenth century (railways, telegraph networks, etc.) – thus adding to the spatial turn the dimensions of communication and mediality and using it, in particular, to lay the groundwork for a spatialized history of communication (for a fruitful comparison to new approaches to a geography of communication from the perspective of media studies, see Falkheimer and Jansson 2006). It is the dimension of communication that might very well eliminate the danger of a relapse into a pre-discursive spatial materiality in the German-language versions of the spatial turn.

These questions aside, the spatial turn has created more complex ways of experiencing and studying political and spatial historical contexts. Embodied by approaches such as network analysis, these new possibilities stand in contrast to the culturalist constrictions of historical research. But the spatial turn loosens the constrictions of national history as well. What is striking is the simultaneous emergence of the spatial turn and the transnationalization of the discipline of history (see Middell and Naumann 2010). As a new focus in research on world history (Osterhammel 2000) and area studies (Engel and Nugent 2010), space represents an approach that is particularly well suited to analyzing international relations. As part of this process, the history of mental mapping – from the invention of the Orient to the "invention of Eastern Europe" (Wolf 1994) – is certainly an important structural element of spatial history. On the other hand, it is worth taking note of the interdisciplinary studies that use urban spaces and power structures to investigate the political spaces of the early modern period (see Dorsch and Rau 2013). Such studies are most valuable when they not only have a conceptual orientation, but are based on empirical historical case studies, be it within the context of urbanization, practices of mobility and movement, spatial memory or mapping (see Rau 2013, 2014; Stock and Vöhringer 2014; on spatiality in eighteenth-century Lima, Arias 2010).

One important study of knowledge spaces from the perspective of the history of science shows that the spatial turn has made it necessary to separate epistemological knowledge from the history of ideas and to question this knowledge

in terms of its concrete local situatedness. In other words, the epistemological potential of the category of space enables us to "portray scientific knowledge in terms of its contingencies and local situatedness within the historical context of its production, rather than examining it in the abstract space of the history of concepts and ideas" (Rheinberger et al. 1997: 8). However, this approach tends to do the footwork for the iconic turn, since it investigates knowledge spaces primarily with an emphasis on their functions as representational spaces, their strategies of knowledge representation and visualization processes. Here a link between space and mediality comes to the fore that has ultimately led to the spatial turn's massive infiltration of media theory (among others Falkheimer and Jansson 2006). Examples include the application of the debate on space to research on new technologies, information systems analysis (see Bodenhamer et al. 2010), and the Internet, its localizations, spatial superimpositions and gender differentiations.

These gender-specific aspects of space have of course been the primary point of departure for gender research. This line of research has broadly focused the spatial turn on the problems of concrete spatial organization, symbolization and coding. The long history of the feminist metaphor of space within the context of the extension of women's rights and roles was initially linked to actual spaces, as in Virginia Woolf's *A Room for One's Own* (1929; see Rendell et al. 2000 on this work and other key gender-related texts). In later periods, the gender-focused discourse on space increasingly took up marginalized and liminalized experiences of space with a view toward the manner in which they are imbued with gender-related meaning. In gender-oriented narratology, for example, such gender-specific role assignments to specific spaces are examined in terms of their linguistic coding (see Würzbach 2004). But even in text-transcendent studies of space – e.g., the (feminist) theory of architecture – we find a growing tendency to break up entrenched binary oppositions such as home/work, production/consumption and private/public. The critical focus here is on the spatial expression of these oppositions in the functionally separate spheres of "work center" versus "residential area," in the isolation of women in residential areas, in gender-specific urban spaces ("gendered spaces") and in the spatial metaphors of the gender discourse itself (see Shands 1999: 8ff.; Massey 1994; Spain 1992; Ardener 1993; Ainley 1998; Löw 2001: 246 ff.; Beebe et al. 2012).

However, when the spatial perspective is applied more specifically to the analysis of real spaces, it runs the risk of it becoming caught in a "space" trap. As regards the spatial turn, this trap has been criticized mainly from a sociological perspective and refers to the purported return of the (ever dynamic) concept of space and the underlying tendency to draw on physical geographical space in such a way that the results of social practices are unwittingly transformed into

seemingly natural spatial conditions (Lippuner and Lossau 2004: 48). The application and transfer of the category of space to the analysis of social relations and historical developments – the spatialization of the social (see Shields 2013) – not only involves a depoliticization process, but also brings the danger of a naturalization of social phenomena, as Julia Lossau and Roland Lippuner demonstrate in their analysis of Pierre Bourdieu's initial distinction between and subsequent merger of physical and social space (Lippuner and Lossau 2004: 54). On the other hand, a tendency toward harmonization is also observable in the theoretical use of concepts of space, as is the case with the emphatic understanding of hybridity made evident in Patrick Ffrench's work:

> Since critical theory is apt to use terms like "the border" or "the frontier" in discussing conceptual, generic, or cultural transgressions or shifts, we should be wary of a forgetfulness of the political conflict, a forgetfulness of *war*, that this use of the figure of the border may leave behind as a kind of residue. (Ffrench 2003: 230)

Finally, the spatial turn is central and self-reflexive to the extent that the spatial categories of the study of culture – center, periphery, edge, border – can be defined more precisely beyond their character as metaphors and can be explored with a focus on their complexity. After all, even the figure of the "turning point" embodies a spatial metaphor and it is no accident that the unfolding of the debate in the study of culture along the lines of the various turns is represented as a spatial movement that does not follow an evolutionary perspective of progress but references constellations of synchronicity – i.e., theoretical landscapes, intellectual fields, contact zones and border transgressions between disciplines. And it is no accident that in this respect the spatial turn has taken aim at the self-definition of the study of culture and shown the reductive nature of steering the discourse in Western cultural research too strongly in the direction of theory production alone – focusing it "only on shifts in sense and meaning, giving equal treatment to land and sea, armored units and missile defense systems, and outsourcing it to the social environment" (Maresch 2001).

In fact, an attempt should be made to gain the new clarity that is already evident in the overlaps between the spatial and iconic turns. Obviously, we should not go so far as to trace the spatial turn back to the "need for visualization" (Osterhammel 1998: 375, 2000: 307) – a need that, via maps and spatial representations, produces "images of the world." But a prominent link between the spatial and iconic turns could nevertheless be exploited. It could ultimately lead to important insights into the materiality of space, though these should not tempt us to return to the concrete, territorial, naturalizing concepts of space and fall victim to a conceptless neopositivism. Rather, the materialization perspective could provide motivation not only to give enhanced status to abstract spatial

relationships and virtual or symbolic concepts of space, but also, as advocated by spatial theorist Rudolf Maresch, to take account of locations, transport systems, sea straits and resources. These, too, are not simple localities, but complex spaces characterized by social and intercultural relations, activities, conflicts, the invisible exercise of power and translation processes. This approach requires us to give renewed consideration to the territorial links of space and to continued explosive spatial conflicts such as those between Israel and Palestine and those in Eastern Europe and other regions of the world.

This means the spatial turn will be consummated only when the spatial perspective is characterized in a comprehensive way that goes beyond its theoretical conceptualization – when it is grounded in empirical case studies, translated into practice by spatializing "concepts of justice, democracy, citizenship, community struggles and so on" (Soja 2011: 1), further developed in transcultural discourse and reconnected to the global, transcultural and societal conditions of reality.

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Chapter VII: The Iconic Turn/Pictorial Turn

Not only the major "image revolution" (Brandt 2004: 53) that began in the second half of the nineteenth century, but especially the emergence of the Internet as a digital and visual storage medium and the overproduction of pictures and images in our media society – all hint at an iconic turn, as do the visualization techniques in medicine and the natural sciences and the images generated by the modern surveillance state. Yet talk of an iconic turn is not just a reference to the increasing importance of visual phenomena of everyday culture. This turn has led to a new epistemological awareness of images in the study of culture. Linked to a critique of knowledge and language, it seeks to promote a visual literacy that has been poorly developed in Western societies since Plato's hostility toward images and logocentrist trends in philosophy. The dominance of language in Western cultures has long marginalized the study of visual cultures.

In 1992, American literary scholar and cultural theorist William J. T. Mitchell identified and proclaimed a "pictorial turn" as a movement against this dominance of verbal language (Mitchell in *Artforum* 1992: 89–94, reprinted in Mitchell 1994). Reflections on pictures and images, as well as reflections that use images, were to have enhanced status in the future. At around the same time, German art historian Gottfried Boehm, in his essay "Die Wiederkehr der Bilder" (Boehm 1994), proclaimed an "iconic turn" with the ultimate goal of establishing a "general image science" (*Allgemeine Bildwissenschaft*) in explicit analogy and as a counter-strategy to a general linguistics – particularly to the dominance of language and text in the linguistic turn. As a critical reaction to the dominant position of media studies, this image science was initially anchored in art history so that it could explore the intrinsic logic of images and gain new analytical access to visual cultures. After all, images have been "read" long enough for their hidden meanings, subtexts and underlying stories, but images are not mere signs, representations or illustrations. They have a power all their own that seems to elude language. Thus, from the start, the iconic turn went beyond the analysis of pictures and images as objects and representations, covering the entire spectrum of visual perception and culture. It set the stage for a comprehensive "visual turn" encompassing visual practices and modes of perception such as attention, remembering, seeing, observing and even cultures of the gaze.

Compared with the other turns, there has been greater disagreement on what discipline actually pioneered the iconic turn. Various scholarly cultures, each struggling for disciplinary authority and definitional power, have made their own contribution, often taking up controversial positions. Whereas the American discussion has taken place within the broader context of visual studies, iconology and visual culture studies, the iconic turn in German-language research has been

shaped more substantially by disciplinary dynamics – by the transformation of art history into a historical "image science" based on formal analysis, by an anthropology of images and by the efforts currently underway to launch a "visual media science" (*Bild-Medienwissenschaft*) or an interdisciplinary "general image science" (see the overview in Schulz 2005; Rampley 2012; on the differences between the American pictorial and German iconic turn, see Mersmann 2014).

Certainly, this general image science of German persuasion represents an attempt to bring together a wide range of disciplines concerned with images. But to what extent is it possible, within the framework of a new independent discipline, to pursue diverse or even contradictory visual approaches without subjecting them to the integrative constraints of a universal meta-discipline? Ultimately, reflections on images need to be methodologically open in order to shift attention to a question that has been largely forgotten due to the fixation on the image-science umbrella project: What significance does the iconic turn have for the study of culture as a whole? Beyond the evolution of art history into a discipline of cultural analysis, there is another issue of importance here – that of the contribution made by reflections on images to a visual reorientation in the study of culture.

1 The Formation of the Iconic Turn/Pictorial Turn

Even in its German-language research contexts, the history of the emergence of the iconic turn can be told from very different perspectives. As Willibald Sauerländer argues in a collection of papers originally presented at a prominent lecture series (Maar and Burda 2004), the iconic turn in its initial phase represented a discipline-based attempt to understand historical visual cultures on the basis of their own conception of images and to defend them from the growing dominance of contemporary media images: "The iconic turn was an empathetic attempt to hermeneutically rescue the autonomy of the artistic image, which was endangered in the media age" (Sauerländer 2004: 407). However, Sauerländer's view by no means represents the common master narrative of the iconic turn. We can tell a different story once we move beyond the autonomy claim of the image concept in art history and, like Sauerländer himself, confront the challenges posed by the immense expansion of visual worlds as a result of film, video, digital visualizations and other media. Linked particularly to the American discourse on visual culture and the pictorial turn that began in the 1990s (see Curtis 2010; Mirzoeff 2012; Heywood and Sandywell 2012), the debate has broadened to include all images and visual perceptions, beyond the aesthetic evaluations and visual traditions of high culture. This extended image concept has become so

broad as to invalidate the initial distinction between the more narrowly defined iconic turn and the more comprehensive pictorial turn.

If we narrate the emergence of the iconic turn from the perspective of a history of science and epistemology, its opposition to the linguistic turn – especially in the work of Mitchell and Boehm – becomes so clear that all other turns tend to get lost between the two. Mitchell attributes the iconic turn's rise to the fact that late twentieth-century philosophy was increasingly placed on the defensive by the challenges of visual representation (Mitchell 1994: 12–13). In other words, it was increasingly forced to defend the reflexive and logical characteristics of language against the fuzziness of pictorial evidence. Admittedly, this is a very one-sided account of twentieth-century philosophy, which in its engagement with images made its first forays into image science not only in the field of phenomenological philosophy (Martin Heidegger, Edmund Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty), but also in the work of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. This engagement paved the way for the iconic turn in its own right by overcoming assumptions about the representational character of images and underscoring their capacity to explain the world and shape perception.

For his part, Gottfried Boehm derived from the characteristic "epistemological uncertainties" of philosophy its own "turn to images." He finds proof of this turn in the "visual potency" of philosophy itself, starting with the revaluation of the integral function of images in Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy and continuing in the language games of Ludwig Wittgenstein and the metaphors of Hans Blumenberg (Boehm 1994: 14). Nevertheless, the discipline of art history was needed to refine such philosophical approaches. Paradoxically, the iconic turn arose precisely at a time when art historians became involved (albeit somewhat belatedly) in the linguistic turn themselves and began viewing the visual arts as sign systems and textual and discursive phenomena. The opposition to the linguistic turn within the discipline of art history provided the initial impetus to the iconic turn (Bredekamp 2000: 34). Even Mitchell's project of a "*critical* iconology" was confined to his own discipline. However, this project moved beyond the linguistically mediated iconology of his forerunner, Erwin Panofsky, by propagating the idea of a "resistance of the icon to the logos" (Mitchell 1994: 28). Expanding this approach to include reflections on perceptual modes of seeing and observing created a framework for a form of visual studies that transcended the notion of the image. With his explicit inclusion of categories of sensory perception such as the gaze, Gottfried Boehm also moved developments in this direction (1994: 17).

A formational history must address the question of precisely when a turn begins. In the case of the iconic turn, this is a difficult question to answer. As Mitchell points out in *What Do Pictures Want?* one of the reasons for this difficulty is that the pictorial/iconic turn is not a unique modern phenomenon. Rather, it

has recurred in all media revolutions – from photography to the Internet – when a new way of producing visual images has marked a historical turning point (Mitchell 2005: 349). Even so, like all the reorientations in the study of culture, the iconic turn tends to back-project a current focus in a changing theoretical landscape onto factual developments in earlier centuries. Horst Bredekamp, for example, dates the iconic turn to the political iconography in Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* – to the "archetypal image" of the modern state, as illustrated in the famous frontispiece. In other words, the modern state is interpreted as originating as an image, via the act of seeing. In the work of Hobbes, the "visible power" of images (Bredekamp 2003: 130, 2007), which can even validate state treaties, is contrasted by the weaker mode of communication through words. Bredekamp thus sees the formational history of the iconic turn as beginning far back on the timeline of iconicity.

These early traces of the iconic turn, as well as its explicit historicization, point us in the direction of art history. Emerging in the nineteenth century, art history eventually expanded its descriptive and interpretive methods to include non-artistic images, motivated not only by the reception of medieval art and its dissolution of artistic boundaries, but also by the inclusion of the applied arts and the engagement with the emerging field of photography. Through photography as a visual medium, the path was paved for the iconic turn by the natural sciences, especially by Charles Darwin and the evolutionary biologists in his circle with their visualizations and illustrated diagrams. The later rise of the Internet can thus be seen as just the tip of a visual media iceberg (see Bredekamp 2004: 17). Film, in particular, led to a striking migration of reflections on images to media theory, which image science, for its part, further promoted. However, alongside these media-based and technological foundations of theory development, it was above all the explosive alliance between images, media and forms of social staging that gave birth to the iconic turn. Nor can it be overlooked that with its accompanying image policy, visual stagings and censorship, the problematic media coverage of the Second Gulf War (1990–1991) acted as a critical historical and political catalyst.

One goal of the iconic turn has been to use critical visual analysis to explain the omnipresent multiplication of images, which includes the growing "iconic power" of social life (Alexander et al. 2012). The discipline of art history has certainly not been the only driving force behind these developments. Neither art history nor philosophy alone would have been able to initiate such a turn. It required the support of media studies scholars, who recognized and gave enhanced status to the mundane images of everyday life and technology (above all Kittler 2010). The incentive provided by media theory to leave the realm of high culture and redefine images on the basis of an engagement with technical media

has released new epistemological potential for the categories of image, medium and perception in the study of culture.

2 From Art History to an Interdisciplinary Image Science? Positions of the Iconic Turn

"The pictorial turn is not the answer to anything. It is merely a way of stating the question" (Mitchell 1994: 24). In other words, this turn is not merely a response to current visual culture, but a historical, semiotic, anthropological, art-historical, philosophical and epistemological interrogation of the same. "What is an image?" is the central question, one originally raised in Plato's dialogue the *Sophist*. In an age of digital images it may at first sound outmoded, but it is becoming more closely tailored to the diversity of images.

Even if the answers to this central question vary widely, a broadly expanded image concept is always in play. Images in everyday life are just as important for this concept as are images and imaging methods in the natural sciences and medicine. As a result, the iconic turn brings together elements that are increasingly challenging the traditional image concept of art history, which is fixated on artworks. Images must be examined not only in terms of their prehistory ("sub-history"), their relationship to what is depicted, their meaning and refractoriness, but also in terms of their mediality and the complex ways they are perceived. When and where do images assert their power? Under what conditions and in what media? (see Schulz 2005: 53) As Hans Belting explains:

> An "image" is more than a product of perception. It is created as the result of personal or collective knowledge and intention. We live with images, we comprehend the world in images. And this living repertory of our internal images connects with the physical production of external pictures that we stage in the social realm. (Belting 2011: 9)

In this perspective the image concept is broadly expanded. It is anthropologized in the sense that its connection to perception, the subjective gaze and the inner eye is declared to be a central criterion, which clearly takes us beyond the status of pictures as material objects.

On the one hand, this expanded image concept undermines the ontological question posed at the start of this section concerning the nature of images, for it posits images as being constituted by our interaction with them, particularly by the cultural conventions of visual perception and affective attributions. It would therefore seem essential to further develop the visual pragmatics advocated by philosopher Gernot Böhme in his "Theory of the Image" (1999), in which he attempted to provide a philosophical foundation for understanding images.

On the other hand, with this broad visual concept, the reflections on images in philosophy (Kulvicki 2014) and traditional art history have been pushed to their limits. A cross-disciplinary image science is necessary not only because of the heterogeneous visual worlds of contemporary life, but also because of the complex dimensions of visual analysis, which encompass the formation of images in social space, the activities of sensory perception and the production of mental images.

Art History or Historical Image Science?

Although the central question initially raised by art historians – "What is an image?" (debated in Elkins and Naef 2011) – tends to put an end to any fixation on art, it does not lead to a consistent definition. The problem is the great diversity of images, which include not only traditional panel paintings, but also other types of paintings, photographs, films, digital images, mirror images, artistic images, dream images, mental images and even worldviews. Reflecting the semiotic, aesthetic, anthropological and philosophical methodologies necessitated by this diversity, the various approaches associated with the iconic turn can thus be assigned to a variety of groups: a phenomenological theory of images placing emphasis on visibility, an anthropology of images focusing on corporeality, and a visual semiotics stressing symbolism. In this array of positions, art-historical expertise in formal analysis and the constitution of historical meaning has once again been brought to the fore. It highlights the "iconic difference" that Gottfried Boehm has declared to be the key criterion for analyzing images (1994: 30). As Boehm argues, formal analysis is capable of explaining this difference – in other words, it is capable of explaining two important properties of images: their affiliation with material culture, on the one hand, and their participation in the sphere of symbolic meaning, on the other. It is thus able to explain the fundamental opposition between the status of images as constructed entities and their meaningful representational and referential character, between their (material, media-based and technical) production and their representational power.

Given the rise of technical visual media, the only way for art historians to develop cross-disciplinary visual analytical skills has been to transform their own discipline into an image science. Besides Gottfried Boehm, Horst Bredekamp and Hans Belting, the main exponents of this reconceptualized version of art history in German-language research have been Martin Kemp and Martin Warnke. It was Hans Belting who laid the foundation for this foray into image science by first questioning whether the "end of art history" (Belting 1983) was near and then making it his key dictum (Belting 1995/2002/2003). What Belting is in fact referring to is the end of the traditional narrative of a linear universal history of

art with its "framed" images, as well as the end of the traditional canon with its exclusionary tendencies. Much more than all the other turns, the iconic turn has thus involved a fundamental self-definition of an entire discipline: art history is becoming an image science (Bredekamp 2003a: 56) – and, in the U.S., a part of visual culture (Dikovitskaya 2005). It is no longer fixated on art, but is examining all types of images. It is precisely this reconceptualization of an entire discipline that has been a crucial step forward in expanding the focus on images beyond image-related subject areas and visual thematic fields. After all, in addition to the turn toward images as a topic, an explicit goal has been a more precise definition of methodologies.

For German-language art historians, this challenged self-conception meant that they could continue the existing tradition of image science that crystallized in the wake of the Warburg school and was disrupted by National Socialism. The greatest impetus for image science came originally from Aby Warburg (1866–1929), from his iconology and research into visual memory. It emerged from his conceptual substitution of "art" with "image" and his reconstitution, in the *Mnemosyne Atlas* (2006), of visual worlds that left the realm of art. With these ideas he pioneered a discipline of art history conceived as an image science that focused on visual history – a discipline that, with its broad image concept, drew on oft-cited works such as Warburg's study of postage stamps or Erwin Panofsky's essay on the Rolls-Royce radiator. In addition to the prospect of a broad image concept, Warburg's approach contained the seeds of an anthropological approach to image research. After all, what interested Warburg above all was the power of long-resonating pictorial symbols, particularly those from antiquity, and the ongoing emotional stimuli provided by the "pathos formulae" embodied within them. Warburg's iconology was refined by Panofsky into an important methodology in the field of art history, albeit one that continued to be oriented around texts. Later this methodology was revised (mainly by Mitchell and the practitioners of "New Art History") to include visual methodologies. In recent years, an interdisciplinary political iconography has emerged as a research focus linked to Warburg's investigations of the body-related energy of images and their strong emotional force (Warnke 2003; see the Warburg Electronic Library www.welib.de; Johnson 2012).

But to what extent can art history still be considered the central discipline of the iconic or pictorial turn? Because it emphasizes the cultural significance of the modes of visual perception and visualization in other disciplines, it can be easily dethroned from this role by the emerging interdisciplinary field of image science. And yet the iconological tools it uses to analyze individual forms are regarded as the critical basis for crossings of traditional boundaries – crossings that are embodied, for example, by analyses of technical images and targeted collabo-

rations with the natural and technical sciences. The collaborations of this sort that are currently being pursued – for example, at the Helmholtz Zentrum für Kulturtechnik at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin – have been able to draw on historical pre-formations. In his essay "The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine (1995)," for instance, Horst Bredekamp cites the early historical example of cabinets of art and curiosity to illustrate how the visual perceptions of the objects they contain – through their capacity to influence knowledge – led to a fateful blurring of the boundaries between artistic and technical/scientific iconicity (see also Burda et al. 2011).

Visual Media Science

Of course, art history's encroachment on the field of technical images and its involvement with knowledge systems and environmental contexts could not have occurred without media theory or media history. In this context, though, the "media(l) turn" (Schulz 2005: 102) that is visible in other disciplines appears to be less of an individual turn than a broad upheaval in the communication of knowledge. It followed a distinct historical line of development that goes back to Theodor W. Adorno's aesthetics, to the Frankfurt School's critique of the "culture industry" and to Walter Benjamin's seminal essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936/1970). It has led to the investigation and revaluation of technically produced/reproducible images and has also provided insight into the manner in which these images take on a life of their own and even replace reality through "simulation." Jean Baudrillard's media-theoretical considerations have proven crucial for analyzing these processes (see Baudrillard 1994; also Flusser 2011). It is above all the visual media that can be considered a foundation of image generation and the iconic turn. It is through this lens that media theorist Friedrich Kittler took "an ethnological look at the wealth of man-made images of the last hundred years" (Kittler 2010: 21) – images that were not only painted but also reproduced, transmitted and stored. What is meant here is primarily image storage media such as film, photography, television and the computer. The "ancient monopoly of writing" (Kittler 2010: 23) was initially undermined by the older technical visual media – and then finally overturned by the new electronic digital media of the information society.

Although media studies certainly provided an important initial catalyst for the iconic turn, the turn's further development in the study of culture did not take place within this discipline's boundaries. Media studies did not enrich the iconic turn with its own visual perspective because the field is primarily concerned with technological media revolutions, particularly with the culturally dominant role

of the new technological media. In this area of study, where perspectives remain rather general, scholars have drawn on the "techniques of the imaginary" (Engell 2000) to address the process of simulation through visual worlds, but their focus has not been on visual media with their specific properties. The analysis of such media requires a more thought-out image concept, one that, alongside technical aspects, does justice to the potential for symbolic expression.

Other important approaches that paved the way for the iconic turn might be used more productively to elaborate a historically oriented visual media science. Particularly noteworthy here are the approaches to an anthropological media history, to the history and theory of photography, to historical pragmatic visual media research in European ethnology and to an anthropology of media (on this relatively new field of research, see Askew and Wilk 2002; Rothenbuhler and Coman 2005). Although these approaches have been largely marginalized in the discussions of more recent media theories, they support calls for a new historical understanding of media, one that does not claim that perceptual issues and links to the body can be delegated merely to a technical medium. Instead of reducing the visual medium to the role of technical transmissions and the communication of signs, these approaches ascribe to it not only an explicit link to perception, but also a specific aesthetic structure and independent dimension of cultural symbolization. In other words, "media *embody* images" (Schulz 2005: 105).

Anthropology of Images

Embodiment is the central category used by Hans Belting in his anthropology of images to introduce the perspective of an anthropological "media history" of images (Belting 2011: 10). This adoption and modification of media theory has possibly kept art history from losing influence and significance, even if it does not appear essential for developing an anthropology of images or its central argument of a bodily interaction with images. Aby Warburg's idea of a discipline that concentrates on images instead of art and emphasizes the explicit body-related effects of images is more crucial. As part of this tradition, Belting focuses attention on the bodily interaction with images, which he argues is based on changes in the viewer's experience of her own body as a "living medium of its own" (Belting 2011: 11). A central role is played by an image translation process in which, through the act of viewing, external "pictures" are transformed into "mental images" and re-embodied in the individual's visual memory (Belting 2011: 16). The human body becomes a "living" medium of images – a medium that is "able to perceive, to remember, and to project images" (Belting 2005: 315). In the process these images merely switch carrier media.

Particularly noteworthy here is the attempt to eliminate the dualism of inner/outer images by translating visual perception into bodily perception. Yet it is also noteworthy that in this context Belting initiates a spatial turn within the iconic turn by situating images within the body as the "locus of images" (Belting 2011: 37) – images that are themselves defined as spatial physical experiences of inner places, such as dreams and memories. Here an emphasis is placed on material experience in image theory. However, if this view is coupled with an essentialist understanding of the body, then the body itself would seem to be a representation-free zone for acts of perception. But what role do gender-related differentiations of the body play in this model? And how does it account for social practices, processes and conflicts? These figure strongly in the rhetoric about spaces and places – and also in the talk of the use and functions of images, which receive far too little attention here.

If the body is defined as the "natural locus of images" (Belting 2011: 37), the symbolization process is anthropologized in a highly specific way. It is transferred to a naturalized, even essentialized, body and not to a social space where symbolization takes place, meanings are attributed to images, and power, politics and gender relations intervene (for a feminist critique, see Schade 2008: 43–44). At the same time, Belting proposes that this anthropology of images be connected not only to inner places, but to the images of collective cultural memory and the symbolic images that "migrate" (Belting 2011: 7, 46) between different cultures and their various sites in a globalized world (where it is precisely the lost sites that become images). This approach should indeed be taken seriously, but an anthropology of images within the study of culture calls for greater distinctions to be made in image policies due to the different cultural and social uses of images. After all, is there not reason to doubt Belting's claim that "in an anthropological sense, then, 'a place' is different from either a spot in geography or a position in social history" (Belting 2011: 48)? The assumption of a bodily relation of images (with its vague synonymity with a link to human beings, the self, memory or simply a carrier medium) requires clearer specification, not only as regards specific cultural contexts, but also from a neurophysiological perspective, as shown, for instance, in brain research, which situates images in brain processes.

Nevertheless, the image concept of this anthropology of images can be put to productive use in a theory of culturally specific forms of visual perception. Whatever its specific form, the anthropology of images stands in distinct opposition to the semiotic theory of images that still forms the basis of many approaches to image science today. The bodily relation of images is a central question that goes beyond a mere semiotic conception of images and introduces the percipient human being without limiting itself to the iconic semiotic context.

Interdisciplinary Image Science

It is primarily the field of visual semiotics that has provided the foundation for an interdisciplinary image science (see Sachs-Hombach 2003). The project to establish this new discipline of *Bildwissenschaft*, which was later recognized as a German *Sonderweg* of the iconic turn, was inaugurated at a conference in Magdeburg in 2003 and is therefore known as the Magdeburg School. Led by philosopher Klaus Sachs-Hombach, this group continues to be associated with the Virtual Institute for Image Science today (www.bildwissenschaft.org). Beyond the boundaries of art history, it claims not only to provide descriptions of images, but to grasp the causal and empirical conditions of visualization (Sachs-Hombach 2005: 14). All that is lacking is an explicit attempt to bring together image science and media studies.

For the first time, though, work is underway to launch image science as a new discipline and source of impetus and inspiration. Analogous to general linguistics, semiotics is regarded as its actual foundation (see the overview by Bal and Bryson 1991). Positions of visual semiotics with their thesis "that images are perceptible signs" (Sachs-Hombach 2004: 4) can be considered limiting because they do not encompass the potential emotional power of images, are based on an analogy to language, and are reliant on deciphering and decoding. This criticism is supported by the affinity between image science and computational visualistics. Furthermore, the tools of visual semiotics fail to address the bodily relation of images and their potentially conflictual social use. They place the unpredictability of images under verbal control and force images into a quasi-linguistic methodological corset. As a result, as philosopher Gernot Böhme laments, they fail to do justice to the specific evidentiary quality of images as opposed to their referential nature (for further approaches critical of semiotics, see Elkins 1998: 5; Wiesing 2009).

Much like the German-language *Kulturwissenschaften*, German-language image science is in danger of being (mis)understood as an all-encompassing unified discipline. For this reason, we should perhaps speak of image sciences or studies in the plural. This distinction would certainly help scholars to pursue the visual perspective in a more comprehensive way – e.g., in additional fields such as medicine and technology. However, a consensus still needs to be reached on how to understand images. Agreement on this conceptualization could serve as an important interface between the participating disciplines.

Transcultural Image Studies

The field of "image-culture studies" (*Bildkulturwissenschaft*), as proposed, for instance, by the literary studies scholar Birgit Mersmann in her programmatic essay (2004), clearly positions these reflections on images within the study of culture. In this case the iconic dimension is broadened transculturally (on the transcultural history of perspective in Western art, see Belting 2011a). With his anthropological groundwork, Hans Belting was among the first to encourage the cross-cultural analysis of images, but in Mersmann's proposal the differences between visual cultures in a globalized world are more clearly marked out. The corresponding "inter- and transcultural iconic turn" that she posits has the potential to promote a kind of "cultural image studies" (*Kulturbildwissenschaft*) that sets its sights on the cultural encoding of images and visually charges the concept of culture itself. However, as long as the relationship between text and image is insufficiently clarified, it is doubtful that, as Mersmann claims, "culture as image" can ever replace the notion of "culture as text" (2004: 95). However, this approach is leading to an important shift in the focus of (transcultural) research in the study of culture, which has long been dominated by the European text model and linguistic analytical methods.

Furthermore, the concept of culture that in the iconic turn tends to be truncated in terms of images and media is now regaining its cultural anthropological potential (Mersmann 2004: 93), which includes the ability to shape and translate cultural differences. Images, particularly migrating cultural images (see Stegmann and Seel 2004), have the same capacity, though it has not been adequately studied. The unconventional perspective adopted by "cultural-image studies as translation research" (Mersmann 2004: 107) may very well incentivize scholars to devote more attention to the interaction between various visual cultures in hegemonic visual regimes. If the "transmitting effect of images" is foregrounded in this process (Mersmann and Schneider 2009: 1), further insights can be expected from the categories of the translational turn.

Visual Culture/Visual Studies

In the area of theory and methodology, there are already translational gaps between German-language image science and Anglo-American visual studies that can be identified and exploited. Anglo-American visual studies explicitly brings the broader visual field to the fore – including its modes of perception, regimes of the gaze, forms of visualization, taboos on images and critiques of images (for a critical survey, see Mitchell 2005: 336–356; Elkins et al. 2013). It is here that we

might expect to find the most striking departure from the fixation on topics and object fields in the study of culture and the broadest opening to new, methodologically distinguished attitudes to knowledge. For example, the incorporation of iconicity and visuality into a more comprehensive cultural system of communication has led to insights into the "visual construction of the social field" (Mitchell 2005: 345). Faced with the dominance of digital and technical images in a period of great upheaval in media history, cultural studies scholars have taken a special interest in the central question of how perception is shaped by images, technological media and new visualization techniques.

Here talk of a pictorial or iconic turn within the study of culture – with explicit reference to transmissions by media – refers not only to new perceptual influences by images in this period of upheaval, but also to the departure from the mimetic and representational functions of images which is increasingly taking place in the arts, particularly in media art. With this development, emphasis is no longer placed on that which is represented and reproduced, as in the traditional image concept, but on acts of pictorialization and the visualization techniques themselves. As a result, interest has shifted to "seeing" as a socially and culturally habituated practice (Kravagna 1997: 8). In this context, seeing amounts to much more than visual perception. It is contextualized and connected to technologized and mediatized perceptual influences, as well as to economic and cultural power relations. Here we find a more comprehensive cultural-studies version of critical image science or iconology. As W. J. T. Mitchell writes, beyond representation and pictorial presence, this science is contributing to "a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies and figurality" (Mitchell 2005: 16).

Visual studies (or visual culture studies) is therefore calling attention to the practices of modes of perception (for a comprehensive introduction, see Dikovitskaya 2005: 1–45; Mirzoeff 1999, 2012; Evans and Hall 1999). In this connection we can even talk of a visual turn that is shifting the focus from the image to performance and that is shedding light on perceptual practices such as seeing, observing and forms of the gaze as social and cultural processes (Belting 2009). Yet the field of visual studies has remained heterogeneous and controversial. One example is the work of Jonathan Crary, creator of the "genealogy of attention" (2001: 2), who has worked on its periphery since the late twentieth century. Crary has broken down the entire complex of visual perception into its component parts and, surprisingly, foregrounded the acoustic as an integral part of perception:

> My use of the problematic term "perception" is primarily a way of indicating a subject definable in terms of more than the single-sense modality of sight, in terms also of hearing and touch and, most importantly, of irreducibly *mixed* modalities which, inevitably, get little or no analysis within "visual studies." (Crary 2001: 3)

This relativization of the autonomy of the visual, which has crept into the iconic turn through the back door, as it were, could be developed more concretely in the study of culture. Crary has suggested a more in-depth contextualization to this end. He has incorporated the visual, along with other dimensions, into the context of a "manageable subjectivity" (Crary 2001: 2) and argued from here that the visual, linked to economic labor conditions, is an important aspect of both the "modernization of subjectivity" and "processes of modernization" in general (2).

Here, as in the other strands of the discussion, an approach has been adopted that appears to be more methodologically productive than the attempt to narrow the focus to images as a topic. In place of a fixation on visual objects, we are seeing a turn toward distinctly visual forms of perception, especially in the American approaches to visual culture, but also in German-language research, particularly in the work of Tom Holert (2000: 9). Stress is being laid on the social and political aspects of visualization, as well as on political iconographies (see Hebel 2011). A field is being staked out for reflections on the gender-specific social conventions of the gaze and even on visualizations as vehicles for surveillance and the exercise of power. So far, however, we have not seen the continuance of the fundamental critique suggested in the reflexive turn, one directed at a form of the gaze that found expression in Western history as a hegemonic gesture of the visual principle (Kravagna 1997: 7). However, the stage has been set for a critical theory of the gaze and the act of seeing, a theory that explicitly challenges the consequences of the visual principle and a controlling "over-view" that extends not only to the increasingly aggressive monitoring and surveillance practices of contemporary societies, but also to their transformations and manifestations in the media – e.g., through international TV reality shows such as "Big Brother" (see Levin, Frohne and Weibel 2002).

With the social foundations and cultural encodings of seeing being explored more intensively, the question of "What is an image?" is increasingly being contextualized to include social acts of perception and power (see already Bryson 1983: xi): Why and who are producing and using images? What is the impact of these images and how are they being perceived? Linked to critical reflections on the relationship between seeing, visibility and evidence, between representation, perception and strategies of power, there are interesting interfaces with the reflexive turn, based solely on the manner in which approaches in visual culture studies are regarded as a "renewal of the critique of representation" (Holert 2000: 20). Because the field of visual culture studies begins with methodologically fertile forms of (visual) perception and links these to power and knowledge, it is able to demonstrate its relevance to the study of culture – provided it does not founder on the boundlessness of the visual object field, but makes more targeted

use, when interacting with images, of the sites of images as well as specific cultural and analytical techniques.

3 An Iconic Turn Instead of a Linguistic Turn – From Visual Knowledge to an Iconic Epistemology?

The iconic turn can be clearly understood as a counter-movement to the linguistic turn and its assertion that all knowledge depends on language. After all, as Barbara Maria Stafford, a leading figure in visual studies, has argued, the linguistic turn was and continues to be based on a hierarchical orientation toward knowledge, precisely because of its "totemization of language as a godlike agency in western culture" (Stafford 1996: 5). The long reach of the linguistic turn can be seen in the fact that interdisciplinary approaches to iconicity are often still founded on the metaphor of reading, which is shaped by language, rather than on the metaphor of spectatorship. Paradoxically, most of these approaches can even make do without recurrence to images. This phenomenon goes hand in hand with the exaggerated importance attached to the culture of the text and literaricity (with its associations of depth, meaning, cerebration and gravity) in contrast to the widespread devaluation of the culture of the spectacle or performance (with its connotations of superficiality and ephemerality). The overemphasis on texts impacts the concept of culture, above all the idea of "culture as text" associated with the interpretive turn. Even in the reflexive turn, representation is almost always reduced to textual representation.

If the iconic turn indeed focuses not on understanding images, but on understanding the world through images, one basic condition must be fulfilled before we can talk of a turn: there must be a shift from the object level (i.e., from images as objects of study) to the level of methodological attitudes, a shift that brings the images themselves into view as knowledge media and analytical categories. Only then will the iconic turn be able to fully unleash its methodological and epistemological potential and be recognizable as an "appeal for a methodological honing of the methods of visual analysis in all disciplines" (Bredekamp 2004: 16). But this question aside, it seems as if the critique of representation that has already been made by the reflexive turn comes to full fruition only when applied to images. From the perspective of a critique of representation, then, the question of "What is an image?" demands a deliberate deconstruction of images with their assumptions of seemingly direct evidence, presence and representation. The recognition that all images, even photographs, are constructed, produced and configured, if only because of the selection of details and focuses, reinforces doubts about authentic representations and authenticity as a whole.

A similar criticism of the trust placed in images, especially in relation to electronic and digital images, is at the core of the iconic turn. Critical image analysis takes place on various levels and is not restricted to images as objects of perception, interpretation or knowledge. Increasingly, scholars are examining the capability of images to shape knowledge in the first place. As a result, the asserted intrinsic "iconic logic" (Boehm 2004: 39–40) – amounting to a specific liberation of the imaginary from pictorial materiality (43) – has acquired an explosive epistemological significance. It is leading to many unexplored spaces of perception and knowledge, to new evidence (of the abstract and the factual) and to vistas that were once blocked by the dominance of language. "Beyond language there exist vast spaces of meaning, undreamed-of spaces of visuality, sound, gesture, facial expression and movement. They do not need to be improved upon or retroactively justified by the verbal" (Boehm 2004: 43). In this context, on the basis of iconicity, linguistic reality is being extended beyond the verbal – and interestingly enough, also beyond the visual, although this aspect requires further elaboration. The reason is that sound is included as well, though not yet in a differentiated manner or as a supplement to images. But does this evocative iconic logic go so far as to open up new perceptual horizons and ultimately supplant the linguistic turn?

In this regard, the iconic turn has from the start been considered a milestone in the development of the study of culture after the linguistic turn. Its followers have claimed for the first time not only that images have played and are continuing to play a dominant cultural and philosophical role in Western cultures, but also that images are implicated in a knowledge revolution – that the iconic turn has the potential to replace the linguistic turn and the related "logocentric bias" (Schulz 2005: 8) of language as the dominant medium of knowledge and to bring about a second (!) major paradigm shift in the study of culture. Given the sequence of other turns, we will surely have to qualify this paradigmatic claim. Furthermore, it does not appear as if the dominance of language and writing is so easily overcome. On the one hand, images are not replacing texts. Images themselves depend on (linguistic) interpretation, one effect of which is to free us from their suggestive power. On the other, in addition to verbal language, images claim for themselves the crucial act of "showing" (Boehm 2007).

However, the greatest skepticism toward claims of an iconic paradigm shift is epistemologically based. To be sure, it may seem as if the linguistic turn "logically [led] to the iconic turn" (Schulz 2005: 36) once representational and metaphorical functions filled the gaps of verbal language. This was recently emphasized by Gottfried Boehm: "What the iconic turn teaches us is that all understanding is dependent not on language but representation. It is here that it is linked to what may be the most important insight of modernity" (Boehm 2007: 4). However, a remarkable essay by Karlheinz Lüdeking has cast doubt on the idea that it is pos-

sible at all to mention the iconic turn in the same breath as the linguistic turn. According to Lüdeking, both turns are "entirely incompatible" (Lüdeking 2005: 122) and do not occupy the same level of logic. He argues that the linguistic turn unleashed a profound methodological revolution: instead of revealing new types of problems, it worked to resolve the old problems in new ways by universally understanding them as problems of language. Images, by contrast, do not have this universal methodological potential. The phenomena themselves must be grasped *as* images in order to perform the same fundamental knowledge work as language. Only then, writes Lüdeking, will the iconic turn be comparable to the linguistic turn.

This argument is noteworthy and can be applied to the status of the other turns as well, all of which claim to make an epistemological leap beyond the object field. Upon closer inspection, should we not say that the dual goal of the iconic turn is not only to "think about images in new and different ways" (Schulz 2005: 92), but also to think *with the help of* images, to use images as epistemological tools to gain new knowledge in entirely different areas than the visual field? Relevant approaches do indeed exist if we bear in mind the "showing" function of the visual as well as the representational dependence of knowledge, as exemplified by visual insights. This refers not only to glimpses into the brain or the visual communication of historical processes, but also to the imaginary dimension of knowledge (Boehm 2007: 78–79) that seems essential for the study of culture and that cannot be understood through language alone. In other words, the iconic turn clearly assigns images an epistemological status, that of "iconic epistemes" (Boehm 2007: 78) or cognitively constituent and activating (e.g., memory-shaping or myth-producing) "image acts" (Bredekamp 2011). In Horst Bredekamp's view, such visually active movements of thought are "the fusion point of what constitutes the iconic turn" – not an extension of the object, but "a new manner of philosophical thinking" (Bredekamp 2005).

In the end, one possible fundamental claim of the iconic turn remains questionable – that it will take the place of the linguistic turn as the new mega turn. In fact, like the other turns in academic research, it seems to have the medium-term goal of undermining the linguistic turn by further differentiating it, by enriching it with what it has suppressed, and by tapping its innovative methodological potential. As a result, it challenges not the linguistic turn per se, but its methodological dominance. In other words, "culture as image" will not be able to establish itself as a new formula because iconic reflections remain dependent on language criticism. Nevertheless, iconic reflections represent an important material and imaginary element in the further elaboration of the concept of culture (Boehm 2004: 30–31).

4 The Iconic Turn/Pictorial Turn in Different Disciplines

In the case of the iconic turn, we encounter a phenomenon in a clearly defined form that generally applies to all the other turns as well: it is increasingly rare that a fixed central discipline charts a new course that is then adopted by other individual disciplines. Particularly in the case of the iconic turn, it is the individual disciplines themselves that have given the overall project of image or visual studies a multifaceted character. This project has been subsequently developed in case studies that have tested the epistemological capability of the iconic turn. The awe-inspiring multiplication and dissemination of images appears to have been replicated in a wave of deliberations on images throughout the disciplines. Beyond traditional fields in the study of culture, the visual perspective has, for example, recently entered economics and visual management studies (see Bell and Davison 2013). In addition to PowerPoint presentations and other forms of visualization that serve as an alternative basis for decision-making, these latter fields have adopted many profound ideas from the iconic turn: "There are signs that we are witnessing the beginnings of a visual turn in management studies" (Bell and Davison 2013: 169; see also Bell, Warren and Schroeder 2014). In this context the visual lens can be critically directed toward organizations as visual regimes that are characterized by a specific "way of looking" (Küpers 2014: 19): "Critical research on vision in organization explores how specific visual experiences, meanings and corresponding practices are discriminated, marginalized, degraded or ignored [and] how visual strategies are used to achieve and maintain power and control" (Küpers 2014: 27). This interesting example of the spread of ideas originating in the study of culture points to the enormous range of the iconic turn in terms of its influence on iconic reflections in different disciplines. But to what extent are these reflections contributing to a critical image science?

Even if we cannot, on the basis of the current debate, answer this question definitively, it should be noted that the iconic turn as a whole aims to increase sensitivity to images and expand visual literacy. Guided by disciplinary advances and the expertise of art historians in visual and formal analysis, the iconic turn is also moving into media studies. Here it covers the wide complex of the visualization and aestheticization of everyday life and the world of consumption. It is also helping to analytically differentiate visual forms that change the entire system of visibility (Trottier 2012). Such forms include corporate images, surveillance images, control images, media images and social self-images. Media images, in particular, are characterized by the simultaneity of event, image and perception, as illustrated by the collapse of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001. But they are also based on media stagings and manipulations, as shown by CNN's orchestration and construction of visual reality during the Gulf Wars. Media images acti-

vate collective visual memories and – like the images of September 11 shown in Hollywood film sequences – can act as powerful citations. The methodologies of both critical political iconology (Mitchell 2011; see also Hebel and Wagner 2011) and visual rhetorics – the visual turn in the theory of rhetorics (Hill and Helmers 2004) – could provide further answers to the questions dominating this debate: What is the nature of the power emanating from images? How persuasive are images in a reality determined by the media? Is cultural knowledge reproduced in images? What gender and power hierarchies are associated with them? Is there such a thing as global visual knowledge? These and similar questions are posed, not least, within the framework of "visual sociology" or the "iconic turn in cultural sociology" – with reference to the highly effective "cultural work" of pictorial icons and the growing iconic power in society (see, among others, Alexander et al. 2012: 1–12; Harper 2012).

In this area, critical image science has devoted itself mainly to revealing how images are manipulated. One example is the fine analysis by art historians of the manipulated satellite images that U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell presented to the United Nations Security Council in February 2003 (Schweizer and Vorholt 2003). In order to demonstrate the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and to justify military action against the country, Powell showed images that ultimately turned out to be doctored. The incident was all the more explosive because an "offensive" tapestry reproduction of Picasso's anti-war painting *Guernica* outside the UN Security Chamber was concealed behind a curtain prior to Powell's appearance so as not to evoke the suffering of war. Both actions illustrate the power of images. As this and many other examples show, the mission of a critical image science must thus be to undermine the faith in supposedly documentary or technical images. It must also expose image polices that abuse the evidentiary character of images for a rhetoric of persuasion while recoiling from the power of images themselves (Schweizer and Vorholt 2003: 33).

Image policy is therefore an important field in political science in need of further development. So far we have seen only tentative approaches to a "theory of visual political communication" (Hofmann 2004: 309) because political science has for decades been characterized by a bias toward language policy that has left the complex of image policy unexamined. In the past, images were not seen as having a rational or emancipatory potential (Hofmann 2004: 312). More recent approaches have focused on "visual competence" as a new research field in the social sciences (Müller 2008), on the "visual politics" of social movements, on political struggles "through the image" (Khatib 2012: 1), on the image politics of climate change (Schneider and Nocke 2014) and on an environmental activism that uses a rhetoric of image events (DeLuca 2005). "Visual political communication research" (Drechsel 2008/09: 4) examines topics such as image policy in con-

nection with the mediality of waging and legitimizing war and even in conjunction with "image warfare" (Roger 2013). However, the difficulty that all of these approaches face is that political scientists do not have an adequate set of tools to analyze and critique images and for this reason must rely on collaborations with art historians, especially scholars with expertise in "political iconography." This is a problem shared by all the other disciplines that are only now starting to devote increased attention to the functions of images.

In this context, methodological openness is a key challenge, particularly for the disciplines that have traditionally placed a heavy emphasis on texts. Given the dictum that "law is text," it may seem astonishing, for example, that legal scholarship has broadened to include image science or even an "iconology of law" (Douzinas and Nead 1999; Dahlberg 2012; Stolleis 2009). However, against the backdrop of the communicative context of law and the growing interest in communication through visual media, this opening must be seen as inevitable. Attention is now being directed toward images and visual storytelling in legal writings and the visual communication of court trials (see Wagner and Sherwin 2014).

In another text-based discipline – literary studies – the increased interest in images has centered around research on intermediality as an extension of intertextuality. Here the concept of the literary text has been expanded to include photography, film and digital media. This development, which can be connected to the increasingly visual conception of culture, is reflected in the widespread incorporation of visual material into literary texts (see, for example, the work of W.G. Sebald, Jonathan Safran Foe's *Tree of Codes*, Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*, and particularly the genre of the graphic novel). It also finds expression in the newly developed iconic focus in the analysis of such texts (Emden and Rippl 2010; Beckman and Weissberg 2013; Brunet 2009). Here the relevant investigative approaches explicitly apply the methodologies of the iconic/pictorial turn to new reflections on the relationship and interfaces between words/texts and images. New fields of analysis have emerged that are addressing reading as an optical medium, notational iconicity, filmic modes of writing and the competition between media. An additional important topic is the technological upheaval in fields such as painting, photography, film and TV, which is reflected on in literary texts by means of ekphrastic descriptions and other pictorial textual strategies (Amihay and Walsh 2012; Emden and Rippl 2010; for the context of medieval literature, see Starkey and Wenzel 2005; for a comprehensive survey of the various iconic approaches, see the handbooks by Heywood and Sandywell 2012; Benthien and Weingart 2014). Clearly, it has been easiest for the iconic turn to enter literary studies through an extension of media theory. Here, though, a symbol-oriented conception of media comes into play that raises new questions within the broader

theoretical field of a "historical anthropology of media" (Emden and Rippl 2010: 10) – questions that have tended to be suppressed in relation to technological mediatization.

Technological modes of visualization predominate in the iconic turn's current rise in the natural sciences, engineering and medicine. Imaging methods such as ultrasound, X-rays and medical MRI are playing a central role, particularly in the neurosciences, as are geographical visualizations in the form of satellite images of the Earth (see Carusi et al. 2015). Scientific images were long regarded as mere illustrations or the products of objectivizing imaging methods, but now the realization is increasingly taking hold that the images in these fields are not reflections of reality but "visually implemented theoretical models or sets of compressed data" (Heintz and Huber 2001: 9). Their constructedness is shown by "constructions of visibility" and by the process, beyond representation, of "rendering visible" and showing.

As a result, images can shape the knowledge process itself, one example being the computer-generated images that are used to gain insight into the visual contexts of reality (physical phenomena) and – via various stages of translation – to transform these insights into symbolic representations. With the scope they offer as regards color, selection and control (via pictorial details or pattern generation), visual strategies demonstrate that such visualizations are aesthetically and subjectively influenced. But here, too, images require interpretation and must be historicized. In this field a relatively advanced dialogue between art history and the natural sciences, between the analysis of artistic and scientific images (Jones and Galison 1998), is undermining any belief in the objectivity of images, any perceived fidelity of the image to the natural world. In other words, it is precisely the field of the history of science in which, instead of a naïve belief in images, we find appeals to adopt a distanced stance toward images, to historicize scientific images and to analyze them from the perspective of a history of styles (Daston and Galison 1992, 2007; on "visual cultures in science and technology," see Hentschel 2014).

As exemplified by nanotechnology and its use of scanning tunneling microscopy to represent the smallest, previously invisible atomic particles, this approach can result in a deliberate problematization of the visualization process, which comprises various stages of translation: "For example, the scanning tunneling microscope generates an image that goes through at least four successive transfer processes before we perceive it" (Heckl 2004: 136; see also Lynch and de Ridder-Vignone 2015). Because these transfer processes are not successively linked, but depend instead on the preselection of imaging techniques and the subjective choice of the output images to be further processed, they bring into play an important subjectivity factor. It is here that scholars should begin their investi-

gations by connecting the insights of the iconic turn to those of the translational turn in order to trace the translation processes out of which iconicity emerges. However, because it is not yet clear how a previously invisible entity such as the nano-world can be made perceptible, the focus on translation processes could bring into view perceptual operations that go beyond visualization, one example being auditory processing: "We may soon be seeing a sonic turn that by making the inaudible audible will direct attention to entirely new dimensions" (Heckl 2004: 129). In addition, a critical image science could investigate politically relevant visualizations such as images of unborn children (sonograms) with respect to their impact on the abortion debate (Stabile 1999).

At any rate, when it comes to such visualizations, the iconic turn tends to raise uncomfortable questions rather than contenting itself with describing or elucidating the expanding visualization practices of the various disciplines. Are not scientific and technological images much less objective than has been suggested by the natural scientists who identify image with object? Do not images such as these follow very specific styles because of visualization techniques, model constructions, pattern formations, the selection of analogies and so on? As part of the move to "revisit representation," studies in the discipline of scientific history are currently revealing the aesthetic and subjective content of such images, imaging techniques and photographs (see Coopmans et al. 2014).

This criticism of visual representation by science studies scholars is directed at the entire complex of representational practices. Along this interface it could be linked to approaches from the humanities, such as the contributions to the critical debate on "picturing culture" (see Ryan 1997; Edwards 1994). Analogous to the text-centered writing culture debate that unfolded within the context of the reflexive turn, approaches from visual anthropology/ethnography (see Pink 2013) have undermined the trust placed in the representational function of images. Starting with a look at the colonial entanglements of photography, these approaches have shown how the visual representation of other cultures fails to do justice to foreign visual traditions and uses of images as long as European image concepts are merely projected onto them. Thanks to the visual turn, attention is increasingly being focused on the pluralization of visual cultures beyond Europe, especially on visual perspectives as elements in processes of social change (see Freitag 2015; Elkins 2010; on "visualizing China," see Henriot and Yeh 2013). Furthermore, the performativity of images has long been underestimated, despite the fact that in European cultures visual performativity is an important cultural practice that was first examined within the context of the iconic turn.

Regarding the question of "What role do images play in the staging and performance of human action?" (Wulf and Zirfas 2005: 7), we find an interesting link between the performative turn and the iconic turn. As part of a new "iconology

of the performative," the boundaries of a body-centered visual anthropology can be extended to include the more comprehensive performative processes of image generation through staged action, on the one hand, and the iconic processes of cultural performativity, on the other. Images structure and modify our perceptions of the world. They acquire their evidentiary quality by bringing "something performative into existence" (Wulf and Zirfas 2005: 18; Huppauf and Wulf 2009). However, images also play an important role in rituals by unleashing their own performative power through the accumulation of symbols· This close connection between images and the ritualistic elements of staged action takes the iconic turn into broader contexts in the study of culture. Within these contexts examples can be found of how the iconic turn is employed to analyze cultural action "from the outside," as it were, rather than from the perspective of the disciplines that have always been oriented toward images.

In religious studies, the outlines of a visual turn with a distinct performative emphasis became visible a few years before the iconic turn in fact emerged. This development took place after religious studies – which had previously stressed discourse – began focusing on the visual communication in various religions. Pursuing such ideas, Peter Bräunlein has suggested studying "image acts" (2004) that are not tied to a Western representational context. Proceeding from the utilitarian function of images, he has evaluated the ritual and visionary elements of religion as religious modes of visual knowledge. Such elements include exchanged glances, spirit possession, passions and bodily transformations through visually communicated mimetic action.

Visual actions are for the most part visual embodiments that require gender-sensitive study. Indeed, a focus on the body has provided the iconic turn with an ideal gateway into gender studies. Here the first step undertaken by gender research was to declare gender to be the central category of the body (and hence of the image) and to assert itself as an image science. It is examining, in the sense of social anthropology, the creation of gender "identities" in the image process, the gender encodings of the gaze within the context of visibility/invisibility, as well as modifications of practices of the gaze in light of media techniques (Jones 2010). Historical investigations in this field have explored the "intersection of science, gender, and visual culture" (Shteir and Lightman 2006: xxii) and highlighted vision and visuality within science culture. They have developed visual methodologies to analyze the perceptual categories of seeing, the gaze and the observed object, which, as can be seen by the view of women as objects of the male gaze, are dependent on gender-specific investigations (Bal and Bryson 2001: 9; Jones 2010).

To understand the historical dimension of the emerging cultural anthropology of images, it is helpful to take a look at an interesting contribution made

to the iconic turn by the late German historian Heinz Dieter Kittsteiner. Kittsteiner's work represents the attempt, with the help of neurobiological approaches, to elaborate a theory of "inner visual worlds" (2004: 165) – i.e., conscious or unconscious visual ideas that guide knowledge. The goal here is to extend the language-fixated discipline of hermeneutics, which understands history as a voluminous book, to include "interpretation based on images." According to Kittsteiner, mental images represent historical knowledge because they affect the process of understanding history and even historians have them before their eyes (e.g., images of the Berlin Wall on the night of November 9, 1989, and the attacks on September 11, 2001). In many cases these images serve as "signs of history" (*Geschichtszeichen*). Arabs, for example, are all too often identified with the image of Osama bin Laden, particularly since September 11, 2001. Such personalizations are often employed to visually compress, simplify and give tangible form to the complexity of specific historical structures and processes. Here Kittsteiner argued for a critical historical analysis of images: "Reality has greater complexity, and the mission of historical studies is to preserve this complexity under the onslaught of images" (165). Thus, Kittsteiner's proposal was that images be taken seriously not only as sources of historical data, but also in terms of their epistemological status. Nevertheless, he viewed the rhetoric of an iconic turn with great skepticism: "We don't need an 'iconic turn' in cultural history. What we need is a critical analysis of the function of our mental images" (178). Admittedly, without an iconic turn – and without renewed attention to the significance of images in producing (historical and other) knowledge – such a focus would never have materialized.

The iconic/visual turn in the discipline of history has also been discussed in a debate on the role of the visual in early modern German history and historiography (*German History* 2012: 574–591). This turn is reflected in texts that lend images enhanced status as resources or "traces" of historical evidence that go beyond material culture (for more on this "picturing history" approach, see Burke 2001: 12–13; Schwartz 2004). It also finds expression in "historical image research" (Paul 2011), and a historical "politics of images" (Crew 2009: 271). Furthermore, specific studies of historical visual culture enable us to reconnect representational forms to the experiences of individual actors. These studies have a wide variety of focuses, including the importance of leaflet propaganda and the mass media, the role of photography in a political iconography caught between (state) propaganda and "visual counter-worlds" (Lüdtke 2004: 229), the colonial use of images (Behrend and Werner 2001; Krüger 2004) in the sense of "colonial visuality" and "counter-visuality" (Mirzoeff 2011), so-called documentary images such as war photographs (Paul 2004), and above all the visual representations of the Holocaust (see Zalizer 2001; Bannasch and Hammer 2004; Hirsch 2012). The newly established

field of visual history also addresses media images that claim to provide historical evidence through the processes of eyewitnessing (Burke 2001).

It would go beyond the scope of this book to discuss the iconic turn's full range of applications within the discipline of history, but one remarkable approach deserves mention here – the attempt to forge links from the examination of the images of history in the study of culture – and above all from mental images – to brain research. From the perspective of perceptual physiology, experiments in brain research confirm the skepticism about the representational character of images. Mental images should therefore not be understood as representations of the external world. Rather, the external world should be seen as a mere projection of our internal images. The objects of reality are first perceived as images in the brain and its visual centers. Because sensory impressions must be combined with information stored in the brain to create a coherent picture of the world, interpretation and construction are crucial acts. In other words, the idea that our brains reproduce the outer world is an illusion; in reality we construct it (Singer 2004: 75). However, in doing so, we rely on the capacity of our (visual) sense not to mislead us. As neuroscientist Wolf Singer argues, this trust is increasingly being destroyed by the manipulations of media images. "And thus, in the foreseeable future, if the media are not more careful about how they handle the barrage of images, what we experience as the iconic turn could become an iconic turn *down*" (Singer 2004: 70).

Nevertheless, the insights of brain research into the constructional (as opposed to representational) "nature" of seeing do not necessarily mean that image science should abandon its approach to a "culture" of seeing. Rather, as part of the study of culture, image science should explicitly maintain its highly complex ideas about images – or it should view images in their

> infinite diversity and complexity, in which all things converge and mutually influence each other: genetically transmitted images, dream images, memories, visual perceptions, desires, yearnings, fears and imaginings that have both a collective and individual, purely subjective, quality. (Schulz 2005: 145)

In view of this diversity of visual overlaps, a cognitive image science or an incipient "neuroaesthetics" or "neurobiology of aesthetics" (Stafford 2007) could represent an interesting attempt to combine the study of culture with the natural sciences. Yet it is doomed to remain simplistic and reductionist if it naturalizes its own insights into the character of images as mental constructs instead of opening them to the explicitly cultural constructional level of social interaction, historical influence, gender-specific reception and political power.

Ultimately, we face the question: What does the iconic turn mean for the study of culture as a whole? Most importantly, the iconic turn has shed new

light on visual literacy and images as an analytical category, and it has called into question all references to a mimetic presence. In addition, it has motivated researchers to apply the self-reflexivity of images to analyses of cultural phenomena and give more serious thought to the manner in which social and cultural contexts are shaped through visual acts and image policy. In other words, as Mitchell claims, "Visual culture is the visual construction of the social, not just the social construction of vision" (2005: 343). This area of inquiry covers the treatment of images as political instruments within the context of aesthetics and politics – e.g., as part of the 2011 revolution in Egypt (Dal 2013) – and also encompasses the issue of "violence and visibility" (Martschukat and Niedermeier 2013) and the new focus on visibility as a critical category of cultural and social analysis. Visibility refers not only to the possibilities of social self-portrayal and the new sensibilities regarding social staging and forms of surveillance, but also to strategies of social power and exclusion that are aimed at concealment and invisibility (of poverty, inequality, disease, etc.). However, any attempt to render visible such concealed phenomena presupposes a complex context of visualization. For this context and many others, the question of the text-image relationship, the interaction between images, their tense relationship in the media and the need for them to be commented on through writing and texts is of eminent importance.

From this vantage point, the iconic turn is particularly interesting for the study of culture when it illuminates, like visual culture studies, the connection between images, discourses, knowledge and power. Instead of referring back to art history and image science, the pictorial/iconic turn will have to push forward into the fields of global visual culture, as W. J. T. Mitchell advocated as early as 2005: "If visual culture is to mean anything, it has to be generalized as the study of all the human practices of human visuality, and not confined to modernity or the West" (Mitchell 2005: 349). Implementation of this transcultural perspective will necessarily take the pictorial/iconic turn into the field of image policy.

The global threat of conflicts over images, bans on images and even image wars shows in particular how image policy relies on text and language to reveal – beyond the evidentiary nature of images – cultural breaks in the understanding of images, violations of image taboos and also possible manipulations and deceptions. What could be helpful here are approaches to "image criticism" that are based on visual pragmatics. One example is the interdisciplinary work being done by Gottfried Boehm at the Swiss National Center of Competence in Basel. His project, entitled *Iconic Criticism – The Power and Meaning of Images*, is giving priority to the unity of visuality, perception, showing, speech and even hearing. The initiatives launched to combat aniconism and interrogate iconoclashs are also providing a concrete foundation for examining and highlighting the social relevance of the iconic turn (Latour and Weibel 2002). As regards

the development of theory in the study of culture, the focus on categories and processes of visual perception such as attention, observation and the gaze is of great importance. It is reinforcing the growing shift in the study of culture toward transculturally connectible cultural techniques and perceptual attitudes. Here the technological dependence of visual perception, in particular, could provide an incentive to broaden a perspective that continues to be too narrowly focused on culture.

Nevertheless, one important aspect of the iconic turn makes it vulnerable to criticism: its self-exaggeration and hubris, expressed particularly in the way it ignores the acoustic. In view of the great importance of sound movies and the acoustic accompaniment of (moving) images, this concentration on a "pure" iconic turn is proving to be particularly one-sided. Because images and visual perceptions are frequently dependent on soundtracks – on being accompanied, enhanced and even interpreted by sound – the initial efforts we are seeing to establish an "audio-visual turn" should be continued and even deepened. On the level of the transformation of theory in the study of culture, there has been an even more controversial effect with considerable epistemological potential: French poststructuralism, for example, pursued a "cult of writing," which in the work of Jacques Derrida referred less to phonocentrism than to the manner in which Derrida fundamentally questioned the metaphysics of voice with its fiction of immediate presence. Similar skepticism can be directed against the immediacy claim of images.

By rehabilitating images, the iconic turn has effectively counteracted this suppression of theory. With its concentration on the visual foundations of knowledge, it can be linked to modernity's predominant paradigm of seeing (see the chapter "The Reflexive Turn"). It supports the visual production of knowledge that long prevailed in the sciences, including "participant observation" in cultural anthropology. In this context, though, it should now be possible to identify the elements – particularly the acoustic phenomena – that are specifically ignored by this iconic and visual focus. Here links could be forged to the reflexive turn's critique of visualization, which calls for a discursive approach in the broad sense of engaging all the senses. Finally, such research could be used by cultural anthropology, particularly by the ethnomusicological field of "hearing cultures," to supplement the visual turn (Erlmann 2004; Bull and Back 2004).

At this point, of course, we are pushing the iconic turn to its limits. Even if we do not wish to proclaim a "(visual-)acoustic turn" (Meyer 2007), it is worth emphasizing that the turn toward perceptual processes that many have demanded in the study of culture must be rethought in this direction. W. J. T. Mitchell stressed this idea himself in his reflections on a productive broadening of the visual turn: "The important task is to describe the specific relations of vision to the other senses,

especially hearing and touch, as they are elaborated within particular cultural practices" (Mitchell 2005: 349). At any rate, the stimuli provided by the iconic turn should no longer be restricted to the visual field, particularly in light of recent developments in media theory and its intermedia connection of the senses.

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Outlook: Are the Cultural Turns Leading to a Turn in the Humanities and Study of Culture?

The seven turns introduced here represent reorientations in the study of culture that have already established themselves or even become classics but which are continuing to evolve and inspire research. After a survey of all these turns, the question arises as to how powerful and sustained such focuses are. In fact, it is impossible to give a definitive answer to this question, particularly because attempts are constantly being made to create and use new turns in research.

The number of emerging turns is impressive, although in many cases the turn rhetoric is empty and exaggerated. There has been talk, for example, of a mnemonic turn, which is traced back to a cultural "memory paradigm" (Assmann 2011: 8), and also of a medial turn (Münker 2009), which is considered just as important. In fact, the key concepts of memory and media deserve further elaboration because they have been continuous paths in the forest of ever-multiplying cultural turns, which have come to appear ubiquitous. They include the ethical turn (Gras 1993: 30ff.; Parker 1998: 15ff.; Davis and Womack 2001; Rancière 2009), the historic turn discussed in the wake of the New Historicism (McDonald 1996), and the narrative or narrativist turn, which emphasizes the cultural potential of narratives and discursively communicated social self-images (Kreiswirth 1995; for the social sciences, Czarniawska 2004; for fiction and theory, Meretoja 2014: 2ff.). Even these turns do not exist in isolation, but are informed by a variety of others – e.g., by the cognitive turn in the philosophy of science and psychology (extending to narrative research), which focuses not only on linguistic but also mental epistemological conditions (Fuller et al. 1989), and the metareferential turn in contemporary media (Wolf 2011). Additional reorientations are the practice turn, seen primarily in science studies (Schatzki et al. 2001; Soler et al. 2014; concerning international relations, see Neumann 2002), and the experiential turn, which is giving newly enhanced status to the category of experience (LaCapra 2004: 3ff.). Finally, an emotional turn (Lemmings and Brooks 2014) and an affective turn (Clough and Halley 2007) are underway, rounded off by a biographical turn (Chamberlayne et al. 2000) and a therapeutic turn (Madsen 2014) – the latter reflecting the current dissemination of psychology as an analytical category into a broad range of disciplines.

In a broader perspective there has also been discussion of a general transnational/transcultural turn (linked to transcultural memory in Bond and Rapson 2014, to literary studies in Jay 2010). One of its more specific manifestations is the imperial turn currently taking place in a field of historiography that is no longer centered around national history and has a critical focus on empire and imperi-

alism (Burton 2003). World politics has been the arena for a forensic turn (Holert 2005) that appears to be “reformatting world politics as a forensic criminological investigation” (Holert 2005: 6). This turn can be seen, for example, in the attempts to prove the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and thus to justify war. An even more radical development in world politics is the emergence of a biopolitical turn (Campbell and Sitze 2013: 4–5; Esposito 2013: 110), which is directing attention to the massive dimensions of “biopower” – the increasingly comprehensive political and technological control of the human body and life in general. It is linked to a powerful ontological turn that is introducing questions of being and reality into new left-wing political thought (Bosteels 2011) and a variety of other disciplines such as science studies (Woolgar and Lezann 2013).

Ultimately, we could ask whether we now need a dialogical turn (Camic and Joas 2004: 15) in order to escape the dangers of the postdisciplinary fragmentation of the research landscape caused by the forced conversations between disciplines. However, if the scope of the individual disciplines is called into question, even a dialogical turn will prove insufficient. In other words, to what extent are the disciplines in the humanities able to reflect on their own limitations in the context of an emerging posthumanist theory that is highly sensitive to the massive impact of nonhuman actors? Many of the more recent potential turns must be seen in relation to this question, including not only the environmental turn (see Heise 2008: 12), but above all the digital turn and the computational turn (Dorbolo 2000; Berry 2011, 2012; Gold 2012), both of which are embedded in the context of a technological turn. Together with many of the other proliferating reorientations, these refocuses often make the exaggerated claim that they, as specific turns, have the potential to transform humanities as a whole. Which of them will prove to be central avenues in the study of culture? And which will be mere side roads or even detours? Such questions certainly will not be decided in the academic discourse alone.

Such emerging topics, grandiloquently referred to as turns, often represent unsustainable attempts to fashion kingdoms out of tiny plots of the academic field. But do all of them meet the criteria for a turn? To what extent do the alleged turns really make a conceptual leap forward and move – via their focus on new subject areas – to the level of analytical categories? Which of them will develop transdisciplinary potential and cross-disciplinary impact? This is the decisive question that will ultimately separate the chaff from the wheat. It is relevant even to those turns that are already established, which continue to be in flux, intersecting with other research turns and even forming hyphenated turns. Are they characterized only by the dynamic of “moves” or are they finding their way into a broad constellation of refocuses in which their important conceptual impetus is being transformed into an epistemological shift?

A survey of the individual turns shows that it is precisely in this sense that we can speak of a paradigm shift on a meta-level or of a fundamental turn in the study of culture itself. Following Karl Schlögel and his suggestion to further develop the idea of a "histoire totale" (2004: 265), we can make out a similar epistemological shift in the mutual enrichment and "pluralization of dimensions" of the cultural turns. However, in a less grandiose way, we might also see in the turns an influential concentration of basic theoretical assumptions. What is observable across the board is a shift "from a 'being' to a 'becoming' vocabulary" – that is, a shift from concepts such as structure and system to process and indeterminacy, as Victor Turner wrote in his posthumously published essay "Process, System, and Symbol" (1985: 152). However, a fundamental element in the study of culture in the wake of the linguistic turn is the explicit shift to social action and reality, as well as to transcultural border crossings. This shift does not mean abandoning one of the major achievements of the linguistic turn: the enduring insight into the mediation of all access to reality through language and discourse, which has prompted analyses of culture to focus on the constructed and fabricated character of human experience, history, gender, identity and culture. This constructivism has been a pivot point at which the cultural turns have moved away from dichotomies and binary systems and worked to formulate an influential critique of essentializations. Nevertheless, the rejection of polarizations in favor of intersectional and translational relations – a trend that currently runs through all the turns – is increasingly being motivated by the complex relations of reality itself, by the fragmentation of a bipolar world society into a multipolar world and especially by the conflicts and threats emanating from it. In this context the study of culture is facing existential social, political and material challenges that are testing its constructivist and representational orientations.

1 A Religious Turn versus Secular Criticism

Cultural theory is subject to this multipolar world itself. As Edward Said once wrote, this world demands not only a "secular criticism" (Said 1983: 1–30), but also a "worlding" of theory. For this reason alone, the fixation on language that was inherited from the linguistic turn has been gradually disappearing, turn by turn. After all, a connection to the world means much more than a connection to language. As the chain of reorientations has unfolded, the universal thread of the linguistic turn has become more highly differentiated and – to use Clifford Geertz's metaphor – it has been woven into a broader, homespun fabric of cultural reflection. But such a theoretical structure can no longer be held together by a complete system of cultural meanings, as Geertz once postulated, but only

by ongoing translation processes. As Lawrence Grossberg emphasizes without providing a more detailed explanation, cultural studies has played a pioneering role for "a self-reflective practice of translation and transformation" (Grossberg 2010: 294) – a practice that is able to cope with the increasing "superimposition of grids" (199).

In this way, the cultural turns can be said to have sought (translational) terms and concepts that the humanities can use to recover what they themselves have suppressed. These terms will allow the humanities to enter into negotiations with the social and life sciences and – beyond this – to engage with the conditions of reality itself. Which operative concepts need to be developed in order to make the modifications of reality translatable into the language employed by the study of culture? To what extent is the language or the descriptive system of the study of culture willing and capable of being translated in such a way that connectible points can be created that will expand the study of culture to include the disciplinary systems of the individual sciences as well as culturally different knowledge systems? To what extent is translation in this sense something more than the attempt – through the adoption of theories from other disciplines – to secure the survival of various fields of study in a neoliberal research environment (see Littlefield and Johnson 2012: 13)?

An important initial translation activity has focused on reincorporating social and economic issues into the concept of culture. After all, the connection to the world certainly also means more than a connection to culture. The ongoing gulf between the study of culture and the field of economics is the result of the culturalist excesses of linguisticality, textuality and symbol systems that have lost sight of their material economic contexts. Yet it remains to be seen whether and to what extent "returning cultural studies to economics" (the title of a chapter in Grossberg 2010: 117) will lead to a managerial turn (Alvesson and Willmott 2003) and, beyond that, to a broader economic turn (Tonkiss 2007). Furthermore, we can only speculate on which incentive from empirical reality will be taken up to be "translated" into as-yet undeveloped theoretical reorientations in the study of culture. After all, cultural approaches tend to be quite open as regards the future and need to be able to handle considerable "uncertainty about a field's direction" (Marcus and Fischer 1999: x). George Marcus and Michael Fischer were among the first to emphasize this uncertainty about future developments as one aspect of a typical attitude toward experimentation. However, the attempted explanation needs to go even deeper than this: just as the new directions in the study of culture arose not from simple theoretical developments but from social impetus, so, too, will their future be decided outside the laboratory of theory.

However, lines of development are emerging and influencing the formation of theory without the study of culture merely responding to social processes. After

all, cultural approaches are distinguished by the fact that they tend to work with "operative" terms – in other words, with terms that not only describe but shape reality. The most interesting developments in the study of culture in the wake of the linguistic turn can be found in those areas in which such operative and translational terms and concepts are being applied. For example, the discursive foundational level of political philosophy, which is crucial for the humanities, has two main axes of development that are relevant to an analysis of the current times and are named in the title of a book of political-philosophical essays by Jürgen Habermas: *Between Naturalism and Religion* (2008). This title reflects modern tensions between the "spread of naturalistic worldviews," on the one hand, and the countervailing "revitalization of religious communities and traditions and their politicization across the world," on the other (Habermas 2008: 1). From the perspective of the study of culture, the tensions implied here are those between a "(neuro)biological turn" and a "religious turn." They are opening up a field of translational challenges that cut across disciplines and are relevant to society as a whole.

In the future as well, the study of culture will face the challenge of having to critically engage with the cultural and social consequences of modernization, secularization and rationalization – consequences that are already molding not only contemporary European societies but also societies worldwide. In this connection, Habermas has postulated a second major line of political-philosophical concerns and reflections in addition to the neurobiological axis: the striking reentry of religion into "postsecular" societies. Theorists in the study of culture will have to pay close attention to these developments in the future. According to Habermas, "postsecular societies" expect of their "secular citizens" that they "translate relevant contributions from religious language into a publicly intelligible language" (Habermas 2008: 113). As part of this process, though, religious beliefs and expressions of faith need to submit to an "institutional translation proviso" (130) by the secular state and the secular constitution, which will ensure that beliefs are communicated in a commonly accepted public language. Postsecular societies thus have two distinguishing features: on the one hand, they insist on the separation of religious faith and knowledge; on the other, they incorporate the legitimate claims and socially essential values of religious communities instead of ignoring them due to fully secularized and scientistically simplified ideas about reason. But this necessary public use of reason through social dialogue requires that the one-sidedness of the "institutional translation proviso" be supplemented by "cooperative acts of translation" (132).

Interestingly enough, in this area Habermas works with a translation concept without elaborating its categorical potential or even strengthening it as a fundamental element of his own theory of communication – here additional impetus

from the approaches of the translational turn could clearly be of help. In this case, however, the conceptual fuzziness of his reference to a "translation proviso" would become obvious, for what is at stake here is not actual translation, but "translatability" as a prerequisite for the possibility of inducing people to listen to expressions of faith in the form of generally understandable arguments. In this context, the empirical lens of the study of culture appears to be more sharply defined. It can, on the one hand, build on the explanatory foundations of political philosophy and, on the other, look more closely at the culturally specific perceptual patterns, modes of action and representational forms that are needed for these social processes of translation. Finally, in contrast to Habermas, its understanding of culture is not based on an a-priori fixation on social communication and (successful) dialogue. Through the lens of the cultural turns, the study of culture can use its embeddedness in empirical cultural analysis to develop more effective analytical categories. Instead of imagining translation in relation to dialogue, it is attempting in this way to conceptualize the precarious category of translatability on the basis of social contradictions and conflict situations.

It is in this sense, too, that the study of culture could develop a religious turn based on the conflict scenarios between secular and religious discourses (see, among others, Manoussakis 2005; Nehring and Valentin 2007). Where do we find the connections and limits of translatability as regards cultural and religious forms of expression? The initial incentive for this much-needed debate came from the field of cultural criticism itself: from the "odd return to religion" that has been underway in literary and cultural criticism since the 1979s (beginning with the New Criticism). In the chapter "Religious Criticism" concluding the work *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, Edward Said described this return to religion as an uncritical retreat to the "secure protection of systems of belief" (Said 1983: 292). He saw it continued in the trend toward a "contemporary Manichaean theologizing of 'the other'" (Said 1983: 291) through belief in authority and a binary thinking.

However, from the perspective of the study of culture, a religious turn is of interest only if 1) it does not take place as "secular criticism" solely on the level of a cultural critique (Said 1983: 1ff.); 2) it explores, both on this level and beyond, the risk of interventions by religious discourses and quasi-religious excesses (which have been spurred, e.g., by the quasi-religious unity of the Orientalism discourse); and 3) it does more than reveal the cult status of theories, religious ascriptions of meaning, mythologizations and ritualizations (the claim that even "secular criticism" comes "with religious strings" can be found in Pecora 2006: 2). A more fruitful approach would be to critically examine the many intersections between the religious field and other disciplines, including not only literature (see Holsinger 2006; and the special issue of *American Literary History*,

2014) but the study of international relations (see Thomas 2014). It would also be fruitful to pursue critical investigative approaches that integrate the factor of religion into analyses of culture in order to fully understand the special religious logic of certain social actions and derive from such insights an analytical category capable of interpreting both "political religion" (e.g., in the context of National Socialism) and the "religion of violence" (Weisbrod 2006: 274). Of course, an even more pressing need is to investigate "religious violence" (Juergensmeyer 2003) because of its rapid spread. Such violence has long left the framework of the dialogical civil-religious articulations that are so central for Habermas. The notable contemporary politicization of religion could and should motivate an analytical religious turn as a major future reorientation in the humanities.

Nevertheless, any possible reorientation of the humanities and the study of culture must first address their specific descriptive system. An important question here is whether additional and more fundamental shifts, such as a neuroscientific, global/transcultural or digital turn, will have a broad enough scope to be able to intervene in this descriptive system.

2 Neurobiological Challenges – Approaches and Limits of a Neuroscientific Turn

Our examination of the turns has shown how common assumptions have formed within the individual reorientations and led to the establishment of an independent system of description in the study of culture with the potential for further development. Nevertheless, the increasingly precarious situation of the contemporary humanities has compelled researchers to look for possible links to the different descriptive system of the more powerful natural sciences and thus enrich the humanities' own status. These developments are providing an initial general answer to the question of why the neuroscientific turn (Littlefield and Johnson 2012) has gained such great appeal for the humanities over the last decade. However, disciplinary research practice in the study of culture provides deeper insights into the expansion of neuroscientific approaches. We are seeing attempts, for instance, in biologically based cultural and literary theories in which discussions are centered around biopoetics, linked to problematic Darwinian positions in evolutionary theory (see Cooke and Turner 1999). There have also been discussions of a neuronal and a biological turn in the discipline of history (see the *Isis* focus section 2014; the *AHR* Roundtable 2014; and Cooter and Stein 2013). These turns are playing a role in neuroaesthetics (Stafford 2007; Mondloch 2015) and more recent approaches to "neuroeconomics" (Camerer, Loewenstein and Prelec 2005) – to name just a few examples. Such developments are

making clear that neuroscientific explanations of how perception, emotionality and consciousness work in neural networks are especially exciting for the study of culture because the cultural turns inevitably enter this terrain as they move across the boundaries of object and topic fields and examine perceptual patterns and attitudes. It is obvious that the humanities and natural sciences should move closer together here.

However, the hierarchy and asymmetry between the humanities and the sciences has increased the danger that instead of a reconciliation, the neuroscientific turn might shunt the descriptive system of the study of culture to the side. And, indeed, at the start of the twenty-first century, this turn already paved the way for a more fundamental paradigm shift – one that, as German brain researcher Wolf Singer has put it, resembled “a breach in the dam” or, using financial market vocabulary, “a hostile takeover of one descriptive system by the other” (Singer 2002: 180). Such a paradigm shift from a cultural to a neuroscientific system of description was grandly proclaimed around ten years ago in a manifesto by eleven German neuroscientists. Their ambitious objective was to transform “our conception of human beings” through brain research (“Das Manifest” 2004: 36). To this end, they proposed a dialogue between the neurosciences and the humanities, though evidently not urgently enough (37). In a skeptical review of this initial manifesto ten years later – one that now was more clearly focused on a “reflexive neuroscience” – the authors self-critically conceded that naturalistic presuppositions were followed for too long a time (Tretter et al. 2014). Their goal today is to overcome these presuppositions through explicit transdisciplinary collaborations with the fields of psychology, philosophy and the study of culture.

What needs to be overcome in particular is the reductionist investigative strategy of brain research, which is endeavoring to replace rational explanations of action (i.e., explanations of action based on “reasons”) with causal ones. A causal explanation does not allow for free action that is taken on the basis of reasons; it only recognizes actions that are attributable to neuronal causes. These causes have a deterministic effect on the decision-making ability of the subject behind her back, as it were. However, a consciousness of freedom is linked to descriptive systems that are based on cultural actions and mental explanations of action. When, as a result, brain research sets its sights on a “fusion process of descriptive systems” (Singer 2002: 179), it must draw on a “mentalistic language” as opposed to an “empiricist language” (on this condition, see Habermas 2008: 157). This language is needed not only to understand both the micro-level of consciousness and the subjects’ motivations, but also to recognize “the autonomy of the ‘inner perspective’” of the subjects’ feelings, sense of responsibility, etc. (“Das Manifest” 2004: 37) – and to comprehend the actors’ self-understandings.

Thus, in the developmental process of the neuroscientific turn, the key function of culture has been increasingly integrated into a neuroscientific system. After all, brain activities themselves have already been represented in mentalistic language and "in terms of cultural categories" such as healthy, natural, normal, rational and so on (see Choudhury and Slaby 2012: 46). A negotiation process appears to be taking place, one in which the study of culture is deploying its enormous capital of language and self-reflexivity beyond "hostile takeovers." In this context, it is once again the neurosciences that could rescue the humanities from the textual and representational fixations that followed the linguistic turn. They could, for example, encourage humanities scholars to direct attention to the "embodied self." As Lynn Hunt emphasized in the *AHR* Roundtable "History Meets Biology," "the vocabulary of embodiment calls attention to gesture, action, movement, and unconscious or tacit forms of knowledge" (Hunt 2014: 1586). Drawing on the neurosciences to study issues such as personhood, self, agency and experience could enrich historical reflections and the humanities as a whole, especially if they are seen as a matter of "interactions between body and brain and body and environment" (see Hunt 2014a: 113).

However, the main reason the neuroscientific turn is proving so fertile is that as a critical neuroscience (Choudhury and Slaby 2012) it is stimulating mutual translation processes between the descriptive systems of the natural sciences and the study of culture. This is partially due to the growing knowledge of the plasticity of the brain, which appears to be malleable by social and cultural processes and experiences ("neuroplasticity"). At any rate, the neuroscientific turn is leading to the recognition of common assumptions and concerns, including the clear rejection of the binarity principle. Just as neurobiology no longer makes dualistic distinctions between body and mind, so too is the mind no longer attributed its own energy but grasped in terms of its dependence on both the body ("embodiment") and materiality. Furthermore, thanks to the connectivity of the neuroscientific turn, interesting overlaps are emerging with the iconic turn because the new imaging methods in the natural sciences and medicine are making an important contribution to the boom in brain research. The increasingly accurate visual representations of brain structures and activities have provided the basis for the field's findings.

Interestingly enough, an urgent appeal to use the category of translation to study human thought and action with respect to brain structures and social dimensions can be found in the interdisciplinary collection *The Neuroscientific Turn* (Littlefield and Johnson 2012). It argues "that neuroscience is a *translational discipline*: a set of methods and/or theories that has become transferable – sometimes problematically so – to other disciplines" (3). Furthermore, it explicitly describes the neuroscientific turn as a "collaborative project" with

the humanities (4). The interaction between the study of culture and the natural sciences – understood as a conflict-ridden, tense and stimulating process of translation, negotiation and mediation – could become one of the various axes along which the study of culture continues to evolve.

3 Digital and Transcultural Challenges – Approaches of a Digital and a Global Turn

In what other directions could the current constellation of turns in the study of culture develop? A widespread view of the study of culture is that it is concerned with making sense of the world, with the formation and comprehension of meaning and the need for interpretation. In other words, even if the field has long stepped out of the long shadow of hermeneutic textual studies (see Kasten, Paul and Sneller 2012), we continue to see their influence. As an examination of the turns shows, the humanities are increasingly being viewed not only as textual but also as pragmatic action sciences, and they are increasingly focusing on cultural practices and forms of perception that include translation, observation, memory, comparison, description, narration, representation and staging. In addition, they are addressing the question of how global conditions are impacting the transformation of these perceptual and expressive forms. It is not enough for scholars to produce ever new interpretations of culture. An attempt must be made to define pragmatic categories that allow us to work not only cross-disciplinarily, but also cross-culturally. What is needed is the development of a transcultural and transnational conceptual system, the translation of categories and concepts in the study of culture, and the transcultural translation of its descriptive system, which is rooted largely in Europe. These goals can be accomplished by the "cross-categorical translations" proposed by Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000: 85), by "traveling concepts" that move between cultures, and by intersecting theories (Bal 2002; Neumann and Nünning 2012).

Most importantly, the translation of cultural concepts needs to take into account the new technological challenges of an increasingly digital world (Gold 2012). Recently there has been much discussion about a computational turn and a digital turn. These terms refer to the radical transformation that is aligning the humanities as a whole with new computer-based research practices – a result mostly but not only of the new communication potential of technology, media, email, social networks, digital archives and open access formats. Here, too, one can only speak of a turn if the new technological options open up previously unknown epistemological horizons – if they lead to information literacy, new collaborative work processes and a research dynamic that is characterized not only

by static structures, but by relational networks. In this context a certain de-individualization process is at work in the way research attitudes in the humanities have recently been addressing the phenomenon of big data, motivated by Google's digitization efforts and the new possibilities of mapping word frequencies in vast amounts of text and data. In the field of literary studies, Franco Moretti has used the term "distant reading" – as opposed to "close reading" – to describe this type of statistic approach (Moretti 2013). What we are seeing is the invocation of a paradigm shift in the way knowledge is being produced and disseminated through databases. Currently almost all disciplines are being challenged by the characteristic "plasticity of digital forms" (Berry 2011: 1). This plasticity is geared toward permanent expandability and is exemplified by digital text editions (e.g., in the form of hypertext). Whereas Clifford Geertz once asked, "What is culture if it is not a consensus?" the question has now become, "What is culture after it has been 'softwarized'?" (Berry 2011: 5). But it remains to be seen whether the digital turn in the humanities and social sciences would be better off entering into an alliance with the other turns in order to move beyond the mere quantification of big data and the performance of large-scale analyses and remain open to cultural critique and individual case analyses (see Liu 2012). Here the networking concept of the digital turn could be applied to itself.

The digital turn is especially well suited to illustrate one important finding: at this specific developmental stage of cultural theory, whole clusters of turns are forming. The result is an interesting reciprocal reinforcement of each turn's significance. On the one hand, the digital turn is agglomerating with the material turn. After all, with the recognition that human beings are pushing up against their limits and increasingly being dominated by technology, the material turn in science studies has taken on a particularly illuminating role, providing insights into the interaction between human actors and nonhuman agents such as things, instruments and technologies. On the other hand, alliances have formed with the posthuman turn, as Richard Grusin points out in his like-named book (Grusin 2015). This specific turn is calling into question the privileged status of human beings as actors and placing them on the same level as the animals, plants and material objects with which they are pursuing networking and exchange relations (Wolfe 2010: xv; on "cultural posthumanization," see also Herbrechter 2013: 174). Thanks to this epistemological shift, it is possible to use the word "turn" here, since "posthuman theory is a generative tool to help us re-think the basic unit of reference for the human in the bio-genetic age known as 'anthropocene', the historical moment when the Human has become a geological force capable of affecting all life on this planet" (Braidotti 2013: 5).

Another way in which clusters of turns enhance an individual turn's significance is through agglomeration with a global reorientation, especially in an

environment in which transnational relations and communication networks are being created by digitization technologies. Despite the recent discussion of a global turn, translation processes are coming to the fore and being grasped as constitutive practices of a transnational reformation of the study of culture: "Cultural studies today is not only about globalization: it is being 'globalized' – a very uneven and contradictory process. ... What interests me about this is that, everywhere, cultural studies is going through this process of re-translation" (Hall and Chen 1996: 394). In an interview on the globalization of cultural studies in 1996, the late Stuart Hall interpreted the uneven globalization of the study of culture as a process by which it was being continually translated or retranslated. Of course, here it is not enough to cite the automatic mechanisms of global digitization. Rather, it is precisely the "diaspora intellectual figures" who are acting as the agents of this translation process – "constantly translating between different languages, different worlds" (399) and constantly transforming theories and concepts into different contexts. As a result, translation is being decoupled from the idea of an original:

> And I use "translation" in quotation marks too: translation as a continuous process of re-articulation and re-contextualization, without any notion of a primary origin. So I am not using it in the sense that cultural studies was "really" a fully-formed western project and is now taken up elsewhere. I mean that whenever it enters a new cultural space, the terms change. (394)

In other words, the "translation" of cultural studies involves opening up the field with respect to nonhegemonic countries outside the U.S. and Europe – and opening it so broadly that 1) it can participate in the economic shifts on the periphery and thus even become Asian or African "cultural studies" and 2) it questions its own tendency toward universal validity claims and conceptualizes itself in new epistemological fields in the course of this global upheaval (see 396; also Bachmann-Medick 2014).

This type of shift toward transcultural contexts and inequalities is linked to a critical comparativism that is increasingly addressing problems of relativism, comparison, differences and commonalities both as methodological issues and within the context of a politics of research attitudes. Despite all the implementational difficulties, the study of culture is thus continuing to face the task of defining investigative categories and methodologies that are no longer solely Western-influenced, but are developing in a "global conversation" that is by no means free of power struggles (for a discussion from a science perspective, see Jacob 1999: 112). This transformation is also affecting scholarly canonization processes, particularly the question of the universal applicability of European (scholarly) categories and the need to critically rethink such categories from the

perspective of their "cross-categorical translation" (Chakrabarty 2000: 85). Are these investigative categories predicated on Europe? Is it therefore difficult to transfer them to other cultural contexts? To what extent should each researcher's own investigative concepts be reviewed in the ensuing global conversation? A "global turn" is thus bringing into play the translatability of the categories of the study of culture, beyond the dominance of Western categories (see Gergen 2006).

Not only is this type of cross-cultural turn expanding the research field in a quantitative fashion – e.g., through an extension of regional studies to include global entanglements, international contexts and breaks. What is also emerging is a new transcultural investigative attitude that casts local or regional contexts and area studies in a new light (Bachmann-Medick 2015). Clear impetus has come from the diverse approaches of transnational, transcultural and translocal historical studies (Freitag and von Oppen 2010), from a transcultural sociology or a sociology of world society that is understood as "a 'glocal' cultural investigation" (Beck 2000: 49), from a transnational comparative literature focused on the contemporary literatures of the world (Jay 2010), as well as from a transnational anthropology that, confronted with a "world in pieces," is currently becoming an "intensive ethnography in multiple sites" (Marcus 2000: 15) or a "multi-sited ethnography" (15) in a multipolar world.

As should be emphasized in conclusion, the cutting-edge research that has been outlined in broad strokes here – geared toward the further development of reflections in the study of culture – is not taking us away from the individual disciplines any more than the cultural turns themselves. It is creating a reservoir of thematic and methodological incentives and focuses that will come to fruition only when they find their way into concrete disciplinary work – when the turns assert themselves in the individual disciplines through "topics that link existing disciplines" and, as a result, the disciplines themselves are "dislocated and twisted," to use Tom Mitchell's words (Mitchell 2009: 1028). Does this mean that the turns are ultimately provoking a "turning" of the disciplines, an "explosion or implosion of a disciplinary regime" (Mitchell 2009: 1028), a displacement of the established discourse managed by the individual disciplines?

However we answer these questions, the turns have constantly challenged researchers to step out of their own disciplines and enter "shared territories" (Klein 2005: 39). And this border-crossing activity seems better suited to a world of complex interdependencies and differences than Geertz's notion of "blurred genres." Such practice could be accompanied by an in-depth look at the politics behind the methodologies and analytical concepts in the study of culture. To quote sociologist Ulrich Beck, after bidding farewell to "methodological nationalism" with its "national outlook," researchers could work toward a "methodo-

logical cosmopolitanism" that is comparable to a "paradigm shift" (Beck 2011: 17). Clifford Geertz once posed a question that pointed in a similar direction: How can theory in the study of culture develop a language that is able to do justice to a "multiplex world" and the challenges of the "hard particularities of the present moment" (Geertz 2000: 228)? The current problem is that "the language within which [theory] is cast, a language of summings up rather than sortings out" (228) is severely inhibiting. In other words, a vocabulary that continues to be based on generalities and semantic contexts will not lead to further advances. In view of cultural particularities, cultural conflict and "cultural softwarization," new analytical categories are needed. It is precisely the differentiation of the turns that is a prerequisite for the complex transcultural shift in the analytical vocabulary of the study of culture, a shift toward relationship and network concepts (Hannerz 1998: 246ff.) and above all toward the new translational terms that are playing a role in cross-cultural interactions or that can be derived from such interactions in the first place.

Current approaches to the "public humanities" that emphasize the participation and responsibility of the humanities in democratic renewal, problem-solving and education for a critical citizenship points in a similar direction (Cooper 2014: xix; Nussbaum 2010; Brooks 2014). What is also emerging is a "commitment to ethical reading" not only regarding social problems but also in critical contradiction to an increasingly instrumental use of language (Brooks 2014: 2). As a result, the public humanities are becoming part of a broader ethical turn that is directing the study of culture to the referential links and social commitments that were easy to avoid during the boom period of constructivism. A key factor here is the fundamental translation of cultural concepts into cultural concerns. This implies directing our full attention to the conflicts of the contemporary global world and going beyond theoretical conceptual work in order to study fields such as environmental responsibility, climate change, sustainable development, new cultural practices of economics and management, the narrative structure of social life, global ethics, human and animal rights, as well as theories of social movement (see Ó Tuama 2009).

It is certainly possible to transform the reorientations in the study of culture into these social and political concerns – and thus into methodological approaches that increasingly align concept-based work with the analysis of problem fields. This transformation could prevent the turns from becoming mired in theoretical debates. Fundamental reflections and research in the study of culture, undertaken within the framework of the cultural turns after the linguistic turn, will then not need to adapt only to changing textual conditions or practical links. And their fields of inquiry will then not be formed only by the precarious intercultural and intercategorial in-between and translational spaces

that are addressed by Clifford Geertz's central questions concerning modes of thought and theory in a "splintered world": "What is a culture if it is not a nation? … What is a culture if it is not a consensus?" (Geertz 2000: 224). The emerging fields in the study of culture are even abandoning questions that continue to be situated in the familiar context of the liberal humanities. They will increasingly need to open to the "practical extensions of the humanities" (Epstein 2012: 12, 27) and even to a critical posthumanism. From a broader perspective, they will have to examine a more comprehensive planetary dimension that relativizes the limitedness of anthropocentrism in key ways. In the sense of an epistemological turn toward their own process of knowledge production (Braidotti 2013: 155), the cultural turns and the humanities will increasingly need to answer a variety of new questions: What is culture if we no longer see it as a product of humans alone but as part of a network of human and nonhuman forces? What is culture if it is not an ethical commitment?

4 Conclusion

Despite all these very different directions taken by the cultural turns, we can identify common concerns. The dynamism that characterizes the random proliferation of the turns could, for example, be slowed down and developments could be deepened by means of fundamental reflections on the direction of research in the study of culture as a whole. This could be achieved, in particular, by a return to ethical issues, a stronger focus on social references and the development of fundamental methods of cultural analysis such as translation, mediation, networking and connectivity. In this context translation could be refined into a research focus that more cogently examines the pivotal points between turns, disciplines, research fields and problem scenarios. In a complex research constellation such as this, the cultural turns could acquire a new dimension. Within the scope of the increasing transnationalization of the study of culture, they are ideal tools for defining cross-cultural issues and scenarios, developing transcultural categories and exploring common reference points. In this sense, the turns could be used to drive additional cross-border scholarly communication in the field of the study of culture – with an eye toward the new dynamics resulting from a collaborative, transcultural acquisition of knowledge.

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