

The poetics of quotation : grammar and pragmatics of an intertextual phenomenon

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The Poetics of Quotation

Grammar and Pragmatics of an Intertextual Phenomenon

0. Intertextuality and Quotation

Texts are generated and analyzed according to categories and rules which are codified in textual theories such as grammars, rhetorics and poetics. These theories refer throughout to single texts or classes of texts without, however, being applicable to the interrelations between texts or classes of texts. Such an obvious deficiency necessitates categorial and terminological innovations – desiderata that have long been neglected by scholarship. During the past years, however, a radical change has taken place. «Intertextuality» is now the latest fashion in critical theory. Julia KRISTEVA (1967), the inventor of the term, may be regarded as its initiator, and the Russian literary and cultural critic Mikhail BAKHTIN whom she rediscovered, as its originator. In the wake of the Bakhtin Renaissance numerous books and articles on intertextuality have been published in Western Europe and North America (COMPAGNON 1979, RIFFATERRE 1980, GENETTE 1982) and their number is still increasing. For those theoreticians who want to keep abreast of the most recent critical development the obligation of becoming «intertextualists» seems almost unavoidable.

For all the enthusiasm that these scholars show towards their task, they are not infrequently oblivious of the fact that the rudiments of a poetics of intertextuality have long existed. These can be found in the *imitatio auctorum* concept of classical poetics as well as in the diverse methodological approaches of comparative criticism. Still, the intertextual approach undoubtedly marks progress in two respects: 1. The notion of a «dialogue of texts» (BAKHTIN) makes literary criticism abandon its positivistic stance of textual derivation and sharpens the perception for the manifold relations that link one text to another. 2. These intertextual relations can be systematized in much more differentiated paradigms than would have been possible within the limited derivational view. Nevertheless, it is evident that these advances imply dangers as well. For, on the one hand, scholars might be tempted to interrelate texts arbitrarily without any other legitimation than mere intuition. On the other hand, a danger arises from the ambition to classify intertextual relations as exhaustively as possible – an enterprise which, as Gérard GENETTE's *Palimpsestes* (1982) demonstrates, can end in terminological scholasticism. A poetics of quotation, which will be attempted here, may profit from the issues of the intertextuality debate and at the same time avoid its errors.

The following outline is split into a grammatical and a pragmatic part, the relation between the two being that of *langue* and *parole*, of competence and performance. The grammar of the quotation describes the intertextual rules of its constitution, whereas the pragmatics considers the factors involved in the process of quotational communication.

1. The Grammar of Quotation

1.1 A grammar of quotation must take into account the following basic structural elements:

1. the quotation text (T₁),
i.e. the text in which the quotation occurs (=target text);
2. the pre-text (T₂),
i.e. the text from which the quotation is taken (=source text);
3. the quotation proper (Q).

These elements require a detailed analysis, the guiding principles of which will be the quantity, quality, distribution, frequency, code, genre and markers of quotations. The focus of the present investigation will be the verbal quotation occurring in verbal texts.

A quotation reveals several unmistakable characteristics which distinguish it as such. Its most obvious feature probably is intertextual repetition: a pre-text is reproduced in a subsequent text. Another feature of the quotation is its segmental character, for, as a rule, the pre-text is not reproduced entirely, but only partially, as *pars pro toto*. It follows, thirdly, that the quotation is essentially never self-sufficient, but represents a derivative textual segment. As such it, fourthly, does not constitute an organic part of the text, but a removable alien element, or, to put it differently, an *improprie*-segment replacing a hypothetical *proprie*-segment. To sum up these features in a provisional DEFINITION: A quotation repeats a segment derived from a pre-text within a subsequent text, where it replaces a *proprie*-segment.

1.2 With regard to QUANTITY, quotations show a great variability. They usually consist of morphological or syntactic units, include more rarely larger sections of texts, or, in an exceptional case, even the complete pre-text. Some titles of well-known literary works contain word or sentence quotations: John Barth's *The Sot-Weed Factor* repeats the title of a satirical poem by Ebenezer Cooke, Aldous Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza* refers to a segment of a line from John Milton's *Samson Agonistes* (41), and Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* quotes a line from *Hamlet*

(V.2.376). More extensive textual segments are reproduced in Ulrich Plenzdorf's *Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.* which quotes Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*.

1.3 So far we have tacitly assumed that while passing from the original to the target text quotations remain unchanged. This assumption, however, requires some modifications. It is true that scientific or judicial texts should quote as accurately as possible, i.e. without altering the pre-text. Poetic texts, on the contrary, show their specific nature in that they do not integrate prefabricated textual elements without alterations, but rather reshape them and supply them with new meanings. For this reason, it is necessary to examine the quotation with respect to its QUALITY. To do so requires the following distinction. The form we usually call quotation enjoys a twofold existence, on the one hand as a segment of the pre-text $T_2 (= Q_2)$, on the other as a segment of the quotation text $T_1 (= Q_1)$. $Q_1 = Q_2$ signifies intertextual identity, $Q_1 \neq Q_2$ intertextual deviation. Intertextual deviations, like *intratextual* deviations, can be described in a secondary grammar. Two levels have to be distinguished here: expression and content, or, to use a different terminology, surface and deep structure.

1.3.1 The SURFACE STRUCTURE of Q_1 - Q_2 deviations can be described in terms of transformations. These are basically identical with the types of transformations used in stylistic theory and generative transformational grammar, the only difference being that their present field of application is defined in intertextual terms. The respective transformations are addition, subtraction, substitution, permutation, and repetition (cf. PLETT 1979, 143-149). They refer to linguistic units of varying length: phonological or morphological, syntactic or textual ones. An example taken from Ezra Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* may illustrate the transformational variations of a given pre-text. The quotation text in question comprises the two lines

Died some, pro patria,
non «dulce» non et «decor»,

which split up and rearrange Horace's well-known pre-text line

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori (*carm.* III.2.12).

Pound's lines illustrate the following intertextual operations: subtraction of the Latin verbal phrase «est [. . .] mori» and its substitution by the English verb «died», subtraction of the terminal morpheme {-um} in «decorum», syntactic permutation of the pre-text, addition and repetition of the

negation «non» missing in Horace. These operations involve morphological and syntactic text units. An intersegmental graphemic addition is effected by the inverted commas. Reviewing these rather complex transformational procedures, one realizes that their results – the quotations – may be designated by classical rhetorical nomenclatures, e.g. ellipsis, apocope, anastrophe. These rhetorical figures, then, do not indicate deviations *within* a text, but such as exist *between* texts or, more precisely, between Q₂ as part of a pre-text and Q₁ as part of a quotation text. These findings demonstrate the need for an intertextual rhetoric which should be developed in addition to the classical model.

1.3.2 An approach to the aspects of the intertextual DEEP STRUCTURE of quotations allows a comparison to rhetoric as well. The procedure of quoting resembles that of tropification, since the resulting text always lends itself to two interpretations, namely a literal and a non-literal one. For this reason a quotation text can be regarded as twice encoded or «overcoded» (ECO 1976, 133–135), since it admits of a *proprie* as well as of one or more *improprie* readings. The title of G. B. Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, for instance, refers in its literal (primary) sense directly to the events of the play, whereas its additional (secondary) sense derives from the fact that it is also a (translated) quotation of the initial line of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Thus, as a general rule, a quotation does not only include a single (isotopic) but two or more (pluri-isotopic) levels of meaning that need to be interrelated by the recipient. This interrelationship, or, to use BAKHTIN's term, this «dialogue» extends well beyond the quoted element and covers its primary and secondary contexts as well. Whereas the author of a scientific discourse endeavours to avoid the semantic blurrings, like connotations and associations, inherent in such a dialogue, the literary author will use quotations with just that intention. His aims will be: accumulation of meanings, ambiguity, polysemy. The more quotations are encoded in a poetical text, the more complex will be its intertextual deep structure, the more polyphonic the textual dialogue. This operation, however, meets its limits, when an excessive accumulation of quotations obstructs any definite formation of sense. In this case the semantemes invalidate each other. What remains is the material quality of quotational signs and structures.

1.4 In addition to quantity and quality two further criteria are relevant for the structure of the quotation: distribution and frequency. These are characteristics of the quotation which, when taken by themselves, seem relatively simple, but develop a high degree of complexity, when correlated with other features. As both distribution and frequency have often implicitly been referred to in the present investigation, they will be treated

only briefly here. The DISTRIBUTION of the quotation can be described with reference to the most prominent positions of the quotation text: beginning, end, middle. The initial position is identical with the title, the motto or the first sentence, the final position can be a concluding aphorism. That these structural positions, when furnished with quotations, are important for the understanding of the entire work, is illustrated by T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, where title, motto and concluding formula represent quotations (pre-texts: Malory, Petronius, the Upanishads). The middle position in a text (whatever this may be) allows of such a broad range of quotational variants that it is pointless here to go into further details.

1.5 If only few quotations occur within a text, their impact on its structure and meaning is comparatively insignificant. In this case the determining influence of the quotational context proves stronger than that of the quotations themselves. The situation, however, changes, when the pre-text interpolations increase in FREQUENCY. In that case the influence of the context diminishes in proportion. The final stage in such a development is reached with a text completely compounded of quotations. At this point a context in the sense of an original creation no longer exists. Its part is taken over by the quotations preceding and following each quotation. As there is a multiplication of quotations, so there is also a multiplication of contexts. The structural result of this procedure can be termed collage, the procedure itself montage (cf. KLÖTZ 1976). As not every collage or montage is based on quotations, it seems appropriate to establish the «quotational collage» and the «quotational montage» as subcategorizations of those more general terms. A «quotational montage» makes exclusive use of prefabricated textual elements of which it forms a specific structural arrangement – called «quotational collage». Any employment of non-quotational elements entails a modification of these categories.

1.6 A quotation is always embedded in two contexts: C_1 = the quotation-text context and C_2 = the pre-text context. As these contexts are *per definitionem* non-identical: $C_1 \neq C_2$, each of the two possible types of quotation:

1. $C_1 \neq C_2 / Q_1 = Q_2$ and
2. $C_1 \neq C_2 / Q_1 \neq Q_2$

means a conflict between the quotation and its new context C_1 . This conflict may be described as INTERFERENCE. To illustrate interferential phenomena it seems appropriate to select two criteria: code and genre. Whereas the former applies even to the smallest quotational unit, the latter rather concerns quotations of a larger extension.

1.6.1 An interference of CODES takes place, when quotation and context C_1 differ with regard to language, dialect, sociolect, register, spelling, prosody etc. In these cases we speak of interlingual, diatopic, diastratic, diatypic, graphemic, prosodical etc. interference. Codal interferences of the interlingual and graphemic kinds are often employed in Ezra Pound's *Cantos*, where quotations from foreign literatures are rendered in the characters of their original languages, e.g. in Greek letters or Chinese ideograms. Sometimes foreign language quotations are translated into English, sometimes characters like Chinese ideograms are reproduced in Latin letters. These are cases of «transcoding» (ECO) or, more generally speaking, of «transposition» (GENETTE). Every transcoding procedure signifies an assimilation of the quotation to its new context and hence a diminution of quotational interferences.

1.6.2 The GENRE of the quotation may either be identical with or different from that of its new context C_1 . Starting from the classical triad of poetry, drama and fiction, the resulting combinations are either a poem quoted within a poem, a play quoted within a play, and a novel quoted within a novel *or* a poem quoted within a play, a poem quoted within a novel, a play quoted within a novel etc. Generic interference can be illustrated by Thornton Wilder's quotation of Catullus's poems in his novel *The Ides of March* or by Goethe's quotation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in his novel *Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung* etc. A play composed of quotations from several interferential genres is Tom Stoppard's *Travesties* which apart from drama (O. Wilde) embodies poetry (Shakespeare), novel (J. Joyce), diary (H. Ball, N. Krupskaya), political essay, telegram, and epistle (Lenin). As is demonstrated by these specimens of generic interference, a quotation is not restricted to a segmental text reproduction, but borders on the dimension of structure reproduction. This is the domain of the classical *imitatio* concept which together with its intertextual variants (e.g. parody, travesty) provides a framework for the analysis of quotational interference.

1.7 A grammar of quotation cannot work without a system of MARKERS which indicate the occurrence of quotations within the text. These markers are of a deictic nature, for they make visible the seams between quotation and context (C_1). There are overt and covert seams, hence there exist overt and covert quotations, depending on whether the author wishes to stress or to disguise the interference of «frame» and «inset» (STERNBERG 1982). The number and kind of textual signals vary accordingly. Provided a scale of decreasing distinctness is set up, quotation markers are either explicit, implicit or simply non-existent. Misleading or pseudo-markers constitute a special class that modifies the first and second categories.

1.7.1 EXPLICIT markers indicate a quotation directly, either by a performative verb like «I quote» or a standardized formula like «quote»- «unquote» or even by naming the source directly, as in James Joyce's *Ulysses*:

... If youth but knew. But what does Shakespeare say?

Put but money in thy purse.

- Iago, Stephen murmured.

As opposed to these intratextual markers, notes, marginal glosses, source indices, prefaces and postscripts as well as commentaries are located outside the text proper. If these are jointly published with the text, maybe even as an integral part of it, they gain the status of a subtext.

1.7.2 IMPLICIT markers are either features inherent in or added to the quotation. As features added, they may appear on the phonological level as pauses before and after the quotation or on the graphemic level as inverted commas, colons, italics or empty spaces. They are, however, ambiguous in so far as they do not only signal quotations but other textual features as well (for instance, inverted commas also signal irony). As features inherent in the quotation itself implicit markers become effective only in such cases when a codal interference exists between the quotation and its context. In spite of this restriction, however, an even stronger ambivalence can be imputed to this type of implicit markers. For differences of the kind described may also refer to non-quotational characteristics of poetical texts, when, for instance, a play includes speakers of dialects or foreign languages such as the Welshman Fluellen in Shakespeare's *Henry V* or the French lieutenant Riccaut de la Marlinière in Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm*.

1.7.3 Because of the ambiguous nature of implicit quotation markers, the explicit ones alone seem suited to indicate a quotation in a reliable manner. But even they have to be considered with caution, for the commentary may be a pseudo-commentary, and the quotation marked as such may turn out a pseudo-quotation. Consequently, it is up to the recipient's «quotation competence» to decide whether or not a quotation is a quotation. The quotation competence is especially challenged when a text lacks both explicit and implicit quotation markers. In this case the quotational character of a linguistic segment only emerges on the basis of a «pragmatic presupposition» (CULLER 1976), which, besides the communicating individual, includes the concrete evidence of the pre-text as well. A quotation, whose source cannot be verified, is none – unless it is a pseudo-quotation.

2. The Pragmatics of Quotation

The remarks made in the first part have led the argument from grammar to pragmatics. In the following exploration, pragmatics signifies the communication of quotations. This includes manifold factors: sender, receiver, code, place, time, medium, function etc. For the sake of simplicity, these factors will be subsumed under three central aspects: 1. the *sender* as point of departure for functional modes of quotations, 2. the *receiver* (recipient) as point of departure for perceptual modes of quotations, 3. the *norm* as point of departure for evaluative modes of quotations. Although these aspects do not cover the pragmatics of quotation entirely, they are suited to illuminate its essential features.

2.1 If a SENDER, i.e. a speaker or writer, makes use of a quotation, he does so not just arbitrarily but with certain intentions. These intentions are in their turn modified by the conventions of the chosen communicative situation. As there are more or less conventionalized communicative situations, it follows that there are more or less conventionalized quotational functions, too. Stefan MORAWSKI (1970) utilized this insight in his typology of quotational functions which he outlines in terms of a scale of decreasing normative forces. He distinguishes three functions of the quotation: an authoritative, an erudite, and an ornamental one. These functional types are evidently realized in non-literary texts but they unquestionably occur in literary texts as well. The following discussion will begin with MORAWSKI's typology and then proceed to delineate a few functional aspects of the poetic quotation.

2.1.1 The AUTHORITATIVE QUOTATION occurs in communicative situations that impose on the sender an obligation to quote. Such communicative situations are closely attached to social institutions; hence the quotation act assumes a ritualized character. Illustrative examples are sacral and legal proceedings, where priests and preachers, judges and lawyers endorse their reasoning by quotations from the Bible or the Law, respectively. Within their scope of validity, the authority claimed for such books admits of no doubts about their legitimacy. They maintain the status of «holy books», whether it be the Bible or the Koran, the Corpus Iuris Civilis or the Civil Code, or, to venture into the field of political doctrine, the works of Marx, Engels and Mao-Tsetung (hence the term «Mao Bible»). Consequently, every subsequent reference text (e.g. Biblical commentaries) and every quotation taken from them is subject to a very narrow range of application, usually one of an exegetical character. When a quotation in its claim to authority is not questioned at all, its function may also be regarded as being «ideological».

2.1.2 The ERUDITE QUOTATION mainly occurs in scientific texts that refer to other scientific texts. Like the theological quotation, it may be used to rely on the authority of incontestable knowledge. It differs, however, from the authoritative quotation in so far as it may question its validity as well. Whereas the authoritative quotation demands an affirmative contextualization, the erudite quotation is open to a discussion of the pros and cons. It allows of more than one point of view, even of its refutation. As for the plurality of functions it is likely to adopt, this quotation may also be termed «argumentative».

2.1.3 The ORNAMENTAL QUOTATION is even less subordinate to the normative forces of a communicative situation. Its spectrum of application is broad, for it includes numerous kinds of occasional discourse: letters, advertisements, ceremonial addresses, obituaries, feuilletons, essays. If in these texts the ornamental quotations are obliterated altogether, the communicative act does not fail, since the basic information is preserved. This is due to the fact that ornamental quotations only serve as decorative embellishments added to the substance of a text. Hence the functional relation between text and quotation undergoes a decisive change: «Whereas in the case of the authoritative function the text serves the quotation, here the arrangement is the reverse» (MORAWSKI 1970, 696). Being an aesthetic stimulus for the recipient's delight, the ornamental quotation shows the closest affinity to the poetic quotation. In this respect it differs remarkably from the ideological sway of the authoritative quotation and the persuasive force of the erudite quotation.

2.1.4 As compared to the non-poetic types of quotation, the POETIC QUOTATION is characterized by its lack of an immediate practical purpose. Such a purpose can, however, be achieved, when a politician, a journalist or a salesman employs a poetic quotation in a non-poetic text. In this case the poetic quotation is de-poeticized, i.e. divested of its autotelic function and invested with the practical function of the respective quotation context. On the other hand, a reversal of this procedure takes place when a non-poetic quotation is inserted in a poetic discourse. In that case the quotation is poeticized, i.e. released from the constraints of an immediate practical usefulness and transferred to a state of «purposiveness without purpose» which causes «disinterested satisfaction» (KANT). Instances of this method are to be found in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* which contains quotations from treatises of medicine (Robert Burton) and philosophy (John Locke) and even from a mediaeval formula of excommunication (Bishop Ernulphus of Rochester) (cf. MEYER 1968, 72–93). A modern development are the «found poems» of the Canadian author John Robert Colombo consisting entirely of quotations from non-

literary texts such as newspaper reports, political speeches, dictionary entries etc. Both the poeticizing and the de-poeticizing of a quotation represent functional shifts that are conditioned by the ruling influence of the quotation context. They prove superfluous, when the quotation and its context fulfil the same function, either a poetic or a non-poetic one. The result is a functional paradigm of four categories (Figure I):

Figure I

	Context 1	Context 2	Quotation
a	non-poetic	non-poetic	non-poetic
b	non-poetic	poetic	de-poeticized
c	poetic	non-poetic	poeticized
d	poetic	poetic	poetic

Even though, from a functional point of view, all these categories admit of further subdivisions, only category d will be singled out for a closer examination: a poetic quotation occurring in a poetic context.

The author who re-employs fragments from poetic (pre-)texts in his own poetic text does so with certain intentions. Any statement of a general nature is, however, difficult, since it means a curtailment of possible alternatives. A negative common denominator could be that the author's primary purpose is not to bring his audience to an immediate confrontation with reality, but only with mirrors of reality, i.e. literature – sometimes more sometimes less, dependig on the amount of quotations. He withdraws, to use Fredric JAMESON's (1972) well-known book-title, into the «prison-house of language», and he tries to take his reader along on the same aesthetic exploration. Hence literary texts with a high quotation frequency embody the following paradox: The reality of literature made up of literature is – literature. There is no better illustration of this than the exceptional case of a quotation-within-a-quotation in a poetic text (cf. SMIRNOV 1983) which denotes a fictional reality thrice removed from factual reality: reality (r) ← poetic text (r1) ← quotation I (r2) ← quotation II (r3).

2.2 The RECEIVER, i.e. the listener or reader, who comes across a quotation text, may either notice the quotations or he may not. If he overlooks them, the text misses its purpose which consists in opening up dialogues between pre-texts and quotation texts. The culprit for such an aesthetic failure cannot easily be identified. Part of the responsibility lies with the author who should feel obliged to supply the quotations with markers in such a way that their twofold encoding is clearly made apparent. In his

book *Literary Quotation and Allusion* E. E. KELLETT (1969, 3) writes to this effect:

Here is a man who steals, and boasts of his thefts: he covers his walls with paintings, and openly proclaims they are taken from a National Gallery. He is not like the Spartan boy who stole and gained glory if undetected: he *desires* to be detected, and deliberately leaves clues to guide his pursuers to their prey.

Authors like James Joyce and Arno Schmidt, however, do not always adhere to this maxim, but conceal their quotations so carefully that hosts of books and articles have been written on Joyce and, in the case of Schmidt, a «deciphering syndicate» has been endeavouring for years to verify even remote quotations and allusions in his novels. Umberto Eco (1984, 45) describes the process of concealing quotations during the composition of his novel *Il nome della rosa* as follows:

In fact, I had dozens and dozens of file cards with all sorts of texts, and sometimes pages of books, photocopies – countless, far more than I used. But when I wrote the scene, I wrote it all at one sitting (I polished it later, as if to cover it with a uniform finish, so the seams would be less visible.) So, as I was writing, I had at my elbow all the texts, flung in no order: and my eye would fall first on this one and then on that, as I copied out a passage, immediately linking it to another.

Literature of this kind has a *poeta doctus* as its author and requires a *litteratus doctus* as its recipient.

For this reason, both must be provided with a sufficient knowledge of literary history. This knowledge is stored in three types of memory depositories which mark three stages in the progress of civilization: 1. individual, 2. printed, and 3. electronic. Individual memory forms the basis of the tradition of oral literature in preliterate societies. With the advent of the Gutenberg era individual memory was supplemented though not superseded by printed memory (written memory being just an intermediate stage in the development) (cf. COMPAGNON 1979, 233–356; ONG 1982). This type of memory claims the advantage of being extrapersonal and hence susceptible to a larger amount of literary experience. The printed quotation storehouses were called Commonplace Books, *Thesauri*, *Collectanea*, *Polyanthea*; their history can be traced up to Büchmann's *Geflügelte Worte* and *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. The first successful author in this field was Erasmus; his *Adagia*, *Apophthegmata* and *Parabola*e were among the bestsellers of their century. In the electronic age the data banks of computers take over the part of the printed information holders. They provide mankind with the prospect of an almost infinite enlargement of

their collective (quotational) memory. This development, however, does not make the individual memory superfluous, for it still represents the only instrument of decoding quotations in oral communication.

The reception of quotation texts does not proceed evenly but is retarded again and again by «quotation thresholds». Accordingly, quotations constitute reception obstacles which impede the process of text communication. The seams between the quotation and its context do not only endanger the homogeneity of the literary structure, but also the unity of perception. The perception is diverted by something alien and unexpected which requires integration. Put in a simple scheme, the reception of quotations proceeds in three stages:

- Stage 1: Disintegration of the perceptual continuum (quotation context) by the intrusion of an alien element (quotation);
- Stage 2: Verification (and interpretation) of the alien element (quotation) by a digression into «text archaeology» (pre-text);
- Stage 3: Reintegration of the alien element (quotation) and resumption of the perceptual continuum (quotation context) on an advanced (enriched) level of awareness.

If the quotation remains unnoticed, this sequence of perceptual stages is not put into operation at all. If the quotation is not verified, stages 2 and 3 are not accomplished. If the quotation cannot be integrated in the text, stage 3 has to be dismissed. In the two latter cases the process of poetic perception comes to a halt in the stage of alienation. The disruption of the communicative process leaves the quotation text in a condition of fragmentation that no longer deserves the Aristotelian epithet of «*hèn kai hólon*». The unity of the work of art then ceases to exist. Such a failure may even not be due to the recipient's perceptual incapacity but sometimes concurs with the author's artistic intentions.

2.3 The third pragmatic aspect, the NORM, rules the interplay between the quotation and its context. The norm concept involves the following features: valency, i.e. a spectrum of possible attitudes; conventionality, i.e. a tacit or outspoken social agreement on the acceptability of such attitudes; and historicity, i.e. the time-bound relativity of values and conventions. These characteristics all contribute to the transferring of the abstract quotation competence into the concrete quotation performance.

2.3.1 If we mark the terminal points on a scale of VALUES as positive (+) and negative (-), we obtain the following choices in the relationship between the quotation and its context (Figure II):

Figure II

		1)	2)	3)	4)
I	quotation (Q)	+	+	-	-
II	context (C ₁)	+	-	+	-

For the present occasion the first and fourth choices prove rather insignificant, since the pre-text segment, when entering the quotation text, is in harmony with its new context, be it positive or negative. Choices 2) and 3), however, deserve our special attention, since they signal a conflict of values. In both cases the recontextualization of a pre-text segment entails its semantic inversion. In 2) this means a negative, in 3) a positive reevaluation. Such shifts are possible because the context determines the quotation. Both 2) and 3) represent instances of an intertextual irony: the quotation contains two opposite meanings at the same time, one derived from C₂ and the other from C₁. A brief example of an intertextual irony is the title of T. S. Eliot's «Aristophanic melodrama» *Sweeney Agonistes*. By means of a substitutional transformation Eliot's title changes the biblical hero of Milton's play *Samson Agonistes* into a dubious creature of the modern demi-monde. Accordingly, the mythical pre-text is subjected to a negative and the modern (con-)text to a positive reevaluation. The quotation itself contains both contradictory values – hence it represents the nucleus of an intertextual irony.

2.3.2 Like the text of which it forms a part, the quotation is subject to certain CONVENTIONS. In classical terminology, conformity with an established convention is called *decorum* (or *aptum*), its violation *indecorum* (or *inaptum*). *Decorum* (Engl. «appropriateness») is a relational term. It links the factors that are involved in the communicative act to each other: sender, receiver, code, subject, time, place etc. – with the aim of ensuring its success. This tenet holds true for social and poetic communication alike. From these presuppositions three types of quotation can be derived: one of *decorum*, one of *indecorum* and one belonging to neither of these categories. Whereas the former two have attracted the scholars' attention in a series of author and period studies, the third category – the «anarchical» quotation – is still comparatively neglected. Every investigation of this kind has to take account of the historical conventions dominating the quotations and their new contexts.

2.3.3 In the course of literary HISTORY, the potential normative conflict between quotation and context has given rise to specific literary forms. These have only been possible since the time when conventions became

obsolete and could therefore be called in question. Parody and travesty are such forms of literature which invert the norm of generic conventions. Parody transposes «base» topics, persons, actions, places and times into a «high» style, whereas travesty transposes «high» topics, persons, places and times into a «low» style. The same procedure that makes parody and travesty, as literary forms, invert the genre code of the heroic epic can also be applied to a single text and a single text segment, the quotation.

If texts become so well known that they develop into storehouses of quotations, the user of these quotations may easily lose sight of their original contexts. The quotations then become autonomous language units and assume the status of *adagia* and *aphorisms*. That has been happening to quotations for centuries. The result very often is that being devoid of their pre-texts they become worn out like «dead metaphors». For this reason they have to be revitalized by specific («alienating») techniques in order to regain their semantic vigour. Nevertheless the quotation text will lack much of the friction that originates from a collision of C₁ and C₂ (now no longer existing). The decline in spontaneity may even affect a pre-text not yet forgotten as is testified by Hamlet's soliloquy beginning with the line «To be or not to be that is the question». The result is that this speech belongs to the texts most often parodied in world literature. Hence there is great danger that the humorization encroaches on the source of the quotation as well. Meaninglessness and ridicule – these are the tributes that a quotation frequently has to pay for its fame.

3. Periods of Quotation Literature

Only when there is literature *for* quotations, is there also literature made *of* quotations. – This truism has some sense in so far as it makes plain that the art of quotation presupposes the existence of a literary tradition. This is especially true of fictitious quotations, for they are only made possible by an existing practice of quoting in literature. Whoever resorts to prefabricated materials instead of original inventions, whoever copies the writings of others instead of writing himself, invites the reproach of being lazy, of lacking imagination, even of committing plagiarism. Charges of this kind were not only brought against authors of scientific studies, but against writers as well. Apart from cases of thoroughly justified criticism, the latter have often suffered the fate of total misjudgment. For the fact was overlooked that there are different ways in which the poet may see himself. One author conceives of himself as an original genius relying en-

tirely on his imagination, whereas the other views himself as a literary engineer combining prefabricated materials. The first type of author denies, the second practises intertextuality. This does not mean, however, that the former's literary products are more precious than the latter's. The poetics of quotation requires its own kind of originality and variety which equals that of the aesthetics of genius. Irrespective of their differences, the prerequisite for both is a highly developed sense of literary artistry.

Quotations have existed in literature at almost all times. Still, it can be observed that certain historical periods are particularly susceptible to quoting. This is especially true for the late stages of artistic developments, when artistic forms are used up in such a way that their fragments can only be treated in a playful manner. The 20th century has already witnessed two such phases: modernism and postmodernism. In the modernist period, the phenomenon of quotation emerges in every field of art: literature (Eliot, Joyce, Döblin), art (Picasso, Braque, Schwitters), music (Stravinsky, Mahler, R. Strauss), photography (Hausmann, Höch, Heartfield) etc., even if the quotation is conceived in different ways, according to the respective character of its medium. Postmodernism actually shows a flood of quotational works of art even in film and architecture, the end of which cannot yet be foreseen. John BARTH, author of intertextual stories and novels, made a speech on the «Literature of Exhaustion» (1982, ¹1967) thereby providing a negative cue for its evaluation. The problem under consideration is: Can quotational literature be equated with decadent literature? Are we dealing with Alexandrianism, mere epigonality here? In his book *Statt einer Literaturgeschichte*, Walter JENS (1978, 13) made some apt remarks on the historicity and value of a quotation culture:

In einer Spätkultur wird die Welt überschaubar. Man ordnet und sammelt, sucht nach Vergleichen und findet überall Analogien. Der Blick gleitet nach rückwärts; der Dichter zitiert, zieht Vergangenes, ironisch gebrochen, noch einmal ans Licht, parodiert die Stile der Jahrtausende, wiederholt und fixiert, bemüht sich um Repräsentation und zeigt das schon Vergessene in neuer Beleuchtung. Alexandrien ist das Eldorado der Wiederentdeckung, der Hellenismus die hohe Zeit posthumer Nekrologe. Statt Setzungen gibt man Verweise: Amphitryon 38, Ulysses, die Iden des März. Wenn die Gegenwart keinen Schatten mehr wirft, braucht man, um die eigene Situation zu bestimmen, die Silhouette des Perfekts; wenn es den Stil nicht mehr gibt, muß man die Stile beherrschen: auch Zitat und Montage sind Künste, und das Erbe fruchtbar zu machen, erscheint uns als ein Metier, das aller Ehren wert ist.

There is almost nothing to be added to this justification of a literature that does not refer to life but rather to itself. In present-day avantgarde literature *réécriture* still dominates *écriture*, the *poeta philologus* the *vates*,

the «quotationist» (MILTON) the author who is subject to the «anxiety of influence» (BLOOM). The reversal of this tendency is only a matter of time.

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