Towards a Rhetoric of Cross-Cultural Identity[1]

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the involvement of metaphor and allusion in the discursive construction of cross-cultural identity. Cross-cultural identity is regarded as a narrative; as such it is liable to rhetorical analysis and dependent on rhetorical processes for its construction and assimilation. Metaphor is claimed to serve both as an analogy for the act of cross-cultural communication and cognition and as a fundamental enabling means of that communication and cognition. Allusion is, likewise, claimed to serve as another analogy on the semiotic and mimetic levels, this time for the experiential condition of the cross-cultural subject, while more pragmatically, it acts as a means for negotiating a palatable identity in a given host community. In conclusion, it is suggested that rhetorical analysis may provide a fruitful tool for affirming the possibility of cross-cultural communication and for understanding how it may actually work.

1. Introduction

This paper offers a speculative exploration of the involvement of two tropes, metaphor and allusion, in the discursive construction of cross-cultural identity. At times that involvement is by means of analogy, at others it takes the form of effective participation in the communicative act and its attendant cognitive processes. Metaphor and allusion are tropes in the strict rhetorical sense of figures of thought, one of the two categories into which classical *elocutio* divided all figures (the other category being the figures of speech). In much work on cross-cultural identity the term figure is used to designate the end-product of the troping process, that is to say to the semantic identification, rather

than the mental process which leads to that identification. Frequent such "figures" include Derrida's *différance* (1967, 1978) and "fragmentation", "hybridity", and "diaspora", cited by Grossberg (1996) and fuelling the sociological investigations of Rutherford (1990) and Hall and du Gay (1996). Given that the emphasis of what follows is on the process rather than the product, I shall use the term "trope", while the paper's underlying premise is that rhetoric may prove a useful means for approaching cross-cultural identity, once the latter is recognised as being inescapably discursive.

If one is to assert the possibility of a rhetoric of cross-cultural identity, then it must be assumed that identity may be realised verbally, or textualised, in some way or another. This will be the subject of section 2. In this respect, cross-cultural identity is no different from any other, and Section 3 will suggest that, despite many voices to the contrary, cross-cultural identity is not a discrete category of identity, but is different from other identities only in degree of (contextual disparity), not in kind. Section 4 will suggest how metaphor may be regarded as a key trope in both the construction and cognition of cross-cultural identity, as well as in the empathetic engagement with it. Section 5 will similarly suggest how allusion is another trope fundamental to the construction and cognition of cross-cultural identity, as well, this time, to the successful socialisation or acculturation of that identity. Section 6 offers some thoughts on the relationship between metaphor and allusion as well as some ideas for future research and theorisation.

2. Discursive identity

If a rhetoric is to be proposed for cross-cultural identity, it must be possible for that identity to be realised one way or another through words, whether uttered or written. In what follows, this realisation of identity will be referred to as its discursive construction. Although there is an important sense in which, as Derrida claimed, our identity is constructed and we are positioned through texts written by other people, texts which define us for consumption by others and cajole us into adopting social roles which then impinge on our own sense of ourselves (Crawshaw and Callen 2001:103-4), the emphasis of this paper is on the individual's discursive construction of its own identity. The starting point for this paper is its disagreement with those who would deny the possibility of communicating cross-cultural identity at all because of its radical instability and multiplicity, to revert for a moment to Derridean terms. A cross-cultural subject is too often simplistically conceived of as existing on ontological and epistemological borderlines, in a state of in-betweenness; of being neither one thing or another, of being Janus-faced, liminal, hybrid; in short, unstable and slippery rather than stable and fixed, such subjects are deemed irremediably indeterminate, indefinable, possibly unknowable, and certainly unwriteable. André Green (qtd. Balibar 2002: 75) has remarked that "You can be a citizen or you can be stateless, but it is difficult to imagine *being* a border". As for the impossibility of cross-cultural textualisation, David Pan (2004), building on J.G. Herder's account of the origin of language and an unstated allegiance to Whorf-Sapir linguistic determinism (generally discredited and particularly

elegantly dismantled by Pinker [1994: 57-65]), has argued that narratives possess a "symbolic" and an "aesthetic quality", the former constituted by a system of culturally specific "arbitrary signs" and addressing the intellect, the latter of possibly (but only possibly) multicultural "aesthetic mechanisms" which address the emotions. Thus at best:

> transcultural narratives might be possible as the ability of one narrative to create an emotional response in more than one culture, even if the character of this response will vary from culture to culture. In this case transcultural narrative understood as a narrative common to two cultures is indeed still an impossibility, but the ability of a narrative to be translated and proliferate across cultures with differing functions would be possible. (Pan 2004: 19)

J.P.A. Sell (2007: 2-5) has argued at length against Pan's views and suggested that metaphor, both as rhetorical figure and means to cognition, actually enables the realisation of cross-cultural narrative, of which more below. What is more germane at this point is to register some surprise at scepticism about cross-cultural narratives when there is a prevailing tendency to consider identity as either a form of narrative in itself or as best understood through analogy with narrative. The origin of this tendency lies in the classic liberal humanist faith in what John Fekete (1977: 195) identified as "the *telos* of harmonic integration". As far as the human subject was concerned, liberal humanism's overstatement of the individual's possession of complete autonomy (e.g. "the subject is also the absolute master of its decisions, able to make them on its own without interference from any factors over which it has less than perfect control" (Renaut 1999: xii) led to Isaiah Berlin's wish "to be conscious of myself as a thinking, willing, active being, bearing responsibility for my own choices and able to explain them by references to my own ideas and purposes" (1969: 131). This desired ability to to "explain" his choices "by references to [his] own ideas and purposes" hints at an underlying humanist urge to make sense of the subject by means of a coherent account of its actions and decisions made in conformity with some personal *telos*. Robert Young makes this desideratum more explicit when he writes of "the extent to which a person's life needs to be unified in the manner suggested in 'ordering one's life according to a plan or conception'" (1980: 35). Here the pressure is felt of liberal humanism's hankering for "harmonic integration", in this case of the subject, which "needs" to be unified and to make sense. For moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, "behavior [sic] is only characterised adequately when we know what the longest term intentions are and how the shorter-term intentions are related to the longer. Once again we are involved in writing a narrative history" (1984: 207-8).

From there it is a short step to the notions of "identity narrative" and "narrative as identity" as worked out, respectively, by Charles Taylor and Paul Ricœur, the former regarding narrative as the best way to make sense of identity, the latter arguing that identity actually is narrative. Even if Taylor's emphasis is on what might be called the "theme" of a subject's identity narrative while Ricœur's is on its plot, both contemplate narratives that take in and give form to life as a whole. Taylor writes:

> We want our lives to have meaning, or weight, or substance, or to grow towards some fulness [sic] [. . .]. But this means our *whole* lives. If necessary we want the future to "redeem" the past, to make it part of a life story which has sense or purpose, to take it up in a meaningful unity. [. . .] It seems clear from all this that there is something like an a priori unity of a human life through its whole extent (1989: 50–1)

Here we have identity as harmonic integration and equipped with its own equally harmonious and integrated "life story", or narrative. Ricœur's position is similar. Once again, identity is inalienably narrative:

> What justifies our taking the subject of an action, so designated by his, her, or its proper name, as the same throughout a life that stretches from birth to death? The answer has to be narrative. To answer the question "Who?" as Hannah Arendt has so forcefully put it, is to tell the story of a life. The story told tells about the action of the "who". And the identity of this "who" therefore itself must be a narrative identity. (1992: 246).

Once again, narrative, and therefore identity, is conceived of as formally idealist: "It is indeed in the story recounted, with its qualities of unity, internal structure, and completeness which are conferred by emplotment, that the character preserves throughout the story an identity correlative to that of the story itself" (1992: 143). Thus, despite their differing emphases, both Ricœur and Taylor are engaged in satisfying the liberal humanist demand for a model of subjectivity which will confer upon it unity and meaning, recognise its scope for agency, and respect its autonomy.

At the same time, they also parry any Humean, Nietszchean or postmodern dispersion of the self into a series of random, discrete and incoherent sense perceptions, perspectivist interpretation or subject positions, respectively[2]. But accommodations have been made between those who see man as author-creator and others who see him as product-created; man is no longer either an autonomous individual or a socially determined being, but a social individual. As Raymond Tallis has put it: "we are not complete masters of our fates, shaping our lives according to our utterly unique and original wishes, but neither are we the empty playthings of historical, political, social, semiological or instinctual forces" (1997: 228). Meanwhile, as Jonathan Dollimore has argued, if post-structuralism has succeeded in decentring or dispersing anything, it is, crucially, "man", understood as a non-inflectable monolith, the shibboleth of liberal humanism. Foucault's famous dictum that "man is an invention of recent date" and soon to "be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea" (1970: 387) liberated individuality rather than eliminated it, since it is precisely "those discourses centred around 'man' and human nature which, historically, have regulated and repressed *actual* diversity and *actual* human difference" (Dollimore 1984: 257–8). Furthermore, through their insistence on unified, orderly, coherent and goal-driven narratives and identities, Taylor and Ricœur align themselves with those neo-humanist ethical critics who, as Andrew Gibson has suggested, ignore "all the various problematisations of narrative and narrative 'form' — problematisations that have been precisely postmodernist — which could not have emerged without the modern novel— in novel theory from the 1960s onwards" (1999: 11). A narrative need no longer

conform to any unitary and unifying "*telos* of harmonic integration", but it is still a narrative. And the same is true of identity: recently Kwame Anthony Appiah has rejected the Taylor-MacIntyre requisite of the "unified self as too stringent, remote from the loose, baggy, and somewhat aleatory nature of life as some of us experience it" (2005: 285 n.51). It is remote, too, from the extemporary, provisional performances of identity that Irving Goffman and Judith Butler have analysed and theorised respectively (see Section 5). In short, it is possible for liberal humanists and postfoundationalists alike to subscribe to a conception of identity as narrative; in no way is this tantamount to postulating an essentialist view of the self, or a view of it as being a stable entity. For the present purposes, such a conception makes a rhetorical approach to identity a feasible proposition.

3. Cross-cultural identity: a difference in degree, not kind

A premise underlying this paper is that it is just as possible to imagine "being a border", to imagine, that is, what it is like to be in the skin of a cross-cultural subject, as it is to conjure in words visions of New Jerusalem or golden eggs. Such imagining is possible because we are adept at a series of cognitive procedures which are replicated in such rhetorical devices as metaphor and allusion and in which we may be drilled by our reading of literature to the point where our empathetic capacity is so highly developed that all subjectivities, cross-cultural or otherwise, become objects of comprehension rather than bafflement, estrangement or rejection. Besides, if cross-cultural identity is regarded not as some sort of hybrid identity but as a "*being in becoming*" (Parry 2003: 102; original emphasis), then, in a postmodern scheme of things, there would be no qualitative difference between it and any other sort of identity; all cross-cultural identity might require would be perhaps a higher degree of empathetic imagining, not a different kind.

Even among members of the same culture, there will always be a degree of what has been called "contextual disparity" (R. D. Sell, 2000: 119-20), some not quite seamless intersection of those parts of their cognitive environments brought to bear on any particular act of interpersonal communication[3]. Never identical, there will always be a gap to be bridged imperfectly between the experiential and communicative biographies of receiver and sender. But this does not mean that communication is condemned to insignificance and that meanings can never be made. In fact, much of our communicative energies are expended in efforts to bridge just that gap, to close down contextual disparity: thence our resort to metaphorics ("it's a bit like . . .") or our constant anxiety to ensure our receiver's comprehension ("You know what I mean?") and to reassure the sender that we comprehend ("I can relate to that"). The meaning sent and the meaning received will never be exactly identical because not all contextual disparities can be entirely eliminated, but that does not mean a pretty useful and accurate meaning will never be received. Cross-cultural communication, ultimately, may be regarded as a narrowing down or ironing out of experiential disparity by a corresponding extension of communicative parity. This two-fold process may be

subjected to rhetorical scrutiny and, I would suggest, is at once latent within and engineered by a series of rhetorical figures. In what follows I shall concentrate on two, the tropes of metaphor and allusion.

4. The metaphorics of cross-cultural identity

The metaphorics of cross-cultural identity depends on the resuscitation of two aspects of metaphor which are often neglected in modern treatments of metaphor. These aspects are its associated psychosomatic condition of wonder and its affective appeal to the emotions. Ever since Aristotle, rhetoric has acknowledged the joint role of the emotional and the intellectual in the cognitive process. Both the start and the end of the cognitive process are attended by the psychosomatic condition of wonder, traditionally the origin of both aesthetics and science and the first step towards the attainment of new knowledge. The initial ripple of wonder through a subject's consciousness, whether that subject is contemplating an artistic production, a natural phenomenon, or some intractable mathematical puzzle, is a sign of the cognitive system kicking in, starting to assimilate and provide a logical account of something new, foreign or strange to our conceptual system. As Descartes put it, "Whenever the first encounter with an object surprises us, and we judge it to be new or very different from what we knew before or even what we had supposed it to be, we are caused to wonder at it and are astonished at it" (qtd Fisher 1998: 45). Socrates was alluding to the cognitive function of wonder's intellectual component when he enthroned wonder as the "beginning of philosophy" (Plato 1952: 55). In his recent treatise on wonder, Fisher (1998: 8) describes how wonder starts with our surprise or bewilderment at something new or different that does not make sense; that surprise or bewilderment is then superseded by the intellectual effort to make sense of that new or different thing: we pass from a state of "not getting-it" to finally being able to "get-it", as the rainbow is first wondered at until, through knowledge, its mystery is unwoven. This is why wonder is the beginning of philosophy, since our perplexity before the new or unexpected incites us to embark on a voyage that, in rationalising the wonderful, leads us to an understanding of it. And even at that moment of intellectual success, the emotions are present for a sense of pleasure accompanies our cognitive triumph.

Fisher's aspiration is to construct a "poetics of thought" (1998: 33), to identify ways in which the pursuit of knowledge not only reflects the passage from wonder before a work of art to an elucidation of that work's meaning, but relies upon the very instruments of cognition that aesthetics provides us with. Taking the rainbow as his paradigm of the wonderful, he shows how in their attempts to explain it philosophers from Aristotle through Theodoric of Freiburg to Descartes employed a method that starts with metaphor (Aristotle paired the rainbow with the echo) and ends with synecdoche (Theodoric's explanation reduced the rainbow to one drop of water). This, of course, brings us close to Hayden White's theory of discourse, the key premise of which is that discourse "constitutes the objects which it pretends only to describe realistically and to analyze objectively" (1978: 2) and is thus a cognitive instrument which inscribes the conscious

process of apprehending new realities. For White discourse passes from metaphor, through metonymy, to synecdoche, in its attempts to characterise and thus assimilate and tame a "strange" and "threatening" parcel of reality (5-6). Naturally, that characterisation can only ever be partial and distorting. Fisher is more reluctant than White to force a distinction between metonymy and synecdoche, rightly so given the reasonable doubts that there is any difference between them[4]; and he is also dismissive of White's contention that the effect of discourse is to "domesticate" the strange. There is, however, agreement on the basic issue that discourse and cognition are symbiotically related, and the umbilical cord is metaphor, wonder's rhetorical homologue.

In classical elocution, of all the tropes and figures it was the metaphor that took pride of place. The aesthetic writ small, a textual pocket of wonder, metaphor's "imaginative rationality" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 194) and cognitive force was the consequence of fusing the intellectual and the emotional. This was recognised by Henry Peacham (1996: 22) when he wrote in *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577) that metaphors "obtain allowance of [the hearer's] judgement, they move his affections, and minister a pleasure to his wit". Here we have the rational or intellectual yield of metaphor in winning the reader's assent ("allowance"'), and the additional emotional yield that accrues directly in the senses and indirectly in the pleasure the reader registers on exercising his wit to infer the metaphor's significance. What is more, like wonder and like poetry, metaphor is, for Peacham, both "profitable and pleasant", "profitable" in so far as it teaches, "pleasant" in so far as we derive pleasure on realising what we have learned, when we "get it", to adopt Fisher's phraseology. This takes us back to Aristotle (1926: 395-7), for whom metaphor was not mere decoration or adornment, but a cognitive instrument which teaches by making us understand something after a process of syllogistic inference. Leech (1969: 151) explains that 'metaphor is associated with a particular rule of transference [whereby] . . . the figurative meaning F is derived from the literal meaning L in having the sense "like L"'. Metaphor comes to include all cases of transference whereby "the figurative sense F may replace the literal sense L if F is related to L in such-and-such a way" (Leech 1969: 148). It is as we work from F to L that the effect of metaphor is pedagogic (in what sense is the world [F] a "stage" [L]?). It is when we have worked it out that our initial puzzlement or wonder is replaced with pleasure.

Juan Luis Vives made of metaphor the central plank of his theory of signification, arguing that without it, and in the absence of words for new realities, those new realities would be incomprehensible and ineffable; thus, for him too, metaphor was the most effective instrument of cognition (Hidalgo-Serna, 1998: xii-xiii, xxxi), while at the far end of a (very) long Renaissance, Giambattista Vico was to argue that language was born of man's capacity to metaphorize. We are not far from Lakoff and Johnson for whom (1980: 3) "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" and hence "the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor"; they even claim (1980: 144) that metaphor has the "power … to create a reality rather than simply to give us a way of conceptualizing a pre-existing reality". Metaphor is a potent force indeed[5].

In what follows, I propose ways in which cross-cultural communication, in particular the communication of cross-cultural identity, is enabled by the mechanisms associated with metaphor. To ensure expository clarity, I shall refer to the culture of origin of the cross-cultural subject as "C1", and the culture to which that subject is transferred as "C2".

1) In so far as metaphor is the discursive homologue of psychosomatic wonder, cross-cultural narrative will also stimulate an initial sense of bafflement, bewilderment, wonderment. In the terms of metaphor, the relationship between C1 and C2 is akin to that between vehicle and topic. The C1 conceptual system as instantiated in the narrative will at some points clash to greater or lesser degree with the conceptual system of C2 as interiorized in the cognitive environments of each C2 receiver. This will result in a greater or lesser measure of culture shock – the shock of the culturally/conceptually new or strange, in a word, of alterity. In the case of translations, cross-culturality will depend on the preservation of unacculturated C1 elements.

2) The C2 receiver may simply reject the narrative. Alternatively, he or she may attempt to understand or assimilate it, using his or her wit to accommodate it to his or her conceptual frame. This accommodation is metaphorical in that its basis is usually resemblance or analogy. In other words, where metaphor challenges us intellectually to find the ground that makes sense of the relationship of resemblance postulated between topic and vehicle, cross-cultural narrative (once understood on the lexico-syntagmatic level) challenges us to find resemblances or analogies between C1 and C2, or between C1 and C2 phenomena, institutions, customs, assumptions, expectations, and so on.

3) Once the narrative's alterity has been rationalized by the C2 receiver, squared with C2's conceptual system, it may be assimilated intellectually on the individual level and, thanks to the trickle-down effect/grapevine/marketing etc., culturally on the collective level. This assimilation does not mean that C1's alterity is domesticated. Just as our understanding of a metaphor can affect our perception of both familiar topic and strange vehicle, even to the point of estranging the familiar ("Yes, a head is a bit like a coconut, if you think about it"), so our understanding of a cross-cultural narrative can alter our perception not only of C1, but also C2. Metaphorical cognition permits us to see the new in terms of the old, the strange in terms of the familiar; it also allows us to see the old and the familiar in terms of the new and the strange. Thus "to bring the remote nearby is not at all to domesticate it" (Fisher, 1998: 119); if anything, it is to make what was near less domesticated itself, to estrange the familiar. Thus the wonder attendant upon the cross-cultural narrative's C1 origin may be transferred on cognition to C2. This is consonant with the findings of anthropologists who have noticed "the *symbiotic* nature of cultural construction and the two-way, *mutualistic*, character of cultural construction" (Whitehead, 1997: 38) when cultures encounter each other in what Pratt (1992: 6) calls "the contact

zone". If all differences between C1 and C2 are ironed out in translated narratives, there will be little alterity and scant scope for any metaphorical cognition of C1.

So far, the model has taken account of the cross-cultural narrative's appeal to the intellect through the sign system of symbolic language. But if the model is to be truly metaphorical, the intellectual component needs to be complemented with an emotional/affective one.

1) The loss of specific culturally-coded affective significance may be partly countervailed by the psychosomatic sensations of wonder (experienced first on encountering C1's alterity as instantiated in the cross-cultural narrative and then on deriving an estranged C2) and of pleasure on coming to understand C1 as instantiated in the narrative.
2) The originally Greek term "metaphor" was rendered in Latin as *translatio*, which was generally Englished as "translation". In the sixteenth century, English rhetorician George Puttenham's term for metaphor was "transport"; in modern Greece buses are metaphors. There is an important sense in which any act of interpersonal communication is metaphorical in that the receiver often needs to put him or herself in the sender's shoes, and vice versa. In other words, communication, a communing with others, requires empathy. If we relocate ourselves to the situationality of our interlocutor, the contextual disparity that obtains between us will be diminished. Empathy, in short, is an imaginary transfer or translation of ourselves into the experiential skin of the other. The cross-cultural narrative will be possible provided that its frames, scripts, affective contexts or experiential *gestalts* (whether or not they require rationalization through analogy) coincide with C2 frames, scripts, affective contexts or experiential *gestalts*[6]. C's affective mechanisms may well not function on translation into C2's language, but its sign system may represent situations which engage the C2 receiver affectively through empathy. Thus C2 may come to identify with C1 in a dialogic process of development akin to that which Taylor (1994: 32-5) has theorised in respect of the individual interacting with significant others.

By applying a metaphorical model to cross-cultural communication, we can, I think, allay any pessimism regarding its possibility. The efficient virtue, or active ingredient, of such communication will be its very conceptual alterity. As Cronin (2000: 94) has written of translations, cross-cultural narratives such as narratives of identity "bring foreign elements, extraneous ideas, fresh images into cultures without which the kick start of otherness remains stalled in an eternity of mediocrity". The wonder of this alterity can be dispelled if we use our wits to find analogies (work out the metaphor) and our affective imaginations to empathize (translate ourselves into the experiential biography of the other). Domesticated enough to make linguistic comprehension possible, but still foreignising enough to preserve that alterity which will then stimulate learning, cross-cultural identity will constitute a textual and imaginary and intrinsically cross-cultural "third space" (to adopt Bhabha's [1994] term) where cultural negotiation

can take place. In this sense, the cross-cultural narrative and cross-cultural communicaton is no different in kind from any other, even if in degree the contextual disparities that obtain between C1 senders and C2 receivers are greater than those between C1 senders and C1 receivers. As there will always be gaps in our understanding of any narrative, the cross-cultural narrative is only an extreme test of the communicative and cognitive capacities (of analogy, of empathy) we put into practice every day. This, of course, means that however well we come to understand a narrative, cross-cultural or otherwise, we shall never dominate it entirely, never completely eliminate its alterity. But we can understand narratives well enough to assimilate them conceptually, changing our conceptual system in the process. In the same way that no cross-cultural subject ever completely "los[es] a hold on the self" (Parry, 2003: 102), so no narrative, cross-cultural or otherwise, ever completely yields up all its meaning.

Of course, it might be objected that once C2 understands a cross-cultural identity narrative well enough to be able to assimilate it conceptually, the narrative will, by definition, cease to be cross-cultural and become instead acculturated. In the same way, once we know that a rainbow is a cloud of droplets refracting the rays of the sun as seen by an observer when an angle of between 40 and 42 degrees, the rainbow is no longer wonderful in a technical sense. But, though comprehended intellectually, each time we see a rainbow we may still temporarily register the primordial emotion we experienced at the first sighting, an emotion conceptualized as wonder and stored away in the memory. Similarly, even if culturally assimilated, each new encounter with a cross-cultural identity may at least strike us momentarily as strange. It is in that fleeting remembrance of alterity, a remembrance cold philosophy cannot cheat us of, that an identity may remain cross-cultural, even once rationalised and assimilated. For if on the intellectual plane alterity can be totally acculturated or familiarized, on the emotional plane the memorised trace of the initial wonder will always be able to set the nerve-ends jangling.

5. Allusion, intertextuality and cross-cultural identity

The second trope I would like to consider in relation to cross-cultural identity is allusion. At first sight it may seem somewhat removed from metaphor, but as we shall see, there are many points of contact between the two.

Recent investigations of the interfaces between intertextuality and postcolonial writing have discovered ways in which writers may exploit intertextuality in order to subvert dominant discourses or to question the relevance of traditional genres to particular ethnic experiences (Döring 2002, Kloos [ed.] 1998, Nielsen 1994). This section suggests that if indeed on the mimetic level intertextuality shows how dominant discourses and genres are inadequate to the task of representing alien subjectivity, on the semiotic level intertextuality can actually inscribe the experience of that subjectivity and, through a process of estrangement, generate in the reader a replica of it. If we accept Derrida's notion of *écriture* as extending to the writing or written-ness of the subject's identity, the rhetoric of that writing or written-ness becomes a legitimate

object of study. Intertextuality (as semiotic process and result) and within intertextuality allusion (as the conscious manipulation of intertexts) are a major part of that rhetoric[7]. Derrida claimed that otherness lay intrinsically beyond our grasp, that "an experience which could not be lived as my own " was "impossible and unthinkable". I hope to demonstrate that, on the contrary, far from leaving participants in communicative situations with so many parcels of sophisticated textuality on their hands which inevitably occlude the subjectivity of others, intertextuality bridges the experiential and cognitive gaps that separate disparate subjects and thus enables empathy to be generated between subjects from different cultures.

At first sight allusion appears to be a particularly potent resource for those wishing to stake a claim to membership of a linguistic community. Through lending an utterance or text authority and signalling its producer as culturally clued-in, allusion smooths an outsider's passage towards acceptance by insiders (J. P. A. Sell 2004). The pragmatic use by cross-cultural subjects of intercultural allusion in the presentation of identities palatable to the host society might not surprise structuralists who would readily claim that the cross-cultural subject in the process of passing from one culture/society/polity to another is, in so far as between cultures, between texts too and therefore literally intertextual. Yet it will be immediately obvious that allusion may also be an agent of estrangement if the outsider's references are to a textual universe beyond the ken of the insiders he is addressing; such estrangement will lead either to rejection of the outsider on the part of the insider or to an awareness that there is much learning to be done in order to grasp fully where the outsider is coming from and thence to embrace him as a brother. The latter is often the one side-effect of the intertextual stereophony of Salman Rushdie's novels where few readers are sufficiently familiar with both Rushdie's English and Indian allusive frameworks to avoid being estranged by one or the other. However, the contrivance of estrangement may yield a beneficial cognitive and empathetic dividend since it highlights the culture gap which the outsider is forced to bridge at the same time as it reflects the outsider's own sensation of permanent strangeness inside a foreign culture. Estrangement may thus enlighten the insider vis-à-vis the outsider's subjectivity on the intellectual and emotional planes.

There are some suggestive analogies between intertextuality and the foreigner or outsider. Firstly, according to Riffaterre (1980: 84), the intertextual is intrinsically a dual sign on account of its simultaneous sitedness in two different contexts, the quotation text (the text where the intertextual reference is made) and the pre-text (the text to which that reference is owed)[8]; and this dual sitedness problematises interpretation, for the intertextual fragment refuses to commit itself to any referential allegiance to one context or the other. Here the analogy would be with the ambivalent condition of the cross-cultural subject, who may unabashedly declare, for example, dual sitedness by holding two passports, and whose allegiances may be questioned by the likes of Norman Tebbit when caught cheering on the wrong side at cricket. Secondly, Linda Hutcheon (1991) has pointed out how, in political terms, intertextuality has been viewed as fundamentally subversive of representational canons and, more generally, of society at large. Similarly the outsider causes us to rethink our own self-representations

before either expansively modifying or defensively reasserting them, our modification or reassertion depending on whether we see immigration as an opportunity or threat to ourselves and to society at large. Thirdly, much as intertextuality is a transposition of one text to another which leads to the latter's transformation, so the arrival of foreign subjects always transforms the host society. Fourthly, if liberal humanist accounts of the autonomous, unitary subject are dispensed with, like intertextuality identity becomes a dynamic space of transformations; possibly chaotic, certainly not stable, identity is constantly in process. For the transcultured self Parry (2003: 102) has offered a definition which, *mutatis mutandis*, would serve very well for intertextuality as well:

> As a working definition, the transcultured self may be described as one who . . . can dwell in travel, that is, who can temporarily acculturate to the other's world, *but* without losing hold of the self. It is not a hybrid identity, but a *being in becoming*, one which is brought to a fuller recognition of itself through confrontation with difference and, simultaneously, to the sense of its own limitations. [Original emphasis.]

Fifthly, and most importantly for our purposes, allusion has been characterised as constituting an alien presence in a text, an alien presence which is removable from the text, not an organic part of it (Plett 1991: 9); in Riffaterre's words (1980: 110), intertextual fragments are "perceived as foreign bodies with an independent textual presence elsewhere". *Mutatis mutandis* once again, the foreigner or outsider is an alien presence in a given host society, a literal foreign body whose organic integration some might suspect and whose removal a few might desire. Intertextual theory even provides a terminology in which those few might seek respectability for their desire: the intertextual fragment is "an *improprie*-segment replacing a hypothetical *proprie*-segment" (Plett 1991: 9); it is improper in that it does not belong genetically to the text it has been grafted onto, but has been parented elsewhere—is of a different blood. That impropriety verges on the unethical in that the intertextual fragment does the work that a putative genetically proper element could well have done—an argument more familiar from those who accuse immigrants of stealing the work of natives. Instead of "improper", Riffaterre generally prefers the politically and ethically neutral term "ungrammatical", by which he means that perceived incompatibility between words or phrases which, in a given text, do not make literal sense but defy the reader's assumption that language is referential. Ungrammaticalities, including tropes, figures, irony, humour and intertextuality, "stem from . . . the fact that the poetic verbal sequence is characterised by contradictions between a word's [or fragment's] presuppositions and its entailments" (1980: 5). Ungrammaticalities are identified thanks to the reader's exercise of his linguistic competence on the "first, *heuristic reading* . . . where the first interpretation takes place, since it is during this reading that *meaning* is apprehended". They are ironed out or made grammatical thanks to the reader's "literary competence . . . this is the reader's familiarity with the descriptive systems, with themes, with his society's mythologies, and above al with other texts. Wherever there are gaps or compressions in the text—such as incomplete descriptions, or allusions, or quotations—it is this literary competence alone that will enable the reader to respond

properly". Since intertextuality is both semiotic process and socio-cultural condition, the twin notions of "ungrammaticality" and "impropriety" are not in conflict but actually complement each other; in fact on one occasion Riffaterre fuses the two in the felicitous expression "deviant phraseology".

Deviant phraseology generates the very cognitive uncertainty which arises upon immersion in an alien culture with its particular set of members' resources (Fairclough 1989), including intertextual references to recognised pre-texts; as a consequence of this temporary estrangement from his own culture, the reader is made to share the experience of alterity with the cross-cultural subject, at once representative of an alien sign system and, in him or herself, a microcosm of that sign system, when translated or transposed from his homeland to another. And that is precisely the sort of accomplishment which, for Derrida, lay beyond the rhetorical and persuasive reach of literature. Yet it is an accomplishment implicit in Kristevan notions of intertextuality as embodying otherness and offering a "modality of transformation" (Kristeva 1984: 89) both of the individual and, like other foreign bodies, of the text of society at large. Intertextuality may then transpose us, much as metaphor may translate us, into a new world and make culture gaps bridgeable.

The parallel with metaphor is by no means gratuitous. In so far as intertextuality's deviant phraseology registers, in its ungrammaticality, on the intellect (which it bewilders) and, in its impropriety, on the senses (which it stimulates), it has a two-fold effect akin to that of metaphor which, since time immemorial addressed both reason and emotions, offering enhanced cognition with a dividend of pleasure (or distaste). At this point the conceptual terrain we are covering is criss-crossed with a tangle of metaphorical and semantic connections. For metaphor as translation translates us from our world to the world of the other, from known topic to unknown vehicle; as a means to cognition, it depends, crucially, on traversing the different domains of topic and vehicle. If we assent to the proposed relationship between topic and vehicle, we admit their common ground and thereby open up pores in the membrane dividing topic and vehicle domains. By mapping or transposing one domain onto the other, we can "see new correspondences or indeed attribute new structures or properties to objects, concepts and situations" (Semino 1997: 203). This process of translation is analogous to intertextuality which, for Kristeva, is a transposition of one sign system into another. The first effect of deviant phraseology is puzzlement which, as we observed above, may trigger automatic rejection of the improper or may more positively stimulate curiosity in the reader and lead him to make sense of the apparently ungrammatical. The disorientation produced by deviant phraseology is therefore, like metaphor, a rhetorical strategy which either pushes us to repudiate the intruding intertextual foreign body or steers us along the path of further learning as contexts and cultures are found which enable the deviancies to be ironed out. Much as we will try to find out in which pre-texts the allusive references becomes grammatical and proper, so we may attempt to become familiar with the social, cultural, racial and ethnic contexts where the foreign body encountered in the text is not a foreign body and, more optimistically, to build a new context where estranging factors are removed all together.

But there is more than a relationship of analogy between allusion and cross-cultural subjects, for allusion, more particularly intercultural allusion (that is to say, A's allusion while addressing B to elements proper to the conceptual framework of B's culture), may be used by such subjects to construct for themselves identity narratives which have the pragmatic goal, among others, of brokering their acceptance by the culture they happen to find themselves in at any given time. Identity narratives are presentations in the sense indicated by Erving Goffman, for whom such presentations of identity were "dramaturgical" (1959: 240): the process of establishing identity in society is a "performance" or "dramatic realization", conditioned by setting and audience, which an "actor" executes to achieve some particular goals at a given moment (1959: 17, 30); or, as Thomas Hobbes wrote as long ago as 1651, "a *person*, is the same that an *actor* is, both on stage and in common conversation" (1996:106). It is important to realise that no performed or presented identity is coterminous with, or identical to, a person's most essential, irreducible, intimate and, so to speak, "real" identity, if such a thing exists at all (something which Goffman would have denied). As Jenny Diski puts it, "we are actors or con artists . . . who walk into discrete situational frames and become whatever will get us through" (2004: 10). Thus, we may deliberately present different identities at different times, in different contexts, and to different people by, for example, switching dialects, idiolects and allusive frames of reference, all of which are deictic of that sociocultural identity or persona we wish to display in the particular context. Acceptance is won by establishing social and/or cultural parity between ourselves and our current interlocutors, a parity which is grounded in our positing a cultural frame of reference which we assume our interlocutors share and to which our allusions, among other things, refer. To achieve this relationship of parity, we play down some aspects of our identity and play up others, and it is this pragmatic gauging of the identity we present to the context we are in which allows us to conceive of identity as a narrative constructed for the pragmatic purposes of social and cultural interaction and acceptance. And, as Goffman argued in *Stigma*, the pressure, the need to perform palatably, to produce acceptable identity narratives, to pass oneself off as "normal" is greater among those who are in some way or another marginalized by noticeable disparity (1963: 42-44). Thus it is that allusion to elements in C2's cultural framework may be deployed for pragmatic purposes by C1 subjects in the construction of their narrative identities.

6. Conclusions

In different ways, metaphor and allusion throw light on the process of cross-cultural communication and the construction of cross-cultural identity, at the same time as they may play a part in such communication and construction. Not only do affinities exist between them and cross-cultural communication on the basis of analogical relations, but the very process of cross-cultural communication can be facilitated by their deployment and by a familiarity with cognitive processes they involve. I would suggest, then, that taking identity as a narrative, a discursive construction, throws it open to a rhetorical analysis. More tropes could be considered as, too, could topics by exploiting synergies

between the frames and scripts of discourse analysis and the theory and practice of rhetorical invention. It is perhaps more difficult to see how the figures of speech and composition might contribute to cross-cultural communication, but certainly it would be unwise to rule out all possibility of their playing a role too in constructing narratives of cross-cultural identity.

Notes

1. This article is the outcome of work done as part of two research projects financed by the DGI of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science: "Metáforas de la diáspora postcolonial en la Gran Bretaña de finales de siglo (1990-2005)" (code: HUM2007-63028/FILO) and "Intertextualidad y multiculturalismo en la narrativa británica actual (1990-2005)" (code: HUM2004-02413/FILO).

2. Hume: A man is "a bundle or collection of different perceptions which succeed one another with an inconceivable rapidity and are in perpetual flux and movement"; we "imagine something unknown and mysterious [the self, the soul] connecting the parts beside their relation"; "the identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one" (1978: 252, 254, 259). Nietzsche's substitution of interpretations for knowledge — "facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations" (1968: 267) — is well known, as is his consequent postulation of perspectivism. As things, including the self, are only ever "becoming", never actually "being", there can be no knowledge of what they are or, in regard of identity, who I am. As Taylor has pointed out, both Derrida's and Foucault's deconstructionist views of the self, with their anti-Romantic "suspicion of the supposed unity and transparency of the disengaged self, of the alleged inner sources of the expressive self", are in neglect of Nietzsche's "Dionysian vision of 'the eternal return' which makes possible the all-englobing affirmation of 'yea-saying'" (1989: 488). Foucault's final shift away from socially determined subjectivity to the construction of the self as a work of art — "From the idea that the self is not given to us, I think there is only one practical consequence: we have to create ourselves as a work of art" (1998: 262) — is, in a sense, a reversion to Bradleyan idealism in so far as identity becomes susceptible to aesthetic criteria. He therefore anticipates Taylor's own idea of the coherent and orderly identity narrative.

3. "Context" is used in Sperber and Wilson's (1995: 15-6) sense as denoting "a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world. It is these assumptions, of course, rather than the actual state of the world, that affect the interpretation of an utterance. A context in this sense is not limited to information about the immediate physical environment or the immediately preceding utterances: expectations about the future, scientific hypotheses or religious beliefs, anecdotal memories, general cultural assumptions, beliefs about the mental state of the speaker, may all play a role in interpretation". They define "[a]n individual's total cognitive environment" as "a function of his physical environment and his cognitive abilities. It consists of not only all the facts that he is aware of, but also all the facts that he is capable of becoming aware of. The individual's actual awareness of facts, i.e. the knowledge he has acquired, of course contributes to his ability to become aware of further facts. Memorised information is a component of cognitive abilities" (1995: 39).

4. Eco (1990: 207-11) appears to have demolished any such distinction. Fisher (1998: 119) only alludes to metonymy once when he lumps it in with synecdoche, chiasmus and metaphor without caring to differentiate.

5. And not only does it enable cognition, it also underpins language according to the prevailing inferential model of communication whereby the relationship between "the propositional form of an utterance and the thought this utterance is used to represent . . . is one of resemblance rather than identity" and metaphor is "a perfectly general dimension of language use" (Sperber and Wilson, 1996: 231, 237). Not all students of metaphor go so far in their estimate of its force to shape reality and structure language. Kittay (1989: 313), despite concurring with Lakoff and Johnson that "truth and falsity are relative to a conceptual scheme, and that metaphorical truth and falsity must be understood in these terms" still advocates the possibility of a literal language: "If we deny the literal in language, we deny the possibility of metaphor as well" (1987: 20).

6. "Experiential gestalt" is Lakoff and Johnson's term for each particular domain into which our experience is "conceptualized" (1980: 117).

7. To clarify my argument, I use "intertextuality" to refer to "the transposition of one or more systems of signs into another" (Roudiez 1984]: 15) and to the polyvocal discursive-communicative space derived from such transpositions; in other words, "intertextuality" is both semiotic process and socio-cultural result or "socio-cultural condition" in so much as, just like the Kristevan text, at a given moment in time a society or culture is a "productivity . . . a permutation of texts, an intertextuality" (Kristeva 1984: 36); or, like the Barthesian text, it is a "multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (Barthes 1988: 156). In contrast, when referring to the conscious intertextual procedure of those quoting from, citing or alluding to the words of others, I shall use the term "allusion" thereby upgrading the subject's autonomy in playing the intertext. If Roland Barthes (1976: 36) argued that the intertext is "What comes to me, not what I summon up" it is that summoning up that I understand as allusion. But the divorce between intertextuality and allusion is not complete since any act of allusion is another transposition which transforms the intertext itself.

8. Although Riffaterre provides the main theoretical inspiration for this article, I prefer the term "pre-text" to his "intertext" and shall be using it throughout.

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