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Resignifying Hate Speech

Doing and Undoing the Performative in Franz Kafka's "Schakale und Araber"

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For Gerhard Neumann

The article in hand is offering a new perspective on Franz Kafka's short but brilliantly contrived text "Schakale und Araber" by investigating processes of signification and resignification, staging and restaging as the basis of performative strategies to do and undo acts of hate and hate speech. With this new perspective, this article is turning away from dominant strings of interpretation concerning Kafka, and particularly "Schakale und Araber", as for e.g. in the (auto-) biographical approach (with and without psychoanalytical support), the historical approach (with and without focus on biographical or regional aspects), the cultural approach (with and without emphasis on Jewish and Judaic elements), the comparative-cultural studies approach (with or without its concern for orientalist discourse) the anthropological approach (with or without focus on Kafka's use of animal figures). En passant, the article in hand will shed new light on these interpretations, especially in connection with "Schakale und Araber", and refocus their insights in an investigation into the performative, clarifying some of the underlying signification processes of Kafka's writings as opposed to these interpretive arguments. Of course, this new attempt at understanding Kafka's texts, and "Schakale und Araber" in particular, is indebted to some of the most outstanding and demanding interpretations of Kafka's works, as those based on style and rhetorical analyses, abstract psychoanalytical analyses of signification processes, and deconstruction¹.

In the vein of the above predominant, yet discarded approaches, from the very start “Schakale und Araber” has basically been regarded as a text reflecting Kafka’s biography, his personal problems and preferences, the historical and cultural background of his times². Thus interpretations concerned with the (auto-) biographical have focused on Kafka’s well-known problematical relationship with his father and subsumed “Schakale und Araber” under the labeling “father-son conflict” and “Oedipal conflict” from a very biographical point of view. Or they have focused on Kafka’s well-known dietary problems presenting “Schakale und Araber” as a text concerned with vegetarianism, health, hygiene, and the slaughter of animals³. This has been linked to questions about Kafka’s relationship to and view on Judaism and Jewishness, overwhelmingly emphasizing Jewish traditional writings and rituals (e.g. animal slaughter, Messiah, dietary laws)⁴. As different as these interpretive approaches may seem, one can argue nevertheless that all of these attempts at interpretation are about nothing else but the identification of exterior elements within the text. In other words, they try to “demystify”, to “demetaphorize” Kafka’s text in order to give a meaningful closure safeguarded by an unquestioned exteriority, be it biographical, historical or cultural, of the text itself. This way of interpretation, however, does exactly what Kafka feared and abhorred when asking Martin Buber at the time of publication not to introduce “Schakale und Araber” as a “parable” (“Gleichnis”)⁵, a literary category that is bound to trigger off attempts at demetaphorization, demystification, unraveling a presupposed riddle.

Contrary to these interpretive attempts of demetaphorization based on a clear-cut hierarchical inside-outside textual structure, the article in hand is showing Kafka’s reconstructing and deconstructing of performative processes aiming at identification and closure, and thereby not only questioning the validity of such hierarchical inside-outside demarcations, but establishing the necessary relocation of Kafka’s – or for that matter: any – writing as agency within a performative field. Kafka’s “Schakale und Araber” offers a variety of hate speech acts and acts of hatred and harassment, which, carefully analyzed, stress the failure of any attempt at demarcation or closure. Hate speech, intimidation, threat, and insult are speech acts which clearly

show linguistic and performative workings within their strategies. Acts of hatred, harassment, bullying, display complex combinations of somatic, corporeal, and linguistic performative elements closely connected to hate speech. In her famous book on "excitable speech", Judith Butler is elaborating not only a clear-sighted and convincing analysis of hate speech and hate acts, but also a powerful set of strategies counter-acting and resignifying hate speech. In order to understand Kafka's reconstructing and deconstructing of hate speech and hate acts in "Schakale und Araber", it is necessary to clarify some fundamental linguistic, philosophical, psychoanalytical and political concepts offered by Butler's insightful analysis.

Complaints about hate speech, slander, harassment and threats have been on the rise in the industrial and economic superpowers with long-term stable democracies like the United States of America, Western Europe and Japan in the last twenty years. Complaints are uttered throughout all layers and areas of societies, they don't even stop at the thresholds of educational institutions such as universities and schools⁶. In the U.S. public and theoretical discussions basically have taken place in two distinct areas: specialists in law like Richard Delgado, Mari J. Matsuda, and Charles R. Lawrence III. have taken up the debate on racial minorities, while researchers like Catharine MacKinnon and Rae Langton have concentrated their work on sexual expression and harassment, especially pornography. The problem discussed in the U.S. debates is basically due to clashes between "hate speech" and "free speech" guaranteed by the First Amendment of the American Constitution. Heated discussions in the U.S. have even led to calls for a revision or change of the First Amendment⁷. The most basic and important political as well as legal task was to find a useful and practical definition for "hate speech" in order to structure and clarify the discussions. At the turn of the millennium most attempts at defining hate speech turned to J.L. Austin's ground-laying work *How to Do Things with Words*⁸ which differentiates between "illocutionary" and "perlocutionary" speech acts. While the illocution-

any speech act is defined as an act that at the moment of the utterance does what it says, the perlocutionary speech act is defined as an act that produces an effect as the consequence of the utterance. This leads to a short-cut definition which is situated at the core of the hate-speech debates: “The illocutionary speech act is itself the deed that it effects; the perlocutionary merely leads to certain effects that are not the same as the speech act itself”⁹. With this turn in the discussion about hate speech, Judith Butler had to become one of the decisive players in the debate, for these attempts at definition do not only reach far into the realm of the performative, her trade mark, the positions that Delgado, Matsuda and MacKinnon among others have taken are obviously diametrically opposed to any political and philosophical critical stance Butler is known for.

Judith Butler enters this discussion by questioning the validity and usefulness of the term “wound” that Richard Delgado, Mari J. Matsuda and their co-editors make the focus point of their argument by introducing it in the title of their influential book *Words that Wound*, combining physical and linguistic vocabularies as if physical and linguistic “wounds” were identical. Charles R. Lawrence III even speaks of “verbal assault” and likens the speech act to “receiving a slap in the face. The injury is instantaneous” and endowing it with the power to “produce physical symptoms that temporarily disable the victim”¹⁰. It seems that there is no specific language available to describe the negative effects of speech acts, referred to as “linguistic injury”. Butler mentions Elaine Scarry’s influential book *The Body in Pain*, which argues that corporeal pain is inexpressible in language, in order to shed light on the intricate relationship of body and language and the limits which language encounters when confronted with the body¹¹. The American debates on pornography are dominated by Catherine MacKinnon, whose arguments in the 1990s reflected the shifting in the definitions of hate speech from “perlocutionary”, language and gestures exciting a certain reaction in the audience, to “illocutionary”, identifying utterance and act. In *Only Words*¹² MacKinnon uses the term “performative utterance” in order to merge both speech and conduct. She conceives pornography not only as perlocutionary in that it “acts on” and thereby injures women, but also as illocutionary, argu-

ing that through its representations pornography constitutes women as objects and inferior beings. Mari J. Matsuda goes even further by adding to the perlocutionary level of hate speech the illocutionary power of contributing to the social constitution of the addressee. In Matsuda's argument hate speech does not only reflect a relation of social domination, it enacts this domination and thereby fixes social structures of inequality and hierarchy. Butler is adamant in her opposition to these lines of argumentation endowing hate speech with the power to constitute its object/addressee and strongly questions the efficacy ascribed to hate speech in the above definitions. From her radically democratic position she sees the necessity to clarify what is at stake in these arguments concerning state intervention and censorship:

The firmer the link is made between the speech act and conduct, however, and the more fully occluded the distinction between felicitous and infelicitous acts, the stronger the grounds for claiming that speech not only produces injury as one of its consequences, but constitutes an injury in itself, thus becoming an unequivocal form of conduct. The collapse of speech into conduct, and the concomitant occlusion of the gap between them, tends to support the case for state intervention, for if "speech" in any of the above cases can be fully subsumed under conduct, then the first Amendment is circumvented. To insist on the gap between speech and conduct, however, is to lend support for the role of nonjuridical forms of opposition, ways of restaging and resignifying speech in contexts that exceed those determined by the courts¹³.

Instead of inducing the addressee of hate speech to turn to the law and ask for the abolishment of hate speech, and thereby acknowledging his or her own positioning as victim, Butler champions a more grass-root democratic opposition to hate speech: a restaging and resignifying that counteracts hate speech without the necessity of relying on the First Amendment and juridical censorship. Indeed, her own book *Excitable Speech* with its relentless theoretical analysis of the construction and functioning of hate speech can be regarded as such an act of successful nonjuridical opposition.

Unfortunately the article in hand does not offer the necessary space to pay tribute to the intricacy and depth, the elaboration and playfulness of Judith Butler's politico-philosophical inquiry into the meaning of language and speech act as a fundamental condition of humanity. Here it must suffice to give a coarse outline of her explanations of the functions and structure of hate speech, connecting it to the performative (illocutionary and perlocutionary), interpellation, the body, agency, and her conceptualization of "excitable speech" in order to clarify signification processes in Franz Kafka's "Schakale und Araber".

Butler sets out by carefully investigating the description of the hate-speech scenario offered by Delgado, MacKinnon and others as "words that wound", and replaces this description with the victim's claim of "having been wounded by words". An argumentative turn that leads to an important shift in point of view highlighting the basic conditions of the hate-speech scenario:

When we claim to have been injured by language, what kind of claim do we make? We ascribe an agency to language, a power to injure, and position ourselves as the objects of its injurious trajectory. We claim that language acts, and acts against us, and the claim we make is a further instance of language, one which seeks to arrest the force of the prior instance. Thus, we exercise the force of language even as we seek to counter its force, caught up in a bind that no act of censorship can undo.

Could language injure us if we were not, in some sense, linguistic beings, beings who require language in order to be? Is our vulnerability to language a consequence of our being constituted within its terms?¹⁴

Butler focuses from the start on the two sides of the conflict involving hate speech. She denounces the short-sighted biased presentation of an active aggressor and a passive victim. According to her, the victim's claim to have been wounded, includes an affirmation of his or her own status as victim and thereby supports the speech act of the aggressor and renders it successful. This is not to say that Butler rejects the idea of linguistic injury, the con-

viction of the addressee to have been terribly wounded, quite the contrary. However, it is her aim to probe possible modes of opposition against hate speech in order to counteract the aggression in a nonjuridical arena. She is trying to achieve this by envisaging a scenario in which the hate speech act fails in order to extrapolate from there to any hate speech act in general. Indeed, not very different from Austin, who, too, made a long and sometimes comical list of failing illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts in *How to Do Things with Words*.

A rather handy and plausible example presents the special case of the "threat". Here it is quite obvious that the speech act expressing the threat is only the beginning of something that is meant to be fulfilled in the future, a promise to hurt someone. The person who is uttering a threat is indeed blinded by his or her own self-conceit, because it is the structure of the threat to claim its illusory sway over the future. If the future turns out to be different from what the threat stated, the threat's failure is all too obvious. Nevertheless the threat remains a powerful speech act, whether it succeeds or fails. The failure to deliver the threat does not call into question its status as speech act. What is called into question is only its efficacy. In order to be effective the threat needs to be convincing. But that which makes it convincing is not the outcome of the single threat itself. It is that which exceeds the singularity of the threat, that which connects it to the past as a quotation. Already Austin proposed that in order to understand the performative character of a speech act, one needs to locate the speech act within the "total speech situation". In Butler's argument this "total speech situation" is always already exceeding the single speech act itself. Taking the illocutionary speech act as a starting point, Butler explains the "ritual or ceremonial" dimension of such speech acts:

Such utterances do what they say on the occasion of the saying; they are not only conventional, but in Austin's words, "ritual or ceremonial". As utterances, they work to the extent that they are given in the form of a ritual, that is, repeated in time, and, hence, maintain a sphere of operation that is not restricted to the moment of the utterance itself. The il-

locutionary speech act performs its deed at the moment of the utterance, and yet to the extent that the moment is ritualized, it is never merely a single moment. The “moment” in ritual is a condensed historicity: it exceeds itself in past and future directions, an effect of prior and future invocations that constitute and escape the instance of utterance¹⁵.

While the threat has to be linked to a past as quotation in order to be successful, the person uttering the threat involuntarily enters into a historical genealogy. In the political and theoretical discussion usually the sovereignty of the person uttering hate speech is emphasized in order to hold that person responsible for his or her speech act, because the idea of hate speech as a “mere” quotation is then understood as a limitation on responsibility. Butler, on the contrary, points to the limitations of sovereignty in her argument, which insists on the fallibility of the speech act while at the same time calling for its responsibility: “I would argue that the citationality of discourse can work to enhance and intensify our sense of responsibility for it. The one who utters hate speech is responsible for the manner in which such speech is repeated, for reinvigorating such speech, for reestablishing contexts of hate and injury¹⁶. If one carefully considers the proper functioning of utterances such as “slander”, “insult” or “hate speech”, the above explanation shows its value also for the understanding of these. Throughout the course of her treatise, Butler is offering various examples of injurious utterances to drive home her general argument.

But let us return to the above quotation: the historical framework, the citationality of the injurious speech act is not enough to explain the enormous pain and fear with which the threatened person reacts to the threat, as elaborated e.g. by Lawrence in *Words that Wound*. How can it be that utterances like threat, insult or slander lead to such fearful responses – after all, they are only words? Austin’s concept even of the most powerful, i.e. the illocutionary speech act cannot grasp such reactions. In order to explain, what is really happening during such speech acts, Butler introduces Althusser’s concept of interpellation: “If hate speech acts in an illocutionary way, injuring in and through the moment of speech, and constituting the subject through

that injury, then hate speech exercises an interpellative function"¹⁷. Both thinkers, the linguist Austin and the philosopher Althusser, may not seem compatible at first sight, after all, Austin is not interested in the question whether the subject preexists the speech act, whereas Althusser makes a point of the idea that the subject only comes into linguistic existence through a certain speech act. Yet they share the concept that a speech act always exceeds the moment of its utterance and has a ritual or ceremonial dimension. Therefore the following famous Althusserian scene of interpellation fits both theories:

In the famous scene of interpellation that Althusser provides, the policeman hails the passerby with "hey you there" and the one who recognizes himself and turns around (nearly everyone) to answer the call does not, strictly speaking, preexist the call. Althusser's scene is, therefore, fabulous, but what could it mean? The passerby turns precisely to acquire a certain identity, one purchased, as it were, with the price of guilt. The act of recognition becomes an act of constitution: the address animates the subject into existence¹⁸.

This concrete little scene offers all the necessary components to make up the scene of interpellation: To become a subject, to receive an identity means to be interpellated. A fitting equivalent scene therefore is the naming on the first birthday or name day. In order for the interpellation to function properly the interpellating person needs to have the necessary authority for the act. The act of interpellation is ritualized and can therefore be repeated over and over again, as in the quotation the address by a policeman in the street. The identity presented in the act of interpellation is only temporary, the subject is exposed again and again to acts of interpellation. The act of interpellation does not only recognize the existence of a certain person case by case, but presents the fundamental possibility of recognition: "Thus, to be addressed is not merely to be recognized for what one already is, but to have the very term conferred by which the recognition of existence becomes possible"¹⁹. This Althusserian scene of interpellation of course brings to mind

not only psychoanalytical concepts of identity and the Other according to Freud or Lacan, but also the Hegelian version of the Other and is thus deeply grounded in Western thought:

Hate speech exposes a prior vulnerability to language, one that we have by virtue of being interpellated kinds of beings, dependent on the address of the Other in order to be. That one comes to “be” through a dependency on the Other – an Hegelian and, indeed, Freudian postulation – must be recast in linguistic terms to the extent that the terms by which recognition is regulated, allocated, and refused are part of larger social rituals of interpellation. There is no way to protect against that primary vulnerability and susceptibility to the call of recognition that solicits existence, to that primary dependency on a language we never made in order to acquire a tentative ontological status²⁰.

Like Freud and Lacan, Butler argues that the subject is haunted by the scars of that very first interpellation which brings it into linguistic existence and is responsible for the subject’s fundamental vulnerability to language. The person who utters hate speech misuses this linguistic function in order to do harm to the addressee. Because this dependency on language and exposure to speech acts is the fundamental mode of the existence of human beings as linguistically constructed subjects, Butler regards a complete abolition of hate speech as illusory.

The utterances of hate speech are part of the continuous and uninterrupted process to which we are subjected, an on-going subjection (*assujettissement*) that is the very operation of interpellation, that continually repeated action of discourse by which subjects are formed in subjugation²¹.

Be it the negation of hate speech, be it the affirmation of recognition, the human being is exposed to repetitive acts of interpellation, that result in linguistic survival or linguistic death.

The "threat" is a characteristic part of hate speech. In racism and fascism hate speech aggressively announces the "extermination" of the addressee. This is why the relationship of the subject to the body is never more obvious and imminent than in hate speech. In view of the devastating experience of history, a mere psychological explanation of the victimized addressee's dreadful fears fails to understand what is really at stake. The threat aims at the addressee's very mode of existence, at his or her body. This alone explains the imminent fear that spreads in the addressee's body and mind. Although constructed in language the linguistic subject is inseparably connected to a body. But not only the addressee's body, the aggressor's body, too, enters the stage of hate speech as that body which is to fulfill the threat. "The threat prefigures or, indeed, promises a bodily act, and yet is already a bodily act, thus establishing in its very gesture the contours of the act to come"²². It is one of the characteristics of the threat that it promises the future of the announced act of violence, and expresses this in language. Yet there is one more dimension in which the body appears on the stage of hate speech, as it appears in any act of speech, i.e. as the unavoidable double of the speaking subject. Butler follows Shoshana Felman's argument in *Le Scandale du corps parlant*. Departing from Nietzsche's famous diction in *Die Genealogie der Moral*, that the human being is an animal with the right to make promises, "l'animal prometteur", Felman sets out to analyze not only what can be said in speech acts, but also what happens between the speaking bodies. She casts doubt on the principle relationship of saying and doing, of the linguistic subject and its material body: "Dire un faire, serait-ce possible?"²³

Felman thus suggests that the speech act, as the act of a speaking body, is always to some extent unknowing about what it performs, that it always says something that it does not intend, and that it is not the emblem of mastery or control that it sometimes purports to be".

While the speaking subject is uttering its sentences, its own body swerves away, distracts from the speech act's intention and stages another existence. In more concrete words: there are manifold ways in which the body is betray-

ing, is giving away the subject of its speech. Or, rephrased psychoanalytically with Freud: the ego is not the master in his or her own house. To give a more concrete, but of course slightly simplified idea of what is going on, one could say in the case of the threat that there are two main ways in which the body swerves from the speech act: either the softness of the body's expression undermines the intended sincerity and brutality of the threat, or the body comes across much more violently and emotionally than the utterer of the threat intended, thereby giving away the underlying emotions and pulling the mask off of the aggressor's face, revealing the full extent of his or her hatred. Or explained in still another way, the reality of the body thwarts the intended message: The sheer time that a slanderer wastes by writing his slanderous mails betrays all his intentions and shows the pathological obsessiveness of this speech act and destroys the literality of the message. The unconscious body marks the limitations of intentionality. "The body becomes a sign of unknowingness precisely because its actions are never fully consciously directed or volitional"²⁴. In acts of hate speech, slander, threat and the like, the self-conceit of the speaker assuming a position of omnipotence and mastery even of the future exposes these speech acts to imminent failure. In hate speech, the speaker's misappropriation of the authority and function of the scene of interpellation intensifies this proneness to failure. Using the example of the threat, Butler once again explains the deep structure of hate speech and the inherent inevitability of its failure:

The self-conceit that empowers the threat, however, is that the speech act that is the threat will fully materialize that act threatened by the speech. Such speech is, however, vulnerable to failure, and it is that vulnerability that must be exploited to counter the threat. [...] Nevertheless, the fantasy of sovereign action that structures the threat is that a certain kind of saying is at once the performance of the act referred to in that saying; this would be an illocutionary performative, in Austin's view, one that immediately does what it says. The threat may well solicit a response, however, that it never anticipated, losing its own sovereign sense of expectation in the face of a resistance it advertently helped to

produce. Instead of obliterating the possibility of response, paralyzing the addressee with fear, the threat may well be countered by a different kind of performative act, one that exploits the redoubled action of the threat (what is intentionally and non-intentionally performed in any speaking), to turn one part of that speaking against the other, confounding the performative power of the threat²⁵.

It is surprising, what a great risk an aggressor in a setting of hate speech (or for that matter: harassment) is willing to take. After all, the speech act may trigger off a reaction quite different from the one intended. While aiming at smothering the addressee, it may inadvertently force upon the other (the addressee) a chance for an effective or powerful response. One reason for the excessiveness of hate speech may well be the primary scar of interpellation, which the speaker fantasizes to overcome through imitation and misappropriation. Not only in Butler's concept, also in Freud and Lacan, the human subject is exposed to a primary interpellation, which leaves a vulnerability to the Other that can never be overcome. Yet the utterer of hate speech fantasizes about his or her own sovereignty by abusing the scene of interpellation and oppressing the other. And for that very reason hate-speech relationships are experienced as so injurious. They tend to trap the opponents in a never-ending restaging of misappropriated interpellation. To grasp this fundamental fallibility of the hate-speech context Judith Butler re-coined the term "excitable speech" taken from juridical vocabulary:

The main concerns of *Excitable Speech* are both rhetorical and political. In the law, "excitable" utterances are those made under duress, usually confessions that cannot be used in court because they do not reflect the balanced mental state of the utterer. My presumption is that speech is always in some ways out of our control²⁶.

In this sense "excitable speech" is at the same time the deliberate and undeliberate effect of the speaker, who is not the original creator of his or her words, but echoes a prior utterance, like a quote. As a matter of fact, he or

she is the effect of the primary naming or interpellation. And the incident of hate speech reveals the fundamental failure of any speech act, in so far as the linguistic subject presupposes mastery of the utterance. In order to counteract hate speech, Butler focuses on the failure of the speaker to control the speech act and its outcome. While others maintain that any criticism of the sovereignty of the utterer of the speech act leads undoubtedly to the demolition of agency, Butler argues that agency becomes possible where illusory sovereignty wanes. “The one who acts (who is not the same as the sovereign subject) acts precisely to the extent that he or she is constituted as an actor and, hence, operating within a linguistic field of enabling constraints from the outset”²⁷. Butler is aiming at a new model of responsibility, one that is not based on a sovereign controlling speech acts, but on an affirmative expansion of agency, i.e. a never-ending restaging and resignifying in language. As a successful example of such restaging and resignifying, Butler mentions the reevaluation of the word “queer”.

Butler then exemplifies the meaning of agency by using a parable Toni Morrison related in her award speech for the Nobel Prize in Literature 1993. According to the parable, children are going to an old blind woman and ask her to guess whether the bird they are holding in their hand is dead or alive. The old woman, however, believes to know the motivation behind this question, and after a long pause she responds by way of avoiding a direct answer to the question: “I don’t know whether the bird you are holding is dead or alive, but what I do know is that it is in your hands. It is in your hands”²⁸. Butler regards the act of the children as hate speech and explains:

The children’s question is cruel not because it is certain that they have killed the bird, but because the use of language to force the choice from the blind woman is itself a seizing hold of language, one whose force is drawn from the conjured destruction of the bird. The hate speech that the children perform seeks to capture the blind woman in the moment of humiliation, but also to transfer the violence done to the bird to the woman herself, a transfer that belongs to the particular temporality of the threat²⁹.

While the children try to humiliate the old woman by abusing her blindness, she herself counters with raising the question of ethics and responsibility. Butler sees her reaction as an act of performative agency because she is transferring the meaning of language to the question of power. Morrison fashions the old woman of the parable as an experienced blind writer and focuses in the unfolding of the parable on the functioning and meaning of language in general and literary language in particular. According to Morrison the response of the old woman is reflecting her thoughts as a writer: "she thinks of language partly as a system, partly as a living thing over which one has control, but mostly as agency – an act with consequences"³⁰. For Butler it is important that Morrison does not make an affirmative statement about the quality or essence of language because such a definition would betray the idea of agency Morrison tries to convey. She avoids any dogmatic assertion because that would imply mastery or control.

Morrison's handling of the parable supports Butler's interpretation. Instead of controlling her speech and the plot of the parable, so seemingly well construed, Morrison allows the story to fall apart half-way through her discourse. Suddenly, the children are no longer motivated by hate, but by honest yet timid curiosity, and suddenly there is no bird in their hands and it has never been there. The blind woman reconsiders the situation which is then completely resignified. As a result there remains not one single undisputable interpretation for the little parable. Morrison has indeed created a text that re-writes itself and creates a never-ending output of possible interpretations.

To transfer this to the field of politics, means to acknowledge that the possibility of resignifying and restaging transcends the intention of an individual subject. Discursive performativity "is not a discrete series of speech acts, but a ritual chain of resignifications whose origin and end remain unfixed and unfixable"³¹. The possibility for political opposition and change lies in the misappropriation of an injurious speech act. Resignification, Butler insists, is not only necessary in order to counteract, but also in order to understand what is at stake in hate speech.

Processes of signification and resignification to be investigated in Franz Kafka's "Schakale und Araber" are concerned with hate speech and acts of hatred which are abundant in this short but powerful story. Since "Schakale und Araber" is a fictitious text, it will be necessary at first to look at how hate speech is constructed in literature. Keeping in mind the argument that hate speech as well as any other performative speech act, according to Austin, Althusser and Butler, exceeds the frame of the individual utterance – which in "Schakale und Araber" can be regarded as the utterances delivered by the characters, i.e. the jackal, the Arab, and the narrator – it is indispensable to begin with the title and the preliminary remarks, since they construct the setting of the hate-speech scenario. Already the title opens up the dimension of citationality, in so far as it offers two semantically complex nouns with well-established discursive categorical functions: "Arab" being a word in literature that immediately invokes orientalism and all its discriminatory prejudice, while "jackal", widely used as an insulting pejorative expression, supports this semantic level of discrimination. Therefore the combination of both words in the title already slightly suggests the uneasy scenario that is indeed unfolded in the course of the story, even hinting at discriminatory language.

Furthermore, Kafka's story in fact begins with a typical orientalist cliché: a group of travelers is camping in an oasis, the tall white figure of an Arab, who had looked after their camels, is passing by. The narrator is lingering between sleep and sleeplessness, fidgeting in the grass. Kafka describes the scene in telegram style, short sentences without any conjunctions. In the autograph³², the sentences are even separated by semicolon. The scene is so much an orientalist cliché that there seems to be no need for extra elaborations. It is exactly the kind of scene one can find in famous romanticist pictures and books and in the works of their end-19th century epigones. Indeed, what more is needed than words like "oasis", "camel", "Arab" to create this kind of scene in any reader's mind.

What adds to the efficacy with which the orientalist imagery appears before the reader's inner eye, is the enormous influence of adult adventure books published in Kafka's times by such popular authors as Friedrich Gerstäcker and Karl May. Especially Karl May³³ claimed to have really experienced all the adventurous travels he described in his books set in the North American plains and savannas or the North African deserts and wadis, and tried to support this with the use of the first-person narrative. Kafka, too, in this short "orientalist" story resorts to the first-person narrator and the past tense, otherwise rarely found in his works³⁴. While Gerstäcker and May, however, write superficially "realistic" literature, Kafka, after just a few lines, surprises his reader with a talking jackal, jumping out of a fantasy story. Indeed Kafka plays with different genres in "Schakale und Araber", mixing them to an extent that they create a comical effect here and there in the course of the story. While the Arab guide of the group "crept upwind" in order to eavesdrop on the conversation between the jackal and the narrator like an American Indian³⁵ borrowed from the aforementioned adventure books, the jackals themselves are given features and gestures typical of anthropomorphous picture-book dogs:

Und alle Schakale ringsum, zu denen inzwischen noch viel von fernher gekommen waren, senkten die Köpfe zwischen die Vorderbeine und putzten sie mit den Pfoten, es war als wollten sie einen Widerwillen verbergen, der so schrecklich war, daß ich am liebsten mit einem hohen Sprung aus ihrem Kreis entflohen wäre³⁶.

When speaking up for the second time, the eldest of the jackals is already slandering the Arabs. While praising the intelligence of the northerner (the narrator), he does not only criticize the Arabs for killing animals and despising carrion, but insults and slanders them in front of the foreigner with arrogant and despising language. The two terms Kafka is using, "kalter Hochmut" („cold arrogance“) and "kein Funken Verstand" („no spark of intelligence“), are not only well-known collocations, but also typical of stereotype slanderous language in German, and therefore make some kind of a

citational impression:

“Wir wissen”, begann der Älteste, “daß Du von Norden kommst, darauf eben baut sich unsere Hoffnung. Dort ist der Verstand, der hier unter den Arabern nicht zu finden ist. Aus diesem kalten Hochmut, weißt Du, ist kein Funken Verstand zu schlagen. Sie töten Tiere um sie zu fressen und Aas mißachten sie“³⁷.

The narrator understands the slanderous dimension of these words immediately and cautions the jackals by explicitly referring to the nearness of some Arabs who may overhear the conversation. In the story this sentence of course also serves to increase suspense, as did, by the way, the earlier description of the jackals, comparing their movements to the reaction of a body under a whip and the later caution of the narrator warning that the Arabs might just shoot down all the jackals³⁸. Again this image, though brought up by the narrator, calls to mind acts of hatred and brute violence. However, the eldest of the jackals continues with yet another piece of slander: “Ist es nicht Unglück genug, daß wir unter solches Volk verstoßen sind”³⁹. The German term “solches Volk” is pejorative and usually used when referring to Roma – again fulfilling the citational function necessary for effective hate speech. The eldest of the jackals then turns to the topic of cleanliness (in the German original expressed by the word “Reinheit” which is also used in religious contexts): “Wir werden sie doch nicht töten. Soviel Wasser hätte der Nil nicht um uns reinzuwaschen. Wir laufen doch schon vor dem bloßen Anblick ihres lebenden Leibes weg, in reinere Luft, in die Wüste, die deshalb unsere Heimat ist“⁴⁰. The imagery of this sentence is not only pejorative, but downright racist, discriminating between “the clean us” and “the unclean them”. This culminates in a lengthy veritable hate speech full of slander and disdain:

Frieden müssen wir haben von den Arabern, atembare Luft, gereinigt von ihnen den Ausblick rund am Horizont, kein Klagegeschrei eines Hammels, den der Araber absticht, ruhig soll alles Getier krepieren, ungestört soll es von uns leergetrunken und bis auf die Knochen gereinigt

werden. Reinheit, nichts als Reinheit wollen wir [...] wie erträgst nur Du es in dieser Welt, Du edles Herz und süßes Eingeweide. Schmutz ist ihr Weiß, Schmutz ist ihr Schwarz, ein Grauen ist ihr Bart, speien muß man beim Anblick ihrer Augenwinkel und heben sie den Arm, tut sich in der Achselhöhle die Hölle auf. Darum o Herr, darum o teurer Herr, mit Hilfe Deiner alles vermögenden Hände, mit Hilfe Deiner alles vermögenden Hände schneide ihnen mit dieser Schere die Hälse durch⁴¹.

Kafka's choice of words here is ever so careful and serving his purpose: "Frieden müssen wir haben von den Arabern" is a far more euphemistic expression for violent oppression or extermination than the choice given in the English translation ("We want to be troubled no more by Arabs"⁴²). The singular with the definite article referring to the Arabs ("der Araber") is used in German in times of war or opposition and therefore openly hostile and racist. "Getier", like "Reinheit", is a reference to religion, while the exaggerated flattering of the narrator parodies the courting for favor. Beginning with rhetorical parallelisms in the abstract description of the colors, the speech moves then on to more urging and pressing repetitions of words and complete phrases, until finally reaching the rhetorical climax: "slit their throats through with these scissors"⁴³. Rhetoric is here used for its original purpose: the persuasion of an undecided bystander. The elaborate construction of the speech the eldest jackal is giving here turns our attention back to the beginning of the text, and makes apparent how brilliantly Kafka has contrived the whole story: In order to achieve the greatest hate-speech effect in so short a story, Kafka starts practically from zero, i.e. the seemingly objective style of the telegram, only to quickly and relentlessly change his style into the talkative and flowery prolixity so easily attributed to orientalism together with the negative human characteristics of stubbornness and vengeance as displayed by the jackals' eldest. This paper, however, does not want to argue the case of orientalism, it just wants to show how Kafka is using prejudiced and racist material from orientalism in order to create a discursive frame that advances smoothly the characters' hate-speech utterances. In any case we cannot forget that the originator of such hate-speech language is not an

oriental, but a talking jackal.

Compared with this jackal, the Arab seems at first sight much more composed and cold-blooded. His words when referring to the jackals are arrogant and superior: “Eine unsinnige Hoffnung haben diese Tiere, Narren, wahre Narren sind sie. Wir lieben sie deshalb, es sind unsere Hunde”⁴⁴. The jackals’ complaints about the behavior of the Arabs he swiftly pushes aside, even making fun of them in the parodistic repetition of their hurt and hostile feelings: “Wunderbare Tiere, nicht wahr? Und wie sie uns hassen!”⁴⁵. Yet, more than slander, the Arab is using harassment to fight the jackals. The absolute climax of this short story is not the eloquent hate speech of the eldest jackal, but rather the blood-draining violent scene in which the jackals tear the carcass of the camel to pieces under the slashing whip of the Arab guide:

Vier Träger kamen und warfen den schweren Kadaver vor uns hin. Kaum lag er da, erhoben die Schakale ihre Stimmen. Wie von Stricken unwiderstehlich jeder einzelne gezogen, kamen sie stockend, mit dem Leib den Boden streifend heran. Sie hatten die Araber vergessen, den Haß vergessen, die alles auslöschende Gegenwart des stark ausdunstenden Leichnams bezauberte sie. Schon hieng einer am Hals und fand mit dem ersten Biß die Schlagader. Wie eine kleine rasende Pumpe, die ebenso unbedingt wie aussichtslos einen übermächtigen Brand löschen will, zerrte und zuckte jede Muskel seines Körpers an ihrem Platz. Und schon lagen in gleicher Arbeit alle auf dem Leichnam hoch zu Berg.

Da strich der Führer kräftig mit der scharfen Peitsche kreuz und quer über sie. Sie hoben die Köpfe, halb in Rausch und Ohnmacht, sahen die Araber vor sich stehn, bekamen jetzt die Peitsche mit den Schnauzen zu fühlen, zogen sich im Sprung zurück und liefen eine Strecke rückwärts. Aber das Blut des Kameels lag schon in Lachen da, rauchte empor, der Körper war an mehreren Stellen weit aufgerissen. Sie konnten nicht widerstehn, wieder waren sie da“⁴⁶.

The Arab’s wielding of the whip is not only an outrageous act of violence

aiming at the jackals' bodies, it is also a heinous act of psychological terror, subduing the jackals with a brutally contrived double bind, leaving them no choice but to lose. For if the jackals want to eat, they will have to endure the whiplashes, yet if they want to avoid the whip, they will suffer from their hunger and their desire. Indeed, the jackals' bodies in this scene show clearly what is at stake in the violent conflict of these two parties, and furthermore in any hate-speech relationship. At the end of the story the reader may very well, like the narrator from the north, be shocked to see in how vicious a circle the jackals and Arabs have entered, how their antagonism will continue eternally lest it shall draw "blood"⁴⁷. This camel scene has all the elements of a repetitive rite, and with the growing brutality and hostility in this story, one is well reminded of the endings of the most terrible cases of hate speech and hate acts in the reality of human history.

According to Judith Butler and Shoshana Felman the speaking subject of the speech act is betrayed by his or her own body, swerving away and undermining the subject's intentions. When it comes to hate speech, this is even more the case, since the attempt of the speaking subject to imitate the fundamental scene of interpellation, misappropriating the authority to interpellate, and thereby clearly exceeding its own limited function, increases the proneness to failure, reflected also in the betrayal of a body thwarting its subject's intentions. "Schakale und Araber" is not only a story about hate, hate speech and hate acts, but also about the body and its stakes.

The perfect example for Butler's and Felman's argument is the lengthy hate speech of the jackals' eldest. He is in fact trying to use his body in order to persuade the narrator, when he takes recourse to the "natural plaintiveness of his voice", yet the narrator is not really mollified. Even here the jackal's attempt to exploit his body's powers fails. At the beginning of his argument, however, the jackals' bodies are already belying his words. While he is trying to convince the narrator of the righteousness of their strife for "cleanliness", "a rank smell which at times I [the narrator] had to set my teeth to endure streamed from their open jaws"⁴⁸, counteracting the intention of the jackal's speech. Furthermore, Kafka introduces a meaningful metaphor for

the complex relationship of the somatic body and the linguistic subject: “das Gebiß”, rendered as “teeth” in the English translation. The German word “Gebiß”, however, does not only show a parallel construction to “Gehör” and “Gesicht”, hearing and seeing senses of the body, and thereby underscoring the argument of the jackal, it is also fashioned from the underlying verb “beißen” (“to bite”), rendering the most corporeal function of this body part, as well as its sarcastic metaphorical cultural-linguistic usage (as in “biting ridicule”). “Wir sind arme Tiere, wir haben nur das Gebiß; für alles was wir tun wollen, das Gute und das Schlechte, bleibt uns einzig das Gebiß”⁴⁹. Such sentences reveal the functioning of Kafka’s talking animal figures, which shed from their oblique positions new light onto the fundamental conditions of the human being as a linguistic subject in a material body⁵⁰; – in this case the likeliness of “biting” and “talking”, which may be more universal than the hate-speech framework of this story suggests. Moreover, throughout the text, Kafka makes use of imageries and sayings connected to “Gebiß” offered by the German language. The most appropriate of these in this story certainly is “Verbissenheit”⁵¹ (“doggedness”), a perfect metaphor for the relentless and helpless way in which the subject of hate speech sinks his or her teeth into the other’s body. A metaphor that is as much reclaiming the argument of the interrelatedness of linguistic and bodily harm: “words that wound”, as it is underscoring the somatic level in hate speech.

While the jackals’ side offers these overt and comprehensible examples of the treacherous relationship of body and subject, the representation of this relationship as far as the Arab is concerned is more latent and covert. In the last scene of the story, when the Arab guide is feeding and at the same time for no obvious reason at all hitting the jackals, he displays a seemingly unquestionable and unlimited power over the animals. It is not only the power to hurt, it is even more so the power to feed. After all, the jackals, who, at least in Kafka’s story, are unable to kill prey by themselves, are completely dependent on another being to “commit the crime” and to supply them with food. According to the representation of the jackals, the Arabs kill animals in order to eat. However, in this scene, the Arab guide makes a point of explaining that the dead camel was not killed but died of natural causes, expressed

by the German word "verendet". Since the caravan at this moment is about to move on, it is curious that the Arab does not simply leave the dead camel behind, but takes great pains to present it to the jackals. He obviously wants to display his power and superiority. But by doing so, his whipping becomes so violent, the whole scene becomes so ghastly and primordial, that the narrator watching the scene seems horrified and interferes with a mild gesture. In spite of the will to display his unlimited power and superiority, the Arab loses control of this scene, and almost loses the consent of the northerner. Here, too, it is the body which goes berserk and strays and stages a very different scene from what the Arab most likely had planned.

There is one other scene, in which the Arab's body is betraying his words. Although he pretends to be superior and unconcerned about the jackals' complaining and scheming, even making fun of them in front of the northerner, he again takes great pains to even eavesdrop on their discussion with the foreigner. If he is as careless about this as he pretends, why does he bother and take so much time and circumspection to creep "upwind" and eavesdrop on their conversation like an American Indian creeping up on an enemy? To ask, what he wanted to overhear, makes this scene even more grotesque. For he himself declares that what he heard is not only well-known to him, but to everybody else, and moreover it was exactly what he expected:

[D]as ist doch allbekannt, solange es Araber gibt, wandert diese Schere durch die Wüste und wird mit uns wandern, bis ans Ende der Tage. Jedem Europäer wird sie angeboten zu dem großen Werk, jeder Europäer ist gerade derjenige welcher ihnen berufen scheint⁵².

Indeed, he himself is uttering these words, "that pair of scissors goes wandering through the desert and will wander with us to the end of our days", as if invoking his fate, his latent fears, or the despicable link that will fasten him forever to these "vile beasts". Although pretending to be superior and sovereign, he is indeed haunted by that little pair of scissors. He tries to shake it off with a laugh, but that does not come out so well either. This rusty little pair of scissors – Kafka surely enjoyed the irony of this image to the

fullest – it is of course the symbol of his Oedipal castration complex. But it is not only his. The jackals share that problem. It is to them, that the pair of scissors belongs⁵³. But their Oedipus complex is so apparent that it hardly needs mentioning⁵⁴. Chopping off the Arab's head is of course a metaphor for the Oedipus complex in which the son fantasizes to kill his father in order to avoid parental castration or subjugation. The Arab with his seemingly unlimited, archaic power (feeding and punishing) is of course a perfect symbol for the father's position in patriarchy: *Le nom/non du père*. Even the narrator seems somewhat fascinated by his seemingly unlimited strength and primordial authority. The case of the Arab's Oedipus complex, however, is more complicated. While he plays the role of the father figure in the jackals' Oedipus complex, he is not really their father. He is only assuming the position of authority through hate speech and hate acts, i.e. his arrogant slander and his brutal harassment. In fact he is only misappropriating the authority characteristic of the scene of interpellation: Not only does he call the jackals his dogs, assuming a mastery that does not belong to him, he is also trying to dominate and subdue them with carrot and stick, literally with meat and whip. His case therefore is only a variation of the prototypical Freudian Oedipus complex displayed by the jackals. By harassing the other, he is assuming a position that does not belong to him, misappropriating the authority of interpellation and fantasizing about a power (the power of naming and thereby deciding another being's destiny) that he simply does not have. Looking at this relationship of Arabs and jackals, it becomes apparent that it is not only the Oedipus complex which links their fate, but also the Hegelian dialectic relationship of master and slave; the Arab is not at all as independent and sovereign as he would like to make believe.

There is one rather conspicuous aspect in which Franz Kafka's story varies from Judith Butler's enactment of the hate-speech scenario, and this concerns the number of players. While Butler describes it as a bilateral antagonistic clash between the person who utters hate speech and the person who is forced to hear it, Kafka introduces a third party, the narrator from the north. Both antagonistic parties, the jackals and the Arabs, try to win

this third person over onto their side. The jackal does not only slander the Arabs viciously in front of the northerner, he even tries to talk him into killing them for their sake. His attempt at persuasion is accompanied by a strong seductive gesture: The jackal approaches him as if he were the long awaited savior of their lot, offering him the highest act of interpellation: that of a God-sent Messiah. Yet the northerner declines the offer. To become the Messiah of a pack of jackals and slit throats with a rusty pair of scissors is, after all, not exactly tempting.

Compared to this, the Arab's attempts are much more subtle. He seduces the foreigner with the suggestion that they are similar and equal in kind, human beings as opposed to the animals. In his last speech he uses the "we" in a way that also allows to include the northerner: "Du hast Recht Herr", sagte er, 'wir lassen sie bei ihrem Beruf'"⁵⁵. And in the following sentence he underscores once more the difference that separates in his opinion the jackals from the two human beings: "Gesehn hast Du sie. Wunderbare Tiere, nicht wahr?"⁵⁶ even treating the jackals like freaks on a fair or a circus display. This, however, is not the only time that the Arab is referring to a spectacle in connection with the jackals. After rushing out of the hiding place he used in order to eavesdrop on the conversation between the jackals and the northerner about the scissors, the Arab uses the word ("Schauspiel") explicitly to criticize the show the jackals are putting on to entice the foreigner: "So hast Du Herr auch dieses Schauspiel gesehn und gehört"⁵⁷. But the jackals are not the only ones who are putting on a show. The Arab does it, too, to show off his superiority. What else is the scene with the dead camel, but a spectacle put on to impress – who? Its function is certainly to teach once more the jackals a lesson of who is the master in this relationship. But is it not also a show put on to impress the foreigner? After all, the Arab is much more deeply entangled in this conflict than he tries to make believe. There is always the possibility, no matter how remote, that the constant nagging and scheming of the jackals may turn out successful.

The narrator, a foreigner from the north, is approached by both parties to side with them, but he keeps to himself. Twice he tries to calm them down with a mild gesture. But once he, too, becomes so emotionally involved

that he not only stirs up more hostile feelings in the jackal, but he himself loses control over his body: “‘O’, sagte ich wilder als ich wollte, ‘sie werden sich wehren, sie werden mit ihren Flinten Euch rudelweise niederschließen’”⁵⁸. Unwillingly, he has become the third party, desired by both sides in this competition. And it seems impossible for him to keep out of their conflict, at least for as long as he is in contact with the warring parties, since neither of them is willing to stop his wooing for his support and recognition. Like in the Oedipal triangle, where the antagonistic parties of father and son are competing for the mother’s love, the two antagonistic parties of the hate-speech scenario are wooing for the third person’s consent and recognition of their claims. The actors in hate speech, like in hate acts, need an applauding audience not only to live out their hatred to the full. We should not forget that both parties have a very weak position, the attacked because he or she feels victimized and the aggressor because he or she knows in the innermost heart, that he or she does not really own the position he or she is pretending to have. After all, the misappropriated authority of interpellation is only fake and so is the sovereignty that the aggressor assumes. The success of his or her hate speech (slander, harassment) is as much dependent on the affirmation of the person victimized, as on the credulity of the lookers-on. This is Judith Butler’s argument: once the aggressor has done the fatal step to start a hate-speech relationship, he or she has unwillingly put his or her own position and reputation at risk.

In Kafka’s story the failure is complete: The northerner – the Arab once refers to him as European – does not live up to the naïve expectations of the jackal. He is certainly not a Messiah, he is not even able to solve the conflict. Neither does Kafka present him as someone who has a superior position to the hostile parties or even sees through their calamities. His suggestion that this is a “very old quarrel”, “in the blood”, that may not end unless blood is flowing⁵⁹, is not in the least compatible with any modern ethical stance. Most likely he will simply return home, leaving the two parties alone with their problems. The jackals and the Arabs, too, have failed in their respective endeavor to gain advantage over the adversary through the foreigner. In the end it looks as if the conflict between the jackals and the Arabs will

continue forever and change to the worse. At the end of the story, it is neither the northerner/European nor the narrator who has the last word, but the harassing Arab. Ironically he is the one to find the appropriate label not only for this story, but for every hate-speech relationship. How pessimistic this ending is, shows the final word in the German original with which Kafka has chosen to end this story: "hassen".

"Schakale und Araber" is indeed a very pessimistic story – as far as the plot and the conflict triangle of the characters are concerned. In this respect Kafka has aptly shown the complete failure of any hate-speech scenario. But there is also the aspect of reader response. After all, Kafka has taken great pains not only to describe, but also to discuss the problem of hate speech and harassment in this story. The last cynical words of the harassing Arab are bypassing the narrator and turned directly also to the reader, who is, so to speak, looking over the narrator's shoulder. With this gesture, Kafka pulls the reader right into the text, confronting him directly with the outcome of the story and forcing him to take a position, unless he wants to imitate the failure of the narrator and dodge the responsibility, walking away from the story.

It is not the intention of this article to read "Schakale und Araber" as the literary construction of hate speech. The text can only be understood as a resignifying process answering to preexisting hate-speech scenarios. Kafka has taken great pains to construe a text and a conflict that allows no single consistent explanation. The attempt to criticize it as orientalism, for showing a despicable image of Arabs, is bound to fail not only because the text uses any elements of orientalism to expose the European narrator and with him Western colonialism, for example through the naïve Messianic belief in salvation by the European expressed by the jackals, but criticized by the Arab who sees through Western pretenses, but also through the simple existence of a talking jackal, which safes this story from being taken as realistic, and stresses the process of its construction and its fictitiousness. The attempt to regard it as a valid description of the plight of the Jews in European history is also bound to fail, since the jackals are too negative an image for European

Jewry. Even the more specific argument by Sander L. Gilman cannot stand up to closer scrutiny. He is identifying the jackals with the Jews only as far as the heated criticism of Jewish ritual slaughter starting in the middle of the 19th century is concerned⁶⁰. In Kafka's story, however, surprisingly the argument against the brutality of Jewish ritual slaughter is expressed by the jackals themselves denouncing the slaughter by the Arabs.

Even the Oedipus complex, though strongly evoked by the story, cannot be considered as an explanatory model for the reasons and motivations or even the underlying structure of hate speech. The article in hand sets great store by the symbol Kafka has put at the center of the Oedipal conflict: the rusty little pair of scissors, which is simply too ironical not to topple any attempt at serious psychoanalytical interpretation. To allow a psychoanalytical master discourse to give meaning to hate speech means to halt the process of resignification and to assume a position of naming that fixes the theoretical perspective and allows no further restaging. Kafka is not using the Oedipus complex to explain his story, but to (re)stage it. In this sense "Schakale und Araber" can only be understood as a parody of the Oedipus complex.

Regarding "Schakale und Araber" as a continually resignifying and restaging text, the many paradoxes, the countless inexplicable digressions and descriptions, the juxtapositions of various genres, and the many comical effects, all, suddenly, fall into place. With this kind of *écriture* Kafka is able to achieve three effects: First, on the level of satire, he is debasing and deriding the aggressors of hate speech and hate acts, slander and harassment. He is not criticizing the aggressors, he is simply making fun of them and their self-inflicted tragic-comical predicament. Second, by avoiding any fixation of meaning, he is not falling into the trap of interpellation, name-calling, or false sovereignty. Quite the contrary, his circumspect writing exposes such acts of fixation – the trade mark of his texts. It is for good reasons that Kafka's story does not side with any of the quarrelling parties; neither the jackals nor the Arabs, not even the narrator is beyond doubt. And third, in "Schakale und Araber" Kafka is resignifying and restaging hate speech and hate acts, and thereby not only turning the screw of interpretation and power, shedding an analytical light on the processes of doing and undoing

the performative, but also enabling agency as discursive performativity by opening up a ritual chain of resignifications whose origin and end remain unfixed and unfixable.

Notes

- 1 Concerning such outstanding and path-breaking interpretations of Kafka, one can never fail to mention Gerhard Neumann's analysis of Kafka's "sliding paradox" (Gerhard Neumann, "Umkehrung und Ablenkung. Franz Kafkas gleitendes Paradox", in: Heinz Politzer: *Franz Kafka* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968). Gilles Deleuze's and Félix Guattari's elaboration of Oedipal and anti-Oedipal structures in Kafka's works is also valuable in its attempts at overcoming individualized psychoanalysis. Unfortunately they have not included the jackals of this story in their list on "oedipalized" animal figures in Kafka's works (Gilles Deleuz and Felix Guattari, *Kafka. Pour une littérature mineure* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1975). Last but not least some of the powerful deconstructionist "re-writings" of Kafka should be mentioned, Paul de Man, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Judith Butler en passant, and Maurice Blanchot, *De Kafka à Kafka* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981), Jacques Derrida (among others: Jacques Derrida, "Préjugés", *La Faculté de juger* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1985).
- 2 Harmut Binder (ed.), *Kafka-Handbuch*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1979): 327-329.
- 3 Unfortunately the articles interpreting "Schakale und Araber" in Marc Lucht, Donna Yarri (ed.), *Kafka's Creatures. Animals, Hybrids, and Other Fantastic Beings* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010) show a very idiosyncratic way of interpretation and offer very little insight: Hadea Nell Kriesberg, "Czechs, Jews and Dogs Not Allowed: Identity, Boundary, and Moral Stance in Kafka's A Crossbreed and Jackals and Arabs":33-52; Tahia Thaddeus Reynaga, "Agents of the Forgotten: Animals as the Vehicle of Shame in Kafka":67-80. Naama Harel, "De-allegorizing Kafka's Ape: Two Animalistic Contexts": 53-67.
- 4 Quite opposite to the feeble attempts at interpretation mentioned in the footnote before, Sander L. Gilman has offered a remarkable book on Kafka dealing with Jewishness, illness, vegetarianism, and ritual slaughter: Sander L. Gilman, *Franz Kafka. The Jewish Patient* (New York: Routledge, 1995).
- 5 Harmut Binder (ed.), *Kafka-Handbuch*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1979):327. When Kafka offered the text for publication to Martin Buber's monthly *Der Jude*, vol. 2, in October 1917, he himself added the title "Schakale und Araber" and asked that it be referred to as "animal story" and not "parable".
- 6 Cf. e.g. B. Meschkutat, M. Stackelbeck, G. Langenhoff (ed.): *Der Mobbing-Report*, Bremerhaven (Wirtschaftsverlag) 2005, the German "Mobbing Report 2012" of the Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz, July 2, 2013, the U.S. Equal

- Employment Opportunity Commission Report 2012 ([http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/July 2, 2013/publications/index](http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/July_2_2013/publications/index)), or the British “Recording-Reporting” following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry demanding the reporting of all incidents of racism in British schools (<http://www.insted.recording-reporting-2011.pdf>, July 2, 2013). For various theoretical approaches to hate speech and harassment cf. H.Kuch and S. K. Herrmann, *Philosophien sprachlicher Gewalt. 21 Grundpositionen von Platon bis Butler* (Weilerswist: Velbrück, 2010).
- 7 For a detailed discussion of hate speech and free speech and the gray zone between both from the point of view of law, cf. Nicholas Wolfson, *Hate Speech, Sex Speech, Free Speech* (Westport: Praeger, 1997).
- 8 J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1962).
- 9 Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech. A Politics of the Performative*. (New York: Routledge, 1997): 3.
- 10 Mari J. Matsuda, Charles R. Lawrence III, Richard Delgado and Kimberle Williams Crenshaw, *Words That Wound. Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech, and the First Amendment* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993): 68.
- 11 Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain. The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: (Oxford UP, 1985).
- 12 Catherine MacKinnon, *Only Words* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993).
- 13 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 23.
- 14 Butler, *Excitable Speech*:1-2.
- 15 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 3.
- 16 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 27.
- 17 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 24.
- 18 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 25.
- 19 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 5.
- 20 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 26.
- 21 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 27.
- 22 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 11.
- 23 Shoshana Felman, *Le Scandale du corps parlant. Don Juan avec Austin ou la séduction en deux langues* (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1980) : 13.
- 24 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 10.
- 25 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 11.
- 26 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 15.
- 27 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 16.
- 28 Toni Morrison, *The Nobel Lecture in Literature 1993* (New York: Knopf, 2007): 2.
- 29 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 9.
- 30 Morrison, *The Nobel Lecture in Literature 1993*: 3.
- 31 Butler, *Excitable Speech*: 14.
- 32 This analysis of “Schakale und Araber” is based on the autograph of the historical-critical edition: Hans-Gerd Koch (ed.), *Franz Kafka. Gesammelte Werke*

in zwölf Bänden (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1994) vol.6, *Franz Kafka. Beim Bau der chinesischen Mauer und andere Schriften aus dem Nachlaß in der Fassung der Handschrift* : 49-53. From now on quoted as "Franz Kafka". The arrangement of this edition follows Kafka's octavo note books. It is believed that "Schakale und Araber" was written in February 1917 (in Octavo B).

- 33 Especially Karl May (1842-1912) is still an immensely popular author in German-speaking countries.
- 34 For Kafka's use of first-person narrator and tense, cf.: Dorrit Cohn, "Kafka's Eternal Present", *Franz Kafka*, ed. by Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1986):108.
- 35 Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.), *The Collected Short Stories of Franz Kafka* (London: Penguin, 1954): 410.
- 36 Franz Kafka, 50.
- 37 Franz Kafka, 49.
- 38 Franz Kafka, 49-50. "rudelweise niederschießen" is again a term expressing disdain and superiority.
- 39 Franz Kafka, 50.
- 40 Franz Kafka, 50.
- 41 Franz Kafka, 51-52.
- 42 Glatzer, 409.
- 43 Glatzer, 410.
- 44 Franz Kafka, 52.
- 45 Franz Kafka, 53.
- 46 Franz Kafka, 52.
- 47 Glatzer, 408.
- 48 Glatzer, 408.
- 49 Franz Kafka, 51.
- 50 Cf. Karl-Heinz Fingerhut, *Die Funktion der Tierfiguren im Werke von Franz Kafka. Offene Erzählgerüste und Figurenspele* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1969).
- 51 The word itself does not appear, its metaphorical meaning would be too obvious. Instead semantic variations such as "festgebissen" and "eingebissen" take its place in the story.
- 52 Franz Kafka, 52.
- 53 It is nevertheless surprising that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari did not include the jackals in their list of Kafka's animal figures, "mice, ape, dog, and insect" even though they are explicitly dealing with the Oedipus complex in their analysis of animal figures. Cf.: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka. Pour une littérature mineure* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1975. It should also be noted that the father-son conflict (with the jackal representing the son, and the Arab the father), of which the psychoanalytical Oedipus complex is of course an integral part, has been at the core of interpretations of this story from the very start, yet mainly from a biographical point of view. Cf.: Hartmut

- Binder (ed.), *Kafka-Handbuch*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1979: 327-329. One of these early interpretations is: W.H. Sokel, *Franz Kafka – Tragik und Ironie. Zur Struktur seiner Kunst* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1964).
- 54 Interpretations that identify the jackals in this story with the Jews and the conflict between Arabs and jackals with that of gentiles and Jews have also pointed to the interrelatedness of Anti-Semitism and Oedipus complex. Cf.: Sigmund Freud, “Neue Folge der Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse”, *Studienausgabe*, vol. 1, (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1982). Sigmund Freud, “Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion”, *Studienausgabe*, vol. 9, (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1982. The most impressive analysis of “Schakale und Araber” in this line of interpretation is Sander L. Gilman: *Franz Kafka. The Jewish Patient* (New York: Routledge, 1995). Other interesting positions on the relationship of Anti-Semitism and Psychoanalysis include: W. Bohleber, and J.S. Kafka (ed.), *Antisemitismus* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 1992). S. Quinzio, *Die jüdischen Wurzeln der Moderne* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1995). J.H. Schoeps and J. Schlör (ed.), *Antisemitismus. Vorurteile und Mythen* (Frankfurt: Zweitausendundeins, 1995).
- 55 Franz Kafka, 53.
- 56 Franz Kafka, 53.
- 57 Franz Kafka, 52.
- 58 Franz Kafka, 50.
- 59 Glatzer, 408.
- 60 Sander L. Gilman, *Franz Kafka. The Jewish Patient* (New York: Routledge, 1995).