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Strange Loops and Writes-of-Passage: Double-Crossing Diaspora

Johannesburg. Late winter, 1996. I begin reading *The Heart in Exile: South African Poetry in English, 1990–1995*. The polemics of its reception render it a promising site to investigate the role of the poetry anthology in shaping the national imaginary of a "new" South Africa. Still, I cannot deny the intimation that, viewed from the anticipated retrospect of Tel Aviv, my investment in a work whose title condenses "an alternating series of versions in which 'the heart' conceives of its 'exile' in, from or within the imaginative entity we call South Africa" will exceed professional interest.[1] For now, though, it is enough to read.

But I do not—cannot—proceed past the second poem: Denis Hirson's "Long-Distance South African," with its searing layering of personal and public memory. My reading falters in its middle passages, snags, stops. For someone has mentioned "gooseberries, and soon the old house / in Johannesburg comes up."[2] South African like Hirson (in what John Ash calls the "longing distance"[3]), I find that these mnemonics cut too close to home, although on reflection that is precisely the wrong idiom.

Days later. Hod Hasharon, on the outskirts of

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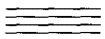
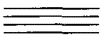
Tel Aviv. Late summer, 1996, in the exile's calendar.[4] Or maybe not "the exile": having reverted to the ambiguities of my status as the emigré, expatriate, and new immigrant/*olah xadashah* granddaughter of a "stateless" German Jewish refugee (among other things), I am aware that they disentitle me to the claim of Hirson's *exile* in anything other than a distant, metaphorical sense. But I am nevertheless schooled in his diasporicity, in the texts of his memory. Quite literally so.



Digression. "The school crest: is divided into four coloured quadrants. Red backs a crown with three gold branches, yellow an open book; blue, a scroll of parchment about to eat a plume; green, two tapes running under an archbishop's mitre: Alfred, Bede, Caedmon and Dunstan, who came from England a long time ago."[5] Mark these crests/crusts of tribute adorning our childish figures. They are the alphabetical insignia whereby English-speaking South Africans acknowledge a "home" across the seas, one whose loss no longer aches. *Nostos,* to return home; *algia,* a painful feeling.[6] We wear such badges on breasts and blazers sometimes absented from the playground where an old photograph places Denis's sister Zöe and me, side by side among peers cross-dressed in Austrian national costume for a pageant whose purpose I have long forgotten. When we are absent (on Jewish holidays, and they are many), Christian National Education (the avowed policy of our all-White government school, post-Sharpeville but pre-Soweto) lacks bodies on which to inscribe its religious nationalism, its nationalist religion. When we are absent (on Jewish holidays, and we are many), our classmates abandon class altogether and play on land bequeathed by mining magnate Hermann Eckstein. I recite their names, an oneiric onomastics proper only if one suspends all notions of propriety: Johnny Belcher, Juanita Buck, Paula and Paulo Cipriani, Luke Connell, Sean Khourie, Jacques Marchand, Lauren van Rooyen, Ranka Sakota, Elizabeth Theotocatis, and Peter Wetton await the return of Stephen Baum, Kim Fabian, Denise Klein, Anthony Klotz, Bronwyn Neuberger, and Dawn Zar (the "z" of whose name enthralls me long before I learn that in Hebrew *zar* means "stranger"). Foreign bodies the lot of us, more or less and not at all, in the taken-for-granted naturalizations of childhood. Reterritorialized bodies, we are accompanied to school by the deterritorialized bodies of women who migrate—passes permitting—through

the bedsized quarters appended to our houses, the homes of "people of another house."[7]

"They have names like Regina, Patience, Angelina, Evelina."[8] We ask no more of them than that they answer to names like Regina, Patience, Angelina, Evelina—and that they keep house. "Johannesburg," says Hirson's Granny Toba "wryly, her hair massing into a cloud as her face goes glum, 'what were we doing in Johannesburg? For twenty years we sat on our suitcases, waiting to get back to Palestine.'"[9]



Recursion. At age twenty, I announce my intention to emigrate to Israel. At age twenty-one, I leave South Africa. Zionist socialism seems perfect as an antidote to apartheid. Israel is my alibi, an "elsewhere" which is concrete enough.[10] With loving idealism, or perhaps a lover's idealism, I make *aliya*—perform my ascent to the Holy Land. Did not Ya'akov Fichman say that Eros was the first casualty of the Jewish Diaspora? "There is not a single love poem in Hebrew literature until the Spanish period. This was one of the harshest signs of dispersion."[11] In Israel, I read my bearings off an old map—Walter Benjamin's: "*Old map.* In a love affair most seek an eternal homeland. Others, but very few, eternal voyaging. These latter are melancholics, for whom contact with mother earth is to be shunned. They seek the person who will keep far from them the homeland's sadness."[12]

But my home's/land's sadness, being homelanded in Bantustans, will not abate. Belatedly, I recognize my return to Zion as a recursion, a willed turn, a trope of the Grand Apartheid Narrative of resettlement on the basis of "ethnic" origin. Nevertheless, the Zionist narrative overwrites and underwrites that drift to the map which, for White, middle-class South Africans like myself, has become a dominant dis-position. Emigration: "Now / I turn to go, / and as I turn"

> I ask you to
> let me go that
> I might be unclasped,
> not an abandonment but
> a sending, and a
> release from anger that
> I should have to leave my possession, and
> from sorrow of leaving.[13]

Is there a similar sorrow interleaving the text of Abraham's summons? "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee" (Genesis 12:1). Where does one begin to give an account, I ask, when narratives of rootedness are always already routed through the knowledge of a home left behind, when the *ur*-text is an *ur*-text no more, but no less? And once having asked, no one myth or myth of oneness can ever really claim me. I am less disturbed by the incommensurably heterogeneous identities which go by the appellation/interpellation "Jewish" in the land where I now sojourn than by a certain estranging reductiveness. In Hod Hasharon, I am perpetually the *Ashkenaziya* (to my former husband's family) or the *Anglo-Saksit* (to most of the rest, except, of course, other *Anglo-Saksiyot*: adj., fem., pl.—and this we are). To my Lodz-born paternal grandfather, Louis Bethlehem, and his residually Irish, non-Jewish South African wife, Thelma Fenessy; to my Königsberg-born maternal grandfather, Leo Gerson, and his aspiringly English, Jewish South African wife, Dolly Elaine Noach, I am probably too much of both and not enough of either. In time, the epithet "new" in that other stock phrase, *olah xadashah*, wears off, but so does any lingering feeling of exaltation. I succumb to a sort of up-down/round-and-round vertigo and register the *intifada* with a sense of *déjà vu*.

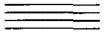
> *Achilles*: Could we . . . get out of this Escher picture we're in?
> *Tortoise*: Of course! We just need to go UP one story. Do you want to try it?
> *Achilles*: Anything to get back to my house! I'm tired of all these provocative adventures.
> *Tortoise*: Follow me, then, up this way.
> *(And they go up one story.)*
> *Achilles*: It's good to be back. But something seems wrong. This isn't my house! This is YOUR house, Mr. Tortoise.
> *Tortoise*: Well, so it is—and I am glad for that![14]

To and fro, and two and fro, in the dis-course of discourse itself.[15] Palestinian exiles exiled by exiles[16]—or by the native-born, who, forgetting the novelty of their homecoming, constantly seek to forget the violence of its price. Jewish exiles in exile from their exile, extolling an *Eretz-Yisrael* which remains ineluctably exotic despite their best efforts to domesticate it.[17] In the canonic heart of Zionism, I learn to read narratives that are as much

displaced as displacing. And read narratives in its margins too, where my former mother-in-law, former Iraqi Hilwah Cohen (renamed Yaffa Shabat by a nascent bureaucracy overwhelmed with Cohens), mourns possessions left behind in Baghdad, "'back there': a sack of silver vessels hidden in the earth, her dead offspring, parents, language"; things once new and known, "things she once knew and no longer knows."[18] Not for a moment did Theodor Adorno give up the hope of going back to the place where he had spent his childhood.[19] But the past, as Salman Rushdie has famously said, "is a country from which we have all emigrated"[20]—some more irrevocably than others.

My past refuses to stay in its place as I shuttle between the temporalities of child- and adulthood, between the geographies of there and here, so that when I unpack my books in Hod Hasharon upon returning from South Africa once again and brush up against the grain of Hirson's cape-gooseberry bush, it is to register the acrid tang of *déjà lu*. "The past: it 're-bites' [*il re-mord*]," notes Michel de Certeau; "it is a secret and repeated biting."[21] I read the child in me reading the "language of nostalgia"—which, of course, she never did—or did differently, from right to left. I knead that longing which inheres in all my modalities of be-longing, past as well as present, needing now the need for a cape gooseberry. Irreducible despite, and at the very moment of, the tongue-against-teeth explosion of its sphere into spores—intractable as the foreignness I have sometimes sought to discard, intertextual as the spoor it leaves in Doris Lessing's short story "Flavours of Exile."[22] Strictly speaking, I know, the fruit itself is not indispensable. Christopher Hope's neighbors, displaced like him from the land of their birth, are cooking "mascara stew. It's their special of the day; / they eat it when they're sad. Someone says / it's because they're Iranian." Meanwhile—and this is the point—"you are in your garden, somewhere in Africa."[23]

It is longing that spooks me, just as I, you, Mr. Styles—we—"spook them."[24]



Double-Crossing. "Arriving one night in a town north of Slovenia," recalls W. E. B. Du Bois, "the driver of a rickety cab whispered in my ear, 'Unter die Juden?' I stared and then said yes."[25] This anecdote marvelously engages the traditional allegorization of the Jew as a figure of, or for, alterity.

Having experienced his own identity as a legacy "of trouble and exile, of strife and hiding"[26]—in short, of double consciousness—Du Bois might well claim an affinity with comparable constructions of Jewish exile. But at the very moment he affirms the thrust of such narratives, the affirmation spoken in his voice and issuing from his body ("I stared and then said yes") literally depletes them. A kind of double-crossing of the allegorical Wandering Jew occurs here, with Du Bois's otherness—his Blackness—exceeding the code of Jewishness to which he is nevertheless acceding.[27] A surplus that is also a lack, it fascinates me. Faced with the rampant allegorization of the Diasporic Jew, a feature as much of modernism as of postmodernism, of colonial as well as postcolonial discourse,[28] I experience a misrecognition that makes me want to invert Du Bois's affirmation. I will not read myself in allegory; I do not coincide with any allegorical universalization of my Jewishness, much less with that of my (non)-third-world South Africanness. Preternaturally edgewise, my ghosts refuse to speak otherwise, in that etymology which no longer needs elaboration.

If my experience of diaspora is far from allegorical, what paradigm might be adequate to recounting it? I have chosen here to trace the course of loops crossed in the double strands of wire curled around a fence.[29] Strange loops, as Hofstadter would say—those by which, "moving upwards (or downwards) through the levels of some hierarchical system, we unexpectedly find ourselves right back where we started"[30]—in the long, longing distance. "So long to the land, & not without nostalgia."[31] Some voices (like Arthur Nortje's here, before his death-by-exile) will, I know, retain their power to unsettle me wherever I find myself, for my elsewheres seem to have always been borne on the printed page. The text you are reading traces my passages out/passages in, dispersed among the other texts that have largely mediated my self-perception. Their twisted crossings and recursions say something about mine. I give you no clean breaks, only a story which begins in fits and starts, a resumé of mis-fits and false starts. It differs, tellingly, even from some of the texts that seek to tell it.

Are we, am I, always to be caught in the *fort-da* of a syntax that constantly reworks the "thematic valorization of origin as loss,"[32] the better to rehearse the (male, modernist) heroic transcendence of loss, that masterful redemption inscribed in the text-as-home? "Mamãe, disse ele"—"Mama, he said"—writes Hélène Cixous of Joyce's departures from the motherland, reading their difference through this fragment from Clarice Lispector.[33]

My gendered self, mindful of Shari Benstock's observation that "matria need not leave home to be exiled and expatriated" and heedful of Virginia Woolf's "sudden splitting off of consciousness,"[34] registers suspicion at the embodiments of the motherland which silently underpin our fascination with displacement. "When contexts become congenial to the examination of exile," Esther Fuchs reminds us, "it means among other things that one presupposes, or takes for granted, the concept of home."[35] And not only the concept of home: David Bunn reads the "Coloured" Nortje's exclusion from the symbolic South African national body, like the excluded Blacks about whom Nortje writes, in tandem with his "deep ambiguity about the womb that expelled him as a racially indexed body into apartheid South Africa."[36] Douglas Reid Skinner transforms the inevitable passage from womb to world that makes wanderers of us all into the familiar imperative of attaining critical distance: "There are other, more important reasons for journeying out from one's culture of origin. In the growth of the individual, the passage of birth from the physical womb must be reiterated in a subsequent birth from the mythic, social womb."[37] But their saying "Mamãe" does not coincide with mine, just as the whole phrase is never allowed to coincide with itself: "Mamãe, disse ele. . . . We all have the impression of having already heard it, but otherwise, and in another language. Mater, ait. Mater? Lapsus? No. Lapwing. Or else we have already said it. Mamãe, disse ele. A little sentence like this, at the end of a text, such a sentence to end with, is rare. What is more, it is the sentence of a 'beginner.'"[38]

"Mater? Lapsus?" Or metalepsis, which means to say "present effect attributed to a remote cause" in a "compressed chain of metaphorical reasoning" whose colliding tropes violate narrative levels?[39] I have no defense against the lurking essentialisms that lie in wait around diaspora's corner other than a relentless kind of syntagmatic restlessness, knotted and affirmed in increasingly "tangled hierarchies."[40] Which is highly emblematic of diaspora, in one view—or not, in another—for it violates the continuity of personal narrative, metaleptically, so that our starting points are never just the beginning, so that (like Hofstadter's Achilles) we never simply end up in the right place. In a sense, metalepsis has prefigured this text of mine, which engages it in order to reconfigure more linear paradigms of diaspora strung out between a single hypostatized point of origin and the cataclysm/deliverance of divergence. My personal history precludes the stability of a single originary myth—from which, predictably willful, I

keep my distance.[41] It is much harder to refuse the narratives of loss and redemption, of loss as redemption, which threaten to deflect me from the resolutely mobile productivity of failing to coincide—at any given time, in any given place—with all of my selves. But you do not have to be born into a diaspora to realize that, in Kenneth Surin's words, "our criteria of belonging are always subject to a kind of chaotic motion."[42]

What is cause and what is effect in *this* reading of my diasporic doublings, my double diaspora? I do not claim to know. But I do know this: something has been rent and something else remains to be rendered—a solidarity measured not in a zealous essentialism of "roots," but in the awareness of our distance from them.

The lessons of the long distance have to be learned again, elsewhere. That is to say, here. Now.

Notes

Exchanges with Michael Gluzman, Leon de Kock, Donald Moerdijk, Reingard Nethersole, and Candice Ward palpably frame this text. I thank them, as well as Hannan Hever, Sonja Laden, and Janine Woolfson, for commenting on one of its drafts. The death of my uncle, South African economist Ronnie Bethlehem, shot in the garage of his Johannesburg home during what South African journalism terms a "hijacking," coincided with the writing of this essay and inflects it with a particular burden of memory. As Edward Said says of the exile's knowledge in a secular and contingent world, "Homes are always provisional." In the aftermath of apartheid, yet so close to it that the murderous legacies of forced removal, coerced migrancy, appropriation, and violence still inhere in the South African social body, one acknowledges that acknowledging the provisionality of home—long a fact of life under apartheid—is desperately insufficient.

1 Leon de Kock and Ian Tromp, "Introduction" to *The Heart in Exile: South African Poetry in English, 1990–1995*, ed. Leon de Kock and Ian Tromp (London, 1996), xv–xxi; quotation from xx.

2 Denis Hirson, "The Long-Distance South African," in ibid., 4–12; quotation from 11.

3 John Ash, "World's Floor," in *The Burnt Pages: Poems* (New York, 1991), 92.

4 "A life of exile moves according to a different calendar," observes Edward Said in "Reflections on Exile," in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, ed. Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Cornel West (New York/Cambridge, MA/London, 1990), 357–66; quotation from 366.

5 Denis Hirson, *The House Next Door to Africa* (Cape Town, 1986), 43.

6 See Leo Spitzer's retrieval of this etymology in his discussion of nostalgia's former formal classification as a disease, in "Persistent Memory: Central European Refugees in an Andean Land," *Poetics Today* 17 (1996): 617–38, esp. 620 (special issue on "Creativity and Exile: European/American Perspectives II," ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman).

7 "'People of another house' is the English translation of the Xhosa word employed dur-

ing the early part of the nineteenth century to refer to 'white people,'" according to Clifton Crais, in *The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770–1865* (Johannesburg, 1992), 30.

8 Hirson, *House Next Door to Africa*, 43.

9 Ibid., 26.

10 Jane Marcus notes that "the Latin word for elsewhere is *alibi*. An alibi establishes one's innocence for not having been at the scene of the crime"; "Alibis and Legends: The Ethics of Elsewhereness, Gender and Estrangement," in *Women's Writing in Exile*, ed. Mary Lynn Broe and Angela Ingram (Chapel Hill, NC, and London, 1989), 269–94; quotation from 272. Linda Peckham draws attention to the manner in which the rhetorical self-constructions of White (liberal, intellectual) South Africans have sought to deflect attention away from our complicity in apartheid: "For white South African intellectuals to criticize apartheid means to examine our own positions, our two-tongued/tweetalig selves. To speak about apartheid from the position of observer . . . is part of the contradiction since the matter of my/our identity-as-white represents the central issue, the privileged subject of apartheid. . . . We cannot claim to understand apartheid without then acknowledging a certain self-interest in any rhetoric that sets us apart"; "Ons Stel Nie Belang Nie/We Are Not Interested In: Speaking Apartheid," in Ferguson et al., eds., *Out There*, 367–74; quotation from 367.

11 Ya'akov Fichman, "On Love Poetry in the Literature of Israel," in *Love Poetry in Israel from Ancient Times to the Present* (in Hebrew), ed. Haim Toren, with an introduction by Ya'akov Fichman (Jerusalem, 1955 [1948]), i–xix; quotation from i–ii; my translation.

12 Walter Benjamin, "One-Way Street," in *Selected Writings*, Vol. 1, *1913–1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1997 [1996]), 444–88; quotation from 475.

13 Alan James, "Cape St. Francis: A Visit Prior to Emigration," in de Kock and Tromp, eds., *Heart in Exile*, 175–78; quotation from 177. James shares the sorrow of leaving South Africa with other poets who will find their way into this essay: Christopher Hope, Douglas Reid Skinner, and, of course, Arthur Nortje, though differently.

14 Douglas R. Hofstadter, "Little Harmonic Labyrinth," in *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid. A Metaphorical Fugue on Minds and Machines in the Spirit of Lewis Carroll* (New York, 1989), 103–26; quotation from 125.

15 "The etymology of the word discourse, derived from *discurrere*, suggests a movement 'back and forth' or a 'running to and fro,'" notes Hayden White; "Introduction: Tropology, Discourse, and the Modes of Human Consciousness," in *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore and London, 1982 [1978]), 1–25; quotation from 3.

16 See Said, "Reflections on Exile," 361.

17 Michael Gluzman persuasively analyzes the failure of such Hebrew poets as Alexander Penn and Leah Goldberg to rewrite the home/exile binary from the requisite Zionist perspective of *sh'lilat hagolah*, or "the negation of exile." The "negated site" of Goldberg's European childhood landscape, for instance, is "beautifully familiar," whereas Tel Aviv is a locus of detachment and estrangement; see "Modernism and Exile: A View from the Margins," in *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism*, ed. David Biale, Michael Galchinsky, and Susannah Heschel (Berkeley, 1998).

18 Uri Tzaig, "Grandmother's House," in *The Story Teller* (Berlin, 1994), 92. Tzaig is Hilwah's grandchild, as are my children, Idan and Maya Shabat. We choose not to correct another legacy of border crossing: the imperfect English transliteration of their last name, with its missing "b"; some losses are not productive until they are internalized.

19 Theodor W. Adorno, "On the Question: 'What Is German?,'" *New German Critique*, No. 36 (1985): 125–26.

20 Salman Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands," in *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991* (London, 1991), 9–21; quotation from 12.

21 Michel de Certeau, "Psychoanalysis and Its History," in *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi, foreword by Wlad Godzich (Minneapolis, 1986), 3–16; quotation from 3.

22 "Language of nostalgia" is Lessing's phrase; see "Flavours of Exile," in *A Century of South African Short Stories*, ed. Jean Marquard (Johannesburg, 1978), 258–65, esp. 259. Here the South African narrator's cape gooseberries give her critical leverage against her (Scottish) mother's culinary nostalgia—and brussels sprouts. (The irony of my retrieval of this text is quite deliberate.) For a comparative analysis of Lessing's, Jean Rhys's, and Christina Stead's various negotiations of "home," see Judith Kegan Gardiner, "The Exhilaration of Exile: Rhys, Stead and Lessing," in Broe and Ingram, eds., *Women's Writing in Exile*, 134–50.

23 Christopher Hope, "Heat," in de Kock and Tromp, eds., *Heart in Exile*, 162.

24 I am invoking Homi Bhabha's invocation of Athol Fugard's *Siswe Banzi Is Dead* in "Unpacking My Library Again," *Journal of the Midwest Language Association* 28 (1995): 5–18. "The *minoritization* of a people, no less than its 'nationalization,' exceeds the language of numbers and the majoritarian claim to a 'common good.' It must be seen for what it is: the 'other side,' the alterity, the fantasy of the national 'people-as-one' that disturbs the parochial dream of ascendant authority. Let's spook them to hell!" (17).

25 W. E. B. Du Bois, "Europe 1892–1894," in *The Autobiography of W. E. B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century* (New York, 1968), 154–82; quotation from 175. Paul Gilroy quotes this passage in his insightful discussion of the transcoding by Black historians of the concept of diaspora in Jewish thought; see "'Not a Story to Pass On': Living Memory and the Slave Sublime," in *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA, 1993), 187–223, esp. 211–12.

26 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York, 1970), 211.

27 My various tonalities of "double-crossing" are indebted to J. Hillis Miller, "Slipping Vaulting Crossing: Heidegger," in *Topographies* (Stanford, 1995), 216–54.

28 This modernist and postmodernist trajectory is too well-known to require any extensive inventory; suffice it to mention James Joyce and Jean-François Lyotard as exemplary instances. Two texts that I happen to have read recently can be juxtaposed to suggest the profound sedimentation of this trope. In Radhika Mohanram's "Biculturalism, Postcolonialism, and Identity Politics in New Zealand: An Interview with Anna Yeatman and Kaye Turner," in *Postcolonial Discourse and Changing Cultural Contexts: Theory and Criticism*, ed. Gita Rajan and Radhika Mohanram (Westport, CT, and London, 1995), 189–203, Yeatman says: "I have never felt I belonged in something like race/ethnic terms, and this is a very Jewish state of being in the world. I mean, I always see their

being a dominant group and I'm not of it" (190). In the hands of a dominant group this same trope can serve to channel the very construction of ethnicity, as Patrick Harries shows in analyzing the consequences of the analogy drawn by a nineteenth-century missionary/explorer between the Jews and the so-called Gwamba grouping: "To Henri Berthoud, 'the Gwamba is to other tribes the same as the Jew is to European nations.' In this way Berthoud rightly indicated the exclusion of the 'Gwamba' because of their foreign rites and customs but then imbued an extremely diverse and fragmented conglomeration of refugees with all the political and social rites and customs of Jewery"; "Exclusion, Classification and Internal Colonialism: The Emergence of Ethnicity among the Tsonga Speakers of South Africa," in *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, ed. Leroy Vail (London/Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1989), 82–117; quotation from 90.

29 "This is not a barbed-wire fence we are speaking about," insists expatriate South African writer Dan Jacobson, in "The Private Landscape of Meaning or the Public Landscape of Politics: Stephen Gray Interviews Dan Jacobson," *Kunapipi* 11 (1989): 75–81. "I've never written about this, or even thought about it before, and I don't know why I've suddenly seized on it with such passion. An ordinary fence, an ordinary four-stranded fence. Obviously in the tying of the strands to the fence-post there would be surplus curls of wire each time, which would simply be nipped off, and then would be left as a ring on the strand. . . . I didn't know I'd remembered these until we started talking about them. . . . Because it's never been described, nobody knows about it. Anyway, that was the one responsibility one felt in writing about South Africa" (79–80).

30 Hofstadter, "Introduction: A Musico-Logical Offering," in *Gödel, Escher, Bach*, 3–32; quotation from 10.

31 David Bunn (quoting from Nortje's *Oxford Journal*) in "'Some Alien Native Land': Arthur Nortje, Literary History, and the Body in Exile," *World Literature Today* 70 (1996): 33–40; quotation from 37.

32 Joel Fineman, "The Structure of Allegorical Desire," in *Allegory and Representation*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (Baltimore and London, 1981), 26–60; quotation from 49.

33 Hélène Cixous, "'Mamãe, disse ele,' or, Joyce's Second Hand," trans. Eric Prenowitz, *Poetics Today* 17 (1996): 339–66; quotation from 341 (special issue on "Creativity and Exile: European/American Perspectives I," ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman).

34 Shari Benstock, "Expatriate Modernism: Writing on the Cultural Rim," in Broe and Ingram, eds., *Women's Writing in Exile*, 20–40; quotation from 26. Virginia Woolf says, in *A Room of One's Own* (Harmondsworth, 1945), that "if one is a woman one is often surprised by a sudden splitting off of consciousness, say in walking down Whitehall, when from being the natural inheritor of that civilisation, she becomes, on the contrary, outside of it, alien and critical" (80).

35 Esther Fuchs, "Exiles, Jews, Women, Yordim, I—An Interim Report," in Broe and Ingram, eds., *Women's Writing in Exile*, 295–300; quotation from 300.

36 Bunn, "Some Alien Native Land," 40.

37 Douglas Reid Skinner, "Free Verse, or, Where the Heart Is Full Of," in *Momentum: On Recent South African Writing*, ed. M. J. Daymond, J. U. Jacobs, and Margaret Lenta (Pietermaritzburg, 1984), 307–10; quotation from 308.

38 Cixous, "Mamãe, disse ele," 341.

39 For definitions of "metalepsis," see Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford, 1991), 99. I am also drawing on the fusion of Gérard Genette's theorization of metalepsis as a violation of narrative levels with Hofstadter's strange loops by Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (New York and London, 1987), 120.

40 Hofstadter ("Introduction," 10) uses this term in reference to the system in which a strange loop occurs.

41 "Clutching difference like a weapon to be used with stiffened will, the exile jealously insists on his or her right to refuse to belong" (Said, "Reflections on Exile," 363).

42 Kenneth Surin, "On Producing the Concept of a Global Culture," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 94 (1995): 1179–99; quotation from 1196 (special issue on "Nations, Identities, Cultures," ed. V. Y. Mudimbe).