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INTERFERENCE AND ASPECTS OF REPERTOIRE CONSOLIDATION IN CULTURE[1]

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Questions of cultural contacts and diffusion have long been debated by anthropology and cultural history. Ever since the late nineteenth century the idea of borrowings between cultures stands as a leading explanation for similarities, observed even between geographically remote cultures. Viewing such similarities as silent traces of assumed past contacts and diffusion, this line of study has offered an alternative perspective on cultural *change*, in contradistinction to the deterministic approach of cultural evolutionism. The notions of *diffusion*, *contact*, *acculturation*,[2] or *assimilation*, sometimes referring to partly overlapping phenomena, were elaborated through the 20th century with reference not only to similarities and change, but also to diversity and continuity in cultures. Discussions of these issues address questions of adaptability and cooperativeness of certain groups vs. the rigidity and resistance of others. The context of these discussions is often that of colonial relations between aboriginal peoples and dominating modern European cultures. However, cultural diffusion is also a central issue in the debate over the modes of existence of modern socio-cultural entities in the era of globalization (Appadurai 1991, Hannerz 1992).

In this paper I will attempt to synthesize some of these issues with the general theory of culture. I proceed from the dynamic-*relational* approach in culture research, as presented primarily by works of Norbert Elias, Pierre Bourdieu and Itamar Even-Zohar. All these theories share, either explicitly or implicitly, the idea of cultural *repertoire*, which refers to imaginary tool-kits (Swidler 1986), that is, organized sets of models for both action and perception, which direct individuals' behavior, as members of social groups, in all areas of life. Within this conceptual context, the notion of interference,

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[2] The 1935 milestone definition of acculturation by Redfield, Linton and Herskovits says:

> Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. *N.B.*—Under this definition, acculturation is to be distinguished from *culture-change,* of which it is but one aspect, and *assimilation,* which is at times a phase of acculturation. It is also to be differentiated from *diffusion,* "which, "while occurring in all instances of acculturation, is not only a phenomenon "which frequently takes place without the occurrence of the type of contact between peoples specified in the definition given above, but also constitutes only one aspect of the process of acculturation. (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits 1935: 145-146).

Acculturation is also defined as "the processes whereby one cultural system conquers the minds of an individual or group" (Boyer 2001: 3032).

borrowed from the Czech linguistic Structuralism, has been suggested by Itamar Even-Zohar (1997, 2001) and reformulated by him during the last twenty years, to account for the concrete mechanism of transference and shift of repertoires between different social settings. In this theoretical framework, transference of repertoires is seen as a vital aspect of the dynamic structure of all cultures throughout history. The present research project conducted by Bietak and Goldwasser (Goldwasser 2000) takes, however, a more specific perspective to the subject, concentrating on the ways a veteran, superior, highly canonized local culture, such as that of the ancient Egyptians, was transformed through borrowing from what seems to be a lesser culture of Canaanite invaders. In light of this focus of interest, I shall discuss some aspects of interference in view of the basic tension between innovative and conservative forces in culture.

I. Cultural contacts and the notion of interference

1. The notion of interference has been proposed specifically with reference to situations where goods and practices imported from one culture to another become "domesticated" in the target culture, and generate new local forms of production and consumption. It should therefore not be confused with the contacts and exchange of goods as such. Although interference often results from contacts and exchange between different groups, this is by no means always the case.

2. Broadly speaking, three procedures may take place in intercultural exchange:

(a) Import of goods as tangible objects, tools or materials, such as amphorae, ornaments, wine and food supplies, cloth, domestic animals, etc., – or cars, electrical appliances, and mobile phones, in the modern civilization. This also includes textual products in their original foreign languages, such as journals, records, or films, as well as the use of foreign words and names in the local language.
(b) *Translation* ("translation borrowings", or *calques*), of both linguistic and non-linguistic items, such as translated lyrics or everyday speech idioms, as well as local packaging of imported products, and local branches of all kinds of foreign industry-lines and commercial chains.
(c) A large-scale *reproduction*, that is, implementation of extraneous *models* of cultural production and consumption, such as transportation, agriculture or writing systems, marital and parental relations, home designs, or leisure pastime, etc. When such implementation of imported models takes place, then interference is likely to occur.

2.1. These three procedures may correspond to three phases of the process of interference (though they may also be simultaneously performed). The process normally starts with an import of goods, the next stage "translates" these goods to the local settings, and finally similar goods are eventually produced by local producers under local constraints. At this ultimate stage of cultural interference, the new domestic production is no longer seen as applying an external repertoire but functions as a "naturalized" production, creating a new *local* repertoire. In the case of textual products, such as books or lyrics, "translation" normally refers to what seems to be the obvious procedure of producing linguistic equivalents for the originals in the local languages. However, in principle, the same procedure also occurs when the imported products are non-textual artifacts. Then

"translation" simply means creating imitations of the originals. For example, it is highly plausible that the wheels for the chariots imported by the Hyksos to ancient Egypt were subsequently produced as imitations, before the final stage where the Egyptian engineers had become sufficiently independent to produce a much improved wheel (Rovetta et al. 2000). However, not all imports result in such a substantial transference of models. Hallowell (1945) points out that while many aboriginal peoples almost immediately adopted artifacts and tools provided by the Europeans, almost none of them could ever try imitating the fabrication of such tools (Hallowell 1945: 188). Imported artifacts and tools may be routinely used in the target culture as its standard components (as in the case of tomatoes and potatoes in Europe since the 16th century), sometimes to the point that they become officially recognized as such (for instance, foreign words becoming items in the dictionary), without necessarily inducing the imitation of their generative models, that is, without changing the structure of home repertoire. Such seems to have been the use of Canaanite words that were transplanted, according to Goldwasser (2000) into the Egyptian language before the 18th dynasty.

3. Contacts between two groups may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for interference. Encounters between groups may have many different manifestations. They may be continuous or ephemeral, official or unofficial, coercive and stressful or voluntary and peaceful, confined to certain fields of action or across-the-board. However, there is no a-priori correlation between the volume of the contacts and the transference of repertoires. Often repertoires may be massively transferred to the target culture with the mediation of only few agents. For instance, the adoption of English Romantic attitudes and sentiments by a restricted circle of German intellectuals and literary people during the late 18th century transcended that circle to spread across society, ultimately reaching an enormous effect on the shaping of the modern German culture at large. And conversely, even when two large groups of people come into direct contacts on a regular basis, transference of repertoires does not always occur between them. Such seems to be the case of many immigrant groups who remain rather segregated, with meager receptiveness towards the local cultures and hardly having any impact on them. In fact, interference may even occur between the target and the source cultures without direct contact at all. Sometimes it is the mediation of a *third* party that serves as a (disguised or overt) catalyst for imports or exports (Sela-Sheffy 2003). One such example is the massive reception of Italian-style food material, as well as eating and cooking patterns, indirectly through American cultural repertoire in contemporary Israeli culture. Only after popular Italian-like *American* fast food – with pasta and pizza among its inbuilt components – was rife in the local setting, restricted importation directly from Italy was established as a source of inspiration for *gourmet* cuisine (Calò 2005). In other cases, contacts with one culture may trigger the borrowing from yet another culture (see, e.g., Drory 1991 on the Mozarabic-Castilian-Hebrew case in medieval Spain).

Moreover, interference is often unilateral. This may seem obvious, given the fact that inter-cultural encounters are often shaped by unbalanced power relations of unequal groups. This does not necessarily mean that the target culture is the weaker party in the contact. There are cases where precisely the group endowed with absolute political advantage, through forceful domination over the other, embraces cultural components

from a politically subordinate one, which had accumulated a strongly prestigious and rich repertoire (such as the embracing of Sumerian culture by the Akkadians, Greek culture by the Romans or Galo-Roman by the Francs). But even in cases of reciprocal cultural exchange, if interference takes place at all, its timing, scope and tempo may be different in each of the cultures involved. It seems that there is sufficient evidence for the interference of Egyptian with the Canaanite culture of the Hyksos during the 180 years of the latter's rule over Egypt, but apparently no evidence of the reverse during that period. Only seventy years after the Hyksos' expulsion from Egypt did such a reverse impact become apparent (Goldwasser 2000). The point is that, regardless of the nature of the contacts, when interference occurs, the transferred repertoire is further reproduced in the target culture and persists through later generations that have no longer direct contact with its source. This seems to have been the case of the footprints left by the Hyksos, long after their dominating presence in Egypt had ended.

4. The asymmetry between contacts and interference have led students in the field to discuss interference from the viewpoint of the role it plays in the internal organization and dynamics of the *target* culture, where it serves as constructive factor of *innovation*.

5. From a relational perspective, the notion of culture is understood as an open multiple system of systems (I am referring to Even-Zohar's Polysystem hypothesis; Even-Zohar 1997a), which means that the boundaries of any given cultural entity are, as a rule, less clear-cut than propounded by the official image of this entity. In many cases what is taken to be a discrete culture repertoire (such as that of an established national culture) has a vital function within yet another cultural space. It is impossible to understand the cultural world of German aristocracy and bourgeois intelligentsia throughout the 17th and 18th centuries without its massive use of French language, social etiquette and literary genres, to mention but one example. In this case, then, French repertoire operated as the highbrow layer of German culture; and similar such examples are abundant. Seen in this way, the very notion of "culture" as a well bounded highly focalized entity may seem anachronistic, in that it takes for granted the distinction between what is "inherent" to it and what is not, while in reality culture repertoires are constantly formed and reformed. There is no difference, in this respect, whether exchange occurs between two seemingly distinctive national cultures, or between the various less distinct subcultures, such as those of different ethnic groups, social layers, urban and rural cultural formations, etc, which exist within the fuzzy boundaries of each of these national cultures.

Cultural entities can therefore be better conceived, following Norbert Elias, as dynamic configurations, which, on the one hand, are shaped by the inertial forces of gradual accumulation and consolidation of their repertoires, and on the other hand, are in constant mutation and readjustment, in accordance with the ever changing nets of social interlocking which maintain them (Elias and Dunning 1986). The more a given figuration becomes consolidated, the more dramatic the effect of "crossing the boundaries" may seem. From a historical perspective, however, traces of what in retrospect seems as interference between two distinct cultures may serve as indicators of greater fuzziness and instability in the cultural entities involved.

5.1. What governs the tempo of all these cultural mutations and interferences is a *center–periphery* form of relationships that shapes inter-group encounters in every particular case. This means, in simple words, that from the viewpoint of the receiving culture, borrowing can be made either from a prestigious extraneous source that at that particular point functions as its higher layer, or from a cultural source of lesser status that functions at that point as its peripheral layer.

II. The conditions for interference

From the perspective of the target culture, two mutually dependent conditions determine the interference:

1. **The "receptive attitude",** that is, the willingness of specific agencies in a culture to adopt what is viewed as an external repertoire. This means that at a certain point, extraneous repertoire becomes valuable for a certain social group, which "thinks of itself" as "lacking", or rather, "in need" of it. The most conspicuous instances of this attitude are cases of *culture planning*, which often occur during periods of drastic change, where a deliberate fabrication of a whole new repertoire is attempted within the target social setting. Such were, to take as examples two extreme modern cases that still persist today, the secular revolution in Turkey during the 1920's, or the Zionist revolution and construction of Modern Hebrew culture during the second half of the19th century and early 20th. In both cases, as in many similar ones, the ideology of modernity was there; what was lacking in those traditional societies was the repertoire required for practicing this ideology. Hence the immense energy dedicated in these – and other – cases to appropriation of entire repertoires from external sources of contemporary European cultures, using a large range of components – from official organizational models to models of everyday life. In all such cases, a deliberate predilection for non-indigenous *models* of life, preceded – and directed – the appropriation of extraneous *products* (such as books, cloths, food material, etc.). [3] These borrowed products have served as both the concrete supply for implementing the desired new models, as well as the means of training for the skills required for their continuous reproduction (Even-Zohar 1990a, 1990b; Shavit and Shavit 1977; Toury 1998, 1999, 2002) [4]

[3] The claim here is somehow tricky, in that it is hard to determine whether the "need" precedes the borrowing, or *vice versa*. It may well be argued that, since restricted circles of Jewish intellectuals throughout the second half of the 19th century, or the "Young Turks" in later 19th and early 20th century, were already acquainted with a European educated cultural environment, the idea of enlightened secular national culture appealed to them as part of the repertoire they already (at least partly) mastered. This means that these people had actually acted as competent agents in both cultures, and although they were not in the position to become fully socially integrated, or to take leading roles in the source cultural environment, they were still able to use the expertise they acquired from it as their distinctive capital in their home societies.

[4] Seen in more general terms, instances of culture planning are extreme cases of an avant-garde attitude that may be in principle also quite regular in less dramatic situations, with less distinct nationalist agendas. However, receptiveness for extraneous repertoires is not always so sweeping and intentional. It may also be pertinent in situations where a certain group has to cope in a new cultural environment, as in cases of immigration, or groups under occupation. But in such cases, receptiveness does not necessarily predominate; often groups may retain their home culture – and overstress its distinctiveness – precisely as means of "gaining a seat at the common table" (Boyer 2001).

1.1. In all of these different social circumstances, the appropriation of extraneous repertoire is a means of claiming status, through demonstrating high aspirations and ability, and the possession of new precious goods and expertise, a strategy no less powerful than monopolizing the well established domestic repertoire. The question is how far this pursuit of novelty can go, and how effective it can be in a given cultural figuration. Such openness is never an overall general tendency, but one restricted to certain social sectors, usually balanced by an opposed tendency of other sectors to conform to domestic repertoire and reject innovations. This basic tension between conservatism and innovativeness may be best illustrated through the ambiguous notion of "provincialism" in its popular derogatory use in public discourses in so many cultures: This term may refer either to a syndrome of cultural isolation and backwardness, or conversely, to an exaggerated pursuit of "world culture" through which local legacies are allegedly overlooked, and imitation overshadows domestic creative forces.

1.2. According to Bourdieu (1980), the greater the accumulated capital of agents in a specific field, the more firmly they adhere to established repertoires, while newly arrived agents tend to take what Bourdieu calls a revolutionary stance. Along this line, Grant McCracken (1990) analyzed the "patina strategy", that is, the use of things with patina by high-standing American families, to show the longevity of their wealth, as means of distinguishing themselves from wealthy subordinate groups. In reaction, the latter, "unable to use patina, [are forced to] use its terrible rival, fashion" (ibid. 42). However, McCracken also shows that these conflicting tendencies may often be reversed, namely, that orthodoxy may often be precisely the attitude of those in inferior positions, who do not have sufficient cultural capital to speculate on, and hence are forced to demonstrate maximal compliance with the existing prevailing repertoire, to be admitted to a certain culture field. Whereas innovations may often be the privilege of senior capital-holders as the only means of sustaining their advantage: when status markers like the patina are largely appropriated by newly arrived, superordinate groups are caught in a "chase and flight" cycle of fashion, to recreate their distinction (McCracken 1990: 40). In all events, according to this view, the incentive to import and innovate is primarily the social need to create prestige, rather than just an instrumental need of new technologies (Renfrew 1986).

2. **The accessibility of non-indigenous repertoires**. Even when a receptive attitude predominates in a culture, the adoption of extraneous repertoires is nevertheless selective. The very fact that such repertoires may be available – that is, physically present in a certain environment – does not necessarily mean that they are also actually *accessible* to all people in this environment as viable options for modeling their own ways in life. Available repertoires may be overlooked, or deliberately rejected for ideological reasons or less dramatic considerations of taste. And the same can happen when the extraneous repertoire is made available by a politically dominating group.[5] The accessibility or non-

[5] An example would be the disregard of British culture by the mainstream Jewish community during the thirty years of the British Mandate in Palestine, in spite of this community's fascination with modernity. People normally could not and even would not speak English (certainly less than they do today, when British domination has long been terminated), and local high culture as well as everyday practices were more oriented toward Middle-European and French models, through the mediation of East-European –

accessibility of repertoires depends not only on the status of the source culture as a whole, but also on that of specific practices in particular. For instance, the predilection of many societies today for things American is obvious with regard to everyday popular cultural production, but may be undecided with regard to practices of higher aspirations. A case in point is the unequal reception of the various American fast food chains around the world: while McDonald's has become a standard food facility in many cultural settings, Starbuck coffee shops has not. In the Israeli case, according to experts in the industry, these coffee shops have not been able to compete with the prevailing local taste for sophisticated European-oriented coffee and cafés (Coussin 2003).

III. Strategies of interference and naturalization

1. Even when interference seems to be widespread and spontaneous, it still requires the involvement of specific agencies that are responsible for the import and incorporation of innovations, be they official position-holders in large-scale centralized organizations, or local unofficial opinion-leaders. In light of the basic tension between orthodoxy and innovativeness, as described above, the action of these agencies is governed by two general opposing strategies of incorporating the imported repertoires, as follows:

1.1. *Domestication* of imported *artifacts* through their adaptation to patterns of production and consumption inscribed by the local repertoire (in which process the "transplanted" artifacts are often remodeled so as to fit to new functions). In many cases, items borrowed from another culture are depleted of their regular "practical" functions (Even-Zohar 1990), and attain a bare semiotic function of marking their value, and thereby the status of those who possess them. The Russian ethnographer and semiotician Pëtr Bogatyrëv illustrated this shift of functions by the transformed use of galoshes in a Moravian village during early 20th century (Bogatyrëv 1936). While relocated in the rural cultural setting, the regular (unmarked) urban use of galoshes as water-resistant device had vanished, and they became pure embellishment accessories signalizing festivity and prestige. A similar claim is forcefully put forward by Colin Renfrew (1986) with regard to the use of metals in ancient Europe. Their earliest use in the receiving cultures was as status symbols, connected with display and prestige, and only later have they been adjusted to be utilized as useful commodities.

1.2. *Adoption of and adaptation to* extraneous *models*, by way of which the domestic repertoire is transformed. In this process, a whole set of new cultural options ("ways of doing – and conceptualizing – things") unfolds in the local cultural setting, inducing also changes in adjacent practices, thus transforming the internal organization and stratification of the local culture. As pointed out by Even-Zohar (1997), it is not the magnitude of flow of goods from one culture to the other, as such, that determines this process, but the creation of the need of these goods, which make them accepted as natural

mainly Russian – culture which dominated the idea of "Culture" at the time. Indeed, in certain fields of Israeli culture, British-mandate "imprint" can still be traced even today, and precisely in those fields where models were formally imposed by the British authorities, such as the realm of law, or in the systems of roads and streets. It seems, however, that these few British footprints that are still visible in Israel function more like inertial relics of the once ruling administration than as actively generative models governing the ongoing cultural production in Israel today.

and indispensable in the target culture. As an illustration, Even-Zohar takes the incorporation of black pepper in Western cookery. Its import to Europe from the East in the Middle Ages induced the formation of a taste for seasoning in general, in the context of which the use of pepper, as well as of other spices, seems now a necessity.

2. These two strategies do not exclude each other; rather, they are two complementary aspects of the same process of incorporating innovations from the "outside". The chances that the one strategy or the other will predominate in each specific case depend on the extent to which a given cultural field or practice is controlled by a solid canon (by a "solid canon" I mean a durable body of sanctioned models and artifacts, widely recognized as this field's both *epitome* and *guidelines*; see Sela-Sheffy 2002).

A convincing test case for examining these two strategies is provided by the study of translation (Even-Zohar 1990c; Even-Zohar and Toury 1981; Toury 1977, 1999, and others). In this field of study, translation is approached both as a *general metaphor* for cultural import and interference in all areas of life, and at the same time as a major *particular channel* through which interference takes place. Studies of literary translation show that translators usually tend to exhibit cautious conformity with prevailing domestic norms both in style and content, and to "convert" the texts, even at the expense of massive alternations, omissions and insertions. Whereas in non-canonized textual production, such as advertisements, journals, technical manuals, TV series, etc., violation of domestic norms, including the use of foreign items in their original form, is far more tolerated. In other words, while in the literary field, translators, acting as cultural importers, assume the role of guardians of the canon, in the other fields, such commitment is not imposed on them, at least not to the same extent. However, even in literary translations, in certain cases, and at certain periods, translators would nevertheless demonstrate greater freedom to retain in their outputs foreign features of the source texts. In such cases, these translators may either be discredited as incompetent, or granted the role of pioneers, thereby increasing the potential of their work as an innovative factor in the context of the target literature.

3. It emerges from this example that in every cultural setting there operate in principle two categories of value and prestige makers who determine the pace and fate of inter-cultural interferences. These are different functions, which may be fulfilled by either different or the same institutions and persons.

3.1. One such category is that of *Trendsetters*. These may be official and non-official agencies; in modern times these are magazines, radio stations, TV shows, specific shops and social clubs, etc. These agencies are responsible for a short term coronation of updated fashions. In this sphere the pursuit of innovation becomes a declared ideology, and borrowing from what are taken to be external cultural resources is strongly endorsed. Evidently, this process entails an accelerated market change, with the new items either quickly vanishing or being routinized. The faster their routinization, the more pressing is the need of yet newer items to replace them (Gladwell 1997). Following the analysis of Bruce Ryan and Neal Gross (1943), the spread of trends is usually described as a gradual process, starting with the adoption of new items by restricted circles of adventurous

"innovators", followed by slightly larger groups of "early adopters", which are the respected opinion leaders in a community. These items are then less rapidly distributed by ever-growing circles of "early majority" and "late majority" who imitate the former, until they are finally accepted by the "laggards", the most traditional of all, at which point they become non-distinct widespread popular goods. Only the "innovators" react directly to the work of the importers. As this sequence expands, the diffusion of new items becomes entirely interpersonal.

3.2. The other category is that of *Canonizers*. These are usually the more traditional official institutions in a society. In modern times these may be systems of education, national academies, museums, encyclopedias, etc. These agencies are responsible for the long-term consolidation of repertoires and securing of their value. They do that by various ways of accumulating and preserving repositories of selected production, using them as precast models. The longer and more complex their action, the less conspicuous are its traces, and hence more "natural" its consequences are believed to be. In the final analysis, for an imported repertoire to persist in the target culture, it has to be bestowed with legitimacy by canonizing agencies.

4. When the power of the canonizers outweighs that of the trendsetters, the relevant field (or entire cultural figuration) may undergo stagnation. This is more likely to occur in cultural fields of rigid social equilibrium and extreme centralization.[6] Yet, it is hard to imagine a functioning cultural figuration where all channels of interference and innovation are practically blocked. In fact, there is often a discrepancy between the actual ups and downs of the cultural market and the way they are – or are not – labeled and presented in the long lasting canonized repositories of a certain culture. Sometimes, what may be seen from the outside as an extremely stagnant culture, disguises changes that actually occur, without the canonizers' recognition. Such is, for instance, the case of the Jewish extreme orthodox in Israel: whereas a scrutiny of the life of this community reveals considerable borrowings of modern consumer-culture models from the secular Israeli environment, spokesmen of this community demonstrate utter rejection of the latter, insisting on adherence to their conservative repertoire (Caplan and Sivan 2003). In the same vein, Rina Drory (1991) has shown that efforts of canonization may increase precisely in times of change, when established models may be displaced by new ones, adopted from new cultures. One of her examples is the manifesto of Hebrew poetics, *Book of Studies and Discussions,* written in the 12th century by the Hebrew poet Moses Ibn-Ezra. This book was intended as a guide for the "exemplary work of Hebrew poetry" to follow Arabic models. However, the cultural sphere in which this book was written was no longer that of the Jewish community in Arabic Spain, where Arabic culture served as a dominant desirable source, but rather that of the Jews in Christian Spain, where the Arabic literary legacy was less and less adhered to.

[6] This point has been put forward by Norbert Elias in his analysis of French Court culture during the 17th and 18th centuries (Elias 1994 [1939]). Elias argued that during this period of time Court manners have reached the point of maximal consolidation, as a result of several centuries of their increased codification through books of etiquette and other forms of social control, so that by that time they became so strictly perpetuated, that deviating from them meant risking severe social sanctions.

4.1. As a rule, in heterogeneous and less centralized cultural figurations, there is usually a delicate balance, induced by social competition and market dynamics, between these two forces (trendsetters and canonizers), which brings about a *dynamic stability*. On the one hand, when the chase of external novelties becomes the name of the game, trendsetters may compete with one another precisely by demonstrating conservatism and recycling domestic old-fashion models, which in this context operate as markers of an ultra revolutionary attitude (i.e., what is often called “retro style"). From the opposite perspective, canonizing institutions readjust from time to time their standards, and confer canonicity on repertoires that until then were unacknowledged, so as to close the gap with the continuing flow of imported repertoires promoted by trendsetters. This process is evidently belated, as retrospect recognition can only be conferred on repertoires that persist long enough to become fairly established. Such may have been the case of the belated adoption of Canaanite cultural models brought to ancient Egypt with the Hyksos, by agencies of the long-standing highly canonized Egyptian culture.

5. Finally, in light of the ever-mutating nature of cultural figurations, in any particular case of interference, the receiving cultural core maintains, as I mentioned earlier, a kind of center-periphery relations with its source. In cases of long-lasting highly canonized cultural figurations, innovations are likely to be borrowed from extraneous sources of lesser status that are located at the marginal layers of this culture. The lesser-ranked models of these sources are then being relabeled and gain value in the target culture as “exotic”, ”authentic”, or whatever attributes stemming from the ideal of freshness that underlies the competition between trendsetters. Their naturalization in the target culture is nevertheless a prolonged process, since they have to be authorized by stronger canonizing agencies. On the other hand, cases where the extraneous repertoire comes from a prestigious source that operates as the higher layer of the receiving culture are typical to fields with weaker consecrating agencies, or fields where a powerful canon is not (yet) extant at all (this is the case of many practices of everyday life, and fields of popular cultural production). In such cases, the naturalization of borrowed innovations may be rapid. In these cases, the trendsetters are people who are also able to act as competent actors in the source culture. Employing in the target culture models they acquire from a higher-ranked source is for them a means of upgrading the status of the target cultural production to that of potential canon, and hence a way of promoting themselves to the position of senior consecrating agencies in the domestic arena.

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