### K-1

#### Criticizing boundaries does not challenge the current system, but merely creates the ideal system envisioned by liberal capitalism

Prozorov, Research Fellow at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland**, in ‘8**

[Sergei, “De-Limitation: The Denigration of Boundaries in the Political Thought of Late Modernity” in The Geopolitics of European Identity, ed. Noel Parker, pg. 30]

Another important symptom of the erasure of societal division is the displacement of the theme of class struggle in “left-wing” critical theory. The discourse of the Third Way is most emblematic of this tendency, not merely in its reluctant acceptance of the maxims of neo-liberal capitalism, but also in its communitarian pathos of inclusion, solidarity and demo- cratic equality (Giddens 1998; cf. Rose 2000). The same tendency is at work in more “radical” tendencies of critical theory, e.g. Hardt and Negri’s Deleuzian Marxism, which supplants the concrete image of class struggle with a highly abstract vision of the resistance of the global “multitude” to the mechanisms of the empire, posited not as a social class, but as a self- propelling abstract machine of capitalist expansion (Hardt and Negri 2000, 2004; cf. Thoburn 2003). The multitude, undifferentiated in its plen- itude of absolute diversity, faces not its social antagonist, but an anony- mous network of subjection. Both forces are in Hardt and Negri’s account unbounded, constituted by the dissolution of identities, fragmentation of communities, and the erasure of boundaries. The same unbounded politi- cal imagination characterizes much of contemporary left-wing thought: from the naïve valorization of “electronic democracy,” “cyber-commu- nism,” and other derivations of a better future via technological innova- tions, to more sophisticated Derridean visions of the perpetually deferred “democracy to come,” whose central feature is a non-exclusive and limitless orientation more cosmopolitan than cosmopolitanism itself (Derrida 1996, 2005; Nancy 1991). The last approach is clearly attuned to the paradoxes and aporias that plague any cosmopolitan project; yet, this awareness does not lead it to abandon the ideal, but rather to maintain it in a deconstructed, destabi- lized state so that any discourse on “democracy to come” “will always be aporetic in its structure (force without force, incalculable singularity and calculable equality, commensurability and incommensurability, heteron- omy and autonomy” (Derrida 2005, 86). For all their philosophical sophistication, the political significance of these formulas for critical thought is exhausted in reiterating the anti-exclusionary, universalist, and cosmopolitan maxims of contemporary global liberal-democratic capital- ism in the vain hope that their left-wing context will somehow enhance their subversiveness. In fact, we may observe a striking parallel between the “alternative” forms of sociopolitical order articulated in contemporary critical thought, and the object of their criticism: a universal non-exclusive community of cosmopolitan democracy is an ideal form of the polit- ical organization of liberal capitalism, which, as we know from Marx, abhors all boundaries and distinctions and excludes nothing from its modus operandi.

#### Erasing borders is not a world of absolute inclusion- instead it leads to unlimited and endless violence of a world police state in order to erase the ontological necessity of pluralism that makes resistance inevitable and imposible. The political Gesutre of the Kritik is a way to erase the other and brings about worst most violent state of nature.

Prozorov, Research Fellow at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland, in ‘8

[Sergei, “De-Limitation: The Denigration of Boundaries in the Political Thought of Late Modernity” in The Geopolitics of European Identity, ed. Noel Parker, pg. 34-6]

For Schmitt, the immanentist orientation of modern political theology, through the effacement of sovereign transcendence, inevitably renders it anti-political by virtue of its negation of any outside to the immanent order of being (cf. Ewald 1992; Ojakangas 2004). This negation of the out- side may be conceptualized at two levels. In terms of political ontology, immanentism necessarily disavows its own origins, which must logically be decisionist and exceptional, i.e., exterior to the plane of immanence of the internal organization of order. Every order is constituted by a founding rupture that dispenses with the previously existing order and inaugurates the new order, without itself being part of either. In the ontological sense, the outside of order, disavowed in immanentist thought, is that marginal excess that constitutes the form of order by escaping from it, that supple- ment which simultaneously sustains and undermines the existence of order, the sovereign decision that institutes order, while remaining unsubsumed under its principles (see Schmitt 1985; Derrida 1992). The dis- avowal of the sovereign foundation is thus the negation of the boundary that ultimately separates order from itself, and thus, in the well-known Derridean argument, prevents its closure and consolidation into a “self- propelling machine.” On the ontic level, the negation of the outside takes place through the effacement of the fundamental spatio-temporal pluralism of political orders in the project of world unity, for which there are no longer “friends” and “enemies,” both of whom are legitimate equals to the self in the pluralistic domain of the international. What remains is only the self-immanent self that is to be elevated to the universal status and the obscene excess of the “foe,” whose resistance to forcible incorporation into world unity serves as a justification for its annihilation. The logic of world unity is marked by a persistent attempt at the erasure of all dividing lines between individuals and political communities and, thus, the merger of the self and the other in the final reign of benign universality. There is no longer a place (literally as well as figuratively) for the exclusion of the other, simply because there is no longer any “otherness” in the system which operates with the all-inclu- sive category of humanity (Schmitt 1976; Kervegan 1999). For Schmitt, the horrifying consequence of world unity would be the elimination of all pluralism and, hence, the impossibility of difference, “otherness,” and, in concretely spatial terms, the outside. A unified world is a world, which is impossible to leave in any other manner than by discon- tinuing one’s own existence. “Freedom is freedom of movement, nothing else. What would be terrifying is a world in which there no longer existed an exterior but only a homeland, no longer space for measuring and test- ing one’s strength freely?” (Schmitt 1988, 243). The problem with world unity, however, is more than the sacrifice of pluralism. The world, “in which there is only a homeland,” is, in Schmitt’s diagnosis, a dystopic “world police power,” to which the romantic connotations of “homeland” barely apply: “The day world politics comes to the earth, it will be trans- formed in a world police power” (Schmitt, cited in Petito 2004, 6). For Schmitt, pluralistic antagonism between states in an international society is infinitely preferable to the technological nihilism of world domination, which mindlessly pushes for ever-greater integration, oblivious to the fact that world unity can serve the most obscene of purposes: after all, “the Kingdom of Satan is also a unity” (Schmitt, cited in Ojakangas 2004, 80). “In a spiritual world ruled by the law of pluralism, a piece of concrete order is more valuable than any empty generalizations of a false totality. For it is an actual order, not a constructed and imaginary abstraction . . . It would be a false pluralism, which played world-comprehending totalities off against the concrete actuality of such plural orders” (Schmitt 1999, 206). The effacement of the outside only serves to endow a necessarily par- ticularistic unity with a universality that elevates it above its numerous equals in the pluralistic ontology of the international, and consequently opens a path for global police domination by what, by logical necessity, remains merely one political force in the world. The borderless world, tele- ologically presupposed in much contemporary political discourse, is, in a Schmittian analysis, a world of infinite self-certitude and arrogance, unbounded violence of the subjection of particular political entities to the pseudo-universal ideal and unlimited “world police power” over a world that remains ontologically pluralistic and, thus, will inevitably resist its subjection

Our alternative is to embrace the political and reject absolute enmity.

#### Only rejection the ethics of obligation prevents annihilation of difference and unending violence. We should embrace the space of the political through the endorsement

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[Dr. Louiza, Against Ethics? Iconographies of Enmity and Acts of Obligation in Carl Schmitt’s Theory of the Partisan, *Practices of Ethics: Relating/Responding to Difference in International Politics* Annual Convention, International Studies Association, March 22]

The paper ends with a discussion of obligation. Outlining the contours of a notion of political, rather, than ethical obligation, however, may require some explicit distancing from the now-familiar accounts that have oriented critical ‘ethical’ endeavours for some time. So we ask again the ethical question which has haunted us: from whence does obligation originate? Were we to be still enthralled by a Levinasian or generally any ‘other-beholden’ thought of being ‘hostage’ to the other, we might say that the face to face encounter installs obligation before representation, knowledge and other ‘Greek’ relationalities (Levinas 1989: 76–77; Odysseos 2007a: 132-151).Caputo, however, warns us off this kind of commitment to a notion of perfectible or total obligation. He asks that we recognise that ‘one is always inside/outside obligation, on its margins. On the threshold of foolishness. Almost a perfect fool for the Other. But not quite; nothing is perfect’ (1993: 126). The laudable but impossible perfectibility of ethics and ethical obligation to the other must be rethought. This is because ‘one is hostage of the Other, but one also keeps an army, just in case’ (ibid.).Caputo is not speaking as a political realist in this apparently funny comment. He is pointing, I suggest, to the centrality of politics and enmity. Obligation is not to the other alone; it is also to the radical possibility of openness of political order, which allows self and other to be ‘determined otherwise’ (Prozorov 2007a). Analytically, we also want to know the tactics and subjective effects of being directed towards enforced freedom. In this way, we might articulate a political and concrete act obligation that is inextricably tied to freedom that is not ‘enforced’, that is not produced for us, or as ‘us’.

With Schmitt, one might say that obligation points practically (i.e. politically) to the‘relativisation of enmity’. Obligation may not, however, be towards the enemy as such, for the enemy is the pulse of the political – so long as the enemy is relative (yet can be killed) in the order, the openness of the order can be vouched safe in the disruption of the absolutism of its immanence (Ojakangas 2007; Schmitt 1995a). We might, then, recast Schmitt’s conception of the political (which he regards as coming into being in the decision which distinguishes between friend and enemy) through his later emphasis in Theory of the Partisan on the politically normative significance of the relativisation of enmity. In other words, we might say that what needs to remain possible is the constant struggle ‘between constituent and constituted power’(Beasley-Murray 2005: 221) in both society and also world order.

It is important to identify the ethical and governmental project of enforced freedom because doing so allows us to think of obligation as related to a different freedom: freedom as resistance (not freedom as an attribute). Prozorov suggests that an ‘ontology of concrete freedom’ relies on ‘freedom of potentiality of being other wise’,of being able to ‘to assert one’s power as a living being against the power, whose paradigm consists in the “care of the living”’ (2007a: 210-211). This assumes, however, first, that resistance lies in the ‘refusal of biopolitical care that affirms the sovereign power of bare life’ ((Prozorov 2007a: 20) and, second, that there is a sort of ‘radical freedom of the human being that precedes governmental care’ (Prozorov2007a: 110). I argue in conclusion, however, that freedom as resistance is still too limited; it may still be, despite all attempts, lured back to a thinking of an essence: of that prior state of pre-governmental production of subjectivity, which in actuality does not exist. Rather, Foucault’s brief intervention on the issue of obligation (2001b) through the International Committee against Piracy points to ‘a radically interdependent

relationship with practices of governmentality’ (Campbell 1998: 516) to which we are all subjected, here understood in the proper Greek sense of our subjectivity being predicated on governmental practice (cf. Odysseos 2007a: 4). ‘We are all members of the community of the governed and thereby obliged to show mutual solidarity’, Foucault had argued, as against obligation understood within modern humanism (Foucault 2001b: 474; emphasis added). This obligation which he invokes simply exists (es gibt), as Heidegger might say. We would add that Schmitt’s account of the transition from ‘real’ to ‘absolute’ enmity in the twentieth century and his demand that ‘the enemy is not something to be eliminated out of a particular reason, something to be annihilated as worthless..’ must be read in this way (Schmitt2004: 61): as speaking for the need to ward off the shutting down of politics. That is why Schmitt’s two iconographies rest precisely on two extremes: the mythic narratives of an order open to enmity as its exteriority, which guarantees pluriversal openness, on the one hand, and the absolute immanence of order where ‘absolute enmity driv[es] the political universe’ on the other hand (Goodson 2004b: 151).This is a notion of a world-political obligation that ‘is a kind of *skandalon* for ethics, which makes ethics blush, which it must reject or expel in order to maintain its good name…’ (Caputo 1993: 5). This obligation is articulated for the openness that enmity brings; it attends to the other as enemy by allowing, against ethics, for the continued but changeable structurations of the field of politics, of politics as pluriverse.

### K-2

#### Starting politics from the standpoint of an excluded identity-group is a vengeful politics of resentment – it can only position itself reactively against an ostensible universal like <whiteness>, inevitably re-instantiating the terms of oppression

A – Focusing on suffering means your identity becomes dependent on that notion i.e. exclusion

B – they gain pleasure from reliving the suffering because it is their form of revenge

C – we must use a community as a place to discuss best forms of political action

D – the affirmative is “MY suffering” when it should be “OUR suffering”

Bhambra, 10 – Warwick AND Victoria Margree School of Humanities, U Brighton (Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’, http://www.academia.edu/471824/Identity\_Politics\_and\_the\_Need\_for\_a\_Tomorrow\_)

2 The Reification of Identity We wish to turn now to a related problem within identity politicsthat can be best described as the problem of the reiﬁcation of politicised identities. Brown (1995) positions herself within thedebate about identity politics by seeking to elaborate on “the wounded character of politicised identity’s desire” (ibid: 55); thatis, the problem of “wounded attachments” whereby a claim to identity becomes over-invested in its own historical suffering and perpetuates its injury through its refusal to give up its identity claim. Brown’s argument is that where politicised identity is founded upon an experience of exclusion, for example, exclusion itself becomes perversely valorised in the continuance of that identity. In such cases, group activity operates to maintain and reproduce the identity created by injury (exclusion) rather than– and indeed, often in opposition to – resolving the injurious social relations that generated claims around that identity in the ﬁrst place. If things have to have a history in order to have af uture, then the problem becomes that of how history is con-structed in order to make the future. To the extent that, for Brown, identity is associated primarily with (historical) injury, the future for that identity is then already determined by the injury “as both bound to the history that produced it and as a reproach to the present which embodies that history” (ibid 1995: 73). Brown’s sug-gestion that as it is not possible to undo the past, the focus back- wards entraps the identity in reactionary practices, is, we believe,too stark and we will pursue this later in the article. Politicised identity, Brown maintains, “emerges and obtains its unifying coherence through the politicisation of exclusion from an ostensible universal, as a protest against exclusion” (ibid: 65). Its continuing existence requires both a belief in the legitimacy of the universal ideal (for example, ideals of opportunity, and re- ward in proportion to effort) and enduring exclusion from those ideals. Brown draws upon Nietzsche in arguing that such identi-ties, produced in reaction to conditions of disempowerment andinequality, then become invested in their own impotence through practices of, for example, reproach, complaint, and revenge. These are “reactions” in the Nietzschean sense since they are substitutes for actions or can be seen as negative forms of action. Rather than acting to remove the cause(s) of suffering, that suf-fering is instead ameliorated (to some extent) through “the estab-lishment of suffering as the measure of social virtue” (ibid 1995:70), and is compensated for by the vengeful pleasures of recrimi-nation. Such practices, she argues, stand in sharp distinction to –in fact, provide obstacles to – practices that would seek to dispel the conditions of exclusion. Brown casts the dilemma discussed above in terms of a choicebetween past and future, and adapting Nietzsche, exhorts theadoption of a (collective) will that would become the “redeemer of history” (ibid: 72) through its focus on the possibilities of creat-ing different futures. As Brown reads Nietzsche, the one thingthat the will cannot exert its power over is the past, the “it was”.Confronted with its impotence with respect to the events of thepast, the will is threatened with becoming simply an “angry spec-tator” mired in bitter recognition of its own helplessness. The onehope for the will is that it may, instead, achieve a kind of mastery over that past such that, although “what has happened” cannotbe altered, the past can be denied the power of continuing to de-termine the present and future. It is only this focus on the future, Brown continues, and the capacity to make a future in the face of human frailties and injustices that spares us from a rancorous decline into despair. Identity politics structured by ressentiment – that is, by suffering caused by past events – can only break outof the cycle of “slave morality” by remaking the present againstthe terms of the past, a remaking that requires a “forgetting” of that past. An act of liberation, of self-afﬁrmation, this “forgettingof the past” requires an “overcoming” of the past that offers iden-tity in relationship to suffering, in favour of a future in whichidentity is to be deﬁned differently. In arguing thus, Brown’s work becomes aligned with a posi-tion that sees the way forward for emancipatory politics as re-siding in a movement away from a “politics of memory” (Kilby 2002: 203) that is committed to articulating past injustices andsuffering. While we agree that investment in identities prem-ised upon suffering can function as an obstacle to alleviating the causes of that suffering, we believe that Brown’s argument as outlined is problematic. First, following Kilby (2002), we share a concern about any turn to the future that is ﬁgured as a complete abandonment of the past. This is because for those who have suffered oppression and exclusion, the injunction to give up articulating a pain that is still felt may seem cruel and impossible to meet. We would argue instead that the “turn to the future” that theorists such as Brown and Grosz callfor, to revitalise feminism and other emancipatory politics, need not be conceived of as a brute rejection of the past. Indeed, Brown herself recognises the problems involved here, stating that [since] erased histories and historical invisibility are themselves suchintegral elements of the pain inscribed in most subjugated identities[then] the counsel of forgetting, at least in its unreconstructedNietzschean form, seems inappropriate if not cruel (1995: 74). She implies, in fact, that the demand exerted by those in painmay be no more than the demand to exorcise that pain throughrecognition: “all that such pain may long for – more than revenge– is the chance to be heard into a certain release, recognised intoself-overcoming, incited into possibilities for triumphing over, and hence, losing itself” (1995: 74-75). Brown wishes to establish the political importance of remembering “painful” historical events but with a crucial caveat: that the purpose of remembering pain is to enable its release . The challenge then, according to her,is to create a political culture in which this project does not mutate into one of remembering pain for its own sake. Indeed, if Brown feels that this may be “a pass where we ought to part with Nietzsche” (1995: 74), then Freud may be a more suit-able companion. Since his early work with Breuer, Freud’s writ-ings have suggested the (only apparent) paradox that remember-ing is often a condition of forgetting. The hysterical patient, who is doomed to repeat in symptoms and compulsive actions a past she cannot adequately recall, is helped to remember that trau-matic past in order then to move beyond it: she must remember inorder to forget and to forget in order to be able to live in the present. 7 This model seems to us to be particularly helpful for thedilemma articulated by both Brown (1995) and Kilby (2002),insisting as it does that “forgetting” (at least, loosening the holdof the past, in order to enable the future) cannot be achieved without ﬁrst remembering the traumatic past. Indeed, this wouldseem to be similar to the message of Beloved , whose central motif of haunting (is the adult woman, “Beloved”, Sethe’s murderedchild returned in spectral form?) dramatises the tendency of theunanalysed traumatic past to keep on returning, constraining, asit does so, the present to be like the past, and thereby, disallow-ing the possibility of a future different from that past. As Sarah Ahmed argues in her response to Brown, “in order to break the seal of the past, in order to move away from attach-ments that are hurtful, we must ﬁrst bring them into the realm of political action” (2004: 33). We would add that the task of analys-ing the traumatic past, and thus opening up the possibility of political action, is unlikely to be achievable by individuals on their own, but that this, instead, requires a “community” of participants dedicated to the serious epistemic work of rememberingand interpreting the objective social conditions that made up thatpast and continue in the present. The “pain” of historical injury is not simply an individual psychological issue, but stems from objective social conditions which perpetuate, for the most part, forms of injustice and inequality into the present. In sum, Brown presents too stark a choice between past andfuture. In the example of Beloved with which we began thisarticle, Paul D’s acceptance of Sethe’s experiences of slavery asdistinct from his own, enable them both to arrive at new under-standings of their experience. Such understanding is a way of partially “undoing” the (effects of) the past and coming to terms with the locatedness of one’s being in the world (Mohanty 1995). As this example shows, opening up a future, and attending to theongoing effects of a traumatic past, are only incorrectly under-stood as alternatives. A second set of problems with Brown’s critique of identity poli-tics emerge from what we regard as her tendency to individualise social problems as problems that are the possession and theresponsibility of the “wounded” group. Brown suggests that the problems associated with identity politics can be overcome through a “shift in the character of political expression and politi-cal claims common to much politicised identity” (1995: 75). She deﬁnes this shift as one in which identity would be expressed in terms of desire rather than of ontology by supplanting the lan-guage of “I am” with the language of “I want this for us” (1995:75). Such a reconﬁguration, she argues, would create an opportu-nity to “rehabilitate the memory of desire within identiﬁcatory processes…prior to [their] wounding” (1995: 75). It would fur-ther refocus attention on the future possibilities present in theidentity as opposed to the identity being foreclosed through its attention to past-based grievances.

#### Making the debate about us as persons diverts attention from structural inequalities by misidentifying the conditions of their removal –makes oppression inevitable because it uses a flawed starting-point

A – Claiming privilege makes a space unsafe is a rhetorical strategy that distracts attention from the larger institutions that make the world unsafe

B – safe spaces arent real they are symbolic of what we want the real to be

C – these spaces don’t ignore oppression, we are developing plans for how we should collectively transform politics

D – this is a space that should be based on principles not whether or not an individual is privileged

E – their personal suffering stories change the focus point to what can they do for ME rather than what can we do for society

F – this space allows us to interrogate the structures that cause oppression rather than the oppression itself – this solves the root cause

G – our solutions may not be perfect but using this as a site of contestation to make that action better by reforming it is key

Smith, 13 – intellectual, feminist, and anti-violence activist (Andrea, The Problem with “Privilege,” http://anarchalibrary.blogspot.com/2013/08/the-problem-with-privilege-2013.html)

This kind of politics then challenges the notions of “safe space” often prevalent in many activist circles in the United States. The concept of safe space flows naturally from the logics of privilege. That is, once we have confessed our gender/race/settler/class privileges, we can then create a safe space where others will not be negatively impacted by these privileges. Of course because we have not dismantled heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, settler colonialism or capitalism, these confessed privileges never actually disappear in “safe spaces.” Consequently, when a person is found guilty of his/her privilege in these spaces, s/he is accused of making the space “unsafe.” This rhetorical strategy presumes that only certain privileged subjects can make the space “unsafe” as if everyone isn’t implicated in heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, settler colonialism and capitalism. Our focus is shifted from the larger systems that make the entire world unsafe, to interpersonal conduct. In addition, the accusation of “unsafe” is also levied against people of color who express anger about racism, only to find themselves accused of making the space “unsafe” because of their raised voices. The problem with safe space is the presumption that a safe space is even possible.¶ By contrast, instead of thinking of safe spaces as a refuge from colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy, Ruthie Gilmore suggests that safe space is not an escape from the real, but a place to practice the real we want to bring into being. “Making power” models follow this suggestion in that they do not purport to be free of oppression, only that they are trying to create the world they would like to live in now. To give one smaller example, when Incite! Women of Color Against Violence, organized, we questioned the assumption that “women of color” space is a safe space. In fact, participants began to articulate that women of color space may in fact be a very dangerous space. We realized that we could not assume alliances with each other, but we would actually have to create these alliances. One strategy that was helpful was rather than presume that we were acting “non-oppressively,” we built a structure that would presume that we were complicit in the structures of white supremacy/settler colonialism/heteropatriarchy etc. We then structured this presumption into our organizing by creating spaces where we would educate ourselves on issues in which our politics and praxis were particularly problematic. The issues we have covered include: disability, anti-Black racism, settler colonialism, Zionism and anti-Arab racism, transphobia, and many others. However, in this space, while we did not ignore our individual complicity in oppression, we developed action plans for how we would collectively try to transform our politics and praxis. Thus, this space did not create the dynamic of the confessor and the hearer of the confession. Instead, we presumed we are all implicated in these structures of oppression and that we would need to work together to undo them. Consequently, in my experience, this kind of space facilitated our ability to integrate personal and social transformation because no one had to anxiously worry about whether they were going to be targeted as a bad person with undue privilege who would need to publicly confess. The space became one that was based on principles of loving rather than punitive accountability.¶ Conclusion¶ The politics of privilege have made the important contribution of signaling how the structures of oppression constitute who we are as persons. However, as the rituals of confessing privilege have evolved, they have shifted our focus from building social movements for global transformation to individual self-improvement. Furthermore, they rest on a white supremacist/colonialist notion of a subject that can constitute itself over and against others through self-reflexivity. While trying to keep the key insight made in activist/academic circles that personal and social transformation are interconnected, alternative projects have developed that focus less on privilege and more the structures that create privilege. These new models do not hold the “answer,” because the genealogy of the politics of privilege also demonstrates that our activist/intellectual projects of liberation must be constantly changing. Our imaginations are limited by white supremacy, settler colonialism, etc., so all ideas we have will not be “perfect.” The ideas we develop today also do not have to be based on the complete disavowal of what we did yesterday because what we did yesterday teaches what we might do tomorrow. Thus, as we think not only beyond privilege, but beyond the sense of self that claims privilege, we open ourselves to new possibilities that we cannot imagine now for the future.

#### Our alternative is to recognize debate as a site of contingent commonality in which we can forge bonds of argumentation beyond identity - the affirmative’s focus on subjectivity abdicates the flux of politics and debate for the incontestable truth of identity

A – the alternative is to engage in politics, and find solutions within the system rather than question it

B – Resistance accomplishes nothing, therefore working within the political is better but for the political to be effective deliberation about what “we” should do is better than what the system can do for “me”

C – there should be safe spaces to learn how to communicate and argue common points rather than individual points, because those individual points are insulated from inquiry

D – the alternative is to use debate as a safe deliberative space that removes identity or subjectivity as reasoning for collective action

Brown, 95 - prof at UC Berkeley (Wendy, “States of Injury” p. 47-51)

The postmodern exposure of the imposed and created rather than dis- covered character of all knowledges—of the power-surtuscd, struggle-¶48¶produced quality of all truths, including reigning political and scientific ones—simultaneously exposes the groundlessness of discovered norms or visions. It also reveals the exclusionary and regulatory function of these norms: white women who cannot locate themselves in Nancy Hartsock’s account of women’s experience or women s desires, African American women who do not identify with Patricia Hill Collinss account of black women’s ways of knowing, are once again excluded from the Party of Humanism—this time in its feminist variant. ¶Our alternative to reliance upon such normative claims would seem to be engagement in political struggles in which there are no trump cards such as “morality” or “truth."Our alternative, in other words, is to struggle within an amoral political habitat for temporally bound and fully contestable visions of who we are and how we ought to live. Put still another way, postmodernity unnerves feminist theory not merely because it deprives us of uncomplicated subject standing, as Christine Di Stefano suggests, or of settled ground for knowledge and norms, as Nancy Hartsock argues, or of "centered selves and “emancipatory knowledge," as Seyla Bcnhabib avers. Postmodernity unsettles feminism because it erodes the moral ground that the subject, truth, and nor- mativity coproduce in modernity. When contemporary feminist political theorists or analysts complain about the antipolitical or unpolitical nature of postmodern thought—thought that apprehends and responds to this erosion—they arc protesting, inter' aha, a Nictzschcan analysis of truth and morality as fully implicated in and by power, and thereby dplegiti- mated qua Truth and Morality Politics, including politics with passion- ate purpose and vision, can thrive without a strong theory of the subject, without Truth, and without scientifically derived norms—one only need reread Machiavelli, Gramsci, or Emma Goldman to see such a politics flourish without these things. The question is whether fnninist politics can prosper without a moral apparatus, whether feminist theorists and activists will give up substituting Truth and Morality for politics. Are we willing to engage in struggle rather than recrimination, to develop our faculties rather than avenge our subordination with moral and epistemological gestures, to fight for a world rather than conduct process on the existing one? Nictzschc insisted that extraordinary strengths of character and mind would be necessary to operate in thce domain of epistemological and religious nakedness he heralded. But in this heexcessively individualized a challenge that more importantly requires the deliberate development of postmoral and antirelativist political spaces, practices of deliberation, and modes of adjudication.¶49¶The only way through a crisis of space is to invent a new space —Fredric Jameson. “Postmodernism"¶Precisely because of its incessant revelation of settled practices and identi- ties as contingent, its acceleration of the tendency to melt all that is solid into air. what is called postmodernity poses the opportunity to radically sever the problem of the good from the problem of the true, to decide “what we want” rather than derive it from assumptions or arguments about “who we are.” Our capacity to exploit this opportunity positively will be hinged to our success in developing new modes and criteria for political judgment. It will also depend upon our willingness to break certain modernist radical attachments, particularly to Marxism’s promise (however failed) of meticulously articulated connections betwreen a com- prehensive critique of the present and norms for a transformed future—a science of revolution rather than a politics of oneResistance, the practice most widely associated with postmodern polit- ical discourse, responds to without fully meeting the normativity chal- lenge of postmodernity. A vital tactic in much political w’ork as wrcll as for mere survival, resistance by itself does not contain a critique, a vision, or grounds for organized collective efforts to enact either. Contemporary affection for the politics of resistance issues from postmodern criticism’s perennial authority problem: our heightened consciousncss of the will to power in all political “positions” and our wrariness about totalizing an- alyses and visions. Insofar as it eschew’s rather than revisesthese problematic practices, resistance-as-politics does not raise the dilemmas of responsibility and justification entailed in “affirming” political projects and norms. In this respect, like identity politics, and indeed sharing with identity politics an excessively local viewpoint and tendency toward positioning without mapping, the contemporary vogue of resistance is more a symptom of postmodernity’s crisis of political space than a coherent response to it. Resistance goes nowhere in particular, has no inherent attachments, and hails no particular vision; as Foucault makes clear, resistance is an effect of and reaction to power, not an arrogation of it.¶What postmodernity disperses and postmodern feminist politics requires are cultivated political spaces for posing and questioning feminist political norms, for discussing the nature of “the good” for women. Democratic political space is quite undcrtheonzed in contemporary femi- nist thinking, as it is everywhere in latc-twentieth-ccntury political the- ory, primarily bccausc it is so little in evidence. Dissipated by the increasing tcchnologizing of would-be political conversations and pro- cesses, by the erosion of boundaries around specifically political domains¶50¶and activities, and by the decline of movement politics, political spaces are scarcer and thinner today than even in most immediately prior epochs of Western history. In this regard, their condition mirrors the splayed and centrifuged characteristics of postmodern political power. Yet precisely because of postmodernity’s disarming tendencies toward political disori- entation, fragmentation, and technologizing, the creation of spaces where political analyses and norms can be proffered and contested is su- premely important.¶Political space is an old theme in Western political theory, incarnated by the polis practices of Socrates, harshly opposed by Plato in the Repub- lic, redeemed and elaborated as metaphysics by Aristotle, resuscitated as salvation for modernity by Hannah Arendt. jnd given contemporary spin in Jurgen Habermas's theories of ideal speech situations and com- municative rationality. The project of developing feminist postmodern political spaces, while enriched by pieces of this tradition, necessarily also departs from it. In contrast with Aristotle’s formulation, feminist politi- cal spaces cannot define themselves against the private sphere, bodies, reproduction and production, mortality, and all the populations and is- sues implicated in these categories. Unlike Arendt’s, these spaces cannot be pristine, ratified, and policed at their boundaries but are necessarily cluttered, attuned to earthly concerns and visions, incessantly disrupted, invaded, and reconfigured. Unlike Habermas, wc can harbor no dreams of nondistorted communication unsullied by power, or even of a ‘com- mon language,’\* but wc recognize as a permanent political condition par- tiality of understanding and expression, cultural chasms whose nature may be vigilantly identified but rarely “resolved,” and the powers of words and images that evoke, suggest, and connote rather than transmit meanings.42 Our spaces, while requiring some definition and protection, cannot be clean, sharply bounded, disembodied, or permanent: to engage postmodern modes of power and honor specifically feminist knowledges, they must be heterogenous, roving, relatively noninstitutionalized, and democratic to the point of exhaustion.¶Such spaces are crucial for developing the skills and practices of post- modern judgment, addressing the problem of “how to produce a discourse on justicc . . . when one no longer relies on ontology or epistemology.”43 Postmodemity’s dismantling of metaphysical foundations for justice renders us quite vulnerable to domination by technical reason ¶51¶unless we seize the opportunity this erosion also creates to develop democratic processes for formulating postepistemelogical and postontological judgments. Such judgements require learning how to have public conversations with each other, arguing from a vision about the common (“what I want for us") rather than from identity (“who I am”), and from explicitly postulated norms and potential common values rather than false essentialism or unreconstructed private interest.44 Paradoxically, such public and comparatively impersonal arguments carry potential for greater accountability than arguments from identity or interest. While the former may be interrogated to the ground by others, the latter are insulated from such inquiry with the mantle of truth worn by identity-based speech. Moreover, post identity political positions and conversations potentially replace a politics of difference with a politics of diversity—differences grasped from a perspective larger than simply one point in an ensemble. Postidentity public positioning requires an outlook that discerns structures of dominance within diffused and disorienting orders of power, thereby stretching toward a more politically potent analysis than that which our individuated and fragmented existences can generate. In contrast to Di Stefano's claim that 'shared identity” may constitute a more psychologically and politically reliable basis for “attachment and motivation on the part of potential activists,” I am suggesting that political conversation oriented toward diversity and the common, toward world rather than self, and involving a conversion of ones knowledge of the world from a situated (subject) position into a public idiom, offers us the greatest possibility of countering postmodern social fragmentations and political disintegrations.¶Feminists have learned well to identify and articulate our "subject positions —we have become experts at politicizing the “I”that is produced through multiple sites of power and subordination. But the very practice so crucial to making these elements of power visible and subjectivity political may be partly at odds with the requisites for developing political conversation among a complex and diverse “we.” We may need to learn public speaking and the pleasures of public argument not to overcome our situatedness, but in order to assume responsibility for our situations and to mobilize a collective discourse that will expand them. For the political making of a feminist future that does not reproach the history on which it is borne, we may need to loosen our attachments to subjectivity, identity, and morality and to redress our underdeveloped taste for political argument.

### Case

**Double bind – either their poetry is trapped within the current economic order that produces the impacts, or it creates defunct pluralism that destroys poetic engagement – empirically true in Latin American debates**

**Dawes 91** (Greg, professor of Latin American Studies at North Carolina State University, “A Critique of the Post-Althusserian Conception of Ideology in Latin American Cultural Studies”, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern\_culture/v001/1.3r\_dawes.html)[rkezios]

In order to overcome the division that they have created between ideology and politics, Beverley and Zimmerman then turn to an Althusserian solution to this dilemma, "We rejoin here the point that revolutionary political consciousness does not derive directly or spontaneously from exploitative economic relations, that it must be in some sense produced" (8). Thus, as I suggested above, literature serves as that desperately needed link between ideology and politics that aids in the "development of subject identity." In essence, then, literature (and specifically poetry in this study) is a semi-autonomous territory for the production of political consciousness in Central America, but it is somehow divorced from the actual social relations of production themselves. According to this logic, it is the production of a certain type of literature--"political" poetry, for instance--which enables subjects to reflect upon "private experiences of authenticity and alienation to the awareness of collective situations of social exploitation, injustice, and national underdevelopment" (9). But the weakness in a such an argument--in addition to the separation set up between individual and social experience--resides more fundamentally on the privileging of the unconscious in aesthetics. For if we agree that the motor force of ideology is the unconscious, then what power do revolutionaries have to change it, much less interpret it? If there are no conscious, scientific methods to follow, then how do we prove that this or that thesis is actually valid? All this theoretical footwork pushes Beverley and Zimmerman's study into a corner on more than one occasion. One such moment is in their analysis of literary production in revolutionary Nicaragua. Before turning to this section, I would note that another problem with this discussion of Central American literature and revolutions is that Beverley and Zimmerman fervently adhere to postmodernist interpretations of the "unfixity" of social class (i.e.--pluralism) and of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's notion of "radical democracy." The idealism exhibited in the writings of both Althusser and Laclau and Mouffe will come back to haunt Literature and Politics when the analysis extends beyond the theoretical to the practical realm. For example, in their study of Nicaraguan poetry during the revolutionary period, Beverley and Zimmerman give a very accurate account of the aesthetic and political debate that ensued after 1985, yet the authors overlook the fact that the deficiency in the Nicaraguan political, economic and cultural system was the vulnerability of pluralism. Thus, they assess the situation as follows: Though the debate had repercussions inside the Frente, the Sandinista leadership was reluctant to take a firm stand one way or another on cultural policy, for fear of making the mistake of the Cubans in the late 1960s of favoring one cultural "line" over others. But this commendable commitment to pluralism also meant that cultural policy was made ad hoc, without any real budgetary priorities or control. (103) Since their post-Althusserian approach automatically excludes a more organic and materialist understanding of the consequences of the economic and political situation--because ideology is supposed to be relatively independent from these spheres--Beverley and Zimmerman do not interpret this aesthetic crisis on a more global scale as the crisis of this type of "third path" to socialism. Since representation, for Althusser, does not transcend the aesthetic realm, they fail to acknowledge that the crisis in aesthetic agency is also a crisis in economic and political agency, i.e.--they fail to note that pluralist economic, political and aesthetic institutions are affected by their internal limitations and by the overwhelming force of capital. This weakness in their analysis is due, in large part, to the fact that they do not truly take a critical distance with respect to this "third path." Their own study advocates an aesthetic and political pluralism which doesn't effectively distinguish itself from liberal pluralism. Even late in Chapter 4, Beverley and Zimmerman continue to hold this position vis-a-vis political and artistic representation, "We are far from thinking that cultural forms have an essential class location or connotation, as our discussion in the previous chapter of the ideological mutations of vanguardism suggests" (110). Here the fateful error of post-Althusserianism or post-Marxism is fleshed out. When aesthetic agencies are separated from the social relations of production, then history itself will have a way of turning any such idealist study on its head. In the postscript to this chapter, Beverley and Zimmerman run into precisely this dilemma: [T]he perspective we adopted in our presentation of this chapter--that the revolutionary process was irreversible, despite problems and setbacks--clearly has been problematized. It may be that the revolution will go forward; on the other hand, we may well be witnessing the first stage of a more long-lasting restoration. We had hypothesized in chapters 1 and 2 that one of the key roles of literature in the revolutionary process in Central America generally was to constitute a discursive space in which the possibilities of alliance between popular sectors and a basically middle- and upper-class revolutionary vanguard could be pragmatically negotiated around a shared sense of the national-popular. (111) Here their populist or postmodernist theory meets the limits of its interpretative abilities because history itself has proven that this multi-class alliance, the concept of the nationalism, and the experimental nature of a mixed economic system were not able to sustain themselves. As Carlos Vilas has demonstrated, it was the Sandinista's transformation from a vanguard predominantly supported by the working class and the campesinos to a party which catered to the interests of entrepreneurs in the last years of the revolution, which lost the elections of 1990.10 Similarly, in the cultural realm, the Frente abandoned its cultural democratization project not only because of financial problems, but also because there was a shift in ideological positions within party cadres themselves who now suggested that culture follow more professional guidelines. As a result, the professionalists--or, those who favored professionally-developed artists--clashed with those who defended the democratization program. Thus, the content of this debate boiled down to differences in political, economic, and aesthetic form--a regular "revolution with the revolution" to paraphrase Regis Debray--among the revolutionary forces.

#### Speaking for others is wrong—their privileged social location makes any claim to political empowerment suspect—it’s an act of commodification and colonial domination, which turns the case

Linda Martín Alcoff (Department of Philosophy at Syracuse University. “The Problem of Speaking For Others” Cultural Critique Winter 1991-92, pp. 5-32.)

Feminist discourse is not the only site in which the problem of speaking for others has been acknowledged and addressed. In anthropology there is similar discussion about whether it is possible to speak for others either adequately or justifiably. Trinh T. Minh-ha explains the grounds for skepticism when she says that anthropology is "mainly a conversation of `us' with `us' about `them,' of the white man with the white man about the primitive-nature man...in which `them' is silenced. `Them' always stands on the other side of the hill, naked and speechless...`them' is only admitted among `us', the discussing subjects, when accompanied or introduced by an `us'..."[4](http://www.alcoff.com/content/speaothers.html" \l "footnote4) Given this analysis, even ethnographies written by progressive anthropologists are a priori regressive because of the structural features of anthropological discursive practice. The recognition that there is a problem in speaking for others has followed from the widespread acceptance of two claims. First, there has been a growing awareness that where one speaks from affects both the meaning and truth of what one says, and thus that one cannot assume an ability to transcend her location. In other words, a speaker's location (which I take here to refer to her social location or social identity) has an epistemically significant impact on that speaker's claims, and can serve either to authorize or dis-authorize one's speech. The creation of Women's Studies and African American Studies departments were founded on this very belief: that both the study of and the advocacy for the oppressed must come to be done principally by the oppressed themselves, and that we must finally acknowledge that systematic divergences in social location between speakers and those spoken for will have a significant effect on the content of what is said. The unspoken premise here is simply that a speaker's location is epistemically salient. I shall explore this issue further in the next section. The second claim holds that not only is location epistemically salient, but certain privileged locations are discursively dangerous.[5](http://www.alcoff.com/content/speaothers.html#footnote5) In particular, the practice of privileged persons speaking for or on behalf of less privileged persons has actually resulted (in many cases) in increasing or reenforcing the oppression of the group spoken for. This was part of the argument made against Anne Cameron's speaking for Native women: Cameron's intentions were never in question, but the effects of her writing were argued to be harmful to the needs of Native authors because it is Cameron rather than they who will be listened to and whose books will be bought by readers interested in Native women. Persons from dominant groups who speak for others are often treated as authenticating presences that confer legitimacy and credibility on the demands of subjugated speakers; such speaking for others does nothing to disrupt the discursive hierarchies that operate in public spaces. For this reason, the work of privileged authors who speak on behalf of the oppressed is becoming increasingly criticized by members of those oppressed groups themselves.[6](http://www.alcoff.com/content/speaothers.html" \l "footnote6) As social theorists, we are authorized by virtue of our academic positions to develop theories that express and encompass the ideas, needs, and goals of others. However, we must begin to ask ourselves whether this is ever a legitimate authority, and if so, what are the criteria for legitimacy? In particular, is it ever valid to speak for others who are unlike me or who are less privileged than me? We might try to delimit this problem as only arising when a more privileged person speaks for a less privileged one. In this case, we might say that I should only speak for groups of which I am a member. But this does not tell us how groups themselves should be delimited. For example, can a white woman speak for all women simply by virtue of being a woman? If not, how narrowly should we draw the categories? The complexity and multiplicity of group identifications could result in "communities" composed of single individuals. Moreover, the concept of groups assumes specious notions about clear-cut boundaries and "pure" identities. I am a Panamanian-American and a person of mixed ethnicity and race: half white/Angla and half Panamanian mestiza. The criterion of group identity leaves many unanswered questions for a person such as myself, since I have membership in many conflicting groups but my membership in all of them is problematic. Group identities and boundaries are ambiguous and permeable, and decisions about demarcating identity are always partly arbitrary. Another problem concerns how specific an identity needs to be to confer epistemic authority. Reflection on such problems quickly reveals that no easy solution to the problem of speaking for others can be found by simply restricting the practice to speaking for groups of which one is a member.

**Their affirmation of the borderlands and mestizo consciousness reflect a racist ordering of the world – uniquely turns case and undermines the mestizo consciousness**

**Feghali 11** (Zalfa, PhD candidate in American and Canadian Studies at the University of Nottingham, “Re-articulating the New Mestiza”, http://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1107&context=jiws)[rkezios)

Anzaldúa‟s formulation of the new mestiza finds its roots in José Vasconcelos‟ theory of “a cosmic race” and attempts to move beyond this theory to bring the new mestiza to light. To do this, Anzaldúa adopts Vasconcelos‟ formulation and moulds a creation story for the new mestiza: At the confluence of two or more genetic streams, with chromosomes constantly „crossing over,‟ this mixture of races, rather than resulting in an inferior being, provides hybrid progeny, a mutable, more malleable species with a rich gene pool. From this racial, ideological, cultural, and biological cross-pollination, an „alien‟ consciousness is presently in the making – a new mestiza consciousness (99). Anzaldúa sees this new mestiza consciousness crossing all borders and effacing all social constructions of identity, history, language, race, sexuality, and gender. Not only is this a figure of hope, it is also one of distinct political potential, capable of identifying with other mestiza figures (read hybrid identities) and oppressions. Most importantly to Anzaldúa, the mestiza has an interest in forming solid alliances and unlikely partnerships on the basis of a shared experience of marginality and oppression. In Borderlands, Anzaldúa chooses to focus on two somewhat different kinds of oppression that impact the Chicana/o subject: first, and more generally, the oppression perpetrated by Anglos, or whites on non-whites. The second, the oppression of women by men in Chicano/a society, is seen as a corollary and effect of white oppression as Chicano men oppress their women. A “Cosmic Race” In his original essay of 1925, Vasconcelos lauds the people inhabiting the area of Mexico for their mestizo/a culture, which, as Rafael Pérez-Torres has put it, “locates itself within a complex third space neither Mexican nor American but in a transnational space of both potential and restraint” (“Alternate Geographies and the Melancholy of Mestizaje” 322). In its traditional meaning, mestizaje “reflects a simultaneously racial, sexual, and national memory, an embodiment of colonization and conquest” (Bost, Mulattas and Mestizas 9). In fact, one of the reasons that Jose Vasconcelos won popular acclaim for his theories was the attractiveness of the idea that an entire population, which literally embodies a history of violence, can forge an identity that moved beyond such a violent history – and flourish. Anzaldúa herself refers to this very specific history in her hope that the emergence of the new mestiza will bring an end to rape, violence, and war. For the purposes of his essay, Vasconcelos sees this group as the first stage in the creation of a new, cosmic race that will eventually take on characteristics and subsume genetic streams from all the races on earth. This cosmic race will take on the best or most desirable traits from each respective race. Eventually, according to Vasconcelos, the lines between the “original” races will blur to the point that any one individual‟s “racial heritage” would be completely indistinguishable from another‟s, thus becoming the ultimate mestizo/a (something akin what critics would now call a “post-ethnic” or “post- racial” world). This emphasis on the special character and potential of the mestiza/o Mexican subject has made Vasconcelos‟ theory very attractive to Mexican and Chicano/a activists, particularly nationalists. As many Chicano/a activists have done, Anzaldúa uses a narrow interpretation of Vasconcelos‟ essay in the hope of finding a solid theoretical grounding for her own project. However, this has brought her much criticism, as Vasconcelos‟ theory has been rigorously undermined. As Didier Jaén puts it: It is true that mestizaje is one of the central concepts of the Vasconcelos essay, but of course, it is also clear that the racial mixture Vasconcelos refers to is much wider, much more encompassing, than what can be understood by the mestizaje of the Mexican or Chicano…But even if we expand the concept of mestizaje to include all other races, this biological mixture would not fulfill what Vasconcelos expresses with the idea of the Cosmic race (“Introduction” xvi). Clearly, Vasconcelos‟ utopian vision of mestizaje leading to a new, privileged subject that lives in a race-less world does not hold up theoretically or pragmatically. For example, he clearly delineates the “four major races of the world” before envisioning a fifth, cosmic race which embraces the four “original” races of the world. Despite the fact that the original text was written in 1925 and must be read with one eye trained on that time‟s theoretical and scientific reach, it is problematic in the way it combines scientific language and terms with a more mystical outlook (something that is echoed in Anzaldúa‟s work, albeit for a different purpose). It thus presents itself as scientific fact and knowledge while in fact holding little or no solid scientific basis. 3 My main objection to Vasconcelos‟ analysis comes from the implications of his own underlying premise, namely, that there are four races of humans: the Black, the Indian (as in American native), the Mongol, and the White. Out of these four races, Vasconcelos imagines that the fifth, mestizo, cosmic race will resemble a symphony: Voices that bring accents from Atlantis; depths contained in the pupil of the red man, who knew so much, so many thousand years ago, but now seems to have forgotten everything. His soul resembles the old Mayan cenote of green waters, laying deep and still…This infinite quietude is stirred with the drop put in our blood by the Black, eager for sensual joy, intoxicated with dances and unbridled lust…There also appears the Mongol, with the mystery of his slanted eyes that see everything according to a strange angle…The clear mind of the White, that resembles his skin and his dreams, also intervenes… Clearly Vasconcelos‟ theory is based on fundamental racism on his part. Yet despite having borne heavy criticism for his theory, Vasconcelos‟ essay was reprinted in 1948 and became a rallying point for Chicano activist and Mexican nationalist movements. In addition to Vasconcelos‟ popularity as an alternative Mexican historian, this is most likely why Anzaldúa espouses his theory. However, as I plan to show, Anzaldúa‟s work also falls into many of the same traps as Vasconcelos‟. It has been important to look at Vasconcelos‟ work in such depth as I will show that Anzaldúa‟s work, while in many ways vastly different, may have the effect of re-inscribing Vasconcelos‟ racism. Indeed, this re-inscription is evident when Anzaldúa seems to preclude the possibility of forming alliances or having sympathy with whites, despite her attempts to unite all mestiza identities everywhere under an umbrella of mutual „inbetween-ness.‟ In fact, over the course of Borderlands/La Frontera, Anzaldúa builds up the white or the Anglo as a monolithic entity that she blames for abuses and infractions against borderlanders, Mexicans, and minority groups. Directly addressing “white society”, Anzaldúa writes: “We need you to accept the fact that Chicanos are different, to acknowledge your rejection and negation of us. We need to you own the fact that you looked upon us as less human, that you stole our lands, our person-hood, our self respect” (107). Anzaldúa uses two pronouns to refer to two groups: “we” and “you”. Naming all white society as “you” casts it as one whole entity that can be generalized in one word. Recall however, that Anzaldúa identifies as a part of an emerging new mestiza consciousness and community, which strives to move beyond simple dualistic thinking and endeavors to “act and not react” (101). This important contradiction lies at the heart of Anzaldúa‟s analysis.

**Anzaldúa analysis of otherness lacks an understanding of whiteness – reproduces racial heirarchies**

**Feghali 11** (Zalfa, PhD candidate in American and Canadian Studies at the University of Nottingham, “Re-articulating the New Mestiza”, http://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1107&context=jiws)[rkezios)

Besides Anzaldúa‟s construction of this white “enemy”, to which I return below, she neglects to address the multiplicity that also characterizes whiteness. It is unlikely that she is unaware of whiteness as an object of study, particularly as it moves away from being cast as “invisible.”4 As Ian F. Haney Lopez reflects, “being White is not a monolithic or homogenous experience, either in terms of race, other social identities, space, or time. Instead, Whiteness is contingent, changeable, partial, inconstant, and ultimately, social” (White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race xiv). However, it is important to point out that even if Anzaldúa is in fact innocent of ignoring the emerging field of whiteness studies (which is entirely plausible given that Borderlands was written in 1987, around the same time that the first studies on whiteness are emerging), her work shows traces of using very same exclusionary logic she critiques when she thinks about whiteness and whites. While I do not deny that whiteness in the US was and is still, at least to a certain degree, undifferentiated and normative (particularly from the perspective of non-whites), it is still important to be aware of the way that Anzaldúa ultimately reproduces several of the “white practices” that she objects to. If this is in fact what Anzaldúa‟s work does, then she is ignoring her own advice to the new mestiza community, despite the fact that she believes dualistic thinking can only reproduce the status quo. She reminds her readers that “A counterstance locks one into a duel of oppressor and oppressed”, and seems convinced that “At some point, on our way to a new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank, the split between two mortal combatants somehow healed so that we are on both shores at once…” (Borderlands 100). Indeed she later writes: “The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our languages, our thoughts” (102). It could be argued that Anzaldúa is attempting to heal this split through naming it – but it is not enough to reconcile the important contradictions that characterize her formulation of the new mestiza. Note, however, that Anzaldúa identifies a “split” as the fundamental building block of the plurality of “our” many lives, languages, and thoughts – yet presents “our” culture as singular. The underlying assumption here is that culture is the same for both “the white race and the colored race.” What is needed is a theorization of the relationship between race and culture – something that Anzaldúa does not provide but could have proven very useful to her argument.5

**Their analysis of the borderlands is flawed – conflation of identity and culture and failure to acknowledge priviledge**

**Feghali 11** (Zalfa, PhD candidate in American and Canadian Studies at the University of Nottingham, “Re-articulating the New Mestiza”, http://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1107&context=jiws)[rkezios)

Another critique and limitation of Anzaldúa‟s conception of the new mestiza figure is that she equates the physical experience of living in the borderlands with the emotional and spiritual experiences of other, more abstract borderlands. In this vein, Pablo Vila provides a cogent argument warning against making an easy equivalence between the two, which would serve to homogenize the border, as if there were only one border identity, border culture, or process of hybridization. I think, instead, that the reality of the border […] goes well beyond that consecrated figure of border studies, the border crosser. […] That is, the confusion of the American side of the border with the border itself, the essentialization of the cultures that meet in the border encounter […] and the tendency to confuse the sharing of a culture with the sharing of an identity (Border Identifications 4). It is Vila‟s last two comments that I feel are most evident in Anzaldúa‟s account, with regard to the way she attempts to transpose her analysis of a physical border area with borders that cannot be physically defined, as in for example, the borders of ethnicity. While my analysis also looks at these borders, I try not to equate them so simply so as not to lose sight of what makes them different. Vila‟s critique also has particular implications on the way Anzaldúa sees whites. An interesting point, however is that the only whites Anzaldúa does not dismiss as potential allies are those who are homosexuals.6 Significantly, she recognizes that within whiteness there is inequality – it is as a result of marginalization, among other things, that the homosexual is able to identify and “link people with each other – the Blacks with Jews with Indians with Asians with whites with extraterrestrials” (Borderlands 106). In another connection to Vila, it is also clear that Anzaldúa blurs the distinction between being part of a culture and sharing in that identity, as I noted above. This is also evident in her use of the word “Gringo.” In fact, many on the Mexican side of the border would accuse of Anzaldúa of not having the right to use the word “Gringo”, given her position with relation to the border.7 Equally important in this context is Anzaldúa‟s appropriation of the indigena. Anzaldúa reclaims the indigena as the Indian part of her own mestizaje, and names it as a source and inspiration for her own resistance to oppression. In including the indigena in her analysis, Anzaldúa critiques Chicano/a society for denying the indigenous part of mestizaje. Yet this indigena is never elaborated on: Anzaldúa reclaims the indigena but does not explain what she is reclaiming, exhibiting once again her tendency to lean towards essentialized identities. While she clearly writes with an intention of inclusivity, she is unwittingly conveying a message that could be construed to be equally problematic as those essentializing and racist groups that she is writing against. This is perhaps because of Anzaldúa‟s own location. Despite the fact that her analysis is rooted in the borderlands, she does not address the fact that she is, whether or not she likes it, writing from the US side of the border. As such, she perhaps unconsciously falls prey to the trappings of privilege and theory, which could make her text as questionable and problematic as any other US text about the border. As Socorro Tabuenca notes: “In Anzaldúa‟s text…the geographic border and the relationships between Mexico and the United States are essentialized. In it, US whites are presented as “them” and minorities as “us.”… The border culture according to Anzaldúa, is also a metaphorical culture narrated from the vantage point of the First World” (qtd. in Vila Ethnography at the Border 311). Tabuenca is not trying to deny the importance of studying the “privileged” side of the border; rather, his suggestion is that the border should be studied from both sides, simultaneously. Accordingly, this analysis should hold true for both physical and psychic borders.