

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Comparative criticism

9

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

BRITISH COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION

President: Professor Arthur Terry, Department of Literature, University of Essex
Secretary: Dr H. M. Klein, Comparative Literature, University of East Anglia, Norwich
Treasurer: Dr Susan Bassnett, Graduate School of Comparative Literature, University of Warwick

Executive committee

Dr Stephen Bann, Rutherford College, University of Kent, Canterbury
 Professor David Bellos, Department of French, University of Manchester
 Mrs Penny Brown, Department of Comparative Literary Studies, University of Manchester
 Dr Leon Burnett, Department of Literature, University of Essex
 Mrs Eva Fox-Gál, Department of English and Related Literature, University of York
 Dr Theo Hermans, Department of Dutch, University College, London
 Dr Elinor Shaffer, Comparative Literature, University of East Anglia, Norwich
 Dr Marganita Stocker, Department of English, University of Liverpool

Journal editor: Elinor Shaffer

Editorial assistant: Mark Ogden

Bibliography editor: Joseph Th. Leerssen

Editorial Board

Stephen Bann (Kent)	Glyn Tegai Hughes (Wales)
John Bayley (Oxford)	Frank Kermode (Cambridge)
Malcolm Bradbury (Norwich)	J. W. McFarlane (Norwich)
Peter France (Edinburgh)	John Montague (Cork)
Henry Gifford (Bristol)	G. Printz-Páhlson (Cambridge)
George Gömöri (Cambridge)	J. P. Stern (London)
Michael Hamburger	Arthur Terry (Essex)
	R. A. Wisbey (London)

International Editorial Board

European editor: George Steiner (Geneva)
 Christine Brooke-Rose (Paris)
 Jonathan Culler (Cornell)
 Northrop Frye (Toronto)
 Geoffrey Hartman (Yale)
 Wolfgang Iser (Constance)
 Harry Levin (Harvard)
 Thomas McFarland (Princeton)
 René Wellek (Yale)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Comparative criticism

An annual journal

9

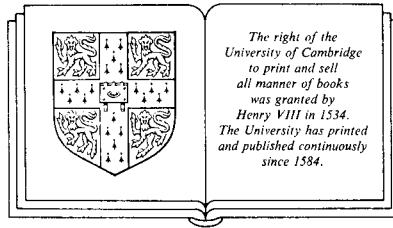
Edited by

E. S. SHAFFER

READER IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND EUROPEAN HISTORY

UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge

New York New Rochelle Melbourne Sydney

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9
Edited by E. S. Shaffer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521341721

© Cambridge University Press 1987

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1987

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-34172-1 hardback

Transferred to digital printing 2007

CONTENTS

<i>List of illustrations</i>	page vii
<i>List of contributors</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>Frontispiece</i>	xii
<i>Editor's introduction: 'Monsters methodiz'd': translating the Other</i>	xiii

Part I Cultural perceptions and literary values

PARTHA MITTER Can we ever understand alien cultures?	3
VICTOR TURNER Are there universals of performance?, with an introduction by Barbara Babcock, "The Arts and all things common": Victor Turner's literary anthropology'	35
RICHARD GORDON Aelian's peony: the location of magic in Graeco-Roman tradition	59
GORDON BROTHERSTON Inca Faustus and Faustian Incas: two Quechua plays from vice-regal Peru	97
PETER HUGHES 'Playing with grief': Hamlet and the rituals of mourning	111
JOSEPH TH. LEERSSEN Montesquieu's corresponding images: cultural and sexual alterity in pseudo-oriental letters	135
JONATHAN HALL Heroic repression: narrative and aesthetics in Shen Fu's <i>Six Records of a Floating Life</i>	155

Part II Translations*Prize-winner in the BCLA Translation Competition 1985*

CATHARINA REGINA VON GREIFFENBERG 'Of the lashing and crowning with thorns of my best-loved Christ'. A poem from the German	
Translated by Sheenagh Pugh	175

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

FAROGH FARROKHZAD 'Rebirth'. A poem from the Persian Translated with an introduction, 'The loaded heart', by Martin Turner	183
GEORG LUKÁCS The heroic age: Hebbel to Ibsen. A chapter from <i>The Evolution of Modern Drama</i> Translated with an introduction by Stanley Mitchell, and a note on Hebbel by David Midgley	193
ERNST JANDL <i>Out of estrangement</i> : opera for speaking voices in seven scenes Translated with an introduction 'Ernst Jandl: the creative contradictions' by Michael Hamburger	237
Part III Essay reviews	
STEPHEN HEATH Theory, etc. A review of Jonathan Culler, <i>On Deconstruction</i> and Terry Eagleton, <i>Literary Theory</i>	281
NICOLE WARD JOUVE How <i>The Second Sex</i> stopped my aunt from watering the horse chestnuts, or Simone de Beauvoir and contemporary feminism	327
<i>Books and periodicals received</i>	
Compiled by Mark Ogden	335
<i>Bibliography of Comparative Literature in Britain and Ireland 1961–1965</i>	
Compiled by Joseph Th. Leerssen and Glyn Tegai Hughes	339
<i>Bibliography of Comparative Literature in Britain and Ireland 1984</i>	
Compiled by Joseph Th. Leerssen	365

ILLUSTRATIONS

A magical formula: a fourth-century love spell from Egypt	<i>frontispiece</i>
	<i>page</i>
The monster god of Calicut	11
Horned Indian gods	11
West gopura, Sri Natarāja Temple, Cidambaram	16
Colette O'Neill as <i>she</i> , Philip Voss as <i>he</i> , in the British première of Ernst Jandl's <i>Out of estrangement</i>	249
Philip Voss as <i>he</i>	255
Raad Rawi as <i>hez</i> , Philip Voss as <i>he</i> , Colette O'Neill as <i>she</i>	273
Philip Voss as <i>he</i>	277

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

BARBARA BABCOCK, Professor, Department of English, University of Arizona

GORDON BROTHERSTON, Professor, Department of Literature, University of Essex

RICHARD GORDON, Lecturer, School of Modern Languages and European History, University of East Anglia

JONATHAN HALL, Lecturer, Department of English Studies and Comparative Literature, University of Hong Kong

MICHAEL HAMBURGER, Poet and translator

GLYN TEGAI HUGHES, Gregynog, University of Wales

STEPHEN HEATH, Lecturer, Faculty of English, University of Cambridge

PETER HUGHES, Professor, Englisches Seminar, University of Zürich

ERNST JANDL, Poet

JOSEPH TH. LEERSSEN, Docent Europese Studies, Universiteit van Amsterdam

DAVID MIDGLEY, Lecturer, Department of German, Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages, University of Cambridge

STANLEY MITCHELL, Translator

PARTHA MITTER, Lecturer, School of Asian and African Studies, University of Sussex; and British Academy Reader

SHEENAGH PUGH, Translator

MARTIN TURNER, Translator

ANTHONY VIVIS, Translator

NICOLE WARD JOUVE, Lecturer, Department of English and Related Literature, University of York

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, to Dr J. Harle of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and to the British Library for permission to use the illustrations ‘Horned Indian gods’, ‘Sri Natarāja Temple’, and ‘The monster god of Calicut’ respectively, which accompany the article by Partha Mitter.

Thanks are due to B. G. Teubner GmbH of Stuttgart for allowing us to reproduce the rhomboid figure, as frontispiece and in the article by Richard Gordon, and to Artisjus of Budapest for permission to publish Stanley Mitchell’s translation of ‘Hebbel und die Grundlegung der modernen Tragödie’ by Georg Lukács.

We should like to thank Hermann Luchterhand Verlag of Darmstadt for their permission to publish Michael Hamburger’s translation of Ernst Jandl’s *Aus der Fremde* and the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, for their kind help in supplying photographs from the British première in August 1985.

Finally, we are grateful to Mrs Edith Turner, the widow of the late Victor Turner, for sending us the article ‘Are there universals of performance?’ which we publish in this volume.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

α α
 β α α κ
 λ β α α κ ρ
 α λ β α α κ ρ α
 ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ
 α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ
 θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α
 α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ
 ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α
 α ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α μ
 λ α ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α μ α
 β λ α ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α μ α ρ
 α β λ α ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α μ α ρ ι
 β λ α ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α μ α ρ
 λ α ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α μ α
 α ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α μ
 ν α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ α
 α θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α χ
 θ α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ α
 α ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ μ
 ν α λ β α α κ ρ α μ
 α λ β α α κ ρ α
 λ β α α κ ρ
 β α α κ
 α α

A magical formula in the shape of a rhombus taken from a fourth-century love spell from Egypt now in Strasbourg (Greek papyrus no. 1167). See Richard Gordon, 'Aelian's peony', p. 87.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Monsters methodiz'd: translating the Other

gazelles, but of himself, he shot
Nizāmī, *Haft Payker* (*The Seven Beauties*)

The perception of the 'other' – the person, group, or nation defined as 'unlike ourselves' – as not simply unlike but *ipso facto* alien, strange, monstrous is a common event. It can, if carried out on a large scale with sufficient dogmatic conviction, become a politics of apartheid, genocide, permanent or chronic civil war, and a variety of other forms of oppression and deprivation, in many of which our 'advanced' century has matched any other period of human history. So pressing has it become to comprehend this process, not merely to those regularly defined in negative terms, but to all (for everyone is an 'other' to someone), that in recent times we have seen an immense quantity of discussion emerge on these topics. Our last volume, in considering the role of 'National myth' in shaping literary culture, and attitudes towards others' culture, was a part of this discussion. Much of it has arisen from the growing willingness, on the part of ex-colonial nations, to admit – and there have been sharp accusations – to having perpetrated a systematic misreading of other groups' characteristics on the basis of which they claimed the right to rule, judge, educate, and exploit those groups. So far has this willingness gone that the shouts of 'mea culpa' have been greeted as constituting a new and more subtle form of imperialism. To review one's errors in attributing virtue to oneself, vice or incapacity to others, may be a form of nostalgia as gratifying as recounting one's victories; indeed, it is a way of recounting them. So familiar has the discussion become that a title like 'The Hegemonic Form of Othering' in fact turns out (to one's considerable relief) to be a deliberate parody. (For this example see the Special Issue on "'Race,' Writing, and Difference', in *Critical Inquiry* (Autumn 1985), and the responses to it – of which this title is one – in the issue of a year later.) In the process of 'othering' it is now possible both to other, and to be othered. 'Translating the Otherer' is already on the horizon.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The real root of the problem, and the best statements of it, lie further back. For comparative literary studies, whose modern beginnings are coeval with the growth of historicism in the eighteenth century, Herder's view that each culture has its own contribution to make to human achievement formed the basis of a kind of 'cultural relativism' that required and enabled comparison: the highest cultures were the most distinctive, achieved the greatest degree of individuality, but precisely in that they achieved a general humanity; they are comparable because they have achieved an equal validity in the interpretation, ordering, and artistic expression of human experience. In this position there is still a residual notion of a shared humanity, however sophisticated by historical awareness. This moment of humanism has recently been reformulated in ringing fashion by E. H. Gombrich in a lecture using a line from Goethe as title: "'Sind eben alles Menschen gewesen", "They were All Human Beings – So Much is Plain": Reflections on Cultural Relativism in the Humanities', in which he expresses his profound concern at our present situation in the humanities, which arises 'from the extirpation of the notion of man from our vocabulary on the ground that, in contrast to the concepts that occur in the natural sciences, this notion does not describe anything tangible or clearly defined.' (This address was delivered to the Seventh International Congress of Germanists, and published in *Kontroversen, alte und neue, Akten des VII. Internationalen Germanisten-Kongresses Göttingen 1985* (Tübingen, 1986), 1: 16–28; it is translated in *Critical Inquiry* (Summer 1987), pp. 686–99.) But there is another more extreme interpretation of 'cultural relativism', that made by Hegel, and Gombrich takes this as epitomizing the party of inhumanity: that each culture is unique, and therefore incommensurable with others. 'Every age has such peculiar circumstances, such individual conditions that it must be interpreted, and can only be interpreted, by reference to itself', Hegel wrote in his lectures on the philosophy of history (*Werke* (Frankfurt, 1969–79), 12: 10). Yet even 'the age' does not include all contemporaries, but only those who have attained an appropriate cultural level in relation to the Hegelian 'development of the spirit'. This view – in its Marxist form relating to economic 'underdevelopment' – has become so common that we hardly notice how extraordinary an apportionment of time it is. (Wlad Godzich, Foreword, José Antonio Maravell, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. by Terry Cochran (Manchester University Press, 1986), x.)

The controversy over 'cultural relativism' was carried out in a context that especially concerns students of literature and comparatists in

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

xv

particular: that of the possibility of translation from a non-European language into a European language. Hegel and Wilhelm von Humboldt, the linguist and student of a number of non-European languages, did battle over this crucial question in the 1820s. The Romantic interest in Oriental languages and literature led to the attempt to translate the *Bhagavad-Gita* by A. W. Schlegel, a major theorist of the German Romantic movement, and the best of Shakespeare's translators. (*Bhagavad-Gita...textum recensuit, adnotationes criticas et interpretationem Latinam adjecit Augustus Guilelmus a Schlegel*, Bonn, 1823.) A detailed critique of Schlegel's translation appeared in a French journal, and von Humboldt, who had devoted considerable study to Sanskrit himself, replied in Schlegel's defence at considerable length. The discussion turned on the possibility of translating the key conceptions of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, such as Dharma, Brahma, and Yoga. Schlegel had chosen to translate not into German, but into Latin, on the grounds that Sanskrit was the classical literary language of India as Latin was of Europe; it was not a current vernacular. Moreover, as the terms had no single synonyms in Latin, Schlegel translated them by a variety of words, trying to hew as closely as possible to the meaning of the term in each particular context; thus he translated 'Yoga' as, in different places, 'exercitatio', 'applicatio', 'destinatio', 'disciplina activa', 'devotio', 'mysterium', 'facultas mystica'. Humboldt, although he held in principle that any translation could only be an approximation, tried to show how one could, by working through these nuances, gradually grasp the central concept; this he called 'Vertiefung', or a kind of progressive immersion and deepening of one's understanding. Thus through this hermeneutic process new conceptions could be brought into the target language. His 'target language' was itself a syncretic, European language, in that he availed himself of a variety of available translations and explications of individual terms from the pioneering work of the first English Sanskritists, Wilkins, Sir William Jones, and his successor Colebrooke (all of whose work on Indian mythology, literature, and legal systems underlies the philological contributions of the Schlegel brothers and Franz Bopp), and of the French terms of Langlois, as well as his own renderings into current German, in order to render Schlegel's Latin comprehensible and through it the original Sanskrit text. This is a comparatist's translation, and a comparatist's commentary, *par excellence*. For Humboldt, moreover, the *Bhagavad-Gita* was 'the only genuine philosophical poem' in world literature, and in a second paper he tried to convey the way the alien conceptions were embedded in the poem.

Hegel entered the field with a still lengthier paper addressing the

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

problem of whether alien conceptions could be understood ('Ueber die unter dem Namen Bhagavad-Gita bekannte Episode des Mahabharata von Wilhelm von Humboldt'). Hegel held to linguistic relativism, the incommensurable insularity of linguistic and cultural worlds; but in addition he asserted the superiority of the European mental world. In the last analysis, he held, the *Bhagavad-Gita* could not be understood by the Western mind because its conceptions were irrational. In his view, Indian philosophy lacked a genuine conception of mind, because it dealt with a purely abstract attitude of consciousness, an 'empty unity', without the possibility of concrete realization. While few would now embrace Hegel's terms, the philosophic objection lies deep in Western culture: as Socrates said, 'we cannot give the name of "art" to anything irrational', and the economic and technological forms of this argument are rife. "'Yoga" is a word that our language cannot possess, because the conception does not lie in our education and religion, according to Hegel. Without attempting to unravel the specifics of this controversy further (see Kurt Müller-Vollmer, 'Von der Durchdringbarkeit des wirkungsgeschichtlichen Bewußtseins: Gadamer, Hegel und die Hermeneutik Wilhelm von Humboldts', in the first ('Part I Theory') of the two imposing Festschrift volumes in honour of René Wellek, edited by Joseph P. Strelka (Peter Lang: 1985), pp. 475–97), it is clear that the major positions still available to us are represented by these two antagonistic forms of cultural relativism.

Partha Mitter's special merit – in our opening article, and in his work as a whole – is to take this broad problem and explore it through the particular case of the perception of works of art. A pupil of Gombrich, he has been able to look (in his previous book, *Much Maligned Monsters*) at the whole range of the reception of Indian art in Europe, which involved coming to grips with the complex Western misreadings of the Indian philosophy, religion, mythology reflected in temple architecture, sculpture, and paintings – those cultural artefacts that Hegel claimed were reflections of conceptions finally 'untranslatable' into Western terms. Fortunately for us, the 'other', the native speaker, may take things into his own hands, as did Mitter's great predecessor, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, born in Ceylon in 1877, associated with Tagore in the movement for Bengali nationalism, and later Curator of the Department of Asiatic Art in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, whose Selected Papers are now published in two paperback volumes, *Traditional Art and Symbolism* and *Metaphysics*, by Bollingen/Princeton University Press (a third will contain his *Life and Works* by Roger

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

xvii

Lipse). An essay like Coomaraswamy's 'The Indian Temple' shows what can be done in the translation of the other into familiar terms that restore the otherness to the familiar and establish resemblances at the heart of cultures alien to one another: his subtle and moving disquisition on the strange custom of the ritual breaking of the skull at death reveals not only the 'God-aperture' (*brahma-randhra*) in man, through which the spirit leaves at death the 'City of God within us', but the smokehole or skylight of the traditional house, and the 'oculus' of the dome in both Western and Eastern architecture (*Traditional Art*, pp. 3–10). His '*Samvega*: Aesthetic Shock' is a brilliant essay in comparative aesthetics, demonstrating the equivalent claim to rationality or intellectual power at the root of Buddhist art and the aesthetic emotion appropriate to it (*ibid.*, pp. 179–85). If we agree that the effort to 'translate the other' should be made, whether on the grounds of the Goethean humanism cited by Gombrich, or on the grounds of explicating the cultural relativists' claim of 'uniqueness', or on the grounds that even the most intractably other (however defined or 'othered') must be accepted at the table of the human race (or the animal kingdom in which the doubters of man continue to believe), then the Western misreading are (just) better than nothing; and Humboldt's view of the translation process allows for a gradual correction of misreadings, if not in any one work of translation, then as the nuances of significance of terms are collected and absorbed over time by successive generations of translators, writers, and speakers. Eventually, the word 'Yoga' is admitted to the dictionaries of Europe. In the *Shorter Oxford*, we read: 'Yoga, 1820. [Hind., Skr. *yoga* lit. union, Yoke.] In Hindu philosophy, union with the Supreme Spirit; a system of ascetic practice, abstract meditation, and mental concentration pursued as a method of obtaining this.'

How much the wiser are we for this? Hegel would say: not at all. The undeniable reception and legitimized presence of the alien word within the language does not resolve the argument. (Burchfield, we note, continues to keep *samvega*, not to mention *brahma-randhra*, beyond the pale.) But the hermeneutic method valiantly essayed by Humboldt has continued to develop. The major theorist of the time, Schleiermacher, usually accounted the originator of modern hermeneutics, was also in considerable difficulties over the Oriental case. To him the stumbling-block was not the 'irrationality' or otherwise of conceptions, but the unfeasibility of achieving the intimate knowledge of the speaker and his 'voice' within the total context of a particular life and oeuvre that, for him, genuine understanding requires. As he said:

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xviii

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

If we turn now to the distant and hazy Orient, how is it possible to think of trying to distinguish the forms of particular human beings in order to illumine their works by reference to the special way in which their inner life [*Gemüt*] developed? . . . It is only as we approach our own era and restrict ourselves to the European scene we know so well and where we all stroll, as it were, in the same hall that it seems possible to undertake this mode of treatment. . . ('On the Concept of Hermeneutics': the first Academy Address of 1829, in *Hermeneutics*, ed. H. Kimmmerle, trans. by James Duke and Jack Forstman (1977), pp. 206–7)

This aspect of hermeneutic method (which Schleiermacher calls the 'divinatory') has been attacked in recent times by Gadamer, and others – for where can we locate the 'self' that is to communicate with another 'self'? Like Gombrich arguing for 'man', Stanley Corngold in *The Fate of the Self* (Columbia University Press, 1986) has made a passionate examination of the role of misreadings of Dilthey and especially crucially of Nietzsche in the undermining of the conception of the 'self' that has been part of the erosion of humanism in recent times. But in the face of the draining of the humanist conceptions it is the other side of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics – what Schleiermacher calls the 'comparative' method – that has been stressed, that is, the general linguistic context rather than the individual life of the author. (See my essay 'The Hermeneutic Community in the *Biographia Literaria*' in *Politics, Romanticism, and the 'New Historicism'*, ed. A. Mellor, forthcoming, for a comparison of Schleiermacher's method to Coleridge's.) It may be that this gives us an opportunity to approach 'the distant and hazy Orient' as well as the distant past where biographical detail is unavailable (and indeed the present from which the 'author' has been banished) – but what if we haven't the linguistic context? It would seem that we are back with the Hegel–Humboldt opposition. In the case of the *Bhagavad-Gita* do we have much more than a trumped-up European polyglottism (though based in a once ambitious historical philology) as a linguistic context? Schleiermacher's essay on translation provided another form of solution: that translation should seek and stress the difference, rather than incorporate and acclimatize the alien element in a variety of familiar terms. In this way the 'target language' would be more radically enriched and extended. It is clear that 'cultural relativism' remains a shared theoretical position, but that the hermeneutic method as variously developed presents the possibility of a practical art whereby the interpreter (fully persuaded of the impossibility of his task) could and can continue to press forward with his approximations, like the lover on Keats's Grecian urn.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

xix

Victor Turner, the well-known British anthropologist and student of Dilthey's hermeneutics, is one of the modern heirs of the art of interpretation and translation of the other. Turner perceived the essential structure of ritual experience in the African societies he studied to be a generally applicable pattern of 'social drama' and pioneered ethnological theatre, with Richard Schechner, in America, a form understood best here perhaps through Peter Brook's production *The Ik*. He was never less than stimulating, bold, and wide-ranging as in the posthumous essay 'Are there universals of performance?' which we publish here, with an essay by Barbara Babcock interpreting his life and work for a literary audience.

Richard Gordon's probing discussion of magic pursues these vital questions, in particular, the matter of judgements of 'rational' and 'irrational', which we shall be exploring in future issues, the images of the other as they affect the criteria for the classification of disciplines themselves as rational, scientific, legitimate, central, authoritative, 'white', and correct on the one hand, or as irrational, pseudo-scientific, occult, illicit, 'black', marginal, and false on the other. This history of magic is perhaps the most illuminating possible way of opening this crucial topic, which is of intense interest to literary theorists and critics now faced with or engaged in a use of and deconstruction of disciplines other than literary in their own field.

Continuing the exploration of national myth begun in volume 8 we turn to other aspects of 'imagology', in Joseph Th. Leerssen's article on Montesquieu, the interpretation of images held by one national or cultural group to be applicable to another: in this case, both gender and national. In the imaginary harem with Montesquieu and his alter ego, Persian letters written by a non-Persian for Europeans addressed as Persians receiving the letters return us to a more familiar use of imaginary Oriental images for the critique for Europe by Europeans.

A new turn is given to European thematic material as familiar as Faust by Gordon Brotherston's treatment of the Spanish, Latin American, and Inca versions, which argues for the successful absorption by the native drama of Spanish materials, which return to Europe from their long voyage into strange waters to illuminate Goethe: a paradigm for what comparative literature studies can yield. This throws light also on the intricacies of the blending of materials from different religious universes in Goethe's *Faust*: the story of Faust's truck with the devil in its German Protestant context, yet drawing on Calderón's Catholic Counter-

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Reformation *autos*, as well as on Greek mythology, displays the historicist syncretism of the cultural humanism of Weimar.

Peter Hughes too shows how essential European cultural property can be given fresh life, as he looks at *Hamlet* in the unusual and remarkably illuminating context of mourning rituals in a variety of societies.

Jonathan Hall on Shen Fu continues his development of Bakhtin's methods begun in his earlier article, 'Falstaff, Sancho Panza, Azdak: carnival and history' in volume 7. Our first piece on Bakhtin, by Ann Shukman, in volume 2, including a translation of Bakhtin's 'Essay on the Novel', was a major addition to the literature on this important critic, who since then has received increasing attention and acclaim, while his conceptions of 'carnival' and 'polyphonic discourse' have provided fruitful results in the hands of other critics. The last section of Hall's paper opens a general question of method, and we look forward to his forthcoming work on Bakhtin in relation to Shakespeare, one section of which will appear in volume 10.

We are equally pleased to mark the centenary of the birth of György Lukács, one of the major European critics of the twentieth century, with the first translation into English of a crucial chapter from his first book, *The Evolution of Modern Drama* (1908), written in Hungarian, and only recently translated in full into German. We might have selected his exemplary chapter on Ibsen (only just dead, in 1905), but even more illuminating of the process by which Lukács was able to analyse the problematic of modern drama before to most people it had well appeared is his meditation on Hebbel, a dramatist little-known in English, despite his life-long concern with Shakespeare, whose struggles with the historical drama led into the contemporary social world of Ibsen. The importance of Hebbel for Ibsen has long been noted by Ibsen scholars. Stanley Mitchell, the translator, was among the first to introduce Lukács in this country, with his seminal translation of *The Historical Novel* (1962). This continues our series of essays on and translations from leading modern European critics still too little known in English, which began with Peter Szondi in volume 5 and continued with Ortega y Gasset in volume 6. The appearance of this important early work in English is long overdue, and I am very glad to be able to report that Stanley Mitchell has agreed to translate the whole of this penetrating and prescient book from Lukács' pre-Marxist period, to be published by the Athlone Press.

Stephen Heath examines two theoretical works that have been highly influential on the critical scene, Culler's restatement of Derrida, and Eagleton's of Marxism, and probes the failure to link theory and praxis.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

xxi

A completely different form of perception and style – and thus of criticism – is seen in Nicole Ward Jouve's brilliant essay on feminist critical literature read against her own experience as a woman and as a writer. This is a model of a kind of writing pioneered by Virginia Woolf – the conscious search for one's own voice, style and form of sentence.

Failure to overcome the distance from the other, even in full understanding of it, is seen and felt on the intimate and domestic scene even more intensely than on the international scene: in Ernst Jandl's *Aus der fremde, Out of estrangement*, an 'opera for speaking voices in seven scenes', interpreted by the poet Michael Hamburger, we have a graphic and painful expression of strangeness residing at the core of language itself. The Viennese Jandl, now past 60, is one of the most distinctive voices in European poetry: sound poet and experimentalist, dramatist in sound, and critic, he has found the best possible translator in Hamburger, sensitively demonstrating the untranslatability of the most intimate and inward sounds even of a long-shared language.

We are very pleased to announce the names of the winners of the annual British Comparative Literature Translation Prize Competition, including a share first prize, Sheenagh Pugh, for her translation of the powerful German baroque poet Catharina Regina von Greiffenberg, and John Gatt, for his translations from Guido Gozzano's *Farfalle* (Butterflies). Gatt's translation, 'Lepidoptera', will be published in volume 10. We should like to thank Professor Peter France, now retiring from the panel of judges, for his service on the panel for the Translation Prize since its inception. We are delighted to announce that the distinguished poet, translator, and critic Edwin Morgan, Emeritus Professor of the Department of English of the University of Glasgow, will join the panel, beginning with the next competition.

We are equally pleased to publish another work by last year's prize winner, Martin Turner, continuing his explorations of modern Persian poetry with his translation of Forugh Farrokhzad, a woman modernist whose emergence from Persian traditionalism took a tragic course. The poem we print here, 'Rebirth', is a major statement, of modernism, of feminism, and of an individual poet.

With this volume we bring our series of special bibliographies on the history of comparative literary studies in the UK up to 1965, within a decade of the beginning of our annual bibliographies (1975). We are extremely grateful for the continuing interest of our former Bibliography Editor, Dr Glyn Tegai Hughes, who has lent Dr Joseph Th. Leerssen his invaluable expertise and experience in compiling this bibliography.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xxii

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Its size bears eloquent witness to the immense growth in comparative literary studies in this country from the early sixties onwards.

I should like to thank Chris Lyall Grant, who has acted with great patience, fortitude, and commitment as sub-editor for this volume, even in the face of chronic illness; and Dr Mark Ogden, who has continued to carry out his indispensable work as Editorial Assistant with his usual scrupulous care and efficiency, despite his increasing commitments, first to his thesis on Hölderlin, then as Research Fellow at St Catharine's College, and now as Fellow and Director of Studies in German at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. We all continue to be indebted to Jill Walden, Controller of Production, Journals, for her expert shaping of the entire complex operation of production down to the smallest detail. We are grateful also to Dennis Forbes, Journals Director, and to the presiding genius of Michael Black, whose retirement in the summer of 1987 leaves us much the poorer, though with the hope that his own writing will benefit.

The next volumes of *Comparative Criticism* will be on the following themes: volume 10, 'Comedy', which will include major new theoretical work on a traditional topic, and essays based on the plenary and other selected papers from the BCLA Conference held at Manchester in December, 1986; volume 11, 'The future of the disciplines', concerning the present state and relations of the disciplines, especially the literary and historical disciplines, on which Stephen Bann will be a guest editor, a topic of urgent concern of all of us in the humanities, in and out of the universities; and volume 12, on 'Science and literature'. We should particularly welcome papers dealing with the rewriting of literary history to register and incorporate the history of the sciences. We are as always interested in translations of literary and critical texts, past and present, and for volumes 11 and 12 scientific texts impinging on literature. After focussing attention on relations of English and European to non-European materials in our last two volumes, volume 8, 'National myth and literary culture', and this present volume, we would welcome further submissions or suggestions relating to this aspect of our proposed themes.

The deadline for submissions is 1 March; the annual press deadline is in September; the volume normally appears in the late spring of the following year. The deadline for submissions for the next British Comparative Literature Association Translation Competition is October 1988. For details of submission, write to Dr Theo Hermans, Department

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-34172-1 - Comparative Criticism: An Annual Journal, 9

Edited by E. S. Shaffer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

xxiii

of Dutch, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT. A subscription system, as for journals, is now in effect; discounts of 35 per cent are available for individuals. All correspondence, including requests for Guidelines for Contributors, should be addressed to the Editor, *Comparative Criticism*, Cambridge University Press, Pitt Building, Cambridge CB2 1RP.

E. S. Shaffer