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## INTERTEXTUALITY: ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT<sup>1</sup>

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The analysis of the concept of intertextuality carried out in this essay begins with a survey of the various ways in which the subject appears before Kristeva's introduction of the term as such. Then it concentrates on Bakhtin's and Kristeva's role as the first contributors to the development of a theory of intertextuality. The detailed study of the wide variety of perspectives from which the phenomenon and its increasing relevance have been approached by later critics constitutes the last part of the essay.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Intertextuality as a term was first used in Julia Kristeva's "Word, Dialogue and Novel" (1966) and then in "The Bounded Text" (1966-67), essays she wrote shortly after arriving in Paris from her native Bulgaria.<sup>2</sup> The concept of intertextuality that she initiated proposes the text as a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of analysis instead of static structures and products. The "literary word", she writes in "Word, Dialogue, and Novel", is "an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings" (1980, 65). Developing Bakhtin's spatialization of literary language, she argues that "each word (text) is an intersection of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read" (1980, 66).

There are always other words in a word, other texts in a text. The concept of intertextuality requires, therefore, that we understand texts not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracings of otherness, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures. Rejecting the New Critical principle of textual autonomy, the theory of intertextuality insists that a text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole, and so, that it does not function as a closed system.

From this initial approach, there have appeared a wide range of attitudes towards the concept of intertextuality and what it implies, to such an extent that it is practically impossible to deal with it without considering other related subjects or without taking into account the various contributions made by a large number of literary critics. One of the most immediate consequences of such a proliferation of intertextual theories has been the progressive dissolution of the text as a coherent and self-contained unit of meaning, which has led, in turn, to a shift of emphasis from the individual text to the way in which texts relate to one another.

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<sup>2</sup> In *Desire in Language*, "Word, Dialogue and Novel" is dated in 1966 and "The Bounded Text" in 1966-67; both essays appeared in her first volume of essays *Recherches pour une sémanalyse* in 1969.

Though intertextuality as a term appeared some three decades ago, and the twentieth century has proved to be a period especially inclined to it culturally, intertextuality is by no means a time-bound feature: the phenomenon, in some form, is at least as old as recorded human society (Worton and Still 1990, 2). Unsurprisingly, therefore, we can find theories of intertextuality wherever there has been discourse about texts, from the classics, like Plato, Aristotle, Horace and Longinus, to Bakhtin, Kristeva and other twentieth-century theorists such as Genette, Barthes, Derrida and Riffaterre, among others.

Going back to the classics and beginning with Plato, it must be said that in spite of his opposition to poetry on moral, and hence political, grounds, certain aspects of his theory have much in common with some modern approaches to intertextuality. Bakhtin himself locates in the Socratic dialogues one of the earliest forms of what he terms variously the novel, heteroglossia, dialogism — what Kristeva will christen intertextuality. The dialogues, Plato's typical creation, are usually meandering and inconclusive discussions lacking overall unity and characterized by their digressive and playful tone. There is ambivalence not only in the diversity of ideologies evoked, but also in the central image of Socrates, the wise fool, sometimes sympathetic or affectionate, sometimes ironic or even savagely satirical. This serious truth-seeking by means of a plurality of voices obviously recalls what Bakhtin will celebrate in the dialogic novel. In addition to the form of the Socratic dialogue, intertextual relations are highlighted in other aspects of Plato's theory, such as his notion of texts as subliminal purveyors of ideology that can influence and alter the subject, as well as in his view of imitation. Neither Platonic nor Aristotelian imitation is to be understood as imitation of nature. In the case of Plato, the "poet" always copies an earlier act of creation, which is itself already a copy. For Aristotle, dramatic creation is the reduction, and hence intensification, of a mass of texts known to the poet and probably to the audience as well. These texts vary from other written works of literature to the oral tradition of myths, stock characters or social codes of conduct. Though Bakhtin and Kristeva saw Aristotelian logic as related to the monologic pole of discourse due to its emphasis on unified and universal truths, later critics have argued that the Aristotelian account of composition as drawing from a variety of sources can be considered close to the notions of polyphony and dialogism (Worton and Still 1990, 4).

If Aristotle holds that we learn through imitating others and that our instinct to enjoy works of imitation is an inborn instinct, both Cicero and Quintilian will emphasize later on that imitation is not only a means of forging one's discourse but also a consciously intertextual practice that contributes to the definition of the individual. For them, imitation is not repetition but the completion of an act of interpretation. Thus, imitation as theory and practice presupposes a virtual simultaneity and identification of reading and writing, but it also implies and depends upon a process of transformation. Present literary practices have produced even copies without an original (Baudrillard's notion of *simulacra*), that underline the problematic relationship between physical and semiotic reality. However, in its earlier phase, imitation presupposes reference to a pre-existent reality which is concrete as well as textual. In any case, the stylistic exercise of imitation reveals the idea of proliferation, variation, regeneration, which is a central feature of language.

The Middle Ages, with their multi-levelled interpretation of texts, also show a similar belief in the possibility to expand the meanings of a work, even if such meanings should fit into limited and predetermined categories. Church fathers and medieval theologians made current the view that the created world in its radiant order and hierarchy should be regarded as God's symbolic book. If this was true, the objects which composed the world were a kind of dictionary of God's meanings. Thus, when God himself wrote a verbal book (the Bible) the words in it pointed, at a literal level, to the objects in His other book, the Book of Nature, but, in addition, the things signified by those words had a spiritual sense as

well, since they had been invested with God's meanings. Somehow, the interpretation of the Bible already depended on an intertextual practice and, at a time in which literature was subordinated to Theology, what was true of religious texts was also made extensible to secular ones. All literary works were seen as going back to the Bible and all could be read like it, a view that can be regarded as a medieval version of what contemporary authors like Borges have conceived as the Great Book of Literature and the circular memory of reading.

If God's two Books were intended to have more than one sense, it was just natural for individual writers to disregard originality and to try and emulate God's technique instead. Yet it was Renaissance literature that showed, perhaps for the first time in Western culture, a conscious awareness of discourse as open, unfinished, and subject to an infinite number of interpretations. The textual past is always present through quotations or allusions in the work of such writers as Bacon, Shakespeare, Montaigne, Ronsard, Du Bellay, etc. What these authors perceive is the globality and infinite potentiality of the culture in which their own discourses are inscribed, rather than their debt to previous writers, whose merit is seen to lie in their power of expression and not in any monopoly (or even originality) of thought. Accordingly, the way in which such writers deal with the work of preceding authors is based on their belief that their possibilities of imitation, understood as interpretation and re-writing of the *Urtext*, are limitless. Only by multiplying and fragmenting his/her models can the individual writer assert and maintain his/her independence. This is the theory proposed by Montaigne, for instance. He believed that the "self" is to be found in a distancing of the reading and writing subject from the anterior "other" (a view much in consonance with the Bloomian concept of "anxiety of influence") and defends a sort of boastful forgetfulness as the best means of escaping the tyranny of past masters (Worton and Still 1990, 7-9).

The writer's efforts to detach him/herself from the work of previous authors as well as to proclaim his/her own creative space received a new impulse from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. But, in contrast with the lack of interest in originality that, as we have seen, dominated the literary world during the classical period, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the eighteenth century brought with it a revaluation of originality as the only true sign of an author's genius. It was then that the concept of influence arose, thus bearing from the very beginning the seeds of a methodology related to, but ultimately different from that of intertextuality. From an intertextual perspective, there is no way of considering originality as a trait to be cherished by either authors or readers. T. S. Eliot was perhaps the first to state the fact that the most individual parts of an author's work may be those in which his/her ancestors are more vigorously present (1971, 784). While the notion of tradition had quite often led to interpreting an author's work in the light of those that had preceded it, it was also Eliot's innovation to assert that influence moves in two directions: when studying a work one must consider what has come before it, but one must equally be aware of the fact that the work of the dead poets changes and enriches its meaning in the light of what has been written by later authors. In spite of his undeniable influence on the ideas of the New Criticism, T. S. Eliot, an outstanding figure in the context of modernist poetry, qualified in this way the New Critics' view of the work of art as a self-sufficient whole, a complete system based on the relation between images, rhythm, sounds, etc., which determine its structure. Such an approach, which goes back to the romantics and is related to the ideas expounded by Symbolism and Modernism, exemplifies the position that later theories of intertextuality have tried to undermine. It can therefore be said that Eliot's quasi-intertextual ideas about the simultaneity of all works of literature and the perpetual process of re-adjusting the relations among them are surprisingly up-to-date.

In the late twentieth century, temporally sequential habits of thinking and reading have been particularly questioned. Robert Darnton has contended that "we constantly need to be

shaken out of a false sense of familiarity with the past, to be administered doses of culture shock" (in Kiely 1993, 19). But we also need to be shaken out of a false sense of our ability to see the past "as it was". Accordingly, Borges points out that "the present has something hard and rigid about it. But as to the past, we are changing it all the time" (in Kiely 1993, 17). In this sense, the contemporary preoccupation with intertextuality tends to question the usefulness of previous critical narratives of unified progression, in order to suggest, instead, a view of literary works as crowded with layered images of multiple reflections and unexpected relationships. Robert Kiely, for instance, sees postmodern literature as engaged in "an effort to rupture the myth of a coherent tradition ... It may be perfectly obvious (and easy to prove) that Beckett learned from Dickens and Joyce. But this does not contradict the fact that Beckett teaches us (perhaps forces us) to read or reread Dickens and even Melville in particular ways" (1993, 19).

While all authors re-write the work of predecessors, many contemporary writers *consciously* imitate, quote, plagiarize, parody ... extensively. As Heinrich F. Plett (1991, 27) puts it, *ré-écriture* dominates *écriture* in twentieth-century literature: the image for writing has changed from original inscription to parallel script, and writers think less of writing originally and more of re-writing. Even if, as we have said, intertextuality is by no means a time-bound feature, it is obvious that certain cultural periods incline to it more than others and that our century has already witnessed two such phases. In the modernist era, intertextuality is apparent in every section of culture: literature (Eliot, Joyce), art (Picasso, Ernst), music (Stravinsky, Mahler), photography (Heartfield, Haussmann), etc., even if it is interpreted in different ways. Postmodernism shows an increase of this tendency which now includes films (e.g. Woody Allen's *Play it Again, Sam*) and architecture (e.g. Charles Moore's *Piazza d'Italia*, New Orleans) (Plett 1991, 26). Risking some degree of oversimplification, one could say that the pretexts of the modernist work are normative (these pretexts come from a wide range of epochs and cultures but the privileged ones are always the canonized and classical texts). The postmodernist work, by contrast, has as its very aim the levelling down of all traditional distinctions between high and low: past and present, classic and pop, art and commerce, they all are reduced to the same status of disposable materials. Anyway, the production of art and literature during our century has become an act of creation based on a re-cycling of previously existing works. This development has not occurred in a theoretical vacuum; it has actually been accompanied by a particular theory legitimizing and re-defining the status of texts and their producers: the theory of intertextuality. Thus, the typically New Critical textualism of the early twentieth century, and the close readings which showed tensions and multiplicity reconciled within the single text, have been succeeded by an approach which expands criticism beyond the individual work in order to consider it in relation to the whole literary system as well as to culture, history and society, no longer regarded as objective entities over and against the text but as partaking of the same textuality as literature.

The crucial step that separates every previous approximation to intertextuality from the notion that Kristeva initiated taking Bakhtin's theories as a point of departure is the view of the exterior of the text as a system (or an infinity) of other such textual structures. Thus, if a text refers to "*all* other texts", these are seen, in turn, as converging with history and reality, both existing only in textualized form. Likewise, both in Bakhtin and Kristeva, the subject is conceived as composed of discourses, as a signifying system, a text understood in a dynamic sense. No wonder, then, that, once this step was taken, intertextuality came to be defined as nothing but "*l'impossibilité de vivre hors du texte infini*" (Barthes 1973b, 59).

From this point of view, it is easy to understand the fact that the development of the theory of intertextuality would constitute in itself a complex intertextual event. If Plato,

Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian ... can be considered the intertexts of Bakhtin's theory, Kristeva's dialogue with the texts of Bakhtin, in which she initially uses the term *intertextualité*, is carried out, in turn, with the mediation of the works of Derrida and Lacan, among others. The ideas expounded by all these authors are equally present in any of the later contributions to the subject (Barthes, Genette, Riffaterre ...), and they will be in those approaches still to come.

In what follows, I will try to explain the main aspects of some fundamental views on the subject of intertextuality, beginning with Bakhtin as the crucial mediator between twentieth-century intertextual theories and those traceable antecedents (in the classical period, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, etc.), already commented on. The next link in the chain will be the one constituted by Julia Kristeva, who, as we have noted, introduced the term in her interpretation of Bakhtin's work for the Western public, adding to his theories elements that she had taken from such fields as formal logic, psychoanalysis and deconstruction (Worton and Still 1990, 16). To end with, I will analyze some of the later theories of intertextuality as they have developed from its first introducers. Since this century has seen such a wide variety of positions on the subject that concerns us, I will not attempt to cover the material exhaustively, but rather to give a brief analysis of some of the most important and influential theorists after Bakhtin and Kristeva.

## 2. THE ORIGINS OF THE TERM: MIKHAIL BAKHTIN AND JULIA KRISTEVA

Although Bakhtin started publishing as early as 1919, for a variety of reasons (personal, political ...) it is only over the last twenty or so years that he has slowly come to be recognized in critical circles outside Eastern Europe. His theory of language (everyday dialogism) and of the poles of literature (the monologic and the dialogic) can be taken as a powerful precursor of and influence on the development of later approaches to intertextuality.

What can only uneasily be called "Bakhtin's philosophy" is a pragmatically oriented theory of knowledge, one among other modern epistemologies that seek to grasp human behaviour through the use we make of language. Bakhtin's distinctive place among these is specified by the dialogic concept of language that he proposes as fundamental.

Dialogism's immediate philosophical antecedents are to be found in the attempts made by various neo-Kantians to overcome the gap between "matter" and "spirit". Moreover, Kant's argument that there is an unbridgeable gap between mind and world is the conceptual rock on which dialogism is founded. One of its basic aims is to frame a theory of knowledge for an age when relativity dominates physics and cosmology and, thus, when non-coincidence of one kind or another raises troubling questions and does away with the old conviction that the individual subject is the site of certainty, whether the subject so conceived is named God, the soul, the author ... (Holquist 1990, 17,19). For Bakhtin, the "self" is dialogic, it lives in a relation of simultaneity with the "other": consciousness is otherness or, more accurately, it is the differential relation between a centre and all that is not a centre. The self, then, may be conceived as a multiple phenomenon of essentially three elements: a centre (I-for-itself), a not-centre (the-not-I-in-me), and the relation between them (Holquist 1990, 29).

Dialogism is the name not just for a dualism, but for a necessary multiplicity in human perception. We are in dialogue not only with other human beings and with ourselves, but also with the natural and the cultural configurations we lump together as "the world". In sum, dialogism is based on the primacy of the social, and the assumption that all meaning is achieved through struggle.

Any analysis of Bakhtin's theory about literary discourse must begin with his view on language, since the former is a direct consequence of the latter. Just as he tries to avoid an essentialist unitary conception of the self, Bakhtin gives language the same treatment. His project is not a linguistics but, to use his word, a "metalinguistics", a view of language within a social and historical frame. This metaposition, however, is not so much a move towards transcendence as it is a battle stance, a polemical insistence upon situating theories of language within the constraints of their particular social and historical period. He systematically questions and subverts the basic premises and arguments of traditional linguistic theory. Thus, while Saussure is interested in language as an abstract and ready-made system, Bakhtin is interested only in the dynamics of living speech. Where Saussure speaks of passive assimilation (in relation to language as opposed to speaking), Bakhtin sees a process of struggle and contradiction. And whereas Saussure dichotomizes the individual and the social, Bakhtin assumes that the individual is constituted by the social, that consciousness is a matter of dialogue and juxtaposition with a social "other".

Instead of working with the old dualism of system and performance, he posits communication and not language as the subject of his investigations. Language, as conceived by most linguists, would embrace grammar, lexicon, syntax and phonetics; discussions of word combinations wouldn't include a unit more comprehensive than the sentence. All these features play a role as well in Bakhtin's metalinguistics, but as dynamic elements in constant dialogue with other features that come into play only in particular acts of communication. So, to the list of topics appropriate to the study of language should be added those appropriate to the study of communication as well: utterances, Bakhtin's fundamental unit of study, and speech genres, the conventions by which utterances are organized.

For Bakhtin, unity or plenitude in language can only be an illusion. Literary authors can attempt artificially to strip language of others' intentions, a unifying project which he calls monologism or poetry. On the other hand, at certain historical moments, writers have artistically elaborated and intensified heteroglossia, creating what he calls the (dialogic) novel. As Worton and Still point out (1990, 15), it is important to note that these categories do not correspond to traditional ones, for example, Heine's lyric verse is included by Bakhtin in the category of "novel", whereas Tolstoy's prose is presented as monological.

Monologism has, according to Bakhtin (1981, 271), been encouraged or imposed by hierarchical or centralizing socio-linguistic forces such as Aristotelian or Cartesian poetics, the medieval church's "one language of truth", or Saussurean linguistics. The novel, on the other hand, has been shaped by iconoclastic, even revolutionary popular traditions, among which the carnival plays a very important role. It is in popular laughter, in the parody and travesty of all high genres and lofty models that the roots of the novel are to be sought. This applies in particular to the Socratic dialogues and also to Menippean satire, in which laughter is used as a weapon against authority and the established hierarchies. Whereas the epic world, and the world of high literature in general, is absolute and complete, closed as a circle inside which everything is past and already over, low genres and, in a broad sense, the common people's creative culture of laughter, deal with contemporaneity, flowing, transitory, "low", present (Bakhtin 1981, 20). Under such an influence, the novel appears as unique among all genres due to its ability to change and develop. Moreover, every time the novel, in any of its manifestations, has tried to adopt and keep a stable, fixed form, it has been heavily attacked and criticized (Bakhtin 1981, 6). This is what happened, for instance, with the chivalry romance and the sentimental novel. However, it is from the parody of previous novelistic traditions that some of the most important works in the history of literature have taken their force. From this perspective, nothing conclusive can be said about the novel, which must always be seen as open, free, and in continuous development.

The novel constitutes, for Bakhtin, the highest incarnation of the dialogical play that characterizes all discourse. No utterance is devoid of dialogical dimension. The only distinction that can be drawn in this regard is not between discourses endowed with dialogism and those devoid of it, but between the two roles, one weak and one strong, that dialogism can be called to play. Yet, at times, he is tempted to inscribe it into a single opposition where the “dialogical” utterance would face a “monological” one, as is the case with the relation that he establishes between prose and poetry (Todorov 1984, 63-8).

From as early as the first edition of *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929), and especially in the chapter entitled “Discourse in the Novel”, prose, which is dialogical, is opposed to poetry, which is not. In poetry, language is conceived as unitary and, consequently, the utterance appears as self-sufficient, with no relation to other utterances external to it. The poet fully assumes his/her speech act and regards each word as his/her own, as a pure and direct expression of his/her intentions. The novelist, on the other hand, does not exclude the intentions of others as they are present in every utterance, and allows heteroglossia to enter his/her work, thus creating a unique artistic product out of such a diversity of voices (Bakhtin 1981, 297-98). Prose and poetry are, then, the result of opposed tendencies: one is centrifugal and leads to plurality and variation (the novel), the other is centripetal and is associated with the unitary and the single (the poetic genres). This de-centralizing impulse that characterizes the novel accounts, from the very beginning, for its parodic quality and its opposition to any kind of authority. While poetry contributes to the cultural and political centralization of the verbal and ideological worlds, the novel has, from its origins, a de-stabilizing function that opposes it to official language. Irreverent, like the carnival, the novel turns out to be the subversive and liberating genre *par excellence*.

Intimately linked with this subversive and liberating quality is the novel's capacity to question itself and its own conventions (Bakhtin 1981, 39). Considering the ways in which novelistic discourse may overtly appear as self-reflexive, Bakhtin (1981, 412-13) mentions those works centred on what he calls “the literary man”, who sees life through the eyes of literature and tries to live according to it. *Don Quixote* and *Madame Bovary* are the best known examples of this type, but the “literary man” and the testing of that literary discourse connected with him can be found in almost every major literary work. There are also those novels which introduce an authorial figure in the diegesis, someone that comments on his/her creative task and on the process of writing (a “laying bare of device”, in the terminology of the Russian formalists). In that way, we have not only the novel in its proper sense, but also fragments of a sort of “novel about the novel”. *Tristram Shandy* is perhaps the best example and an important precedent of the self-reflexive quality central to British postmodernist literature.

Before finishing this survey of Bakhtin's ideas on language and the novel, it would perhaps be convenient to call attention to two aspects of his theory which may be misleading. The first has to do with the position of the author in relation to his/her work. As has already been noted, in the monological genres the author subordinates all the voices present to his/her own intentions. In a different way, the prose writer does not impose a single criterion to the reader but, on the contrary, allows each voice to keep its own integrity and independence. However, Bakhtin does not go so far as to argue that the author is absent from his/her text:

there is no unitary language or style in the novel. But at the same time there does exist a center of language (a verbal-ideological center) for the novel. The author (as creator of the novelist whole) cannot be found at any one of the novel's language levels: he is to be found at the center of organization where all levels intersect. (Bakhtin 1981, 48-9)



This assertion separates Bakhtin from poststructuralist critics, with whom he has been associated on account of his defence of the polyphonic character of language in general and of the novel, in particular.

The other point I would like to comment on goes back to what has already been said about the novel's link with the present, a present which is always changing and moving towards an equally inconclusive future. In spite of this, the novel can have, and often has, the past as its central subject. But even when this is the case, the present and its open character will always be the basis on which the portrait of the past is structured. According to Aída Díaz Bild (1994, 140), this direct contact with contemporary reality has important consequences for the novelistic discourse. One of them has to do with the author's ability to move freely within his/her field of representation (something unthinkable in the case of the epic), which makes possible the introduction of one of the novel's basic features: its literary self-consciousness. In addition, this new temporal orientation puts it in contact with extra-literary genres, that is, with everyday reality and ideology. This fact enhances even more the open quality of the novel, since literary evolution brings with it not only the introduction of changes within existing limits but also the modification of such limits: "After all, the boundaries between fiction and nonfiction, between literature and nonliterature and so forth are not laid up in heaven" (Bakhtin 1981, 33).

According to Bakhtin, everything stands under the same sign: the sign of plurality. Our lives are surrounded by the echoes of a dialogue that undermines the authority of any single voice, a dialogue that takes place within the text, but which is, at the same time, a dialogue with all the voices outside it. Unlike the third eye of Tibetan Buddhism, which gives those who possess it a vision of the secret unity holding creation together, Bakhtin seems to have had a third ear that permitted him to hear differences where others perceived only sameness, especially in the apparent wholeness of the human voice (Holquist 1983, 307).

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One of the most important, and earliest interpretations of Bakhtin's work for a Western public was the one by Julia Kristeva. In the late 1960s, Kristeva subscribed to the *Tel Quel* notions of textual, i.e. cultural, revolution. She saw Bakhtin's concept of dialogism as quintessentially dynamic, even revolutionary. In her view, what it tried to revolutionize dynamically was not only the static structural model but cultural politics in general. Bakhtin, in propagating the relativity of each single position, the self-criticism of each word, the undermining of all dogmatic and official monologism, the carnivalesque profanization of all that is sacred and the subversion of all authority, was fighting against the increasing rigidity of post-revolutionary Soviet cultural politics and the doctrinary canonization of Socialist Realism. He was, in fact, continuing the revolutionary struggle against repression.

It was this revolutionary potential of Bakhtin's criticism of ideological monologism that fascinated Kristeva and other writers of the *Tel Quel* circle in the late sixties, and they, in turn, employed Bakhtin's concept of dialogism in their own struggle against the bourgeois ideology of the autonomy and unity of individual consciousness and the self-contained meaning of texts. Kristeva tried to achieve this objective by fusing ideas from philosophy (Husserl/Derrida), political science (Marx/Althusser) and psychoanalysis (Freud/Lacan) with the procedures of structural linguistics (Chomsky) and formal logic.

For Kristeva, Bakhtin represents the possibility of opening linguistics to society: "Bakhtin situates the text within history and society, which are seen as texts read by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them" (Kristeva 1980, 65). Following Bakhtin, Kristeva attempts to transform semiotics into something she also calls "translinguistics" (1980, 37), a method of analysis that allows her to confront the literary

work on the formal and the social levels simultaneously. At the same time, however, she transforms Bakhtin's concepts by causing them to be read in conjunction with ideas about textuality that were emerging in France in the mid-sixties. For instance, she slips "text" into a paraphrase of Bakhtin: "each word (text) is an intersection of words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read" (1980, 66). Though the parentheses imply that Kristeva is only supplying a synonym, or at most, a neutral expansion of Bakhtin's concept, this textualization of Bakhtin changes his ideas, changes them just enough to allow the new concept of intertextuality to emerge. Kristeva's term became quite popular but it did not do so, however, because of its own coherence: the face of "intertextuality", as a new master term, is less a simple, single, precise image, a bronze head by Rodin, than something shattered, a portrait bust by an avid exponent of analytic cubism too poor to afford a good chisel (Clayton and Rothstein 1991, 11).

In "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" Kristeva introduces *Rabelais and His World* and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. However, her reading of Bakhtin is mediated by other texts and other critics' theories, not to mention the political motivation behind her work: "there is no equivalence", she writes, "but rather, identity between challenging official linguistic codes and challenging official law" (1980, 65). In the last resort, hers is a political concept which aims at empowering the reader/critic to oppose the literary and social tradition at large.

Among the authors that mediate Kristeva's reading of Bakhtin, Derrida plays a crucial role. When she characterizes Bakhtin's "conception of 'the literary word' as an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a *point* (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings" (1980, 65, italics in the original), one cannot help but notice Derrida's critique of voice behind this slight shift towards a dialogue of "writings", not "utterances", particularly since Kristeva cites *Of Grammatology* on the first page of her essay. A Derridean view of writing supplies a dimension that was not present in Bakhtin originally, the dimension of indeterminacy, of *différance*, of dissemination. Although Bakhtin's notions of "heteroglossia" or "hybridization" might seem near equivalents to the poststructuralist concepts, Bakhtin's emphasis on the historical uniqueness of the context of every utterance distances his terms from the endlessly expanding scope of intertextuality. In Kristeva's usage, the intersection of textual surfaces in a literary word can never be circumscribed, it is open to endless dissemination. In fact, Derrida's reading of Saussure in *Of Grammatology* must be regarded as a crucial intertext of most theories of intertextuality. The way in which he subordinates difference between the signifier and signified to the difference between one signifier and another, his notion of the general text (*Il n'y a pas de horstexte*), as well as his definition of iterability, which leads to a view of texts as inevitably quoting and quotable, provide ample space within the object of study for a multitude of intertexts.

In much the same way, Lacan functions as a largely unacknowledged intertext for Kristeva's account of Bakhtin. She notes that Bakhtin's claim that the language of epic is univocal cannot withstand a psychoanalytic approach to language. It is psychoanalysis as well as the semiotics she cites (the theory of Benveniste), that reveal dialogism to be inherent in every word, as the trace of a dialogue with oneself (with another), and a writer's distance from him/herself (1980, 74). This psychoanalysis is Lacan's and his ideas may have lain behind Kristeva's choice of the term "ambivalence" to describe certain forms of dialogism (Clayton and Rothstein 1991, 19-20).

From this and other modifications of Bakhtin, then, there emerge Kristeva's several "definitions" of intertextuality:

any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*. (1980, 66)

Dialogue and ambivalence lead me to conclude that, within the interior space of the text as well as within the space of *texts*, poetic language is a “double”. (1980, 69)

The writer’s interlocutor [ ... ] is the writer himself, but as reader of another text. The one who writes is the same as the one who reads. Since his interlocutor is a text, he himself is no more than a text rereading itself. The dialogical structure, therefore, appears only in the light of the text elaborating itself as ambivalent in relation to another text. (1980, 86-87)

For the practising critic, Kristeva’s conception of intertextuality opens several lacunae that do not appear in Bakhtin (Clayton and Rothstein 1991, 20). The first one involves a vagueness about the relation of the social to the literary text. Kristeva does not discuss what happens to a fragment of the social text when it is “absorbed” and transformed by literature, nor does she account for how specific social texts are chosen for “absorption”. A second problem, the inability to construct a convincing literary history, follows from the first. Kristeva (1980, 71) claims, for example, that a break occurred at the end of the nineteenth century that clearly marks off the dialogism of Joyce, Proust, and Kafka from the dialogical novels of the past, including Bakhtin’s principal examples, Rabelais and Dostoevsky. But her conception of intertextuality generates no means of distinguishing the modern novels from those earlier polyphonic works.

In spite of all this, the notion and the concept introduced by Kristeva soon spread all over Europe, and flowed across the Atlantic into the discourses of American criticism as a major, shaping influence on literary history and theory from the mid-seventies until the present. But like any influential idea, it changed as it was assimilated within different cultural and intellectual contexts. Theorists, of course, try to regularize it, but adaptations of intertextuality have refused orthodoxy, often encouraging multiple interpretations.

### 3. LATER THEORIES OF INTERTEXTUALITY: MAIN LINES OF DEVELOPMENT

As Clayton and Rothstein (1991, 21) point out, later approaches to intertextuality have kept and further textualized Kristeva’s strong basis in semiotics: the science of signs developed by Saussure and still intact in Barthes’ *Elements of Semiology* (1964) is treated less as a *science* with objective aims and verifiable results and more as a mode of *interpretation*. Theories proceeded from this point in three directions (Clayton and Rothstein 1991, 21): (1) the deconstructive path of aporia and the reader’s puzzlement or play; (2) what can be regarded as an attempt to limit the endlessly expanding intertextual space suggested by the previous deconstructive approach, in an effort to find out the basic criteria of a method that can throw some light on the practical analysis of intertextuality in literature; and (3) the social or political path taken by cultural materialism or new historicist criticism. Barthes will serve to exemplify (1); Michel Riffaterre, Jonathan Culler and Gérard Genette will illustrate some of the basic aspects of (2); and *Rezeption* and Foucauldian criticism will appear perhaps as the best representatives of the last approach (3).

Even before Kristeva’s 1965 presentation of Bakhtin in Barthes’ seminar, Roland Barthes was evoking something like intertextuality under the name of *cryptographie*. In *Le degré zéro de l’écriture* (1972) he uses the term thus:

Sin duda puedo hoy elegir tal o cual escritura, y con ese gesto afirmar mi libertad, pretender un frescor o una tradición; pero no puedo ya desarrollarla en una duración sin volverme poco a poco prisionero de las palabras del otro e incluso de mis propias palabras. Una obstinada remanencia, que llega de todas las escrituras precedentes y del pasado mismo de mi propia

escritura, cubre la voz presente de mis palabras. Toda huella escrita se precipita como un elemento químico, primero transparente, inocente y neutro, en el que la simple duración hace aparecer poco a poco un pasado en suspensión, una criptografía cada vez más densa. (Barthes 1973a, 25)

This is intertextuality in the sense that a text may appear to be the spontaneous and transparent expression of a writer's intentions, but must necessarily contain elements of other texts. Barthes provides an extraordinary example of this in *S/Z* where he picks out some of the quotations without quotation marks, some of the references to cultural codes, stereotypes, received wisdom and so on in Balzac's *Sarrasine*.

Like Kristeva, Barthes holds that the limitations of the linguistic-structuralist approach have to be overcome by means of a meeting of different epistemes, namely dialectical materialism and psychoanalysis. This new method will produce a new object that we call text and which is intertextual by default: other texts are always present in it, at varying levels and in more or less recognizable forms (Barthes 1987, 39).

Barthes' vision of intertextuality also highlights the frequent anonymity of the "sources" of intertextual quotations. This idea was implicit in Kristeva's discussion of the "absorption" of social texts, because the social may be thought of as the network of anonymous ideas, commonplaces, folk wisdom, and clichés that make up the background of one's life. Whereas traditional influence studies primarily hunted for allusions to celebrated works of the past, Barthes, however, makes the commonplace central: "the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*" (1990, 160). The "already read" in Barthes encompasses more than the idea that we all possess conventional knowledge whose sources we cannot recall. It extends towards a notion of the subject as constituted by the texts of his/her culture, the subject *as* already read: "This 'I' which approaches the text is already itself a plurality of other texts, of codes which are infinite or, more precisely, lost" (1974, 10). Kristeva herself has consistently argued, in accordance with new French psychoanalytic theory, for this re-definition of the subject as always already cleft asunder or even radically dispersed. The fracturing of the reading subject is inevitably associated with the dissolution of the author, or death of the author as Barthes puts it. This implied rejection of authority does not correspond exactly to the political or even revolutionary thrust which Kristeva emphasizes in Bakhtin. Barthes tends to sound rather neutral in his sense as he seems ever ready to politicize matters of taste, but also to aestheticize political issues.

Valuable as Barthes' account of intertextuality is, it does not provide the critic with a particularly effective tool for analyzing literary texts. Clayton and Rothstein (1991, 23) point to the fact that Barthes' radical intertextuality foregoes the possibility of rigour in the discussion of individual texts, so much so that to attempt such a rigorous discussion, he must retrench on the theory. This theory, however, has a real heuristic or, at least, iconoclastic value in unsettling customary ideas about the author, the work, and the representation of reality.

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The second path, that in which intertextuality is used to achieve greater interpretive certainty, has been taken by critics who have applied it rather effectively to their practical criticism, such as Michel Riffaterre, Jonathan Culler and Gérard Genette. While the latter privileges the literary text in its narrower sense, the former concentrates on the act of reading and Culler relies on the linguistic method and its analogies with literary discourse in order to carry out his critical task from an intertextual perspective. However, in spite of the differences, their approaches are equally bent on establishing certain limits to the intertextual scope of every particular text.

Taking into account the relevant role of the reader, Riffaterre approaches intertextuality not only from the point of view of all the possible relations among texts but as the main, fundamental characteristic of (literary) reading. He defines the literary phenomenon as not only the text, but also its reader and all the reader's possible reactions to the text (1983, 3).

Although he has sometimes been called a structuralist, this label needs qualification, for he rejects the structuralist search for a deep grammar in literature, as well as the notion that all literary works of a given type share the same structure. On the contrary, he believes that the only significant structure in a literary work is that which the reader can perceive. Yet he must also be distinguished from the reader-response critics, in that his work is based on a concern with textual elements that readers are *obliged* to recognize.

He distinguishes two stages of reading (1980, 625-27). The first one is a naive, "mimetic" reading which yields what he calls the "meaning" of a work, the linear, word-by-word decoding of the message in accordance with an assumption that language is referential, that words relate directly to things. In the course of this reading, however, one encounters "ungrammaticalities" —difficulties, obscurities, undecidable moments, figurative language— any wording so unacceptable in a mimetic context that it prompts the reader to look elsewhere for the "significance" of the work. This emerges only in a second stage of reading, no longer lineal but comparative. Riffaterre considers two possible, though not exclusive, ways of reading comparatively: retroactive reading and intertextual reading. The former refers to the way in which the reader keeps reviewing and comparing backwards, recognizing repetitions and variations upon the same structure(s). Intertextual reading, on the other hand, is

the perception of similar comparabilities from text to text; or it is the assumption that such comparing must be done even if there is no intertext at hand wherein to find comparabilities. (1980, 626)

Ambiguity exists only as a stage in the reading process and serves to alert the reader to the presence of an intertext that will resolve the work's difficulties. These function as traces left by the absent intertext, as signs of an intertext to be completed elsewhere. Such "clues" are enough to set in train an intertextual reading, even if the intertext is not yet known or has been lost with the tradition it reflected (1980, 627).

Rejecting the poststructuralist dispersal of meanings, Riffaterre claims that there is only one correct reading and that it is the intertextual method that guides the reader in his/her interpreting. According to him, the ability to recognize gaps and ungrammaticalities are part of every reader's linguistic competence and it does not require much erudition or "preternatural insights" (1987, 373). Yet his own interpretations of poems and novels are full of learned allusions and draw on an encyclopaedic command of French and English literatures. Anyway, what is relevant in his theory is his basic concern with the effect on the reader of a textual *presupposition*: readers *presuppose* that there is an intertext which gives structural and semantic unity to the work, but the success or failure to locate that intertext on the part of the reader is, in a sense, irrelevant to the experience of intertextual reading. Analogous if not identical with Kristeva's assertion that every text is under the jurisdiction of other discourses, Riffaterre's thesis is that literary reading is possible only if the reader recognizes that the text articulates a *presupposition* of intertext, to such an extent that the text can be considered not simply a sequence of words organized as syntagms but a sequence of presuppositions (1980, 627).

The concept of presupposition is also a central one in the theory of Jonathan Culler. The example of Riffaterre illustrates the logical independence of intertextuality from many poststructuralist assumptions. Culler also argues for the constraining power of intertextuality, although not so absolutely as Riffaterre, for whom, as we have noted, there is

only one proper interpretation of a text, the one that is reached through the intertextual method. In "Presupposition and Intertextuality" (1976), Culler suggests that we start the study of intertextuality by considering its linguistic dimensions and in terms of two kinds of presuppositions: logical and pragmatic. The former are best thought of as the presuppositions of a sentence. Thus, the question "Have you stopped beating your wife?" presupposes that one previously made a habit of beating one's wife (Culler 1976, 1389). On the other hand, a sentence like "Once upon a time", though poor in logical presuppositions, is extremely rich in pragmatic ones since it relates the story that follows to a series of other stories, identifies it with the conventions of a genre, etc. (Culler 1976, 1392). The linguistic analogy suggests, according to Culler, two ways of approaching intertextuality:

The first is to look at the specific presuppositions of a given text, the way in which it produces a pre-text, an intertextual space whose occupants may or may not correspond to other actual texts ... The second enterprise, the study of rhetorical or pragmatic presupposition, leads to a poetics which is less interested in the occupants of that intertextual space which makes a work intelligible than in the conventions which underlie that discursive activity or space. (1976, 1395)

The practical virtue of Culler's proposal is, then, that it limits the set of possible intertexts to those which are either logically or pragmatically suggested by the work one is studying, and that it does so without excluding the anonymous, already read discourse of the social text, which is usually ignored in influence studies (Culler 1976, 1383). From this point of view, Culler also calls attention to the complex quality of the relationship that exists between influence and intertextuality. When he proposes to follow the linguistic model (and, in particular, the notion of presupposition), he does so as a means of avoiding the danger of setting out to study intertextuality and focusing, in the end, on a text's relation to specific precursors, something more in consonance with influence studies. According to Culler, this is precisely the sort of mistake that Kristeva makes in her analysis of Lautréamont's *Poésies*, a disappointing reading for anyone under the impression that the whole point of intertextuality is to take us beyond the study of identifiable sources (Culler 1976, 1384-85).

Like Michel Riffaterre's and Jonathan Culler's proposals, Gérard Genette's approach to the subject of intertextuality can be considered as an attempt to delimit the definitions of intertextuality put forward by Kristeva, Derrida, Barthes, etc., as they have been found difficult to apply to the practical analysis of texts. In contrast with Bakhtin's and Kristeva's wide interests, which are not only linguistic but also social, political, philosophical ..., Genette concentrates basically on the literary text in the strict sense of the word. Reading Kristeva's notion of intertextuality as referring to the literal and effective presence in a text of another text, he asserts that *intertextuality* is an inadequate term and proposes in its place *transtextuality*, by which he means everything, be it explicit or latent, that relates one text to others. Therefore, though he centres on the particular literary text, he acknowledges that it can no longer be studied in isolation.

El objeto de la poética [ ... ] no es el texto considerado en su singularidad [ ... ] sino el architexto ... Hoy yo diría, en un sentido más amplio, que este objeto es la transtextualidad o la transcendencia textual del texto. (1989, 9)

In *Palimpsestes*, his "last word" upon intertextuality, Genette insists on the globality of the notion of transtextuality and offers five subcategories (1989, 10-15):

1. *Intertextuality*: the relation of co-presence between two or more texts, that is, the effective presence of one text in another which takes place by means of plagiarism, quotation or allusion.

2. *Paratextuality*: the relations between the body of a text and its title, subtitle, epigraphs, illustrations, notes, first drafts, and other kinds of accessory signals which surround the text and sometimes comment on it.
3. *Metatextuality*: the relation, usually called "commentary", which links one text with another that comments on it without quoting it or, even, without mentioning it at all. It is the critical relation *par excellence*.
4. *Archtextuality*: the generic category a text belongs to. The text may not recognize its generic quality, which should be decided by its readers, critics ... However, this generic perception determines to a great extent the reader's "horizons of expectation", and, therefore, the work's reception.
5. *Hypertextuality*: the relation between the latecome text (*hypertext*) and its pre-text (*hypotext*). He defines *hypertext* as every text derived from a previous one by means of direct or indirect transformation (imitation), but not through commentary. In the former, direct or simple transformation, a text B may make no explicit reference to a previous one A, but it couldn't exist without A. For instance, *The Eneyd* and *Ulysses* are, in different degrees, two hypertexts of the same hypotext, *The Odyssey*. Imitation is a more complex kind of transformation, since it requires the constitution of a *generic* model.

In spite of this complex and detailed classification, the five categories established by Genette tend to overlap when it comes to the practice. For example, the paratext may also contribute to determining the generic quality of the text, thus merging with archtextuality. Hypertextuality seen as the presence of one text in another text does not seem to be very different from intertextuality. Only by restricting the latter notion to plagiarism, quotation or allusion, and the former to parody, travesty and pastiche is he able to keep them apart. However, both categories fall together again when he acknowledges that

no hay obra literaria que, en algún grado y según las lecturas, no evoque otra, y, en este sentido, todas las obras son hipertextuales ... (1989, 19)

In such a general statement as this, one could equally say "intertextual" instead of "hypertextual".

Despite the complex terminology and the unavoidable overlapping, Genette's concepts may be taken as a useful point of departure to be sufficiently defined later on by each individual critic/theorist, and, above all, they contribute to underlining the complexity of the notion of intertextuality. Each text is trapped in a network of relations, between the different parts that constitute it, between that text and those which precede it, or those that come after it, or even those which never were (Borges' pseudo-textuality). In turn, all those relations can be said to exist in as far as they are perceived by the reader, who may discover an echo, but may equally silence it. Genette himself goes as far as to assert that the hypertext necessarily gains in some way or another from the reader's awareness of its signifying and determining relationships with its hypotexts (1989, 494), thus confirming Linda Hutcheon's assertion that most discussions of intertextuality end up considering the role of the reader, no matter how formalistic they have attempted to sound (Hutcheon 1986, 232). As Worton and Still (1990, 23) point out, Genette's analysis of individual texts may be less sustained, less close than Riffaterre's, but his work does insistently remind us that memory can be actively "revolutionary" only so long as it is creative as well as commemorative.

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The third path, that of putting intertextuality at the service of political and historical projects, has become identified with two schools, *Rezeptions-Ästhetik* and critics associ-

ated with Michel Foucault. The former has tried to chart historical development by looking at the ways in which the intertextual connections that a text evokes change over time. Its leading proponents, Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser, do not rely extensively on the term intertextuality, but their investigations into continuity and change employ related notions. For Clayton and Rothstein (1991, 26), Jauss' Gadamerian notion of "horizon of expectations" that a reader brings to a work resembles intertextuality, because the reader's horizon is constructed by an inherited system of norms and conventions. To the study of this intertextual field, Jauss' reception criticism adds a historical dimension by tracing the ways in which different readers' horizons diverge from one another over time. As far as Iser's reader-response criticism is concerned, it employs a similar intertextual concept, the notion of "repertoire of the text", a repertoire that exists only in the reader and is activated by "references to earlier works, or to social and historical norms, or to the whole culture from which the text has emerged" (in Clayton and Rothstein 1991, 26).

Foucault's path leads towards a conception of intertextuality that emphasizes the role played not only by discursive but also by non-discursive formations such as institutions, professions and disciplines. Unlike Barthes and Derrida, with their boundless visions of textuality, Foucault highlights the forces that restrict the free circulation of the text. Among them he cites the author principle, that of commentary and that of discipline:

We tend to see, in an author's fertility, in the multiplicity of commentaries and in the development of a discipline so many infinite resources available for the creation of discourse. Perhaps so, but they are nonetheless principles of constraint, and it is probably impossible to appreciate their positive, multiplicatory role without first taking into consideration their restrictive, constraining role. (Foucault 1972, 224)

To those "principles of constraint" he also adds the conditions under which discourse may be employed. Although every text possesses countless points of intersection with other texts, these connections situate a work within existing networks of power, simultaneously creating and disciplining the text's ability to signify. Foucault insists that we analyze the role of power in the production of textuality and of textuality in the production of power. This entails looking closely at those social and political institutions by which subjects are subjected, enabled and regulated in forming textual meanings. Even if he regards the text as a site of "anonymity" and the author as a "role function" played out in the text, Foucault does not agree with Barthes' isolation of the text from history and ideology. His concept of culture as intersecting discourses represents a form of the concept of intertextuality that emphasizes the production of ideology.

Foucault's neglect of gender issues has often been noted and historicist criticism in the eighties and nineties has generally attempted to correct this lacuna in Foucault's project, so much so as to suggest that historicist critics should begin by hyphenating race-class-gender. In line with this, and in relation to the problematic question of literary canons, Paul Lauter (1993, 242) asserts that an adequate theory of criticism can only be developed by fully considering the art produced by women, by working people and by national minorities.

Oppositional criticisms have also adopted and criticized the concept of intertextuality. Just as Annette Kolodny thought that feminist theorists must revise Bloom's notion of influence,<sup>1</sup> feminist and critics of colour have begun to rethink the notion of intertextuality.

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<sup>1</sup> There are no female figures against which a woman writer can react in an attempt to demarcate herself from them, since not only Bloom's but any literary canon among those traditionally proposed include no women writers. In addition, Bloom's theory reproduces very specifically the



Clayton and Rothstein (1991, 28) mention the example of Barbara Johnson, for whom “questions of gender may enrich, complicate and even subvert the underlying paradigms of intertextuality theory” (Johnson 1987, 124). It hardly needs to be said that the work of decentering male-centred culture as it is expressed in language, literature, art and institutional configuration has always been a major concern of feminist criticism. For more than two decades now, feminist scholars have been reacting against the apparently systematic neglect of women’s experience in the literary canon, neglect that takes the form of distorting and misreading the few recognized female writers and excluding the others. Moreover, the predominantly male authors in the canon have dealt with the female character and the relations between the sexes in a way that both reflects and contributes to sexist ideology (Robinson 1993, 213). The feminist alternatives to the male-dominated membership and attitudes of the accepted canon have contributed to widening and enriching the intertextual space through the recovery of lost works by women, and the restoration of the value of disdained genres. Even if, as Lillian S. Robinson asserts (1993, 214), feminist criticism has tended to concentrate on writing by women, it has also emphasized alternative readings of the tradition, readings that re-interpret women’s character, motivations, and actions, and that identify and challenge sexist ideology: “from this perspective, Milton may come in for some censure, Shakespeare and Chaucer for both praise and blame, but the clear intention of a feminist approach to these classic authors is to enrich our understanding of what is going on in the text, as well as how—for better, for worse, or for both—they have shaped our literary and social ideas” (Robinson 1993, 214).

Feminist critics’ recognition of the individual as a site crossed and modelled by the discourses that surround him / her, their moving from the margins of culture an entire literature that was previously dismissed and their alternative approaches to traditional works now presented in a new light, ultimately tend to support the already acknowledged relevance of questions of gender within the realm of intertextuality. To mention a last example, most feminist criticism has questioned the overall anonymity that surrounds the figure of the author in the main discourses of intertextuality. This is, for instance, what has happened in the American critical scene. Certainly many American critics have used the term in its pure French form, but in general the transplanted concept has resisted the erasure of the writer.<sup>1</sup> Thus, N. Miller’s method in her work “Arachnologies” is a deliberate blending of Barthesian notions of the text as “textile” or “web” with a clashing American feminist insistence on the importance of the author. But where Barthes’ text is an infinite web seemingly spinning itself Miller insists on re-introducing the spider—as author, as subject, as agent, as gendered body, as producer of the text (Friedman 1991, 158).

Many other approaches to the subject of intertextuality could be added to the ones mentioned here. Such a proliferation of theories underlines the inapprehensible quality of the concept analysed in this essay. Yet it is also a proof of the increasingly relevant role intertextuality has been playing in contemporary literary criticism. Linda Hutcheon, among others, has called attention to the fact that this particular change in criticism has come about the way most critical changes do—that is, primarily because of a change in the literature

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Oedipal conflict between *sons* and *fathers*, which makes it ultimately inapplicable to the case of women.

<sup>1</sup> This does not exclude the existence of a similar reaction on the continent. Friedman (1991: 176) cites as examples Wittig’s reference to an intertextuality in which the author is still clearly present in “The Mark of Gender” and a British volume entitled *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms*, edited by Roger Fowler, in which intertextuality is defined under the general category “Creation” in the context of Marxist criticism. For Fowler and Wittig, the author’s agency is assumed in the “practice” of intertextuality.

itself (Hutcheon 1986, 231). Accordingly, a literature constructed on the principle of intertextuality, as seems to be the case with most post modern literature, asks for intertextual readings as well as intertextual methods of interpretation. I hope that the survey developed in this essay will be useful to answer the demands imposed on us by a literature not less complex than the period in which it has been produced: THE POSTMODERN.

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