

Grenzgänger Seeks Reflexive Methodology

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Review Essay:

Mats Alvesson & Kaj Sköldberg (2000). Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research. London: Sage, viii + 319 pages, ISBN 0 8039 7707 7 (paperback) £ 19.99

Christiane K. Alsop (Ed.) (2001). Grenzgängerin: Bridges Between Disciplines. Eine Festschrift für Irmgard Staeuble. Heidelberg: Asanger Verlag, 315 pages, ISBN 3-89334-363-6 (paperback) DM/SFR 68,- Euro 35,-

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Abstract: *Reflexive Methodology* reviews major strands of current thought in epistemology, philosophy, social science, and interpretive methods. The book falls short in that it neither does a thorough job reviewing the literature nor does it provide method-related advice useful to students. *Grenzgängerin* constitutes a collection of essays on a broad range of topics, but which are only loosely connected if at all. Drawing on DERRIDA and the notion of a historical science of the historical subject, I attempt to practice method, something I missed in both texts. I make explicit the historical nature of my own writing and the historical nature of my subject. I make explicit intertextuality and in the process practice reflexivity in the particular way I am writing.

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1. General Introduction

This is one story. It is two stories that make one story. How can two stories be one story? In classical logic, this is an impossibility. Or, as DERRIDA (1998) framed it, an impossibility. In dialectical logic, things are different. Two can be one; a contradiction in the thing itself. The contradiction amounts to tension, a force, pushing towards evolution and change. [1]

There are two stories, each somehow constitutive of the other. The first accounts for how I came to the point of writing about reflexivity and crossing borders in the way I did in the second story. The second story is a review of two books, one about reflexivity, the other about crossing borders or rather, about people who cross borders (GrenzgängerInnen). But without this second story, the first would never have been written. [2]

The two stories, both on the macro level as well as in the details in facing columns inform one another, play off one another, are connected and contradictory. They are also bridged, by a set of common referents—or should I say references. They constitute an attempt to tell reflexivity in a reflexive way. Whether they succeed does not merely depend on me, the author. They also depend on the readers, the counter-signatories as DERRIDA (1988) conceptualized them. [3]

2. Another Grenzgänger: Reflexive Autobiography

Next to my keyboard the two volumes to be reviewed, *Grenzgängerin: Bridges between Disciplines and Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. How I will meet the book review editor's

"How many voices intersect, observe, and correct one another, argue with one another, passionately embrace or pass by one another in silence? Are we going to seek one final evaluation?"
(DERRIDA, 2001, p.50)

challenge to bring together in the same review essay two rather different books. A little farther away from my latest book acquisition, *The Work of Mourning* (DERRIDA, 2001). DERRIDA is and always has been a Grenzgänger, always writing reflexively, always engaging in praxis

Michel SERRES (1992, p.99): "Il faut concevoir ou imaginer comment vole et se déplace Hermès, lorsqu'il transporte les messages que lui confient les dieux — ou comment voyagent les anges. Et, pour cela, décrire les espaces qui se situent entre des choses déjà repérées, espaces d'interférence, selon le titre du deuxième Hermès. Ce dieu ou ces anges passent dans le temps plié, d'ou des millions de connexions. Entre m'a toujours paru et me paraît toujours préposition d'une importance capitale."

We never read texts as blank slates, but in the context of other texts, those that are currently salient to us because they are contemporaneous, others because they constitute our intellectual and cultural history. But this relation between texts has not required the coming of KRISTEVA (1980), who coined the notion of intertextuality, but

of methodology rather than providing us with a method of or a prescription for praxis. I turn to get Glas (DERRIDA, 1986, p.1) and read:

"Two unequal columns, they say distyle [disent-ils], each of which—envelop(e)(s) or sheath(es), incalculably reverses, turns inside out, replaces, remarks, overlaps [re-coupe] the other.

The incalculable of what remained calculated itself, elaborates all the coups [strokes, blows, etc.], twists or scaffolds them in silence, you would wear yourself out even faster by counting them. Each little square is delimited, each column rises with an impassive self-sufficiency, and yet the element of contagion, the infinite circulation of general equivalence relates each sentence, each stump of writing (for example, 'je m'éc ...') to each other, within each column and from one column to the other of *what remained* infinitely calculable." [4]

has, as ALVESSON and SKÖLDBERG discuss in their chapter on hermeneutics, been a topic for scholars concerned with the interpretation of text which, has been expanded by RICOEUR (e.g., 1991) to actions, and, by Clifford GEERTZ (e.g., 1973), who was himself influenced RICOEUR. Michel SERRES, a mathematician and philosopher talks about his method of thinking in terms of "plies," which, like pleats (Falten) and (mathematical) convolution (Faltung),

"Jedes (beliebig kleine) Gebiet enthält verschiedene Arten von 'Trajektorien', die (im Laufe der Zeit) zu den verschiedenen Bereichen führen. Das genau ist die Definition der schwachen Stabilität." (PRIGOGINE, 1979, p.230)

like baker transformations, bring the most distant in direct neighborhood (PRIGOGINE, 1979). Bringing the distant together in close physical and intellectual neighborhood, is not just a fancy of postmodern literature but has entered domains such as architecture that directly shapes the physical environments that we inhabit on a daily basis. (For an example, see the designs by the architect Peter EISENMAN, who, as part of his ideas

"Die Begriffe Ereignis und Katastrophe, Verstanden als plötzlicher Übergang, umreißen das Rebstockprojekt und formalisieren den urbanen Kontext von Frankfurt als mathematischen Prozess." ([Rebstockprojekt](#))

for a project in Frankfurt, shows the Butterfly Cusp, a three-dimensional diagram of a catastrophic event, a three-dimensional representation of a four-dimensional phase or variable space.) [26]

"The thesis and antithesis and their proofs therefore represent nothing but the opposite assertions, that a limit is, and that the limit equally is only a sublated one; that the limit has a beyond, with which however it stands in relation, and beyond which it must pass, but that in doing so there arises another such limit, which is no limit." (HEGEL, 1969, §528)

Each reading, each interpretation inevitably indeterminately arises from the dialectical tension between the text (in whatever form, written, spoken, culture, action) and the reader's (interpreter's) situated, historically (biographically) conditioned horizon. I shall almost constantly, following DERRIDA (1982, p.xi), "be examining the relevance of the limit (Grenze). And therefore relaunching in every sense the reading of the Hegelian *Aufhebung*, eventually beyond what Hegel, inscribing it, understood himself to say or intended to mean." [5]

This opening of my review of the two dissimilar but in some respects very similar books will make those understand who, despite and perhaps because of my own disappointments expressed in this review, will read *Reflexive Methodology*, that I not only disagree with their points about the potential of recent (postmodern) ideas but also about the very writing of a book on reflexivity and reflexive method. [27]

To begin with, I would have thought that a book on reflexive methodology, the authors draw some implications from the dictum that the medium is the message, or at least, that there is not only content of the text, but also that the very medium one chooses for

"Methodology is like spelling of which we say in French: c'est la science des ânes, 'it is the science of the jack-asses.' It consists of a compendium of errors of which one can say that you must be dumb to commit most of them." (BOURDIEU, 1992, p.244)

The note on the back cover of Grenzgänger reads,

"Über Disziplin- und Ländergrenzen hinweg führten Irmgard Staeubles wissenschaftliche Wege zur Philosophie (FU Berlin), in die Geisteswissenschaften (UCLA, USA) und Geschichte der Sozialwissenschaften (Sydney, Australia), zu Forschungsaufenthalten in Papua New Guinea und wieder zurück nach Berlin, wo sie nun seit 20 Jahren lehrt und forscht." [6]

representation communicates content. Thus, if I make claims about the constructed or socially constructed nature of scientific knowledge in particular and any sort of claim in general, then I want my representational format to reflect this claim. If I claim that intertextuality and horizons shape the way in which we read texts, then I would want my text to reflect this in content and form. Finally, if I claim that interpretations continuously change in historical

I had felt immediately that there was a lot I could do with reflexivity, a topic in which I have a long-standing interest (e.g., ROTH, 2001; ROTH & MCROBBIE, 1999). My own epitaph (did I sneak in a few pages of *The Work of Mourning?*) would read somewhat similar ...

Über Disziplin- und Ländergrenzen hinweg führten Wolff-Michael ROTHs wissenschaftliche Wege zur Physik (Julius Maximilians Universität Würzburg), in

(biographical) time—as this was made the topic of HUSSERL's famous diagram subsequently used in similar form by MERLEAU-PONTY (1945), then I would want this fact reflected in form and content of my writing. [28]

In my reading, *Reflexive Methodology* has shortcomings in all of these points. First, it does not make reference to a considerable literature on the topic of reflexivity in the social sciences, most notably *The Reflexive Thesis: Wrioting Sociology of Knowledge* (ASHMORE, 1989) and *Knowledge and Reflexivity: New Frontiers in the Sociology of Knowledge* (WOOLGAR, 1988) but also other books and articles that have come out of the area of science studies and sociology of knowledge. More recently, Michael LYNCH (2000) has argued Against reflexivity as an academic virtue and source of privileged knowledge, and in the process lists a considerable

"A scientific practice that fails to question itself does not, properly speaking, know what it does. Embedded in, or taken by, the object that it takes as its object, it reveals something of the object, but something which is not really objectivized since it consists of the very principles of apprehension of the object."
(BOURDIEU, 1992, p.236)

die Erziehungswissenschaften (Memorial University, St. John's, Canada), und Didaktik der Naturwissenschaften, Statistik, und physikalische Chemie (USM, Hattiesburg, MS), zu Forschungsaufenthalten in Australien und Deutschland, auf einen Lehrstuhl der Quantitativen Forschungsmethoden (Vancouver, Canada) und Victoria, Canada (Lehrstuhl in den Angewandten Kognitionswissenschaften), wo er einen nun seit 5 Jahren lehrt und forscht. [7]

number of different ways in which the term has been used, oftentimes as a basis for supporting claims of the superior forms of knowledge that could be gained through reflexivity as practice. [29]

Second, *Reflexive Methodology* is a straight, expository text, by and large telling us how the world is with. Irony is sometimes used (e.g., pp.238-240), but not irony with respect to its own constitution of reality. [30]

How does someone who has studied and received (major, minor) degrees in physics, physical chemistry, applied mathematics, and statistics end up doing qualitative research and reading authors such as Jacques DERRIDA? How does knowing such a history provide readers with semiotic resources for reading a text written by the person? In the case of reading a review essay, how does knowing something about the intellectual biography of the reviewer become a semiotic resource for readers to read the review essay and what kind of ideas

Third, I found very little in terms of the shaping of interpretive horizons and how the authors Mats ALVESSON and Kaj SKÖLDBERG, their biographical (professional) experiences shaped and figured into the writing. Not only are such references absent but unbeknownst to these authors and despite their own assertions, their text makes claims

"... research often unconsciously purveys and reinforces existing patterns. Researchers are themselves prisoners of their own society and its taken-for-granted concepts ..." (RM, p.129)

about the nature of qualitative research which may be true for organizational science but certainly not true for other social sciences such as education. For example, I have personally written numerous articles that employ a variety of "postmodern" writing strategies, including conversations between the authors, between author and reviewers, between author, other authors, reviewers, and research participants

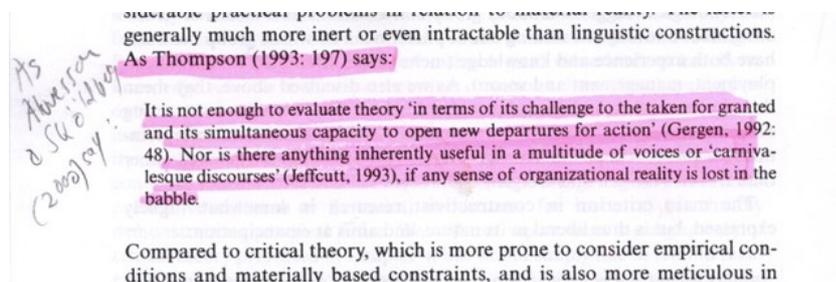


Figure 1: Excerpt from the reviewed text of *Reflexive Methodology*, including a multiply nested text that throw light on the authors' claim that "Primary sources have a higher value than secondary ones" (p.74).

does the reader develop about the works reviewed? [8]

I was immediately enamored by the title of *Grenzgängerin*, particularly after reading the names of stages in the life (or should I say lives?) of Irmingard SCHAEUBLE to whom this collection of essays has been dedicated, or alternatively, in whose honor the collection has been brought together. My own physical and intellectual travels have taken me across many borders—but what is a border, Grenze, that has been crossed; or perhaps, it is no longer a border for the person who is moving freely around the terrain that others stake to lay claims. The very trajectories of border crossers, GrenzgängerInnen, make borders disappear, thwart any effort to contain, call into question the reality of borders (*peras, limes, Grenze* [Fig. 2]), in the moment of transgression. What is seemingly distant, incompatible, or belonging to different classes becomes, in one moment of transgression connected, no longer unthinkable, a new way of doing, talking, and living. One (series of) event(s), changes our lives and the way we think about life in general—all those who attempt to move across borders after September 11, 2001, have experienced it physically and intellectually:

"The fact remains that academe is the only sector of American society that is distinctly divided in its response [to September 11, 2001]. Indeed, expressions of pervasive moral relativism are a staple of academic life in this country and an apparent symptom of an educational system that has increasingly suggested that Western civilization is the primary source of the

(e.g., ROTH & ALEXANDER, 1997; ROTH & McROBBIE, 1999; ROTH, McROBBIE, & LUCAS, 1998). [31]

The text seems to be caught in a value system that they borrowed or inherited from the very "objectivist" research that it abdicates from. The text always describes ideas, intentions, and motivations that underlie the expressions that research participants may use in interviews. It second-guesses the quality of a data source ("which does not suffer from effects of bias or dependence" [p.74]) and uses unarticulated value systems as referential frameworks for making comparative judgments such as "X is better than Y". [32]

A sign of the consistent inconsistency in the text was that there were claims as to the low quality of certain data sources and the use of such lower quality data sources throughout the text. For example, one page 74, we can find the statement "Primary sources have a higher value than secondary ones. (Alternatively, and more strongly: accept only primary sources.)" At the same time, throughout the book and particularly in the example from page 274 (Figure 1), the authors quote authors that quote other authors. As the figure shows, had some reflexive ideas about saying "Alversson & Sköldberg (2000) say, 'As Thompson (193: 197) says: "... 'carnavalesque discourses' (Jeffcutt, 1993)'"." Similarly, *Grenzgängerin* did not actively cross a limit (*peras, limes, Grenze* [Fig. 2]) and constitute itself as a historical subject in the process of writing the historical science of the subject. [33]

But I have stormed too much ahead, have stepped "in medias rei," "bin mit der Tür ins Haus gefallen." So I have to

world's ills—even though it gave us the ideals of democracy, human rights, individual liberty, and mutual tolerance." (ACTA, 2001, pp.4-5)

In the face of such developments, GrenzgängerInnen will find it increasingly difficult to do what academics have been engaging in for centuries—breaking down borders in crossing them, opening up new terrain but, in a reflexive twist of dialectical contradiction, at the same time, constructing new (disciplinary) borders. [9]

backtrack, begin to write a book review essay in a more traditional format. [34]

4. Reflexive Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Reflexive Methodology is divided into seven chapters. Following a brief introduction, there are four chapters in which the major frameworks underlying the reflexive methodology, the *quadri-hermeneutics* (p.248) presented here. These include data-oriented methods (e.g., grounded theory, discourse analysis, and ethnomethodology), hermeneutics (objectivist and alethic), critical theory, and poststructuralism. In Chapter 6 the reader finds more "orientations" that are "of topical interest and too important to be excluded" (p.200) before coming to the last chapter, concerned with reflexive interpretation as a play of interpretive levels. [35]

To begin with a summary statement: I found the book disappointing on many fronts. After reading a few pages and skipping through the book, I felt like abandoning it; only my commitment to the book review editor kept me slugging through a hodge-podge of poorly explicated ideas. Early on in

"Für die meisten Begründer der klassischen Wissenschaft, selbst für Einstein, war die Wissenschaft ein Versuch, über die Welt der Erscheinungen hinauszugehen, um eine zeitlose Welt von höchster Rationalität zu erreichen—die Welt Spinozas. Vielleicht gibt es eine subtilere Form der Wirklichkeit, die sowohl Gesetze als auch Zufallsspiele, sowohl Zeit als auch Ewigkeit umfaßt. Unser Jahrhundert ist ein Jahrhundert der Suche, neuer Formen der Kunst, der Musik, der Literatur und neuer Formen der Wissenschaft. Jetzt, fast am Ende dieses Jahrhunderts, können wir noch immer nicht vorhersagen, wohin dieses neue Kapitel der menschlichen Geschichte führen wird ..." (PRIGOGINE, 1979, p.223)

Although I was studying physics, I was interested in other areas even

the book, we find several cautions, which I reconstruct, after reading the

more than in physics. These included philosophy, particularly when it was grounded in physics and mathematics (e.g., von WEIZSÄCKER, BOHR, MÜLLER), literature, visual arts, and anthropology (especially LÉVI-STRAUSS). The physics of the second part of the 20th century, far from solving the puzzles of a "normal science" (KUHN, 1970) dealt with phenomena that required rethinking old approaches, leading to new fields such as non-equilibrium

"... and this involves a bifurcation of the same possibility ..." (DERRIDA, 2001, p.49)

thermo-dynamics. Recursive (reflexive?) mathematical systems led MANDELBROT (1982) to fractals, THOM (1979) to catastrophe theory, and PROGOGINE (1979) to the description of the becoming of non-deterministic systems. [10]

When I pursued doctoral studies, I was convinced that the patterns underlying human behavior, competence, and performance followed natural laws, which I would be able to uncover through carefully designed studies and the application of the most powerful statistics available. When there were difficulties getting all data points "in line" with the model, I studied outlier analysis to find out how, on statistical grounds, particular measurements can be excluded. [11]

During a post-doctoral year at Indiana University, I continued the statistical work I had done but, having come to meet personally and to read the work of several semioticians (ECO, CUNNINGHAM) and radical constructivists (von GLASERSFELD),

book, as indicative of the fatal flaws.

1. "Hopefully the reader will not demand of us either the professional philosopher's familiarity with all the classical and modern currents in the philosophy of science, or the methodological expert's knowledge of the plethora of variously technical writings on qualitative method that have appeared in recent years" (p.vii).
2. "Parts of the book may be rather demanding, due to its research orientation. [...] But it is simply a matter of persevering! Without hard work there is nothing, except possibly methodological junk food, satisfying for the moment but leading to malnutrition in the end" (p.10). [36]

Not only does the text lack the familiarity with classical and modern currents, or with the qualitative approaches to research in areas outside of the authors' management field, but also it lacks reference to the ongoing discussion of various forms of reflexivity in social science research. The book does neither a good job in reviewing the history of ideas that qualitative methodologists draw on to justify what they are doing, or more frequently, what they have done, nor does it give methodological advice and examples of concrete analyses that students of method could use in their practical efforts of coping with qualitative design and data. So what use is a book on reflexive methodology that admits (a) to be less than expert in philosophy and method, (b) to be difficult to read, and (c) not to touch on the technical level of methodology (p.288)? Who might be interested in reading such a book? (My own answer can be found at the end of this review.) [37]

4.2 Lacunae

doubts about my own present and past work began to emerge. These doubts became stronger when I returned to teach at a high school, where I found that whatever I could measure helped me very little to assist Johnny, who experienced a conflict between his religious home and the secular attitude of his science classes. I increasingly realized the importance of lived experience, meaning, and understanding; and I came to understand the importance of the physical and social context of student actions. [12]

I had begun reading the literature in sociology of science, science studies, anthropology of science,

In my reading, *Reflexive Methodology* does not cross borders, does not even acknowledge the scholarship on reflexivity in other academic disciplines. It is caught up in a debate contrasting objectivism and relativism (quantitative and qualitative research) that I believed many scholars had left behind in the beginning of the 1990s. Many of my colleagues in (science) education, having participated in the heated exchanges over method, truth, epistemology, and so on are now simply going on with their business. For the journals and audiences I know it matters less whether a manuscript is based on quantitative or qualitative research and more whether

VOICEOVER: I tell graduate student that the question is not quantitative or qualitative method but the research question. Its framing will drive how the answers are sought. In my graduate seminars, I involve students in discussions about the differences in finding answers to the almost identical questions "Do students learn more in hands-on than in regular lessons?" and "How do students learn in hands-on lessons and in regular lessons?"

the research narrative is compelling, that is, whether research questions are relevant in the historical context and whether these questions have been answered in a way that corresponds to the current state of the art in the particular field. [38]

For example, based on earlier work by ASHMORE and WOOLGAR, LYNCH (2000)

1. <i>Mechanical Reflexivity</i>	4. <i>Meta-theoretical Reflexivity</i>
1.1. Knee-jerk reflexivity	4.1. Reflexive objectification
1.2. Cybernetic loopiness	4.2. Standpoint reflexivity
1.3. Reflections ad infinitum	4.3. Breaking frame
2. <i>Substantive Reflexivity</i>	5. <i>Interpretative Reflexivity</i>
2.1. Systemic-reflexivity	5.1. Hermeneutic reflexivity
2.2. Reflexive social construction	5.2. Radical referential reflexivity
3. <i>Methodological Reflexivity</i>	6. Ethnomethodological Reflexivity
3.1. Philosophical self-reflection	
3.2. Methodological self-consciousness	
3.3. Methodological self-criticism	
3.4. Methodological self-congratulation	

Table 1: Types of reflexivity in social sciences, established based on the article by LYNCH (2000).

ethnomathematics, and ethnomethodology. I became aware of different types of data sources and ways of assembling artifacts into collections of data sources. I also learned about writing a piece of research, seeking order in the data sources, or telling stories into which I would insert selected pieces from the data sources. [13]

VOICEOVER: In contrast to ALVESSON and SKÖLDBERG, I consider interviews and transcripts, video, and other artifacts as data sources rather than as data (raw or otherwise) proper. From these sources, a researcher makes selections to be placed in the context of his/her own writing—these selections become data, pieces of evidence in support of the claims made by the researcher in the manuscript. [14]

I began to interview students, videotape them during the lessons or after school when they

differentiates and lists different types of reflexivity (Table 1). *Reflexive Methodology* cannot pretend to exist independently of a strand of discussions that has been started more than two decades ago. It is not surprising that my annotations frequently included "naïve," "wishy-washy," "they want to have their cake and eat it too," and "they are struggling." [39]

The lack of theoretical sophistication is embarrassingly evident throughout *Reflexive Methodology*. As an example, take the following explanation of *deconstruction* as a two-step methodology.

"The first step involves a destruction of the previously dominating picture, in favour of what was hidden, dominated. The second step involves a destruction of both these poles, but at the same time a displacement of them, and thus a construction of something new and wider, in which the two at most constitute special cases" (p.154). [40]

Contrast this statement with the following one that appeared in the translator's notes to *The Ear of the Other* (DERRIDA, 1985).

"As a composite translation, deconstruction as Derrida used it combines the sense of two Heideggerian terms: Destruktion, meaning not destruction but dismantling, and Abbau, meaning to take apart an edifice" (p.ix). [41]

Evidently, there is a contradiction between the reading of deconstruction in the "primary source" and that given in *Reflexive Methodology*, which I would consider to be a

"Reflexivity is not intrinsically radical. Woolgar (1984: 10; quoted in Ashmore 1989: 32) points out that some species of self-reflection and self-reference are 'benign' (unthreatening to conventional modes of inquiry), and, as noted above, objectivistic modes of social analysis advocate their own, appropriately objectivistic, modes of reflexivity. The effects or implications of applying a form of analysis 'to itself' will vary with the kind of analysis in question, and the examination of 'self' (or self's own writings, and the writings of colleagues in self's field) is no less circumstantial, contingent, fallible or trustworthy than is any other investigative or critical activity. Like confession, reflexive analysis does not come naturally; it requires a tutorial under the guidance of a particular programme." (LYNCH, 2000, p.36)

worked on specially prepared tasks that would help me understand meaning making and learning. One project was concerned with the nature of knowledge and concerned the question whether different instructional forms would change the way students talk about knowledge. Over two years, I collected student essays, interviewed students, and audiotaped classroom discussions concerning questions of ontology, sociology, and epistemology of science. In the course of these two years, my students designed and conducted their own physics

secondary source. Following its own logic ("Primary sources have a higher value than secondary ones" [p.74]), we therefore have a concrete and articulated reference for making a value judgment. [42]

What bugged me stylistically was the serial treatment of ideas, currents, and so forth. Thus, rather than an integration of ideas, we get a serial alignment of different ideas, first this author than that author; I often felt like reading what a masters or doctoral student writes. These ideas are ascribed to others. As a result, we find numerous construc-

experiments and read essays and books that questioned traditional thinking about these topics. [15]

In my initial analyses, I took the written transcripts from interviews as indicators of what students had in their mind. Structured approaches to data analysis designed to arrive at grounded theory (LINCOLN & GUBA, 1985; STRAUSS, 1987) drove my interpretive efforts to understand what students were thinking as a collective. I drew on the recommended "member checking" as way to verify whether my ordering had brought out a reality that could be understood by participants themselves (ROTH & ROYCHOUDHURY, 1993, 1994). [16]

My reading of *Opening Pandora's Box: A Sociological Analysis of Scientists' Discourse* (GILBERT & MULKAY, 1984) alerted me to the fact that one needed to be cautious in the interpretation of interviews. One could not take the interviews as emanation of ideas coming from the mind of the interviewee; rather, I learned that discourse is a form of situated action that has to be understood as the product of the dialectic relation between human being and his/her setting. While I attempted to write (in my experience, {writing | understanding} forms a dialectical unit), I came to read more extensively in the area of discourse analysis (EDWARDS & POTTER, 1992; POTTER & WETHERELL, 1987) and conversation analysis applied to institutional settings (BODEN, 1994; LYNCH & BOGEN, 1996). Interpreting a subset of the data with one of my high school students, Todd ALEXANDER, who also (re-) interviewed students, we began to

tions such as "Hirsch ... distinguishes," "Hirsch prefers," Skinner holds," "Palmer prefers," "Hirsch ... has set up," "Hirsch recommends," Palmer rejects," "Madison advocates" (pp.58-59). ALVESSON and SKÖLDBERG become the mouthpieces for others, the ventriloquist's puppets that do not, or only virtually so, take their own stand. [43]

I do not appreciate the personification of rather complex and heterogeneous fields, a "homo-homogenizing" (DER-RIDA, 1998) of irreducible complexity. It means relatively little to me when the authors write "Critical theory has little time to spare for the bookkeeper mentality which is so typical of method-minded scholars" (p.131) or "according to PM [postmodernism], the individual does not speak with a single voice" (p.189) on the same page that we also find the construction "According to Taussig (1987)." Terms such as critical theory or postmodernism signify, refer to, are used in the context of (WITTGENSTEIN, 1958/1994) many things, events, and practices. Constructions such as "Critical theory has little time" and similar constructions relating to the same and other fields caricaturizes the concerns of many different intellectuals and often quite distinct practices. [44]

4.3 Hunt for the elusive: truth

Despite all claims to the contrary, *Reflexive Methodology* is concerned with truth. Discussing the only transcript from an interview with an entrepreneur and a cursory interpretation provided, the question is posed "How do we know that the researchers *really* have performed participant observation,

VOICEOVER: My marginal commentary

look at the interpretive repertoires students use when talking about science and religion (ROTH & ALEXANDER, 1997). Collaborating closely allowed us to feature Todd, a participant, to take a first-person perspective on the analysis and to the writing of the research narrative. Our narrative featured the discursive repertoires employed by students who talk about science and religion, and featured several discursive devices in the case of inconsistencies and conflicts between scientific and religious discourse. Furthermore, in

says, "stating the obvious" and have not fabricated the data?" (p.262, my emphasis). One may continue to ask, How know that data sources have not been fabricated? How do we ever know that natural scientists or medical researchers have not fabricated their data sources or eliminated pieces that would have led to disconfirm their hypothesis? "We don't," I would answer. Accepting research reports is inherently built on the trust that each participant in the practice does what the method section says has been done. How do we know that Pons and Fleischman measured what they subsequently theorized as an instance of cold fusion? It is only when it becomes known that people breach the trust, such as Alan SOKAL (1996) with his "Transgressing the Boundaries: Toward a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity" that controversies break out. SOKAL opened his (hoax) essay with a citation, "Transgressing disciplinary boundaries ... [is] a subversive undertaking since it is likely to violate the sanctuaries of accepted ways of perceiving" (p.218). [45]

On the next page in *Reflexive Methodology* we read, "Criticism of *bias* takes into account that the information came from one side of the story only" (p.263, my emphasis). Bias, [OFr. *biais*, oblique]. Bias, a line cutting across the grain of fabric. Bias, an inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment, prejudice. Bias, a specific instance of such inclination or preference. I begin to wonder how bias can be invoked unless you are concerned with truth. I wonder how bias can be specified independent of the purpose of the story—there are many stories that one can tell about the entrepreneur without

having to invoke

"The semantic horizon which habitually governs the notion of communication is exceeded or punctured by the intervention of writing, that is of a *dissemination* which cannot be reduced to a *polysemia*. Writing is read, and 'in the last analysis' does not give rise to a hermeneutic deciphering, to the decoding of a meaning or truth." (DERRIDA, 1982, p.329)

the attempt to not truncate his agency, Todd talked about himself rather having the texts he produced in the course of two years cut into bite size pieces and displayed in someone else's (the independent researcher's) narrative. Initially we had difficulties publishing the piece, in part because reviewers of several American journals refused to review it given its topic of science and religion in schools, in part because we questioned

bias even if one is concerned with truth. [46]

And again, the absence of additional sources is bemoaned, because it "makes it difficult to say anything about X's true motives" (p. 263, my emphases). (At this point, my commentary consisted simply of two exclamation marks and yellow highlighting.) If readers have not done so by the time they get to this page in the book, they may begin to ask question about truth. How can a text belabor the emergence of an interpretation from the interaction between a reader's horizon and the text and then continue to search for the truth? How can a text treat the situated nature of discourse and

"Die befindliche Verständlichkeit des In-der-Welt-seins *spricht sich als Rede aus*. Das Bedeutungsganze der Verständlichkeit *kommt zu Wort*. Den Bedeutungen wachsen Worte zu. Nicht aber werden Wörterdinge mit Bedeutungen versehen." (HEIDEGGER, 1977, p.161)

common wisdom according to which the texts participants produce during an interview are emanations that exhibit content of mind. [17]

When the piece was accepted for publication, I felt encouraged to do another pass with a colleague through the entire data source, rereading the 3,500 pages of text, and

discourse analysis and then not take into account the interviewer and interview situation, the cultural context of the entrepreneur, etc.? *Reflexive Methodology* continues, "Was one of X's motives really the company's mismanagement of affairs ...?" We might ask, how is it possible to write about lifeworlds, the world as it is salient and significant to the individual,

to do a thorough discourse analytic study of interpretive resources and discursive devices. We were particularly interested in the changes that might occur over the two-year period in the frequency students draw upon the repertoires, in the ontological and epistemological claims they make (ROTH & LUCAS, 1997). Our data show that although students may have changed their ontological and epistemological claims over the two-year period, the repertoires had remained and the frequencies with which students drew on each stayed constant. I began to realize that what we got from our interviews was shaped more by the language students had available than it was shaped by any psychological characteristics; and it the interviewer-interviewee text emerged as an irreducibly social phenomenon. [18]

Inevitably, I came into contact with reflexivity, in particular through *The Reflexive Thesis: Wrighting the Sociology of Knowledge* (ASHMORE, 1989) and *Knowledge and Reflexivity: New Frontiers in the Sociology of Knowledge* (WOOLGAR, 1988). In both books, the authors explored new ways to deal with the contradiction arising from an application of the social-constructivist approach upon itself (see Table 1). Thus, although some sociologists have come to describe scientific knowledge as the outcome of a social process, their own descriptions bore very few if any signs of the social construction that led to their existence. Earlier social-constructivist writers used the same expository "this-is-the-truth" style that characterized earlier, "objectivist" sociology of science. [19]

always the result of situated and biographical processes, and then ask for true motives? How can such questions about the truth of a participant's

"Mitteilung ist nie so etwas wie ein Transport von Erlebnissen, zum Beispiel Meinungen und Wünschen aus dem Inneren des einen Subjekts in das Innere des anderen." (HEIDEGGER 1977, p.162) statement made long after some event coexist with a discussion of HUSSERLIAN hermeneutics, which had made salient the changing nature of interpretation through historical time? "To treat context as a factor from which one can abstract for the sake of refining one's analysis," writes DERRIDA (1988, p.60), "is to commit oneself to a description that cannot but miss the very contents and object it claims to isolate, for they are intrinsically determined by context." Why ask such questions when in other parts of the book the text is concerned with *being-in-the-world* and the structure of care, which had led HEIDEGGER to conclude that language is in the first instance a way of taking care and only in a second instance a way of representing and interpreting. [47]

Why, we might ask, develop a theoretical apparatus that presumably motivates my research and then act in ways that are incompatible with the theoretical apparatus? It does make sense when the text makes others speak. "Collingwood ... asserts that any interpretation of a past happening is subjective and historical, since it involves in a fundamental way the researcher's own time-bound frames of reference, values and so on. Consequently there is no longer any Truth,

Although these projects had been satisfying, I increasingly became aware of the contradiction between my writing and the situated, dialogic nature of interviews. I had reached a limit (*Grenze, limes, peras*) that I needed to cross to be able to move on, a contradiction, I had to resolve and thereby change what I was doing. This led me in another study of this type, as Grenzgänger because conducted in Australia, to write the "results" in the form of two intersecting conversations (ROTH, MCROBBIE, & LUCAS, 1998). One conversation features four high school students talking about epistemology, the nature of science, and other related topics. The other conversation features two individuals, apparently adult researcher and interviewer, respectively, talking about students' talk about epistemology. Entitling the article "Four Dialogues and Metalogues about the Nature of Science," we make the claim

with a capital 'T', in the sense of mirroring an objective reality" (p.80). Although *Reflexive Methodology* grounds its "quadri-hermeneutics" in hermeneutics, it does not have to follow what COLLINGWOOD has been made to say. In this book, many people are made to say many things, but because the authors are absent, it is never clear whether quadri-hermeneutics actually subscribes to what one or the other is said to have said. [48]

"At the beginning of the long quotation above, it is claimed that '[f]or a certain type of character it is something you dream of. You want to see if the ideas, the thoughts and philosophies that you cherish within yourself can bear fruit.' Here it is implied that there is a distinct and special type of person ..." Who claims? Is it a text that claims or the person interviewed? "It is implied ..." Who implies, who draws the implication? When we "read between lines" or say that something has been implied, who is the source of the reading or the implication? Is it possible to attribute the reading or implication to the author of the statement? Did the author sign (as I do this reading and writing at the end of the review essay) the original text alone or also all the readings and implications drawn by others? (DERRIDA, 1988) [49]

We read further, "The statement also implies that there is an inner urge in these individuals to start up on their own—the decision factor behind launching one's own agency" (p.265). Again, who implies? Does the interviewee say more than he says? If there are different inter-linear readings, different implications, then who is the judge as to the veracity of one or the other? Whose inner urge is it? In such cases, does not the written

interpretation tell us more about the interviewer/author than about the interviewee? The interpretation is ascribed to the interviewee, though someone else authored the interpretation. Who signs? Who is the signatory of an event? And again, there are factors behind a decision; a decision which arises as a causal consequence of decision factors. [50]

At the end of reading a book on one "methodology" or another, I ask myself (a) whether I found the book useful and worthwhile quoting; (b) whether my graduate students in a seminar on qualitative research would find it useful as a text or resource; and (c) whether I would actually use the book as a text. In the case of *Reflexive Methodology*, my answer is "no" to all three questions. [51]

cluding its own, meant to say its limit. In the familiarity of the languages called (instituted as) natural by philosophy, the languages elementary to it, this discourse has always insisted upon assuring itself mastery over the limit (*peras, limes, Grenze*). It has recognized, conceived, posited, declined the limit according to all possible modes; and therefore by the same token, in order better to dispose of the limit, has transgressed it. *Its own limit* had not to remain foreign to it. Therefore it

copied in school when, for better or for worse, one learns to use the fusain, the stem of a morning glory or other climbing plant, the helix inscribed on the shell of a snail, the meanders of the

Figure 2: Somewhat unusual quotation from *Margins of Philosophy* (DERRIDA, 1982, p.x), that has a double reference: use of columns to write dialectically and discourse about limits, Grenzen, and transgressing the limits.

that students do not "have" or "hold" 5. Grenzgängerin

ideas about issues such as epistemology, which ooze from the students' minds when proper methodology is applied, but that people engage in epistemology talk, and their talk is sensitive and adapts to the present context. [20]

I wanted to show that there are gulfs between the worlds of students and teacher in the same classroom, but also between the worlds of different (high achieving versus low achieving, male versus female) students (ROTH, BOUTONNÉ, MCROBBIE, & LUCAS, 1999). In the article, student and teacher text excerpts were set side by side, which made salient their drastically different experiences. More importantly, the contrasts between student and teacher talk about the classroom were read as an indictment of the teacher, leading some reviewers to reject the article because of "teacher bashing." I was so frustrated with reviewers' constant criticisms concerning the different voices of research participants that I decided to challenge the canon, cross borders again, and write a piece in which voices were even more relativized, where the narrative relativized itself. The resulting "methodological" piece concerned the question whether it was possible to write a narrative about the different lifeworlds that exist in the same classroom that gets it right, that is, the question was whether one could "w/ri(gh)t classroom research" (ROTH & MCROBBIE, 1999). [21]

When the piece was published, it contained not only conversations between researchers and participants, but also conversations involving the authors, the reviewers of an earlier draft, participants, and

5.1 Introduction

In *Grenzgängerin*, the editor Christiane ALSOP has brought together a diverse set of essays concerned with an equally diverse of topics associated with different disciplines. In the first part entitled "Einblicke—eine Sozial

VOICEOVER: Why do the authors not consider their own historicity and that of their writing?

wissenschaft historisch betrachtet", the topics include the genesis of modern psychology; the moral-psychological and social-theoretical links in the work of Melanie KLEIN; the relationship between Nazi politics and the educational theories of H. HETZER; the life and work of a virtually unknown M. VAERTING; psycho-technics in the German army during WW I; and the cerebral localization of mental functions. In a second part entitled "Ausblicke—eine Sozialwissenschaft interdisziplinär betrachtet" the topics include historical responsibility and the duty of descendants to apologize or pay for what in the present comes to be recognized as injustice; the role of paternalism in the positive climate of a Senegalese mine; the historical changes in a researcher's methodology as she becomes increasingly dissatisfied with quantitative approaches; the role of "character" in political theories; assimilation and cultural genocide of Australian aboriginals; the notion of "Heimat" in a Europe of disappearing borders; the role of autobiographical accounting processes in intergenerational discourse; a psychology of machines; and a story of the power and beauty of Internet technologies in the emancipation of women. These essays have been brought together in honor of

relevant others such as BOURDIEU and DERRIDA. A new film-derived technique, voiceover, cuts/ interrupts an ongoing narrative or conversation with another piece of text, often making a contrasting claim, which allowed us to relativize what is being claimed in the current main text. In another study, about the learning of a beginning and a veteran teacher (myself) teaching alongside one another, we used a two column format to present parallel experiences, embedded in a narrative written from a collective, third-person perspective (ROTH & BOYD, 1999). Here, two participants are also the authors; I believe that emancipatory research requires participation in practice rather than the kind of distanced fly-on-the-wall critical observer that I read *Reflexive Methodology* to be about. [22]

In one of my research programs concerned with bringing about change, we evolved a praxis to deal with the traditional divide between research and praxis, knowledge production and knowledge application. The research takes place in inner-city schools in Philadelphia, PA. But it is a very different kind of research than this is traditionally understood. We refer to our praxis as {coteaching|cogenerative dialoguing} (ROTH, LAWLESS, & TOBIN, 2000). Here, both my colleague Ken TOBIN and I participate in the teaching science to high school students alongside other teachers, including those who have not yet received their certificate. We all take joint responsibility for assisting students in learning. Periodically, all teachers and two students discuss the lessons and what should be changed to enhance student learning; we call

Irmingard STAEUBLE, who holds a chair (Lehrstuhl) in history of psychology. The essay contributors are colleagues, former and present collaborators, and former students. [52]

I enjoyed a good number of the essays (e.g., Figure 3); but I found some chapters wanting (e.g., Figure 4). But I also felt ambivalent. There are disparities between chapters and the lack of bridges and discussion of differences. Some disparities are enormous and I would have liked to see efforts to make possible connections between different essays or a form of engagement of the different authors in a critical dialogue. For example, the section titles made me expect very different issues that I ultimately encountered. The first promises "Einblicke," perspectives on and perhaps understandings of psychology as a historical science. The title of the second section makes the promise to provide an interdisciplinary perspective on a social science. I felt as if the promises—interdisciplinarity, dialogue between disciplines, a particular social science (psychology?) as the subject—were never kept. The gift that was never given; perhaps the gift that was impossible to give. The gift, which is the impossibility itself. The book's subtitle promises us "bridges between disciplines"; but bridges are notably absent in this book. It is a collection, spuriously ordered under Einblicke (looking inward, glimpse, but also "inspection" and "insight") and Ausblicke (looking outward, but also figuratively, an "outlook" or "prospects"). Perhaps a finer-grained ordering with conversation among the authors (see, for example, ROTH, TOBIN, & RITCHIE, 2001) or an editor's narrative could have provided bridges, glue, to link the chapters that

this aspect of our praxis cogenerative dialoguing. Because cogenerative dialoguing involves students and teachers, new courses of actions are not just theoretically possible but lead to practical change. As part of our collective responsibility, we do not criticize one another for not having done something or for having committed an error. Rather, if we notice something of importance, we do something about it *then and*

on the surface are so different. The book needs a GrenzgängerIn, someone to build bridges, so that the different authors could have come closer together. Instead, the chapters stand side by side in the way the countries of the old Europe did. This, I recognize, is not necessarily attributable to Christiane ALSOP. [53]

5.2 Demonstration

Let me illustrate this with a number of essays that bear interesting relevance to my own situation, where First Nations people are embroiled in court battles over land claims. Ought the provincial and federal governments of Canada settle these claims, which means money from public coffers and ultimately money collected in the form of taxes? Why should the children of those who took the land from the natives more than 100 years ago pay for reparations? Even more poignantly, why should recent immigrants and their descendants be paying for the evils of a culture that was not even theirs? To these questions, THOMPSON contributes important elaborations and justifications. She makes two kinds of reparation claims, questioning liberal assumptions about obligations and entitlements. Similarly, VAN KRIEKEN shows how Australian public life has been marked by the debate over Aboriginal child removal that juxtaposes the practice as a form of "welfare" with the practice as a form of cultural genocide that requires apology (and perhaps reparation). Finally, to complicate the issue of the relation between "natives" and "Europeans," KASSÉ shows that paternalism provided a context for mine workers that was not only desired by the workers but also contributed to the productivity of the mine. As French

personnel was exchanged for Senegalese managers, the productivity of the mine decreased until a closure was imminent. Although workers and managers were Senegalese, the relationship of trust that bound Senegalese workers and French managers never established itself. [54]

"Two unequal columns, they say distyle [disent-ils], each of which—envelop(e)s or sheath(es), incalculably reverses, turns inside out, replaces, remarks, overlaps [recoupe] the other." (DERRIDA, 1986, p.1)

"The *solution* of these antinomies, as of those previously mentioned, is transcendental ..." (HEGEL, 1967, §569).

there. We subsequently talk about what has happened to generate local theory (explanation) and develop new understanding. We write about our experiences and change efforts as collectives, involving those who participated in a particular episode, students, beginning teachers, regular teachers, doctoral students, university supervisors, and researchers (e.g., ROTH, TOBIN, ZIMMERMANN, BRYANT, & DAVIS, 2002; ROTH, TOBIN, ELMESKY, CARAMBO, MCKNIGHT, & BEERS, in press). We draw on a variety of genres such as collective third-person voice, which allows us to take a common perspective, or dialogue and metalogue, which allows us to take individual perspectives on some issue. Even the preparation of a manuscript is part of our collective effort to improve the situation at the school. [23]

Our work in urban schools, has allowed us to radicalize qualitative research. The transformations were precipitated by questions such as How can we change, or help those concerned if, like fish in the water, we

In my Canadian context, THOMPSON helped me to understand the complexity of the issue of reparation, and also why, though I always had rejected it, I have or rather had the historical responsibility for the Nazi war crimes. Here, an interesting turn of thoughts occurred to me. In my youth, living in Germany as the child of children of the war, I had rejected all responsibility for the perpetration of my forefathers. Crossing borders, having become a Grenzgänger, changed my responsibilities: no longer am I responsible for war crimes but for the loss of land and culture of the First Nations. It is an interesting and perhaps unarticulated consequence of becoming someone different, of abrogating one citizenship and taking on another. The simple act of migration eliminates one set of responsibilities and brings into my life another. Having taught some classes in a nearby middle school, I also have become aware of the continued colonialism of the dominant Anglo-centric (perhaps more accurately liberal, money-oriented, and consumerist) culture that destroys whatever is left of traditional culture.

find it difficult to conceive of a world that is different from water?

Much of the colonialism is hegemonic, the First Peoples participate in and support it, and ideological, unavailable for reflection by most. Thus, the patterns of teaching through the telling of stories and the (for Western culture) long pauses between speakers are incompatible with the fact-oriented propositions and the absence of pauses in Western speech. What we need is not a return to paternalism and patronizing practices that have led to evils similar to those described by van KRIEKEN as existing in Australia. [55]

I felt that these essays would have deserved a larger discussion, an

I liked "Power, Anxiety, and the Research Process" (C.K. ALSOP), though I am not sure I can (or if it is every possible to) justify why I like it. Her account shares similarities with my own trajectory from mostly quantitative to mostly qualitative research, though my experience was not one of conversion as her "I converted" seems to suggest. Also, my own experience was not that of going from "objective experience" (p.174) to "subjective experience" (p.177); rather, over the years, my data changed and the use of statistics became decreasingly necessary to answer the kind of research questions I asked. For me, it was not a conversion from quantitative to qualitative research but a change in what I considered to be interesting questions. But one important aspect brought out by ALSOP's analysis is the concern for meaning that brings about the changes between two research paradigms. ALSOP comes closest to what I would imagine a historical science (ALSOP qua scientist) of a historical subject (ALSOP) to be.

Textbox 1: Comments about one of the chapters that I liked

How should we think of helping in the situation of teachers and students who live in very different worlds, and frequently do not realize it. If conventional ways of viewing the world (produced by individual and collective habitus) is the horizon of the present, change appears to be precluded. For the teachers, there is no need to change because they live in worlds that are more or less comfortable; they are confirmed in

engagement, a dialogue in which core issues common to them would have been further articulated. In the context of the essay on paternalism, one might have addressed questions about and relativize notions of obligations and entitlements, knowledge and power, colonialism and its reproduction even in the most multi-cultural of societies, Canada. Without such connections, these essays stand monolithically, independently, requiring the thoughtful

this by students who do well despite the horrific situations that are their home. Other students live in a different world, experiencing ridicule, power, and constraints. How can any individual change given the reificational nature of knowledge and perception? For this apparent dilemma, RICLUR (1991) suggests a dialectic of Self and Other. It is by placing oneself in the Other's point of view that I confront myself with my present horizon, with my

reader to bring them together, to re-read, to play SERRES' *Hermes*, PRIGOGINE's baker, and the metaphoric *Grenzgängerin*, or to proceed in a manner that DERRIDA has marvelously enacted in his writing. [56]

Grenzgängerin. When I read the title it was like a revelation. It is a title that one can play on; in the association with *Reflexive Methodology*, it would allow to "push the boundaries," open up new literary genres, permit building bridges not only within the book and across the chapters, but between the books. *Grenzgängerin*, before I read the two books the term had become a metaphor, thoughts of my own professional and personal life as points of departure for writing an essay about books that broached new territory, opened up new terrain, enriched existing topologies of representation. *Grenzgängerin*, evoked images of Ulysses

Some of the essays in *Grenzgängerin* I found wanting; I was particularly disappointed by the historical studies, which I thought should have made thematic the historic nature of the subject and the science. And for both subject and science, I would have liked more contextual analyses, that would allow me to understand a person such as Hildegard HETZER (analyzed by WEBER) rather than having to read a critique of her association with Nazi ideas. WEBER's analysis does not allow us to understand how HETZER subsequently could become professor and was awarded a "Bundesverdienstkreuz erster Klasse." Throughout the chapter, I had the sense that the author was judging his subject against an unarticulated value framework, and a framework that was not historically situated but floated transcendently above the analysis. I appreciated KASSÉ's analysis of the changes from French to local Senegalese managers as a much more successful attempt in historicizing the subject of analysis. On the other hand, she, too, lacked reference to the historical nature of my own analysis, and therefore, to the temporally situated conclusions that will be out of date in some near future.

Textbox 2: Comments about disappointing chapters

prejudices. This confrontation, when it takes the form of an inquiry of

the traveler, not only that in Homer's epic but especially that in JOYCE's

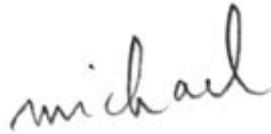
recontextualization, allows me to reweave my beliefs, desires, Self, Other, and world (DERRIDA, 1998; RORTY, 1991). Such transformations entail the way in which we know about the world and ourselves in the world, therefore transforming Self and lifeworld. Placing oneself in the Other's point of view is made possible by engaging in a dialogue. Such dialogue requires trust both a priori and as a stabilizing feature of its ongoing development. Trust itself can arise from a sense of solidarity which is only possible once we abandon traditional notions of hierarchy related to schooling and develop a sense of "we are in this together for the learning." That is, solidarity implies that we extend our sense of "we" to people whom we previously thought of as "they." It is in the sense of solidarity that I read the postmodern call on educators to adopt a discourse of hope that rejects religious, cultural, social, and gender borders and thereby rejects the enactment of difference structured in hierarchy and dominance (GIROUX, 1992). In all of this, I do not want to claim that any one of the styles is appropriate independent of the context in the way I read *Reflexive Methodology* claiming the possibility of research and writing to be. Rather, each of the published pieces that I described was written in a particular context, addressing a particular audience, each with its own standards of what is "good research," "legitimate methodology," and "appropriate research writing." While I wrote these pieces, I also wrote straight Why might some readers be inclined to find my narrative more compelling than that of *Reflexive Methodology*? It may have to do with the unarticulated

novel and that in KAZANTZAKI's poem. The *Grenzgängerin* does not have Heimweh (see the RAUSCHENBACH chapter), does not have a home other than within her/himself. Like the Zen practitioner who returns from the monastery to take up everyday life as Zen practice, the *Grenzgängerin* is at home in the here and now. [57]

5.3 Language, culture, and border crossing

An interesting process could have been broached by addressing the role of language in writing. Clearly, by having German and English texts side by side, and even more so, having the same texts integrate English and German (see the ALSOP, GRÜTER and JOVANOVIĆ contributions), the "language barriers" that often divide scholarly communities are coming down. Language plays an important role in making the boundaries between culture stronger than they perhaps ought to be, and stronger as (sociological) advocates of the weak nature of cultural boundaries profess them to be (SEWELL, 1999). Clearly, when in Germany—as my quick review of a few pages of the *Süddeutsche Allgemeine* shows—"Bars cool sind," when "Comedy" replaces "Komödie," when painters are looking for their "sujets," and when "Verabredung" (not to speak of the rendezvous) is challenged by "dating(-game)" borders are coming down and professional Grenzgänger have to look for new (linguistic?) frontiers. German editors may already read Gerlish, when reading about something "die die Agency der involvierten Subjekte noch in einer uneasy balance or imbalance of 'checking out' läßt." The French, too, speak Frenchlish when they now go "surfer" in the mountains, fill their cars

ways in which we assess credibility, much in the way we assess credibility of a research article. In the present situation, I have accounted of various ways not only to write in a "postmodern," sometimes hyper-reflexive way, but also to get it published. [24]



Although it is singular, one, this signature is double, signing of this article but also countersigning, as reader, the two books I reviewed. [25]

with "fuel," use their "walkman," exchange their "e-mails," and find everything "cool." (Fortunately, some die harts in Quebec refuse the walkman and use a balladeur instead, and send courriel.) Europe and the breaking down of boundaries, will lead to an increasing mixing of languages, some say, will even lead to the disappearance of the (literary) English as well. Grenzgänger could have served as a metaphor to elaborate the current situation and history of Europe, not only bringing about the common currency but also affecting the little problems in translating from one language to another. Behind the words, there is always some reality that can be elucidated, disclosed, if we only get at the right sources, if we make sure to eliminate bias in the source materials, interview more people. Such individuals would find it difficult to understand the problem of the "incompossibility" of language, the antinomy that exists between the two propositions "1. We only ever speak one language. 2. We never speak only one language" (DERRIDA, 1998, p.7).

Monolingualism, DERRIDA argues, is always monolingualism imposed by the other, is always colonial, always reduces language to the One, the hegemony of the homogeneous. More terrifying, because language always comes from the other, is for the other, and returns to the other, it inherently represents the foreign and strange. [58]

The monolingualism of this reading is mine, the one signing this reading, which therefore constitutes the counter-signature to both books. [59]

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