THEORIZING THE SUBJECT: THEODOR ADORNO, EDWARD SAID, GAYATRI SPIVAK AND CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL DISCOURSE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BY
ASHA VARADHARAJAN
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

C. 1992. ASHA VARADHARAJAN
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-23914-4
Asha Varadharajan

• Missing Pages 17, 51-56

Able to copy 17 and 56 but not 52, 53, 54, 54 – inserted sheets to show that pages are missing
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Graduate Studies and Research

SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

Asha Varadharajan
Department of English
September 1992

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Dr. Louise Forsyth (Dean, College of Graduate Studies and Research)

Dr. L. M. Findlay (Supervisor, Department of English)

Dr. H. Clark (Department of English)

Dr. S. Gingell (Chair, Graduate Committee, Department of English)

Dr. D. Thorpe (Department of English)

Dr. L. Jaeck (Department of Modern Languages)

EXTERNAL EXAMINER:

Dr. Linda Hutcheon
Departments of English and Comparative Literature
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario
THESIS

THEORIZING THE SUBJECT:

THEODOR ADORNO, EDWARD SAID, GAYATRI SPIVAK
AND CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL DISCOURSE

ABSTRACT

Theodor W. Adorno’s Negative Dialectics informs my attempt to articulate a mode of theoretical analysis that extricates the process of knowing from that of violation in the interests of discovering a space from which the "subaltern" can speak. The contribution of Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to tracing the itinerary of the subaltern’s silencing is both exemplary and problematic in this regard. Their crucial focus on the calumny of the discourse of Empire has nevertheless contributed to a merely implied interest (to date) in the resistance of the oppressed.

Moreover, the difficulty of speaking outside of what Said calls "orientalism" has entailed the transformation of empirical and historically constituted "others" into the ineffable, ontological residue of the failure of (patriarchal and ethnocentric) representation. This thesis addresses these problems in the light of Adorno’s significant attempt to reclaim the object or otherness from the inexorable progress and sublation (Aufhebung) of the Hegelian dialectic. His enterprise dismantles the very logic of identity which produces exclusionary politics—instances of, in Said’s words, "pontification about what makes ‘us’ worth protecting and ‘them’ worth attacking.

Adorno’s conception of a "negative dialectic" in which subject and object "reciprocally permeate each other" because each is defined "as a moment of its own opposite" informs my reading of the work of Said and Spivak. They raise questions that theoretical discourse cannot afford to ignore: Who or what inhabits/appropriates the category of the subject? How might the insertion of philosophy (of theory) into history trace the formation of the subject to "the conditions of material production?" Indeed, how has criticism as a discourse of "orientalism" ensured that the object of this discourse, the subaltern as sexual subject and ethnic other, does not speak?

If the subaltern has hitherto been reduced to a systemic excess, to a species of "non-being," its very negativity becomes occasion for critique and for resistance to rather than retreat from stable definition and identity. It is the central contention of this project that while contemporary critical theory has been right to dismantle systems that thrive on the interpenetration of knowledge and power, mere dismantling does not suffice. Post-colonial discourse is in real danger of turning every attempt to reclaim knowledge/reason to serve the urgent political interests of minorities into, in Martin Jay’s words, "an automatic brief for the suppression of [what remains a theorized] heterogeneity."
Adorno’s insistence on particularity (rather than the in-different flux of differance) ensures that the dialectic between subject and object does not conclude in the subject’s rediscovery of a suitably disseminated self, but in the object’s articulated resistance to what Spivak describes as "the subject of the West, or the West as subject." As Adorno might have argued, the "preponderance of the object" explodes the categories of the subject. In this context, the object does not merely elude the subject, but demands that the subject formulate the riddle of the other in another way.

My conclusion, therefore, makes claims for empirical others who are demonstrable if not definable, and argues for a nuanced attention to historical variables that transforms both facts and the norms of their interpretation into the ground of emancipatory critique and political transformation. This work, in short, aims to do more than gesture vaguely in the direction of questions of daily survival or lament that the other woman continues to be obscured from the philanthropic gaze of the potential "native informant."
The author has agreed that the Library, University of Saskatchewan, may make this thesis freely available for inspection. Moreover, the author has agreed that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor or professors who supervised the thesis work recorded herein or, in their absence, by the Head of the Department or the Dean of the College in which the thesis work was done. It is understood that due recognition will be given to the author of this thesis and the University of Saskatchewan in any use of the material of this thesis. Copying or publication or any other use of the thesis for financial gain without approval by the University of Saskatchewan and the author's written permission is prohibited.

Requests for permission to copy or to make any other use of material in this thesis in whole or in part should be addressed to:

Head of the Department of English
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Canada
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the Department of English, University of Saskatchewan, for financial support during my graduate career as well as to express my gratitude for the generosity of spirit which characterizes its members. Memorial University of Newfoundland and Queen's University have also contributed to material necessities. Dr. E. Epperly of the former and Dr. L. Monkman of the latter have, in the course of attending to financial matters, also been sources of moral support and encouragement.

My supervisor, Dr. L.M. Findlay, has been a sustaining and challenging presence during my graduate career at the University of Saskatchewan. I can only hope that this thesis reflects in some small way his theoretical rigour, the wit (in Jane Austen's sense of the word) and panache that distinguish his own expression, and, crucially, his ethical and political vigilance. His patience and editorial skills did much to ease the difficult circumstances under which this thesis was produced.

Sheila Steele, Mary Lou Jones and Laura Jones have, over the years, remained kindred spirits. My delightful and courageous students at Memorial University made me re-think privileged claims to marginality. Michelle Mahoney gave unstintingly of her energy and love, for which I am grateful. My colleagues at Queen's have been concretely but unobtrusively supportive—they know who they are! April Anderson's vitality and humorous debunking of intellectual pretensions have illuminated my darkest hours, while my personal debt to Rhonda Anderson is inseparable from my intellectual one. Her uncompromising friendship (she is no fan of what passes for "theory") inspired the difficult task of disentangling knowledge from power, and her insights pepper the salient moments of this work.

This project is dedicated to my grandmothers, Kanthimathi, Madhurambal, and Kamala (scarred survivors of a colonial and Brahmin past) and to the women of a post-colonial future, Deepa, Pooja, and Arielle. I hope the women and men of the present in my family recognize their traces in this tribute to their clear-eyed love.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION...........1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I: The End(s) of (Wo)Man or, The Limits of Difference.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II: Rethinking the Object..........................59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III: Theodor W. Adorno.................................83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION I: Theory and Praxis: The Case of the Frankfurt School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION II: &quot;... an objectless inwardness&quot;: Philosophies of Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION III: &quot;... the preponderance of the object&quot;: Negative Dialectics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION IV: &quot;Frankfurters and French Fries&quot;: Adorno and Post-structuralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: The &quot;curious guardian at the margin&quot;.................................165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V: Edward W. Said..................................218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION I: &quot;Secular&quot; Criticism: (Dis)placing the Post-colonial Intellectual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION II: In Search of &quot;... new objects for a new kind of knowledge&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION: &quot;... the inextinguishable color from non-being&quot;....247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED.................................254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The notion of the subject has come to replace that of the individual because critical discourse (at least within the domain of post-modernism) has become increasingly aware of "the necessity of understanding consciousness as something produced rather than as the source of ideas and the social world--as constituted and not constitutive" (Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity 7-8). If either self or world constitutes the "privileged beginning" (Changing the Subject 9) of analysis, one is in danger of casting the individual in the role of the rational author of his/her destiny, while simultaneously treating social processes as the workings of immutable necessity. Such an analysis leaves no room for an understanding of the complex interactions between self and world and does not explain the often contradictory and constraining nature of those interactions. The aim, then, of contemporary critical analysis has been to treat "interior and exterior as problematic [indeed fluid] categories" (Changing the Subject 9) and to suggest an approach which both situates the subject and determines the conditions of its possibility (see John Mowitt's foreword to Paul Smith, Discerning the Subject xi).

Post-modernism's denial of the constitutive power of consciousness has had consequences too for the claims of occidental reason. Friedrich Nietzsche was, of course, one of the first to demonstrate the inexorable manner in which the stability of the self becomes inseparable from the "will to know." Post-modernism envisages its task, therefore, as the exposure of the continuing predication of the legitimacy of knowledge upon the instrumentality of power.

The post-modern subject, in representing itself as constituted rather than constitutive, has enabled the analysis of systemic relations which govern the constitution of subjects and which determine the possibilities for self-representation. This sensitivity to economies of
power, desire, and knowledge which traverse and engender subjects has
given post-modernism its undeniable edge. Nevertheless, precisely the
political import of its strategy of displacement must be re-thought when
the critical gaze shifts to the object or the other who is no longer
content (if she or he ever was) that the erstwhile sovereign subject has
abdicated its throne.

My interest is in the subject which constitutes as its object the
feminine and ethnic other of the discourse of Western patriarchy and
Empire. This object functions as the guarantor of the subject's self-
sufficiency and difference. Given this state of affairs, the self-
effacement of the subject seems a necessary prelude to the appearance of
a visible and voluble object. Paradoxically, however, the very process of
self-effacement which exposes the illusory mastery of the subject
simultaneously denies the resistance of the object.

The displacement of the subject can all too easily become a
convenient ploy for withholding subjectivity from those for whom it has
never been anything but an illusion. The critique of essence, identity,
and authenticity does not adequately account for the experience of being
bereft of all three; indeed, such a critique appropriates that experience
and transforms it into a moment of self-discovery for the critic rather
than a recognition of otherness. In other words, if the sovereignty of
the subject is only a necessary illusion, is the power exerted in the name
of that fiction of mastery equally illusory? Whom shall the other hold
accountable for its suffering?

This revelation of the nexus of knowledge and power calls precisely
for, in Michel Foucault's words, "... the usurpation of power [and] the
appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it"
("Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 88). Instead, critical discourse seems
to have reached a kind of impasse in which theorists can do no more than
bemoan the inherent violence of knowledge and its product—representation.
This thesis attempts, therefore, to conceive of another knowledge that
involves not the annihilation of the subject but its reformulation in confrontation with a resistant object. I wish to discover a mode of representation in which the colonized or the feminine functions as more than the West's "limit-text" (Homi Bhabha's phrase). I want to ensure that "the discovery of [Western and masculine] assumptions" does not preclude an investigation into the history and materiality of other cultures [and of femininity] (Shabha, "Difference, Discrimination..." 196 and 197).

Theodor W. Adorno's Negative Dialectics informs my attempt to articulate a mode of theoretical analysis that differentiates the process of knowing from that of violation in the interests of discovering a space from which the "other" can speak. In this regard, the contributions of Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to tracing the itinerary of the colonized's silencing are both exemplary and problematic.

Said and Spivak raise questions that theoretical discourse cannot afford to ignore: Who or what inhabits or appropriates the category of the subject? How might the insertion of theory into history trace the formation of the subject to "the conditions of material production" (Negative Dialectics 284)? Indeed, how has criticism as a discourse of "orientalism" ensured that the object of this discourse, the "subaltern" (Spivak's term) as sexed subject and ethnic other, does not speak?

Spivak's consciousness of the difficulty of speaking outside of what Said calls "orientalism" (because the discourse of Empire constitutes the other in the very process of defacing him/her) contributes, however, to her transformation of empirical and historically constituted "others" into the ineffable, ontological residue of the failure of patriarchal and ethnocentric representation. Said's prose, in an analogous fashion, focuses on the violence of Empire rather than on the resistance of the colonized. Their work, in short, has been indispensable to the process of decolonization but needs to be supplemented by a theory of negation that does not preclude a politics of affirmation.
Adorno's conception of a "negative dialectic" in which subject and object "reciprocally permeate each other" because each is defined "as a moment of its own opposite" (Negative Dialectics 139) informs my reading of the work of Said and Spivak. If the subaltern has hitherto been reduced to a systemic excrescence, to a species of "non-being," its very negativity can become occasion for critique and for resistance to rather than retreat from stable definition and identity. It is the central contention of this project that, while contemporary critical theory has been right to dismantle systems that thrive on the interpenetration of knowledge and power, more than mere dismantling is required.

Adorno's insistence on particularity ensures that the dialectic between subject and object does not conclude with the subject's rediscovery of a disseminated self, but with the object's articulated resistance to what Spivak describes as "the subject of the West, or the West as Subject" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 271). As Adorno might have argued, the "preponderance of the object" (Negative Dialectics 183) explodes the categories of the subject. In this context, the object does not merely elude the subject, but demands that the subject formulate the riddle of the other in another way.

My conclusion, therefore, makes claims for empirical others who are demonstrable if not definable, and argues for a nuanced attention to historical variables that transforms both facts and the norms of their interpretation into the ground of emancipatory critique and political transformation.
... he [Aziz] remembered that he had, or ought to have, a motherland. Then he shouted: "India shall be a nation! No foreigners of any sort! Hindu and Moslem and Sikh and all shall be one! Hurrah! Hurrah for India! Hurrah! Hurrah! India a nation! What an apotheosis! Last comer to the drab nineteenth-century sisterhood! Waddling in at this hour of the world to take her seat! She, whose only peer was the Holy Roman Empire, she shall rank with Guatemala and Belgium perhaps. Fielding mocked again. And Aziz in an awful rage danced this way and that, not knowing what to do, and cried: "Down with the English anyhow. That's certain. Clear out, you fellows, double quick, I say. We may hate one another, but we hate you most. If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty or five hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then"—he rode again furiously—"and then," he concluded, half kissing him, "you and I shall be friends." "Why can't we be friends now?" said the other, holding him affectionately. "It's what I want. It's what you want." But the horses didn't want it—they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single-file; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Man beneath: they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, "No, not yet," and the sky said, "No, not there."

-- E.M. Forster, A Passage to India
INTRODUCTION

I want to begin on a personal note, to elicit the traces of memory, desire, and invention that animate this conjunction of self, writing, and historical moment. Perhaps it would be more accurate, in the spirit of Walter Benjamin, to petrify the self in a "Medusan glance [so that it] turns into the stage on which an objective process unfolds" (T.W. Adorno, "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin," Prisms: Cultural Criticism and Society 235). I have, at any rate, the rudiments of a dialectic at my disposal as well as the notion of a subjective dimension as a staging of the articulable violence and silent depredations of history.

The history in question is precisely that of the process of decolonization. The object, product, and survivor of this necessarily incomplete process (for reasons I shall sketch here and develop in the course of this narrative) is the post-colonial subject. Her "otherness" in the discourse of Western Empire serves to consolidate the identity of her colonizers even as it reifies her own, and her perceived tendency to elude the categories of Western rationality renders her dear to mosaics, melting pots, and post-moderns.

My interest in this traffic of selves and others, colonizers and colonized, men and women, colour and whiteness is that of a member of the familiar, if still anomalous, breed of intellectual émigrés or "native informants" as they are now called. My contribution to the vexed enterprise of inscribing the margins, of representing the colonized, and of letting, so to speak, Caliban curse freely, is, as is probably obvious, heavily compromised.

My integrity seems hopelessly entangled with my tendency to "throw in [my] lot with salaried profundity" (Adorno's phrasing in Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life 66), with the fact that neo-imperialism continues apace, and with my conformity to Macaulay's caricature of "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect" (as quoted in Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of
Nationalism 86). In the current theoretical climate, one could well substitute "Derridean" for "English."¹ Worse, I could belong, and am perhaps perceived as belonging to the cadre of "colourful personalities" (Adorno, *Minima Moralia* 135) whose alienation is, as the modernists and existentialists were well aware, a profitable commodity.² I might function then no longer as the "white man's burden" but as his scourge, able to "ingratiate [myself] with aggressive jibes masochistically enjoyed by [my] protectors" who could then congratulate themselves on their liberality (Adorno, *Minima Moralia* 136).

Agency is a treacherous business in the realm of "mental miscenation" (Anderson, *Imagined Communities* 87) which post-colonial intellectuals inhabit. The reproduction of the conquest of land in the colonization of the mind serves as a baleful yet crucial reminder of the impossibility of authenticity. That the post-colonial intellectual is "a stranger in his [sic] own native land" (Bipin Chandra Pal, as quoted in *Imagined Communities* 88) is no longer surprising and is in fact the condition of her claim (one that she makes at her peril) that "[s]he really knows what [s]he is talking about."³

This inauthenticity also denotes her inability both to be the other of Western empire (the splendid but mute savage) and to speak for the "wholly other" whom Gayatri Spivak characterises as "the curious guardian at the margin" ("Theory in the Margin: Coetzee's Foe Reading Defoe's Crusoe/Roxana" in *Consequences of Theory* 172). The "native informant" both constitutes and adjudicates the limits of knowledge about the other and the "graphematic" space the latter occupies/inscribes (Spivak, "Theory in the Margin" 175).⁴ The post-colonial intellectual represents, therefore, the visible sign of a deferred postcoloniality even as she marks the limits of colonization. How then can she articulate the impossible possibility she seeks and prefigures?

Spivak is probably right to dismiss most attempts to call the place of the writing or investigating subject into question as "meaningless
piet[ies]" ("Can the Subaltern Speak? 271); however, that such attempts
can never suffice or that they dwindle into no more than knee-jerk
responses to various forms of political correctness does not obviate the
necessity for a reflection on "beginnings."\textsuperscript{5} Besides, reflexivity can
constitute the grounds for, or at the very least supplement, critique even
if it cannot substitute for the latter.

The reflection on subject positions has become unavoidable for the
sympathetic Western critic who chooses to engage with the other without
presumption or patronage. The danger, as I see it, of this timely
recognition of a perhaps inescapable ethnocentrism, is that it could be
turned easily enough into an excuse for inaction. This conscientious
refusal to speak for those whom the discourse of Empire designates as
other would become a way of absolving oneself of the responsibility for
the brutality of history. Since the Western critic is inevitably
implicated in the history of colonization, any intervention on behalf of
the other, it could be argued, will be contaminated by that history and
therefore futile. The process of self-scrutiny would then translate
itself into consolation for the wrongs of the past and into paralysis in
the present.

Reflexivity may also be less innocent than the phrase "meaningless
piety" suggests; that is, critical restraint could reconstitute itself as
yet another colonizing gesture. It is not often noticed that the critic
who refrains from speaking on behalf of those whom she can never "know"
presumes that having spoken she would have said it all and that the other
will be moved neither to challenge nor to supplement her. In other words,
her humility has all the trappings of a gracious and patronizing self-
effacement which still reserves the right to grant the other "permission
to narrate" her (hi)story.\textsuperscript{6}

The native informant is equally subject to these problems; indeed,
they are compounded by the contradiction between her political allegiance
to her "origins" and her facility with the discourses of the colonizer.
It seems pertinent, given the paradoxes of decolonization, to distinguish between reflexivity as the willed paralysis of the purveyor of master narratives or even of the over-scrupulous native informant and reflexivity as commitment to a dialectical mode of critique in which the mind ... reckons itself into the problem, understanding the dilemma not as a resistance of the object alone, but also as the result of a subject-pole deployed and disposed against it in a strategic fashion—in short, as the function of a determinate subject-object relationship.

(Fredric Jameson, Marxism and Form: Twentieth Century Dialectical Theories of Literature 308)

The forms of reflexivity I have described deal with a "petrified otherness" (Adorno, Minima Moralia 135), and conceive of the relation between subject and object as a logical rather than a dialectical contradiction. The paralysis of the self-reflexive critic stems from her designation of the other as a barrier which brings epistemological hubris up short. The other as object of analysis is thus pitted against the investigating subject in stark, antithetical terms—the hubris or hasty retreat of one confirming the blank impenetrability of the other.

The perception of otherness as radical and irreducible leaves one trapped within the confines of the colonial encounter in which the colonizer "... perceive[d] as human only [his] own reflected image, instead of reflecting back the human as precisely what is different" (Adorno's phrasing, Minima Moralia 105). In other words, the respect for the integrity of the other functions as a complement to the colonizer's paranoid insistence that the other serve to consolidate his identity.

Dialectical thinking, however, eschews antithesis except as "determinate negation." As the quotation from Marxism and Form indicates, the relation between subject and object must be construed as a dynamic interaction subject to historical conditions or, in the colonial situation, as an interplay between the power of the colonizer and the
resistance of the colonized. The split between subject and object, therefore, is not inherent but historically produced and negated.

Jameson's insistence on the strategic deployment of the subject-pole of the dialectic avoids the willed paralysis of reflexivity because the intellectual's power of negation resides not only in recognizing the pervasiveness of ideology or of systems of power/knowledge, but also in constructing a mode of critique that does more than confirm what it attacks. The task for the post-colonial intellectual, to borrow Adorno's words, "is to let neither the power of others, nor [her] own powerlessness, stupefy [her]" (*Minima Moralia* 57).

Reflexivity (such as I have been discussing) thus reveals itself as an inadequate comprehension of the functioning of ideology because it assumes that there are no chinks in the armour of the system and fails to take into account the fact that both the processes of colonization and of decolonization were and will remain incomplete. Adorno remarks that "[t]he world is systematized horror, but therefore it is to do the world too much honour to think of it entirely as a system..." (*Minima Moralia* 113). Interestingly, Edward Said's trenchant critique of "orientalism" allows itself to do the system too much honour.

In his path-breaking work, Said's focus remains on the misdeeds of the oppressor rather than on the resistance of the oppressed. While such an emphasis is perhaps unavoidable in a polemic, his subsequent writings continue to call for the production of "new objects for a new kind of knowledge" (Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered" 91) without specifying the contours of such a novel discourse. The Platonic residue in Said's claim that different knowledge demands different objects will come under scrutiny in Chapter V. His caution regarding hasty projections of a decolonized future in which orientalism will cease to influence representation is salutary; nevertheless, his insistence on empirical others who are historically constituted rather than ontologically given ("Representing the Colonized: Anthropology and its Interlocutors" 225)
implies that the "other" is invokable if not definable.

I am not unaware that the fashionable gesture of de-centering the subject resembles, much too closely for comfort, the classic gesture of self-deprecation common to colonials who believed that "by careful mimicry [they] might become men [sic]" (Derek Walcott, "The Schooner Flight" in The Star-Apple Kingdom 12). If we collaborated with their power once, we might just as easily be co-opted by their overtures of humility. In this sense, the belief that the "mirror, where a generation yearned/for whiteness..." (Walcott, "Another Life" in Derek Walcott's Selected Poetry 43) is now willing to return that gaze with candour is no more than wish-fulfilment. Abdul Jan Mohammed and David Lloyd's point is well taken that the "non-identity which the critical Western intellectual seeks to (re)produce discursively is for minorities a given of their social existence" ("Introduction: Minority Discourse--What is to be Done?" in "The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse" 16).

The problem remains, however, that the consequence of negating the negation that constitutes the (minority) self as other appears to be stable identity of a sort which produces exclusionary politics as well as "pontification about what makes 'us' worth protecting and 'them' worth attacking" (Said, "Identity, Negation and Violence" 60). The trick, then, to use Adorno's trenchant comment on Nazism (and not inappropriately in this instance), is "not to choose between black and white but to abjure such prescribed choices" (Minima Moralia 132). I shall consider in a moment Said and Spivak's rewriting of such prescribed choices as the dialectic of friend and foe in the context of my claims for an epistemology that is not dismissable as colonization or appropriation.

My stake in the defensible claims of otherness is as much personal as it is political, and the trajectory of my engagement with the discourse of Empire has its roots in the (literal) subalternity of my ancestry. My introduction to the power and possibilities of historical dialectic occurred in my experience of the irreducible contradiction of the lives of
my grandparents. I share their legacy of (enabling) schizophrenia, of lives conducted in the consciousness of their status as victims and agents of the British Empire.

My maternal grandfather turned his Master's degree in English (with irony and alacrity, no doubt), into a career in the Indian Police, while my paternal grandfather let his own skills as a lawyer slide when he languished in jail for joining, and to some degree spearheading, the freedom movement in Southern India. One chose to honour the claims of family while the other, following Mahatma Gandhi's example, pursued what were then, perhaps, more pressing concerns. The latter's person, however, was subject to violence from nationalists too who stoned him when he chose to conduct one of the first widow-remarriages in the Brahmin, Tamil-speaking community. To this day, he runs a school for "untouchables" or "Harijans" (God's people or children) as Gandhi courageously labelled the others within.9

The former chose to rebel on the level of language. His children received education in the vernacular despite his passion for English Literature and he wrote his own unpublished poetry in his native tongue, Malayalam, refusing the option to publish in English. The social reformer in my paternal grandfather, however, did not penetrate the opacity of Brahmin ritual in his home and produced its own subaltern in his wife. Here, it seemed, his authority remained (in)effective in that his radicalism could not, and did not, command submission from her in the way his conservatism did from them both.

This exercise in self-situation may help to illustrate the problematic status of nationality and of "nativism" in the discourse of post-colonialism. The awakening of India to self-consciousness had less to do with an essence that achieved fruition and more to do with unity in the face of a common enemy—a point that the epigraph makes with the poignant reminder that dissension was essential to British dominion. As Benedict Anderson points out, "'India' only became 'British' after the
1857 Mutiny" (Imagined Communities 86). Anderson's nice ambiguity is salutary—the "mutiny" confirmed "India" as both a nation and a British possession—even if one baulks at his leaving the word "mutiny" unchallenged. India had thus to invent itself as an entity, dream "an imagined political community" in order to come into being (Imagined Communities 15ff).

My own desire for national allegiance, then, emerges as an irrevocable contradiction and involves the dialectical mediation of Brahmin orthodoxy and colonial education. That sexism was not coterminous with colonialism was ammunition enough for me to begin the difficult task of representing a self that could not claim to be representative. The "intellectual in emigration" (Adorno, Minima Moralia 33) inhabits a "twilight" world, to use Derek Walcott's evocative metaphor ("What the Twilight Says" 5), but the wound that history has inflicted creates the urge to begin again.10

Adorno claims that every such individual is "mutilated" because "his [sic] language has been expropriated, and the historical dimension that nourished his [sic] knowledge, sapped..." (Minima Moralia 33). Adorno's situation as a "permanent exile" (Martin Jay's phrase in Permanent Exiles: Essays on the Intellectual Migration from Germany to America), however, serves to clarify and distinguish my own. I cannot experience my situation as an uprooting in the way that he implies because I cannot recall an authentic cultural and linguistic dimension that was not already contaminated by the history of colonialism and by multiplicity. Once again, the dialectic of friend and foe plays itself out on the level of language as it does on that of history and of identity. In short, the historical dimension that "nourishe[s] [my] knowledge" is precisely that which "sap[s]" it—there is no Archimedean point outside the history of the colonial encounter.

Perhaps my relatively sanguine reaction to the horrors of schizophrenia as well as my unwillingness to romanticize its creative
potential (I have in mind here Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's claim for a minority discourse that thrives on the revolutionary potential of schizophrenia as a radical disintegration of the socius, not a clinical disorder of the mind) has something to do with a divine Hindu pantheon that is unmistakably multiple and that displays none of the narcissistic and jealous anxiety of Setebos in Robert Browning's representation of Caliban and his "maker!"

Adorno's cultural alienation was itself subject to the corrosive irony of his position as a witness to the Nazi extermination of Jews, as well as to the guilt of a survivor of that extermination. His searing awareness that authenticity is bought at the price of the decimation of others animates his sustained critique of identity-thinking. The relevance of that critique to this work will soon become clear.

I do, nevertheless, endorse Adorno's willingness to "affirm" this mutilation as the ever-present capacity to negate an administered world. If, as he says, "wrong life cannot be lived rightly" (Minima Moralia 37), the "neurosis" that defines the "native informant" must be transformed into the source of "the healing force, that of knowledge" (Adorno, "Notes on Kafka" Prisma 252). Lest I am accused of being in danger of forgetting myself and of uncritically embracing the material suffering of "mutilation," I want to say that I carry with me the image of my maternal grandfather's last days when his "senility" manifested itself as an infallible memory of Shakespeare and Tennyson and an inability to recognize the anxious faces that hovered over him. The resistance to the ill-gotten gains of colonial education begins, perhaps, in the memory of such loss.

I have thus far treated Adorno, Said, and Spivak as "presences" rather than as objects of sustained critique in the course of developing a paradigm of knowledge that is no longer in danger of treating epistemology as violation, representation as colonization, or theory as the shortest distance between "the stalled origin and the stalled end"
(Spivak, "Theory in the Margin" 158). Such an enterprise entails, as I shall argue, a "negative dialectic" between subject and object in which "otherness" functions as resistance to, rather than retreat from, identity and stable definition.

The "negative dialectic" insists on an "immersion in particularity" which does not lead merely to "the subject's rediscovery of itself" (Susan Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics 85) but to a "dialectical reversal" (Jameson, Marxism and Form 309) in which "the preponderance of the object" (Adorno, Negative Dialectics 183) explodes the categories of the subject. That the object eludes the instrumental rationality of the knowing subject is not to be construed as the "native's" tantalizing mockery of epistemological desire. This certainly seems to be Spivak's contention when she remarks that, as agent and victim, the native "simply withdraws [his] graphematic space" (Spivak, "Theory in the Margin" 175).

Spivak does not entertain the possibility that the recognition that the "desire to help [or "know"] racially differentiated others [has] a threshold and a limit" (Spivak, "Theory in the Margin" 177) may be the prelude to a mode of critique which becomes "a matter, indeed, of the reversal of limits" (Jameson, Marxism and Form 309). The error (I realize that the opposition between truth and error is itself something she would wish to "undo") in Spivak's conception of this process of discovering the "native" as "the unemphatic agent of withholding" lies in the conclusion she draws from her analysis ("Theory in the Margin" 172).

"Theory," she writes, "is always withdrawn from that which it seeks to theorize, however insubstantial that object might be (my emphasis)" ("Theory in the Margin" 175). Spivak's analysis often assumes that the interaction between subject and object poles in the dialectic is analogous to the failure of a force to move a simply resistant object. She collapses the poles of the dialectic because theory's capacity to be "off the mark" is matched by the insubstantiality of the object it seeks to theorize. It is difficult to escape the tautological conclusion that
theory is its own (insubstantial) object. In other words, "the explanation ... is inherent in the initial description of the event" (Jameson, Marxism and Form 344).\textsuperscript{13}

This problem reappears in Spivak's representation of the "native's" desire to retain "a space of withholding, marked by a secret that may not be a secret but cannot be unlocked" ("Theory in the Margin" 172). This cautionary measure leaves knowledge with no choice but to demand (insensitively and unsubtly, of course) the key. She puts the "native" in the odd position of coyly refusing the lumbering advances of the knowing subject and puts knowledge in the impossible position of a violator of mysteries or, worse still, turns knowledge into a species of mysticism. As far as the tautological character of this kind of argument is concerned, I merely want to point out that the representation of one pole of the dialectic (Friday with his withholding slate) has repercussions on the other (knowledge becomes colonization—a command for the native "to yield his 'voice'") (Spivak, "Theory in the Margin" 172). The reverse, of course, holds true too.

The tautology occurs in a different guise when Spivak attempts to refute Benita Parry's charge that she never permits the subaltern to speak. Spivak points out that Parry "has forgotten that [she (Spivak) is a native] too" ("Theory in the Margin" 172). Her response seems to me to continue to beg the question of the subaltern because she dissolves the distinction between knower and known. This dissolution makes Spivak guilty of appropriating the subaltern woman's powerlessness to unlearn her own privilege, or catches her in the act of making the damaging admission that the subaltern (the object of her critique) is Spivak (the subject of her critique). This is a different point from the one that acknowledges that the subject must reckon herself into the problem she addresses or the object she describes.

Moreover, the space she grants the "wholly other" becomes the hazardous groundlessness of theory itself which must seek, fruitlessly,
its ground. This contention unwittingly clarifies theory's insubstantial object. In the name of a respect for thresholds and limits the subaltern is once again silenced. By the end of her essay, "theory" contains the dialectic of friend and foe as it does the web of desire and power. The "native" represents the ineffable, ontological residue of the failure of representation, the impossibility of theory, the sign of the inadequacy of self-reflection, and the occasion for, one imagines, further musings on that inadequacy. I shall have more to say on Spivak's reliance on emblematic constructions that do the work of analysis. At this stage, it seems enough to suggest that a Marcusian "great refusal" will simply not do.

Adorno's claim for a negative dialectic which acknowledges "the preponderance of the object" suggests a different possibility which I shall describe briefly here and pursue in Chapter III. The dialectical method allows for the reciprocal modification of facts and categories so that the recognition of limits becomes the occasion for a "politics of the possible" grounded in the particular that escapes the conceptual net of the category.

The "locus of hope," not the a priori limits of theory, lies in the non-identity of the particular, in the "perishing present" in the process of transforming itself in the new order, and in the "refuse of reality" wherein lies the defiance of the present and the promise of a different future. Spivak makes room only for a Friday who withdraws his graphematic space rather than for one who demands that she "express the logic of the matter' in a new modality" (Buck-Morss' phrasing in The Origin of Negative Dialectics 87). She is right to drive thought to its limit but she must also let it turn back on itself in a dialectical reversal committed to serving "that which would be different" (Buck-Morss, The Origin of Negative Dialectics 189).

Max Horkheimer offers a moving comment on the peculiar "pessimistic streak" in the materialist whose faith is in the future:
For all the optimism he [sic] has about changing situations, for all that he treasures the happiness which comes from solidarity among men and work for a changed society, he has a pessimistic streak as well. Past injustice will never be made up; the suffering of past generations receives no compensation. ("Materialism and Metaphysics" in Critical Theory: Selected Essays 26)

The materialist critic, then, is like Benjamin's Angel of History who would "like to make whole what has been smashed," but is irresistibly propelled into a future to which, however, "his" back remains turned" ("Theses on the Philosophy of History" in Illuminations 259-60). The post-colonial intellectual, I would suggest, is in a similar predicament, in danger of reducing her language to "phonetic pain" and her experience to "the suffering of the victim" (Walcott, "The Muse of History" 40), but compelled both to resist that pain and to envisage the task of decolonization and the condition of postcoloniality.

It is possible now to return to the epigraph from E.M. Forster's A Passage to India to suggest the ways in which the opposition of friend and foe can be undone to produce a process of knowing not only as "enabling [violation]" (Spivak, "Theory in the Margin" 175), but as healing and resistance. The passage (to continue my evocation of Benjamin) is a "'dialectical image'" which functions as an "objective [crystallization] of the historical dynamic" (Adorno, "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin" Prisms 238).

This notion can be explained initially in terms of the use of perspective in Forster's paragraphs. The landscape dwarfs human pretensions to understanding just as the history of political relations between England and India destroys the possibilities of friendship between Englishman and Indian. In short, the novel's finale encapsulates the dynamic of self and historical process because the dream of a nation is inextricable from the invention of self.
Theories of post-colonial discourse seem trapped in a version of Forster's conclusion to his novel, coyly averting the inevitable political (and erotic?) encounter because they persist in slippages which reproduce the "native" as unrepresentable and the dialogue between ex-colonizer and colonized as impossible. Said argues, for example, that the last sentence is an instance of "aestheticized powerlessness" that "can neither recommend decolonization, nor continued colonization" and that it is "all Forster can muster by way of resolution" ("Representing the Colonized: Anthropology and its Interlocutors" 223).18

To charge Forster with a failure of nerve is to miss the unnerving point his novel makes—the relations of desire which bind Fielding and Aziz are precisely and disconcertingly the relations of power. The choice between colonization and decolonization proves self-contradictory because it reflects a contradictory reality. Aziz and Fielding find, respectively, that desire and power turn into each other; simultaneously, as Said's predilection for Foucauldian analyses should have indicated, power produces both colonizer and colonized as it does their respective configurations of desire.

It is in this sense that the concluding scene functions as a dialectical image—it pits opposites against each other only to reveal what connects them or contains the dialectic of friend and foe. I shall develop this idea in the context of both Spivak and Said's tendency to freeze the dialectic and to overlook the symbiotic relation of master and slave except insofar as it confirms one's power and the other's powerlessness.

Moreover, while it is true that the context includes Fielding's (not necessarily Forster's) mockery of India's pretensions to nationhood, the immediate context of the last line of the novel is Fielding's question "'Why can't we be friends now?'", a subtle but significant distinction, or at least a question that invites engagement with a set of issues other than those directly concerned with (de)colonization. In his essay
"Dante," Forster comments that to claim love's possibility for those we do not know is sentiment. Instead, what is involved is a different process of acknowledging the claim people we do not or cannot know have on us ("Dante" (1908) in Albergo Empedocle and Other Writings 146).¹⁹

Fielding's desire contains within it what Adorno would describe as the intolerable tolerance of democracy. As Adorno explains,

[t]o assure the black that he is exactly like the white man, while he obviously is not, is secretly to wrong him still further. He is benevolently humiliated by the application of a standard by which, under the pressure of the system, he must necessarily be found wanting, and to satisfy which would in any case be a doubtful achievement. (Minima Moralia 103)

But Said does not notice that the answer to Fielding's question and, in a sense, to his own, is in Aziz's preceding exclamation that such friendship will be the outcome of "driv[ing] every blasted Englishman into the sea." The doubleness which animates this dialectic of friend and foe is encapsulated in Aziz's actions which begin with him riding furiously against Fielding and conclude with him half-kissing the latter (here too, Forster does not allow for completeness--one more instance, Said would argue, of a lack of muscular resolve?).

Spivak would probably read the refusal of Fielding's desire (after all, even the earth proves implacable in this regard) as another instance of her contention that "[w]hen one wants to be a friend to the wholly other, it withdraws its graphematic space" ("Theory in the Margin" 175). The language of thresholds, deferral, and of abysses is not foreign, of course, to a passage that widens the gap between (English) self and (Indian) other. I think, however, that Forster, as does the dialectical method, demands that we formulate the riddle another way.

Instead of congratulating oneself on the pitilessness of one's realism, one begins to wonder whether, to use Fredric Jameson's words, "the fact of our judgement stood as a judgement on us rather than on the
utopian speculation that we are unable to take seriously" (Marxism and Form 90). Forster does not merely ask (in ontological terms) whether the friendship between Aziz and Fielding is real or possible, but also what sort of world it would have to be in which such a friendship would be realistic.20

More interestingly for my purposes, the conjunction between desire and knowledge (that Fielding cannot love what he does not know) suggests a radical dimension to cognition. Adorno claims that "the need to lend a voice to suffering is a condition of all truth" (Negative Dialectics 17-18). Cognition, then, must "acknowledge the reality of human suffering" (Buck-Morss' phrasing in The Origin of Negative Dialectics 83). Fielding, for instance, does not acknowledge the brutalization Aziz has suffered at the hands of Empire. Adorno, however, wants to argue that there is more to it than that.

"The act of cognition itself [has] a somatic character" (Buck-Morss' phrasing in The Origin of Negative Dialectics 83), which is why the resistance of otherness that his negative dialectic endorses is both objective and somatic.21 This point will assume its proper significance in the context of Spivak's choice of the contaminated and sacrificed bodies of revolutionaries, bonded labourers, and tribal prostitutes as the sites and signs of a "worlding," of the inscription of (de)colonization. Said's comments on the transformation of the human into landscape will also be important in this regard.

Adorno, Said, and Spivak form the privileged foci of this work because their "gaze [catches] the exception rather than the rule" (Buck-Morss on Adorno in The Origin of Negative Dialectics 177) and they share Penelope's (and Draupadi's?) talent for unravelling—-in this case, the fabric of Empire and of anthropology.22 Adorno's passionate disavowal of "Man as the ideology of dehumanization" (The Jargon of Authenticity 59) as well as his visceral awareness that knowledge must comprehend "its own impossibility for the sake of the possible" (Minima Moralia 247) make him
the basis of my attempt to reformulate the agenda of post-colonial discourse.

My insistence on emancipatory critique, it should be remembered, shares his strategic "pessimism of the intellect" (Romain Rolland’s phrase) even as it seeks to transcend the confines of "anthropology and its interlocutors" (Said’s essay which I have mentioned earlier bears this title). I offer the ensuing chapters not from the point of view of the victim whose "damaged life"\textsuperscript{23} serves as the privileged "guarantee of correct knowledge"\textsuperscript{24} but from the more modest perspective of the "[wo]man who no longer has a homeland [and for whom] writing [has become] a place to live" (Adorno’s phrasing in \textit{Minima Moralia} 87).\textsuperscript{25}
Notes

1. See also R. Radhakrishnan, "Ethnic Identity and Post-structuralist Differance" Cultural Critique (Fall 1987) 212-213.


4. Spivak does not gloss this unusual word. Because Friday's tongue has been cut out, and he only has a slate at his disposal, I understand Spivak to be using the word "graphematic" to indicate a form of inscription that is not necessarily of the order of language. She is also interested, I think, in establishing a relationship between Poe, whom she calls an "enabling violator ... without [whom] there is nothing to cite" (175) and Friday's victimization which he translates into agency by refusing inscription and thus disabling his potential violator. In this sense they both occupy a space which awaits inscription. At the same time, however, Spivak wants to avoid placing Friday beyond signification; therefore, she uses a term that embraces representation without conforming to the order of writing, except, perhaps, in Derrida's sense of the term.

5. I have in mind here Edward Said's reflections in Beginnings: Intention and Method (1985) in which he elaborates on the ways in which "writing or thinking about beginning is tied to writing or thinking a beginning" (xv. Italics in original).


7. Gillian Rose in The Melancholy Science: An Introduction to the Thought of Theodor W. Adorno (1978) defines "determinate negation" as follows: "Loosely, negation is criticism of society which is positive (determinate) in that it aims to attain and present knowledge of society insofar as that is possible, but not positive in the sense that it confirms or sanctions what it criticises" (150). See also Marxism and Form (1971 360) for clarification. The fleshing out of a strategy of negation as grounds for emancipatory critique is the fundamental concern of my text as a whole. I therefore only suggest its outlines here. The phrase in question is a staple of the Hegelianized Marxism of the Frankfurt School.

8. I am drawing upon Michel Foucault's writings in Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-77 (1980) here. The particular conjunctions of power and knowledge are explored in Chapter I and are concerns of the thesis as a whole.

9. I am aware that Gandhi's relationship with the "untouchables" was, at the very least, a problematic one, and that Dr. Ambedkar, their leader at the time and still revered today, had much to say on Brahmans who sought to assuage their own guilt at the material expense of the human dimension of their cause. See, for example, Arun P. Mukherjee's thoughtful comments on this score in "The Exclusions of Postcolonial Theory and Mulk Raj
Anand's Untouchable: A Case Study" Ariel, 22.3 (July 1991): 27-51. It should be clear that I have no wish to exempt my family in this regard.

10. Interestingly, Max Horkheimer's early book of aphorisms is entitled Dämmerung (1934), signifying both dawn and dusk and suggestive of his and Adorno's tenuous, yet tensile (tenacious?) optimism. In Minima Moralia, Adorno writes, "For no sunrise...is pompous, triumphal, imperial; each one is faint and timorous, like a hope that all may yet be well, and it is this very unobtrusiveness of the mightiest light that is moving and overpowering. This is why precisely the loveliest dreams are as if blighted" (111).

11. The affinities with Jacques Derrida's pharmakon and Paul de Man's complex of blindness and insight (the splinter in the eye, as Adorno calls it) will occasion comment later on.

12. Spivak uses the notion of privilege as loss as an informing principle in her writing. She sees the process, quite rightly, as an active one. She would not disagree, I think, that loss is inscribed in privilege construed as gain.

13. Jameson's explanation of tautology has helped me clarify my engagement with Spivak. Jameson explains the profound tautology that is a function of the dialectical mode in that it dissolves the dualism that allows the subject to imagine itself as distinct from the object. Spivak is not guilty of this naïve dualism; however, the problem remains that her engagement with the object is apparent rather than real. Her argument has something of the character of a logical tautology because what began as different entities turn out to have been the same thing after all. As the progress of her essay demonstrates, the object grows increasingly phantasmatic, and it is unclear how one is to distinguish between the colonial encounter with the other which reconstituted itself as self-absorption and Spivak's own acknowledgement of defeat in the face of the "wholly other." She transforms this "defeat" into a respect for the integrity of limits; however, such a ploy seems to me insufficient since she loads the dice so heavily against the subject's desire to know and constructs agency as withdrawal rather than as re-presentation from a different standpoint (not to be confused with the standpoint of différence). My detailed engagement with Spivak's oeuvre occurs later in this work, where I hope to delineate the potential of a negative dialectic that rejects, as Spivak does, the reduction of the object to the subject's measure, without concluding that the object is unrepresentable; worse, that like Nietzsche's woman unconcerned with truth, it withdraws from the arena of truth and re-presentation. The object is also occluded because the emphasis remains on a refinement of categories rather than on an engagement with facts that corroborate or contest these categories. Interestingly, even if one stayed within the limits of Spivak's own terms, and the object is no more than the subject's fantasy, it should be eminently representable because, like all fetishes, it is also fungible.

14. See Kumkum Sangari, "The Politics of the Possible" in Cultural Critique (Fall 1987).

15. See Buck-Morss' discussion of Ernst Bloch in The Origin of Negative Dialectics (1977 76) and Adorno's "Notes on Kafka" for the germ of my idea.

16. Adorno uses the phrase the "logic of the matter" in his critique of Husserl. I will pursue the relationship between phenomenology and negative dialectics in Chapter III.
17. I have quoted only part of the quotation which Buck-Morss cites in full: "... only he who recognizes the most modern as the ever-identical serves that which would be different." Adorno explains the process of thought turning back upon itself in *Minima Moralia* (1974 86). I will demonstrate later what I have been indicating here, that deconstructive gestures can reconstitute themselves into recuperative gestures of mastery or into repetitions of the problems they attempt to overcome. The question of negative dialectics as proto-deconstruction will be taken up in Chapter III, particularly since Paul de Man, for example, uses the motif of thought recoiling upon itself for a different set of purposes.

18. Both Said and I use Forster's text as a symptom of a larger problem. In other words, the novel serves as the occasion for critique. In the article in question, Said refers the reader to his *Culture and Imperialism* which I have not managed to obtain. I am concerned, therefore, with what I consider to be a less than careful reading of Forster within the confines of this article.

19. The rest of this thesis is devoted to distinguishing epistemology from appropriation. In order to do so, the post-colonial intellectual must acknowledge what Forster describes as the claims of the other on the self. These claims must be understood as the resistance of the object that is immanent to but coerced by the subject. The crisis of the subject has thus far managed to exclude a rethinking of the object precisely on the grounds that any such epistemological desire is doomed to repeat the history of colonization (see Chapters I and II). Forster's comment suggests a mode of analysis that does not confine itself to philanthropic gestures but that takes responsibility for the subject's implication in colonization by furthering decolonization. The self, in other words, must learn to take its cue from the other. In the context of *A Passage to India*, Fielding fails to realize that the power of Empire grounds his desire or love for Aziz—they (Aziz and Fielding) are both servants of Empire. Fielding must acknowledge Aziz's claim on his sense of political "fair play" before he can presume either to know or to love Aziz.

20. The editors of *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (1982; rpt. 1990) describe Robert S. Lynd's collaboration with the empirical research conducted by the Frankfurt School as being informed by the principle I have just cited, and add, "[o]nly history could verify such hypotheses--by realizing them" (406).

21. Adorno's point in *Negative Dialectics* (1973 203) that the relation between subject and object should take into account the fact that the object is not merely instrumental in the subject's self-realization but remains immanent to identity as objective resistance and "unassuaged [somatic] unrest" will be developed in Chapter III.

22. In their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1972), Adorno and Horkheimer use Odysseus to allegorize the "cunning of reason." Said and Spivak in their turn have been concerned to indicate the colonial victims of the Enlightenment. My reference to Penelope and to Draupadi is meant to recall their critique and acknowledge its subversive import. I shall have more to say on this score in subsequent chapters.

23. Adorno's *Minima Moralia* bears the subtitle "Reflections from Damaged Life."

24. The Frankfurt School's major departure from Lukács involved their rejection of the revolutionary subject's privileged access to the whole because the fact of exploitation did not necessarily produce the consciousness of exploitation and the desire for social transformation.
Indeed, the very fact of victimization ensured the success of ideology. See particularly Horkheimer's essay "Traditional and Critical Theory" (213) in Critical Theory: Selected Essays (1972) as well as Adorno's scattered comments on Brecht's mistaken attempts to deduce revolutionary consciousness from the empirical worker (even Lukács acknowledged the necessity for mediation between empirical and imputed consciousness). Benjamin's faith in what Adorno called the "spontaneous power of the proletariat" is the subject of many letters Adorno wrote, perhaps because he disapproved of Brecht's influence on Benjamin (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 216ff).

25. I think Buck-Morss, in The Origin of Negative Dialectics (190), underestimates the ambiguity of these lines. She sees them as indicative of Adorno's retreat into a private sphere. I prefer to emphasize their liberating aspect and their relationship to what he says earlier in the same text: "There is no remedy but steadfast diagnosis of oneself and others, the attempt, through awareness, if not to escape doom, at least to rob it of its dreadful violence, that of blindness..." (Minima Moralia 33).
CHAPTER I: THE END(S) OF (WO)MAN OR, THE LIMITS OF DIFFERENCE

Hope cannot aim at making the mutilated social character of women identical to the mutilated social character of men; rather its goal must be a state... in which all that survives the disgrace of the difference between the sexes is the happiness that difference makes possible.
Theodor Adorno, Prisms: Cultural Criticism and Society

Contemporary feminist debates over the meanings of gender lead time and again to a certain sense of trouble, as if the indeterminacy of gender might eventually culminate in the failure of feminism.
Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity

.... To us, the man who adores the Negro is as "sick" as the man who abominates him.

Conversely, the black man who wants to turn his race white is as miserable as he who preaches hatred for the whites. These truths do not have to be hurled in men's faces. They are not intended to ignite fervor. I do not trust fervor.

Every time it has burst out somewhere, it has brought fire, famine, misery.... And contempt for man.
Frantz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks

All discourses... would then develop in the anonymity of a murmur. We would no longer hear the questions...: Who really spoke? Is it really he and not someone else?... Instead, there would be other questions, like these: What are the modes of existence of this discourse? Where has it been used, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it for himself? What are the places in it where there is room for possible subjects? Who can assume these various subject functions? And behind all these questions, we would hardly hear anything but the stirring of an indifference: What difference does it make who is speaking?
Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?"

Not so very long ago, the cover of Time magazine bore the words, "God is dead, Marx is dead, and I'm not feeling too well myself." The magazine's wry encapsulation of polite unease was both appropriate and prophetic, at least if the sentiments expressed in the current discourse of the Western world's well bred and, one imagines, well read, are to be believed. The paper devoted in recent years to the imminent demise of the Cartesian cogito is witness to the dis-ease or, if you will, lingering malaise, of an ethos that dates back to the eighteenth century when the likes of Immanuel Kant responded to the query "Was ist Aufklärung?"

The dis-ease in question, so the story goes, afflicts the claims of occidental rationality as well as its supreme exemplar, Western Man, as
both herald and heir of the motto of the Enlightenment: "aude sapere," or "dare to know." If, as Peter Gay argues in his two-volume study *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, the age whose luminaries included the said Descartes and Kant as well as Diderot, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Bacon, Newton, Locke, and Hume, inaugurated "modernity," then it seems appropriate that its agonistic progeny in the late-twentieth century style themselves post-moderns.

Gay makes an interesting case for including pre-Enlightenment figures like Bacon and Descartes based on their conformity to what he identifies as the ethos of Enlightenment. He views the Enlightenment as the work of three overlapping generations in which he traces "a distinct evolution, a continuity in styles of thinking as well as a growing radicalism" (*The Rise of Modern Paganism* 17). While his penchant for evolutions might be subject to question, Gay rightly sees the need to draw attention to the fact that the Enlightenment itself "had a history" (17).

The break, the post-moderns claim, is as much historical and epistemological as it is lexical or typographical, and they assume the mantle of the past reluctantly at best, guiltily aware of the continuing predication of the legitimacy of knowledge upon the instrumentality of power. I have, of course, been precipitate on at least two scores: in characterizing post-modernism as an only recent or emergent phenomenon and, more hazardously, in asserting its phenomanality.

In other words, post-modernism rests its claim to difference on precisely its rejection of teleological representations of temporality, of history as the unfolding of an idea or as a version of manifest destiny. In this sense, post-modernism might be said to have always already begun, to signify, so to speak, an infinite regress. One immediate way of indicating that post-modernism is not so much a historical problem as a problem for history or a problem posed to history suggests itself.

If I might return to the catchy idiom in which *Time* captured the accents of post-modernism for a moment, the slogan alludes to Friedrich
Nietzsche, Karl Marx, and Sigmund Freud. In their separate but related ways, this unholy trinity can be held responsible for the initial onslaught on the hubris of reason and on the mastery of self-consciousness that post-modernism now makes its distinctive prerogative. Post-modernism's Oedipal Angst can thus be viewed as a doubled movement—one that refuses the heritage of instrumental rationality bequeathed to it by the patriarchs of the Enlightenment, while it simultaneously celebrates the de-centering of the transcendental subject of knowledge practised by its other fathers, themselves enacting the "anxiety of influence" (Harold Bloom's familiar and appropriately f(am)ilial phrase).

In his insightful essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," Michel Foucault describes Nietzsche's sensitivity both to the futility of the search for origins and to the "instinctive violence" of knowledge itself (The Foucault Reader 96). Nietzsche's writings have been instrumental to the post-modern enterprise because they insist "that truth or being does not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents" ("Nietzsche ..." 81). Nietzsche displaces traditional historical understanding in favour of genealogy—the latter devotes itself to the tracing of "the history of an error we call truth" ("Nietzsche ..." 80).

If history cannot be envisioned in evolutionary terms, it becomes impossible to sustain the notion of human identity as consistent with itself, as the embodiment of an idea (to switch to Hegelian phraseology) which "discovers" itself in its objectifications. Since neither history nor identity bespeaks the unfolding of necessity, Nietzschean genealogy "affirm[s] knowledge as perspective" ("Nietzsche ..." 90) and uncovers, in the play of historical forces, not the successive representations of a rational intention, but "the dissension of other things" ("Nietzsche..." 79). Indeed, as Foucault argues in the same essay, genealogy's "dissociating view" (87) rewrites the progress of history as "the hazardous play of dominations" (83). The task of genealogy is to render
visible the process by which errors and accidents impose themselves as truths and essences. Only then can one subvert the inexorable manner in which the stability of the self becomes inseparable from the "will to know." The pretenders to the throne of objective knowledge are those who, as a matter of course, "[grasp] a certain amount of reality in order to become master of it, in order to press it into service" (Nietzsche, as quoted by David Held 156).

What this notion reveals, in short, is the vulnerability of truth as well as the inevitability of its masquerade. More importantly, the nexus of knowledge and power calls precisely for, in Foucault's words, a "reversal of a relationship of forces, the usurpation of power, [and] the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it" ("Nietzsche ..." 88). This detour has been necessary not only to indicate that post-modernism is a genealogical intervention in the teleology of historical becoming, but also to gloss the particular provenance of "post" in a problematic that disdains the continuity of before and after with which I began.

The "post" in question refers to the epistemological rather than to the temporal dimension of the break. In other words, post-modernism enables the writing of what Foucault, paraphrasing Nietzsche, calls an "'effective' history" ("Nietzsche ..." 87), one that exposes the discontinuities at the very heart of the seamless narrative of conventional history and liberates the marginal elements enslaved by its ruthless trajectory.¹

Since such a history is "without constants" ("Nietzsche ..." 87), it is sensitive to the rules which constitute and constrain discourses of power/knowledge; however, the weakness of such rules is precisely their constituted character which renders them "eminently displacable, replaceable, and even dispensable" (R. Radhakrishnan 40). It is thus that post-modernism acquires the political dimension in which its deconstructive character finds expression.
Since I have conjured the spectre of deconstruction, I should perhaps indicate that Jacques Derrida, as is well known, also undertakes a critique of the search for origins or final causes, and names the process Nietzsche identifies as the "will to power" as the itinerary of a "metaphysics of presence" "from which the multiplicity of existence can be deduced and through which it can be accounted for and given meaning" (Michael Ryan, Marxism and Deconstruction 9). Deconstruction, too, can be described as a genealogy which recovers the repressed and effaced other of the concepts which claim self-sufficiency or which, in Derrida's terms, deny the "différance" which constitutes and undermines their identity. In other words, nothing indisputably is; it "is only as it differs from or defers something else" (Ryan, Marxism and Deconstruction 11).

In this sense, Derrida's concern is of a piece with Nietzsche's; both expose truth as the masquerade of error, as the willed mastery of concepts which must conceal their dependence on the alterity they suppress. If, according to Nietzsche, truth is merely a congealed form of error, Derrida displaces the opposition between truth and error to reveal, so to speak, error as the soft underbelly of hardened or congealed truth. Nietzsche's genealogy/history of error or of the exteriority of accidents which fabricate teleology becomes the process of differentiation delineated in Derrida's Speech and Phenomena and other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs: "Every concept is necessarily and essentially inscribed in a chain or a system, within which it refers to another and to other concepts, by the systematic play of differences" ("Differance" 140). As Derrida himself admits, différance is "the juncture--rather than the summation--of ... the difference of forces in Nietzsche... ("Differance" 130). Simply put, Derrida, taking his cue from Saussure, transfers to a linguistic and spatial dimension the struggle of historical (temporal) forces. When Foucault identifies power as the appropriation of discourse, of a system of rules for constituting "reality," he is closer to Derrida's version of "things." Truth/error in Nietzsche becomes, in Derrida, a
historically constituted system of reference which is both relational and exclusive by definition. In this way, Derrida too questions the developmental model of history by treating concepts/words/forces as items in a series which are laterally determined.\(^2\)

Nietzsche's call (in Foucault's terms) for an effective history without constants is echoed in Derrida's conception of what marking out *différence* entails. Of course, one wonders whether the political dimension I teased out from the very instability of truth might not itself be "at risk" for acquiring the character of a *telos*:

In marking out *differance*, everything is a matter of strategy and risk. It is a question of strategy because no transcendent truth present outside the sphere of writing can theologically command the totality of this field. It is hazardous because this strategy is not simply one in the sense that we say that strategy orients the tactics according to a final aim, a *telos* or the theme of a domination, a mastery or an ultimate reappropriation of movement and field. In the end it is a strategy without finality.... [The concept of play] designates the unity of chance and necessity in an endless calculus.\(^3\) ("Differance" 135)

Nietzsche discerns the "unity of chance and necessity" when he chooses to interrogate the intentionality of history by drawing attention to the "singular randomness of events" (Foucault, "Nietzsche ..." 88); Derrida does so, by subjecting systems of reference to the play of differences. Both therefore deny the power of consciousness to constitute reality. Nietzsche suggests that self-consciousness is power in the guise of knowledge, and Derrida that the self, like everything else, is "a 'function' of the language" ("Differance" 145). Consciousness, then, is an effect of the "regime of Truth" (Foucault's phrase) or of the system of determinations (linguistic or otherwise) in which it is inscribed.

It is in the context of this shift in emphasis from the power of consciousness to determine events, from the interpretation of events as the unfolding of Reason or the manifestation of Spirit, that the corpus of
Marx and Freud assumes its deserved importance. Because Nietzsche believed concepts functioned as forces, he paradoxically succeeded in defining history as the bloody conceptual struggle of an undifferentiated and curiously anonymous truth and error. Even his famous characterization of history as the battle of Apollonian and Dionysiac forces has all the charm and veracity of, precisely, metaphor in the service of allegory.

In short, Nietzsche did little more than assert the determined rather than the determining nature of truth and identity. It would take the concerted efforts of Marx and Freud to locate those determinations in a precise historical configuration (capitalism) and in the ravages of desire, sexuality, and the unconscious. Nietzsche's rage against philosophers as "the lustful eunuchs of history" chained to "an ascetic ideal" (quoted in Foucault, "Nietzsche ..." 92), his demand for "life," finds its logical culmination in the work of Freud.

Freud's discovery of the unconscious makes it possible to situate the randomness of events in the unpredictability of desire. One must, of course, note the crucial shift in emphasis from truth/consciousness as the oppression of alterity to consciousness as the repression of desire. The utilitarian dimension (reality pressed into service) implicit in Nietzsche's version of consciousness gains a juridical form in Freud—consciousness as the prohibition of desire. The inscription of consciousness in systems of power or discourse finds an analogous interpretation/representation in Freud's notion of the "mystic writing pad." (The description of the writing pad is taken from Irene Harvey 178).

Just as the imprint remains on the wax slab even after the celluloid sheet has been removed, and cannot become visible except in certain lights, the "foundational process of the psyche" (Harvey's phrase 178) is transformed into a gnarled landscape of latent and manifest content, and of the exigencies of condensation and displacement. Freud's reading of the non-erasable but obscured imprint of the unconscious lends substance
to Nietzsche's provocative refusal of teleology and its penchant for mechanical sequences of cause and effect derived from human intention.

I shall comment in due course on what Harvey describes as an incomplete exchange. She writes that "[t]he 'imprinting' so well explicated in terms of the world to consciousness does not return full circle or ellipse such that the subject also inscribes itself upon the world, which in turn inscribes itself upon the subject" (Harvey 179). This inability to account for the moments when ideology fails and agency becomes possible is a problem common to the various depictions of the human subject as a function of discursive practices.

While Nietzsche's emphasis on the exteriority of accidents might be analogous to Marx's perception that history occurs behind the backs of its ostensible protagonists, the latter discovers that there is a method to the madness of events. Marx might be said to emphasize the singular randomness of events; that is, the dialectical relation between chance and necessity finds its locus in the material conditions of production to which the (de)formation of the subject can be traced.

Marx's conception of history
has not, like the idealistic view of history, in every period to look for a category, but remains constantly on the real ground of history. It does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of ideas from material practice.

(Marx, The German Ideology 164)

Marx effects a two-fold displacement: the critique of history takes place from within history and relates the efficacy of concepts to their material effects. Instead of a totalizing vision of the will to power, Marx restricts his vision to a specific exercise of power—the history of capitalism. If the contradictions of material/discursive practices can demystify the truth of concepts, the human subject can be shown to be an effect of ideology (of which it remains unconscious or which it (mis)recognizes as reality) rather than the author of its destiny or, as
Hegel would have it, the embodiment of the World Spirit.

Marx shows, for example, that the subject's experience of alienation does not move inexorably to self-recognition in its objectifications as Hegel argued. Alienation is not a necessary moment in the dialectic of subject and object which ends in their identity. Instead, alienation is a mark of the dialectic between forces and relations of production. The rule of the principle of exchange and the power of the commodity reduce the relations of production to transactions between things—labour and capital. The Hegelian dialectic is itself an unconscious reflection of the "real" relations of production even as it serves to transform the accidents of history into immutable necessities. In short, Marx's remarkable analysis serves not only to read history as a kind of ontological or inherent violence of the concept, but to specify the kinds of domination that particular concepts serve to mask.

Moreover, Marx emphasizes the "radical" dimension of his work—his "genealogy" serves not only as diagnosis but as a handbook for revolution. In these terms, the recognition that "the tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living" and that history is the product of "circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past" does not invalidate the contention that "[m]en [sic] make their own history" (Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire 13). Marx does not succumb, therefore, to the determinism of either the Absolute Subject or to that of the displaced subject. To sum up, then, Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud "illuminate" the tangled web of knowledge (discourses of rationality), desire (sexuality and the unconscious), and power (ideology and the relations of (re)production) in which the post-modern subject must find its (dis)place(ment).

Gérard Raulet points out that what post-modernism alleges to be new "is, in fact, not so new" (159), that "the possibility of reasonable discourse has always been in doubt" (159) and constitutes "the recurrent crisis of reason coming to consciousness" (160). Raulet's specific
context is Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* which traces as far back as the (hi)story of Odysseus the interminable and reversible process in which enlightenment becomes myth.

I shall defer detailed consideration of the Frankfurt School to the next chapter; however, the point remains that the fall of reason is in infinite regress. It might therefore be best to remember with Andreas Huyssen that "modernism as that from which postmodernism is breaking away remains inscribed into the very word with which we describe our distance from modernism" ("Mapping the Postmodern" 10), or with Derrida that "[b]reaks are always, and fatally, reinscribed in an old cloth that must continually, interminably, be undone" (quoted in Nancy Fraser 131).

But what, precisely, is the "modernity" at stake in the conflict of interpretations to which the "meaning" of post-modernism has been subject? In her essay, "Epistemologies of Postmodernism: A Rejoinder to Jean-François Lyotard," Seyla Benhabib defines modern philosophy as "caught in the prison-house of its own consciousness" (107)—both empiricism and rationalism rely on a notion of representation as adequation and on a dualism between appearance and essence, mind and body, idea/word and thing. This dualism is a function of the mastery of the concept which imposes identity on heterogeneous matter.

Post-modernism's anti-representational stance is an attempt, therefore, to refuse the appeal to the subject as the source of meaning. In the process, however, postmodernism jettisons both the value of reflection as the source of "emancipation from self-incurred bondage" (Benhabib 109) as well as the means to distinguish between consensus and conquest, truth and deception, because the oppositions are themselves caught in a play of differences (Benhabib 115). Benhabib, therefore, accepts post-modernism's break with the episteme of modernity, but rejects what she perceives to be the unpalatable consequences of that break.

Foucault's reading of the post-modern dilemma in "What is Enlightenment?" articulates a similar approach. The Enlightenment has
bestowed "the outline of what one might call the attitude of modernity" (The Foucault Reader 38). This "attitude" "marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task" (39). The problem of the Enlightenment is one post-modernism must continually address because it has determined the post-modern mode of knowing and being. The critique of modernity inheres in the very ethos of modernity.

Foucault is uninterested in whether one is for or against the Enlightenment. If the Enlightenment has made the Western world what it is, the prophets of post-modernity must exploit this historical contingency to envisage the "possibility of no longer being [what it is]" (46). In other words, that "we are always in the position of beginning again" (47) does not put us at the mercy of the in-difference of the play of language. Instead, questions of truth become implicated in questions of justice when the limits of critique "[take] the form of a possible transgression" (45).

This hasty summary of the complex course of post-modernism serves as a prelude to my focus on its attempt to put the self at stake in order that the latter's "other" might speak. It should be clear that post-modernism marks the limits of modernism and is itself the other hitherto suppressed by the brutal trajectory of reason in the service of power. In Nietzschean terms, post-modernism enacts the problematic of "vouloir--savoir" ("Nietzsche..." 96) just as modernism illustrates the nexus of "pouvoir--savoir." The ressentiment in question makes "the burden [of history or of modernity] still more irksome by awakening a consciousness of it" (Marx, as quoted in Raullet 155). Post-modernism, then, is repetition not only with a difference, but with a vengeance.4 I shall turn now to discourses of subjectivity which (dis)articulate the self to determine their usefulness for the strategy of negation I began to outline in the last chapter.

Whether the discourse of post-modernity envisages its patrimony as an unfinished task that must be undertaken in the "spirit" of the
Enlightenment, or as a weed that must not only be uprooted but beheaded as well, no one on either side of the issue seems willing or able to shake off the burden of a style or an attitude that is quintessentially "modern." Descartes' "crowning" achievement, after all, is the posture of doubt that grounds the certainty of reason. As Foucault, who has perhaps done more than anyone else to trace the "archaeology" of modern (Western) man's "being" remarks, the Enlightenment produced man as a finitude without infinity [which] no doubt [is] a finitude that has never finished, that is always in recessions with relation to itself, that always has something still to think of at the very moment when it thinks, that always has time to think again what it has thought. (The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences 372)

In this "analytic" (Foucault's term), "man appears as a truth both reduced and promised" (The Order of Things 320) because the contents of his knowledge and the products of his labour appear as both alien and determining (Marx and Hegel would no doubt concur) and yet he is their source. This "strange empirico-transcendental doublet" (The Order of Things), is a creature who is perhaps no more "than a kind of rift in the order of things" (The Order of Things xxiii), but who must nevertheless trust to his fallible reason to determine the conditions of (his) being. The discourse of post-modernity explores this inescapable dilemma, not only in order to explain how "man" came into being, but also, in the course of undermining his authority as the transcendental ground of knowledge, to translate the reduction of being as the promise of difference. The "death of the subject" has been both announced and denounced with appropriate zeal. I undertake this journey through familiar landscapes, and negotiate, once more, treacherous ground, in the hope that an-other story waits to be told. Like Lily Tomlin's Trudy who finds reality acceptable in small doses but much too confining as a lifestyle, I hope to transform the experience of displacement, as she
does, from the sign of a "breakdown" to the evidence and imminence of a "breakthrough."

The notion of the subject has come to replace that of the individual because critical discourse has become increasingly aware of "the necessity of understanding consciousness as something produced rather than as the source of ideas and the social world—as constituted and not constitutive" (Julian Henriques et al 7-8). This necessity is itself a consequence of a "global" attempt to understand the workings of ideology and of the machinery of power without falling into the familiar dualism of self and world.

If either self or world constitutes the "privileged beginning" (Henriques et al 9), of analysis, one is in danger of casting the individual in the role of the rational author of his/her destiny, while simultaneously treating social processes as the workings of immutable necessity. Such an analysis leaves no room for an understanding of the complex interactions between self and world and does not explain the often contradictory and constraining nature of those interactions. The aim, then, of contemporary critical analysis has been to treat "interior and exterior as problematic [indeed fluid] categories" (Henriques et al 9), and to suggest an approach which both situates the subject and determines the conditions of its possibility (see John Mowitt's foreword to Paul Smith, Discerning the Subject xi).

Louis Althusser's 1969 essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)" has been crucial in the formulation of a method sensitive to the (de)formative powers of ideology. Althusser argues that capitalism maintains itself as a mode of production not only through the reproduction of labour power but also through the reproduction of the mechanisms which ensure that labour power's submission to the established mode of production. This reproduction affects both the agents and the victims of exploitation so that capitalism becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.
Althusser offers a more complicated reading of the relationship between base and superstructure within orthodox Marxism. Ideology is not merely a camera obscura of the real relations of existence that socialism will one day transform into a camera lucida of relations free of ideology; instead, "the peculiarity of ideology is that it is endowed with a structure and a functioning such as to make it a non-historical reality..." (Althusser, "Ideology ..." 161). Althusser breaks, therefore, with the traditional Marxist notion that ideology is a function of a specific mode of production. His notion of ideology is not ahistorical but transhistorical, and cognizant of the fact that "revolution" might leave the apparatus of power unchanged.

Althusser's contention is that even if one acknowledges that the economic base is determinant in the last instance, one must account for the relative independence of the superstructure as well as its reciprocity with the base. Ideology is not a mere reflection of the real relations of existence (albeit in an inverted form). "What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live" (Althusser, "Ideology ..." 165). Althusser insists that ideology is not mere illusion; its existence is material because it is embodied in the apparatuses of state, church, and family. Capitalism reproduces itself through the interplay of repression and ideology, a policing, so to speak, from within and without.

Althusser introduces the category of the subject as the instance of the functioning of ideology. Ideology constitutes "concrete individuals as subjects" ("Ideology ..." 171); simultaneously, however, "the category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology" ("Ideology ..." 171). The concept of "interpellation" (173) explains this "double constitution" ("Ideology ..." 171) of the subject. If ideology is the imaginary relation of individuals to the real relations in which they live, they must nevertheless recognize themselves in that representation.
This commonsensical notion of reality, that the real is the obvious, is one which makes the individual the source of "his" representations (I will return to the en-gendering of interpellation). However, the individual identifies his experience with its representation in ideological apparatuses, suggesting thereby that his recognition is also a méconnaissance, and that it becomes constitutive of what he believed to be his "own" experience.

Althusser owes this structure of ideology in which the individual is rewritten as the "specifically subjected object of social and historical forces and determinations" (Smith xxvii) to Jacques Lacan's notion of the imaginary. However, as Paul Smith argues, Althusser misreads Lacan in order to ensure that interpellation always produces a compliant subject.⁵

While Althusser is right to see ideology as constitutive of reality rather than the latter's distortion, he fails to take note of Lacan's cautionary emphasis on the subject as merely the place of the operations of the symbolic and imaginary orders, as the process and product of their division rather than the unified effect of ideology (Smith 14ff). Interpellation, then, is less the arbitrary imposition of ideology and more the "locus of negativity and conflict" (Mowitt xv). To put it bluntly, ideology produces both repression and resistance.

Althusser cannot account for such negativity because the individual, in his scheme of things, recognizes himself only through the imaginary relation in which the ideological apparatuses ritually "hail" him. But, "what is the nature of the entity that must already exist... in order to recognize her/himself in the interpellation?" (Henriques et al 97). It appears then that Althusser has not transcended the confines of the dualism I described earlier—he cannot discard a rudimentary notion of an entity that pre-exists its determinations.

If Althusser's attempt to complicate the function of ideology has been salutary, his notion of the real remains contradictory. As Andrew Parker has shown, Althusser seems trapped between a desire to accord the
economic base a delegatory function and an awareness that the system comes into existence all at once and the relation between base and superstructure should be thought along the lines of reciprocity rather than of structural causality. What happens, however, is that "the category of subjectivity is ... displaced ... onto an economy personified by [its representatives since delegation implies a subject who initiates representation]" (Parker 60).

Further, Althusser’s anti-humanist stance, his interest in processes without subjects, makes it impossible for him to theorize agency except as "the outline [of] a discourse which tries to break with ideology, in order to dare to be the beginning of a scientific (i.e. subjectless) discourse on ideology" (Althusser, "Ideology ..." 173). This advocacy of "science" continues to beg the question of the agent of this "break with ideology." The problem, then, is to develop a notion of power that does not transform ideology into a monolith that the subject swallows whole (the whale in the belly of Jonah which pitches Jonah into the belly of the whale) and a notion of ideological representation that breaks with tropes of resemblance, correspondence, adequation, or delegation in favour of the materiality of discursive practice.

In fact, what is at stake is a different exploration of Althusser’s own "seminal" perception that "the order of knowledge does not recapitulate the order of reality" (Thomas E. Lewis 37). Wherein does this non-correspondence lie? How might this disjunction serve the interests of critical negation? If discourses can be said to produce rather than to describe objects, is one in danger of transforming the "brute fact" of oppression into the mere conflict of interpretations? In short, is there life after ideology?

In order to reinforce his sense of the "speculary" ("Ideology ..." 180) structure of all ideology, Althusser uses the example of God as the Absolute Subject, as the centre which draws the gaze of the individuals it subjects even as it serves to guarantee their subjectivity. Lacan offers
a similar paradigm in his discussion of the order of the imaginary in which he describes the child's image in the mirror as a representation of the mother's desire granted to the child. The mother's presence guarantees the child's illusory plenitude. Similarly, identity "operates as a law," as something "enjoined on the subject" (Jacqueline Rose, Feminine Sexuality 29) in Lacan's account of subjectivity—men and women line up on either side of a divide marked by the presence or absence of the penis. The phallus acquires its (illusory) status precisely because it is an arbitrary signifier.

Foucault attempts to pose the problem of power in an "analytics... that no longer takes law [or heliocentrism] as a model and a code" (The History of Sexuality I 90) to offset what Judith Butler (in her critique of Lacan) calls "the religious idealization of 'failure'... 'before the law' [which enforces] obedience without reward" (Gender Trouble 56). Curiously enough, even though Althusser is interested in the means by which power reproduces itself, his juridical conception of power renders it paradoxically impotent because, in Foucault's words, "it is incapable of doing anything, except to render what it dominates incapable of doing anything either, except for what this power allows it to do" and because it reduces domination "to an effect of obedience" (The History of Sexuality I 85).

Foucault offers instead a model of power as momentarily (from moment to moment) produced in the unstable interplay and strategic (dis)ordering of asymmetrical relations. Resistance, therefore, becomes inscribed within power "as an irreducible opposite" (The History of Sexuality I 96). In other words, power is an effect of resistance just as resistance is an effect of power. Foucault's corrective is a useful one because it allows for specific and contextual determinations of the efficacy of power and argues that power creates sites of contestation rather than of imposition.

Foucault's own version of the gap between the order of knowledge and of things occurs in the context of his formulation of discourse as the
object's condition of existence. Althusser clings to the real as the determinant in the last instance which delegates ideology as its representative. Foucault, on the contrary, wishes to "dispense with 'things'" (The Archaeology of Knowledge 47) as anterior to discourse even as he retains an awareness that discourse itself is "a violence that we do to things" ("The Discourse on Language" in The Archaeology of Knowledge 229).

This move enables Foucault to retain the productive dimension of power as well as his cognizance of its violence because the "real world would be thought not as substance but as a texture of symbolic systems, and the symbolic would be thought of as having a real effectivity" (see John Frow 52). Or, as Foucault himself explains, subjectivity is constituted in "historically analyzable practices... which [cut] across symbolic systems while using them" ("On the Genealogy of Ethics..." in The Foucault Reader 369).

Discourse, then, is not the means to uncover the ineradicable essence of an object, but the system of relations which "[enable] it to appear, to juxtapose itself with other objects, to situate itself in relation to them, to define its difference, its irreducibility, and even perhaps its heterogeneity..." (Foucault The Archaeology 45). This notion of the object of knowledge as "a node within a network" whose "unity is variable and relative" (The Archaeology 23) has important consequences for the constitution of subjectivity.

Althusser's sense of the constitutive function and material existence of ideology is retained in Foucault's claim that discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (The Archaeology 49). Simultaneously, however, Foucault clarifies the contradictory nature of interpellation because the subject, like the referent, is no longer anterior to speech but the dispersed site of "enunciative modalities" (The Archaeology 54), a function of the moment of utterance.
The subject is imbricated in ideological/discursive practices which operate discontinuously and render "his" subjectivity multiple and contradictory. Foucault's characterization of discourse as a practice that must be put to use (in an instance of utterance) even if one is not "master" of its effects ensures that "[a] person is not simply the actor who follows ideological scripts, but is also an agent who reads them in order to insert him/herself into them—or not" (Smith xxxiv-xxxv).

While a notion of power relations as a series of transformable matrices seems more credible than Althusser's notion of authority as the identifiable enemy or Lacan's arbitrary, alienating, and inaccessible Phallus, and helps explain the actual workings of power, I wonder whether Foucault's delight in that power's invisible meshes and protean configurations, in its capacity to entice those who seek to evade its grasp, might not in the end be more imprisoning precisely because he understands that to seduce is to (re)produce? My pun here serves as a reminder that Foucault seems sometimes to be advocating a pleasure in complicity, in marvelling at the very inventiveness of power that disdains clear-cut models of constraint or prohibition.

Henriques et al point out that the simultaneously constraining and liberating function of discourse as that which both transmits and thwarts power could lead to a kind of relativist position which makes it impossible to adjudicate between competing claims (109). Foucault's own practice makes it difficult to conceive of a different relation between knowledge and power that does not duplicate the "episteme" it rejects. As Robert D'Amico asks, "[on] what basis do we 'condemn' a thought as trapped within a past episteme if that is only possible because we are caught within a present one?" (181).

Foucault affirms perspective, as I suggested earlier, but the very modesty of an enterprise that refuses to resist homogeneity with sweeping gestures of negation and that confines itself to a myopic attention to detail might leave those structures firmly entrenched. If the rules of
discourse "delimit the sayable" (Henriques et al 105), they also "structure the possible" (Jacqueline Zinner 221). Foucault's knowing delineation of the ruses of desire-knowledge-power serves interestingly to increase the gap "between the impotent expertise of the knowers and the romantic anarchism of the doers" (Zinner 225) precisely because he "writes in order to have no face" (The Archaeology of Knowledge 17) and "[leaves] us high on riderless words" (Zinner 224).

While I would not go so far as to suggest, as Zinner does, that Foucault's writings introduce us to "the mania of a bibliophilic mind" (Casaubon and the key to all mythologies, perhaps?) (224), I cannot help but concur with her provocative analysis of the disappointment the reader feels on reaching the "place of the individual within a highly complex network of power and social practice, only to find it vacant" (224). Instead, Foucault offers us bodies and pleasures, a power that calculates its effects but is not attributable to anyone in particular, and words that dispense with things.

In the drama of what Zinner wickedly calls "the state vs genitalia" (223), Foucault fails to identify who regulates whom, as Adorno might have said. Althusser, too, refuses to acknowledge the differential interpellation of the sexes in the practices of ideology. Lacan, not to be outdone, explains that "this signifier [the phallus] is chosen as what stands out as most easily seized upon in the real of sexual copulation..." ("The Meaning of the Phallus" in Feminine Sexuality 82).

One might very well ask, "most easily seized upon" by whom? Jacqueline Rose indicates that Lacan's interest is precisely in how "anatomical difference comes to figure sexual difference" (Feminine Sexuality 42); however, as she admits later, there seems to be a recognizable pattern to this apparently arbitrary choice. If the relation to the phallus is constitutive of femininity, Lacan "presupposes the subordination which [his analysis] is intended to explain" (45).

It has been the task of feminism, therefore, to take its cue from
the strengths of these interrogations to present a view from elsewhere (Teresa de Lauretis' phrase). Theories of subjectivity, in short, must account for "woman" as the docile and (re)productive object par excellence of the web of desire/power/knowledge. The "sudden intrusion, the unanticipated agency, of a female 'object' who inexplicably returns the glance, reverses the gaze, and contests the place and authority of the masculine position" (Butler ix) does not duplicate the (masculine) attempt to predicate identity upon anatomy; instead, what is at stake is precisely the discourse of identity which produces "woman" as unscribed body and which oppresses women in their bodies. If both sex and gender are viewed as "regulatory fictions" (Butler 32), identity becomes a "kind of persistent impersonation" (Butler x) "open to intervention and resignification" (Butler 32).

One version of the subject in process, of "woman" as the sign of becoming rather than the guarantor of being, has been the writing associated with feminist reappropriations of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Lacan's stress on the "division and precariousness of human subjectivity" (Rose, Feminine Sexuality 29) has seemed potentially liberating for women uncertain of the value of essentialism, strategic or otherwise, and unwilling to cast opposition to penis envy in the terms of womb envy.

If, as Lacan argues, sexual identity operates as a law, women seek to disobey the law that renders being as the struggle between the haves and the have-nots (the nice conjunction of the phallus and the commodity as fetish should not go unnoticed). The phallus, as Lacan was aware, is a fraud, the signifier to which the value of the transcendental signified accrues (Rose, Feminine Sexuality 43).

The construction of femininity, therefore, is predicated upon this fraud, and the job of feminists has been, in the course of "[t]he description of feminine sexuality [, to conduct] an exposure of the terms of its definition" (Rose Feminine Sexuality 44). If "we can assume that any theory of the subject has always been appropriated by the
'masculine'," (Luce Irigaray, Speculum of the Other Woman 133), "woman" becomes "the blind spot of an old dream of symmetry" (the title of the opening essay of Speculum), the term that functions as "difference and loss" (Rose Feminine Sexuality 49) in relation to "man."

In this economy of the same, woman is produced as the negative term in the definition of what constitutes the human; she cannot herself negate the terms of her definition. Irigaray argues convincingly that this phallic economy, far from designating woman as other, excludes her altogether. She does not even function as limit or difference; rather, she is "[t]he same re-marking itself" (21). Irigaray's contention is that the "hom(m)osexual" dimension of language banishes women and seeks to usurp their place (see Butler 9ff and Rose 49).

Irigaray begins her essay with an ironic repetition of Freud's well known claim that the riddle of femininity does not apply to women because they are themselves the problem, and demonstrates, in the course of her dazzling re-reading of Freud, the operations of an economy of the same in which the little girl is "[a] little man who would have no other desire than to be, or remain, a man" (Speculum 26). Irigaray herself, however, likes to tread on dangerous ground, particularly when she seeks to divorce the polymorphous perversity of desire from the exercise of (phallic) power.

In their effort to "take issue with the cloak of the law in which [the father] wraps his desire, his penis" (Speculum 38), Luce Irigaray and Jane Gallop imply that the release of the violence of desire is in itself sufficient to unsettle the oppressive power of a phallic economy. Indeed, Gallop goes so far as to write that "an exposure of the father as desiring, a view of the father as prick, a view of the father's prick, feminizes him" (The Daughter's Seduction 38).

The law, I would argue, does not "[proscribe] any sexual relation" (Gallop 71), but the terms in which that relation might be constituted. Gallop's disjunction of the "masculine sexed body" (75) from the father's
law has its concomitant, for example, in Julia Kristeva's search for a "warm but dazzling, domesticated paternity" ("Freud and Love: Treatment and its Discontents" in The Kristeva Reader 260). Their search unwittingly reveals the disturbing dimensions of Gallop's call for "complicitous seduction" (75), as it does also the unsavoury implications of Kristeva's representation of woman as "the underhand double of explicit phallic power" ("Stabat Mater" in The Kristeva Reader 170).

Gallop, Irigaray, and Kristeva are guilty of treating the body as a "prediscursive anatomical facticity" (Butler 8); they must not forget that "sex, by definition, [can] be shown to have been gender all along" (Butler 8). Besides, the narrow options for female sexuality are surprising in such subtle critics--why are women's alternatives trapped between rape and seduction? Both argue for their essential passivity. Of course, Gallop and others' attempt must be viewed on its own terms--they seek to introduce a playful dimension to the humourless injunctions of the law. After all, the prohibition of desire serves to provoke desire, as Foucault might have pointed out. Nevertheless, the stakes in power play have always been much too high for women. The pursuit of an elsewhere in which "woman" might be inscribed, therefore, must be undertaken with caution, if not with despair.

Freud's reluctant admissions that "an individual is not a man or a woman but always both" ("Femininity" in The Complete Works 14) and that "pure masculinity and femininity remain theoretical constructions of uncertain content" ("Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction between the Sexes" in The Complete Works 258) have opened the door for feminist psychoanalysts interested in the possibility that "masquerade is the very definition of femininity" (Rose, Feminine Sexuality 43) because, as I suggested earlier, woman operates as difference and loss in relation to the male sign.

In this version of the quest for a feminine libidinal economy, "woman" becomes the "break in ... systems of 'presence,'... the resurgence
of a heterogeneity capable of reworking the principle of [the phallus']
authority" (Speculum 50). The practice of écriture féminine entails the
discovery of a relationship to the primal, "a source (of life)" (Verena
Andermatt Conley, "Approaches" 1). This writing disdains closed systems
and thrives on a vocabulary of abundance, of overflow, of rhythms, of
excess, "where the 'scene' of sexual difference oscillates, vacillates,
vibrates..." (Conley 1).

This orgasmic focus on becoming, on "the movement of a pulsion
toward an object" (Hélène Cixous "voice i" 52), Cixous argues, is not the
privilege of women alone. Yet, she claims that women's jouissance is
"less socializable" (55), and creates a mode of discourse that transforms
exchange into reciprocity rather than mastery. Her desire to endorse
perpetual movement, however, keeps her, by her own admission, within the
confines of the aesthetic, within a constitution of self as style.

The joyous, celebratory mode of écriture féminine suggests that
dissimulation is the very mark of the feminine and, like the strategic and
adventurous movement of différencation, cannot be forced to mean anything in
relation to a specific political and historical juncture. The affirmation
here would be more appealing if it were tied either to the critical
negativity of feminine resistance to a phallic economy, or to the
assertion of autonomy. Instead, Cixous offers the consolation of
"innocence," of a relation to the body that is auto-erotic but not
necessarily conducive to a homo-sexual libidinal economy. The volatile
"jargon" is often unnecessarily cute. To "BLOW UP words," or to prefer
"DADA to data" (Elaine Marks, "voice iv" 110) is all very well;
unfortunately, it sounds increasingly apologetic, like a cover for a
discursive femininity in which no more than words are at risk. As Cixous
herself says, "... the political is something cruel and hard and so
rigorously real, that sometimes I feel like consoling myself by crying and
shedding poetic tears" (58).

Cixous' strategy bears an uncanny resemblance to Derrida's own
claims for a graphics of the hymen, for an expenditure without reserve ("dépense" is Cixous' word), and for a logic of supplementarity beyond the binary opposition which encodes sexual difference. He describes his project as a relationship to the other which "would not be a-sexual, far from it, but would be sexual otherwise..." ("Choreographics" 66). Both Dissemination and Spurs rewrite femininity as radically undecidable; indeed, as the name for that which rails against identity and propriety. Yet, as many of Derrida's female readers point out, the very sincerity with which he flaunts his transition from "the cavalier in spurs to the dreamer of multiplicities" (Conley, "voice ii" 75) might give one reason to doubt him. Derrida's interest in "a rebellious force of affirmation" (Derrida, "voice ii" 83) which resists the reduction of the "'anatomical' thing in question ... to its most summary phenomenality" (Derrida, "voice ii" 89), might not be sufficient proof that the masculine subject who affirms the feminine has escaped the "discriminating" "code of sexual marks" (Derrida "Choreographics" 66).

The sexual politics as well as the rhetorical violence (or "scission" in Derrida's terms) of the latter's disseminative textual (and bodily) surgery are worth pursuing because the displacement of the sexual and historical specificity of the feminine body transforms "woman" into the figure of the malaise of phallogocentricism and precludes discussion of either her oppression within or resistance to that system. Sally Robinson's "Deconstructive Discourse and Sexual Politics: The 'Feminine' and/in Masculine Self-Representation" makes Derrida's ruse of containment depressingly clear.

Her lucid essay demonstrates how the text of Spurs turns the feminine into the pretext for a kind of phallocentric crisis management. Derrida's argument becomes a way for the phallic economy of the same to mark itself as other. Masculine desire for the affirmative feminine entails the rejection of the claims of the recalcitrant feminist--the latter is dismissed, to recall Irigaray reading Freud, as a little girl
who wants to be a little man.

Since *Spurs* is actually Derrida's reading of Nietzsche, and both of them reject the desire to discover woman's truth or woman as truth, the progress of their conversation must be viewed, precisely, as the negation of the feminine in order that the masculine might affirm the difference within. The putting into play of the feminine occurs at the cost of the proliferation of self-representation, however effortful and anguished.

A similar process is at work in "The Double Session" where Derrida casts the hymen as that "which undoes, outwits ... the assurance of mastery" (*Dissemination* 230) because standing, as it does, between the inside and the outside of a woman, it can stand in for the pure medium of fiction and fulfil its destiny as the "tissue on which so many bodily metaphors are written" (*Dissemination* 213). In this fold between desire and fulfilment (one recalls the scene of *écriture feminine* in which the scene of sexual difference vacillates and vibrates), Derrida can trace the divided generation (268), the disseminative spill, of meaning because nothing takes place. The perfect crime has been committed because the mime in the present remembers the deliberations over a crime that was yet to be committed and in fact never was (200). In this exchange between Pierrot, Mallarmé, and Derrida, a double displacement occurs.

Columbine never appears except as a portrait just as the "veil is, without being, torn" (213). Would one be naïve if one asked who is the third woman whose hymen lends itself so willingly to bodily metaphors but not to sexual consummation? Interestingly, the (male) thematic critic is also displaced because he proceeds on the assumption that words have referents. It is thus that Derrida and his cohorts commit the perfect crime, "a blow without marks" (213), because the "crisis of literature" and the blow (violence) of rhetoric take place "in the instance where no one is there to know" (285).

By a predictable sleight of hand, the hymen absolves the men who desire to penetrate, to murder, to read, and to write, because their fate
"hinges" on the game of chance whose arbiter is at once intact and torn (216) and can hold no one accountable for the performance. Derrida's textual designs on the female body become instances of the bloodless violence of the game in which "woman," to use Irigaray's words, will always find herself signed up without having begun to play. Set between—at least—two, or two half, men. A hinge bending according to their exchanges. A reserve supply of negativity sustaining the articulation of their moves... toward the mastery of power. Of knowledge. In which she will have no part. Off-stage, off-side, beyond representation, beyond selfhood. A power in reserve for the dialectical operations to come. (Speculum 22)

Derrida's (perhaps deliberate) confession in his exchange with Conley is instructive if not disarming: "In brief, you see, like the unconscious—-the unconscious that I am—-I do not want to give up anything" ("voice ii" 89). Teresa de Lauretis' fine essay, "The Technology of Gender," seeks, therefore, a subject of feminism who is no longer confined to the terms of patriarchy which keep her chattering about her difference from man; worse, condemn her, as the "mere" effect of signification, to be the instance of difference in man (Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction 1).

Her aim, instead, is to make it possible to talk about differences among women and even within women. The straitjacket of identity does not draw attention to what, in women as in the real, escapes categories of representation. This is not to suggest that women occupy the dimension of the unknowable with which the likes of Lacan identify the "real;" rather, it demands that difference be articulated as "the tension of contradiction, multiplicity, and heteronomy" (De Lauretis 26).

With characteristic caution, De Lauretis gestures to "the space not visible in the frame but inferable from what the frame makes visible" (26) from which, presumably, the new subject of feminism will voice her
dissidence. De Lauretis' call to create spaces in "the chinks and cracks of the power-knowledge apparati" (25) curiously reproduces the very deconstructive strategy of subversion, of excess and rupture, her essay so effectively dismisses.

I want, however, to suggest the possibility of a strategy that does not acquiesce to being beyond the pale of masculine and cultural intelligibility (see also Seyla Benhabib's essay mentioned earlier). If I might recall my preface for a moment, respect for the integrity of limits might preclude the active possibility of "expand[ing] [not merely exceeding] the boundaries of what is, in fact, culturally intelligible" (Butler 29). Or, as Sherry B. Ortner says laconically in response to the question whether one can ever really know the other, "try" ("Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties" 143).

I have been concerned thus far with phallogocentrism's other insofar as she is sexually determined. I must turn now to discourses of ethnicity that seek to understand otherness specifically as the product of the colonial situation in which racial difference was equally determining. This other is the object of the discourse of Empire as well as the means to the colonizer's self-definition.

The process and product of the representation of the colonized reflects the "primary Manicheism" (Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth 50) that governs the colonial situation in which white and black function as the metaphysical opposition between good and evil. The relationship between colonizer and colonized, however, develops in a representational economy in which blackness is produced not only as the negative term of the dialectic between self and other, but as negation itself. The presence of the colonized is simply effaced—they are people caught in "historylessness" (Hegel's word) just as their land is uninscribed territory on which imperialists build their home away from home.

This is a familiar scenario in which epistemic violence reflects the march of Empire—the actual extermination of the brutes has its complement
in a paranoiac mode of representation that constitutes the other as the
descent into chaos, the horror of absence and the terror of silence. The
post-modern delight in the simulacrum, therefore, has a certain irony in
this context. For the colonized, who has never experienced the luxury of
being, figurality denotes not the play of the signifier but the trap of a
specular economy which confirms, precisely, his/her "inessentiality"
(Fanon's word, The Wretched of the Earth 36). The writings of Fanon,
Albert Memmi, Wole Soyinka, and Homi Bhabha, to name but a few, can be
seen as sustained attempts to decolonize the "native," as well as to
demystify the rhetoric of humanism. Fanon calls on Algeria to "[l]eave
this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men
everywhere they find them" (The Wretched of the Earth 311). The task of
decolonization is also one of self-representation, a way out of the
peculiar dilemma in which "not only must the black man be black; he must
be black in relation to the white man" (Fanon, Black Skin White Masks
110).

In a deceptively simple formulation, Fanon indicates that "alterity
for the black man is not the black but the white man" (Black Skin White
Masks 97), setting the tone for a modality of exchange in which the
"native" both returns the glance of the colonizer and contests the process
of splitting in which s/he "can only conceptualize [herself or himself]
when [s/he] is mirrored back to [herself or himself] from the position of
another's desire" (Juliet Mitchell's phrasing in Feminine Sexuality 5).

Fanon's texts are a remarkable testimony to the material
consequences of the production of discursive effects. He is all too aware
that the "negro" in the colonial situation is a creation of the white man.
As I see it, the interest of Fanon's reading of the affective dimension of
colonial power resides in his searing conclusion that self-representation
is not merely a matter of hatching oneself out of alien discursive
containment. The struggle against the ideological valency of white
fictions must nevertheless acknowledge that they constitute the reality of
Asha Varadharajan

PAGE 53

MISSING
serves as the appropriate framework within which the object's transition
to subjectivity might be effected. I shall turn, therefore, to a
consideration of the constitution of the object within post-structuralist
and post-colonial discourse in order to discover alternative means to
articulate its determinants, resistance, self-representation, and desire.
Notes

1. In their introduction to the volume *Post-structuralism and the Question of History*, Geoff Bennington and Robert Young remark that "post-structuralism['s] facilitation of the examination of differentiated and customarily marginalised histories—of phallocentrism, of the fantastic structures of colonialism and of fascism—is a measure by which its interrogation of a dialectical history's transcendence can be assessed" (1991?). I think post-modernism shares this interest even if the two discourses must, to some extent, remain distinct.

2. The contradiction between a historically constituted system of reference and the lateral or spatial determination of concepts/words/forces is readily enough explained. Derrida wishes to avoid the structuralist emphasis on closed systems whose essential relations can be plotted; therefore, he creates an open-ended system that is potentially unlimited and therefore open to history. However, the teleological model of history offers another form of closure. As Derrida explains, "...if the word 'history' did not in and of itself convey the motif of a transgression outside the theme of a final repression of difference, we [one] could say that [only] differences alone could [can] be 'historical' through and through and from the start [from the outset and in each of their aspects]" ('Differance" 141; Bass 11). *Differance*, therefore, "is no more static than [it is] genetic, no more structural than historical. Nor is it any less so [Or is no less so]" (142; 12).

3. A gloss on Derrida's fascinating rhetorical ploys in this passage might be useful. The circularity of Derrida's sentences attests to the way in which *differance* undermines its own possibility. Consider, for instance, the characterisation of *differance*: "In the end, it is a strategy without finality." This oxymoron enhances my claim that politics (a "reasonable" enough interpretation of "strategy," I think) becomes an end in itself in Derrida's terms. The sylleptic character of the word "hazard" is also worth noting. In French, "hasard" suggests at once the positive connotations of "chance" and "luck" (as in *jeux du hasard*) and the negative connotations of "risk" and "danger." The unity of chance and necessity, therefore, seems less paradoxical in French because the play of chance as risk necessitates strategy; that is, political commitment as a calculated risk in the service of a goal or telos. David B. Allison, the translator of *Speech and Phenomena*, translates "aventureux" ("La Differance" 7) as "risk" and as "hazardous" while Bass translates it, literally enough, as "adventurous." My interpretation, therefore, might be seen as problematic. I think, however, that Allison intuits the turn Derrida's passage takes when the concept of play is introduced as the unity, precisely, of "hasard" and necessity. The notion of the "endless calculus" in which the unity of chance and necessity finds its expression seems drawn from Democritus who serves as the epigraph to Jacques Monod, *Le Hasard et la nécessité: essai sur la philosophie naturelle de la biologie moderne* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1970). The epigraph reads: "Tout ce qui existe dans l'univers est le fruit du hasard et de la nécessité." The risk in question also indicates the economic character of *differance* because it suggests an investment without "the perception of gain" (151). The "calculus" or "calculations" (Alan Bass' translation in *Margins of Philosophy* 7) is/are endless because the play of *differance* involves a game in which "one wins and loses each time" (151). This duplicitous character of *differance* which is, "logically" enough, neither word nor concept, explains why political commitment is hazardous as well as inevitable. I am grateful to
Sylvia Söderlind for her perceptive comments on this passage, her expertise in French, and her suggestion that Derrida, too, perhaps drew on Democritus.

4. Derrida's practice of reading might serve as an example of what I mean here. In "History Traces," Marian Hobson shows how Derrida's texts (as "parasites") are indistinguishable from the "host" texts off which they live. When one attempts to prise them apart, however, the dangers of Derrida's parasitic habitation become clear—the structure of the host text threatens to collapse upon itself (Post-structuralism and the Question of History 103). It is in this sense that Derrida makes claims for his political purchase on ideas—his loving homage to the texts he reads bears all the marks of an implosion. I also hope to develop Teresa de Lauretis' suggestive remarks in Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema (1984). De Lauretis contends that the problem for feminist theory remains "how to theorize that experience [which is based on the fact of the oppression of one sex], which is at once social and personal, and how to construct the female subject from that political and intellectual rage" ("Semiotics and Experience" 166). This rage, however, cannot be articulated without an understanding of the ways in which social structures and modes of representation form and deform femininity. It is for this reason that De Lauretis believes that "the most exciting work in feminism ... is not ... anti-Oedipal [but] Oedipal with a vengeance, for it seeks to stress the duplicity of that scenario and the specific contradiction of the female subject in it, the contradiction by which historical women must work with and against Oedipus" ("Desire in Narrative" 157). Subsequent chapters will attempt to develop the notion of repetition with a vengeance in the context of the theory of dialectical negation (which eschews mere opposition) at stake in this thesis.

5. In Discerning the Subject, Smith argues that "the imaginary is emphatically not, as Althusser implies, the opposite of the real or its direct product. The imaginary is that set of representations and identifications which supports an illusory plenitude of the ego ... and the real is what ... stands outside of all symbolization and is unknowable..." (20).
CHAPTER II: RETHINKING THE OBJECT

In his foreword to Paul Smith's Discerning the Subject John Mowitt suggests a possibility that Smith's work fails to address except tangentially. The crisis of the subject, Mowitt argues, needs to be rewritten "from the standpoint of a rethinking of the object" ("The Resistance to Theory" xix). I have demonstrated at some length the nature of the crisis as well as indicated both the necessity and inadequacy of the modes of self-reflection it precipitated. The demise of the Cartesian subject seemed at first to elicit the potential of its object, the former's self-effacement a necessary prelude to the visibility and volubility of the latter.

Within the discursive domain of post-modernism which identifies and exacerbates the displacement of the subject, however, a problem immediately presents itself. The very process which exposes the illusory mastery of the subject forecloses upon the resistance of the object. If the subject is always already discontinuous with itself and its identity only a necessary illusion, is the power exerted in the name of that fiction of identity and mastery equally illusory? If the subject was never whole and undivided, was the object never powerless, traduced, and excluded? Whom shall the object hold accountable for its suffering?

The displacement of the subject can all too easily become a convenient ploy to withhold subjectivity from those for whom it has never been anything but an illusion. The critique of essence, identity, and authenticity does not account for the experience of being bereft of all three; indeed, such critique appropriates that experience and transforms it into a moment of self-discovery rather than a recognition of otherness.

Critical attention, in other words, remains focused on reconstituting the self, on coming to terms with its timely demise, rather than on making room for other voices clamouring, precisely, for self-recognition. The powerlessness of the subject, as its power did once, leaves the object out in the cold. One might very well ask how a
potentially radical discourse took a conservative turn or, in current terminology, how subversion became re-containment.

The object in question, as Chapter I has shown, is the feminine and ethnic other of the discourse of Western patriarchy and Empire. I have delineated discourses of subjectivity each of which in turn constitutes modes of otherness. The post-modern subject, in representing itself as constituted rather than constitutive, has enabled the analysis of systemic relations which govern the constitution of subjects and which determine the possibilities for self-representation. This sensitivity to economies of power, desire, and knowledge which traverse and engender subjects has given post-modernism its undeniable edge. Nevertheless, precisely the political import of its strategy of displacement must be re-thought when the critical gaze shifts to the other who is no longer content that the erstwhile subject has walked off the job (Gérard Rault's phrase 155) or abdicated its throne.

The problem remains that the feminine and ethnic other of the masterful Cartesian cogito, excluded as it were from its self-fashioning, reappears in the self-deprecatory post-modern ego as the difference within. Foucault's Madness and Civilization traces the process of normalization to which madness has been subject as the "other" of reason. His analysis reveals the manner in which madness functions as the guarantor of reason's self-sufficiency and difference. Since, as I have attempted to indicate, the displacement of the Cartesian self also involves a questioning of its modes of cognition, the parallels between the place of madness in the discourse of reason and the status of femininity in the discourse of patriarchy are not difficult to make (the hystericization of women's bodies is a case in point).

Foucault argues that madness and reason enter into a perpetually reversible relation which provides every madness with its reason, that sits in judgment upon and masters it, every reason its madness
in which it finds its derisory truth. Each is the measure of
the other, and in this movement of reciprocal reference, they
impugn each other, yet each founds the other ... for the truth
of madness is to be the inside of reason, to be one of its
figures, a force and seemingly a momentary need in order for
reason better to provide itself with the guarantee of its
difference. (as quoted in Changing the Subject 137-38)

In "Cogito and the History of Madness," Derrida offers a critique of
Foucault's project on the grounds that the latter's aim is an impossible
one. Having determined the means by which reason's recognition of
madness' immanence becomes another form of incarcerating madness, Foucault
claims to tell the tale of folly in its own voice. Derrida's admiration
for Foucault's venture is not in doubt; he insists, however, that
Foucault's desire to avoid "the restrained and restraining language of
reason," while "utilizing the concepts that were the historical
instruments of the capture of madness" is "with all seriousness, the
maddest aspect of his project" (Writing and Difference 34).

Foucault, Derrida contends, puts Western reason on trial and herein
lies the "infeasibility" (33) of the former's book. The proceedings of
the trial would have no choice but to "unceasingly reiterate the crime"
(35) because the language of reason and the form of its denunciation
are one and the same. Derrida counters Foucault's work by suggesting, in
familiar deconstructive terms, that reason is not only duplicitous in its
apparent rejection of madness but also strangely complicitous with that
which it categorically denies.

His reading of Descartes demonstrates that the latter in fact
"installs [madness'] possible menace at the very heart of the
intelligible" (55) and therefore denies knowledge the power to dominate
and objectify madness. Derrida's critique of Foucault is well-
considered; nevertheless, Foucault at least engages the possibility of
speaking otherwise while Derrida's essay is predicated on the impossibility of doing so.

As Ann Wordsworth explains, "if history is a rational concept, how is it possible to write a history of madness? And second, if Foucault claims to speak for a madness that by definition must remain silent does he not risk reappropriation by the very mode of exclusion that he claims to avoid?" ("Derrida and Foucault: Writing the History of Historicity" in *Post-structuralism and the Question of History* 117). Derrida believes that "... an archaeology, even of silence, [is] a logic, that is, an organized language, a project, an order, a sentence, a syntax, a work..." (*Writing and Difference* 35). Because Derrida insists that "silence plays the irreducible role of that which bears and haunts language, outside and against which alone language can emerge" (54), he transforms silence (madness) into the indispensable condition of language (reason) itself and therefore renders it incapable, by definition, of being elicited in the sense that Foucault believes possible.

Foucault's "archaeology of silence" (35), as Derrida suggests, never addresses the question "who wrote and who is to understand, in what language and from what historical situation of logos ... this history of madness" (38)? Foucault, in Derrida's terms, is in danger of objectifying and incarcerating madness himself because he fails to confess to the "authorship" of the desire to speak madness itself. Derrida's own work is hardly exempt from this charge—he returns us time and again to the subject who is, thanks to his critique of historical meaning which masquerades as logos, never there. As I have already argued, the potential resistance of the other of a specific discourse is transformed into the inherent weakness of the said discourse's claim to power and thus defused.

It is clear that both Foucault and Derrida, as exemplars of the discourse of post-modernism, are in pursuit of the other of reason. Derrida's interpretation of Foucault aligns itself with the writings of
Georges Bataille. As Jürgen Habermas explains in his essay entitled "The French Path to Postmodernity: Bataille between Eroticism and General Economics," Bataille argues that the other of reason is "the incommensurable which cannot be touched by reason, except at the cost of an explosion of the rational subject..." (101). Bataille's concern has of course a sacral dimension to it; however, his belief that the other would remain hidden from the knowing subject except in moments of ecstatic illumination is not all that far removed from critical discourse that peddles only more sophisticated versions of the myth of the dark continent (my reading of Spivak in the preface indicates one way in which post-modern discourse or deconstructive strategies turn knowledge into a species of mysticism).

I want to point out briefly here that the space of the subject remains empty in the writing of both Foucault and Derrida because they cannot conceive of an other knowledge that involves not the annihilation of the subject but its reformulation in confrontation with a resistant object. Surely the surrender of identity by the post-modern cogito should entail an explosion of the categories of the subject rather than of its substance.1

I shall now return to the ways in which the notion of the difference within remains problematic. Teresa de Lauretis describes one aspect of this problem, that is, the effort on the part of contemporary French philosophers to deny the sexual specificity of real women in favour of "a radically 'other' subject, de-centered and de-sexualized" ("The Technology of Gender" 24). In this strategic move, Derrida for example identifies the "feminine" with the structure of différance itself which opposes meaning, sexual identity, and truth.

The crucial factor here is that this movement is precisely "objectless and non-referential" (Betty R. McGraw, "Splitting Subject/Splitting Seduction" 144), which means that Derrida's delineation of the process of devenir-femme has "little to do with woman" (McGraw
Derrida's deconstruction of "woman" is effected in the interests of a reconstruction of "man." My interest aims to do the opposite, to, in McGraw's words, "[posit] the feminine as an object of knowledge anchored in a sociality that lies beyond the wreckage of the paternal symbolic function and that can modify, expand and renew it" (145).

A related aspect of the problem De Lauretis describes involves the critique of ethnocentrism implicit in Derrida's re-reading of "white mythologies." Derrida's well known articulation of the limits of logocentrism depends on a theory of the pre-destined frustration of the desire for presence. This constitutive lack needs a symbol, a marker of the limits of logocentric desire. It is this need, as Homi Bhabha argues, that cultural otherness fulfils ("Difference, Discrimination..." 194-97).

Derrida's appropriation of otherness here is of a piece with his appropriation of the feminine. In both cases, otherness functions as "the discovery of [Western and masculine] assumptions" (Bhabha 197) rather than the investigation of the history and materiality of other cultures (Bhabha 196). What might this other mode of representation be in which the colonized function as more than the West's "limit-text, the Anti-West" (Bhabha 195) or in which the feminine subject's "critical negativity" does not preclude the "affirmative positivity of [feminism's] politics" (De Lauretis 26)?

To my mind, both Bhabha and McGraw offer unsatisfactory solutions to the problem they present so lucidly, solutions which entail a replication of the deconstructive strategies they reject so strenuously (De Lauretis shares this tendency as I indicated in Chapter I). In other words, the "supplementary strategy" Bhabha defends as well as the structure of seduction McGraw offers suffer from the continued insistence on otherness as that which insinuates itself within the boundaries of hegemonic discourse, its deviation from the dominant economy of the same defined in terms of dominant categories.

McGraw suggests that in what she calls "seductive writing"
the feminine is not outside the masculine, nor is it its canny opposite. It is, instead, inside the masculine, its uncanny difference from itself. The feminine inhabits the masculine as its otherness, as its own disruption. It is pure difference and can only be defined by the way in which it differentially relates to other differences.... (151)

Surely this is Derrida's point, that the feminine constitutes the very structure and movement of différence! The difference between this strategy of seduction, and the simultaneous production and appropriation of otherness Foucault describes in the passage cited earlier, also escapes me.

McGraw contends that her theory "dialectizes" the entire structure (151) because the terms are not opposed but reversible--they are simultaneously done and undone. McGraw reads dialectics as différence because the conditions of such reversibility remain unaddressed, as does the distinction between reversibility and appropriation. Her argument loses its force because she claims first that différence remains anterior and opposed to the "thetic positioning of the subject" (144), and then herself positions a subject who is continuously coming undone--a deconstructive ploy, if ever I saw one.

The negativity McGraw endorses is closer to Kristeva's claims for unlimited semiosis, for a heterogeneity that cannot be articulated either as cognition or as representation because both pretend to mastery. Moreover, this version of negativity does not confront the motive force of contradiction in the Hegelian dialectic, the force that insists on the inevitability of the distinction between subject and object even as it traces their inescapable relation. By making the terms of the dialectic reversible rather than contradictory, McGraw relinquishes the potential for resistance--negation becomes in effect a strategy merely of displacement rather than a search for alternatives.
In a recent essay, Bhabha repudiates the dialectical power of negation in favour of what he calls a "supplementary strategy" ("DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation" 305). Bhabha explains that the aim of such a strategy is to "disturb the calculation" in the process of suggesting that "adding 'to' need not 'add up'" (305). Bhabha draws here on the Derridean notion of the supplement as that which exceeds the structure of signification even as it marks the lack that compromises all claims to completeness. Instead of a different logic of articulating otherness in pursuit of which Bhabha claims to be writing, his essay endorses a disappointing "ambivalence" (319) which "reveal[s] the instability of any division of meaning into an inside and outside" (314). Bhabha is correct in pointing out that incommensurability structures all narratives of identification (319); however, the task of minority discourses cannot be confined to taunting dominant discourses with their failure to achieve their objective.

The recognition of incommensurability has not prevented the proliferation of Procrustean beds in which bodies are simultaneously identified and othered. Bhabha writes this incommensurability as the "native's" active withholding (306), but such a withholding seems to me impossible without a concept of dialectical negation. The reasons for this claim will soon become clear; suffice it for the moment to say that the continuous exposure of the lack that helps to constitute identity brings one no closer to modes of representation that reconstitute the relationship between self and other rather than confining themselves to the limits of the self or the mystery of the other.

Bhabha's rejection of the attempt to confront hegemonic discourses "with a contradictory or negating referent," or to "turn contradiction into a dialectical process" ("DissemiNation..." 306) has, of course, ample precedent. The appropriative strategies of deconstruction have their counterparts in Jean-Paul Sartre's reading of Negritude "as the minor term of a dialectical progression" (as quoted by Fanon in Black Skin, White
Masks 133) towards the raceless society. Sartre argues that negritude as an antithetical value is necessary but not sufficient and, as such, "is the root of its own destruction, ... a transition and not a conclusion, a means and not an ultimate end" (Black Skin, White Masks 133). Fanon counters Sartre's claim with the ironic statement that white intellectuals could come up with no better response to black self-affirmation "than to point out the relativity of what they [the blacks] were doing" (133). Sartre retains the privilege of relating Negritude to the "universal" value of racelessness, of completing the process of dialectical negation.

Fanon rejects Sartre's argument on two scores: it intellectualizes the experience of being black (134) and fails to acknowledge that black consciousness is "not a potentiality of something" (135) but wholly what it is. Fanon's position is itself in danger of countering one pernicious Manicheism with another (Soyinka's phrase); nevertheless, his point is worth noting that one must not be too hasty in transcending the historical moment of negation or in rejecting the identity which is its product.

The black consciousness which emerges from the moment of negation has value precisely because the white man is not only the other but also the master (138n), because the meaning of negation is forged in the specific situation of decolonization and fashioned out of material suffering. The voice of the black man, therefore, is "torn through and through" (Fanon, "Letter to a Frenchman" in Toward the African Revolution 49). In this powerful image, Fanon undermines his own leanings towards identity; he insists, instead, on a complex voicing of self that reveals the negation at the centre of identity. Identity in the colonial situation is in fact the refusal of Man rather than his apotheosis.

Interestingly, Sartre's faith in the dialectic bears a curious affinity with deconstruction's insistence on the constitutive lack imbricated in discourses of presence. In his introduction to Albert Memmi's The Colonizer and the Colonized, Sartre endorses Memmi's contribution to the "infamous death-struggle of colonialism" (xxix).
Sartre's awareness of the "relentless reciprocity [which] binds the colonizer to the colonized" (xxviii), however, leads him to the problematic conclusion that the colonialist apparatus "will manufacture its own destruction of itself" (xxviii).

Sartre is not unaware of the dangers in manipulating the revolt of the oppressed to serve the cause of rejuvenating a decadent Western society or of making his country live up to its own vaunted humanism (see for example his introduction to Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth). Nevertheless, his faith in historical necessity makes him shift the emphasis from the struggle of the colonized to that rigidity of the colonialist apparatus at its inception which will wreak havoc at its end.

The colonized bear the secret of the death of colonialism; they are its nemesis, just as otherness functions as saviour in current deconstructive rhetoric. The colonized, in other words, function as the occasion for the self-realization of the colonizer—the latter's "product and his fate" (xxviii). Nationalism, within this state of affairs, is merely another name for a colonial apparatus programmed to self-destruct.

Both Sartre's version of the dialectic and the strategy of reversal and displacement characteristic of deconstruction, are in danger of emptying negation of its political content. Sartre grants the resistance of the colonized merely antithetical status in the movement of the dialectic towards a society without races, while deconstruction turns otherness into the secret at the heart of identity rather than the latter's determinate (and therefore deeply political) negation. Moreover, Derrida's plea for a discourse in which sexual codes would no longer be discriminating (discussed at length in Chapter I) bears the unmistakable stamp of Sartre's vision of a raceless society.

Deconstruction conceives of negativity as a form of rot within history and it can be read, therefore, as a version of the dialectical faith in necessity. The necessity at issue here is not the inexorable movement of the Hegelian dialectic towards the identity of subject and
object, but that which vitiates all teleologies, that which structures desire. This conjunction is particularly significant because deconstruction styles itself as the critique of dialectical reason.

Sartre draws, of course, for his championing of the colonized on Marx’s vision of the proletariat as the bearer of the secret that will destroy the bourgeoisie; however, as Walter Benjamin was aware, perhaps nothing is as destructive of revolutionary potential as the belief that history is on one’s side. I shall return to the question of privileged subjects of history in my discussion of the Frankfurt School.

Fanon’s faith in a black self that is wholly what it is seems naïve in the face of current scepticism regarding the possibility of an unmediated relationship to reality. Memmi provocatively includes the period of revolt in the period of colonization precisely because he sees the pitfalls in opposing a black essence to a white one. Moreover, in accepting the definition of (black) self as a form of otherness one might be acquiescing to a symbolic violence that produces one as the negative term in the dialectic between male and female, colonizer and colonized. Fanon’s own trenchant analysis of the psyche of the colonized reveals the difficulty of contending with the object without accounting for the fantasy of it that shapes its appearance to the subject. How then can one rethink the object without resorting to a pre-discursive reality?

Given the political context of patriarchy and of Empire, signifiers cannot be construed (if they ever could be) as innocent markers of provisional identity. They must be understood as words which (to quote Cixous) “designate that which cannot be classified inside of a signifier except by force and violence and which goes beyond it in any case” (“voice i” 51). Cixous argues that in order to institute "respectful modalities" (56) of exchange between self and other, the "enigmatic kernel of the other ... must be absolutely preserved" (61).

The nature of this "respect" is never developed except as a vague appeal to jouissance, a knowledge that cannot do without the experience of
the body, a knowledge that asserts that in touching the other one alters the self. I like Cixous' attention to the dynamism of the exchange between self and other, as well as her sensitivity to the violence of identity that is intolerant of mystery. Adorno, as I shall go on to explain, makes a similar point.

The problem remains, nevertheless, that this respect for enigmas does not escape the charge that what "is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought" collapses into or becomes "the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking that" (Foucault's phrasing in *The Order of Things* xv). Cixous is right in suggesting that a different mode of cognition is required, but wrong in implying that knowledge itself is incapable of thinking otherwise or, in Foucault's words, that "knowledge condemns itself to never knowing anything but the same thing" (*The Order of Things* 30).

Foucault's own concern with the discursive constitution of subjects and objects (as elaborated in Chapter I) seems, initially at least, a more promising approach to the status of the object, of the world of things that in some sense remains anterior to discourse and that exceeds its grasp. He asserts, after all, that discourse is a violence done to things. Foucault asks a different set of questions—instead of determining the nature of the object he proceeds to ascertain the conditions which ascribe it that status, which "[make] it manifest, nameable, and describable" (*The Archaeology of Knowledge* 41).

Foucault's procedure concentrates on discursive practices "that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (*The Archaeology of Knowledge* 49). Foucault wishes to dispense with things because the order of knowledge or of discourse in his view has a "productive rather than reflective character;" that is, "the process of signification itself gives shape to the reality it implicates" (Henriques et al *Changing the Subject* 99). This view of signification is certainly an improvement on the "radical intransitivity" (Foucault's phrase in his brief discussion of
Mallarmé in *The Order of Things* (300) to which Derrida condemns
signification in works like *Dissemination* which use Mallarmé as exemplar.

Despite Foucault's emphasis on the materiality of discursive
practices, however, he shares with Derrida the exclusive delineation of
the object's and therefore of knowledge's conditions of possibility. This
sleight of hand has of course reformulated the question of adequation so
that it is no longer a matter of knowledge conforming to reality but of
implicating reality in a regime of truth. Nevertheless, Foucault's and
Derrida's analyses shift attention away from what is to be done and keep
it trained on the impossibility of speaking about the object.

This impossibility is defended on the grounds that the rules of
discourse constrain what can be said. The subject can do no more than
redefine the conditions which make the object intelligible. All the
subject encounters, in other words, is the genealogy of the object. In
this sense, the object can provoke no other response from the subject than
one that explains how it came to be an object in the first place, the
oppressed "other" of a discourse whose principles of intelligibility
cannot help but exclude it.

I have no wish to resurrect an object untrammelled by the traces of
power/desire/knowledge or to pluck it from the tangle of discursive and
material relations within which it finds its place. Foucault and Derrida
have been indispensable to critical discourse's discovery of the *hubris*
which animates the order of knowledge. Since the rules of discourse
delimit the sayable, the object cannot be re-presented in its own terms.
But does that mean that the object cannot be encountered on its own terms
(see Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other*)? The genealogical enterprise,
in short, is necessary but not sufficient. Its demand for continued
vigilance, its assertion that resistance cannot but be implicated in its
opposite, power, must be heeded. But it is time, once again, to re-think
the relationship between the order of knowledge and that of the "real."
The "radical intransitivity" of the discourse of postmodernism seems an inevitable consequence of the contemporary consensus that "the order of knowledge does not recapitulate the order of reality" (Lewis, "Reference and Dissemination ..." 37). Certainly no theory of ideology or sensitivity to asymmetrical relations of power between subject and object can afford to ignore this disjunction. And yet the transition from the absence of epistemological guarantees to the impossibility of reference seems both hasty and presumptuous. It is precisely this transition that Lewis explores, bearing in mind Marx's warning that the question of objective truth isolated from practice can never be more than an empty scholastic question (Lewis 38).

Lewis does not wish to lapse into the "'referential fallacy' which consists of the belief that an actual state of the world must underwrite the functioning of every semiotic entity" (41); however, he argues that epistemological uncertainty cannot be bought at the price of obscuring social conflict over the use of signs. Lewis suggests, therefore, that the production of reference merely implies that the vertiginous process of unlimited semiosis "has come to a provisional halt" (41).

Lewis makes the crucial point that semiosis is only potentially unlimited, that such a notion is theoretically necessary to account for "instability, indeterminacy, contradiction, and historical change in the processes of sign production and sign interpretation" (43). None of these factors suggests either the impossibility of reference or the vanity of epistemology even as each indicates that concepts and metaphors arrest semiosis.

Lewis contends that readings of works like Derrida's "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy" forget all too easily that Derrida contests a particular tradition of philosophy in which conceptual adequacy, just as much as metaphorical adequacy, depends on a trope of resemblance. Despite this qualification, however, Derrida's essay suffers
from a contradictory reliance on precisely a naïve notion of reference as the relation between sign and spatio-temporal object.

Metaphor functions as both the condition of the philosophical text's possibility and as that which subverts the power of the referent. But is the mimetic relation the only one available to a reconsideration of the problem of reference? Under what conditions might the non-correspondence between metaphor and referent, knowledge and reality, representation and object, serve subversive ends?

In order to avoid the pitfalls of Derrida's argument, which contests the trope of resemblance that determines metaphorical and conceptual adequacy while retaining the analytic theory of reference in order to ground its critique, Lewis deploys the writings of Althusser in a provocative fashion. I shall emphasize two aspects of Lewis' complicated argument as a prelude to my discussion of Adorno as the figure who incorporates the insights of postmodernism without succumbing to its weaknesses.

According to Lewis, Althusser dispenses with "'a metaphysics of the referent'" (49) because he shifts the emphasis from resemblance or, in the case of scientific knowledge, from verification, to the "discursive systematization and effectivity" (49) of knowledge. This shift not only subjects knowledge to continuous historical revision but also acknowledges that epistemology or representation does not involve an immediate encounter with a sensuous object.

Instead, the distinction between objects of knowledge and real objects is irreducible—both are tied to specific processes of production. Concepts are in no way identifiable with their objects; they are nonetheless "real" (recall Althusser's notion of ideology as the imaginary relation to the real relations of existence). Because knowledge of empirical existence is not "that empirical existence itself" (48), this very incommensurability ensures that the consumption of knowledge might serve very different ends than its production.
Althusser argues, if I may recall Chapter I, that the mode of production must also guarantee the reproduction of the forces and relations of production. He conceives of ideology as a force which brooks no resistance to its interpellation of subjects. If, however, ideology is produced in the gap between epistemology and reality, the failure inscribed in its production might be reproduced in its consumption. In this situation, those subjected to ideological exigencies could consume cultural products "in an effectively different way" (54).

Derrida's notion of dissemination could be construed in an analogous fashion. Derrida argues that meanings not only proliferate but are also eminently capable of straying from their intended destination. He is tempted, therefore, to eschew the very possibility of reference. Lewis, however, announces a theory of reference as a practice of dissemination" (38). In other words, "shifting the contexts that enable such texts to acquire references" (54) prepares the ground for the profession of the object's political desire.

In order to make this ground possible, I want to investigate the respective potential in dialectical and differential thinking for theorizing the resistance of the object. The concept of différerance with which Derrida has become identified represents deconstruction's attempt to part company with classical dialectics. Différerance, however, remains indebted to the dialectic, at least insofar as it recognizes the "mediated nature of all supposedly proper entities" (Ryan, Marxism and Deconstruction 67) and endorses the power of negativity. Derrida takes issue with the movement of the dialectic towards an identity which suppresses alterity as well as with Hegel's desire to turn the moment of negation or of contradiction into a stage in the process of self-recognition when consciousness "appropriates the other as itself" (Ryan 67).

The heterogeneity which constitutes identity (the notion that every entity is only as it differs from and defers something else) is turned,
within the confines of the dialectic, into "a system of simple binary oppositions or contradictory negations" (Ryan 67). The movement of the dialectic is a specular one, because difference or alterity functions, not as the enemy of all claims to identity, property, and propriety, but as that which enables "the return of the other-relation into the self-identity of the entity, concept, or subject" (Ryan 67).

The identity which emerges at the end of the dialectical process, in other words, is the product of sublation because the antithetical term is both negated and conserved in the self-presence of the subject or concept. Derrida describes this sublation (Aufhebung) as an "idealization and [a] reappropriation" ("White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy" 253) because the concept or the subject "... comes back to [it]self, recognizes [it]self, reassembles [it]self or resembles [it]self, outside [it]self in [it]self" (253).

This rather complicated, if tongue-in-cheek, play on words performs or mimes the circular trajectory of the Hegelian Idea in which the contradiction, negation, or "other-relation" is always "within (or in sight of) reappropriation" (253). Derrida questions the very notion of constitutive or originary concepts which are not themselves effects of a process of substitution and displacement or, in Hegelian terms, "derivative in relation to what they supposedly subordinate and exclude..." (Ryan 67). In short, Derrida questions the power of the concept to consume its own negation (its object) and that of identity to neutralize alterity.

Derrida insists on a graphics of différance because the sign is "deferred presence" ("Différance" in Margins of Philosophy 9; "Differance" in Speech and Phenomena 138) and, as such, "embodies" the structure of différance which also "defers the moment in which we can encounter the thing itself, make it ours, consume or expend it, touch it, see it, intuit its presence" (9; 138). It is for this reason that différance is
objectless and non-referential; it is "a movement of mediation" (9; 138) without origin or telos.

Similarly, the structure and movement of différance is subjectless because, as I have already explained, "the subject (in its identity with itself, or eventually in its consciousness of its identity with itself, its self-consciousness) is inscribed in [the] language, is a 'function' of [the] language" (15; 145) which, in turn, constitutes itself as the "systematic play of differences" (11; 140).

Derrida shifts the focus, therefore, from the relation between subject and object to the order of conceptuality which produces the relation and which constitutes that relation as opposition. This is doubtless an important move, not the least because, like Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud before him, Derrida puts the authority of consciousness in question. Interestingly, however, it is precisely when the political implications of his attention to the "radical alterity" (21; 152) which troubles the logic of contradiction cry out to be addressed that Derrida becomes inscrutable.

His attention to, so to speak, the letter of the law of différance keeps him confined to the radical intransiitivity of the pure medium of fiction he affirms in Dissemination, to the act of writing in which language is its own object. It is this process that Foucault, in his discussion of Mallarmé, describes as "a silent, cautious deposition of the word upon the whiteness of a piece of paper, where it can possess neither sound nor interlocutor, where it has nothing to say but itself, nothing to do but shine in the brightness of its being" (The Order of Things 300).

Foucault ascribes to Mallarmé the "discovery of the word in its impotent power" (300). The oxymoron is significant in that it identifies what I have been demonstrating—the curious complicity between the postmodern death of the subject and the abnegation of responsibility for the continued implacability of power. Moreover, against his will and despite his good intentions, Derrida is in danger of ontologizing différance when
he characterizes it "as the entirely other relationship that apparently interrupts every economy" (19; 150), and aligns it with the death drive in Freudian discourse.

Derrida wishes to reject the desire that animates the economy of the Hegelian dialectic, that "implies that the deferred presence can always be found again, that we have here only an investment that provisionally and calculatedly delays the perception of its profit or the profit of its perception" (20; 151). If, however, this alterity is "exempt from every process of presentation by means of which we would call upon it to show itself in person" (20; 151), and différence maintains our relationship with the object as "that which we necessarily misconstrue and which exceeds the alternative of presence and absence" (20; 151), what is to prevent the descent into a kind of metaphysical pathos in which knowledge, representation, and resistance become simultaneously impossible?

The emphasis on a playful affirmation of différence which resists nostalgia for the logic of presence and absence (27; 159) does not account for the conflict between self and other. Derrida transforms the logic of contradiction or of opposition into the doubled economy of différence "in which whoever loses wins, and in which one loses and wins on every turn" (20; 151). Because the subject and object in question have been dismissed from the scene of différence, Derrida is not obliged to explain who loses and who wins and in what historical circumstances this game of chance and necessity is played.

This strategy begins to read very much like equivocation and is perhaps guilty of a sleight of hand by which relations of power are transformed into relations of meaning (see Foucault, "Truth and Power" in The Foucault Reader 56). Derrida would of course retort that relations of meaning are always implicated in relations of power; however, acquiescing to the inevitable deferral of its presence leaves the object no alternative but to defer to the subject's assertion of its absence.
Différence establishes itself as the alternative to dialectical negation, as the adventurous strategy that, contrary to the Hegelian economy which reappropriates the alterity which troubles it, puts that alterity into play. I have already indicated the ways in which the reversal and displacement essential to the practice of différance themselves become forms of appropriation of the otherness they elicit; more importantly, however, différance offers no genuine engagement with the dialectical mode of reason.²

It does not serve as a critique of the Hegelian dialectic; instead, Derrida posits différance as the dialectic’s condition of possibility, as that which is necessary to discover "what indicates that each of the terms [of the dialectical opposition] must appear as the différance of the other" (17; 148). How, then, does one think against Hegel without shifting the argument to another level (Derrida’s own version of Aufhebung, perhaps?) and without dismissing the dialectic as merely a form of orthodoxy? Can one, in other words, deploy the power of dialectical negation in the interests of the alterity, the object, the other, that Hegel seeks to repress in the name of identity, the concept, and the subject? It is this task that the rest of this chapter will address in the context of the philosophy of Adorno and the Frankfurt School.

In "Truth and Power," Foucault rejects dialectics and semiotics, contending that they do not account "for the intrinsic intelligibility of conflicts" (The Foucault Reader 56). He describes their failure to articulate a microphysics of power relations thus:

'Dialectic' is a way of evading the always open and hazardous reality of conflict by reducing it to a Hegelian skeleton, and 'semiology' is a way of avoiding its violent, bloody, and lethal character by reducing it to the calm Platonic form of language and dialogue. (56-57)

My own argument thus far has suggested as much; despite the hazards of the dialectic, however, I believe it necessary to reclaim the
dialectical method in the very instant that I deny its "matter." Curiously enough, it is Foucault who suggests how. In his tribute to Jean Hyppolite, Foucault speculates on the impossibility of being truly free from the Hegelian system. He wonders whether "our anti-Hegelianism is possibly one of his [Hegel's] tricks directed against us, at the end of which he stands, motionless, waiting for us" ("The Discourse on Language" in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 235).

Foucault's appreciation for Hyppolite resides in the latter's conception of the Hegelian system, "not as a reassuring universe...," but as "the field in which philosophy took the ultimate risk" (236). This risk, for Hyppolite, entailed the dissolution of the concept in "the extreme irregularity of experience" (236). In contrast to Derrida, Hyppolite did not envisage the Hegelian totality as a movement of recuperation; rather, as Foucault explains, he transformed "the Hegelian theme of the end of self-consciousness into one of repeated interrogation" (236).

One might well ask whether this "transformation" is not the distinguishing feature of the movement of *différance*. I would beg to differ on at least two scores. Hyppolite's transformation is imbued with the awareness that "that which permits us to think against Hegel [is] that which remains Hegelian [within us]" (235). Derrida's concept of erasure might suggest, on one level, that *différance* has a similar status. On another level, as I have indicated, *différance* is the alterity which troubles the logic of contradiction; indeed, which produces, even sustains, dialectical logic.

Secondly, while the movement of *différance* might correspond to Hyppolite's "endless task, against the background of an infinite horizon" (236), as well as to Hyppolite's notion of a philosophy that "was present, uncertain, mobile" (236), it is predicated upon the inaccessibility of experience, the object, or the referent. For Hyppolite, on the contrary,
philosophy's supple uncertainty was a function of its "contact with non-
philosophy" (236).

It is this desire for a philosophy or an order of knowledge that
"[begins] to formulate itself ... amid the murmuring of things" (236) that
animates Adorno's negative dialectics. Apart from scattered, and for the
most part dismissive, comments on Habermas towards the end of his life,
and a belated admission of affinities between his thought and theirs,
Foucault never engaged directly with the philosophy of the Frankfurt
School (Peter Dews, "Adorno, Post-structuralism, and the Critique of
Identity" in The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin 1). His
subtle homage to Hyppolite's enterprise, however, suggests that he might
have endorsed Adorno's singular attention to the dialectic of Western
history as the domination of the concept or, in Foucault's own terms, to
discourse "as a violence that we do to things" (The Archaeology of
Knowledge 229).

I have been concerned thus far to situate the writings of Adorno in
relation to the politics of post-modernism. I will return to the struggle
between "frankfurters and french fries" (to borrow Rainer Nägele's amusing
appellations) in the final section of this chapter--its import might be
clearer then. For now, it seems crucial to consider Adorno's œuvre in
relation to the agenda of his fellow émigrés and as an independent attempt
to re-think the place of the object in the discourse of philosophy.
Notes

1. The context for this distinction between category and substance is two-fold. Kant shifted the emphasis from error as the distortion of truth to the conditions of the possibility of knowing. This shift made it possible to understand that "conditions of truth [were] regulative ideas and categorial forms through which, and only through which, we perceive sense data as particular objects or events" (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 380). Kant's emphasis on the incommensurability of the subject with the reality which it knows is what Lukács wished to transcend in his demand that the subject be substance. The Vicoian legacy in the definition of commensurability as the conjunction between knowing and making is particularly evident in Lukács' conceptions of alienation and reification. The dialectical unification of subject and object would occur in the proletariat, the only subject that was also an object (the object of capitalism would become the subject of communism) (Andrew Feenberg, Lukács, Marx and the Sources of Critical Theory 116). The proletariat, in other words, comprehends reality in the very act of transforming it (Leszek Kolakowski, Main Currents of Marxism: Its Origin, Growth and Dissolution 271). The rest of this chapter will continue to clarify relations between category and substance in the course of adumbrating a different mode of cognition. Foucault and Derrida are equally interested in the conditions of knowledge which place limits on that knowledge. Just as Kant grants a priori status to these categories or forms which determine the mode in which reality appears to the subject, Derrida and Foucault, as I have indicated, treat them as discursive practices which delimit the sayable or the thinkable. In other words, they treat these limits as inherent to the order of conceptuality. Since the stability of the self is inseparable from the "will to know" in their scheme of things, epistemological failure becomes consonant with a subjectivity, in Foucault's terms, which writes in order to have no face. This effacement of self is reproduced in Derrida's appreciative reading of Bataille. The "ultimate subversion of lordship" occurs when sovereignty (of identity) "no longer seek[s] to be recognized" ("From Restricted to General Economy A Hegelianism without Reserve" 265). This subversion is possible only when sovereignty "expend[s] itself without reserve, lose[s] itself, lose[s] consciousness, lose[s] all memory of itself and all the interiority of itself" (265). This posture of the self establishes a relationship to an "unknowledge" that will be "the absolute excess of every epistemē..." (268. Italics in original). Adorno, however, believes that the category of the subject is indispensable to such self-transcendence. He does not succumb to the temptation to "[bypass] the order of apprehension" (Derrida, Margins of Philosophy 4); instead, Adorno seeks to expand the limits of the intelligible to include, precisely, the perceived incommensurability of the sensible.

2. In Of Grammatology (1976), Derrida "domesticates" Hegel thus: "... all that Hegel thought within this horizon [of absolute knowledge], all, that is, except eschatology, may be read as a meditation on writing. Hegel is also the thinker of irreducible difference...." (26. Italics in original). Under the guise of acknowledging his debt to Hegel, Derrida effects a curious reversal by which dialectics becomes indebted to différence and Hegel is legitimated as "the first thinker of writing" (26).

3. Compare, for example, the opening paragraph of Derrida's essay, "From Restricted to General Economy A Hegelianism without Reserve" (Writing and Difference 251. Italics in original). Derrida writes: "'Often Hegel seems to me self-evident, but the self-evident is a heavy burden'.... Why
today—even today—are the best readers of Bataille among those for whom Hegel's self-evidence is so lightly borne? So lightly borne that a murmured allusion to given fundamental concepts ... suffice to undo the constraint of Hegel.... And, contrary to Bataille's experience, this puts one, without seeing or knowing it, within the very self-evidence of Hegel one often thinks oneself unburdened of. Misconstrued, treated lightly, Hegelianism only extends its historical domination, finally unfolding its immense enveloping resources without obstacle. Hegelian self-evidence seems lighter than ever at the moment when it finally bears down with its full weight." Adorno's reading of the ruses of Hegelian Reason, I shall go on to argue, shares Derrida's sensitivity, but seeks to transform the "constraint" of its matter into the "freedom" of its method. Hyppolite's view of Hegel, in common with Adorno's, contends with the possibilities of the dialectic even as it critiques the "historical domination" of Hegelianism.
CHAPTER III: THEODOR W. ADORNO

SECTION I

THEORY AND PRAXIS: THE CASE OF THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

Let us, from now on, be on our guard against the hallowed philosophers' myth of a "pure, will-less, painless, timeless knower;" let us beware of the tentacles of such contradictory notions as "pure reason," "absolute knowledge," "absolute intelligence." All these concepts presuppose an eye such as no living being can imagine, an eye required to have no direction, to abrogate its active and interpretive powers—precisely those powers that alone make of seeing, seeing something. All seeing is essentially perspective, and so is all knowing.

—Friedrich Nietzsche

The philosophy of Adorno, as is well-known, was formulated in the context of a collective enterprise articulated by a group of disaffected German intellectuals known as the Frankfurt School, many of whom emigrated to the United States during and in the aftermath of the Second World War. Adorno and Max Horkheimer returned to Germany, Herbert Marcuse and Leo Lowenthal chose to remain in America, and the influential yet marginal Walter Benjamin committed suicide while escaping from the Nazis during the war.

The philosophical premises, political pessimism, mandarin and messianic pretensions, and disavowed Judaism of the Frankfurt School have been well documented. It is not my intention to contribute to the heated debate surrounding these issues, except insofar as my overview necessarily confirms some readings and conflicts with others. The emphasis here is on eliciting a "structure of feeling," as it were, to call upon Raymond Williams' useful phrase, within which Adorno's thinking took shape.

In The Dialectical Imagination, Martin Jay describes the founding members of the Frankfurt School as "an extraordinary generation whose historical moment has now irrevocably passed" (xvii). Jay's elegiac tone reflects the members' "pessimism, resignation and distance from praxis" at the end of their lives (Douglas Kellner, "The Frankfurt School Revisited" 145); however, as Kellner's article implies, the passing of their
historical moment paradoxically confirms the continuing relevance of their philosophy of praxis to ours.

Their practical "failure" only signifies that "the general truths which critical theory believed in could not be 'verified or falsified by reference to the[ir] present order, simply because they [those truths] implied the possibility of a different one'" (Richard Brosio, The Frankfurt School 10). What might be described as a "utopian" moment in their thought continues to appeal to those engaged in critique aimed at political transformation. The "Schopenhauerian ... pessimism" (Kellner 150) which is often noted, and particularly in the School's leading figure, Max Horkheimer, is a complement to their fervent "hope that earthly horror does not possess the last word" (Jay, The Dialectical Imagination xii).

In other words, the credibility of critical theorists' desire to "... [maintain the] freedom to think things might be different" (Adorno, as quoted in Held, Introduction to Critical Theory 38) is dependent upon their stringent "effort to prevent [the theory's] instrumentalization by those very forces that [it seeks] to oppose" (Arato and Gebhardt The Essential Frankfurt School Reader xiv). The difficulty of "preferr[ing] no revolution at all to a betrayed one" (The Dialectical Imagination 4), however, is that "political impotence" could very easily be (and was) translated into "theoretical virtue" (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader xiv).

The notorious surrender of Marxism to the ploys of the culture industry, nevertheless, is confirmation of Marcuse's insight into the historical moment when theory "anticipates political practice ... but also upholds the objectives of liberation in the face of a failing practice" (as quoted in Held 36). Marcuse here shares with Horkheimer the conviction that in some instances the "age needs no added stimulus to action [Nazism comes to mind]" ("On the Concept of Philosophy" in Eclipse of Reason 184). While the elitism of Horkheimer's conviction that "truth
has sought refuge among small groups of admirable men" ("Traditional and Critical Theory" in Critical Theory: Selected Essays 237-8) might give one pause, it suggests that theory itself is "a political factor of utmost significance" (Marcuse, as quoted in Held 36).

Leszek Kolakowski contends to the contrary that "the strength of the Frankfurt School consisted in pure negation, and its dangerous ambiguity lay in the fact that it would not openly admit this fact, but frequently suggested the opposite" (395). I think Kolakowski underestimates the strength and subtlety of the School's theory of negation, but their refusal to render their vision of Utopia concrete owes something to "[Judaism's] injunction against graven images" (George Friedman, The Political Philosophy of the Frankfurt School 96).

Kellner rejects Jay's emphasis on the Jewish origins of the members of the Institute in favour of their interest in Marxism. While the Institute tends to minimize the importance of these origins, the elusive character of their utopian vision can be attributed, I think, to a desire to conjoin a utopian imagination with the exigencies of Marxist philosophy and with revolution in this world rather than with faith in the hereafter. They refuse to spell out the dimensions of the utopia they envisage because they believe that the principle of reification has cast its spell on the world and that constructing this utopia in the terms of the order it seeks to transcend would risk falsifying it (see Friedman 96).

Jay suggests that the School "[recognized] the legitimacy of ultimate thoughts without the daring to think them out loud" ("The Extraterritorial Life of Siegfried Kracauer" in Permanent Exiles 197). Rather than argue that the School clings to what they know to be illegitimate (in the guise of a kind of negative theology, perhaps), it seems important to perceive the apparent paradox of their position as both active and dialectical (like everything else they espouse). Adorno enjoins his readers "not to think of claims to the Absolute as certain and
yet, not to deduct anything from the appeal to the emphatic concept of truth" (as quoted in The Dialectical Imagination xii).

The enterprise of the School, precisely because it envisions "de- alienated man as a historical potentiality rather than an inherent reality" (Jay, "The Frankfurt School's Critique of Marxist Humanism" in Permanent Exiles 18-19. Italics mine), becomes a matter of "salvag[ing] relative truths from the "wreckage of false ultimates" (Horkheimer, "On the Concept of Philosophy" in Eclipse of Reason 183). It is for this reason that critics who accuse the School of a complacent "pure negation" and those who question the absence of "ontological fixations ... [which might] imbue [dialectical negation] with significance and direction" (Kracauer, as quoted in "The Extra-territorial..." 196) are both wrong.

As Marcuse explains, "the materialist concept of essence is a historical concept" (as quoted in Brosio 8) and its utopian possibilities can only be realized through "the determinate socio-historical negation of what exists" (as quoted in Brosio 41). The materialist interest in "tasks to be mastered at the moment" (Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics" 24) has a corresponding effect on Horkheimer's conception of "the attitude of today's martyrs": "no longer patience but action; their goal is no longer their own immortality in the after-life but the happiness of men who come after them and for whom they know how to die" ("Thoughts on Religion" in Critical Theory: Selected Essays 130). By transforming faith in utopia into responsibility for the ravages of history, the School combines materialism and metaphysics in its concept of negation. It is also thus that Horkheimer can asseverate, without risk of humanist or teleological embarrassment, "[t]he method of negation, the denunciation of everything that mutilates mankind and impedes its free development, rests on confidence in man" ("On the Concept..." in Eclipse of Reason 187).

Kellner believes that Jay's attempt "to take imagination as the center of critical theory is misleading" (144) because it reduces critical theory to the "play of ideas" (144). Kellner seems unnecessarily literal-
minded here as well as unobservant. It is impossible to separate, as I have been arguing, critical theory's interest in determinate negation from its emphasis on the imagination. I shall consider the relationship between Adorno and Benjamin in the context of the place of the aesthetic in cognition in Section III; at this stage of the argument it is probably adequate to note the pervasive conjunction of the dialectic with the poetic in the works of Marcuse and Horkheimer.

For them, philosophy that seeks to deny the claims of ideology cannot help but draw on the power of fantasy "because of [fantasy's] unique capacity to 'intuit' an object without its being present" (Marcuse, as quoted in Helmut Dubiel, Theory and Politics: Studies in the Development of Critical Theory 67). The utopian project of materialism, in other words, will succeed only in the hands of philosophers who are not afraid of being misunderstood because they speak a language which seeks to "[name] the 'things that are absent' by breaking the spell of things that are" (Brosio 10).

Despite their commitment to the concrete, therefore, critical theorists adumbrate a mode of cognition that is at once conceptual, material, and aesthetic. This "prismatic" (Friedman's word 152) version of truth (one that does not concede dominion to the language and reality of "facts" or to the systematic nature of thought) is premised on a "reconstruction of the concept of knowledge in the relative under a finite horizon, rather than [on] a sceptical critique of human limits in the light of an unattainable eternal truth" (Feenberg's phrasing 234).

I wish to address the implications of critical theory in the context of my stated interest in professing the object's political desire. This interest, therefore, will occasionally entail working against the grain of the texts of critical theory, insofar as they claim that "all organized or organizeable opposition [has] long since capitulated" (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader xiv). I hope, nevertheless, to demonstrate that readers' justified impatience with the complex, paradoxical, and
aphoristic formulations of the Frankfurt School has blinded them to the possibilities in its philosophy, precisely in terms of its commitment to revolution.

Kellner's critique also calls attention to Jay's retrospective stance which fails to grant due emphasis to the "earlier, more radical phase of the Institute's history" (132). Jay prefers to dwell on the growing resignation of its members, to the disadvantage of the Institute's own "spirit of criticism and relevance" (143). Kellner castigates Jay's "mandarin concern" (143) with intellectual history isolated from a consideration of the consequences and validity of ideas. Kellner is himself guilty of dismissing the aesthetic strain in the philosophy of the Frankfurt School (a point which I have already raised); regardless, his article rightly insists on the School's (troubled) Marxist heritage.

Carl Grünberg, the Institute's first director, asserts his allegiance to the doctrines of historical materialism in his inaugural address (Kellner 132-33). In his terms, the programme of interdisciplinary research to be undertaken by the Institute's members is committed to a critique of political economy with a view to reflecting and provoking transformation in the concrete, social, and historical world. Horkheimer, who became director soon after, also insists that the capitalist system is the target of critical theory because private property ensures that "the gigantic apparatus of human production must function in the service of a small group of exploiters" (as quoted in Kellner 134).

This commitment, in principle, to the goals of Marxism, however, becomes heavily qualified as time wears on, because conventional Marxism's "scientism, economism, mechanistic determinism, [and] dogmatic materialism" (Kellner 142) become anathema to the members of the Institute. Kolakowski's unsympathetic portrayal of the School, too, has its roots in what he perceives to be their failure to "[treat] Marxism ... as a norm to which fidelity must be maintained" (341). He concludes,
therefore, that the School is "not so much a continuation of Marxism in any direction, as an example of its dissolution and paralysis" (395). It is my contention that the Institute's astute reformulation of Marxist shibboleths makes the philosophy of dialectical materialism more rather than less viable.

Critical theory's indebtedness to Marx and Lukács (despite periodic quarrels with the latter) reveals itself in its willingness to adopt a meta-critical stance towards its own methodological presuppositions while retaining its commitment to revolution. Critical theory acknowledges Marx's indispensable contribution to be his complex sense of the inescapable relation between mental and manual labour. Consciousness, in Marx's terms, "can flatter itself as being independent of the social life process, though the forms of consciousness continue to belong to the complex of the division of labor and hence possess neither independent life nor history" (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 186). Because the vaunted independence of consciousness is an illusion, its representation of the world is not to be trusted either and can be counted on to align itself with the forces of reaction.

Marx's philosophy of praxis (action that is informed by a dialectical relation to theory), as should be obvious by now, is the outcome of a sustained intervention in the pretensions of Hegelian Reason. As Andrew Feenberg remarks, "Marx attempts to reconstruct the concept of reason so that capitalist alienation appears as reason's essential problem, a problem to be resolved through historical action" (14). Instead of the Hegelian emphasis on thought realizing itself, Marx argues for the equal importance of reality striving towards thought (Feenberg 42).

Marx opposes Hegel's attempt to construe "real" alienation as merely the phenomenal appearance of the fundamental alienation of thought which seeks to recognize itself in its objectifications. Hegel therefore makes reification "an eternal foundation of knowledge and experience"
(Feenberg's phrasing 83) rather than the historically contingent form in which reality constitutes itself as appearance. Also implicit here is a critique of Kant's tendency to posit the laws of formal rationality as a priori categories that "logically ... precede and organize all experience" (Trent Schroyer, *The Critique of Domination: The Origins and Development of Critical Theory* 106).

Lukács takes up where Marx leaves off to suggest that thought is "a form of reality, ... a moment in the total process" (as quoted in Feenberg 72). If, as Marx suggests, the economy is the determinant in the last instance, and even of the antinomies into which reason "resolves" itself, rationality itself can be shown to obey the laws of capitalism and thus cannot presume to "serve as the paradigm of explanation" (Feenberg 74). In this instance, as Kolakowski points out, Horkheimer accepts Lukács' view that "thought about society is itself a social fact, [and] theory inevitably a part of the process it describes" (353). Lukács' concept of totality includes, therefore, Antonio Gramsci's sense that political action and awareness of that action are aspects of a single phenomenon (see Kolakowski 233).

The problem, however, is that Lukács' vision of "totality" relies upon a concept of revolution predicated upon the dialectical union of subject and object. Since Marx insists that the realm of philosophy is precisely the realm of need and labour in which the proletariat moves (Feenberg 55), Lukács is able to realize the potential union between action and awareness in the figure of the collective subject, the proletariat. Lukács wishes to avoid turning the proletariat into the passive medium through which the cunning of reason in the guise of historical necessity realizes itself. He constitutes the proletariat, therefore, as the subject of revolution which "comprehends reality in the very act of transforming it" (Kolakowski's phrasing 271).

This conception of the proletariat is inseparable from a notion of the dialectical method as that which serves as "an active constituent"
(Kolakowski 269) of the reality it seeks to comprehend. The dialectic cannot be conceived outside of its visceral connection to the struggle of the proletariat, or outside of its desire to transcend the split between theory and practice. Dialectic, at least within the discourse of traditional Marxism, is "the self-knowledge of a social process by which the world is revolutionized..." (Kolakowski 271).

Lukács agrees with Marx that the proletariat's position within the productive process "forces it to an awareness of its situation and of the possibilities of action open to it" (Connerton 47). The proletariat "overcomes the horizon of reification" (Feenberg 160-1) which, in Lukács' terms, signifies the rule of the commodity. The proletariat discovers that the objective laws of necessity are "the products of human intentions" (Connerton 47) and effects, therefore, a revolutionary transformation in which "historical necessity appears ... as free action" (Kolakowski 271).

In dialectical terms, this conjunction of awareness and action is a possibility contained in "the difference between concept and reality" (Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State" in The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 109). Horkheimer's notion of the basis of revolutionary praxis echoes the critical (as opposed to the descriptive) character of Marx's concepts. The latter, as Connerton explains, "bear in themselves a particular imprint: the tension of a condition which they need to surpass" (47). When the proletariat comprehends its place in the structure of capitalist production, it has already begun to revolt. As Horkheimer would put it, "[t]hought itself is already a sign of resistance, the effort to keep oneself from being deceived any longer" ("The Authoritarian State" 116).

Yet, how is this demand that the "subject [be] commensurate with the reality which it knows" (Feenberg 116) to be met without turning the proletariat into the unconscious agent of necessity or without transforming historical laws into "hidden deities using human beings to
bring about their ends" (Gramsci, as quoted in Kolakowski 233)? Feenberg insists that Lukács wishes precisely to dispense with the notion of the proletariat as a "generalized romantic subjectivity which would still move within the framework of a reified world view as the incarnated freedom antinomially opposed to the 'pitiless necessity of the laws' of the system" (129).

Instead, as Feenberg goes on to claim, Lukács understands the freedom of the proletariat as a specific act of mediation (of determinate negation) of the given (129). The proletariat does not merely substitute itself for "those transcendental forces [it] was supposed to explain, dissolve and systematically replace" (Feenberg 129); in performing an act of dialectical import, it joins forces with intellectuals whose task is to "[confront] history with that possibility which is always concretely visible within it" (Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State" 106). The proletariat, in short, is that historical possibility.

The editors of The Essential Frankfurt School Reader describe thus the Hegelian process of mediation that Lukács refashions into the critique of political economy shattering the spell of reification:

Mediation is de-fetishization. The appearances of reality are first recognized as such, then detached from their immediate context and are finally related to the social whole, the vision of which is fragmented by reification. But this "relating" mediates only because the addressees of the theory—the proletariat—de-fetishize themselves in the practical recognition of themselves as commodities, as objects of the capitalist system. The addressees (i.e. practical mediation when already in motion) discover the full form of their self-consciousness ... in the theory. The theory (i.e. theoretical mediation) discovers its reality (and that of its categories) in its being so recognized by its addressees. (198)
This smooth reciprocity of theoretical and practical mediation which produces the proletariat as privileged subject of revolutionary transformation comes increasingly under the merciless scrutiny of the proponents of critical theory.

Critical theorists are first of all unconvinced by Lukács' protestations in favour of an imputed class consciousness which will balance the failings of the individual consciousnesses of empirical workers. Connerton points to the subjunctives which begin to litter Lukács' prose when he cannot account for "the ways in which the conditions and constraints of the capitalist process of production bec[o]me introjected by those who are subject to its power" (Connerton 51. Italics in original). The self, for critical theorists, becomes an increasingly threatened entity because of the complex network of relations into which it is integrated.

Given this state of affairs, they experience only aversion for "the emergence of a collective subject composed of the human fragments of [their] day" (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 200). Adorno, particularly, marshalls Lukács' own comment to criticize Benjamin and Brecht's refusal to realize that the proletariat "bear all the marks of the typical bourgeois character" except for "their interest in revolution" (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 216). The fears of the Frankfurt School were of course borne out in the success of Nazism, but my interest here is in their scepticism regarding the common purpose of intellectual and worker. As Horkheimer comments ruefully in "Traditional and Critical Theory," "even the situation of the proletariat is, in this society, no guarantee of correct knowledge" (213).

Horkheimer rejects the Viconian basis of Lukács' demand that the subject be substance. The proletariat becomes commensurate with the reality it knows because it no longer experiences alienation from the products of its labour—it knows what it has made. Critical theory, in Horkheimer's terms, will not accept that critique can ever become
identical with its object. As I suggested earlier, it is precisely the dialectical non-coincidence between concept and object, or the incommensurability of knowledge and reality that functions as the basis for determinate negation or as incitement to revolutionary praxis.

This recalcitrant insistence on the open-endedness of the dialectic has complex implications for the relationship between theory and practice and for the role of the intellectual in the struggle for social justice. As Horkheimer explains in "Traditional and Critical Theory," "the thinking subject is not the place where knowledge and object coincide, nor consequently the starting-point for attaining absolute knowledge" (211). Horkheimer argues that this illusion about the thinking subject is the product of bourgeois ideology, "for in it the limited freedom of the bourgeois individual puts on the illusory form of perfect freedom and autonomy" (211). In this sense, Lukács' desire to privilege the proletariat as the site of the potential dialectical unity of subject and object is in danger of reproducing both Hegel and the capitalist ideology which informs the latter's philosophical premises. It is no accident that Hegel's obeisance to the State finds its counterpart in Lukács' allegiance to the Party.

Interestingly, however, Horkheimer believes that his refusal to privilege the proletariat does not preclude "thinking [which] should in fact be a critical, promotive factor in the development of the masses" (213). What critical theory accounts for is "the ever present possibility of tension between the theoretician and the class which his [sic] thinking is to serve" (215). In other words, Horkheimer concedes the necessity of making the practice of theory "[in]separable from the struggle" (216), but reserves the right to challenge the "enemies" without and within.

Gramsci's vision of organic intellectuals is one that Horkheimer would perceive to be fraught with difficulty. While this caution might be interpreted as mere elitism, I think it draws attention to the fact that there is no necessary correspondence between awareness and action or
between victimization and desire for revolution. While the division between mental and manual labour is itself a product of capitalist ideology, it is a division that needs to be confronted in the difficult transition from capitalism to "communism." Horkheimer emphasizes the importance of reducing this necessary tension between the critical theorist's "insight and oppressed humanity in whose service he [sic] thinks" (221), but he also envisions a role for critical theory that is not confined to the dimensions of the proletarian struggle.

Horkheimer calls for "constructive thinking" that disdains the criteria of empirical verification in favour of the "obstinacy" (220) of fantasy. While the theorist's "existential judgment" "is conditioned by its conscious relation to the historical practice of society" (234), he [sic] must contend with the realization that in a society that deflates all pretensions to oppose prevailing modes of perception, the "universality" of his [sic] concerns are not recognized as such (218). Horkheimer's comment on the eve of the Second World War is particularly revealing of his weary sense of the necessity and futility of thought:

The entire situation in Europe is quite sad. Even the fear of war itself forms but a moment within a social development in which, in any case, all cultural values of any significance are perishing with an uncanny necessity. Those few to whom the truth has fled appear as ridiculous, dogmatic persons speaking a bombastic language, as empty, completely without foundation.... (as quoted in Dubiel xi)

The messianic overtones of this passage should not be overlooked, of course; however, it would be a mistake to read it merely as an assertion of theory's pedagogical relation to practice. In my view, it glosses a profound sentiment that Horkheimer articulates in his "The Latest Attack on Metaphysics": "[t]o know [within the discourse of positivism] is neither to believe nor to hope" (Critical Theory: Selected Essays 138). If knowledge is to "[coincide] with the struggle for certain real ways of
life" (Horkheimer, "Postscript" in Critical Theory: Selected Essays 245), that possibility is contained in the theorist's continued willingness to remain "outrawed but imperturbable" ("Traditional and Critical Theory" 241).

Horkheimer overturns theory's implied splendid isolation from and martyrdom to the insensibility of the masses when he writes:

One day we may learn that in the depths of their hearts, the masses, even in fascist countries, secretly knew the truth and disbelieved the lie, like catatonic patients who make known only at the end of their trance that nothing has escaped them. Therefore it may not be entirely senseless to continue speaking a language that is not easily understood. ("Art and Mass Culture" in Critical Theory: Selected Essays 290)

The vindication of theory, therefore, lies not in itself (Horkheimer writes that a "philosophy that thinks to find peace within itself, in any kind of truth whatsoever, has ... nothing to do with the critical theory" ("Postscript" 252)), but in the "masses" whose apparent gullibility will reveal itself as knowledge biding its time.

Rather than shift the onus to the emergence of the organic intellectual who will realize philosophy in the abolition of the proletariat, Horkheimer retains the tension between thought and action. This dialectical tension is productive because the theorist must alter "his" conceptions in relation to the historical practice of society. This process of continuous mediation does not permit a simple and accidental recognition on the part of theory of the reality of its categories; instead, theory is committed to a hazardous exchange between concept and object in which "there can be no corresponding concrete perception of [the essential kind of change at which critical theory aims] until it actually comes about" ("Traditional and Critical Theory" 220). Critical theory rejects, therefore, "the foolish wisdom of resignation" as well as the lure of "petty satiety" (Adorno, "Resignation" 168). It chooses to retain
"a firm grasp on possibility" without "objecti[fying] itself as utopia" (Adorno 168) or hoping to bind knowledge and reality in a "spurious harmony" (Adorno's phrasing in *Prisms* 32). It must be remembered that critical theory's commitment to what Adorno calls "open thinking" (168) is not a sop to the privilege of the concept but a tribute to the intractability and complex modalities of the object. I shall turn now to the problematic (yet promising) character of an interest in emancipation that is not tied to the apotheosis of privileged subjects.

The Frankfurt School's notion of critique is constituted, predictably enough, of an antinomial affirmation. In George Lichtheim's words, "they affirm [with Hegel] the cognoscibility of being [but insist] with Kant ... upon the non-identity of form and matter, subject and object of cognition" (*From Marx to Hegel* 205). They are careful to emphasize, however, that the exercise of reason "never aims simply at an increase of knowledge as such. Its goal is man's [sic] emancipation from slavery" (Horkheimer, "Postscript" 246).

It is this constitution of critique as a "radicalizing force" (Schroyer 83) that confirms the School's indebtedness to Hegel, one to which the title of Lichtheim's book bears witness. Horkheimer's vision of "constructive thinking" recalls the Hegelian method in which "each critical reconstruction ... breaks down the constraints of past forms of consciousness" (Schroyer 29). The function of critique is to demonstrate the "constitutive genesis of the existing in order to recognize the actual" (Schroyer 29). The utopian projections of the School, then, draw on this commitment to historical possibility, to the contours of change that can be traced in the very opacity of an alienating and apparently immutable economic necessity.

The process of cognition, at least as the Frankfurt School understands it, is inseparable from the critique of ideology. Indeed, critique becomes "the medium of a possible confrontation between claim and reality" (Connerton 45). Marx and Hegel become simultaneously
complementary and antagonistic figures—the "idealist" method grounds the "materialist" attempt to pierce the ideological veil of Hegelian Reason. The members of the School, along with Marx, introduce an awareness of the dynamism of concepts, that they exist in dialectical tension with the reality they describe. In this sense, the School can argue that "the demand to abandon the illusions about man's [sic] condition is the demand to abandon a condition which needs those illusions" (Connerton's phrasing 43).

Connerton charts a history of the concept of critique, pointing to its derivation from "crisis." The exercise of reason, therefore, has always in some sense been an intervention, a form of trouble-shooting, so to speak. Connerton notes the curious shift that the notion of critique undergoes during the Enlightenment when a "fundamental displacement of accent [occurs], from critique as method to critique as principle" (18). Critique is no longer merely a means that might serve discernible ends; instead, the interest shifts (in Kant, for example) to reflection on the conditions of knowing. Critique, in other words, becomes reflexive.

This turn has provocative consequences for the status of reason (an issue I shall address in a moment), but also explains the School's faith in "open thinking." The power of critique is irreducibly contingent and contextual, and its commitment to "a truth which has yet to be established" (Connerton 19) avoids "[grounding] the old antithesis between relativism and absolutism in the notion that truth and immutability [are] synonymous" (Jay, "The Frankfurt School's Critique of Karl Mannheim and the Sociology of Knowledge" in Permanent Exiles 69). Moreover, the contradiction of the existing can be premised in the intimations of an order that must be recognized as "nowhere in existence" (Marcuse, as quoted in Brosio 41).

Critique, in Marcuse's terms, must be more than mere crisis management that reinforces conformity to the existing order of things. The rational reconstruction of reality involves, therefore, a contrapuntal
interaction between two modes of critique. As Arato and Gebhardt explain, the transcendent critique of culture involves "an attack from an imaginary point of reference outside culture" (The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 187), while the immanent critique of culture "faces the danger of loving immersion in the object criticized" (188). Even though there is an unresolved contradiction between these modes of critique, they are equally necessary or, at any rate, unavoidable.

The School remains partial, I think, to the process of immanent criticism, in which "... empirical reality [is] confronted with its own logic, not with moral commandments imported from a transphenomenal Beyond or deduced from the 'vanity' of the subjective consciousness, the ego..." (Lichtheim 8-9). This repudiation of "false ultimates" stems from Horkheimer's conviction that "critical theory proceeds from the theorist's awareness of his own partiality. Thus theory is neither neutral nor objective" (Stanley Aronowitz, "Introduction" in Critical Theory: Selected Essays xiii-xiv).

The theorist negotiates the elusive terrain between "the ... enslavement to the concrete and [the search] for a teleology to give meaning to human existence" (Aronowitz xv). This slippery ground of theoretical endeavour ensures that knowledge remains "a representation which is a product [of particular men in a particular society, context, and moment of time] but [makes room for it to] become a productive force in turn" (Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics" 35). Implicit in Horkheimer's different conception of the relation between the particular and the universal is a dismantling of the dualism of bourgeois philosophy.

Horkheimer writes in "Authority and the Family" that bourgeois philosophy is unable to bridge the gap between self and world because it conceives of the individual "... as a purely intellectual essence, a being which must ... acknowledge [the world] as an eternal principle and perhaps as the expression of his [sic] own true being" (Critical Theory: Selected Essays 79). Consequently, the world assumes the "blind power" of a
"faceless economic necessity" (82) to which the individual submits. This submission, which reveals the powerlessness of the self, is justified, however, "by supposed insight into eternal matters of fact" (87). The first task of critical theory, therefore, is to distinguish between "the knowledge of facts" and "the acceptance of facts" (124).

The resistance of theory consists in its ability "to look behind the facts," to "distinguish the superficial from the essential without minimizing the importance of either" ("The Latest Attack on Metaphysics" 181). Here, once again, Horkheimer reveals the dialectical character of his thinking; that is, the elements of the process (in this case, the superficial and the essential) "determine each other continuously, so that in the total development neither of them is to be presented as an effective factor without giving the other its role" ("Materialism and Metaphysics" 28).

Horkheimer reinforces the importance of understanding the dialectic as antinomial here, in the course of making it possible to defend utopian thinking (the transcendence of facts) as the only form of critical apprehension which keeps its "eye unwaveringly on the facts" ("Traditional and Critical Theory" 191). Adorno’s work, too, bears witness to the insight that "appearances are dialectical; to reject all appearances is to fall completely under its [their?] sway, since truth is abandoned with the rubble without which it cannot appear" (Adorno, Prisms 84).

But what, in Horkheimer's terms, is the status of "facts?" What might be at stake in understanding appearances as dialectical? How does knowledge of facts serve critical rather than "affirmative" ends? Horkheimer wants, at the outset, to bring to the fore the social construction of reality. He argues, therefore, that

[t]he facts which our senses present to us are socially preformed in two ways: through the historical character of the object perceived and through the historical character of the perceiving organ. Both are not simply natural; they are
shaped by human activity, and yet the individual perceives himself [sic] as receptive and passive in the act of perception. ("Traditional and Critical Theory" 200)

In order to avoid conceiving of theoretical practice as "the independent knowledge of a fixed object" (Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics" 28), and to comprehend it as "a product of ever-changing reality" (28), Horkheimer establishes the links between the self-sufficiency of facts and the freedom of the economic subject in bourgeois society ("Traditional and Critical Theory" 197). He shows, in other words, that the givenness of facts corresponds to the self-determination of the subject because both unwittingly "exemplify the working of an incalculable social mechanism" (197).

The inescapability of brute fact has a double-edged quality. On the one hand, it enforces obedience to a world which appears as a self-contained reality in direct confrontation with the knowing subject (Horkheimer "Authority and the Family" 78). On the other hand, the "penetration" of the workings of this seemingly self-regulating mechanism exposes the "fact" that the world is "dependent on man and changeable at his [sic] will" (78). Moreover, this dependence on "man" has crucial implications for the relationship between knowledge and its object.

If "[e]very datum depends not on nature alone but also on the power man [sic] has over it" ("Postscript" 244), theoretical activity is obliged to explain how its failure to grasp the object is bound up with the power it exercises over the object. Horkheimer's sensitivity to the nexus of knowledge and power here paves the way for Adorno's interest in the object's resistance. What must be noted is that the fallibility of knowledge is no excuse for a modest abstinence from the desire to know and to act on that knowledge. The propensity for error and for self-interest does not destroy the potential for change; rather, it exists in tension with that potential and indeed, produces the hope of a better world. In
short, Horkheimer attempts to understand human agency as that which simultaneously produces and thwarts power.

In reconstituting the relationship between the intelligible and the sensible, Horkheimer's purpose is two-fold. He wishes to avoid privileging either the authority of observation or that of a priori thinking. The dualism of bourgeois philosophy perpetuates itself in the dichotomy between the "contentless concept and the unthought object" (Friedman's phrasing 116). In Kant's philosophy (I am relying on Feenberg 17 here), the categories of rationality provide the conditions for the concrete contents from which they have been abstracted and upon which the faculty of reason exercises itself. Comte reverses this process in order to discover the laws which govern social facts through the power of observation grounded in experience (Held 161-62).

Both options succeed in encouraging accommodation to the existing order because "facts" and "categories" assume the aspect of objective necessity. In other words, concepts grounded in observation and concepts grounded in the formal properties of rationality are equally incapable of accounting for the interplay between "the human and the extrahuman, the individual and the classifiable, the methodological and the substantive..." ("Materialism and Metaphysics" 29). This interplay, conditioned as it is by the historical character of the perceiver and the perceived, unremittingly exposes the conventional (bourgeois) and contingent character of inexorable laws.

For Horkheimer, then, critical theory has to deploy its complex sense of the contingency of knowledge to bolster the latter's productive force. If knowledge of facts cannot afford to be translated as acceptance of facts, critical theorists must work to discover whether and how they can declare with impunity that "[r]eason is a poor ally of reaction" (Horkheimer, "The Social Function of Philosophy" in Critical Theory: Selected Essays 271). Horkheimer's Eclipse of Reason attempts to unpack the contradictory process by which "the initially sharp opposition between
reason and authority is increasingly softened by the desire to ground authority in reason" ("Authority and the Family" 76). In the course of this analysis, Horkheimer ponders the distinction between critique as method and critique as principle which I raised earlier. The force of the distinction hinges on his critique of instrumental rationality as the disease of reason and his defence of philosophy as the discourse of reason capable of self-transcendence and reflexive critique. The essays in the volume also serve to illustrate the process of dialectical reversal I mentioned in the Introduction. Horkheimer's ruthless display of the limits of reason becomes the way to redeem its potential. His argument thrives on the irony that reason must become the instrument of its own eclipse.

I offer a detailed exposition of Eclipse of Reason because of Horkheimer's comment on its opening pages that "[i]t would be difficult to say which of the ideas originated in [Adorno's] mind and which in my own; our philosophy is one" (vii). Adorno's dedication of Minima Moralia to Horkheimer echoes this bond. Horkheimer's claim has, of course, been disputed on the grounds that his thinking is no match for Adorno's subtlety. I think, however, that the clarity and elegance of Horkheimer's prose does him a disservice in critical eyes accustomed to Adorno's paratactic (and prototactic) meditations. While it is true that Horkheimer does not attempt revolution at the level of both style and content in the manner of Adorno, his disquisitions reward the reader willing to accord him the same care and critical scrutiny that have hitherto been Adorno's due.

Horkheimer's project is an ambitious one, concerned with determining whether "the concept of rationality that underlies [his] contemporary industrial culture ... contain[s] certain defects that vitiate it essentially" (v). His inquiry is based on a distinction between subjective and objective reason which are respectively confined to the emphasis on means and ends. He attributes the crisis of reason to the
loss of the original concept of reason as "a principle inherent in reality" ("Means and Ends" 5). The ensuing split between subject and object meant the denial of the capacity for objective thinking and the turning over of reason to "the conflicting interests to which [the] world actually seems abandoned" ("Means and Ends" 9).

Even though Horkheimer rejects the objective delusion that reason can discover a fundamental structure of being from which a conception of human destination can be derived ("Means and Ends" 12), he cannot find it in himself to endorse the consequences of the Enlightenment. The grounding of authority in reason rather than faith produces a more humane but therefore more "pliable" truth which is "from the very beginning in danger of surrendering to the 'irrational'" ("Means and Ends" 13). The philosophes of the Enlightenment, in Horkheimer's view, find themselves in a paradoxical situation. They desire to provide truth with a rational foundation but succeed in liquidating the objective concept of reason itself ("Means and Ends" 16-18).

Reason no longer "recognizes itself in the nature of things" ("Means and Ends" 15); instead, its relativist character renders it eminently adaptable to prevailing reality. It is in this sense that Horkheimer characterizes the product of the Enlightenment as instrumental reason--it has abandoned autonomy in favour of "operational value" ("Means and Ends" 21). This criterion of efficacy contributes to reason's duplicitous character: "[it] furnishes ... the ideology for profit and reaction as well as the ideology for progress and revolution" ("Means and Ends" 25).

Horkheimer returns to his desire to blend the discourses of materialism and metaphysics when he defends the concepts of metaphysics for their basis in the "universally human" ("Means and Ends" 26) and lambasts the concepts of pragmatism which are "severed from their human content" ("Means and Ends" 26) and provide, therefore, no "guarantee against tyranny" ("Means and Ends" 28). When "calculability replaces truth" ("Means and Ends" 44), the philosophy of pragmatism becomes akin to
the process of reification which obscures the human bottom of the exchange of commodities. Pragmatism accepts the surface of things because reason has been reduced to a "mere dull apparatus for registering facts" ("Means and Ends" 55). Horkheimer wishes to release thought from the tyranny of facts and to restore to reason the "power to discover and assert new kinds of content" ("Means and Ends" 55).

Eclipse of Reason establishes that the rejection of objective reason as a principle inherent in reality recoils upon itself and, rather than reflecting the freedom of the subject, turns reason itself into an instrument, into a slave of an objective apparatus that is impervious to subjective scrutiny. The lectures in this volume demonstrate that thought must retain the right to determine, register, and contradict facts to avoid elevating a critical (scientific) method into a principle of truth. Several insights combine to reinforce Horkheimer's conviction that instrumental reason does not reconcile knowledge and reality; rather, it merely reinforces conformity to the existing order. Simultaneously, however, he does not advocate a return to objective reason because he is aware that the crisis of metaphysics was a consequence of its abstraction from the historical process which turned speculative reason into an apology for the harshness of social reality.

Let me elaborate, then, on the insights which produce his conviction and which address the question, once again, of the relationship between the superficial and the essential, the transcendence of fact that keeps its eye unwaveringly on the facts, the rubble of appearance without which truth cannot appear, and the knowledge of facts which precludes acceptance of facts. In the course of his discussion of the status of fact, Horkheimer posits a version of theory that preserves the human content of cognition without turning the transcendence of reality into "metaphysical nonsense" ("Conflicting Panaceas" 83).

Horkheimer views positivism as fundamentally flawed because its conception of the world as a world of facts and things reduces cognition
to statements about facts and fails to realize that this representation of
the world itself "presupposes the reification of life in general and of
perception in particular" ("Conflicting Panaceas" 81). In other words,
just as the instrumentalization of reason reveals its powerlessness, the
concept of fact is a product of a social system which views the objects of
experience as types of the commodity, of the abstract object of exchange.
Horkheimer rejects the very concept of fact because the latter
"presupposes social processes that thinking cannot accept as ultimates"
("Conflicting Panaceas" 82).

The attention to the surface of reality ensures that intelligence
becomes "the servant of the apparatus of production, rather than its
master" ("Conflicting Panaceas" 82). Horkheimer concurs here with Marx's
sense that the categories of rationality must be analysed in terms of
their basis in the capitalist system of production. This undermining of
the categories of rationality serves as a baleful reminder that
intellectuals derive their leisure from precisely the capitalist system of
domination that produces the split between mental and manual labour ("The
Revolt of Nature" 103).

Even though "intelligence" must concede that concepts cannot be
extricated from their process of production, and that philosophy is always
in danger of abstracting from, misrepresenting, and degrading the concrete
into "mere stuff to be dominated" ("The Revolt of Nature" 97), it has no
alternative but to engage in the ceaseless diagnosis of the dis-ease of
reason. Herein lies the vexed character of reason—it must put itself at
stake in order "to recognize the extent to which it is still unreasonable,
blind, the victim of unmastered forces" (Marcuse, "A Note on Dialectic" in
The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 450).

To my mind (I am not of course alone in this perception), the
crucial distinction between the critique of Enlightenment undertaken by
the School and that of post-modernism lies here, in their comprehension of
the status of reason. As I have already pointed out, the explosion
involved here is of the categories of rationality and not of reason tout court. If the latter were the case, the limits of Reason would be in danger of being misconstrued as a call to obscurantism. To use Marcuse's words, "... Reason, and Reason alone, contains its own corrective" (450).

Hegel's anticipation of Parsifal's message: "the hand that inflicts the wound is also the hand that heals it" (as quoted by Marcuse 450) assumes less hopeful dimensions in the thinking of Derrida. The old cloth that must be interminably undone contributes to the structure of deferral that inhabits his work so that "the whole system of predicates, history, ideology, practice etc. [is contained within] cautionary quotation marks" (Ann Worsdworth's phrasing 122).

The self-critique of reason, in Horkheimer's view, has consequences in that "man" "understand[s] ... the basic process by which he has created and is maintaining the antagonism [between self and world, cognition and its object] that is about to destroy him" ("On the Concept of Philosophy" 177). This comprehension becomes, therefore, the means by which the subject can simultaneously hold itself accountable and accomplish an act of "double-edged" ("On the Concept of Philosophy" 182) negation. The negation in question rejects the claims of ideology and "reality" even as it is tainted by the very reality it disdains.

The end of deconstruction is the beginning of critical theory because the latter is not content with noting the incommensurability of knowledge and reality or with exposing the vanity of epistemology. Horkheimer's concession to the finite and fallible nature of knowledge is a function of his interest in reading the text of the object's suffering, whether the object in question is nature or the martyrs of the concentration camps. The comprehension and acceptance of the limits of knowledge must not obscure the traces of the violence exercised in the name of rationality. It is, after all, the task of reason to realize its own reasonableness just as its self-critical proponents cannot afford the sentimental lapse Horkheimer describes with, yes, wisdom: "[t]hat we do
not know everything does not mean at all that what we do know is the nonessential and what we do not know the essential" ("Materialism and Metaphysics" 39).
SECTION II

"... an objectless inwardness": PHILOSOPHIES OF IDENTITY

In "The Revolt of Nature" Horkheimer asks that nature be "treat[ed] as a text ... that, if rightly read [by philosophy] will unfold a tale of infinite suffering" (Eclipse of Reason 126). I have already indicated Horkheimer's conviction that knowledge of the object must account for the power that the subject/concept wields over the object. It is this refusal to allow the concept to have the last word on the object in both discursive and material terms that Adorno shares and that he elevates into (appropriately enough) the substance of his philosophy. The subjugation of nature (as privileged signifier of the lowly status of the object) becomes, in Adorno's work, the informing (allegorical) principle of his monumental attempt to "give thought the density of experience" (Adorno, "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin" 240).

In challenging the autonomy of thought, Adorno's philosophical discourse effects a radical departure from the vanity of all forms of epistemology that collapse the distinction between knower and known in the complacent conviction that the authority of consciousness reflects the reality of being. The rest of this section is devoted to elucidating the salient features of Adorno's critique of philosophical discourse as the attempt to subsume the particular in the universal, the fact in the category, and the object in the subject.

The epigraph to Against Epistemology: A Metacritique: Studies in Husserl and the Phenomenological Antinomies reads: "A mortal must think mortal and not immortal thoughts" (3). This quotation from Epicharmus, Fragment 20, encapsulates the sustained materiality of Adorno's thinking even as it suggests his disdain, not unlike Nietzsche's, for a mode of philosophy that aspires to system or that fancies itself as the point of departure for all thinking. The transcendental subject of knowledge, whose forms and categories constitute thought's and the world's conditions of possibility, is the target of Adorno's attack. Adorno's familiar
critique of identity thinking entails a radical undermining of epistemology as both the practice and principle of thought.

Adorno's early study of Edmund Husserl foreshadows the development of the matter and method of the former's oeuvre. The work simultaneously discounts the claims of "substantive philosophy" (1) and seeks new grounds for discoursing about "things." Adorno adopts what he calls a "micrological procedure" (2) in his reading of Husserl, in which the latter's philosophy serves as "the occasion and not the point..." (1). This procedure can be viewed as an adumbration of the dialectical method that Adorno will develop at length in Negative Dialectics.

The phenomenological enterprise, for Adorno, serves as the model of prima philosophia, of the search for an irreducible first principle. As Adorno explains, the content of this first and final ground is not the issue; rather, what is at stake is "the very concept and legitimacy of such a foundation" (5). Even though Adorno uses Hegel against Husserl, his analysis serves to dismantle the claim of spirit to contain matter. In other words, Hegel's method holds valid even while his own claims for Geist are called into question. Adorno traces the legacy of German Idealism in Husserl, even though phenomenology, as its name indicates, styles itself as a philosophy of concretion.

Adorno subjects Husserl to an "immanent critique" (5). The procedure involves turning Husserl against himself or using the strength of Husserl's own premises against his conclusions. Adorno adopts this technique from Hegel who claimed that genuine refutation was not achieved "by ... defeating [the opponent] where he [sic] is not" (Hegel, as quoted by Adorno 5). Adorno's intention is to demonstrate the "ghostliness of all phenomenological concretion" (85); that is, Husserl's attempt to pierce the veil of conceptual reification through the intuitive glance that would reveal objects in their singularity confuses "the schema of order imposed on objects by human consciousness" with "the order of the objects themselves" (76).
Husserl's argument is riven with this contradiction because he attempts to render the first principle "unmediated and immediate" (7). Adorno shows that the intuitive glance which reveals the naked sense datum is itself mediated just as it mediates the object it re-presents. The materialist turn in phenomenology is ill-served by a "scientific" method which substitutes hypostatized fact for hypostatized essence" (105). Husserl rightly chafes against a conceptual veil that obscures the object; he errs when he fails to reflect critically on his own epistemological method and accords the latter's products the status of unmediated phenomena, of things in themselves.

The phenomenological reliance on irreducible first principles is an example of what Adorno calls the "identity hypothesis" (7) which seeks to ground all phenomena even as it proclaims its own groundlessness. Adorno rejects not only the foundationalist aspirations of thought but also its claim to completeness. Philosophy which has recourse to first principles must paradoxically "[divest] itself of any relation to things" (11) in order to function as the guarantor of their being. Moreover, such an epistemological procedure "confiscates what is unlike itself and makes it the same, its property" (9). The exposure of the logical contradiction of a prima philosophia that must abrogate its relation to things in order to function as their explanatory principle spills over here into a preliminary sensitivity to the violence of the concept which will permit nothing to escape its definitions. Identity thinking finds its locus in the knowing subject which functions as the a priori of the profession and pretensions of epistemology.

Adorno's indebtedness to Nietzsche is perhaps nowhere more evident than in this work which proceeds to excori ate the "sickness of spirit" (18) which debilitates the discourse of philosophers. The difference, however, is that, as Adorno explains, "Nietzsche undervalued what he saw through" (19). Adorno elaborates on this underestimation of the "honourable idolaters of concepts" (Nietzsche, as quoted by Adorno 19) on
two levels, one of which teases out the social bases of the victory of spirit over matter while the other harnesses Nietzsche's perception that "nothing real escaped [the] grasp [of concept-mummies] alive" (as quoted by Adorno 19) to a dialectical reconstitution of the relation between method (spirit/concept) and matter.

In the manner of Marx, therefore, Adorno turns the interrogation of philosophy into a critique of ideology. Identity thinking, in Adorno's terms, reflects a social situation in which mental labour is effectively split from manual labour. The boundlessness of spirit, its capacity to contain that which proceeds from it, manifests itself as the "fanatical intolerance" (13) of an epistemological procedure that transforms the particular into an abstract repetition of the universal rather than acknowledge precisely its non-identity. Adorno relates the power of method to the supremacy of the principle of exchange in capitalist relations that reduces the relation between subject and object to one of equivalence.

This is a familiar enough Marxist critique of reification, but it gains provocative dimensions when Adorno claims that the principle of reification corrodes the practice of epistemology itself. Adorno's vision of philosophers is a cruel one indeed; the discourse of the peddlers of the identity hypothesis, he writes, is

... the self-deafening roar ... of those who neither contribute to the real reproduction of life nor actually participate in its real mastery. As middlemen, they only commend and sell to the master his means of lordship, spirit objectified into method. (15)

However, this passage demonstrates the metaphysical character of Nietzsche's own damnation of philosophers for relying on concepts which evaporate reality. Adorno correctly emphasizes the fact that the sickness of spirit which afflicts philosophy "arises from real lordship" (18); that is, the subject can set itself up as better only because it is the victor
in the struggle with the object. The object, Adorno argues, thus becomes victim of the irrefutable logic of violence: "what survives has more right on its side than what perishes" (18). Adorno therefore confirms Horkheimer's sense of the essential dualism of bourgeois philosophy, a dualism that is inextricable from the subject's assertion of its identity and mastery.

Adorno is careful, however, not to oppose, as Nietzsche sometimes does, a logic of becoming to that of being. The hypostasis and intolerance of being is not to be overcome by a Dionysian lapse into the regenerative powers of the chaos of becoming—the object which merely confirms or reflects the unity and identity of the subject is just as much the latter's creation as the object that opposes its chaotic fury to the rational self-mastery of the subject. Despite his unfailing eye for the posturings of identity and the hubris of epistemology, therefore, Adorno never reneges on his conviction that "[c]riticizing epistemology also means ... retaining it" (27).

It seems important to point out (in however sketchy a fashion) the implications of the vigilance Adorno demands, paradoxically enough, of the philosopher, of precisely the "man" who "kill[s]" and "stuff[s]" what "he" pretends to revere (Nietzsche's words as quoted by Adorno 19). Adorno describes this vigilance as the ability to distinguish between the truth and untruth of epistemology:

Epistemology is true as long as it accounts for the impossibility of its own beginning and lets itself be driven at every stage by its inadequacy to the things themselves. It is, however, untrue in the pretension that success is at hand and that states of affairs would ever simply correspond to its constructions and aporetic concepts. (25)

The necessary distinction between concept and object is responsible, in a sense, for the "thought of identity" (32) that permeates their inevitable relation. Adorno demonstrates how the contingency and
unfamiliarity of the object is perceived as a threat to the self-mastery of the subject. The subject's intolerance of contradiction and dissension is translated into an attempt to overcome the object's negativity. Instead of drawing the subject out of its isolation and imprisonment, the object suffers the loss of its own non-identity and particularity and is subsumed in the familiarity of the concept.

The violent transformation of difference into identity reflects the inadequacy of an epistemological procedure that refuses to be surprised, and that seeks, instead, to explain the unknown by the known (32). An epistemology grounded in first principles cannot afford to acknowledge the irony that vitiates its claim to truth: a philosophy which comprehends everything thus comprehends nothing (35). Adorno's double-edged formulation is crucial because it illustrates not only the emptiness of concepts but their indispensability to the philosopher "[mindful] of the suffering that sedimented itself in [them]" (39).

Standing consciousness on its head, therefore, entails more than the classic materialist ploy of linking the products of rationality to the forces and relations of capitalist production. The "miscarriage" of concepts constitutes "a bit of unconscious transcription of history" (39); more to the point, however, the suffering produced by that miscarriage carries the promise of salvation in the moment of the concepts' ruin (39). Adorno describes this moment of ruin, with characteristic aplomb, as the moment in which the idea of philosophical critique is born. A dialectician to the last, Adorno celebrates the birth of thought at the very moment that it contemplates the dissolution of the concept (as well as of itself) in the recalcitrance of the object.

Husserl's interest in a philosophical discourse that would one day acquire the status of science provides the context for Against Epistemology. The "identity hypothesis" here is confined to Husserl's insistence on the unassailability of method independent of the mediation of actual instances of thinking or of the ensemble of historical and
social relations that constitute both self and world. Adorno demonstrates the manner in which Husserl's affirmation of the "things themselves" becomes, all too predictably, a ploy to detach the scientificity of method from its relation to contingency and materiality.

Husserl's very concern for the vitality of life that escapes the conceptual net is responsible for the impossible situation in which he finds himself. The search for the essence of phenomena which eludes the contexts of their appearance returns phenomenology to metaphysics in the form of scientism. The phenomenological epoché's refusal to account for the mediated nature of all entities (since precisely social relations are bracketed out) ensures that a reified reality masquerades as the thing itself while the failure to acknowledge what Adorno calls the "societal callouses" (47) of the spirit or of method reduces the object to the subject's measure.

Phenomenology, as a philosophy of concretion, serves as a target insofar as it fails to examine the adequacy of the concept or to elicit the object. In his studies of Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger, however, Adorno's emphasis shifts from a desire to discourse about "things" to a wicked assault on the radical inwardness of the existentialist subject which expresses itself in what Adorno calls a "jargon of authenticity." It should be noted, of course, that the attempt to undermine the interiority of subjectivity is a prelude or even a companion piece to the assertion of "the preponderance of the object."

Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic is interesting not so much for the points it scores off Kierkegaard, as for its demonstration of Adorno's mode of analysis which seeks to "[catch Kierkegaard] in the traps set by his [Kierkegaard's] own hand" (12). In some ways, immanent critique works more persuasively as (what else?) the critique of (subjective) immanence (eminence?) here because Adorno contends with Kierkegaard's intense awareness of the contradictions which destroy the credibility of his argument rather than attributing to him a kind of
philosophical or logical naïveté.

The fascination of Kierkegaard's text lies in its desire to escape the constraints of identity. Kierkegaard justifiably questions the absolutism of the Hegelian subject but offers self-sacrifice as the alternative. The "leap of faith" involves the rejection of the possibility of thought because reason must repent its claim to absoluteness (Robert Hullot-Kentor, "Foreword" xviii). Adorno's reading of Kierkegaard deserves mention because the critique of identity is readily enough confused with the sacrifice of subjectivity or the suicide of rationality.

Adorno attempts to discover the source of the melancholy which animates Kierkegaard's meditations on the self. The "objectless inwardness" (30) which characterizes subjectivity in the texts of Kierkegaard is a consequence of a dialectic that excludes the world altogether or that makes it function as the occasion for the subject's deeds or as resistance to the subject's retreat into interiority. In this scenario, the world of things is simply "the superior power of otherness" (29) that "throw[s] [the 'I'] back onto itself" (29). This self-induced isolation of subjectivity is, however, elevated into an ontological condition in which the subject gains substance at the expense of the world. The twists and turns of Kierkegaard's reasoning, however, do not end here. The radical inwardness Kierkegaard seeks issues in a mourning for the very world of things without the rejection of which inwardness would be impossible.

Adorno's complex interpretation reveals the manner in which the humility of self-sacrifice is contingent upon the prior usurpation of the world. The mystic, Adorno writes, "is judged not according to the measure of a reality that he fails, but according to the measure of his own inwardness" (30). In other words, Kierkegaard defuses precisely the sort of criticism Adorno directs at him by exempting himself from material definition (31). The problem remains, nevertheless, that the world as
well as history are not simply absent from the realm of subjective immanence but are also objects of the mystic's rage.

The dialectic of self is a "'making transparent'" (58) in Kierkegaard's terms, because interiority is conceived as a progressive spiritualization. As Adorno remarks, Kierkegaard's "dialectic swings between the negation of consciousness and its unchallenged authority" (107) since the freedom of the self exalts it above the fallenness of being but this very freedom must be surrendered in "a theology of sacrifice in which the individual must 'perish' to become 'himself'" (108). The conflict between self and world is resolved through the annihilation of both in the leap of faith that asserts the infinite immanence of spirit.

Adorno argues that the shrivelling of the historical dimension in Kierkegaard's ethic has a corresponding effect on its construction of self. The latter contracts into a singular abstraction of which "nothing more can be predicated" (75) and the longing for a presence that will require no embodiment obscures the obstinately determinate nature of the self in Kierkegaard. Adorno detects, in both Husserl and Kierkegaard, the curious inevitability with which the attempt to escape the spell of reification issues in a disregard for the contingent individual. The yearning for "lost immediacy" (39) implicit in the desire to escape "capitalism's privations" (39) becomes indistinguishable from a "shallow idealism" (40) born of bourgeois comfort.

In a sensitive analysis of the function of the intérieur in Kierkegaard's text, Adorno shows how the sheltering of self from the world is reflected in the window which separates Kierkegaard's apartment from the economic processes of production and precludes reflection on his own status as rentier. Kierkegaard's social status serves as an uncanny repetition of Adorno's claim that those who profess philosophy are no more than "middlemen" whose very distance from the actual reproduction of life or of mastery allows them to obscure the real source of their detachment
from the cares of the world.

The reliance on a private sphere is itself a function of bourgeois ideology which comfortably divides the world into "internal and external, spirit and nature, freedom and necessity" (40). Instead of attempting a critique of reification, Kierkegaard counsels retreat into a sphere which is itself the product of the reification (in the loose sense of alienation) he wants to resist. Adorno's analysis, in short, warns that self-sacrifice is a luxury born of bourgeois privilege. It must be remembered, nevertheless, that Adorno shares Kierkegaard's concern for the indispensability of subjectivity even as he rejects the way in which interiority serves to mystify rather than to resist relations of power. In a similar fashion, Adorno insists that Husserl's failure to restore vitality to things in no way damages the urgency and necessity of his desire to do so.

Adorno's supple sense of a subjectivity that "is historically formed and yet not reducible to historical determinations" (Schroyer, "Foreword" in The Jargon of Authenticity xii) accompanies his scathing, if humorous, denunciation of the deification of Dasein in the writings of Heidegger and like-minded existentialists. Adorno is simply impatient with gestures of autonomy or spontaneity that ignore the "objective context of unfreedom" (Schroyer xv). The Hegelian Aufhebung manifests itself in the figure of Dasein which, in Heidegger's terms, exceeds the opposition between fact and essence (Schroyer xvi). Adorno, as should be clear by now, is immediately suspicious of any entity that claims to produce historicity while remaining exempt from historical determination.

The Jargon of Authenticity was conceived, Adorno writes, as "a kind of propaedeutic" (xx) to Negative Dialectics. It reveals, therefore, a common interest in the disintegration of philosophical discourse into words that signal authenticity without containing it. In other words, neither the claims of authenticity nor the jargon which evokes it can be subject to rational critique because they are elevated above "the realm of
the actual, [the] conditioned, and [the] contestable" (11). It is this contempt for the "ontic" (20) that contributes to the reactionary nature of authenticity.

Adorno's bald statement that "Man is the ideology of dehumanization" (59) captures the jargon's clever attempt to divert attention from "men" and their struggle against "conditions which are made by [them] and which harden into opposition against them" (60). Since, as Adorno argues, the emphasis is on an ineradicable essence of Man, the critique of social conditions, like its object, is deemed all too shallow for being historically bound. As the category of authenticity must rely on the givenness of things, it becomes "a possibility that is prefixed to and foreordained for the subject, without the subject being able to do anything about it" (127).

Thus authenticity only confirms the powerlessness of the contingent individual who must "puff himself [sic] up into selfness" (163-64) in the face of a determining objectivity that denies "the absolute disposal of the individual over himself" (128). Moreover, if authenticity is prefixed to the subject, it can readily become indistinguishable from the prevailing social order which precedes and determines the individual. The jargon of authenticity fails to address the question of wholeness as an unquestioned good because it cannot afford to acknowledge that the brandishing of wholeness might only serve to "atomiz[e] ... those who are without power" (142) or those for whom reality is, precisely, heteronomous.

Adorno categorically rejects the "specious humanism" (Kellner, review of The Jargon of Authenticity 185) that the jargon endorses in creating an antidote to alienation. The solution it offers is no consolation for the wrongs of the world because it enables the "authentic ones" to cut themselves off from the travails of the ontic while "at the same time [they return] to the everyday world inwardly transformed" (Kellner 189).
The attempt to salvage subjectivity in the works of both Heidegger and Kierkegaard destroys the empirical content of that subjectivity beyond recall because pure identity, as Hegel well knew, is death. One has only to remember that Kierkegaard's insistence on radical inwardness concludes in a theology of sacrifice or that Heidegger's desire for the non-representable power of Being manifests itself as a relation to death as a mark of authenticity (see John Murphy, review of *The Jargon of Authenticity* 190-92) to concur with Hegel. The complicity of the philosophical discourse of German Idealism in the brutality to which men and women are subject, one needs no reminding, resides in its belief in "the lordship of spirit" (*Against Epistemology* 20) which prepared the way for fascism.

The dismantling of the claims of identity and of epistemology converges in the book Adorno wrote in collaboration with Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. The ambitious nature of the project has rendered its contentions questionable in that it proposes to offer a diagnosis of the malaise of Western civilization itself. The authors undertake, in a sense, to reduce historical processes to an "epic" struggle between "man" and nature.

The analysis of domination, therefore, remains unrelated to specific social relations or modes of production because the authors wish to trace the progress (or regress) of consciousness itself. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* 's provocations, nevertheless, cannot be ignored, and its value, then as now, resides in its attempt to come to terms with the legacy of the Enlightenment. The central concern of this work might be seen as the attempt to trace the process Weber called *Entzauberung* or demagicization; that is, "the elimination of all that is unpredictable, 'irrational,' qualitative, sensuous and mysterious from both theoretical explanation and the practical conduct of life" (*The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* 191). The Enlightenment did call for a "disenchanted universe" (Gay 145), but, as Gay argues, it is a mistake to "ridicule" the
philosophes of the Enlightenment as mere "system makers and shallow rationalists" (182). Gay makes the pertinent point that the philosophes' demand for the right to question everything is too easily confused with a belief in the omnipotence of reason (141). In fact, the philosophes' target was metaphysics, the mode of philosophy that wished to penetrate the essence of things, a kind of magical thinking in itself since it meddled in what was precisely unknowable. The disenchanted universe was therefore not one in which experience was reduced to "the hard, the measurable, the prosaic," but one which sought "the expansion of the natural" (148). Gay's "balanced" view of Enlightenment reason might itself be suspect, but his writing evinces a nuanced sensitivity to the impossible contradictions of the age which make it difficult to read the narrative of reason, as much as any other, in monolithic terms. The philosophes, in short, were themselves steering a treacherous course between reasoners who, like spiders, "[made] cobwebs out of their own substance" and experimenters who, like ants "only collect[ed] and use[d]" (Bacon, as quoted by Gay 311).

Despite its savage indictment of "civilization as rationalized irrationality" (Horkheimer, "The Revolt of Nature" 94), however, Dialectic of Enlightenment offers a useful corrective to those prophets of post-modernism who claim sole responsibility for the crisis of Reason. Adorno and Horkheimer, while acknowledging themselves "both patients and physicians" (Hiram Caton, review of Dialectic of Enlightenment 1308) of the disease of Enlightenment rationality, are not so sure that the disintegration of reason is cause for heady celebration.

The philosophes "agreed that whether man's relation to nature must be viewed as a collaboration or as a duel, that relation was intimate, inescapable, and exclusive" (Gay, The Science of Freedom 160). In analogous fashion, Dialectic of Enlightenment is founded on the insight that the "history of man's efforts to subjugate nature is also the history
of man's subjugation by man. The development of the concept of the ego reflects this twofold history" (Horkheimer, "The Revolt of Nature" 105). The authors wish to indicate that man's urge to dominate nature is also responsible for the birth of reason itself.

"[T]he first man's calculating contemplation of the world as prey" (Horkheimer, "On the Concept of Philosophy" 176) signifies not only the birth of reason and of the self, but also their dis-ease. The triumph of reason (the attempt to control the environment) produces the familiar split between subject and object:

on the one hand the self, the abstract ego emptied of all substance except its attempt to transform everything ... into means for its preservation, and on the other hand an empty nature degraded to mere material, mere stuff to be dominated, without any other purpose than that of this very domination.

(Horkheimer, "The Revolt of Nature" 97)

The authors reject what they call instrumental reason, that which "either eulogizes nature as pure vitality or disparages it as brute force" ("The Revolt of Nature" 126) in the interests of a reconciliation between man and nature. This reconciliation will also produce a notion of enlightenment "released from entanglement in blind domination" (Adorno and Horkheimer, as quoted in Held 148)

The authors' interest in the legacy of the Enlightenment is, on one level, a consequence of their experience of Nazism. They perceive the transformation of the liberating power of reason into a repressive regime as endemic to the constitution of Enlightenment rationality. The rise of fascism is represented in their work as the revenge of a nature that has not been subdued but merely repressed. If the history of reason is inseparable from an ethic of domination, the "pathogenesis of the Western rationalist tradition" (Held's phrase 89) can be described thus:

Beneath Europe's known and recognized history there exists another, subterranean history. It comprises the fate of the
human instincts and passions repressed and distorted by civilization. From the perspective of the fascist present—an era in which the hidden side of things comes to light—manifest history reveals itself in its connection with its dark subterranean side.... (Adorno and Horkheimer, as quoted in Held 89)

The dialectic of enlightenment, then, involves this very process by which reason continually collapses into repression. Reviewers note the fragmentary nature of the work as a reenactment of the history it traces; it seems pertinent, however, to note the manner in which the "history" of the collapse of reason reverts into a myth or tale of the prolonged oppression of external nature and the subsequent repression of inner nature.

Adorno and Horkheimer write that the formation of subjectivity is contingent upon the choice between the subjection of the self to nature and the subjection of nature to (and within) the self. The progress of the Enlightenment only confirms the process that began with Odysseus—nature becomes an inanimate object which "man" invests with significance or dominates at will. Odysseus, in the authors' eyes, seems already aware of Bacon's insight that one must obey nature in order to master "her."

As Connerton explains,

[Odysseus in the episode with the Sirens] wants to discover a formula for rendering to nature what is nature's, and yet betray it in the very process. He must find an arrangement by which he as a subject need not be subject to it. This he does by a double strategic act of force. One possibility he reserves for himself. He listens, but while bound impotently to the mast .... The other possibility he prescribes for his men .... They are able to survive because they are unable to hear .... Odysseus has found a stratagem for resisting the temptation while listening to it, and so is able to control
the power of nature: but only at the price of doing violence to his own inner nature, and of establishing social domination. He must forcibly restrain his instinctual drives ... and he must force obedience upon those who travel with him ... which in turn is only possible because he deludes them. (68-69)

The authors' unusual interpretation of this familiar episode is the basis for their use of Odysseus as the prototype, not only of "bourgeois renunciation" (Connerton 69), but of Western civilization which they characterize as the introjection of sacrifice. The duplicitous character of sacrifice is evident in Odysseus' act because he is simultaneously capable of self-surrender and self-preservation. In other words, the rational control of nature, or the exercise of instrumental reason, is bought at the price of the denial of desire for and the masking of the fear of precisely that which one seeks to control.

Paradoxically, myth already contains a moment of enlightenment, in that both are motivated by fear of the unknown and the desire to preserve the self. The difference, however, is that the mythic conception of the universe does not entail a radical separation between self and world, and includes a moment of wonder in the Angst that the human self experiences. The mimetic relation between self and world implicit in the ritual reenactment of natural forces is transformed, within the dialectic of enlightenment, into the relationship to a world of quantifiable and manipulable objects. It is this emphasis on utility and calculability that disenchants the universe and represses the instincts.

"Man imagines himself free from fear when there is no longer anything unknown" (Adorno and Horkheimer, as quoted in Held 154). The connection between this argument and Adorno's description of the lordship of spirit or of identity which manifests itself as rage against otherness is not difficult to make. Dialectic of Enlightenment draws startling conclusions from what might appear to be flimsy evidence. The transition
from the domination of nature to the domination of "men" seems hasty and ill-defined to critics like Connerton, while the mimetic relation between discursive concepts and instruments of technological mastery, they argue, seems overblown.

It is true that Adorno and Horkheimer seem less inclined to undertake specific analyses of historical situations; however, I think the importance of this (in many ways) aleatory work lies precisely in its paradigmatic status. The use of myth to destabilize reason makes the simple enough point that enlightenment is in danger of reverting to myth, that reason has lost, paradoxically, its self-consciousness in its new found slavery to the dictates of necessity. That the categories of reason are no less subject to historical revision than the "facts" of existence bears repeating, if only because, as Adorno and Horkheimer are well aware, the development of history has not changed the fact of domination.

Without deprecating the value of historically and socially differentiated analyses therefore, I want to assert that the recognition of the thread that links, as Adorno says, the slingshot to the bomb, has a simultaneously bracing and sobering effect. We dismiss, at our peril, the authors' searing sense that, in Habermas' words, "[t]he history of civilization arises ... from an act of violence which humans and nature undergo in the same measure" ("The Primal History of Subjectivity--Self-Affirmation Gone Wild" in Philosophical-Political Profiles 100).
SECTION III

"... the preponderance of the object": NEGATIVE DIALECTICS

The figure lurking in the interstices of my discussion of Adorno's oeuvre thus far has, of course, been that of Hegel. Adorno's challenge to the legacy of German Idealism draws its inspiration from the dialectical principle that matter and method are inseparable; that is, as Adorno demonstrates in his analyses, the philosophies of identity dissolve into the very antinomies they seek to resolve. The philosophy of Hegel is, of course, not exempt from the charge that it posits an identity between object and concept. The problems with Hegelian logic may be identified again briefly as follows.

Hegel presupposes an identity between "the contentless concept and the unthought object" (Friedman's phrasing 116) even though he must begin with an acknowledgement of the empirical difference between concept and object. The task of philosophy, in Hegel's terms, is precisely to transcend this empirical difference in the speculative unity of thought and thing. Consciousness, one remembers, produces or renders an account of the world through a process of self-reflection. This explains the circularity of the Hegelian dialectic since the mind becomes the locus of a reconciliation between thought and thing where the object is brought to the level of the concept (see Dubiel 141-42).

The problem for proponents of materialism is that Hegel presupposes the moment of identity without seeking a historical resolution of the problem of alienation. Hegelian Reason becomes "affirmative, even before reality itself is affirmed as rational.... [t]he Hegelian solution seems a purely private assertion, a personal peace treaty between the philosopher and an inhuman world" (Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory" 204). While concurring with this estimate of the reactionary character of Hegelian Reason, Helmut Dubiel presents a significant complication in the attempt to comprehend the actual workings of Hegelian logic. Dubiel writes,

[t]he Hegelian logic is founded on the notion that in the act
of thinking every object of knowledge does not remain formally identical with itself but, rather, because of its immanent "contradictory nature," attempts to go beyond itself and thereby transforms its identity and boundaries. Hence a form of knowledge that did no more than apply the static potential of formal logical categories cannot adequately grasp the object's self-movement. This is why knowledge itself must be much more like a process; within this process, particular judgements are valid only as provisional phases through which ... knowledge proceeds. The criterion of "truth" is no longer the adequate correspondence of a particular judgement to a determined sphere of objects. (141-42)

The immanently contradictory nature of the object of knowledge, however, should apply equally to the thinking subject. Hegel neglects this possibility, or even actively obscures it, so that the subject's experience of contradiction is only a momentary stumbling block in its process of self-recognition. The subject comes into its own when, as I have suggested, it recognizes the other as itself.

Adorno, I would argue, deploys this self-contradiction in Hegel's text in the interests of the object of knowledge. Not only does he accord the moment of contradiction or of negation "primary" status, he manipulates the "impenetrable resistance of matter" to reconstitute the object of knowledge ("matter"), not as "the manifestation of 'spirit,'" but rather [as] its essential limit" (Marcuse's phrasing, as quoted in Feenberg 251).

Adorno, therefore, transforms what might be perceived as an internal inadequacy in Hegel's reasoning into its enduring strength. Adorno takes Hegel's interest in the self-movement of the object seriously, as he does Hegel's contention that the most important principle of the dialectic is "'to surrender to the life of the object,' to express and represent the 'coming-into-being' of reality itself [since] 'what the historical object
has been ... what it is becoming, and what it is not' ... all contribute to its character" (Held, quoting Hegel 229).

If the principle of contradiction is the motive force of the dialectic, the very instability of its two poles can prevent, as Marcuse remarks, "... historical categories [from becoming] abstracted into rigid one-sidedness" (as quoted in Held 228), while their inescapable relation to the objects whose "coming-into-being" they trace ensures that categories are necessarily returned "... to their concrete, living foundations" (228). In other words, categories do not contain or subsume "actual existence" (Marcuse's phrase, as quoted in Held 228); rather, their inevitable response to the dynamism of experience ensures that subject and object remain mutually determined and determining.

Interestingly, as I have already begun to suggest, Adorno too wishes to rescue Hegel from himself. His reading of Hegel reinforces Marcuse's sensitivity to the subversive implications of dialectical reasoning. The value of Hegelian philosophy, for Adorno, lies in the destruction of its system in the very instant that one salvages its method. Adorno explains this curious desire to defend Hegel who, "to all appearances [is] anything but a critic of idealism," in Kierkegaard. Construction of the Aesthetic:

... Hegel, the most extreme exponent of the idea of totality ..., developed a dialectical process that employed the claim to totality so dynamically that particular phenomena never result from the systematic subordinating concept; instead the system ... is to be synonymous with the quintessence of fulfilled actuality. Kierkegaard tirelessly ridiculed Hegel for deferring every statement that would be binding for real existence until some imaginary completion of the system.... [However, it is] through such deferment of the whole, [that] the particular present ... gains a concrete fullness.... Similarly, ... Marx ultimately subordinated all his thought to the category of exchange-value, of the commodity. Indeed,
even this category, as the quintessence of the phenomena of capitalist society, maintains allegiance to the concept of totality. However, it shifts the emphasis of explanation from the side of consciousness to that of the "material" in such a fashion that the unity of the "idea" of capitalist society is destroyed by contents that do not arise continuously from any idea because they place the reality of the idea itself in question. (106-107)

The implications of the new "emphasis of explanation" constitute the premises of Negative Dialectics and enable Adorno to constitute a different mode of philosophical critique.

Hegel's philosophy can be understood initially as an attempt to repudiate Kant's notion of the relation between discursive reason and objective reality. (The ensuing discussion draws on Sang-Ki Kim's review of Adorno's Drei Studien zu Hegel in New German Critique 4 (Winter 1975): 168-178. I have been unable to acquire Adorno's text in translation). For Kant, the thing in itself (Ding an Sich) is unknowable and therefore human reason is dependent on the mode of givenness of objects; that is, on how they appear through the senses. This split between discursive reason and objective reality signifies human finitude for Kant since knowledge begins and ends in experience.

For Hegel, however, Kant empties discursive reason, or the forms and categories through which reality is apprehended, of their content because, as I indicated earlier, the a priori status of these categories necessitates precisely their abstraction from empirical content. The unity of self-consciousness that Kant posits, therefore, is a "vacuous" one in Hegel's terms, because it reproduces the split between form and content, thing and appearance.

It is this split that Hegel resolves in the primordial unity of being and self-reflection. Hegel conceives of reflection, as I have already explained, not as a mere process of cognition, but as the movement
of substantiality itself. Adorno identifies this move on Hegel's part as a simultaneous repudiation and preservation of Kant's transcendental subject because it rejects the powerlessness of the knower in the face of the unknowable thing in itself while simultaneously rendering the subject more powerful than ever in positing, a priori, the unity of reflection and reality.

Adorno chooses to concentrate on the process of dialectical mediation between the extremes of form and content, nature and spirit, theory and praxis, freedom and necessity, thing in itself and phenomena in order to avoid reading Hegel's philosophy in purely "affirmative" terms, as an ideology that reinforces the irrationality of social relations in the process of protecting the rationality of the Absolute Subject. This emphasis on the process of mediation elicits the "real" import of Hegel's critical reflections:

[i]n Hegel's dialectic, those poles separated into opposition by Kant ... become completely penetrated by [dialectical] reflection in such a manner that none of these determinations remains standing as an ultimate category .... Each [determination] needs, in order to be thought and to be, precisely that other moment that in Kant is opposed to it. Therefore for Hegel mediation never means as it is made out to be in the most disastrous misunderstanding since Kierkegaard, a compromise ... between extremes. Rather, mediation occurs through the extremes which exist throughout, within itself.... (Adorno, as quoted in Kim 172)

In contrast to Husserl's subject which must divest itself of its relation to things in order to serve as their ground, Hegel's dialectics turns itself into "the unwavering struggle of the critical consciousness of reason with the critical experience of objects" (Kim 172). Because Hegel's spirit encompasses both being and thinking, "material production and social praxis are no longer merely subjective labor which can be
thought apart from [their] ... determinate objects which exist in concrete reality" (Kim 173).

In other words, critical consciousness becomes the process by which the "immediate givenness" (Kim's phrase 173) of objects is negated. It becomes more than the dull register of facts of which Horkheimer speaks, the servant to the apparatus of capitalist production. The "societal callouses" of spirit become its very condition of possibility, in the instant that they preclude the hypostatization of either fact or essence. As Dewey, the philosopher of pragmatism knew, to determine what is given is the most pressing problem even of analyses such as his, most willing to surrender to the life of the object (see The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 376).

How, therefore, is consciousness to be attuned to the vitality of the object? Despite Adorno's defence of Hegel, the self-cognition of the object is difficult to distinguish from the movement Dubiel describes in which the object is brought to the level of the concept. Perhaps a different approach to the issue is possible if the reciprocity of subject and object is understood, in Gillian Rose's explanation, as a situation in which "the subject is part of the object to be apprehended, but that the subject does not construct that object" (The Melancholy Science 57). Fair enough; but, as Rose herself admits, the object, in the sense of material reality or social processes, must then be seen to contain as well as condition our experience of it (61).

I think, however, that Adorno wishes to retain the moment of non-identity between concept and object to avoid granting priority to either and to exploit it is an accurate reflection of society as an antagonistic rather than a harmonious totality. This non-identity nevertheless enables his antinomic endorsement of totality as a critical rather than affirmative category. In these terms, the vantage point of totality serves to throw the contradictions of capitalism and of humanism into sharp relief; simultaneously, totality remains a "utopian" concept which
vanishes when besieged (see "Adorno and Kracauer: Notes on a Troubled Friendship" in Permanent Exiles 226) and which, when spelt out, bears a remarkable resemblance to Hegel's alarming claim that the real is the rational. Adorno explicates this vanishing concept of utopia in "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin" when he writes that faith in the contours of possibility which will become visible in the moment of reconciliation only "reveals the chasm separating that day [of reconciliation] and life as it is" (241).

Before broaching the status of the object in Negative Dialectics, I would like to consider Rose's gloss on the "concrete" in Adorno's texts. I offer this gloss as a prelude to using Adorno's notion as a critical lever to determine (in Chapters IV and V) the political consequences of Spivak's and Said's reconstitution of the (feminine) object of the discourse of Empire. Rose points out that Adorno conflates the philosophical and sociological connotations of the "concrete." Adorno, of course, argues consistently in his texts for their mutual implication because knowledge, like reality, is socially produced.

Rose distinguishes four senses of the concrete in Adorno's writings (60-62). The concrete refers to the individual as the point of departure for all thinking as well as the sum of all its [the individual's] determinations. In Althusser's terms, this sense of the concrete would refer to the individual as subject of and subject to relations of production. The concrete is also an attribute of the object; that is, it is a social fact rather than a mental construct.

Another connotation of the concrete is borrowed from Benjamin and contains two aspects. The concrete is whatever is irreducibly material, that which resists assimilation to the products of consciousness or that escapes the conceptual net. It is also that which inheres in the name which magically illumines or evokes the thing. Benjamin has in mind here an Adamic correspondence between word and thing. The name does not define the object; rather, it indicates that the object is "not-otherwise" (see
Adorno is critical of this messianic strain in Benjamin's thinking, one which he aligns with the surrealist attempt to produce, as it were, objects out of a hat, set adrift from their anchoring in social reality. Adorno sees this desire to rescue the immediacy of objects as resignation to, rather than liberation from, reification. Reality is never simply there—it is irreducibly mediated. Finally, the realization of the concrete will occur, in Adorno's terms, only when the concept becomes identical with its object. This is not to be construed as a Hegelian appeal to the postulate of rational identity but, once again, as a desire to produce in discourse the singularity and, therefore, heteronomy of the object.

At this stage, I want to make a somewhat unorthodox use of "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin" to reconstruct Adorno's reflections on the status of the object. This touching and accurate tribute, in its very respect for the elusiveness of its subject, is paradoxically much more revealing about Adorno himself. With Rose's gloss providing the necessary backdrop, then, I offer the following tentative remarks on the desire that contributes to the luminous quality of Adorno's own ruminations.

Perhaps it is best to begin with the moment of divergence between Adorno's and Benjamin's thinking. Adorno states that Benjamin "transformed himself into a supreme instrument of knowledge on which the latter had left its mark" (229). While Adorno's own style reflects this attempt to battle the subjectivism of philosophy, he is less inclined to dispense with the subjective dimension itself. This aspect of Benjamin's philosophy, for Adorno, "is no less a source of terror than a promise of happiness" (235) because its "inhumanity against the deception of 'the universally human'" (236) rightly inveighs against the jargon of authenticity which compromises bourgeois ideology; however, Benjamin also succeeds in exploding the potential autonomy of the particular, contingent, or empirical individual in whose name his diatribe against Man.
is performed.

Yet, Benjamin's compulsion to "break the bonds of a logic which covers over the particular with the universal or merely abstracts the universal from the particular" (230) forms the guiding principle of Adorno's own thought. Philosophy, in Adorno's terms, needs to divest itself of the urge to define, to classify, and to abstract; in short, it is no longer to be rendered synonymous with speculation. The interest in the material which might throw the reality of the idea into doubt is linked to the irreducibly historical dimension of thought and experience.

In a manner analogous to Marcuse who conceives of essence as a historical concept (see Section I), Adorno appreciates the sleight-of-hand by which Benjamin refuses to use historical objects as mere illustrations of concepts. Instead, the uniqueness of things demonstrates the historical character of ideas themselves while serving as poignant reminders of a reality that is always in eclipse. Benjamin's gaze, therefore, does not elicit the substance of a thing; instead, his loving attention to the object intertwines its substance with its historical fate. The substance of things, then, is precisely that which eludes, in a nice touch, the ephemera of concepts.

This fidelity to the object produces the fragmentary quality of Benjamin's thinking which, like Adorno's, refuses to submit to the exigencies of system. Benjamin's interest in a scarred and fractured substantiability is reminiscent of Adorno's micrological procedure. Adorno and Benjamin share a "methodological hostility to systems" (John Fekete's phrasing in "Benjamin's Ambivalence" 193) which they express as a defence of the particular. The object's challenge to the dominion of conceptuality is represented stylistically in the form of fragments, aphorisms, and essays. As Fekete explains, "[t]he aphoristic fragment sets its own horizon. It does not develop an epistemology of discontinuity. As a way of seeing the world, the aphorism both implies a greater whole and yet is complete as a fragment" (193).
Adorno is careful to indicate, however, that Benjamin's talent did not lie in an unprecedented access to the immediacy of objects, a rare ability to intuit their presence. Instead, he characterises Benjamin's fragments as extraordinary attempts to surrender to their object while simultaneously asserting the incommensurability of thought and thing. Benjamin's singularity, then, lies in his manner of seeing which renders the familiar strange. More to the point, in pressing close to its object, Benjamin's thought seeks to transform itself so that the stringency of his thinking is matched only by the density of the experience it contains and communicates (240).

In a classic antinomial formulation, Adorno describes Benjamin's writing as the desire to invest conceptuality with that which has hitherto been denied it. Lest this desire be misconstrued as one which turns the philosopher into a creature who is privy to manifestations of a most theological sort, Adorno represents the task of philosophy as an "impossible possibility" (241), as the elucidation of the possible reconciliation between concept and object but possessing, as the only means of such elucidation, the very concepts which render that "radical reduction" of distance (240) impossible.

It must be asked wherein the force and application of this projected reconciliation between concept and object might lie. After all, as Habermas observes, "[t]hat we can never describe concrete objects completely in explicit discourse ... [or that] [i]n making a statement about a particular ..., we always apprehend it in view of a universal determination" "is a trivial insight" ("The Primal History of Subjectivity ..." 105).

I think the answer might be sought initially in an as yet inadequately highlighted aspect of objectivity. Habermas suggests that the primacy of the object must also denote "the coercive character of a world ... that ... weighs upon subjects" ("The Primal History..." 106). Adorno interprets the process of self-reflection, therefore, as an attempt
to "[ward] off suffering" (Habermas, "The Primal History" 106). Philosophy is "inherent[ly] fallible" (106) because it cannot escape the objective context in which it finds its place; however, the power of reflection interrupts the course of necessity in its recognition of contingency. Adorno wants to reconstitute epistemology as "a form of theoretical resistance" (J.A. Bradley, review of Negative Dialectics 368) to the separation of the speculative and substantive realms, and to discover how philosophy, "itself a historical determination, [can] break out of ... the immanent context of history" (Bradley 368). The rejection of the purely speculative dimension of thought entails, in short, "not mere contemplation but praxis" (Adorno, Prisms 150).

Adorno remains true to his desire to produce the type of thinking that resists paraphrase (Adorno 11). It is with due trepidation, therefore, that I proceed. Negative Dialectics abounds in paradoxical (Adorno thought this a weak word to explain his technique) formulations which enact the "impossible possibility" of a philosophical method that "substitute[s] ... for the paramounty of the supra-ordinated concept ... the idea of what would be outside the sway of such unity" (xx). A philosophy that might serve "authentic concretion" (xix) cannot be articulated without addressing the radical separation of subject and object which epistemology takes for granted.

"The fallacy of constitutive subjectivity" (xx) has produced a state of affairs in which the subject, once "radically parted from the object, ... reduces it to its own measure; the subject swallows the object, forgetting how much it is an object itself" (Adorno, "Subject and Object" in The Essential Frankfurt School Reader 499). The transcendental subject, as I have indicated, is self-grounding and, as such, fails to recognize itself as the very form of objectivity. In other words, in claiming to engender the world, the transcendental subject can "brag of [its] captivity as freedom" ("Subject and Object" 504) because, as always, ideology is at pains to conceal that consciousness is determined rather
than determining.

This need to acknowledge that "Man is a result, not an eidos" ("Subject and Object" 511) cannot, however, afford to ignore the fact that "[t]he antithesis of universal and particular ... is both necessary and deceptive. Neither one exists without the other; the particular only as defined and thus universal; the universal as the definition of something particular, and thus itself particular. Both of them are and are not" ("Subject and Object" 510). Adorno, therefore, does not wish to reverse the relation of constitutive primacy; instead, he seeks a mode of cognition in which the subject would function as "the object's agent, not its constituent" ("Subject and Object" 506).

This mode would involve reading the particular "not in the light of the universal, but rather in the light of the very contradiction between universal and particular" (Jameson, Late Marxism: Adorno, or, the Persistence of the Dialectic 32). Adorno conceives of a philosophy whose very proximity to its object ironically confirms its distance from that object. Negative dialectics is born in the intolerable tension between these two positions.

The claim to constitutive subjectivity is responsible for "the sense of identity of a mind that repressively shapes its Other in its own image" (Adorno "Subject and Object" 499) and thus reveals the reality of reification. Adorno wants to emphasize the historical truth contained in this separation of subject from object, that the object has continually receded from consciousness because the subject's claim to supremacy over the object ironically "defrauds" it of the object ("Subject and Object" 507). The subject, in this scenario, casts a spell over the object instead of "entrust[ing] itself to its own experience" ("Subject and Object" 506). Negative Dialectics, it might be said, seeks to "[rend] the veil [the subject] is weaving around the object" ("Subject and Object" 506).

The opening pages of Negative Dialectics describe Adorno's project
as one which "use[s] the strength of the subject to break through the fallacy of constitutive subjectivity" (xx). This declaration sets the pace for the vertiginous effect of a dialectical method which has and seeks no alternative to using philosophical concepts to "[cope] with all that is [by definition] heterogeneous to those concepts" (4). Critics of Adorno can hardly be blamed, I suppose, for considering Negative Dialectics the epitome of all attempts to paint (write) oneself into a corner; in my estimation, however, Adorno's virtually comprehensive sense of the difficulty of his task in no way vitiates either its necessity or his conviction that it is undertaken for the sake of the possible.

Adorno admits that the continued currency of Hegelian dialectics needs defending, and he proceeds to offer this defence by getting rid of the dialectic's affirmative traits. The anachronistic character of a dialectical method which posits the negation of negation must be asserted without, however, denying the value of contending with the contradictions that Hegel's failure brought to light. How, then, does Adorno propose to represent the moment in which "philosophy is obliged ruthlessly to criticize itself[?]" (3).

Adorno begins a thoroughgoing analysis of the logic of identity in the process of reconstituting the dialectical method. He observes that dialectics is haunted by the realization that "objects do not go into their concepts without leaving a remainder" (5) and that the relation between knowledge and its object can no longer conform to a norm of adequation. Adorno redefines the principle of contradiction as the mute reflection of the "untruth of identity, [of] the fact that the concept does not exhaust the thing conceived" (5). Because Hegelian dialectics operates according to a principle of unity, it necessarily renders the object "divergent, dissonant, [and] negative" (5) till the latter is forced to reflect the unity and identity of the subject.

The project of Negative Dialectics is radical because the logic of identity is the failure not only of Hegelian dialectics, but of thought
itself. Adorno's philosophy relies on a reversal which discerns the irrationality of reason (Buck-Morss 7). This is a complex position which implicates the categories of rationality in the antinomical social reality to which they bear witness. Negative dialectics, in this context, is thought in which thinking itself, in equal measure to the contents of thought, is under scrutiny (see also Marxism and Form 45).

The irreconcilability of concepts and reality enables one to penetrate the reified appearance of reality while simultaneously questioning the adequacy of concepts which capture that reality. The real can never coincide with the rational in thought till an objective reconciliation of social contradictions can be foreseen. The principle of non-identity reveals itself in the process of a thinking which enacts what Adorno calls a "logic of "disintegration;" that is, the micrological procedure Adorno uses in his critique of philosophies of identity is reproduced in Negative Dialectics to make the categories of reason self-destruct (see Buck-Morss 63-64). Only this practice of immanent criticism would ensure that philosophy became the enemy rather than the ally of the course of history.

"To think," Adorno says uncompromisingly, "is to identify" (5). The difference between subject and object, particular and universal, then, has hitherto been dictated by the universal so that unity is conceived as the measure of heterogeneity (5). Adorno seeks to destroy conceptuality as we know it in the interests of what he calls non-identity, the "insight into the constitutive character of the nonconceptual in the concept" (12).

What might the consequences of such an insight be for the practice of epistemology? What would a substantive philosophy look like? Adorno calls for a philosophy which "would truly give itself" to the diversity of objects which impinge upon its consciousness "rather than use them as a mirror in which to reread itself, mistaking its own image for concretion" (13). The respect for objects would coalesce with a concession to the finite and incomplete character of knowledge. Adorno's aversion to
systems becomes explicit here because, to his mind, categories, systems, and theorems only attest to his conviction that "[n]o object is wholly known" (14) and that a philosophy that is incapable of error is also incapable of truth.

This desire to surrender to the life of the object must nevertheless contend with the concept, "the organon of thinking, and yet the wall between thinking and the thought" (15). In one of his many succinct, yet opaque, characterisations of the principle and practice of negative dialectics, Adorno declares that philosophy "must strive, by way of the concept, to transcend the concept" (15). Why does Adorno cling to the concept, to what he tirelessly ridicules as the nemesis of philosophical discourse?

His statement serves, to my mind, as a prelude to his desire to retain a speculative moment within thought. The danger of thought's pressing itself close to the object is that it might mistake ideology for reality. The primacy of the object might reinforce the division between subject and object because one would be deemed wholly abstract and the other wholly concrete. If the object is conceived as "pure material" (91), it becomes a "dead thing" (91) and loses its power of predication. Materialist thinking would then dwindle into a metaphysics of matter whose informing principle would be commodity exchange. After all, reification is precisely the consequence of forgetting the labour concealed in the commodity. Adorno, once again, wants to retain a dialectical emphasis that permits the philosopher occasionally to accuse the world of being inadequate to the concept.

Adorno insists that negative dialectics is not a negative theology that "hypostatiz[es] the concept of nonconceptuality" (136); instead, it constitutes the "self-critique of the concept" (136). His very allegiance to dialectical thinking precludes this hypostasis because the deferral of identity ensures that concept and object are always restless moments of their own opposites. Adorno wishes to break the stranglehold of an
epistemological procedure in which subject and object "solidly confront each other" in favour of one in which "they reciprocally permeate each other" (139).

Adorno conceives of this reciprocity as existing within a Kraftfeld or force-field, "a relational interplay of attractions and aversions that [constitute] the dynamic, transmutational structure of a complex phenomenon" (Jay, Adorno 14). This juxtaposition of elements resists reduction to "a common denominator" and forms, instead, "a dialectical model of negations that simultaneously [construct] and [deconstruct] patterns of a fluid reality" (Adorno 14-15). Despite this emphasis on mutuality, however, Adorno posits the "preponderance of the object" as a gesture of resistance to the relations of force that merely logical contradictions obscure. Adorno, in other words, is interested in the fractured rather than fluid dimension of reality.

While Adorno indicts thought for its alleged purchase on infinity, he refuses to relinquish his belief that the pursuit of reason will explode the existing order (37). There is room, in other words, for a political purchase on ideas because the notion of the world as a self-regulating mechanism is itself the product of capitalist ideology. Philosophy rests its claim to comprehension, in Adorno's terms, on the duplicitous character of society which "is full of contradictions and yet determinable; rational and irrational in one, a system and yet fragmented; blind nature and yet mediated by consciousness" (as quoted in Adorno 99).

The very exercise of thought, as Horkheimer knew, is already a sign of resistance; the paradox, of course, as Adorno points out, is that the freedom of thought must point unforgivingly to the unfreedom of existence (18). The difficulty of practising a philosophical procedure that will "allow the method neither quite to absorb the contents ... nor to immaterialize them" (48) becomes particularly evident when one recognizes that "the principle of dominion which ... rends human society" reproduces itself in the principle which "causes the difference between the concept
and its subject matter" (48).

There is no reason, however, to elevate this difference that manifests itself as social antagonism and as logical violation into an ontological condition. Negative dialectics dissolves the concealed character of concepts and things when it reads both as "texts[s] of their becoming" (52). Negative dialectics elicits this inner history to revoke the immediacy of objects and to expose the untruth of concepts (52). Adorno makes the political dimension of negative dialectics explicit when he writes that shattering the spell of reification entails adumbrating the "possibility of which their reality has cheated the objects" (52). This possibility is visible only to thought which has the courage to think against itself (141). To reveal the contradictions within reality is to produce a philosophy that sets itself up as a contradiction against reality (145).

If the principle of identity is the point of departure for negative dialectics, the practice of the latter teases out the desire that grounds the repressive regime of the concept: [1]iving in the rebuke that the thing is not identical with the concept is the concept's longing to become identical with the thing" (149). Appropriately, therefore, non-identity contains identity, confirming for Adorno, the "truth moment of ideology, the pledge that there should be no contradiction, no antagonism" (149). In a courageous and strategic move, however, Adorno turns the desire of the concept to be one with the thing against itself; negative dialectics is propelled, not by the desire of the concept, but by the "resistance which otherness offers to identity" (160-61).

Adorno's rejection, not of the content of identity, but of its very idea, gains credibility because he never wavers from his conviction that "an appetite for incorporation" always combines "with an aversion to what cannot be incorporated, to [ironically,] the very thing that would need to be known" (161). The object becomes the non-identical, that which remains immanent to identity even as it is pushed out of it (162). Lest
this conception of the subject as more than what it is lead once again to an appropriation of the non-identical, Adorno accords the object a moment of resistance. The object's identity constantly militates against its identifications (161) so that it is "irreducible to--although not entirely unmediated by--an active subjectivity" (Adorno 63). The "groping for the preponderance of the object" (183) on the part of the subject which wants to cast off the carapace of identity becomes, in turn, the latter's salvation (277).

Negative dialectics is too often perceived as a "fraud" because Adorno's refusal to sacrifice the Kraftfeld or dialectical interplay of contradictions in favour of an ontological postulate seems to condemn the "advance" his critique makes to "retrogress[ion]" (Kracauer, as quoted in "Adorno and Kracauer: Notes on a Troubled Friendship" 232). One way of defending Adorno's refusal of "generative first principles" (Jay's phrase) is to represent his text as "stand[ing] in the very river of history itself" (Jameson's phrasing in Marxism and Form 50), as a "[footnote] to a totality which never comes into being" (Marxism and Form 52). Adorno, I think, would refuse the pathos of this stance even though he would be in accord with its spirit.

Kracauer's comment underestimates the radical quality of Adorno's enterprise, its diagnosis of the boring imprisonment of the self in itself, crippled by its terror of the new and unexpected, carrying its sameness with it wherever it goes, so that it has the protection of feeling, whatever it might stretch out its hand to touch, that it never meets anything but what it knows already. (Late Marxism 16)

Regression is an ever-present possibility within the neurosis of identity, of course; nevertheless, the persuasiveness of Adorno's work, for me, resides in its remarkable capacity to evoke the fragility of a new self committed to "imagining what [it] can by definition not yet imagine or foresee; what has no equivalent in [its] current experience" (Late Marxism
In the texts of Spivak and Said, I hope to demonstrate, might be glimpses of what Jameson calls "another side, an outside, an external face of the concept" (25) or of what Adorno, in a predictably enigmatic fashion, names the "inextinguishable colour from non-being." The negative impulse, in Said's and Spivak's view, would emanate from the (feminine) object of the discourses of patriarchy, capitalism, and Empire which has hitherto been condemned by the logic of identity to function as what Adorno would style a systemic excrescence. Excrescences, as the text of Negative Dialectics demonstrates, shatter the pretensions of conceptual logic or of the mania for systems whose rage against otherness manifests itself as the unity of identity.
SECTION IV
"FRANKFURTERS AND FRENCH FRIES": ADORNO AND POST-STRUCTURALISM

This project, as should be obvious by now, is an attempt to change the subject of theory and of political practice, at least insofar as it has remained the creature of post-structuralist discourse. The suitably disseminated subject, as I have demonstrated at length in Chapter I, still wields power unconscionably and requires, therefore, to be rather more rigorously scrutinized than has often been the case. The philosophy of Adorno, in my view, offers an "epistemological 'break' that simultaneously changes the subject and the very discourse in which change is being theorized ..." (R. Radhakrishnan's phrasing in "The Changing Subject and the Politics of Theory" 126).

Nietzsche's destruction of any necessary connection between interest, agency, and insight has been reproduced in post-structuralist theories of the subject which celebrate the latter's (putative) death. The subject, as object of historical determination, faces a permanent impasse, in the disjunction between thinking and willing caused by its constituted character. Radhakrishnan traces the "contradictory history" of the subject's "move[ment] from phenomenological plenitude and freedom into poststructuralism" thus:

[t]he contradiction lies in the fact that the more the "subject" produces knowledge about itself the less it is able to assume political agency on behalf of that very knowledge ... [that is] the legitimating basis of knowledge loses its a priori status. Radical poststructuralist epistemology produces the deconstructive knowledge that the very basis on which the subject acts is putative, not real: constructed, not natural. Thus, epistemology loses the sanction, as it were, to ground ethico-political legitimacy. The radical poststructuralist subject of epistemology, with its commitment to a nameless and open-ended process, finds itself at odds with the exigencies of political subjectivity, for the latter
is not easily served by a deconstructive epistemology of perennial disaccommodation. The political subject requires the determinate authority of names, identities, and constituencies. ("The Changing Subject ..." 127)

The problem, in short, is that the post-structuralist subject is radically de-historicized, and can therefore hardly be called upon to assume its role in the context of revolutionary agency. Within Derrida's writing for example, the contextualization of the empirical individual in terms of specific histories of oppression collapses all too often into yet another opportunity to expose the continued hegemony of logocentrism, into "huge, inconsequential generalizations" ("The Changing Subject ..." 144).

As I have suggested, in contrast to Derrida's emphasis on différance as an ethic of particularity, Adorno's consistent focus on the contingent, empirical, particular individual in an administered world transforms damaged lives into the radical negativity of situated consciousnesses whose epistemology is inseparable from political commitment. Negative dialectics, too, enacts what Radhakrishnan calls "a movement of recursion" ("The Changing Subject..." 136) in which the production of knowledge reinforces the status of the subject as an effect of ideology, but Adorno does not discount the possibility of revolutionary change even if there is no escaping the fact that "[t]he subject in action is held in abeyance by the subject as construct" ("The Changing Subject..." 136).

Adorno can assert this claim with such confidence because the moment of negation occurs in the very gap between ideological reality and possibility. Radhakrishnan acknowledges the value of a "viable hors-texte, a tactical location that is discontinuous with the status quo" ("The Changing Subject..." 134), but he concedes too much to the exigencies of post-structuralist epistemology, to what he continues to believe is its radical potential.

He identifies this potential as the pursuit of "an interrogative and perilous epistemology" ("The Changing Subject..." 148), the very pursuit
that he convincingly demonstrates has "opened up an unbridgeable chasm between politics and epistemology ..." ("The Changing Subject..." 127).

It is this contradiction that results in his weak call for the post-structuralist subject to "take on both political and epistemological tasks and highlight, in the process, the profoundly asymmetrical and 'interrupted' relationship of the epistemological to the "ethico-political ..." ("The Changing Subject..." 127).

Surely the practitioners of post-structuralism have been only too successful in charting this asymmetry, in problematizing the very notion of the "ethico-political." Without discrediting the vexed relation between epistemology and politics or theory and practice, it is time to determine whether the conflation of epistemology and politics might serve strategic or "revolutionary" ends. As I have indicated in my readings of Althusser and the members of the Frankfurt School, both knowledge and reality are tied to specific processes of production. Indeed, for these theorists, the production of ideology is inseparable from the reproduction of capitalist relations. To use Marx's familiar terms, consciousness is determined by matter and not matter by consciousness.

In the work of Adorno and Horkheimer, the progress of reason is inextricable from the instrumentalization of nature and labour; hence their sustained attempt to discover the traces of instrumental rationality in discursive concepts. Within this scenario, the vaunted asymmetry between the categories of rationality and the constraints of capitalist relations seems untenable. The asymmetry is to be located, rather, in the gap between the claims of capitalist ideology and the reality of capitalist relations, a gap that comes to be inhabited by critical negation.

The interrupted relation between politics and epistemology that Radhakrishnan suggests needs posing is precisely what post-structuralism cannot do because its discourse is part of the problem and not of the solution. In other words, post-structuralism is founded in the gap
between insight and agency. The "destitute" ("The Changing Subject ..." 148) subject serves to exemplify rather than to examine the problem. Radhakrishnan has in mind, of course, the familiar complaint that the explosive language of post-structuralism is little more than a damp squib when translated into reality; curiously enough, however, he hopes to close the gap between the subject in action and the subject as construct with the very discourse whose political inconsequentality he has been at some pains to elucidate.

This hope continues to beg the question of the political consequences of inhabiting an impasse which keeps hegemonic structures firmly in place or which offers crude power the opportunity to deck itself out in style. Radhakrishnan prefers to take the familiar road to political success; to invest the "inconsequential generalizations" of post-structuralism with historical specificity rather than address the possibility of, yes, a radically different practice.

The perilous epistemology Radhakrishnan envisages lapses only too readily into what Adorno pungently describes as "[r]isk without hazard" [recall my comments on the strategic and adventurous character of différence], into privileged contemplation of the pathos of subjectivity in which, "at the cost of any possible answer, the radical question becomes what is substantial unto itself" (The Jargon of Authenticity 29). How, then, might epistemology's inevitable implication in and relation to the ethico-political be deployed to ensure that "a difference in theory [is] translated into a difference in history" (?) ("The Changing Subject ..." 148).

One of the most influential exponents of the delights and dangers of an interrogative and perilous epistemology is, of course, Paul de Man. De Man's readings painstakingly demonstrate the "necessary exclusion" which forms "the very originating locus of such insight as they [the readings] achieve or illumination as they can provide" (Wlad Godzich, "Introduction: Caution! Reader at Work!" in Paul de Man, Blindness and Insight: Essays in
the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism xxii). This exclusion contributes
the blindness upon which every insight depends. De Man's reading practice
attempts to embody his claim that "philosophical knowledge can only come
into being when it is turned back upon itself" ("Criticism and Crisis" in
Blindness and Insight 16).

The self-enclosed quality of his essays reflects their underlying
contention: the materiality of the object with which knowledge must come
to terms is its own status as representation. Since De Man collapses the
distinction between epistemology and representation, knowledge becomes its
own object instead of establishing a relation between self and world.
This position contravenes that of Adorno's because the latter is careful
to suggest that "the constitutive share of language in truth does not
establish an identity of truth and language" (Negative Dialectics 111).
The opacity of the object, for Adorno, does not attest to the
"'nothingness of human matters'" ("Criticism and Crisis" 18); rather, it
reflects the subject's inability to divest itself of the cloak of
identity.

De Man writes that the moment of undecidability that thought
encounters involves the realization that "consciousness does not result
from the absence of something, but consists of the presence of a
nothingness" ("Criticism and Crisis" 18). Consciousness, in De Man,
uses objects as mirrors in which to re-read itself. This point becomes
"clear" when De Man declares that knowledge which "knows and names itself
as fiction" ("Criticism and Crisis" 18) is armed with the peculiar courage
of a vision that is driven to confront "the failure [that] lies in the
nature of things" ("Criticism and Crisis" 18).

The self, then, has no choice but to think this void and thus become
"the agent of its own instability" ("Criticism and Crisis" 19). De Man's
contentions are symptomatic of post-structuralist texts which reduce the
function of epistemology to "a knowing reiteration of its [own]
impossibility" (Peter Osborne's phrasing in "Adorno and the Metaphysics of

The difference between this stance and Adorno's own "enterprise [which] is always teetering on the brink of blowing itself up" (Bagleton's phrasing in The Ideology of the Aesthetic 341) is that the latter is undertaken for the sake of the possible and is never perceived as an excuse to stop thinking. Negative dialectics is "a rational critique of reason" (my emphasis) because the survivor of Nazism could not afford to forget that "[w]hen men are forbidden to think, their thinking sanctions what simply exists" (Negative Dialectics 85).

I do not want to accuse De Man of a failure to think; however, I do want to indicate the futility and political quietism of thought which ceaselessly exposes its own aporias. The blindness that is inextricable from insight should be cause, not for meditations on the void, but for self-examination which gives "human matters" their due and holds itself accountable to the object that its blindness fails. The "posture of incessant harrying of an unbeatable enemy" (Peter Dews' phrasing in Logics of Disintegration: Post-structuralist Thought and the Claims of Critical Theory 44) should not obscure the privileges of a position that is not obliged to explain from where the authority of a discourse that questions the status of all discourses comes (see Godzich xvi).

In the concluding paragraph of his essay (just before he makes his puzzling concession to perilous epistemology), Radhakrishnan argues that the anomic of the post-structuralist subject can be traced to its refusal of dialectical mediation ("The Changing Subject" 148); that is, to its failure to acknowledge that there is a place for identity and a place for difference (148). Radhakrishnan does not develop this insight; I hope it is clear that my interest in Adorno seeks to remedy precisely this defect in post-structuralist epistemology.

My explication of Adorno's attempt to reconstitute the relation between subject and object seeks to emphasize his representation of this
relation not only as the other's difference from, but as its resistance to, the hegemony of identity. The very writing of Negative Dialectics, thought's attempt to think against itself, disperses the subjectivist mist in which the object has been enveloped and gives the abstraction of thought the form of "authentic concretion." The subtle negotiation of the terrain between a "'bad' immediacy of the object and the false self-identity of the concept" (Terry Eagleton's phrasing in The Ideology of the Aesthetic 341) enacts the dialectical mediation of the epistemological and the ethico-political because the reification of thought reproduces the spell (the principle of commodity exchange) which bewitches "men."

Adorno is cognizant of the limitations of philosophy in that an abstract negation of the course of the world in theory often accompanies its blind affirmation in praxis (see Rainer Nägele, "The Scene of the Other: Theodor W. Adorno's Negative Dialectic in the Context of Poststructuralism" 65). He is reluctant, therefore, to effect any easy transition between epistemological and ethico-political revolution; he insists, however, that one cannot proceed without the other.

I want to state here categorically that it is not the subject but the object which is in crisis. The indiscriminate celebration of otherness, difference, and radical indeterminacy within academic discourse has precluded precise accounts of the growing backlash against minorities (as defined in terms of race, gender, or sexual orientation) as well as fostering a dangerous inattentiveness to the existence and possibility of resistance. The guardians of "radical" discourse within the academy, in an uncanny imitation of the purveyors of authenticity in Adorno's day, "ominously [strike up] [a] concerned tone: no answer would be serious enough; every answer, no matter of what content, [is] dismissed as a limiting concretization ..." (The Jargon of Authenticity 29).

This refusal to "pin [themselves] down" is passed off as a concession to the dynamism (the play of différence) of the world (The Jargon of Authenticity 29); instead, it serves as a sobering reminder of
Horkheimer's (contentious?) sense that "mankind [sic] [is] not betrayed by the untimely attempts of the revolutionaries but by the timely attempts of the realists" ("The Authoritarian State" 106). The valorization of difference has turned into a gesture of autonomy without content, while the insight into the speciousness of the ideology of humanism is threatening to destroy even the desirability of subjectivity. Is post-structuralism in danger of "end[ing] the talk [of humanism] because [its] doctrine would end the matter [?]" (Adorno's phrasing, Negative Dialectics 89).

My use of Adorno's critique of Heidegger to expose the vulnerability of post-structuralism might seem inappropriate, at first glance. I have been concerned, nevertheless, to show how post-structuralism reinforces the hierarchies it deconstructs. In these terms, it seems to me valid to suggest that post-structuralism's challenge to authenticity does not escape the latter's jargon. The bind in which post-structuralism finds itself, the loss of the subject as the legitimating basis of epistemology and action, reveals its failure to articulate a mode of discourse in which the subject's inevitable complicity with ideology does not necessarily connote paralysis. Negative dialectics, on the contrary, "knows" that "put[ting] [one's] cards on the table ... is by no means the same as playing the game" (Negative Dialectics xix).

The political context of Adorno's own philosophy, that of Nazism, gives him a different take on the problem of subjectivity. He undertakes a critique of humanism precisely because its discourse mystifies social relations which make human beings eminently dispensable, which attribute to them the fungibility of things. For him, therefore, the undermining of the authority of identity occurs in the name of those condemned to acquiesce to a logic of definition which produces otherness as its negative term. Adorno never forgets that relations of difference are also differential relations of power.

Moreover, the post-structuralist subject may not have escaped the
confines of the dialectic of enlightenment in which self-assertion and self-surrender are complementary necessities (see Section II). The introversion of sacrifice (recall the example of Odysseus) that produces instrumental rationality as well as identity seems to have become, ironically enough, the motto of the post-structuralist subject (see my discussions of Bataille [as well as pp. 257–58 in Derrida, "From Restricted to General Economy"], Cixous, and Kierkegaard). Kristeva's "herethics" of sacrifice serves as an interesting exemplar of the reversal I have in mind here.

Kristeva rewrites the discourse of psychoanalysis in order that the proponents of Eros might succumb to "another form of love—Agape" ("Freud and Love: Treatment and its Discontents" 261), which makes "the thought of death bearable ..." ("Stabat Mater" 185). Within Freudian discourse, the threat of castration is contingent upon the split between the object of desire and that of identification. The "merging of the identifying ideal with the object of desire" ("Freud and Love" 249) in love becomes, for Kristeva, the subject's constitutive metaphor—"amour" becomes translatable as "a-mort." This merging is located in the body of the enceinte woman.

Kristeva characterises the enceinte woman's desire "for law as desire for reproduction and continuity" ("Stabat Mater" 183) as "perversion" because the biological jubilation contained in this desire is marked by symbolic suffering. A double displacement occurs here. Kristeva's desire to reconcile the "seducer and the legislator" ("Freud and Love" 261) makes her represent masculine desire to "overcome the unthinkable of death by postulating maternal love in its place" ("Stabat Mater" 176) as feminine masochism. Moreover, what appears as a search for a female libidinal economy located in the mother's body becomes instead an attempt "to place the mother at the source and fading-point of all subjectivity and language—a point which ... threatens the subject with collapse ..." (Jacqueline Rose, "Julia Kristeva—Take Two" in Sexuality in
"Stabat Mater" graphically re-produces the classic divisions in the discourse of psychoanalysis (life and death, self and other, language and flesh) which conspire to create the split subject. The enceinte condition of the female subject, however, renders these divisions undecidable because "[her] removed marrow . . . nevertheless acts as a graft . . . which wounds but increases [her]" ("Stabat Mater" 168).

In contrast to the production of masculine subjectivity, where the threat of castration remains (necessarily) phantasmatic and is imposed from without, the feminine subject's "wound" (lack) is constitutive. This "wound" is simultaneously "increase" because the "paradox" ("Stabat Mater" 168) of childbirth grants her "the possibility--but not the certainty--of reaching out to the other, the ethical" ("Stabat Mater" 182). It is in this curious sense of the ethical (the parallels with Kierkegaard are startling, but I don't have the space to develop them here) that Kristeva's conception of the maternal body assumes a Bakhtinian flavour--body, in effect, becomes world.

In Mikhail Bakhtin's discourse, the relation between body and world, despite the extent to which they permeate each other, is one of appropriation--body consumes world and leaves its indelible traces. The gargantuan devouring and excreting male body in Bakhtin is transformed within the limits of Kristeva's discourse into an enclosed maternal body secreting its privileged signs (milk and tears). The "increase" that the maternal body experiences, however, both succeeds (as the consequence of the "wound" of sexual desire and penetration) and precedes (in the parturition of birth) loss. The gargantuan male body grows at the expense of the world, while "motherhood's impossible syllogism" (Kristeva, "Motherhood according to Giovanni Bellini" in Desire in Language 237) can only be realized as a body whose immanence resides in the eclipse of figuration and identity.

Female desire, for Kristeva, becomes the counterpart of the saint's
ecstasy, both inescapably masochistic because indistinguishable from pain. The *jouissance* which produces the "irrational but unshakeable maternal certainty" "that death does not exist" ("Stabat Mater" 175) is a function of the masochism that yields to the pain of penetration and the loss of parturition. Kristeva's fascination with the possibility of transcending desire and death results in a vision of yielding as the specifically female power(lessness) of love.

Kristeva's en-gendering of self-preservation and self-surrender reproduces the dialectic of enlightenment in that the *enceinte* woman can function as the guarantor of the continuity of the species only at the cost of self-dissolution. Kristeva sacrifices *Eros* in the name of *Agape*, but remains incapable of healing the split subject. In order to conquer death through love, the female subject must give up her desire. In Kristeva's texts, desire for reproduction fuses with desire for the (paternal) law, thus retaining the female subject as the underhand double of explicit phallic power ("Stabat Mater" 170).

It has become customary to label Adorno a *deconstructeur avant la lettre* (see, for example, Jay, Adorno, Ryan, Marxism and Deconstruction, and Eagleton, *Walter Benjamin or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism*), but the work of disentangling negative dialectics from the clutches of the strategy of *différence* has only recently begun. The parallels between deconstruction and negative dialectics are, of course, not readily dismissable, but one cannot help but wonder at the fugitive evolutionary impulse within the discourse of post-structuralism which demands that all roads lead more or less coherently to a post-modern/structuralist universe.

Peter Dews was one of the first to undertake a systematic analysis of the differences between Adorno's project and that of post-structuralism (see "Adorno, Post-structuralism, and the Critique of Identity" and *Logic of Disintegration: Post-structuralist Thought and the Claims of Critical Theory*). Dews does not confine himself to Derrida; he includes Lacan,
Foucault, and Lyotard in his interpretation. Dews' scope is one I cannot hope to match; therefore, I shall limit my consideration to those elements which I believe pertinent to the reconstitution of the post-colonial subject in the discourse of Spivak and Said. Since Foucault and Derrida might be said to be of prime importance in the work of Said and Spivak, I have dealt with the former almost exclusively in my own writing.

[Dews locates in Adorno and Derrida] a common concern with the lability and historicity of language, a repudiation of foundationalism in philosophy, an awareness of the subterranean links between the metaphysics and [of?] identity and structures of domination, and a shared tortuous love-hate relation to Hegel.... ("Adorno, Post-structuralism, and the Critique of Identity" 2)

He insists, however, (and rightly) that to conflate the two is a "serious misunderstanding" and that Adorno provides "some of the conceptual tools with which to move beyond [post-structuralism] as a self-destructively indiscriminate and politically ambiguous ... assault on the structures of rationality and modernity in toto" ("Adorno, Post-structuralism ..." 2-3).

While Chapter I attempts to complicate Dews' categorical condemnation of post-structuralism, I think the danger of the kinds of ambiguity to which post-structuralism lends itself cannot be overstated. The problem, as Dews sees it, is that post-structuralism is often indistinguishable from an "ontological affirmation of an irreducible plurality" ("Adorno, Post-structuralism ..." 7). Simply countering universality with contingency and particularity will "boomerang" (Dews 13) once again into identity-thinking, into a treasuring of singularity for its own sake rather than into viewing the particular "as standing in a pattern of relations to other particulars, a historically sedimented 'constellation' which defines its identity" (Dews 14).

This boomerang effect is a consequence of conceiving the relation between concept and reality as one of "necessary antagonism" (Dews 14)
rather than recognizing the antagonism as itself the product of "an historically obsolete imperiousness of consciousness" (Dews 14). Despite Derrida's sensitivity to the way in which boundaries between conceptual opposites remain infinitely transgressable, he posits the logical priority of non-identity over identity (Dews 17) because différence is the dialectic of oppositions' condition of possibility. This tactical manoeuvre does not permit the step Adorno's negative dialectics takes: the assault on the inadequacy of the concept is equally an indictment of the irreconcilability of the object (see also Peter Osborne 28).

Adorno has, of course, been responsible, along with Horkheimer, for extended analyses of the mimetic relation between the "identitarian logic of exchange value" (Jay Bernstein's phrasing in "Art against Enlightenment: Adorno's Critique of Habermas" in The Problems of Modernity 53) and discursive rationality. The immediacy of objects which the universalizing concept institutes deprives the latter of its real desire, which is to discover the object, not in its identity with the concept, but in its alterity. Adorno attacks, not conceptual thought itself, but its "regimentation ... into system, correspondence, and universality" (Bernstein 53), and invents negative dialectics as the method that will use the concept/discursive reason (the negation of particularity) for the sake of particularity (see Bernstein 55).

This desire to render reason substantive assumes different proportions in the rhetoric of Derrida which, as Barbara Foley points out, also claims to move beyond the realm of textual exegesis to produce "an epistemological practice possessing the capacity to expose and disrupt the ideological stratagems by which advanced capitalist society legitimates itself" ("The Politics of Deconstruction" in Rhetoric and Form: Deconstruction at Yale 121). Foley's essay, however, disproves this claim.

The idiom of subversion, resistance, and displacement is no more than a cover, once again, for textual exegesis, for a revelation of the
internal contradictions of a discourse and for an undermining of the said discourse's claim to epistemological authority (Foley 120). Far from articulating a coherent politics based upon deconstruction, the latter seeks to deconstruct the very notion of the political. Foley asserts that unless deconstruction "takes to task not the existence of opposed categories qua categories, but their historically specific contents" (128), it "cannot--will not--provide the grounds for a rupture that is, finally, anything more than discursive" (129).

Foley traces the "political bankruptcy" (113) of deconstruction to Derrida's continued deferral of his confrontation with Marx as well as to deconstruction's refusal of mastery. Foley rejects Spivak's and Ryan's attempt to annex Marx to the discourse of deconstruction (I shall take this point up again in the next chapter) because she says they offer, as a consequence, a radically revised Marx who refuses "to master--in practice--the text of capitalist domination" (133). The reliance on dispersal and heterogeneity defuses the value of oppositional politics because such a politics requires "determinate analysis ... pursuing determinate results" (Foley 129).

Foley remarks that "binary oppositions are dialectical rather than static--historical rather than epistemological" (129) in the course of criticizing deconstruction for its desire to "freeze in time its act of epistemological transgression" (129). Adorno's emphasis on mediation, as I have been insisting, avoids this problem because the non-conceptual functions as the concept's immanent contradiction. Because Derrida advocates the logical priority of non-identity, différence cannot itself be differentiated by what it differentiates.

History, for Derrida, always assumes the character of a telos, which explains why deconstruction cannot be construed as historical. Instead, deconstruction poses the problem of history, or, différence serves to constitute historicity itself. For Adorno, the problem with epistemology is exactly that, by engaging in disquisitions on the origins of
historicity, it deliberately diverts attention from the historical
determinations of epistemology. Negative dialectics is a logic of
disintegration because it is committed to tracing the historical
trajectory of the object, its change, disintegration, and multiple
modality.

If deconstruction elicits a reality in eclipse (history as the
category of alterity), negative dialectics counterposes the richness of
things (constellations of particulars) to the transience of thought.
Adorno does not assume the impenetrability of materiality in advance as
deconstruction does. De Man's reflections on the status of knowledge as
representation, for insistence, retain a Kantian residue, an assumption of
the unknowability of the thing in itself. While Adorno is well aware of
the inadequacy of categories, he does not seek to "bypass the order of
apprehension" (Derrida's phrase). If "we" have no other form of
apprehension, how can thought proceed as it always has, but with a
difference?

The trick, for Adorno, is to produce "a set of guerrilla raids on
the inarticulable, a style of philosophizing which frames the object
conceptually but manages by some cerebral acrobatics to glance sideways at
what gives such generalized identity the slip" (Eagleton, The Ideology of
the Aesthetic 342). Negative dialectics moves beyond deconstruction
because concept and object are not merely incommensurable but "determinate
in their irreconcilability" (The Ideology of the Aesthetic 354).
Eagleton's point is an important one, because Adorno's reiteration of the
social dimensions of epistemology enables him to transcend
deconstruction's Nietzschean assault on the inherent violence of the
concept. Besides, negative dialectics incorporates the insights of
deconstruction without reducing itself to a "naive objectivism" (Dews'
phrase in Logics of Disintegration 11).

I could be accused, thus far, of confusing notoriously conservative
misappropriations of Derrida with the "master" himself. I want,
therefore, to address (in necessarily sketchy terms) the premises of Derrida's own philosophy to determine whether they can become grounds for the articulation of political resistance. Derrida's work has, of course been a running concern in my text, but some direct confrontation might be useful as a prelude to my reading of Spivak's allegiance to deconstruction, her desire to make it the ally of the disenfranchised "Third World."

Peter Dews echoes Foley's objection to the relentless Manicheism of Derrida's world, the reduction, as he perceives it, of Western thought into "a set of perfunctory dualisms" (Logics of Disintegration xv). The emphasis on undecidability obscures this premise of Derrida's thought which also fails to relate the antinomies of thought to the relations of production in the manner of Marx and Adorno. Even if one quarrels with Dews' reading by pointing out that Derrida is concerned with the tradition of Western metaphysics, there are enough indications that Derrida means to topple the structure of thought itself.

Dews first ascertains whether the radical claims of deconstruction are borne out even in epistemological practice. He contrasts Adorno's and Derrida's readings of Husserl to illustrate his contention that Derrida "offer[s] us a philosophy of différence as the absolute" (Logics of Disintegration 24). Adorno questions the very concept and possibility of the transcendental reduction regardless of its content. His reading of Husserl "uncover[s] the reef of facticity on which any transcendental enquiry must run aground" (Logics of Disintegration 16).

Derrida too discovers this internal contradiction within the discourse of phenomenology, but argues that what "appears to be the result of the intrusion of facticity and historicity, is the effect of a transcendental structure more fundamental than that of consciousness" (Logics of Disintegration 18). Adorno's impulse is to reveal the intertwining of subjectivity with the realm of facticity; Derrida seeks the ground of transcendental consciousness itself. Irene Harvey explains
Derrida's contradiction of Husserl thus: "... the moment of evidence, the foundation of all truth and objective knowledge is a result of a 'more fundamental' absence--indeed the movement of différance itself" (10).

This move produces différance as an "ungrounded ground of ground, or that which allows for the constitution of the notion of ground itself and in turn for the notion of constitution itself.... [It is a] 'more originary' origin, which is profoundly not an origin for Derrida..." (Harvey 20). Différance, one remembers, does not contradict identity but 'grounds' the very opposition between identity and difference. In this sense, deconstruction as a practice of reading can only "lay bare" the structure of contradictions that constitutes a text; it cannot oppose or change it. Derrida's quest for the effaced non-metaphysical ground of metaphysics allows him to "[illustrate] the limits and conditions of the possibility of metaphysics ... it does not prohibit in the slightest the continuation and indeed paradoxical affirmation of that same history" (Harvey 14).

Harvey urges that reading deconstruction as simply reproducing what it sets out to displace is "an inexcusable ... violation" of Derrida's work (36). But she herself admits that deconstruction must prove that its "'presence' will ... make a difference" (25). I am not sure Harvey succeeds in defending Derrida on this score; the best she can do is reveal the illegitimacy of a question that asks what is proper to deconstruction. Since the presupposition of propriety is precisely what is at stake, and deconstruction wants to free truth from the contamination of logocentrism, the "presence" of deconstruction "exceeds the question" (28) (of its epistemic status). It is, thus, a philosophy of limits because intentions are intrinsically non-fulfillable and principle and practice are necessarily at odds (Harvey 28; 62).

Deconstruction's attempt to think radical contingency, curiously enough, does not imply that it undergoes the logical progression from the contingency of knowledge to the latter's revisability (Logics of
Disintegration 37). As Dews points out, Adorno's awareness of the reciprocal determination of consciousness and materiality makes it possible for knowledge to "learn from its objects" (Logics of Disintegration 37). Negative dialectics maintains a more complex position which states that "there is something given in experience, and that there is nothing given immediately" (Logics of Disintegration 41. Italics in original). Deconstruction's inability to learn from its objects is a consequence of its claim that "the absence of the object and a fortiori of the subject ... is the condition of the possibility of intelligibility or meaningfulness" (Harvey 2). It is tempted, therefore, as I have maintained (see Chapter II) to eschew the possibility of reference and to reduce subjectivity to a textual effect to offset the universalizing pretensions of the subject as the source of all knowing.

With these preliminary remarks in mind, I want to address the implications of Adorno's dismantling of the logic of identity (one that he systematically relates to the logic of equivalence produced by the exchange relations of capital) for the not merely different, but dissident subject of feminism and of post-coloniality. Karen Newman's provocative essay, "Directing Traffic: Subjects, Objects, and the Politics of Exchange," illuminates a pertinent approach to the divorce between epistemology and materiality with which I began this section. She too makes a plea for a reappropriation of Adorno's "Subject and Object" inflected with a feminist politics. She describes this procedure as a "politics of the negative" (48).

Newman begins with the contention that in an age in which feminism is in crisis, "cultural analysis seems at once an unpardonable luxury and a political imperative" (42). She goes on to connect the crisis of feminism with the discursive reproduction of the anthropological paradigm in which woman figures as object of exchange. Newman's point is that, despite feminist sensitivity to the oppressive character of this paradigm, the "syntax of exchange itself remains unchallenged" (44). This means
that woman's status as object is hypostatized (44). Newman wants to find a way of representing woman without reinscribing her as victim of a system of exchange in which man normatively desires woman.

Newman appreciates, therefore, Adorno's attempt to perceive subject and object as mutually constituted because, as he was well aware, the point is not to enthrone the object but to abolish the separation and inevitable hierarchy of subject and object. Neither the identity nor the antithesis of subject and object tells the whole story. Newman makes a case for a relation between subject and object in which power circulates rather than congeals, and in which neither subject nor object occupies a fixed position (50).

While I am sympathetic to Newman's desire to complicate the relations between ideology and sexually and racially differentiated subjectivity (I make a similar argument in the Introduction), I am less comfortable with her tendency to privilege the fluidity of the Kraftfeld at the expense of Adorno's own trenchant sense of its tensions and contradictions, of what I called its fractured dimension. The fluidity of boundaries could preclude the acknowledgement of active transgression and, as Newman herself argues earlier, de-essentializing subjectivity and de-sexualizing it are not synonymous.

She ends on an appeal to jouissance, to a version of the shattering of subjectivity that I have already argued is politically inadequate (see also Chapter I). How, one wonders, is her desire to lose sight of the self different from Foucault's interest in anonymous bodies and pleasures and Derrida's choreographies? She links this loss of self to the discovery that the desire and pleasure of the object is discredited in feminist analyses of the oppressiveness of the object position. Newman seems to be confusing the desire of the object with the position one assumes as an object—a disturbing point of view, that.

This elision of the conflict between self and other misses Adorno's crucial reformulation of the movement of dialectical mediation as
"unassuaged unrest" (Negative Dialectics 203). The dialectic is no longer informed by the subject's desire; instead, it is animated by the opacity of the object. Newman defuses the political import of Adorno's audacious manoeuvre because she readily forgets that the circulation of power and of subject positions must nevertheless foreground who regulates whom. To put it as simply as I can, the marriage of epistemology and ethics/politics can occur only if the mutual constitution of subject and object does not mystify their historically produced antagonism.

Philosophy becomes responsible only when the subject "mak[es] good" (Nägele 70) for what it has done to the object. It is impossible, therefore, to make grand gestures which simply cancel the subject. Newman's desire to lose sight of the self must be expressed, instead, as an attempt to "[reclaim the subject] through a postulate of transgression" (Nägele 70). In other words, the circulation of power and fluid identities lacks ethico-political content unless it includes the subject as "both the resistance against and the principle of domination" (Nägele 70).
CHAPTER IV

GAYATRI CHAKRAVORTY SPIVAK: THE "CURIOUS GUARDIAN AT THE MARGIN"

I insist that deconstruction is not neutral. It intervenes.
--Jacques Derrida

... unfortunately, I understand everything I say.
--Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

Only because of the hopeless is hope given to us.
--Walter Benjamin

I

It is often said of Adorno that he is a thinker whom everybody knows and nobody reads. I think the same can be said of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, for perhaps a different set of reasons. I mean this comment literally in that, as far as I am aware, there is no extended study of her writings though her name is sprinkled liberally in texts that attempt to politicize deconstruction or that engage with the post-colonial subject. This remark brings me to my second point.

Adorno's penchant for aphoristic formulations has led, as Fredric Jameson and Gillian Rose for instance have pointed out, to egregious errors of interpretation because the "quotable quote" is plucked from its context and then marshalled as evidence. Since Adorno attempted to write sentences all of which were equidistant from the centre, as it were, this strategy of interpretation could lead to embarrassing blunders. More to the point, the fragment, in Adorno's and Benjamin's terms, both conjures up the whole of which it is a part and fractures or defers it. The particular fragment, in other words, is not an illustration of an idea; it is, instead, a constellation of particulars, a momentary illumination of the object's history of suffering as well as the possibility that has been denied it thus far.

But what has all this to do with Spivak? More than might be evident at first glance. Spivak, too, is cited often, and is always, it seems, embodied in the phrases that appear to encapsulate her often complicated and precious arguments. I want to explore the possibility that critical engagement with Spivak's oeuvre has limited itself to these "simple"
phrases because the scope of her critique seems both alarming and unconvincing.

In other words, accepting her generalized pithy (and witty) formulations allows critics to congratulate themselves on their sense of humour and simultaneously to let themselves off the hook as far as familiarizing themselves with the specific charges she makes is concerned. The "global" connections she makes in the context of transnational capitalism then appear as leaps in logic inevitable in one with an axe to grind.

Reading Spivak's work, however, also produces the opposite problem. If, as she claimed in a recent presentation at the University College of Galway (May 23, 1992), she never, except unknowingly, overdresses a simple idea, what is the value of the often impenetrable prose in which her analyses are couched? If her contentions are readily condensable into the succinct assertions she periodically introduced into her speech, could the latter have been made without subjecting her audience to occasional bewilderment?

It probably seems curious that my interpretation of Spivak begins with random remarks on style, but I think such a consideration is crucial in relation to a corpus that has suffered puzzling critical neglect in the same instant that its author garners public attention. Spivak is used, more often than not, to bolster arguments, confirm surmises, or confer authority rather than patently analyzed. Given this situation, it might prove fruitful to broach the problematic of her critiques with Adorno's cautions in mind.

In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno writes that "philosophy is not expoundable" and that the "crux" of philosophy "is what happens in it, not a thesis or a position" (33). Is it possible to read Spivak in this light? She calls her essays "interventions," a word which entitled one of Adorno's own collections of essays, implying thereby that hers is a form of *praxis* irreducible to theory. By the same token, one must ask whether
anything happens in Spivak's essays, whether her privileging of the position of "gadfly" ("The Rani of Sirmur" in *Europe and its Others* I 147) stirs other than discursive trouble.

Could my demand for lucidity be a function of what Adorno calls "the all but universal compulsion to confuse the communication of knowledge with knowledge itself [?]" (*Negative Dialectics* 41). Do Spivak's texts wrestle with the "paradoxicality" of language of which Adorno speaks: that it must communicate and yet "each communicative step ... falsif[ies] truth and sell[s] it out" (*Negative Dialectics* 41)? Would Spivak, however, concur with the conclusion Adorno draws--"[t]ruth is objective, not plausible" (*Negative Dialectics* 41)?

In "Imperialism and Sexual Difference," Spivak adopts a theoretical model borrowed from Paul de Man. She writes that, according to this model, "the basis of a truth-claim is no more than a trope" or what she later calls "a politically interested figuration" (225). Feminism performs a "tropological deconstruction" when it recognizes that woman or the racial other has been produced with reference to, but nevertheless unlike, the "truth" of man (225). Feminism's attempt to establish this recognition as truth, however, is immediately confronted with the problem that its discourse "is marked and constituted by, even as [it] constitute[s], the field of [its] production" (225). Spivak then goes on to show that even as feminists "discover the troping error of the masculist [sic] truth-claim" they "perform the lie of constituting a truth of global sisterhood" (226). I shall return to Spivak's reconstitution of the relations between imperialism and sexual difference in a moment.

For now, I want to investigate the relationship she establishes between deconstruction and truth-claims. She describes the "substance" of deconstructive concerns as "the blindness of truth-telling" (226). This blindness is a consequence of ignoring what deconstruction "knows" only too well--"that 'truths' can only be shored up by strategic exclusions, by declaring opposition where there is complicity, by denying the possibility
of randomness, by proclaiming a provisional origin or point of departure as ground" (226).

Adorno, too, acknowledges that "cogency and play are the two poles of philosophy" (Negative Dialectics 15), but he warns specifically against turning philosophy itself into a work of art. Adorno refuses to "authorize some brusque exorcism of the concept" (Eagleton's phrasing, The Ideology of the Aesthetic 355) and asks, rather, that the conceptual and the aesthetic "keep faith with their own substance through their opposites" (Negative Dialectics 15). To collapse the distinction between language and truth (the aesthetic and the conceptual) is to forego the value of each. Art's resistance to its meanings is matched by philosophy's refusal to clutch at any immediate thing (Negative Dialectics 15).

Spivak does not consider the possibility of this active negotiation of truth and trope, just as she does not suggest how the modulating of opposition into the recognition of complicity might change things. Is the blindness of truth-telling more than a pious disclaimer? I have already indicated that this deconstructive insistence on blindness can itself become a form of superior insight. Commenting on the interweaving of truth and trope in "a general configuration of textuality" ("Feminism and Critical Theory" in In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics 78), Spivak writes that "literature ... displays that the truth of a human situation is the itinerary of not being able to find it" ("Feminism and Critical Theory" 77). She then argues that the unavailability of unified solutions is often not confronted (78). Critical theory, one assumes, enacts this repeated confrontation.

I want to examine the traffic between the modesty of theory and the puzzling authority of the theorist a bit further. The critic cannot hold the key because "the moment of evidence, the foundation of all truth and objective knowledge is a result of a 'more fundamental' absence--the movement of différance itself" (Harvey's phrasing 10). Derrida traces the
birth of metaphysics to the effacement of its ground; that is, the role of writing in the constitution of Being. Since the meaningfulness of the sign inheres precisely in the absence of subject and object, interpretation opens on to an abyss in which the oppositions of metaphysics have "'their secret copulating relationship'" (Harvey 18).

It is this argument that Spivak presumably has in mind when she demonstrates the impossibility of feminism's oppositional stance. But who "knows" that this is the case? The deconstructor? Harvey explains that the question which seeks to determine what is proper to the practice of deconstruction is an improper one. Deconstruction's reliance on "both-and" formulations, its insistence that, if it can be described within metaphysical determinations, such descriptions do not constitute "the essence of deconstruction [and are] incomplete determination[s]" (Harvey 24) still does not explain how deconstruction has managed to escape the distinction between truth and falsehood, or, what one is to do with an answer that shatters the question (to ask what deconstruction is is to set up a response within the domain of metaphysics which deconstruction has already effectively undermined/exceeded).

If the critical negativity of deconstruction cannot be aligned with the affirmativity of (feminism's) politics, then Derrida's and Spivak's claim that deconstruction is not neutral can only be understood in terms of its complicity with, rather than its opposition to, power. If truth and epistemology are to be situated elsewhere, or at least also elsewhere, deconstruction must confront the epistemological status of a discourse that exposes the vanity of epistemology. How is the "presence" of deconstruction to make a difference if intentions are intrinsically non-fulfillable and the object always escapes (see also Harvey 25; 28)? Besides, deconstruction seems in danger of banality when so much of the discourse produced in its name seems to overlook the distinction between the impossibility of unified truth and the provisionality of truth(s).

Adorno's philosophy, to put it crudely, adopts for its premise
deconstruction's conclusion. Adorno writes that "[i]n principle, philosophy can always go astray" (Negative Dialectics 14), but he does not stop there. The sentence continues: "... which is the sole reason why it can go forward" (Negative Dialectics 14). The "untruth" of epistemology, in other words, is the condition of possibility of its "truth." Rather than read Adorno's declaration (truth is objective, not plausible) as a species of objectivism or as a desire to resurrect a metaphysics of presence, it seems appropriate to construe the term "objective" in relation to the status of the object in Adorno's philosophy which I have taken some pains to elaborate. I want, in this context, to make two tentative claims whose validity I hope to investigate.

If I might recall for a moment Adorno's asseveration that "[t]he need to lend a voice to suffering is a condition of all truth" (Negative Dialectics 17-18), then the "objectivity" of truth inheres in the world that weighs upon the subject. The "truth" of Spivak's texts, it might then be said, lies in her capacity to contest the plausibility of patriarchy, capitalism, and Empire in as much as their discourses simultaneously invest and occlude the dispossessed colonial subject. The objectivity of her texts, as is probably obvious, resides in the visibility she accords those constituted as others or as objects of the said discourses.

Adorno is to be understood literally here; truth is objective because it tells the tale of the object and seeks to redeem the latter in its alterity. This alterity, it is crucial to note, cannot be elicited without charting its historical trajectory, the relations of determination which conspire to produce alterity as the object of a certain discursive practice. Nevertheless, Spivak's task, as Adorno's interest in concretion bears out, is to explore the contingency of the object as not only the sum of its determinations, but also their excess. Spivak, in short, attempts to reveal the heteronomy of the feminine and ethnic object of the "subject of the West, or the West as Subject" (Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"
in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* 271).

In warning against confusing truth with the plausibility of explanations, Adorno deprecates the epistemological model which represents knowledge as the possession of truth. Adorno is leery of the commodification of knowledge; that is, the process in which, as Buck-Morss explains, "the medium of language [is] seen as the truck that [takes] [knowledge] to the market, where the 'exchange' of ideas mean[s] simply the transmission of information" (*The Origin of Negative Dialectics* 87). Spivak, particularly because of her precarious position as native informant, shares Adorno's wariness.

She traces her discomfort with the emergence of the "Third World" as a privileged signifier within radical criticism to the tendency "[t]o think of the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact heritages waiting to be recovered, interpreted, and curricularized in English translation" (*The Rani of Sirmur* 128). Her work, therefore, has been devoted to exploring "the difficulties in fixing such a signifier [the Third World or what she deems a particularly "hallowed" signifier, that of the Third World Woman] as an object of knowledge" (*The Rani of Sirmur* 128). This chapter, then, reads Spivak's continued reluctance to "fix" the Third World Woman against Adorno's affirmation of "the preponderance of the object," of epistemology as the process in which the object, not the subject, takes the lead (see Buck-Morss 88).

Does focusing on the Third World Woman as an object of knowledge have no choice but to objectify her? Can epistemology avoid the perils of information retrieval? Can the "realized difficulty of knowing" (Sangari's phrase) constitute an object lesson of a kind? Should the language of philosophy content itself with indicating how the object always escapes? If intelligibility is a function of the absence of subject and object (since meaningfulness inheres in signs), how is the diagnosis of power relations to be conducted? After all, the nexus of power-knowledge requires a hierarchical relation between subject and
object, just as discourses, which in Foucault's terms are responsible for rendering an object manifest, nameable, and describable, are not anonymous. If the intelligibility of the signifier is always in doubt, how can it nevertheless bespeak an oppression that "radical" critics use as a stick with which to beat the hegemony of interlocking systems of social order?

These questions serve to frame my critical scrutiny of Spivak's interruptions of the texts of transnational capitalism, patriarchy, and Empire. I hope to delineate the possibility of a relation between native informant and Third World Woman that does not require the denegation of the active, interpretive powers of the subject and that simultaneously brings the fate of the object at the hands of the subject to the fore.

I should like to recapitulate briefly some of the contentions that Chapter III makes in order to clarify my interest in Spivak's work as in some ways an exemplary execution of Adorno's plans for negative dialectics. Adorno's philosophy, however, simultaneously forms the basis of my critique of Spivak's methodological assumptions and procedures. I say this because I have no desire to turn my engagement with Spivak into a conflict of interpretations. Spivak's essays, as Adorno might have said, are the occasion and not the point of my critique (see Chapter III, Section II where I discuss Adorno's micrological procedure in *Against Epistemology*).

In other words, I do not wish to claim the superiority of my analysis of the texts she reads over hers--what is at stake is the viability of the strategies she employs and the tenability of the conclusions she draws. More to the point, I want to determine the political consequences of adopting a (deconstructive) epistemology that "does not wish to officiate at the grounding of societies" ("The Rani of Sirmur" 147) but prefers, instead, to rest easy in "a radical acceptance of vulnerability" (Spivak, "The Post-modern Condition: The End of Politics?" in *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*).
Adorno argues, as I have suggested, that the identity accorded the subject has been the consequence of a constitution of the object as radically other. Adorno rescues the dialectic from critical orthodoxy when he claims that the movement of the dialectic is animated by "the resistance which otherness offers to identity" (Negative Dialectics 160-61). This desire to reclaim the object or the other from the inexorable progress and sublation (Aufhebung) of the Hegelian dialectic grants the object a new status. The object is no longer merely instrumental to the subject's self-realization but remains immanent to identity as objective resistance and as "unassuaged [somatic] unrest" (Negative Dialectics 203).

Spivak imbuces the object in (merely) philosophical discourse with historical specificity. The object that Adorno describes as being immanent to but coerced by the subject becomes, within the confines of Spivak's discourse, the "subaltern" as sexed subject and ethnic other. It might also be said that she extracts the other from the epistemological confines within which Derrida asks that philosophy think its other and reintroduces the other into history. It remains to be seen whether Spivak accomplishes more than "a pointing toward that which can never be reached" (my emphasis) or whether she manages to elude the slippage between "that which language can never capture" and "that which language seems to kill" (Harvey's phrasing 131; 136).

The world that weighs upon the subject is the discourse of orientalism and of racism whose epistemic violence ensures that the subaltern does not "speak." As Derrida explains in "Racism's Last Word,"

[t]he point is not that acts of racial violence are only words but rather that they have to have a word.... [Racism] institutes, declares, writes, inscribes, prescribes. A system of marks, it outlines space in order to assign forced residence or to close off borders. It does not discern, it discriminates. (292)
Spivak's own "blueprint[s] of an interminable analysis" ("Explanation and Culture: Marginalia" in In Other Worlds 110) trespass on forbidden ground to carve a representative space from which the subaltern might speak. These blueprints, therefore, might be said to be of a piece with yet another dimension of Adorno's sense of the objectivity of truth. Not only does Spivak "lend a voice to suffering;" she produces, in the course of doing so, "truth" which "critically challenge[s] the course of history rather than merg[es] with it" (see Benjamin Snow, "Introduction to Adorno's 'The Actuality of Philosophy'" 115).

Spivak's work raises questions that theoretical discourse prefers to evade: Who or what inhabits/appropriates the category of the subject? How might the insertion of philosophy into history make it possible to trace the (de)formation of the subject to "the conditions of material production" (Negative Dialectics 284)? If one reads her texts as vital deployments of a negative dialectic between a masculine and Eurocentric self and its feminine and ethnic other, the significance of Adorno's rethinking of the discourse of the subject from the standpoint of the object becomes clear.

Spivak situates theoretical consciousness in "the arena of cultural explanations that question the explanations of culture" (Spivak, "Explanation and Culture: Marginalia" 117). In doing so, she seems to endorse Adorno's assertion that the mind does not "[lie] beyond the total process in which it finds itself as a moment" (Negative Dialectics 200). If Adorno's critique of identity hinges on the split between mental and manual labour in which categories of rationality inadvertently reproduce the constraints of capitalist relations, Spivak's essays repeatedly draw attention to the collaboration of intellectuals, institutions, and "advanced capitalist technocracy" ("Explanation and Culture: Marginalia" 107).

This displacement of the opposition between mental and manual labour (except insofar as intellectuals, in their institutional allegiances,
collude in the exploitation of the latter) is crucial if intellectuals are to avoid consigning Third World Women to "questions of daily survival" while they lament the fact that "women of privilege ... have the luxury to contemplate woman's writing and voice" (see Donna Przybylowicz, "Toward a Feminist Cultural Criticism: Hegemony and Modes of Social Division" 299).

I shall return to this problem in connection with Spivak's privileging of women who have no access to the culture of imperialism, and for whom, she claims, entering the labour force is not an unquestioned good.

It is now possible, given this hasty attempt to put Adorno and Spivak into what I hope will be a productive relation, to consider the value and efficacy of Spivak's effort to turn the negativity of the subaltern, who has hitherto been reduced to a systemic excrecence, into occasion for critique and resistance. The subaltern woman, in Spivak's texts, becomes the "effective and as yet unthought limit" (Derrida's phrasing in "Racism's Last Word" 298) of the self-consolidating discourses of Empire and humanism. Spivak has no desire to produce more versions of the subaltern as a "programmed near-[image] of [the] sovereign self [of Europe]" ("The Rani of Sirmur" 128). Instead, she seeks a mode of writing which will transfigure philosophy (theory) itself into "the prism in which [the inextinguishable color from non-being] is caught" (Adorno's phrasing in Negative Dialectics 57). Spivak, in other words, does not simply oppose, in complementary fashion, the lost self of the colonized to the sovereign self of Europe. If self-definition produces otherness as its negative term, the non-being of the other challenges the very terms of the definition.

If Spivak's trajectory can be described as "the inscription and description of a non-unitary female subject of color through her engagement, therefore also disengagement, with master discourses" (Trinh T. Minh-ha's phrasing in Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism 43), how do her "jagged transitions between the analytical and the poetical and the disruptive" (Trinh 43) enable the re-presentation of "the
impossible (feminine ethnic) real" (Trinh 43)? If it is true that "[t]o be lost, to encounter impasse, to fall, and to desire both fall and impasse" is "what happens to the body in theory" (Trinh 42), what might the fate of the body of and in the real be?

Benita Parry's "Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse" (one of the very few essays that devote reasonable space to Spivak) identifies the achievements of deconstructive analysis in the field of colonial discourse in the course of trying to ascertain the "truth" of its radical claims or the superiority of its diagnosis of the "dispersed space of power" (Parry 29) to the "adversarial rhetoric" (Parry 28) more common to the writings of critics like Fanon. Parry summarizes the tenets of deconstructive decolonization as follows:

In the territory cleared of metaphysical divisions, undifferentiated identity categories and ontological absolutes providing the ideological justifications for colonialism's system, criticism ... reveals for analysis the differential, variously positioned native -- for some critics a self-consolidating other, for others an unconsenting and recalcitrant self -- and in place of the permanently embattled colonial situation constructed by anti-colonialist theory, installs either a silent place laid waste by imperialism's epistemic violence, or an agonistic space within which unequally placed contestants negotiate an imbalance of power.

(29)

While Parry does not want to accuse "criticism" of political quietism, she is rightly troubled by its inability to translate a politics of reading into an adumbration of "native" resistance. She is equally concerned that the homogenizing impulse evident in, for example, Spivak's use of terms such as the "axiomatics of imperialism" obscures the diversity of Europe's self-presentation. Spivak, in Parry's terms, attributes absolute power to colonialist discourse and simultaneously
rejects the value of representing the role of the "native" as a combative historical subject committed to the quest for an-other knowledge (34).

Parry argues persuasively that Spivak's writing out of years of actual historical and political struggle on the part of the colonized is a consequence of the very sensitivity of her microrological analyses which transform brute power into an insidious process wherein the "native" colludes in his/her own objectification. Parry "masterfully" describes this disturbing transition in Spivak's work thus:

Where military conquest, institutional compulsion and ideological interpellation was, epistemic violence and devious discursive negotiations requiring of the native that he [sic] rewrite his position as object of imperialism is; and in place of recalcitrance and refusal enacted in movements of resistance and articulated in oppositional discourses, a tale is told of the self-consolidating other and the disarticulated subaltern. (36)

My engagement with Spivak echoes Parry's perspicacious observations, but I hope, with the help of Adorno, to "redeem" Spivak's oeuvre. This desire involves examining the implications of interpreting her interventions as performances of a negative dialectic between colonizer and colonized rather than only as tropological deconstructions. My critique, therefore, tries to come to terms with what Spivak does before faulting her for what she fails to do. In articulating the limits of her "perilous" and "interrogative" (deconstructive) epistemology, I hope to invoke the beginnings of "an-other knowledge" (Parry's phrase) that allows "the method neither quite to absorb the contents ... nor to immaterialize them" (Negative Dialectics 48). The "seeds" of this other knowledge, I hope to show, exist in the interstices of her own work, in the logic of its matter, as Adorno might have said.

Despite Spivak's problematic adoption of a deconstructive epistemology, her interest in the politics of marginality makes it
difficult to dismiss her readings out of hand. Even though she identifies truths with tropes, she continually emphasizes that these truths or tropes are politically interested figurations. Her tropological deconstructions, therefore, indicate the exclusions that shore up truth-claims. If Derrida lays bare the structure of contradictions which constitutes a work, Spivak reveals "what inhabits the prohibited margin of a particular explanation" ("Explanation and Culture: Marginalia" 106). She argues that the nature of the prohibited margin exposes the politics of the explanation in question.

She chooses to inhabit the excluded margin of cultural explanations in the name of difference. Her cultivation of marginality, it must be noted, is strategic; that is, it involves more than pointing an accusing finger at the centre ("Explanation and Culture: Marginalia" 107). Spivak defends the complexity of her position in deconstructive terms—she does not want the margin to exchange places with the centre (this desire is to be read in conjunction with her rejection of oppositional politics) but to displace the opposition between margin and centre.

In other words, by implicating herself in the centre, Spivak accuses it of marginality while allowing herself the freedom and flexibility to act as a "shuttle" between margin and centre "[who] thus narrate[s] a displacement" ("Explanation and Culture: Marginalia" 107). Spivak, however, does not confront the privilege the post-colonial intellectual must possess in order to roam the corridors of power at will, all the while proclaiming her marginality. Besides, does her privileging of those women who have no access to the culture of imperialism as objects of knowledge mean to imply that resistance can only come from those lucky enough to be "shuttles" rather than victims?

In the paper Spivak presented at Galway, she assumed an inevitable split between theory and practice when she admitted that the language of what she called "high theory" was of no use in her dialogues with women in Algeria. There, she said, the work of revolution proceeds in the way it
always has, meaning, I suppose, in a language replete with pragmatic considerations. I think there is more to this than a courageous concession to the irrelevance of theory.

Through much of her speech which described the process of gendering as internalized constraint perceived as choice, Spivak seemed oddly surprised that disenfranchised women nevertheless exercise their right to make ethical choices. Some of the members of her audience alighted upon this perception as a novelty, as if "survival" does not involve the rational adjudication of truth-claims. I dwell on this problem at some length because the apparent sensitivity to the mutual implication of politics and epistemology seems rarely to avoid the patronage of a stance that leaves the "real" work of revolution to the "other" while intellectuals confine themselves to refining epistemological categories on the other's behalf (see also Foley 121).

The numerous prolegomena to analysis that this chapter contains thus far will, I hope, admit one more. I want to reiterate Adorno's designs for a radical philosophy in the context of an essay that I have deliberately failed to mention. This hitherto silent essay might prove the instrument of Spivak's "redemption;" it will not, however, serve to resolve the sometimes impossible contradictions of her work into a spurious harmony. Since both Spivak and Adorno believe that "[n]o object is wholly known," and that "knowledge is not supposed to prepare the phantasm of a whole" (Negative Dialectics 14), I hope the absence of a "concluding cadence" (Jay's phrase) will be forgiven.

Adorno shatters the dichotomy between politics and epistemology because he believes, as I have explained, that reification bewitches both concept and object. Social contradictions, therefore, reappear as the distortion to which philosophical antinomies subject thought. Immanent critique incites the self-liquidation of concepts or the process of dialectical negation which holds concepts accountable for effacing the suffering that has sedimented itself in them.
The very transparency that concepts arrogate to themselves betrays them because it proves much too revealing of their being in the world. Materiality inheres in consciousness as the latter's immanent contradiction and thus renders absurd the belief that "the power of thought is sufficient to grasp the totality of the real" (Adorno, "The Actuality of Philosophy" 120). Adorno emphasizes, nevertheless, that even though the real functions as thought's essential limit, it is overpowered by thought's relentless desire to "rediscover itself" ("The Actuality of Philosophy" 120) in the real. Thought then "veils reality and eternalizes [the latter's] present condition" ("The Actuality of Philosophy" 120).

"The Actuality of Philosophy," a lecture Adorno gave in 1931, proves the surprising consistency of his philosophy. It is his first attempt to refashion philosophy into a discourse whose primary task would be to relinquish the illusion "that being itself is appropriate to thought and available to it" (120). For Adorno, reason can hope to "come across correct and just reality" "only in traces and ruins" (120). He aims, therefore, to "burst ... open" the relation between reason and reality (122).

Adorno transforms the stolidity of "being," the hobby horse of idealism, into an "incomplete, contradictory, and fragmentary" text which philosophy must "read" (126). The method of philosophy is to be distinguished from that of science which accepts its findings as "indestructible and static" (126). For philosophy, these findings are "sign[s] that [need] unriddling" (126). Thus he proposes the idea of philosophy as interpretation, eloquently adumbrating what such an idea would entail:

philosophy persistently and with the claim of truth, must proceed interpretively without ever possessing a sure key to interpretation; nothing more is given to it than fleeting, disappearing traces within the riddle figures of that which exists and their astonishing entwinings. Thus it reaches so
few "results." It must always begin anew and therefore, cannot do without the least thread which earlier times have spun, and through which the lineature is perhaps completed which could transform the ciphers into a text.... Authentic philosophic interpretation does not meet up with a fixed meaning which already lies behind the question, but lights it up suddenly and momentarily, and consumes it at the same time. ... philosophy has to bring its elements ... into changing constellations ... until they fall into a figure which can be read as an answer, while at the same time the question disappears. The task of philosophy is not to search for concealed and manifest intentions of reality, but to interpret unintentional reality.... (126-27)

Adorno's indebtedness to Benjamin is of course evident here, particularly when he goes on to claim that the configuration of historical images constitutes unintentional truth in contrast to the Hegelian assumption that "truth appear[s] in history as intention" (128-29). As he was fond of reiterating, "[h]istory is in the truth; the truth is not in history" (as quoted in Buck-Morss 46). Adorno describes this process of philosophical interpretation as a materialist knowledge because, in his view, "[t]he interpretation of given reality and its abolition are connected to each other" (129). The constructive dimension of philosophy is contained in the "change-causing gesture of the riddle" (129) which compels action.

The question which informs this lecture is how interpretative philosophy can "construct keys before which reality springs open" (130). The opposing modes of idealism and positivism use keys that are too large or that fit but fail to open the door. Armed with the premise that being does not submit to the rationality of thought, interpretative philosophy welcomes the moments when "irreducible reality breaks in upon it" (132). The loss of security that the reliance on historical concreteness involves
(that it is no longer possible to grasp the totality of the real), however, is not threatening to the modest hope that "it may be possible to penetrate the detail, to explode in miniature the mass of merely existing reality" (133).

Adorno's call for a "non-alienated mode of cognition" (Bagleton's phrasing in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* 2), his desire to philosophize, not about the concrete but out of it (see Nägele 74), requires the philosopher to dissolve the "blind predominance of merely existing things" (*Negative Dialectics* 30), to recognize that "their becoming fades and dwells within the things" (*Negative Dialectics* 52). Adorno wants to avoid the process by which reality that is no longer identical with its concept "splinter[s] into a profusion of particulars which [confront] the subject as opaque and inexplicable" (Buck-Morss 72).

The particular, in his philosophical method, always exists in a dialectical, mediated relation to the totality of social relations and its value lies in its contingency. The traces and ruins of which Adorno speaks are the loci of hope because their very resistance to categorization defies the existing order of things (Buck-Morss 76). This resistance mocks the classificatory and universalizing impulse inherent in the attempt to equate pigeon-holing with knowledge (Buck-Morss 72). Adorno, in short, employs a philosophical method whose "gaze [catches] the exception rather than the rule" (Buck-Morss 176), and that turns the exception into a fugitive glimpse of the rule's most profound truths.
II

I am ruefully aware that my readers are in danger of "easily forget[ting] the main thing in the course of [perusing my] extensive preliminary considerations" (Adorno's comment on reading Husserl in The Jargon of Authenticity 83); thus, I hasten to arrive at my declared destination. Spivak's entire project can be described as a persistent vigilance to the, at best, objectification, and at worst, disappearance, of women in the Third World from discourses whose "focus remains defined by the [Western] investigator as subject" (Spivak, "French Feminism in an International Frame" in In Other Worlds 150).

She writes that the discontinuity between worlds must be confronted because an attention to sexual difference does not necessarily connote an antipathy to imperialism, however benevolent the impulse of Western feminism might be. It is this problem that prompts Spivak's listing of questions she considers crucial to intellectual endeavour on the part, not only of excommunicated patriarchs, but also of canonized feminists, busily perpetuating the lie of global sisterhood:

[however unfeasible and inefficient it may sound, I see no way to avoid insisting that there has to be a simultaneous other focus: not merely who am I? but who is the other woman? How am I naming her? How does she name me? Is this part of the problematic I discuss?... ("French Feminism in an International Frame" 150)

Spivak's acknowledgement of benevolence appreciates the decision on the part of Western feminists "to suspend their judgements ... whenever the other is concerned" (Trinh's phrasing 80); but she wants to indicate that their recognition of the danger of speaking for the other also "serves as an excuse for their complacent ignorance and their reluctance to involve themselves in the issue" (Trinh's phrasing 80). Her own position as a post-colonial intellectual, colonized by the culture of
imperialism, if not subject to the brute exploitation of multinational capitalism, is, she claims, nevertheless one of token power.

She describes her status within the institution as a product of the process by which "[t]he putative center welcomes selective inhabitants of the margin in order better to exclude the margin" ("Explanation and Culture..." 107). While I hesitate to accept her abject representation of her own access to power, I sympathize with her identification of the irony which attends that access. There is also something to be said for Spivak's experience as a diasporic intellectual, the "dehumanization of ... relocation—reeducation—rededication, the humiliation of having to falsify [her] own reality, [her] voice" (Trinh's phrasing 80), that colours her sometimes remote theoretical formulations with an occasional personal urgency.

Spivak is much too intelligent to attribute much of the pain that accompanies displacement to her own experience; after all, hers was not a forced relocation and she was not fleeing the horrors of the Calcutta that fascinates and repels Western imagination and fills the latter's media. But it is precisely this displacement of the "authentic" Indian experience within the dimensions of her self that informs her critical practice.

Incidentally, the cover of The Post-Colonial Critic sports an image of what one might call a "generic" Indian woman, replete with a tight braid, dangling earrings, and what the West likes to call a caste mark on her forehead. While I do not imagine that this portrait is intended to resemble Spivak herself (at least I hope not!), the nature of the representation is, to say the least, significant. After all, it serves to introduce the reader to a woman who vigorously abjures every attempt to iron out her constitutive contradictions and homogenize her stubborn heterogeneity, one who always "register[s as other]" (Spivak, "Postmarked Calcutta, India" in The Post-Colonial Critic 79). Perhaps the juxtaposition is deliberate; that is, the conversations with Spivak serve to revoke the stereotyped image. Be that as it may, it is time to return
to Spivak's deployment of her condition of chosen exile.

She cannot "say" her reality even though she is angered by representations which distort it and compelled by the desire to stall the eager voices that rush "to fill in the blanks on [her] behalf" (Trinh's phrasing 80). The chastening realization that her inability or unwillingness to say her reality has resulted in her being said (Trinh's idea, my deployment 80), produces, I would argue, the repetitive and interminable nature of her analyses, their relentless pursuit of discourses that presume to say the other in order, predictably, to unsay those discourses.

Even if Spivak's practice of deconstruction cannot be consigned to the category of free play, there is no denying that she continues to situate her interventions (the very word gives her game away) within the inscription and de-scription of the "tried and true" codes of patriarchy and imperialism. Spivak, to borrow Audre Lorde's words, uses "the master's tools [to] dismantle the master's house" and seems relatively content to do so despite the fact that her tactics keep her trapped within the confines of "beat[ing] [the master] at his own game" (Lorde, as quoted in Trinh 80) and render her incapable of promoting genuine change.

For her, critique involves the unremitting exposure of complicity rather than the charting of opposition, the shifting of the ground under one's feet as a prelude to walking somewhere (see Hobson's description of Derrida's technique 104). Spivak's method is analogous to that of Derrida who says: "If I saw clearly ahead of time where I was going I really don't believe that I should take another step to get there [but this does] not mean ... I never know where I'm going" (as quoted in Hobson 104).

Post-colonial discourse, I submit, cannot be content with such artlessness (or artfulness); it must attempt at least a modest resolution of "the determinate tension between ... the critical and the affirmative, the radically indeterminate and the intentionally determinate" (Radhakrishnan's phrasing in "Ethnic Identity..." 214). That practice and
principle might very well prove to be at odds is no excuse for not putting
decision to the test of history, or for not letting "truth" "enter ... into
configurations and causal contexts that help to make it evident or to
convict it of its failings" (Negative Dialectics 42).

Spivak's readings occur "[w]ithin a shifting and abyssal frame,"
continually confronted with the proverbial choice that is no choice at
all: "To choose not to read is to legitimate [hegemonic] reading, and to
read no more than allegories of unreadability is to ignore the
heterogeneity of the 'material'" ("Finding Feminist Readings: Dante-Yeats"
in In Other Worlds 28-29). Whether she admits it or not, Spivak hardly
wishes that her efforts be construed as admitting to failure in advance.
As Foucault might say, to argue that discourses transmit power is
simultaneously to produce discourse that thwarts power.

To rely on a discursive practice that does no more than reveal the
field of its production is to succumb to what Spivak herself attacks as
the conservative misreading and annexation of deconstruction. Surely her
writing is a consistent battle against deconstruction's unfortunate fate:
"what was once to surpass dogmas and the tutelage of self-certainty has
become the social insurance of a cognition that is to be proof against any
untoward happening..." (Adorno's phrasing in Negative Dialectics 35).

I should like to consider, at this stage, Spivak's contentious essay
"Can the Subaltern Speak?" in order to suggest the parameters within which
the "radical" nature of her enterprise must be located. Spivak's
reluctant authority stems from her position as "native [informant] for
first world intellectuals interested in the voice of the Other" ("Can the
..." 284). Her tricky negotiation of the traffic between First and Third
Worlds involves her distance as a privileged intellectual from those women
with whom she nevertheless shares a common identity as "native." She must
contend, therefore, with a proximity to those she seeks to represent that
paradoxically reveals itself as untraversable distance.

She uses this doubled sense of the subaltern subject as at once
"irretrievably heterogeneous" ("Can the ..." 284) and uncannily alike to advantage in the construction of a theory that can no longer be placed in binary opposition to practice. What this means is that the instability of the object of knowledge undermines the possibility of a theory that is "'of' something, [that] requires a genitive, a beat which it can police or process" (Hobson's phrasing 103).

Her "intention" is to operate "like a map or graph of knowing rather than an individual self that knows, [thus inscribing] a limit to the claim to power of knowledge" ("A Literary Representation of the Subaltern: A Woman's Text from the Third World" in In Other Worlds 258). Spivak, therefore, cannot produce a theory whose "beat, [or] area of application is opposite, over against [its object]" (Hobson 103). Instead, she offers two different options: that "the production of theory is also a practice" ("Can the ..." 275) and that intellectuals practise a "vigilance precisely against too great a claim for transparency" ("Can the ..." 293).

These injunctions inform her analysis of "the relations between the discourses of the West and the possibility of speaking of (or for) the subaltern woman" (271). She begins with a critique, interestingly enough, of "those intellectuals who are our best prophets of heterogeneity and the Other ..." (272), her targets being Foucault and Deleuze. Spivak argues that the "theory of pluralized 'subject-effects' gives an illusion of undermining subjective sovereignty while often providing a cover for" "an interested desire to conserve the subject of the West, or the West as Subject" (271).

She makes this claim because of the tendency in both these intellectuals to indulge in "an unquestioned valorization of the oppressed as subject" and to declare as their objective the establishment of conditions in which the oppressed themselves would be able to speak (274). Spivak seems to share here Horkheimer's and Adorno's perception that the mere fact of oppression in no way serves as the guarantor of correct knowledge, as the wherewithal required to crash through the walls of
ideology, or as incitement to insurrection.

Moreover, the "brandishing [of] concrete experience" (275) could merely reproduce the division between "those who act and struggle [and are therefore mute] [and] those who act and speak ..." (275). Within this scenario, the intellectual need no longer implicate "himsel" in the constitutive contradictions of subject-formation or acknowledge "his" complicity with the dissemination of ideology. Spivak thus unveils the interested convergence of the representation of subalterns as "self-knowing [and] politically canny" with the representation of intellectuals as "transparent" (275), as somehow untouched by the vast economic and political machinery that constitutes the "Other as the Self's shadow" (280).

Spivak draws upon Marx's attempts to defetishize the concrete in her rejection of Foucault's and Deleuze's desire to occlude the overdetermined process which produces the other as a subject whose attempts to knit together power, desire, interest, and agency are deliberately and "ruthlessly dislocated" (280). She traces this systematic dislocation to the imperialist project in which economic and epistemic violence coincide. Her essay questions the essentialist agenda implicit in the Western intellectual's ability to consider subaltern consciousness in isolation from the "palimpsestic narrative of imperialism" (281), in "his" positing of "an unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself" (285), thus allowing "him" to "abstain from representation" (285). Spivak's point is that this abstinence is itself a form of representation, of an undeceived subaltern consciousness in whom desire and interest unproblematically coincide.

Spivak has thus far called into question the place and authority of the writing/investigating subject, a strategy not unlike Adorno's critique of identity thinking. Like Adorno, Spivak rejects the predication of the possibility of knowledge on identity ("A Literary Representation ..." 254). Her essays adumbrate the "interruption" that characterizes the
relationship between the theoretical ("no program of knowledge production
can presuppose identity as origin") and the practical (the "need for
claiming subaltern identity"), and that "persistently brings each term to
crisis" ("A Literary Representation ..." 254).

She develops this strategy in order to point out that the narrative
and history of imperialism cannot be contested merely by "substituting the
lost figure of the colonized" (295). This substitution only sanctions the
First World intellectual's ignorance because the latter constructs "a
homogeneous Other referring only to [his] own place in the seat of the
Same or the Self" (288). In her own way, Spivak does as good a job as
Adorno in rejecting the jargon of authenticity, particularly insofar as it
serves to ground "counterhegemonic ideological production" (307).

She resists the temptation to "[masquerade] as the absent
nonrepresentor who lets the oppressed speak for themselves" (292);
instead, she offers a nuanced position in which intellectuals do not
"represent (vertreten) [the other] but ... learn to represent (darstellen)
[themselves]" (289). I want to examine briefly what such a position
involves and what its implications are for the future of post-colonial
discourse. I want to suggest that this shift only apparently dissolves
the subject whom she says presides by disavowal; in reality, under the
guise of protecting the subaltern from being offered as "an object of
seduction to the representing intellectual" (285), Spivak returns the
focus squarely to the machinations of imperialist discourse, leaving the
subaltern woman to shuttle between the twin terrors of patriarchy and
imperialism, to fend for herself as well as a "pious item" "in global
laundry lists" can (308).

In "The Rani of Sirmur," Spivak makes an explicit statement of her
lack of interest in engaging in counterhegemonic ideological production.
She writes that to "nostalgically [assume] that a critique of imperialism
would restore the sovereignty for the lost self of the colonies [and that]
Europe [would], once and for all, be put in the place of the other that it
always was" ("The Rani ..." 128), is a "revisionary impulse" doomed to failure. She prefers, therefore, to produce "an alternative historical narrative of the 'worlding' of what is today called 'the Third World'" ("The Rani ... 128).

Spivak accords more value to the tracing of the itinerary of the consolidation of sovereignty and the concomitant effacement of subaltern consciousness than to the articulation of the latter's resistance. Even if one must reject "an essentialist, utopian politics" ("Can the ..." 276), is the only alternative a sweeping assertion that "[t]here is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak" ("Can the ..." 307)? Adorno is only too aware of the dislocation and incoherence to which the subject under capitalism is prone, but he insists that the mutilation the subject suffers is also the beginning of the subject's different articulation of its self in relation to an administered world.

Spivak rightly rejects the positivistic tendency to view the concrete as somehow indestructible and static, but fails to see that her own attempt to elicit the constitutive contradictions of subaltern consciousness might discover, not a definition of subaltern consciousness which encompasses its buried reality, but an active demonstration of the manner in which the subaltern disarticulates its determinations. The identity of the subaltern, in other words, exists in the latter's resistance to its identifications. If I might recall a comment I made earlier, Spivak seems to believe that because nothing is given immediately to experience or to representation, it must be deemed inaccessible.

Spivak wishes to illustrate that the subaltern on the other side of the international division of labour has, for far too long, been "dragged along as an appendage of the process of material production, without autonomy or substance of its own" (Adorno's phrasing in Minima Moralia 15). It is therefore sentimental to attempt to retrieve the subaltern self, or at least within the context of what she calls "elite approaches," ("A Literary Representation ..." 253), "the subaltern's view, will,
presence, can be no more than a theoretical fiction to entitle the project of reading" ("Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography" in *In Other Worlds* 204). However, as Adorno points out, the intellectual who "wishes to know the truth about life in its immediacy must scrutinize its estranged form, the objective powers that determine individual existence even in its innermost recesses" (*Minima Moralia* 15).

This might account for Spivak's sustained focus on the discourses and relations of material production that produce the subaltern as the object of knowledge. Her focus, however, leads her to conclude, first, that there is no space from which the subaltern can speak because of the latter's subsumption in power relations and second, that the notion of the concrete is itself a limiting proposition, one that enforces slavish conformity to the dictates of common sense. The first conclusion puts Spivak in danger of what Adorno would describe as practising critique which confirms rather than negates what it attacks (see Introduction). The second leads her to underestimate her own accomplishment. I have already commented on Adorno's notion of the object as containing both its history and its denied possibilities. Spivak's interest in the subaltern's geo-political determinations, which latter deny the transparency of the subject of knowledge as well as of the object of cognition, resists the reification implicit in a common-sense perception of facts. What she does, therefore, in locating the "immense discontinuous network of strands" of which what seems to operate as a subject is part ("Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography" 204) is to "bring the petrified [thing] [the subaltern as object of cognition] in flux and precisely thus make us aware of history" (Adorno's phrasing in *Negative Dialectics* 130).

Spivak, appropriately enough, has discovered, not the essence of the subaltern, but the latter's concreteness (in Adorno's sense of the term (see Chapter III, Section III). This concreteness can be traced to the function of the subaltern, not only as the unthought limit of Western
epistemology, but as the unresolved contradiction of the ideology of Empire. What Spivak implies but does not assert is that "[t]he aporetical concepts of philosophy are marks of what is objectively, not just cogitatively, unresolved" (see Negative Dialectics 153). For the deconstructive critic, this by no means simple-minded relation between sign and referent is impossible (see Chapter II).

Or is Spivak's point that the Western intellectual will be unable to hear even if the subaltern were to speak? If this is the case, Spivak seems to want to have her cake and eat it too (if I may be permitted a cliché). On the one hand, intellectuals who believe that the oppressed can represent themselves are castigated as engaging in sanctioned ignorance of the subaltern's position "[o]n 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..." 283). On the other hand, her own attempt to "traffic in a radical textual practice of differences" ("Can the..." 285) shifts the interest from "rendering vocal the individual" to "rendering visible the mechanism [of silencing]" ("Can the ..." 285). In this context, the epistemic violence of imperialism becomes indistinguishable from the "general violence that is the possibility of an episteme" ("Can the ..." 287).

The prospects for counterhegemonic ideological production seem bleak indeed if the discovery that the colonized have no history within the context of colonial production is matched by the contention that they cannot know and speak for themselves. The post-colonial critic, in Spivak's terms, seems confined to contesting the production of the colonial subject within Western discourse. Her praise of Derrida, for example, has to do with his desire to demote the subject of knowledge within the context of ethnocentrism ("Can the ..." 293).

The dangers of the assimilation of otherness are too familiar to warrant comment. But is there room for (female) subaltern consciousness
that is not merely a "displaced figuration," "a violent shuttling ... between tradition and modernization" ("Can the ..." 306)? Must the colonized be forced, once again, to read the narrative of imperialism, albeit this time inflected with "correct" politics? For all its theoretical sophistication, Spivak's essay seems to be operating with a schematic notion of power in which oppression seems merely a matter of gullibility.

Despite her dismissal of the jargon of authenticity, Spivak is not above privileging the sexed subaltern subject as the discourse of imperialism's unthought limit, or "the historical predicament of the colonial subaltern [as] the allegory of the predicament of all thought, all deliberative consciousness" ("Subaltern Studies ..." 204). She retains the West, therefore, as the point of reference for the voicing of the subaltern self. More to the point, however, is her desire to see "[t]hat inaccessible blankness circumscribed by an interpretable text ... developed within the European enclosure as the place of the production of theory" ("Can the ..." 294).

Is the voicing of subaltern consciousness then to become Europe's problem? Or is the subaltern now instrumental to the intellectual's unlearning of privilege? (In "Can the ...", the subaltern "cathect[s] the representative space or blank presupposed by the dominant text" ("Imperialism and Sexual Difference" 229), but in the latter essay, that space is catheted by the native informant. This collapse of the distinction between investigating subject and subaltern object is never explained). Why is the text of imperialism any more readable than that of the subaltern? If semiosis is to concern itself with what a text cannot say, why, quite frankly, would it bother? And why does the subaltern continue to recede while the narrative of imperialism overwhelms the vision?

It is here that Spivak's admiration for deconstruction does her in. Otherness is privileged as the anti-West or the West's limit-text, as the
vanishing point of the intelligibility of the discourse of imperialism. The very strategy that enables her to indicate the ruthless effacement of subaltern history and consciousness leads her to privilege that absence and that silence. As a form of resistance, Spivak's method is of a piece with the movement of différence which "produces what it forbids, makes possible the very thing that it makes impossible" (Derrida, Of Grammatology 143). There is more to this than my frequently expressed distaste for deconstruction's political ambiguity, however.

In The History of Sexuality I, Foucault writes:

... this often-stated theme, that sex is outside of discourse and that only the removing of an obstacle, the breaking of a secret, can clear the way leading to it, is precisely what needs to be examined. Does it not partake of the injunction by which discourse is provoked? Is it not with the aim of inciting people to speak of sex that it is made to mirror, at the outer limit of every actual discourse, something akin to a secret whose discovery is imperative, a thing abusively reduced to silence, and at the same time difficult and necessary, dangerous and precious to divulge?

He then explains that the curious conjunction of provocation and prohibition meant "not that sex [was consigned] to a shadow existence, but that they dedicated themselves to speaking of it ad infinitum, while exploiting it as the secret" (34-35. Italics in original). I want to suggest that this is exactly the process to which Spivak subjects the category of the sexed subaltern. Her derogatory comments on authenticity and her refusal to fetishize the concrete notwithstanding, Spivak keeps theory chained to the allure of an elusive subaltern being that is to be found, neither in the text of imperialism nor in that of insurgency; indeed, not even in between the two.

The "inaccessible blankness" of the subaltern, she says, is nevertheless what she would like to see installed as the place for the
production of theory; as, in Foucault's terms, an incitement to discourse. She is careful to indicate that the disarticulation of the subaltern is to be understood as a violent aporia rather than a blank absence, but since the subaltern can neither speak the text of female exploitation nor unravel the strands of ideological mystification, her being doubly in shadow makes her all the more effective as theory's constitutive lapse as well as its potential salvation.

Spivak is right to spurn Western intellectuals' celebration of dispersion and heterogeneity without any concession to the active dislocation of identity contingent upon the efficacy of imperialism, but, in doing so, I am not so sure she serves the political interests of the subaltern subject either. Because she fears that no theory escapes the marketplace (I'm borrowing Adorno's idea here), and that the text of insurgency could readily freeze into an object of imitation or of investigation ("Can the ..." 287), she discerns resistance in the very intangibility of subaltern consciousness.

Does the intangibility of subaltern consciousness, however, connote its unassailability (see Negative Dialectics 61 for an elaboration of this distinction)? Here, once again, is an example of Spivak's vulnerability to the jargon of authenticity. The subaltern will retain a luminous quality only because, as Adorno would say, "it can[not] be laid down in definite contents that would give the meddlesome intellect something to latch on to" (Negative Dialectics 61). Given the "secret copulating relationship" between prohibition and provocation, what is to prevent the continued proliferation of Western self-consolidation at the expense of the other that has now safely been deemed inconceivable?

On a different but related front, Spivak tirelessly attacks, as I have already opined, the prophets of heterogeneity who brandish concrete experience because they readily forget that "[k]nowledge has not, like the state police, a rogue's gallery of its objects" (Adorno's phrasing in Negative Dialectics 206). Curiously, however, she seems to want to deny
the interpretive powers of the investigating subject altogether because of what she construes, in post-structuralist fashion, to be the inherent violence of the episteme. This position, however, would deprive her pronouncements of any validity whatsoever, because she, too, must be considered to "[conceive] [her objects] as [she] conveys them" (see Negative Dialectics 206).

Since she wants to highlight precisely those whom the vast intellectual, political, and economic machinery has forgotten, as well as to let them function as a return of the repressed which wreaks havoc on the giant lie of imperialism, her representations of subaltern consciousness, however inadequate to their object, must not be allowed to fall by the wayside as manifestations of "the logic of translation-as-violation" ("Imperialism and Sexual Difference" 235). The intellectual, it seems, can desire but not touch, re-present him/herself (darstellen) but not represent (vertreten) the other, and, above all, violate but never know.

If I might make a "simple" restatement of my objection to Spivak's position, she supports "a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest" ("Subaltern Studies ..." 205. Italics in original), but avoids tackling the methodological implications of an interest in concretion. The problem, as should be clear by now, is that any endeavour that upholds the primacy of the object is immediately identified with positivist essentialism. She engages in a critical appraisal of the project of the historians/historiographers who comprise Subaltern Studies in these terms; that is, she applauds what she perceives to be their deployment of deconstructive methodology in their visibly and scrupulously political analyses.

For Spivak, "the risks of the irreducibility of cognitive 'failure' and of 'alienation' [must be] accepted" ("Subaltern Studies ..." 201). She chooses to privilege, therefore, their realizations that "subaltern consciousness is subject to the cathexis of the elite, that it is never
fully recoverable, that it is always askew from its received signifiers, indeed that it is effaced even as it is disclosed, [and] that it is irreducibly discursive" ("Subaltern Studies ..." 203).

These are edifying and necessary cautions, no doubt, because one must at all costs avoid the pitfalls of assuming that subaltern women/consciousness needs to be "corrected by [one's] superior theory and enlightened compassion" ("French Feminism ..." 135). However, she offers them as methodological presuppositions which add up to a theoretical practice that accounts for "... the enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way fall[ing] prey to its own work" (quoting Of Grammatology 24 in "Subaltern Studies ..." 201).

The importance of this generalized inscription of cognitive failure cannot, in Spivak's scheme of things, be stressed enough, because the historiographers would otherwise willy-nilly, 'insidiously objectify' the subaltern, control him [sic] through knowledge even as they restore versions of causality and self-determination to him, become complicit, in their desire for totality (and therefore totalization), with a 'law [that] assign[s] a[n] undifferentiated [proper] name' to 'the subaltern as such.' ("Subaltern Studies ..." 201)

I have already pointed to the tautological character of this move (see also Introduction), an inevitable consequence of assuming that knowledge is necessarily analytical, that it partakes of the character of a proposition, a definition, or a statement. The possibility Spivak does not explore here is the one (naturally!) Adorno suggests. Spivak envisages a focus on the particular that fractures or defers the whole, as I have said, one that does not admit that the particular might be capable of invoking (dare I say referring to?) a whole it cannot articulate.

But Adorno extends the role of the particular as he does that of totality. The impossible totality should function as a critical rather than affirmative category as I have explained (Chapter III, Section III),
but also (and this is particularly relevant here), its very deferment accords "the particular present ... [a] concrete fullness ..." (Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic 106-7). It is only thus that the reality of the idea or the episteme can be thrown into question. "Forg[ing] a practice which takes ... into account" "that what one is saying is undermined by the way one says it, radically" (Spivak, "The Post-modern Condition ..." 20) should also involve an openness to the undermining accomplished by the heterogeneity of materiality itself.

It is Spivak's repeated confusion of concretion with phenomenality (see Chapter II) that is responsible for exhausting the particularity of the subaltern women in the seeming inexhaustibility of the category (the macro-narratives of imperialism, patriarchy, and transnational capitalism or the international division of labour) and not the thing. One cannot help but regret that the eloquence she summons to the war against the sanctioned ignorance of the Western intellectual or even the native informant does not come to the defence of subaltern specificity more often.
III

I might be accused of deliberately ignoring Spivak's contention that "the truth of a human situation is the itinerary of not being able to find it" ("Feminism and Critical Theory" 77), in order to force her to conjure a reality which, by definition, is invisible or unattainable. I hasten, therefore, to experiment with a different option. Could Spivak's forays into subaltern territory be accompanied by the "wisdom" that Roland Barthes claims "the action of love obtains": "... the other is not to be known; [her or] his opacity is not the screen around a secret, but, instead, a kind of evidence in which the game of reality and appearance is done away with" (as quoted in Woman, Native, Other 49)?

Adorno, too, draws upon Marx's "[inscription of sensual immediacy] in a systematic nexus of ideological deception" (Nägele 75) in his desire to provoke empirical appearance to tell the truth. When Adorno makes philosophical interpretation conform to the unriddling of signs he, in the manner of Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud, rethinks "the dialectic of appearance and being, of surface and depth" (Nägele 75). This is why finding the answer to the riddle simultaneously destroys the question (see my discussion of "The Actuality of Philosophy" and of Derrida's formulation of the relationship between question and answer). As Nägele explains,

the "positive facts" of positivism are not "given" but are produced by a systematic nexus of deception, displacement, reversal. Truth is not on the surface, but neither is it behind or beneath.... Freud's procedure shows this move particularly clearly: whatever appears in speech acts and utterances is the product of a displacement, of a cover up, a secondary process; however, the truth is not simply behind this deceptive surface and process, it will not be found by a simple act of uncovering and particularly not by negating the
surface. The truth is nowhere else but in the deceptive secondary process itself. The process of hiding is the structure of truth. (75)

But if phenomena were themselves the truth, and there was no need to look behind them for the truth, how was this truth to be released? The world could not be changed unless it was interpreted first. It is not the elements themselves, but their configuration that makes them cognitively accessible. In order to express the "logic of the matter," therefore, the subject resorts to an "exact fantasy" ("The Actuality of Philosophy" 131) which is at once an attempt to "abide strictly within the material" ("The Actuality of Philosophy" 131) and a desire to escape its confines insofar as the object is revealed in a new modality. In short, while the subject surrenders to the object, the latter does not remain unchanged by the encounter (see also Buck-Morss 86-90).

In Spivak's writing, as I have begun to suggest, a similar process is at work. She seems to believe that "the discourse must search in restless pursuit of an imaginary goal which it will never reach because the lack of its indefatigable, if subterranean, desire is precisely the apparatus of the quest" (Barker's phrasing 110). This belief, I would surmise, informs the manner in which her interruptions burst open the relation between reason and reality and mock thought's desire to read the real as its reflection.

Her belief, moreover, contains a political desire to represent the truth of the situation of the subaltern as "the itinerary of [the latter's] silencing" ("The Post-modern Condition ..." 31) within the narrative of the West's history. The tracing of this itinerary foregrounds the negotiation between epistemological phenomena and structures of violence that cannot be contained within discursive realms (Spivak, "Strategy, Identity, Writing" in The Post-Colonial Critic 36). The subaltern, precisely because she functions as the vanishing point of the intelligibility of Western discourse, becomes the unintentional
instrument of the deconstitution of its founding concepts, or, to put it more directly, functions as the excess that brings to light the rottenness at/of the core.

In "The Rani of Sirmur," Spivak proposes a reading of archival material in order to suggest the difficulties involved in any historical attempt to get the story straight. Her method, like Adorno's, distinguishes itself from one which seeks reality behind given data. Since the archival material itself needs considerable sifting and manipulation, it conforms to the typology of the philosophical text in Adorno's subtle imagining. It is important to note that Spivak proposes a reading, because the historical record is unprocessed and therefore presents itself to the theorist, not as a graspable whole or an archaeological find, but as, in Adorno's terms, an "incomplete, contradictory, and fragmentary" text that Spivak must interpret, reconstruct, and reevaluate. She must proceed, therefore, with due trepidation, because there is, as yet, no fixed object of investigation as well as no results that can be foreseen.

As Spivak makes clear, the historical/archival records "...show the soldiers and administrators of the East India Company constructing the object of representations that becomes the reality of India" ("The Rani ..." 129). She is appreciative, as a consequence, of Dominick La Capra's warning against the privileging of archives, however textual their deployment. The archive, as La Capra points out, inadvertently functions as "a stand-in for the past that brings the mystified experience of the thing itself" (as quoted in "The Rani ..." 130). Her intention is to read historical documents not merely as "quarries" (La Capra's phrase) for facts, but as overdetermined relics of the "thematics of imperialism" ("The Rani ..." 130).

It is in the context of "imperial governance" (130) that the object emerges as a "cross-hatching of condensations" (130) and, one assumes, displacements, if the Freudian thematics implicit in this essay are taken
at face-value. I think Spivak resorts to Freud because she wants to explore the relation between the epistemic violence which the subject of imperialism inflicts and the desire which the native informant feels for the lost object of her analysis.

Spivak's procedure can, in Adorno's terms, be envisaged as an "unriddling," as an attempt to unpack the "astonishing entwinings" of desire, thought, and matter. She has, after all, only traces and ruins of an irrecoverable reality at her disposal; worse, these are traces of imperial governance. The object, that is the Rani, is already lost to Spivak's compassionate gaze, the former does not exist in any simple sense and neither has she been concealed in order to be made manifest by an intrepid explorer such as Spivak. But if Spivak's reader expects, not the spirit or essence of the Rani but a "constellation" of the changing configurations of her "entwinings" with "native" and British patriarchy and Empire or, if one wills, a figure in the carpet, that reader is both satisfied and frustrated.

Spivak's project is unmistakable: "to inspect soberly the absence of a text that can 'answer one back' after the planned epistemic violence of the imperialist project" (131). It seems clear that even as she transforms ciphers into readable texts, Spivak does not permit herself a willingness to be surprised. In other words, the Rani's absence is a foregone conclusion. But, as Adorno might ask, is there a crack or a crevice within this pieced together, but nevertheless formidable, collage of oppression, misinformation, misrepresentation, native collaboration, and the sheer weight of circumstances that conspire against the Rani, through which the "unintentional reality" of the Rani might seep? Sites of desire and representation, after all, do not have to reconstruct a sovereign self, which impossibility seems to be Spivak's beef against revisionary impulses or the language of nativism.

Because Spivak's attention remains trained on the construction of the Rani as the object of imperialism, her reading of dispatches, letters,
and consultations concerning the deposing of the Rani's husband and the subsequent control to which she and her young son were subject, is geared towards uncovering "the force [which] make[s] the 'native' see himself as 'other'" (133). Spivak produces a reading of the texts at her disposal that "masterfully" traces the process by which the alien is domesticated as Master and the native obliged, ironically, to "cathect the space of the Other on his home ground" (133). In this scenario, the contradiction between the colonizer pitching his tent on what he must represent to himself as uninscribed earth and the dependence of the intelligibility of "[t]he narrative of imperialism—as—history" (134) on "planned" (134) violence is never explored except to affirm the relationship as one of contradiction.

Here the confusion stems from what Adorno would call the phrase giving birth to the reality. In other words, the substantiality of the systematic control of land and the forcible removal of its natural or rightful inhabitants sits uneasily with the materiality of a representation in which the alien unintentionally deceives himself that he is occupying uninscribed territory. Of course, ideology is born in the contradiction between representation and reality, but at the risk of re-introducing intentionality into the trajectory of imperialism, I think this representation of matters between alien master and native slave seems unlikely.

The economic motives of imperialism were after all never in doubt, and least of all to the scions of the East India Company. The conquest of territory, as the history of wars repeatedly bears out, is a logical consequence when trading rights are involved. Because imperialists use up a great deal of pen and paper to explain away their actions, it is a mistake to assume them to have been "unaware" that they were massacring hordes of natives to stake their claim on the land. In this instance, I think it fair to presume that the imperialists were the last to believe their own rationalizations. I do not want to suggest that imperialists
were given to introspection or moral conflict; I think, merely, that there is something to be said for Marlow's comments on the colonists' devotion to efficiency in the opening pages of *Heart of Darkness*.

Spivak offers a competent analysis of the imperialist conspiracy that produces "an 'other' text--the 'true' history of the native Hill states" (135), but does not, in the course of this analysis, undertake an examination of this conspiracy in terms of its effect on the imperialist subject. A recognizable phase of the project of imperialism, as Marlowe sees it, is one in which the colonist is no longer distinguished by his belief in the idea or his appetite for force. He is, instead, the quintessential bureaucrat who effects an inversion of means and ends; that is, colonization is a job like any other, and the colonist can be asked to do no more than his duty, to follow orders as best he can. The devotion to efficiency, in such a reading, produces a complex (imperial) subject, one whose non-monolithic status is not only a matter of class composition or social positionality (133), but whose agency is predicated upon his instrumentality as, not surprisingly, an agent of Empire.

Spivak seems to recognize the importance of reconstituting intentionality as a devotion to efficiency, and the master as the subject of the instrumental rationality crucial to "the 'interested' science of war" (135) because, at this point in her essay, representation inexplicably assumes a "planned" (135) status and loses its character as ideological deception. Spivak never distinguishes sufficiently between planned and overt representations (135), and her essay succumbs to an aporia on this score.

A dialectical approach would have served Spivak's interests admirably here: if the Rani's fate makes visible "unintentional reality," one that defeats the archival documents' "intention" to write her out of historical existence since the riddle of her absence demands interpretation, the intentionality of the project of imperialism can simultaneously be rewritten, not only as a telescoping of determinations
(136), and certainly not as a deliberate(d) cause (136), but as the trajectory of truth in which the debris of history continually surfaces to ensure that conquerors are never redeemed by their unselfish belief in the idea (Marlow's phrase). Similarly, the relation between Birch (instrument as agent) and the Rani (instrument as allegory) is insufficiently explored, perhaps because Spivak tends to absolutize imperial governance.

Spivak wants to make sure that understanding is not construed as forgiveness (136), which explains why she eschews the temptation to develop the strands of determination into a decipherable pattern or even a momentary illumination. Her traces and ruins consume any significance they might have for the understanding because she wants to retain the irreducibility of the epistemic violence of the narrative of imperialism. What this position implies is that imperialism is a form of displacement that serves to ground the race-class-gender determinations (137).

In order to resist the transformation of over-determination into a species of determinism, Spivak removes, in a curious move, the narrative of imperialism from its grounding in history or from the function it has hitherto held which is to tell the truth of history. Instead, the narrative of imperialism becomes akin to différance, a non-originary ground of the process of grounding socio-political processes in their race-class-gender determinations. Since the narrative of imperialism is a ground which figures an originary displacement, it troubles the process of narrativization itself in which "the willed (auto)biography of the West masquerades as disinterested history" (131).

I wonder whether this discursive displacement of the material reality of imperialism puts the Rani at an even further remove even though the effects of the brutal history which lies in truth are only too palpable on her person or in her lack of personhood. Spivak relinquishes the security which macro-narratives offer in favour of what troubles the edge of hegemonic discourses, what is in danger of being destroyed by blundering instruments of conventional analysis that seek to explain
events or determine causes rather than trace the relations which produce causes as effects of effects.

But her emphasis on the historicity and narrativity of events does not enable an engagement with historical images or particulars in their concreteness, or does it? Spivak identifies the stages which seem to draw her ever closer to the Rani, the mediations which envelop the Rani's subjectivity. Why does Spivak choose this figure who appears to have little or no presence as an individual but whose instrumentality in the designs of Empire (Spivak says the dismemberment of Sirmur was on the cards) is only too plain? Her obscurity is instrumental to Spivak's own method which seeks to demonstrate "the allegorical predicament" (144) of the Rani "caught ... between patriarchy and imperialism" (144).

Spivak rejects the desire to see the Rani as an individual because such a desire occludes the fact that she emerges as such within the text of imperialism only because the English want Sirmur in the hands of "a weaker vessel" (142) who is guarding a young son. This individualistic focus would keep Spivak within the confines of discoursing about the concrete rather than from out of it. Instead, Spivak discovers the Rani amidst the overwhelming defacement of the names of widows who suffered the fate of self-immolation and the correspondingly meticulous records of the names of the Company's cadets.

It is interesting, however, that Spivak glosses over the record of the Rani's astuteness and generosity because the latter's actions are "interfere[d] with ... authoritatively" (143) by the "young white man in her own household" (144). I suspect that Spivak wants to avoid lapsing into an individualistic focus that would render the real relations of power askew. However, it seems important that Spivak indicate why the Rani's actions do not count as "evidence" in her desire to "touch ... some remote substance" of her (147).

Once again, the Rani's declared intention to commit Sati becomes the occasion for Spivak's reconstruction of her allegorical predicament.
Spivak's comments on the relation between sanctioned suicide and subject formation are insightful and powerful. She writes that this counter-narrative of women's consciousness and desire produced not only the imperialist motif of white men saving brown women from brown men (see "Can the ..."), but also served the suspect function of according the sexed subject free will. The irony, of course, is that "free will" meant allowing oneself to be dissuaded by a British officer or choosing death as the signifier of female desire.

The records do not indicate whether the Rani did commit Sati after all, but given the force and persuasion on the side of the British, it is unlikely that she could "choose" to die. Spivak offers the possibility that the English misread the Rani, but uses this perception merely to prove that the Rani "emerges only when she is needed in the space of imperial production" (146), and to insist on the "textualization that violated [Spivak's] Rani" (147).

I have no quarrel with Spivak's concern with "the fabrication of representations of historical reality" (147), because she performs the invaluable task of connecting the interpretation of a given reality to the abolition of its oppressive power. Her interest in the Rani as an object of knowledge, as a historical particular, serves to expose her mediated connection to the totality of social relations. There is, as Spivak says, no real Rani to be found; however, even if the Rani cannot be presented whole and complete and delectable enough for the appetite for knowledge, is there a value to be accorded the brief glimpses one gets of her in Birch's or the other imperial texts?

Might those moments when the Rani expresses a desire or performs an action (even if it was nipped in the bud) be construed as the moments when Spivak's traversal of the space of imperial production might have been brought up short, when "irreducible reality breaks in upon" the risky enterprise of unriddling signs? Could the modest hope of "penetrat[ing] the detail," the discarded piece of the imperial puzzle, be a genuine
probability because the Rani's resistance is already beginning to crack
the smooth façade of imperial discourse and power?

Spivak of course does not want to render the traces of the Rani
merely opaque and inexplicable, but her own reading is an "exact fantasy"
that abides within the archival material and transcends that material only
to "imagine [the Rani] in her simple palace, separated from the authority
of her no doubt patriarchal and dissolute husband, suddenly managed by a
young white man in her own household ... [and] caught thus between
patriarchy and imperialism ..." (143-44).

That her "imagination" does not extend to the strain the Rani seems
to have put on the patriarchal and imperial text which apparently
contained her is an example of a puzzling neglect on the part of a
deconstructive critic who is, by definition, interested in loose threads
that unravel a text. I want to conclude my discussion of the Rani with
the "fantasy" (I am well aware of the remove at which my own re-reading is
placed) that a canny and knowing subaltern consciousness might be found in
the political embarrassment the Rani's putative Sati might have caused
(146). Spivak herself admits the Rani was "astute;" it is this figuration
of the Rani as the site of (to be sure failed) resistance to epistemic
violence rather than in the space of imperial production that I prefer to
"imagine," or, that is at least equally persuasive.
PLEASE NOTE

Page(s) missing in number only; text follows. filmed as received.

209--217

UMI
CHAPTER V

EDWARD W. SAID

There is no document of culture which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. --Walter Benjamin

Whoever pleads for the maintenance of this radically culpable and shabby culture becomes its accomplice, while the man who says no to culture is directly furthering the barbarism which our culture showed itself to be.

--Theodor W. Adorno

Edward W. Said's passionate and prolific intellectual career, as a jaded "master" of ceremonies might say, needs no introduction, at least within the hallowed confines of the academy and, I suspect, within the ranks of the CIA, anxious to keep under surveillance an outspoken and courageous critic of the neo-colonial pretensions of the United States. Said is a particularly interesting exemplar of the "intellectual in emigration," because the humane, ethical, tempered, and (for the most part!) civil accents that distinguish his elegant and refined work are persistently in the service of a radical critique of violence committed precisely in the name of (Western) "virtues, humanism, morality ..." ("Identity, Negation and Violence" 60).

The bulk of Said's writing bears the unmistakable stamp of a voice in the wilderness that refuses to be stifled, one whose strength is a consequence of its intense awareness of the precariousness of the human condition. In this sense, Said's stance enables him to infuse historical categories with the richness and density of individual experience, to retain within critical discourse that has effectively banished the individual (a mere effect of the ideology of humanism, after all), the possibility that "the individual has gained as much in richness, differentiation and vigour as, on the other hand, the socialization of society has enfeebled and undermined him [sic]" (Adorno's phrasing in Minima Moralia 17).

The intellectual, in Said's scheme of things, is capable of genuine critical negation only because s/he "forgets neither the system's claim to
totality, which would suffer nothing to remain outside it, nor that [s/he] remonstrates against this claim" (Adorno's phrasing in *Minima Moralia* 16). Said shares with Adorno the concern for "the liquidation of the particular" (*Minima Moralia* 17) endemic to identity-thinking, to self-affirmation that presides at the expense of whatever that self constitutes as other.

This concern produces a critical corpus which privileges the voice of the diasporic intellectual, one who can be counted on to discern the politics of appropriation implicit in the desire to represent the colonized or to let them speak for themselves. Crucially, therefore, Said departs from post-structuralist practice in that his desire to dismantle the authority of the "subject of the West, or the West as Subject" is also a desire to replace that subject or usurp its prerogative. Far from being empty, therefore, the place of the subject in Said's discourse is that of the post-colonial intellectual, one in which the latter can be at home with homelessness. Besides, the process of decolonization gains its energy from the imminent demise of the West.

The "complicity that enfolds all those who, in face of unspeakable collective events, speak of individual matters at all" (Adorno's phrasing in *Minima Moralia* 18) is also, in Said's work, the condition of the intellectual's power and veracity. The privilege which accrues to intellectuals as a consequence of their "permitting themselves to think at all in face of the naked reproduction of existence" (Adorno's phrasing in *Minima Moralia* 27) is one they must accept, Adorno writes, with "the shame of still having air to breathe, in hell" (*Minima Moralia* 28).

Said, I submit, translates this "shame" into a code of intellectual conduct. Said's texts gain their power from the uncompromising realization that the fact of Empire radically corrodes the claims of Western civilization. It is not possible, therefore, as Adorno well knew in the context of Nazism, "to defame barbarism and rely on the health of culture. Rather, it is the barbaric element in culture itself which must
be recognized" ("Spengler after the Decline" in Prisms 71). Independent thought, for Said as for Adorno, is born of entanglement in and responsibility for the travails of human existence, its character that of "steadfast diagnosis of oneself and others" (Minima Moralia 33), and its informing principle the "mutilation" which, according to Adorno, every intellectual émigré suffers. This condition of exile or displacement, which saps the historical dimension that nourishes one's knowledge and expropriates one's language, serves as "[t]he splinter in [the émigré's] eye" which becomes, paradoxically enough, "the best magnifying-glass" at his/her disposal (Minima Moralia 50).

It seems appropriate now to determine the implications of intellectual contemplation conceived of as "distanced nearness" (Minima Moralia 90) and conducted, or so it hopes, without velleity or violence. What, in other words, is the value of Said's faith in the "concrete awareness of the conditionality of human knowledge" (Adorno's phrasing in Minima Moralia 128)? Is there a contradiction between Said's epistemological model which relies on being-in-the-world and his intellectual posture which privileges displacement, even detachment? How can the content of knowledge include the transformation of material reality?

Does the form of Said's "historical consciousness, ... in its very willingness still to be a thought," bear the "trace[s] of connivance at the world" because "the privilege that permits immunity" is flaunted in "[t]he detachment necessary to all thought" (Adorno's phrasing in Minima Moralia 99)? In this sense, the serenity and poise which make his style instantly recognizable might contain "a hidden violence: he can afford to talk in this way because no-one interrupts the master" (Adorno's phrasing in Minima Moralia 99).

I have no intention of impugning Said's unimpeachable intellectual integrity; I merely wish to address the contradictions of the intellectual's situation, particularly those of the post-colonial
intellectual who takes up cudgels on behalf of the vanquished and against the victors. More to the point, these are considerations that trouble Said himself, and I hope to put them to work in order to elicit Said's particular brand of critical and determinate negation.

I use Adorno's pronouncements on the simultaneous necessity and injustice of intellectual labour somewhat liberally here because Said makes several appreciative references to Adorno's critique of identity and plans for dialectical negation without relating Adorno's thinking explicitly or systematically to his own intellectual praxis, political desires, epistemological models, or lambasting of post-structuralism.
SECTION I

"SECULAR" CRITICISM: (DIS)PLACING THE POST-COLONIAL INTELLECTUAL

The essays which comprise Said's *The World, the Text, and the Critic* strive to project a future for intellectual production in which "textuality" will no longer function as the "exact antithesis and displacement of what might be called history" ("Introduction: Secular Criticism" 3). Said takes to task the institutional contexts which encourage the continued "divorce" between "the cultural realm and its expertise" and "their real connections with power" ("Introduction ..." 2) in the name of professionalism. He advocates, instead, a radical embrace of all "that is worldly, circumstantial, or socially contaminated" ("Introduction ..." 3) in the interests of reconstituting the relation between "texts and the existential actualities of human life" ("Introduction ..." 5). What this entails, therefore, is the refusal to "accept uncritically the conventional opposition between methodology and material knowledge" (Adorno's phrasing in "Foreword" *Prisms* 8).

The critic comes to figure that shadowy place between text and world, charged with the unenviable task of forging anew the links between criticism and its "constituency, the citizens of modern society, who have been left to the hands of 'free' market forces, multinational corporations, the manipulations of consumer appetites" ("Introduction ..." 4). S/he must adjudicate the rival claims of dominant culture and totalizing critical systems ("Introduction ..." 5), so that her/his constituency might have more on its mind than textual aporias. Said seems unembarrassed by this rather tall order for the critical consciousness, and proceeds, with a nice combination of vigour and circumspection, to discover what taking account of the world might mean.

In the essay that opens the collection, Said turns the example of Erich Auerbach's exile from fascist Europe into the allegorical predicament of the critical consciousness he envisages. This
consciousness transfigures the "concrete dangers" ("Introduction ..." 6) of the exiled condition into "a positive mission" ("Introduction ..." 7). Said reads Auerbach's exile as resonant with implications for received notions of nation, culture, community, and milieu.

Auerbach's exile in Istanbul, Said notes, is particularly significant because the latter connotes, in occidental imagination, a metaphysical opposition to, and alienation from, Europe. Mimesis, therefore, is a product of the fact of homelessness, its affirmation of the Judaic-Christian tradition inseparable from the experience of "agonizing distance" ("Introduction ..." 8) between critical consciousness and the nurturant influences of tradition. Said's essay indicates the worldliness of Mimesis through the attention he pays the circumstances entailed by the text itself ("Introduction ..." 4).

The negative dialectic between exile and affirmation that Said discerns in the conditions which produced Auerbach's "definitive" work becomes the occasion for an incisive analysis of the predication of ideas of culture, nation, and milieu upon the affirmation of identity and the exclusion, silencing, or domestication of alterity. Contrary to routinely benign conceptions of culture as the name for that which fosters a sense of belonging and community, Said offers "culture" as that which aggressively fortifies itself against what "it believes to be not itself" ("Introduction ..." 12).

Said argues that culture, far from being a figuration of "man's best self," as Arnold might have put it, is "a system of discriminations and evaluations" ("Introduction ..." 11) which asserts the hegemony of "an identifiable set of ideas" ("Introduction ..." 10) rather than encourages their free play. Said also dissolves the familiar distinction between culture and society or civilization in favour of an expanded sense of culture as the natural ally of the State (clearly part of Arnold's designs for culture), both busily perpetuating national identity through a "constantly practiced differentiation" ("Introduction ..." 12) and wrested victory "over everything not [themselves]" ("Introduction ..." 14).
Where, in this battleground of alterity and identity, is the critical consciousness to be located? Said carves a space for individual consciousness, predictably enough I suppose, "at a sensitive nodal point" in which "a worldly self-situating" issues, not merely in "conformity or belonging," but in "distance, or what we might also call criticism" ("Introduction ..." 15). The critic, whose consciousness inhabits the world just as it exists in its body, becomes the site of a dialectical interplay between what Said calls "filiation" and "affiliation" ("Introduction ..." 16), an interplay which disturbs the complacency of those "supported by known powers and acceptable values" ("Introduction ..." 16), and renders the boundaries of nation, culture, and selfhood infinitely transgressable.

Said's argument thus far seems to conform to liberal humanism at its best, upholding the values of belonging and conformity even as it keeps the spirit of inquiry alive. It is, nevertheless, an explicit contradiction of the ideology of humanism insofar as the normative value of Man is predicated upon the domination of "men" who dare to deviate from that norm. Said's interest in methodology, moreover, is at odds with what he tirelessly criticizes in post-structuralist methodology and the academic Left--the skeptical tendency to call everything into question and criticize nothing (Adorno's phrasing). Moreover, he takes considerable pains to distinguish his interest in the social, economic, and institutional contexts of intellectual production from a mere sociology of knowledge, since the latter fails to identify who regulates whom. In short, for Said, critical theory "is a theory of human relations only to the extent that it is also a theory of the inhumanity of those relations" (Adorno's phrasing in "The Sociology of Knowledge and its Consciousness" Prisma 41).

The provocative aspect of his exploration of the connections between exile and belonging becomes evident only when he suggests that the "process of representation, by which filiation is reproduced in the
affiliative structure and made to stand for what belongs to us ..., reinforces the known at the expense of the knowable" ("Introduction ..." 22-23). Said demonstrates that the "natal" ties which bind the individual consciousness to culture obscure the processes of "acquisition and appropriation" ("Introduction ..." 23) that underpin the rootedness of culture. In this scenario, the individual consciousness readily loses its critical detachment and serves as a willing accomplice in "the transfer of legitimacy from filiation to affiliation" ("Introduction ..." 24). In other words, culture becomes the saviour of society, the domain in which consciousness ironically expresses its disaffection for prevailing reality in the very categories of rationality that reality has produced.

It is this transition from a negotiated treaty between detachment and belonging to the uncritical affirmation of dominant culture that Said describes as "the regulated, not to say calculated, irrelevance of criticism" ("Introduction ..." 25). This affirmation reflects the common conception of ideas as regulative truths rather than as themselves "afflicted with the injustice under whose spell they were conceived" (Adorno's phrasing in "Spengler after the Decline" Prisms 66). His plea for "secular criticism," therefore, entails a consciousness that is "always situated; [that is] skeptical [and] reflectively open to its own failings [but] by no means ... value-free" ("Introduction ..." 26).

This rather academic (antisepctic?) conception of criticism is, at the close of the essay, aligned with "oppositional" practice, one that populates the mere efficacy of method with alternative acts and intentions ("Introduction ..." 29). Despite this belated sop to the coercive character of cultural affirmation, the dignified humanity and "mastered irony" (Said's phrase in "Swift as Intellectual" 89) that characterize Said's essay curiously empty secular criticism of political urgency. In other words, Said seems more interested in adumbrating an intellectual ethic (a Stephen Daedalus figure, perhaps, who is the conscience or consciousness of his race?), in critical protocol or decorum rather than
in the politics of critical (dis)engagement (see also Foucault, "Politics and Ethics: An Interview" in *The Foucault Reader*).

What, precisely, is at stake in reinforcing the known at the expense of the knowable? How does the text's "worldliness," its combination of "sensuous particularity as well as historical contingency" ("The World, the Text, and the Critic" 39), contribute to its status as event? If Said's claims for secular criticism transform texts into objects "whose interpretation ... has already commenced and [which are] already constrained by, and constraining, their interpretation" ("The World ..." 39), how does the analysis of their determinate nature further our understanding of texts as "fundamentally facts of power" ("The World ..." 45)? In other words, Said alights on a concept such as "worldliness" rather than, say, materiality, because he wants, like Spivak and Adorno, to transform facts into "processes of infinite mediation" ("Foreword" *Prisms* 7).

In raising these questions, Said makes cultural discourses the objects of secular criticism in order to achieve at least two aims. The urbane world of criticism is suddenly rent by matters "having to do with ownership, authority, power, and the imposition of force" ("The World ..." 48). In other words, because culture "cloak[s] itself in the particular authority of certain values over others" ("The World ..." 53), the notion of culture itself becomes indistinguishable from ethnocentrism. Said can then deploy the discursive situation as a paradigm of the relation between colonizer and colonized; or, rather less persuasively, use the relation between colonizer and colonized to interpret the discursive situation.

The reciprocity between these two options produces his second aim—to construe the worldliness of texts and of criticism as representative of historical contingency; that is, if I might borrow an idea of Benjamin's, the traffic between text and critical consciousness embodies or reproduces "the present in the course of its articulation, its struggles for definition" ("The World ..." 51) in order to explode the continuum of
history. This explosion is possible because criticism is a process which "articulat[es] those voices dominated, displaced, or silenced by the textuality of texts" ("The World ..." 53).

The significance of texts, then, is radically contested terrain because the textuality of texts displaces their circumstantiality as it does the connections between ideas and social reality. Secular criticism is informed by the Foucauldian principle that texts are "an integral, and not merely accessory, part of the social processes of differentiation, exclusion, incorporation, and rule" ("Criticism between Culture and System" 215). As for the intellectual, s/he must disclose the systematic links between the legitimacy of knowledge and the instrumentality of power or, more specifically, s/he must remain particularly alert to those moments when the meaning of "to administer, study, and reconstruct" slips imperceptibly into the significance of "to occupy, rule, and exploit" ("Criticism between ..." 222), when cultural affirmation becomes indistinguishable from vulgar bullying.

But even as scholarship repeatedly "take[s] account of power, money, and colonial conquest" ("Raymond Schwab and the Romance of Ideas" 265), it must continue to be imbued with a "modest (perhaps shrinking) belief in noncoercive human community" as well as with "an unstoppable predilection for alternatives" ("Traveling Theory" 247). This predilection infuses Said's vision of secular criticism with historical energy, with "work, intention, resistance, effort, ... conflict" ("Traveling Theory" 245), and, finally, with adversarial passion rather than merely healthy cynicism or humane skepticism.

Said's conception of "secular criticism," however, seems less subtle than it might be. He does not address explicitly what Adorno calls "[t]he process of neutralization" to which culture is subject ("Culture and Administration" 100). In other words, Said's perceptive delineation of culture's complicity with, even culpability for, relations of power cannot bear to dispense with a space from which the voice of reasonable dissent
can be raised. Culture’s uselessness is inexorably transformed into "tolerated negativity" ("Culture and Administration" 101) in a world subject to instrumental rationality. Said seems reluctant to confront the institutional guarantees which gird intellectual power. The institution certainly functions as his oblique point of reference and he objects at specific moments to its unsavoury political and economic allegiances, but makes little attempt to unpack the vexed relation between a generalized acknowledgement that the "claim to being autonomous, critical and antithetical [can never be] assert[ed] ... with total legitimacy" and the fact that the intellectual "is granted the space in which to draw breath immediately by that power against which it rebels" ("Culture and Administration" 102). The self-imposed marginality of the post-colonial critic, as I remarked earlier, turns alienation itself into a profitable commodity.

Further, the emphasis in Said’s writing seems to be on the worldliness of the (potentially orientalist) critic; he is less inclined, therefore, to contend with the "administration" (in Adorno’s sense of the term) which "is not simply imposed upon the supposedly productive [native informant] from without [but] multiplies within this person himself [sic]" ("Culture and Administration" 104). To what extent, in other words, is the no doubt disaffected post-colonial intellectual "himself" implicated within the processes of material production? If, as Adorno argues, culture has become indistinguishable from the "congealed content of educational privilege" ("Culture and Administration" 108), does colonization produce "a savage mind" equally content to function "as an administered supplement" to the processes of material production?

If I might return to the question of Auerbach’s exile, Said testifies to the birth of critical consciousness in the experience of displacement. This privileging of exile is a concomitant to Said’s interest in consciousness as the site of resistance and critique rather than of conformity. The dialectic of filiation and affiliation, however,
concedes too much to the pleasures and profits of displacement. What if Auerbach's capacity to negate his culture was a consequence of being "satiated with tradition" rather than displaced from it (I'm using Adorno's idea here; see "Culture and Administration" 102)?

I raise this issue in order to begin to distinguish Said's negative stance from the procedure of negative dialectics. You recall that negation, for Adorno, is possible only if thought thinks against itself. In this sense, the situatedness of knowledge is more than an ontological concession to the finiteness of things. In the context of the relationship between tradition and exile, Adorno argues that the negation of tradition is not mere wholesale repudiation, but the embodiment of a desire to restore the vitality of tradition against its ossification and self-satisfaction ("Culture and Administration" 102).

Critical consciousness that wishes to oppose the continual imposition of the known at the expense of the knowable cannot hope to succeed unless it acknowledges that "it is only where that which was is still strong enough to form the forces [of tradition] within the subject and at the same time to oppose them that the production of that which has not yet been seems possible" ("Culture and Administration" 102). Said seems less inclined to explore the possibility that while Auerbach's "agonizing [physical] distance" from the Judaeo-Christian tradition produced predictable self-consolidation at the expense of the other, the agonizing proximity of the culture within might also have been responsible for Auerbach's critical alienation.

The words Said chooses to describe critical consciousness—"skeptical," "open," "reflective"—tend to mitigate Adorno's tougher sense of the process of negation as one of struggle and conflict between equally strong forces, forces which, in equal measure, are imposed from without and multiply within. Said seems willing to admit that "orientalism" could be the nemesis of both colonizer and native informant, but the virulence of the latter's negation stems, Said implies, only from the consciousness
of being victimized and alienated by "tradition."

Said, of course, wishes to retain, in the manner of Adorno, a moment of spontaneity for critical consciousness, wherein "reified consciousness begins to cede to a consciousness of reification" (R. Holub's phrasing in a review of Adorno's Prisma 286), and the critic "is still in a position to alter the function of the institution within which [his] consciousness expresses itself" ("Culture and Administration" 108). However, if "secular criticism" is to avoid the all-too-easy process by which the fact and experience of colonization become tantamount to critical validity, or by which the colonized carry the wounds of Empire as if branded with social untruth, a rather more rigorous and unflinching confrontation with institutions becomes crucial.

Adorno would concur with Said that hope is to be located in difference understood as divergence from the totalizing claims of culture and the systems of knowledge it produces, but he is only too aware that the success of ideology confirms the unpalatable suspicion that, all too often, "domination is propagated by the dominated" (Minima Moralia 183). It is precisely this pessimistic contention that Said challenges in "Intellectuals in the Post-Colonial World." Said argues that because the meaning of colonial rule is "by no means ... a settled question" (44), the analysis of colonization has produced "a politics of blame" (45. Italics in original) which forces the colonized to experience gratitude for modernization in the wake of colonization and which issues in regret for the loss of the colonial past. While non-Western peoples are themselves responsible for simple denunciation (46), the "hatred of colonialism" (45) must not, therefore, be obscured.

The post-colonial intellectual, in these circumstances, becomes representative of the "constitutive limitations imposed on any attempt to deal with relationships that are polarized, radically uneven, remembered differently" (45). In other words, the dilemma of the post-colonial intellectual is precisely "his" consciousness of inhabiting a no-"man's"
land between First and Third Worlds, neither of which acknowledges "him" as its own. Said points to those Third World intellectuals who collude in "a whole set of appeals to an imagined history of one-way Western endowments and free hand-outs followed by a reprehensible sequence of ungrateful bitings of that grandly giving "Western" hand" (47) and obscure the "recourseless submission" to European superiority that the colonized continue to endure (48).

Said, even as he rejects the search for alternatives within a system that has made unthinkable those very alternatives (49), wants to make room for a process by which the post-colonial intellectual, situated at the juncture of this world and a different one, can turn the narrative of history as imperialism into history as the indictment of imperialism. In other words, the function which defines the post-colonial intellectual is that which attests to "an experience of colonialism that continues into the present" (54). In this sense, the vigilance of the post-colonial intellectual to the vestiges of colonization serves "utopian" ends--"the formerly silent native speaks and acts on territory taken back from the colonialist" (55).

Paradoxically, however, this vigilance keeps the post-colonial intellectual within the confines of a re-writing of history that must, willy-nilly, take the conquerors into account while they go on to other things. In this scenario, imperialism is central to the history of the colonized but not to that of the imperialists themselves. For Said, this contradiction illustrates the inescapable relation between materiality and methodology, between politics and epistemology, because the relation is dependent on "the power to give, or withhold, attention" (62).

Having come this far, however, Said concludes his essay with a gesture of what might be perceived as a retreat into "the intellectual vocation itself" in which resides "a resistant, perhaps ultimately subjective, component of oppositional energy" (64). Said's disillusionment with collective resistance which, he says, manifests
itself much too often as domination or coercion (64), is of a piece with Adorno’s call for “open thinking” (Resignation” 167) which “is actually and above all the force of resistance” (my emphasis) (167).

Said removes the intellectual from the area of combat and charges “him” with the task of reexamining the issues completely (70). Changing the situation, he would concur with Adorno, is possible only through “undiminished insight” (“Resignation” 167). Said’s representation of thinking as a vocation rather than a choice, financial convenience, or exigency, moves it from the realm of contemplation to that of praxis. Rather than perceive this position as a retreat into intellectual elitism, Adorno and Said would argue that the critical thinker who does not “[permit] himself [sic] to be terrorized into action is in truth the one who does not give up” (Adorno, “Resignation” 167).

As a prelude to my analysis of Said’s Orientalism, I want to raise, with Catherine Gallagher’s provocative help, the paradoxes that plague Said’s desire to collapse the distinction between pure and political knowledge, to relate the discourse of anthropology to Empire as an ongoing concern, to reject nativism, essentialism, and authenticity; indeed, “reality,” and to address the vexed links between power, discourse, desire, knowledge, intellectuals, institutions, and the State.

In “Politics, the Profession and the Critic,” Gallagher considers the potentially disturbing implications of Said’s claims for the intellectual vocation. She interprets Said’s work as a “paradigmatic attempt at integrating the roles of literary critic and political advocate, at giving them a joint foundation” (37). Her quarrel is not with this conjoining of historically mutually antagonistic forces, but with the dilemma into which Said has been writing himself:

[Said] writes of distortions of reality while denying the existence of a reality beneath the distortions. He notes that knowledge is always bounded by place but insists that there is an epistemologically privileged locus of displacement called
exile. He champions the right of political self-determination for a people longing to end their exile but then appraises that exile as valuable in itself. He calls on the literary critic to be—in and through criticism—engaged in the world and simultaneously in permanent exile from any particular location. (37).

Even if Said can be taken to be exploring these paradoxes, he can still be castigated for overlooking "the foreground of professionalism" in his work (37). Gallagher concurs with Bruce Robbins' claim that Said fails to admit that the profession "is already the longed-for no-place place" (37). Gallagher uses this failure to ground her sense of the ironical "empty[ing], diminish[ing] and displac[ing] [of] the idea of the political" (38) that occurs in Said's essays in The World, the Text, and the Critic.

Gallagher demonstrates the curious contradiction between Said's political interest in the course of the world and the intellectual detachment of his "restless dwelling within the unstable terrain of exile" (38). Said's essays work to the detriment of "the particularizing impulse" (38) because they are not concerned with the "exigencies of any particular involvements" but with intellectual abstractions such as "circumstantiality," "worldliness," and the "poignancy of involvement itself" (38). Said seems, against the politicizing impulse of his work, to be rejecting alliances in favour of exile.

The problematic situation in which Said finds himself is a consequence of his conception of the "automatically progressive role of exiled worldliness ..." (39). Gallagher attributes the "illegibility of the critic as a political signifier" (39) to Said's inability to specify his politics, an inability which then becomes aligned with a kind of cosmopolitan detachment and humanism in which the "value of not privileging any values" is upheld (39). Said, in Gallagher's terms, effectively describes criticism as a process of "self-voiding" (39)
because the "utter equivalence of all values" (39) is hardly an alternative to the authoritative assertion of certain values over others.

The "confluence of cosmopolitan critical homelessness and local political affiliation" can ironically occur only within the professionalism Said denounces (40). If "oppositional strategies ... [are] necessarily entailed in the strategic position [of critical intellectualism] itself" (41), Gallagher argues, then Said seems uncomfortably close to the position that the "profession entails its own adequate politics (40). Gallagher concludes her review with the related dangers of Said's stance: that politics will come to be replaced by criticism since he attributes to criticism an inherent political valence (42), and that dispossession as the legitimating basis for intellectual activity could obscure the extent to which intellectuals are themselves responsible for the plight of dispossession (42). An "effortful" politics, says Gallagher, is possible once we recognize that political intervention does not follow either from "our professional identities ... or our critical skills" (43). Are her claims borne out in Said's practice of "critical intellectualism" in Orientalism?
Notes

1. See Paul Bové, *Intellectuals in Power: A Genealogy of Critical Humanism* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1986). I did not read Bové's work until after I had completed this chapter. I want to acknowledge here the similarity of his contentions regarding Said's (dis)placement of the intellectual. Bové argues that Said serves to legitimate critical practice because his critical strenuousness draws upon the very tradition of critical humanism which he opposes. Adorno argues in "Culture and Administration" that one must be imbued with tradition in order to hate it properly. While Said wants critical consciousness to privilege exile, one cannot help wondering whether his resistance does not stem equally from his formidable scholarship, from the fact that he wears his learning lightly. Bové also delineates, with care and perception, the American reception of *Mimesis*. He describes the process by which Auerbach became transformed from the man who attributed his own powerful revitalization of Western culture to the authority of tradition into the isolated titanic figure who singlehandedly synthesized the fragments of a declining Western culture. It is the residue of this predictable American emphasis on individual effort that Bové discerns in Said's work.
SECTION II

In Search of "new objects for a new kind of knowledge"

It is difficult to believe that Said's Orientalism was written nearly 15 years ago, given the controversy it continues to incite and the challenges it continues to weather. Perhaps the very familiarity of its central tenets is reason enough for me to offer only a very brief summary before ascertaining the force and application of Said's contentions for the future of post-colonial discourse.

Said claims that the "Orient was almost a European invention" (1) which served, appropriately enough, "to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (1-2). Said explores the place and function of the Orient as Europe's "cultural contestant," as "one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other" (1) within what he calls the discursive practice of "orientalism." Because orientalism is based on "an ontological and epistemological distinction" between the Orient and the Occident, it is readily identifiable as "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (3). Said, taking his cue from Foucault, argues, in short, that the vast scholarship marshalled as evidence about the Orient, served in fact to manage and produce the Orient (3).

This premise leads to the constitution of a dialectic between "Europe and its others" in which the object of knowledge becomes indistinguishable from the object of conquest. Said argues, therefore, that the Orient as an entity cannot be thought apart from the barrage of "interests inevitably brought to bear on (and therefore always involved in) any occasion when that peculiar entity ... is in question" (3). The emphasis in Said's book, then, is on the history and tradition of "thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given [the Orient] reality and presence in and for the West"(my emphasis) (5). In other words, and with his Foucauldian credentials plain for all to see, Said concerns himself with "the internal consistency" of Orientalism "despite or beyond any
correspondence, or lack thereof, with a 'real' Orient" (5).

Orientalism as a system or body of knowledge, Said makes sure to reiterate, not only filters the Orient into Western consciousness, but carries with it "a considerable material investment" (6). The word "investment" creates a nice conjunction of the economic and the psychoanalytical in that the logic of Orientalism is not merely a lie fabricated by colonialists for material gain, but a complex "battery of desires, repressions, investments, and projections" (8). That desire, knowledge, and violence coalesce in the subject's experience of the object collapses, for Said, the distinction between pure and political knowledge, particularly because knowledge about the Orient is immediately violated by "the gross political fact" (11) of imperialism.

Said wants to move away from a conception of Orientalism as a lie that can be contradicted towards an understanding of the ways in which the representations of Orientalism actively displace the Orient in the imagination of the West. Moreover, the politics of distinctions between truth and falsehood are at stake in Said's discussion, as well as the material reality of ideas themselves. Orientalism itself produces knowledge and representation of the Orient or of the colonized; however, their identity is negatively determined. The nature of the object is contained in the inventory Said, in the manner of Gramsci, compiles of the infinity of traces deposited by the historical process in the self (25) of the colonized and the geography of the Orient.

Said questions the epistemological model of surveillance, the "increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control" (36) implicit in the discourse of Orientalism. The object, in this scenario, is immediately rendered vulnerable to scrutiny and reduced to thing-like status, to a fundamentally ontological and stable fact over which the observer has authority because "[he] know[s] [the fact] and it exists, in a sense, as [he] know[s] it" (32).

For Said, Orientalism contains the Orient within its
representations, classifies Orientals in terms of Platonic essences which render them intelligible and identifiable, and constitutes, less a vision of reality or a mode of thought, than an irreducible constraint on thought with overwhelming political consequences. Said wants to refrain from reading the discourse of Orientalism as an accessory after the fact of imperialism, as a mere handmaiden or even an accomplice of brute force. Instead, he reveals the way in which "vision and reality propped each other up" (44). What this involves is the reciprocity between a political vision of reality contingent upon the radical opposition between the familiar and the strange (the known and the knowable) (43) and a political control of that strangeness which "does not require that the barbarians acknowledge the distinction" (54) or that they might have a stake in the reconstruction and domination of their reality.

Said, in short, usurps the prerogative of Orientalism to "[articulate] the Orient" as "the silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries" (57), but I am uncertain whether his text can count as "empirical material" which "dislodge[s] or alter[s]" "the self-containing, self-reinforcing character of [the] closed system [of Orientalism], in which objects are what they are because they are what they are" (70). How, in other words, does Orientalism avoid the dangers of "transmut[ing] living reality into the stuff of texts ..." (86)?

Does Said reinforce the mystery of the Orient by reviling those who want it to "deliver up its secrets" (138)? What guidelines does he offer for considering the experience of otherness "as a salutary dérangement of ... European habits of mind and spirit" (150)? If "the very act of construction is a sign of imperial power over recalcitrant phenomena" (145), what purpose has his reconstruction of Orientalism served? Are we any closer to the historical and empirical Orient or is knowledge itself always "set apart from, and unequal with, its surroundings" (157)? How can the general category avoid limiting the terrain upon which the specific instance can operate (102)?
Orientalism ably demonstrates the absurdity of the belief "that man [sic] plays no part in setting up both the material and the processes of knowledge" (300), but, as Said admits at the closing of his book, his desire to let his work serve as a "reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge" (328) precludes the book being an argument "for something positive" (325). It remains, therefore, a crucial clearing of space and of the throat in the area of post-colonial discourse.

However, Said makes the puzzling claim that scholars most likely to escape the dangerous seduction of Orientalism are those who define their discipline intellectually rather than operate in a field defined canonically, imperially, or geographically (326). Hasn't the whole of Orientalism been devoted to collapsing the distinction between the pure and the political? Gallagher seems to be right in discerning a privileging of critical intellectualism for its own sake in Said's work. The great value of a "skeptical critical consciousness" (327), according to Said is its ability to subject its method to reflexive scrutiny and to let itself be guided by the material rather than "doctrinal preconception[s]" (327).

A laudable aim that I have been touting myself; however, where is the material of the Orient that is not obscured by the vision of Orientalism? It is necessary to say that the study of human experience has moral and political consequences and that the intellectual failure of Orientalism was also a human failure because the Orientalists failed to consider the experience of the other a human experience (327-28). But Said has also spent the better part of the book inveighing against a humanizing impulse that relentlessly familiarizes or estranges the other.

His faith in the independence of scholarship, while an attractive proposition for obvious reasons, begins to wear a bit thin. Said, of course, wishes to suspend the division of labour which keeps intellectuals chained to the allure of professionalism, but his writing is often in danger of forgetting that "the class from which independent intellectuals
have defected takes its revenge, by pressing its demands home in the very
domain where the deserter seeks refuge [the university, the discipline,
etc.]" (Adorno's phrasing, *Minima Moralia* 21).

Perhaps it might be best to appreciate the modesty of an enterprise
animated by the intuition that "[t]he expression of history in things is
no other than that of past torment" (Adorno's phrasing in *Minima Moralia*
49). Said's position as an intellectual accords him the privilege of
voice, not as the reward of the free spirit (*The Foucault Reader* 72), but
as a responsibility to constitute a new "politics of truth" (*The Foucault
Reader* 74). His position within the institutionalization of disciplines
enables him to engage with the regimes which produce truth and grant
authority to its pronouncements.

Perhaps the contradictions of Said's position are not his own but of
the circumstances in which the post-colonial intellectual finds himself:
the "renunciation of power [must be] one of the conditions of knowledge"
and yet "power and knowledge directly imply one another" (Foucault's
phrasing in *The Foucault Reader* 175) at least within the tangled web of
Orientalist discourses and imperialist narratives. Could Orientalism then
be read as an embattled attempt "to put into play [the] enabling limits"
of knowledge? (Weber, *Institution and Interpretation* x. The ensuing
discussion deploys Weber's argument in an attempt to defend Said).

Said's method avoids the static opposition between self and other in
favour of the relation between the identity of the self and the non-
identity of the other. The concept of each is, therefore, not substantial
but relational. In criticizing the tendency of Orientalism to turn
otherness into a Platonic essence, Said also institutes a mode of analysis
in which "cognitive objects are henceforth to be identified not by
reference to an intrinsic quality, their form, but rather in terms of
their capacity to be deformed and transformed" (Weber xi).

It is this notion that prompts Said's investigation of the "process
of selective accumulation, displacement, deletion, rearrangement" that
produced the Orient of occidental imagination (Orientalism 176). The consequences of this procedure involve the undermining of the concept of knowledge as adequation and the rendering of the real rather than the cognitive ambiguous. Said is, of course, not given to anything that smacks of radical indeterminacy, but he is equally aware of the importance of demonstrating that the processes of determination within which the object finds its place or suffers displacement transform that object, not only as an idea but as an empirical reality. There is simply no other way in which to understand texts as facts of power.

The value of Said's work, then, lies not only in restoring to the empirical phenomenon of the Orient its historical, dynamic, and transmutational character, but also in enacting the process of thought in quest of its object. The doubled character of Orientalism is worth noting: in the course of interpreting the paranoiac form of thought that relentlessly estranges the other, Said produces thought that breaks with its own frames to include the other. Far from being insensitive to the foreground of the institution in his work, Said reads Orientalism as a figure of institutionalization itself, as the strategy which establishes identities and enforces lines of demarcation. In this context, where the imposition of limits is inseparable from the exercise of power, Said's text unravels how this imposition of constraints occurs.

Orientalism, in short, represents the logical transition from what Weber calls "the institution of specific interpretations [of the other, the Orient, colonization] [to] the interpretation of specific institutions [that of Orientalism and Empire]" (17). Said finds the limits of knowledge of the other enabling because he recognizes that the conditions of possibility of knowledge are also the conditions of imposability (Weber's pun) and, as such, can be thwarted, challenged, re-read, and re-written. He is not, however, concerned that the other remains negatively determined in his text because that is precisely the function of alterity: to negate what we know and to indicate what we do not know (I have already
addressed the issue of the other as the vanishing point of the intelligibility of discourse). Besides, as Adorno argues, to insist on a reality behind the mists of ideological deception is to reproduce the opposition between appearance and reality: "[a]s the reflection of truth, appearances are dialectical; to reject all appearance is to fall completely under its sway, since truth is abandoned with the rubble without which it cannot appear" ("Veblen's Attack on Culture" in Prisms 84).

Even though Said's corpus can be viewed as the attempt to stall the displacement of history by textuality, he is careful not to turn history itself into a kind of absent cause that controls texts. After all, he has the best example at his disposal of the ravages the capitalizing upon history produces. His is a flexible situating of critical consciousness inside and outside things, a situating that makes it possible for him to comprehend the internal consistency of orientalism as a discourse even as he insists on its material consequences and reality. The fictionality of the real cannot, in Weber's words, afford to obscure the reality of fictions (152).

But how is it possible for the "dialectical critic of culture" "to both participate in culture and not participate" (Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society" in Prisms 33)? Weber suggests the possibility of conceiving of the other, not as someone to be eliminated in order that his place be taken and his property be appropriated--but rather as an agent, acting in the name of a transgressive desire acknowledged to be as dangerous as it is seductive: seductive because it is shared by all members of the community, and dangerous, because if indulged it would threaten the very bounds that structure that community. (149)

I want to explore the potential for critical negation contained in representing the post-colonial intellectual as "terrorist," as the figure
which, by definition offends "... Western heritage, morality and outraged virtue" ("Identity, Negation ..." 50) while remaining paradoxically negative and indefinable. This conception of the post-colonial intellectual might help take the sting off Said's antiseptic cosmopolitan humanism and suggest the possibility of reconstituting the post-colonial self as transgressive other and critical consciousness as the reversal of limits. I hope it is clear that I am not advocating acts of terrorism.

In "Identity, Negation, and Violence" Said calls to account the invidious thinking which produces the affirmation of identity at the expense of alterity. He alights on the concept of terrorism and its permanent and subliminal associations with Islam in the Western mind. Said's task is to "reconnect representations of 'terrorism' to contexts, structures, histories and narratives" from which they have been severed (47). Said, in other words, refuses to consider the phenomenon and conception of terrorism in isolation or to attempt a definition of the term. Instead, he exposes the mechanism of othering that produces terrorism as endemic to Islam and as therefore impervious to historical change or social amelioration.

How, then, can the post-colonial intellectual oppose the practice of terrorism and simultaneously challenge the historical and contextual factors that inexorably transform victims into terrorists? This question serves as the basis for Said's provocative and determinate negation of the invisible terrorism of neo-colonial interventions that systematically transfigures itself into the "frightening visibility" of individual terrorists and the tragic confirmation of the irremediable corruption of the Islamic psyche. This species of negative dialectic between terrorism and putative democracy shatters the radical opposition between alien and isolated acts of aggression and the bastion of humanity or virtue that the Western State represents.

Terrorism, then, is a function of the interplay between identity and alienation that produces cultural affirmation. Said sees virtually no
difference between triumphalist assertion and the rush to protect what seems endangered (54). This might seem to dissolve the distinction between victim and oppressor till one realizes that the logic of identity underpins both. Terror, in Said's terms, is the logical consequence of the rationalized and sanctioned violence of colonialism.

Said's essay serves both to denounce the process by which any attempt to retell the facts of history, to provide alternative versions of the seeming inevitability of colonial intervention is automatically characterized as terrorism, and to institute criticism as "terrorism" which "press[es] the interests of the unheard, the unrepresented, the unconnected people of our world" (60). Interestingly, however, the accents of terrorism are also those of "personal restraint, historical scepticism and committed intellect" (60).

The knowledge which the critical act of terrorism produces inhabits treacherous ground because the logic of identity immediately identifies Said's connections with Palestine as the basis for his claim that he knows what he is talking about. In the distance that he establishes from the continuity of the familiar, in his hesitation before either verification or speculation, in his capacity to be both inside and outside things, in his reversal of the conventional opposition between the subjective and the objective (the latter is actually the product of human cruelty and misery and the former that which breaches the facade of normality, normativity, familiarity, and facticity), Said strives incessantly to make the possible real.

My own deployment of terrorism seeks to invest his critical detachment with the promise of difference and with the tension of conflict. It is a sobering thought, no doubt, that culture functions as ideology, but Said's task is more difficult—he must prove that the notion of culture as ideology is itself in danger of becoming only ideology. In the voice of the post-colonial intellectual, therefore, can be discerned the clamour of those things which were not embraced by [the historical
dynamic, which fell by the wayside) (Minima Moralia 151). Said, too, knows that it is "in the nature of the defeated to appear, in their impotence, irrelevant, eccentric, derisory" (151); he also knows, however, that therein lies the means to outwit the historical dynamic which destroys them.
Notes

1. See Dennis Porter, "Orientalism and its Problems" (The Politics of Theory 179-94) for a thoughtful critique. Said's dismissive reference to Porter's essay in "Orientalism Reconsidered" seems a defensive, uncharacteristically graceless response. Porter is right, I think, to point to the inadvertent homogenizing of the West that takes place in Said's argument and to take Said to task for failing to discern the contradictions and distancings from stereotypical realism in the so-called imperialist texts. This problem crops up in the discussion that follows "Intellectuals in the Post-Colonial World" when Said brands Conrad an unregenerate imperialist and refuses to grant credence to the knowledge Heart of Darkness might offer at least of the imperialist subject. I am not sure, however, whether Porter's essay escapes the process by which (in Spivak's terms) the recuperation of the moments of aporia in manifestly ideological texts serves to legitimate the subject of the West or the West as Subject. Besides, Porter's privileging of aesthetic texts as the sites of "truth" which contest ideology once again begs the question that Said raises with such urgency, that culture's separation from what Adorno calls the guilt of society is precisely what needs to be addressed.
CONCLUSION

"... the inextinguishable color from non-being"

My affirmation of "the preponderance of the object," it might appear, has been conducted on what Spivak sometimes calls the precious register of theory and failed, thus far, and with obvious irony, to offer a concrete example of the kind of practice in relation to "other women" that this project envisages. In order to make amends as best I can, I propose, with Said, Spivak, and Adorno, to begin and end with contradiction and heterogeneity. I do not propose, therefore, to write the customary conclusion to an endeavour of this sort; instead, I hope to adumbrate the significance and potential of a critical method that not only fractures or defers the whole, but invokes precisely what it cannot articulate.

The members of the Frankfurt School, contrary to popular conceptions of their antipathy to scientific rigour and method, sought a mode of philosophizing that transcended the tyranny of facts only insofar as it kept its eye unwaveringly on the latter. The point, then, was to test the epistemological validity of categories against their historical contents which could be counted upon to convict the merely eidetic of its failings. If the history concealed in the blind predominance of existing things could be dislodged by philosophy, a tale of the possibilities that had been denied the suffering object might be told.

It is because philosophical interpretation recounts the concealed tale of the scarcity and oppression that afflicts the world that Adorno styles it a "melancholy science" (an inversion of Nietzsche's "gay science"). Philosophy, then, is a species of mourning for the object that the history of cognition, capitalism, patriarchy, and colonialism has
effaced/defaced. Benjamin remarked that as long as there was a beggar there was a myth and it is this intuition that inspires Adorno's conception of philosophy, one whose claim to "actuality" rests on its persistent critique of ideology.

If cultural analysis seems an unpardonable luxury in these troubled times, how can cultural and economic categories combine to project a different role for the institutionalized form of the discipline (of literature, theory, or the humanities)? In "Ambivalence, the Humanities and the Study of Literature," Samuel Weber attempts to determine "the place of cognition, alongside desire and power, in the institutional role of the humanities today ..." (13). Weber argues that "what we call the crisis of the humanities is inextricably related to ... the ambivalence of demarcation" (15).

He proceeds to discern this demarcation of the boundary between the sciences and the humanities in R.S. Crane's The Idea of the Humanities. Weber writes:

What is striking in Crane's lectures is the manner in which they seem compelled to recur to the opposition of the sciences and the humanities in order to delimit the latter. ... The sciences, in short, generalize, universalize; they seek the invariant and attain it by reduction. The humanities, by contrast, seek "to preserve as much as possible of the variety, the uniqueness, the unexpectedness" that Crane identifies with the productions of a humanity free from biological or social constraints. (14)

Weber perceives this demarcation to be ambivalent because the
inclusiveness of the humanities is contingent upon distinguishing them from the exclusionary character of science (15). Weber uses this problematic character of the relationship between exclusion and inclusion to ask:

"can there be any sort of "inclusions," however "progressive," comprehensive or totalizing they may be, that would not necessarily proceed by selection, and hence by exclusion? And is any sort of specification or particularization conceivable that would not necessarily entail recourse to conceptualization, and thus to generalization?" (14)

Adorno, too, you will recall, fashions his philosophy out of precisely the negative dialectic between the particular and the universal, and situates the moment of negation in the contradiction between them. Weber's essay seems motivated by a similar understanding of "the highly conflictual force-field [also Adorno's term] of this demarcation [of the limits of the universal and the particular]" (15).

Weber, in what I would argue is the spirit of Adorno, contends that "the crisis, but also the chance of the humanities" lies in the manner in which "[t]he particular concern with the particular, the unpredictable, the unexpected, defines itself through an opposition from which it can never entirely extricate itself" (15). What, then, might the consequences of the ambivalence of demarcation be for reconstituting the power, validity, and efficacy of cognition?

Weber deploys the "underlying complicity" (16-17) between the sciences and the humanities (since the confrontation of the particular always entails a relation to cognition even if it does not partake of the
substance of cognition) to combine aesthetic perceptions with conceptual judgements. If the aesthetic judgement is one in which "the particular imposes itself at the expense of preexisting universals" (17), the iterability of things which science establishes through "control instances" can be qualified to include alteration as well as recurrence (17).

I hope I have made it clear that Adorno, too, articulates the resistance of the particular to concepts which fail to identify, consume, or subsume it, in the interests of an epistemology which is no more (and can be nothing less) than "the participation in and imparting of the particular, the partisan and the partial" (Weber 19). In his scheme of things, therefore, a revolution in cognitive practice has less to do with the discovery of "new objects for a new kind of knowledge" and more to do with a process in which "we treat the singularities we do not understand as though they were the products of another understanding, like our own and yet unlike it (for it has produced precisely what we do not understand)" (Weber 23).

I offer the following as an exemplary cognitive performance which, even as it seeks to reverse the limits of cognition, stops short of experiencing those limits as "frontier[s] which [signify] only a new country to be conquered" (Weber 22). In a fascinating article entitled "More than 100 Million Women are Missing," Amartya Sen highlights the failures of ethnocentric presumption in demographic studies.¹ In the course of exploring the misconception that women outnumber men (a consequence of generalizing from the situation in North America and Europe), Sen explodes the category "Third World" because every hypothesis
that seeks to explain the excess mortality of women is defeated when confronted with the "facts." Sen wonders, therefore, "how [we can] understand and explain these differences (in the population of women in South and West Asia and China), and react to them" ("More than ..." 61).

Sen institutes a complex dynamic between the biological and the political because women's biological superiority in terms of their capacity to resist disease or their sheer longevity is in inverse proportion to the attention paid their health and nutritional needs in the Asian countries just mentioned. Sen, however, does not want to discount the discrimination women in "developed" countries suffer, even though they seem to have relatively equal access to health care and nutrition.

Rather than determine what the political function of the biological itself might be, in the manner of Spivak's emblematic figures or gestures of resistance, Sen traces the overdetermined political causes and effects of "matters of life and death" ("More than ..." 61). Sen's analysis cannot, in short, contemplate the retrieval of subaltern women's consciousness yet—it looks in vain for their bodies first.

Sen's remarkable essay functions as a means to ensure that "the concept does not exhaust the thing conceived" (Negative Dialectics 5). Interestingly and ironically, as Sen is well aware, the essay's strategy of negation entails precisely the recovery of these "missing" women and enables the telling of their tale of "inequality and neglect" ("More than ..." 61). The shift in emphasis in this analysis is worth noting, particularly because the enabling exclusion here is the object itself, not the subject's incapacity to describe it. Sen's essay, therefore, is seemingly disabled before it even begins. However, the insubstantiality
of the object, even as it exposes the aporetic nature of the concept, becomes the occasion, precisely, for Sen’s unriddling of the object’s absence. In the course of tracing the itinerary of the excessive mortality of these women, Sen discovers that the combination of cultural and economic categories only works to undermine their independent value.

For instance, to explain the excess mortality of women in parts of South Asia as a function of sexism in the East (what Spivak calls white men saving brown women from brown men), does not account for the electoral successes of these women, for example, as opposed to the near lack of female representation in the United States Senate. Similarly, wielding the club of underdevelopment does not account for the “substantial excess of women” in “poor” countries like those of sub-Saharan Africa.

Sen rejects the “superficial plausibility” of the “alleged contrast between ‘East’ and ‘West’ [as well as] the simple hypothesis of female deprivation as a characteristic of economic ‘underdevelopment’” (“More than ... 63) in favour of what Adorno might have called a changing constellation of economic, social, and cultural factors, the meaning of whose configuration is elicited on behalf of the missing women. The movement of Sen’s essay demonstrates the manner in which the particular continually gives the lie to the universal. However, progress is discernible because the insubstantiality of the object gives way to its concretion in terms of the factors that determine that very absence.

Sen’s essay must be understood as more than merely plaintive. It conforms to Adorno’s vision of interpretation as an “exact fantasy,” one that abides strictly within the material at hand, but is nevertheless not content to leave the object unchanged by the encounter with the concept.
It is, in other words, Sen's determination to make the differences in the physical presence of women across the globe mean something that is responsible for the momentary illumination offered by the particulars the essay assembles. The illumination is momentary because Sen never succumbs to the temptation to conceive of knowledge as unconditional; moreover, the unstable configuration of particulars that can be read as an answer, is a sympathetic tribute to the cruelly eclipsed reality of these women, and a critical and political challenge to the indifference of demographic studies that deems the question of their absence/mortality insignificant.

The understandable desire, on the part of post-colonial intellectuals, to avoid the pitfalls of information retrieval could bear some qualification from writing such as Sen's whose nuanced attention to "the potentially interesting variables" ("More than ..." 66) transforms the facts of the case as well as the paradigmatic norms of interpretation into the ground of emancipatory critique and political transformation.

Since one must obviously do more than gesture vaguely in the direction of questions of daily survival while continuing to lament that the "other woman" continues to be obscured from our (merely philanthropic and discursive?) gaze, Sen's concern with the literal absence of women who "are simply not there" ("More than ..." 66) shows us how.
Notes

1. I am grateful to Rhonda Anderson for bringing this article to my attention.
WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED


---. "Commitment." Arato and Gebhardt 300-318.


---. "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda." Arato and Gebhardt 118-37.


---. "Subject and Object." Arato and Gebhardt 497-512.

---. "Veblen's Attack on Culture: Remarks Occasioned by the Theory of the Leisure Class." Studies in Philosophy and Social Science 9.3
(1941): 389-413.


Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. The Empire Writes


---. "Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority Under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817." Gates, "Race, Writing, Difference" 144-65.


---. The Resistance to Theory. Foreword by Wlad Godzich. Theory and History of Literature 33. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press,
1986.


---. "voice ii." Conley and Spanos 68-93.


---. *Logics of Disintegration: Post-structuralist Thought and the*


---. A Passage to India. London: Edward Arnold, 1924.


---. Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews.


Fraser, Nancy. "The French Derrideans: Politicizing Deconstruction or Deconstructing the Political?" "Modernity and Postmodernity" 127-55.


Gallagher, Catherine. "Politics, the Profession, and the Critic."
Diacritics (Summer 1985): 37-43.


Griffin, Robert J., Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin, and Edward Said. "An
Exchange on Edward Said and Difference." Critical Inquiry 15
(Spring 1989): 611-47.

Guha, Ranajit, ed. Writings on South Asian History and Society. 1982.

Habermas, Jürgen. "The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment." New

---. "The French Path to Postmodernity: Bataille between Eroticism and
General Economics." Trans. Frederick Lawrence. "Modernity and
Postmodernity" 79-103.

---. The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures. Trans.

---. "Theodor Adorno: The Primal History of Subjectivity--Self-
affirmation Gone Wild." Philosophical-Political Profiles. Trans.
Frederick G. Lawrence. London and Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press,

Hartman, Geoffrey, ed. Psychoanalysis and The Question of the Text.
Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1976-77. Baltimore and

Harvey, Irene. Derrida and the Economy of Différance. Studies in
Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Ed. James M. Edie.

Held, David. Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas.

Henriques, Julian, Wendy Holloway, Cathy Urwin, Couze Venn, and Valerie
Walkerdine. Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and


---. "Introduction to Adorno's 'Idea of Natural History.'" *Telos* 60 (Summer 1984): 97-110.


---. "Mapping the Postmodern." "Modernity and Postmodernity" 5-53.


La Capra, Dominick. History and Criticism. Ithaca, New York: Cornell


---. *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics.*


---. "The German Ideology I." Tucker 146-203.


Mehlman, Jeffrey. *Revolution and Repetition: Marx/Hugo/Balzac.* Berkeley:
Univ. of Calif. Press, 1977.


"Modernity and Postmodernity." *New German Critique* 33 (Fall 1984).


Przybylowicz, Donna. "Toward a Feminist Cultural Criticism: Hegemony and Modes of Social Division." Przybylowicz et al 259-301.


"Ethnic Identity and Post-Structuralist Differance." JanMohammed and Lloyd 199-220.


Raulot, Gérard. "From Modernity as One-Way Street to Postmodernity as Dead End." "Modernity and Postmodernity" 155-78.


---. "Woman in Difference: Mahasweta Devi's 'Douloti the Bountiful.'" Przybylowicz et al 105-128.


---, ed. She, the Inappropriated Other. Discourse 8 (Winter 1986-87).


Weber, S. "Ambivalence, the Humanities and the Study of Literature."
Diacritics (Summer 1985): 11-25.


Bibliographical Note:
I have not duplicated sources listed in the following, except when they
have been cited or have been of immediate use in the writing of this
dissertation:


*Cultural Critique* 5 (Winter 1986-87).

Hutcheon, Linda.  *A Poetics of Postmodernism.*

---.  *The Politics of Postmodernism.*


Todd, Janet.  *Feminist Literary History.*

Trinh, Minh-ha T.  *Woman, Native, Other.*

The texts of Jay, Said and Spivak.