

INTERTEXTUALITY

:

debates and contexts

Mary Orr

polity

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Prologue

A Palinode to 'Deconstruction'

Supercaligramma-listic hypertextulosis,
Even though the sound of it is something quite precocious. . . .

Meta-para-palimpsestic-intertextualitis
Even though the sound of it is medically frightening. . . .

Mary Poppins coined the word which kids can say like lightning,
Yet intertextual as term will never r-hym(n)e with writing.

* * *

LEAR: Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.

King Lear, 1. i. 92

Serious studies of intertextuality do not normally begin with non-sense verse, or a parody of it. This is because, in high and popular culture, 'intertextuality' is the very non-frivolous name given by critical theory to inter- and intracultural dynamics and their operations. While there are differences of approach and application, books about intertextuality are unanimous about the etymology of the word: it was coined in the late 1960s by Julia Kristeva and enjoyed immediate and resounding success. Not least, as critical term and catchphrase, intertextuality captured the mood of May 1968 in its spearheading of extensive cultural reappraisal.¹ Non-hierarchical and democratically inclusive notions of text in a vast mosaic of other texts could now be prioritized. Such notions directly questioned and challenged pre-1968 ideologies. Among these were the concept of (1) a unified self (especially a male subject position in hierarchical structures of knowledge and power); (2) the pre-eminence of high-cultural expression (as essentially white, male and European); and (3) direct referential connections between language and the world (whether mimetic, semantic, symbolic or metaphysical). It was the model of Saussurian linguistics which was pivotal. It has only two terms, an arbitrarily connected signifier and signified, whereas other

linguistics models include a third term of reference to the world outside language. Texts and intertextuality as complex linguistic systems therefore heralded for the late twentieth century an infinity of new cultural possibility through the endless connectivity of a world as 'super-text' or its later deconstruction.

Nonsense, however, uncovers some of the presuppositions and problems within Saussurian linguistics and hence intertextuality. As a non-language calqued onto dictionary language grammars and vocabularies, nonsense immediately questions how arbitrary the connections are in fact between signifier and signified. Even in the most arbitrarily assigned of sign systems, speakers nevertheless assume that communication will occur and recur because there is sufficient stability and consensus. Otherwise, interlocutors with varying levels of competency and linguistic sophistication could not be included, and the language system itself would only collapse into randomness or secret code. Because nonsense is not totally anarchic yet is quintessentially a non-utilitarian linguistic form, it then puts pressure on how such linguistic purposes can be distinguished within the Saussurian system. Trial and error cannot explain how speakers distinguish an utterance that is 'factual' from one that is mocking, jesting, ironic or poetic. By creating understandable 'words', nonsense presses the Saussurian model on a further issue. How can a system respond to new concepts? If it incorporates 'foreign' words or forges new words or neologisms from within a given linguistic root-stock, how are these also arbitrary?

Nonsense verse or prose therefore has serious disruptive and re-evaluative roles. It provides a position whereby serious critical discourse, or seriously ludic mockery of received ideas and unquestioned patterns, can be distinguished from the circulation of glib, faddish jargon, which may ultimately prove rather meaningless, or a private language. Even as early as 1978, and in the introduction to one of the first studies of intertextuality, Jeanine Parisier Plottel questioned the authenticity of this buzzword:

Intertextuality is a fashionable word in academic literary circles. This is to be expected when we consider that the word implies a subtle sensation of a very special learnedness and pomposity! Such characteristics are the leading assets of most literary terms that come to be in vogue. Another shorter term would surely be more desirable, but none has yet been devised to convey the message of intertextuality.²

Is intertextuality then merely inventive, or is it also analytically critical? Is it, and will it continue to provide, a viable theoretical tool, or is intertextuality (with deconstruction) like the story of 'The emperor's new clothes', nonsense parading as grand theory? Clearly

these questions are central to this book. It took only the naïve child in Andersen's story to ask the obvious question to unmask the serious pretentiousness of the adult world for what it was.

While children obviously have a lot to tell serious criticism about what makes a text captivating, worth retelling and fun, the more adult realms of nonsense poetry, nursery rhyme and *Alice in Wonderland* logic provide a clear answer to the question 'What is intertextuality?' at its most obvious. Rather than heading immediately for corpora or other theories as complement of the 'what?', the route that most readers, guides and applied studies of intertextuality have taken,³ there is a simpler answer to the question. Intertextuality (as indeed also deconstruction and *différance*) is unequivocally a neologism. This kind of rhetorical coinage serves to fill a specific gap in pre-existing vocabularies, whether a whole concept or a nuance. Because neologisms enter a specific language in a particular historical context, they can be plotted and dated as regards their success. As grafts of other longer-established words, they either beat off competitor terminologies or become dated, if not obsolete, longer term. Translation often further extends, rejuvenates or kills such neologisms. The closer a neologism therefore is to major Indo-European roots, the more likely it is to survive translingually, its successful circulation then bound up with the affinities of its coinage in related languages. Kristeva's 'intertextualité' ('Intertextualität', 'intertextuality', etc.) operates supremely well in this respect, but can it fend off Derrida's related, and equally successful, neologisms to maintain its distinctive relevance, even difference from *différance*? And, more crucially, can it fare well in the open marketplace of common usage where, as neologism and not ordinary word, it may become a pejorative term?

If intertextuality's lasting significance is challenged from within literary and critical theory by deconstruction's neologisms, its future status and survival is no less under threat from rivals and newcomers on its borders. Late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century electronic media and text-messaging developments pose interesting questions about the status of printed book or paper-bounded theories. Is intertextuality (and indeed deconstruction) a last gasp expression of such bricolages or mosaics of (print) text, which multimedia theories and possibilities will inevitably replace? Will 'interdiscursivity', 'hypertextuality' and 'interdisciplinarity' then take precedence over intertextuality, or is the latter specific enough to withstand onslaughts from these newer terms? Has intertextuality a flexibility to expand its remit even beyond its first disciplinary contexts and successful involvements into adjacent areas as diverse as classics, biblical studies, film and media studies? Or has its former drive towards decentring centres and demarginalizing margins ossified into a new

variant, or even more pernicious version, of the very orthodoxies it sought to replace?

In the history of cultural recycling of which intertextuality is but a twentieth-century manifestation, what has not previously been given serious critical attention offers a good potential site for new investigation to test intertextuality's remits and qualities. The realm of children's literature is one such relatively uncharted field, while the arts of nonsense, scribbling or improvisation could constitute mainly untried approaches to socio-criticism and histories of cultural production. An important twentieth-century critical legacy was just such a prioritization of what was absent, whether theorized as lack (by Freudian or Lacanian psychoanalysis), aporia (by deconstruction), positive blanks and silences (by proponents of *écriture féminine*) or revisioning of negatively ascribed notions such as *négritude*. The contributions of feminist, gay and postcolonial cultures and criticism about how to theorize and recuperate the so-called marginal in order to fill in the lacunae of official or mainstream culture and criticism have also been vital. Indeed, intertextuality has often been harnessed as description of such alternative linguistic turns. Yet retrievals of lost voices, or reversals of previous cultural trends and hierarchies which focus on other corpora, do not necessarily reveal the intrinsic dynamics of intertextuality, or demarcate its specific role within critical theory. Its detractors have already labelled it a meaningless catch-all, a 'Passepartoutbegriff', conflating with the word 'postmodern'.⁴ If, in fact, intertextuality is interchangeable with, or collapses into, the word 'postmodern' or 'deconstruction' via the outworkings of deferral such as ambiguity, indetermination or equivocation, it is already doomed to redundancy. But so, too, are intertextuality's replacements, and, in turn, their replacement neologisms. Is intertextuality's 'newness', like the emperor's new clothes, non-existent? Or is it a commentator on fashion's motor of eternal return, where cast-offs are recycled as the latest retro-gear? Clearly, unless and until the particular parameters of intertextuality have been ascertained, its applications (both as theory and practice) can only remain various, contradictory, limited or vague.

However, if 'nothing only comes of nothing', goes endlessly round and round or empties out, how can intertextuality's parameters be ascertained? The epigraph above from *King Lear* provides a most serious reply. Rather than defining intertextuality by what it is not, for example, against nonsense (the *via negativa*), or, indeed, by a double negative (a deconstruction of deconstruction), this study, like Lear, will press it further for what it is. Lear's personal tragedy in so doing, however, also constitutes a warning. From the outset, his error was to take at face value the wordy reformulations of 'love' of his

elder daughters Goneril and Regan, whereas it was his youngest daughter Cordelia's more profound silence that spoke the more. His failure to discern between her 'nothing' as no response, and nothing as something infinitely more than was expressible, is the ultimate tragedy of the play and a timely reminder to debates grounded in linguistics. Terms such as 'love' or 'intertextuality' can be nothing without the qualifiers and contexts in which they can speak again.

Prologues, like prologomena, and formal introductions of strangers to one another, are prefatory remarks, preliminary events or acts, and set forth or summarize the main action of a work. In like manner, the main debates and open questions of this book concerning the potential and future of intertextuality as term are now set out. But prologues also remind us that there may be contexts and speaking prior to (pro-logos) what the subject may say it is about. The primary question 'What is intertextuality?' now requires specific contexts the better to frame it, and to allow it to speak again in reply. As Cordelia knew to her cost, a third or more of the cultural and critical kingdom depends keenly upon the answer.

Introduction

As its most focused studies take as read, intertextuality's definition and specific parameters are grounded in the French intellectual scene of the late 1960s.¹ Almost without exception, both theoretical and applied surveys delimit intertextuality within the contexts of Saussurian linguistics, semiotics, post-structuralism, and the *Tel Quel* group of intellectuals.² Those unfamiliar with any of these movements need not even look to general works on critical theory for elucidation. Recent glosses and guides to intertextuality, such as Graham Allen's *Intertextuality* (2000) and Tiphane Samoyault's *Intertextualité: mémoire de la littérature* (2001), give clear expositions of these conceptual contexts, and potted versions of the main theories. Allen even provides the uninitiated reader with a glossary of critical terms, and a tour round critical theory more widely, including feminist theory, post-colonial criticism and multimedia, using intertextuality as a vehicle. Common to these recent guides and to older applied and theoretical studies, however, is a surprising consistency: intertextuality remains singular in their titles.³ There is also an agreed canon of its theorists and theories. While inevitable variation comes by extension of the core list, applied and theoretical studies nevertheless reiterate, endorse and reinforce the roles of the central players. Starting with Kristeva's coinage of intertextuality with reference to Bakhtin as important staging post, the main discussion focuses on the contribution of Barthes, not least his (in)famous death of the author. Kristeva's too overarching term is then further clarified by Riffaterre's emphasis on the reader and Genette's more nuanced taxonomies. Harold Bloom's 'anxiety of influence' is universally the stalking-horse.

While these reiterations certainly clarify and refine various aspects of intertextuality, they also tacitly exclude alternative theories or positions that might challenge (their own) pre-given dispositions of viewpoint, appraisal and methodological approach. What follows in this book is such a challenge to the received canon of what 'intertextuality' is, and how this canon has been formulated, especially in critical guides. Consequently, the formula of further gloss or anthology inherent in critical 'readers', or overtly reformist promotion of an alternative list and gloss of theories or theorists, will be eschewed. Instead, this book seeks first and foremost to question afresh the 'canon' of French theorists of intertextuality – the coiners Kristeva, Barthes, Genette and Riffaterre – and how they fit together, but without the baggage of accepted critical accretion to let them speak again in context. This reverbalization (rather than reiteration) is therefore the main objective of the first chapter, but is foundational for the parameters of the remainder of the book. Such a revisionary route will reveal the received version of 'intertextuality' as much more diverse and partial, especially when the historical and ideological contexts of late 1960s and 1970s France are reconsidered. Within critical theory, intertextuality may then appear less 'French' and less 'postmodern' than has previously been claimed.⁴ This may prove a distinct advantage in intertextuality's favour when it is compared, in the remainder of chapter 1, to other globalizing and rival terms for cultural recycling such as 'interdiscursivity', 'interdisciplinarity' and 'hypertext'.

To prepare the ground for this first chapter, and for the remainder of the book, several unexamined assumptions that undergird critical theory readers and guides to intertextuality, and more sophisticated applied studies, need first to be verbalized. These comments also constitute en route a brief overview of other important contributions to the critical story of intertextuality to date, which have been previously sidelined or silenced. Their recuperation here provides a shortcut to certain ideas in later chapters of this study. By highlighting unvoiced modes of intertextual work in other guises – paraphrase, formulaic expression, variant, recontextualization, translation – various tacit critical agendas behind intertextuality's representations become visible. Among intertextuality's most practical functions is (re-)evaluation by means of comparison, counter-position and contrast. These operations openly inform the ensuing study and its method throughout.

Of foremost concern, however, is the question how and why certain players in the story of intertextuality have come to be canonized. Circulation of their works by constant repetition and critical gloss is obviously essential, but this would not be possible without

readily available copy and aids to rapid assimilation. To this end, accessible bibliographies as vehicles of 'required' reading lists have been hugely significant disseminators. Indeed, many major guides to intertextuality have seen the provision of such bibliographies as a major service to their readers.⁵ Obviously, for non-initiates, works or theorists not catalogued do not exist. Such lacunae, if filled, would make for a more comprehensive survey of available information, but may in fact have little to do with unrepresented fields of expertise or narrowness of disciplinary range. The *language(s)* of bibliographies count(s) as much in dissemination of information as contents. Although the first bibliography of bibliographies, Udo Hebel's *Intertextuality, Allusion and Quotation: an International Bibliography of Critical Studies* (1989), was in English, its coverage is primarily of works in other European languages, because English was but the third or fourth in his own portfolio. In stark contrast is the monolingualism of recent readers, such as Allen and Samoyault, epitomized by their bibliographies. There is no reference to any work that is not in English or English translation in Allen, so that in effect 'French' theory is already tantamount to a gloss. In Samoyault, there is equal bias, but towards works only in French; she subordinates 'foreign' matter through second-hand citation and tokenist appraisal relegated to footnotes. Popularizing anthologies and guides dependent largely on translations may not in fact be serving intertextuality well, as we will discover in various contexts throughout this study. Thus, the multilingual bibliography test underscores how critical (in many senses) is the availability of key texts, and, if in translation, that they follow rapidly on the heels of their language of first publication. Where a theorist, or his/her whole corpus, is not translated, material simply disappears from reading lists, bibliographies and, more important, cultural and critical circulation.

It is for the simple reason that it has not been translated from German into either English or French that the groundbreaking essays in Broich and Pfister (1985) are rarely cited. The extensive annotated bibliography categorizing intertextuality under other guises such as allusion, adaptation, quotation and parody is also largely undiscovered, although it is the likely model for the very similar format in Hebel (1989). As also a Germanist, Hebel fully acknowledges the contribution of this volume, one of his top two with Stierle and Warning (1984). Even in the early 1980s, these critics were challenging intertextuality as a monolithic, blanket term in ways that non-German-speaking critics are only now beginning to suggest.⁶ Moreover, the contributors in Broich and Pfister (1985) were examining intertextuality as theories and practices (plural), well before Worton and Still (1990) adopted a similar format, and across various

critical traditions, of which two are cause for particular reflection. First, in accord with Broich and Pfister's subtitle, works of English (and American) literature, and from the Renaissance to postmodernism, constitute the 'case studies' for the 'forms' and 'functions' of intertextuality in practice throughout. The historical breadth and choice of this corpus doubly challenges what is perceived as 'cutting edge' literary theory and reading practice. If it is not in effect French,⁷ it must then inhabit English departments in the United States or Britain, where work on related continental (usually French) critical theory is undertaken mainly through English translation. However, Gisela Ecker's essay 'A map for re-reading: Intertextualität aus der Perspektive einer feministischen Literaturwissenschaft' (Broich and Pfister, 1985) makes Allen's foray into feminist approaches in 2000 extremely belated, even arguably derivative. Similarly, Joseph Schöpp's 'Endmeshed in entanglements: Intertextualität in Donald Barthelme's *The Dead Father*' pre-empts much of what is taken as definitive work on intertextuality and postmodern practices such as Waugh (1984) or Hutcheon (1988 and 1989), even if their treatments are more extensive.

While work on practices is vital to the extension of intertextuality's definitions, the more important contribution that Broich and Pfister's volume makes is to its theories, both across several linguistic traditions (German, French, English) and across traditions of linguistics. Thus, French semiotic theories, such as Kristeva's, are integral to the debate, but in counter-distinction to developments in structuralist poetics, such as the more formalist Jenny (1976), or post-structuralist Genette of *Palimpsestes* (1982). These French theories are, however, of equal significance to the rich, German contribution to Central European and Slavist theories of 'intertextuality'. These issue from Russian Formalism and the Bakhtin circle, where socio-critical dimensions and considerations are paramount. The world is not a text, but a referent to which texts can point and are affiliated. Broich and Pfister (1985) highlight the particular importance of work by Renate Lachmann (1982), who was also a key contributor to Stierle and Warning (1984). Her work epitomized landmark research in a similar vein to contributors in Schmid and Stempel (1983), prioritizing not Kristevan intertextuality, but development of Bakhtin's work on dialogism and speech genres, as the very titles and series of these collections underscore.⁸ Again, because Lachmann's work is unavailable in French or English, more recent reappraisals of intertextuality from precisely such viewpoints, such as Bruce (1995), lay claim to such ideas as new departures, developing similar, but French, socio-criticism, such as Angenot (1983a). Interestingly, Angenot's essay and much of his later work is equally

unavailable in English. Only critics with wider linguistic access can therefore tell whether the provenance of ideas is really as new as is claimed. Thus, Broich and Pfister (1985) remain a veritable goldmine for intertextuality's theories and practices. In its range and depth, it also outstrips subsequent work by its individual contributors in English, such as Plett (1991). He, like Hebel (1989), while multilingual, and a promoter of multilingual practices, opts for intertextuality under not a socio-critical but largely a semiotic and post-modern umbrella, since the late 1980s and 1990s were more alive to such ideas via Derrida and Lyotard. Referentiality is then inter-referentiality of text to text, not text to referent outside it.

Greater diversity or linguistic range may not, however, be the only panacea to intertextuality's misrepresentations. As Broich and Pfister (1985) demonstrate, a parallel prerequisite is openness to a number of theoretical angles, often coupled with pre-postmodern viewpoints on practices to provide counterchecks to 'the new', or the latest, as the only sites worthy of consideration. Openness of approach is not unsurprisingly found in the earliest, albeit largely monolingual, responses to intertextuality of the 1970s. The overtly pluralized special number of *Poétique* (1976), *Intertextualités*, interestingly, has no editorial résumé. Rather, it revels in the free plurality and strategies of its form, but not as limitless play, as Jenny's essay therein indicates.⁹ Already critical of Kristevan intertextuality as both too broad and too narrow a term within semiotics, Jenny's famous 'leadership du sens' advocates text cognizant of its material contexts.¹⁰ Only then may it offer 'meaning' as a centring position for critical evaluations. Hence, other epochs have equally enjoyed 'intertextuality', whether in the medieval *rhétoriqueurs* (Zumthor, 1976), post-structuralist *mise en abyme* (Dällenbach, 1976),¹¹ the Renaissance of Dante (Contini, 1976) or the modernism of Joyce (Topia, 1976). The final essay by Leyla Perrone-Moisés, underlining the intertextual status of criticism not as para- but 'pariah-literary',¹² will find particular resonance in the second chapter below. There is much to prove if one is a latecomer writer or, indeed, poet-critic or critical theorist, which may be why critical readers endorse largely *one* view of intertextuality at the expense of others. As Germaine Brée put it in 1978, 'Intertextuality, in *one* interpretation (Julia Kristeva's) of the much used term, is the power of the written text to impose a reorganization of the corpus of texts that preceded its appearance, creating a modification in the manner in which they are read.'¹³ Fixity (critical canonization) is the endpoint in the largely unvoiced, and undocumented, process of such impositions, which begins from much more critically diverse, eclectic, or even iconoclastic, positions. These are exemplified in the collection edited by Plottel and Charney (1978),

in the preface of which Plottel openly states that it will make no attempt 'to define or establish an orthodoxy'.¹⁴ Rather:

[i]ntertextuality is the recognition of a frame, a context that allows the reader to make sense out of what he or she might otherwise perceive as senseless. This seems quite obvious when dealing with the corpus of an unfamiliar culture [...] Such is, of course, Lévi-Strauss's method, in his study of myth. When dealing with works that belong to a familiar tradition, we may not be quite as aware of the lenses with which we read. [...] Interpretation is shaped by a complex of relations between the text, the reader, reading, writing, printing, publishing and history: the history that is inscribed in the language of the text and in the history that is carried in the reader's reading. Such a history has been given a name: intertextuality.¹⁵

Multifariousness, we are reminded, was what the theory of intertextuality hailed, yet such practices are sidelined when critical rigour is prioritized, such as in the agenda of Riffaterre. As intertextuality is thus 'refined', it becomes (purer) semiotics, (post-)structuralist poetics, socio-criticism, deconstruction, depending where referentiality is pinned; to itself, language, a system or the world. Plottel and Charney (1978) none the less remind critics of what actually happens in practice: theory is never 'pure', but a 'pick and mix'. In what can only be described as their 'cocktail' rather than formulaic approach to intertextuality, where theory is as often derived from practices, the seriously experimental *and* fun can be returned to definitions of intertextuality. However, given the intervening plethora of studies on and about intertextuality since Hebel (1989), how can the term avoid becoming one uniform *mélange* of all cultures, languages and media, or an even more impossibly vague and overly large cultural and critical *Gesamtkunstwerk*?

The major principles and lessons drawn from the above short survey round others' and other versions of the story of intertextuality inform and pertain to the working methods in this book. First, unlike monolingual readers or critical guides, no theory represented here is relayed second-hand through translations or unquestioned recycling of the work or bibliographies of other critics. This book assumes a rather different first premise, that readers' curiosity and interest extend beyond one cultural tradition, language and critical school, and that no card-carrying cultural critic, especially in a global twenty-first-century culture, can be resolutely monolingual. Because it draws mainly on French, German and Anglo-American theories of intertextuality, but includes comparisons with among others Russian, Chinese or Japanese traditions where strategic, the question of intertextuality more broadly, as translation, interlingual communication,

or new word overlapping with precursor terms, is constantly in view. To these ends, and following Broich and Pfister (1985), this book provides two indices of the critical vocabularies and alternative terms that 'intertextuality' as catch-all word encounters, or has ingested. Such tools will then allow readers to think laterally about related critical terms, to cross-reference a keyword where it occurs in a variety of different contexts, or to demonstrate the unsuitability or compatibility of certain concepts then applied in practice.

A related issue, also faced differently by Broich and Pfister (1985), Hebel (1989) and Plett (1991), is the choice of English as 'main' language. Rather than seeing it as the *lingua franca*, this book challenges such monolingualism by reintroducing those theories or critics which have been particularly badly served by lack or inadequate provision of translations. Such 'foreign' material is not secondary in my own translations, but fully equal through reference in the notes, bibliography and index to the original. Clearly because certain texts in the original fall outside my linguistic competency – the theories of the Bakhtin circle, for example, are not represented in depth – Bakhtin's work is given coverage in the first chapter with respect to its reception in France. Similarly, Russian Formalism as 'science' of signs is discussed with reference to theories of rhetoric and poetics, not least those of Genette, in chapter 3. The invitation is then for Russianists and specialists in other languages and cultures to follow through the ideas opened up.

Contrary to the wonderful diversity of application that are the essays in *Poétique* (1976) or Plottel and Charney (1978), or the more nationally focused exemplifications of theory in practice in Broich and Pfister (1985) or Worton and Still (1990), this book is not about specific practices, or how these extend theories of intertextuality. By also breaking with previous practices of guides on intertextuality, this book attempts to uncover some of the basic principles underlying various theories of intertextuality, so that this term or its cognates may be used to better critical advantage. Hence, the aim is to provide readers with a well-stocked critical toolbox to describe intertextuality for the range of jobs it does. A major advantage of this is that applications are left entirely to the reader's own spectrum of theoretical interests regarding intertextuality, or questions of its specific cultural and historical manifestations. The corollary of this is that the close readings of the texts of one national literature, genre or epoch, or of one race, class, sex or creed, will not predominate or occlude discussion of the mechanisms of intertextuality, or its related or affiliated terms. Slippage into simple oppositions or their reversals will equally be avoided. Concentration on 'popular' cultural forms as opposed to 'high' cultural ones, or priority of say music over pho-

tography, does not necessarily enhance understanding of how intertextuality operates across media. New readers from a wide variety of media backgrounds can then be drawn into the critical community, and one where 'mainstream' and 'marginal' cease to be divisive. Thus, where sparing reference is made en route to aid theoretical understanding, this is to something interculturally familiar so that the viability of this book can be maximized by others' application of key terms to a multiplicity of contexts, epochs, media or genres. The literary, cultural or critical knowledge of one person could never encompass all possible examples or theories, let alone attempt exhaustive codification. Indeed, where the reader finds that the principles discussed throughout this study cannot be applied to a certain corpus or tradition, this should stimulate and enlarge critical debate about intertextuality itself.

With this rather different practical methodology now in place, a further requirement is a sharper yet more diverse *theoretical* method and comparative framework than are offered by previous guides which gloss the 'canonical' theorists of intertextuality. Provision of alternative lists of theories, media, aesthetic value systems or comparative geographies may only provide more of the same. It is the very ubiquity of intertextuality that gives the lead. Inhabiting not just the context of 1960s France, semiotics and postmodernism, but prior contexts, its atemporality has been the visible running thread in many practice-orientated studies of intertextuality, which treat older forms and genres alongside recent ones.¹⁶ From the 1990s on, critics such as Worton and Still (1990) and Piégay-Gros (1996),¹⁷ followed by Limat-Letellier and Miguët-Ollgnier (1998) and Samoyault (2001), are more specific and expansive about the longer history of intertextuality in France, its theoretical background prior to Kristeva.¹⁸ Clearly, as some commentators have noted, a wider cultural history of the term, its manifestations and contexts beyond France, would be desirable.¹⁹ Such a task has not been tackled probably because it would represent a mammoth undertaking on two counts. It would need first to encompass comparative investigations between modes and media of cultural production – *inter alia* music, painting, literature, sculpture, architecture, photography, film, television, video, and computer-generated forms – as well as investigate their historical importance or evolution in one or several national heritages. A related remit would entail plotting the evolution of intertextuality as a critical term in Western and non-Western cultures. Yet, not to undertake such a cultural history of intertextuality potentially isolates or over-determines its aegis within late twentieth-century cultural contexts. Intertextuality is not independent of modernism or its heritage in Romanticism, just as the 'post' in post-modern, post-feminist,

post-colonial, etc., may be closer to modernism, feminism and colonialism than first imagined. To assure continuity rather than discontinuity, questions need to be asked of intertextuality as label for operations which are in fact far from new, and still going strong in different guises.

To assure intertextuality an ongoing place beyond its specific contexts, this book rises to the second challenge, the mapping of its evolutions, but responds from within the Western critical condition and its traditions. While there is nothing new under the sun, this has never prevented humanity from engaging in artistic or critical reinventions. At the very least, such a platform allows this book to elucidate how the term intertextuality differs and is similar to older forms of very much the same thing, since the interplay of such manifestations will undoubtedly find analogues in the cultural future. In best Renaissance tradition, this book also recognizes the foundational work and previous insights of other critics, for they make possible the space for my version of the story of intertextuality. This book thus steps into the gap ascertained by Richard Schoek: 'Intertextuality has its own literary history, although it is not yet written',²⁰ but first as a direct question to its 1960s context. What was the semantic vacuum that the neologism, intertextuality, duly filled? And why were perfectly valid terms that had been in circulation to describe the referential processes between and within works, and between works and the material world, no longer appropriate? Since the word intertextuality is a graft, what other alternatives were available at the same time? Which did intertextuality reinforce, and which did it silence?

Examination of what has been downplayed or dismissed everywhere constitutes the main mode of reconsideration in the following chapters. The assumption underlying this book is that there exist what I call 'shadowland' terms to intertextuality such that, like the tip of an iceberg, it is but a part of a greater whole. These shadowlands have been closed to view in order to prioritize or valorize another term, and invent a lineage to support its importance. This process trades under names such as ideology, power, or simply cultural criticism. By re-examining this lineage, but with a firm eye on its shadow and an ear to the echo of its voice, this book does not, however, set out to discover territories which have not been included in the mainstream. Instead, the shadowlands of concern here are as much the most tried and tested forms of cultural recycling, such as quotation and imitation and the former mainstream of previous epochs (canonical authors, rhetoric, genres), as the works of so-called marginal writers. Indeed, by underlining the concept of shadowlands, the labels 'mainstream' or 'marginal' cease to play a key role in determining a hierarchy or value system of literary or cultural production

and its rejuvenations. Heritage can then be investigated more broadly, and understood in a variety of ways that may also set out paths for intertextuality's development within, and beyond, the currently perceived crisis of postmodernism.²¹

It is the interaction of intertextuality with its shadowlands – related and rival terms to describe the processes of cultural rejuvenation – that structures this book and its four main chapters. Intertextuality (as cultural form of Saussurian linguistics, celebrating the arbitrariness and relativity of signifiers to signifieds, and later developed into deconstruction and postmodernism) claims to break with the old sureties, especially about meaning as mythical and metaphysical or atheistic, agnostic, or anti-metaphysical. The first chapter examines the shadowlands to such a notion of intertextuality as (clean) break or disconnection with the past, to examine what it might also have recuperated. Intertextuality can then be more sharply assessed in the light of its two kinds of competitor. First, there are its close relations. Kristeva's coinage is not necessarily Barthes's or Riffaterre's version of intertextuality. Second, to intertextuality in all its versions, there are rival terms, especially regarding its alleged inclusiveness. Concepts such as interdiscursivity and interdisciplinarity manifest the same ability to colonize cultural space. To conclude this chapter, some of the same possibilities and problems experienced by postmodernism – cultural fusion, information storage, retrieval and verification – and encapsulated in electronic hypertext and the internet, find parallels in third-century AD Alexandria. Cultural expansion on one level was the negotiation of an increasingly elitist high culture of the polymath on another. In their differences and similarities, Alexandrianism and postmodernity may be much less polarized when surface appearance is peeled back.

Intertextuality may then also discover that it has less leverage than the ingrained concepts it 'radically' overturned or sought to dispose of. The second chapter focuses on intertextuality's most blatant shadowland, its arch-enemy. The term it reacted to most violently, and desired to replace and displace, was influence, with all its baggage of critical source-hunting and authorial intention. Previous criticism on intertextuality has consistently named Harold Bloom's 'anxiety of influence' as stalking-horse theory.²² By re-examining Bloom's ideas also for their shadowlands, the second chapter will reveal their surprising similarities with deconstruction and intertextuality. Although their surface vocabularies are so different, Bloom may in fact be talking the same language as Derrida, and even deconstructing deconstruction in so doing. Does Bloom then equally consign influence to the dustbin of literary history, or to its recycling plant? The questions the remainder of the chapter asks are how and why

influence came to have such negative and pejorative implications in the 1970s. Can influence be put in a more positive light by shadowland theories that were circulating in parallel, especially those examining and, more important, recognizing tradition, canon and the reader? One of the key issues chapter 2 highlights is how cultural value and its revaluation are imparted, not least by critics. At the very least, Harold Bloom spearheads the insertion of the critic-‘poet’ into the holy trinities of text, writer and reader, or work, author and world. The influence of the critic as arbiter and disseminator presses into the open some very undeconstructed terms at the heart of the deconstructive turn itself.

The positive value and mediation of influence in the Enlightenment or Romanticism to express individuality (of poets, critics, or works, etc.), suggests this hid its own shadowland scapegoat. At work on very similar questions concerning models and anti-models, the antagonist term to recover in chapter 3 is imitation. Rather than being tantamount to a stifling precursor or dull copy, imitation’s positive and creative implications emerge. The essential role of iteration for inspiration within the Renaissance and seventeenth-century classicism, for example, reopens debates about mimicry and models, copy and cornucopia, plagiarism and parody. Postmodernity’s simulacrum, virtual reality, electronic copy-cut-and-paste, or modernism’s bricolage and collage techniques, make of imitation not intertextuality’s distant double-remove, but double. Genette’s theories of the palimpsest are first compared to Kristeva’s intertextuality as imitation, the better to surpass her coinage. His earlier *Mimologiques* (1976), however, further illustrate Genette’s imitations of the strongest precursors when it comes to Western mimesis and representation, Plato and Aristotle. Mimesis and anti-mimesis thus form a configuration that is found to be central to cultural generation and individuation in domains other than art such as zoology and psychology. Chapter 3 examines theories in these domains, and, at seemingly polar opposites, Richard Dawkins’s evolutionary ‘meme’ theory and René Girard’s anthropology of the scapegoat. Both have much to say about principles of cultural survival and change, which inspired the mimetic or anti-mimetic function of art itself not least as ritual. Drama is thus singled out for particular consideration in the final part of the chapter. As the imitative form *par excellence*, it challenges the status of the novel as the primary dialogic genre. Is it then the mimetic bond itself that intertextuality tried, but failed, to break? Is distinctiveness always relative to, and imitative of, previous models?

How, then, do norms, models, paradigms or genomes come about? The fourth chapter looks not to a further encapsulating concept such

as intertextuality, influence or imitation to find out, but to the micro-level of intercommunication, quotation. As kind of linguistic imitation, quotation has a focusing and crystallizing function, where part is often also the whole. As utterance that verifies, authorizes, transports and redefines meanings across time and national boundary, quotation and its accomplice, allusion, name borrowing practices for very specific ends, whether authentication of or separation and autonomy from authorities. Indeed, quotation and allusion fully contend with intertextuality regarding utterances such as saws, proverbs, anonymous or multi-authored words, ballads, orally transmitted lore that have no identifiable first user or historical context.

When also doubled by translingual equivalent, quotations have an even more far-reaching and potent revivifying role. This is demonstrated in what are usually viewed as starkly contrasting epochs. Where the Renaissance with its vernacular imitations sought distance from authority texts and the authoritative languages of Hebrew, Greek and Latin, the Middle Ages negotiated the same problems from the position of creative deference. Commentary, translation, exegesis, all return pre-modern views on interpretation and interpreting references and authority texts, including the Bible, to the postmodern world of texts and intertextuality. Running threads throughout the preceding chapters on imitation and influence also converge on the issue of translation as form of copy that interprets and creates afresh. Its vibrancy in its inter- as well as intralingual and metaphorical senses offers a different way of combining the transitional, transactional and transformational aspects of intertextuality, influence and imitation, from the angle of quotation as reinterpretation. The saying again of the same or similar words has at least two concomitant senses, past and present, literal and figurative, factual and ironic, serious and joking, poetic and prosaic, semantic and semiotic. Affecting one or more cultural heritages, moments or contexts, this constant overlaying of language to speak with forked or double tongue represents the problems of communication since time immemorial: fidelity or fickleness, authority or fakery, truth(s) or deception(s), utility or art. Is language then merely an infinite system or network of unmarked quotations, or is it dependent on textual quotation of its oral diversity for its regeneration? Does postmodern emphasis on audiovisual media then revivify or further distance oral and popular forms? And will intertextuality be made redundant when the printed text no longer rules?

By linking the shadowlands together, the fourth chapter then puts intertextuality back in the balances to assess whether it has, first, the durability to outlast its strategic place in the evolution of critical ideas and, second, the specificity sufficient to prevent it from becoming too

overarching, nebulous or dépassé in the longer term. Unlike all good tragedies, comedies, epics, novels, fairy stories and romances, there is no happy, tragic, or even postmodern, suspended, ending to this book. Yet, as with all fourth acts of classical dramas, we can have intuitions about the fifth, knowing that it will ultimately be about inheritance, conflict, death, future succession, love, and hope of continuity. These may come about by a tragi-comic twist, a supernatural turn of events, an unmasking of what was hidden in the logic of the plot. Combination and new combination is all. Thus, ideas of cultural sedimentation, stultification and weightiness of the past which post-modernity has nurtured as crisis to undergird deconstruction, and that intertextuality has fostered as mosaic of fragments, may not, after all, be the end of the cultural story or its critical retellings.

The debates and contexts of the four chapters of this book are now in place. To begin with intertextuality so as to uncover influence, behind which is imitation, with quotation as a final layer of an onion-like conceptualization of literary and cultural reference, could, however, merely replicate old-fashioned nostalgia for a greater cultural past. For those readers and critics who remain sceptical about literary-historical studies and hence the presumed foundation and approach of this book, it also openly eschews such a retrospective, nostalgic evaluation. Furthermore, the important work of deconstruction to challenge binary taxonomies or dialectics no longer allows such a (naïve) move. However, to challenge deconstruction also to examine its own limits, and what deferral of meaning implies for national history, gender, race, or aesthetic or moral judgements, a theory, of literature, rather than literary theory, is required, as Antoine Compagnon rightly notes.²³ 'Theory', like intertextuality, influence, imitation and quotation, has its own history and desire for distinctiveness. Thus, contrary to the mainly chronological and linear exposition of standard literary histories, this book looks at evolution as also simultaneous development. Instead of simply rewinding the spool of time, or imagining a retrospective 'progress' towards some original or root term for intertextuality, each chapter highlights theories and theorists from its same contexts, late 1960s and 1970s France. While tenets found in Romanticism (chapter 2), in Renaissance modes of revisionism (chapter 3) and medieval micro-macrocosmic structures (chapter 4) are revisited, these ideas are anchored firmly in those of the 1970s. The clear advantages of this are that debates common to all historical periods, and cutting across national or linguistic cultural boundaries, remain uppermost. Redefinition and reordering here also break with the standard recipe of previous readers and guides. Finally, the multiple contexts of the 1970s and its contributions to the 'crisis in postmodernism' may find

unexpected enlightenment by rediscovery of parallels with former epochs. The way will then be open for future studies to examine the many theories that intertextuality (and deconstruction) may have eclipsed initially, but whose lasting significance may be ascertained only as these pass away.

Recent media in fact provide a much more integrated model than the image of concentric nesting onion skins, for the working method of this book and a metaphor for its space in late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century cultural criticism. Our four chapters can better be envisaged as a set of open electronic windows, with intertextuality first and, by virtue of its position to hide and reveal the contents of the other chapter windows, last. Once all four windows are open, questions can then be asked of them together, about patterns and procedures, precedents and replications, which otherwise could be hidden. The ultimate issue is then the collective overcoming of all four, of survival beyond the fourth act. In other words, what role does intertextuality play now for its own future and the future of art in contradistinction to the *opus* of science, philosophy, history, religion? Do we need to expand, delimit or replace it? Are there better alternatives such as citation, or cultural recycling in an electronic age? Fast-forwarding to 'end' to find out would spoil this retelling of the story, so let us now illuminate the first and most familiar screen, intertextuality, to let it 'speak again'.

1

Intertextuality

If Kristeva is openly acknowledged for coining the term intertextuality in the late 1960s, this recognition is surprisingly fleeting and dismissive.¹ However supportive critics may be of its semiotics contexts, they glide rapidly over Kristeva's term, to concentrate on its more illustrious theorists such as Barthes.² Indeed it was he, not Kristeva, who wrote the definition for intertextuality in the *Encyclopédie universalis* in 1973. In arenas outside semiotics, critics of intertextuality also relegate Kristeva's contribution and its French contexts, but as derivative of the work of Bakhtin and the Bakhtin circle.³ A notable exception is provided by Worton and Still (1990), who focus extensively in their introduction on Kristeva's part in a French high-cultural, avant-garde and intellectual tradition that combined experimental writing, literary theory, Saussurian linguistics and left-wing politics. By placing Kristeva firmly within the French critical and intellectual elite of *Tel Quel*, however, they separate her brand of intertextuality, as specifically highbrow, from similar modes of cultural borrowing practised by popular culture. Film and popular music had quickly adopted recycling and sampling in distinctly non-French, and non-theoretical, ways.⁴ While these critical snapshots of Kristevan intertextuality focus on very different issues, they have all contributed to one outcome, marginalization of Kristeva's contributions to the 'real' work and texts on intertextuality:

Kristeva's first published work in France is on Mikhail Bakhtin's literary writings, Roland Barthes' seminar is the place where this first substantial part of the Kristevan *oeuvre* would be presented. Roland

Barthes is not there in the writing, but he is, in part, its precondition. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that Barthes is there, but only in a displaced form. [...] Kristeva will not take up Barthes' theories as such in her work, but it was Barthes' writings from *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture* (1953) onward, which opened up the whole terrain for studies in semiotics. Roland Barthes, then, is Kristeva's Parisian mother, as it were; there is nothing Oedipal here.⁵

There is, however, some sinister transference at work. Why has Kristeva's version of intertextuality been sidelined, even actively discredited, whereas Barthes's among others has not? Is such discrediting of Kristeva as coiner and theorist of intertextuality deliberate, or justifiable? This chapter seeks to answer these questions as central to the wider importance of intertextuality's ongoing justification as term, especially in view of its rivals. These are not only the rival French theories of intertextuality proffered by Barthes, Riffaterre or Genette. Newer contenders, such as 'interdiscursivity', 'interdisciplinarity' and 'hypertext', provide possible replacements of intertextuality as concept. In the twenty-first century, are these not better, less elitist and more inclusive ways of describing cultural recycling than intertextuality in whatever French guise?

Kristeva's term in context

By default, Anglo-American as well as French critics of intertextuality base their understanding of it on Kristeva's essay 'Word, dialogue, novel', the fourth chapter of *Semiotikè*, published in Paris in 1969, but not translated into English until 1980.⁶ The classic definition, enshrined in critical readers in English and French, is taken from a sentence early in the essay: intertextuality is 'a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double.'⁷ While reappraisals of intertextuality as critical term in English, French and German highlight the imprecision or overgeneralizations generated by this 'definition',⁸ these may have less to do with the 'theory' itself than with the practical circumstances and parameters of its reception and circulation. In non-French-speaking intellectual circles, particularly Anglo-American academe, the early production of translations of 'French' critical theory has been crucial to its inclusion in key debates, and its dissemination via conferences, publications and university curricula. Barthes's *oeuvre*, particularly the early texts pertinent to intertextuality and semiotics, was immediately accessible in translation,

whereas Kristeva's work was very belatedly, and often only partially, translated.⁹ Obviously, by 1980, Kristeva's ideas then appeared very similar to those of the already familiar Barthes and Derrida. From this alone, it is unsurprising that 'intertextuality' rapidly elided with the Barthesian notion of the 'death of the author', adapted readily as another version of (Derridean) deferral of text, or was subsumed by the larger theoretical framework of postmodernism and deconstruction. 'Intertextuality', then, was the linguistic Big Bang, the deconstruction of 'Text' into texts and intertexts where these two terms ultimately become synonymous. On every count, Kristeva's coinage was but a pre-semiotic moment in the ensuing deferrals of (inter)text in semiotic space.

While the problems and influences of translations will be the subject of the fourth chapter, the relevant and central point here is that translation, or the lack of it, has created a 'Kristeva' of Anglo-American critical theory that we will discover is not the Kristeva of *Semeiotikè*.¹⁰ If the reader has remained crucial as a 'clearinghouse' outside the text and intertext for Kristeva's French-speaking critics,¹¹ whether fellow theorists such as Barthes and Riffaterre or German and Canadian bi- or trilingual critics, reception of 'Kristeva' in translation and in the critical reader industry has never been questioned. No doubt is ever cast on the authority of her 'text' as other than a completely reliable and transparent cultural transfer. Since the original essay in French is never compared, any distortions, misappropriations or blatant misrepresentations of 'Kristeva's' theory of intertextuality in translation remain invisible.¹² Moreover, since *Semeiotikè* is in fact still inaccessible in its entirety to all but French speakers, no one has ever questioned whether 'Word, dialogue, novel' is in fact 'the intertextuality essay', let alone whether Kristeva's work in *Semeiotikè* as a whole might inform it or, indeed, pre-empt and outstrip ideas found later in deconstruction. Even more radically, Kristeva's wider *Semeiotikè* as other prefiguration of deconstruction has received no critical re-evaluation as a whole, not even in France or within French-speaking critical communities, such that it might then also offer a solution to thinking various ways out of its impasses and the so-called crisis in postmodernism.

If inaccessibility to the French language or to *Semeiotikè* as a whole provides some excuse as to why Kristeva's intertextuality has been marginalized in Anglo-American critical theory, more puzzling is why her term has fared equally badly in France. French critical guides to intertextuality seem unanimous, and surprisingly consistent with the Anglo-American version of the story. Kristeva is again seen as coiner, but, as the quotation from Lechte above endorses, this time her term becomes tantamount to a recuperation or a French version of

Bakhtin's 'dialogism'. Hence, because the more concerted theorization of intertextuality by a Barthes, Riffaterre or Genette brought the critical rigour her original work was deemed to lack, French critical guides eclipse Kristeva's version and concentrate on theirs. Consequently, French guides to intertextuality, like their English counterparts, once again ignore *Semeiotikè* as a collection of supporting essays to the fourth, 'Bakhtin', chapter. Within France, critical guides then only reinforce a French intellectual hierarchy and critical canon of 'intertextuality' which allows no voice, least of all a female one, to question such constructs.

Marginalization of Kristeva in France extends beyond her theory of intertextuality, however. Although she was part of the *Tel Quel* intellectual establishment alongside Sollers, Derrida and Lyotard, her enormous contribution (via *Semeiotikè*) to intertextuality's wider theoretical contexts in linguistics, poetics, psychoanalysis, comparative religion and philosophy of language has always been perceived derivatively, and differently, to theirs. In France, because the philosophical tradition is ingrained – it has been integral to the curriculum in boys' lycées, and only recently taught to girls – tacit demarcations about its status and seriousness obtain. Thus, Derrida is obviously a philosopher, and stratospherically so, whereas women thinkers, without a lineage of philosopher foremothers behind them, rank in the arena only of ideas about emotions such as psychoanalysis, not of pure thinking. Kristeva cannot then be a philosopher in French intellectual terms (or league), whether with or without the 'feminist' qualification that her work (in translation) after *Semeiotikè* enjoys in some Anglo-American academic feminist and critical theory circles. If these have recuperated Kristeva's importance as post-modern thinker, and widened access to her work through monograph studies and readers, they have unwittingly downplayed her primary contributions to the philosophy of language. This is because her work in linguistics and intertextuality is severed from her later work within psychoanalysis and poetics.¹³ In France, critical occlusion of Kristeva is further compounded by her approach, epitomized in fact by *Semeiotikè*, which we would now name interdisciplinary, but which was clearly and strikingly at odds with the 'pure' research pursued by her male *Tel Quel* contemporaries in the late 1960s. At the very least what follows will rescue Kristeva's *oeuvre* as symbiosis, not suture into 'periods' or shifts of disciplinary loyalty, to allow her most recent work to be read in the light of *Semeiotikè*.

If 'Kristevan' and Kristevan intertextuality are not to be doomed to an honorable mention in literary and critical history, rereading *Semeiotikè* is of paramount importance in the recuperation of a major figure in its double sense: for Kristeva's intertextuality in literary and

cultural theory, and for Kristeva as woman intellectual. Full rereading of *Semeiotikè* is a study in its own right, but this chapter can offer no better beginning than to elucidate what Kristeva's intertextuality is. How *Semeiotikè* attempted to navigate it between the Scylla of the death of the unified subject and the Charybdis of the non-existence of any outside of the text will be elucidated. Returning to *Semeiotikè* as a whole can then reopen two key questions. The first reconsiders Kristeva's role in transposing Bakhtin's work on dialogism and the polyphonic novel. The second concerns her theorization of the dynamics of intertextual production. The way will then be cleared to reassess those sections of *Semeiotikè* that have not seen the critical light of day for want of translations or critical consideration, but which also bear enormously on translation as model for intertextual work.

Kristeva's intertextuality and *Semeiotikè*

If there is one word to sum up Kristeva's striking interdisciplinarity of approach, both regarding intertextuality and its encompassing *Semeiotikè* and since, it is interconnection of ideas where previously none existed. The roots of all Kristeva's interests can be found in her doctoral thesis (1966) in linguistics from an at least double tradition. As a linguist and translator, Kristeva brought hitherto unknown work in Russian to bear on French intellectual inquiry into linguistics and language as meta-system. What was original about Kristeva's doctoral work was her combinatory exploration of Russian Formalist and structuralist ideas (not least Bakhtin's), and the grafting of these within Saussurian linguistics and the Barthes/*Tel Quel* politics of post-Marxist materialism to envisage a theory of intersubjectivity as text. While Todorov is usually credited with launching Bakhtin's European and thence American reception, Kristeva's much earlier part in *Semeiotikè* has yet to be fully mapped.¹⁴ She has too often been assumed as 'French' in French and Anglo-American criticism, and her rich Eastern European heritage has mainly been sidelined, although it was clearly noted as early as 1978 by Plottel and Charney:

Cultural historians might trace the concept of intertextuality in [Kristeva's] work to the Eastern European formalist tradition of the early twentieth century. Although Kristeva's present audience is primarily an audience steeped in the most recent developments of the critical model emerging through Franco-American transatlantic commuting, the issues that she tackles appear also in many pages of Soviet semioticians, especially Iouri Lotman, for whom intertextuality is the public domain of culture itself.¹⁵

'Word, dialogue, text', therefore, may be less Kristeva's manifesto for 'intertextuality' than her advocacy of various aspects of Bakhtin's extensive *oeuvre* within Russian semiotics channelled specifically towards a range of similar questions that were current in intellectual circles in France.¹⁶ In other words, Kristeva's essay is primarily a 'translation' of Bakhtin as informed transposition. Source- and target-text traverse a space that is mediated by a translator-interpreter of two languages, and expert in two frames of reference in linguistics. Credit has therefore rarely been given to Kristeva's legitimate and transparent reworking, even 'proselytizing', of Bakhtin.¹⁷ One reason may be because the translation is particularly 'unfaithful' to Kristeva's original essay on this very subject.

The original essay in *Semeiotikè*, written in 1966, appends to the end of its title an all-important footnote. This directly acknowledges that Kristeva's ensuing study is based on, and emerges from, Bakhtin's two recent literary studies, on Dostoyevsky (Moscow, 1963) and Rabelais (Moscow, 1965). Furthermore, Kristeva notes how Bakhtin visibly influenced Soviet theoreticians of language and literature of the 1930s (Voloshinov and Medvedev), and announces that Bakhtin is working on a study of genres of discourse. Kristeva can only have had access to this material in the original Russian. This footnote is transposed in the translation to the end of the first sentence (where it is of tangential relevance). It is also pared down to a bald reference to the *translations* of *Rabelais and his World* (translated in 1965) and *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics* (translated in 1973). The translation then crowns this first note not with the additional information on Bakhtin's influence, but with a reference to his death in 1975 and to the publication (Todorov's) of some of his essays in French in 1978. Elsewhere, the translation elides often partial renditions of the notes in Kristeva's original essay with glosses for an Anglo-American readership. While it may seem a point of pedantry, such improper referencing and acknowledgement in the first footnote of the Bakhtinian context in its rich multiplicity has led to unjustifiable assessments of Kristeva's essay. Its import has been reduced either by suggesting that, retrospectively, it is tantamount to a plagiarism of Bakhtin,¹⁸ or, inversely, that Kristeva's reworking of intertextuality falls painfully short of the precisions in 'Bakhtin's' original work.¹⁹

By contrast, and from its outset, Kristeva's original essay signals how *belated* the French intellectual scene in linguistics is when compared to work already well developed in the 1930s in Russia. Secondly, Bakhtin's double place in the transformation of issues to do solely with linguistics derives from his role in and outside Formalism, and his calling into question of science as meta-structural

term. Kristeva's scrupulousness (unlike Barthes or Derrida for example) in citing or referencing ideas gleaned from elsewhere, because unrecorded, or unnoticed in French-speaking circles, has in fact played against her work being seen as highly informed transformation. What ensues in her 'Word, dialogue, text' essay is the planting out of Bakhtin's various concepts, such as dialogism, carnival, poetic language, as various seedlings in the French seedbed of Saussurian linguistics. At each planting out, Kristeva begins overtly with reference to Bakhtin, such that her own contribution can then also be inserted. Bakhtin is in fact mentioned seven times in the first six pages of Kristeva's essay, as well as indirectly through his works. Most significantly for our analysis, the famous 'definition' of 'intertextuality' is the second half of a longer sentence prefaced by a reference to Bakhtin as originator: 'Yet what appears as a lack of rigour is in fact an insight first introduced into literary theory by Bakhtin: any text etc.' The mosaic of quotations phrase is then a *gloss* and transposition of Bakhtin's thought. This is doubly obvious in that this sentence is itself appositional and expands a prior idea also fully attributed to Bakhtin. It is worth quoting it in full: 'In Bakhtin's work, these two axes, which he calls *dialogue* and *ambivalence*, are not clearly distinguished.'²⁰ The two axes in question are horizontal (subject-addressee) and vertical (text-context). It goes without saying that subjects, addressees and exterior texts are all very alive in Kristeva's Bakhtin, which she renders faithfully, and in Kristeva's intertextuality developed from these Bakhtinian co-ordinates in the following paragraph. Indeed, both Bakhtin and Kristeva honour the author as funnel, so that textuality enters into dialogue with other determining elements. Together, these produce in the novel its polyphony. Neither Bakhtin nor Kristeva, therefore, posits the reader as pivot of interpretability within or outside the text. It is on the question of mediation, however, that Kristeva opens up space for her own concept of intertextuality:

The word as minimal textual unit thus turns out to occupy the status of *mediator*, linking structural models of cultural (historical) environment, as well as that of *regulator*, controlling mutations from diachrony to synchrony, i.e., to literary structure. The word is spatialized: through the very notion of status, it functions in three dimensions (subject-addressee-context) as a set of *dialogical*, semic elements or as a set of *ambivalent* elements. Consequently the task of literary semiotics is to discover other formalisms corresponding to different modalities of word-joining (sequences) within the dialogical space of texts.²¹

For Kristeva, the novel exteriorizes this linguistic dialogue and is at the same time the expansion of the horizontal and vertical axes above

through two interconnected operations of the 'translinguistic'. This is the spatialization of both the condensation of words transmitted in a language (as 'langue' and 'discours') and the elaboration of language within generic formalizations which ever renew and transform socially marked instances of words (dialogism and carnival). The remainder of Kristeva's essay reads Bakhtin to rewrite it into *French*, not as 'translation' of 'languages', but as translinguistic dialogue between two intercultural situations. Combining gloss, interpretation, résumé or elaboration of Bakhtin's key terms – the ensuing and clearly designated subsections of Kristeva's essay make this again abundantly clear – Kristeva is precisely this *mediator-regulator* of textual dialogue. Moreover, French cultural heritage is returned via the 'strangeness' of reading it proleptically through Bakhtin's *Rabelais* (carnival, the grotesque). It is from such (Bakhtinian) 'double-voiced' critical dialogue that Kristeva's essay takes its cue so that her own translingual project can be integrated within the French intellectual climate of left-wing *Tel Quel* and structural (post-Formalist) notions of morphology. What is therefore so stunningly new in Kristeva's work here is the advancing of a theory of *translinguistics*, and the transformative operations at work in any cultural transfer, whether intra- or interlingually. It is but a short step from this to notions of transference and counter-transference and the realm of the pre-linguistic and pre-semiotic in her later 'psychoanalytic' works.

This leaves us with a problem, however. If much of 'Word, dialogue, novel' is a revision of Bakhtin for the rather different French context of Saussurian linguistics, what, in short, is Kristeva's intertextuality? Within *Semeiotikè* as a whole, the term is first mentioned in the preceding essay, 'Le Texte clos' ('The closed text', 1966–7):

The text is therefore *productivity*, meaning that (1) its relation to the language in which it is sited is redistributive (destructive-constructive) and consequently it can be approached by means of logical categories other than purely linguistic ones; (2) it is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a text, many utterances taken from other texts intersect with one another and neutralize one another.²²

While the full significance of this definition will be made even more apparent in the next part of the chapter, the key phrase is 'a permutation of texts, an intertextuality', but in apposition to the text's quality as 'productivity'. Text is the translinguistic arena of language (as 'langue', 'parole', and their logical reformations in writing and other cultural productions) in active and constant redistribution. Intertextuality thus names this interactive, permutational production of text, its constant intersecting and neutralizing processes. While the