Journal X

Volume 1
Number 1 *Autumn 1996*

Article 9

1996

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1.

I am working on a project called "The X Tables." What better place to talk about this project than in *Journal x*? A new kind of review? When I was in graduate school happiness was finding one of those bibliographical essays written by an expert covering the best recent work in a given field, in which this work was classified, grouped into distinct sets according to critical approaches and arguments, thus creating a sense of order and possibility for the neophyte overwhelmed by the quantity of materials produced annually within the paradigm of specialization. These essays were offered as objective compilations, not exhaustive in quantitative terms, but final in their authoritative judgments. The best part came at the end, when the authority offered a series of suggestions for further work that remained to be done in the area. If you have watched a bird of prey bring food to its chicks in some nature documentary then you know how we jumped on these topical gifts from the master.

Have things changed since those days? Is anyone still working within the specialist paradigm of mastery? "Politics" has been one partial solution to the impossible demands of scholarship, more efficient than the burning of the library in Alexandria in eliminating works from the list of required readings. Nonetheless, the shelves in the library continue to fill up with new volumes of books and journals, to which must be added the growth in other media such as video, disks, and the internet. Even if there are no

more masters, there still is expertise in reading (but for how much longer?). Perhaps there is a place then for a different kind of bibliographical essay with a different focus: not one that covers a field, but one that explores the way a given reader manages information within a specific style of learning, reasoning, and writing.

How do I read? The editors of this journal spoke of the function of pleasure in the operations of scholarship. They were using the term as a shorthand allusion to that scene of our expertise that Roland Barthes and other French theorists have complicated by opening it up to the psychoanalytic notions of desire. Expert reading is not pleasure but bliss, in this theoretical sense of *jouissance*. Should it even be called "reading" when it comes to the way I interact with the infinity of pages and screens? Barthes confessed that he read far less than people thought. Wittgenstein comes to mind as someone who seemed to read very little in his field. In my case, I read more than it might seem, but no matter how much I read it is nothing, infinitesimal, in comparison to the amount of writing produced. My relationship to books, then, is not quantitative control but a certain attitude, a mode of being within an information environment.

Could the way I read be put into an expert system? Artificial intelligence has had some success with simulating expert knowledge. Certain kinds of expertise turn out to be easier to put into a machine than is quotidian common sense. These expert systems demonstrate the literate nature of expertise — that expertise is precisely a formation of the apparatus of the alphabetic era — in the diagnostic format within which they operate. The true and perhaps final heir of the Platonic dialogue is the AI machine. Grammatology, that is, indicates that AI is to print knowledge what photography was to painting: a form of automation that took over many of the features of a craft, putting them into a technology that made the craft available to the amateur.

This speculative analogy is suggestive in several respects. Automation does not eliminate experts or painters, but it changes their function. As for the amateurs, they have been left on their own for the most part. Photography is not yet taught in our schools as a central part of mass literacy, but eventually it will be. These possibilities suggest several areas in need of invention: what becomes of reading when it is relieved of the tasks (and joys) of scholarship? What kind of education will be possible when the work of specialization is done by expert systems? Experts and amateurs alike will require new methods and practices.

The part of expertise that so far has escaped machine intelligence is its madness. Perhaps I need a better term to characterize my relationship to reading. "Desire" might work. One goal of "The X Tables" is to persuade the AI movement to recognize the place of the unconscious in mentality, to accept the computer as the prosthesis of the body-in-the-mind not only in terms of common sense (human intelligence is oriented in a material body) but also in psychoanalytic terms in which the book as object carries investments shared by babies, voices, turds, the phallus. I do not want to get into the theory for now, other than to say that my relationship to books is overdetermined. Do I *like* to read constantly? It is the nature of expertise to repeat itself endlessly. A contemporary *Inferno* would be easy to design: just shift everyone over to a differ-

ent expertise (baseball players become lawyers, lawyers become astronauts, astronauts become English professors).

My point is that interface design in computing is headed towards creating computers that will help us with our reading. Expert systems are designed by the formulation of algorithms that capture the behaviors of that expertise, as extrapolated from the debriefings of hundreds or even thousands of individual experts. One function for this series on the pleasures of reading, then, might be as a resource for some future information architect. Another way to put it might be more ethnographic: to accumulate a record of professional reading while this practice is still commonplace. It may be that some day news organs may find worth noting the passing of native readers, the way they now note the passing of the last speakers of a dead language.

2.

I think within a problematic that orients my reading. The condition for having the "Eureka!" experience of heuretics, after all, is to be looking for something. To find things that make me want to write — or, better, to find texts that show me *how* to write, that is my object. Heuretics in fact is a way to read everything as a poetics. The madness, the obsessive behavior, according to the theory, is due to the fact that the motivation of this quest is desire, a profound want caused by the limitations of the human condition. This want cannot in principle be satisfied. Moreover, knowledge of the nature of this condition does not alter the experience of it, any more than does knowledge of fusion cause stars to go out. The relationship rather is: may I use this knowledge to learn how to harness this energy in myself, to teach others how to recognize this feeling themselves and turn it to constructive ends? Common wisdom has it that contentment in an achievement-oriented culture such as ours is dependent upon finding a fit between the demands of a career and the neuroses of the practitioners. The training of scholars, then, might shift its focus from information to desire, to learning how to harness this madness to create knowledge fusion. Nor is this madness *one*.

Not an origin, but an orientation, it starts with a question of knowledge. I have in mind the grammatological question of the apparatus: what happens to the practices of literacy when the principal interface for preserving meaning is no longer the page but the screen (not that the screen is likely to last that much longer in its present form either)? I am always wondering: how may I use the new technologies to conduct teaching, research, and service in the humanities? One of the ways I have responded to that question has been to design a genre called *mystory*, intended as a way to do academic writing that takes into account the new audio-visual media. Mystory is also a way to bring into communication these different levels of want — the want of disciplinary information and the want of being.

The experience of pleasure happens when I find something that I recognize as a relay for mystory. You might say that the new chapter I wrote for the second edition of *Text Book* (co-authored with Robert Scholes and Nancy Comley; St. Martin's Press) is a response before the fact to this *Journal x* review. The

new chapter was meant to complete our textual approach to introductory composition by creating a section on a textualist research paper. The only (or at least the best) response to a text is another text: such is the coded formula for a textualist research paper. The chapter featured the mystory as the genre that would enable a general education student to author a text. In the context of the AI discussion, I could add that mystory is a diagnostic capable of guiding the customizing of a computer interface to fit the unique learning style of an individual user.

When I went to construct the chapter on the mystory I ran into a basic difficulty: where to find examples of mystories to use as models? Why did I not consider using the one I wrote myself ("Derrida at the Little Bighorn")? Or, even if there are few if any print mystories, there are plenty of hypertexts, authored by students working with George Landow at Brown University. I did not think that this lack of paper models was a major problem, since students working their way through the first four chapters of *Text Book* will experience everything necessary for grasping the nature of the genre in the abstract, as well as the compositional strategies needed to execute the kinds of reasoning and writing called for. Moreover, in teaching mystorically myself for some time, I believed that one of the most interesting things about mystory was discovering its poetics. Mystory was a Wittgensteinian sort of concept, consisting of a family of uses.

Even if there are no models of mystory, however, there are plenty of relays, of the sort I described in *Teletheory* to evoke the properties of this mythical genre. The fifth chapter of *Text Book* asks the students not just to write a mystory, but first to design the poetics for such a thing. I wonder if anyone has had any success with that chapter, which I think of as being really very difficult? The pleasure of constructing that chapter was to find relays — readings each of which would suggest at least one attribute or property of a potential mystory. Everything I learned from writing *Teletheory*, from generating "Derrida at the Little Bighorn" out of a series of existing works, I tried to condense into this assignment. I did not want to include my sample, since it is a "failure" (like most experiments, a happy failure in that what I learned from making it allowed me to compose *Heuretics*), and because I did not want to prejudice the outcome. The idea was to supply a brief selection from a given work, manifesting a certain device or form, framed with the suggestion that this device, recontextualized, could become part of the instructions for a mystory.

In principle, these selections could come from anything, regardless of the relevance of the original to the goals of mystory. In practice, however, all five selections reflected the autoportraiture characteristic of mystory. The relays I used as resources for generating the elements of a mystorical poetics include short selections from *Manhood*, by Michel Leiris; *Alias Olympia*, by Eunice Lipton; "Incloser" (from *The Birthmark*), by Susan Howe; "How to Become Paranoia-Critical," (from *The Unspeakable Confessions of Salvador Dali*), by Salvador Dali; and *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, by N. Scott Momaday (which I also used in *Teletheory*). The comments and assignments, along with the instructor's manual, of *Text Book* clarify the motivation of each selection, so I won't say any more about them now, except to note that they represent a mini-exhibition of

the kinds of writing that give me pleasure. The method of generating a poetics by extracting one feature from a relay, combining it with a number of other such extracted features, and elaborating them into a set of instructions for composing any number of potential works, is even more pleasurable to contemplate.

What is heuretic reading — reading with the goal of writing something myself? I want to continue here the procedure initiated in *Text Book*, to add a few more relays to the ones collected there, some of which might contribute a new property to the mix, and others of which might simply elaborate further a property already available in the initial offering. For example, I recommend to any mystorian Susan Griffin's *A Chorus of Stones: The Private Life of War*. In a study as aesthetic as it is theoretical, Griffin demonstrates at length one of the basic assumptions addressed by a mystory — the irreducible connection between private and public existence, between individual and collective experience, between memory and history. "For perhaps we are like stones; our own history and the history of the world embedded in us, we hold a sorrow deep within and cannot weep until that history is sung." As the jacket prose explains, *Chorus* "illustrates how it is that private life — family history, childhood experiences, gender and sexuality, private aspiration and public image — assume an undeniable role in the causes and effects of war."

Griffin places her own private and familial experience at the center of her meditation, which she explores in relation to comparative studies of the private/public symmetries legible in the lives of such historical figures as Mohandas Gandhi and General Hugh Trenchard, Daniel Schreber and Heinrich Himmler, and various other figures who became emblems of culture: Franz Kafka, Rita Hayworth, Ernest Hemingway. One of the rationales of mystory was that it simulated the experience of invention. Biographies of the famous inventors in the Western tradition, that is, indicate the important contribution that experiences outside a discipline make to the specialized work of an expert. In *Teletheory* I focused on the constructive side of this creative process by referring to the lives of artists and scientists canonized in our histories. Griffin complicates my focus by showing that the same circulation of experience works for the creators of evil — the inventors of weapons of mass destruction, the architects of the politics of hate, are inventors too, whose products are generated out of a mystory. Himmler and Gandhi may be understood in the same terms.

3.

I am always looking for examples of works that make the kinds of juxtapositions featured in *Chorus*. James Michael Jarrett, who has published several articles documenting his own experiments with mystory, sent me a brochure from an exhibition by Glenn Ligon, entitled *To Disembark*, held at the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D. C., from November of 1993 to February of 1994. This brochure is itself a conceptual mystory, effective in its own right, even if it were not realized as an installation. In the installation, Ligon explores his sense of identity by evoking the history of Henry "Box" Brown, a slave who shipped himself to freedom in 1849. Ligon writes himself into this historical event in a variety of ways: he introduces descriptions of himself composed by friends,

for example, into nineteenth-century advertisements seeking the return of runaway slaves. Ligon's installation is a relay showing the mystorian how to use collective, historical materials to compose an image of one's own sense of self.

Another related relay illustrating this juxtapositional use of found histories to evoke personal identity is the project by May Stevens, *Extraordinary. Ordinary.* "A collage of words and images of Rosa Luxemburg, Polish/German revolutionary leader and theoretician, murder victim (1871-1919) juxtaposed with images and words of Alice Stevens (born 1895-) housewife, mother, washer and ironer, inmate of hospitals and nursing homes." The title names a project rather than a single work, which includes paintings and exhibits as well as "an artist's book examining and documenting the mark of a political woman and marking the life of a woman whose life would otherwise be unmarked."

Rhetoricians have pointed out that juxtaposition has the *effect* of argument. Sergei Eisenstein, in his invention of intellectual montage as a way to *write* with a camera, used the device of montage to create a filmic equivalent of literate concepts. Indeed, the entire collection of formal experiments produced within the avant-garde movement in arts and letters in our century might be read as an exploration of the capacities of the devices of juxtaposition and repetition to support systematic reasoning. A profound demonstration of the basic principles is *Pig City Model Farm*, by Rob Kovitz. Soon after I came across this book in a museum bookstore I ordered forty copies for one of my courses. Unfortunately only five copies were still available (published by Treyf in Toronto, 1992, with the warning "keep refrigerated"). The ingredients: found materials drawn from two specialized domains, pig farming and utopia. Materials include graphic as well as written information. The compositional technique is simply to juxtapose and repeat quantities of materials from each of the domains, interweaving them through a rather lengthy book. The effect is that of a penetrating, unforgettable critique of utopian thinking. How this effect is created is a topic that deserves an article all to itself. In a word, *Pig City* evokes a critique.

I am always on the lookout for relays, existing works, usually by artists, poets, and filmmakers, that suggest ideas that might be generalized, emulated using different materials, appropriated for another composition. This new composition is not to be of the same sort as its sources, but a hybrid diverging unpredictably from its causes. Sometimes I have access not to the work itself but only to a description, as in the case of Ligon, but the idea of the relay is strong enough to radiate beyond its embodiment in the work. This radiation effect was explicitly featured in the multiples (a genre of cheap reproducible objects) and performances of Joseph Beuys. The desire to write *Applied Grammatology* came in part from seeing a small black-and-white photo of a Beuys installation, "The Pack" (a group of small sleds, each equipped with a roll of felt, a battery-powered lantern, and a glob of fat, spilling out of the back of a battered Volkswagen bus). Such objects "broadcast" to those with the proper receivers. I sympathize with those Asian filmmakers of a previous era who tried to make the Hollywood movies they were only able to read about.

For example, even if I rarely go to the City, sometimes it is enough to read the "Goings on About Town" column of *The New Yorker*, which is where I came across this entry:

Jim Shaw — A small but fascinating show of drawings titled "Dreams That Money Can Buy," after a 1944 Surrealist film by Hans Richter. Each drawing pairs a creepy or innocuous image with a new but skittishly handwritten text. Even a cursory reading reveals that the words have no relation whatsoever to the images. A precisely detailed drawing of two snarling muzzled greyhounds is paired with this dreamlike sequence: "A young man of indeterminate age, race, and gender is talking to a large African-American woman about his (?) allergies and troubled family history. . . . He walks backward and compares himself to Jesus and turns into a werewolf." This is no dream — it's Michael Jackson being interviewed by Oprah Winfrey. In fact, all Shaw's dreamtexts are descriptions of things he's seen on TV — everybody's ready-made unconscious.

Such examples as I have been giving of works that become relays for mystory share a common feature: the collage/montage manipulation of found materials and histories. Mystory takes everything as language, as raw material for another text. Sometimes, as in the case of Jarrett sending me the Ligon brochure, I receive a relay as a gift. Joseph Grigely, for example, sent me a copy of the booklet published in conjunction with a project entitled, "Conversations with the Hearing." The title of the booklet is "Deaf & Dumb: A Tale." The tale must be inferred, extracted, from a compilation of outmoded, historical publications concerning the deaf and dumb. This outmodedness (the booklet faithfully reproduces the look, layout, and typeface of the originals being cited) is an important part of the evocation. Beuys used obsolete gear in his performances in the same way. Perhaps Walter Benjamin explained best the value of dated materials, whose outmodedness allows the symbolic power of the object to become legible from behind the use value. Most of the fragments Grigely collects address the education of individuals afflicted with the absence of hearing or speech: an account of an acoustic method for communication, first published in 1828; exercises for lip reading; an inventory of cases of individuals and their handicaps; obituaries for instructors of the deaf from the early 1900s; a sign language chart; a relevant extract from Rousseau; a list of trades taught at institutions for the deaf and dumb; "anecdotes and annals" dealing with cases of rape, infanticide, and other crimes happening to or perpetrated by the deaf and dumb. The effect of this collage is quite extraordinary, in that it somehow manages to use these dated, public, impersonal fragments to evoke a disturbing narrative tale.

Susan Howe is the master of this method of historical evocation, while showing how to add to the found histories her own poetic elaborations and transformations. "Melville's Marginalia," included in *The Nonconformist's Memorial*, exemplifies the mix of research, commentary, creative writing, formal experiment, and layout that makes me want to write. She brings to our attention the almost negligible career of James Clarence Mangan, to which she was led by one of Melville's marginalia. The whole thing could be a fiction, for all I know, in the style of Borges' "Pierre Menard." I have not wanted to verify the historical statements, because their accuracy doesn't matter for the purposes of a mystorical relay: the effect of learning something about oneself by research-

ing another. My attraction to hypermedia is due in part to the exact fit between it and the collage/montage compilation mode.

4.

What is the appeal of collage/montage compositions? Why do they fit so well with hypermedia? The answer has something to do with the promise of wholeness, related to the way expert knowledge is constituted by an intuitive awareness of an intense complex of intertextual references. The divisions between narrative and document, between fiction and argument, between the aesthetic and the didactic, between the metaphysical and the practical, are rendered unnecessary in hypermedia, thus promising a solution to information overload. A great diversity of heterogeneous materials may be brought into relationship and made legible, intelligible, both formally and materially: materially in the digital mechanics of hypermedia (in which any item of information is equally and uniformly near to any other item, coupled by a jump), and formally in the aesthetics of mystory and the method of chorography. Hypermedia and mystory, that is, are homologous to the associative allusive structure of expert knowledge (mystory supported by hypermedia makes it possible to map expert knowledge onto quotidian cognition — to use schemata as if they were concepts). The commentators tell us that in our electronic culture the image is replacing the concept as the basic unit of communication, and that the danger of this situation is that the kind of reasoning we teach in school as the basis of critical thinking is bypassed by the slogan-picture hybrid of image discourse. The answer is: teach image discourse in the schools and use it ourselves.

If the image is the problem it is also the answer to the information overload afflicting our message-saturated civilization. The design of a collage/montage text includes the foregrounding of an image that organizes the whole into a memorable unit. The formal principle is that of the *mise-en-abyme* (putting in the abyss) — the selection of a schemata that is emphasized through repetition and elaboration to signal its function as the source of formal coherence. Although the image may be either diegetic or nondiegetic (motivated or unmotivated by the materials being collected), the most effective relays in my experience have all been diegetic. A relay for this effect may be found in the film *Time Indefinite*, by Ross McElwee (whose film *Sherman's March* provided one of the key relays in *Teletheory*). *Time Indefinite* continues McElwee's autobiography, moving from the multitude of girlfriends documented in *Sherman's March* to his engagement and marriage.

Interpolated throughout this two-hour film is an image of a boy fishing with his father. All the footage of family and friends, the rituals associated with birth, marriage, anniversary, and death, is organized and framed within this scene. While McElwee narrates in voice-over his own experience as a boy fishing with his father, we see a child being taught by his father how to deliver the *coup de grace* to a small fish. The child attempts to stomp on the head of the fish while it is flipping and flopping on the boards of the pier. Some time later McElwee returns to this fish, a close-up of the creature gasping, gills beating, mouth working, framed and photographed at an unusual face-front angle. This

angle and shape of the framing link the fish to the toothless mouths of McElwee's dying grandmother and his infant son. The closeup of the son that concludes the film echoes uncannily with the closeup of the dying fish. The repetition of shapes and angles produces a powerful mood, a commentary showing us the attitude the filmmaker takes towards the life he has recorded: he feels in the environment of family ritual like a fish out of water.

Another example of this organizing power of an image is in Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried.* The temporal discontinuities of the author's experience — childhood, combat in Vietnam, civilian life after war — are integrated in a superb example of a diegetic image: a description of the equipment carried into combat by an infantryman. "As PFCs or Spec 4s, most of them were common grunts and carried the standard M-16 gas-operated assault rifle. The weapon weighed 7.5 pounds unloaded, 8.2 pounds with its full 20-round magazine. Depending on numerous factors, such as topography and psychology, the riflemen carried anywhere from 12 to 20 magazines, usually in cloth bandoliers, adding on another 8.4 pounds at minimum, 14 pounds at maximum. When it was available, they also carried M-16 maintenance gear — rods and steel brushes and swabs and tubes of LSA oil — all of which weighed about a pound." This detailed inventory of the weight of the rifle and ammunition is extended to all the equipment the soldier carries.

This insistence on physical details inevitably begins to evoke an allegorical signal: there is something more to this weight. O'Brien's list of what the soldier carries into battle continues on past standard issue to those personal items that mark the humanity of the individual — anything from good-luck pieces to letters from home. These personal objects give way in turn to things metaphysical, to a complex, infinite immensity of emotions, from ideals and values through concerns and worries about love relationships to visceral fear of mutilation or death. "They shared the weight of memory. They took up what others could no longer bear. Often, they carried each other, the wounded or weak. They carried infections. They carried the land itself — Vietnam, the place, the soil — a powdery orange-red dust that covered their boots and fatigues and faces. They carried the sky. The whole atmosphere." Such is the device rendered to perfection: the material, sensible, concrete, physical, external given reality transforms into a vision of things abstract, spiritual, invisible, inchoate, internal. Sometimes an exact measurement between the two realms is possible, as in the case of Ted Lavender, whose fear could be counted by the extra rounds he carried for his grenade launcher, each round weighing 10 ounces. The normal supply was 25 rounds, but at the time he was killed Ted Lavender was carrying 34 rounds.

Marguerite Duras once said that writing requires looking outside for something that is already within oneself. I have learned that this external search is necessary in order to understand the nature of this interiority, which has no shape, no quality other than force, energy. A relay for what happens might be "The Marina Trench," by Sigrid Nielsen, in which (as Glenn Jordan and Chris Weedon explained in *Cultural Politics*) the deepest area of the ocean is made to symbolize a feminine or even lesbian mode of relationship: "That is part of the Marina Trench: silence. You cannot speak; if you open your mouth the water

will rush into your jaws. No one has ever been able to explain to me why that silence falls between women. It is a place on the map of the women's world, that silence . . . like a wall of water which resists everywhere at once. This story is not a protest, no more than the purple spots on the map, the sounding in feet and meters, the name in boldface type, the warning to proceed cautiously." With such an image — the Marina Trench outside evoking this feeling of separation inside — I am at the fundamental unit of mystorical structure. In my research I seek just such an image for myself, adequate to evoke for me first this pressure of imbalance, to bring into equilibrium the inside with the outside. Once such an image is located, it acquires mythological power for its author (but only for that author — a personal mythology), the ability to condense and contain and actively direct one's passage through the archive of world knowledge.

5.

The "atmosphere" that O'Brien spoke of is one of the guiding concerns of "The X Tables." The conceptual or disciplinary point of departure for this concern has to do with the way images communicate by evoking atmosphere (the silence between women measured in terms of foot-pounds at the bottom of the ocean). In image discourse and electronic media, atmosphere is shifting from a background to a foreground status. Writing online has a much larger dimension of performance than was the case in literacy. English departments need to collaborate more with Theater in order to develop this aspect of composition. I have used Michael Chekhov's *Lessons for the Professional Actor* in some of my courses to try to articulate this condition. Chekhov, a student of Stanislavsky who modified his master's technique in some important respects, offers a variation on the account of Method acting given in *Heuretics*.

The key to the Method for Chekhov is in the atmosphere that an actor finds to guide the performance of the role. What attracted me to the Method in the first place as the analogy for chorography (mystory elaborated into a rhetoric) is its account of how actors use their inner lives, their memories and personal histories, as resources for creating a character. This relationship may be generalized into a relay for reading as such. Or rather, for heuretics — reading with an aim towards writing. The postmodernist element of this approach may be obvious: the commitment to making a new work out of an existing one (text). The Chekhov *Lessons* could be read in conjunction with David Savran's documentary commentary on the Wooster Group, *Breaking the Rules*. This juxtaposition suggests that the Wooster Group approaches a play in the manner of a single actor rehearsing a role and seeking an atmosphere for the role that might be condensed into a single psychological gesture. Savran describes the Wooster Group as "deconstructing" such canonized plays as *The Cocktail Party*, *Our Town*, and *The Crucible*. A production that is an apt relay for mystory is the Wooster Group's *Route 1 & 9*.

An obvious reason for the value of the Wooster Group in general is the way it has used the autobiographical expressions of Spalding Gray as raw material. Equally important is the way the Group juxtaposes Gray's life story with clas-

sic plays. In *Heuretics* I spoke of electronic composition as similar to throwing away the performance of a play in favor of the personal material an actor generates as part of rehearsing. *Route 1 & 9* does precisely this when a scene from *Our Town* is played on a monitor while the actors reproduce in blackface a Pigmeat Markham vaudeville routine. One way to understand this juxtaposition is to read it as the replacement of a performance of the play by a presentation of the private associations generated by actors for the rehearsal of the play: the Pigmeat Markham routine is the psychological gesture that creates the atmosphere the Group wants to produce in its performance — its remake — of *Our Town*. Instead of showing us the play, they give us the atmosphere directly.

I am learning from Chekhov and the Wooster Group how to write "The X Tables." I want to learn from the acting analogy how to develop a pedagogy of atmosphere. The histories of creativity and of philosophy indicate that part of becoming creative in one's life and work has to do with learning how to recognize and then tap into the grounding enframing mood, the emotional state of mind, that constitutes the background of consciousness. In the creative process one accesses this mood, no matter what the object of work might be. The specific contribution the humanities division of knowledge has to make to the educational enterprise in general concerns this creative process: mystory is designed to help students encounter and experience the mood dimension of cognition. Perhaps the best exploration of such a pedagogy that I have read is Robert B. Ray's *The Avant-Garde Finds Andy Hardy*, itself a heuretics, showing how to textualize popular culture, using the Andy Hardy films starring Mickey Rooney.

To try to push this thread a bit further: the "X" in "The X Tables" refers among other things to the "logic of sense" invented by Gilles Deleuze and explained most directly in a book by that title. I tested this logic in a text entitled "The Miranda Warnings" (in George Landow, ed., *Hyper/Text/Theory*). In that text I crossed the Supreme Court "Miranda" decision with the career of Carmen Miranda: the floating signifier, the X, is the term *miranda*. Given the logic of mystory, I am compelled to follow this *miranda* further, to see what might be gathered within the parameters of this puncept. An immediate association is with Prospero's daughter. Indeed, a review of the history of *The Tempest* reveals a direct connection with the problematic of postcolonial identity included in *Heuretics*. This play has been the subject of numerous remakes in our century in association with a postcolonial cultural politics.

At the moment I am only collecting some of these versions, all of which shift the point of view or the point of identification from Prospero to one of the helping figures: either Ariel or Caliban. Among the ones that interest me most would be: *A Tempest* by Aimé Césaire; *Philadelphia Fire*, a novel by John Edgar Wideman; the films by Peter Greenaway (*Prospero's Books*) and Paul Mazursky (*Tempest*); the artist's book by Jimmie Durham (*The Caliban Codex*). Then there are the poems composed under the "Ariel" title by T. S. Eliot and Sylvia Plath. A major movement in Latin American letters in the early 1900s was called Arielism, which argued for the superiority of the aristocratic, high culture of South American traditions against the Caliban-like vulgarity of gringo commercialism. More recently a Latino, mixed-race proletarian identification

with Caliban has replaced the Hispanic upper-class identification with Ariel in the political allegories generated out of *The Tempest*.

What about Miranda? "The X Tables" will have a relation to *The Tempest* similar to the deconstructive one that the Wooster Group establishes with its classic plays. Part of the purpose of such a project is to demonstrate a heuretic approach to scholarship. Rather than keeping absolutely separate the hermeneutic and creative applications of a given theory, as has been the case normally, heuretics studies a theory from both sides of its applications at once: as it is developed into a means of interpretation by critics, and into a poetics by artists. In order to understand the implications of Derrida's theories it is as useful to consider the Wooster Group as it is to read Barbara Johnson. "The X Tables" includes a remake of Shakespeare, then, constructed in hypermedia rhetoric with *miranda* as the switch. Only a fragment of Shakespeare will be materially present: it is a collage/montage of a heterogeneous body of materials constituting a certain problematic. To be tested is the proposition that abstract reasoning may be conducted and directed by means of atmosphere.

6.

The specific atmosphere I am using is the samba feeling (Carmen Miranda popularized samba in her Hollywood films during the era of the Good Neighbor Policy) known as *saudade*. "The X Tables" will reason via *saudade*. In *Heuretics* I showed how the chorographer might inhabit a narrative by introducing a heuretic code (the code of mystory) attached to the hermeneutic code that engages the interest of the audience by means of enigmas (using the definitions of these codes established by Roland Barthes in *S/Z*). The problematic that has formed around *The Tempest*, in which the arguments of a postcolonial cultural politics have already been attached to the plots and characters of a specific narrative drama, offers an ideal site for demonstrating another aspect of chorography: how to attach the heuretic code to the hermeneutic or truth code of an argumentative form. In *Teletheory* I used Barthes to show that the codes he found in narrative have their exact equivalents in argumentative exposition: enigmas are to plots what problems are to arguments. In *Heuretics* I demonstrated the inclusion of my mystory into a narrative (*Beau Geste*), but I did not demonstrate the companion possibility, at least not explicitly: the attachment of a mystory to an argument. "The X Tables" will take up this further development of chorography. In both cases, the premise is that what makes a reader want to write is the recognition that the enigmas and problems of narratives and arguments are displacements of mystories. Or rather, that a map to one's inner coherence (the structure of one's attention) becomes legible only through its inscription within the available discursive practices. The sharp distinction between concept and myth, between logic and dreamwork, that was necessary in print is dispensable in hypermedia.

My excuse for talking in this abstract way about works-in-progress is that projects such as this are what motivate my reading. Mystory as a research method works in this way: why am I researching the status of *The Tempest* in postcolonial theory and art? Because of the *miranda* puncept. I should have

known that Shakespeare would be relevant for me, having produced a decade ago a videotape for Paper Tiger Television in which I "proved" that the meaning of *Hamlet* is the Devil's Millhopper sinkhole, a geological wonder just outside the city limits of Gainesville, Florida. How do you attach the heuretic code to an argument? The premise of the method is that in electracy (electronic literacy) the emotional features of argumentation acquire new prominence, while *logos* or the devices of demonstrative proof are subordinated. The chorographer locates a central emotional appeal in argument and attaches to it — replaces it with — a mood generated by the chorographer's mystory. In my case, this mood or state of mind is *saudade*. The experiment is to explore the adequacy of *saudade* as the external name for this interior feeling constituting my mood, my attunement to Being (as Heidegger might put it).

Consider some of the features of this experiment: I have no experience of samba. Or rather, my experience is entirely mediated by mass and popular art. The point is precisely to deconstruct this opposition between concept and experience, having in mind the movement away from expert knowledge and toward the attempt to embody expertise within a vernacular practice. I have no experience of *différance*, either, but I think with it just the same. My *saudade* is not that of a Brazilian (the Marina Trench in the story is not that of the oceanographer). The attempt occurs on dangerous ground, mined with the paradoxes of cultural politics. The rationale for taking the risks comes from the need for a postcolonial cross-cultural internet/interface, for a discourse capable of global comprehension. I have characterized this discourse elsewhere as "cyberpidgin." It involves people from different cultures learning the states of mind available to their counterparts — precisely those states that differentiate one group from another, which may be learned first aesthetically (for aesthetics is the part of a practice that is transferable). The history of primitivism in the avant-garde provides a valuable lesson in this matter of the transferability of states of mind. "Primitivism" — now understood as racism-lite because it simply inverts the valuation of the stereotypes — still has much to teach us as a relay.

My approach to this problematic is to collect an archive that considers the difficulty from both the hermeneutic and creative sides, which shows that the artists have tended to embrace what the interpreters have condemned. A mediating anthology is *Symposium of the Whole: A Range of Discourse Toward an Ethnopoetics*, edited by Jerome and Diane Rothenberg. Perhaps the prototype in this context is the famous essay on "The Duende" by Federico Garcia Lorca. Because of Lorca, duende is a part of my cognitive map of reality. Any number of concepts naming states of mind unfamiliar to dominant Western culture are in circulation. The film *Koyaanisqatsi* popularized the Hopi notion of "nature out of balance" and applied it to modern industrial forms of life. The Zen concept of *mu* or "no-mind, no-thing," has entered our culture through the work of the beat poets, among others. This exchange of culture-specific states of mind is a fundamental part of the history of civilization. Zen in America or Elvis in Japan: these are inventions (heuretics is the logic of inventions of this sort) whose design has to become part of our vernacular. Chorography is a method for bringing this phenomenon into pedagogy and the discourse of learning in general.

Poets and artists have an important role to play, as they have always had, in the growth of language and culture. How many words did Shakespeare invent? Lorca's relation to Gypsies, or Picasso's to Africans, might be reframed in terms of translation or mediation rather than in terms of the artist-hero of primitivism (the colonialist aspect of the cultural appropriation that rightly has been called into question). The vanguard experiments must now be extracted from their institutional entanglements in the arts and generalized into a quotidian amateur attitude capable of supporting a global internet conversation across civilizations. Some of the most important parties to this conversation have already gathered in the virtual space of *The Tempest*. The "X" of "The X Tables" marks this spot.