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Synthesis or Absence:

The Cultural Code in Alexander Chantsev's *Yellow Angus*

Yellow Angus [orig. *Жёлтый Ангус*] (2018) is a collection of short stories by Russian japanologists, writer, essayist, and literary critic Alexander Chantsev. This book consists of two seemingly culturally defined parts: *Time of the Cicadas* [orig. *Время цикад*] – “the hard – hitting stories about Japan,” and *Humus Horizons* [orig. *Гумусовый горизонт*] – “the reflective adventures in the Moscow dacha.” However, the division of the book into the Japanese part and the Russian part is conditional, since the cultural coordinates in them are intentionally shifted and ambiguous. It can be seen in the plots, intertextual allusions, on the character and metaphorical levels, and indeed in language. Thus, for instance, *Yellow Angus* is formally a multilingual work, but because of the inserts in English, not Japanese, as one would assume. Japanese in the book is invisible and appears implicitly through the interlingual homonymy. At the same time, it is in the second – supposedly Russian – part that the Russian language is used from such a distance that it seems foreign. These and some other significant peculiarities of Alexander Chantsev's translingual poetics can be seen as forms of cultural codification, potentially aimed either at recreating an *unknown* cultural code, irreducible to the sum of its components or at the verbal representation of the *absence* of any cultural certainties. The study aims to explore this moving and elusive cultural code in *Yellow Angus* in its architectonic function.