A Degree of Rage

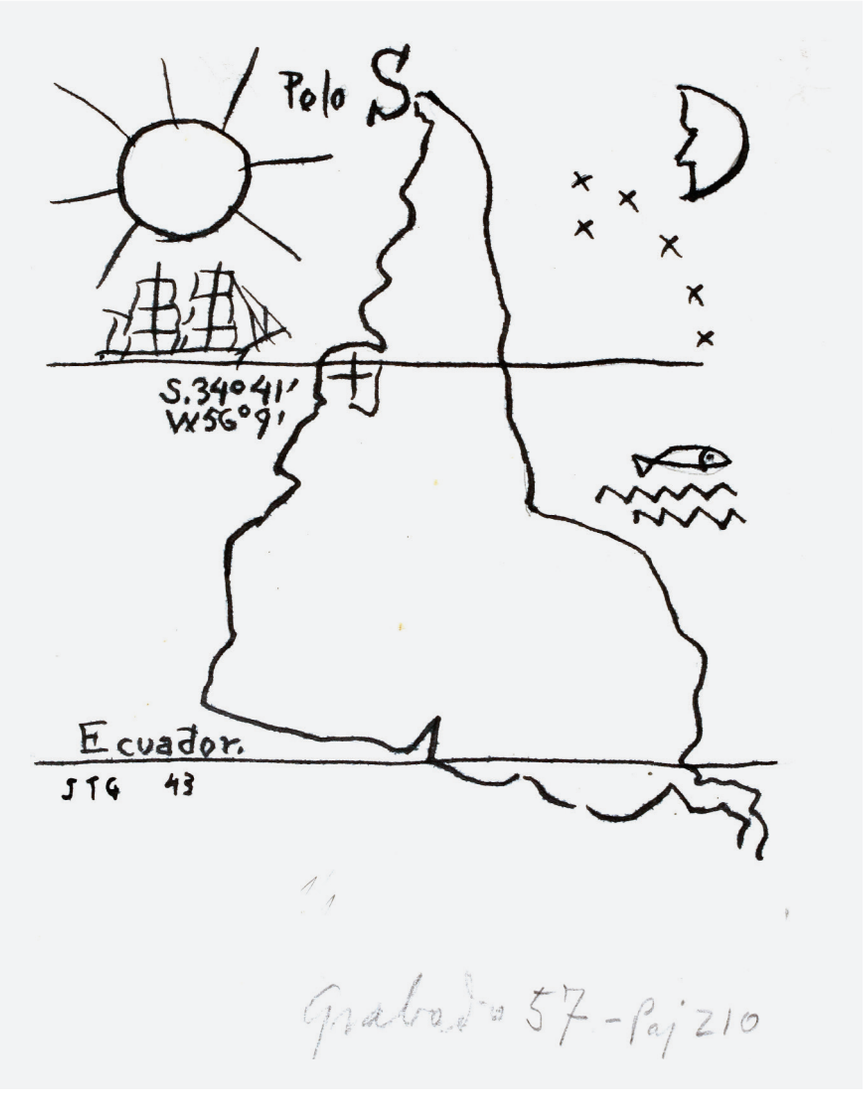
History,

Her.

IF EVEN MINIMALLY SUCCESSFUL, THE READINGS WILL INCITE

A Degree of Rage

AGAINST THE IMPERIALIST NARRATIVIZATION OF History, *THAT IT SHOULD PRODUCE SO ABJECT A SCRIPT FOR* Her.



Joaquín Torres García
“América Invertida (Inverted America)” (1943)
Ink on paper, 8 11/16 × 6 5/16 inches
Museo Torres García, Montevideo

EDITED BY—Tiger Dingsun

PREFACE

TIGER DINGSUN

This project was originally going to be about margins.

But if the margin is there to be at the service of the center, perhaps it is necessary to reformulate the margin—to recast both its geographical and psychological implications. Or perhaps, the goal is to reiterate the margin as ultimately unknowable, its territory ambiguous, the boundaries between its paratext and the central text unresolvably blurry. Margins, after all, only become possible objects when a political distinction is made between the margin and the center.

But even this goal of ambiguity may be an act of totalization, an act of cementing the margin's inherenty quality as something that is unknowable. We learn from Said (and, perhaps, the way that imperialism has infiltrated the most minute details of our day-to-day interactions) that the western imperialist perceives the subaltern as "knowable and unknowing". This is the idea that through colonialism, one can conceivably understand all aspects of a culture; a culture that is perhaps too underdeveloped, immature, or ignorant to understand themselves. On the other hand, it is often the case that the well-meaning post-colonial theorist becomes complicit in an epistemological othering, and posits the subaltern as unknowable and disenfranchised from knowing. Both ultimately leave no space for the "third world woman" to speak for herself.

I began this project with a desire to reposition these texts from margin to center. But I soon became paralyzed with insecurity and uneasiness that I myself, while reading and compiling all of this postcolonial feminist theory, was buying into the voyeuristic impulse of aestheticizing and fetishizing marginality and the "third world woman." I felt uneasy even with the act of anthologizing, of bringing texts together. I felt uneasy with the possibility that I was essentializing all discourse about the "third world women" as a monolithic text block — a literal volume, with distinct boundaries.

Ostensibly, the texts in this book center around the figure of the "third world woman," but it is worth taking the time now to point out that this analytic category of "third world woman" is colonialist for two reasons: one, it is a homogenizing categorization, and ignores the huge amount of heterogeny between actual "third world women"; two, the composite "othering" of third world women helps western feminism centralize and define itself against the backdrop of a margin.

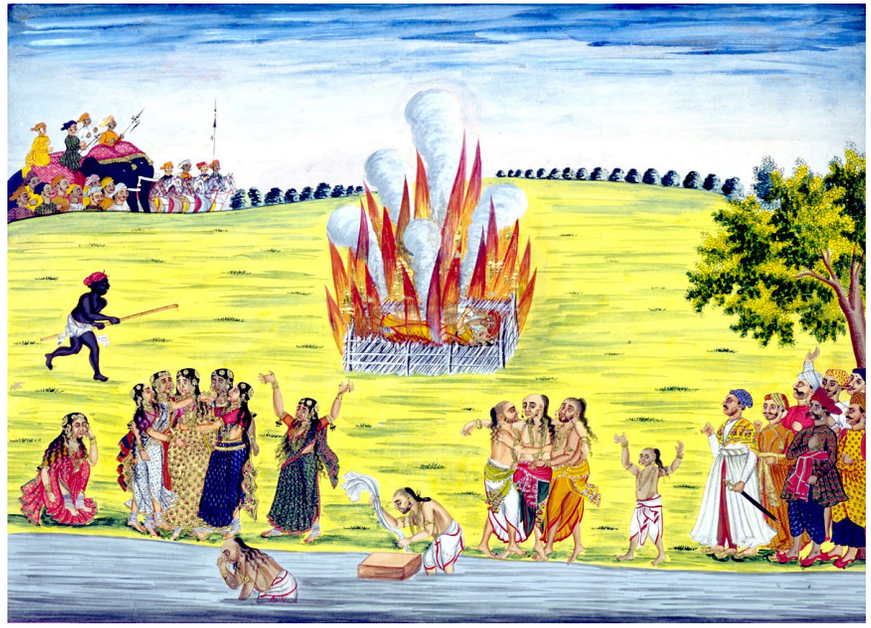
While I was working on this project, someone suggested to me that this anthology is also a project about pushing back against the splintering of knowledge — through compiling these texts, I am also breaking through pay-walls, dead links, and unsearchable PDFs, to make them more accessible. And while that provided some reassurance that what I was doing wasn't totally useless, the question still remained. This act of anthologizing, of consolidation: is it perhaps more harmful than it is productive?

But over time I have come to see this anthology not simply as a rectangular block, but as the intersection of splintering, multifaceted pathways. This book is merely the nexus where these heterogeneous texts intersect, but one must never forget that they extend far beyond this moment—in multiple directions and in multiple dimensionalities. This is reflected in various formal decisions that I have made. Different colored text provides the opportunity for both simultaneity and differentiation. Positioning more than one text on the same page fractures and decentralizes the monolithic text-block. Redrawing the margins allow for a fluidity between text and page.

These texts provide a wide swath of different perspectives that will hopefully illuminate the complexity that comes when one finds themself in the intersections of multiple global hegemonic systems of oppression. Hopefully, through close readings of these texts, and an integration of what these texts have to say with our own worldview and practices, we will become more aware of our inherent biases, of how empire is the backdrop against everything we do, of the violent undercurrent of colonialism that still remains, ever present.

A constant critique is needed. And then a constant critique of that critique is needed.

This anthology makes no pretensions about being anything more than the mediator between these texts and the reader. But if it brings us even one step closer to that ever unreachable goal of universal liberation, if it leads to the decolonization of even one aspect of our minds, our biases, and the way we go about the world, if it, as Spivak puts it, incites even a degree a rage against the imperialist narrativization of history, then I will have considered this project a success.



Unknown Artist
circa 1800

These pictures are made by Indian artists for the British in India and are called Company paintings. This one depicts the practice of sati (suttee) or widow-burning.

It should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English. The role of literature in the production of cultural representation should not be ignored. These two obvious "facts" continue to be disregarded in the reading of nineteenth-century British literature. This itself attests to the continuing success of the imperialist project, displaced and dispersed into more modern forms. If these "facts" were remembered, not only in the study of British literature but in the study of the literatures of the European colonizing cultures of the great age of imperialism, we would produce a narrative, in literary history, of the "worlding" of what is now called "the Third World." To consider the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact literary heritages waiting to be recovered, interpreted, and curricularized in

THREE WOMEN'S TEXTS AND A CRITIQUE OF IMPERIALISM

GAYATRI CHAKRAVORTY SPIVAK

0:11
I'm a storyteller. And I would like to tell you a few personal stories about what I like to call "the danger of the single story." I grew up on a university campus in eastern Nigeria. My mother says that I started reading at the age of two, although I think four is probably close to the truth. So I was an early reader, and what I read were British and American children's books.

THE DANGER OF A SINGLE STORY

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

0:38
I was also an early writer, and when I began to write, at about the age of seven, stories in pencil with crayon illustrations that my poor mother was obligated to read, I wrote exactly the kinds of stories I was reading: All my characters were white and blue-eyed, they played in the snow, they ate apples,

1:03
(Laughter)

1:05
and they talked a lot about the weather, how lovely it was that the sun had come out.

English translation fosters the emergence of "the Third World" as a signifier that allows us to forget that "worlding," even as it expands the empire of the literary discipline.[1]

It seems particularly unfortunate when the emergent perspective of feminist criticism reproduces the axioms of imperialism. A basically isolationist admiration for the literature of the female subject in Europe and Anglo-America establishes the high feminist norm. It is supported and operated by an information-retrieval approach to "Third World" literature which often employs a deliberately "nontheoretical" methodology with self-conscious rectitude.

In this essay, I will attempt to examine the operation of the "worlding" of what is today "the Third World" by what has become a cult text of feminism; *Jane Eyre.*[2] I plot the novel's reach and grasp, and locate its structural motors. I read *Wide Sargasso Sea* as *Jane Eyre*'s reinscription and *Frankenstein* as an analysis—even a deconstruction—of a "worlding" such as *Jane Eyre*'s.[3]

I need hardly mention that the object of my investigation is the printed book, not its "author." To make such a distinction is, of course,

1. My notion of the "worlding of a world" upon what must be assumed to be uninscribed earth is a vulgarization of Martin Heidegger's idea; see "The Origin of the Work of Art," *Poetry, Language, Thought,* trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York, 1977), pp. 17-87.

2. See Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* (New York, 1960); all further references to this work, abbreviated *JE,* will be included in the text.

3. See Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Harmondsworth, 1966); all further references to this work, abbreviated *WSS,* will be included in the text. And see Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein;* or, The Modern Prometheus (New York, 1965); all further references to this work, abbreviated *F,* will be included in the text.

to ignore the lessons of deconstruction. A deconstructive critical approach would loosen the binding of the book, undo the opposition between verbal text and the biography of the named subject "Charlotte Bronte," and see the two as each other's "scene of writing." In such a reading, the life that writes itself as "my life" is as much a production in psychosocial space (other names can be found) as the book that is written by the holder of that named life-a book that is then consigned to what is most often recognized as genuinely "social": the world of publication and distribution.[4] To touch Brontë's "life" in such a way, however, would be too risky here. We must rather strategically take shelter in an essentialism which, not wishing to lose the important advantages won by U.S. mainstream feminism, will continue to honor the suspect binary oppositions—book and author, individual and history—and start with an assurance of the following sort: my readings here do not seek to undermine the excellence of the individual artist. If even minimally successful, the readings will incite a degree of rage against the imperialist narrativization of history, that it should produce so abject a script for her. I provide these assurances to allow myself some room to situate feminist individualism in its historical determination rather than simply to canonize it as feminism as such.

Sympathetic U.S. feminists have remarked that I do not do justice to Jane Eyre's subjectivity. A word of explanation is perhaps in order. The broad strokes of my presuppositions

1:09
(Laughter)

1:11
Now, this despite the fact that I lived in Nigeria. I had never been outside Nigeria. We didn't have snow, we ate mangoes, and we never talked about the weather, because there was no need to.

1:25
My characters also drank a lot of ginger beer, because the characters in the British books I read drank ginger beer. Never mind that I had no idea what ginger beer was.

4. I have tried to do this in my essay "Unmaking and Making in *To the Lighthouse,*" in *Women and Language in Literature and Society,* ed. Sally McConnell-Ginet, Ruth Borker, and Nelly Furman (New York, 1980), pp. 310-27.

1:35
(Laughter)

1:36
And for many years afterwards, I would have a desperate desire to taste ginger beer. But that is another story.

are that what is at stake, for feminist individualism in the age of imperialism, is precisely the making of human beings, the constitution and "interpellation" of the subject not only as individual but as "individualist."[5] This stake is represented on two registers: childbearing and soul making. The first is domestic-society-through-sexual-reproduction cathected as "companionate love"; the second is the imperialist project cathected as civil-society-through-social-mission. As the female individualist, not-quite/not-male, articulates herself in shifting relationship to what is at stake, the "native female" as such (*within* discourse, *as* a signifier) is excluded from any share in this emerging norm.[6] If we read this account from an isolationist perspective in a "metropolitan" context, we see nothing there but the psychobiography of the militant female subject. In a reading such as mine, in contrast, the effort is to wrench oneself away from the mesmerizing focus of the "subject-constitution" of the female individualist.

5. As always, I take my formula from Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," *"Lenin and Philosophy" and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York, 1971), pp. 127-86. For an acute differentiation between the individual and individualism, see V. N. Vološinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language,* trans. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik, Studies in Language, vol. 1 (New York, 1973), pp. 93-94 and 152-53. For a "straight" analysis of the roots and ramifications of English "individualism," see C. B. MacPherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford, 1962). I am grateful to Jonathan Ree for bringing this book to my attention and for giving a careful reading of all but the very end of the present essay.

6. I am constructing an analogy with Homi Bhabha's powerful notion of "not-quite/ not-white" in his "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambiguity of Colonial Discourse," *October* 28 (Spring 1984): 132. I should also add that I use the word "native" here in reaction to the term "Third World Woman." It cannot, of course, apply with equal historical justice to both the West Indian and the Indian contexts nor to contexts of imperialism by transportation.

To develop further the notion that my stance need not be an accusing one, I will refer to a passage from Roberto Fernandez Retamar's "Caliban."[7] José Enrique Rodó had argued in 1900 that the model for the Latin American intellectual in relationship to Europe could be Shakespeare's Ariel.[8] In 1971 Retamar, denying the possibility of an identifiable "Latin American Culture," recast the model as Caliban. Not surprisingly, this powerful exchange still excludes any specific consideration of the civilizations of the Maya, the Aztecs, the Incas, or the smaller nations of what is now called Latin America. Let us note carefully that, at this stage of my argument, this "conversation" between Europe and Latin America (without a specific consideration of the political economy of the "worlding" of the "native") provides a sufficient thematic description of our attempt to confront the ethnocentric and reverse-ethnocentric benevolent double bind (that is, considering the "native" as object for enthusiastic information-retrieval and thus denying its own "worlding") that I sketched in my opening paragraphs.

In a moving passage in "Caliban," Retamar locates both Caliban and Ariel in the postcolonial intellectual:

> There is no real Ariel-Caliban polarity: both are slaves in the hands of Prospero, the foreign magician. But Caliban is the rude and unconquerable master of the island, while

1:43
What this demonstrates, I think, is how impressionable and vulnerable we are in the face of a story, particularly as children. Because all I had read were books in which characters were foreign, I had become convinced that books by their very nature had to have foreigners in them and had to be about things with which I could not personally identify. Now, things changed when I discovered African books. There weren't many of them available, and they weren't quite as easy to find as the foreign books.

7. See Roberto Fernandez Retamar, "Caliban: Notes towards a Discussion of Culture in Our America," trans. Lynn Garafola, David Arthur McMurray, and Robert Marquez, *Massachusetts Review* 15 (Winter-Spring 1974): 7-72; all further references to this work, abbreviated "C," will be included in the text.

8. See Jose Enrique Rodó, *Ariel,* ed. Gordon Brotherston (Cambridge, 1967).

2:14
But because of writers like Chinua Achebe and Camara Laye, I went through a mental shift in my perception of literature. I realized that people like me, girls with skin the color of chocolate, whose kinky hair could not form ponytails, could also exist in literature. I started to write about things I recognized.

2:35
Now, I loved those American and British books I read. They stirred my imagination. They opened up new worlds for me. But the unintended consequence was that I did not know that people like me could exist in literature. So what the discovery of African writers did for me was this: It saved me from having a single story of what books are.

> Ariel, a creature of the air, although also a child of the isle, is the intellectual.
>
> The deformed Caliban—enslaved, robbed of his island, and taught the language by Prospero—rebukes him thus: "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse." ["C,"pp. 28, 11]

As we attempt to unlearn our so-called privilege as Ariel and "seek from [a certain] Caliban the honor of a place in his rebellious and glorious ranks," we do not ask that our students and colleagues should emulate us but that they should attend to us ("C," p. 72). If, however, we are driven by a nostalgia for lost origins, we too run the risk of effacing the "native" and stepping forth as "the real Caliban," of forgetting that he is a name in a play, an inaccessible blankness circumscribed by an interpretable text.[9] The stagings of Caliban work alongside the narrativization of history: claiming to *be* Caliban legitimizes the very individualism that we must persistently attempt to undermine from within.

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, in an article on history and women's history, shows us how to define the historical moment of feminism in the West in terms of female access to individualism.[10] The battle for female individualism plays itself out within the larger theater

9. For an elaboration of "an inaccessible blankness circumscribed by an interpretable text," see my "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxist Interpretations of Culture,* ed. Cary Nelson (Urbana, Ill., forthcoming).

10. See Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History," *New Left Review* 133 (May-June 1982): 5-29.

of the establishment of meritocratic individualism, indexed in the aesthetic field by the ideology of "the creative imagination." Fox-Genovese's presupposition will guide us into the beautifully orchestrated opening of *Jane Eyre.*

It is a scene of the marginalization and privatization of the protagonist: "There was no possibility of taking a walk that day... Out-door exercise was now out of the question. I was glad of it," Brontë writes (*JE*, p. 9). The movement continues as Jane breaks the rules of the appropriate topography of withdrawal. The family at the center withdraws into the sanctioned architectural space of the withdrawing room or drawing room; Jane inserts herself—"I slipped in"—into the margin—"A small breakfast-room *adjoined* the drawing room" (*JE*, p. 9; my emphasis).

The manipulation of the domestic inscription of space within the upwardly mobilizing currents of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century bourgeoisie in England and France is well known. It seems fitting that the place to which Jane withdraws is not only not the withdrawing room but also not the dining room, the sanctioned place of family meals. Nor is it the library, the appropriate place for reading. The breakfast room "contained a book-case" (JE, p. 9). As Rudolph Ackerman wrote in his *Repository* (1823), one of the many manuals of taste in circulation in nineteenth-century England, these low bookcases and stands were designed to "contain all the books that may be desired for a sitting-room without reference to the library."[11] Even in this

2:58
I come from a conventional, middle-class Nigerian family. My father was a professor. My mother was an administrator. And so we had, as was the norm, live-in domestic help, who would often come from nearby rural villages. So, the year I turned eight, we got a new house boy. His name was Fide. The only thing my mother told us about him was that his family was very poor. My mother sent yams and rice, and our old clothes, to his family. And when I didn't finish my dinner, my mother would say, "Finish your food! Don't you know? People like Fide's family have nothing." So I felt enormous pity for Fide's family.

11. Rudolph Ackerman, *The Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions, and Politics,* (London, 1823), p. 310.

3:42
Then one Saturday, we went to his village to visit, and his mother showed us a beautifully patterned basket made of dyed raffia that his brother had made. I was startled. It had not occurred to me that anybody in his family could actually make something. All I had heard about them was how poor they were, so that it had become impossible for me to see them as anything else but poor. Their poverty was my single story of them.

already triply off-center place, "having drawn the red moreen curtain nearly close, I [Jane] was shrined in double retirement" (*JE*, pp. 9-10).

Here in Jane's self-marginalized uniqueness, the reader becomes her accomplice: the reader and Jane are united-both are reading. Yet Jane still preserves her odd privilege, for she continues never quite doing the proper thing in its proper place. She cares little for reading what is *meant* to be read: the "letter-press." She reads the pictures. The power of this singular hermeneutics is precisely that it can make the outside inside. "At intervals, while turning over the leaves of my book, I studied the aspect of that winter afternoon." Under "the clear panes of glass," the rain no longer penetrates, "the drear November day" is rather a one-dimensional "aspect" to be "studied," not decoded like the "letter-press" but, like pictures, deciphered by the unique creative imagination of the marginal individualist (*JE*, p. 10).

Before following the track of this unique imagination, let us consider the suggestion that the progress of *Jane Eyre* can be charted through a sequential arrangement of the family/counter-family dyad. In the novel, we encounter, first, the Reeds as the legal family and Jane, the late Mr. Reed's sister's daughter, as the representative of a near incestuous counter-family; second, the Brocklehursts, who run the school Jane is sent to, as the legal family and Jane, Miss Temple, and Helen Burns as a counter-family that falls short because it is only a community of women;

third, Rochester and the mad Mrs. Rochester as the legal family and Jane and Rochester as the illicit counter-family. Other items may be added to the thematic chain in this sequence: Rochester and Celine Varens as structurally functional counter-family; Rochester and Blanche Ingram as dissimulation of legality-and so on. It is during this sequence that Jane is moved from the counter-family to the family-in-law. In the next sequence, it is Jane who restores full family status to the as-yet-incomplete community of siblings, the Riverses. The final sequence of the book is a *community of families*, with Jane, Rochester, and their children at the center.

In terms of the narrative energy of the novel, how is Jane moved from the place of the counter-family to the family-in-law? It is the active ideology of imperialism that provides the discursive field. (My working definition of "discursive field" must assume the existence of discrete "systems of signs" at hand in the socius, each based on a specific axiomatics. I am identifying these systems as discursive fields. "Imperialism as social mission" generates the possibility of one such axiomatics. How the individual artist taps the discursive field at hand with a sure touch, if not with transhistorical clairvoyance, in order to make the narrative structure move I hope to demonstrate through the following example. It is crucial that we extend our analysis of this example beyond the minimal diagnosis of "racism.")

Let us consider the figure of Bertha Mason, a figure pro-

4:12
Years later, I thought about this when I left Nigeria to go to university in the United States. I was 19. My American roommate was shocked by me. She asked where I had learned to speak English so well, and was confused when I said that Nigeria happened to have English as its official language. She asked if she could listen to what she called my "tribal music," and was consequently very disappointed when I produced my tape of Mariah Carey.

4:41
(Laughter)

4:44
She assumed that I did not know how to use a stove.

4:48
What struck me was this: She had felt sorry for me even before she saw me. Her default position toward me, as an African, was a kind of patronizing, well-meaning pity. My roommate had a single story of Africa: a single story of catastrophe. In this single story, there was no possibility of Africans being similar to her in any way, no possibility of feelings more complex than pity, no possibility of a connection as human equals.

duced by the axiomatics of imperialism. Through Bertha Mason, the white Jamaican Creole, Brontë renders the human/animal frontier as acceptably indeterminate, so that a good greater than the letter of the Law can be broached. Here is the celebrated passage, given in the voice of Jane:

> In the deep shade, at the further end of the room, a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not ... tell: it groveled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face. [*JE*, p. 295]

In a matching passage, given in the voice of Rochester speaking to Jane, Brontë presents the imperative for a shift beyond the Law as divine injunction rather than human motive. In the terms of my essay, we might say that this is the register not of mere marriage or sexual reproduction but of Europe and its not-yet-human Other, of soul making. The field of imperial conquest is here inscribed as Hell:

> "One night I had been awakened by her yells ... it was a fiery West Indian night ...
> "'This life,' said I at last, 'is hell!—this is the air—

those are the sounds of the bottomless pit! *I have a right* to deliver myself from it if I can ...
Let me break away, and go home to God!' ...

> "A wind fresh from Europe blew over the ocean and rushed through the open casement: the storm broke, streamed, thundered, blazed, and the air grew pure ... It was true Wisdom that consoled me in that hour, and showed me the right path ...
> "The sweet wind from Europe was still whispering in the refreshed leaves, and the Atlantic was thundering in glorious liberty ...
> "'Go,' said Hope, 'and live again in Europe ... You have done all that God and Humanity require of you.'" [*JE*, pp. 310-11; my emphasis]

It is the unquestioned ideology of imperialist axiomatics, then, that conditions Jane's move from the counter-family set to the set of the family-in-law. Marxist critics such as Terry Eagleton have seen this only in terms of the ambiguous *class* position of the governess.[12] Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, on the other hand, have seen Bertha Mason only in psychological terms, as Jane's dark double.[13]

I will not enter the critical debates that offer themselves here. Instead, I will develop the suggestion that nineteenth-century feminist individualism could conceive of a "greater" project

5:20
I must say that before I went to the U.S., I didn't consciously identify as African. But in the U.S., whenever Africa came up, people turned to me. Never mind that I knew nothing about places like Namibia. But I did come to embrace this new identity, and in many ways I think of myself now as African. Although I still get quite irritable when Africa is referred to as a country, the most recent example being my otherwise wonderful flight from Lagos two days ago, in which there was an announcement on the Virgin flight about the charity work in "India, Africa and other countries."

5:54
(Laughter)

12. See Terry Eagleton, *Myths of Power: A Marxist Study of the Brontës* (London, 1975); this is one of the general presuppositions of his book.

13. See Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven, Conn., 1979), pp. 360–62.

5:55
So, after I had spent some years in the U.S. as an African, I began to understand my roommate's response to me. If I had not grown up in Nigeria, and if all I knew about Africa were from popular images, I too would think that Africa was a place of beautiful landscapes, beautiful animals, and incomprehensible people, fighting senseless wars, dying of poverty and AIDS, unable to speak for themselves and waiting to be saved by a kind, white foreigner. I would see Africans in the same way that I, as a child, had seen Fide's family.

6:34
This single story of Africa ultimately comes, I think, from Western literature. Now, here is a quote from the writing of a London merchant called John Lok, who sailed to west Africa in 1561 and kept a fascinating account of his voyage. After referring to the black

than access to the closed circle of the nuclear family. This is the project of soul making beyond "mere" sexual reproduction. Here the native "subject"is not almost an animal but rather the object of what might be termed the terrorism of the categorical imperative.

I am using "Kant" in this essay as a metonym for the most flexible ethical moment in the European eighteenth century. Kant words the categorical imperative, conceived as the universal moral law given by pure reason, in this way: "In all creation every thing one chooses and over which one has any power, may be used *merely as means;* man alone, and with him every rational creature, is an *end in himself."* It is thus a moving displacement of Christian ethics from religion to philosophy. As Kant writes: "With this agrees very well the possibility of such a command as: *Love God above everything, and thy neighbor as thyself.* For as a command it requires respect for a law which *commands love* and does not leave it to our own arbitrary choice to make this our principle."[14]

The "categorical"in Kant cannot be adequately represented in determinately grounded action. The dangerous transformative power of philosophy, however, is that its formal subtlety can be travestied in the service of the state. Such a travesty in the case of the categorical imperative can justify the imperialist project by producing the following formula: *make* the heathen into a human so that he can be treated as an end in himself.[15] This project is presented as a sort of tangent in *Jane*

14. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason, The "Critique of Pure Reason," the "Critique of Practical Reason" and Other Ethical Treatises, the "Critique of Judgement,"* trans. J. M. D. Meiklejohn et al. (Chicago, 1952), pp. 328, 326.

Eyre, a tangent that escapes the closed circle of the *narrative* conclusion. The tangent narrative is the story of St. John Rivers, who is granted the important task of concluding the *text.*

At the novel's end, the *allegorical* language of Christian psychobiography—rather than the textually constituted and seemingly *private* grammar of the creative imagination which we noted in the novel's opening—marks the inaccessibility of the imperialist project as such to the nascent "feminist" scenario. The concluding passage of *Jane Eyre* places St. John Rivers within the fold of *Pilgrim's Progress.* Eagleton pays no attention to this but accepts the novel's ideological lexicon, which establishes St. John Rivers' heroism by identifying a life in Calcutta with an unquestioning choice of death. Gilbert and Gubar, by calling *Jane Eyre* "Plain Jane's progress," see the novel as simply replacing the male protagonist with the female. They do not notice the distance between sexual reproduction and soul making, both actualized by the unquestioned idiom of imperialist presuppositions evident in the last part of *Jane Eyre:*

> Firm, faithful, and devoted, full of energy, and zeal, and truth, [St. John Rivers] labours for his race ... His is the sternness of the warrior Greatheart, who guards his pilgrim convoy from the onslaught of Apollyon ... His is the ambition of the high master-spirit[s] ... who stand without fault before the throne of God; who share the last mighty

Africans as "beasts who have no houses," he writes, "They are also people without heads, having their mouth and eyes in their breasts."

7:04
Now, I've laughed every time I've read this. And one must admire the imagination of John Lok. But what is important about his writing is that it represents the beginning of a tradition of telling African stories in the West: A tradition of Sub-Saharan Africa as a place of negatives, of difference, of darkness, of people who, in the words of the wonderful poet Rudyard Kipling, are "half devil, half child."

15. I have tried to justify the reduction of sociohistorical problems to formulas or propositions in my essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" The "travesty" I speak of does not befall the Kantian ethic in its purity as an accident but rather exists within its lineaments as a possible supplement. On the register of the human being as child rather than heathen, my formula can be found, for example, in "What Is Enlightenment?" in Kant, *"Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals," "What Is Enlightenment?" and a Passage from "The Metaphysics of Morals,"* trans. and ed. Lewis White Beck (Chicago, 1950). I have profited from discussing Kant with Jonathan Ree.

7:31
And so, I began to realize that my American roommate must have throughout her life seen and heard different versions of this single story, as had a professor, who once told me that my novel was not "authentically African." Now, I was quite willing to contend that there were a number of things wrong with the novel, that it had failed in a number of places, but I had not quite imagined that it had failed at achieving something called African authenticity. In fact, I did not know what African authenticity was. The professor told me that my characters were too much like him, an educated and middle-class man. My characters drove cars. They were not starving. Therefore they were not authentically African.

> victories of the Lamb; who are called, and chosen, and faithful. [*JE*, p. 455]

Earlier in the novel, St. John Rivers himself justifies the project: "My vocation? My great work? ... My hopes of being numbered in the band who have merged all ambitions in the glorious one of bettering their race-of carrying knowledge into the realms of ignorance-of substituting peace for war-freedom for bondage-religion for superstition-the hope of heaven for the fear of hell?" (JE, p. 376). Imperialism and its territorial and subject-constituting project are a violent deconstruction of these oppositions.

When Jean Rhys, born on the Caribbean island of Dominica, read *Jane Eyre* as a child, she was moved by Bertha Mason: "I thought I'd try to write her a life."[16] *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the slim novel published in 1965, at the end of Rhys' long career, is that "life."

I have suggested that Bertha's function in *Jane Eyre* is to render indeterminate the boundary between human and animal and thereby to weaken her entitlement under the spirit if not the letter of the Law. When Rhys rewrites the scene in *Jane Eyre* where Jane hears "a snarling, snatching sound, almost like a dog quarreling" and then encounters a bleeding Richard Mason (JE, p. 210), she keeps Bertha's humanity, indeed her sanity as critic of imperialism, intact. Grace Poole, another character originally in *Jane Eyre*, describes the incident

16. Jean Rhys, in an interview with Elizabeth Vreeland, quoted in Nancy Harrison, *An Introduction to the Writing Practice of Jean Rhys: The Novel as Women's Text* (Rutherford, N. J., forthcoming). This is an excellent, detailed study of Rhys.

to Bertha in *Wide Sargasso Sea:* "So you don't remember that you attacked this gentleman with a knife?... I didn't hear all he said except 'I cannot interfere legally between yourself and your husband'. It was when he said 'legally' that you flew at him' " (*WSS*, p. 150). In Rhys' retelling, it is the dissimulation that Bertha discerns in the word "legally"—not an innate bestiality—that prompts her violent *re*action.

In the figure of Antoinette, whom in *Wide Sargasso Sea* Rochester violently renames Bertha, Rhys suggests that so intimate a thing as personal and human identity might be determined by the politics of imperialism. Antoinette, as a white Creole child growing up at the time of emancipation in Jamaica, is caught between the English imperialist and the black native. In recounting Antoinette's development, Rhys reinscribes some thematics of Narcissus.

There are, noticeably, many images of mirroring in the text. I will quote one from the first section. In this passage, Tia is the little black servant girl who is Antoinette's close companion: "We had eaten the same food, slept side by side, bathed in the same river. As I ran, I thought, I will live with Tia and I will be like her... When I was close I saw the jagged stone in her hand but I did not see her throw it.... We stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking glass" (WSS, p. 38). A progressive sequence of dreams reinforces this mirror imagery. In its second occurrence, the dream is par-

8:20
But I must quickly add that I too am just as guilty in the question of the single story. A few years ago, I visited Mexico from the U.S. The political climate in the U.S. at the time was tense, and there were debates going on about immigration. And, as often happens in America, immigration became synonymous with Mexicans. There were endless stories of Mexicans as people who were fleecing the healthcare system, sneaking across the border, being arrested at the border, that sort of thing.

8:53
I remember walking around on my first day in Guadalajara, watching the people going to work, rolling up tortillas in the marketplace, smoking, laughing. I remember first feeling slight surprise. And then, I was overwhelmed with shame. I realized that I had been so immersed in the media coverage of Mexicans that they had become one thing in my mind, the abject immigrant. I had bought into the single story of Mexicans and I could not have been more ashamed of myself.

tially set in a *hortus conclusus*, or "enclosed garden"—Rhys uses the phrase (WSS, p. 50)—a Romance rewriting of the Narcissus topos as the place of encounter with Love.[17] In the enclosed garden, Antoinette encounters not Love but a strange threatening voice that says merely "in here," inviting her into a prison which masquerades as the legalization of love (WSS, p. 50).

In Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* Narcissus' madness is disclosed when he recognizes his Other as his self: "Iste ego sum."[18] Rhys makes Antoinette see her *self* as her Other, Brontë's Bertha. In the last section of *Wide Sargasso Sea,* Antoinette acts out *Jane Eyre*'s conclusion and recognizes herself as the so-called ghost in Thornfield Hall: "I went into the hall again with the tall candle in my hand. It was then that I saw her—the ghost. The woman with streaming hair. She was surrounded by a gilt frame but I knew her" (*WSS,* p. 154). The gilt frame encloses a mirror: as Narcissus' pool reflects the selfed Other, so this "pool" reflects the Othered self. Here the dream sequence ends, with an invocation of none other than Tia, the Other that could not be selfed, because the fracture of imperialism rather than the Ovidian pool intervened. (I will return to this difficult point.) "That was the third time I had my dream, and it ended... I called 'Tia' and jumped and woke" (*WSS,* p. 155). It is now, at the very end of the book, that Antoinette/Bertha can say: "Now at last I know why I was brought here and what I have to do" (*WSS,* pp. 155–56). We can read this as her having been brought into the England of Brontë's novel: "This cardboard house"—a book between cardboard covers—"where I walk at night is not England" (*WSS,* p. 148). In this fictive England, she must play out her role, act out the transformation of her "self" into that fictive Other, set fire to the house and kill herself, so that Jane Eyre can become the feminist individualist heroine of British fiction. I must read this as an allegory of the general epistemic violence of imperialism, the construction of a self-immolating colonial subject for the glorification of the social mission of the colonizer. At least Rhys sees to it that the woman from the colonies is not sacrificed as an insane animal for her sister's consolidation.

Critics have remarked that *Wide Sargasso Sea* treats the Rochester character with understanding and sympathy.[19] Indeed, he narrates the entire middle section of the book. Rhys makes it clear that he is a victim of the patriarchal inheritance law of entailment rather than of a father's natural preference for the firstborn: in *Wide Sargasso Sea,* Rochester's situation is clearly that of a younger son dispatched to the colonies to buy an heiress. If in the case of Antoinette and her identity, Rhys utilizes the thematics of Narcissus, in the case of Rochester and his patrimony, she touches on the thematics of Oedipus. (In this she has her finger on our "historical moment." If, in the nineteenth century, subject-constitution is represented as childbearing and soul making, in the twentieth century psychoanalysis allows the West to

9:25
So that is how to create a single story, show a people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become.

9:36
It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an Igbo word, that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world, and it is "nkali." It's a noun that loosely translates to "to be greater than another." Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of nkali: How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power.

17. See Louise Vinge, *The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature Up to the Early Nineteenth Century,* trans. Robert Dewsnap et al. (Lund, 1967), chap. 5.

18. For a detailed study of this text, see John Brenkman, "Narcissus in the Text," *Georgia Review* 30 (Summer 1976): 293-327.

19. See, e.g., Thomas F. Staley, *Jean Rhys: A Critical Study* (Austin, Tex. 1979), pp. 108-16; it is interesting to note Staley's masculist discomfort with this and his consequent dissatisfaction with Rhys' novel.

10:11
Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person. The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti writes that if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story and to start with, "secondly." Start the story with the arrows of the Native Americans, and not with the arrival of the British, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you have an entirely different story.

plot the itinerary of the subject from Narcissus [the "imaginary"] to Oedipus [the "symbolic"]. This subject, however, is the normative male subject. In Rhys' reinscription of these themes, divided between the female and the male protagonist, feminism and a critique of imperialism become complicit.)

In place of the "wind from Europe" scene, Rhys substitutes the scenario of a suppressed letter to a father, a letter which would be the "correct"explanation of the tragedy of the book.[20] "I thought about the letter which should have been written to England a week ago. Dear Father ... "(*WSS*, p. 57). This is the first instance: the letter not written. Shortly afterward:

> Dear Father. The thirty thousand pounds have been paid to me without question or condition. No provision made for her (that must be seen to). ... I will never be a disgrace to you or to my dear brother the son you love. No begging letters, no mean requests. None of the furtive shabby manoeuvres of a younger son. I have sold my soul or you have sold it, and after all is it such a bad bargain? The girl is thought to be beautiful, she is beautiful. And yet ... [*WSS*, p. 59]

This is the second instance: the letter not sent. The formal letter is uninteresting; I will quote only a part of it:

20. I have tried to relate castration and suppressed letters in my "The Letter As Cutting Edge," in *Literature and Psychoanalysis; The Question of Reading: Otherwise*, ed. Shoshana Felman (New Haven, Conn., 1981), pp. 208-26.

> Dear Father, we have arrived from Jamaica after an uncomfortable few days. This little estate in the Windward Islands is part of the family property and Antoinette is much attached to it. ... All is well and has gone according to your plans and wishes. I dealt of course with Richard Mason. ... He seemed to become attached to me and trusted me completely. This place is very beautiful but my illness has left me too exhausted to appreciate it fully. I will write again in a few days' time. [WSS, p. 63]

And so on.

Rhys' version of the Oedipal exchange is ironic, not a closed circle. We cannot know if the letter actually reaches its destination. "I wondered how they got their letters posted," the Rochester figure muses. "I folded mine and put it into a drawer of the desk... There are blanks in my mind that cannot be filled up" (WSS, p. 64). It is as if the text presses us to note the analogy between letter and mind.

Rhys denies to Brontë's Rochester the one thing that is supposed to be secured in the Oedipal relay: the Name of the Father, or the patronymic. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the character corresponding to Rochester has no name. His writing of the final version of the letter to his father is supervised, in fact, by an image of the *loss* of the patronymic: "There was a crude bookshelf made of three shingles strung together over the desk and I looked at the

10:51
I recently spoke at a university where a student told me that it was such a shame that Nigerian men were physical abusers like the father character in my novel. I told him that I had just read a novel called "American Psycho"—

11:07
(Laughter)

11:09
—and that it was such a shame that young Americans were serial murderers.

11:14
(Laughter)

11:18
(Applause)

books, Byron's poems, novels by Sir Walter Scott, *Confessions of an Opium Eater* ... and on the last shelf, *Life and Letters of* ... The rest was eaten away" (*WSS,* p. 63).

Wide Sargasso Sea marks with uncanny clarity the limits of its own discourse in Christophine, Antoinette's black nurse. We may perhaps surmise the distance between *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* by remarking that Christophine's unfinished story is the tangent to the latter narrative, as St. John Rivers' story is to the former. Christophine is not a native of Jamaica; she is from Martinique. Taxonomically, she belongs to the category of the good servant rather than that of the pure native. But within these borders, Rhys creates a powerfully suggestive figure.

Christophine is the first interpreter and named speaking subject in the text. "The Jamaican ladies had never approved of my mother, 'because she pretty like pretty self' Christophine said," we read in the book's opening paragraph (*WSS,* p. 15). I have taught this book five times, once in France, once to students who had worked on the book with the well-known Caribbean novelist Wilson Harris, and once at a prestigious institute where the majority of the students were faculty from other universities. It is part of the political argument I am making that all these students blithely stepped over this paragraph without asking or knowing what Christophine's patois, so-called incorrect English, might mean.

Christophine is, of course, a commodified person. "'She

was your father's wedding present to me' explains Antoinette's mother, 'one of his presents' " (*WSS,* p. 18). Yet Rhys assigns her some crucial functions in the text. It is Christophine who judges that black ritual practices are culture-specific and cannot be used by whites as cheap remedies for social evils, such as Rochester's lack of love for Antoinette. Most important, it is Christophine alone whom Rhys allows to offer a hard analysis of Rochester's actions, to challenge him in a face-to-face encounter. The entire extended passage is worthy of comment. I quote a brief extract:

> "She is Creole girl, and she have the sun in her. Tell the truth now. She don't come to your house in this place England they tell me about, she don't come to your beautiful house to beg you to marry with her. No, it's you come all the long way to her house-it's you beg her to marry. And she love you and she give you all she have. Now you say you don't love her and you break her up. What you do with her money, eh?" [And then Rochester, the white man, comments silently to himself] Her voice was still quiet but with a hiss in it when she said "money." [*WSS,* p. 130]

Her analysis is powerful enough for the white man to be afraid: "I no longer felt dazed, tired, half hypnotized, but alert and wary, ready to defend myself" (*WSS,* p. 130).

Rhys does not, however, romanticize individual heroics

11:24
Now, obviously I said this in a fit of mild irritation.

11:27
(Laughter)

11:29
But it would never have occurred to me to think that just because I had read a novel in which a character was a serial killer that he was somehow representative of all Americans. This is not because I am a better person than that student, but because of America's cultural and economic power, I had many stories of America. I had read Tyler and Updike and Steinbeck and Gaitskill. I did not have a single story of America.

on the part of the oppressed. When the Man refers to the forces of Law and Order, Christophine recognizes their power. This exposure of civil inequality is emphasized by the fact that, just before the Man's successful threat, Christophine had invoked the emancipation of slaves in Jamaica by pro-claiming: "No chain gang, no tread machine, no dark jail either. This is free country and I am free woman" (*WSS,* p. 131).

As I mentioned above, Christophine is tangential to this narrative. She cannot be contained by a novel which rewrites a canonical English text within the European novelistic tradition in the interest of the white Creole rather than the native. No perspective *critical* of imperialism can turn the Other into a self, because the project of imperialism has always already historically refracted what might have been the absolutely Other into a domesticated Other that consolidates the imperialist self.[21] The Caliban of Retamar, caught between Europe and Latin America, reflects this predicament. We can read Rhys' reinscription of Narcissus as a thematization of the same problematic.

Of course, we cannot know Jean Rhys' feelings in the matter. We can, however, look at the scene of Christophine's inscription in the text. Immediately after the exchange between her and the Man, well before the conclusion, she is simply driven out of the story, with neither narrative nor characterological explanation or justice. "'Read and write I don't know. Other things I know.' She walked away without looking back"(*WSS*, p. 133).

21. This is the main argument of my "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

Indeed, if Rhys rewrites the madwoman's attack on the Man by underlining of the misuse of "legality,"she cannot deal with the passage that corresponds to St. John Rivers' own justification of his martyrdom, for it has been displaced into the current idiom of modernization and development. Attempts to construct the "Third World Woman" as a signifier remind us that the hegemonic definition of literature is itself caught within the history of imperialism. A full literary reinscription cannot easily flourish in the imperialist fracture or discontinuity, covered over by an alien legal system masquerading as Law as such, an alien ideology established as only Truth, and a set of human sciences busy establishing the "native" as self-consolidating Other.

In the Indian case at least, it would be difficult to find an ideological clue to the planned epistemic violence of imperialism merely by rearranging curricula or syllabi within existing norms of literary pedagogy. For a later period of imperialism—when the constituted colonial subject has firmly taken hold—straightforward experiments of comparison can be undertaken, say, between the functionally witless India of *Mrs. Dalloway,* on the one hand, and literary texts produced in India in the 1920s, on the other. But the first half of the nineteenth century resists questioning through literature or literary criticism in the narrow sense, because both are implicated in the project of producing Ariel. To reopen the fracture without succumbing to a nostalgia for lost origins, the literary critic must turn to the archives of imperial governance.

11:54
When I learned, some years ago, that writers were expected to have had really unhappy childhoods to be successful, I began to think about how I could invent horrible things my parents had done to me.

12:07
(Laughter)

12:09
But the truth is that I had a very happy childhood, full of laughter and love, in a very close-knit family.

12:16
But I also had grandfathers who died in refugee camps. My cousin Polle died because he could not get adequate healthcare. One of my closest friends, Okoloma, died in a plane crash because our fire trucks did not have water. I grew up under repressive military governments that devalued education, so that sometimes, my parents were not paid their salaries. And so, as a child, I saw jam disappear from the breakfast table, then margarine disappeared, then bread became too expensive, then milk became rationed. And most of all, a kind of normalized political fear invaded our lives.

In conclusion, I shall look briefly at Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein,* a text of nascent feminism that remains cryptic, I think, simply because it does not speak the language of feminist individualism which we have come to hail as the language of high feminism within English literature. It is interesting that Barbara Johnson's brief study tries to rescue this recalcitrant text for the service of feminist autobiography.[22] Alternatively, George Levine reads *Frankenstein* in the context of the creative imagination and the nature of the hero. He sees the novel as a book about its own writing and about writing itself, a Romantic allegory of reading within which Jane Eyre as unself-conscious critic would fit quite nicely.[23] I propose to take *Frankenstein* out of this arena and focus on it in terms of that sense of English cultural identity which I invoked at the opening of this essay. Within that focus we are obliged to admit that, although *Frankenstein* is ostensibly about the origin and evolution of man in society, it does not deploy the axiomatics of imperialism.

Let me say at once that there is plenty of incidental imperialist sentiment in *Frankenstein*. My point, within the argument of this essay, is that the discursive field of imperialism does not produce unquestioned ideological correlatives for the narrative structuring of the book. The discourse of imperialism surfaces in a curiously powerful way in Shelley's novel, and I will later discuss the moment at which it emerges.

Frankenstein is not a battle-

22. See Barbara Johnson, "My Monster/My Self," *Diacritics* 12 (Summer 1982): 2-10.

23. See George Levine, *The Realistic Imagination: English Fiction from Frankenstein to Lady Chatterley* (Chicago, 1981), pp. 23-35.

ground of male and female individualism articulated in terms of sexual reproduction (family and female) and social subject-production (race and male). That binary opposition is undone in Victor Frankenstein's laboratory— an artificial womb where both projects are undertaken simultaneously, though the terms are never openly spelled out. Frankenstein's apparent antagonist is God himself as Maker of Man, but his real competitor is also woman as the maker of children. It is not just that his dream of the death of mother and bride and the actual death of his bride are associated with the visit of his monstrous homoerotic "son"- to his bed. On a much more overt level, the monster is a bodied "corpse," unnatural because bereft of a determinable childhood: "No father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses; or if they had, all my past was now a blot, a blind vacancy in which I distinguished nothing" (*F,* pp. 57, 115). It is Frankenstein's own ambiguous and miscued understanding of the real motive for the monster's vengefulness that reveals his own competition with woman as maker:

> I created a rational creature and was bound towards him to assure, as far as was in my power, his happiness and well-being. This was my duty, but there was another still paramount to that. My duties towards the beings of my own species had greater claims to my attention because they included a greater proportion of happiness or misery.

12:56
All of these stories make me who I am. But to insist on only these negative stories is to flatten my experience and to overlook the many other stories that formed me. The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.

13:24
Of course, Africa is a continent full of catastrophes: There are immense ones, such as the horrific rapes in Congo and depressing ones, such as the fact that 5,000 people apply for one job vacancy in Nigeria. But there are other stories that are not about catastrophe, and it is very important, it is just as important, to talk about them.

> Urged by this view, I refused, and I did right in refusing, to create a companion for the first creature. [*F,* p. 206]

It is impossible not to notice the accents of transgression inflecting Frankenstein's demolition of his experiment to create the future Eve. Even in the laboratory, the woman-in-the-making is not a bodied corpse but "a human being." The (il)logic of the metaphor bestows on her a prior existence which Frankenstein aborts, rather than an anterior death which he reembodies: "The remains of the half-finished creature, whom I had destroyed, lay scattered on the floor, and I almost felt as if I had mangled the living flesh of a human being" (*F,* p. 163).

In Shelley's view, man's hubris as soul maker both usurps the place of God and attempts—vainly—to sublate woman's physiological prerogative.[24] Indeed, indulging a Freudian fantasy here, I could urge that, if to give and withhold to/from the mother a phallus is the male fetish, then to give and withhold to/from the man a womb might be the female fetish.[25] The icon of the sublimated womb in man is surely his productive brain, the box in the head.

In the judgment of classical psychoanalysis, the phallic mother exists only by virtue of the castration-anxious son; in *Frankenstein*'s judgment, the hysteric father (Victor Frankenstein gifted with his laboratory—the womb of theoretical reason) cannot produce a

24. Consult the publications of the Feminist International Network for the best overview of the current debate on reproductive technology.

daughter. Here the language of racism—the dark side of imperialism understood as social mission—combines with the hysteria of masculism into the idiom of (the withdrawal of) sexual reproduction rather than subject-constitution. The roles of masculine and feminine individualists are hence reversed and displaced. Frankenstein cannot produce a "daughter" because "she might become ten thousand times more malignant than her mate ... [and because] one of the first results of those sympathies for which the demon thirsted would be children, and a race of devils would be propagated upon the earth who might make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror" (*F,* p. 158). This particular narrative strand also launches a thoroughgoing critique of the eighteenth-century European discourses on the origin of society through (Western Christian) man. Should I mention that, much like Jean-Jacques Rousseau's remark in his *Confessions,* Frankenstein declares himself to be "by birth a Genevese" (*F,* p. 31)?

In this overly didactic text, Shelley's point is that social engineering should not be based on pure, theoretical, or natural-scientific reason alone, which is her implicit critique of the utilitarian vision of an engineered society. To this end, she presents in the first part of her deliberately schematic story three characters, childhood friends, who seem to represent Kant's three-part conception of the human subject: Victor Frankenstein, the forces of theoretical reason or "natural philosophy"; Henry

13:44
I've always felt that it is impossible to engage properly with a place or a person without engaging with all of the stories of that place and that person. The consequence of the single story is this: It robs people of dignity. It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It emphasizes how we are different rather than how we are similar.

25. For the male fetish, see Sigmund Freud, "Fetishism," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* ed. and trans. James Strachey et al., 24 vols. (London, 1953-74), 21:152-57. For a more "serious" Freudian study of *Frankenstein,* see Mary Jacobus, "Is There a Woman in This Text?" *New Literary History* 14 (Autumn 1982): 117-41. My "fantasy" would of course be disproved by the "fact"that it is more difficult for a woman to assume the position of fetishist than for a man; see Mary Ann Doane, "Film and the Masquerade: Theorising the Female Spectator," *Screen* 23 (Sept.-Oct. 1982): 74-87.

14:08
So what if before my Mexican trip, I had followed the immigration debate from both sides, the U.S. and the Mexican? What if my mother had told us that Fide's family was poor and hardworking? What if we had an African television network that broadcast diverse African stories all over the world? What the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe calls "a balance of stories."

Clerval, the forces of practical reason or "the moral relations of things"; and Elizabeth Lavenza, that aesthetic judgment—"the aerial creation of the poets"—which, according to Kant, is "a suitable mediating link connecting the realm of the concept of nature and that of the concept of freedom ... (which) promotes ... *moral* feeling" (*F*, pp. 37, 36).[26]

This three-part subject does not operate harmoniously in Frankenstein. That Henry Clerval, associated as he is with practical reason, should have as his "design ... to visit India, in the belief that he had in his knowledge of its various languages, and in the views he had taken of its society, the means of materially assisting the progress of European colonization and trade" is proof of this, as well as part of the incidental imperialist sentiment that I speak of above (*F*, pp. 151-52). I should perhaps point out that the language here is entrepreneurial rather than missionary:

> He came to the university with the design of making himself complete master of the Oriental languages, as thus he should open a field for the plan of life he had marked out for himself. Resolved to pursue no inglorious career, he turned his eyes towards the East as affording scope for his spirit of enterprise. The Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit languages engaged his attention. [*F*, pp. 66-67]

But it is of course Victor Frankenstein, with his strange itinerary

26. Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J. H. Bernard (New York, 1951), p. 39.

of obsession with natural philosophy, who offers the strongest demonstration that the multiple perspectives of the three-part Kantian subject cannot co-operate harmoniously. Frankenstein creates a putative human subject out of natural philosophy alone. According to his own miscued summation: "In a fit of enthusiastic madness I created a rational creature" (*F*, p. 206). It is not at all farfetched to say that Kant's categorical imperative can most easily be mistaken for the hypothetical imperative—a command to ground in cognitive comprehension what can be apprehended only by moral will-by putting natural philosophy in the place of practical reason.

I should hasten to add here that just as readings such as this one do not necessarily accuse Charlotte Brontë the named individual of harboring imperialist sentiments, so also they do not necessarily commend Mary Shelley the named individual for writing a successful Kantian allegory. The most I can say is that it is possible to read these texts, within the frame of imperialism and the Kantian ethical moment, in a politically useful way. Such an approach presupposes that a "disinterested" reading attempts to render transparent the interests of the hegemonic readership. (Other "political" readings—for instance, that the monster is the nascent working class—can also be advanced.)

Frankenstein is built in the established epistolary tradition of multiple frames. At the heart of the multiple frames, the narrative of the monster (as reported by Frankenstein to Robert Walton,

14:32
What if my roommate knew about my Nigerian publisher, Muhtar Bakare, a remarkable man who left his job in a bank to follow his dream and start a publishing house? Now, the conventional wisdom was that Nigerians don't read literature. He disagreed. He felt that people who could read, would read, if you made literature affordable and available to them.

14:55
Shortly after he published my first novel, I went to a TV station in Lagos to do an interview, and a woman who worked there as a messenger came up to me and said, "I really liked your novel. I didn't like the ending. Now, you must write a sequel, and this is what will happen ..."

15:10
(Laughter)

15:13
And she went on to tell me what to write in the sequel. I was not only charmed, I was very moved. Here was a woman, part of the ordinary masses of Nigerians, who were not supposed to be readers. She had not only read the book, but she had taken ownership of it and felt justified in telling me what to write in the sequel.

15:32
Now, what if my roommate knew about my friend Funmi Iyanda, a fearless woman who hosts a TV show in Lagos, and is determined to tell the stories that we prefer to forget? What if my roommate knew about the heart procedure that was performed in the Lagos

who then recounts it in a letter to his sister) is of his almost learning, clandestinely, to be human. It is invariably noticed that the monster reads *Paradise Lost* as true history. What is not so often noticed is that he also reads Plutarch's *Lives,* "the histories of the first founders of the ancient republics,"which he compares to "the patriarchal lives of my protectors" (F, pp. 123, 124). And his *education* comes through "Volney's *Ruins of Empires,"* which purported to be a prefiguration of the French Revolution, published after the event and after the author had rounded off his theory with practice (F,p. 113). It is an attempt at an enlightened universal secular, rather than a Eurocentric Christian, history, written from the perspective of a narrator "from below," somewhat like the attempts of Eric Wolf or Peter Worsley in our own time.[27]

This Caliban's education in (universal secular) humanity takes place through the monster's eavesdropping on the instruction of an Ariel-Safie, the Christianized "Arabian"to whom "a residence in Turkey was abhorrent"(*F,* p.121). In depicting Safie, Shelley uses some commonplaces of eighteenth-century liberalism that are shared by many today: Safie's Muslim father was a victim of (bad) Christian religious prejudice and yet was himself a wily and ungrateful man not as morally refined as her (good) Christian mother. Having tasted the emancipation of woman, Safie could not go home. The confusion between "Turk" and "Arab" has its counterpart in present-day confusion about Turkey and Iran as "Middle Eastern" but not "Arab."

Although we are a far cry here from the unexamined and covert axiomatics of imperialism in *Jane Eyre,* we will gain nothing by celebrating the time-bound pieties that Shelley, as the daughter of two antievangelicals, produces. It is more interesting for us that Shelley differentiates the Other, works at the Caliban/Ariel distinction, and cannot make the monster identical with the proper recipient of these lessons. Although he had "heard of the discovery of the American hemisphere and wept with Safie over the helpless fate of its original inhabitants," Safie cannot reciprocate his attachment. When she first catches sight of him, "Safie, unable to attend to her friend [Agatha], rushed out of the cottage" (*F,* pp. 114 [my emphasis], 129).

In the taxonomy of characters, the Muslim-Christian Safie belongs with Rhys' Antoinette/Bertha. And indeed, like Christophine the good servant, the subject created by the fiat of natural philosophy is the tangential unresolved moment in Frankenstein. The simple suggestion that the monster is human inside but monstrous outside and only provoked into vengefulness is clearly not enough to bear the burden of so great a historical dilemma.

hospital last week? What if my roommate knew about contemporary Nigerian music, talented people singing in English and Pidgin, and Igbo and Yoruba and Ijo, mixing influences from Jay-Z to Fela to Bob Marley to their grandfathers.

16:05
What if my roommate knew about the female lawyer who recently went to court in Nigeria to challenge a ridiculous law that required women to get their husband's consent before renewing their passports? What if my roommate knew about Nollywood, full of innovative people making films despite great technical odds, films so popular that they really are the best example of Nigerians consuming what they produce? What if my roommate knew about my wonderfully ambitious W braider, who has just started her own

27. See [Constantin Francois Chasseboeuf de Volney], *The Ruins; or, Meditations on the Revolutions of Empires,* trans. pub. (London, 1811). Johannes Fabian has shown us the manipulation of time in "new" secular histories of a similar kind; see *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York, 1983). See also Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1982), and Peter Worsley, *The Third World,* 2d ed. (Chicago, 1973); I am grateful to Dennis Dworkin for bringing the latter book to my attention. The most striking ignoring of the monster's education through Volney is in Gilbert's otherwise brilliant "Horror's Twin: Mary Shelley's Monstrous Eve," *Feminist Studies* 4 (June 1980): 48-73. Gilbert's essay reflects the absence of race-determinations in a certain sort of feminism. Her present work has most convincingly filled in this gap; see, e.g., her recent piece on H. Rider Haggard's *She* ("Rider Haggard's Heart of Darkness," *Partisan Review* 50, no. 3 [1983]: 444-53).

business selling hair extensions? Or about the millions of other Nigerians who start businesses and sometimes fail, but continue to nurse ambition?

16:46
Every time I am home I am confronted with the usual sources of irritation for most Nigerians: our failed infrastructure, our failed government, but also by the incredible resilience of people who thrive despite the government, rather than because of it. I teach writing workshops in Lagos every summer, and it is amazing to me how many people apply, how many people are eager to write, to tell stories.

At one moment, in fact, Shelley's Frankenstein does try to tame the monster, to humanize him by bringing him within the circuit of the Law. He "repair[s] to a criminal judge in the town and ... relate[s his] history briefly but with firmness"—the first and disinterested version of the narrative of Frankenstein—"marking the dates with accuracy and never deviating into invective or exclamation... When I had concluded my narration I said, 'This is the being whom I accuse and for whose seizure and punishment I call upon you to exert your whole power. It is your duty as a magistrate' " (*F,* pp. 189, 190). The sheer social reasonableness of the mundane voice of Shelley's "Genevan magistrate" reminds us that the absolutely Other cannot be selfed, that the monster has "properties" which will not be contained by "proper" measures:

> "I will exert myself [he says], and if it is in my power to seize the monster, be assured that he shall suffer punishment proportionate to his crimes. But I fear, from what you have yourself described to be his properties, that this will prove impracticable; and thus, while every proper measure is pursued, you should make up your mind to disappointment." [F, p. 190]

In the end, as is obvious to most readers, distinctions of human individuality themselves seem to fall away from the novel.

Monster, Frankenstein, and Walton seem to become each others' relays. Frankenstein's story comes to an end in death; Walton concludes his own story within the frame of his function as letter writer. In the *narrative* conclusion, he is the natural philosopher who learns from Frankenstein's example. At the end of the *text,* the monster, having confessed his guilt toward his maker and ostensibly intending to immolate himself, is borne away on an ice raft. We do not see the conflagration of his funeral pile—the self-immolation is not consummated in the text: he too cannot be contained by the text. In terms of narrative logic, he is "lost in darkness and distance" (*F,* p. 211)—these are the last words of the novel-into an existential temporality that is coherent with neither the territorializing individual imagination (as in the opening of Jane Eyre) nor the authoritative scenario of Christian psychobiography (as at the end of Brontë's work). The very relationship between sexual reproduction and social subject-production—the dynamic nineteenth-century topos of feminism-in-imperialism—remains problematic within the limits of Shelley's text and, paradoxically, constitutes its strength.

Earlier, I offered a reading of woman as womb holder in Frankenstein. I would now suggest that there is a framing woman in the book who is neither tangential, nor encircled, nor yet encircling. "Mrs. Saville," "excellent Margaret," "beloved Sister" are her address and kinship inscriptions (F, pp. 15, 17, 22). She is the occasion, though not the protagonist, of the novel. She is

17:13
My Nigerian publisher and I have just started a non-profit called Farafina Trust, and we have big dreams of building libraries and refurbishing libraries that already exist and providing books for state schools that don't have anything in their libraries, and also of organizing lots and lots of workshops, in reading and writing, for all the people who are eager to tell our many stories.

17:35
Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity.

17:55
The American writer Alice Walker wrote this about her Southern relatives who had moved to the North. She introduced them to a book about the Southern life that they had left behind. "They sat around, reading the book themselves, listening to me read the book, and a kind of paradise was regained."

18:16
I would like to end with this thought: That when we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise.

18:29
Thank you.

18:30
(Applause)

the feminine subject rather than the female individualist: she is the irreducible *recipient*-function of the letters that constitute Frankenstein. I have commented on the singular appropriative hermeneutics of the reader reading with Jane in the opening pages of *Jane Eyre.* Here the reader must read with Margaret Saville in the crucial sense that she must *intercept* the recipient-function, read the letters as recipient, in order for the novel to exist.[28] "Margaret Saville does not respond to close the text as frame. The frame is thus simultaneously not a frame, and the monster can step "beyond the text" and be "lost in darkness." Within the allegory of our reading, the place of both the English lady and the unnamable monster are left open by this great flawed text. It is satisfying for a postcolonial reader to consider this a noble resolution for a nineteenth-century English novel. This is all the more striking because, on the anecdotal level, Shelley herself abundantly "identifies" with Victor Frankenstein.[29]

I must myself close with an idea that I cannot establish within the limits of this essay. Earlier I contended that *Wide Sargasso Sea* is necessarily bound by the reach of the European novel. I suggested that, in contradistinction, to reopen the epistemic fracture of imperialism without succumbing to a nostalgia for lost origins, the critic must turn to the archives of imperialist governance. I have not turned to those archives in these pages. In my current work, by way of a modest and inexpert "reading" of "archives," I try to extend, outside of the reach of the European novelistic tradition, the most powerful suggestion in *Wide Sargasso Sea:* that *Jane Eyre* can be read as the orchestration and staging of the self-immolation of Bertha Mason as "good wife." The power of that suggestion remains unclear if we remain insufficiently knowledgeable about the history of the legal manipulation of widow-sacrifice in the entitlement of the British government in India. I would hope that an informed critique of imperialism, granted some attention from readers in the First World, will at least expand the frontiers of the politics of reading.

28. "A letter is always and *a priori* intercepted, ... the 'subjects' are neither the senders nor the receivers of messages. ... The letter is constituted ... by its interception" (Jacques Derrida, "Discussion," after Claude Rabant, "Il n'a aucune chance de l'entendre," in *Affranchissement: Du transfertet de la lettre,* ed. Rene Major [Paris, 1981], p. 106; my translation). Margaret Saville is not made to appropriate the reader's "subject" into the signature of her own "individuality."

29. The most striking "internal evidence" is the admission in the "Author's Introduction" that, after dreaming of the yet-unnamed Victor Frankenstein figure and being terrified (through, yet not quite through, him) by the monster in a scene she later reproduced in Frankenstein's story, Shelley began her tale "on the morrow ... with the words 'It was on a dreary night of November'" (*F,* p. xi). Those are the opening words of chapter 5 of the finished book, where Frankenstein begins to recount the actual making of his monster (see *F,* p. 56).

DO MUSLIM WOMEN REALLY NEED SAVING? ANTHROPOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON CULTURAL RELATIVISM AND ITS OTHERS

LILA ABU-LUGHOD

What are the ethics of the current "War on Terrorism," a war that justifies itself by purporting to liberate, or save, Afghan women? Does anthropology have anything to offer in our search for a viable position to take regarding this rationale for war?

I was led to pose the question of my title in part because of the way I personally experienced the response to the U.S. war in Afghanistan. Like many colleagues whose work has focused on women and gender in the Middle East, I was deluged with invitations to speak—not just on news programs but also to various departments at colleges and universities, especially women's studies programs. Why did this not please me, a scholar who has devoted more than 20 years of her life to this subject and who has some complicated personal connection to this identity? Here was an opportunity to spread the word, disseminate my knowledge, and correct misunderstandings. The urgent search for knowledge about our sister "women of cover" (as President George Bush so marvelously called them) is laudable and when it comes from women's studies programs where "transnational feminism" is now being taken seriously, it has a certain integrity (see Safire 2001), My discomfort led me to reflect on why, as feminists in or from the West, or simply as

people who have concerns about women's lives, we need to be wary of this response to the events and aftermath of September 11, 2001, 1 want to point out the minefields—a metaphor that is sadly too apt for a country like Afghanistan, with the world's highest number of mines per capita—of this obsession with the plight of Muslim women. I hope to show some way through them using insights from anthropology, the discipline whose charge has been to understand and manage cultural difference, At the same time, I want to remain critical of anthropology's complicity in the reification of cultural difference.

CULTURAL EXPLANATIONS AND THE MOBILIZATION OF WOMEN

It is easier to see why one should be skeptical about the focus on the "Muslim woman" if one begins with the U.S. public response. I will analyze two manifestations of this response: some conversations I had with a reporter from the PBS *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* and First Lady Laura Bush's radio address to the nation on November 17, 2001, The presenter from the *NewsHour* show first contacted me in October to see if I was willing to give some background for a segment on Women and Islam, I mischievously asked whether she had done segments on the women of Guatemala, Ireland, Palestine, or Bosnia when the show covered wars in those regions; but I finally agreed to look at the questions she was going to pose to panelists, The questions were hopelessly general. Do Muslim women believe "x"? Are Muslim women "y"? Does Islam allow "z" for women? I asked her: If you were to substitute Christian or Jewish wherever you have Muslim, would these questions make sense? I did not imagine she would call me back, But she did, twice, once with an idea for a segment on the meaning of Ramadan and another time on Muslim women in politics. One was in response to the bombing and the other to the speeches by Laura Bush and Cherie Blair, wife of the British Prime Minister.

What is striking about these three ideas for news programs is that there was a consistent resort to the cultural, as if knowing something about women and Islam or the meaning of a religious ritual would help one understand the tragic attack on New York's World Trade Center and the U.S. Pentagon, or how Afghanistan had come to be ruled by the Taliban, or what interests might have fueled US, and other interventions in the region over the past 25 years, or what the history of American support for conservative groups funded to undermine the Soviets might have been, or why the caves and bunkers out of which Bin Laden was to be smoked "dead or alive, as President Bush announced on television, were paid for and built by the CIA,

In other words, the question is why knowing about the "culture" of the region, and particularly its religious beliefs and treatment of women, was more urgent than exploring the history of the development of repressive regimes in the region and the U.S. role in this history, Such cultural framing, it seemed to me, prevented the serious exploration of the roots and nature of human suffering in this part of the world, Instead of political and historical explanations, experts were being asked to give religio-cultural ones, Instead of questions that might lead to the exploration of global interconnections, we were offered ones that worked to artificially divide the world into separate spheres—recreating an imaginative geography of West versus East, us versus Muslims, cultures in which First Ladies give speeches versus others where women shuffle around silently in burqas.

Most pressing for me was why the Muslim woman in general, and the Afghan woman in particular, were so crucial to this cultural mode of explanation, which ignored the complex entanglements in which we are all implicated, in sometimes surprising alignments, Why were these female symbols being mobilized in this "War against Terrorism" in a way they were not in other conflicts? Laura Bush's

radio address on November 17 reveals the political work such mobilization accomplishes, On the one hand, her address collapsed important distinctions that should have been maintained, There was a constant slippage between the Taliban and the terrorists, so that they became almost one word—a kind of hyphenated monster identity: the Taliban-and-the-terrorists. Then there was the blurring of the very separate causes in Afghanistan of women's continuing malnutrition, poverty, and ill health, and their more recent exclusion under the Taliban from employment, schooling, and the joys of wearing nail polish, On the other hand, her speech reinforced chasmic divides, primarily between the "civilized people throughout the world" whose hearts break for the women and children of Afghanistan and the Taliban-and-the-terrorists, the cultural monsters who want to, as she put it, "impose their world on the rest of us,"

Most revealingly, the speech enlisted women to justify American bombing and intervention in Afghanistan and to make a case for the "War on Terrorism" of which it was allegedly a part, As Laura Bush said, "Because of our recent military gains in much of Afghanistan, women are no longer imprisoned in their homes, They can listen to music and teach their daughters without fear of punishment, The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women" (U.S. Government 2002).

These words have haunting resonances for anyone who has studied colonial history, Many who have worked on British colonialism in South Asia have noted the use of the woman question in colonial policies where intervention into sati (the practice of widows immolating themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres), child marriage, and other practices was used to justify rule. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) has cynically put it:

white men

brown

saving

women

from

brown men.

The historical record is full of similar cases, including in the Middle East, In Turn of the Century Egypt, what Leila Ahmed (1992) has called "colonial feminism" was hard at work, This was a selective concern about the plight of Egyptian women that focused on the veil as a sign of oppression but gave no support to women's education and was professed loudly by the same Englishman, Lord Cromer, who opposed women's suffrage back home.

Sociologist Marnia Lazreg (1994) has offered some vivid examples of how French colonialism enlisted women to its cause in Algeria, She writes:

> Perhaps the most spectacular example of the colonial appropriation of women's voices, and the silencing of those among them who had begun to take women revolutionaries ... as role models by not donning the veil, was the event of May 16, 1958 [just four years before Algeria finally gained its independence from France after a long bloody struggle and 130 years of French control—L.A.], On that day a demonstration was organized by rebellious French generals in Algiers to show their determination to keep Algeria French, To give the government of France evidence that Algerians were in agreement with them, the generals had a few thousand native men bused in from nearby villages, along with a few women who were solemnly unveiled by French women ... Rounding up Algerians and bringing them to demonstrations of loyalty to France was not in itself an unusual act during the colonial era, But to unveil women at a well-choreographed ceremony added to the event a symbolic dimension that dramatized the one constant feature of the Algerian occupation by France: its obsession with women. [Lazreg 1994:135]

TOWARD A DECOLONIAL FEMINISM

MARÍA LUGONES

In "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System" (Lugones 2007), I proposed to read the relation between the colonizer and the colonized in terms of gender, race, and sexuality. By this I did not mean to add a gendered reading and racial reading to the already understood colonial relations. Rather I propose a rereading of modern capitalist colonial modernity itself. This is because the colonial imposition of gender cuts across questions of ecology, economics, government, relations with the spirit world, and knowledge, as well as across everyday practices that either habituate us to take care of the world or to destroy it. I propose this framework not as an abstraction from lived experience, but as a sense that enables us to see what is hidden from our understandings of both race and gender and the relation of each to normative heterosexuality.

Lazreg (1994) also gives memorable examples of the way in which the French had earlier sought to transform Arab women and girls, She describes skits at awards ceremonies at the Muslim Girls' School in Algiers in 1851 and 1852, In the first skit, written by "a French lady from Algiers,' two Algerian Arab girls reminisced about their trip to France with words including the following:

> Oh! Protective France:
> Oh! Hospitable France!..
> Noble land, where I felt free
> Under Christian skies to pray to our God: ...
> God bless you for the happiness you bring us!
> And you, adoptive mother, who taught us
> That we have a share of this world,
> We will cherish you forever!
> [Lazreg 1994:68-69]

These girls are made to invoke the gift of a share of this world, a world where freedom reigns under Christian skies. This is not the world the Taliban-and-the-terrorists would "like to impose on the Test of us.' Just as I argued above that we need to be suspicious when neat cultural icons are plastered over messier historical and political narratives, so we need to be wary when Lord Cromer in British-ruled Egypt, French ladies in Algeria, and Laura Bush, all with military troops behind them, claim to be saving or liberating Muslim women.

POLITICS OF THE VEIL

I want now to look more closely at those Afghan women Lama Bush claimed were 'rejoicing" at their liberation by the Americans, This necessitates a discussion of the veil, Or the burqa, because it is so central to contemporary concerns about Muslim women, This will set the stage for a discussion of how anthropologists, feminist anthropologists in particular, contend with the problem of difference in a global world. In the conclusion, I will return to the rhetoric of saving Muslim women and offer an alternative.

It is common popular knowledge that the ultimate sign of the oppression of Afghan women under the Taliban-and-the-terrorists is that they were forced to wear the burqa. Liberals sometimes confess their surprise that even though Afghanistan has been liberated from the Taliban, women do not seem to be throwing off their burqas. Someone who has worked in Muslim regions must ask why this is so surprising, Did we expect that once "free" from the Taliban they would go "back" to belly shirts and blue jeans, or dust off their Chanel suits? We need to be more sensible about the clothing of "women of cover," and so there is perhaps a need to make some basic points about veiling.

First, it should be recalled that the Taliban did not invent the burqa, It was the local form of covering that Pashtun women in one region wore when they went out, The Pashtun are one of several ethnic groups in Afghanistan and the burqa was one of many forms of covering in the subcontinent and Southwest Asia that has developed as a convention for symbolizing women's modesty or respectability. The burqa, like some other forms of "cover" has, in many settings, marked the symbolic separation of men's and women's spheres, as part of the general association of women with family and home, not with public space where strangers mingled.

Twenty years ago the anthropologist Hanna Papanek (1982), who worked in Pakistan, described the burqa as "portable seclusion.' She noted that many saw it as a liberating invention because it enabled women to move out of segregated living spaces while still observing the basic moral requirements of separating and protecting women from unrelated men. Ever since I came across her phrase "portable seclusion", I have thought of these enveloping robes as "mobile homes," Everywhere, such veiling signifies belonging to a particular community and participating in a moral way of life in which families are paramount in the organization of communities and the home is associated with the sanctity of women.

The obvious question that follows is this: If this were the case, why would women suddenly become immodest? Why would they suddenly throw off the markers of their respectability, markers, whether burqas or other forms of cover, which were supposed to assure their protection in the public sphere from the harassment of strange men by symbolically signaling to all that they were still in the inviolable space of their homes, even though moving in the public realm? Especially when these are forms of dress that had become so conventional that most women gave little thought to their meaning,

To draw some analogies, none of them perfect, why are we surprised that Afghan women

Modernity organizes the world ontologically in terms of atomic, homogeneous, separable categories. Contemporary women of color and third-world women's critique of feminist universalism centers the claim that the intersection of race, class, sexuality, and gender exceeds the categories of modernity. If *woman* and *black* are terms for homogeneous, atomic, separable categories, then their intersection shows us the absence of black women rather than their presence. So, to see non-white women is to exceed "categorial" logic. I propose the modern, colonial, gender system as a lens through which to theorize further the oppressive logic of colonial modernity, its use of hierarchical dichotomies and categorial logic. I want to emphasize categorial, dichotomous, hierarchical logic as central to modern, colonial, capitalist thinking about race, gender, and sexuality. This permits me to search for social organizations from which people have resisted mode1n, capitalist modernity that are in tension with its logic. Following Aparicio and Blaser,[1] I will call such ways of organizing the social, the cosmological, the ecological, the economic, and the spiritual *non-modern*. With Aparicio and Blaser and others, I use non-modern to express that these ways arc not premodcrn. The modern apparatus reduces them to premodern ways. So, non-modern knowledges, relations, and values1 and ecological, economic, and spiritual practices are logically constituted to be at odds with a dichotomous, hierarchical, "categorial" logic.

I. THE COLONIALITY OF GENDER

I understand the dichotomous hierarchy between the human and the non-human as the central dichotomy of colonial modernity. Beginning with the colonization of the Americas and the Caribbean, a hierarchical, dichotomous distinction between human and non-human was imposed on the colonized in the service of Western man. It was accompanied by other dichotomous hierarchical distinctions, among them that between men and women. This distinction became a mark of the human and a mark of civilization. Only the civilized are men or women. Indigenous

1. Juan Ricardo Aparicio and Mario Blaser present this analysis and the relation between knowledge and political practices that focuses on politically committed research in indigenous communities in the Americas, including both academics and activists, insiders and outsiders to the communities in their forthcoming work. This is an important contribution to understanding decolonial, liberatory processes of knowledge production.

do not throw off their burqas when we know perfectly well that it would not be appropriate to wear shorts to the opera? At the time these discussions of Afghan women's burqas were raging, a friend of mine was chided by her husband for suggesting she wanted to wear a pantsuit to a fancy wedding; "You know you don't wear pants to a WASP wedding,' he reminded her. New Yorkers know that the beautifully coiffed Hasidic women, who look so fashionable next to their dour husbands in black coats and hats, are wearing wigs, This is because religious belief and community standards of propriety require the covering of the hair, They also alter boutique fashions to include high necks and long sleeves, As anthropologists know perfectly well, people wear the appropriate form of dress for their social communities and are guided by socially shared standards, religious beliefs, and moral ideals, unless they deliberately transgress to make a point or are unable to afford proper cover. If we think that U.S. women live in a world of choice regarding clothing, all we need to do is remind ourselves of the expression, "the tyranny of fashion,'

What had happened in Afghanistan under the Taliban is that one regional style of covering or veiling, associated with a certain respectable but not elite class, was imposed on everyone as "religiously" appropriate, even though previously there had been many different styles, popular or traditional with different groups and classes—different ways to mark women's propriety, or, in more recent times, religious piety. Although I am not an expert on Afghanistan, I imagine that the majority of women left in Afghanistan by the time the Taliban took control were the rural or less educated, from nonelite families, since they were the only ones who could not emigrate to escape the hardship and violence that has marked Afghanistan's recent history, If liberated from the enforced wearing of burqas, most of these women would choose some other form of modest head covering, like all those living nearby who were not under the Taliban—their rural Hindu counterparts in the North of India (who cover their heads and veil their faces from affines) or their Muslim sisters in Pakistan.

Even *The New York Times* carried an article about Afghan women refugees in Pakistan that attempted to educate readers about this local variety (Fremson 2001), The article describes and pictures everything from the now-iconic burqa with the embroidered eyeholes, which a Pashtun woman explains is the proper dress for her community, to large scarves they call chadors, to the new Islamic modest dress that wearers refer to as *hijab,* Those in the new Islamic dress are characteristically students heading for professional careers, especially in medicine, just like their counterparts from Egypt to Malaysia, One wearing the large scarf was a school principal; the other was a poor street vendor, The telling quote from the young street vendor is, "If I did [wear the burqa] the refugees would tease me because the burqa is for 'good women' who stay inside the home" (Fremson 2001:14), Here you can see the local status associated with the burqa—it is for good respectable women from strong families who are not forced to make a living selling on the street.

peoples of the Americas and enslaved Africans were classified as not human in species—as animals, uncontrollably sexual and wild. The European, bourgeois, colonial modern man became a subject/agent, fit for rule, for public life and ruling, a being of civilization, heterosexual, Christian, a being of mind and reason. The European bourgeois woman was not understood as his complement, but as someone who reproduced race and capital through her sexual purity, passivity, and being homebound in the service of the white, European, bourgeois man. The imposition of these dichotomous hierarchies became woven into the historicity of relations, including intimate relations. In this paper I want to figure out how to think about intimate, everyday resistant interactions to the colonial difference. When I think of intimacy here, I am not thinking exclusively or mainly about sexual relations. I am thinking of the interwoven social life among people who are not acting as representatives or officials.

I begin, then, with a need to understand that the colonized became subjects in colonial situations in the first modernity, in the tensions created by the brutal imposition of the modem, colonial, gender system. Under the imposed gender framework, the bourgeois white Europeans were civilized; they were fully human. The hierarchical dichotomy as a mark of the human also became a normative tool to damn the colonized. The behaviors of the colonized and their personalities/souls were judged as bestial and thus non-gendered, promiscuous, grotesquely sexual, and sinful. Though at this time the understanding of sex was not dimorphic, animals were differentiated as males and females, the male being the perfection, the female the inversion and deformation of the male.[2] Hermaphrodites, sodomites, viragos, and the colonized were all understood to be aberrations of male perfection.

The civilizing mission, including conversion to Christianity, was present in the ideological conception of conquest and colonization. Judging the colonized for their deficiencies from the point of view of the civilizing mission justified enormous cruelty. I propose to interpret the colo-

2. Since the eighteenth century the dominant Western view "has been that there are two stable, incommensurable, opposite sexes and that the political, economic, and cultural lives of men and women, their gender roles, are somehow based on these 'facts'" (Laqueur 1992, 6). Thomas Laqucur also tells us that historically, differentiations of gender preceded differentiations of sex (62). What he terms the "one-sex model" he traces through Greek antiquity to the end of the seventeenth century (and beyond): a world where at least two genders correspond to but one sex, where the boundaries between male and female are of degree and not of kind (25). Laqueur tells us that the longevity of the one-sex model is due to its link to power. "In a world that was overwhelmingly male, the one-sex model displayed what was already massively evident in culture: man is the measure of all things, and woman does not exist as an ontologically distinct category" (62). Laqueur sums up the question of perfection by saying that for Aristotle and for "the long tradition founded on his thought, the generative substances are interconvertible elements in the economy of a single-sex body whose higher form is male" (42).

The British newspaper *The Guardian* published an interview in January 2002 with Dr. Suheila Siddiqi, a respected surgeon in Afghanistan who holds the rank of lieutenant general in the Afghan medical corps (Goldenberg 2002), A woman in her sixties, she comes from an elite family and, like her sisters, was educated. Unlike most women of her class, she chose not to go into exile, She is presented in the article as "the woman who stood up to the Taliban" because she refused to wear the burqa. She had made it a condition of returning to her post as head of a major hospital when the Taliban came begging in 1996, just eight months after firing her along with other women, Siddiqi is described as thin, glamorous, and confident, But further into the article it is noted that her graying bouffant hair is covered in a gauzy veil, This is a reminder that though she refused the burqa, she had no question about wearing the chador or scarf.

Finally, I need to make a crucial point about veiling, Not only are there many forms of covering, which themselves have different meanings in the communities in which they are used, but also veiling itself must not be confused with, or made to stand for, lack of agency. As I have argued in my ethnography of a Bedouin community in Egypt in the late 1970s and 1980s (1986), pulling the black head cloth over the face in front of older respected men is considered a voluntary act by women who are deeply committed to being moral and have a sense of honor tied to family. One of the ways they show their standing is by covering their faces in certain contexts, They decide for whom they feel it is appropriate to veil.

nized, non-human males from the civilizing perspective as judged from the normative understanding of "man," the human being par excellence. Females were judged from the normative understanding of "women," the human inversion of men.[3] From this point of view, colonized people became males and females. Males became not-human-as-not-men, and colonized females became not-human-as-not-women. Consequently, colonized females were never understood as lacking because they were not men-like, and were turned into viragos. Colonized men were not understood to be lacking as not being women-like. What has been understood as the "feminization" of colonized "men" seems rather a gesture of humiliation, attributing to them sexual passivity under the threat of rape. This tension between hypersexuality and sexual passivity defines one of the domains of masculine subjection of the colonized.

It is important to note that often, when social scientists investigate colonized societies, the search for the sexual distinction and then the construction of the gender distinction

3. There is a tension between the understanding of procreation central to the one-sex model and the Christian advocacy of virginity. Instead of seeing the working of sex as related to the production of heat leading to orgasm, St. Augustine sees it as related to the fall. Idealized Christian sex is without passion (see Laqueur 19921 .59-60). The consequences for the coloniality of gender are evident, as the bestial, colonized males and females are understood as excessively sexual.

results from observations of the tasks performed by each sex. In so doing they affirm the inseparability of sex and gender characteristic mainly of earlier feminist analysis. More contemporary analysis has introduced arguments for the claim that gender constructs sex. But in the earlier version, sex grounded gender. Often, they became conflated: where you see sex, you will see gender and vice versa. But, if I am right about the coloniality of gender, in the distinction between the human and the non-human, sex had to stand alone. Gender and sex could not be both inseparably tied and racialized. Sexual dimorphism became the grounding for the dichotomous understanding of gender, the human characteristic. One may well be interested in arguing that the sex that stood alone in the bestialization of the colonized, was, after all, gendered. What is important to me here is that sex was made to stand alone in the characterization of the colonized. This strikes me as a good entry point for research that takes coloniality seriously and aims to study the historicity and meaning of the relation between sex and gender.

To take a very different case, the modern Islamic modest dress that many educated women across the Muslim world have taken on since the mid-1970s now both publicly marks piety and can be read as a sign of educated urban sophistication, a sort of modernity (e.g., Abu-Lughod 1995, 1998; Brenner 1996; El Guindi 1999; MacLeod 1991; Ong 1990), As Saba Mahmood (2001) has so brilliantly shown in her ethnography of women in the mosque movement in Egypt, this new form of dress is also perceived by many of the women who adopt it as part of a bodily means to cultivate virtue, the outcome of their professed desire to be close to God.

Two points emerge from this fairly basic discussion of the meanings of veiling in the contemporary Muslim world, First, we need to work against the reductive interpretation of veiling as the quintessential sign of women's unfreedom, even if we object to state imposition of this form, as in Iran or with the Taliban, (It must be recalled that the modernizing states of Turkey and Iran had earlier in the century banned veiling and required men, except religious clerics, to adopt Western dress.) What does freedom mean if we accept the fundamental premise that humans are social beings, always raised in certain social and historical contexts and belonging to particular communities that shape their desires and understandings of the world? Is it not a gross violation of women's own understandings of what they are doing to simply denounce the burqa as a medieval imposition? Second, we must take care not to reduce the diverse situations and attitudes of millions of Muslim women to a single item of

clothing, Perhaps it is time to give up the Western obsession with the veil and focus on some serious issues with which feminists and others should indeed be concerned.

Ultimately, the significant political-ethical problem the burqa raises is how to deal with cultural "others," How are we to deal with difference without accepting the passivity implied by the cultural relativism for which anthropologists are justly famous—a relativism that says it's their culture and it's not my business to judge or interfere, only to try to understand, Cultural relativism is certainly an improvement on ethnocentrism and the racism, cultural imperialism, and imperiousness that underlie it; the problem is that it is too late not to interfere, The forms of lives we find around the world are already products of long histories of interactions.

I want to explore the issues of women, cultural relativism, and the problems of "difference" from three angles, First, I want to consider what feminist anthropologists (those stuck in that awkward relationship, as Strathern [1987] has claimed) are to do with strange political bedfellows, I used to feel torn when I received the e-mail petitions circulating for the last few years in defense of Afghan women under the Taliban, I was not sympathetic to the dogmatism of the Taliban; I do not support the oppression of women, But the provenance of the campaign worried me, I do not usually find myself in political company with the likes of Hollywood celebrities (see Hirschkind and Mahmood 2002), I had never received a petition from such women defending the right of Palestinian

The colonial "civilizing mission" was the euphemistic mask of brutal access to people's bodies through unimaginable exploitation, violent sexual violation, control of reproduction, and systematic terror (feeding people alive to dogs or making pouches and hats from the vaginas of brutally killed indigenous females, for example). The civilizing mission used the hierarchical gender dichotomy as a judgment, though the attainment of dichotomous gendering for the colonized was not the point of the normative judgment. Turning the colonized into human beings was not a colonial goal. The difficulty of imagining this as a goal can be appreciated clearly when one sees that this transformation of the colonized into men and women would have been a transformation not in identity, but in nature. But turning the colonized against themselves was included in the civilizing mission's repertoire of justifications for abuse. Christian confession, sin, and the Manichean division between good and evil served to imprint female sexuality as evil, as colonized females were understood in relation to Satan, sometimes as mounted by Satan.

women to safety from Israeli bombing or daily harassment at checkpoints, asking the United States to reconsider its support for a government that had dispossessed them, closed them out from work and citizenship rights, refused them the most basic freedoms. Maybe some of these same people might be signing petitions to save African women from genital cutting, or Indian women from dowry deaths, However, I do not think that it would be as easy to mobilize so many of these American and European women if it were not a case of Muslim men oppressing Muslim women—women of cover for whom they can feel sorry and in relation to whom they can feel smugly superior, Would television diva Oprah Winfrey host the Women in Black, the women's peace group from Israel, as she did RAWA, the Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan, who were also granted the Glamour Magazine Women of the Year Award? What are we to make of post-Taliban "Reality Tours" such as the one advertised on the internet by Global Exchange for March 2002 under the title "Courage and Tenacity: A Women's Delegation to Afghanistan"? The rationale for the $1,400 tour is that "with the removal of the Taliban government, Afghan women, for the first time in the past decade, have the opportunity to reclaim their basic human rights and establish their role as equal citizens by participating in the rebuilding of their nation." The tour's objective, to celebrate International Women's Week, is "to develop awareness of the concerns and issues the Afghan women are facing as well as to witness the changing political, economic, and social conditions which have created new opportunities for the

The civilizing transformation justified the colonization of memory, and thus of people's senses of self, of intersubjective relation, of their relation to the spirit world, to land, to the very fabric of their conception of reality, identity, and social, ecological, and cosmological organization. Thus, as Christianity became the most powerful instrument in the mission of transformation, the normativity that connected gender and civilization became intent on erasing community, ecological practices, knowledge of planting, of weaving, of the cosmos, and not only on changing and controlling reproductive and sexual practices. One can begin to appreciate the tie between the colonial introduction of the instrumental modem concept of nature central to capitalism, and the colonial introduction of the modern concept of gender, and appreciate it as macabre and heavy in its impressive ramifications. One can also recognize, in the scope I am giving to the imposition of the modern, colonial, gender system, the dehumanization constitutive of the coloniality of being. The concept of the coloniality of being that I understand as relat-

women of Afghanistan" (Global Exchange 2002).

To be critical of this celebration of women's rights in Afghanistan is not to pass judgment on any local women's organizations, such as RAWA, whose members have courageously worked since 1977 for a democratic secular Afghanistan in which women's human rights are respected, against Soviet-backed regimes or U.S.-, Saudi-, and Pakistani-supported conservatives, Their documentation of abuse and their work through clinics and schools have been enormously important.

It is also not to fault the campaigns that exposed the dreadful conditions under which the Taliban placed women, The Feminist Majority campaign helped put a stop to a secret oil pipeline deal between the Taliban and the U.S. multinational Unocal that was going forward with U.S. administration support, Western feminist campaigns must not be confused with the hypocrisies of the new colonial feminism of a Republican president who was not elected for his progressive stance on feminist issues or of administrations that played down the terrible record of violations of women by the United State's allies in the Northern Alliance, as documented by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, among others, Rapes and assaults were widespread in the period of infighting that devastated Afghanistan before the Taliban came in to restore order.

It is, however, to suggest that we need to look closely at what we are supporting (and what we are not) and to think carefully about why, How should we manage the complicated politics and ethics of finding ourselves in agreement with those with whom we normally disagree? I do not know how many feminists who felt good about saving Afghan women from the Taliban are also asking for a global redistribution of wealth or contemplating sacrificing their own consumption radically so that African or Afghan women could have some chance of having what I do believe should be a universal human right—the right to freedom from the structural violence of global inequality and from the ravages of war, the everyday rights of having enough to eat, having homes for their families in which to live and thrive, having ways to make decent livings so their children can grow, and having the strength and security to work out, within their communities and with whatever alliances they want, how to live a good life, which might very well include changing the ways those communities are organized,

Suspicion about bedfellows is only a first step; it will not give us a way to think more positively about what to do or where to stand, For that, we need to confront two more big issues. First is the acceptance of the possibility of difference, Can we only free Afghan women to be like us or might we have to recognize that even after "liberation" from the Taliban, they might want different things than we would want for them? What do we do about that? Second, we need to be vigilant about the rhetoric of saving people because of what it implies about our attitudes.

Again, when I talk about accepting difference, I am not implying that we should resign ourselves to being cultural relativists who respect whatever goes on elsewhere as "just their culture," I have already discussed the dangers of "cultural" explanations;

II. THEORIZING RESISTANCE/ DECOLONIZING GENDER

The semantic consequence of the coloniality of gender is that "colonized woman" is an empty category: no women are colonized; no colonized females are women. Thus, the colonial answer to Sojouner Truth is clearly, "no."[6] Unlike colonization, the coloniality of gender is still with us; it is what lies at the intersection of gender/class/race as central constructs of the capitalist world system of power. Thinking about the coloniality of gender enables us to think of historical beings only one-sidedly, understood as oppressed. As there are no such beings as colonized women, l suggest that we focus on the beings who resist the coloniality of gender from the "colonial difference." Such beings are, as I have suggested, only partially understood as oppressed, as constructed through the coloniality of gender. The suggestion is not to search for a non-colonized construction of gender in indigenous organizations of the social. There is no such thing: "gender" does not travel away from colonial modernity. Resistance to the coloniality of gender is thus ed to the process of dehumanization was developed by Nelson Maldonado Torres (2008).

I use the term *coloniality* following Anibal Quijano's analysis of the capitalist world system of power in terms of ''coloniality of power', and of modernity, two inseparable axes in the workings of this system of power. Quijano's analysis provides us with a historical understanding of the inseparability of racialization and capitalist exploitation[4] as constitutive of the capitalist system of power as anchored in the colonization of the Americas. In thinking of the coloniality of gender, I complicate his understanding of the capitalist global system of power, but I also critique his own understanding of gender as only in terms of sexual access to women.[5] In using the term *coloniality* I mean to name not just a classification of people in terms of the coloniality of power and gender, but also the process of active reduction of people, the dehumanization that fits them for the classification, the process of subjectification, the attempt to turn the colonized into less than human beings. This is in stark contrast to the process of conversion that constitutes the Christianizing mission.

4. Anibal Quijano understands the coloniality of power as the specific form that domination and exploitation takes in the constitution of the capitalist world system of power. "Coloniality" refers to: the classification of the world's populations in terms of races-the racialization of the relations between colonizers and colonized the configuration of a new system of exploitation that articulates in one structure all forms of control of labor around the hegemony of ca pi tali where labor is racialized (wage labor as well as slavery, servitude, and small commodity production all became racialized forms of production; they were all new forms as they were constituted in the service of capitalism); Eurocentrism as the new mode of production and control of subjectivity; a new system of control of collective authority around the hegemony of the nation-state that excludes populations racialized as inferior from control of collective authority (see Quijano 1991; 1995; and Quijano and Wallerstein 1992).

5. For my argument against Quijano's understanding of the relation of coloniality and sex/gender, see Lugones 2007.

6. "Ain't I a Woman?"; speech given at the Women's Convention in Akron Ohio, May 29, 1851.

"their" cultures are just as much part of history and an interconnected world as ours are. What I am advocating is the hard work involved in recognizing and respecting differences—precisely as products of different histories, as expressions of different circumstances, and as manifestations of differently structured desires, We may want justice for women, but can we accept that there might be different ideas about justice and that different women might want, or choose, different futures from what we envision as best (see Ong 1988)? We must consider that they might be called to personhood, so to speak, in a different language.

Reports from the Bonn peace conference held in late November to discuss the rebuilding of Afghanistan revealed significant differences among the few Afghan women feminists and activists present. RAWA's position was to reject any conciliatory approach to Islamic governance, According to one report I read, most women activists, especially those based in Afghanistan who are aware of the realities on the ground, agreed that Islam had to be the starting point for reform. Fatima Gailani, a U.S.-based advisor to one of the delegations, is quoted as saying, "If I go to Afghanistan today and ask women for votes on the promise to bring them secularism, they are going to tell me to go to hell.' Instead, according to one report, most of these women looked for inspiration on how to fight for equality to a place that might seem surprising. They looked to Iran as a country in which they saw women making significant gains within an Islamic framework—in part through an Islamically oriented feminist movement that is challenging injustices historically complex.

When I think of myself as a theorist of resistance, it is not because I think of resistance as the end or goal of political struggle, but rather as its beginning, its possibility. I am interested in the relational subjective/intersubjective spring of liberation, as both adaptive and creatively oppositional. Resistance is the tension between subjectification (the forming/informing of the subject) and active subjectivity, that minimal sense of agency required for the oppressing ←→ resisting relation being an active one, without appeal to the maximal sense of agency of the modem subject (Lugones 2003).[7]

Resistant subjectivity often expresses itself infra-politically, rather than in a politics of the public, which has an easy inhabitation of public contestation. Legitimacy, authority, voice, sense, and visibility are denied to resistant subjectivity. Infra-politics marks the tum inward, in a politics of resistance, toward liberation. It shows the power of communities of the oppressed in constituting resistant meaning and each other against the constitution of meaning and social organization by power. In

7. In Lugones 2003 I introduce the concept of "active subjectivity" to capture the minimal sense of agency of the resister to multiple oppressions whose multiple subjectivity is reduced by hegemonic understandings/colonial understandings/racist-gendered understandings to no agency at all. It is her belonging to impure communities that gives life to her agency.

8. It is outside the scope of this article, but certainly well within the project to which I am committed, to argue that the coloniality of gender is constituted by and constitutive of the coloniality of power, knowledge, being, nature, and language. They arc crucially inseparable. One way of expressing this is that the coloniality of knowledge, for example, is gendered and that one has not understood the coloniality of knowledge without understanding its being gendered. But here I want to get ahead of myself in claiming that there is no de-coloniality without de-coloniality of gender. Thus, the modern colonial imposition of an oppressive, racially differentiated, hierarchical gender system permeated through and through by the modern logic of dichotomizing cannot be characterized as a circulation of power that organizes the domestic sphere as opposed to the public domain of authority and the sphere of waged labor (and access and control of sex and reproduction biology) as contrasted to cognitive/epistemic intersubjectivity and knowledge, or nature as opposed to culture.

our colonized, racially gendered, oppressed existences we are also other than what the hegemon makes us be. That is an infra-political achievement. If we are exhausted, fully made through and by micro and macro mechanisms and circulations of power, "liberation" loses much of its meaning or ceases to be an intersubjective affair. The very possibility of an identity based on politics (Mignolo 2000) and the project of de-coloniality loses its peopled ground.

As I move methodologically from women of color feminisms to a decolonial feminism, I think about feminism from and at the grassroots, and from and at the colonial difference, with a strong emphasis on ground, on a historicized, incarnate intersubjectivity. The question of the *relation* between resistance or resistant response to the coloniality of gender and de-coloniality is being set up here rather than answered.[8] But I do mean to understand resistance to the coloniality of gender from the perspective of the colonial difference.

Decolonizing gender is necessarily a praxical task. It is to enact a critique of racial- and reinterpreting the religious tradition.

The situation in Iran is itself the subject of heated debate within feminist circles, especially among Iranian feminists in the West (e.g., Mir-Hosseini 1999; Moghissi 1999; Najmabadi 1998, 2000), It is not clear whether and in what ways women have made gains and whether the great increases in literacy, decreases in birthrates, presence of women in the professions and government, and a feminist flourishing in cultural fields like writing and filmmaking are because of or despite the establishment of a so-called Islamic Republic, The concept of an Islamic feminism itself is also controversial, Is it an oxymoron or does it refer to a viable movement forged by brave women who want a third way?

One of the things we have to be most careful about in thinking about Third World feminisms, and feminism in different parts of the Muslim world, is how not to fall into polarizations that place feminism on the side of the West, I have written about the dilemmas faced by Arab feminists when Western feminists initiate campaigns that make them vulnerable to local denunciations by conservatives of various sorts, whether Islamist or nationalist, of being traitors (Abu-Lughod 2001), As some like Afsaneh Najmabadi are now arguing, not only is it wrong to see history simplistically in terms of a putative opposition between Islam and the West (as is happening in the United States now and has happened in parallel in the Muslim world), but it is also strategically dangerous to accept this cultural opposition between Islam and the West, between fundamentalism and feminism, because

those many people within Muslim countries who are trying to find alternatives to present injustices, those who might want to refuse the divide and take from different histories and cultures, who do not accept that being feminist means being Western, will be under pressure to choose, just as we are: Are you with us or against us?

My point is to remind us to be aware of differences, respectful of other paths toward social change that might give women better lives, Can there be a liberation that is Islamic? And, beyond this, is liberation even a goal for which all women or people strive? Are emancipation, equality, and rights part of a universal language we must use? To quote Saba Mahmood, writing about the women in Egypt who are seeking to become pious Muslims, "The desire for freedom and liberation is a historically situated desire whose motivational force cannot be assumed a priori, but needs to be reconsidered in light of other desires, aspirations, and capacities that inhere in a culturally and historically located subject" (2001:223), In other words, might other desires be more meaningful for different groups of people? Living in close families? Living in a godly way? Living without war? I have done fieldwork in Egypt over more than 20 years and I cannot think of a single woman I know, from the poorest rural to the most educated cosmopolitan, who has ever expressed envy of U.S. women, women they tend to perceive as bereft of community, vulnerable to sexual violence and social anomie, driven by individual success rather than morality, or strangely disrespectful of God.

Mahmood (2001) has pointed out a disturbing thing that happens when one argues for a respect for other traditions, She notes that there seems to be a difference in the political demands made on those who work on or are trying to understand Muslims and Islamists and those who work on secular-humanist projects, She, who studies the piety movement in Egypt, is consistently pressed to denounce all the harm done by Islamic movements around the world—otherwise she is accused of being an apologist, But there never seems to be a parallel demand for those who study secular humanism and its projects, despite the terrible violences that have been associated with it over the last couple of centuries, from world wars to colonialism, from genocides to slavery, We need to have as little dogmatic faith in secular humanism as in lslamism, and as open a mind to the complex possibilities of human projects undertaken in one tradition as the other.

ized, colonial, and capitalist heterosexualist gender oppression as a lived transformation of the social. As such it places the theorizer in the midst of people in a historical, peopled, subjective/intersubjective understanding of the oppressing ←→ resisting relation at the intersection of complex systems of oppression. To a significant extent it has to be in accord with the subjectivities and inter-subjectivities that partly construct and in part are constructed by "the situation." It must include "learning" peoples. Furthermore, feminism does not just provide an account of the oppression of women. It goes beyond oppression by providing materials that enable women to understand their situation without succumbing to it. Here I begin to provide a way of understanding the oppression of women who have been subalternized through the combined processes of racialization, colonization, capitalist exploitation, and heterosexualism. My intent is to focus on the subjective/intersubjective to reveal that disaggregating oppressions disaggregates the subjective,intersubjective springs of colonized women's agency. I call the analysis of racialized, capitalist, gender oppression "the coloniality of gender" I call the possibility of overcoming the coloniality of gender "decolonial feminism."

The coloniality of gender enables me to understand the oppressive imposition as a complex interaction of economic, racializing, and gendering systems in which eve1y person in the colonial encounter can be found as a live, historical, fully described being. It is as such that l want to understand the resister as being oppressed by the colonizing construction of the fractured locus. But the coloniality of gender hides the resister as fully informed as a native of communities under cataclysmic attack. So, the coloniality of gender is only one active ingredient in the resister's history. In focusing on the resister at the colonial difference I mean to unveil what is obscured.

The long process of coloniality begins subjectively and intersubjectively in a tense encounter that both forms and will not simply yield to capitalist, modern, colonial normativity. The crucial point about the encounter is that the subjective and intersubjective construction of it informs the resistance offered

BEYOND THE RHETORIC OF SALVATION

Let us return, finally, to my title, "Do Muslim Women Need Saving?" The discussion of culture, veiling, and how one can navigate the shoals of cultural difference should put Laura Bush's self-congratulation about the rejoicing of Afghan women liberated by American troops in a different light, It is deeply problematic to construct the Afghan woman as someone in need of saving, When you save someone, you imply that you are saving her from something, You are also saving her to something, What violences are entailed in this transformation, and what presumptions are being made about the superiority of that to which you are saving her? Projects of saving other women

depend on and reinforce a sense of superiority by Westerners, a form of arrogance that deserves to be challenged, All one needs to do to appreciate the patronizing quality of the rhetoric of saving women is to imagine using it today in the United States about disadvantaged groups such as African American women or working-class women, We now understand them as suffering from structural violence, We have become politicized about race and class, but not culture.

As anthropologists, feminists, or concerned citizens, we should be wary of taking on the mantles of those 19th-century Christian missionary women who devoted their lives to saving their Muslim sisters, One of my favorite documents from that period is a collection called Our Moslem Sisters, the proceedings of a conference of women missionaries held in Cairo in 1906 (Van Sommer and Zwemmer 1907), The subtitle of the book is A Cry of Need from the Lands of Darkness Interpreted by Those Who Heard It, Speaking of the ignorance, seclusion, polygamy, and veiling that blighted women's lives across the Muslim world, the missionary women spoke of their responsibility to make these women's voices heard, As the introduction states, "They will never cry for themselves, for they are down under the yoke of centuries of oppression" (Van Sommer and Zwemer 1907:15), "This book,' it begins, 'with its sad, reiterated story of wrong and oppression is an indictment and an appeal, It is an appeal to Christian womanhood to right these wrongs and enlighten this darkness by sacrifice and service" (Van Sommer and Zwemmer 1907:5).

to the ingredients of colonial domination. The global, capitalist, colonial, modern system of power that Anibal Quijano characterizes as beginning in the sixteenth century in the Americas and enduring until today met not a world to be formed, a world of empty minds and evolving animals (Quijano CAO1; 1995). Rather, it encountered complex cultural, political, economic, and religious beings: selves in complex relations to the cosmos, to other selves 1 to generation, to the earth, to living beings, to the inorganic, in production; selves whose erotic, aesthetic, and linguistic expressivity, whose knowledges, senses of space, longings, practices, institutions, and forms of government were not to be simply replaced but met, understood, and entered into in tense, violent, risky crossings and dialogues and negotiations that never happened.

Instead, the process of colonization invented the colonized and attempted a full reduction of them to less than human primitives, satanically possessed, infantile, aggressively sexual, and in need of transformation. The process I want to follow is the oppressing ←→ resisting process at the fractured locus of the colonial difference. That is, I want to follow subjects in intersubjective collaboration and conflict, fully informed as members of Native American or African societies, as they take up, respond, resist, and accommodate to hostile invaders who mean to dispossess and dehumanize them. The invasive presence engages them brutally, in a prepossessing, arrogant, incommunicative and powerful way, leaving little room for adjustments that preserve their own senses of self in community and in the world. But, instead of thinking of the global, capitalist, colonial system as in every way successful in its destruction of peoples, knowledges, relations, and economies, l want to think of the process as continually resisted, and being resisted today. And thus I want to think of the colonized neither as simply imagined and constructed by the colonizer and coloniality in accordance with the colonial imagination and the strictures of the capitalist colonial venture, but as a being who begins to inhabit a fractured locus constructed doubly, who perceives doubly, relates doubly, where the "sides" of the locus are in tension, and the

One can hear uncanny echoes of their virtuous goals today, even though the language is secular, the appeals not to Jesus but to human rights or the liberal West. The continuing currency of such imagery and sentiments can be seen in their deployment for perfectly good humanitarian causes. In February 2002, I received an invitation to a reception honoring an international medical humanitarian network called Medecins du Monde/ Doctors of the World (MdM), Under the sponsorship of the French Ambassador to the United States, the Head of the delegation of the European Commission to the United Nations, and a member of the European Parliament, the cocktail reception was to feature an exhibition of photographs under the cliched title "Afghan Women: Behind the Veil."

The invitation was remarkable not just for the colorful photograph of women in flowing burqas walking across the barren mountains of Afghanistan but also for the text, a portion of which I quote:

> For 20 years MdM has been ceaselessly struggling to help those who are most vulnerable. But increasingly, thick veils cover the victims of the war. When the Taliban came to power in 1996, Afghan Women became faceless. To unveil one's face while receiving medical care was to achieve a sort of intimacy, find a brief space for secret freedom and recover a little of one's dignity. In a country where women had no access to basic medical care because they did not have the right to appear in public, where women had no right to practice medicine,

> MdM's program stood as a stubborn reminder of human rights ... Please join us in helping to lift the veil.

Although I cannot take up here the fantasies of intimacy associated with unveiling, fantasies reminiscent of the French colonial obsessions so brilliantly unmasked by Alloula in *The Colonial Harem* (1986), 1 can ask why humanitarian projects and human rights discourse in the 21st century need rely on such constructions of Muslim women.

Could we not leave veils and vocations of saving others behind and instead train our sights on ways to make the world a more just place? The reason respect for difference should not be confused with cultural relativism is that it does not preclude asking how we, living in this privileged and powerful part of the world, might examine our own responsibilities for the situations in which others in distant places have found themselves. We do not stand outside the world, looking out over this sea of poor benighted people, living under the shadow—or veil—of oppressive cultures; we are part of that world, Islamic movements themselves have arisen in a world shaped by the intense engagements of Western powers in Middle Eastern lives.

A more productive approach, it seems to me, is to ask how we might contribute to making the world a more just place. A world not organized around strategic military and economic demands; a place where certain kinds of forces and values that we may still consider important could have an appeal and where there is the peace necessary for discussions, debates, and transformations to occur within communities, We need to ask ourselves what kinds of world conditions we could contribute to making such that popular desires will not be overdetermined by an overwhelming sense of helplessness in the face of forms of global injustice, Where we seek to be active in the affairs of distant places, can we do so in the spirit of support for those within those communities whose goals are to make women's (and men's) lives better (as Walley has argued in relation to practices of genital cutting in Africa, [1997])? Can we use a more egalitarian language of alliances, coalitions, and solidarity, instead of salvation?

Even RAWA, the now celebrated Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, which was so instrumental in bringing to U.S. women's attention the excesses of the Taliban, has opposed the U.S. bombing from the beginning. They do not see in it Afghan women's salvation but increased hardship and loss. They have long called for disarmament and for peacekeeping forces, Spokespersons point out the dangers of confusing governments with people, the Taliban with innocent Afghans who will be most harmed. They consistently remind audiences to take a close look at the ways policies are being organized around oil interests, the arms industry, and the international drug trade. They are not obsessed with the veil, even though they are the most radical feminists working for a secular democratic Afghanistan. Unfortunately, only their messages about the excesses of the Taliban have been heard, even though their criticisms of those in power in Afghanistan have included previous regimes. A

conflict itself actively informs the subjectivity of the colonized self in multiple relation.[9]

The gender system is not just hierarchical but racially differentiated, and the racial differentiation denies humanity and thus gender to the colonized.[10] Irene Silverblatt (1990; 1998), Carolyn Dean (2001), Maria Esther Pozo (Pozo and Ledezma 2006), Pamela Calla and Nina Laurie (2006), Sylvia Marcos (2006), Paula Gunn Allen (1992), Leslie Marmon Silko (2006), Felipe Guaman Pomade Ayala (2009), and Oyeronke Oyewumi (1997), among others, enable me to affirm that gender is a colonial imposition, not just as it imposes itself on life as lived in tune with cosmologies incomparable with the modem logic of dichotomies, but also that inhabitations of worlds understood, constructed, and in accordance with such cosmologies animated the self-among-others in resistance from and at the extreme tension of the colonial difference.

The long process of subjectification of the colonized toward adoption/internalization of the men/women dichotomy as a normative construction of the social—a mark of civilization, citizenship, and membership in civil society was and is constantly renewed. It is met in the flesh over and over by oppositional responses grounded in a long history of oppositional responses and lived as sensical in alternative, resistant socialities at the colonial difference. It is movement toward coalition that impels us to know each other as selves that are thick, in relation, in alternative socialities, and grounded in tense, creative inhabitations of the colonial difference.

I am investigating emphasizing the historicity of the oppressing ←→ resisting relation and thus emphasizing concrete, lived resistances to the coloniality of gender. In particular, I want to mark the need to keep a multiple reading of the resistant self in relation. This is a consequence of the colonial imposition of gender. We see the gender dichotomy operating normatively in the construction of the social and in the colonial processes of oppressive subjectification. But if we are going to make another construction of the self in relation, we need to bracket the dichotomous human/non-human, colonial, gender system

9. A further note on the relation of intersectionality and categorial purity: intersectionality has become pivotal in U.S. women of color feminisms. As said above, one cannot see, locate, or address women of color (U.S. Latinas, Asians, Chicanas, African Americans, Native American women) in the U.S. legal system and in much of institutionalized U.S. life. As one considers the dominant categories, among them "woman," "black," "poor," they are not articulated in a way that includes people who are women, black, and poor. The intersection of "woman" and "black" reveals the absence of black women rather their presence. That is because the modern categorial logic constructs categories as homogeneous, atomic, separable, and constituted in dichotomous terms. That construction proceeds from the pervasive presence of hierarchical dichotomies in the logic of modernity and modem institutions. The relation between categorial purity and hierarchical dichotomies works as follows. Each homogeneous, separable, atomic category is characterized in terms of the superior member of the dichotomy. Thus "women" stands for white women. "Black" stands for black men. When one is trying to understand women at the intersection of race, class, and gender, non-white black, mestiza, indigenous, and Asian women are impossible beings. They are impossible since they arc neither European bourgeois women, nor indigenous males. Intersectionality is important when showing the failures of institutions to include discrimination or oppression against women of color. But here I want to be able to think of their presence as being both oppressed and resisting. So, I have shifted to the coloniality of gender at and from the colonial difference be able to perceive and understand the fractured locus of colonized women and agents fluent in native cultures.

10. I agree with Oyeronke Oyewumi, who makes a similar claim for the colonization of the Yoruba (Oyewumi 1997). But I complicate the claim, as I understand both gender and sex as colonial impositions. That is, the organization of the social in terms of gender is hierarchical and dichotomous, and the organization of the social in terms of sex is dimorphic and relates the male to the man even to mark a lack. The same is true of the female. Thus, Mesoamericans who did not understand sex in dimorphic, separable terms, but in terms of fluid dualisms, became either male or female. Linda Alcoff sees the contribution of sperm and egg in the reproductive act as

first step in hearing their wider message is to break with the language of alien cultures, whether to understand or eliminate them. Missionary work and colonial feminism belong in the past, Our task is to critically explore what we might do to help create a world in which those poor Afghan women, for whom "the hearts of those in the civilized world break, can have safety and decent lives.

that is constituted by the hierarchical dichotomy man/woman for European colonials + the non-gendered, non-human colonized. As Oyewumi makes clear, a colonizing reading of the Yoruba reads the hierarchical dichotomy into the Yoruba society, erasing the reality of the colonial imposition of a multiply oppressive gender system. Thus it is necessary for us to be very careful with the use of the terms *woman* and *man* and bracket them when necessary to weave the logic of the fractured locus, without causing the social sources woven into the resistant responses to disappear. If we only weave man and woman into the very fabric that constitutes the self in relation to resisting, we erase the resistance itself. Only in bracketing [ ] can we appreciate the different logic that organizes the social in the resistant response. Thus the multiple perception and inhabitation, the fracture of the locus, the double or multiple consciousness, is constituted in part by this logical difference. The fractured locus includes the hierarchical dichotomy that constitutes the subjectification of the colonized. But the locus is fractured by the resistant presence, the active subjectivity of the colonized against the colonial invasion of self in community from the inhabitation of that self. We see here the mirroring of the multiplicity of the woman of color in women of color feminisms.

I mentioned above that I was following Aparicio and Blaser's distinction between the modern and non-modern. They make the importance of the distinction clear as they tell us that modernity attempts to control, by denying their existence, the challenge of the existence of other worlds with different ontological presuppositions. It denies their existence by robbing them of validity and of co-evalness. This denial is coloniality. It emerges as constitutive of modernity. The difference between modern and non-modern become—from the modern perspective—a colonial difference, a hierarchical relation in which the non-modern is subordinated to the modern. But the exteriority of modernity is not premodern (Aparicio and Blaser, unpublished). It is important to see that a framework may well be fundamentally critical of the "categorical", essentialist logic of modernity and be critical of the dichotomy between woman and man, and even of the dimorphism between male and female, without seeing coloniality or the colonial difference. Such a framework would not have and may exclude the very possibility of resistance to the modern) colonial, gender system and the coloniality of gender because it cannot see the world multiply through a fractured locus at the colonial difference.

in some way entailing the sexual division and the gender division. But the contribution of sperm and egg is quite compatible with intersexuality. From "contributes the ovum" or "contributes sperm" to a particular act of conception, it does not follow that the sperm contributor is either male or a man, nor does it follow that the egg contributor is female or a woman. But nothing about the meaning of male or man would unequivocally point to a sperm contributor who is markedly intersexed as a male man, except again as a matter of normed logic. If the Western, modern, gender dichotomy is conceptually tied to the dimorphic sexual distinction, and production of sperm is the necessary and sufficient condition of maleness, then of course the sperm donor is male and a man. Hormonal and gonadal characteristics are notoriously insufficient in determining gender. Think of the dangerous misfit of male-to-female transsexuals being housed in male prisons to get a feel for this perception embedded in language and popular consciousness.

In thinking of the methodology of decoloniality, I move to read the social from the cosmologies that inform it, rather than beginning with a gendered reading of cosmologies informing and constituting perception, motility, embodiment, and relation. Thus the move I am recommending is very different from one that reads gender into the social. The shift can enable us to understand the organization of the social in terms that unveil the deep disruption of the gender imposition in the self in relation. Translating terms like *koshskalaka, chachawarmi,* and *urin* into the vocabulary of gender, into the dichotomous, heterosexual, racialized, and hierarchical conception that gives meaning to the gender distinction is to exercise the coloniality of language through colonial translation and thus erases the possibility of articulating the coloniality of gender and resistance to it.

In a conversation with Filomena Miranda, I asked her about the relation between the Aymara *qamaña* and *utjaña,* both often translated as "living." Her complex answer related *utjaña* to *uta,* dwelling in community in the communal land. She told me that one cannot have *qamaña* without *utjaña.* In her understanding, those who do not have *utjaña* are *waccha* and many become *misti.* Though she lives much of the time in La Paz, away from her communal lands, she maintains *utjaña,* which is now calling her to share in governing. Next year she will govern with her sister. Filomena's sister will replace her father, and thus she will be chacha twice, since her community is *chacha* as well as her father. Filomena herself will be *chacha* and *warmi,* as she will govern in her mother's stead in a *chacha* community. My contention is that to translate *chacha* and *warmi* as man and woman does violence to the communal relation expressed through *utjaña.* Filomena translated *chachawarmi* to Spanish as complementary opposites. The new Bolivian constitution, the Morales government, and the indigenous movements of Abya Yala express a commitment to the philosophy of *suma qamaña* (often translated as "living well"). The relation between *qamaña* and *utjaña* indicates the importance of complementarity and its inseparability from communal flourishing in the constant production of cosmic balance. *Chachawarmi* is not separable in meaning and practice from *utjaña;*

it is rather of a piece with it. Thus the destruction of *chachawarmi* is not compatible with *suma qamaña*.[11]

I am certainly not advocating not reading, or not "seeing" the imposition of the human/non-human, man/woman, or male/female dichotomies in the construction of everyday life, as if that were possible. To do so would be to hide the coloniality of gender, and it would erase the very possibility of sensing—reading—the tense inhabitation of the colonial difference and the responses from it. As I mark the colonial translation from *chachawarmi* to man/woman, I am aware of the use of *man* and *woman* in everyday life in Bolivian communities, including in interracial discourse. The success of the complex gender norming introduced with colonization that goes into the constitution of the coloniality of gender has turned this colonial translation into an everyday affair, but resistance to the coloniality of gender is also lived linguistically in the tension of the colonial wound. The political erasure, the lived tension of *languaging*—of moving between ways of living in language—between *chachawarmi* and man/woman constitutes loyalty to the coloniality of gender as it erases the history of resistance at the colonial difference. Filomena Miranda's *utjaña* is not a living in the past, only in the *chachawarmi* way of living. The possibility of *utjaña* today depends, in part, on lives lived in the tension of languaging at the colonial difference.

III. THE COLONIAL DIFFERENCE

Walter Mignolo begins *Local Histories/Global Designs* by telling us that "The main topic of this book is the colonial difference in the formation and transformation of the modern/colonial world system" (Mignolo 2000, ix). As the phrase "the colonial difference" moves through Mignolo's writing, its meaning becomes open-ended. The colonial difference is not defined in Local Histories. Indeed, a definitional disposition is unfriendly to Mignolo's introduction of the concept. So as I present some of the quotes from Mignolo's text, I am not introducing them as his definition of "the colonial difference." Rather, these quotes guide my thoughts on resistance to the coloniality of gender at the colonial difference from within the complexity of his text.

> The colonial difference is the space where coloniality of power is enacted. (Mignolo 2000, ix)

> Once coloniality of power is introduced into the analysis, the "colonial difference" becomes visible, and the epistemological fractures between the Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism is distinguished from the critique of Eurocentrism, anchored in the colonial difference. ... (37)

11. It is important for me not to "translate" here. To do so would enable you to understand what I am saying, but not really, since I cannot say what I want to say having translated the terms. So, if I do not translate and you think you understand less, or do not understand at all, I think that you can understand better why this works as an example of thinking at the colonial difference.

I have prepared us to hear these assertions. One can look at the colonial past and, as an observer, see the natives negotiating the introduction of foreign beliefs and practices as well as negotiating being assigned to inferior positions and being found polluting and dirty. Clearly, to see this is not to see the coloniality. It is rather to see people—anyone, really—pressed under difficult circumstances to occupy demeaning positions that make them disgusting to the social superiors. To see the coloniality is to sew the powerful reduction of human beings to animals, to inferiors by nature, in a schizoid understanding of reality that dichotomizes the human from nature, the human from the non-human, and thus imposes an ontology and a cosmology that, in its power and constitution, disallows all humanity, all possibility of understanding, all possibility of human communication, to dehumanized beings. To see the coloniality is to see both the *jaqi*, the persona, the being that is in a world of meaning without dichotomies, and the beast, both real, both vying under different powers for survival. Thus to see the coloniality is to reveal the very degradation that gives us two renditions of life and a being rendered by them. The sole possibility of such a being lies in its full inhabitation of this fracture, of this wound, where sense is contradictory and from such contradiction new sense is made anew.

> [The colonial difference] is the space where *local* histories inventing and implementing global designs meet *local* histories, the space in which global designs have to be adapted, adopted, rejected, integrated, or ignored. (Mignolo 2000, ix)

> [The colonial difference] is, finally, the physical as well as imaginary location where the coloniality of power is at work in the confrontation of two kinds of local histories displayed in different spaces and times across the planet. If Western cosmology is the historically unavoidable reference point, the multiple confrontations of two kinds of local histories defy dichotomies. Christian and Native American cosmologies, Christian and Amerindian cosmologies, Christian and Islamic cosmologies, Christian and Confucian cosmologies among others only enact dichotomies where you look at them one at a time, not when you compare them in the geohistorical confines of the modern/colonial world system. (ix)

Thus, it is not an affair of the past. It is a matter of the geopolitics of knowledge. It is a matter of how we produce a feminism that takes the global designs for racialized female and male energy and, erasing the colonial difference, takes that energy to be used toward the destruction of the worlds of meaning of our own possibilities. Our possibilities lie in communality rather than subordination; they do not lie in parity with our superior in the hierarchy that constitutes the coloniality. That construction of the human is vitiated through and through by its intimate relation with violence.

> The colonial difference creates the conditions for dialogic situations in which a fractured enunciation is enacted from the subaltern perspective as a response to the hegemonic discourse and perspective. (Mignolo 2000, x)

> The transcending of the colonial difference can only be done from a perspective of subalternity, from decolonization, and, therefore, from a new epistemological terrain where border thinking works. (45)

I see these two paragraphs in tension precisely because if the dialogue is to be had with the modem man, his occupation of the colonial difference involves his redemption but also his self-destruction. Dialogue is not only possible at the colonial difference but necessary for those resisting dehumanization in different and intermingled locals. So, indeed, the transcending can only be done from the perspective of subalternity, but toward a newness of being.

> Border thinking ... is a logical consequence of the colonial difference ... [T]he fractured locus of enunciation from a subaltern perspective defines border thinking as a response to the colonial difference. (x)
> It is also the space where the restitution of subaltern knowledge is taking place and where border thinking is emerging. (ix)

> The colonial differences, around the planet, arc the house where border epistemology dwells. (37)

I am proposing a feminist border thinking, where the liminality of the border is a ground, a space, a borderlands, to use Gloria Anzaldúa's term, not just a split, not an infinite repetition of dichotomous hierarchies among de-souled specters of the human.

Often in Mignolo's work the colonial difference is invoked at levels other than the subjective/intersubjective. But when he is using it to characterize "border thinking," as he interprets Anzaldua, he thinks of her as enacting it. In so doing he understands *her* locus as fractured. The reading I want to perform sees the coloniality of gender and rejection, resistance, and response. It adapts to its negotiation always concretely, from within, as it were.

IV. READING THE FRACTURED LOCUS

What I am proposing in working toward a decolonial feminism is to learn about each other as resisters to the coloniality of gender at the colonial difference, without necessarily being an insider to the worlds of meaning from which resistance to the coloniality arises. That is, the decolonial feminist's task begins by her seeing the colonial difference, emphatically resisting her epistemological habit of erasing it. Seeing it, she sees the world anew, and then she requires herself to drop her enchantment with "woman," the universal, and begins to learn about other resisters at the colonial difference.[12] The reading moves against the social-scientific objectifying reading, attempting rather to understand subjects, the active subjectivity emphasized as the reading looks for the fractured locus in resistance to the coloniality of gender at a coalitional starting point. In thinking of the starting point as coalitional because the fractured locus is in common, the histories of resistance at the colonial difference are where we need to dwell, learning about each other. The coloniality of gender is sensed as concrete, intricately related exercises of power, some body to body, some legal, some inside a room as indigenous female-beasts-not-civilized-women are forced to weave day and night, others at the confessional. The differences in the concreteness and intricacy of power in circulation are not understood as levels of generality; embodied subjectivity and the institutional are equally concrete.

As the coloniality infiltrates every aspect of living through the circulation of power at the levels of the body, labor, law, imposition of tribute, and the introduction of property and land dispossession, its logic and efficacy are met by different concrete people whose bodies, selves in relation, and relations to the spirit world do not follow the logic of capital. The logic they follow is not countenanced by the logic of power. The movement of these bodies and relations does not repeat itself. It does not become static and ossified. Everything and everyone continues

12. Learning each other's histories has been an important ingredient in understanding deep coalitions among U.S. women of color. Here I am giving a new turn to this learning.

to respond to power and responds much of the time resistantly-which is not to say in open defiance, though some of the time there is open defiance-in ways that may or may not be beneficial to capital, but that are not part of its logic. From the fractured locus, the movement succeeds in retaining creative ways of thinking, behaving, and relating that are antithetical to the logic of capital. Subject, relations, ground, and possibilities are continually transformed, incarnating a weave from the fractured locus that constitutes a creative, peopled re~creation. Adaptation, rejection, adoption, ignoring, and integrating are never just modes in isolation of resistance as they are always performed by an active subject

UNTITLED (FAÇADOMY)

JULIANA HUXTABLE

FEMALE
THE OTHER SEX. NOT I, BUT SOMETHING OTHER. SCALING THE FOLDS OF LABIA THAT STAND AGAINST THE UNKNOWN. I CLOSE MY EYES AND SEE FLASHES OF OTHER SILHOUETTES, FORMS GENDERED THROUGH RELIEF AND IN THE REMAINS OF NEGATIVE SPACE. I STRUGGLE TO MAKE OUT THE FORMS OF WHAT SEEM LIKE HIPPOS, BREASTS, BUT THESE POINTS FAIL TO SIGNIFY FULLY, AND HAVE BEEN SHUT OFF; CONTRABAND. SHE IS PERHAPS INSOFAR AS HER WOMB BEARS CERTAIN POTENTIALS FOR REPRODUCTIVE LABOR; IF BARREN—SAINT OR NON-ENTITY.

thickly constructed by inhabiting the colonial difference with a fractured locus. I want to see the multiplicity in the fracture of the locus: both the enactment of the coloniality of gender and the resistant response from a subaltern sense of self, of the social, of the self-in-relation, of the cosmos, all grounded in a peopled memory. Without the tense multiplicity, we see only either the coloniality of gender as accomplishment, or a freezing of memory, an ossified understanding of self in relation from a precolonial sense of the social. Part of what I see is tense movement, people moving: the tension between the dehumanization and paralysis of the coloniality of be-ing, and the creative activity of be-ing.

One does not resist the coloniality of gender alone. One resists it from within a way of understanding the world and living in it that is shared and that can understand one's actions, thus providing recognition. Communities rather than individuals enable the doing; one does with someone else, not in individualist isolation. The passing from mouth to mouth, from hand to hand of lived practices, values, beliefs, ontologies, space,times, and cosmologies constitutes one. The

production of the everyday within which one exists produces one's self as it provides particular, meaningful clothing, food, economies and ecologies, gestures, rhythms, habitats, and senses of space and time. But it is important that these ways are not just different. They include affirmation of life over profit, communalism over individualism, "estar" over enterprise, beings in relation rather than dichotomously split over and over in hierarchically and violently ordered fragments. These ways of being, valuing, and believing have persisted in the resistant response to the coloniality.

Finally, I mark here the interest in an ethics of coalition-in-the-making in terms of both be-ing, and be-ing in relation that extends and interweaves its peopled ground (Larde 2007). I can think of the self in relation as responding to the coloniality of gender at the colonial difference from a fractured locus, backed by an alternative communal source

A HOMOCHROMOSOMAL RELATIONSHIP THAT (THEY'D LIKE YOU TO BELIEVE) FORGOES THE FIRST WHY OF SUBJECT FORMATION. THE TECHNO-SCIENTIFIC CODES CREATED BY THE WRITERS OF CERTAIN MYTHOLOGY REFLECT THEIR BIASES. THEY LOOK AT THE 3-D STRUCTURES FROM ABOVE, ANTHROPOMORPHIZE THEIR CURIOUS "APPEARANCE" WITH AN ALPHABET WHOSE HEGEMONY RESTS ON FORCED SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS. "SHE" DESIGNATES ALL THAT IS NOT "HE," A SEMIOTIC ZONE OF ABJECTION RENDERED EVERY TIME HE SAYS "BITCH." TO SAY NOT MALE DOESN'T SUFFICE, THE TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES; SPECTACLE DISTRACTION FROM THE KNIFE; CLITERECTOMY. A SPACE OF SHELTER AND COMMUNION FOR ALL WHO "SHE" ASSUMES AND ALL WHO ASSUME "SHE."

of sense that makes possible elaborate responses. The direction of the possibility of strengthening the affirmation and possibility of self in relation lies not through a rethinking of the relation with the oppressor from the point of the oppressed, but through a furthering of the logic of difference and multiplicity and of coalition at the point of difference (Lorde 2007). The emphasis is on maintaining multiplicity at the point of reduction—not in maintaining a hybrid "product, in which hides the colonial difference—in the tense workings of more than one logic, not to be synthesized but transcended. Among the logics at work are the many logics meeting the logic of oppression: many colonial differences, but one logic of oppression. *The responses from the fragmented loci can be creatively in coalition,* a way of thinking of the possibility of coalition that takes up the logic of de-coloniality, and the logic of coalition of feminists

of color: the oppositional consciousness of a social erotics (Sandoval 2000) that takes on the differences that make be-ing creative, that permits enactments that are thoroughly defiant of the logic of dichotomies (Larde 2007). The logic of coalition is defiant of the logic of dichotomies;

MALE
GIFTED THE SALIENCE OF THE ORIGINAL REFERENCE. AN IMPOSITION ON CERTAIN BODIES IN ITS EARLIEST INCARNATION (IN A SINGLE LIFESPAN AND/OR ACROSS WESTERN HISTORY) THE NAME ATTACHED TO CERTAIN FLESH/COMPOUNDS; A PHALLIC OBJECT TAUTOLOGICALLY DESIGNATED PENIS AND ORGANIZED AS THE CENTER OF A CERTAIN TRUTHSOME WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE WE'RE ALL MALE TO A CERTAIN DEGREE— THAT GOD'S PRODUCT DESIGN WAS A BIT GRANDER IN THE MOVE FROM CLITORIS TO PENIS; IT DOESN'T NECESSARILY ACCOUNT FOR THE MOVE FROM FLESH TO SYMBOL. PERHAPS IT'S THE CHROMOSOMES, THE INTROSPECTIVE PROBLEM OF SCIENTIFIC VISION GIFTING

differences are never seen in dichotomous terms, but the logic has as its opposition the logic of power. The multiplicity is never reduced.

So, I mark this as a beginning, but it is a beginning that affirms a profound term that Maldonado Torres has called the "decolonial turn." The questions proliferate at this time and the answers are difficult. They require placing, again, an emphasis on methodologies that work with our lives, so the sense of responsibility is maximal. How do we learn about each other? How do we do it without harming each other but with the courage to take up a weaving of the everyday that may reveal deep betrayals? How do we cross without taking over? With whom do we do this work? The theoretical here is immediately practical. My own life—ways of spending my time, of seeing, of cultivating a depth of sorrow—is animated by great anger and directed by the love that Larde (2007), Perez (1999), and Sandoval (2000) teach us. How do we practice with each other engaging in dialogue at the colonial difference? How do we know when we are doing it?

Isn't it the case that those of us who rejected the offer made to us over and over by white women in consciousness,raising groups, conferences, workshops, and women's studies program meetings saw the offer as slamming the door to a coalition that would really include us? Isn't it the case that we felt a calm, full, substantial sense of recognition when we asked: "What do you mean "We," White Woman?" Isn't it the case that we rejected the offer from the side of Sojourner Truth and were ready to reject their answer? Isn't it the case that we refused the offer at the colonial difference, sure that for them there was only one woman, only one reality? Isn't it the case that we already know each other as multiple seers at the colonial difference, intent on a coalition that neither begins nor ends with that offer? We are moving on at a time of crossings, of seeing each other at the colonial difference constructing a new subject

# of a new feminist geopolitics of knowing and loving.

A NEW VISION OF TRUTH, NO? IT CRACKS A BIT WHEN BODIES BETRAY THIS VISION. PENIS-LIKE VESSELS WHO PRODUCE DIFFERENT REPRODUCTIVE FLUIDS, OR NONE AT ALL. PHANTASMAL SHELLS WHO BEAR THE ORNAMENTS OF THE TESTOSTERONE-LADEN BEAST (AS THE PROUDEST AMONG MEN'S MEN WOULD CRY), BUT WHOSE DNA IS OTHERWISE; WHEN THE MUCH-HERALDED DIMORPHISM IS TRI- OR MOSAIC, FUNCTIONALLY, IT'S A MARKER: M ON AN ID CARD, BIRTH CERTIFICATE OR INHERITANCE PAPERS. A COERCIVE NEGATION: NOT WOMEN.

INTERSEX
AN ANGEL OPENS UP THE RUSTED GATES THAT MAKE WHOLE AN EMBANKMENT. THE ANGEL FLUTTERS WITH THE FORCE OF CORPOREAL FIGURES WHOSE POWER INSPIRES A SLIPPAGE OF FEAR TO PANIC IN THE VIBRATING SOULS OF DOCTORS, LAWYERS, PRIESTS AND BIOLOGISTS WHO CUT AWAY WINGS. A HYPER-SWIFT CLOSING AND RE-CLOSING OF PERCEPTIVE ABILITIES AND MAN-MADE WOUNDS IMPERCEPTIBLE TO THE HUMAN EYE IN ITS MICRO-REPETITIONS.

WHAT BETTER WAY TO RE-ARTICULATE SPACE AND TIME THAN THROUGH A BODY LITERALLY BEYOND THE SCOPE OF, YET STILL WITHIN, THE WORLD OF MAN (AND WOMAN). THE PHALLIC/VOID DIVISION COLLAPSES, NOT AT THE LEVEL OF METAPHOR BUT IN FLESH. ANGELS CAN ONLY BE REPRESENTED IN GESTURES BECAUSE THEY ELUDE PLACE. THEY'RE AMONG US. THEY FIRST APPEARED IN DREAMS AND THEN IN MATERNITY WARDS. OTHERS BROKE THROUGH FLESH IN MID-LIFE CRISES. THEY ARE DIVINE MUTANTS, WHOSE BODIES CRAWL UNDER, FLY OVER AND BREAK THROUGH THE GATEWAY TO THE MODERN SYMBOLIC ORDER. THEY STRUGGLE TO SAY I. SPACE AND TIME REFRACT ON THE SURFACE OF SKIN THAT EMITS, VIBRATES OUTSIDE OF THE WAVELENGTHS OF SEXUAL TRUTH. MULTIPLE IN FORM—HYPERTROPHY, HYPOSPADIA, TRUE AND PSEUDO, MALE AND FEMALE—AN ELSEWHERE TO THE ELSEWHERE.

TRANS

THE TOTALITY OF BECOMING'S SIGNIFICATION CONDENSED INTO AN IDENTITY. A THOUSAND PLATEAUS SEEN FROM A CARTOGRAPHER'S VIEWPOINT; SPACIAL TOTEMS. MATRIX CLUSTERS MADE OF UNIVERSAL ESSENTIALS THAT MUST DISTORT CERTAIN POINTS— TUGGING, PULLING, TUCKING, FEELING IN CERTAIN WAYS TO SUPPRESS THE AUTOIMMUNE ATTACK. MANIPULATING COORDINATES TO APPEAR AS ONE AMONG MANY BEINGS— AS THE POSSIBILITY OF COMPLETE TECTONIC IMPLOSION. SHIFTING MARKERS, TRAILS OF FLIPS, SWITCHES, STRONG AND STEADFAST ACCUMULATIONS OR NONE AT ALL— AN INTERIORITY PAINFULLY HIDDEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN. LESS A TO BE THEN a TO b OR abˆn. NUMERICAL, LEGAL, ONTOLOGICAL, AND CORPOREAL. A HAPHAZARD AND EFFECTIVELY DECEPTIVE QUILT OF REFUSALS THAT AMASS TO SOMETHING LIKE A WORMHOLE MASQUERADING AS RIGHTS-BEARING SUBJECT. VISIONS OF LOVE SPREAD ACROSS AN OCEANIC VOID, SURFACE IN WAVES THAT GAIN OR REGAIN FIRST BREATH.

NON-CONFORMING
TANK GIRL IN A POLICE LINEUP. THE SUSPECT OF AN INCHOATE CRIME THAT HAS BEEN COMMITTED AGAIN SO MANY TIMES NO SINGLE PERPETRATOR COULD POSSIBLY LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF THEM. THE SEARCH CONTINUES INDIFFERENT TO THE FACT THAT THE CRIME IS AGAINST NO ONE IN PARTICULAR AND PRODUCES NO TANGIBLE HARM. I AM NEITHER/NOR AND ONLY POSSIBLY /OR/ OR/OR ad infinitum. GENDER HACKERS DISPLACE THE HETERO TELOS WITH CONSCIOUS REFUSALS. WHERE, HOW AND WHEN:

BODY HAIR APPEARS
CLOTHING CONCEALS OR REVEALS
THE TENUOUS SUBJECT BECOMES
“I” AND SPEAKS WHENCE
DESIGNATIONS OF “HE,” “SHE,”
OR “THEY” LEGITIMATE OR DISRUPT.

BIOPOLITICAL SUBJECT FORMATIONS COMING TO A CROSSROAD ON A JOURNEY ELSEWHERE /FINDING ONESELF ATTACHED TO A CROSS, CARRYING IT AND PAYING FOR ITS CANONIZING DESIGNATION IN BLOOD. A SACRIFICE NECESSARY THAT OPENS UP THE POSSIBILITY OF LIFE BEYOND THE SOVEREIGN AND BIOPOLITICAL SEXES AND INTO THE KINGDOM—AN INSISTENCE ON LIBERATION / A COMFORTABLE AND DISTANCED INABILITY TO COMPREHEND THE DRIVE OF THE MASSES. SELF-ACTUALIZED PROVIDENCE. PATERNAL TWIN OF ANDROGYNY; MATERNAL TWIN OF PANDROGENY; CHILD OF THE SINTHOME AND ORIGIN OF THE DEVIANT’S DEVIATION; DYKE, TRANNY, FAGGOT.

PERSONAL
AN ACT OF SELF-CANONIZATION.
A LOOP-CHAIN OF SIGNIFICATION
STRENGTHENED—AMINO ACIDS
BUILD THE STRUCTURES OF THE
DEATH DRIVE.

POETRY
IS NOT
A LUXURY

AUDRE LORDE

I AM I.

The quality of light
by which we scrutinize our lives
has direct bearing upon the product which
we live, and upon the changes which we
hope to bring about through those lives.
It is within this light

that we form those ideas
by which we pursue our magic
and make it realized.

This is poetry as illumination,
for it is through poetry
that we give name to those ideas which are,
until the poem, nameless and formless—
about to be birthed, but already felt.
That distillation of experience
from which true poetry springs
births thought
as dream births concept,
as feeling births idea,
as knowledge births (precedes) understanding.

As we learn to bear the intimacy of scrutiny,
and to flourish within it,
as we learn to use the products of that scrutiny
for power
within our living,
those fears which rule our lives
and form our silences
begin to lose their control over us.

For each of us
as women,
there is a dark place within where hidden and growing our true spirit
rises, “Beautiful and tough as chestnut/stanchions against our nightmare
of weakness” and of impotence.

These places of possibility within ourselves are dark
because they are
ancient
and hidden;
they have survived and grown strong
through darkness.
Within these deep places,
each one of us holds an incredible reserve of creativity and power,
of unexamined and unrecorded emotion and feeling.

The woman’s place of power within each of us
is neither white nor surface;
it is dark,
it is ancient,
and it is deep.

When we view living, in the European mode,
only as a problem to be solved,
we then rely solely upon our ideas to make us free,
for these were what the white fathers told us were precious.

But as we become more in touch with our own
ancient,
black,
non-European
view of living as a situation

EUNUCH
A CINEMATIC AND BEAUTIFUL TRAGEDY IN THE EUNUCH. TRAGIC, LESS BECAUSE OF ANY REAL FACETS OF THE LIFE OF, BUT RATHER, IN THE DEFEAT OF A REGIME. EVEN IF, OR PERHAPS PRECISELY WHEN, ULTIMATELY FOR THE GOOD, IT CARRIES WITH IT NOSTALGIA, IN DISASTER-PORNOGRAPHIC RETURNS TO IMAGES OF AN IMMEDIATE PAST—A FASCINATION. EUNUCH IN MANY WAYS ARE THE SURVIVORS. RITUALISTICALLY PLACING THEMSELVES IN A SPACE OF SYMBOLIC ABJECTION. OR AFFINITY TO A FEMININE IDEAL OR PERHAPS NONE OF THEM AT ALL. A PHYSICAL SLIPPAGE CONTINGENT ON CULTURES ISOLATED BY REGION, DEVELOPMENT OR EPOCH, WHAT DOES IT MEAN HERE AND NOW (UNLESS, OF COURSE, THIS TEXT REACHES A THERE AND THEN)?

to be experienced
and interacted with,
we learn more and more
to cherish our feelings,

and to respect
those hidden sources
of our power
from where
true knowledge
and therefore
lasting action
comes.

At this point in time,
I believe that

women

carry within ourselves
the possibility for fusion
of these two approaches
as keystone for survival,
and we come closest to this combination in our

poetry.

I speak here of poetry
as the revelation
or distillation of experience,
not the sterile word play that,
too often,
the white fathers distorted the word poetry
to mean—in order to cover their desperate wish
for imagination without insight.

For women, then,

poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity
of our existence.
It forms the quality of the light
within which

we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change,

first made into language,
then into idea,
then into more tangible action.

Poetry is the way
we help give name to the nameless
so it can be thought.

The farthest external horizons of our hopes
and fears
are cobbled by our poems,
carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives.

As they become known and accepted to ourselves, our feelings,
and the honest exploration of them,
become sanctuaries
and fortresses
and spawning grounds for the most
radical and daring of ideas,
the house of difference
so necessary to change and the conceptualization of any meaningful action.
Right now, I could name at least ten ideas I would have once found
intolerable
or incomprehensible
and frightening, except as they came after dreams and poems.

This is not idle fantasy, but the true meaning of

"it feels right to me."
We can train ourselves to respect our feelings,
and to discipline (transpose) them into a language
that matches those feelings so they can be shared.

And where that language does not yet exist,

it is our poetry which helps to fashion it.
Poetry is not only dream or vision,
it is the skeleton architecture of our lives.

Possibility is neither forever nor instant.
It is also not easy to sustain belief in its efficacy.
We can sometimes work long and hard
to establish

one beachhead
of real resistance to the deaths we are expected to live,
only to have that beachhead
assaulted or threatened by canards
we have been socialized to fear,
or by the withdrawal of those approvals
that we have been warned to seek for safety.

We see ourselves diminished or softened by the

falsely benign accusations

of childishness,
of non-universality,
of self-centeredness,
of sensuality.

And who asks the question:
am I altering your aura,
your ideas,
your dreams,
or am I merely
moving you to temporary and reactive action?

(Even the latter is no mean task,

but one that must be rather seen within the context
of a true alteration
of the
texture

of our lives).

The white fathers told us,

I think therefore I am;

and the black mothers in each of us
—the poet—whispers in our dreams,

I feel therefore
I can be free.

Poetry coins the language to express and charter
this revolutionary awareness
and demand,
the implementation
of that freedom.
However, experience
has taught us that the action in the now
is also always necessary.

Our children cannot dream unless they live,
they cannot live unless they are nourished,

and who else will feed them
the real food without which
their dreams will be no different from ours?
Sometimes we drug ourselves
with dreams of new ideas.
The head will save us.
The brain alone will set us free.

But there are no new ideas
still waiting in the wings

to save us as women,

as human.

There are only old and forgotten ones,
new combinations,
extrapolations
and recognitions from within ourselves,

along with the renewed courage to try them out. And we must
constantly
encourage
ourselves
and each other
to attempt the heretical actions
our dreams imply
and some of our old ideas disparage.

In the forefront of our move toward change, there is only our poetry
to hint at possibility made real.
Our poems formulate the implications of ourselves,
what we feel within and dare make real
(or bring action into accordance with),
our fears,
our hopes,
our most cherished terrors.
For within structures defined by profit,
by linear power,
by institutional dehumanization,
our feelings were not meant to survive.
Kept around as unavoidable adjuncts or pleasant pastimes,
feelings were meant to kneel to thought as we were meant to kneel to men.
But women have survived.
As poets.
And there are no new pains.
We have felt them all already.

We have hidden that fact
in the same place

UNIVERSAL CROP TOPS FOR ALL THE SELF-CANONIZED SAINTS OF BECOMING

JULIANA HUXTABLE

where we have hidden our power.

They lie in our dreams,
and it is
our dreams
that point the way
to freedom.
They are made realizable through our poems
that give us the strength and courage

to see,
to feel,
to speak,
and to dare.

UNTITLED (DESTROYING FLESH)

UNIVERSAL CROP TOPS FOR ALL THE SELF-CANONIZED SAINTS OF BECOMING. PRIMAL SELF-RECOGNITION DISASSEMBLES AS IT FORMS, TRANSFERRING CORPORAL MATTER INTO THE VIRTUAL AND IT DOUBLES BACK AS A FANTASY OF OURSELVES...

For there are no new ideas.
There are only new ways of making them
of examining what our ideas really mean

while we suffer
battle

while tasting

If what we need to dream,
to move our spirits
most deeply and directly
toward and through
promise,
is a luxury,
then we have given up
the core—
the fountain-of our power,
our womanness;
we have give up the future of
our worlds.

felt,
(feel like)
on Sunday morning at 7 AM,
after brunch,
during wild love,
making war,
giving birth;
the old longings,
the old warnings
and fears of being silent
and impotent and alone,
our new possibilities
and strengths.

OR PERHAPS ITS ALL JUST A NIGHTMARE. LIKE THAT TIME I REALIZED THAT FOR US BY US WAS A MESSAGE MORE SEDUCTIVE TO THEM THAN IT EVER WAS TO US. NOT THAT US IS EVEN US AT THIS POINT, AS THE SEPARATIONS BETWEEN DISSOLVE WITH EVERY CAUSTIC 'AGREE TO TERMS OF SERVICE'. THERE ARE SO MANY SKELETAL REMAINS IN LOCKED XANGAS LIVEJOURNAL AND MYSPACE ACCOUNTS. THE FINAL FRONTIER OF OLD TRIBES AND THEOLOGIES. WHEN HOT TOPIC AND GAP WERE HOT TOPIC AND GAP.

THE CULT OF PREDETERMINED VOLITION IS DEAD—THE SACRILEGE OF THE OLD-ENOUGH-TO-NOT-BE-NEW AND EXPANSIVE DIGITAL FRONTIER CONSUMED ALL THE WIGGERS, GOTH GIRLS, PUNKS AND YUPPIES OF OLD, SERVING A GENERATION OF SELF CREATED DEITIES, HALLOWED BY VIRTUE OF THE SINGULARITY AND BREADTH OF THEIR ICONOCLASM AS THEY ARE FORCED TO REFIGURE THE SOCIAL.

THE OSTENSIBLY LOST BOYS GIRLS AND OTHERWISE WHO CRUCIFY THE ALWAYS-ALREADY-DEAD VERSION OF THEMSELVES CURRENTLY UNABLE TO CHOOSE WHICH SONG TO PLAY-TO-ITS-END ON THE WAY FROM START TO FINAL TRAIN STOP AND OPT FOR A 40 MINUTE MIX ABLE TO MUTE THE BOUNDARIES THAT PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVELY FRAME EVERY DECISION BETWEEN DUNK/BOOT, NATURAL/MAYBELLINE, CHEST BINDER OR BRA, TUCK OR GET-STUCK-GETTING-CLOCKED.

THE RELIGIOUS AND COMPULSIVE NEED && PRAYER FOR DURATION PERMEANCE AND PERMANENCE IN SOUND IS ANSWERED BY THE ADVENT OF THE MIX OVER SONG. THE SUBLIME AND RAPTUROUS POWER OF THE HYMN TO BREAK YOLKS GIVEN AS THE PERFECT PASTICHE OR LAYERING THAT ALLOWS US FOR A MOMENT TO ESCAPE GENRE, THE 5-OR-SO MINUTE LIMIT OF SONGS PROPER AND THE UNIT-CUBES WE FIND OURSELVES ATOMIZED IN DIVIDED BY A SURFACE MADE OF CLICKS SHARING REPRE-SENTATIVE DATA FILES, EACH ONE DESTROYING OUR FLESH AS IT FADES INTO NOUMENON.

UNTITLED IN THE RAGE (NIBIRU CATACLYSM)

UNTITLED (PSYCHOSOCIAL STUNTIN')

UNTITLED (CASUAL POWER)

IF YOU WALK UP THROUGH HARLEM AND ALONG THE BRONX RIVER YOU COME TO A SPACE BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF GPS SOFTWARE UNABLE TO SENSE THE WALL OF ASHES (FROM BUILDINGS BURNT FOR INSURANCE MONEY) AND AMASSED SMOKE FROM CRACK PIPES. BEYOND THE VEIL IS A MYTHICAL LAND WHERE BLACK MOUNTAINS COVERED IN PANTHER FUR SPLIT TRIBUTARIES OF THE RIVER AS THE WATER FIGHTS ITS WAY INTO THE IDEATIONAL OCEAN OF MY SCHIZOPHRENIC LONGING FOR THE PLACE THAT LEFT EYE GOT LOST IN WHILE MAKING FAN MAIL. DENSE SKY, AIR HEAVY AND MOIST WITH THE BLOOD OF PIGS LINGERING IN THE NEAR-TROPICAL HEAP OF A TOPOS UNDER GREENHOUSE EFFECT. CUT OFF FROM THE 'REAL' BY AN ATMOSPHERIC BUBBLE OF COINTELPRO PROPAGANDA AND PAMPHLETS CREATED BY THE HOOVER ADMINISTRATION, IT'S A LAND WHERE REPARATIONS ARE TAKEN AS THEY ARE LIVED. ITS MUSES AND MEDIUMS AMONG US ARE 'URBAN' WOMEN IN SPORTS BRAS, BOXER SHORTS AND LOW SLUNG CAMO PANTS IN MILITARY AND ATHLETIC SHOEWEAR. THE SPIRITUAL RESIDUE OF 'CAPITALISM BLUSH DOPE EQUALS GENOCIDE' AND THE PROTECTIVE OPTIMISM OF FREE BREAKFAST FOR THE CHILDREN SWINGS IN HOOP EARRINGS SO LARGE THEY TRACE COLLARBONES WHEN JAWS DROP TO DISCLOSE LYRICALLY THAT THERE IS STILL A PLACE WHERE BLACK UNICORNS FUN FREELY. BANTU KNOTS AND BALD HEADS WITH THICKLY LINED LIPS OCCASION A MOMENT TO MEMORIALIZE THE HOOD SURREALISM OF HYPE WILLIAMS AND THE FUTURES OF OCTAVIA BUTLER (AND THE IMAGES THAT FRONT THE COVERS OF HER BOOKS). WHERE THE ONTOLOGICAL CHAINS OF THE ATLANTIC TRIANGLE REVERBERATE TO SHATTER POINT IN PATTERNS, BEATS, RHYMES AND TECHNICOLOR INSISTENCES ON A NEW NEW WORLD WHERE THE COMMON THREAD IS SHARED WITH MISSY WHEN SHE SAYS: I CAN'T STAND THE RAIN (ME I'M SUPERFLY). BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS, AALIYAH CROONS 'MORE THAN A WOMAN' AND BROKEN STATICY CLIPS OF ANGELA DAVIS SPEECHES PLAYING ON LEFTIST AM RADIO PROVIDES THE 'FEELS LIKE' ADDITION TO THE GENERAL CLIMATE READING OF THE MORNING WEATHER..

[...]

Cyan: Editor's highlights
Magenta: Anchor words
Blue: Quotations
Red: Footnotes

CAN THE SUBALTERN SPEAK?

GAYATRI CHAKRAVORTY SPIVAK

[...]

I

Some of the most radical criticism coming out of the West today is the result of an interested desire to conserve the subject of the West, or the West as Subject. The theory of pluralized 'subject-effects' gives an illusion of undermining subjective sovereignty while often providing a cover for this subject of knowledge. Although the history of Europe as Subject is narrativized by the law, political economy and ideology of the West, this concealed Subject pretends it has 'no geo-political determinations'. The much-publicized critique of the sovereign subject thus actually inaugurates a Subject. I will argue for this conclusion by considering a text by two great practitioners of the critique: 'Intellectuals and power: a conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze'.[1]

I have chosen this friendly exchange between two activist philosophers of history because it undoes the opposition between authoritative theoretical production and the unguarded practice of conversation, enabling one to glimpse the track of ideology. The participants in this conversation emphasize the most important contributions of French poststructuralist theory: first, that the networks of power/desire/interest are so heterogeneous, that their reduction to a coherent narrative is counterproductive—a persistent critique is needed; and second, that intellectuals must attempt to disclose and know the discourse of society's Other. Yet the two systematically ignore the question of ideology and their own implication in intellectual and economic history.

Although one of its chief presuppositions is

1. Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected essays and interviews,* trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, Cornell University Press: Ithaca, NY, 1977, pp. 205-17 (hereafter cited as FD). I have modified the English version of this, as of other English translations, where faithfulness to the original seemed to demand it. It is important to note that the greatest 'influence' of Western European intellectuals upon US professors and students happens through collections of essays rather than long books in translation. And, in those collections, it is understandably the more topical pieces that gain a greater currency. (Derrida's *'Structure, sign and play'* is a case in point.) From the perspective of theoretical production and ideological reproduction, therefore, the conversation under consideration has not necessarily been superseded.

the critique of the sovereign subject, the conversation between Foucault and Deleuze is framed by two monolithic and anonymous subjects-in-revolution: 'A Maoist' (*FD*, p. 205) and 'the workers' struggle' (*FD*, p. 217). Intellectuals, however, are named and differentiated; moreover, a Chinese Maoism is nowhere operative. Maoism here simply creates an aura of narrative specificity, which would be a harmless rhetorical banality were it not that the innocent appropriation of the proper name 'Maoism' for the eccentric phenomenon of French intellectual 'Maoism' and subsequent 'New Philosophy' symptomatically renders 'Asia' transparent.[2]

Deleuze's reference to the workers' struggle is equally problematic; it is obviously a genuflection: 'We are unable to touch [power] in any point of its application without finding ourselves confronted by this diffuse mass, so that we are necessarily led ... to the desire to blow it up completely. Every partial revolutionary attack or defense is linked in this way to the workers' struggle' (*FD*, p. 217). The apparent banality signals a disavowal. The statement ignores the international division of labor, a gesture that often marks poststructuralist political theory.[3] The invocation of *the* workers' struggle is baleful in its very innocence; it is incapable of dealing with global capitalism: the subject-production of worker and unemployed within nation state ideologies in its Center; the increasing subtraction of the working class in the Periphery from the realization of surplus value and thus from 'humanistic' training in consumerism; and the large-scale presence of paracapitalist labor as well as the heterogeneous structural status of agriculture in the Periphery.

Ignoring the international division of labor; rendering 'Asia' (and on occasion 'Africa') transparent (unless the subject is ostensibly the Third World'); reestablishing the legal subject of socialized capital—these are problems as common to much poststructuralist as to structuralist theory. Why should such occlusions be sanctioned in precisely those intellectuals who are our best prophets of heterogeneity and the Other?

The link to the workers' struggle is located in the desire to blow up power at any point of its application. This site is apparently based on a simple valorization of *any* desire destructive of *any* power. Walter Benjamin comments on Baudelaire's comparable politics by way of quotations from Marx:

> Marx continues in his description of the *conspirateurs de profession* as follows: ' ... They have no other aim but the immediate one of overthrowing the existing government, and they profoundly despise the more theoretical enlightenment of the workers as to their class interests. Thus their anger – not proletarian but plebeian – at the *habits noirs* (black coats), the more or less educated people who represent [*vertreten*] that side of the movement and of whom they can never become entirely independent, as they cannot of the official representatives [*Repräsentanten*] of the party.' Baudelaire's political insights do not go fundamentally beyond the insights of these professional conspirators ... He could perhaps have made Flaubert's statement, 'Of all of politics I understand only one thing: the revolt', his own.[4]

The link to the workers' struggle is located, simply, in desire. Elsewhere, Deleuze and Guattari have attempted an alternative definition of desire, revising the one offered by psychoanalysis: 'Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object. It is, rather, the subject that is lacking desire, or desire that lacks a fixed subject; there is no fixed subject except by repression. Desire and its object are a unity: it is the machine, as a machine of a machine. Desire is machine, the object of desire also a connected machine, so that the product is lifted from the process of producing and something detaches itself from producing to product and gives a leftover to the vagabond, nomad subject.'[5]

This definition does not alter the specificity of the desiring subject (or leftover subject-effect) that attaches to specific instances of desire or to production of the desiring machine. Moreover, when the connection between desire and the subject is taken as irrelevant or merely reversed, the subject-effect that surreptitiously emerges is much like the generalized ideological subject of the theorist. This may be the legal subject of socialized capital, neither labor nor management, holding a 'strong' passport, using a 'strong' or 'hard' currency, with supposedly unquestioned access to due process. It is certainly not the desiring subject as Other. The failure of Deleuze and Guattari to consider the relations between desire, power and subjectivity renders them incapable of articulating a theory of interests. In this context, their indifference to ideology (a theory of which is necessary for an understanding of interests) is striking but consistent. Foucault's commitment to 'genealogical' speculation prevents him from locating, in 'great names' like Marx and Freud, watersheds in some continuous stream of intellectual history.[6] This commitment has created an unfortunate resistance in Foucault's work to 'mere' ideological critique. Western speculations on the ideological reproduction of social relations belong to that mainstream, and it is within this tradition that Althusser writes: 'The reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the

2. There is an implicit reference here to the post-1968 wave of Maoism in France. See Michel Foucault, *'On Popular Justice: a discussion with Maoists'*, in *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-77*, trans. Colin Gordon et al., Pantheon: New York, p. 134 (hereafter cited as PK). Explication of the reference strengthens my point by laying bare the mechanics of appropriation. The status of China in this discussion is exemplary. If Foucault persistently clears himself by saying 'I know nothing about China', his interlocutors show toward China what Derrida calls the 'Chinese prejudice'.

3. This is part of a much broader symptom, as Eric Wolf discusses in *Europe and the People without History*, University of California Press: Berkeley, 1982.

4. Walter Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire: *A lyric poet in the era of high capitalism*, trans. Harry Zohn, Verso: London, 1983, p. 12.

5. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*, trans. Richard Hurley et al., Viking Press: New York, 1977, p. 26.

6. The exchange with Jacques-Alain Miller in PK (*'The Confession of the Flesh'*) is revealing in this respect.

ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, Will provide for the domination of the ruling "in and by words" [*par la parole*].'[7]

When Foucault considers the pervasive heterogeneity of power, he does not ignore the immense institutional heterogeneity that Althusser here attempts to schematize. Similarly, in speaking of alliances and systems of signs, the state and war-machines (*mille plateaux*), Deleuze and Guattari are opening up that very field. Foucault cannot, however, admit that a developed theory of ideology recognizes its own material production in institutionality, as well as in the 'effective instruments for the formation and accumulation of knowledge' (*PK*, p. 102). Because these philosophers seem obliged to reject all arguments naming the concept of ideology as only schematic rather than textual, they are equally obliged to produce a mechanically schematic opposition between interest and desire. Thus they align themselves with bourgeois sociologists who fill the place of ideology with a continuistic 'unconscious' or a parasubjective 'culture'. The mechanical relation between desire and interest is clear in such sentences as: 'We never desire against our interests, because interest always follows and finds itself where desire has placed it' (*FD*, p. 215). An undifferentiated desire is the agent, and power slips in to create the effects of desire: 'power ... produces positive effects at the level of desire — and also at the level of knowledge' (*PK*, p. 59).

This parasubjective matrix, cross-hatched with heterogeneity, ushers in the unnamed Subject, at least for those intellectual workers influenced by the new hegemony of desire. The race for 'the last instance' is now between economics and power. Because desire is tacitly defined on an orthodox model, it is unitarily opposed to 'being deceived'. Ideology as 'false consciousness' (being deceived) has been called into question by Althusser. Even Reich implied notions of collective will rather than a dichotomy of deception and undeceived desire: 'We must accept the scream of Reich: no, the masses were not deceived; at a particular moment, they actually desired a fascist regime' (*FD*, p. 215).

These philosophers will not entertain the thought of constitutive contradiction—that is where they admittedly part company from the Left. In the name of desire, they reintroduce the undivided subject into the discourse of power. Foucault often seems to conflate 'individual' and 'subject';[8] and the impact on his own metaphors is perhaps intensified in his followers. Because of the power of the word 'power', Foucault admits to using the 'metaphor of the point which progressively irradiates its surroundings'. Such slips become the rule rather than the exception in less careful hands. And that radiating point, animating an effectively heliocentric discourse, fills the empty place of the agent with the historical sun of theory, the Subject of Europe.[9]

Foucault articulates another corollary of the disavowal of the role of ideology in reproducing the social relations of production: an unquestioned valorization of the oppressed as subject, the 'object being', as Deleuze admiringly remarks, 'to establish conditions where the prisoners themselves would be able to speak'. Foucault adds that 'the masses *know* perfectly well, clearly' —once again the thematic of being undeceived—'they know far better than [the intellectual] and they certainly say it very well' (*FD*, pp. 206, 207).

What happens to the critique of the sovereign subject in these pronouncements? The limits of this representationalist realism are reached with Deleuze: 'Reality is what actually happens in a factory, in a school, in barracks, in a prison, in a police station' (*FD*, p. 212). This foreclosing of the necessity of the difficult task of counterhegemonic ideological production has not been salutary. It has helped positivist empiricism—the justifying foundation of advanced capitalist neocolonialism—to define its own arena as 'concrete experience', 'what actually happens'. Indeed, the concrete experience that is the guarantor of the political appeal of prisoners, soldiers and schoolchildren is disclosed through the concrete experience of the intellectual, the one who diagnoses the episteme.[10] Neither Deleuze nor Foucault seems aware that the intellectual within socialized capital, brandishing concrete experience, can help consolidate the international division of labor. The unrecognized contradiction within a position that valorizes the concrete experience of the oppressed, while being so uncritical about the historical role of the intellectual, is maintained by a verbal slippage. Thus Deleuze makes this remarkable pronouncement: 'A theory is like a box of tools. Nothing to do with the signifier' (*FD*, p. 208). Considering that the verbalism of the theoretical world and its access to any world defined against it as 'practical' is irreducible, such a declaration helps only the intellectual anxious to prove that intellectual labor is just like manual labor. It is when signifiers are left to look after themselves that verbal slippages happen. The signifier 'representation' is a case in point. In the same dismissive tone that severs theory's link to the signifier, Deleuze declares, 'There is no more representation; there's nothing but action'—'action of theory and action of practice

7. Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster, Monthly Review, Press: New York, 1971, pp. 132-3.

8. For one example among many see *PK*, p. 98.

9. It is not surprising, then, that Foucault's work, early and late, is supported by too simple a notion of repression. Hen: the antagonist is Freud, not Marx. 'I have the impression that [the notion of repression) is wholly inadequate to the analysis of the mechanisms and effects of power that is so pervasively used to characterize today' (*PK*, p. 92). The delicacy and subtlety of Freud's suggestion—that under repression the phenomenal identity of affects is indeterminate because something unpleasant can be desired as pleasure, thus radically reinscribing the relationship between desire and 'interest'—seems quite deflated here. For an elaboration of this notion of repression, see Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology,* trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, MD, 1976), pp. 88f. (hereafter cited as OG); and *Derrida, Limited inc.: abc,* trans. Samuel Weber, *Glyph,* 2, 1977, p. 215.

10. Althusser's version of this particular situation may be too schematic, but it nevertheless seems more careful in its program than the argument under study. 'Class instinct,' Althusser writes, 'is subjective and spontaneous. Class position is objective and rational. To arrive at proletarian class positions, the class instinct of proletarians-only needs to be educated; the class instinct of the petty bourgeoisie, and hence of intellectuals, has, on the contrary, to be revolutionized' (op. cit., p. 13).

which relate to each other as relays and form networks' (*FD*, pp. 206-7). Yet an important point is being made here: the production of theory is also a practice; the opposition between abstract 'pure' theory and concrete 'applied' practice is too quick and easy.[11]

If this is, indeed, Deleuze's argument, his articulation of it is problematic. Two senses of representation are being run together: representation as 'speaking for', as in politics, and representation as 're-presentation', as in art or philosophy. Since theory is also only 'action', the theoretician does not represent (speak for) the oppressed group. Indeed, the subject is not seen as a representative consciousness (one re-presenting reality adequately). These two senses of representation—within state formation and the law, on the one hand, and in subject-predication, on the other —are related but irreducibly discontinuous. To cover over the discontinuity with an analogy that is presented as a proof reflects again a paradoxical subject privileging.[12] *Because* 'the person who speaks and acts ... is always a multiplicity', no 'theorizing intellectual ... [or] party or ... union' can represent 'those who act and struggle' (*FD*, p. 206). Are those who act and *struggle* mute, as opposed to those who act and *speak* (*FD*, p. 206)? These immense problems are buried in the differences between the 'same' words: consciousness and conscience (both conscience in French), representation and re-presentation. The critique of ideological subject—constitution within state formations and systems of political economy can now be effaced, as can the active theoretical practice of the 'transformation of consciousness'. The banality of leftist intellectuals' lists of self-knowing, politically canny subalterns stands revealed; representing them, the intellectuals represent themselves as transparent.

If such a critique and such a project are not to be given up, the shifting distinctions between representation within the state and political economy, on the one hand, and within the theory of the Subject, on the other, must not be obliterated. Let us consider the play of *vertreten* ('represent' in the first sense) and *darstellen* ('represent' in the second sense) in a famous passage in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, where Marx touches on 'class' as a descriptive and transformative concept in a manner somewhat more complex than Althusser's distinction between class instinct and class position would allow.

Marx's contention here is that the descriptive definition of a class can be a differential one—its cutting off and difference from all other classes: 'in so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that cut off their mode of life, their interest, and their formation from those of the other classes and place them in inimical confrontation [*feindlich gegenüberstellen*], they form a class'.[13] There is no such thing as a 'class instinct' at work here. In fact, the collectivity of familial existence, which might be considered the arena of 'instinct', is discontinuous with, though operated by, the differential isolation of classes. In this context, one far more pertinent to the France of the 1970s than it can be to the international periphery, the formation of a class is *artificial* and economic, and the economic agency or *interest* is impersonal because it is systematic and heterogeneous. This agency or interest is tied to the Hegelian critique of the individual subject, for it marks the subject's empty place in that process without a subject which is history and political economy. Here the capitalist is defined as 'the conscious bearer [*Träger*] of the limitless movement of capital'.[14] My point is that Marx is not working to create an undivided subject where desire and interest coincide. Class consciousness does not operate toward that goal. Both in the economic area (capitalist) and in the political (world-historical agent), Marx is obliged to construct models of a divided and dislocated subject whose parts are not continuous or coherent with each other. A celebrated passage like the description of capital as the Faustian monster brings this home vividly.[15]

The following passage, continuing the quotation from *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, is also working on the structural principle of a dispersed and dislocated class subject: the (absent collective) consciousness of the small peasant proprietor class finds its 'bearer' in a 'representative' who appears to work in another's interest. The word 'representative' here is not '*darstellen*'; this sharpens the contrast Foucault and Deleuze slide over, the contrast, say, between a proxy and a portrait. There is, of course, a relationship between them, one that has received political and ideological exacerbation in the European tradition at least since the poet and the sophist, the actor and the orator, have both been seen as harmful. In the guise of a post-Marxist description of the scene of power, we thus encounter a much older debate: between representation or rhetoric as tropology and as persuasion. *Darstellen* belongs to the first constellation, *vertreten*—with stronger suggestions of substitution—to the second. Again, they are related, but running them together, especially in order to say that beyond both is where oppressed subjects speak, act and know *for themselves*, leads to an essentialist, utopian politics.

Here is Marx's passage, using '*vertreten*' where the English use 'represent', discussing a social 'subject' whose consciousness and *Vertretung* (as much a substitution as a representation) are dislocated and incoherent: The small peasant proprietors 'cannot represent themselves; they must be represented. Their representative must appear simultaneously as their master, as an authority over them, as unrestricted governmental power that

11. Foucault's subsequent explanation (*PK*, p. 145) of this Deleuzian statement comes closer to Derrida's notion that theory cannot be an exhaustive taxonomy and is always formed by practice.

12. Cf. The surprisingly uncritical notions of representation entertained in *PK*, pp. 141, 188. My remarks concluding this paragraph, criticizing intellectuals' representations of subaltern groups, should be rigorously distinguished from a coalition politics that takes into account its framing within socialized capital and unites people not because they are oppressed but because they are exploited. This model works best within a parliamentary democracy, where representation is not only not banished but elaborately staged.

13. Karl Marx, *Surveys from Exile*, trans. David Fernbach, Vintage Books: New York, 1974, p. 239.

14. *idem*, *Capital: A critique of political economy*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes, Vintage Books: New York, 1977, p. 254.

15. *ibid.*, p. 302.

protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence [in the place of the class interest, since there is no unified class subject] of the small peasant proprietors therefore finds its last expression [the implication of a chain of substitutions—*Vertretungen*—is strong here] in the executive force [*Exekutivgewalt*—less personal in German] subordinating society to itself.'

Not only does such a model of social indirection—necessary gaps between the source of 'influence' (in this case the small peasant proprietors), the 'representative' (Louis Napoleon), and the historical-political phenomenon (executive control)—imply a critique of the subject as *individual* agent but a critique even of the subjectivity of a *collective* agency. The necessarily dislocated machine of history moves because 'the identity of the *interests*' of these proprietors 'fails to produce a feeling of community, national links, or a political organization'. The event of representation as *Vertretung* (in the constellation of rhetoric-as-persuasion) behaves like a *Darstellung* (or rhetoric-as-trope), taking its place in the gap between the formation of a (descriptive) class and the nonformation of a (transformative) class: 'In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life ... *they form a class.* In so far as ... the identity of their interests fails to produce a feeling of community ... *they do not form a class.*' The complicity of *Vertreten* and *Darstellen*, their identity-in-difference as the place of practice—since this complicity is precisely what Marxists must expose, as Marx does in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*—can only be appreciated if they are not conflated by a sleight of word.

It would be merely tendentious to argue that this textualizes Marx too much, making him inaccessible to the common 'man', who, a victim of common sense, is so deeply placed in a heritage of positivism that Marx's irreducible emphasis on the work of the negative, on the necessity for de-fetishizing the concrete, is persistently wrested from him by the strongest adversary, 'the historical tradition' in the air.[16] I have been trying to point out that the uncommon 'man', the contemporary philosopher of practice, sometimes exhibits the same positivism. The gravity of the problem is apparent if one agrees that the development of a transformative class 'consciousness' from a descriptive class 'position' is not in Marx a task engaging the ground level of consciousness. Class consciousness remains with the feeling of community that belongs to national links and political organizations, not to that other feeling of community whose structural model is the family. Although not identified with nature, the family here is constellated with what Marx calls 'natural exchange', which is, philosophically speaking, a 'placeholder' for use value.[17] 'Natural exchange' is contrasted to 'intercourse with society', where the word 'intercourse' (*Verkehr*) is

16. See the excellent short definition and discussion of common sense in Errol Lawrence, 'Just plain common sense: the "roots" of racism', in Hazel V. Carby, *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and racism in 70s Britain,* Hutchinson: London, 1982, p. 48.

Marx's usual word for 'commerce'. This 'intercourse' thus holds the place of the exchange leading to the production of surplus value, and it is in the area of this intercourse that the feeling of community leading to class agency must be developed. Full-class agency (if there were such a thing) is not an ideological transformation of consciousness on the ground level, a desiring identity of the agents and their interest—the identity whose absence troubles Foucault and Deleuze. It is a contestatory *replacement* as well as an *appropriation* (a *supplementation*) of something that is 'artificial' to begin with—'economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life'. Marx's formulations show a cautious respect for the nascent critique of individual and collective subjective agency. The projects of class consciousness and of the transformation of consciousness are discontinuous issues for him. Conversely, contemporary invocations of 'libidinal economy' and desire as the determining interest, combined with the practical politics of the oppressed (under socialized capital) 'speaking for themselves', restore the category of the sovereign subject within the theory that seems most to question it.

No doubt the exclusion of the family, albeit a family belonging to a specific class formation, is part of the masculine frame within which Marxism marks its birth.[18] Historically as well as in today's global political economy, the family's role in patriarchal social relations is so heterogeneous and contested that merely replacing the family in this problematic is not going to break the frame. Nor does the solution lie in the positivist inclusion of a monolithic collectivity of 'women' in the list of the oppressed whose unfractured subjectivity allows them to speak for themselves against an equally monolithic 'same system'.

In the context of type development of a strategic, artificial and second-level 'consciousness', Marx uses the concept of the patronymic, always within the broader concept of representation as *Vertretung*: the small peasant proprietors are therefore incapable of making their class interest valid in their proper name [*im eigenen Namen*], whether through a parliament or through a convention. The absence of the nonfamiliar artificial collective proper name is supplied by the only proper name 'historical tradition' can offer—the patronymic itself—the Name of the Father: 'Historical tradition produced the French peasants' belief that a miracle would occur, that a man *named* Napoleon would restore all their glory. And an individual turned up'—the untranslatable *'es fand sich'* (there found itself an individual?) demolishes all questions of agency or the agent's connection with his interest—'who gave himself out to be that man' (this pretense is by contrast, his only proper agency) 'because he carried [*trägt*—the word used for the capitalist's relationship to capital] the Napoleonic

17. 'Use value' in Marx can be shown to be a 'theoretical fiction'—as much of a potential oxymoron as 'natural exchange'. I have attempted to develop this in 'Scattered speculations on the question of value', a manuscript under consideration by *Diacritics.*

18. Derrida's 'Linguistic circle of Geneva', especially pp. 143f., can provide a method for assessing the irreducible place of the family in Marx's morphology of class formation. In *Margins of Philosophy,* trans. Alan Bass, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, IL, 1982.

Code, which commands' that 'inquiry into paternity is forbidden'. While Marx here seems to be working within a patriarchal metaphorics, one should note the textual subtlety of the passage. It is the Law of the Father (the Napoleonic Code) that paradoxically prohibits the search for the natural father. Thus, it is according to a strict observance of the historical Law of the Father that the formed yet unformed class's faith in the natural father is gainsaid.

I have dwelt so long on this passage in Marx because it spells out the inner dynamics of *Vertretung*, or representation in the political context. Representation in the economic context is *Darstellung*, the philosophical concept of representation as staging or, indeed, signification, which relates to the divided subject in an indirect way. The most obvious passage is well known: 'In the exchange relationship [*Austauschverhaltnis*] of commodities their exchange-value appeared to us totally independent of their use-value. But if we subtract their use-value from the product of labour, we obtain their value, as it was just determined [*bestimmt*]. The common element which represents itself [*sich darstellt*] in the exchange relation, or the exchange value of the commodity, is thus its value.'[19]

According to Marx, under capitalism, value, as produced in necessary and surplus labor, is computed as the representation/sign of objectified labor (which is rigorously distinguished from human activity). Conversely, in the absence of a theory of exploitation as the extraction (production), appropriation and realization of (surplus) value *as representation of labor power*, capitalist exploitation must be seen as a variety of domination (the mechanics of power as such). 'The thrust of Marxism', Deleuze suggests, 'was to determine the problem [that power is more diffuse than the structure of exploitation and state formation] essentially in terms of interests (power is held by a ruling class defined by its interests)' (*FD*, p. 214).

One cannot object to this minimalist summary of Marx's project, just as one cannot ignore that, in parts of the *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari build their case on a brilliant if 'poetic' grasp of Marx's *theory* of the money form. Yet we might consolidate our critique in the following way: the relationship between global capitalism (exploitation in economics) and nation-state alliances (domination in geopolitics) is so macrological that it cannot account for the micrological texture of power. To move toward such an accounting one must move toward theories of ideology—of subject formations that micrologically and often erratically operate the interests that congeal the macrologies. Such theories cannot afford to overlook the category of representation in its two senses. They must note how the staging of the world in representation—its scene of writing, its *Darstellung*—dissimulates the choice of and need for 'heroes', paternal proxies, agents of power—*Vertretung*.

My view is that radical practice should attend to this double session

19. Marx, Capital, 1, p. 128.

of representations rather than reintroduce the individual subject through totalizing concepts of power and desire. It is also my view that, in keeping the area of class practice on a second level of abstraction, Marx was in effect keeping open the (Kantian and) Hegelian critique of the individual subject as agent.[20] This view does not oblige me to ignore that, by implicitly defining the family and the mother tongue as the ground level where culture and convention seem nature's own way of organizing 'her' own subversion, Marx himself rehearses an ancient subterfuge.[21] In the context of poststructuralist claims to critical practice, this seems more recuperable than the clandestine restoration of subjective essentialism. The reduction of Marx to a benevolent but dated figure most often serves the interest of launching a new theory of interpretation. In the Foucault-Deleuze conversation, the issue seems to be that there is no representation, no signifier (Is it to be presumed that the signifier has already been dispatched? There is, then, no sign-structure operating experience, and thus might one lay semiotics to rest?); theory is a relay of practice (thus laying problems of theoretical practice to rest) and the oppressed can know and speak for themselves. This reintroduces the constitutive subject on at least two levels: the Subject of desire and power as an irreducible methodological presupposition; and the self-proximate, if not self-identical, subject of the oppressed. Further, the intellectuals, who are neither of these S/subjects, become transparent in the relay race, for they merely report on the nonrepresented subject and analyze (without analyzing) the workings of (the unnamed Subject irreducibly presupposed by) power and desire. The produced 'transparency' marks the place of 'interest'; it is maintained by vehement denegation: 'Now this role of referee, judge, and universal witness is one which I *absolutely refuse* to adopt.' One responsibility of the critic might be to read and write so that the impossibility of such interested individualistic refusals of the institutional privileges of power bestowed on the subject is taken seriously. The refusal of the sign-system blocks the way to a developed theory of ideology. Here, too, the peculiar tone of denegation is heard. To Jacques-Alain Miller's suggestion that 'the institution is itself discursive', Foucault responds, 'Yes, if you like, but it doesn't much matter for my notion of the apparatus to be able to say that this is discursive and that isn't ... given that my problem isn't a linguistic one' (*PK*, p. 198). Why this conflation of language and discourse from the master of discourse analysis?

Edward W. Said's critique of power in Foucault as a captivating and mystifying category that allows him 'to obliterate the role of classes, the role of economics, the role of insurgency and rebellion', is most pertinent here.[22] I add to Said's

20. I am aware that the relationship between Marxism and neo-Kantianism is a politically fraught one. I do not myself see how a continuous line can be established between Marx's own texts and the Kantian ethical moment. It does seem to me, however, that Marx's questioning of the individual as agent of history should be read in the context of the breaking up of the individual subject inaugurated by Kant's critique of Descartes.

21. Karl Marx, Grundrisse: *Foundations of the critique of political economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus, Viking Press: New York, 1973, pp. 162-3.

analysis the notion of the surreptitious subject of power and desire marked by the transparency of the intellectual. Curiously enough, Paul Bove faults Said for emphasizing the importance of the intellectual, whereas 'Foucault's project essentially is a challenge to the leading role of both hegemonic and oppositional intellectuals'.[23] I have suggested that this 'challenge' is deceptive precisely because it ignores what Said emphasizes—the critic's institutional responsibility.

This S/subject, curiously sewn together into a transparency by denegations, belongs to the exploiters' side of the international division of labor. It is impossible for contemporary French intellectuals to imagine the kind of Power and Desire that would inhabit the unnamed subject of the Other of Europe. It is not only that everything they read, critical or uncritical, is caught within the debate of the production of that Other, supporting or critiquing the constitution of the Subject as Europe. It is also that, in the constitution of that Other of Europe, great care was taken to obliterate the textual ingredients with which such a subject could cathect, could occupy (invest?) its itinerary—not only by ideological and scientific production, but also by the institution of the law. However reductionistic an economic analysis might seem, the French intellectuals forget at their peril that this entire overdetermined enterprise was in the interest of a dynamic economic situation requiring that interests, motives (desires) and power (of knowledge) be ruthlessly dislocated. To invoke that dislocation now as a radical discovery that should make us diagnose the economic (conditions of existence that separate out 'classes' descriptively) as a piece of dated analytic machinery may well be to continue the work of that dislocation and unwittingly to help in securing 'a new balance of hegemonic relations'.[24] I shall return to this argument shortly. In the face of the possibility that the intellectual is complicit in the persistent constitution of Other as the Self's shadow, a possibility of political practice for the intellectual would be to put the economic 'under erasure', to see the economic factor as irreducibly as it reinscribes the social text, even as it is erased, however imperfectly, when it claims to be the final determinant or the transcendental signified.[25]

22. Edward W. Said, *The World, The Text, The Critic,* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 1983, p. 243.

23. Paul Bove, 'Intellectuals at war: Michel Foucault and the analysis of power', *Sub-Stance,* 36/37, 1983, p. 44.

24. Carby *et al., op. cit.,* p. 34.

25. This argument is developed further in Spivak, 'Scattered speculations'. Once again, the *Anti-Oedipus* did not ignore the economic text, although the treatment was perhaps too allegorical. In this respect, the move from schizo- to rhyzo-analysis in *Mille plateaux,* Seuil: Paris, 1980, has not been salutary.

II

The clearest available example of such epistemic violence is the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other. This project is also the asymmetrical obliteration of the trace of that Other in its precarious Subject-ivity. It is well known that Foucault locates epistemic violence, a complete overhaul of the episteme, in the redefinition of sanity at the end of the European eighteenth century.[26] But what if that particular redefinition was only a part of the narrative of history in Europe as well as in the colonies? What if the two projects of epistemic overhaul worked as dislocated and unacknowledged parts of a vast two-handed engine? Perhaps it is no more than to ask that the subtext of the palimpsestic narrative of imperialism be recognized as 'subjugated knowledge', 'a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity' (*PK,* p. 82).

This is not to describe 'the way things really were' or to privilege the narrative of history as imperialism as the best version of history.[27] It is, rather, to offer an account of how an explanation and narrative of reality was established as the normative one. To elaborate on this, let us consider briefly the underpinnings of the British codification of Hindu Law.

First, a few disclaimers: in the United States the third-worldism currently afloat in humanistic disciplines is often openly ethnic. I was born in

26. See Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A history of insanity in the age of reason,* trans. Richard Howard, Pantheon Books: New York, 1965, pp. 251, 262, 269.

27. Although I consider Fredric Jameson's *Political Unconscious: Narrative as a socially symbolic act,* Cornell University Press: New York, 1981, to be a text of great critical weight, or perhaps because I do so, I would like my program here to be distinguished from one of restoring the relics of a privileged narrative: 'It is in detecting the traces of that uninterrupted narrative, in restoring to the surface of the text the repressed and buried reality of this fundamental history, that the doctrine of a political unconscious finds its function and its necessity' (p. 20).

India and received my primary, secondary and university education there, including two years of graduate work. My Indian example could thus be seen as a nostalgic investigation of the lost roots of my own identity. Yet even as I know that one cannot freely enter the thickets of 'motivations', I would maintain that my chief project is to point out the positivist-idealist variety of such nostalgia. I turn to Indian material because, in the absence of advanced disciplinary training, that accident of birth and education has provided me with a *sense* of the historical canvas, a hold on some of the pertinent languages that are useful tools for a *bricoleur,* especially when armed with the Marxist skepticism of concrete experience as the final arbiter and a critique of disciplinary formations. Yet the Indian case cannot be taken as representative of all countries, nations, cultures and the like that may be invoked as the Other of Europe as Self.

Here, then, is a schematic summary of the epistemic violence of the codification of Hindu Law. If it clarifies the notion of epistemic violence, my final discussion of widow-sacrifice may gain added significance.

At the end of the eighteenth century, Hindu law, insofar as it can be described as a unitary system, operated in terms of four texts that 'staged' a four-part episteme defined by the subject's use of memory: *sruti* (the heard), *smriti* (the remembered), *sastra* (the learned-from-another) and *vyavahara* (the performed-in-exchange). The origins of what had been heard and what was remembered were not necessarily continuous or identical. Every invocation of *sruti* technically recited (or reopened) the event of originary 'hearing' or revelation. The second two texts—the learned and the performed—were seen as dialectically continuous. Legal theorists and practitioners were not in any given case certain if this structure described the body of law or four ways of settling a dispute. The legitimation of the polymorphous structure of legal performance, 'internally' noncoherent and open at both ends, through a binary vision, is the narrative of codification I offer as an example of epistemic violence.

The narrative of the stabilization and codification of Hindu law is less well known than the story of Indian education, so it might be well to start there.[28] Consider the often-quoted programmatic lines from Macaulay's infamous 'Minute on Indian education' (1835): 'We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.'[29] The education of colonial subjects complements their production in law. One effect of establishing a version of the British system was the development of an uneasy separation between disciplinary formation in Sanskrit studies and the native, now alternative, tradition of Sanskrit 'high culture'. Within the former, the cultural explanations generated by authoritative scholars matched the epistemic violence of the legal project.

I locate here the founding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784, the Indian Institute at Oxford in 1883, and the analytic and taxonomic work of scholars like Arthur Macdonnell and Arthur Berriedale Keith, who were both colonial administrators and organizers of the matter of Sanskrit. From their confident utilitarian-hegemonic plans for students and scholars of Sanskrit, it is impossible to guess at either the aggressive repression of Sanskrit in the general educational framework or the increasing 'feudalization' of the performative use of Sanskrit in the everyday life of Brahmanic-hegemonic India.[30] A version of history was gradually established in which the Brahmans were shown to have the same intentions as (thus providing the legitimation for) the codifying British: 'In order to preserve Hindu society intact [the] successors [of the original Brahmans] had to reduce everything to writing and make them more and more rigid. And that is what has preserved Hindu society in spite of a succession of political upheavals and foreign invasions.'[31] This is the 1925 verdict of Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri, learned Indian Sanskritist, a brilliant representative of the indigenous elite within colonial production, who was asked to write several chapters of a 'History of Bengal' projected by the private secretary to the governor general of Bengal in 1916.[32] To signal the asymmetry in the relationship between authority and explanation (depending on the race-class of the authority), compare this 1928 remark by Edward Thompson, English intellectual: 'Hinduism was what it seemed to be ... It was a higher civilization that won [against it], both with Akbar and the English.'[33] And add this, from a letter by an English soldier-scholar in the 1890s: 'The study of Sanskrit,

28. Among many available books, I cite Bruse Tiebout McCully, *English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism,* Columbia University Press: New York, 1940.

29. Thomas Babington Macaulay, Speeches by Lord Macaulay: *With his minute on Indian education;* ed. G.M. Young, Oxford University Press, AMS Edition: Oxford, 1979, p. 359.

30. Keith, one of the compilers of the *Vedic Index,* author of *Sanskrit Drama in Its Origin, Development, Theory, and Practice,* and the learned editor of the *Krsnayajurveda* for Harvard University Press, was also the editor of four volumes of *Selected Speeches and Documents of British Colonial Policy* (1763 to 1937), of *International Affairs* (1918 to 1937), and of the *British Dominions* (1918 to 1931). He wrote books on the sovereignty of British dominions and on the theory of state succession, with special reference to English and colonial law.

31. Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection under the Care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* Society of Bengal: Calcutta, 1925, vol. 3, p. viii.

32. Dinesachandra Sena, *Brhat Banga,* Calcutta University Press: Calcutta, 1925, vol. 1. p. 6.

33. Edward Thompson, *Suttee: A historical and philosophical enquiry into the Hindu rite of widow burning,* George Allen & Unwin: London, 1928, pp. 130, 47.

34. Holograph letter (from G. A. Jacob to an unnamed correspondent) attached to inside cover of the Sterling Memorial Library (Yale University) copy of Colonel G. A. Jacob (ed.) *Mahanarayana-Upanishad of the Atharva-Veda with the Dipika of Narayana,* The Government Central Books Department: Bombay, 1888, italics mine. The dark invocation of the dangers of this learning by way of anonymous aberrants consolidates the asymmetry.

"the language of the gods", has afforded me intense enjoyment during the last 25 years of my life in India, but it has not, I am thankful to say, led me, as *it has some,* to give up a hearty belief in our own grand religion.'[34]

These authorities are *the very best* of the sources for the nonspecialist French intellectual's entry into the civilization of the Other.[35] I am, however, not referring to intellectuals and scholars of postcolonial production, like Shastri, when I say that the Other as Subject is inaccessible to Foucault and Deleuze. I am thinking of the general nonspecialist, nonacademic population across the class spectrum, for whom the episteme operates its silent programming function. Without considering the map of exploitation, on what grid of 'oppression' would they place this motley crew? Let us now move to consider the margins (one can just as well say the silent, silenced center) of the circuit marked out by this epistemic violence, men and women among the illiterate peasantry, the tribals, the lowest strata of the urban subproletariat. According to Foucault and Deleuze (in the First World, under the standardization and regimentation of socialized capital, though they do not seem to recognize this) the oppressed, if given the chance (the problem of representation cannot be bypassed here), and on the way to solidarity through alliance politics (a Marxist thematic is at work here), *can speak and know their conditions.* We must now confront the following question: on the other side of the international division of labor from socialized capital, inside *and* outside the circuit of the epistemic violence of imperialist law and education supplementing an earlier economic text, *can the subaltern speak?*

Antonio Gramsci's work on the 'subaltern classes' extends the class-position/class-consciousness argument isolated in *The Eighteenth Brumaire.* Perhaps because Gramsci criticizes the vanguardistic position of the Leninist intellectual, he is concerned with the intellectual's role in the subaltern's cultural and political movement into the hegemony. This movement must be made to determine the production of history as narrative (of truth). In texts such as 'The Southern question', Gramsci considers the movement of historical-political economy in Italy within what can be seen as an allegory of reading taken from or prefiguring an international division of labor.[36] Yet an account of the phased development of the subaltern is thrown out of joint when his cultural macrology is operated, however remotely, by the epistemic interference with legal and disciplinary definitions accompanying the imperialist project. When I move, at the end of this essay, to the question of woman as subaltern, I will suggest that the possibility of collectivity itself is persistently foreclosed through the manipulation of female agency.

35. I have discussed this issue in greater detail with reference to Julia Kristeva's *About Chinese Women,* trans. Anita Barrows, Marion Boyars: London, 1977, in 'French feminism in an international frame', *Yale French Studies,* 62, 1981.

36. Antonio Gramsci, 'Some aspects of the Southern question', *Selections from Political Writing: 1921-1926,* trans. Quintin Hoare, International Publishers: New York, 1978. I am using 'allegory of reading' in the sense developed by Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust,* Yale University Press: New Haven, CT, 1979.

The first part of my proposition—that the phased development of the subaltern is complicated by the imperialist project—is confronted by a collective of intellectuals who may be called the 'Subaltern Studies' group.[37] They *must* ask, Can the subaltern speak? Here we are within Foucault's own discipline of history and with people who acknowledge his influence. Their project is to rethink Indian colonial historiography from the perspective of the discontinuous chain of peasant insurgencies during the colonial occupation. This is indeed the problem of 'the permission to narrate' discussed by Said.[38] As Ranajit Guha argues,

> The historiography of Indian nationalism has for a long time been dominated by elitism—colonialist elitism and bourgeois-nationalist elitism ... shar [ing] the prejudice that the making of the Indian nation and the development of the consciousness—nationalism—which confirmed this process were exclusively or predominantly elite achievements. In the colonialist and neo-colonialist historiographies these achievements are credited to British colonial rulers, administrators, policies, institutions and culture; in the nationalist and neo-nationalist writings—to Indian elite personalities, institutions, activities and ideas.[39]

Certain varieties of the Indian elite are at best native informants for first-world intellectuals interested in the voice of the Other. But one must nevertheless insist that the colonized subaltern *subject* is irretrievably heterogeneous.

Against the indigenous elite we may set what Guha calls 'the *politics* of the people', both outside ('This was an *autonomous* domain, for it neither originated from elite politics nor did its existence depend on the latter') and inside ('it continued to operate vigorously in spite of [colonialism], adjusting itself to the conditions prevailing under the Raj and in many respects developing entirely new strains in both form and content') the circuit of colonial production.[40] I cannot entirely endorse this insistence on determinate vigor and full autonomy, for practical historiographic exigencies will not allow such endorsements to privilege subaltern consciousness. Against the possible charge that his approach is essentialist, Guha constructs a definition of the people (the place of that essence) that can be only an identity-in-differential. He proposes a dynamic stratification grid describing colonial social production at large. Even the third

37. Their publications are: Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies I: Writing on South Asian history and society,* Oxford University Press: New Delhi, 1982. Ranajit Guha (ed.) *Subaltern Studies II: Writings on South Asian History and Society,* Oxford University Press: New Delhi, 1983; and Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India,* Oxford University Press: New Delhi, 1983;

38. Edward W. Said, 'Permission to narrate', *London Review of Books,* 16 February 1984.

39. Guha, *Studies,* I, p. 1.

40. *ibid.,* p. 4.

group on the list, the buffer group, as it were, between the people and the great macrostructural dominant groups, is itself defined as a place of in-betweenness, what Derrida has described as an '*antre*':[41]

elite
1. Dominant foreign groups.
2. Dominant indigenous groups on the all-India level.
3. Dominant indigenous groups at the regional and local levels.
4. The terms "people" and "subaltern classes" have been used as synonymous throughout this note. The social groups and elements included in this category represent *the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the "elite."*

Consider the third item on this list—the *antre* of situational indeterminacy these careful historians presuppose as they grapple with the question, Can the subaltern speak? *'Taken as a whole and in the abstract* this ... category ... was *heterogeneous* in its composition and, thanks to the uneven character of regional economic and social developments, *differed from area to area.* The same class or element which was dominant in one area ... could be among the dominated in another. This could and did create many ambiguities and contradictions in attitudes and alliances, especially among the lowest strata of the rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and upper-middle peasants all of whom belonged, *ideally speaking,* to the category of "people" or "subaltern classes."'[42]

'The task of research' projected here is 'to investigate, identify and measure the *specific* nature and degree of the *deviation* of [the] elements [constituting item 3] from the ideal and situate it historically'. 'Investigate, identify, and measure the specific': a program could hardly be more essentialist and taxonomic. Yet a curious methodological imperative is at work. I have argued that, in the Foucault-Deleuze conversation, a postrepresentationalist vocabulary hides an essentialist agenda. In subaltern studies, because of the violence of imperialist epistemic, social and disciplinary inscription, a project understood in essentialist terms must traffic in a radical textual practice of differences. The object of the group's investigation, in the case not even of the people as such but of the floating buffer zone of the regional elite-subaltern is a *deviation* from an *ideal*—the people or subaltern—which is itself defined as a difference from the elite. It is toward this structure that the research is oriented, a predicament rather different from the self-diagnosed transparency of the first-world radical intellectual. What taxonomy can fix such a space? Whether or not they themselves perceive it—in fact Guha sees his definition of 'the people' within the master-slave dialectic—their text articulates the difficult task of rewriting its own conditions of impossibility as the conditions of its possibility.

'At the *regional and local levels* [the dominant indigenous groups] ... if belonging to social strata hierarchically inferior to those of the dominant all-India groups still *acted in the interests of the latter and not in conformity to interests corresponding truly to their own social being*'. When these writers speak, in their essentializing language, of a gap between interest and action in the intermediate group, their conclusions are closer to Marx than to the self-conscious naiveté of Deleuze's pronouncement on the issue. Guha, like Marx, speaks of interest in terms of the social rather than the libidinal being. The Name-of-the-Father imagery in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* can help to emphasize that, on the level of class or group action, 'true correspondence to own being' is as artificial or social as the patronymic. So much for the intermediate group marked in item 3. For the 'true' subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself; the intellectual's solution is not to abstain from representation. The problem is that the subject's itinerary has not been traced so as to offer an object of seduction to the representing intellectual. In the slightly dated language of the Indian group, the question becomes, How can we touch the consciousness of the people, even as we investigate their politics? With what voice-consciousness can the subaltern speak? Their project, after all, is to rewrite the development of the consciousness of the Indian nation. The planned discontinuity of imperialism rigorously distinguishes this project, however old-fashioned its articulation, from 'rendering visible the medical and juridical mechanisms that surrounded the story [of Pierre Rivière]'. Foucault is correct in suggesting that 'to make visible the unseen can also mean a change of level, addressing oneself to a layer of material which had hitherto had no pertinence for history and which had not been recognized as having any moral, aesthetic or historical value'. It is the slippage from rendering visible the mechanism to rendering vocal the individual, both avoiding 'any kind of analysis of [the subject] whether psychological, psychoanalytical or linguistic', that is consistently troublesome (*PK,* pp. 49-50).

The critique by Ajit K. Chaudhury, a West Bengali Marxist, of Guha's search for the subaltern consciousness can be seen as a moment of the production process that includes the subaltern. Chaudhury's perception that the Marxist view of the transformation of consciousness involves the knowledge of social relations seems to me, in principle, astute. Yet the heritage of the positivist ideology that has appropriated orthodox Marxism obliges him to add this rider: 'This is not to belittle the importance of understanding peasants' consciousness or workers' consciousness *in its pure form.* This enriches our knowledge of the peasant and the worker and, possibly, throws light on how a particular mode takes on different forms in different regions, *which is considered a problem of second-order importance in classical Marxism.*'[43]

42. Guha, *Studies,* I, p. 8 (all but the first set of italics are the author's).

41. Jacques Derrida, 'The double session', in *Dissemination,* trans. Barbara Johnson, University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1981.

43. Ajit K. Chaudhury, 'New wave social science', *Frontier,* 16-24, 28 January, 1984, p. 10 (italics are mine).

This variety of 'internationalist' Marxism, which believes in a pure, retrievable form of consciousness only to dismiss it, thus closing off what in Marx remain moments of productive bafflement, can at once be the object of Foucault's and Deleuze's rejection of Marxism *and* the source of the critical motivation of the Subaltern Studies group. All three are united in the assumption that there *is* a pure form of consciousness. On the French scene, there is a shuffling of signifiers: 'the unconscious', or 'the subject-in-oppression' clandestinely fills the space of 'the pure form of consciousness'. In orthodox 'internationalist' intellectual Marxism, whether in the First World or the Third, the pure form of consciousness remains an idealistic bedrock which, dismissed as a second-order problem, often earns it the reputation of racism and sexism. In the Subaltern Studies group it needs development according to the unacknowledged terms of its own articulation.

For such an articulation, a developed theory of ideology can again be most useful. In a critique such as Chaudhury's, the association of 'consciousness' with 'knowledge' omits the crucial middle term of 'ideological production': 'Consciousness, according to Lenin, is associated with a *knowledge* of the interrelationships between different classes and groups;-i.e., a knowledge of the materials that constitute society. ... These definitions acquire a meaning only within the problematic within a definite knowledge object—to *understand* change in history, or specifically, change from one mode to another, *keeping the question of the specificity of a particular mode out of the focus.*'[44]

Pierre Macherey provides the following formula for the interpretation of ideology: 'What is important in a work is what it does not say. This is not the same as the careless notation "what it refuses to say", although that would in itself be interesting: a method might be built on it, with the task of *measuring silences,* whether acknowledged or unacknowledged. But rather this, what the work *cannot* say is important, because there the elaboration of the utterance is carried out, in a sort of journey to silence.'[45] Macherey's ideas can be developed in directions he would be unlikely to follow. Even as he writes, ostensibly, of the literariness of the literature of European provenance, he articulates a method applicable to the social text of imperialism, somewhat against the grain of his own argument. Although the notion 'what it refuses to say' might be careless for a literary work, something like a collective ideological *refusal* can be diagnosed for the codifying legal practice of imperialism. This would open the field for a political-economic and multidisciplinary ideological reinscription of the terrain. Because this is a 'worlding of the world' on a second level of abstraction, a concept of refusal becomes plausible here. The archival, historiographic, disciplinary-critical and, inevitably, interventionist work involved here is indeed a task of 'measuring silences'. This can be a description of 'investigating, identifying, and measuring ... the *deviation*' from an ideal that is irreducibly differential.

When we come to the concomitant question of the consciousness of the subaltern, the notion of what the work *cannot* say becomes important. In the semioses of the social text, elaborations of insurgency stand in the place of 'the utterance'. The sender—'the peasant'—is marked only as a pointer to an irretrievable consciousness. As for the receiver, we must ask who is 'the real receiver' of an 'insurgency'? The historian, transforming 'insurgency' into 'text for knowledge', is only one 'receiver' of any collectively intended social act. With no possibility of nostalgia for that lost origin, the historian must suspend (as far as possible) the clamor of his or her own consciousness (or consciousness-effect, as operated by disciplinary training), so that the elaboration of the insurgency, packaged with an insurgent-consciousness, does not freeze into an 'object of investigation', or, worse yet, a model for imitation. 'The subject' implied by the texts of insurgency can only serve as a counterpossibility for the narrative sanctions granted to the colonial subject in the dominant groups. The postcolonial intellectuals learn that their privilege is their loss. In this they are a paradigm of the intellectuals.

It is well known that the notion of the feminine (rather than the subaltern of imperialism) has been used in a similar way within deconstructive criticism and within certain varieties of feminist criticism.[46] In the former case, a figure of 'woman' is at issue, one whose minimal predication as indeterminate is already available to the phallocentric tradition. Subaltern historiography raises questions of method that would prevent it from using such a ruse. For the 'figure' of woman, the relationship between woman and silence can be plotted by women themselves; race and class differences are subsumed under that charge. Subaltern historiography must confront the impossibility of such gestures. The narrow epistemic violence of imperialism gives us an imperfect allegory of the general violence that is the possibility of an episteme.[47]

Within the effaced itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of sexual difference is doubly effaced. The question is not of female participation in insurgency, or the ground rules of the sexual division of labor, for both of which there is 'evidence'. It is, rather, that, both as object of colonialist historiography and as subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow.

The contemporary international division of labor is a displacement of the divided field of

44. *ibid.*

45. Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production,* trans. Geoffrey Wall, Routledge: London, 1978,p.87.

46. I have discussed this issue in 'Displacement and the discourse of woman', in Mark Krupnick (ed.) *Displacement: Derrida and after,* Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 1983, and in *'Love me, love my ombre, elle: Derrida's 'La carte postale', Diacritics,* 14, 4, 1_984, pp. 19-36.

47. This violence in the general sense that is the possibility of an episteme is what Derrida calls 'writing' in the general sense. The relationship between writing in the general sense and writing in the narrow sense (marks upon a surface) cannot be cleanly articulated. The task of grammatology (deconstruction) is to provide a notation upon this shifting relationship. In a certain way, then, the critique of imperialism is deconstruction as such.

nineteenth-century territorial imperialism. Put simply, a group of countries, generally first-world, are in the position of investing capital; another group, generally third-world, provide the field for investment, both through the comprador indigenous capitalists and through their ill-protected and shifting labor force. In the interest of maintaining the circulation and growth of industrial capital (and of the concomitant task of administration within nineteenth-century territorial imperialism), transportation, law and standardized education systems were developed—even as local industries were destroyed, land distribution was rearranged, and raw material was transferred to the colonizing country. With so-called decolonization, the growth of multinational capital, and the relief of the administrative charge, 'development' does not now involve wholesale legislation and establishing educational systems in a comparable way. This impedes the growth of consumerism in the comprador countries. With modern telecommunications and the emergence of advanced capitalist economies at the two edges of Asia, maintaining the international division of labor serves to keep the supply of cheap labor in the comprador countries.

Human labor is not, of course, intrinsically 'cheap' or 'expensive'. An absence of labor laws (or a discriminatory enforcement of them), a totalitarian state (often entailed by development and modernization in the periphery), and minimal subsistence requirements on the part of the worker will ensure it. To keep this crucial item intact, the urban proletariat in comprador countries must not be systematically trained in the ideology of consumerism (parading as the philosophy of a classless society) that, against all odds, prepares the ground for resistance through the coalition politics Foucault mentions (*FD,* p. 216). This separation from the ideology of consumerism is increasingly exacerbated by the proliferating phenomena of international subcontracting. 'Under this strategy, manufacturers based in developed countries subcontract the most labor intensive stages of production, for example, sewing or assembly, to the Third World nations where labor is cheap. Once assembled, the multinational re-imports the goods—under generous tariff exemptions—to the developed country *instead of selling them to the local market.*' Here the link to training in consumerism is almost snapped. 'While global recession has markedly slowed trade and investment worldwide since 1979, international subcontracting has boomed. ... In these cases, multinationals are freer to resist militant workers, revolutionary upheavals, and even economic downturns.'[48]

Class mobility is increasingly lethargic in the comprador theaters. Not surprisingly, some members of *indigenous dominant* groups in comprador countries, members of the local bourgeoisie, find the language of alliance politics attractive. Identifying with forms of resistance plausible in advanced capitalist countries is often of a piece with that elitist bent of bourgeois historiography described by Ranajit Guha.

Belief in the plausibility of global alliance politics is prevalent among women of dominant social groups interested in 'international feminism' in the comprador countries. At the other end of the scale, those most separated from any possibility of an alliance among 'women, prisoners, conscripted soldiers, hospital patients, and homosexuals' (*FD,* p. 216) are the females of the urban subproletariat. In their case, the denial and withholding of consumerism and the structure of exploitation is compounded by patriarchal social relations. On the other side of the international division of labor, the subject of exploitation cannot know and speak the text of female exploitation even if the absurdity of the nonrepresenting intellectual making space for her to speak is achieved. The woman is doubly in shadow.

Yet even this does not encompass the heterogeneous Other. Outside (though not completely so) the circuit of the *international* division of labor, there are people whose consciousness we cannot grasp if we close off our benevolence by constructing a homogeneous Other referring only to our own place in the seat of the Same or the Self. Here are subsistence farmers, unorganized peasant labor, the tribals and the communities of zero workers on the street or in the countryside. To confront them is not to represent (*vertreten*) them but to learn to represent (*darstellen*) ourselves. This argument would take us into a critique of a disciplinary anthropology and the relationship between elementary pedagogy and disciplinary formation. It would also question the implicit demand, made by intellectuals who choose a 'naturally articulate' subject of oppression, that such a subject come through history as a foreshortened mode-of-production narrative.

That Deleuze and Foucault ignore both the epistemic violence of imperialism and the international division of labor would matter less if they did not, in closing, touch on third-world issues. But in France it is impossible to ignore the problem of the *tiers monde,* the inhabitants of the erstwhile French African colonies. Deleuze limits his consideration of the Third World to these old local and regional indigenous elite who are, ideally, subaltern. In this context, references to the maintenance of the surplus army of labor fall into reverse-ethnic sentimentality. Since he is speaking of the heritage of nineteenth-century territorial imperialism, his reference is to the nation-state rather than the globalizing center: 'French capitalism needs greatly a floating signifier of unemployment. In this perspective, we begin to see the unity of the forms of repression: restrictions on immigration, once it is acknowledged that the most difficult and thankless jobs go to immigrant workers; repression in the factories, because the French must reacquire the "taste" for increasingly harder

48. 'Contracting poverty', *Multinational Monitor,* 4, 8, August 1983, p. 8. This report was contributed by John Cavanagh and Joy Hackel, who work on the International Corporations Project at the Institute for Policy Studies (italics are mine).

work; the struggle against youth and the repression of the educational system' (*FD*, pp. 211-12). This is an acceptable analysis. Yet it shows again that the Third World can enter the resistance program of an alliance politics directed against a '*unified* repression' only when it is confined to the third-world groups that are directly accessible to the First World.[49] This benevolent first-world appropriation and reinscription of the Third World as an Other is the founding characteristic of much third-worldism in the US human sciences today.

Foucault continues the critique of Marxism by invoking geographical discontinuity. The real mark of 'geographical (geopolitical) discontinuity' is the international division of labor. But Foucault uses the term to distinguish between exploitation (extraction and appropriation of surplus value; read, the field of Marxist analysis) and domination ('power' studies) and to suggest the latter's greater potential for resistance based on alliance politics. He cannot acknowledge that such a monist and unified access to a conception of 'power' (methodologically presupposing a Subject-of-power) is made possible by a certain stage in exploitation, for his vision of geographical discontinuity is geopolitically specific to the First World:

> This geographical discontinuity of which you speak might mean perhaps the following: as soon as we struggle against exploitation, the proletariat not only leads the struggle but also defines its targets, its methods, its places and its instruments; and to ally oneself with the proletariat is to consolidate with its positions, its ideology, it is to take up again the motives for their combat. This means total immersion [in the Marxist project]. But if it is against power that one struggles, then all those who acknowledge it as intolerable can begin the struggle wherever they find themselves and in terms of their own activity (or passivity). In engaging in this struggle that is their own, whose objectives they clearly understand and whose methods they can determine, they enter into the revolutionary process. As allies of the proletariat, to be sure, because power is exercised the way it is in order to maintain capitalist exploitation. They genuinely serve the cause of the proletariat by fighting in those places where they find themselves oppressed. Women, prisoners, conscripted soldiers, hospital patients, and homosexuals have now begun a specific struggle against the particular form of power, the constraints and controls, that are exercised over them. (*FD*, p. 216)

This is an admirable program of localized resistance. Where possible, this model of resistance is not an alternative to, but can complement, macrological struggles along 'Marxist' lines. Yet if its situation is universalized, it accommodates unacknowledged privileging of the subject. Without a theory of ideology, it can lead to a dangerous utopianism.

Foucault is a brilliant thinker of power-in-spacing, but the awareness of the topographical reinscription of imperialism does not inform his presuppositions. He is taken in by the restricted version of the West produced by that reinscription and thus helps to consolidate its effects. Notice the omission of the fact, in the following passage, that the new mechanism of power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (the extraction of surplus value without extraeconomic coercion is its Marxist description) is secured *by means of* territorial imperialism—the Earth and its products—'elsewhere'. The representation of sovereignty is crucial in those theaters: 'In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we have the production of an important phenomenon, the emergence, or rather the invention, of a new mechanism of power possessed of highly specific procedural techniques ... which is also, I believe, absolutely incompatible with the relations of sovereignty. This new mechanism of power is more dependent upon bodies and what they do than the Earth and its products' (*PK*, p. 104).

Because of a blind spot regarding the first wave of 'geographical discontinuity', Foucault can remain impervious to its second wave in the middle decades of our own century, identifying it simply 'with the collapse of Fascism and the decline of Stalinism' (*PK*, p. 87). Here is Mike Davis's alternative view: 'It was rather the global logic of counter-revolutionary violence which created conditions for the peaceful economic interdependence of a chastened Atlantic imperialism under American leadership ... It was multi-national military integration under the slogan of collective security against the USSR which preceded and quickened the interpenetration of the major capitalist economies, making possible the new era of commercial liberalism which flowered between 1958 and 1973.'[50]

It is within the emergence of this 'new mechanism of power' that we must read the fixation on national scenes, the resistance to economics, and the emphasis on concepts like power and desire that privilege micrology. Davis continues: 'This quasi-absolutist centralization of strategic military power by the United States was to allow an enlightened and flexible subordinancy for its principal satraps. In particular, it proved highly accommodating to the residual imperialist pretensions of the French and British . . . with each keeping up a strident ideological mobilization against communism all the while.' While taking precautions against such unitary notions as 'France', it must be said that such unitary notions as 'the workers' struggle', or such unitary pronouncements as 'like power, resistance is multiple and can be integrated in global strategies' (*PK*, p. 14 2), seem interpretable by way of Davis's narrative. I am not suggesting, as does Paul Bove, that 'for a displaced and homeless people [the Palestinians] assaulted militarily and culturally ... a question [such as

49. The mechanics of the invention of the Third World as signifier are susceptible to the type of analysis directed at the constitution of race as a signifier in Carby *et al., op. cit.*

50. Mike Davis, 'The political economy of late-imperial America', *New Left Review*, 143, January-February 1984, p.9.

Foucault's 'to engage in politics ... is to try to know with the greatest possible honesty whether the revolution is desirable'] is a foolish luxury of Western wealth'.[51] I am suggesting, rather, that to buy a self-contained version of the West is to ignore its production by the imperialist project.

Sometimes it seems as if the very brilliance of Foucault's analysis of the centuries of European imperialism produces a miniature version of that heterogeneous phenomenon: management of space—but by doctors; development of administrations —but in asylums; considerations of the periphery —but in terms of the insane, prisoners and children. The clinic, the asylum, the prison, the university—all seem to be screen-allegories that foreclose a reading of the broader narratives of imperialism. (One could open a similar discussion of the ferocious motif of 'deterritorialization' in Deleuze and Guattari.) 'One can perfectly well not talk about something because one doesn't know about it,' Foucault might murmur (*PK*, p. 66). Yet we have already spoken of the sanctioned ignorance that every critic of imperialism must chart.

51. Bove *op. cit.*, p. 51.

III

On the general level on which US academics and students take 'influence' from France, one encounters the following understanding: Foucault deals with real history, real politics and real social problems; Derrida is inaccessible, esoteric and textualistic. The reader is probably well acquainted with this received idea. 'That [Derrida's] own work', Terry Eagleton writes, 'has been grossly unhistorical, politically evasive and in practice oblivious to language as "discourse" [language in function] is not to be denied.'[52] Eagleton goes on to recommend Foucault's study of 'discursive practices'. Perry Anderson constructs a related history: 'With Derrida, the self-cancellation of structuralism latent in the recourse to music or madness in Levi-Strauss or Foucault is consummated. With no commitment to exploration of social realities at all, Derrida had little compunction in undoing the constructions of these two, convicting them both of a "nostalgia of origins"—Rousseauesque or pre-Socratic, respectively—and asking what right either had to assume, on their own premises, the validity of their discourses.'[53]

This paper is committed to the notion that, whether in defense of Derrida or not, a nostalgia for lost origins can be detrimental to the exploration of social realities within the critique of imperialism. Indeed, the brilliance of Anderson's misreading does not prevent him from seeing precisely the problem I emphasize in Foucault: 'Foucault struck the characteristically prophetic note when he declared in 1966: "Man is in the process of perishing as the being of language continues to shine ever more brightly upon our horizon." But who is the "we" to perceive or possess such a horizon?' Anderson does not see the encroachment of the unacknowledged Subject of the West in the later Foucault, a Subject that presides by disavowal. He sees Foucault's attitude in the usual way, as the disappearance of the knowing Subject as such; and he further sees in Derrida the

52. Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An introduction*, University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1983, p. 205.

53. Perry Anderson, *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism*, Verso: London, 1983, p. 53.

final development of that tendency: 'In the hollow of the pronoun [we] lies the aporia of the programme.'[54] Consider, finally, Said's plangent aphorism, which betrays a profound misapprehension of the notion of 'textuality': 'Derrida's criticism moves us *into* the text, Foucault's *in* and *out*.'[55]

I have tried to argue that the substantive concern for the politics of the oppressed which often accounts for Foucault's appeal can hide a privileging of the intellectual and of the 'concrete' subject of oppression that, in fact, compounds the appeal. Conversely, though it is not my intention here to counter the specific view of Derrida promoted by these influential writers, I will discuss a few aspects of Derrida's work that retain a long-term usefulness for people outside the First World. This is not an apology. Derrida is hard to read; his real object of investigation is classical philosophy. Yet he is less dangerous when understood than the first-world intellectual masquerading as the absent nonrepresenter who lets the oppressed speak for themselves.

I will consider a chapter that Derrida composed twenty years ago: 'Of grammatology as a positive science' (*OG*, pp. 74-93). In this chapter Derrida confronts the issue of whether 'deconstruction' can lead to an adequate practice, whether critical or political. The question is how to keep the ethnocentric Subject from establishing itself by selectively defining an Other. This is not a program for the Subject as such; rather, it is a program for the benevolent *Western* intellectual. For those of us who feel that the 'subject' has a history and that the task of the first-world subject of knowledge in our historical moment is to resist and critique 'recognition' of the Third World through 'assimilation', this specificity is crucial. In order to advance a factual rather than a pathetic critique of the European intellectual's ethnocentric impulse, Derrida admits that he cannot ask the 'first' questions that must be answered to establish the grounds of his argument. He does not declare that grammatology can 'rise above' (Frank Lentricchia's phrase) mere empiricism; for, like empiricism, it cannot ask first questions. Derrida thus aligns 'grammatological' knowledge *with the same problems* as empirical investigation. 'Deconstruction' is not, therefore a new word for 'ideological demystification'. Like 'empirical investigation . . . tak [ing] shelter in the field of grammatological knowledge' obliges 'operat[ing] through "examples"' (*OG*, p. 75).

The examples Derrida lays out—to show the limits of grammatology as a positive science—come from the appropriate ideological self-justification of an imperialist project. In the European seventeenth century, he writes, there were three kinds of 'prejudices' operating in histories of writing which constituted a 'symptom of the crisis of European consciousness' (*OG*, p. 75): the 'theological prejudice', the 'Chinese prejudice' and the 'hieroglyphist prejudice'. The first can be indexed as: God wrote a primitive or natural script: Hebrew or Greek. The second: Chinese is a perfect *blueprint* for philosophical writing, but it is only a blueprint. True philosophical writing is 'independent[t] with regard to history' (*OG*, p. 79) and will sublate Chinese into an easy-to-learn script that will supersede actual Chinese. The third: that Egyptian script is too sublime to be deciphered. The first prejudice preserves the 'actuality' of Hebrew or Greek, the last two ('rational' and 'mystical', respectively) collude to support the first, where the center of the logos is seen as the Judeo-Christian God (the appropriation of the Hellenic Other through assimilation is an earlier story—a 'prejudice' still sustained in efforts to give the cartography of the Judeo-Christian myth the status of geopolitical history:

> The concept of Chinese writing thus functioned as a sort of *European hallucination.* ... This functioning obeyed a rigorous necessity ... It was not disturbed by the knowledge of Chinese script. . . which was then available... A *"hieroglyphist prejudice"* had produced the same effect of *interested blindness.* Far from proceeding . . . from ethnocentric scorn, the occultation takes the form of an hyperbolical admiration. We have not finished demonstrating the necessity of this pattern. Our century is not free from it; each time that ethnocentrism is precipitately and ostentatiously reversed, some effort silently hides behind all the spectacular effects to *consolidate an inside* and to draw from it some domestic benefit. (OG, p. 80; Derrida italicizes only 'hieroglyphist prejudice')

Derrida proceeds to offer two characteristic possibilities for solutions to the problem of the European Subject, which seeks to produce an Other that would consolidate an inside, its own subject status. What follows is an account of the complicity between writing, the opening of domestic and civil society, and the structures of desire, power and capitalization. Derrida then discloses the vulnerability of his own desire to conserve something that is, paradoxically, both ineffable and nontranscendental. In critiquing the production of the colonial subject, this ineffable, nontranscendental ('historical') place is cathected by the subaltern subject.

Derrida closes the chapter by showing again that the project of grammatology is obliged to develop *within* the discourse of presence. It is not just a critique of presence but an awareness of the itinerary of the discourse of presence in one's own critique, a vigilance precisely against too great a claim for transparency. The word 'writing' as the name of the object and model of grammatology is a practice 'only within the *historical* closure, that is to say within the limits of science and philosophy' (OG, p. 93).

Derrida here makes Nietzschean, philosophical and psychoanalytic, rather than specifically political, choices to suggest a critique of European ethnocentrism in the constitution of the Other. As a postcolonial intellectual,

54. *ibid.*, p. 52.

55. Said, *The World,* p. 183

I am not troubled that he does not *lead* me (as Europeans inevitably seem to do) to the specific path that such a critique makes necessary. It is more important to me that, as a European philosopher, he articulates the *European* Subject's tendency to constitute the Other as marginal to ethnocentrism and locates *that* as the problem with all logocentric and therefore also all grammatological endeavours (since the main thesis of the chapter is the complicity between the two). *Not* a general problem, but a *European* problem. It is within the context of this ethnocentricism that he tries so desperately to demote the Subject of thinking or knowledge as to say that *'thought* is ... the blank part of the text' (OG, p .. 93); that which is thought is, if blank, still *in the text* and must be consigned to the Other of history. That inaccessible blankness circumscribed by an interpretable text is what a postcolonial critic of imperialism would like to see developed within the European enclosure as the place of the production of theory. The postcolonial critics and intellectuals can attempt to displace their own production only by presupposing that text-inscribed blankness. To render thought or the thinking subject transparent or invisible seems, by contrast, to hide the relentless recognition of the Other by assimilation. It is in the interest of such cautions that Derrida does not invoke 'letting the other(s) speak for himself' but rather invokes an 'appeal' to or 'call' to the 'quite-other' (*tout-autre* as opposed to a self-consolidating other), of 'rendering *delirious* that interior voice that is the voice of the other in us'.[56]

Derrida calls the ethnocentrism of the European science of writing in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a symptom of the general crisis of European consciousness. It is, of course, part of a greater symptom, or perhaps the crisis itself, the slow turn from feudalism to capitalism via the first waves of capitalist imperialism. The itinerary of recognition through assimilation of the Other can be more interestingly traced, it seems to me, in the imperialist constitution of the colonial subject than in repeated incursions into psychoanalysis or the 'figure' of woman, though the importance of these two interventions *within* deconstruction should not be minimized. Derrida has not moved (or perhaps cannot move) into that arena.

Whatever the reasons for this specific absence, what I find useful is the sustained and developing work on the *mechanics* of the constitution of the Other; we can use it to much greater analytic and interventionist advantage than invocations of the *authenticity* of the Other. On this level, what remains useful in Foucault is the mechanics of disciplinarization and institutionalization, the constitution, as it were, of the colonizer. Foucault does not relate it to any version, early or late, proto- or post-, of imperialism. They are of great usefulness to intellectuals concerned with the decay of the West. Their seduction for them, and fearfulness for us, is that they might allow the complicity of the investigating subject (male or female professional) to disguise itself in transparency.

56. Jacques Derrida, 'Of an apocalyptic tone recently adapted in philosophy', trans. John P. Leavy, Jr., *Semia*, p. 71.

IV

Can the subaltern speak? What must the elite do to watch out for the continuing construction of the subaltern? The question of 'woman' seems most problematic in this context. Clearly, if you are poor, black and female you get it in three ways. If, however, this formulation is moved from the first-world context into the postcolonial (which is not identical with the third-world) context, the description 'black' or 'of color' loses persuasive significance. The necessary stratification of colonial subject-constitution in the first phase of capitalist imperialism makes 'color' useless as an emancipatory signifier. Confronted by the ferocious standardizing benevolence of most US and Western European human-scientific radicalism (recognition by assimilation), the progressive though heterogeneous withdrawal of consumerism in the comprador periphery, and the exclusion of the margins of even the center periphery articulation (the 'true and differential subaltern'), the analogue of class-consciousness rather than race-consciousness in this area seems historically, disciplinarily and practically forbidden by Right and Left alike. It is not just a question of a *double* displacement, as it is not simply the problem of finding a psychoanalytic allegory that can accommodate the third-world woman with the first.

The cautions I have just expressed are valid only if we are speaking of the subaltern woman's consciousness—or, more acceptably, subject. Reporting on, or better still, participating in, antisexist work among women of color or women in class oppression in the First World or the Third World is undeniably on the agenda. We should also welcome all the information retrieval in these silenced areas that is taking place in anthropology, political science, history and sociology. Yet the assumption and construction of a consciousness or subject sustains such work and will, in the long run, cohere with the work of imperialist subject-constitution, mingling epistemic

violence with the advancement of learning and civilization. And the subaltern woman will be as mute as ever.[57]

In so fraught a field, it is not easy to ask the question of the consciousness of the subaltern woman; it is thus all the more necessary to remind pragmatic radicals that such a question is not an idealist red herring. Though all feminist or antisexist projects cannot be reduced to this one, to ignore it is an unacknowledged political gesture that has a long history and collaborates with a masculine radicalism that renders the place of the investigator transparent. In seeking to learn to speak to (rather than listen to or speak for) the historically muted subject of the subaltern woman, the postcolonial intellectual *systematically* 'unlearns' female privilege. This systematic unlearning involves learning to critique postcolonial discourse with the best tools it can provide and not simply substituting the lost figure of the colonized. Thus, to question the unquestioned muting of the subaltern woman even within the anti-imperialist project of subaltern studies is not, as Jonathan Culler suggests, to 'produce difference by differing' or to 'appeal ... to a sexual identity defined as essential and privilege experiences associated with that identity'.[58]

Culler's version of the feminist project is possible within what Elizabeth Fox-Genovese has called 'the contribution of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions to the social and political individualism of women'.[59] Many of us were obliged to understand the feminist project as Culler now describes it when we were still agitating as US academics.[60] It was certainly a necessary stage in my own education in 'unlearning' and has consolidated the belief that the mainstream project of Western feminism both continues and displaces the battle over the right to individualism between women and men in situations of upward class mobility. One suspects that the debate between US feminism and European 'theory' (as theory is generally represented by women from the United States or Britain) occupies a significant corner of that very terrain. I am generally sympathetic with the call to make US feminism more 'theoretical'. It seems, however, that the problem of the muted subject of the subaltern woman, though not solved by an 'essentialist' search for lost origins, cannot be served by the call for more theory in Anglo-America either.

That call is often given in the name of a critique of 'positivism', which is seen here as identical with 'essentialism'. Yet Hegel, the modern inaugurator of 'the work of the negative', was not a stranger to the notion of essences. For Marx, the curious persistence of essentialism within the dialectic was a profound and productive problem. Thus, the stringent binary opposition between positivism/essentialism (read, US) and 'theory' (read, French or Franco-German via Anglo-American) may be spurious. Apart from repressing the ambiguous complicity between essentialism and critiques of positivism (acknowledged by Derrida in 'Of grammatology as a positive science'), it also errs by implying that positivism is not a theory. This move allows the emergence of a proper name, a positive essence, Theory. Once again, the position of the investigator remains unquestioned. And, if this territorial debate turns toward the Third World, no change in the question of method is to be discerned. This debate cannot take into account that, in the case of the woman as subaltern, no ingredients for the constitution of the itinerary of the trace of a sexed subject can be gathered to locate the possibility of dissemination.

Yet I remain generally sympathetic in aligning feminism with the critique of positivism and the defetishization of the concrete. I am also far from averse to learning from the work of Western theorists, though I have learned to insist on marking their positionality as investigating subjects. Given these conditions, and as a literary critic, I tactically confronted the immense problem of the consciousness of the woman as subaltern. I reinvented the problem in a sentence and transformed it into the object of a simple semiosis. What does this sentence mean? The analogy here is between the ideological victimization of a Freud and the positionality of the postcolonial intellectual as investigating subject.

57. Even in such excellent texts of reportage and analysis as Gail Omvedt's *We Will Smash This Prison! Indian women in struggle,* Zed Press: London, 1980, the assumption that a group of Maharashtrian women in an urban proletarian situation, reacting to a radical white woman who had 'thrown in her lot with the Indian destiny,' is representative of 'Indian women' or touches the question of 'female consciousness in India' is not harmless when taken up within a first-world social formation where the proliferation of communication in an internationally hegemonic language makes alternative accounts and testimonies instantly accessible even to undergraduates. Norma Chincilla's observation, made at a panel on 'Third World feminisms: differences in form and content' (UCLA, 8 March, 1983), that antisexist work in the Indian context is not genuinely antisexist but antifeudal, is another case in point. This permits definitions of sexism to emerge only after a society has entered the capitalist mode of production, thus making capitalism and patriarchy conveniently continuous. It also invokes the vexed questions of the role of the "'Asiatic" mode of production' in sustaining the explanatory power of the normative narrativization of history through the account of modes of production, in however sophisticated a manner history is construed. The curious role of the proper name 'Asia' in this matter does not remain confined to proof or disproof of the empirical existence of the actual mode (a problem that became the object of intense maneuvering within international communism) but remains crucial even in the work of such theoretical subtlety and importance as Barry Hindess and Paul Hirst's *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (Routledge: London, 1975) and Fredric Jameson's *Political Unconscious.* Especially in Jameson, where the morphology of modes of production is rescued from all suspicion of historical determinism and anchored to a poststructuralist theory of the subject, the 'Asiatic' mode of production, in its guise of 'oriental despotism' as the concomitant state formation, still serves. It also plays a significant role in the transmogrified mode of production narrative in Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus,* in the Soviet debate, at a far remove, indeed, from these contemporary theoretical projects, the doctrinal sufficiency of the 'Asiatic' mode of production was most often doubted by producing 'For it various versions and nomenclatures of feudal, slave and communal modes of production. (The debate is presented in detail in Stephen F. Dunn, *The Fall and Rise of the Asiatic Mode of Production,* Routledge: London 1982.) It would be interesting to relate this to the repression of the imperialist 'moment' in most debates over the transition from feudalism to capitalism that have long exercised the Western Left. What is more important here is that an observation such as Chinchilla's represents a widespread hierarchization within third-world *feminism* (rather than Western Marxism), which situates it within the longstanding traffic with the imperialist concept-metaphor 'Asia'. I should add that I have not yet read Madhu Kishwar and Ruth Vanita (eds.), *In Search of Answers: Indian women's voices from Manushi,* Zed Press: London, 1984.

58. Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and criticism after structuralism,* Cornell University Press: Ithaca, NY, 1982, p. 48.

59. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, 'Placing women's history in history', *New Left Review,* 133, May-June 1982, p. 21.

60. I have attempted to develop this idea in a somewhat autobiographical way in 'Finding feminist readings: Dante-Yeats', in Ira Konigsberg (ed.), American Criticism in the Poststructuralist Age, University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, MI, 1981.

As Sarah Kofman has shown, the deep ambiguity of Freud's use of women as a scapegoat is a reaction-formation to an initial and continuing desire to give the hysteric a voice, to transform her into the *subject* of hysteria.[61] The masculine-imperialist ideological formation that shaped that desire into the 'daughter's seduction' is part of the same formation that constructs the monolithic 'third-world woman'. As a postcolonial intellectual, I am influenced by that formation as well. Part of our 'unlearning' project is to articulate that ideological formation—by *measuring* silences, if necessary—into the *object* of investigation. Thus, when confronted with the questions, Can the subaltern speak? and Can the subaltern (as woman) speak?, our efforts to give the subaltern a voice in history will be doubly open to the dangers run by Freud's discourse. As a product of these considerations, I have put together the sentence 'White men are saving brown women from brown men' in a spirit not unlike the one to be encountered in Freud's investigations of the sentence 'A child is being beaten'.[62]

The use of Freud here does not imply an isomorphic analogy between subject-formation and the behaviour of social collectives, a frequent practice, often accompanied by a reference to Reich, in the conversation between Deleuze and Foucault. So I am not suggesting that 'White men are saving brown women from brown men' is a sentence indicating a *collective* fantasy symptomatic of a *collective* itinerary of sadomasochistic repression in a *collective* imperialist enterprise. There is a satisfying symmetry in such an allegory, but I would rather invite the reader to consider it a problem in 'wild psychoanalysis' than a clinching solution.[63] Just as Freud's insistence on making the woman the scapegoat in 'A child is being beaten' and elsewhere discloses his political interests, however imperfectly, so my insistence on imperialist subject-production as the occasion for this sentence discloses my politics.

Further, I am attempting to borrow the general methodological aura of Freud's strategy toward the sentence he construed *as a sentence* out of the many similar substantive accounts his patients gave him. This does not mean I will offer a case of transference-in-analysis as an isomorphic model for the transaction between reader and text (my sentence). The analogy between transference and literary criticism or historiography is no more than a productive catachresis. To say that the subject is a text does not authorize the converse pronouncement: the verbal text is a subject.

I am fascinated, rather, by how Freud predicates *a history* of repression that produces the final sentence. It is a history with double origin, one hidden in the amnesia of the infant, the other lodged in our archaic past, assuming by implication a preoriginary space where human and animal were not yet differentiated.[64] We are driven to impose a homologue of this Freudian strategy on the Marxist narrative to explain the ideological dissimulation of imperialist political economy and outline a history of repression that produces a sentence like the one I have sketched. This history also has a double origin, one hidden in the manoeuverings behind the British abolition of widow sacrifice in 1829,[65] the other lodged in the classical and Vedic past of Hindu India, the *Rg-Veda* and the *Dharmasāstra*. No doubt there is also an undifferentiated preoriginary space that supports this history.

The sentence I have constructed is one among many displacements describing the relationship between brown and white men (sometimes brown and white women worked in). It takes its place among some sentences of 'hyperbolic admiration' or of pious guilt that Derrida speaks of in connection with the 'hieroglyphist prejudice'. The relationship between the imperialist subject and the subject of imperialism is at least ambiguous.

The Hindu widow ascends the pyre of the dead husband and immolates herself upon it. This is widow sacrifice. (The conventional transcription of the Sanskrit word for the widow would be *sati*. The early colonial British transcribed it *suttee*.) The rite was not practiced universally and was not caste- or class-fixed. The abolition of this rite by the British has been generally understood as a case of 'White men saving brown women from brown men'. White women—from the nineteenth-century British Missionary Registers to Mary Daly—have not produced an alternative understanding. Against this is the Indian nativist argument, a parody of the nostalgia for lost origins: 'The women actually wanted to die.'

The two sentences go a long way to legitimize each other. One never encounters the testimony of the women's voice-consciousness. Such a testimony would not be ideology-transcendent or 'fully' subjective, of course, but it would have constituted the ingredients for producing a countersentence. As one goes down the grotesquely mistranscribed names of these women, the sacrificed widows, in the police reports included in the records of the East India Company, one cannot put together a 'voice'. The most one can sense is the immense heterogeneity breaking through even such a skeletal and ignorant account (castes, for example, are regularly described as tribes). Faced with the dialectically interlocking sentences that are constructible as 'White men are saving brown women from brown men' and 'The women wanted to die', the postcolonial woman intellectual asks the question of simple semiosis—What does this mean?—and begins to plot a history.

To mark the moment when not only a civil but a good society is born out of domestic confusion, singular events that break the letter of the law

61. Sarah Kofman, *L'Enigme de la femme: La Femme dans les textes de Freud*, Galilee: Paris, 1980.

62. Sigmund Freud. "'A child is being beaten": a contribution to the study of the origin of sexual perversions', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey et al., Hogarth Press: London, vol. 17, 1955.

63. *idem*, "'Wild" psycho-analysis', *Standard Edition*, vol. 11.

64. *idem*, "'A child is being beaten"', p. 188.

65. For a brilliant account of how the 'reality' of widow-sacrifice was constituted or 'textualized' during the colonial period, see Lara Mani, 'The production of colonial discourse: sari in early nineteenth-century Bengal' (master's thesis, University of California at Santa Cruz, 1983). I profited from discussion with Ms Mani at the inception of this project.

to instill its spirit are often invoked. The protection of women by men often provides such an event. If we remember that the British boasted of their absolute equity toward and noninterference with native custom/law, an invocation of this sanctioned transgression of the letter for the sake of the spirit may be read in J.D.M. Derrett's remark: 'The very first legislation upon Hindu Law was carried through without the assent of a single Hindu.' The legislation is not named here. The next sentence, where the measure is named, is equally interesting if one considers the implications of the survival of a colonially established 'good' society after decolonization: 'The recurrence of sati in independent India is probably an obscurantist revival which cannot long survive even in a very backward part of the country.'[66]

Whether this observation is correct or not, what interests me is that the protection of woman (today the 'third-world woman') becomes a signifier for the establishment of a *good* society which must, at such inaugurative moments, transgress mere legality, or equity of legal policy. In this particular case, the process also allowed the redefinition as a crime of what had been tolerated, known, or adulated as ritual. In other words, this one item in Hindu law jumped the frontier between the private and the public domain.

Although Foucault's *historical narrative,* focusing solely on Western Europe, sees merely a tolerance for the criminal antedating the development of criminology in the late eighteenth century (*PK,* p. 41), his *theoretical description* of the 'episteme' is pertinent here: 'The *episteme* is the "apparatus" which makes possible the separation not of the true from the false, but of what may not be characterized as scientific' (*PK,* p. 197)—ritual as opposed to crime, the one fixed by superstition, the other by legal science.

The leap of *suttee* from private to public has a clear and complex relationship with the changeover from a mercantile and commercial to a territorial and administrative British presence; it can be followed in correspondence among the police stations, the lower and higher courts, the courts of directors, the prince regent's court, and the like. (It is interesting to note that, from the point of view of the native 'colonial subject', also emergent from the feudalism-capitalism transition, *sati* is a signifier with the reverse social charge: 'Groups rendered psychologically marginal by their exposure to Western impact ... had come under pressure to demonstrate, to others as well as to themselves, their ritual purity and allegiance to traditional high culture. To many of them *sati* became an important proof of their conformity to older norms at a time when these norms had become shaky within.')[67]

If this is the first historical origin of my sentence, it is evidently lost in the history of humankind as work, the story of capitalist expansion,

66. J. D. M. Derrett, *Hindu Law Past and Present: Being an account of the controversy which preceded the enactment of the Hindu code, and text of the code as enacted, and some comments thereon,* A. Mukherjee & Co: Calcutta, 1957, p. 46.

67. Ashis Nandy, 'Sati: a nineteenth-century tale of women, violence and protest', in V. C. Joshi (ed.), *Rammohun Roy and the Process of Modernization in India,* Vikas Publishing House: New Delhi, 1975, p. 68.

the slow freeing of labor power as commodity, that narrative of the modes of production, the transition from feudalism via mercantilism to capitalism. Yet the precarious normativity of this narrative is sustained by the putatively changeless stopgap of the 'Asiatic' mode of production, which steps in to sustain it whenever it might become apparent that the story of capital logic is the story of the West, that imperialism establishes the universality of the mode of production narrative, that to ignore the subaltern today is, willy-nilly, to continue the imperialist project. The origin of my sentence is thus lost in the shuffle between other, more powerful discourses. Given that the abolition of *sati* was in itself admirable, is it still possible to wonder if a perception of the origin of my sentence might contain interventionist possibilities?

Imperialism's image as the establisher of the good society is marked by the espousal of the woman as *object* of protection from her own kind. How should one examine the dissimulation of patriarchal strategy, which apparently grants the woman free choice as *subject*? In other words, how does one make the move from 'Britain' to 'Hinduism'? Even the attempt shows that imperialism is not identical with chromatism, or mere prejudice against people of colour. To approach this question, I will touch briefly on the *Dharmasāstra* (the sustaining scriptures) and the *Rg-Veda* (Praise Knowledge). They represent the archaic origin in my homology of Freud. Of course, my treatment is not exhaustive. My readings are, rather, an interested and inexpert examination, by a postcolonial woman, of the fabrication of repression, a constructed counter-narrative of woman's consciousness, thus woman's being, thus woman's being good, thus the good woman's desire, thus woman's desire. Paradoxically, at the same time we witness the unfixed place of woman as a signifier in the inscription of the social individual.

The two moments in the *Dharmasāstra* that I am interested in are the discourse on sanctioned suicides and the nature of the rites for the dead.[68] Framed in these two discourses, the self-immolation of widows seems an exception to the rule. The general scriptural doctrine is that suicide is reprehensible. Room is made, however, for certain forms of suicide which, as formulaic performance, lose the phenomenal identity of being suicide. The first category of sanctioned suicides arises out of *tatvajnāna*, or the knowledge of truth. Here the knowing subject comprehends the insubstantiality or mere phenomenality (which may be the same thing as nonphenomenality) of its identity. At a certain point in time, *tat tva* was interpreted as 'that you', but even without that, *tatva* is thatness or quiddity. Thus, this enlightened self truly knows the 'that'-ness of its identity. Its demolition of that identity is not *ātmaghāta* (a killing of the self). The paradox of knowing of the limits of knowledge is that the strongest assertion of agency, to negate the possibility of agency, cannot be an

68. The following account leans heavily on Pandurang Varman Kane, *History of Dharmasastra,* Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute: Poona, 1963 (hereafter cited as HD, with volume, part and page numbers).

example of itself. Curiously enough, the self-sacrifice of gods is sanctioned by natural ecology, useful for the working of the economy of Nature and the Universe, rather than by self-knowledge. In this logically anterior stage, inhabited by gods rather than human beings, of this particular chain of displacements, suicide and sacrifice (*ātmaghāta* and *ātmadāna*) seem as little distinct as an 'interior' (self-knowledge) and an 'exterior' (ecology) sanction.

This philosophical space, however, does not accommodate the self-immolating woman. For her we look where room is made to sanction suicides that cannot claim truth-knowledge as a state that is, at any rate, easily verifiable and belongs in the area of *sruti* (what was heard) rather than *smirti* (what is remembered). This exception to the general rule about suicide annuls the phenomenal identity of self-immolation if performed in certain places rather than in a certain state of enlightenment. Thus, we move from an interior sanction (truth-knowledge) to an exterior one (place of pilgrimage). It is possible for a woman to perform this type of (non)suicide.[69]

Yet even this is not the *proper* place for the woman to annul the proper name of suicide through the destruction of her proper self. For her alone is sanctioned self-immolation on a dead spouse's pyre. (The few male examples cited in Hindu antiquity of self-immolation on another's pyre, being proofs of enthusiasm and devotion to a master or superior, reveal the structure of domination within the rite.)

This suicide that is not suicide may be read as a simulacrum of both truth-knowledge and piety of place. If the former, it is as if the knowledge in a subject of its own insubstantiality and mere phenomenality is dramatized so that the dead husband becomes the exteriorized example and place of the extinguished subject and the widow becomes the (non)agent who 'acts it out'. If the latter, it is as if the metonym for all sacred places is now that burning bed of wood, constructed by elaborate ritual, where the woman's subject, legally displaced from herself, is being consumed. It is in terms of this profound ideology of the displaced place of the female subject that the paradox of free choice comes into play. For the male subject, it is the felicity of the suicide, a felicity that will annul rather that establish its status as such, that is noted. For the female subject, a sanctioned self-immolation, even as it takes away the effect of 'fall' (*pātaka*) attached to an unsanctioned suicide, brings praise for the act of choice on another register. By the inexorable ideological production of the sexed subject, such a death can be understood by the female subject as an *exceptional* signifier of her own desire, exceeding the general rule for a widow's conduct.

In certain periods and areas this exceptional rule became the general rule in a class-specific way. Ashis Nandy relates its marked prevalence in eighteenth- and early ninteenth-century Bengal to factors ranging from population control to communal misogyny.[70] Certainly its prevalence there in the previous centuries was because in Bengal, unlike elsewhere in India, widows could inherit property. Thus, what the British see as poor victimized women going to the slaughter is in fact an ideological battle-ground. As P. V. Kane, the great historian of the *Dharmasāstra*, has correctly observed: 'In Bengal, [the fact that] the widow of a sonless member even in a joint Hindu family is entitled to practically the same rights over joint family property which her deceased husband would have had . . . must have frequently induced the surviving members to get rid of the widow by appealing at a most distressing hour to her devotion to and love for her husband' (*HD* 11.2, p. 635).

Yet benevolent and enlightened males were and are sympathetic with the 'courage' of the woman's free choice in the matter. They thus accept the production of the sexed subaltern subject: 'Modern India does not justify the practice of *sati*, but it is a warped mentality that rebukes modern Indians for expressing admiration and reverence for the cool and unfaltering courage of Indian women in becoming *satis* or performing the *jauhar* for cherishing their ideals of womanly conduct' (HD 11.2, p. 636). What Jean-Francois Lyotard has termed the '*differend*', the inaccessibility of, or untranslatability from, one mode of discourse in a dispute to another, is vividly illustrated here.[71] As the discourse of what the British perceive as heathen ritual is sublated (but not, Lyotard would argue, translated) into what the British perceive as crime, one diagnosis of female free will is substituted for another.

Of course, the self-immolation of widows was not *invariable* ritual prescription. If, however, the widow does decide thus to exceed the letter of ritual, to turn back is a transgression for which a particular type of penance is prescribed.[72] With the local British police officer supervising the immolation, to be dissuaded after a decision was, by contrast, a mark of real free choice, a choice of freedom. The ambiguity of the position of the indigenous colonial elite is disclosed in the nationalistic romanticization of the purity, strength and love of these self-sacrificing women. The two set pieces are Rabindranath Tagore's paean to the 'self-renouncing paternal grandmothers of Bengal' and Ananda Coomaraswamy's eulogy of suttee as 'this last proof of the perfect unity of body and soul'.[73]

69. Upendra Thakur, *The History of Suicide in India: An introduction*, Munshi Ram Manahan Lal: New Delhi, 1963, p. 9, has a useful list of Sanskrit primary sources on sacred places. This laboriously decent book betrays all the signs of the schizophrenia of the colonial subject, such as bourgeois nationalism, patriarchal communalism and an 'enlightened reasonableness'.

70. Nandy, *op. cit.*

71. Jean-François Lyotard, *Le Differend*, Minuit: Paris, 1984.

72. *HD*, II.2, p. 633. There are suggestions that this 'prescribed penance' was far exceeded by social practice. In this passage below, published in 1938, notice the Hindu patristic assumptions about the freedom of female will at work in phrases like 'courage' and 'strength of character'. The unexamined presuppositions of the passage might be that the complete objectification of the widow-concubine was just punishment for abdication of the right to courage, signifying subject status. 'Some widows, however, had not the courage to go through the fiery ordeal; nor had they sufficient strength of mind and character to live up to the high ascetic ideal prescribed for them [*brahmacarya*]. It is sad to record that they were driven to lead the life of a concubine or *avarudda stri* [incarcerated wife].' A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization: From prehistoric times to the present day*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi, 1938, p. 156.

73. Quoted in Sena. *op. cit.*, 2, pp. 913-14.

Obviously I am not advocating the killing of widows. I am suggesting that, within the two contending versions of freedom, the constitution of the female subject in life is the place of the differend. In the case of widow self-immolation, ritual is not being redefined as superstition but as *crime*. The gravity of *sati* was that it was ideologically cathected as 'reward', just as the gravity of imperialism was that it was ideologically cathected as 'social mission'. Thompson's understanding of *sati* as 'punishment' is thus far off the mark:

> It may seem unjust and illogical that the Moguls, who freely impaled and flayed alive, or nationals of Europe, whose countries had such ferocious penal codes and had known, scarcely a century before suttee began to shock the English conscience, orgies of witch-burning and religious persecution, should have felt as they did about suttee. But the differences seemed to them this—the victims of their cruelties were tortured by a law which considered them offenders, whereas the victims of suttee were punished for no offence but the physical weakness which had placed them at man's mercy. The rite seemed to prove a depravity and arrogance such as no other human offense had brought to light.[74]

All through the mid and late-eighteenth century, in the spirit of the codification of the law, the British in India collaborated and consulted with learned Brahmans to judge whether *suttee* was legal by their homogenized version of Hindu law. The collaboration was often idiosyncratic, as in the case of the significance of being dissuaded. Sometimes, as in the general Sastric prohibition against the immolation of widows with small children, the British collaboration seems confused.[75] In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British authorities, and especially the British in England, repeatedly suggested that collaboration made it appear as if the British condoned this practice. When the law was finally written, the history of the long period of collaboration was effaced, and the language celebrated the noble Hindu who was against the bad Hindu, the latter given to savage atrocities:

> The practice of Suttee ... is revolting to the feeling of human nature... In many instances, acts of atrocity have been perpetrated, which have been shocking to the Hindoos themselves... Actuated by these considerations the Governor-General in Council, without intending to depart from one of the first and most important principles of the system of British Government in India that all classes of the people be secure in the observance of their religious usages, so long as that system can be adhered to without violation of the paramount dictates of justice and humanity, has deemed it right to establish the following rules. (HD II.2, pp. 624-5)

74. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

75. Here, as well as for the Brahman debate over *sati*, see Mani, *op. cit.*, pp. 71f.

That this was an alternative ideology of the graded sanctioning of suicide as exception, rather than its inscription as sin, was of course not understood. Perhaps *sati* should have been read with martyrdom, with the defunct husband standing in for the transcendental One; or with war, with the husband standing in for sovereign or state, for whose sake an intoxicating ideology of self-sacrifice can be mobilized. In actuality, it was categorized with murder, infanticide and the lethal exposure of the very old. The dubious place of the free will of the constituted sexed subject as female was successfully effaced. There is no itinerary we can retrace here. Since the other sanctioned suicides did not involve the scene of this constitution, they entered neither the ideological battleground at the archaic origin—the tradition of the *Dharmasāstra*—nor the scene of the reinscription of ritual as crime—the British abolition. The only related transformation was Mahatma Gandhi's reinscription of the notion of *satyāgraha*, or hunger strike, as resistance. But this is not the place to discuss the details of that sea-change. I would merely invite the reader to compare the auras of widow sacrifice and Gandhian resistance. The root in the first part of *satyāgraha* and *sati* are the same.

Since the beginning of the Puranic era (c. AD 400), learned Brahmans debated the doctrinal appropriateness of *sati* as of sanctioned suicides in sacred places in general. (This debate still continues in an academic way.) Sometimes the caste provenance of the practice was in question. The general law for widows, that they should observe *brahmacarya,* was, however, hardly ever debated. It is not enough to translate *brahmacarya* as 'celibacy'. It should be recognized that, of the four ages of being in Hindu (or Brahmanical) *regulative* psychobiography, *brahmacarya* is the social practice anterior to the kinship inscription of marriage. The man—widower or husband—graduates through *vānaprastha* (forest life) into the mature celibacy and renunciation of *samnyāsa* (laying aside).[76] The woman as wife is indispensable for *gārhasthya*, or householdership, and may accompany her husband into forest life. She has no access (according to Brahmanical sanction) to the final celibacy of asceticism, or *samnyāsa*. The woman as widow, by the general law of sacred doctrine, must regress to an anteriority transformed into stasis. The institutional evils attendant upon this law are well known; I am considering its asymmetrical effect on the ideological formation of the sexed subject. It is thus of much greater significance that there was no debate on this nonexceptional fate of widows—either among Hindus or between Hindus and

76. We are speaking here of the regulative norms of Brahmanism, rather than 'things as they were'. See Robert Lingat, *The Classical Law of India,* trans. J. D. M. Derrett, University of California Press: Berkeley, 1973, p. 46.

British—than that the exceptional prescription of self-immolation was actively contended.[77] Here the possibility of recovering a (sexually) subaltern subject is once again lost and overdetermined. This legally programmed asymmetry in the status of the subject which effectively defines the woman as object of one husband, obviously operates in the interest of the legally symmetrical subject-status of the male. The self-immolation of the widow thereby becomes the extreme case of the general law rather than an exception to it. It is not surprising, then, to read of heavenly rewards for the *sati*, where the quality of being the object of unique possessor is emphasized by way of rivalry with other females, those ecstatic heavenly dancers, paragons of female beauty and male pleasure who sing her praise: 'In heaven she, being solely devoted to her husband, and praised by groups of apsarās [heavenly dancers] , sports with her husband as long as fourteen Indras rule' (HD II.2, p. 631).

The profound irony in locating the woman's free will in self-immolation is once again revealed in a verse accompanying the earlier passage: 'As long as the woman [as wife: *strī*] does not burn herself in fire on the death of her husband, she is never released [*mucyate*] from her female body [*strisarīr*—i.e., in the cycle of births].' Even as it operates the most subtle general release from individual agency, the sanctioned suicide peculiar to woman draws its ideological strength by *identifying* individual agency with the supraindividual: kill yourself on your husband's pyre now, and you may kill your female body in the entire cycle of birth.

In a further twist of the paradox, this emphasis on free will establishes the peculiar misfortune of holding a female body. The word for the self that is actually burned is the standard word for spirit in the noblest sense (*ātman*), while the verb 'release', through the root for salvation in the noblest sense (*muc* → *moska*) is in the passive (mocyate), and the word for that which is annulled in the cycle of birth is the everyday word for the body. The ideological message writes itself in the benevolent twentieth-century male historian's admiration: 'The Jauhar [group self-immolation of aristocratic Rajput war-widows or imminent war-widows] practiced by the Rajput ladies of Chitor and other places for saving themselves from unspeakable atrocities at the hands of the victorious Moslems are too well known to need any lengthy notice' (HD 11.2, p. 629).

Although *jauhar* is not, strictly speaking, an act of *sati,* and although I do not wish to speak for the sanctioned sexual violence of conquering male armies, 'Moslem' or otherwise, female self-immolation in the face of it is a legitimation of rape as 'natural' and works, in the long run, in the interest of unique genital possession of the female. The group rape perpetrated by the conquerors is a metonymic celebration of territorial acquisition. Just as the general law

77. Both the vestigial possibility of widow remarriage in ancient India and the legal institution of widow remarriage in 1856 are transactions among men. Widow remarriage is very much an exception, perhaps because it left the program of subject-formation untouched. In all the 'lore' of widow remarriage, it is the father and the husband who are applauded for their reformist courage and selflessness.

for widows was unquestioned, so this act of female heroism persists among the patriotic tales told to children, thus operating on the crudest level of ideological reproduction. It has also played a tremendous role, precisely as an overdetermined signifier, in acting out Hindu communalism. Simultaneously, the broader question of the constitution of the sexed subject is hidden by foregrounding the visible violence of *sati.* The task of recovering a (sexually) subaltern subject is lost in an institutional textuality at the archaic origin.

As I mentioned above, when the status of the legal subject as property-holder could be temporarily bestowed on the *female* relict, the self-immolation of widows was stringently enforced. Raghunandana, the late fifteenth-/sixteenth-century legalist whose interpretations are supposed to lend the greatest authority to such enforcement, takes as his text a curious passage from the Rg-Veda, the most ancient of the Hindu sacred texts, the first of the Srutis. In doing so, he is following a centuries-old tradition, commemorating a peculiar and transparent misreading at the very place of sanction. Here is the verse outlining certain steps within the rites for the dead. Even at a simple reading it is clear that it is 'not addressed to widows at all, but to ladies of the deceased man's household whose husbands were living'. Why then was it taken as authoritative? This, the unemphatic transposition of the dead for the living husband, is a different order of mystery at the archaic origin from the ones we have been discussing: 'Let these whose husbands are worthy and are living enter the house with clarified butter in their eyes. Let these wives first step into the house, tearless, healthy, and well adorned' (HD 11.2, p. 634). But this crucial transposition is not the only mistake here. The authority is lodged in a disputed passage and an alternate reading. In the second line, here translated 'Let these wives first step into the house', the word for first is *agré.* Some have read it as *agné,* 'O fire'. As Kane makes clear, however, 'even without this change Apararka and others rely for the practice of Sati on this verse' (HD IV.2, p. 199). Here is another screen around one origin of the history of the subaltern female subject. Is it a historical oneirocritique that one should perform on a statement such as: 'Therefore it must be admitted that either the MSS are corrupt or Raghunandana committed an innocent slip' (HD 11.2 p. 634)? It should be mentioned that the rest of the poem is either about that general law of brahmacarya-in-stasis for widows, to which *sati* is an exception, or about *niyoga*—'appointing a brother or any near kinsman to raise up issue to a deceased husband by marrying his widow'.[78]

If P.V. Kane is the authority on the history of the *Dharmasāstra,* Mulla's *Principles of Hindu Law* is

78. Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1899, p. 552. Historians are often impatient if modernists seem to be attempting to import 'feministic' judgments into ancient patriarchies. The real question is, of course, why structures of patriarchal domination should be unquestioningly recorded. Historical sanctions for collective action toward social justice can only be developed if people outside of the discipline question standards of 'objectivity' preserved as such by the hegemonic tradition. It does not seem inappropriate to notice that so 'objective' an instrument as a dictionary can use the deeply sexist-partisan explanatory expression: 'raise up issue to a deceased husband'!

the practical guide. It is part of the historical text of what Freud calls 'kettle logic' that we are unraveling here, that Mulla's textbook adduces, just as definitively, that the Rg-Vedic verse under consideration was proof that *'remarriage of widows and divorce are recognized in some of the old texts'*.[79]

One cannot help but wonder about the role of the word *yonī.* In context, with the localizing adverb *agré* (in front), the word means 'dwelling-place'. But that does not efface its primary sense of 'genital' (not yet perhaps specifically *female* genital). How can we take as the authority for the choice of a widow's self-immolation a passage celebrating the entry of adorned wives into a dwelling place invoked on this occasion by its *yonī*-name, so that the extracontextual icon is almost one of entry into civic production or birth? Paradoxically, the imagic relationship of vagina and fire lends a kind of strength to the authority-claim.[80] This paradox is strengthened by Raghunandana's modification of the verse so as to read, 'Let them first ascend the *fluid* abode [or origin, with, of course, the *yonī*-name—a rōhantu jalayōnimagné], O fire [or of fire].' Why should one accept that this 'probably mean[s] "may fire be to them as cool as water" (HD 11.2, p. 634)? The fluid genital of fire, a corrupt phrasing, might figure a sexual indeterminacy providing a simulacrum for the intellectual indeterminacy of *tattvajnāna* (truth-knowledge).

I have written above of a constructed counternarrative of woman's consciousness, thus woman's being, thus woman's being good, thus the good woman's desire, thus woman's desire. This slippage can be seen in the fracture inscribed in the very word *sati,* the feminine form of *sat. Sat* transcends any gender-specific notion of masculinity and moves up not only into human but spiritual universality. It is the present participle of the verb 'to be' and as such means not only being but the True, the Good, the Right. In the sacred texts it is essence, universal spirit. Even as a prefix it indicates appropriate, felicitous, fit. It is noble enough to have entered the most privileged discourse of modem Western philosophy: Heidegger's meditation on Being.[81] *Sati,* the feminine of this word, simply means 'good wife.'

It is now time to disclose that *sati* or *suttee* as the proper name of the rite of widow self-immolation commemorates a grammatical error on the part of the British, quite as the nomenclature 'American Indian' commemorates a factual error on the part of Columbus. The word in the various Indian languages is 'the burning of the *sati*' or the good wife, who thus escapes the regressive stasis of the widow in *brahmacrya.* This exemplifies the race-class-gender overdeterminations of the situation. It can perhaps be caught even when it is flattened out: white men, seeking to save brown women from brown men, impose upon those women a greater ideological constriction by absolutely identifying, *within discursive practice,* good-wifehood with self-immolation on the husband's pyre. On the other side of thus constituting the *object,* the abolition (or removal) of which will provide the occasion for establishing a good, as distinguished from merely civil, society, is the Hindu manipulation of female *subject*-constitution which I have tried to discuss.

(I have already mentioned Edward Thompson's *Suttee,* published in 1928. I cannot do justice here to this perfect specimen of true justification of imperialism as a civilizing mission. Nowhere in his book, written by someone who avowedly 'loves India', is there any questioning of the 'beneficial ruthlessness' of the British in India as motivated by territorial expansionism or management of industrial capital.[82] The problem with his book is, indeed, a problem of representation, the construction of a continuous and homogeneous 'India' in terms of heads of state and British administrators, from the perspective of 'a man of good sense' who would be the transparent voice of reasonable humanity. 'India' can then be represented, in the other sense, by its imperial masters. The reason for referring to *suttee* here is Thompson's finessing of the word *sati* as 'faithful' in the very first sentence of his book, an inaccurate translation which is nonetheless an English permit for the insertion of the female subject into twentieth-century discourse.)[83]

Consider Thompson's praise for General Charles Hervey's appreciation of the problem of *sati:* 'Hervey has a passage which brings out the pity of a system which looked only for prettiness and constancy in woman. He obtained the names of satis who had died on the pyres of Bikanir Rajas; they were such names as: "Ray Queen, Sun-ray, Love's Delight, Garland, Virtue Found, Echo, Soft Eye, Comfort, Moonbeam, Love-lorn, Dear Heart, Eye-play, Arbour-born, Smile, Love-bud, Glad Omen, Mist-clad, or Cloud-sprung—the last a favourite name."' Once again, imposing the upper-class Victorian's typical demands upon 'his woman' (his preferred phrase), Thompson appropriates the Hindu woman as his to save against the 'system'. Bikaner is in Rajasthan; and any discussion of widow-burnings of Rajasthan, especially within the ruling class, was intimately linked to the positive or negative construction of Hindu (or Aryan) communalism.

A look at the pathetically misspelled names of the *satis* of the artisanal, peasant, village-priestly, moneylender, clerical and comparable social groups in Bengal, where *satis* were most common, would not have yielded such a harvest (Thompson's Preferred adjective for Bengalis is 'imbecilic'). Or perhaps it would. There is no more dangerous pastime than transposing proper names into common nouns, translating them, and using them as sociological evidence. I attempted to reconstruct the names on that list and began to feel Hervey-Thompson's arrogance. What, for instance, might 'Comfort' have been? Was it

79. Sunderlal T. Desai, *Mulla: Principles of Hindu law,* N. M. Tripathi: Bombay, 1982, p. 184.

80. I am grateful to Professor Alison Finley of Trinity College (Hartford, CT) for discussing the passage with me. Professor Finley is an expert on the Rg-Veda. I hasten to add that she would find my readings as irresponsibly 'literary-critical' as the ancient historian would find it 'modernist' (see note 79).

81. Martin Heidegger. *An Introduction to Metaphysics,* trans. Ralph Manheim, Doubleday Anchor: New York, 1961, p.58.

82. Thompson, *op. cit.,* p. 37.

83. *ibid.,* p. 15. For the status of the proper name as 'mark', see Derrida, 'Taking chances'.

'Shanti'? Readers are reminded of the last line of T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land*. There the word bears the mark of one kind of stereotyping of India—the grandeur of the ecumenical Upanishads. Or was it 'Swasti'? Readers are reminded of the swastika, the Brahmanic ritual mark of domestic comfort (as in 'God Bless Our Home') stereotyped into a criminal parody of Aryan hegemony. Between these two appropriations, where is our pretty and constant burnt widow? The aura of the names owes more to writers like Edward FitzGerald, the 'translator' of the Rubayyat of Omar Khayyam who helped to construct a certain picture of the Oriental woman through the supposed 'objectivity' of translation, than to sociological exactitude. (Said's *Orientalism*, 1978, remains the authoritative text here.) By this sort of reckoning, the translated proper names of a random collection of contemporary French philosophers or boards of directors of prestigious southern US corporations would give evidence of a ferocious investment in an archangelic and hagiocentric theocracy. Such sleights of pen can be perpetuated on 'common nouns' as well, but the proper name is most susceptible to the trick. And it is the British trick with *sati* that we are discussing. After such a taming of the subject, Thompson can write, under the heading 'The psychology of the "*Sati*"', 'I had intended to try to examine this; but the truth is, it has ceased to seem a puzzle to me.'[84]

Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the 'third-world woman' caught between tradition and modernization. These considerations would revise every detail of judgments that seem valid for a history of sexuality in the West: 'Such would be the property of repression, that which distinguishes it from the prohibitions maintained by simple penal law: repression functions well as a sentence to disappear, but also as an injunction to silence, affirmation of non-existence; and consequently states that of all this there is nothing to say, to see, to know.'[85] The case of *suttee* as exemplum of the woman-in-imperialism would challenge and reconstruct this opposition between subject (law) and object-of-knowledge (repression) and mark the place of 'disappearance' with something other than silence and nonexistence, a violent aporia between subject and object status.

Sati as a woman's proper name is in fairly widespread use in India today. Naming a female infant 'a good wife' has its own proleptic irony, and the irony is all the greater because this sense of the common noun is not the primary operator in the proper name.[86] Behind the naming of the infant is *the* Sati of Hindu mythology, Durga in her manifestation as a good wife.[87] In part of the story, Sati—she is already called

84. Thomspon, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

85. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, vol. 1*, trans. Robert Hurley, Vintage Books: New York, 1980, p. 4.

86. The fact that the word was also used as a form of address for a well-born woman ('lady') complicates matters.

87. It should be remembered that this account does not exhaust her many manifestations within the pantheon.

that—arrives at her father's court uninvited, in the absence, even, of an invitation for her divine husband Siva. Her father starts to abuse Siva and Sati dies in pain. Siva arrives in a fury and dances over the universe with Sati's corpse on his shoulder. Vishnu dismembers her body and bits are strewn over the earth. Around each such relic bit is a great place of pilgrimage.

Figures like the goddess Athena—'father's daughters self-professedly uncontaminated by the womb'—are useful for establishing women's ideological self-debasement, which is to be distinguished from a deconstructive attitude toward the essentialist subject. The story of the mythic Sati, reversing every narrateme of the rite, performs a similar function: the living husband avenges the wife's death, a transaction between great male gods fulfills the destruction of the female body and thus inscribes the earth as sacred geography. To see this as proof of the feminism of Classical Hinduism or of Indian culture as goddess-centered and therefore feminist is as ideologically contaminated by nativism or reverse ethnocentrism as it was imperialist to erase the image of the luminous fighting Mother Durga and invest the proper noun Sati with no significance other than the ritual burning of the helpless widow as sacrificial offering who can then be saved. There is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak.

If the oppressed under socialized capital have no necessarily unmediated access to 'correct' resistance, can the ideology of sati, coming from the history of the periphery, be sublated into any model of interventionist practice? Since this essay operates on the notion that all such clear-cut nostalgias for lost origins are suspect, especially as grounds for counterhegemonic ideological production, I must proceed by way of an example.[88]

(The example I offer here is not a plea for some violent Hindu sisterhood of self-destruction. The definition of the British Indian as Hindu in Hindu law is one of the marks of the ideological war of the British against the Islamic Mughal rulers of India; a significant skirmish in that as yet unfinished war was the division of the subcontinent. Moreover, in my view, individual examples of this sort are tragic failures as models of interventionist practice, since I question the production of models as such. On the other hand, as objects of discourse analysis for the non-self-abdicating intellectual, they can illuminate a section of the social text, in however haphazard a way.)

A young woman of sixteen or seventeen, Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri, hanged herself in her father's modest apartment in North Calcutta in 1926. The suicide was a puzzle since, as

88. A position against nostalgia as a basis of counterhegemonic ideological production does not endorse its negative use. Within the complexity of contemporary political economy, it would, for example, be highly questionable to urge that the current Indian working-class crime of burning brides who bring insufficient dowries and of subsequently disguising the murder as suicide is either a use or abuse of the tradition of sati-suicide. The most that can be claimed is that it is a displacement on a chain of semiosis with the female subject as signifier, which would lead us back into the narrative we have been unraveling. Clearly, one must work to stop the crime of bride-burning in every way. If, however, that work is accomplished by unexamined nostalgia or its opposite, it will assist actively in the substitution of race/ethnos or sheer genitalism as a signifer in the place of the female subject.

Bhuvaneswari was menstruating at the time, it was clearly not a case of illicit pregnancy. Nearly a decade later, it was discovered that she was a member of one of the many groups involved in the armed struggle for Indian independence. She had finally been entrusted with a political assassination. Unable to confront the task and yet aware of the practical need for trust, she killed herself.

Bhuvaneswari had known that her death would be diagnosed as the outcome of illegitimate passion. She had therefore waited for the onset of menstruation. While waiting, Bhuvaneswari, the *brahmacārini* who was no doubt looking forward to good wifehood, perhaps rewrote the social text of *sati*-suicide in an interventionist way. (One tentative explanation of her inexplicable act had been a possible melancholia brought on by her brother-in-law's repeated taunts that she was too old to be not-yet-a-wife.) She generalized the sanctioned motive for female suicide by taking immense trouble to displace (not merely deny) in the physiological inscription of her body, its imprisonment within legitimate passion by a single male. In the immediate context, her act became absurd, a case of delirium rather than sanity. The displacing gesture—waiting for menstruation—is at first a reversal of the interdict against a menstruating widow's right to immolate herself; the unclean widow must wait, publicly, until the cleansing bath of the fourth day, when she is no longer menstruating, in order to claim her dubious privilege.

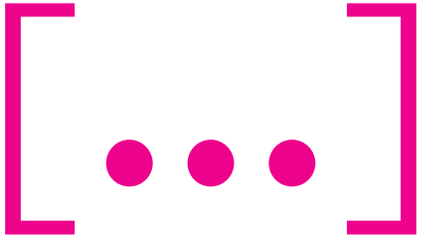
In this reading, Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri's suicide is an unemphatic, ad hoc, subaltern rewriting of the social text of *sati*-suicide as much as the hegemonic account of the blazing, fighting, familial Durga. The emergent dissenting possibilities of that hegemonic account of the fighting mother are well documented and popularly well remembered through the discourse of the male leaders and participants in the independence movement. The subaltern as female cannot be heard or read.

I know of Bhuvaneswari's life and death through family connections. Before investigating them more thoroughly, I asked a Bengali woman, a philosopher and Sanskritist whose early intellectual production is almost identical to mine, to start the process. Two responses: (a) Why, when her two sisters, Saileswari and Rāseswari, led such full and wonderful lives, are you interested in the hapless Bhuvaneswari? (b) I asked her nieces. It appears that it was a case of illicit love.

I have attempted to use and go beyond Derridean deconstruction, which I do not celebrate as feminism as such. However, in the context of the problematic I have addressed, I find his morphology much more painstaking and useful than Foucault's and Deleuze's immediate, substantive involvement with more 'political' issues—the latter's invitation to 'become woman'—which can make their influence more dangerous for the US academic as enthusiastic radical. Derrida marks radical critique with the danger of appropriating the other by assimilation. He reads catachresis at the origin. He calls for a rewriting of the utopian structural impulse as 'rendering delirious that interior voice that is the voice of the other in us'. I must here acknowledge a long-term usefulness in Jacques Derrida which I seem no longer to find in the authors of *The History of Sexuality* and *Mille Plateaux*.[89]

The subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with 'woman' as a pious item. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual as intellectual has a circumscribed task which she must not disown with a flourish.

89. I had not read Peter Dews. 'Power and subjectivity in Foucault', *New Left Review*, 144, 1984, until I finished this essay. I look forward to his book on the same topic [Peter Dews, *The Logics of Disintegration: Post-structuralist thought and the claims of critical theory*, Verso: London, 1987]. There are many points in common between his critique and mine. However, as far as I can tell from the brief essay, he writes from a perspective uncritical of critical theory and the intersubjective norm that can all too easily exchange 'individual' or 'subject' in its situating of the 'epistemic subject'. Dews's reading of the connection between 'Marxist tradition' and the 'autonomous subject' is not mine. Further, his account of 'the impasse of the second phase of poststructuralism as a whole' is vitiated by his nonconsideration of Derrida, who has been against the privileging of language from his earliest work, the 'Introduction' in Edmund Husserl, *The Origin of Geometry*, trans. John Leavy, Nicholas Hays: Stony Brook, NY, 1978. What sets his excellent analysis quite apart from my concerns is, of course, that the Subject within whose History he places Foucault's work is the Subject of the European tradition (pp. 87–94).



UNTITLED
(FOR STEWART)

JULIANA
HUXTABLE

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VIDEO GAMES, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON, IDENTIFICATION THE BOYS AROUND ME HAD KAMEHAMEHA SUPER-HEROES... WITH THE OF INHERENT OR TRAGIC FLAW IN PRINCESS LI'S ABSURD CURVES AND THE CUNT'S MEOW PORNOGRAPHIC BODY FUELED MY RAGE AGAINST MOST 'BOYISH' OF MEANS. I DISCOVERED, BEEFY TRAPEZIUSES OF ANTHROPOMORPHIC SHORTCOMINGS OF PUBESCENT LIFE COULD BE LIKE MOTOKO KUSANAGI, MY WOMANHOOD WAS

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EXCERPTS FROM

FEMINISM IS FOR EVERYBODY: PASSIONATE POLITICS

bell hooks

FEMINIST CLASS STRUGGLE

Class difference and the way in which it divides women was an issue women in feminist movement talked about long before race. In the mostly white circles of a newly formed women's liberation movement the most glaring separation between women was that of class. White working-class women recognized that class hierarchies were present in the movement. Conflict arose between the reformist vision of women's liberation which basically demanded equal rights for women within the existing class structure, and more radical and/or revolutionary models, which called for fundamental change in the existing structure so that models of mutuality and equality could replace the old paradigms. However, as feminist movement progressed and privileged groups of well-educated white women began to achieve equal access to class power with their male counterparts, feminist class struggle was no longer deemed important.

From the onset of the movement women from privileged classes were able to make their concerns "the" issues that should be focused on in part because they were the group of women who received public attention. They attracted mass media. The issues that were most relevant to

working women or masses of women were never highlighted by mainstream mass media. Betty Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique* identified "the problem that has no name" as the dissatisfaction females felt about being confined and subordinated in the home as housewives. While this issue was presented as a crisis for women it really was only a crisis for a small group of well-educated white women. While they were complaining about the dangers of confinement in the home a huge majority of women in the nation were in the workforce. And many of these working women, who put in long hours for low wages while still doing all the work in the domestic household would have seen the right to stay home as "freedom."

It was not gender discrimination or sexist oppression that kept privileged women of all races from working outside the home, it was the fact that the jobs that would have been available to them would have been the same low-paying unskilled labor open to all working women. Elite groups of highly educated females stayed at home rather than do the type of work large numbers of lower-middle-class and working-class women were doing. Occasionally, a few of these women defied convention and worked outside the home performing tasks way below their educational skills and facing resistance from husbands and family. It was this resistance that turned the issue of their working outside the home into an issue of gender discrimination and made opposing patriarchy and seeking equal rights with men of their class the political platform that chose feminism rather than class struggle.

From the outset, reformist white women with class privilege were well aware that the power and freedom they wanted was the freedom they perceived men of their class enjoying. Their resistance to patriarchal male domination in the domestic household provided them with a connection they could use to unite across class with other women

who were weary of male domination. But only privileged women had the luxury to imagine working outside the home would actually provide them with an income which would enable them to be economically self-sufficient. Working-class women already knew that the wages they received would not liberate them.

Reformist efforts on the part of privileged groups of women to change the workforce so that women workers would be paid more and face less gender-based discrimination and harassment on the job had positive impact on the lives of all women. And these gains are important. Yet the fact that the privileged gained in class power while masses of women still do not receive wage equity with men is an indication of the way in which class interests superceded feminist efforts to change the workforce so that women would receive equal pay for equal work.

Lesbian feminist thinkers were among the first activists to raise the issue of class in feminist movement expressing their viewpoints in an accessible language. They were a group of women who had not imagined they could depend on husbands to support them. And they were often much more aware than their straight counterparts of the difficulties all women would face in the workforce. In the early '70s anthologies like *Class and Feminism*) edited by Charlotte Bunch and Nancy Myron, published work written by women from diverse class backgrounds who were confronting the issue in feminist circles. Each essay emphasized the fact that class was not simply a question of money. In "The Last Straw," Rita Mae Brown (who was not a famous writer at the time) clearly stated:

> Class is much more than Marx's definition of relationship to the means of production. Class involved your behavior, your basic assumptions, how you are taught to behave,

> what you expect from yourself and from others, your concept of a future, how you understand problems and solve them, how you think, feel, act.

These women who entered feminist groups made up of diverse classes were among the first to see that the vision of a politically based sisterhood where all females would unite together to fight patriarchy could not emerge until the issue of class was confronted.

Placing class on feminist agendas opened up the space where the intersections of class and race were made apparent. Within the institutionalized race, sex, class social system in our society black females were clearly at the bottom of the economic totem pole. Initially, well-educated white women from working-class backgrounds were more visible than black females of all classes in feminist movement. They were a minority within the movement, but theirs was the voice of experience. They knew better than their privileged-class comrades of any race the costs of resisting race, class, and gender domination. They knew what it was like to struggle to change one's economic situation. Between them and their privileged-class comrades there were ongoing conflicts over appropriate behavior, over the issues that would be presented as fundamental feminist concerns. Within feminist movement women from privileged-class backgrounds who had never before been involved in leftist freedom fighting learned the concrete politics of class struggle, confronting challenges made by less privileged women, and also learning in the process assertiveness skills and constructive ways to cope with conflict. Despite constructive intervention many privileged white women continued to act as though feminism belonged to them, as though they were in charge.

Mainstream patriarchy reinforced the idea that the concerns of women from privileged-class

groups were the only ones worthy of receiving attention. Feminist reform aimed to gain social equality for women within the existing structure. Privileged women wanted equality with men of their class. Despite sexism among their class they would not have wanted to have the lot of working class men. Feminist efforts to grant women social equality with men of their class neatly coincided with white supremacist capitalist patriarchal fears that white power would diminish if nonwhite people gained equal access to economic power and privilege. Supporting what in effect became white power reformist feminism enabled the mainstream white supremacist patriarchy to bolster its power while simultaneously undermining the radical politics of feminism.

Only revolutionary feminist thinkers expressed outrage at this co-optation of feminist movement. Our critique and outrage gained a hearing the alternative press. In her collection of essays, *The Coming of Black Genocide,* radical white activist Mary Barfoot boldly stated:

> There are white women, hurt and angry, who believed that the '70s women's movement meant sisterhood, and who feel betrayed by escalator women. By women who went back home to the patriarchy. But the women's movement never left the father Dick's side. ... There was no war. And there was no liberation. We got a share of genocide profits and we love it. We are Sisters of Patriarchy, and true supporters of national and class oppression, Patriarchy in its highest form is Euro-imperialism on a world scale. If we're Dick's sister and want what he has gotten, then in the end we support that system that he got it all from.

Indeed, many more feminist women found and find it easier to consider divesting o f white supremacist

thinking than of their class elitism.

As privileged women gained greater access to economic power with men of their class feminist discussions of class were no longer commonplace. Instead, all women were encouraged to see the economic gains of affluent females as a positive sign for all women. In actuality, these gains rarely changed the lot of poor and working-class women. And since privileged men did not become equal caretakers in the domestic household, the freedom of privileged-class women of all races has required the sustained subordination of working-class and poor women. In the '90s collusion with the existing social structure was the price of "women's liberation." At the end of the day class power proved to be more important than feminism. And this collusion helped destabilize feminist movement. When women acquired greater class status and power without conducting themselves differently from males, feminist politics were undermined. Lots of women felt betrayed. Middle- and lower-middle-class women who were suddenly compelled by the ethos of feminism to enter the workforce did not feel liberated once they faced the hard truth that working outside the home did not mean work in the home would be equally shared with male partners. No-fault divorce proved to be more economically beneficial to men than women. As many black women/women of color saw white women from privileged classes benefiting economically more than other groups from reformist feminist gains, from gender being tacked on to racial affirmative action, it simply reaffirmed their fear that feminism was really about increasing white power. The most profound betrayal of feminist issues has been the lack of mass-based feminist protest challenging the government's assault on single mothers and the dismantling of the welfare system. Privileged women, many of whom call themselves feminists, have simply turned away from the "feminization of poverty."

The voices of "power feminism" tend to be highlighted in mass media far more than the voices of individual feminist women who have gained class power without betraying our solidarity towards those groups without class privilege. Being true to feminist politics, our goals were and are to become economically self-sufficient and to find ways to assist other women in their efforts to better themselves economically. Our experiences counter the assumption that women can only gain economically by acting in collusion with the existing capitalist patriarchy. All over this nation individual feminists with class power who support a revolutionary vision of social change share resources and use our power to aid reforms that will improve the lives of women irrespective of class.

The only genuine hope of feminist liberation lies with a vision of social change which challenges class elitism. Western women have gained class power and greater gender inequality because a global white supremacist patriarchy enslaves and/or subordinates masses of third-world women. In this country the combined forces of a booming prison industry and workfare-oriented welfare in conjunction with conservative immigration policy create and condone the conditions for indentured slavery. Ending welfare will create a new underclass of women and children to be abused and exploited by the existing structures of domination.

Given the changing realities of class in our nation, widening gaps between the rich and poor, and the continued feminization of poverty, we desperately need a mass-based radical feminist movement that can build on the strength of the past, including the positive gains generated by reforms, while offering meaningful interrogation of existing feminist theory that was simply wrongminded while offering us new strategies. Significantly a visionary movement would ground its work in the concrete conditions of working-class and poor women. That means creating a movement that begins education for critical consciousness where women, feminist

RACE, MULTICULTURALISM, AND PEDAGOGIES OF DISSENT

CHANDRA TALPADE MOHANTY

PREAMBLE

Growing up in India, I was Indian; teaching high school in Nigeria, I was a foreigner (still Indian), albeit a familiar one. As a graduate student in Illinois, I was first a "Third World" foreign student, and then a person of color. Doing research in London, I was black. As a professor at an American university, I am an Asian woman—although South Asian racial profiles fit uneasily into the "Asian" category—and because I choose to identify myself as such, an antiracist feminist of color. In North America I was also a "resident alien" with an Indian passport—I am now a U.S. citizen whose racialization has shifted dramatically (and negatively) since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001.

Of course through all these journeys into and across the borders of countries, educational institutions, and social movements, I was and am a feminist. But along with the changing labels and self-identifications came new questions and contradictions which I needed to understand. Paying attention to the processes of my own racialization, for instance, transformed my understandings of the meaning of feminist praxis. Was being a feminist in India the same as being a feminist in the United States of America? In terms of personal integrity, everyday political and personal practices, and the advocacy of justice, equity and autonomy for women, yes. But in terms of seeing myself as a woman of color (not just Indian, but of Indian origin) and being treated as one, there are vast differences in how I engage in feminist praxis. After all, living as an immigrant, conscious of and engaged with the script of American racism and imperialism is quite different from living as a "color blind" foreigner.

women with class power, need to put in place low-income housing women can own. The creation of housing co-ops with feminist principles would show the ways feminist struggle is relevant to all women's lives.

When women with class power opportunistically use a feminist platform while undermining feminist politics that help keep in place a patriarchal system that will ultimately re-subordinate them, they do not just betray feminism; they betray themselves. Returning to a discussion of class, feminist women and men will restore the conditions needed for solidarity. We will then be better able to envision a world where resources are shared and opportunities for personal growth abound for everyone irrespective of their class.

GLOBAL FEMINISM

Individual female freedom fighters all over the world have single-handedly struggled against patriarchy and male domination. Since the first people on the planet earth were nonwhite it is unlikely that white women were the first females to rebel against male domination. In white supremacist capitalist patriarchal Western culture neocolonial thinking sets the tone for many cultural practices. That thinking always focuses on who has conquered a territory, who has ownership, who has the right to rule. Contemporary feminist politics did not come into being as a radical response to neocolonialism.

Privileged-class white women swiftly declared their "ownership" of the movement, placing working-class white women, poor white women, and all women of color in the position of followers. It did not matter how many working-class white women or individual black women spearheaded the women's movement in radical directions. At the end of the day white women with class power declared that they owned the movement, that they were the leaders and the rest of merely followers. Parasitic class relations have overshadowed issues of race, nation, and gender in contemporary neocolonialism. And feminism did not remain aloof from that dynamic.

Initially when feminist leaders in the United States proclaimed the need for gender equality here they did not seek to find out if corresponding movements were taking place among women around the world. Instead they declared themselves liberated and therefore in the position to liberate their less fortunate sisters, especially those in the "third world." This neocolonial paternalism had already been enacted to keep women of color in the background so that only conservative/liberal white women would be the authentic representatives of feminism. Radical white women tend not to be "represented," and, if represented at all, they are depicted as a fringe freak element. No wonder then that the "power feminism" of the '90s offers wealthy white heterosexual women as the examples of feminist success.

In truth their hegemonic takeover of feminist rhetoric about equality has helped mask their allegiance to the ruling classes within white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. Radical feminists were dismayed to witness so many women (of all races) appropriating feminist jargon while sustaining their

Difference, diversity, multiculturalism, globalization, and how we think about them complicate my intellectual and political landscape in the United States, and I turn to theory, and to the potential of political education, for some way to link my "personal" story with larger stories. For a way to understand the profoundly collective and historical context within which my personal story and journey through difference, and through the inequities of power, privilege, discrimination, marginalization, exclusion, colonization, and oppression, make sense. I am speaking of how I came to recognize, understand, think through, and organize against sexism, racism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and elitism in the United States.

I "do" feminist and anti racist theory as a scholar, teacher, and activist in the U.S. academy—so how do I understand the significance of theory and analysis? I believe that meanings of the "personal" (as in my story) are not static, but that they change through experience, and with knowledge. I am not talking about the personal as "immediate feelings expressed confessionally" but as something that is deeply historical and collective-as determined by our commitment to Western imperialism and transnational capitalism. While feminists in the United States were right to call attention to the need for global equality for women, problems arose as those individual feminists with class power projected imperialist fantasies onto women globally, the major fantasy being that women in the United States have more rights than any group of women globally, are "free" if they want to be, and therefore have the right to lead feminist movement and set feminist agendas for all the other women in the world, particularly women in third world countries. Such thinking merely mirrors the imperialist racism and sexism of ruling groups of Western men.

Most women in the United States do not even know or use the terms colonialism and neocolonialism. Most American women, particularly white women, have not decolonized their thinking either in relation to the racism, sexism, and class elitism they hold towards less powerful groups of women in this society or the masses of women globally. When unenlightened individual feminist thinkers addressed global issues of gender exploitation and oppression they did and do so from a perspective of neocolonialism. Significantly, radical white women writing in *Night-Vision: Illuminating War and Class on the Neo-Colonial Terrain* emphasize the reality that "to not understand neocolonialism is to not fully live in the present." Since unenlightened white feminists were unwilling to acknowledge the spheres of American life where they acted and act in collusion with imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, sustained protest and resistance on the part of black women/women of color and our radical white sisters was needed to break the wall of denial.

Yet even when large numbers of feminist activists adopted a perspective which included race, gender, class, and nationality, the white "power feminists" continued to project an image of feminism that linked and links women's equality with imperialism. Global women's issues like forced female circumcision, sex clubs in Thailand, the veiling of women in Africa, India, the Middle East, and Europe, the killing of female children in China, remain important concerns. However feminist women in the West are still struggling to decolonize feminist thinking and practice so that these issues can be addressed in a manner that does not reinscribe Western imperialism. Consider the way many Western women, white and black, have confronted the issue of female circumcision in Africa and the Middle East. Usually these countries are depicted as "barbaric and uncivilized," the sexism there portrayed as more brutal and dangerous to women than the sexism here in the United States.

A decolonized feminist perspective would first and foremost examine how sexist practices in relation to women's bodies globally are linked. For example: linking circumcision with life-threatening eating disorders (which are the direct consequence of a culture imposing thinness as a beauty ideal) or any life-threatening cosmetic surgery would emphasize that the sexism, the misogyny, underlying practices globally mirror the sexism here in this country. When issues are addressed in this manner Western imperialism is not reinscribed and feminism cannot be appropriated by transnational capitalism as yet another luxury product from the West women in other cultures must fight to have the right to consume.

Until radical women in the United States challenge those groups of women posing as feminists in the interest of class opportunism, the tone of global feminism in the West will continue to be set by those with the greatest class power who hold old biases. Radical feminist work around the world daily strengthens political solidarity women beyond the boundaries of race/ethnicity and nationality. Mainstream mass media rarely calls attention to these positive interventions. In *Hatreds: Racialized and Sexualized Conflicts in the 21st Century*, Zillah Eisenstein shares the insight:

involvement in collectivities and communities and through political engagement. In fact it is this understanding of experience and of the personal that makes theory possible. So for me, theory is a deepening of the political, not a moving away from it: a distillation of experience, and an intensification of the personal. The best theory makes personal experience and individual stories communicable. I think this kind of theoretical, analytical thinking allows us to mediate between different histories and understandings of the personal. One of the fundamental challenges of "diversity" after all is to understand our collective differences in terms of historical agency and responsibility so that we can understand others and build solidarities across divisive boundaries.

Even if we think we are not personally racist or sexist, we are clearly marked by the burdens and privileges of our histories and locations. So what does it mean to think through, theorize, and engage questions of difference and power? It means that we understand race, class, gender, nation, sexuality, and colonialism not just in terms of static, embodied categories but in terms of histories and experiences that tie us together—

that are fundamentally interwoven into our lives. So "race" or "Asianness" or "brownness" is not embodied in me, but a history of colonialism, racism, sexism, as well as of privilege (class and status) is involved in my relation to white people as well as people of color in the United States.

This means untangling whiteness, Americanness, as well as blackness in the United States, in trying to understand my own story of racialization. So the theoretical insights I find useful in thinking about the challenges posed by a radical multiculturalism in the United States—as well as, in different ways, early twenty-first century India—are the need to think relationally about questions of power, equality, and justice, the need to be inclusive in our thinking, and the necessity of our thinking and organizing being contextual, deeply rooted in questions of history and experience. The challenge of race and multiculturalism now lies in understanding a color line that is global—not contained anymore within the geography of the United States, if it ever was. I begin with this preamble because it locates my own intellectual and political genealogy in a chapter that addresses questions of curricular, pedagogical, policy, and institutional practices around antiracist feminist education.

> Feminism(s) as transnational—imagined as the rejection of false race/gender borders and falsely constructed "other"—is a major challenge to masculinist nationalism, the distortions of statist communism and "free"-market globalism. It is a feminism that recognizes individual diversity, and freedom, and equality, defined through and beyond north/west and south/east dialogues.

No one who has studied the growth of global feminism can deny the Important work women are doing to ensure our freedom. No one can deny that Western women, particularly women in the United States have contributed much that is needed to this struggle and need contribute more. The goal of global feminism is to reach out and join global struggles to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression.

RACE AND GENDER

No intervention changed the face of American feminism more than the demand that feminist thinkers acknowledge the reality of race and racism. All white women in this nation know that their status is different from that of black women/women of color. They know this from the time they are little girls watching television and seeing only their images, and looking at magazines and seeing only their images. They know that the only reason nonwhites are absent/invisible is because they are not white. All white women in this nation know that whiteness is a privileged category. The fact that white females may choose to repress or deny this knowledge does not mean they are ignorant: it means that they are in denial.

No group of white women understood the differences in their status and that of black women more than the group of politically conscious white females who were active in civil rights struggle. Diaries and memoirs of this period in American history written by white women document this knowledge. Yet many of these individuals moved from civil rights into women's liberation and spearheaded a feminist movement where they suppressed and denied the awareness of difference they had seen and heard articulated firsthand in civil rights struggle. Just because they participated in anti-racist struggle did not mean that they had divested of white supremacy, of notions that they were superior to black females, more informed, better educated, more suited to "lead" a movement.

In many ways they were following in the footsteps of their abolitionist ancestors who had demanded that everyone (white women and black people) be given the right to vote, but, when faced with the possibility that black males might gain the right to vote while they were denied it on the basis of gender, they chose to ally themselves with men, uniting under the rubric of white supremacy. Contemporary white females witnessing the militant demand for more rights for black people chose that moment to demand more rights for themselves. Some of these individuals claim that it was working on behalf of civil rights that made them aware of sexism and sexist oppression. Yet if this was the whole picture one might think their newfound political awareness of difference would have carried over into the way they theorized contemporary feminist movement.

They entered the movement erasing and denying difference, not playing race alongside gender, but eliminating race from the picture. Foregrounding gender meant that white women could take center stage, could claim the movement as theirs, even as they called on all women to join. The utopian vision of sisterhood evoked in a feminist movement that initially did not take racial difference or anti-racist struggle seriously did not capture the imagination of most black women/women of color. Individual black women who were active

FEMINISM AND THE LANGUAGE OF DIFFERENCE

"Isn't the whole point to have a voice?" This is the last sentence of an essay by Marnia Lazreg on writing as a woman on women in Algeria (1988, 81-107). Lazreg examines academic feminist scholarship on women in the Middle East and North Africa in the context of what she calls a "Western gynocentric" notion of the difference between First and Third World women. Arguing for an understanding of "intersubjectivity" as the basis for comparison across cultures and histories, Lazreg formulates the problem of ethnocentrism and the related question of voice in this way:

> To take intersubjectivity into consideration when studying Algerian women or other Third World women means seeing their lives as meaningful, coherent, and understandable instead of being infused "by us" with doom and sorrow. It means that their lives like "ours" are structured by economic, political, and cultural

> factors. It means that these women, like "us," are engaged in the process of adjusting, often shaping, at times resisting and even transforming their environment. It means they have their own individuality; they are "for themselves" instead of being "for us." An appropriation of their singular individuality to fit the generalizing categories of "our" analyses is an assault on their integrity and on their identity. (98)

In my own work I have argued in a similar way against the use of analytic categories and political positioning in feminist studies that discursively present Third World women as a homogeneous, undifferentiated group leading truncated lives, victimized by the combined weight of their traditions, cultures, and beliefs, and "our" (Eurocentric) history. In examining particular assumptions of feminist scholarship that are uncritically grounded in Western humanism and its modes of "disinterested scholarship," I have tried to demonstrate that this scholarship inadvertently produces Western women as the only legitimate subjects

in the movement from its inception for the most part stayed in their place. When the feminist movement began racial integration was still rare. Many black people were learning how to interact with whites on the basis of being peers for the first time in their lives. No wonder individual black women choosing feminism were reluctant to introduce their awareness of race. It must have felt so awesome to have white women evoke sisterhood in a world where they had mainly experienced white women as exploiters and oppressors.

A younger generation of black females/women of color in the late '70s and early '80s challenged white female racism. Unlike our older black women allies we had for the most part been educated in predominantly white settings. Most of us had never been in a subordinated position in relation to a white female. Most of us had not been in the workforce. We had never been in our place. We were better positioned to critique racism and white supremacy within the women's movement. Individual white women who had attempted to organize the movement around the banner of common oppression evoking the notion that women constituted a sexual class/caste were the most reluctant to acknowledge differences among women, differences that overshadowed all the common experiences female shared. Race was the most obvious difference.

In the '70s I wrote the first draft of *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. I was 19 years old. I had never worked a full-time job. I had come from a racially segregated small town in the south to Stanford University. While I had grown up resisting patriarchal thinking, college was the place where I embraced feminist politics. It was there as the only black female present in feminist classrooms, in consciousness-raising, that I began to engage race and gender theoretically. It was there that I began to demand recognition of the way in which racist biases were shaping feminist thinking and call for change. At other locations individual black women/women of color were making the same critique.

In those days white women who were unwilling to face the reality of racism and racial difference accused us of being traitors by introducing race. Wrongly they saw us as deflecting focus away from gender. In reality, we were demanding that we look at the status of females realistically, and that realistic understanding serve as the foundation for a real feminist politic. Our intent was not to diminish the vision of sisterhood. We sought to put in place a concrete politics of solidarity that would make genuine sisterhood possible. We knew that there could no real sisterhood between white women and women of color if white women were not able to divest of white supremacy, if feminist movement were not fundamentally anti-racist.

Critical interventions around race did not destroy the women's movement; it became stronger. Breaking through denial about race helped women face the reality of difference on all levels. And we were finally putting in place a movement that did not place the class interests of privileged women, especially white women, over that of all other women. We put in place a vision of sisterhood where all our realities could be spoken. There has been no contemporary movement for social justice where individual participants engaged in the dialectical exchange that occurred among feminist thinkers about race which led to the re-thinking of much feminist theory and practice. The fact that participants in the feminist movement could face critique and challenge while still remaining wholeheartedly committed to a vision of justice, of liberation, is a testament to the movement's strength and power. It shows us that no matter how misguided feminist thinkers have been in the past, the will to change, the will to create the context for struggle and liberation, remains stronger than the need to hold on to wrong beliefs and assumptions.

> of struggle, while Third World women are heard as fragmented, inarticulate voices in (and from) the dark. Arguing against a hastily derived notion of "universal sisterhood" that assumes a commonality of gender experience across race and national lines, I have suggested the complexity of our historical (and positional) differences and the need for creating an analytical space for understanding Third World women as the "subjects" of our various struggles "in history." I posit solidarity rather than sisterhood as the basis for mutually accountable and equitable relationships among different communities of women. Other scholars have made similar arguments, and the question of what we might provisionally call "Third World women's voices" has begun to be addressed seriously in feminist scholarship.
>
> In the last few decades there has been a blossoming of feminist discourse around questions of "racial difference" and "pluralism." While this work is often an important corrective to earlier middle-class (white) characterizations of sexual difference, the goal of the analysis of difference and the challenge of race was not pluralism as the proliferation of discourse on ethnicities as

discrete and separate cultures. The challenge of race resides in a fundamental reconceptualization of our categories of analysis so that differences can be historically specified and understood as part of larger political processes and systems.[1] The central issue, then, is not one of merely "acknowledging" difference; rather, the most difficult question concerns the kind of difference that is acknowledged and engaged. Difference seen as benign variation (diversity), for instance, rather than as conflict, struggle, or the threat of disruption, bypasses power as well as history to suggest a harmonious, empty pluralism.[2] On the other hand, difference defined as asymmetrical and incommensurate cultural spheres situated within hierarchies of domination and resistance cannot be accommodated within a discourse of "harmony in diversity." A strategic critique of the contemporary language of difference, diversity, and power thus would be crucial to a feminist project concerned with revolutionary social change.

In the best, self-reflexive traditions of feminist inquiry, the production of knowledge about cultural and geographical others is no longer seen as apolitical and disinterested.

1. I am referring here to a particular trajectory of feminist scholarship in the 1970s and 1980s. While scholarship in the 1970s foregrounded gender as the fundamental category of analysis and thus enabled the transformation of numerous disciplinary and canonical boundaries, on the basis of the recognition of sexual difference as hierarchy and inequality, scholarship in the 1980s introduced the categories of race and sexuality in the form of internal challenges to the earlier scholarship. These challenges were introduced on both political and methodological grounds by feminists who often considered themselves disenfranchised by the 1970s feminism: lesbian and heterosexual women of color, postcolonial, Third World women, poor women, and so on. While the feminist turn to postmodernism suggests the fragmentation of unitary assumptions of gender and enables a more differentiated analysis of inequality, this critique was prefigured in the earlier political analyses of Third World feminists. The historical trajectory of the political and conceptual categories of feminist analysis can be traced by analyzing developments in feminist journals such as *Signs* and *Feminist Studies,* feminist publishing houses, and curriculum "integration" projects through the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

2. For instance, Bernard (1987) codifies difference as the exclusive relation of men to women, and women to women: difference as variation among women and as conflict between men and women.

For years I witnessed the reluctance of white feminist thinkers to acknowledge the importance of race. I witnessed their refusal to divest of white supremacy, their unwillingness to acknowledge that an anti-racist feminist movement was the only political foundation that would make sisterhood be a reality. And I witnessed the revolution in consciousness that occurred as individual women began to break free of denial, to break free of white supremacist thinking. These awesome changes restore my faith in feminist movement and strengthen the solidarity I feel towards all women.

Overall feminist thinking and feminist theory has benefited from all critical interventions on the issue of race. The only problematic arena has been that of translating theory into practice. While individual white women have incorporated an analysis of race into much feminist scholarship, these insights have not had as much impact on the day to day relations between white women and women of color. Anti-racist interactions between women are difficult in a society that remains racially segregated.

3. It is clear from Lazreg's reliance on a notion like intersubjectivity that her understanding of the issue I am addressing in this essay is far from simple (Lazreg 1988). Claiming a voice is for her, as well as for me, a complex historical and political act that involves under standing the interrelationships of voices. The term "intersubjectivity," however, drawing as it does on a phenomenological humanism, brings with it difficult political programs. For a nonhumanist, alternative account of the question of "historical agencies" and their "imbrication," see Mohanty 1997, esp. the introduction and ch. 6. Mohanty discusses the question of agency and its historical imbrication (rather than "intersubjectivity") as constituting the fundamental theoretical basis for comparison across cultures.

4. In spite of problems of definition, I use the term "Third World," and , in this particular context (the U.S. academy), I identify myself as a "Third World" scholar . I use the term here to designate peoples from formerly colonized countries, as well as people of color in the United States. Using the designation "Third World" to identify colonized peoples in the domestic as well as the international arena may appear reductive because it suggests a commonality and per haps even an equation among peoples with very diverse cultures and histories and appears to reinforce implicitly existing economic and cultural hierarchies between the "First" and the "Third" World. This is not my intention. I use the term with full awareness of these difficulties and because these are the terms available to us at the moment. In addition, in the particular discursive context of Western feminist scholarship and of the U.S. academy, "Third World" is an oppositional designation that can be empowering even while it necessitates a continuous questioning.

Despite diverse work settings a vast majority of folks still socialize only with people of their own group. Racism and sexism combined create harmful barriers between women. So far feminist strategies to change this have not been very useful.

Individual white women and women of color who have worked through difficulties to make the space where bonds of love and political solidarity can emerge need to share the methods and strategies that we have successfully employed. Almost no attention is given the relationship between girls of different races. Biased feminist scholarship which attempts to show that white girls are somehow more vulnerable to sexist conditioning than girls of color simply perpetuates the white supremacist assumption that white females require and deserve more attention to their concerns and ills than other groups. Indeed while girls of color may express

But while feminist activists and progressive scholars have made a significant dent in the colonialist and colonizing feminist scholarship of the late seventies and eighties, this does not mean that questions of what Lazreg calls "intersubjectivity" or of history vis-a-vis Third World peoples have been successfully articulated.[3]

In any case, "scholarship"—feminist, Marxist, postcolonial, or Third World-is not the only site for the production of knowledge about Third World women/peoples.[4] The very same questions (as those suggested in relation to scholarship) can be raised in relation to our teaching and learning practices in the classroom, as well as the discursive and managerial practices of U.S. colleges and universities. Feminists writing about race and racism have had a lot to say about scholarship, but perhaps our pedagogical and institutional practices and their relation to scholarship have not been examined with quite the same care and attention. Radical educators have long argued that the academy and the classroom itself are not mere sites of instruction. They are also political and cultural sites that represent accommodations and contestations over knowledge by differently

empowered social constituencies.[5] Thus teachers and students produce, reinforce, recreate, resist, and transform ideas about race, gender, and difference in the classroom. Also, the academic institutions in which we are located create similar paradigms, canons, and voices that embody and transcribe race and gender.

It is this frame of institutional and pedagogical practice that I examine in this chapter. Specifically, I analyze the operation and management of discourses of race and difference in two educational sites: the women's studies classroom and the workshops on "diversity" for upper-level (largely white) administrators. The links between these two educational sites lie in the (often active) creation of discourses of "difference." In other words, I suggest that educational practices as they are shaped and reshaped at these sites cannot be analyzed as merely transmitting already codified ideas of difference. These practices often produce, codify, and even rewrite histories of race and colonialism in the name of difference. In a previous chapter I discussed the corporatization of the academy and the production of privatized citizenship. Here I begin the analysis from a different place,

5. See especially the work of Paulo Freire, Michael Apple, Basil Bernstein, Pierre Bourdieu, and Henry Giroux. While a number of these educational theorists offer radical critiques of education on the basis of class hierarchies, very few do so on the basis of gender or race. However, the theoretical suggestions in this literature are provocative and can be used to advantage in feminist analysis. The special issue of *Harvard Educational Review* (1988) is also an excellent resource. See Freire 1973, Freire and Macedo 1985, Apple 1979, Bernstein 1975, Giroux 1983 and 1988, and Bourdieu and Passeron 1977. For feminist analyses of education and the academy, see Bunch and Pollack 1983, Minnich et al 1988, Schuster and Van Dyne 1985, Cohee et al 1998, and Minnich 1990. See also back issues of the journals *Women's Studies Quarterly, Women's Studies International Forum, Radical Teacher,* and ***Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies.***

different behavior than their white counterparts they are not only internalizing sexist conditioning, they are far more likely to be victimized by sexism in ways that are irreparable.

Feminist movement, especially the work of visionary black activists, paved the way for a reconsideration of race and racism that has had positive impact on our society as a whole. Rarely do mainstream social critiques acknowledge this fact. As a feminist theorist who has written extensively about the issue of race and racism within feminist movement, I know that there remains much that needs to be challenged and changed, but it is equally important to celebrate the enormous changes that have occurred. That celebration, understanding our triumphs and using them as models, means that they can become the sound foundation for the building of a mass-based anti-racist feminist movement.

with a brief discussion of the academy as the site of political struggle and radical transformation.

KNOWLEDGE AND LOCATION IN THE U.S. ACADEMY

A number of educators, Paulo Freire among them, have argued that education represents both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. Thus, education becomes a central terrain where power and politics operate out of the lived culture of individuals and groups situated in asymmetrical social and political spaces. This way of understanding the academy entails a critique of education as the mere accumulation of disciplinary knowledges that can be exchanged on the world market for upward mobility. There are much larger questions at stake in the academy these days, not the least of which are questions of self-and collective knowledge of marginal peoples and the recovery of alternative, oppositional histories of domination and struggle. Here, disciplinary parameters matter less than questions of power, history, and self-identity. For knowledge, the very act of knowing, is related to the power of self-definition. This definition of knowledge is central to the pedagogical projects of fields such as women's studies, black studies, and ethnic studies. By their very location in the academy, fields such as women's studies are grounded in definitions of difference, difference that attempts to resist incorporation and appropriation by providing a space for historically silenced peoples to construct knowledge. These knowledges have always been fundamentally oppositional, while running the risk of accommodation and assimilation and consequent depoliticization in the academy. It is only in the late twentieth century, on the heels of domestic and global oppositional political movements, that the boundaries dividing knowledge into its traditional disciplines have been shaken loose, and new, often heretical, knowledges have emerged, modifying the structures of knowledge and power as we have

inherited them. In other words, new analytic spaces have been opened up in the academy, spaces that make possible thinking of knowledge as praxis, of knowledge as embodying the very seeds of transformation and change. The appropriation of these analytic spaces and the challenge of radical educational practice are thus to involve the development of critical knowledges (what women's, black, and ethnic studies attempt) and, simultaneously, to critique knowledge itself.

Education for critical consciousness or critical pedagogy, as it is sometimes called, requires a reformulation of the knowledge-as-accumulated capital model of education and focuses instead on the link between the historical configuration of social forms and the way they work subjectively. This issue of subjectivity represents a realization of the fact that who we are, how we act, what we think, and what stories we tell become more intelligible within an epistemological framework that begins by recognizing existing hegemonic histories. The issue of subjectivity and voice thus concerns the effort to understand our specific locations in the educational process and in the institutions through which we are constituted. Resistance lies in self-conscious engagement with dominant, normative discourses and representations and in the active creation of oppositional analytic and cultural spaces. Resistance that is random and isolated is clearly not as effective as that which is mobilized through systematic politicized practices of teaching and learning. Uncovering and reclaiming subjugated knowledges is one way to lay claim to alternative histories. But these knowledges need to be understood and defined "pedagogically," as questions of strategy and practice as well as of scholarship, in order to transform educational institutions radically. And this, in turn, requires taking the questions of experience seriously.

To this effect, I draw on scholarship on and by Third World educators in higher education, on

6. I am fully aware that I am drawing on an extremely limited (and some might say atypical) sample for this analysis. Clearly, in the bulk of American colleges and universities, the very introduction of questions of pluralism and difference is itself a radical and oppositional gesture. However, in the more liberal institutions of higher learning, questions of pluralism have had a particular institutional history, and I draw on the example of the college I taught at to investigate the implications of this specific institutionalization of discourses of pluralism. I am concerned with raising some political and intellectual questions that have urgent implications for the discourses of race and racism in the academy, not with providing statistically significant data on U.S. institutions of higher learning nor with claiming "representativeness" for the liberal arts college I draw on to raise these questions.

an analysis of the effects of my own pedagogical practices, on documents about "affirmative action" and "diversity in the curriculum" published by the administration of the college where I worked a number of years ago, and on my own observations and conversations over the past number of years.[6] I do so in order to suggest that the effect of the proliferation of ideologies of pluralism in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1990s in the context of the (limited) implementation of affirmative action in institutions of higher education, and of the corporate transformation of the academy, has been to create what might be called the race industry, an industry that is responsible for the management, commodification, and domestication of race on American campuses. This commodification of race determines the politics of voice for Third World peoples, whether they/we happen to be faculty, students, administrators, or service staff. This, in turn, has long-term effects on the definitions of the identity and agency of nonwhite people in the academy. The race industry is also of course an excellent example of the corporatization of the academy—a visible if somewhat depressing site to explore in terms of the effects of capitalist commodity culture and citizenship on curricular, research and pedagogical priorities in the academy.

There are a number of urgent reasons for undertaking such an analysis: the need to assess the material and ideological effects of affirmative action policies within liberal (rather than conservative Bloom- or Hirsch-style) discourses and institutions that profess a commitment to pluralism and social change, the need to understand this management of race in the liberal academy in relation to a larger discourse on race and discrimination within the neoconservatism of the United States, and the need for Third World feminists to move outside the arena of (sometimes) exclusive engagement with racism in white women's movements and scholarship and to broaden the scope of our struggles to the academy as a whole.

The management of gender, race, class, and sexuality are inextricably linked in the public arena. The New Right agenda since the mid-r970s makes this explicit: busing, gun rights, and welfare are clearly linked to the issues of reproductive and sexual rights.[7] And the links between abortion rights (gender-based struggles) and affirmative action (struggles over race and racism) are clearer in the 1990s and in the early 2000s. While the most challenging critiques of hegemonic feminism were launched in the late 1970s and the 1g80s, the present historical moment necessitates taking on board institutional discourses that actively construct and maintain a discourse of difference and pluralism. This in turn calls for assuming responsibility for the politics of voice as it is institutionalized in the academy's "liberal" response to the very questions feminism and other oppositional discourses have raised.[8]

BLACK/ETHNIC STUDIES AND WOMEN'S STUDIES: INTERSECTIONS AND CONFLUENCES

For us, there is nothing optional about "black experience" and/or "black studies": we must know ourselves.
—June Jordan, Civil Wars, 1981

The origins of black, ethnic, and women's studies programs, unlike those of most academic disciplines, can be traced to oppositional social movements. In particular, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, and other Third World liberation struggles fueled the demand for a knowledge and history "of our own." June Jordan's claim that "we must know ourselves" suggests the urgency embedded in the formation of black studies in the late 1960s. Between 1966 and 1970 most American colleges and universities added courses on Afro-American experience and history to their curricula. This was the direct outcome of a number of sociohistorical factors, not the least of which was an increase in black student enrollment in higher education and the broad-based call for a fundamental transformation of a racist, Eurocentric curriculum. Among the earliest programs were the black and African American studies programs at San Francisco State and Cornell, both of which came into being in 1968, on the heels of militant political organizing on the part of students and faculty at these institutions.[9] A symposium on black studies in early 1968 at Yale University not only inaugurated African American studies at Yale, but also marked a watershed in the national development of black studies programs.[10] In the spring of 1969, the University of California at Berkeley instituted a department of ethnic studies, divided into Afro-American, Chicano, contemporary Asian American, and Native American studies divisions.

A number of women's studies programs also came into being around this time. The first women's studies program was formed in 1969 at San Diego State University. Over nine hundred such programs exist now across the United States (Sheftall 1995).Women's studies programs often drew on the institutional frameworks and structures of existing interdisciplinary programs such as black and ethnic studies. In addition, besides sharing political origins, an interdisciplinary project, and foregrounding questions of social and political inequality in their knowledge base, women's, black, and ethnic studies programs increasingly share pedagogical and research methods. Such programs thus create the possibility of a counterhegemonic discourse and oppositional analytic spaces within the institution. Of course, since these programs are most often located within the boundaries of conservative or liberal white-male-dominated institutions, they face questions of co-optation and accommodation.

In an essay examining the relations among ethnicity, ideology, and the academy (1987),

7. For analyses of the inter section of the race and sex agendas of the New Right, see essays in the special double issue of *Radical America* (1981). I am indebted to Zillah Eisenstein for sharing her 1990 essay with me and for our discussions on this subject.

8. Some of the most poignant and incisive critiques of the inscription of race and difference in scholarly institutional discourses have been raised by Third World scholars working outside women's studies. See West 1987, Sivanandan 1985, and Mohanty 1989b.

9. Information about the origins of black studies is drawn from Huggins (1985). For provocative analyses and historic essays on black studies in the 1g6os and 1970s, see Blassingame 1973.

10. For documentation of this conference , see Robinson, Foster , and Ogilvie 1969.

Rosaura Sanchez maintains that new academic programs arise out of specific interests in bodies of knowledge. She traces the origins of ethnic and women's studies programs, however, to a defensive political move, the state's institutionalization of a discourse of reform in response to the civil rights movement:

> Ethnic studies programs were instituted at a moment when the university had to speak a particular language to quell student protests and to ensure that university research and business could be conducted as usual. The university was able to create and integrate these programs administratively under its umbrella, allowing on the one hand , for a potential firecracker to diffuse itself and, on the other, moving on to prepare the ground for future assimilation of the few surviving faculty into existing departments. (86)

Sanchez identifies the pressures (assimilation and co-optation versus isolation and marginalization) that ethnic studies programs inherited in the 1990s. In fact, it is precisely in the face of the pressure to assimilate that questions of political strategy and of pedagogical and institutional practice assume paramount importance.

For such programs, progress (measured by institutional power, number of people of color in faculty and administrations, effect on the general curricula, etc.) has been slow. Since the 1970s, there have also been numerous conflicts among ethnic, black, and women's studies programs. One example of these tensions is provided by Niara Sudarkasa. Writing in 1986 about the effect of affirmative action on black faculty and administrators in higher education, she argues: "As a matter of record, ... both in the corporate world and in higher education, the progress of white females as a result of affirmative action has far outstripped that for blacks and other minorities" (3–4). Here Sudarkasa is pointing to a persistent presence of racism in the differential access and mobility of white women and people of color in higher education. She goes on to argue that charges of "reverse discrimination" against white people are unfounded because affirmative action has had the effect of privileging white women above men and women of color. Thus, for Sudarkasa, charges of reverse discrimination leveled at minorities "amount to a sanction of continued discrimination by insisting that inequalities resulting from privileges historically reserved for whites as a group must now be perpetuated in the name of justice for the individual" (6). This process of individualization of histories of dominance is also characteristic of educational institutions and processes in general, where the experiences of different constituencies are defined according to the logic of cultural pluralism.

In fact, this individualization of power hierarchies and of structures of discrimination suggests the convergence of liberal and neoconservative ideas about gender and race in the academy. Individualization, in this context, is accomplished through the fundamentally class-based process of professionalization. In any case, the post-Reagan years (characterized by financial cutbacks in education, the consolidation of the New Right and the right-to-life lobby, the increasing legal challenges to affirmative action regulations, etc.) suggest that it is alliances among women's, black, and ethnic studies programs that will ensure the survival of such programs. This is not to imply that these alliances do not already exist, but, in the face of the active corrosion of the collective basis of affirmative action by the federal government in the name of "reverse discrimination," it is all the more urgent that our institutional self-examinations lead to concrete alliances. Those of us who teach in some of these programs know that, in this context, questions of voice—indeed, the very fact of claiming a voice and

wanting to be heard—are very complicated indeed.

To proceed with the first location or site, I move from one narrative, an analysis of the effect of my own pedagogical practices on students when I am teaching about Third World peoples in a largely white institution, to a second narrative, of decolonization—a story about a student project at Hamilton College. I suggest that a partial (and problematic) effect of my pedagogy, the location of my courses in the curriculum and the liberal nature of the institution as a whole, is the sort of attitudinal engagement with diversity that encourages an empty cultural pluralism and domesticates the historical agency of Third World people. This attitudinal engagement, or, rather, the disruption of it, is at the center of the student project I will discuss.

PEDAGOGIES OF ACCOMMODATION/ PEDAGOGIES OF DISSENT

How do we construct oppositional pedagogies of gender and race? Teaching about histories of sexism, racism, imperialism, and homophobia potentially poses very fundamental challenges to the academy and its traditional production of knowledge, since it has often situated Third World peoples as populations whose histories and experiences are deviant, marginal, or inessential to the acquisition of knowledge. And this has happened systematically in our disciplines as well as in our pedagogies. Thus the task at hand is to decolonize our disciplinary and pedagogical practices. The crucial question is how we teach about the West and its others so that education becomes the practice of liberation. This question becomes all the more important in the context of the significance of education as a means of liberation and advancement for Third World and postcolonial peoples and their/our historical belief in education as a crucial form of resistance to the colonization of hearts and minds.

As a number of educators have argued, however, decolonizing educational practices requires

transformations at a number of levels, both within and outside the academy. Curricular and pedagogical transformation has to be accompanied by a broad-based transformation of the culture of the academy, as well as by radical shifts in the relation of the academy to other state and civil institutions. In addition, decolonizing pedagogical practices requires taking seriously the relation between knowledge and learning, on the one hand, and student and teacher experience, on the other. In fact, the theorization and politicization of experience is imperative if pedagogical practices are to focus on more than the mere management, systematization, and consumption of disciplinary knowledge.

NARRATIVE 1

I teach courses on gender, race, and education, on international development, on feminist theory, and on Third World feminisms, as well as core women's studies courses such as "Introduction to Women's Studies" and a senior seminar. All of the courses are fundamentally interdisciplinary and cross-cultural. At its most ambitious, this pedagogy is an attempt to get students to think critically about their place in relation to the knowledge they gain and to transform their worldview fundamentally by taking the politics of knowledge seriously. It is a pedagogy that attempts to link knowledge, social responsibility, and collective struggle. And it does so by emphasizing the risks that education involves, the struggles for institutional change, and the strategies for challenging forms of domination and by creating more equitable and just public spheres within and outside educational institutions. Thus pedagogy from the point of view of a radical teacher does not entail merely processing received knowledges (however critically one does this) but also actively transforming knowledges. In addition, it involves taking responsibility for the material effects of these very pedagogical practices on students. Teaching about "difference" in relation to power is thus extremely

complicated and involves not only rethinking questions of learning and authority but also questions of center and margin. In writing about her own pedagogical practices in teaching African American women's history (1989), Elsa Barkley Brown formulates her intentions and method in this way:

> How do our students overcome years of notions of what is normative? While trying to think about these issues in my teaching, I have come to understand that this is not merely an intellectual process. It is not merely a question of whether or not we have learned to analyze in particular kinds of ways, or whether people are able to intellectualize about a variety of experiences. It is also about coming to believe in the possibility of a variety of experiences, a variety of ways of understanding the world , a variety of frameworks of operation , without imposing consciously or unconsciously a notion of the norm. What I have tried to do in my own teaching is to address both the conscious level through the material, and the unconscious level through the structure of the course, thus, perhaps, allowing my students, in Bettina Apthekar's words, to "pivot the center": to center in another experience. (921)

Clearly, this process is very complicated pedagogically, for such teaching must address questions of audience, voice, power, and evaluation while retaining a focus on the material being taught. Teaching practices must also combat the pressures of professionalization, normalization, and standardization, the very pressures or expectations that implicitly aim to manage and discipline pedagogies so that teacher behaviors are predictable (and perhaps controllable) across the board.

Barkley Brown draws attention to the centrality of experience in the classroom. While this

is an issue that merits much more consideration than I can give here, a particular aspect of it ties into my general argument. Feminist pedagogy has always recognized the importance of experience in the classroom. Since women's and ethnic studies programs are fundamentally grounded in political and collective questions of power and inequality, questions of the politicization of individuals along race, gender, class, and sexual parameters are at the very center of knowledges produced in the classroom. This politicization often involves the "authorization" of marginal experiences and the creation of spaces for multiple, dissenting voices in the classroom. The authorization of experience is thus a crucial form of empowerment for students—a way for them to enter the classroom as speaking subjects. However, this focus on the centrality of experience can also lead to exclusions: it often silences those whose "experience" is seen to be that of the ruling-class groups. This more-authentic-than-thou attitude to experience also applies to the teacher. For instance, in speaking about Third World peoples, I have to watch constantly the tendency to speak "for" Third World peoples. For I often come to embody the "authentic" authority and experience for many of my students; indeed, they construct me as a native informant in the same way that left-liberal white students sometimes construct all people of color as the authentic voices of their people. This is evident in the classroom when the specific "differences" (of personality, posture , behavior, etc.) of one woman of color stand in for the difference of the whole collective, and a collective voice is assumed in place of an individual voice. In effect, this results in the reduction or averaging of Third World peoples in terms of individual personality characteristics: complex ethical and political issues are glossed over, and an ambiguous and more easily manageable ethos of the "personal" and the "interpersonal" takes their place.

Thus a particularly problematic effect of

certain pedagogical codifications of difference is the conceptualization of race and gender in terms of personal or individual experience. Students often end up determining that they have to "be more sensitive" to Third World peoples. The formulation of knowledge and politics through these individualistic, attitudinal parameters indicates an erasure of the very politics of knowledge involved in teaching and learning about difference. It also suggests an erasure of the structural and institutional parameters of what it means to understand difference in historical terms. If all conflict in the classroom is seen and understood in personal terms, it leads to a comfortable set of oppositions: people of color as the central voices and the bearers of all knowledge in class, and white people as "observers" with no responsibility to contribute and/or nothing valuable to contribute. In other words, white students are constructed as marginal observers and students of color as the real "knowers" in such a liberal or left classroom. While it may seem like people of color are thus granted voice and agency in the classroom, it is necessary to consider what particular kind of voice it is that is allowed them/us. It is a voice located in a different and separate space from the agency of white students.[11] Thus, while it appears that in such a class the histories and cultures of marginalized peoples are now "legitimate" objects of study and discussion, the fact is that this legitimation takes place purely at an attitudinal, interpersonal level rather than in terms of a fundamental challenge to hegemonic knowledge and history. Often the culture in such a class vacillates between a high level of tension and an overwhelming desire to create harmony, acceptance of "difference," and cordial relations in the classroom. Potentially this implicitly binary construction (Third World students vs. white students) undermines the understanding of co-implication that students must take seriously in order to understand "difference" as historical and relational. Co-implication refers to the idea that all

11. As a contrast, and for an interesting analysis of similar issues in the pedagogical context of a white woman teaching multicultural women's studies, see Pascoe 1990.

12. For a provocative and productive critique of these binaries in feminist pedagogical theory see Sanchez-Casal and Macdonald, introduction to their edited collection (2002).

of us (First and Third World) share certain histories as well as certain responsibilities: ideologies of race define both white and black peoples, just as gender ideologies define both women and men. Thus, while "experience" is an enabling focus in the classroom, unless it is explicitly understood as historical, contingent , and the result of interpretation , it can coagulate into frozen, binary, psychologistic positions.[12]

To summarize, this effective separation of white students from Third World students in such an explicitly politicized women's studies classroom is problematic because it leads to an attitudinal engagement that bypasses the complexly situated politics of knowledge and potentially shores up a particular individual-oriented codification and commodification of race. It implicitly draws on and sustains a discourse of cultural pluralism, or what Henry Giroux (1988) calls "the pedagogy of normative pluralism" (95), a pedagogy in which we all occupy separate, different, and equally valuable places and where experience is defined not in terms of individual qua individual, but in terms of an individual as representative of a cultural group. This results in a depoliticization and dehistoricization of the idea of culture and makes possible the implicit management of race in the name of cooperation and harmony.

Cultural pluralism is an inadequate response, however, because the academy as well as the larger social arena are constituted through hierarchical knowledges and power relations. In this context, the creation of oppositional knowledges always involves both fundamental challenges and the risk of co-optation. Creating counter-hegemonic pedagogies and combating attitudinal, pluralistic appropriations of race and difference thus involves a delicate and ever-shifting balance between the analysis of experience as lived culture and as textual and historical representations of experience. But most of all, it calls for a critical analysis of the

contradictions and incommensurability of social interests as individuals experience, understand, and transform them. Decolonizing pedagogical practices requires taking seriously the different logics of cultures as they are located within asymmetrical power relations. It involves understanding that culture, especially academic culture, is a terrain of struggle (rather than an amalgam of discrete consumable entities). And finally, within the classroom, it requires that teachers and students develop a critical analysis of how experience itself is named, constructed, and legitimated in the academy. Without this analysis of culture and of experience in the classroom, there is no way to develop and nurture oppositional practices. After all, critical education concerns the production of subjectivities in relation to discourses of knowledge and power.

NARRATIVE 2

Stories are important. They keep us alive. In the ships, in the camps, in the quarters, field, prisons, on the road, on the run, underground, under siege, in the throes, on the verge—the storyteller snatches us back from the edge to hear the next chapter. In which we are the subjects. We, the hero of the tales. Our lives preserved. How it was, how it be. Passing it along in the relay. That is what I work to do: to produce stories that save our lives.

—Toni Cade Bambara, "Salvation is the Issue," 1984

In the intellectual, political and historical context I have sketched thus far, decolonization as a method of teaching and learning is crucial in envisioning democratic education. My own political project involves trying to connect educational discourse to questions of social justice and the creation of citizens who are able to conceive of a democracy which is not the same as "the free market." Pedagogy in this context needs to be revolutionary to combat business as usual in educational institutions. After all, the politics of commodification allows the co-optation of most dissenting voices in this age of multiculturalism. Cultures of dissent are hard to create. Revolutionary pedagogy needs to lead to a consciousness of injustice, self-reflection on the routines and habits of education in the creation of an "educated citizen," and action to transform one's social space in a collective setting. In other words, the practice of decolonization as defined above.

I turn now to a narrative in the tradition of Toni Cade Bambara, a story that "keeps me alive—a story which saves our lives." The story is about a performance by a student at Hamilton College. Yance Ford, an African American studio art major and feminist activist, based her performance, called "This Invisible World," on her three-plus years as a student at the college.[13] She built an iron cage that enclosed her snugly, suspended it ten feet off the ground in the lobby of the social sciences building, She shaved her head and—barefoot and without a watch, wearing a sheet that she had cut up—spent five hours in the cage in total silence. The performance required unimaginable physical and psychic endurance, and it dramatically transformed a physical space that is usually a corridor between offices and classrooms. It had an enormous impact on everyone walking through—no mundane response was possible. Nor was business as usual possible. It disrupted educational routines—many faculty (including me) sent their classes to the performance and later attempted discussions that proved profoundly unsettling.

For the first time in my experience at Hamilton, students, faculty, and staff were faced with a performance that could not be "consumed" or assimilated as part of the "normal" educational process . We were faced with the knowledge that it was impossible to "know" what led to such a performance, and that the knowledge we had, of black women's history of objectification, of slavery, invisibility, and so on, was a radically inadequate measure of the intent or courage and risk it took for

13. Yance has given me permission to use her words and to analyze her performance. She was a student at Hamilton College for about three years, and she had great presence at the college as a black lesbian feminist and performance artist. Thus her work had the kind of effect that someone less visible may not command. For an important theorization of the significance of stories and storytelling, see Stone Mediatore.

Yance to perform "This Invisible World."

In talking at length with Yance, other students, and colleagues, and thinking through the effects of this performance on the campus, I have realized that this is potentially a very effective story. Here is how Yance, writing in October 1993, described her project:

> What is it? I guess or rather I know that it is about survival. About trauma, about loss, about suffering and pain, and about being lost within all of those things. About trying to find the way back to yourself. The way back to your sanity, a way to get away from those things which have driven you beyond a point of recognition. Past the point where you no longer recognize or even want to recognize yourself or your past or the possibility that your present may also be your future. That is what my project is about. I call it refuge but I really think I mean rescue or even better, survival, escape, saved. My work to me is about all the things that push you to the edge. Its about not belonging, not liking yourself, not loving yourself, not feeling loved or safe or accepted or tolerated or respected or valued or useful or important or comfortable or safe or part of a larger community. It's about how all these things cause us to hate ourselves into corners and boxes and addictions and traps and hurtful relationships and cages. It's about how people can see you and look right through you. Most of the time not knowing you are there. It is about fighting the battle of your life, for your life. And this place that I call refuge is the only place where I am sacred. It is the source of my strength, my fortitude, my resilience, my ability to be for myself what no one else will ever be for me.

This is most directly Yance's response and

meditation on her three years at a liberal arts college—on her education. In extensive conversations with her, two aspects of this project became clearer to me: her consciousness of being colonized at the college, expressed through the act of being caged like "animals in a science experiment," and the performance as an act of liberation, of active decolonization of the self, of visibility and empowerment. Yance found a way to tell another story, to speak through a silence that screamed for engagement. However, in doing so, she also created a public space for the collective narratives of marginalized peoples, especially other women of color. Educational practices became the object of public critique as the hegemonic narrative of a liberal arts education, and its markers of success came under collective scrutiny. This was then a profoundly unsettling and radically decolonizing educational act.

This story illustrates the difference between thinking about social justice and radical transformation in our frames of analysis and understanding in relation to race, gender, class, and sexuality versus a multiculturalist consumption and assimilation into a supposedly "democratic" frame of education as usual. It suggests the need to organize to create collective spaces for dissent and challenges to consolidation of white heterosexual masculinity in academy.

THE RACE INDUSTRY AND PREJUDICE-REDUCTION WORKSHOPS

In his incisive critique of current attempts at minority canon formation (1987), Cornel West locates the following cultural crises as circumscribing the present historical moment: the decolonization of the Third World that signaled the end of the European Age; the repoliticization of literary studies in the r960s; the emergence of alternative, oppositional, subaltern histories; and the transformation of everyday life through the rise of a predominantly visual, technological culture. West

locates contests over Afro-American canon formation in the proliferation of discourses of pluralism in the American academy, thus launching a critique of the class interests of Afro-American critics who "become the academic superintendents of a segment of an expanded canon or a separate canon" (r97). A similar critique, on the basis of class interests and "professionalization," can be leveled against feminist scholars (First or Third World) who specialize in "reading" the lives/experiences of Third World women. What concerns me here, however, is the predominately white upper-level administrators at our institutions and their "reading" of the issues of racial diversity and pluralism. I agree with West's internal critique of a black managerial class, but I think it is important not to ignore the power of a predominantly white managerial class (men and women) who, in fact, frame and hence determine our voices, livelihoods, and sometimes even our political alliances. Exploring a small piece of the creation and institutionalization of this race industry, prejudice reduction workshops involving upper-level administrators, counselors, and students in numerous institutions of higher education-including the college where I used to teach-shed light on a particular aspect of this industry. Interestingly, the faculty often do not figure in these workshops at all; they are directed either at students and resident counselors or at administrators.

To make this argument, I draw upon the institution where I used to teach (Oberlin College) that has an impressive history of progressive and liberal policies. But my critique applies to liberal/humanistic institutions of higher education in general. While what follows is a critique of certain practices at the college, I undertake it out of a commitment to and engagement with the academy. The efforts of Oberlin College to take questions of difference and diversity on board should not be minimized. However, these efforts should also be subject to rigorous examination because they have

14. See the American Council on Education 1988. See also articles on "America's Changing Colors" in Time Magazine, 9 April 1990, especially Henry 1990 for statistics on changing demographics in U.S. economic and educational spheres.

far-reaching implications for the institutionalization of multiculturalism in the academy. While multiculturalism itself is not necessarily problematic, its definition in terms of an apolitical, ahistorical cultural pluralism needs to be challenged.

In the last few decades there has been an increase in this kind of activity, often as a response to antiracist student organizing and demands or in relation to the demand for and institutionalization of "non-Western" requirements at prestigious institutions in a number of academic institutions nationally. More precisely, however, these issues of multiculturalism arise in response to the recognition of changing demographics in the United States. For instance, the prediction that by the year 2000 almost 42 percent of all public school students would be minority children or other impoverished children and that by the year 2000 women and people of color would account for nearly 75 percent of the labor force are crucial in understanding institutional imperatives concerning "diversity."[14] As Rosaura Sanchez suggests, for the university to conduct "research and business as usual" in the face of the overwhelming challenges posed by even the very presence of people of color, it has to enact policies and programs aimed at accommodation rather than transformation (Sanchez 1987).

In response to certain racist and homophobic incidents in the spring of 1988, Oberlin College instituted a series of "prejudice reduction" workshops aimed at students and upper- and middle-level administrative staff. These sometimes took the form of "unlearning racism" workshops conducted by residential counselors and psychologists in dorm s. Workshops such as these are valuable in "sensitizing" students to racial conflict, behavior, and attitudes, but an analysis of their historical and ideological bases indicates their limitations.

Briefly, prejudice reduction workshops draw on a psychologically based "race relations" analysis and focus on "prejudice" rather than on institution-

al or historical domination. The workshops draw on co-counseling and re-evaluation counseling techniques and theory and often aim for emotional release rather than political action. The name of this approach is itself somewhat problematic, since it suggests that "prejudice" (rather than domination, exploitation, or structural inequality) is the core problem and that we have to "reduce" it. The language determines and shapes the ideological and political content to a large extent. In focusing on "the healing of past wounds" this approach also equates the positions of dominant and subordinate groups, erasing all power inequities and hierarchies. And finally, the location of the source of "oppression" and "change" in individuals suggests an elision between ideological and structural understandings of power and domination and individual, psychological understandings of power.

Here again, the implicit definition of experience is important. Experience is defined as fundamentally individual and atomistic, subject to behavioral and attitudinal change. Questions of history, collective memory, and social and structural inequality as constitutive of the category of experience are inadmissible within this framework. Individuals speak as representatives of majority or minority groups whose experience is predetermined within an oppressor/ victim paradigm. These questions are addressed in A. Sivanandan's incisive critique (1990) of the roots of racism awareness training in the United States (associated with the work of Judy Katz et al.) and its embodiment in multiculturalism in Britain.

Sivanandan draws attention to the dangers of the actual degradation and refiguration of antiracist, black political struggles as a result of the racism awareness training focus on psychological attitudes. Thus, while these workshops can indeed be useful in addressing deep-seated psychological attitudes and thus creating a context for change, the danger resides in remaining at the level of personal support

15. This discussion of the ideological assumptions of "prejudice reduction" is based on DeRosa 1987.

16. From a document prepared by the associate director of personnel and affirmative action officer at Oberlin College (Prindle 1988, I).

and evaluation, and thus often undermining the necessity for broad-based political organization and action.[15]

Prejudice reduction workshops have also made their way into the upper echelons of the administration at the college. At this level, however, they take a very different form: presidents and their male colleagues do not go to workshops; they "consult" about issues of diversity. Thus , this version of "prejudice reduction" takes the form of "managing diversity" (another semantic gem that suggests that "diversity" [a euphemism for people of color] will be out of control unless it is managed). Consider the following passage from the publicity brochure of a consultant:

> Program in Conflict Management Alternatives: A team of applied scholars is creating alternative theoretical and practical approaches to the peaceful resolution of social conflicts. A concern for maximizing social justice, and redressing major social inequities that underlie much social conflict, is a central organizing principle of this work. Another concern is to facilitate the implementation of negotiated settlements, and therefore contribute to long-term change in organizational and community relations. Research theory development, organizational and community change efforts, networking, consultations, curricula, workshops and training programs are all part of the Program.[16]

This passage foregrounds the primary focus on conflict resolution, negotiated settlement, and organizational relations—all framed in a language of research, consultancy, and training. All three strategies—conflict resolution, settlement negotiation, and long-term organizational relations—can be carried out between individuals and between

groups. The point is to understand the moments of friction and to resolve the conflicts "peacefully"; in other words, domesticate race and difference by formulating the problems in narrow, interpersonal terms and by rewriting historical contexts as manageable psychological ones.

As in the example of the classroom discussed earlier, the assumption here is that individuals and groups, as individual atomistic units in a social whole composed essentially of an aggregate of such units, embody difference. Thus, conflict resolution is best attempted by negotiating between individuals who are dissatisfied as individuals. One very important ideological effect of this is the standardization of behaviors and responses so as to make them predictable (and thus manageable) across a wide variety of situations and circumstances. If complex structural experiences of domination and resistance can be ideologically reformulated as individual behaviors and attitudes, they can be managed while carrying on business as usual.

Another example of this kind of program is the approach of the company that was consulted for the report just quoted, which goes by the name Diversity Consultants: "Diversity Consultants believe one of the most effective ways to manage multicultural and race awareness issues is through assessment of individual environments, planned educational programs, and management strategy sessions which assist professionals in understanding themselves, diversity, and their options in the workplace" (Prindle 1988, 8).

The key ideas in this statement involve an awareness of race issues (the problem is assumed to be cultural misunderstanding or lack of information about other cultures), understanding yourself and people unlike you (diversity—we must respect and learn from each other; this may not address economic exploitation, but it will teach us to treat each other civilly), negotiating conflicts, altering organizational sexism and racism, and devising strategies

to assess and manage the challenges of diversity (which results in an additive approach: recruiting "diverse" people, introducing "different" curriculum units while engaging in teaching as usual—that is, not shifting the normative culture-vs.-subcultures paradigm). This is, then, the "professionalization" of prejudice reduction, where culture is a supreme commodity. Culture is seen as noncontradictory, as isolated from questions of history, and as a storehouse of nonchanging facts, behaviors, and practices. This particular definition of culture and of cultural difference is what sustains the individualized discourse of harmony and civility that is the hallmark of cultural pluralism.

Prejudice reduction workshops eventually aim for the creation of this discourse of civility. Again, this is not to suggest that there are no positive effects of this practice—for instance, the introduction of new cultural models can cause a deeper evaluation of existing structures, and clearly such consultancies could set a positive tone for social change. However, the baseline is still maintaining the status quo; diversity is always and can only be added on.

So what does all this mean? Diversity consultants are not new. Private industry has been using these highly paid management consulting firms since the civil rights movement. When upper-level administrators in higher education inflect discourses of education and "academic freedom" with discourses of the management of race, however, the effects are significant enough to warrant close examination. There is a long history of the institutionalization of the discourse of management and control in American education, but the management of race requires a somewhat different inflection at this historical moment. As a result of historical, demographic, and educational shifts in the racial makeup of students and faculty in the last twenty years, some of us even have public voices that have to be "managed" for the greater harmony

of all. The hiring of consultants to "sensitize educators to issues of diversity" is part of the post-1960s proliferation of discourses of pluralism. But it is also a specific and containing response to the changing social contours of the U.S. polity and to the challenges posed by Third World and feminist studies in the academy. By using the language of the corporation and the language of cognitive and affectional psychology (and thereby professionalizing questions of sexism, racism, and class conflict), new alliances are consolidated. Educators who are part of the ruling administrative class are now managers of conflict, but they are also agents in the construction of race-a word that is significantly redefined through the technical language that is used.[17]

17. Hamilton College has followed a similar route in inviting the "prejudice reduction" workshops of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) on to campus, and in sponsoring the training of some faculty and staff members at the college.

RACE, VOICE, AND ACADEMIC CULTURE

The effects of this relatively new discourse in the higher levels of liberal arts colleges and universities are quite real Affirmative action hires are now highly visible and selective; every English department is looking for a black woman scholar to teach Toni Morrison's writings. What happens to such scholars after they are hired, and particularly when they come up for review or tenure, is another matter altogether. An umber of scholars have documented the debilitating effects of affirmative action hiring policies that seek out and hire only those Third World scholars who are at the top of their fields—hence the pattern of musical chairs in which selected people of color are bartered at very high prices. Our voices are carefully placed and domesticated: one in history, one in English, perhaps one in the sociology department. Clearly these hiring practices do not guarantee the retention and tenure of Third World faculty. In fact, while the highly visible bartering for Third World "stars" serves to suggest that institutions of higher education are finally becoming responsive to feminist and Third World concerns, this particular commodification and personalization of race suggests there has been very little change since the 1970s, in terms of either a numerical increase of Third World faculty or our treatment in white institutions.

In their 1988 article on racism faced by Chicano faculty in institutions of higher education, Maria de la Luz Reyes and John J. Halcon characterize the effects of the 1970s policies of affirmative action:

> In the mid-1970s, when minority quota systems were being implemented in many nonacademic agencies, the general public was left with the impression that Chicano or minority presence in professional or academic positions was due to affirmative action, rather than to individual qualifications or merit. But that impression was inaccurate. Generally (institutions of higher education] responded to the affirmative action guidelines with token positions for only a handful of minority scholars in nonacademic and/or "soft" money programs. For example, many Blacks and Hispanics were hired as directors for programs such as Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Equal Opportunity Programs. Other minority faculty were hired for bilingual programs and ethnic studies programs, but affirmative action hires did not commonly extend to tenure-track faculty positions. The new presence of minorities on college campuses, however, which occurred during the period when attention to affirmative action regulations reached its peak, left all minority professionals and academics with a legacy of tokenism—a stigma that has been difficult to dispel. (303)

De la Luz Reyes and Halcon go on to argue that we are still living with the effects of the implementation of these policies. They examine the problems associated with tokenism and the

ghettoization of Third World people in the academy, detailing the complex forms of racism that minority faculty face today. To this characterization, I would add that one of the results of the Reagan-Bush years has been that black, women's, and ethnic studies programs are often further marginalized, since one of the effects of the management of race is that individuals come to embody difference and diversity, while programs that have been historically constituted on the basis of collective oppositional knowledges are labeled "political," "biased," "shrill," and "unrigorous."[18] Any inroads made by such programs and departments in the seventies were slowly undermined in the eighties and the nineties by the management of race through attitudinal and behavioral strategies, with their logical dependence on individuals seen as appropriate representatives of their "race" or some other equivalent political constituency. Race and gender were reformulated as individual characteristics and attitudes, and thus an individualized, ostensibly "unmarked" discourse of difference was put into place. This shift in the academic discourse on gender and race actually rolls back any progress that has been made in carving out institutional spaces for women's and black studies programs and departments.

Earlier, it was these institutional spaces that determined our collective voices. Our programs and departments were by definition alternative and oppositional. Now they are often merely alternative, one among many. Without being nostalgic about the good old days (and they were problematic in their own ways), I am suggesting that there has been an erosion of the politics of collectivity through the reformulation of race and difference in individualistic terms. By no means is this a conspiratorial scenario. The discussion of the effects of my own classroom practices indicates my complicity in this contest over definitions of gender and race in discursive and representational as well as personal terms. The 1960s and 1970s slogan "The personal

18. This marginalization is evident in the financial cutbacks that such programs have experienced in recent years. The depoliticization is evident in, for instance, the shift from "women's" to "gender" studies—by all measures, a controversial reconstitution of feminist agendas.

is political" was recrafted in the 1980s as "The political is personal." In other words, all politics is collapsed into the personal, and questions of individual behaviors, attitudes, and lifestyles stand in for the political analysis of the social. Individual political struggles are seen as the only relevant and legitimate form of political struggle.

There is, however, another, more crucial reason to be concerned about (and to challenge) this management of race in the liberal academy: this process of the individualization of race and its effects dovetail rather neatly with the neoconservative politics and agenda of the Reagan-Bush years and now the Bush-Cheney years, an agenda that is constitutively recasting the fabric of American life in the pre-1960s mold. The 1980s Supreme Court decisions on "reverse discrimination" are based on precisely similar definitions of "prejudice," "discrimination," and "race." In an essay that argues that the U.S. Supreme Court's rulings on reverse discrimination are fundamentally tied to the rollback of reproductive freedom, Zillah Eisenstein (1990) discusses the individualist framework on which these decisions are based:

> The court's recent decisions pertaining to affirmative action make quite clear that existing civil rights legislation is being newly reinterpreted. Race, or sex (gender) as a collective category is being denied and racism, and/or sexism, defined as a structural and historical reality has been erased. Statistical evidence of racial and/or sexual discrimination is no longer acceptable as proof of unfair treatment of "black women as a group or class." Discrimination is proved by an individual only in terms of their specific case. The assault is blatant: equality doctrine is dismantled. (5)

Eisenstein goes on to analyze how the gov-

ernment's attempts to redress racism and sexism are at the core of the struggle for equality and how, in gutting the meaning of discrimination and applying it only to individual cases and not statistical categories , it has become almost impossible to prove discrimination because there are always "other" criteria to excuse discriminatory practices. Thus , the Supreme Court decisions on reverse discrimination are clearly based on a particular individualist politics that domesticates race and gender. This is an example of the convergence of neoconservative and liberal agendas concerning race and gender inequalities.

Those of us who are in the academy also potentially collude in this domestication of race by allowing ourselves to be positioned in ways that contribute to the construction of these images of pure and innocent diversity, to the construction of these managerial discourses. For instance, since the category of race is not static but a fluid social and historical formation, Third World peoples are often located in antagonistic relationships with one another. Those of us who are from Third World countries are often played off against Third World peoples native to the United States. As an Indian immigrant woman in the United States, for instance, in most contexts I am not as potentially threatening as an African American woman. Yes, we are both nonwhite and other, subject to various forms of overt or disguised racism, but I do not bring with me a history of slavery, a direct and constant reminder of the racist past and present of the United States. Of course my location in the British academy would be fundamentally different because of the history of British colonization, because of its specific patterns of immigration and labor force participation, and because of the existence of working-class, trade union, and antiracist politics—all of which define the position of lndians differently in Britain. An interesting parallel in the British context is the focus on and celebration of African American

19. Gloria Watkins (bell hooks) and I attempted to do this at Oberlin College in a college-wide faculty colloquium called "Pedagogies of Gender, Race, and Empire" that focused on our practices in teaching and learning about Third World people in the academy. While the effects of this colloquium have yet to be thoroughly examined, at the very least it created a public culture of dialogue and dissent where questions of race, gender, and identity were no longer totally dismissed as "political" and thus extraneous to academic endeavor; nor were they automatically ghettoized in women's studies and black studies. These questions came to be seen (by a substantial segment of the faculty) as important, constitutive questions in revising a Eurocentric liberal arts curriculum.

women as the "true" radical black feminists who have something to say, while black British feminists are marginalized and rendered voiceless by the publishing industry and the academy ("black" in Britain often referred to British citizens of African, Asian, or Caribbean origin, although this alliance has unraveled in recent years). These locations and potential collusions thus have an impact on how our voices and agencies are constituted.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND CULTURES OF DISSENT

If my argument in this essay is convincing, it suggests why we need to take on questions of race and gender as they are being managed and commodified in the liberal U.S. academy. One mode of doing this is actively creating public cultures of dissent where these issues can be debated in terms of our pedagogies and institutional practices.[19] Creating such cultures in the liberal academy is a challenge in itself, because liberalism allows and even welcomes "plural" or even "alternative" perspectives. However, a public culture of dissent entails creating spaces for epistemological standpoints that are grounded in the interests of people and that recognize the materiality of conflict, of privilege, and of domination. Thus creating such cultures is fundamentally about making the axes of power transparent in the context of academic, disciplinary, and institutional structures as well as in the interpersonal relationships (rather than individual relations) in the academy. It is about taking the politics of everyday life seriously as teachers, students, administrators, and members of hegemonic academic cultures. Culture itself is thus redefined to incorporate individual and collective memories, dreams, and history that are contested and transformed through the political praxis of day-to-day living.

Cultures of dissent are also about seeing the academy as part of a larger sociopolitical arena that itself domesticates and manages Third World peo-

ple in the name of liberal capitalist democracy. They are about working to reshape and re-envision community and citizenship in the face of overwhelming corporatization. The struggle to transform our institutional practices fundamentally also involves the grounding of the analysis of exploitation and oppression in accurate history and theory, seeing ourselves as activists in the academy, drawing links between movements for social justice and our pedagogical and scholarly endeavors and expecting and demanding action from ourselves, our colleagues, and our students at numerous levels. This requires working hard to understand and to theorize questions of knowledge, power, and experience in the academy so that one effects both pedagogical empowerment and transformation. Racism, sexism, and homophobia are very real, day-to-day practices in which we all engage. They are not reducible to mere curricular or policy decisions—that is, to management practices. In this context we need to actively rethink the purpose of liberal education in antiracist, anticapitalist feminist ways.

I said earlier that what is at stake is not the mere recognition of difference. The sort of difference that is acknowledged and engaged has fundamental significance for the decolonization of educational practices. Similarly, the point is not simply that one should have a voice; the more crucial question concerns the sort of voice one comes to have as the result of one's location, both as an individual and as part of collectives. The important point is that it be an active, oppositional, and collective voice that takes seriously the commodification and domestication of Third World people in the academy. Thus cultures of dissent must work to create pedagogies of dissent rather than pedagogies of accommodation.

And this is a task open to all—to people of color as well as progressive white people in the academy.

DEAR IJEAWELE, OR A FEMINIST MANIFESTO IN FIFTEEN SUGGESTIONS

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE

Dear Ijeawele,

What joy. And what lovely names: Chizalum Adaora. She is so beautiful. Only a day old and she already looks curious about the world. Your note made me cry. You know how I get foolishly emotional sometimes. Please know that I take your charge—how to raise her feminist—very seriously. And I understand what you mean by not always knowing what the feminist response to situations should be. For me, feminism is always contextual. I don't have a set-in-stone rule; the closest I have to a formula are my two 'Feminist Tools' and I want to share them with you as a starting point.

The first is your premise, the solid unbending belief that you start off with. What is your premise? Your feminist premise should be: I matter. I matter equally. Not 'if only.' Not 'as long as.' I matter equally. Full stop. The second tool is a question: can you reverse **x** and get the same results?

For example: many people believe that a woman's feminist response to a husband's infidelity should be to leave. But I think staying can also be a feminist choice, depending on the context. If Chudi sleeps with another woman and you forgive him, would the same be true if you slept with another man? If the answer is yes then your choosing to forgive him can be a feminist choice

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... if, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. ...

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... the question of woman seems most problematic in this context. clearly, if you are poor, black and female you get it in three ways. ...

because it is not shaped by a gender inequality. Sadly, the reality in most marriages is that the answer to that question would often be no, and the reason would be gender-based—that absurd idea of 'men will be men.'

I have some suggestions for how to raise Chizalum. But remember that you might do all the things I suggest, and she will still turn out to be different from what you hoped, because sometimes life just does its thing. What matters is that you try. And always trust your instincts, above all else, because you will be guided by your love for your child.

Here are my suggestions:

FIRST SUGGESTION: *Be a full person.*

Motherhood is a glorious gift, but do not define yourself solely by motherhood. Be a full person. Your child will benefit from that. The pioneering American journalist Marlene Sanders once said to a younger journalist, "Never apologize for working. You love what you do, and loving what you do is a great gift to give your child."

You don't even have to love your job; you can merely love what your job does for you—the confidence and self-fulfillment that come with doing and earning. Reject the idea of motherhood and work as mutually exclusive. Our mothers worked full time while we were growing up, and we turned out well—at least you did, the jury is still out on me.

It doesn't surprise me that your sister-in-law says you should be a 'traditional' mother and stay home, that Chudi can afford not to have a 'double income' family. People will selectively use 'tradition' to justify anything. Tell her that a double-income family is actually the true Igbo tradition because in pre-colonial times, mothers farmed and traded. And then please ignore her; there are more important things to think about.

In these coming weeks of early motherhood, be kind to yourself. Ask for help. Expect to be helped. There is no such thing as a Superwoman. Parenting is about practice — and love. (I do wish though that 'parent' had not been turned into a verb, which I think is the root of the middle-class phenomenon of 'parenting' as one endless, anxious journey of guilt).

Give yourself room to fail. A new mother does not necessarily know how to calm a crying baby. Don't assume that you should know everything. Look things up on the Internet, read

books, ask older parents, or just do trial and error. Let your focus be on remaining a full person. Take time for yourself. Nurture your own needs.

Please do not think of it as 'doing it all.' Our culture lauds the idea of women who are able to 'do it all' but does not question the premise of that praise. I have no interest in the debate about women 'doing it all' because it is a debate that assumes that care-giving and domestic work are exclusively female domains, an idea that I strongly reject. Domestic work and care-giving should be gender-neutral, and we should be asking not whether a woman can 'do it all' but how best to support parents in their dual duties at work and at home.

SECOND SUGGESTION: *Do it together.*

Remember in primary school we learnt that a verb was a 'doing' word? Well, a father is as much a verb as a mother. Chudi should do everything that biology allows—which is everything but breastfeeding. Sometimes mothers, so conditioned to be all and do all, are complicit in diminishing the role of fathers. You might think that Chudi will not bathe her exactly as you'd like, that he might not wipe her bum as perfectly as you do. But so what? What is the worst that can happen? She won't die at the hands of her father. So look away, arrest your perfectionism, still your socially-conditioned sense of duty. Share childcare equally. 'Equally' of course depends on you both. It does not have to mean a literal fifty-fifty or a day-by-day score-keeping but you'll know when the child-care work is equally shared. You'll know by your lack of resentment. Because when there is true equality, resentment does not exist.

And please reject the language of help. Chudi is not 'helping' you by caring for his child. He is doing what he should. When we say fathers are 'helping,' we are suggesting that childcare is a mother's territory, into which fathers valiantly venture. It is not. Can you imagine how many more people today would be happier, more stable, better contributors to the world, if only their fathers had been actively present in their childhood? And never say that Chudi is 'babysitting'—people who babysit are people for whom the baby is not a primary responsibility.

Chudi does not deserve any special gratitude or praise, nor do you—you both made the choice to bring a child into the

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...Middle- and lower-middle-class women who were suddenly compelled by the ethos of feminism to enter the workforce did not feel liberated once they faced the hard truth that working outside the home did not mean work in the home would be equally shared with male partners. ...

world, and the responsibility for that child belongs equally to you both. It would be different if you were a single mother, whether by circumstance or choice, because 'doing it together' would then not be an option. But you should not be a 'single mother' unless you are truly a single mother.

My friend Nwabu once told me that, because his wife left when his kids were young, he became 'Mr. Mom,' by which he meant that he did the daily care-giving. But he was not being a 'Mr. Mom,' he was simply being a dad.

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...a hierarchical, dichotomous distinction between human and non-human was imposed on the colonized in the service of the Western man. It was accompanied by other dichotomous hierarchical distinctions, among them that between men and women. ...

THIRD SUGGESTION:
Teach her that 'gender roles' is absolute nonsense.

Do not ever tell her that she should do or not do something "because you are a girl."

'Because you are a girl' is never a reason for anything. Ever. I remember being told as a child to 'bend down properly while sweeping, like a girl.' Which meant that sweeping was about being female. I wish I had been told simply 'bend down and sweep properly because you'll clean the floor better.' And I wish my brothers had been told the same thing.

There have been recent Nigerian social media debates about women and cooking, about how wives have to cook for husbands. It is funny, in the way that sad things are funny, that in 2016 we are still talking about cooking as some kind of 'marriage-ability test' for women.

The knowledge of cooking does not come pre-installed in a vagina. Cooking is learned. Cooking—domestic work in general—is a life skill that both men and women should ideally have. It is also a skill that can elude both men and women.

We also need to question the idea of marriage as a prize to women, because that is the basis of these absurd debates. If we stop conditioning women to see marriage as a prize, then we would have fewer debates about a wife needing to cook in order to earn that prize.

It is interesting to me how early the world starts to invent gender roles. Yesterday I went to a children's shop to buy Chizalum an outfit. In the girls' section were pale phenomena in washed-out shades of pink. I disliked them. The boys' section had outfits in vibrant shades of blue. Because I think blue will be adorable against her brown skin—and photograph better—I

bought one. At the check out counter, the cashier said mine was the perfect present for the new boy. I said it was for a baby girl. She looked horrified. "Blue for a girl?"

I cannot help but wonder about the clever marketing person who invented this pink-blue binary. There was also a 'gender neutral' section, with its array of bloodless grays. 'Gender neutral' is silly because it is premised on the idea of male being blue and female being pink and 'gender neutral' being its own category. Why not just have baby clothes organized by age and displayed in all colors? The bodies of male and female infants are similar, after all.

I looked at the toy section, also arranged by gender. Toys for boys are mostly active, and involve some sort of 'doing'—trains, cars—and toys for girls are mostly 'passive' and are overwhelmingly dolls. I was struck by how early our culture starts to form the ideas of what a boy should be and what a girl should be.

Did I ever tell you about going to a US mall with a seven-year-old Nigerian girl and her mother? She saw a toy helicopter, one of those things that fly by wireless remote control, and she was fascinated and asked for one. "No," her mother said. "You have your dolls." And she responded, "Mummy, is it only doll I will play with?"

I have never forgotten that. Her mother meant well, obviously. She was well-versed in the ideas of gender roles—that girls play with dolls and boys with cars. I wonder now, wistfully, if the little girl would have turned out to be a revolutionary engineer, had she been given a chance to explore that helicopter.

If we don't place the straitjacket of gender roles on young children we give them space to reach their full potential. Please see Chizalum as an individual. Not as a girl who should be a certain way. See her weaknesses and her strengths in an individual way. Do not measure her on a scale of what a girl should be. Measure her on a scale of being the best version of herself.

A young woman once told me that she had for years behaved 'like a boy'—she liked football and was bored by dresses—until her mother forced her to stop her 'boyish' interests and she is now grateful to her mother for helping her start behaving like a girl. The story made me sad. I wondered what parts of herself she had needed to silence and stifle, and I wondered about what her spirit had lost, because what she called 'behaving like a boy' was simply that she was behaving like herself.

Another acquaintance once told me that when she took her one-year-old son to a baby play group, where babies had been brought by their mothers, she noticed that the mothers of baby girls were very restraining, constantly telling the girls 'don't touch' or 'stop and be nice,' and she noticed that the baby boys were encouraged to explore more and were not restrained as much and were almost never told to 'be nice.' Her theory is that parents unconsciously start very early to teach girls how to be, that baby girls are given more rules and less room and baby boys more room and fewer rules.

Gender roles are so deeply conditioned in us that we will often follow them even when they chafe against our true desires, our needs, our wellbeing. They are very difficult to unlearn, and so it is important to try and make sure that Chizalum rejects them from the beginning. Instead of gender roles, teach her self-reliance. Tell her that it is important to be able to do for herself and fend for herself. Teach her to try and fix physical things when they break. We are quick to assume girls can't do many things. Let her try. Buy her toys like blocks and trains—and dolls, too, if you want to.

FOURTH SUGGESTION:
Beware the danger of what I call Feminism Lite.

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... Radical feminists were dismayed to witness so many women (of all races) appropriating feminist jargon while sustaining their commitment to Western imperialism and transnational capitalism. ...

It is the idea of conditional female equality. Reject this entirely. It is a hollow, appeasing, and bankrupt idea. Being a feminist is like being pregnant. You either are or you are not. You either believe in the full equality of women, or you do not.

Here are some examples of Feminism Lite:

A woman should be ambitious, but not too much. A woman can be successful but she should also do her domestic duties and cook for her husband. A woman should have her own but she should not forget her true role as home keeper. Of course a woman should have a job but the man is still head of the family.

Feminism Lite uses inane analogies like 'he is the head and you are the neck.' Or 'he is driving but you are in the front seat.' More troubling is the idea, in Feminism Lite, that men are naturally superior but should be expected to 'treat women well.' No. No. No. There must be more than male benevolence as the basis for a woman's wellbeing.

Feminism Lite uses the language of 'allowing.' Theresa May is the British Prime Minister and here is how a progressive British newspaper described her husband: 'Philip May is known in politics as a man who has taken a back seat and allowed his wife, Theresa, to shine.'

Allowed.

Now let us reverse it. Theresa May has allowed her husband to shine. Does it make sense? If Philip May were Prime Minister, perhaps we might hear that his wife has 'supported' him from the background, or that she is 'behind' him, but we would never hear that she had 'allowed' him to shine.

Allow is a troubling word. Allow is about power. Members of the society of Feminism Lite will often say, "Leave the woman alone to do what she wants as long as her husband allows."

A husband is not a headmaster. A wife is not a schoolgirl. Permission and being allowed, when used one sided—and it is nearly only used that way—should never be the language of an equal marriage.

Another egregious example of Feminism Lite: men who say 'Of course a wife does not always have to do the domestic work, I did domestic work when my wife traveled.'

Do you remember how we laughed and laughed at an atrociously-written piece about me some years ago? The writer—a man small in more ways than one—had accused me of being 'angry,' as though 'being angry' was something for which to be ashamed. Of course I am angry. I am angry about racism. I am angry about sexism. But I am angrier about sexism than I am about racism. Because I live among many people who easily acknowledge race injustice but not gender injustice.

I cannot tell you how often people I care about—men and women—have expected me to make a case for sexism, to 'prove' it, as it were, while never having the same expectation for racism (Obviously in the wider world, too many people are still expected to 'prove' racism, but not in my close circle). I cannot tell you how often people I care about have dismissed or diminished sexist situations.

Like Ikenga who once said 'even though the general idea is that my father is in charge at our home, it's my mother who is really in charge behind the scenes.' He thought he was refuting sexism, but he was making my case. Why 'behind the scenes?' If a woman has power then why do we need to disguise that she has power?

But here is a sad truth—our world is full of men and

women who do not like powerful women. We have been so conditioned to think of power as male, that a powerful woman is an aberration. And so she is policed. We ask of powerful women—is she humble? Does she smile? Is she grateful enough? Does she have a domestic side? We judge powerful women more harshly than we judge powerful men. And Feminism Lite enables this.

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...how impressionable and vulnerable we are in the face of a story, particularly as children. ...

FIFTH SUGGESTION: *Teach Chizalum to read.*

Teach her to love books. The best way is by casual example. If she sees you reading, she will understand that reading is valuable. If she were not to go to school, and merely just read books, she would arguably become more knowledgeable than a conventionally educated child. Books will help her understand and question the world, help her express herself, and help her in whatever she wants to become—a chef, a scientist, a singer all benefit from the skills that reading brings. I do not mean school books. I mean books that have nothing to do with school, autobiographies and novels and histories. If all else fails, pay her to read. Reward her. I know of this incredible Nigerian woman who was raising her child in the US; her child did not take to reading so she decided to pay her 5 cents per page. An expensive endeavor, she later joked, but a worthy investment.

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... this version of "prejudice reduction" takes the form of "managing diversity" (another semantic gem that suggests that "diversity" [a euphemism for people of color] will be out of control unless it is managed).

SIXTH SUGGESTION: *Teach her to question language.*

Language is the repository of our prejudices, our beliefs, our assumptions. But to teach her that, you will have to question your own language. A friend of mine says she will never call her daughter 'Princess.' People mean well when they say this, but 'princess' is loaded with assumptions, of her delicacy, of the prince who will come to save her, etc. This friend prefers 'angel' and 'star.'

So decide for yourself the things you will not say to your child. Because what you say to your child matters. It teaches her what she should value. You know that Igbo joke, used to tease girls who are being childish—"What are you doing? Don't you know you are old enough to find a husband?" I used to say that often. But now I choose not to. I say 'you are old enough to find a job.' Because I do not believe that marriage is something we should teach young girls to aspire to.

I no longer say 'she had a child *for* him.' I say 'she had a child *with* him.' And I bristle when I hear a man say 'she is carrying my child.' 'Our child' just sounds better, more accurate too.

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... Translating terms ... into the vocabulary of gender ... is to exercise the coloniality of language through colonial translation and thus erases the possibility of articulating the coloniality of gender and resistance to it.

Try not to use words like 'misogyny' and 'patriarchy' too often with Chizalum. We Feminists can sometimes be too jargony, and jargon can sometimes feel too abstract. Don't just label something misogynistic, tell her why it is, and tell her what would make it not be.

Use examples. Teach her that if you criticize **x** in women but do not criticize **x** in men, then you do not have a problem with **x**, you have a problem with women. For **x** please insert inter alia: anger, loudness, stubbornness, coldness, ruthlessness.

Teach her to ask questions like: What are the things that women cannot do because they are women? Do these things have cultural prestige? If so why are only men allowed to do the things that have cultural prestige?

Use examples from the news. Two Nigerian senators quarrel publicly. The woman calls the man a bastard, and the man tells the woman that he will rape her. The man is sexist because he has not insulted her as an individual, but as a generic female and this is dehumanizing. He should have called her a bastard too. Or an asshole. Or so many other things that are not about her being a generic woman.

Remember that television commercial we watched in Lagos, where a man cooks and his wife claps for him? True progress is when she doesn't clap for him but just reacts to the food itself—she can either praise the food or not praise the food, just as he can praise hers or not praise hers, but what is sexist is that she is praising the fact that he has undertaken the act of cooking, praise that implies that cooking is an inherently female act.

Remember the mechanic in Lagos who was described as a 'lady mechanic?' Teach Chizalum that the woman is a mechanic not a 'lady mechanic.'

Point out to her how wrong it is that a man who hits your car, gets out and tells you to go and bring your husband because he can't "deal with a woman".

Instead of merely telling her, show her with examples that misogyny can be overt and misogyny can be subtle and that both are abhorrent. Teach her to question men who can have empathy for women only if they see them as relational rather than as individual equal humans. Men who, when discussing rape, will always say something like 'if it were my daughter or wife or sister.'

Yet such men do not need to imagine a male victim of crime 'as a brother or son' in order to feel empathy. Teach her, too, to question the idea of women as a special species. The American House Speaker Paul Ryan who was recently reacting to the Republican presidential nominee's boast about assaulting women, said, "Women are to be championed and revered, not objectified."

Tell Chizalum that women actually don't need to be championed and revered; they just need to be treated as equal human beings. There is a patronizing undertone to the idea of women needing to be 'championed and revered' because they are women. It makes me think of chivalry, and the premise of chivalry is female weakness.

SEVENTH SUGGESTION:
Never speak of marriage as an achievement.

Find ways to make clear to her that marriage is not an achievement nor is it what she should aspire to. A marriage can be happy or unhappy but it is not an achievement.

We condition girls to aspire to marriage and we do not condition boys to aspire to marriage, and so there is already a terrible imbalance at the start. The girls will grow up to be women obsessed with marriage. The boys will grow up to be men who are not obsessed with marriage. The women marry those men. The relationship is automatically uneven because the institution matters more to one than the other. Is it any wonder that, in so many marriages, women sacrifice more, at a loss to themselves, because they have to constantly maintain an uneven exchange? (One consequence of this imbalance is the very shabby and very familiar phenomenon of two women publicly fighting over a man, while the man remains silent.)

Hillary Clinton will be the next president of the United States. On her Twitter account, the first descriptor is 'Wife.' The first descriptor on her husband Bill Clinton's Twitter account is not 'Husband.' (Because of this, I have an unreasonable respect for the very few men who use 'husband' as their first descriptor)

My sense is that this is not a reflection on Hillary Clinton personally but on the world in which we live, a world that still largely values a woman's marital and maternal roles more than anything else.

After she married Bill Clinton in 1975, Hillary Clinton kept her name, Hillary Rodham. Eventually she began to add his name 'Clinton' to hers and then after a while she dropped 'Rodham' because of political pressure—because her husband would lose voters who were offended that his wife had kept her name. American voters apparently place retrograde marital expectations on women.

Do you remember all the noise that was made after a newspaper journalist decided to give me a new name and call 'Mrs. Husband's Surname' and I promptly told him never to do that again?

I remember how some members of the Society of Ill-Willed Nigerian Commenters insisted on calling me Mrs. Husband's Name even after I had made clear that it was not my name. Many more women than men did this, by the way. And there was a smoldering hostility from women in particular. I wondered about that, and thought that perhaps for many of them, my choice represented a challenge to their largely-unquestioned idea of what is the norm. Even some friends made statements like 'you are successful and so it is okay to keep your name.'

Which made me wonder—why does a woman have to be successful at work in order to justify keeping her name?

The truth is that I have not kept my name because I am successful. Had I not had the good fortune to be published and widely-read, I would still have kept my name. I have kept my name because it is my name. I have kept my name because I like my name.

There are people who say—well your name is also about patriarchy because it is your father's name. Indeed. But the point is simply this: whether it came from my father or from the moon, it is the name that I have had since I was born, the name with which I travelled my life's milestones, the name I have answered to since that first day I went to kindergarten on a hazy morning and my teacher said 'answer 'present' if you hear your name. Number one: Adichie!'

I like it and will not change it. More importantly, every woman should have that choice. How many men do you think would be willing to change their name on getting married?

As for titles, I dislike the title of 'Mrs.' because I think Nigerian society gives it too much value—I have observed too many cases of men and women who loudly and proudly speak of the title of Mrs. as though those who are not Mrs have somehow

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... How do our students overcome years of notions of what is normative? While trying to think about these issues in my teaching, I have come to understand that this is not merely an intellectual process. ...

failed at something. Mrs can be a choice, but to infuse it with so much value as our culture does is disturbing. The value we give to Mrs. means that marriage changes the social status of a woman but not of a man. (Is that perhaps why many women complain of married men still 'acting' as though they were single? Perhaps if our society asked married men to change their names and take on a new title, different from Mr, their behavior might change as well? Ha!) But more seriously, if you, a 28-year-old Masters degree holder, go overnight from Ijeawele Ude to Mrs. Ijeawele Onyekailodibe, surely it requires not just the mental energy of changing passports and licenses but also a psychic change, a new 'becoming?' This new 'becoming' would not matter so much if men, too, had to undergo it.

Still on titles, I like Ms because it is similar to Mr. A man is Mr whether married or not, a woman is Ms whether married or not. So please teach Chizalum that in a truly just society, women should not be expected to make marriage-based changes that men are not expected to make. Here's a nifty solution—each couple that marries should take on an entirely new surname, chosen however they want to as long as both agree to it, so that a day after the wedding, both husband and wife can hold hands and joyfully journey off to the municipal offices to change their passports, drivers licenses, signatures, initials, bank accounts, etc.

EIGHTH SUGGESTION: *Teach her to reject likeability.*

Her job is not to make herself likeable, her job is to be her full self, a self that is honest and aware of the equal humanity of other people. Remember I told you how infuriating it was to me that Chioma would often tell me that 'people' would not 'like' something I wanted to say or do. It upset me because I felt, from her, the unspoken pressure to change myself to fit some mold that would please an amorphous entity called 'people.' It was upsetting because we want those close to us to encourage us to be our most authentic selves.

Please do not ever put this pressure on your daughter. We teach girls to be likeable, to be nice, to be false. And we do not teach boys the same. This is dangerous. Many sexual predators have capitalized on this. Many girls remain silent when abused because they want to be nice. Many girls spend too much time trying to be 'nice' to people who do them harm. Many girls think of the 'feelings' of those who are hurting them. This is the catastrophic consequence of likeability. At a recent rape trial, the woman raped by a man said that she did not want to 'cause conflict.' We have a world full of women who are unable fully to exhale because they have for so long been conditioned to fold themselves into shapes to make themselves likeable.

So instead of teaching Chizalum to be likeable, teach her to be honest. And kind. And brave. Encourage her to speak her mind, to say what she really thinks, to speak truthfully. And then praise her when she does. Praise her especially when she takes a stand that is difficult or unpopular because it happens to be her honest position. Tell her that kindness matters. Praise her when she is kind to other people. But teach her that her kindness must never be taken for granted. Tell her that she too deserves the kindness of others. Teach her to stand for what is hers. If another child takes her toy without her permission, ask her to take it back. Tell her that if anything ever makes her uncomfortable, to speak up, to say, to shout.

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... Her analysis is powerful enough for the white man to be afraid...

Show her that she does not need to be liked by everyone. Tell her that if someone does not like her, there will be someone who will. Teach her that she is not merely an object to be liked or disliked, she is also a subject who can like or dislike. In her teenage years, if she comes home crying about some boys who don't like her, let her know she can also choose not to like those boys.

Here's this bit from the New York Times, about a security agent who was there on the night that gunshots were fired at the White House.

> "Officer Carrie Johnson, who had heard debris fall from the Truman Balcony the night before, listened during the roll call before her shift Saturday afternoon as supervisors explained that the gunshots were from people in two cars shooting at each other. Johnson had told several senior officers Friday night that she thought the house had been hit. But on Saturday she did not challenge her superiors, "for fear of being criticized," she later told investigators."

This fear of being criticized is a consequence of likeability. A man is much less likely to give that as a reason, simply because men are much less likely to be raised with likeability as a central life motif.

NINTH SUGGESTION: *Give Chizalum a sense of identity.*

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... Modernity organizes the world ontologically in terms of atomic, homogeneous, separable categories. ... If *woman* and *black* are terms for [these] categories, then their intersection shows us the absence of black women rather than their presence. So, to see non-white women is to exceed "categorical" logic. ...

It matters. Be deliberate about it. Let her grow up to think of herself as, among other things, a proud Igbo Woman. And you must be selective — teach her to embrace the parts of Igbo culture that are beautiful and teach her to reject the parts that are not. You can say to her, in different contexts and different ways—"Igbo culture is lovely because it values community and consensus and hard work, and the language and proverbs are beautiful and full of great wisdom. But Igbo culture also teaches that a woman cannot do certain things just because she's a woman and that is wrong. Igbo culture also focuses a little too much on materialism and while money is important—because money means self-reliance—you must not give value to people based on who has money and who does not."

Be deliberate also about showing her the enduring beauty and resilience of Africans and of black people. Why? Because of the power dynamics in the world, she will grow up seeing images of white beauty, white ability, and white achievement, no matter where she is in the world. It will be in the TV shows she watches, in the popular culture she consumes, in the books she reads. She will also probably grow up seeing many negative images of blackness and of Africans.

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... But as we become more in touch with our own ancient, black, non-European view ... we learn ... to cherish our feelings, and to respect those hidden sources of our power ...

Teach her to take pride in the history of Africans, and in the Black diaspora. Find black heroes, men and women, in history. They exist. You will have to counter some of the things she will learn in school — the Nigerian curriculum isn't quite infused with the idea of teaching children to have a sense of pride. Western nations do it well, because they do it subtly, and they might even disagree about having it called 'teaching pride' but that is what it is. So her teachers will be fantastic at teaching her mathematics and science and art and music, but you will have to do the pride-teaching yourself.

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... but only privileged women had the luxury to imagine working outside the home ... Working-class women already knew that the wages they received would not liberate them. ...

Teach her about privilege and inequality and the importance of giving dignity to everyone who does not mean her harm—teach her that the househelp is human just like her, teach her always to greet the driver and all domestic staff who are older than she is. Link these expectations to her identity—for example, say to her "In our family, when you are a child, you greet those older than you no matter what job they do."

Give her an Igbo nickname. When I was growing up, my Aunty Gladys called me Ada Obodo Dike. I always loved that. Apparently my village Ezi-Abba is known as the Land of Warriors and to be called Daughter of the Land of Warriors was deliciously heady.

Teach her to speak Igbo. Not as a project. Too many Igbo-speaking parents today approach this as though it were a project—they reward the children for speaking the rare sentence, enroll them in patchily-organized once-a-week Igbo school and never actually make normal conversation with them in Igbo. Children are intelligent, they can easily sniff out what you value and what you don't. Once-a-week ventures into some class while not expecting them to actually speak Igbo at home will make it very clear to them that you have little value for Igbo. And it won't work.

If Chizalum is Igbo-speaking, it will help her better navigate our globalized world. And studies have shown over and over that there are many benefits to being bilingual.

TENTH SUGGESTION:
Be deliberate about how you engage with her and her appearance.

Encourage her participation in sports. Teach her to be physically active. Take walks with her. Swim. Run. Play tennis. Football. Table tennis. All kinds of sports. Any kind of sports. I think this is important not only because of the obvious health benefits but because it can help with all the body-image insecurities that the world thrusts on girls. Let Chizalum know that there is great value in being active. Studies show that girls generally stop playing sports as puberty arrives. Not surprising. Breasts and self-consciousness can get in the way of sports. Try not to let that get in her way.

If she likes makeup let her wear it. If she likes fashion let her dress up. But if she doesn't like either let her be. Don't think that raising her feminist means forcing her to reject femininity. Feminism and femininity are not mutually exclusive. It is misogynistic to suggest that they are. Sadly, women have learned to be ashamed and apologetic about pursuits that are seen as traditionally female, such as fashion and makeup. But our society does not expect men to feel ashamed of pursuits considered generally male—sports cars, certain professional sports. In the same way, men's grooming is never suspect in the way women's

grooming is—a well-dressed man does not worry that, because he is dressed well, certain assumptions might be made about his intelligence, his ability or his seriousness.

Never ever link her appearance with morality. Never tell her that a short skirt is 'immoral.' Make dressing a question of taste and attractiveness instead of a question of morality. If you both clash over what she wants to wear, never say things like 'you look like a prostitute' as I know your mother once told you. Instead say ' that dress doesn't flatter you like this other one. Or doesn't fit as well. Or doesn't look as attractive. Or is simply ugly. But never 'immoral.' Because clothes have absolutely nothing to do with morality.

Try not to link hair with pain. I think of my childhood and how often I cried while my dense long hair was being plaited. I think of how a packet of Smarties chocolates was kept in front of me, as a reward if I sat through having my hair done. And for what? Imagine if we had not spent so many Saturdays of our childhood and teenagehood doing our hair. What might we have learned? In what ways might we have grown? What did boys do on Saturdays?

So with her hair, I suggest that you redefine 'neat.' Part of the reason that hair is about pain for so many girls is that adults are determined to conform to a version of 'neat' that means Too Tight and Scalp-Destroying and Headache-Infusing.

We need to stop. I've seen girls in school in Nigeria being terribly harassed for their hair not being 'neat,' merely because some of their God-given hair had curled up in glorious tight little balls at their temples. Make Chizalum's hair loose. And make that your definition of neat. Go to her school and talk to the administration if you have to. It takes one person to make change happen. Also, her hair doesn't have to 'last'—another reason we give for painful hairstyles. I suggest that you make loose plaits and big cornrows and don't use a tiny-teethed comb that wasn't made with our hair texture in mind.

Chizalum will notice very early on—because children are perceptive—what kind of beauty the mainstream world values. She will see it in magazines and films and television. She will see that whiteness is valued. She will notice that the hair texture that is valued is straight or swingy, and is hair that falls down rather than stands up. She will encounter these whether you like it or not. So make sure that you create alternatives for her to see. Let

her know that slim white women are beautiful, and that non-slim, non-white women are beautiful. Let her know that there are many individuals and many cultures that do not find the narrow mainstream definition of beauty attractive. You will know your child best, and so you will know best how to affirm her own kind of beauty, how to protect her from looking at her own reflection with dissatisfaction.

Surround her with a village of aunties, women who have qualities you'd like her to admire. Talk about how much YOU admire them. Children copy and learn from example. Talk about what you admire about them. I, for example, particularly admire the African American feminist Florynce Kennedy. Some African women that I would tell her about are Ama Ata Aidoo, Dora Akunyili, Muthoni Likimani, Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, Taiwo Ajayi Lycett. There are so many African women who are sources of feminist inspiration. Because of what they have done and because of what they have refused to do.

Like your grandmother, by the way, that remarkable, strong, sharp-tongued babe. I remember once hearing Mrs. Josephine Anenih speak, and being so inspired by her frank and strong feminism, which I had not expected at all.

Surround Chizalum too with a village of uncles. This will be harder, judging from the kind of friends Chudi has. I still cannot get over that blustering man with the over-carved beard who kept saying at Chudi's last birthday party—"I have paid her bride price! A woman whose bride price I have paid cannot come and tell me nonsense!"

So please find the few good men that you can, the few non-blustering men. Because the truth is that she will encounter a lot of male bluster in her life. So it is good to have alternatives from very early on.

I cannot overstate the power of alternatives. She can counter ideas about static 'gender roles' if she has been empowered by her familiarity with alternatives. If she knows an uncle who cooks well—and does so with indifference—then she can smile and brush off the foolishness of somebody who claims that 'women must cook.'

ELEVENTH SUGGESTION:
Teach her to question our culture's selective use of biology as 'reasons' for social norms.

p.61

... Though at this time the understanding of sex was not dimorphic, animals were differentiated as males and females, the male being the perfection, the female the inversion and deformation of the male. ...

I know a Yoruba woman, married to an Igbo man, who was pregnant with her first child and was thinking of first names for the child. All the names were Igbo.

Shouldn't they have Yoruba first names since they would have their father's Igbo surname? I asked, and she said, 'A child first belongs to the father. It has to be that way.'

We often use biology to explain the privileges that men have, the most common reason being men's physical superiority. It is true that men are in general physically stronger than women. But our use of biology is selective. 'A child first belongs to the father' is a common sentiment in Nigeria. But if we truly depended on biology as root of social norms then children would be identified as their mothers rather than their fathers because when a child is born, the parent we are biologically—and incontrovertibly—certain of is the mother. We assume the father is who the mother says the father is. How many lineages all over the world are not biological, I wonder?

For many Igbo women, the conditioning is so complete that women think of children only as the father's. I know of women who have left bad marriages but not been 'allowed' to take their children or even to see their children because the children belong to the man.

We also use evolutionary biology to explain male promiscuity, but not to explain female promiscuity, even though it really makes evolutionary sense for women to have many sexual partners—because the larger the genetic pool, the greater will be the chances of bearing offspring who will thrive.

So teach Chizalum that biology is an interesting and fascinating subject, but she should never accept it as justification for any social norm. Because social norms are created by human beings, and there is no social norm that cannot be changed.

p.83

... A homochromosomal relationship that (they'd like you to believe) forgoes the first why of subject formation. ...

TWELVTH SUGGESTION: *Talk to her about sex and start early.*

It will probably be a bit awkward but it is necessary.

Remember that seminar we went to in class 3 where we were supposed to be taught about 'sexuality' but instead we listened to vague semi-threats about how 'talking to boys' would end up with us being pregnant and disgraced. I remember that hall and that seminar as a place filled with shame. Ugly shame. That particular brand of shame that has to do with being female. May your daughter never encounter it.

With her, don't pretend that sex is merely a controlled act of reproduction. Or an 'only in marriage' act, because that is disingenuous. (You and Chudi were having sex long before marriage and she will probably know this by the time she is twelve) Tell her that sex can be a beautiful thing and that it can have emotional consequences and tell her to wait until she is an adult and tell her that once she is an adult, she gets to decide what she wants sex to mean to her. But be prepared because she might not wait until she's 18. And if she doesn't wait, you have to make sure she is able to tell you that.

It's not enough to say you want to raise a daughter who can tell you anything, you have to give her the language to talk to you. And I mean this in a literal way. What should she call it? What word should she use?

I remember people used 'ike' when I was a child to mean both anus and vagina and anus was the easier meaning but it left everything vague and I never quite knew how to say that I, for example, had an itch in my vagina.

Most childhood development experts and pediatricians say it is best to have children call sexual organs by their proper names—vagina and penis. I agree, but that is a decision you have to make. You should decide what name you want her to call it, but what matters is that there must be a name and that it cannot be a name that is weighed down with shame.

To make sure she doesn't inherit shame from you, you have to free yourself of your own inherited shame. And I know how terribly difficult that is. In every culture in the world, female sexuality is about shame. Even cultures—like many in the west—that expect women to be sexy still do not expect them to be sexual.

The shame we attach to female sexuality is about control. Many cultures and religions control women's bodies in one way or the other. If the justification for controlling women's bodies were about women themselves, then it would be understandable. If, for example, the reason was—women should not wear short skirts because they can get cancer if they do. Instead the reason is

not about women, it is about men. Women must be 'covered up' to protect men. I find this deeply dehumanizing because it reduces women to mere props used to manage the appetites of men.

And speaking of shame. Never ever link sexuality and shame. Or nakedness and shame. Do not ever make 'virginity' a focus. Every conversation about virginity becomes a conversation about shame. Teach her to reject the linking of shame and female biology. Why were we raised to speak in low tones about periods? To be filled with shame if our menstrual blood happened to stain our skirt? Periods are nothing to be ashamed off. Periods are normal and natural and the human species would not be here if periods did not exist. I remember a man who said a period was like shit. Well, sacred shit, I told him, because you wouldn't be here if periods didn't happen.

THIRTEENTH SUGGESTION: *Romance will happen so be on board.*

I'm writing this assuming she is heterosexual—she might not be, obviously. But I am assuming that because it is what I feel best equipped to talk about.

Make sure you are aware of the romance in her life. And the only way you can do that is to start very early to give her the language with which to talk to you. I don't mean you should be her 'friend,' I mean you should be her mother to whom she can talk about everything.

Teach her that to love is not only to give but also to take. This is important because we give girls subtle cues about their lives—we teach girls that a large component of their ability to love is their ability to self-sacrifice. We do not teach this to boys. Teach her that to love she must give of herself emotionally but she must also expect to be given.

I think love is the most important thing in life. Whatever kind, however you define it but I think of it generally as being greatly valued by another human being and giving great value to another human being. But why do we raise only one half of the world to value this? I was recently in a roomful of young woman and was struck by how much of the conversation was about men—what terrible things men had done to them, this man cheated, this man lied, this man promised marriage and disappeared, this husband did this and that.

And I realized, sadly, that the reverse is not true. A roomful of men do not invariably end up talking about women—and if they do, it is more likely to be in objectifying flippant terms rather than as lamentations of life. Why?

It goes back, I think, to that early conditioning. At a recent baby's baptism ceremony, guests were asked to write their wishes for the baby girl. One guest wrote: I wish for you a good husband.' Well-intentioned obviously but very troubling. A three-month old baby girl already being told that a husband is something to aspire to. Had the baby been a boy, it would not have occurred to that guest to wish him 'a good wife.'

And speaking of women lamenting about men who 'promise' marriage and then disappear. Isn't it odd that in most societies in the world today, women generally cannot propose marriage? Marriage is such a major step in your life and yet you cannot take charge of it, it depends on a man asking you. So many women are in long term relationships and want to get married but have to 'wait' for the man to propose—and often this waiting becomes a performance, sometimes unconscious and sometimes not, of marriage-worthiness. If we apply the first Feminism Tool here, then it makes no sense that a woman who matters equally has to 'wait' for somebody else to initiate what will be a major life change for her.

A Feminism Lite adherent once told me that the fact that our society expects men to make proposals proved that women had the power, because only if a woman says yes can marriage happen. The truth is this—the real power resides in the person who asks. Before you can say yes or no, you first must be asked. I truly wish for Chizalum a world in which either person can propose, in which a relationship has become so comfortable, so joy-filled, that whether or not to embark on marriage becomes a conversation, itself filled with joy.

I want to say something about money here. Teach her never ever to say such nonsense as 'my money is my money and his money is our money.' It is vile. And dangerous—to have that attitude means that you must potentially accept other harmful ideas as well. Teach her that it is *not* a man's role to provide. In a healthy relationship, it is the role of whoever can provide to provide.

FOURTEENTH SUGGESTION:
In teaching her about oppression, be careful not to turn the oppressed into saints.

Saintliness is not a pre-requisite for dignity. People who are unkind and dishonest are still human, and still deserve dignity. Property rights for rural Nigerian women, for example, is a major feminist issue, and the women do not need to be good and angelic to be allowed their property rights.

There is sometimes, in the discourse around gender, the assumption that women are supposed to be morally 'better' than men. They are not. Women are as human as men are. Female goodness is as normal as female evil.

And there are many women in the world who do not like other women. Female misogyny exists and to evade acknowledging it is to create unnecessary opportunities for anti-feminists to try and discredit feminism. I mean the sort of anti-feminists who will gleefully raise examples of women saying 'I am not a feminist' as though a person born with a vagina making this statement somehow automatically discredits feminism. That a woman claims not to be feminist does not diminish the necessity of feminism. If anything, it makes us see the extent of the problem, the successful reach of patriarchy. It shows us, too, that not all women are feminists and not all men are misogynists.

FIFTEENTH SUGGESTION: *Teach her about difference.*

p. 193

... Teaching about "difference" in relation to power ... involves not only rethinking questions of learning and authority but also questions of center and margin. ...

Make difference ordinary. Make difference normal. Teach her not to attach value to difference. And the reason for this is not to be fair or to be nice but merely to be human and practical. Because difference is the reality of our world. And by teaching her about difference, you are equipping her to survive in a diverse world.

She must know and understand that people walk different paths in the world and that as long as those paths do no harm to others, they are valid paths that she must respect. Teach her that we do not know—we cannot know—everything about life. Both religion and science have spaces for the things we do not know, and it is enough to make peace with that.

Teach her never to universalize her own standards or experiences. Teach her that her standards are for her alone, and not for other people. This is the only necessary form of humility:

the realization that difference is normal.

Tell her that some people are gay, and some are not. A little child has two daddies or two mommies because some people just do. Tell her that some people go to mosque and others go to church and others go to different places of worship and still others don't worship at all, because that is just the way it is for some people.

> You like palm oil but some people don't like palm oil—you say to her.
>
> Why—she says to you.
>
> I don't know. It's just the way the world is—you say to her.

Please note that I am not suggesting that you raise her to be 'non judgmental' which is a commonly used expression these days, and which slightly worries me. The general sentiment behind the idea is a fine one but 'non-judgmental' can easily devolve into meaning 'don't have an opinion about anything.' And so, instead of that, what I hope for Chizalum is this: that she will be full of opinions, and that her opinions will come from an informed, humane and broad-minded place.

May she be healthy and happy. May her life be whatever she wants it to be.

p.99

... Our children cannot dream unless they live, they cannot live unless they are nourished, and who else will feed them the real food without which their dreams will be no different from ours? ...

Do you have a headache after reading all this? Sorry. Next time don't ask me how to raise your daughter feminist.

With love,
oyi gi,
Chimamanda

A NOTE ABOUT THE TEXTS

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