CHANGING THE STORY: POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES

AND RESISTANCE

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ABSTRACT

The concept of resistance provides a primary framework for the critical project of postcolonialism. Despite its significance, however, resistance has been under-theorized within the field. In postcolonial criticism and theory, resistance signifies any opposition to, or subversion of, colonial authority. This study analyzes the dominant constructions of resistance within the field of postcolonial studies and argues for a theory of resistance that identifies the way in which acts and practices transform the discursive and material structures of colonial power rather than simply subvert or oppose certain aspects of these structures. Chapter One analyzes the concept of resistance as it is constructed within Homi Bhabha's colonial discourse theory. Critics argue that the theoretical deconstruction of colonial power ignores the material structures of colonialism and the agency of the colonized; South Asian resistance to repression in early Twentieth Century South Africa, however, reveals the way in which colonial authority was challenged at the level of its cultural assumptions. Chapter Two identifies an oppositional paradigm of resistance with origins in the work of anti-colonial intellectuals such as Frantz Fanon. Oppositional models of resistance often reinforce colonial representations of power and reduce the identity of the colonized to a function of the anti-colonial struggle. Chapter Three demonstrates how Gandhism constructs the ends and means of struggle as interdependent. Gandhi constructs colonial authority in terms of the cooperation of the colonized; resistance requires the transformation of the colonized subject. Finally, Chapter Four investigates the way in which the concept of reconciliation – as it has been theorized within the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa – aims at transforming the

antagonistic relationship of colonial authority. As models of resistance, both Gandhism and reconciliation construct the experience of colonial power much differently than do the dominant conceptions of resistance within postcolonialism.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Postcolonial Studies and Resistance

> Stories are the secret reservoir of values: change the stories
> individuals and nations live by and tell themselves, and you
> change the individuals and nations.
> > Ben Okri, *A Way of Being Free* (112)

> I told him it would be easy if the only fight were against a
> conqueror; against history.
> > Shauna Singh Baldwin, "Jassie" (152)

I. Confronting the Lion of Empire: The Little Bird Titi, John Chilembwe and the Postcolonial "Story"

In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Edward Said argues that "stories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world; they also become the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history" (xii). Like many postcolonial critics, Said concentrates upon the literary text as a site which illuminates colonialism's discursive constructions of power and identity. While a number of critics of postcolonial studies argue that such a perspective elides the material relations of (neo)colonial power and ignores the way in which colonial authority was maintained through violent repression and/or opposed by militant insurgency, the economic and political structures of colonialism cannot be so easily separated from the "stories" the beneficiaries of colonialism constructed to understand and legitimize them. Reiterating Césaire and Memmi's critique of colonialism, Ngugi wa Thiong'o emphatically argues that decolonization is as much a project of culture as it is a political endeavour; the liberation of the colonized from material exploitation and political repression requires the "decolonization of the mind."

The basic assumption of my argument in this dissertation – that postcolonial theories of resistance must engage with both material and discursive relations – hardly needs to be stated. Current debates surrounding the fate and function of postcolonialism as a discipline centre around this seeming discord between colonialism as either a material or a discursive project and the utility of concentrating on "reading" the colonial past for engaging with contemporary neo-imperial global relations of power. However, most people working within the field, or critiquing it from outside, would agree that while we may distinguish between "material" and "discursive" aspects of colonialism in order to perform an academic analysis, the material and discursive are not so distinct in the experience of colonialism. Yet, postcolonial constructions of resistance either privilege challenges to the discursive modes of authority within the realm of culture *or* forms of politically organized opposition which concentrate on the economic and political

structures of the colonial state. A politically useful theory of resistance cannot privilege one or the other of discursive or material resistance as "genuine" or "authentic." As I will argue, the structural and cultural modes of colonialism were interdependent and reinforcing, and resistance, therefore, must be understood as necessarily both material *and* discursive.

I first read Said's *Culture and Imperialism* while working as a teacher in Malawi. I contemplated Said's theory of cultural resistance and his rather undeveloped interrogation of the ideal of liberation and what he calls the "rhetoric of politics and blame" while studying Malawian folktales with secondary school students. Said's discussion of the politics of opposition had a particular resonance for me as I attempted to follow a new curriculum of Malawian English literature. My Malawian colleagues, and the students themselves, could not understand why the new Junior Certificate curriculum included traditional tales translated into English and Malawian short stories, poetry and drama, instead of "authentic" *English* English literature. A tale like "The Lion and the Little Bird Titi," therefore, took on a particularly political meaning for me, as I attempted to motivate students to engage critically with "their own" literature and culture in an environment in which David Livingstone is a mythical figure of compassion and justice, the face of John Chilembwe – the "martyr" and belated "father" of the Malawian nation – was just then replacing that of the President on Malawi's currency, and in which, for the first time since arriving in Malawi, my "whiteness" was seen as an obstacle to my ability to teach rather than the mark of my "legitimacy" as a teacher of English.

In "The Lion and the Little Bird Titi," the Lion informs Titi that he is weak and has no friends. The Lion offers to "aid" the little bird if he promises to be honest and obedient. The Lion provides the bird some of his strength and Titi proceeds to kill wild pigs and kudu which he must provide to the Lion. The bird's position of subjection is reinforced in each act of killing by the song he agrees to sing as part of the contract: "It's not mine, It's not mine..." After some time, the bird becomes conscious of the inequality of the arrangement, and after killing a buffalo, he climbs atop an anthill to sing to the Lion, this time changing the words: "It's my own, It's my own..." the little bird Titi sings. Outraged by the bird's "insolence," Lion takes back his "gift," leaving Titi "ashamed and defeated." As an explanatory tale, "The Lion and the Little Bird Titi," explains why the bird is so timid. The tale, however, can also be read as a cautionary tale of anti-colonial resistance. The Lion wields discursive authority, naming the bird's difference – the fact that he eats grasshoppers and ants instead of the "better" food the Lion eats – as inferiority or poverty. He contends that he seeks to "uplift" the bird, but only constrains the bird psychically and materially in an exploitative relationship of subservience.

As a discipline which interrogates the colonial production of knowledge, a primary project of postcolonial studies has been to challenge the "typical" Western historiographical response to indigenous insurgency. Colonial "History" has pretended that native resistance "had not happened or was not worth mentioning, or, if that failed... construe[d] it as out and out treachery (the Indian 'Mutiny' of 1857) or an explosion of atavistic barbarity (the Mau Mau uprising in the 1950s)" (Childs and Williams 26). Countering such representations, the Subaltern Studies project, for instance,

acknowledges and records peasant insurgents as subjects of their own history within but not reduced to colonial power, and outside the determination of the homogenous Indian "nation" of an elite imagination. As significant as such a project has been for the study of Indian history and the field of postcolonial studies, however, the early work of *Subaltern Studies* provides a counter-narrative of Indian history but does not interrogate what it means to resist.

The little bird Titi's "talking back" to power exhibits an act of opposition to power which significantly leads to more overt repression – the "ungratefulness" of the bird for the lion's "aid" results in punishment. Yet, tales such as this also raise significant questions about what it means to resist. Significantly, the tale of the little bird Titi's "talking back" resonates with a historical story of native "resistance" in colonial Nyasaland, the 1915 rebellion against British rule, organized by John Chilembwe. The Chilembwe uprising was much more limited in scale and scope than more prominent examples of insurgency against colonial rule, such as the 1857 Indian Rebellion or the Mau Mau struggle in Kenya. The uprising provided little or no material change in the structures of political or economic power of the British protectorate of Nyasaland. However, the story of Chilembwe's failed attempt to oppose colonial authority has nonetheless had a significant impact on African political initiatives and the cultural imagination of the peoples of the region (Pike 97, White, Yorke). More importantly for my purposes, an analysis of representations of the uprising provides a venue for problematizing the dominant notions of resistance utilized within postcolonial studies.

The British historian, John Pike writes of Chilembwe that he was "strict and upright, always neatly dressed in Western attire… [W]hat catches one's attention is his expression, which reveals a zeal, intelligence and imagination that is generally absent from early photographs or portraits of Africans of this period" (Pike 98-99). Many of Chilembwe's European contemporaries were offended by the African's "temerity to wear a hat and 'ape the European'" and particularly Chilembwe's "habit of entering European stores and buying articles of clothing for his wife, such as silk stockings, which many considered to be the prerogative of Europeans only" (Shepperson and Price 227). However, for Pike – as demeaning as his description of Chilembwe may be – Chilembwe's unique "intelligence and imagination" positions him as neither "traitor" nor "barbarian," a critical representation which contrasts starkly with that of most of Chilembwe's British contemporaries in Nyasaland. Chilembwe's ill-fated and rather modest armed rebellion is contextualized by both Pike and Shepperson and Price as a desperate attempt to oppose the violence of the British colonial economy in Nyasaland.[1] Prefiguring Albert Memmi's critique of colonialism, in which he argued that the colonizer must at some point recognize the misery of the colonized and the relation of that misery to their own comfort (7), even British colonial service Medical Officer Dr. Norman Leys identifies the structure of the colonial project as the cause of the rebellion, rather than Chilembwe's "fanaticism." The British people, he writes, "should look upon

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[1] Shepperson and Price's *Independent African* (1958), has been critiqued for conceiving of Chilembwe within a European conception of subjectivity and for constructing African history as parallel to that of Scotland under English rule (See, Robinson).

the rising as a by-product of the system under which the very coffee they are drinking is produced" (qtd. in Shepperson and Price 5). Mentored by the English Baptist missionary Joseph Booth and educated at a seminary in Virginia, Chilembwe initially sought to cooperate with the British colonial government as he developed his industrial mission. However, he became increasingly disenchanted with the political economy of British Nyasaland.

Two main concerns have been attributed as the cause of the rebellion. First, British settlement of Nyasaland instituted a violent structure of economic exploitation. While the physical abuse of African labourers by estate owners like W.J. Livingstone was unquestionably a primary cause of African disaffection (Livingstone's estate was the first to be targeted during the rebellion and the British settler's disembodied head was displayed at Chilembwe's church the following day), this direct violence of colonial rule was only a manifestation of the imposition of particularly modern capitalist structures and values of land use and labour. Through the institution of private property and consequently European "ownership" of the land on which Africans lived and farmed, the European settlers created a labour force dependent upon European farms. *Thangata*, as the system was known, required African men to pay a "hut-tax" or face eviction, the destruction of their homes and crops, or the seizure of their wives. Existing within a subsistence economy, Africans had no alternative but to sell their labour to European settlers in order to pay the government tax. According to George Mwase – whose documentation of the rebellion is based on conversations with one of Chilembwe's lieutenants in the uprising – Chilembwe "had no intention of rebelling against the Government itself," but did so in order to fulfill his aim "to fight white Planters, Traders, and other white settlers within the country" (29). Repeated increases to the hut-tax throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, as well as the 1912 District Administration Ordinance, which undermined indigenous governance in favour of British administered local councils, created a system in which Africans were ever more subjugated.

The second major grievance attributed as the cause of the rebellion was the recruitment of African soldiers to serve the British in the Great War. Having protested earlier employment of African troops in the British Ashanti and Somaliland campaigns, Chilembwe wrote to the *Nyasaland Times* just a month before the rebellion to express his outrage that once again Africans were "invited to shed our innocent blood" in a war "that Africa had nothing to do with." He notes the way in which Africans have served with "gallantry" only to find themselves, in peace, once again the underdog: "In time of peace everything for Europeans only. And instead of honour we suffer humiliation with names contemptible" (qtd. in Shepperson and Price 234-5). The letter slipped by censors and copies of the newspaper were quickly seized in an attempt to "protect" the settler community and English-speaking Africans from the critique. While the Nyasaland Governor at the time contended that Chilembwe's "movement was designed for the massacre of the whites in the Shire Highlands… and for the suppression of white rule"

(qtd. in Shepperson and Price 219-20), Chilembwe's protest is constructed within the terms of modern British democratic discourse.[2]

In Chapter Two, I will interrogate Frantz Fanon's theory of oppositional resistance and the seeming privileged place he gives to violence as a means of evicting the colonist from Africa and, more importantly, restoring the dignity of the colonized through the act of taking the place of the colonist. Fanon draws his theory of resistance from what he constructs as the paradigmatic example of anti-colonial resistance, the Algerian struggle against French colonial rule. The Chilembwe rebellion, however, does not conform to the paradigm Fanon constructs. Indeed, in a speech Mwase attributes to Chilembwe, uttered to his army on the morning of the first day of the rebellion, Chilembwe specifically counsels his soldiers not to enter into battle with any illusions of conquest over the British, or, indeed, any aspirations for military victory: "'Be of good courage, and strike the blow and die for 'Amor Patria,' and not with intention to win and become Kings of your own'" (qtd. in Mwase 50). Chilembwe does not seek the massacre of whites in Nyasaland (his disciplined soldiers kill just three Europeans and are careful to not harm women or children), nor does he seek their eviction.   He plots not the destruction of the British but their transformation: "'The whitemen will then think, after we are dead, that the treatment they are treating our people is almost [most] bad, and they might change to the better for our people'" (qtd. in Mwase 49). Chilembwe seeks to foster the transformation of the structural violence of the colonial economic system through a symbolic gesture of sacrifice intended to appeal to the humanity of the colonists and to illuminate the injustices of colonialism (Shepperson and Price 245, 255, Rotberg "Introduction" xxiii, xxvi). The material structures of inequality that Chilembwe seeks to transform are invested in, and legitimized by, a colonial discourse which constructs Africans as chattel. Structural transformation is therefore inseparable from cultural transformation, an idea I will develop more fully in my treatment in Chapter One of Gandhi's discursive resistance to white South African rule in the decade preceding Chilembwe's rebellion.

The Chilembwe uprising is also significant because as much as Chilembwe utilizes a discourse of patriotism, Shepperson and Price argue that his sense of the nation does not idealize a native past – a form of national imaginary which Fanon critiques and most postcolonial theorists have dismissed – but imagines a national future: "It is not misleading, then, to say that Chilembwe's was the first Central African resistance to European control which looked to the future, not the past, and which did not assume tribal potentates, whether by inheritance or by usurpation, would head the new state" (409). Chilembwe's future-oriented nationalism, seeking to transform colonial economic structures and discourses of power, makes his institutionalization as the figure of the Malawian nation rather ironic. While the disappointment of "flag" independence in the post-colonial state reveals the way in which independence failed to be translated into decolonization, Chilembwe's rebellion seems to have been directed not at achieving entrance into the community of nations but at the initiation of the process of

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[2] The letter included in Mwase's account, based on an oral source, is not as invested in democratic discourse as the Shepperson and Price version (34).

decolonization, in both material and discursive terms. The lesson of the rebellion Ley identifies reveals the way in which Chilembwe's hope that through his self-sacrifice Europeans would recognize the violence of the structure in which they benefit was at least partially fulfilled. Mwase concludes his study of Chilembwe, which he wrote in the 1930s, by arguing that the uprising precipitated more humane governance of the protectorate and that "the country is enjoying the fruits, which John Chilembwe has laboured" (79-80). Though Shepperson and Price describe a conspiracy of silence following the rebellion, the government commission did publicly acknowledge *thangata* and the system of land ownership as rebel grievances. However, the peoples of the Shire Highlands region received little structural redress and, like the Little Bird Titi, in the immediate wake of the rebellion, were targeted for punishment. The general population suffered the excise of fines as collective punishment and the indignity of witnessing numerous participants in the rebellion imprisoned or executed. Further, blaming the rebellion on the "effect of ill digested teaching on the native mind," settlers directed their blame at the Christian missions (Shepperson and Price 363).

Drawing upon the analogy of an unarmed man facing a lion, Mwase immortalizes Chilembwe as a metonym of African discontent and as a fearless hero: "No person on the earth, unless is a very intrepid, can rise against a lion at his prey, equipped with a maize stalk, and attack the lion with it and depend upon pulling off the teeth, jaws, and claws from the lion himself, would [he] not be called a hero" (73)? Significantly, Mwase honours Chilembwe not for his tactical acumen or his prowess on the battlefield but his willingness to sacrifice himself in an impossible endeavour. Chilembwe seeks not "victory," but to illuminate the immorality of colonialism in order to foster transformation. Is confronting the "whiteman" with a maize stalk, however, resistance? Does Chilembwe's resistance lie in his willingness to militarily challenge colonial power or in his commitment to egalitarian ideals?

While it has become banal to argue that colonial domination was never total and that there was always some sort of resistance, the concept of resistance, while it is a continual referent and at least implicit locus of much postcolonial criticism and theory, is largely untheorized within the field. Representations of the Chilembwe uprising and the tale "The Lion and the Little Bird Titi" raise important questions about the nature of resistance. What does it mean to talk back, to change the story, to resist? Did the Little Bird Titi change the "story" or simply momentarily alter his subject position within a structure of power and identity that was not challenged? Can attempts to destroy or dismantle colonial structures of power and attempts to benefit within those structures both be characterized as resistance? Did Chilembwe's armed insurrection or his Providence Industrial Mission – run by and for Africans and based on egalitarian values – provide a greater challenge to British settler authority, or the structure of power in which the settler benefited? To what extent do models of resistance which pit the colonized in opposition to the colonizer alter or reinforce the discursive and political structures of colonial power?

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II. What Does it Mean to Resist? Postcolonial Studies and the Centrality of Resistance

In this dissertation I distinguish between "post-colonial" as a geographical and temporal marker and postcolonialism as a field of study which has as its object the "post-colonial," but functions as a critical perspective which may be characterized as "a set of questions and a style of thought which are made possible by colonialism and its aftermath, and which seek to rethink, and redescribe, its own enabling conditions" (Seth 214). For critics such as Leela Gandhi, postcolonialism, in its "postnational guise," is invested in an ethical position: "a non-violent reading of the colonial past through an emphasis on mutual transformation of coloniser and colonised, and... blueprint for a utopian inter-civilisational alliance against institutionalised suffering" (*Postcolonial* 140). The hope of liberation as an "alliance against institutionalized suffering" is certainly evident in the work of the anti-colonial critic Frantz Fanon and has been taken up by postcolonial theorists such as Said. As I will argue in Chapters One and Two, however, Gandhi's contention that postcolonialism provides a reading practice which emphasizes the "mutual transformation of the coloniser and colonised" seems incongruous with the dominant notions of resistance within the field.

"Resistance" is a primary framework for the critical project of postcolonialism; in many ways, the subject of postcolonial criticism is "resistance" and postcolonialism is a project of "resistance" itself. Yet, while the concept of resistance has received some critical treatment, particularly in the late 1980s, and more recently in the work of Bill Ashcroft and Benita Parry, apart from sporadic discussions of it in introductions to the field, it has functioned as an amorphous concept identifying any kind of struggle, regardless of modes or aims.[3] As Ashcroft argues, "resistance is a word which adapts itself to a great variety of circumstances and few words show a greater tendency towards cliché and empty rhetoric" (Ashcroft 20). Further, historian Frederick Cooper argues that the concept can be "expanded so broadly that it denies any other kind of life to the people doing the resisting... [and] may narrow our understanding of African history rather than expand it" (1532). By interrogating the dominant ways in which "resistance" has been conceptualized within postcolonial studies, I seek to narrow our understanding of the concept, thereby limiting its application. By critiquing the way in which resistance is conceptualized within the work of the Subaltern Studies collective, Homi Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, Benita Parry and Edward Said in Chapters One and Two, and by analyzing Gandhism and the concept of reconciliation in the context of post-apartheid South Africa in Chapters Three and Four, I redefine resistance as endeavours to transform the discursive and material structures of colonial power rather than simply subversion of or opposition to certain aspects of these structures.

As broadly used and under-theorized as "resistance" is within the field, the assumptions underlying its various conceptualizations can largely be traced back to the influence of

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[3] Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (1998) is typical in its omission of the concept of resistance.

Frantz Fanon. For critics like Parry, too many postcolonial critics "overlook that it was the thinking of theorist-activists engaged in liberation struggles which inaugurated the interrogation of colonialism and imperialism as projects of, and constitutive forces in, western modernity" ("Reconciliation" 85). I agree with Parry that postcolonial theory must return to the work of anti-colonial critics. Yet, I focus upon the work of Fanon in Chapter Two not with the expectation that Fanon provides a politically more useful or "authentic" theory of resistance simply because he was an anti-colonial activist, but because of the profound influence Fanon has had upon the field's scope, assumptions and politics. One need look no further than the opening paragraph of *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) to find the seeds of the tensions that continue to shape debates within, and about, postcolonial studies.

Fanon begins the introductory essay to *The Wretched of the Earth*, "Concerning Violence," with the seemingly categorical statement that regardless of how liberation is envisioned – whether as the restoration of the "nation" or the production of it – the process of decolonization is "always a violent phenomenon" (35). As I will discuss in Chapter Two, Fanon's theory of resistance as necessarily violent and oppositional is either ironic or debilitatingly ambiguous.[4] The "minimum demand" of the colonized – though it appears as the extent of the demand in the remainder of Fanon's chapter – is the replacement of the colonist. In the "moment" of independence the colonial bureaucrat or banker is replaced with the "native." Yet, decolonization, as Fanon ambiguously describes it, is both an historical moment and an historical process defined by the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized: "The need for this change exists in its crude state, impetuous and compelling, in the consciousness and in the lives of the men and women who are colonized" and the "possibility of this change is equally experienced in the form of a terrifying future in the consciousness of another 'species' of men and women: the colonizers" (35-6). Decolonization, therefore, is marked by opposition and experienced as antagonism, wherein the image of liberation for the colonized is the colonizer's terror. On one level, it is the historical fulfillment of the expulsion of European direct rule; yet, Fanon continues, "[t]o tell the truth, the proof of success lies in the whole social structure being changed from the bottom up" (35).

The ambivalence foregrounded in the opening paragraph of *The Wretched of the Earth* illuminates the tensions surrounding the concept of resistance within postcolonial studies. First, what is the aim of resistance? Does anti-colonial resistance seek the establishment of the post-colonial nation or the transcendence of political structures and identity-politics constructed in terms of the modern nation-state? Can it be either? Further, as Fanon acknowledges in his reference to colonial consciousness, is decolonization simply political, or is it necessarily cultural as well? As Fanon prophetically argues in *The Wretched of the Earth*, the replacement of the colonizer by the colonized as the establishment of the African nation is doomed to disappointment for

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[4] Yet, it continues to hold credence for many theorists; Peter Hallward, for instance, agrees with Fanon that *every* "emancipatory process, every emergence of a *new* figure of universality, must begin as no less divisive" than the exploitative, and specifically militaristic, colonial project (xv).

the peoples of the continent. Liberation cannot be the entrance of African nations into modernity, for the emergence of European modernity is interdependent with the colonial project, producing "Europe" and modern reason, in relation to their Others. Fanon notes that colonialism was initiated and maintained with the bayonet and cannon, but he also acknowledges that the very relationship within which decolonization is conceived is a product of colonialism: "The settler is right when he speaks of knowing 'them' well. For it is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence. The settler owes the fact of his very existence, that is to say, his property, to the colonial system" (*Wretched* 36). Colonial identity is a function of, rather than prior to, the dominance/privilege of the colonizer and the suffering/subjugation of the colonized. Fanon's seeming recognition, here, of the interdependence of discursive constructions of identity and material relations of power undermines the idea that colonization can be dismantled simply through violence, particularly when colonization *is* the antagonistic conflict for which violence becomes the tool as much as it is the system of *thangata*.

Despite Fanon's ambivalence, however, his work is particularly significant for the way in which the cultural and political, discursive and material elements of colonial power, the activists, guerrillas, politicians, peasants and cultural producers, are all integrated in his discussion of colonialism and its opposition. In both *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon alludes to a notion of liberation which he suggests can only emerge after a violent political revolution constructed in oppositional terms. The "new humanism" Fanon postulates as liberation requires not simply a transformation of economic and political structures marked by dominance and subjugation but the transformation of discursive structures of power establishing and maintaining colonial identities. The producer of culture – the writer or artist – consequently holds a privileged place within Fanon's theory of decolonization. Fanon presents the fraught and often ambivalent strivings of the "native intellectual" who struggles between the desire to assimilate into the dominant culture of the colonizer or reveal the impossibility of colonial hegemony by celebrating a pre-colonial idyllic native culture. Fanon theorizes a series of stages in which the native artist moves from mimicking the style, structure and themes of European literature to adapting "old legends" to the "borrowed estheticism" of a foreign model to, finally, assuming the role of the "awakener" of the people by fashioning a revolutionary "literature of combat" (*Wretched* 221-224). Only in addressing the "people" can the writer take *his* (and the writer and nationalist imaginary are very much masculine) place with the people as a producer of a new culture: "It is a literature of combat because it molds the national consciousness, giving it form and contours and flinging open before it new and boundless horizons; it is a literature of combat because it assumes responsibility, and because it is the will to liberty expressed in terms of time and space" (240). While Fanon frames cultural resistance within a militaristic discourse, and critics such as Barbara Harlow and writer/theorists such as George Lamming have taken up this idea of literature as a mode of oppositional politics, Fanon is describing what postcolonial critics have come to identify as counter-discursive writing.

Said argues that European literature, from travelogues to novels, served both to assert European identity and history, and, as part of the project of colonial education, served to produce and manage the identity of the colonized. Literature is privileged as the primary mode through which the colonial order is produced culturally. As a result, the colonized must literally *write* themselves into existence by contesting European representations and models. In their seminal text, *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) – which signals the transition from Commonwealth literary studies to postcolonial studies, a project of canon (re)formation based on the geographical boundaries of the British Empire to the dominant practice within the Euro-American university of organizing and reading these literatures – Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin prescribe postcolonial literature as being concerned with the appropriation of English and reconstitution of various englishes, the adaptation of metropolitan genres and epistemologies, as well as the native subject's displacement due to dislocation or denigration. By their own admission, they compare widely divergent works on the basis that they depict a struggle for community with a binary which pits the colonial periphery against the European centre (27). Postcolonial literature is defined, then, as a response to European colonial representation of the colonial project and the colonized. Like Said's assertion cited above, such critical practices assume, and are limited to, an oppositional paradigm between apparently fixed communities of the colonizer and the colonized, the European and the Native. By focusing upon the contest of competing versions of history and identity, such formulations privilege this narrative of contest over the act of articulating the story, or the idea that the story – as narrative of identity and experience – is a fundamental part of the contested field on which the struggle is taking place.

Within this postcolonial critical practice, literature is read as "resistance" in so far as, 1) colonial narratives are "rewritten," or, 2) postcolonial literature is constructed as the Other to the colonial narrative. Ashcroft et al., recognize post-colonial works as constituent of various national or regional literatures, and thereby link the act of writing to that of nation building: "The study of national traditions is the first and most vital stage of the process of rejecting the claims of the centre to exclusivity" (17). These national literatures are regarded as "dominated" in terms of their colonial histories and contemporary level of "international importance." For the authors of *The Empire Writes Back*, "'Post-colonial' seems to be the choice which both embraces the historical reality and focuses on that relationship which has provided the most important creative and psychological impetus in the writing" (24). Derived from this political experience, all post-colonial or "dominated" literature subverts European power "through nationalist assertion, proclaiming itself centre and self-determining," yet at the same time radically "questioning the bases of European and British metaphysics, challenging the world-view that can polarize centre and periphery in the first place" (33). To support this claim, they point to such writers as Wilson Harris, Chinua Achebe, J.M. Coetzee, Margaret Atwood and Jean Rhys, who they argue have rewritten texts of the English canon in a way which posits alternative "realities" by reversing the hierarchical order and by "interrogating the philosophical assumptions on which that order was based" (33). To what extent, however, does the privileging of texts that literally *write back* to prior European texts allow for such autonomy to be gained or recognized?

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To read literatures of the colonized as "counter-discourse," even when that counter-discourse takes the form not of the production of an essentialized and homogenous native identity but a hybrid or syncretic one, necessarily constructs the postcolonial text as understandable only in relation to an assumed European referent. For critics such as Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge, the construction of counter-discourse as hybridity and syncretism in *The Empire Writes Back* frames the postcolonial in non-political and non-racial terms eliding the material conditions of the colonial relationship (287). Ashcroft, however, contends that the counter-discursive literary text is never simply a response to the canonical text, reversing the imperial binary of civilized and savage, but a revision which exposes the cultural assumptions of those texts and so it is transformative (32). While I agree that many of the paradigmatic works of this sort do indeed expose the cultural assumptions of colonial authority, it is not clear that this is necessarily transformative. Further, the value of the text – its "resistant" or "transformative" quality – is constrained by a reading practice which can only understand the text in relation to the authoritative and normative metropole. For Arun Mukherjee, the idea that postcolonial writers write *back* to the *centre* implies that they do not write about their own needs when indeed they do, and by focusing on the way texts subvert or resist the colonizer, postcolonialism overlooks a great body of work concerned more about class or family or the management of bodies (6). The political significance of so-called post-colonial writing should not be limited to the way in which it responds to and challenges European forms, models or representations of (post)colonial places and peoples. Further, by limiting postcolonial literatures to objects of resistance defined in this way – assuming a theory of resistance but not articulating it – such a critical practice forecloses the possibility of such texts being used to interrogate what resistance means.

By first privileging particular literary texts which function to "resist" colonialism, and then translating this organization of texts into a reading practice, what it means to resist is left unexamined; even where syncretism and hybridity are constructed as resistance, the postcolonial text is only ever a response to the colonial. As Stephen Slemon asks: "Is literary resistance something that simply issues forth, through narrative, against a clearly defined set of power relations? Is it something actually *there* in the text, or is it produced and reproduced in and through communities of readers and through mediating structures of their own culturally specific histories?" ("Unsettling" 73). If it is the latter, than our understanding of it requires analysis that goes beyond a recognition of alterity. The postcolonial text as counter-discourse is resistant in so far as it is "different." As Slemon argues, "colonised societies have always been consigned to a modality of interpretation, comparison and representation that registers immediate experience not through an unproblematically reflective language but rather *against* the pattern of an-other culture, an-other sign" ("Reading" 104, original emphasis). In many cases, anti-colonial nationalist identities were indeed posited through modern European discourses of identity or specifically against Europe. The tendency of postcolonialism to consign colonized societies to this "modality of interpretation, comparison and representation," however, occludes alternative modes of identity formation and limits the extent to which such constructions of identity can be assessed in terms of how they enable the transformation of structures of inequality.

In Chapter One, I look at the way in which Homi Bhabha's notion of "spectacular resistance" seems to conflate the notion of cultural alterity with resistance. Echoing Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s contention that we must distinguish more sharply between the notions of cultural resistance and cultural alterity (466), I believe that as much as this alterity reveals the way in which colonial power was never total, and, indeed, likely provided an obstacle to colonial authority, reducing "resistance" to "difference" negates the possibility of a politics of transformation. As I will argue in Chapters Three and Four, we can discern such a politics that does not take the form of a universalized and teleological narrative of emancipation, and without such a politics, the concept of resistance seems meaningless.

My concern in this dissertation is not to analyse particular examples or modes of "cultural resistance" but to interrogate the various and contradictory assumptions about resistance which inform postcolonial analyses of literature and other cultural practices. I have no desire to formulate a "genuine" theory or narrative of resistance which is applicable in all places and at all times. However, I do wish to interrogate the assumptions and limitations of the models of resistance that are dominant in postcolonial studies. Further, I wish to draw on examples from India and Africa to suggest that a politically useful construction of resistance must foreground concerns for social and cultural transformation in the form of social justice, popular political participation and non-antagonistic constructions of identity. Post-independence political experience in both South Asia and Africa has demonstrated the limits of "liberation" imagined alternatively as the independent nation-state, cultural autonomy or hybridity.

Literature does not provide the primary objects of my study, but I do recognize literature as a significant mode of cultural expression. Drawing upon Viswanathan's contention that English literary education in British colonies functioned to take the colonized further from themselves and their world to the self of the colonizing other and that other's world, Ngugi argues that decolonization requires the colonized to seize back control of the means of communal self-definition, including language and literary production (Ngugi *Decolonizing* 4). As my analysis of postcolonial models of resistance in Chapters One and Two will show, I am deeply uneasy with the categories of "self" and "other" assumed within such an argument. Indeed, in Chapters Three and Four, through the examples of Gandhian *ahimsa* and South African initiatives towards reconciliation, I will argue that "resistance" in these formulations does not challenge the authority or power of the colonizer or deconstruct such an antagonistic conflict between colonizer and colonized by postulating a hybrid subject. Rather, they challenge the structure of power assumed within colonial discourse by fostering an order in which the relationship between Self and Other is one of mutual interdependence rather than antagonism.

The primary objects of my analysis of colonial power and the idea of resistance are not political and economic structures but cultural structures which legitimize or explain the structural and direct violence of colonialism. Here, I am at least implicitly drawing upon Johan Galtung's theory of "cultural violence" as those aspects of the discursive sphere, from language to religion to empirical science which underwrite structures of exploitation and marginalization. While Galtung identifies rituals (such as

the raising of national flags), symbols, forms of cultural production (such as literature), and language, among other aspects of culture, the violence he is identifying is not simply these cultural "acts" but the conceptual framework of the world which they instil or reinforce. Significantly, while we may "read" the cultural violence in acts, events, processes and structures, the cultural violence of hierarchical thinking (including patriarchy and racism) is not simply a "cause" of the structural violence or direct violence, but these three forms of violence are interdependent and reinforcing.

The construction of colonial subjectivity produced in the education of an elite class of English-speaking, culturally "astute" Indians and Africans need not necessarily be deconstructed or destroyed through the same mediums. Both the use of English and the deliberate use of indigenous languages may, in different ways, be regarded as "resisting" (neo)colonial power *and/or* in reinscribing these power relations. For Ngugi "literature provides us with images of the world in which we live. Through these images, it shapes our consciousness to look at the world in a certain way. Our propensity to action or inaction or to a certain kind of action or inaction can be profoundly affected by the way we look at the world" (*Barrel* 75). Rather than just the particular modes (i.e. literature and language) of instilling a particular world-view (i.e. the superiority of European culture or the pre-eminence of economic development in the form of a capitalist ideology of production and value), I am concerned with formulating a notion of resistance which is invested not in the ideas of opposition, or the production of counter-discourses, but in the transformation of structures and cultures of power. Literature, then, figures as a significant object of analysis in this dissertation for the reasons Ngugi identifies. I draw on works of literature for a variety of reasons to develop my arguments. For instance, in Chapter Two I draw on critical analyses of Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* (1988) to interrogate the assumptions in postcolonial readings of/for resistance. In addition, I believe the novel reveals the "fault-lines" of the various constructions of power implicit in the dominant formulations of resistance within the field and provides a construction of "liberation" which does not conform to that implied by theorists like Fanon and Said. In Chapter Three I draw on Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938) to illuminate and problematize Gandhi's concepts of *ahimsa* and *satyagraha,* and in Chapter Four I read Sindiwe Magona's *Mother to Mother* (1998) for the way in which it both identifies, and performs, the cultural transformation necessary for reconciliation. These works of literature provide a valuable alternative to historical or theoretical representations of power and the values and ideologies which inform the political and economic structures of dominance.

III. Changing the Story

When the Little Bird Titi ascends the anthill to sing "It's my own…" he is seizing back the means of self-definition and changing his role in the story, but is he changing the story of power? While C.L.R. James grafts the Chilembwe uprising into a historical discourse of violent revolution – explicitly in contrast to earlier "primitive" rebellions in which "tribes simply threw themselves at the government troops and suffered the inevitable defeat" (*A History* 47) – the rebellion does not conform to such a paradigm of

revolutionary insurgency. As I have constructed it, Chilembwe's is a different story of resistance. When Ben Okri contends that people must change the "stories" they live by in order to change the world in which they live, I interpret his use of "stories" as not just literature but those discourses of identity and power through which subjectivity is constructed and within which action is understood. Changing the story, therefore, is not an act *against* the oppressor – the Lion or Livingstone, for instance – and it is not simply the production of historical counter-narratives.

In one form or another, active opposition against the institutions or figures of colonial power, the subversion of colonial laws or discourses of identity, or the resilience of the colonized to survive colonial rule are all posited as "resistance" within postcolonial studies. In Chapters One and Two I investigate what I believe are the two dominant conceptualizations of resistance within postcolonialism: the discursive disruption of colonial authority through mimicry, ambivalence and hybridity; and, more materialist conceptions of resistance, which, though they engage with colonial representation, rely upon a notion of anti-colonial resistance as the product of an antagonistic relationship. The immediate problem of constructing the debate in these terms is that it creates an artificial polarity; few critics reside neatly in one or the other camp. While I do not specifically engage with the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, her ability to move back and forth from materialist to discursive critique, and more importantly to specifically ground her critique of colonial discourse in the material experiences of colonialism, provides just one example of the way in which the criticism of the so-called "discursive turn" in postcolonial studies – by such critics as Ahmad, Dirlik, Parry, San Juan and Shohat – has constructed a more polarized view of the field than is the case in practice. By necessity, I have had to limit my focus in both chapters. As a result, I concentrate on the work of Homi Bhabha in Chapter One, as he is the most prominent theorist of discursive forms of resistance, and on the work of Frantz Fanon, Benita Parry and Edward Said in Chapter Two.

In Chapter One, I begin by looking at the work of Ranajit Guha and the Subaltern Studies Collective, analyzing the way in which "resistance" is figured in the project's work. In many ways, the work of the collective parallels the development of postcolonial studies more broadly, beginning with an investigation of the functioning of colonial power and forms of resistance and moving towards the deconstruction of concepts such as "power" and "subjectivity." Within Bhabha's colonial discourse theory, native resistance is figured as the subversion of colonial authority, or the failure of colonial authority to be performed as it is represented. Such a theory seems to negate the possibility of structural change, simply illuminating the impossibility of colonial authority. However, I analyze early twentieth century resistance to white repression of South Africa's South Asian minority in order to argue for ways in which Bhabha's "spectacular resistance" does provide an important critical perspective on how the cultural structure of colonial authority may be challenged.

In Chapter Two, I map what I call the oppositional paradigm of resistance and argue that such a paradigm limits the reading of post-colonial history and cultural texts, such as Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*. Resistance, as an act *against* power, reinforces a construction of power that theorists such as Bhabha, Spivak and Chakrabarty

have convincingly deconstructed and reinforces the colonial representation of power and identity produced as colonial knowledge. In particular, I critique the way in which the cultural identity of the colonized becomes reduced to a function of anti-colonial struggle. Often modernity, the "West," and capitalism are conflated within such discourses of resistance, and initiatives to "oppose" the values of consumer capital or to benefit within them are both characterized as resistance. I conclude the chapter by analysing Fanon and Said's conceptions of liberation as the fulfilment of a "new humanism." I suggest that such a model of liberation is impeded by the oppositional framework within which resistance is imagined.

In Chapters Three and Four I turn my attention to two conceptual paradigms of social change and conflict transformation that radically differ from the dominant notions of resistance propagated within the field of postcolonial studies. First, in Chapter Three, I interrogate Gandhi's conceptions of *ahimsa* (nonviolence), *swaraj* (independence) and *satyagraha*. Despite the widespread belief in, or acceptance of, Mohandas Gandhi's influential role in Indian independence and his status as one of the most significant social and political thinkers of the twentieth century, Gandhi – the political figure – and Gandhism – a philosophy of social and political conduct – are marginalized within postcolonialism.   The premise of Gandhian resistance as *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* dramatically revises colonial power. Gandhi constructs colonial authority in terms of the cooperation and acquiescence of the colonized and therefore invests resistance not in the destruction of colonial rule but the transformation of the colonized subject. Similarly, the concept of reconciliation, which is the focus of Chapter Four, invests resistance not in the idea of opposition to those in power, but in the transformation of the material and cultural structures which produce and maintain inequity and exploitation, dominance and subjugation. In this chapter, I return to Said's notion of liberation and particularly his critique of the rhetoric and politics of blame. I argue that reconciliation, as it is constructed within South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, reveals the way in which "liberation" requires the dismantling of this politics of blame as well as – what I call – the politics of denial. Reconciliation, as it takes form in the writings of Desmond Tutu and Mahmood Mamdani, revises power from the relationship of the oppressor *over* the oppressed to that of those who benefit and those who suffer within structures of oppression.

Ashcroft argues that resistance should be conceptualized as "any form of defence in which an invader is 'kept out,'" as these "sometimes even unspoken forms of social and cultural resistance… [these] forms of saying 'no'… are most interesting because they are most difficult for imperial powers to combat" (20). In Chapters Three and Four I challenge the idea that resistance constitutes a "saying 'no,'" whether in the sense that Ashcroft describes, Bhabha constructs as mimicry and hybridity, or Fanon identifies in the native's desire to overthrow the colonist. I am more concerned with forms of social and cultural resistance that are not subtle, and which are performed as an affirmation of an alternative to the direct and structural violence of colonialism rather than merely a refusal. I analyse examples of "resistance" which do not *oppose* colonial rule or merely *subvert* it, but seek to transform its cultural values and material structures. In my conclusion, I relate these alternative notions of resistance to the ideal of love, which

theorists such as Hardt and Negri, Spivak and Sandoval construct – though in different ways – as a politics of anti-oppression. Both Gandhism and reconciliation construct an alternative notion of power to that of colonial and anti-colonial discourse, and they construct resistance as a "politics of love" which aims at the production of mutually beneficial relationships.

CHAPTER ONE

Colonial Discourse/Power and "Spectacular Resistance"

I. Power, Resistance and Indian Historiography

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the Subaltern Studies project and particularly Ranajit Guha's theorization of colonial power in India because of the way in which the work of the Subaltern Studies collective provides one example of the tensions between so-called materialist and discursive approaches to studying a postcolonial liberatory politics. In many ways, the work of the Subaltern Studies collective parallels the development of postcolonialism more broadly, originating with an investigation of the functioning of colonial power and forms of resistance and moving towards the deconstruction of concepts such as "power" and "subjectivity." I go on to interrogate Homi Bhabha's concepts of hybridity, ambivalence and mimicry. As one of the most influential theorists of colonial discourse, and one who explicitly frames his critical project in terms of illuminating spaces within colonial discourse/power in which resistance can take place, Bhabha's analysis of the subversion of colonial authority – or the failure of colonial authority to be performed as it is represented – has significant repercussions for postcolonial understandings of power and resistance. However, I believe that Bhabha's theory of "spectacular resistance" is limited by its focus on uncovering points of "slippage" in colonial discourse. I will conclude the chapter by discussing the activism of South Asian immigrants in South Africa during the period 1893-1914. Drawing on examples of "mimicry" and "candid (rather than 'sly') civility" which affirm an alternate subjectivity, rather than simply fail to satisfy the colonial demand, I describe examples of "discursive resistance" that are transformative and that must be understood in relation to material forms of colonial authority.

The early work of the Subaltern Studies project provides a valuable critique of colonial and nationalist constructions of insurgency, most particularly by not limiting its focus to colonial structures. As much as the collective "uncovers" local contexts and conditions of rebellion – against landowners, *zamindars*, colonial rulers – the collective is necessarily preoccupied with reading these events against the dominant narratives of Indian history. In his essay, "The Colonial Construction of Communalism," for instance, Gyanendra Pandey seeks to investigate "how reports of communal strife were received by contemporary and subsequent observers, what meanings were derived from them, and what place they were assigned in different representations of a changing colonial world" (Pandey "Colonial" 135). Through his reading of representations of the Banaras riots of 1809, ranging from immediate reports to "histories" written decades after the event, Pandey argues that colonial histories of India construct a "communal riot narrative" accounting for peasant insurgency through the construction of "native character" defined within the antagonistic relationship between Muslims and Hindus. By defining peasant

disturbances as communal in nature – rather than developing in opposition to colonial political or economic systems – colonial history justifies the colonial presence. Pandey interrogates the economic and material causes of a specific event and challenges the production of Indian history, particularly with respect to its focus upon identity politics (Hindu v. Muslim or Colonized v. Colonizers).

Dipesh Chakrabarty argues that the project's critique of colonial and elite nationalist historiography constitutes a "reading strategy" in the way that it seeks to identify the archives of Indian history and examine their production ("Small" 479). Yet, the implicit referent against which this history is read is a narrative of national liberation. For instance, although Chakrabarty argues that Guha does not reduce Indian history to the incomplete transition to capitalism ("Small" 476), Guha's arguments in "Dominance Without Hegemony and its Historiography" imply that capitalism is indeed a precursor to socialism, and so the failure of the development of a capitalist hegemony is linked to the *failure* of the narrative of the "nation" to be fulfilled (*Dominance* 63). In "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," Guha argues that peasant insurgency is both independent of elite political resistance to colonialism and it is the most significant form of popular mobilization. He constructs the Subaltern Studies project as reading for a "lack" in the dominant narratives of Indian history.

On one level contributors "fill in" the lack of narratives of peasant insurgency, but more importantly they identify that "lack" which prevented such insurgency from fulfilling a particularly socialist narrative of the nation: "[T]he initiatives which originated from the domain of subaltern politics were not, on their part, powerful enough to develop the nationalist movement into a full-fledged struggle for national liberation. The working class was still not sufficiently mature in the objective conditions of its social being and in its consciousness as a class-for-itself, nor was it firmly allied yet with the peasantry"(Guha "On Some" 6). The analysis of specifically local acts of resistance, with local causes and contexts, are subsumed within the larger concern of studying the *"historic failure of the nation to come to its own,* a failure due to the inadequacy of the bourgeoisie as well as of the working class to lead it into a decisive victory over colonialism… *it is the study of this failure which constitutes the central problematic of the historiography of colonial India"* (7, original emphasis). While numerous explorations of insurgency and rebellion are read for the way in which they illuminate the "non-development of radicalism" (Henningham 159), or the "failure of the Indian nation," the nature of the goals of "national liberation," a "decisive victory," "radicalism" or an Indian nation "in its own" are assumed but not articulated within this teleology of revolution. So, at least initially, the project is concerned with describing "resistance" but not the origins or aims of resistance.

Subaltern Studies contributors such as Dipesh Chakrabarty and Partha Chatterjee have turned their attention away from analysing specific historical events to more developed critiques of the cultural assumptions of the discipline of history itself. In *Provincializing Europe* (2000), Chakrabarty argues that India and Africa have been relegated to the "waiting room of history" and critiques modern history's conceptual framework of stages: "To attempt to provincialize this 'Europe' is to see the modern as inevitably contested, to write over the given and privileged narratives of citizenship other

narratives of human connections that draw sustenance from dreamed-up pasts and futures where collectives are defined neither by the rituals of citizenship nor by the nightmare of 'tradition' that 'modernity' creates" (*Provincializing* 46). Rather than reading Indian history as a stage in modern development and therefore "mimicry" of European history, Chakrabarty calls for a critique of the way in which the specifically European narrative of modernity and its rhetoric of equality, individual rights, autonomy and the nation limit our understandings of identity and collective action. Rather than representing the subaltern as the subject of their own history, Chakrabarty provides a critique of representation and identity, concentrating upon reading "India's" relationship to European modernity. The Subaltern Studies project gradually shifts from an analysis of the subject (here, the subaltern) to the construction of subjectivity.

The so-called "discursive turn" of the Subaltern Studies project is particularly evident in the contributions of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who first published in the fourth volume. Influenced by both Marxism and deconstruction, Spivak regards the basic assumptions of the project to be suspect. While she notes that the early volumes of *Subaltern Studies* comprised mainly accounts of the "failures" of the bourgeois to recognize the revolutionary potential of the peasantry and the "failures" of trade union socialism or agrarian communalism to "fully develop" (Spivak "Subaltern" 199), her concern is not with the limitations of such narratives but the very conceptualizations of the figures taking part in these narratives. Spivak argues that "[a]s long as notions of discipline and subjectivity are left unexamined, the subaltern will be narrativized in theoretically alternative but politically similar ways. Historians must face the contemporary critique of subjectivity…" (qtd. in McCabe xvi). Yet Ranajit Guha does not suggest that the purpose of the Subaltern Studies project is to speak for, or uncover the silenced *voices* of, the so-called subaltern. As Chakrabarty argues, Guha uses "consciousness" not in the sense of the subject's view of the self but as something "immanent in the very practices of peasant insurgency" ("Small" 478). The Subaltern Studies project was envisioned as an interrogation of the way in which peasants are represented in, or written out of, nationalist and colonial histories of India. Nonetheless, the implication of Spivak's contention that the subaltern (and specifically the female subject) can not speak within dominant discourses is that the reliance upon historical discourse for imagining the subaltern's agency or consciousness limits the way in which the subject, agency, and therefore resistance can be conceptualized and understood.

Neil Lazarus, Sumit Sarkar, and O'Hanlon and Washbrook lament Subaltern Studies' move away from an exploration of Indian history informed by Marxist analysis of material relations of power to approaches that are preoccupied with interrogating the "foundationalism" of history or the subjectivity of the subaltern. While Sarkar, a former member of the collective, acknowledges that the project had to interrogate its own Marxist assumptions and confront the problem of European "universalism" inherent in Marxist thought, he argues that discourse analysis deprives the colonial subject of autonomy and agency. Instead of creating a new Marxist reading practice, Sarkar argues that the collective swung from a "simple emphasis on subaltern autonomy to an even more simplistic thesis of western cultural domination" and reduced all history into the simple problematic of colonial discourse/power ("Decline" 315, 316). Despite its early

efforts to uncover the gaps and silences within colonial and nationalist historical narratives, Subaltern Studies, Sarkar contends, is now constrained by its preoccupation with critiquing colonial power-knowledge. While I am sympathetic to Sarkar's concern that Subaltern or postcolonial studies privileges analysis of the effects of colonial power at the expense of other forms and structures of difference and inequality, and would add that there has been a tendency to concentrate on the politics of cultural identity over other forms of politics and identity, the work of Chakrabarty and Spivak, among many others, performs a vital function in uncovering assumptions about agency, autonomy and subjectivity which limit our understanding of power and the possibilities for resistance.

Guha's contribution to this movement away from examining the subaltern as subject of history to an interrogation of historiography provides an alternative to the sort of work being done by Chakrabarty and Spivak. In the first essay of *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (1997), originally published in volume six of *Subaltern Studies,* Guha critiques the Cambridge School's assertions that the British colonial enterprise in India was hegemonic. Arguing that the history of India under British rule allows "no room… for the phenomenon of resistance" (90), Guha shifts the gaze of the project from the investigation of peasant consciousness in rebellion back to the realm of states and parties in order to challenge claims of British colonial hegemony, and thereby create a historical space for subaltern resistance. Guha seeks to disrupt the juxtaposition of domination and hegemony by arguing for "the absurdity of the idea of an uncoercive state" (23). He contends that British colonial authority was based upon coercion rather than persuasion and was maintained or legitimized by adapting forms of indigenous culture to European modes of power. For instance, Guha contends that the British idiom of Order functioned with the Indian idiom of Danda, an idiom of semi-feudal dominance, to maintain British colonial authority.

Carefully defining power as the relation between Dominance and Subordination, and pointing to the British Raj's dependence upon a standing army, police force and penal system, Guha argues that

> the presumption of hegemony makes for a seriously distorted view of the colonial state and its configuration of power….In colonial India, where the role of capital was still marginal in the mode of production and the authority of the state structured as an autocracy that did not recognize any citizenship or rule of law, power simply stood for a series of inequalities between the rulers and the ruled as well as between classes, strata and individuals. (*Dominance* 20)

The early work of the Subaltern Studies collective provides a counter-narrative to colonial and elite historiographies not only by attempting to position the subaltern as the subject of history but by concentrating on material and local, rather than simply colonial, relations of power. The first essay of *Dominance without Hegemony* subsumes these "series of inequalities" within the colonial enterprise.

As much as Guha is concerned in this essay with debunking the notion of colonial hegemony, and therefore, the notion that colonial power was primarily discursive or the product of knowledge and representation, the appearance of this essay in *Subaltern Studies* can be read as marking an important transition for the project from a concern with positioning the subaltern as subject of history and investigating how subaltern acts of

resistance fail to conform to European narratives of emancipation to a concern with deconstructing Indian historiography. While Guha seeks to open up a space for historical recognition of subaltern resistance, in this essay he argues not just that colonial history misrepresents relations of power in colonial India but that British hegemony *failed* to take hold. For Guha, the misrepresentation of colonial rule as hegemonic seriously affects our understanding of subaltern agency: "the price of blindness about the structure of the colonial regime as a dominance without hegemony has been, for us, a total want of insight into the character of the successor regime too as a dominance without hegemony" (97). However, as true as it may be that British colonial rule was not hegemonic, certainly persuasion was a crucial mode of power.

Debates surrounding the "shift" in Subaltern Studies from the material and historical to the discursive – or polarized arguments over whether colonialism was primarily hegemonic or dominant – risk ignoring the way in which economic and political structures of violence functioned within and through colonial discourse. Further, the shift in Subaltern Studies away from interrogating peasant insurgency within a network of power to deconstructing colonial modes of representation limits our understanding of resistance in that it 1) seems to reduce the subaltern subject to passive subordinate, either dominated or without agency at all, and 2) subsumes all experience within the rubric of colonial power. However, I believe that an interrogation of discursive structures of power and the way in which colonial domination may be resisted discursively is crucial, not as an alternative to the study of more "material" forms of resistance, but to uncovering assumptions about the modes and possibility of such resistance.

II. Deconstructing Colonial Power: Ambivalence, Hybridity, and their Discontents

The initial work of the Subaltern Studies collective largely focused on examining (the representation of) acts of resistance of "conscious" agents. More recent work by many critics associated with the collective contributes to the burgeoning field of colonial discourse theory, wherein the concern is not so much with identifying organized peasant opposition to colonial political and economic policies but with examining the cultural construction of the colonial subject and the possibilities for "resistance" in the gaps and fissures of colonial discourse. Critics such as Spivak, Chakrabarty and Chatterjee examine the discursive construction of colonial subjectivity and history, and deconstruct modern European modes of knowledge and politics as they relate to the so-called postcolonial world. For many critics of this "discursive turn" in postcolonial studies, postcolonial theory seems to de-centre "resistance" from its privileged place in anticolonial thought. Benita Parry, Aijaz Ahmad and Arif Dirlik, to name just a few, have problematized, if not outright attacked, the way in which poststructural or discursive analyses fail to account for material relations of power. In particular, Homi Bhabha has been criticized for de-politicizing postcolonialism by challenging binary notions of colonial power and authority through concepts such as hybridity, ambivalence and mimicry. Parry, for instance, contends that Bhabha focuses upon the "textual" at the expense of the so-called "material" experience of colonialism. While I disagree with

Bhabha's contention that his critical project produces a theory of "resistance" ("Translator" 82), I also disagree that Bhabha's deconstruction of colonial power "de-politicizes" postcolonialism. Rather, Bhabha's critique of colonial authority provides a radical reinterpretation of the nature of colonial power with consequences for how resistance can be imagined and interpreted.

In the introduction to *The Location of Culture* (1994), Bhabha distinguishes between postcolonialism as a field of study which authenticates "histories of exploitation and the evolution of strategies of resistance" and cultures of postcolonial "contra-modernity" which are resistant in the sense that their cultural hybridity "translates" and reinscribes the social imaginary of both the metropole and modernity ("Introduction" 6). This hybridity becomes operational in the sense that the native cannot return the language of authority without altering it. For Bhabha, this "splitting" of the language of authority

> destroys the calculations of the empowered, and allows the disempowered to calculate strategies by which they are oppressed and to use that knowledge in structuring resistance. I have always believed that 'small differences' and slight alterations and displacements are often the most significant elements in a process of subversion or transformation. ("Translator" 82).

In this explanation, Bhabha attributes to the native a form of agency; the disempowered "calculate strategies" and "alter" and "displace." Significantly, as I will argue below, Bhabha's theories of hybridity, ambivalence and mimicry seem, instead, to delineate the interstices of colonial power.

I am particularly interested in two aspects of the way in which Bhabha constructs hybridity and ambivalence as resistance. First, departing from representations of colonial representations of power which construct an antagonistic colonial relationship wherein one actor dominates another – the "oppressor" names, subjugates and exploits the "oppressed" – Bhabha constructs colonial power as a political and cultural structure in which subjects are either empowered/privileged or disempowered/exploited. Second, Bhabha seems to conflate "subversion" with "transformation." I believe that a significant distinction can be made between acts which *subvert* colonial authority and those which are *transformative*. As I will argue below, to define the failure of colonial authority as "resistance" is to establish a concept of resistance which is too broad to have any meaning and forecloses the possibility of meaningful social change; while colonial power may never be total, this does not mean that it is not durable. In the final section of this chapter I will argue for the significance of such "slight alterations and displacements" as transformative resistance, by analysing the interdependence of Indian political and discursive resistance against oppression in South Africa

Bart Moore-Gilbert criticizes Bhabha for giving too little attention to organized forms of resistance, from militant insurgency to non-cooperation to democratic political opposition. Nonetheless, he argues that Bhabha posits two forms of resistance in his work, one which constructs resistance as the impossibility of colonial authority and another which largely re-inscribes modern notions of individual agency. "Intransitive resistance," or the ambivalence of colonial authority, is the rupture between the imaginary of colonial authority and the performance of colonial experience. This form of resistance

is understood as a function of colonial discourse/power, which, Moore-Gilbert suggests, recuperates the resistance Said does not acknowledge in *Orientalism*, without reinscribing the sovereign subject of Fanon's later work (Moore-Gilbert 131). Resistance is inherent within colonial authority in the sense that the ultimate success of colonialism's will-to-power – the transformation of the colonial "other" into the "same" – would be the undoing of the colonizer's authority. In contrast to this "intransitive" resistance, Moore-Gilbert argues that in "Signs Taken for Wonders" and "Sly Civility," Bhabha postulates a form of "transitive" resistance which recuperates native agency. Before analysing Bhabha's construction of a mode of "transitive resistance," as Moore-Gilbert calls it, I wish to briefly discuss his theorizing of ambivalence and hybridity as forms of subversion of colonial authority.

Concentrating on what he calls the "Third Space," or space of enunciation "in-between" an event and its representation, Bhabha positions textuality and discourse as the fields within which colonial authority is both imagined and contested. He premises his critical perspective on the assumption that there is no knowledge outside representation: "the dynamics of writing and textuality require us to rethink the logics of causality and determinacy through which we recognize the political as a form of calculation and strategic action dedicated to social transformation" ("Commitment" 23). Reading the textuality of colonial experience for its hybridity and ambivalence reveals spaces for resistance in the structures of colonial knowledge/power:

> If the effect of colonial power is seen to be the *production* of hybridization rather than the noisy command of colonialist authority or the silent repression of native traditions, then an important change of perspective occurs. The ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority enables a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention. (Bhabha "Signs" 112)

However, can, or should, the "subversion" produced from the instability of colonial authority, due to hybridity and ambivalence, be recognized as "resistance?" Bhabha seems only to be illuminating the instability of the identities Said constructs in his theory of colonial discourse in *Orientalism* (1979).

Bhabha's concern for identifying the ambivalence and hybridity of colonial discourse and the way in which they open up spaces in that discourse which may be read as subversion seems to homogenize all instances of colonial discourse or authority across time and space. His analysis concentrates upon an abstract individual subject who is without gender and exists outside material history or relations of power. Critics such as Young (128), Sharpe (147) and Moore-Gilbert et al. (36), argue that by recognizing resistance as that space between the enunciatory present and representation, Bhabha privileges the act of "reading between the lines" for forgotten or unacknowledged "resistance," and consequently disregards the plentiful documentary evidence of organized, oppositional military and political struggles. For instance, Benita Parry argues that by concentrating on "reading" the enunciatory moment of an event, Bhabha limits native resistance to circumventing and interrogating colonial authority ("Problems" 721). As I will argue below, however, Indian resistance in South Africa provides an example of the way in which the performance of an identity other than that permitted within colonial

representations of the colonized, at the very least, complemented organized political struggle and *challenged* colonial authority in terms of the way in which both the "colonizer" and the "colonized" became aware of, and reacted to, the disruption of the assumptions of colonial difference. Yet, the form of resistance I will discuss through the example of Indian activism in early Twentieth-Century South Africa contrasts with the sort of "resistance" Bhabha describes. Bhabha's "resistance" seems only available as the performance of a hybrid subjectivity which disrupts the binary structure and essential differences of the colonial imaginary, as if identity formation is not influenced by any other factors but metropolitan modes of representation.

Bhabha's construction of subversion paradoxically reinforces the European/native binary in that the colonized subject as subaltern, peasant, labourer, merchant, etc., is virtually nonexistent in Bahbha's work as he concentrates upon an abstract colonial subject in contact with the metropole. In "DissemiNation," for instance, Bhabha problematizes the work of theorists such as Hobsbawm and Anderson by identifying the ambivalence of concepts such as the "people" and the "nation." He argues that the pedagogy of the nation is troubled by its performance: "In the production of the nation as narration there is a split between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative" ("DissemiNation" 145). It is important here to return to Bhabha's acknowledgement of oppression as a system. Rather than constructing "hybridity" within such a system, however, Bhabha limits his theorization of hybridity to the boundaries of colonial discourse, as if colonial representation is, indeed, total. While he seems to discuss the constructs of the "nation" and "people" as broad and abstract categories, the closing of "DissemiNation" makes clear that the "nation" to which he is referring is England, and more broadly the "metropole," wherein an imagined homogeneous (European) community is disrupted by the hybridity produced by immigration; the presence of a distinctly "non-English," yet not quite "other" Other subverts efforts to construct a distinctly "English" national history.

The discourse of the nation is destabilized by its own hybridity, and the ambivalence of the discourse of colonial difference, to which this troubling is attributed, is revealed by the hybridity of the immigrant subject. For Bhabha, the figure and work of Salman Rushdie, for instance, become markers of the way in which the immigrant's subversion of the "nation imaginary" allows us to see the nation *as it actually is.* Referring to *The Satanic Verses*, Bhabha writes: "If the lesson of Rosa's narrative is that the national memory is always the site of hybridity of histories and the displacement of narratives, then through Gibreel, the avenging migrant, we learn the ambivalence of cultural difference" ("DissemiNation"169). As novels such as Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1991) and films such as Gurinder Chadha's *Bhaji on the Beach* (1994) reveal, the immigrant "other" is not a threat by being out of place but by altering the place.

Aijaz Ahmad points out that while we must reject the "claims of Authenticity that come to us from so many religious and protofascist nationalisms of our time" any understanding of "hybridity" must acknowledge that such a process of movement, transmutation and hybridization of ideas, values and norms is by no means new nor

confined to relationships with(in) Europe (Ahmad "Politics" 290). While Bhabha's critique of the nation and the development of theories of hybridity in general provide insight into the limitations of colonial authority and our understandings of it, we must question the equation of hybridity with resistance-to-colonial-authority. Hybridity, as Bhabha constructs it, is not specific to the colonial encounter. While Bangladesh, Tanzania or Ethiopia are no less "hybrid," and their nationalisms are open to critique, the performance of this hybridity is not confined to contact with Europeans/the metropole. Bhabha describes how the concept of hybridity *subverts* colonial authority; through the concept of hybridity, he argues that colonial power does not function as it is supposed to function in dominant (anti)colonial discourses. However, Bhabha provides no indication of how hybridity may destabilize or transform colonial authority. Indeed, the hybridity of the colonial text or subject is only hybrid in relation to the imaginary of a fixed and stable nation: the "alterity" of the other is replaced by "hybridity." Bhabha challenges colonial notions of modernity/tradition, authenticity and the nation, by positing a uniform structure marked by hybridity and ambivalence, but he does not account for the continuation of structures of material exploitation and subjugation which suggest that power adapts to the subversions its ambivalence allows.

In *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (1998), Leela Gandhi characterizes resistance as the subversion of colonial discourse rather than its reversal, overthrow or transformation: "Within this reasoning, the native insurgent is shown to confound the logic of colonial domination through a refusal to occupy his/her designated subject position within colonialism's discursive cartography" (*Postcolonial* 112). While Gandhi retains a rhetoric of anticolonial radical consciousness by using terms like "native insurgent" and "refusal," such a rhetoric is inappropriate in the context of the theorization of ambivalence and hybridity. Bhabha's critique of colonial authority suggests that the colonial subject's apparent *refusal* to fulfill his/her subject position should, instead, be read as the *failure* of colonial power to be performed as it is represented in colonial and anticolonial discourses of the colonial experience. Bhabha theoretically deconstructs colonial power as it is "represented" by the colonizer, and illuminates the ambivalence of colonial power, but does not engage with the complexity of power signified by this ambivalence.

For Hardt and Negri, "postcolonial theorists who advocate a politics of difference, fluidity, and hybridity in order to challenge the binaries and essentialism of modern sovereignty have been outflanked by the strategies of power" (138). Hardt and Negri argue that such theories have no utility in the context of "the new paradigm of power." I would argue in contrast that the value of these theories is not their construction of a politics of resistance (as subversion) but their illumination of colonial discourse/power as more complex or ambivalent than Said's theory of Orientalism or the Manichean discourse Fanon identifies in colonial and anti-colonial thought that critics like Parry, JanMohamed and San Juan, Jr., recuperate. Rather than dealing with an "old paradigm of power," colonial discourse theory challenges the construction of the binary relationship between colonizer and colonized in (anti)colonial thought.

In his critique of *Orientalism*, Bhabha argues that Said's thesis misunderstands Foucault's concept of power:

> '*Pouvoir/Savoir*' places subjects in a relation of power and recognition that is not
> part of a symmetrical or dialectical relation – self/other, master/slave – which can
> then be subverted by being inverted. Subjects are always disproportionately
> placed in opposition or domination through the symbolic decentring of multiple
> power relations which play the role of support as well as target or adversary. (72)

Drawing upon Foucault's understanding of power as omnipresent and diffuse, "the
multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which
constitute their own organization" (Foucault 92), Bhabha critiques Said's construction of
colonial authority by challenging the construction of the "subjects" – colonizer and
colonized – that take part in the colonial relationship. For instance, Bhabha turns instead
to Henry Louis Gates, Jr, and Paul Gilroy, among other Black critics, who "propose forms
of contestatory subjectivities that are empowered in the act of erasing the politics of
binary opposition" ("Postcolonial" 179). Building on the work of Said and Fanon, as well
as critics such as Lata Mani and Gauri Viswanathan, who have analysed colonial
identities as a product of colonial discipline and knowledge, Bhabha is concerned with
interrogating the production of colonial authority through the construction of colonial
knowledge. Challenging the assumption that colonial authority is based only upon
material control and that colonial identity merely replicates these relations of power,
Bhabha develops a theory of colonial subject construction which challenges assumptions
about collective agency or change.

Bhabha rejects the assumption that colonial authority is homogeneous, total, and,
as Fanon argues, completely destroys the indigenous culture. As a result, he contends
that to conceptualize a binary relationship pitting the colonizer against the colonized (as
distinct and homogeneous groups) misunderstands the relationship:

> Colonial authority requires modes of discrimination (cultural, racial,
> administrative...) that disallow a stable unitary assumption of collectivity. The
> 'part' (which must be the colonialist foreign body) must be representative of the
> 'whole' (conquered country), but the right of representation is based on its radical
> difference. Such double think is made viable only through the strategy of
> disavowal... which requires a theory of the 'hybridization' of discourse and power
> that is ignored by theorists who engage in the battle for 'power' but do so only as
> the purists of difference. ("Signs" 111)

Drawing upon, and responding to, Fanon's theory of the "Manichean" colonial
relationship, Bhabha challenges the basis of colonial difference (colonizer/colonized,
white/black).

Critics such as JanMohamed (59) and Moore-Gilbert (147) argue that in
articulating a theory of hybridity and in challenging binary oppositions, Bhabha collapses
the colonizer and the colonized into a singular, hybrid "colonial subject," and that such a
formulation ignores material relations of power. Rather than collapsing "colonizer" and
"colonized" into a single colonial subject, however, Bhabha constructs all colonial
subjects as being the product of colonial discourse. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon
relates two instances of "contact" which, as Bhabha describes, constitute "myths of origin
of the subject within the racist practices and discourses of a colonial culture" ("Other"
76). In one, a child fixes her gaze on the speaker and declares to her mother "Look, a

Negro... I'm frightened" (Fanon *Black* 112). In the other, the child in the Antilles is confronted with racial and cultural stereotypes in comics and other children's books in which "the Evil Spirit, the Bad Man, the Savage are always symbolized by Negroes or Indians" (146). Since the stories are constructed so as to have the reader identify with the victor, Fanon argues that the child identifies with the white hero. Bhabha contends that the colonial subject – i.e. both colonizer and colonized – "turns around the pivot of the 'stereotype,'" and "in the act of disavowal and fixation the colonial subject is returned to the narcissism of the Imaginary and its identification of an ideal ego that is white and whole" ("Other" 76). While Bhabha's analysis does not centre the material relationship of colonialism, his aim seems not to discount material relations of power, but to analyze the way in which the figures which take part in these relations are shaped by colonial discourse.

In "Signs Taken For Wonders," in which he discusses colonial authority in terms of the "colonial presence" or colonial identity, Bhabha writes: "Such a display of difference produces a mode of authority that is agonistic (rather than antagonistic)" (Bhabha "Signs" 108). For critics such as Benita Parry, Bhabha's contention that the colonial relationship should not be understood as antagonistic writes over inscriptions of inequality and conflict in the material colonial world and thereby rejects "that anti-colonialist tradition which perceived the struggle in terms that were antagonistic rather than agonistic, and construed the colonial relationship as generically... one between competing political interests, forces, and goals" (Parry "Signs" 13). Drawing upon the OED definition of agonistic as a Greek athletic contest, or merely a game, and noting that antagonism specifies mutual resistance between two opposing forces, Parry poses the rhetorical question: "In rejecting 'antagonistic' in favour of 'agonisitic,' is Bhabha, who reads social processes according to the rules of writing, positing colonialism as a competition of peers rather than a hostile struggle between the subjugated and the oppressor?" ("Signs" 13). Parry ignores the fact that "agonistic" can also refer to various responses to conflict, from escape to passivity to fighting behaviour. Further, she ignores Foucault's notion of agonism. Foucault constructs agonism as a notion of permanent struggle wherein resistance takes the form of opportunistic exploitation of the ambiguities of power, disrupting dualisms (Butz 24). I belabour this seemingly obscure point because it illuminates the way in which critics such as Parry uncritically assume the basis of colonial identity within the confines of an antagonistic colonial relationship as a battle between oppressive colonizer and subjugated colonized. As Bhabha acknowledges, to deconstruct a practice is not to dismiss its practical and functional power ("Translator" 118); colonial discourse theory problematizes the discourses through which political action is imagined.

The characterization of colonial authority, as opposed to colonialism, as agonistic does not assume a "competition among peers" or equal material relations between the colonizer and colonized. Rather, placed as it is within a discussion of the idea of the colonial presence as ambivalent – appearing to be original and authoritative, yet articulated as repetition and difference – the characterization of colonial authority as "agonistic" suggests that colonial experience is hybrid, even contested, rather than stable or certain. The structure of colonial oppression does construct unequal subject-positions,

but colonial power is *not* simply a binary relationship between oppressive colonizer and resistant colonized. Because Bhabha does not adequately develop this notion of agonism, I do not wish to salvage this idea, in particular, as an alternative to the antagonistic model of power colonial discourse theory problematizes. However, Parry's denunciation of any alternative to antagonism identifies a central tension within postcolonial theories of resistance which I seek to address.

Parry's critique is informed by the assumption of an oppositional paradigm of power. She interprets colonial discourse theory as positing simply that power is never comprehensive and certain and that "resistance" is reduced to the ways in which colonial authority is subverted. Seemingly, the only alternative to such a construction of resistance is a model which defines the conflict in terms of an antagonistic binary in which resistance is the conscious, sometimes collective, and to some degree organized act of a subjugated "agent" in opposition to the agents or institutions of domination. As I will argue below, Bhabha's analysis of the production of colonial identities provides a way of understanding colonial power which allows for the recognition of forms of resistance which neither constitute merely the subversion of colonial authority nor are determined by colonial representations of difference.

III.   Bhabha's "Spectacular Resistance"

Before turning to an analysis of Bhabha's "spectacular resistance," I wish to briefly discuss theories of so-called "everyday resistance," as I believe Bhabha's notion of "sly civility" provides an example of one such mode of resistance. Bill Ashcroft argues that while "resistance has invariably connoted the urgent imagery of war.... the most fascinating feature of post-colonial societies is a 'resistance' that manifests itself as a refusal to be absorbed....In most cases this has not been a heroic enterprise but a pragmatic and mundane array of living strategies to which imperial culture has no answer" (19-20). "Everyday resistance" provides a notion of resistance which is constructed as neither organized conscious opposition nor simply the ambivalence of colonial discourse. While Bhabha constructs "spectacular resistance" through psychoanalytic and poststructural theories, the actual events/behaviours he uses as the basis of these theories are similar to the types of actions which are the object of the work of anthropologists such as James C. Scott. "Everyday resistance" is privileged as a form of "insurgency" that is more endemic to power than moments of distinct social unrest such as strikes, riots and rebellions.

While Bhabha and postcolonial theorists such as Prakash and Haynes approach colonial power from radically different perspectives, their understanding of resistance is quite similar. Prakash and Haynes, for instance, define resistance

> as those behaviours and cultural practices by subordinate groups that contest hegemonic social formations, that threaten to unravel the strategies of domination....but the struggles of subordinated peoples need not be dramatic or informed by conscious ideologies of opposition to seriously affect relations of domination. To use resistance in its more traditional sense would mean not to

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consider the very process by which power is often tested and eroded by the actions
of the subordinate and by which it reconstitutes itself in response. (3-4)
Resistant acts or practices, therefore, can range from overt or apparently conscious acts
seeking to redress an injustice, such as refusing to pay taxes or refusing to leave a place,
to more ambivalent forms of resistance, such as foot-dragging, pilfering, sarcasm, gossip
and rumour. Scott and the contributors to Prakash and Haynes' *Contesting Power:
Resistance and Everyday Social Relations in South Asia* (1991) frame their analysis
within the context of material relations of power which at times include colonial
authority, but are not limited to it. Nonetheless, Scott's theory of public versus hidden
transcripts – in which, for instance, the native publicly shows deference to the landlord
but privately refuses the landlord's demands – seems to describe the very same
experience of power as Bhabha's example of the "sly civility," which I will discuss
below, in which Indians accept Bibles but use them for purposes other than those
intended by Christian missionaries. Indeed, Scott argues that the "zone of struggle" exists
in between the public and hidden transcripts of native discourse, a construction of
resistance not dissimilar to Bhabha's Third Space of colonial discourse; while Bhabha
recognizes resistance in the space created by the ambivalence of colonial power, Scott
frames this "in-between" space as existing in the response to, or rather performance of,
colonial authority (Scott *Domination* 14). For both Bhabha and theorists of "everyday
resistance," while resistance can be named as acts – sarcasm, sly civility, questioning – it
may be conceptualized more accurately through the idea that power itself is unstable and
provides spaces for its own subversion than through the acts of a subjugated "agent" in
opposition to power.

Like discursive concepts such as mimicry, ambivalence and hybridity, Prakash
and Haynes imagine resistance in a way which does not require native "consciousness" or
agency and does not limit it to oppositional strategies with an axis of power defined by
the oppressive colonizer and the subjugated colonized. Indeed, Prakash and Haynes
criticize Scott's characterization of "everyday resistance" (i.e. tax evasion) as necessarily
deliberate and his assumption of a self-determining subject: "Scott ignores how such acts
are necessarily conditioned by hegemony. At the very least, for instance, these acts are
influenced by a logic that accepts the larger structures of landholding and political power
as unalterable facts" (11).[1] Notions of "everyday resistance" identify the way in which
authority is always contested and has to adapt. However, "everyday resistance"
privileges primarily individual and unorganized acts, and therefore limits the possibilities
for resistance to transform material relations or structures of power. Ross Chambers
argues that such behaviour "consists of individual or group *survival* tactics that do not
challenge the power in place, but make use of circumstances set up by that power for
purposes the power may ignore or deny;" however, Chambers argues that such behaviour
also "has a particular potential to change states of affairs, by changing people's

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[1] In contrast to *Weapons of the Weak* (1985), in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*
(1990), Scott acknowledges and critiques the theory of hegemony. For instance, he
argues that the concept of hegemony does not allow for the degree of social conflict and
protest that occurs in a society (78).

mentalities (their ideas, attitudes, values and feelings...)" (Chambers 1, emphasis added).[2]
While the potential of acts such as foot-dragging to "interrupt" the colonial economy
should not be underestimated, the acts described by Scott and by the contributors to
Prakash and Haynes' collection constitute reactions to the practices of colonial power and
primarily reveal how exploitation and domination is made liveable by those subjected to
it.

In "Signs Taken for Wonders" Bhabha explicitly characterizes the "hybridization" of the
English book (the Bible) in its consumption by the Indian peasant as "spectacular
resistance." Drawing upon Macaulay's "Minute on Indian Education" and the British
will to create an elite class of Indian mimic-men to control the masses of the Indian
population, Bhabha describes the experiences of one of the first Indian catechists, Anund
Messeh, as he attempts to introduce Indian peasants to Christianity. Messeh's
presentation of the Bible and Christianity is questioned by his audience. For instance,
Bhabha reports that members of the audience ask the young catechist how the word of
God can come from a people who eat flesh ("Signs" 116). Bhabha argues that the natives
"resist" efforts at conversion by appealing to their customary dietary practices. By
rejecting Christian doctrine as it is presented to them, they are "resisting" both
Christianity and colonial authority (the English as the representatives of God): "When the
natives demand an Indianized Gospel, they are using the powers of hybridity to resist
baptism and to put the project of conversion in an impossible position" (118). The
subversive nature of the native questioning and interpretation of the Bible, Bhabha
contends, effects a challenge to colonial authority, in that when faced with hybridity "the
presence of power is revealed as something other than what its rules of recognition
assert" (112).
      The ambivalence of colonial authority allows for resistance, albeit a form of
resistance which is not produced by oppositional politics:
          Resistance is not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention, nor is it
          simply negation or exclusion of the 'content' of another culture, as a difference
          once perceived. It is the effect of an ambivalence produced within the rules of
          recognition of dominating discourses as they articulate the signs of cultural
          difference and reimplicate them within the deferential relations of colonial power
          – hierarchy, normalization, marginalization and so forth. (110-111)
While such a construction of resistance rejects the modern notion of individual agency,
this is not to suggest that there can be no native agency at all: "it is this liminal moment of
identification – eluding resemblance – that produces a subversive strategy of subaltern
agency that negotiates its own authority through a process of an iterative 'unpicking' and
relocating... [Agency] requires direction and contingent closure, but not teleology and
holism" ("In a Spirit" 330). Bhabha argues that resistance does not require

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[2] Frederick Cooper argues that small or individual acts may subvert a regime by raising
the confidence of the people that power can be contested, allowing for the development of
a spirit conducive to the mobilization of organized resistance more widely (1533).

"intentionality" and should not be defined by an oppositional politics. He contends that colonial authority is challenged, instead, by the ambivalence of colonial power/discourse.

Critics such as Young (210), Easthope (342) and Moore-Gilbert critique this model of resistance as well as the example Bhabha uses to formulate the model. Moore-Gilbert, for instance, argues that "the peasants' questions to the catechist are based as much on category mistakes or misunderstandings as on a considered challenge to his teachings" (133). The peasants' unwillingness to be immediately converted to the values and rituals of the Christian Church and their questioning of Anund Messeh's message disrupt the ability of the English to colonize their minds. To what extent, however, can we regard the peasants' interpretation of the Bible and Christianity through their own spiritual beliefs and practices as constituting resistance or a direct challenge to Christianity and, by association, colonial authority?

Bhabha historically contextualizes his reading of Anund Messeh's efforts to spread the Gospel in terms of the 1818 Burdwan Plan, commissioned by the Church Missionary Society, which Bhabha states anticipated Macaulay's call for the production of a class of Indian teachers, translators and compilers. Bhabha argues that the enunciatory conditions of an Indian educated in English and Christianity, proselytizing in rural villages, conceals the "design of the Burdwan Plan to deploy 'natives' to destroy native culture and religion" ("Signs" 117). However, an important distinction must be made between whether the Burdwan Plan was *designed* to deploy "natives" to *destroy* native culture and religion, as Bhabha argues, or to transform them into Christian Indians in order to "civilize" them or better control them. Bhabha conflates colonialism as a structure of subjugation and economic exploitation with cultural change. I will return to postcolonialism's ambiguity as to the aim of colonialism and the object of resistance in Chapter Two. For now, I wish simply to point to the example of John Chilembwe, which is at once an example of the "success" of the colonial Christian mission in Africa, yet, significantly, a mission which produced organized opposition to colonial exploitation.[3] The "destruction" of native culture, or the attempted eradication of "difference," paradoxically served in some cases to produce a communal identity where it had not previously existed, leading to organized opposition.

Rather than exploring a story of a single meeting in which the "English Book" was introduced to the people of a village, a more historical analysis of peasant responses to the Bible and the English language as they are introduced over time by colonial middle/mimic-men, such as Anund Messeh, would seem to provide a better way into the sort of theory of resistance Bhabha constructs and a better understanding of the extent to which colonial "rules of recognition" were subverted. As it is, the story of Anund Messeh's introduction of the Bible to a rural village is ambiguous. While it marks the subversion of colonial rules of recognition, it may also mark the beginning of a form of cultural change that, as much as it is the implementation of colonial policy aimed at replacing "Heathen" religions with the standards of the Cross (Bhabha "Signs" 106), may

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[3] Chilembwe's mentor, the British evangelist Joseph Booth preached a doctrine of egalitarianism and called for an "Africa for Africans." He was deported from British Nyasaland because of his political ideology.

usefully be understood through Raymond Williams's conception of dominant, residual and emergent ideologies.

In his conclusion to the essay, Bhabha hints at the possibilities of a more historical analysis, juxtaposing an example of an Indian teacher "begging" for a copy of the "Holy Scriptures" and an example of the way in which the Bible was being "translated" into waste paper, a rather different form of translation from either the colonial intent or Bhabha's description of initial contact with the Book (122). While I recognize the limitations of judging "resistance" by the response of those in positions of dominance, it must be noted that the clerical responses Bhabha attributes to this "spectacular resistance" seem to affirm colonial authority and British racial superiority, in the minds of the British missionaries, at least. Bhabha quotes a J.A. Dubois, who, after 25 years of missionary work in India, wrote in 1815 that those who embrace Christianity never entirely renounce their "superstitions" (121). Jenny Sharpe questions the significance Bhabha and others place upon Macaulay's famous "Minute on Indian Education" arguing that English education was limited to a select elite and that general British colonial education policy emphasized vernacular education, as the Raj was primarily concerned with economic exploitation of the subcontinent and not cultural conquest (Sharpe 141-2). As a result, Bhabha conflates the "failure" of the educated Indian class to become fully assimilated with the "subversion" of their message by the peasant masses. Further, while Dubois seems to lament the fact that conversion was never total, Bhabha contends that the failure of mimicry was necessary for colonial authority.

The "mimic-man" – in the form of Anund Messeh, for example – fostered by the British was understood quite explicitly as a means of colonial control, both in terms of "managing" the indigenous population and in terms of reinscribing English identity. As Macaulay imagines it, the British colonial project in India sought to create an intellectual class "Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect" (Macaulay 430). In describing the way colonial authority constructs the native other "as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite," Bhabha argues that the colonial desire for mimicry "emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge" ("Mimicry" 85). The proselytizing mission of Christianity or efforts to create an Indian intellectual class, in a distinctly European sense, can be seen as a function of colonial power in that such projects reinforced for the colonists the benevolence of the colonial project and the endeavour to fulfill the so-called "white man's burden" by raising natives from their "uncivilized" state. Further, the desire for mimicry reaffirmed British identity as a function of racial difference, measured against the necessary failure of the Indian or African to fully assimilate. Such projects undermined indigenous community structures and forms of autonomy which could have been utilized to oppose or subvert the material or economic programme of colonization. As much as the desire for mimicry is a means of control, however, according to Bhabha, the ambivalent colonial demand for a difference that is not quite nothing or not quite total also provides the native a space in which to challenge colonial authority.

For "mimicry" to function as a means of colonial authority, the colonized must fulfill their role. The figure of Anund Messeh seems to be the perfect example of the way in which the native desires to be like the coloniser – in dress, manner, belief – thereby

reinforcing the apparent benevolence of the colonizer while also reinforcing the colonizer's superiority; Anund Messeh can become *anglicized,* a functionary of English rule, but he cannot become English. The desire for mimicry, therefore, requires the native to "satisfy the colonizer's narrative demand" to reaffirm British culture while not being able to become British. However, Bhabha argues that Anund Messeh's tale, when read as a "masque of mimicry," reveals a form of "discursive warfare," or "spectacular resistance" within the agonistic space of colonial authority ("Signs" 121). The refusal (or failure) to satisfy the colonizer's narrative demand – to fail to return the colonizer's gaze in the image of the colonizer's desire – is, for Bhabha, an act of resistance ("Sly" 99). The act of accepting the Bible, but using it for other purposes or interpreting its message in a way not intended by the colonizer constitutes what he calls "sly civility."

Bhabha constructs his theory of mimicry in psychological terms, arguing that the desire for mimicry reflects the colonizer's desire to be justified in their existence (in a colonized land). The colonizer is caught in the ambivalent position of recognizing the self as both father and oppressor; as a result, the native's "refusal to return and restore the image of authority to the eye of power has to be reinscribed as implacable aggression, assertively coming from without: *He hates me"* (100). As a number of critics have suggested, native hatred for the coloniser was not simply the coloniser's paranoia. Bhabha's musings on discursive power utilize few examples to develop these theories of mimicry as control and mockery as subversion. Does the example of Anund Messeh and the villagers reveal the difference between the native who fulfills the colonizer's desire for mimicry and those who refuse, or does it reveal two subjects with vastly different levels of experience with the colonizer?

The two central criticisms of Bhabha's idea of "spectacular resistance" include the extent to which the native's refusal is conscious and the extent to which such a refusal destabilizes colonial power. Bart Moore-Gilbert, for instance, contends that "[i]f the resistance inscribed in mimicry is unconscious for the colonized… it cannot function for the colonized as the grounds on which to construct a considered counter-discourse" (133). Again, we must draw a careful distinction between the *failure* of colonial authority to function as it is represented (or the impossibility of mimicry as the colonizer desires it) and the *refusal* of the colonized. Benita Parry, one of Bhabha's most outspoken critics, argues that while Bhabha's "Third Space" allows him to recover an otherwise impossibly heard (as Spivak has argued) native voice in the colonialist text, "native resistance is limited to its returning the look of surveillance as the displacing gaze of the disciplined" (Parry "Problems" 728). In Chapter Two, I will consider more closely the way in which these criticisms of mimicry, ambivalence and sly civility are based on the assumption that resistance is necessarily conscious and oppositional and functions to threaten the authority (and existence) of the colonizer.

IV.   **Equal but not White, Or, The Demand for Human Behaviour from the Other**

To conclude this chapter, I wish to look at a series of events in South Africa during the first decade of the Twentieth Century in which the Indian population organized

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to assert their "rights" as British subjects and to oppose policies which recognized Indians as subordinate. The main forms of resistance organized by the Indian community, from strikes to document burning, largely conform to a notion of resistance as conscious and collective opposition. In addition to, or within, organized acts of non-cooperation and the political organizing of the movement, however, are a series of acts which neither conform to dominant notions of resistance as opposition nor to Bhabha's conception of "spectacular resistance," though critical recognition of them is dependent upon Bhabha's critique of colonial power and the construction of colonial identity. While I harbour no illusions as to the effectiveness of these acts in bringing about social change, I believe that my analysis of these events through the concepts of ambivalence, hybridity and mimicry speak to some of the criticisms of discourse analysis while revealing a political effect absent in Bhabha's theorizing.

Upon arriving in South Africa in 1893 as a young London-educated lawyer from India, Mohandas K. Gandhi was shocked by the racism he experienced. In his first visit to a South African court, he was forced to leave after refusing to take off his turban. Some weeks later, he was removed from a train for refusing to leave a compartment reserved for whites and then beaten for the same offence. Gandhi quickly realized that not only was the treatment he received commonplace, but that it was generally accepted by the Indian population and other people classified as non-white. Gandhi's experience reflects the sort of failure inherent in the mimicry Frantz Fanon discusses in *Black Skin, White Masks*. Fanon describes how the black Antillean in France "conducts himself like a white man," but once he goes to Europe he learns that he can never escape his racial difference; regardless of his behaviour, the white population will always consider him a Negro (148). Like Bhabha, Fanon theorizes mimicry and the experience of racial difference in psychological terms, but significantly, Fanon is concerned with the psychological effects on the native of the impossible desire to be the same as the European other.

In *An Autobiography: Or, The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (1927/9), Gandhi does not describe any specific incidents of racial harassment during his time as a student in London, but he does describe his infatuation with English style and manners. In contrast, when Gandhi begins practicing law in the predominantly white urban culture of late 19th century Natal, he is immediately confronted with racism. Fanon suggests that the native's realization of the impossibility, in European terms, of his humanity results in feelings of inferiority. While it is important to acknowledge the difference in contexts between Fanon's observations of the black man's experience in Europe in the 1950's and Gandhi's experience as an immigrant in a turn-of-the-century Dutch colony, as much as Gandhi is angry or hurt, he is deeply offended by the racism he experiences. Rather than an indication of his inferiority, Gandhi recognizes his experience of racism in Natal as indicative of the failure of the colonial project to fulfil its own ideals.

He initially registers his affront in the modes of his privileged anglicized class by writing a letter to the press about the first incident and a long telegram to the General Manager of the railway pertaining to the second, and then proceeds to initiate a political organization, the Natal Indian Congress. Gandhi's experience of the inadequacy of these accepted modes of bourgeois political recourse would lead to a radical transformation of

his lifestyle and the development of a more confrontational mode of political action. While confrontational and diplomatic modes of action were framed within a struggle for "citizen rights," Gandhi's loyalty to the Empire and his personal interaction with colonial leaders provided a challenge to colonial authority/identity by assuming equal status with whites. Gandhi's political organizing in South Africa and his assertion of his rights as a citizen of the British Empire is not a story of "subaltern" resistance in the sense of the "subaltern" of the Subaltern Studies project; Gandhi was educated in England and as a lawyer was a member of a privileged class. However, Gandhi's interaction with the white emissaries of the State throughout this period of political struggle reveals a form of "resistance" which reflects that theorized by Bhabha but which appears to be much more calculated and more linked to material relations of power than Bhabha's "spectacular resistance."

In large measure, Gandhi is relegated to the nationalist or elite history of Indian resistance by contributors to the Subaltern Studies project. Further, Gandhi is criticized for not directly challenging colonial power. Ranajit Guha, for instance, criticizes Gandhi for an 1899 article in which he praises the British Empire and characterizes Indians as subjects of the British Queen. Despite his sympathy for the plight of the Boers and the Zulus during the Boer War and the 1906 Zulu Rebellion, respectively, Gandhi helped form Indian Ambulance Corps to serve with the British Army in both conflicts. Guha uses this example, and the fact that Gandhi proposed that the Indians receive no compensation from the state, to show the way in which Gandhi was the consummate "loyalist" or "mimic-man," fulfilling the duties of the subjugated under the illusory hope of gaining "citizen" rights:

> the so-called 'earnest' loyalty was meant as a display to secure the white settler's and the imperial government's recognition of the sincerity and usefulness of Indian collaboration... For the colonized, recognition of their services by the imperial overlords on any terms at all would have been a 'privilege,' that is, an honor done by the master to his servant by acknowledging the latter's servitude. (*Dominance* 46)

Guha argues that this commitment to "duty" to the British Queen, or the "idiom of obedience," was influential in creating the liberal nationalist, and decidedly "non-radical," character of Indian anticolonial politics (47).

It would be easy to concede Guha's criticism but to argue that Gandhi's experience as a witness to British brutality of both the Boers and the Zulus precipitated his transformation from Loyalty to Dissent, literally prompting him to shed the physical and ideological clothing of British modernity he had taken with a European education.[4]

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[4] During the Zulu Rebellion, Gandhi decided to take vows of *ahimsa* and *brahmacharya*, in essence vows of nonviolence, celibacy and poverty. A few years later, after learning that striking labourers were beaten and shot, Gandhi shaved his hair and decided only to wear the lungie (sarong) and upper garment of the indentured labourer, vowing never again to wear European clothes (Meer 100).

Alternatively, I could argue that by focusing on the 1899 letter and Gandhi's role in the Boer War, Guha ignores numerous other possible examples of Gandhi's overt confrontation of British rule, both in South Africa and later in India. To focus on these examples of overt opposition, however, would ignore the way in which Gandhi's seeming "mimicry" of British ideals disrupted and challenged the authority of colonial identity in a way different from that theorized by Bhabha.

Benita Parry argues that Bhabha's theories dispense with conflict ("Signs" 6) and limit native resistance to "returning the look of surveillance as the displacing gaze of the disciplined" ("Problems" 728). Guha contends that Gandhi was foolish to demand rights, for a colonial subject is not a citizen (*Dominance* 46). Gandhi's agitation for Indian rights in South Africa, however, reveals the way in which the conflicts resultant of such discursive forms of resistance – the demand to be recognized as a citizen and not an inferior subject – were acknowledged in the moment – in contrast to being an effect of re-reading the past – and were integral to both political and confrontational modes of opposition.

In both *Satyagraha in South Africa* (1928) and his autobiography, Gandhi argues that despite his recognition that Indians are oppressed by the British as much as by the Boers, he recognizes his duty to the Empire as a British subject. As Gandhi notes, one of the alleged causes of the Boer War was the British dissatisfaction with the Boer treatment of British Indian subjects in South Africa. In a debate over the role of Indians in the war, Gandhi argues:

> Our existence in South Africa is only in our capacity as British subjects... Our rulers profess to safe guard our rights because we are British subjects... If we missed this opportunity, which had come to us unsought, of proving the falsity of a charge which we believed to be false, we should stand self-condemned, and it would be no matter for surprise if then the English treated us worse than before and sneered at us more than ever... And if we desire to win our freedom and achieve our welfare as members of the British Empire, here is a golden opportunity for us to do so by helping the British in the war...
> (*Satyagraha* 66-67)[5]

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[5] Throughout his writings, Gandhi fails to recognize the way in which the presence of Indian "British" subjects in South Africa furthers the colonial exploitation of the indigenous peoples of the region and its resources (See *Satyagraha* 92). While there is evidence in his writings of ambivalence towards Africans, there are numerous examples of his belief in a hierarchy of racial superiority, exhibited, at times, in what appear to be blatantly racist remarks about Africans (See: Gandhi, *Collected Works* 3:234, 8: 105, 135, and Chandramohan 162, 164). As well, while he advocated for Indian equality with Europeans, he did not ally this campaign with similar endeavors to recognize African equality (See Switzer 125, 126, and Chandramohan 158). However, while critics like Guha fail to read the possibility of human error, change or redemption in their criticism of Gandhi's actions in South Africa, Gandhi's writings reveal a transformation in his thought. In his re-writings of his experiences in South Africa, he is careful to qualify his admiration for the British constitution and values as a position he held "at the time", and

Gandhi assumes that the performance of loyalty to the Empire will ensure that Indian grievances against the governments of South Africa would be redressed under British rule of a unified state. In fact, Gandhi notes that during the war Indians were treated well by the British: "the knowledge that the Indians, forgetful of their wrongs, were out to help them in the hour of their need, had melted their hearts for the time being" (*Satyagraha* 73). While there were significant political and economic factors which contributed to the Indian expectation of social change being disappointed – namely, the British desire to appease the Boer population and thereby avoid further war, and to appease white commerce which felt threatened by Indian merchants – the British could not allow Indians equality under the law because they did not recognize them as human beings.

While Guha reads Gandhi's allegiance to Britain in terms of the Manichean or Hegelian loyalty of a slave to his master, Gandhi sought to transform the practice of British rule and become an equal member within it. Ashis Nandy argues that opposition to European colonialism derived from one of two ideological positions: 1) the acceptance of Western values, but the recognition that the West failed to live up to them; or 2) the repudiation of those values themselves ("Towards" 1757). At this point in what he would later call his "experiments with truth," Gandhi believed in the value of the British constitution as a means of organizing society, but recognized the failure of the British to practice these values in their colonial projects (Gandhi *Autobiography* 166). In an 1858 proclamation, Queen Victoria states: "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil" (qtd. in Chandramohan 157). Gandhi understood this proclamation as acknowledging the equality of all British subjects, regardless of race. He therefore measured the practices and policies of the colonies of South Africa as failing to live up to the spirit of the proclamation (Chandramohan 157, Uppal 152, Tendulkar 87).

Guha is critical of Gandhi's position, arguing that the condemnation of the British as "unBritish" is based on the absurdity of accusing the other "of deviating from norms which were displayed as ideals but prevented in fact from realizing themselves to any significant extent in the dominant idioms of political practice" (*Dominance* 4). In contrast, Bhabha argues that "[b]etween the Western sign and its colonial signification there emerges a map of misreading which embarrasses the righteousness of recordation and its certainty of good government" ("Sly" 95). Further, Bhabha suggests that the "form of multiple and contradictory belief that emerges as an effect of the ambivalent, deferred address of colonialist governance" reflects the way in which the "Civilizing Mission" or "White Man's Burden" is contingent upon the construction of the other in terms of its "difference" or "lack" ("Sly" 95, "Other" 83). I would argue that this "split in enunciation," like Bhabha's other "in-between" spaces, does not merely reflect the instability of colonial power – and so resistance as a form of unconscious or intrinsic subversion – but is a space in which more deliberate forms of resistance may germinate.

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in his account of the Zulu rebellion in his autobiography he describes the Zulus as "so-called 'uncivilized'" people (289).

C.L.R. James and George Lamming hail the 1791 Haitian revolution, under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture, as the first successful slave revolt. The revolt was inspired by the ideals of the French revolution – *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* – and the failure of French colonists and slave-holders to fulfill these ideals. The Black Jacobins, as C.L.R. James calls Toussaint and his allies in *Black Jacobins* (1963) and *A History of Negro Revolt* (1938), turned to force of arms to overthrow the rule of the slave-owners, but, significantly, Toussaint did not seek to exterminate, deport or humiliate the French, or to separate the new nation of Haiti from the French Empire. In contrast to the armed rebellion of the Black Jacobins, Gandhi exposed British hypocrisy and, to borrow a phrase from Fanon, "demanded human behaviour from the other" by fulfilling his "duty" to the Empire. In the conclusion to *Black Skin, White Masks,* Fanon imagines resistance as the assertion of humanity: "If the white man challenges my humanity, I will impose my whole weight as a man on his life and show him that I am not that 'sho' good eatin'' that he persists in imagining" (229). The native's obsession with proving the stereotype wrong – like Gandhi's initiatives to promote "hygiene" so that Indians would no longer be regarded by whites as "dirty" – to some degree reflects the way in which the native is unable to escape the framework of colonial discourse. However, Gandhi's display of loyalty to the Empire – though it is an action constituted in and through the field of colonial power – reflects his genuine belief in his equality with the British and so served as a test of Victoria's proclamation and British notions of their own authority.

Gandhi notes that the initial offer of the Natal Indian community to establish an ambulance corps during the Boer War was rejected by the British. In *Satyagraha in South Africa,* he writes: "We encountered formidable difficulties in getting our offer favourably entertained. The story is interesting but this is not the place to detail it" (69). I perceive in this omission a space of unacknowledged disruption of colonial power. Most accounts of the establishment of the Indian ambulance corps reaffirm the silence of these "formidable difficulties," contradict Gandhi's comment, or explain the delay by appealing to the workings of the colonial bureaucracy (Chandramohan 159, Amery 100, Marks 214, Packenham 341 and Uppal 135). In contrast, D.G. Tendulkar suggests that the British refused the offer because they perceived Indians to be inferior: "Gandhi was told: 'You Indians know nothing of war. You would only be a drag on the army; you would have to be taken care of, instead of being a help to us.' The common sneer prevailed that 'if danger threatened the colony, the Indians would run away'" (53). A combination of British difficulties on the battlefield and Gandhi's relentless persistence to force the British to recognize the ability of the Indians, led to the corps being established.

To a degree, Gandhi was purposefully seeking to overturn white stereotypes of Indians, in the way Fanon describes. The Ambulance Corps was a means of showing whites that Indians were not cowards and were capable of seeing beyond their own self interest (Gandhi *Autobiography* 203). Yet, while many of the English saw the contribution of the Indians as revealing that "every Indian was as good a citizen of the British Empire as any one of them," this goodwill deteriorated as the war progressed and British victory became ever more certain: "Some of the colonists could not conceal their gall at any Indian trying to be the European's equal" (Uppal 159). Despite the failure of Indian participation on the side of the British to promote any changes in the Indian's

position in South Africa, Gandhi again organized a medical corps to serve during the Zulu Rebellion of 1906 as a means of justifying the acquisition of citizen rights.[6] Once again, however, the performance of the duties of a British subject did not translate into British recognition of Indians as citizens. Rather, the reward for Indian service during the Zulu Rebellion was a government ordinance that Gandhi recognized as constituting "hatred" and, if not opposed, marking ruin for Indians in South Africa (*Satyagraha* 92). Significantly, Indian responses to this ordinance further challenged the colonial construction of Indian inferiority and provide further evidence of the sort of mimicry-as-resistance which I believe Indians performed through the Ambulance Corps and which Guha ignores in his critique of Gandhi's "liberal loyalty."

The Transvaal Asiatic Ordinance legislated mandatory registration for Indians and required all Indians in the Transvaal to carry a pass; their failure to register or present their pass when asked resulted in imprisonment or deportation. Gandhi writes: "I have never known legislation of this nature being directed against free men in any part of the world…the Ordinance seeks to humiliate not only ourselves but also the motherland. The humiliation consists in the degradation of innocent men" (*Satyagraha* 93-4). Over the next few years, Gandhi would lead political opposition to government policies which required all Indians to register with their finger-prints, imposed a poll-tax on Indians, limited Indian mobility between the provinces, and declared null all non-Christian marriages. Despite the importance of organized mass campaigns of non-cooperation and nonviolent resistance during the period, however, Gandhi's acknowledgment of General Smuts as a peer rather than a superior provided a significant challenge to colonial/White authority.

As "leader" of Indian opposition to the so-called "Black Act," Gandhi negotiated changes to legislation and the terms of the cessation of Indian *satyagraha* campaigns with General Smuts. Uppal quotes Gandhi as saying early in the campaign: "It does not matter what General Smuts thinks today, but it will matter what he thinks a month hence, when we have shown that we are men. I do not have the slightest doubt that General Smuts has sufficient humanity in him to recognize our sincerity of purpose" (Uppal 241). By showing that they prefer imprisonment to the legislation, Gandhi believed that Smuts would have no choice but to recognize Indians as citizens. In his correspondence with Smuts, Gandhi is often polite, but never reverential (See, for instance, Gandhi, *Collected Works* 8:101, 230, 277, Uppal 333).

Following what Gandhi and the Indian community took to be a breach of faith on the part of Smuts, in which Smuts apparently reneged on a verbal agreement to amend the "Asiatic Act," Gandhi sent a letter to Smuts demanding the repeal of the Act and asserting that if the Act is not repealed, "'the certificates collected by the Indians would be burnt, and they would humbly but firmly take the consequences'" (*Satyagraha* 183). While the

[6] Gandhi writes that his sympathies were with the Zulus, particularly after learning that the so-called "rebellion" consisted of British military repression of a tax-refusal campaign. Nonetheless, he believed that the ideals of the British Empire were concerned for the welfare of the world (*Autobiography* 287).

"bonfire of certificates" did blaze – a London newspaper compared the act to the Boston Tea Party – it may be argued that colonial authority was challenged more by the assumptions inherent in the letter than the demands themselves or by the actual burning of the certificates.

Gandhi describes how the letter was not imagined as an "ultimatum" by the Satyagrahis but was quickly read in this way by members of the Transvaal government. He quotes Smuts as angrily declaring: "The people who have offered such a threat to the government have no idea of its power" (*Satyagraha* 182). Reflecting on the letter, Gandhi argues that it was taken as an "ultimatum" and had such a pronounced effect on legislators and the white media because it prescribed a time limit for reply and because it was written in the language of one who is equal with the other. Gandhi writes:

> If the Europeans had considered the Indians to be their equals, they would have found this letter perfectly courteous and would have given it most serious consideration. But the fact that the Europeans thought Indians to be barbarians was a sufficient reason for the Indians to write such letter...If there had not been behind the letter an iron determination to act up to it, it would have been held an impertinence, and the Indians would have proved themselves to be a thoughtless and foolish race.... [W]hen this letter was written, there was deliberate intention of claiming full knowledge and high prestige. Now as well as before the object aimed at was the repeal of the Black Act. But there was change in the style of language used... When a slave salutes a master and a friend salutes a friend, the form is the same in either case, but there is a world of difference between the two, which enables the detached observer to recognize the slave and the friend at once. (*Satyagraha* 183-4)

Rather than simply *failing* to fulfill the colonizer's desire for a particular form of recognition, in the letter the Indian community *refuses* to recognize their inferiority. The development of *satyagraha* as a nonviolent form of confrontational politics is, in part, due to Gandhi's desire to refute European stereotypes of Indian difference, from lack of hygiene and cleanliness to the charge of barbarism. On one level, such acts *can* be read as attempts to appease the whites or fulfill their desire for mimicry. However, rather than becoming the "other" of white desire, Gandhi and the other Satyagrahis seek white recognition not of their impossible attempts to become white but of their equality, by "imposing their weight as men" upon them. While the white population may have desired a recognizable Indian other who was "the *same* but not quite," this mode of colonial/racial authority is disrupted by the Indian assertion of their right to equal treatment under the law and their desire for a "self" who is "*equal* but not White".

The motivation for raising the Indian Ambulance Corps in both the Boer War and the Zulu Rebellion was the belief that if the Indian community demanded rights as citizens it must perform the duties of citizens, assuming that status before it had been recognized by colonial authority. In his argument for the recognition of colonial authority as dominance without hegemony, Guha points to the fact that the colonial state, unlike the metropolitan state, is without citizens ("Small" 3). Similarly, Dipesh Chakrabarty argues that a cornerstone of imperial ideology was "subjecthood but not citizenship, as the native was never adequate to the latter" (*Provincializing* 32). As a settler state, however,

colonial South Africa was a space in transition, a colony that desired to become a part of the metropolitan centre. Smuts biographer, Kenneth Ingham notes that while Smuts recognized a place for Africans in a white South Africa, albeit an inferior one, he believed the presence of Asians *impeded* the development of a European civilisation (55). In a 1909 speech Smuts declares: "Mr. Gandhi has referred to Indians being in partnership with the white population of this country. … It is a claim … which this white population will never allow. (Sustained cheers)" (Gandhi, *Collected* 8:509). The assertion of their rights as citizens and the performance of the duties of the citizen call into question the idea of the nation that the colonists envision.

Homi Bhabha reads white understanding of native resistance to colonial authority as being limited to the reinforcement of the stereotype of the native; folly, frenzy, madness ("Sly" 99). "Resistance" here is the native's questioning of the Christian Bible, for instance. The Christian colonizer can understand these questions or the alternate uses the native has for the Book only as indicative of the inability of the native to be civilized, proof of their inferior status. In contrast, the Indian community's persistence and assumption of the inalienability or naturalness of their rights as "citizens" could not be read by the colonizer as the failure of the Indian to occupy their designated subject position, an act of subversion reinforcing the stereotype of the other, but an active challenge to the assumptions of colonial authority. On one level, Indian persistence forced the South African government to *recognize* Indian concerns and *negotiate* with them, allowing for the years-long confrontation between "Gandhi" and "Smuts:" "The confrontation between Smuts, the acknowledged defender of white supremacy in what he deemed to be a white man's country, and Gandhi, the embarrassingly articulate reminder that the British Empire must, above all, stand for the equality of all subjects of the crown, had a telling impact on both their lives" (Huttenback 177; See also Hancock 321 and Gandhi *Satyagraha* 189). Indian desire for equality, rather than sameness, challenged the legitimacy of white authority/identity itself.

In Fanon's description of mimicry from the perspective of the colonized, cited above, the native seeks to become the *same* as the other, and when he – the native of Fanon and Bhabha is always male – realizes that his skin colour makes this impossible, he is forced to recognize his inferiority within the system he has been acculturated to emulate. Similarly, in Bhabha's concept of mimicry the colonizer desires a colonized other who is the same but not quite/white. Mimicry reinforces the authority of the colonizer because of the impossibility of the other becoming the same; indeed, to do so would be to destroy colonial authority. Bhabha defines the *failure* of the other to return the gaze, or to complete the narrative as "spectacular resistance." In the example of the Ambulance Corps and the "ultimatum," however, the Indian community does not "fail" to complete the narrative; instead they alter the narrative. The demand for citizen rights, while acknowledging difference, transforms the narrative from the impossibility of sameness to the demand – and in these two examples a demand that is both purposeful and grounded in material experience – for equality. This demand – both in terms of a call for legislation and in terms of performance – undermines or threatens colonial authority.

The disruption to colonial authority/identity argued above, I believe, provides examples of the way in which concepts such as mimicry can be used productively to

investigate the ways in which colonial authority described by Bhabha can be disrupted or purposefully challenged. Does refashioning Bhabha's work in this way, however, avoid the central criticisms of Bhabha's discursive preoccupations? Is the sort of challenge to colonial identity and authority performed in the Indian Ambulance Corps or Gandhi's negotiations with Smuts "resistance?" When Gandhi left South Africa in 1914, the government had abolished the poll tax and Indian marriages were recognized. For many Indians, however, the movement had not gone far enough to ameliorate their grievances, particularly in terms of trade and land rights. Indeed, the positions of Indians in South African society would deteriorate drastically after the Great War. Neither the political campaign nor the presumption of equality led to the recognition of Indians as equal by the white population; rather, each instance of Indian imposition of their humanity – whether through the performance of citizen responsibilities such as the Ambulance Corps or the rejection of colonial authority through the burning of their certificates – was returned with more vociferous attempts by the state to control and subjugate them.

Many years after Gandhi left South Africa, Smuts would call him one of the most important men of his era and seemed to acknowledge a genuine, though dubious, respect for him as an individual (Smuts 7:180). While much has been made of the apparent mutual respect between Gandhi and Smuts, a close reading of their correspondence reveals instead mutual "sly civility" (See Gandhi *Satyagraha* 144-5, 181, 186, *Collected* 7:102, 8:20). In fact, Gandhi's contact with the leaders of South Africa seems only to have strengthened their belief in white supremacy, shifting from contempt for an inferior race to anger or hatred for a group with which they are in conflict. In a 1913 letter to Smuts, Prime Minister General Louis Botha refers to Indians as "creatures": "Dear Jannie, This morning I telegraphed you about Gandhi and others – whether we cannot arrest them again. I felt so irritated by their attitude, now again in Natal, that really one could take them by the throat" (Smuts 3:151).[7]   Rather than revealing the way in which colonial authority was reinforced by or simply adapted to Indian resistance, *hatred* or the increasing reliance of coercive modes of power to maintain white dominance reveals the fragility of colonial power.

The Indian Ambulance Corps and the "ultimatum" challenged colonial authority sufficiently to require the recognition of that "subversion" as a challenge and the use of coercion to maintain authority. As I will suggest in my discussion of the anti-apartheid struggle in Chapter Four, diverse forms of opposition and resistance escalate conflict, making colonial power untenable and illuminating that power as injustice. While the events described in this section did not escalate this conflict to such an extent, overt acts of refusal, such as the burning of passes, and more covert forms of "everyday resistance" undoubtedly disrupted the functioning of colonial power and revealed the limits of this power to Indians, Africans and Europeans, alike. The examples of the Indian Ambulance Corps and the "ultimatum," however, as forms of resistance to colonial discourses of knowledge and authority, provide a significantly different challenge to

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[7] See also: Ingham 170, and Gandhi *Collected* 8:17. J.N. Uppal argues that by 1914 both Botha and Smuts had a change of heart and this accounts for their determination to have the Relief Bill passed.

colonial authority than does Bhabha's notions of hybridity, mimicry and sly civility. Bhabha's "spectacular resistance" provides no substantive account of how discursive "resistance" alters or challenges colonial authority; indeed, it does not assume that such an alteration or challenge is a necessary component of "resistance." The Indian performance of a subjectivity other than that prescribed within colonial discourse constitutes not simply a "failure" or "refusal" to fulfill the narrative demand of colonial discourse, but an affirmation of an alternate narrative.

CHAPTER TWO

Opposition and the (Im)Possibility of "Liberation"

I.   The Oppositional Paradigm of Power

While colonial discourse theory has deconstructed colonial power, examining the way in which power functions and subjectivity is constructed, theorists like Bhabha have contributed little to debates over resistance as social transformation, focusing instead on revealing the way in which subversion is an *effect* of colonial authority and deconstructing the production of the colonizer/colonized, dominant/subordinate binary. As critics such as Stuart Hall (245) and Anthony Kwame Appiah (*In My* 283) have noted, as politically significant as the theoretical deconstruction of various essentialisms, and particularly race, have been, such hierarchical and binary frameworks had – and continue to have – significant political currency, both for the way in which they seem to explain material inequalities and the way in which they structure discourses of political struggle. For critics such as Parry, Ahmad, San Juan and Shohat, the apparent failure of colonial discourse theory to account for "material" experiences of colonial oppression highlights the way in which such theories are, at the very least, "apolitical." For these critics, the construction of resistance as the subversion of colonial discourse displaces postcolonialism's liberatory project. For instance, Parry argues that

> the implications of rewriting a historical project of invasion, expropriation and exploitation in the indeterminate and always deferred terms Bhabha proposes and implements, are immense, and for me immensely troubling, since his elaborations dispense with the notion of conflict – a concept which certainly does infer antagonism, but contra Bhabha, does not posit a simplistically unitary and closed structure to the adversarial forces. (Parry "Signs" 6)

Yet, Parry's assumption that the colonial conflict is necessarily antagonistic, or that that conflict can only be performed/resolved within that antagonism, *is* to posit a "simplistically unitary and closed structure." As I will argue in Chapters Three and Four, Gandhi's praxis of *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* and South Africa's endeavours towards reconciliation provide examples of the way in which colonial discourse can be challenged, rather than simply "deconstructed," in a way that seeks to transform the conflict rather than "win" it. In other words, resistance, as I construct it in these chapters, infers transforming both the material and cultural structures of colonialism, including, significantly, the antagonistic framework within which the conflict is conceived.

One significant aspect of the early work of the Subaltern Studies project was an exploration of the way in which the subaltern was constructed not simply as subordinate to European colonial power, but within various registers of authority and dominance. In contrast, the engagement of postcolonial theory with the experiences of peoples of South Asia and Africa, among other (formerly) colonized spaces, is too often limited to the experience of epistemic violence of colonial authority as *perpetrated* by the colonizer.

Significantly, Bhabha's work illuminates the way in which European material privilege and white identity as well as modernity itself have been historically dependent upon the oppression, exploitation, and cultural construction of distinctly non-European others. Yet, as Appiah reminds us, for the vast majority of people living in Africa during its colonization, the influence of European culture was marginal to their daily life (*In My* 11).

If postcolonial studies is to provide the liberatory politics so many of its adherents assume, we must interrogate the way in which postcolonial theory marginalizes material experience and fails to engage with how colonial discourse/power supports, and is supported by, formal political structures. If, as Laura Chrisman argues, colonialism must be understood as a product of struggle and contestation and anti-colonial movements as "constitutive of, not merely constituted by, colonialism" (Chrisman 210), the interrogation of colonial discourse must also engage with organized movements in colonized spaces that sought to evict the colonial interloper, protect societies from capitalist exploitation or western culture, foster the emergence of capitalist structures, and/or build a national community. However, as important as I believe it is to interrogate the meaning of resistance within colonial discourse theory, I believe it is also necessary to interrogate the "politics" of the oppositional discourses of power which critics such as Parry, Ahmad, Shohat and San Juan seek to (re)construct.

Many critics ground their critique of colonial discourse theory and posit an alternative, more "genuine," oppositional resistance in the work of anti-colonial writers such as Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi and Aimé Césaire. As significant as such an oppositional discourse of resistance has been to anti-colonial thought, however, the oppositional paradigm of power, as I will argue in the final two sections of this chapter, is problematized by these very same anti-colonial thinkers. Bill Ashcroft argues that any discussion of resistance within postcolonialism must engage with the problem of whether or not a history of resistance as armed or ideological rebellion "leaves in its wake a *rhetoric* of opposition emptied of any capacity for social change" (19-20). While Ashcroft suggests that "unspoken forms of social and cultural resistance are more common," and it is these "forms of saying 'no,' that are more interesting because they are most difficult for imperial powers to combat" (20), I believe that the oppositional and antagonistic paradigm of power Ashcroft challenges is premised simply on the act of "saying 'no.'" As I will argue in this chapter, resistance as negation – whether in terms of military opposition or "unspoken" forms of rejection – is incongruent with the ideal of liberation assumed in the work of anti-colonial and postcolonial theorists alike.

In this chapter, I briefly map the debate within postcolonial studies as to the value of conceptualizing power oppositionally, before turning to an analysis of Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* and critical responses to it. I argue that postcolonial critics often impose an oppositional model of resistance on to the novel that serves to elide the way in which Dangarembga constructs multiple and conflicting structures of power. The various ways in which the women of the novel experience and seek to challenge oppression reveals a colonial framework of opposition as both a problematic conceptual model of power and insufficient as a politics of resistance. In the second half of the chapter, through the work of Frantz Fanon and Edward Said, I develop the

relationship between resistance and identity and the relationship between material and discursive structures of power and authority that I identify in Dangarembga's novel. Although Fanon problematizes nationalist discourses of anti-colonial revolution, he nonetheless conceptualizes the collective identity of the colonized as a manifestation of resistance. Fanon constructs a narrative of native resistance in which African identity is produced within the antagonistic "battle" against the colonizer. His theorization of liberation as a "new humanism," I argue, is therefore incongruent with the narrative of resistance he constructs. Nonetheless, although the conceptualizations of liberation advanced by Fanon and Said are underdeveloped, I analyse examples of "resistance" in the final two chapters of this dissertation which produce this theory of transformation as not only an ideal "end" of resistance, but its means.

Drawing on Fanon's conception of colonialism as a Manichean relationship, Abdul JanMohamed asserts that the "Manichean world" is a set of socio-political relations within which the colonizer and the colonized relate (*Manichean* 8). Yet, this Manichean opposition between colonizer and colonized is a projection of settler anxiety and negative self image; in other words, it is a form of cultural violence – a product of the colonial imagination which serves to rationalise and perpetuate the dominant position of the colonizer (*Manichean* 3). As a cultural imaginary, this relationship between colonizer and colonized can be deconstructed.[1] Yet, this oppositional discourse nonetheless functions to construct and maintain authority. In the chapter on resistance and opposition in his *Culture and Imperialism,* Said develops this analysis, reiterating a concept of resistance which is necessarily oppositional. Describing the way in which the colonized transforms the colonial experience into a "battle" which forces the colonizer to see himself on the "other side," Said argues that when the colonized initiates this struggle, "[t]here are now two sides, two nations, in combat, not merely the voice of the white master answered antiphonally – reactively – by the colonial upstart" (*Culture* 207).

Yet, while Said defines resistance as oppositional, he also acknowledges the failure of the postcolonial nation, as counter-narrative, to challenge the structures of colonialism.[2] For instance, he recognizes the way in which writers such as Fanon warned of the dangers of an essentialist basis to anti-colonial agitation (307). Further, he is careful to specify that he considers the work of Fanon and Cabral as a theory not just of resistance and decolonization, but liberation as well; he argues: "[a]t its best, the culture of opposition and resistance suggests a theoretical alternative and a practical method of

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[1] While I have thus far concentrated on the work of Bhabha, Said's *Orientalism* has become a foundational text for the analysis of the metropolitan construction of the Other. As he argues in *Culture and Imperialism,* with reference to the work of Suleri and Lowe, this analysis is significant for problematizing the construction of the "the binary oppositions dear to the nationalist and imperialist enterprise" (xxiv).

[2] The role of the nation as impetus and ideal of decolonization has been effectively engaged with elsewhere (See, Anderson, Bhabha "DissemiNation", Chakrabarty *Artifice,* Chatterjee *Nation* and *Nationalist,* L. Gandhi *Postcolonial,* Hardt and Negri, Lazarus, Loomba, Szeman).

reconceiving human experience in non-imperialist terms" (276). In *Culture and Imperialism* Said takes as his objects of study works of "cultural resistance," and the "ideological and cultural war" to which these texts contribute takes place within a teleological model of revolution. Echoing Fanon, Said describes the "first phase" of this revolution as taking the form of national independence movements or struggles for decolonization while the "second phase" is manifested as liberation struggles. Without resorting to an essentialist notion of group identity for those who have been the subjects of the colonial enterprise, Said, among others, maintains an oppositional rhetoric of "two sides."

Many postcolonial theorists critique nativism and nationalism, in the form of *negritude*, panafricanism or that posited by Jawaharlal Nehru in *The Discovery of India*, by questioning the value of the reversal of the categories of the oppressor and the oppressed and the reinscription of homogeneous or essentialist group identities, particularly in terms of the way such reinscriptions reinforce the structure of representation of the colonial enterprise. For instance, Sylvia Wynter reiterates Mudimbe's contention that all oppositional movements, including Marxism, feminism and afrocentrism must necessarily think themselves within the contemporary epistemological locos of the west and its conceptual modes of analysis, even where they contest some of its surface structure and premises (39). To imagine resistance within this epistemological locos is to secure the narrative of colonial discourse as dominant. Ashcroft argues that

> [r]esistance which ossifies into simple opposition often becomes trapped in the very binary which imperial discourse uses to keep the colonized in subjection… The most tenacious aspect of colonial control has been its capacity to bind the colonized into a binary myth. Underlying all colonial discourse is a binary of colonizer/colonized, civilized/uncivilized, white/black which works to justify the *mission civilatrice* and perpetuate a cultural distinction which is essential to the 'business' of economic and political exploitation. (21)

Rather than transform the conceptual relationship and material relations of power, oppositionality serves to reinscribe and reinforce the binary which the European colonial enterprise produces as knowledge. Further such binaries constrain the possibilities for political action. Appiah, for instance, argues that those who construct a Manichean relationship which pits Africa against Europe "postulate an either-or choice between Africa and Europe" and therefore "there is no place for [them] in the real world of politics, and [their] home must be the otherworldy, the monastic retreat" (*In My* 251). To be fair, however, I think critics such as Parry and Ahmad have been careful not to construct simplistic either/or relationships, while still maintaining an oppositional rhetoric and politics.

In defence of oppositionality, Parry contends that when used to mobilize populations against their foreign rulers, the invocation of notions of communal ethnic identity were not made "in the interests of discovering uncontaminated origins or claiming ethnic purity" ("Postcolonial" 17). Parry reacts to colonial discourse theory's "erasure" of the dichotomous axes through which colonial life was organized and the structural conflict of imperial relationships, and she draws upon Fanon among others to

argue that the colonial experience was an antagonistic conflict ("Liberation" 49, "Postcolonial" 16-17). In contrast, Said maintains the notion of "two sides" while also arguing that one of the aims of *Culture and Imperialism* is to "formulate an alternative both to a politics of blame and to the even more destructive politics of confrontation and hostility" (18). In the latter part of this chapter I will return to what Said has to say about an alternative to what he calls a "rhetoric of blame," for I believe that such an alternative has a profound potential not simply for understanding the past but for cultivating social, political and economic change in this era after colonialism. However, I will argue that Said's critique of this "rhetoric of blame" is incompatible with an oppositional politics consigned to a teleological model of change originating with the idea of "two sides" manifested in the "battle" of decolonization. As I will argue in my discussion of *Nervous Conditions*, resistance as a literal or metaphorical "battle" often leads to self-destruction, rather than transformation, and the colonial struggle cannot be separated from the effect of other forms of power; it is never merely a "battle" between "two sides".

Parry argues that Homi Bhabha obscures Fanon's reliance upon an oppositional paradigm of power through which to understand colonization and the possibilities for anti-colonial liberation. She suggests that Bhabha's selective reading of the work of Fanon – his close attention to aspects of Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* rather than *The Wretched of the Earth*, for instance – constructs a critical Fanon which is congenial to his deconstructive preoccupations. She further argues that Bhabha disregards the process of resistance "initiated by Fanon's oppositional discourse when the definition colonizer/colonized conceived under the old regime of thought, is displaced by a different usage of the same term, one invoking *implacable enmity* both as analysis of a political condition and as a galvanizing political slogan" ("Problems" 718, emphasis added). Parry's critique of the deconstructive preoccupations of colonial discourse theory assumes that resistance is necessarily *antagonistic;* it takes the form of counter-discourse, relies upon the "implacable enmity" between the contesting subjects of the *colonial* relationship, and maintains the assumption of the colonized subject's agency *as opposition* to colonial authority. As a result, oppositional discourses of power, such as that utilized by Parry, directs attention at the figures and functionaries of power, rather than structures of power.

For critics such as Parry, the deconstruction of oppositional binaries of power, by definition, negates the possibility of resistance as it is understood within the rhetoric of *anticolonial* struggle. For Parry, the anti-colonial struggle pits a subjugated victim fighting back against an oppressor. In Chapter One, I discussed Parry's criticism of Bhabha's construction of the colonial relationship as an "agonistic" one and her contention that to represent this relationship as anything other than "antagonistic" is to reread the colonial conflict "as a competition of peers" ("Signs" 13). She argues for instance that the concept of "dialogue" should not be used in the context of colonialism "since the word suggests an equal and symmetrical association between parties conducting colloquies in non-coercive situations... another term should be devised for the transactions where the native was sometimes an informant, always a topic, but rarely, and only in very special circumstances, an interlocutor" ("Postcolonial" 15). Parry's appeals to "antagonism" and "implacable enmity" reveal a perspective which concentrates upon

the figures involved in colonial power and not the structure of power itself. Appiah argues that postcolonial studies relies on the idea that (post)colonial cultures "*only* exist antagonistically" (*In My* 115). Further, he suggests that by seeing postcolonial cultures as simply the product of marginality, postcolonial studies "ignores the reciprocal nature of power relations... [and] neglects the multiform varieties of individual and collective agency available to the African subject" (115). Although Appiah's critique of postcolonial studies may not be a fair generalization, I believe that resistance, as the concept is used within the field, is largely confined to acts and practices which respond to or oppose the oppressive other, often defining the parties to the conflict in essentialized terms.

Leela Gandhi similarly argues that the "anti-colonial perspective neglects to acknowledge the corresponding failures and fissures which trouble the confident edifice of both colonial repression and anti-colonial retaliation" and that "far from being exclusively oppositional, the encounter with colonial power occurred along a variety of ambivalent registers" (*Postcolonial* 124). Gandhi, here, I think hints at a conception of power more in line with that articulated by Appiah. Such an understanding of power recognizes the limitations of oppositional models of power, both in terms of the way they construct reality and their utility as a basis for political action. To focus upon "structures of power" is to concentrate on the range of subject-positions produced within a colonized space, not simply by the imposition of European political and economic institutions and European "discipline," but by other forms of authority and means of knowledge production as well. For instance, rather than reinscribing oppositional binaries between the colonizer (as oppressor) and the colonized (as oppressed), by focusing on structures of power we interrogate the production of various registers of privilege, dominance, exploitation or deprivation. In certain contexts, of course, it may be "strategic" to understand these registers through essentialized subject positions, such as the colonizer and colonized, for instance in the way in which members of colonial settler communities benefit from the exploitation of the land and labour of indigenous inhabitants and seek to maintain this position of privilege, through coercion, education or the maintenance of economic relationships of dependency.

Consequently, rather than identifying "rebellion," "local and sporadic protests," "strikes" or "autonomous, popular politics" as all unproblematically transgressive, as Parry seems to do ("Liberation" 46), these acts of "resistance" must be contextualized and interrogated for the way in which they serve to alter the subject-positions of groups or individuals within these various registers of power, expose or dismantle these structures, or, indeed, perform alternative structures of power. As I will argue in my treatment of *Nervous Conditions*, all protests *against* figures of authority are not necessarily transgressive. As a result, I believe we need to examine the "politics" of reading the colonial relationship as "antagonistic" and resistance as the product of "implacable enmity," not in an effort to disregard the very real material and social differences among subjects within a structure of power – recognizing the way in which advantage and disadvantage are always contingent – but to interrogate whether such a politics is helpful in understanding how these differences can be transformed.

II.   Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*: (Re)Reading Opposition

Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* has taken a prominent place in the emerging canon of postcolonial literature and has received much critical attention. The novel has been read as "resistance literature" in the sense that it provides an important intervention in both colonial European and masculine nationalist representations of the African self and nation.[3] Significantly, Dangarembga depicts the experience of a number of people living in colonial Rhodesia who occupy various positions on a number of registers of hierarchy and authority in addition to race or colonial authority, including gender, material privilege and immersion within modernity as marked by formal education. As Deepika Bahri argues, by telling the stories of Zimbabwean women and girls, Dangarembga provides a counter-narrative to male-centred and bourgeois narratives of the nation and by representing women of different ages, classes, and educational backgrounds, she challenges composite and reductive sketches of the third world woman (par. 5-6). Criticism of the novel has consequently focused upon exploring how various characters in the novel, and women more generally, experience power through various axes of power, imagined in terms of *oppositions*; for instance, between men and women, or the Western educated inhabitants of urban spaces and the "uneducated" population of the rural "homestead." The novel and its criticism, therefore, provide significant venues through which to interrogate the oppositional paradigm of power and the notion of resistance constructed within it.

In this section I analyze the way in which resistance – as acts, subject-positions, figures – has been constructed within analyses of the novel. In particular, I interrogate critical readings of Nyasha's anorexia nervosa as resistance to patriarchal and/or colonial power in order to examine the way in which resistance is figured oppositionally. I argue that analyses which read resistance this way cannot account for the complex web of power Dangarembga constructs. Rather than constructing Africans as victims of European domination or women as victims of male domination, I argue that *Nervous Conditions* reveals the "multi-form varieties of individual and collective agency" Appiah argues are available to the African subject. After interrogating critical readings of oppositional resistance within the novel, therefore, I explore the way in which Dangarembga provides no easy path to "emancipation" but does not leave her characters hopelessly passive or victimized. *Nervous Conditions,* I argue, replaces the notion of anti-colonial liberation with less idyllic notions of individual and communal resistance. The novel reveals a complex web of power in which oppositional stances against one

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[3] Aegerter contends that the dialogic nature of the narrative allows the novel to function as a "protest" against official History (232). For Saliba, the text enables "Western readers to interrogate their privilege in order to understand the violence that we do to third world women... When we, as first world readers, implicate ourselves within these systems of power... we participate in the collective work of revolution and in the painful process of expansion necessary for understanding and solidarity across the cultural divide" (143).

system of oppression often reinforce another. While the novel provides no narrative of transformation, it does problematize notions of resistance as opposition.

Dangarembga's narrator Tambu begins her story by placing it within a taxonomy of women's responses to oppression. She introduces the main women characters of the novel by explaining that the story she has to tell is about the "rebellion" of her cousin Nyasha, the "entrapment" of her mother Mainini and her aunt Maiguru, and the "escape" of both herself and her mother's younger sister Lucia (1). The central female figures of the novel are introduced to the reader in terms of the way in which they negotiate their roles as African women in a male-dominated society colonized by a European power. While different readings of the novel privilege one or the other of colonial or male authority, these critical discussions read patriarchal oppression and the feminist politics of the novel within the context of colonization. Conforming to the "dominant rubric under which materials from the 'Third World' were (and are) being studied" (Needham 3), however, much of this criticism has focused upon reading the text for its depiction of spaces within which African women are able to "resist" patriarchy *or* colonialism. Significantly, such readings of the novel focus on the intervention the novel makes in discourses of decolonization which have often ignored the experiences of women by focusing solely upon the colonial relationship between "European" and "Native" (men). Yet these readings reinscribe binary relations of power in which resistance is only understandable as opposition to, or the *negation* of, figures and signs of oppression.

Critical attention to "resistance" in the novel centres on the way Nyasha's body becomes a space upon which patriarchy, colonialism and/or modernity are alternately enacted and a space in which "rebellion" can take place.[4] Nyasha's conflict with her father develops throughout the novel, culminating in her purging after meals and her physical and emotional deterioration. She is introduced by Tambu as "far-minded and isolated, my uncle's daughter, whose rebellion may not in the end have been successful" (1). Deepika Bahri's essay "Disembodying the Corpus: Postcolonial Pathology in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions,*" provides an interesting example of critical interpretations of Nyasha. While Bahri states that a "simplistic oppositionality between colonizer/colonized [is] meaningless" (par. 2), like many other critics, her construction of resistance within the novel is constrained by such an idiom of oppositionality.

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[4] Bahri argues that "the usually appearance-centred practices of anorexia and bulimia become narrativized as artful, if grotesque, protest that will prevent Nyasha's maturation into full fledged commodified 'womanhood'" (par. 9). Hill argues that Nyasha's refusal to eat and her regurgitation constitutes acts of rebellion (78). For Thomas, Nyasha's "anorexic body is a parody of a Western ideal of slim, feminine sexual desirability" (31). In contrast, Nair characterizes Nyasha as a stereotypical figure of the destruction of the colonial/exiled student as a result of Western formal education (138). See also: Uwakweh, Basu, Aegerter, McWilliams, Saliba and Plasa.

Her reading of Nyasha's "rebellion," however, is invested in a theoretical framework that relies upon discourse theory and which interrogates the complex and multiple forms of power that Nyasha negotiates. Bahri argues that

> Nyasha's diseased self suggests the textualized female body on whose abject person are writ large the imperial inscriptions of colonization, the intimate branding of patriarchy, and the battle between native culture, Western narrative, and her complex relationship with both. Not surprisingly, Nyasha's response to this violence on the body is not only somatogenic but it is to manifest specifically that illness which will consume that body. (par. 1)

Nyasha's body, then, is a text on which we can read the multiple and sometimes conflicting modes of power of colonial Rhodesia, and the illness that consumes her body can be seen as the *effect* of these conflicting forms of oppression. Yet Bahri also reads Tambu's experience of anorexia and bulimia as resistance: "Nyasha's *war* with patriarchal and colonial systems is fought on the turf of her own body, both because it is the scene of enactment of these systems and because it is the only site of resistance available" (par. 4, emphasis added). So while Nyasha's anorexia and bulimia are interpreted as the effect of a battle between competing discourses of femininity and racial identity, her illness is also read as a form of resistance *against* patriarchal and colonial systems.

The structures that oppress the women are related but in conflict. On the one hand, the English formal education, which Nyasha's father pressures her to consume, marks her position of social privilege and her family's "escape" from a rural and traditional lifestyle. Yet her father's expectations of his daughter's behaviour are nonetheless imbedded within Shona culture and so result in the conflicting pressures to remain a "decent" (read: not anglicized) girl by wearing appropriate clothing and maintaining a distinctly Shona female body image. For instance, while Babamukuru instils in his daughter the necessity of a Western education, when Maiguru buys Nyasha a dress to recognize her success on her exams, Babamukuru "wanted to know where his daughter thought she was going dressed up in such an ungodly manner" and "accused [Maiguru] of compromising his daughter's decency" (Dangarembga 109). Nyasha's body is a site which her father seeks to control.[5]

Biman Basu reiterates Bahri's suggestion that because the female body is disciplined by both patriarchal and colonial authority, it is the material and corporeal space in which resistance can take place. As a result, Nyasha's "disgorging that which is forcibly inserted into her body, initiates a counter-movement to the prevailing syntax of the narrative... it is Nyasha's violent rebellion that initiates the lines of flight from the

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[5] Babamukuru's behaviour in this instance reflects his own experience of cultural conflict – exhibited dramatically at times with his own psychological trauma, or "bad nerves" (Dangarembga 102), and his expectations that his children will return to the homestead for holidays and cherish their culture (120). At the same time, he demands that the culture of that homestead be altered to satisfy expectations developed though European influences, mainly the demand that his brother have a Christian marriage ceremony with the woman he has been married to for many years already.

territorialized body of the colonized native" (Basu 21). Does Nyasha's subversion of her father's demands for her to eat – her saying "no" to authority – constitute resistance to colonial and/or patriarchal oppression? While it is certainly a form of subversion explicitly linked to Nyasha's thoughtful critique of colonial and patriarchal structures, this subversion does not challenge her father's authority and reinscribes other structures of domination.

Nyasha's repeated references to her desire for a slim figure and her warning to Tambu not to get fat seem to reflect on one level the active subversion of Shona cultural ideals of a strong, large and healthy female body and her father's specific demands for her to eat and gain weight. However, the association of her illness with her own assertions of femininity – the idea that "angles are more attractive than curves," the links between the most extreme stages in the illness and Nyasha's desperate desire for a "svelte and sensuous" figure (Dangarembga 135, 197) – reveals the way in which Nyasha has internalised western values and norms related to beauty and gender. Patriarchy cannot be understood as another form of oppression which affects the female African subject, *in addition to* colonialism, but a form of control which, although exhibiting different and perhaps conflicting forms and symbols, is inflected through Shona (traditional) and colonial (modern) culture. While Nyasha's refusal to be the decent daughter her father demands subverts his authority, her emotional and physical self-destruction is hardly emancipatory; it *is* her experience of oppression. To problematize the "resistance" of Nyasha's illness, however, is not to deny her agency; rather she should be seen "less as victim than as the mediated product of a conflicted narrative" (Bahri par. 7).

Many critics recognize Nyasha's hybrid cultural experience, yet recuperate it within a narrative of oppositional resistance. For instance, Therese Saliba contends that Nyasha's anorexia "serves as an internalization of and resistance to sexual oppression and colonial domination, and is symptomatic of the Western and class privileges she experiences as a cultural hybrid" (138). Saliba characterizes patriarchy as an "internal" form of oppression while colonialism is "external" (133). Rather than being a product of *multiple* forms of oppression, however, I would argue that Nyasha's illness seems rather to be the result of multiple and *conflicting* forms of oppression. For instance, in one of her letters to Tambu after Tambu left for Sacred Heart, Nyasha describes the sense of isolation she feels:

> [The other girls at school] resent the fact that I do not read their romance stories....
> If only they knew that when I was ten my mother used to scold me very severely
> indeed for sneaking them down from the bookshelf... they do not like my
> language, my English because it is authentic and my Shona, because it is not!
> They think that I am a snob, that I think I am superior to them because I do not
> feel that I am inferior to men... And all because I beat the boys at maths! I know
> that I should not complain, but I very much would like to belong Tambu, but I
> find I do not. (Dangarembga 196)

Nyasha's sense of trauma seems to reflect the alienation she feels not only as a "victim" of the oppression of patriarchy (men over women) or colonialism (as western modernity over Shona tradition) but also as a result of existing in a space of intersection where

various axes of power conflict, including Western and Shona patriarchy, racial hierarchies and material privilege.

When Tambu next returns home she finds Nyasha looking "too svelte" and one night Nyasha experiences a breakdown that finally alerts her parents to the severity of her emotional trauma. Before shredding her history book between her teeth and breaking her mirrors and the clay pots she made herself, Nyasha wakes Tambu to warn her of her self-destructive desires:

> "I don't want to do it, Tambu, really, I don't, but it's coming…They've done it to me," she accused, whispering still. "Really, they have." And then she became stern. "It's not their fault. They did it to them too. You know they did," she whispered. "To both of them but especially to him. They put him through it all. But it's not his fault, he's good." Her voice took on a Rhodesian accent. "He's a good boy, a good munt. A bloody good kaffir…. They've deprived you of you, him of him, ourselves of each other." (200)

In this frenzied monologue, "they" becomes an amorphous marker of the oppressor, yet it is a signifier which displaces her trauma; there is no identifiable oppressor – a "they" – to blame, hold accountable, or chase away, but only multiple and conflicting systems of oppression in which some are privileged and some exploited.

One way to account for Nyasha's sense of alienation and the physical illness and psychological breakdown it manifests is to recognize the way in which she is necessarily implicated in the structures of power within which she is located. As Bahri argues:

> Her "anti-colonial" war… is complicated by her own collusion with the corrupt system she is fighting—her unwillingness to relinquish the accent acquired from her brief stay in England, her criticism of the racist dominion of colonizers while remaining standoffish with her compatriots at school, and the lack of effort at regaining her native language or contact with homestead relatives—visible to Tambu but unacknowledged, or unknown to her except in her sense of herself as "hybrid," is also a factor in the war of ideas and values being narrativized on her corporeal bodily space. (par. 17)

Bahri complicates the oppositional binary of domination by illuminating the ways in which Nyasha is complicit within various systems of oppression. However, Bahri contends that Nyasha's unwillingness to redevelop her Shona language skills reflects complicity in the corrupt system of British colonialism or European cultural intrusion, thereby seeming to recuperate an oppositional framework pitting English against Shona, modernity against tradition.

While critics such as Bahri problematize the various oppositional binaries they identify as working in the novel, ultimately, by characterizing Nyasha's illness as rebellion, an oppositional politics is reinscribed, most notably in the way in which the violence perpetrated against Nyasha's body is presented as reflecting a form of warfare. Janice E. Hill reads "Nyasha's struggle against Babamukuru's authoritative attempt to silence her as figuring the struggle of African freedom fighters in the long and bloody guerrilla war against Southern Rhodesia's government" (89). If *Nervous Conditions* provides a counter-narrative to the nationalist, and particularly masculine, literature of African anti-colonialism and disappointed independence, recuperating Dangarembga's

narrative into such a discourse of militant nationalism, and constructing Nyasha as a metonym of organized political struggle, seems to undermine the feminist politics of the text. The tendency of critics of *Nervous Conditions* to focus upon Nyasha's violent response to/experience of oppression and to incorporate her illness into narratives of collective violent rebellion uncritically re-inscribe the myth of violent rebellion as "genuine" or "true" resistance. Further, constructing resistance as "rebellion," or the act of saying "no," occludes the possibility of transforming the web of power within which the women exist.

Readings that parallel the violence perpetrated by Nyasha against her own body with the colonial violence perpetrated against a collective African body *and* violent resistance in response to colonial oppression, at least implicitly rely upon Fanon's assertion that "decolonization is always a violent phenomenon" (35), an assertion with which he begins *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon constructs a narrative that homogenizes the experience of colonialism and resistance across Africa. He argues that "[t]he starving peasant, outside the class system, is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays…. [Colonialism] is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence" (61). Fanon's seemingly totalizing assertions about the utility and necessity of violence as a means of liberation are based on the specific experience of Algerian militant opposition to French colonialism, an experience that was not shared by a great many African states (Caute 68, Woddis 28-30). In addition, Fanon's argument for the necessity of violence is undermined by his association of violent rebellion with the native's desire to replace the settler: "The native is an oppressed person whose permanent dream is to become the persecutor. The symbols of social order – the police, the bugle calls in the barracks, military parades and the waving flags – are at one and the same time inhibitory and stimulating" (53). Violence, then, is closely associated with the symbols and structures of European power in Africa. Fanon acknowledges the cycle of violence in Algeria (89) and underscores the way in which violence is both a tactic and an ideology for the colonized, but one, significantly, which is "furnished by the settler" (84). Nonetheless, Fanon argues that this does not constitute a paradox since colonialism is the organization of a Manichean world (84).

While postcolonial theorists have drawn heavily on Fanon's discussion of nationalism from *Wretched*, and concepts such as "rebellion" and "revolt" are often privileged as "genuine resistance," they have failed to engage with Fanon's writings on violence. As I have argued in my discussion of Bhabha's use of a militaristic rhetoric in his theorization of "spectacular resistance" and my criticism of *Nervous Conditions*, even discursive conceptualizations of resistance continue to be constituted if only implicitly within narratives of violent revolution.[6] At the same time as the postcolonial canon has tended to privilege texts which can be easily read as counter-discursive, I would argue that the privileging of violent rebellion has led to, or perhaps results from, the

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[6] This assumption of violent revolution as "true" resistance is often revealed in reactions to the more discursive and poststructural preoccupations of postcolonial theory. See for instance, San Juan (210), Parry "Problems" (731), Said *Culture* (196, 270).

canonization of works which are easily read within a rubric of resistance as violent opposition.[7]

For Supriya Nair, conferring a cathartic potential upon violence reinscribes a masculinist form of nationalism: "The narrative of liberation follows the scenario of the macho revolutionary process of individuation: boy meets gun and the rest is history" (132). Further, to see Nyasha's self-destructive illness as a mirror of the contemporaneous Zimbabwean struggle for independence, as Hill does, and to privilege Nyasha's rebellion over other forms of women's intervention because it symbolically rehearses guerrilla warfare, reveals a wilful disregard for Zimbabwean history. The violence which wrested political control of the colonial Rhodesian state away from the white minority did not end with independence; the two major militant groups and political parties, ZANU and ZAPU turned their guns towards one another, the conflict raging throughout the 1980s. While the current economic and political instability of Zimbabwe is not dissimilar from the crises which face a number of other African states (many of which achieved political independence from European colonialism without war) guerrilla warfare in Zimbabwe has by no means cultivated a healthy social or cultural national "body." Like the violence of guerrilla warfare, which is understood by Fanon, among others, as a mode of self-definition, the violence which debilitates Nyasha is presented as a means of identity construction which escapes the constraints of the representation of the native imposed by dominant colonizing Others.

While Tambu expresses some ambivalence towards Nyasha's rebellion, suggesting that it "may not in the end have been successful," for a number of critics, Nyasha's destruction of her physical self is a form of feminist *and* anti-colonial "resistance." Bahri, for instance, argues that Nyasha's refusal to eat reflects her ability to manoeuvre against her proscribed place within her society: "Appalled at this invasion of her rights, and what might be seen as a persistent barrier to her development into sexual agent rather than sexualized commodity, Nyasha, indicating the etiology of her symptoms, refuses to eat" (par. 9). More explicitly, Saliba argues that "[t]his fighting back is part of the process of claiming a 'self'" (142) and Sue Thomas contends that anorexia is "a critical and highly ambiguous attempt at self-determination" (31). Since the body is where colonial and patriarchal authority is performed and it is the only space over which the colonized woman has any measure of control, for these critics, Nyasha's act of starving herself is recognized as the performance of a specifically anti-colonial and anti-patriarchal agency. Reading Nyasha's illness within such a narrative of resistance as oppositional violence problematizes the feminist politics of the novel; to recognize Nyasha's self-destructive acts as, albeit, "ambiguous" attempts at self-determination

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[7] The most notable example of this tendency is the place of Ngugi' wa Thiong'o's work within postcolonial studies. Ngugi seeks to recover narratives of Mau Mau insurgency, rewriting British representations of Mau Mau "terrorism" as an honourable fight for freedom, and he frames the struggle for liberation from neo-colonialism in the same oppositional terms of the anti-colonial struggle and within narratives of violent revolution. See, for instance, *Petals of Blood* (1977), *I Will Marry When I Want* (1982), and *Matigari* (1987)

seems too positive an assessment of the function of this "resistance" in effecting her empowerment or transforming the structures of power which marginalize and alienate her.

As much as Nyasha's ideal of a slender body reflects her assimilation into European values as well as her rejection of Shona patriarchy, her violent outburst – as opposed to the violence of anorexia and bulimia which is directed at her own body and psyche – is directed at symbols of European cultural domination in the form of English history books *and* its opposite, the clay pots, as markers of traditional culture. Her destruction of the history book is a form of rebellion against the epistemological violence which subsumes Shona culture into the "body" of English History; yet the destruction of the pots seems to be a rejection of an essentialized past or tradition constructed to counter that History, a counter-discourse in which women's bodies and labour are also controlled and exploited. Bahri argues that "Nyasha's attraction to the Western ideal of femininity must be mediated, then, by her understanding of the exploitative usurpation of the healthy African female body" within the social space of the traditional "homestead" (par. 14). Following their sojourn in England, Maiguru and Nyasha are represented as out of place and uncomfortable within the social space of the homestead, a space in which men gather to make decisions which affect the lives of women and in which much of the labour of daily living is conducted by women. Readings of this disease and the discontent with "traditional" modes of gender relations and lifestyle expressed by Maiguru and Nyasha and learned by Tambu in her formal European education are used to support the feminist politics of the novel. For instance, Biman Basu characterizes wearing short dresses, smoking cigarettes and going dancing as other ways in which Nyasha enacts her resistance (13). Here, then, modernity, or specifically western and bourgeois gender roles and values become a form of resistance.

While critics such as Uwakweh (82) and Saliba (142) have constructed Nyasha's anorexia and bulimia as resistance to show that she is not simply a "passive victim" of patriarchal and colonial oppression, placed within the context of women's various experiences of and responses to multiple and conflicting forms of oppression in the novel, I find it difficult to read the destruction of Nyasha in body and spirit as an act of resistance. Further, the question of this rebellion's "success" reveals the ambivalence or ambiguity that surrounds what it means to "successfully" resist. Therese Saliba contends that during her breakdown, Nyasha "rejects colonial history, which has fragmented her culture and, along with the Shona patriarchal traditions, has scarred her flesh, and she refuses her material privileges gained by colonialism's capitalist system" (141-2). Can Nyasha, however, genuinely "reject" these influences or refuse these privileges without ceasing *to be* – without wasting away to nothing? For Bahri, Nyasha's self-destruction is the attainment of a "body without organs":

> the woman that dies is the abject self that has never enjoyed the luxury of self-determination, that is no real woman but an insubstantial changeling who functions as token and currency in the labor and matrimonial market. Nyasha's pathological persona enacts a mutli-pronged assault on a complex and interwoven system that involves the body and the mind, patriarchy and the female body, colonialism and history. (par. 25)

Nyasha's wasting away constitutes a saying "no" to her father; it is an active rejection of her father's demands and an active subversion of Shona patriarchy, but it is also woven within a web of systems of power and it is indebted to European cultural values; the violence of the conflict which takes place upon Nyasha's body is neither cathartic nor liberating. Rather, Nyasha's violent act seems to be the most dramatic manifestation of the dehumanization of oppression.[8]

Although Dangarembga's explicitly anti-patriarchal or anti-colonial rhetoric in the novel's introduction and Nyasha's thoughtful critique of her experience of colonial and patriarchal power frame power and resistance in the novel oppositionally, I believe that critical readings of *Nervous Conditions* nonetheless impose on the novel a model of resistance that is discursively insufficient and politically unproductive. Tambu suggests that Nyasha's rebellion "may" not have been successful. Without dismissing the politics of Nyasha's actions – from the destruction of the signs of the binary framework of European domination and nativist counter-discourse to the destruction of her own physical body – I would argue that in these acts of desperation, Nyasha performs the ambivalence and ambiguity of power in the colonial space. Dangarembga provides no clear narrative of emancipation, but neither does she construct her characters as hopelessly passive or victimized. By placing her characters within a complex web of power, including colonial rule, modernity, patriarchy, and Shona cultural practices, Dangarembga reveals the way in which oppositional resistance against any one field of power often reinforces another. While I do not believe the novel posits a model of resistance as social transformation, it does problematize oppositional models of resistance.

Two of the three possible responses to oppression in Tambu's taxonomy, "rebellion" and "entrapment," frame oppression oppositionally, in this case defining how women are oppressed in a patriarchal system informed or reinforced by colonial authority. The emphasis upon rebellion in critical treatments of the novel would suggest that rebellion is the only alternative to passivity. Resistance, therefore, is defined as a negative reaction: Nyasha reacts *against* her father's authority and *against* "traditional" constructs of femininity; Babamakuru reacts *against* his daughter's "westernization" while enforcing her "modernization" through formal education. Yet, as Nyasha realizes in her tirade against "them," her parents are as much a product of the inter-connected systems of colonialism, modernism, and tradition, as she is. There is no political utility in opposing the figures of authority within these structures; there is no "them" to rebel against. As a result, the conflict becomes physically manifested in the space of Nyasha's own body. In Nyasha's attack on her European history text and the clay pots, she seems

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[8] Nyasha's self destructive violence is reminiscent of Okonkwo's suicide in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Rather than a means of individual or communal self-determination or "catharsis," Okonkwo's violent response to colonial authority leads to his literal self-destruction and is as much a contributing factor to, as a consequence of, the image of the community or culture as "falling apart."

to be disrupting both poles of the binary between colonizer/ colonized, modern/traditional. If this struggle reveals her "hybridity," as marked by differing manifestations of patriarchal power and the emergence of modern capitalist values and power relations, this "hybridity" seems to signal her destruction rather than her liberation. An oppositional conceptualization of resistance allows Nyasha's subversion of her father's demands to be characterized as resistance, though that subversion reinforces particularly modern or western structures of identification.

The third reaction to colonialism and patriarchy in Tambu's taxonomy is "escape." Escape, as it is constructed within the novel, seems to figure the sort of resistance Ashcroft conceptualizes in the idea of saying "no." In some ways, the example in the previous chapter of the work of Gandhi and other Indians in South Africa reflects the way in which South African Indians were able to "escape" the discursive constructions of their subjectivity, thereby challenging colonial authority, though by no means significantly altering the material or political structure which reinforced white power. While "escape" may constitute a space negotiated by the oppressed which disrupts the oppositional binary of their oppression – and in this way perhaps we should construct Nyasha's response as one of attempted "escape" rather than "rebellion" – neither Lucia nor Tambu find space "outside" patriarchy or colonialism. Each woman "escapes" the patriarchal authority of the homestead in terms of specific relationships; for instance, Tambu escapes the authority of her father, the lingering presence of her gendered "difference" from her brother and the communal expectations of gender roles. As evidenced by Maiguru's feelings of "entrapment," however, the movement away from "traditional" gender constraints facilitates an alteration in subject-position but not an "escape" from patriarchy; the structure is left unchallenged and continues to shape and limit.

Lucia and Tambu's "escape" marks a form of "upward mobility" in material or class terms, from the traditional homestead to the modern school. Lucia, for instance, "escapes" from the responsibilities of the woman within a subsistence economy into waged labour at the school; her move to the school is facilitated by her *willingness* to sell her labour, a labour that in the homestead is an obligation of her gender. Similarly, the emancipation for which Tambu longs, and ultimately receives, is the escape from the homestead:

> How can I describe the sensations that swamped me when Babamukuru started his car, with me in the front seat beside him, on the day I left my home?...When I stepped into Babamukuru's car I was a peasant....It was evident from the corrugated black callouses on my knees, the scales on my skin that were due to lack of oil, the short, dull tufts of malnourished hair. This was the person I was leaving behind....At Babamukuru's I would have the leisure, be encouraged to consider questions that had to do with survival of the spirit, the creation of consciousness, rather than mere sustenance of the body. (Dangarembga 58-59)

This migration from the mental and material limits of the homestead to the "limitless horizons" outside the homestead reveals the binary structures of patriarchy and colonialism as essentializations. As a result, direct opposition by those figured as oppressed against figures or symbols of oppression is problematic. Patriarchy functions

differently in different spaces and it is experienced within the emergence of modern and capitalist relations of power and identity as it is within "traditional" Shona culture.

Tambu's "escape" reveals "modernization," "Westernization," and "colonialism" as concepts which are not synonymous and as concepts that are always being negotiated by those they affect. Tambu recognizes formal education – one marker of modernity or westernization – as the way to "freedom." On one level, formal education facilitates her "emancipation" in the terms of the modern individual, but as the experience of Maiguru and Nyasha reveal, this emancipation is synonymous with alienation. Such a notion of emancipation is predicated on the idea of the bourgeois individual subject, rather than a notion of the subject within the community. However, Tambu's access to education also suggests the possibility of material emancipation from poverty. Indeed, she defines education specifically in material terms as the antithesis of the flies, empty stomachs, dirt, and disease of the homestead (183). In the final section of this chapter I will develop the importance of the transformation of material circumstances described within Fanon and Said's discourses of liberation, and will also take this up further in my discussion of Gandhism and reconciliation. Within an oppositional framework, how does one "resist" poverty? Readings of the novel which focus upon "patriarchy" and "colonialism" tend to ignore the way in which these discourses are imbedded within material structures of inequality.

Tambu characterizes her move to the mission school as her "reincarnation," a rising from the death-like experience of the homestead, "freed from the constraints of the necessary and the squalid that defined and delimited our activity at home" (92-93). Yet, Tambu's embrace of formal education is not indicative of a total rejection of "tradition" within a simplistic modern/traditional binary. Tambu's consciousness of "other struggles to engage in besides the consuming desire to emancipate myself and my family" (152) – a realization she attributes to the influence of Nyasha's continuous questioning – is manifested most significantly in her refusal to attend the Christian wedding ceremony of her parents. Tambu's stubborn refusal to attend the ceremony takes the form of literal "escape," first as her "disappearance" to the girls' hostel and then as a feigned illness. Babamukuru considers her ungrateful and disrespectful, a "bad child" because she does not follow his orders (166). Tambu's unwillingness to go to the wedding, however, is not inspired by the desire to refuse Babamukuru, as a figure of oppression, but her belief that the Christian ceremony demeans her parents' relationship: "A wedding that made a mockery of the people I belonged to and placed doubt on my legitimate existence in this world" (163). Tambu's ambivalence towards her home – a place she sees herself as "too civilised" to return to (120), yet the place where she belongs – reflects the ambivalence of modernity within (post)colonial experience.

For a number of critics, Tambu's education, at the very least, allows for a particularly feminist emancipation. For instance, Supriya Nair argues that Ngugi's critique of colonial education in *Decolonizing the Mind* disregards the way in which the education of girls, such as Tambu, is an anomaly, and therefore provides a significant intervention into the way in which local patriarchal structures collude with colonial authority to reinforce the subordinate status of the colonized woman (133). Further Nair contends that "although Tambu is aware that her foray into colonial education is also a

death of sorts, it is a death she welcomes because, she believes, her incarnation will emerge with more power than she has as a poor, uneducated, black peasant girl (134).[9] The novel and criticism of it reveal the way in which various forms of control and privilege intersect, and at times become muddled in critical interpretations of resistance and power. For Basu, Tambu's appeal to consciousness as a product of education, and specifically the consciousness of patriarchy she attains through education, does not alter her subjection: "If power is apprehended not *negatively* as repression, prohibition, or objectification but *positively* as producing subjects, the narrator's rhetoric of consciousness signals this subjectification and serves to elide the materiality of her contradictory position" (21). As problematic as both Tambu and Nyasha recognize education to be, for both it is a significant means of negotiating a place of privilege within a patriarchal world and, just as significantly, as a potential remedy to material hardship.

In the next two sections I explore the way in which the nation figures as the sign of successful resistance and the way this valorization of the nation as community has been critiqued within postcolonial studies. As Hardt and Negri observe, within much anti-colonial thought, "*the nation becomes the only way to imagine community*" (107, original emphasis). Significantly, while the nation is posited as resistance within a discourse which concentrates on the binary between colonizer and colonized (i.e. the object of colonial oppression being turned back against colonial power in the form of a nationalist counter-discourse), the rhetoric of national liberation has been more about gaining entry into a modern and capitalist community of states than resisting modernity. Dangarembga's representation of complex and intersecting relations of power, therefore, undermines oppositional discourses of resistance which construct experience within a single binary framework. When we conceptualize power in this way, the "nation" loses its liberatory possibilities. Some critics of the novel argue that the "community" of women in the novel provides a means of intervention, or have identified the failure of this "community" to materialize as an explanation for the lack of success of the varying attempts to subvert or reject male power in the novel.[10] Significantly, Dangarembga concentrates on the negotiations of power by individuals and reveals the way in which the overlapping structures of power impede the formation of "communities" in opposition.

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[9] While Uwakweh acknowledges that Tambu's acceptance into the predominantly white Sacred Heart School affirms her mother's fear of the destructive force of acquiring the English language, she argues that Tambu "finds liberation in the act of voicing 'my own story, the story of four women whom I loved, and our men'" (83). Similarly, Flockemann recognizes education as a means of escape from poverty into a racially determined class hierarchy, which, though it constrains Tambu in different ways, allows her to recognize and expose patriarchy (42). See also, Gorle (192)

[10] Aegerter argues that the focus upon Tambu and Nyasha as "dual protagonists metaphorically heals the colonial rupture of rural and urban African peoples" (234), and it is the separation of Nyasha from Tambu – Nyasha's loss of "African community" – which prevents her resistance from being successful (237-8).

III.   Resistant Identities/Identities of Resistance

Frantz Fanon's critique of anti-colonial nationalist discourses and his depiction of colonialism as epistemological violence as much as political oppression or economic exploitation has made him the most prominent "anti-colonial" intellectual of the era of decolonization. In *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth,* Fanon describes colonialism as not merely physical coercion and material exploitation, but a product of knowledge and representation. He argues that "the settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil... he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values (*Wretched* 41). For Bhabha, Fanon's analysis of the colonial construction of identity and the psychological trauma it produces provides a source for his own discursive analysis of colonial authority. In contrast, for Parry, Fanon's conceptualization of colonialism as a Manichean struggle provides a "radical tradition" ("Problems" 27) – rather than simply a theoretical framework – in which to base her own critique of colonial discourse theory. As well, Fanon's writings on national consciousness provide for Parry and other critics a starting point for discourses of transnationalism. As Anthony C. Alessandrini writes, "Fanon's oeuvre is, by all accounts, full of splits, discontinuities, and occasional outright contradictions. This has led to a variety of competing claims to 'Fanon's legacy'... Fanon can be used both to attack and defend humanism" (433). Frantz Fanon and his work have become a contested space through which contemporary postcolonial critics seek to understand the moment of, as well as construct an "originating" narrative for, decolonization.

The fraught status of Fanon's work in postcolonial studies is particularly evident in discussions of violence and revolution. The place of violence in anti-colonial or liberation struggles has not been actively interrogated within postcolonial studies. Postcolonialism, as a field of study which has developed out of literary studies, focuses upon the cultural manifestations of colonial domination and resistance, and, indeed, at times, critics posit the terrain of culture as a more significant "battlefield" for the colonial project than either the economic or military spheres. Nonetheless, implicit in the work of many prominent writers and critics is the assumption that if military rebellion is not the primary means of decolonization it is at least a necessary stage in the process of decolonization. Although Said is critical of what he calls the "politics of blame" which underpins any antagonistic and violent conflict as well as historical representations of it, like many other critics, he takes Fanon's writings on violence at face value, contending that in "Fanon's world" the epistemological revolution in which "the native" becomes conscious of his subject-position and demands an end to colonial domination allows for the crucial stage of violence as a "cleansing force" to commence (*Culture* 271).[11] However, Fanon's treatment of violent resistance in *The Wretched of the Earth*, like much of his writing, is ambivalent.

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[11] Leela Gandhi contends that as a participant in the Algerian revolution, "Fanon's experience of French colonialism produces a doctrinaire commitment to the redemptive value of collective violence" (18).

Fanon asserts that violence provides the native the possibility of overcoming the subject/object relationship of the Manichean worldview.   Fanon's construction of individual subjectivity and collective identity is embedded within a descriptive yet universalizing narrative of "native" consciousness (see *Wretched* 93, 115-16). It is difficult, however, to characterize the narrative of anticolonial resistance Fanon constructs as an unproblematic theory of violence as a "cleansing force." The "splits" and "discontinuities" in these chapters are numerous and the nature of this narrative is ambivalent. Does Fanon provide a focused political treatise on violence and nationalism or does *The Wretched of the Earth* comprise a theoretical *description* of a particular revolutionary process (the Algerian experience in which he participated) that is problematically universalized for all of the Third World? Fanon contends that the mind of the native has been colonized; the religion of the colonialist bourgeoisie paralyses the colonized by teaching forgiveness and meekness (*Wretched* 67), and "in the innermost recesses of their brains the settler's tanks and airplanes occupy a huge place" (*Wretched* 63). Consequently, it is only violence which can *free* their minds.

Yet, the contention that "[v]iolence is in action all inclusive and national" (95) is neither developed nor supported by Fanon and reads more as an ironic commentary upon, or description of, the political rhetoric of violence, rather than a clearly articulated ideological position. For instance, Fanon also suggests that rather than liberating the native, this violent antagonism locks the native into imperial ideology. While Fanon critiques the way that the compromises of the "nationalist bourgeois" forge a nation-state within a western dominated capitalist system, violent antagonism reinforces the racialized identity politics of colonialism. Fanon argues that the native's challenge to the colonial world "is not a treatise on the universal, but the untidy affirmation of an original idea propounded as an absolute" (41). As cited above, Fanon also describes how in the Algerian experience, a cycle of violence occurs (89); this violent revolutionary ethic and the culture of violence it produces cannot provide the sort of liberation Fanon's peasant hopes for. Fanon argues that the new African state will continue to be influenced by imperialism, and so the "atmosphere of violence" will continue to dominate national life (76).[12]

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon describes the way in which the African peasant's desire for the settler's farm – as opposed to the settler's status – a desire which can only be fulfilled through violence, is transformed into a national project by the African bourgeois class. It is this class which constructs the eviction of the colonizer as a project of a "national" people. Fanon argues that "dreams are encouraged, and the imagination is let loose outside the bounds of the colonial order; and sometimes these

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[12] Fanon's description of the cathartic nature of violence seems much more a description of a political rhetoric or phenomenon in Algeria than a coherent philosophy of social change. Placed against Fanon's observations in the final chapter of the book, these assertions of the efficacy of violence are further troubled; far from facilitating the freedom of the masses, the war of national liberation in Algeria is "a favorable breeding ground for mental disorders" (251).

politicians speak of 'We Negroes, we Arabs,' and these terms which are so profoundly ambivalent take on during the colonial epoch a sacramental signification" (68). Despite Fanon's privileging of violence as a cleansing force, the concerns he raises in *The Wretched of the Earth* that the bourgeois class seeks merely to replace foreign rule while maintaining the structures of imperial order are true as much for Africa's violent revolutions as for the "passive revolutions" conducted by elite classes who won national independence through negotiation. Indeed, it is this limited construction of decolonization within the boundaries of colonial identity politics and the modern nation-state which seems to account for the expressions of disappointment with the post-colonial state in the years just after independence. Fanon critiques the construction of national liberation as merely the eviction of foreign rule:

> The people who at the beginning of the struggle had adopted the primitive Manicheism of the settler – Blacks and Whites, Arabs and Christians – realize as they go along that it sometimes happens that you get Blacks who are whiter than Whites and that the fact of having a national flag and the hope of an independent nation does not always tempt certain strata of the population to give up their interests or privileges....This discovery is unpleasant, bitter, and sickening: and yet everything seemed to be so simple before: the bad people were on one side, and the good on the other. (144-5)

Nationalization, Fanon argues, constitutes the transfer into native hands of the structures of privilege and subjugation of the colonial era rather than the transfer of the whole economy into the service of the "masses" (152). The peasant's desire for the settler's land is not fulfilled. The struggle to end poverty, hunger, illiteracy, ignorance, which Fanon argues must be the focus of the struggle, rather than national sovereignty, become merely the rallying cry of "development" for the new national leaders (94, 203).

Fanon predicts popular dissatisfaction with the national project – or its failure – due to the way in which not just the imagined national community but the nation as a social and political structure is reduced to a question of race:

> [The bourgeoisie] have come to power in the name of a narrow nationalism and representing a race; they will prove themselves incapable of triumphantly putting into practice a program with even a minimum humanist content, in spite of the fine-sounding declarations which are devoid of meaning since the speakers bandy about in irresponsible fashion phrases that come straight out of European treatises on morals and political philosophy. (163)

Fanon's critique of the post-colonial nation-state foreshadows the central criticisms of the nation as a prominent object of critique within postcolonial studies: namely, racial essentialism which reinscribes the colonizer's Manichean construction of identity, the way in which the concept/institution of the nation is embedded within European modernity, and the failure of the national project to challenge the structures of privilege and subjugation of the colonial order.

Partha Chatterjee, for instance, interrogates the way in which Indian nationalisms are imbedded within European discourses of progress, citizenship, rights and the state: "[Nationalism] thus produced a discourse in which, even as it challenged the colonial claim to political domination, it also accepted the very intellectual premises of

'modernity' on which colonial domination was based" (*Nationalist* 30). As Albert Memmi argues, because the peoples of South Asia and Africa were oppressed as "groups" they necessarily had to adopt a "nationalist" or ethnic form of opposition which excluded the colonizer (39). Cultural nationalism becomes the only way to imagine community and so nationalism becomes synonymous with anti-colonial resistance. In India, as Chatterjee argues, nationalist resistance took the form of a counter-discursive project which made the subject of History an Indian, and specifically Hindu, oppressed "people" (98). Such a position had the obvious consequences of violence – both epistemological and physical – against minority populations. Chatterjee also argues that by focusing on the nation as an imagined cultural community, the bourgeois nationalist project did not seek to transform the administrative or economic "institutional structures of 'rational' authority set up in the period of colonial rule" (*Nationalist* 49) and disrupted the possibilities of authentic, creative and plural development of social identities (*Nation* 156).

While Aijaz Ahmad echoes aspects of Chatterjee's critique of the nation, Ahmad's work provides another framework through which to critique the anti-colonial nation. Situating his work within Marxism, Ahmad argues

> against both the nation/culture equation, whereby all that is indigenous becomes homogenized into a singular cultural formation which is then presumed to be necessarily superior to the capitalist culture which is identified discreetly with the 'West,' and the tradition/modernity binary, whereby each can be constructed in a discrete space and one or the other is adopted or discarded. (*In Theory 9*)

Poststructuralist critiques of the nation largely disregard the material circumstances and ideological constructs within which resistance could be imagined, critiquing the idea of a nation as a concept based upon ethnic essentializations within a larger project of deconstructing all metanarratives. Ahmad is critical of the nation/culture equation and of "poststructuralist debunking of all nations and nationalisms as mere myths of origin and as essentialist, coercive totalizations" (12). Ahmad argues that nationalism should not be seen as a unitary concept which is either progressive or retrograde. Further, it is not the dialectical opposite of imperialism. As a result, Ahmad proposes that "one struggles not against nations and states as such but for different articulations of class, nation and state" (11). Such varying perspectives on the nation reveal a tension between the nation as a political structure (the state) through which a "people" achieves some semblance of self-determination within a distinctly international system (of law, economics, etc) and a cultural imaginary (the people).

Anti-colonial intellectuals such as Léopold Senghor, who argued for a Pan-African solidarity through *negritude*, imagined a collective African "people." For Senghor, the "sum of the cultural values of the black world" could be used as "an instrument of liberation" from colonial oppression (Senghor 28, 21). Bill Ashcroft argues that binary views of colonization and resistance, such as *negritude*, rely upon problematic notions of the "masses" and "pure culture" and that the "desperate need to claim authenticity leads to contradictory and illogical assumptions about the nature of cultural production itself" (30). Similarly, in *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth* Fanon critiques forms of nationalism which depend upon the construction of a

shared ethnicity/race as a "national" cultural past. In contrast, Fanon posits a cultural community which is produced *through* "struggle." Writing within the context of the Algerian revolution, Fanon constructs the national culture of the colonized as a product of the violent struggle against colonial occupation. Such a critical stance relies upon the binary framework of colonial authority, but does not reinforce or valorize the colonized as a product of difference. National identity is not some pre-existing essence to which anti-colonialism is a struggle to re-establish, but something that is produced as/through struggle.

Fanon argues that peasants and labourers are not so much concerned with placing themselves within a "black" community or a "Negro" history, but with ending their material oppression: "For the Negro who works on a sugar plantation in Le Robert, there is only one solution: to fight. He will embark upon this struggle, and he will pursue it, not as the result of a Marxist or idealistic analysis but quite simply because he cannot conceive of life otherwise than in the form of a battle against exploitation, misery and hunger" (*Black* 224). In *The Wretched of the Earth*, as I have described, Fanon further develops this construction of the self-actualization of the "native" not as a consequence of (or following) acts of violence perpetrated against the colonizer but *through* these acts. Fanon's position is once again ambivalent. While he presents native rebellion within the framework of the native's desire that the "last shall be first and the first last" (*Wretched* 37), he represents the native as not seeking to *struggle for life*, but as conceiving of *life as struggle*. The struggle for freedom ruptures the native from his cultural past – a past in which violence was played out in "symbolic killings" and "fantastic rides" – and shapes his identity: "After centuries of unreality, after having wallowed in the most outlandish phantoms, at long last the native, gun in hand, stands face to face with the only forces which contend for his life – the forces of colonialism" (*Wretched* 57, 58). The national community of the colonized does not exist just as a construction of colonial discourses of difference. Nor can national identity be grounded in a "shared" language, lifestyle, values or cultural past, as Senghor would have it. Rather, as Stephan Feuchtwang argues, "Fanon does not analyze the colonial situation as a contact of cultural subjects or as an interaction of interested subjects as if they were logically prior to the situation. Instead, the relations of the situation are analyzed to see how their organization forms cultural subjects" (qtd. in Gates 467). The "people" of Fanon's theories are produced through the contest of resistance.

Similarly, Amilcar Cabral frames political struggle as a determining factor in the constitution of national identity. Cabral contends that armed struggle is not merely a means of achieving liberation from colonial rule but a central means of constituting the "nation." Arguing that armed struggle is necessarily democratic, self-reflective, popular and constructive, Cabral argues that "the armed liberation struggle is not only a product of culture but also a *determinant of culture*" (64, original emphasis). Further, he contends that "the armed struggle for liberation, in the concrete conditions of life of African peoples, confronted with the imperialist challenge, is an act of insemination upon history – the major expression of our culture and of our African essence. In the moment of victory, *it must be translated into a significant leap forward of the culture of the people who are liberating themselves*" (65, emphasis added). Constructions of cultural identity

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and resistance such as this exhibit a paradox: the national community is produced through the act of resistance – the African essence *is* violent struggle against the colonizer – but the logic of resistance nonetheless assumes that this community somehow pre-exists resistance. In other words, the "community" that the struggle purportedly aims to liberate is a product of that struggle. Where Benedict Anderson asserts that the imagined community is something that makes possible the willingness of millions to kill and die (7), in the colonial context, as expressed by these writers, the act of killing and dying and the larger framework of resistance constitute the cultural production of the national community. The culture of the "people" *is* a culture of "resistance" (as opposition).[13]

The construction of native communal identity as a product of anti-colonial "resistance," espoused by writers such as Fanon, Cabral and Ngugi is also reinforced by some postcolonial critics. For instance, in his analysis of Appiah's critique of essentialist constructions of African identity, Tsenay Serequeberhan asserts that the cultural impact of struggle cannot be easily dismissed:

> beyond our ethnic identities, the heritage of the differing African liberation movements makes possible for us a historical and political world which we all share as Africans. This 'sharing'[...] only calls for the recognition that, beyond color and race, our being African is grounded in a shared history of subjugation, struggle, and liberation; a history we affirm and choose to perpetuate."
> (qtd. in Maithufi 155).

While Serequeberhan argues that the identity "African" is at least in part a product of a shared struggle against colonialism and imperialism, Edward Said notes that "the culture of opposition and resistance suggests a theoretical alternative and a practical method for reconceiving human experience in non-imperialist terms" (*Culture* 176).[14] As I have argued, oppositional discourses and politics of resistance are inextricably imbricated within colonial discourse. It is important to recognize the way in which a shared sense of subjugation and struggle produces cultural identity and the way in which this recognition provides a much different basis for assertions of a national community than do constructions of the nation which are based on a pre-colonial past of an imagined ethnic/racial community. However, it is also important to interrogate the implications of affirming and perpetuating a "national" identity imagined as a shared history of subjugation and struggle.

The oppositional nature of such a "culture of opposition and resistance" reinforces colonial discourse in a similar, but certainly not identitical, way as "nativist" forms of nationalism. Despite the fact that members of the Subaltern Studies group, for instance, have shown the way in which some instances of peasant insurgency in British India were not recognized by the British colonizers as political rebellion against their rule, as Albert Memmi argues, the colonized takes up arms, or rebels, because "this is the only action

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[13] Ngugi constructs a similar relationship between "resistance" and culture. The history of the people is a history of "resistance" against (neo)colonialism – Mau Mau insurgency, for instance – rather than an idealized pre-colonial history (*Barrel* 80).

[14] E. San Juan, Jr. similarly constructs the experience or identity of "people of colour" as struggle. See also: Sandoval "U.S.," Chatterjee "For an Indian History" (9), Darby (154).

that the colonizer understands" (129). Silenced, debased and denied in a multitude of other ways, the colonized can seemingly only gain the recognition of the colonizer through combat. Memmi argues: "After having been rejected for so long by the colonizer, the day has come when it is the colonized who must refuse the colonizer" (128). However, Memmi also constructs this act of rejection within a teleological narrative of the colonial experience. While he argues that mimicry precedes revolt (xiv), his description of the psychological conditions for revolt suggest that as much as rebellion enacts a breach of colonial order – a re-conception of life outside the terms of imperialism – it may also be regarded as a form of assimilation: "At the height of his revolt, the colonized still bears the traces and lessons of prolonged cohabitation... The colonized fights in the name of the very values of the colonizer, uses his techniques of thought and his methods of combat" (129). Obviously, conflict and militarism were not introduced to South Asia and Africa by European colonists. Nonetheless, opposition against the colonizer, in the form of an organized struggle that seeks the hallmarks of European modernity – nationhood, independence, citizenship, rights – rejects the figures of colonial oppression but adopts the principles upon which that oppressive order is based. If the national community for which the struggle takes place is a product of that struggle, the expectations of the anti-colonial national project cannot but be undermined; the nation exists as a "people" only in so far as it reflects a community in opposition.

In his analysis of a post-independence speech by Ghana's first President, Kwame Nkrumah – significantly the leader of an independence movement or struggle that was strategically and rhetorically not violent – Bill Ashcroft notes the way in which the new "nation" cannot be imagined outside of "struggle:" "The speech demonstrates how in even the most triumphant and ebullient moments of liberation the temptation to reconstruct a force/counterforce binary almost inevitably diffuses the meaning of resistance" (27). The national community is defined in terms of opposition. My critique thus far of the way in which national identity is posited as a product of resistance (as opposition) – rather than its justification – seems to reduce oppositional politics to a discursive construction in which material realities and historical exigencies are ignored. The struggle *against* (neo)colonialism may be a significant mode of communal self-identification, but it is not the only mode.

Ahmad argues that because no culture is homogeneous and because of the varying axes of privilege and power within any society, "the totality of an indigenous culture can hardly be posited as a unified, transparent site of anti-imperialist resistance" (*In Theory* 8). Inverting this argument, I would contend that "resistance" is by no means the only way in which individuals recognize themselves as part of a larger (national) community. Further, the production of culture as shared struggle limits the possibilities for the sort of "leap forward" towards liberation that Cabral suggests. Ashis Nandy argues that when a violent and oppressive society, with its special brands of victimhood and privilege collapses, "the psychology of victimhood and privilege continues and produces a second culture which becomes, over time, only a revised edition of the first" ("Towards" 1760). A community imagined through oppositional violence cannot but lead to a culture of violence. To return to Ashcroft's formulation of resistance as a "saying no" or negation, if identity is based on a negation, on being against, what sort of liberation is possible?

IV.   Liberation and the Limits of Anti-Colonial Thought

Guha's contention that the central problematic of the historiography of colonial India is the "historic failure of the nation to come into its own" constructs the "nation" as the only, or primary, means of imagining community and liberation. Yet, the nation is an ambivalent sign in discourses of liberation; it signifies a great diversity of sometimes contradictory perspectives and hopes. Liberation, as the "nation," signifies at different times and in different contexts liberation *from* foreign rule, capitalist exploitation, economic and technological underdevelopment or poverty, and/or "primitive" or "backwards" modes of governance, etc. Criticism of a novel like *Nervous Conditions* reveals that postcolonial critics are fairly confident about what resistance is *against*. There is no consensus within the field of postcolonial studies, however, as to what resistance works toward. Does liberation constitute a counter-discourse of racialized identity inverting the hierarchical discourse of colonial knowledge and authority? Does it constitute simply freedom from foreign rule? Is it the manifestation, or process, of transforming the structural and cultural violence of inter-connected systems of dominance and subordination?

While Fanon argues that "nationalism is not a political doctrine, nor a program" (*Wretched* 203), the ideological assumption of liberation as nationalism, as fraught and diverse as it may be, imposes a defining framework for analyses of liberation. In her critique of postcolonialism, Ella Shohat suggests the concept "post-independence" as an alternative to "post-colonial" or "neo-colonial" because it implies a "nation-state telos" and therefore "provides expanded analytical space for confronting such explosive issues as religion, ethnicity, patriarchy, gender and sexual orientation, none of which are reducible to epiphenomena of colonialism and neo-colonialism" (328). For Shohat, postcolonialism provides too limited a framework for analysing the multiple axes of power and identification in this post- or neo-colonial era. As a political ideology which facilitates the spread of liberal capitalism, the "nation-state telos" may provide a productive framework for analysing contemporary structures of power and identity. Within postcolonial discourses, however, the nation-state is synonymous with both liberation and its deferral. On the eve of India's national independence, Jawaharlal Nehru declared that "[a] moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance... The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us" ("Tryst" 340). Achievement of nation status marks a new beginning for India. The nation seemingly provides the possibility for the liberation of the Indian mind from colonial constructions of difference as inferiority, and the liberation of productive forces for the benefit of all.

In his critique of the colonial relationship, however, Albert Memmi argues that the nationalist model constrains decolonization. Referring specifically to the socialist movement in Europe, Memmi argues that the left "put one national entity in opposition to another; in the process confusing Americans with capitalists" (29). Memmi's observation

points to the ambiguous terms in which anti-colonialism continues to be understood within postcolonial studies. As much as anti-colonial resistance is directed towards colonial authority and knowledge, it also seeks to alleviate material exploitation and establish sovereignty over material development. National identity is conflated with the alleviation of poverty, while capitalism is conflated with Europe. Guha's critique of colonial and bourgeois nationalist histories of India is invested in a particularly anti-capitalist framework. Similarly, Benita Parry counters the charge that anti-colonial resistance was primarily reactive and failed to effect an epistemological break with dominant forms of knowledge by arguing that Marxist-inspired movements imagined liberation as not simply the eviction of foreign rule but the complete destruction of capitalism ("Liberation" 45). For instance, she argues that criticism of anticolonial nationalism ignores "Marxist programmes devised by those whose class position and/or affiliation committed them to the fight against the capitalist/imperialist world-order, and for a non-coercive, egalitarian and internationalist modernity" (45).

While Parry points to Cabral's contention that the goal of the organized anti-colonial movement in Guinea and Cape Verde was the "'destruction of the capitalist structure'" ("Liberation" 46), it is important to recognize that Cabral's work, as much as it was framed within a specifically anti-capitalist ideology, was very much grounded in the modern concepts of progress and development, as is Marxism generally. Cabral argues that "the chief goal of the liberation movement goes beyond the achievement of political independence to the superior level of complete liberation of the productive forces and the construction of economic, social and cultural progress of the people" (Cabral 62). Similarly, Césaire argues that European colonial occupation of Africa and Asia impeded a "movement of Europeanization" already in progress: "The proof is that at present it is the indigenous peoples of Africa and Asia who are demanding schools, and colonialist Europe which refuses them; that it is the African who is asking for ports and roads, and colonialist Europe which is niggardly on this score; that it is the colonized man who wants to move forward, and the colonizer who holds things back" (25). Césaire claims that pre-colonial African society was not simply ante-capitalist but anti-capitalist, democratic, communal and cooperative (24). Yet, he also places this society within a particularly modern construction of material development arguing that colonial rule has impeded economic development.

Parry provides an important critique of the way in which criticism of anti-colonial nationalism is often limited to the interrogation of the way nationalist discourses of identity are constrained by European or colonial structures of knowledge; liberation movements, she argues, also imagined themselves in material terms. However, the material aspects of anti-colonial national "liberation" in the work of such anti-colonial critics as Cabral and Césaire cannot be simplistically separated from the way in which national liberation is imbedded within European knowledge systems. For critics such as these, while national liberation may be imagined in anti-capitalist terms, it also seems to signify the completion of the unfinished business of modernity: freedom, citizenship, formal education, progress, development. Nehru's programme of planned development, for instance, while it provided a form of economic progress, was neither "non-coercive" nor "egalitarian." As much as such social goals were evident in the rhetoric of resistance

of an Indian National Congress, Nkrumah, or a multitude of other anti-colonial movements, parties and leaders, the transformation from colonial order to anti-capitalist nation, and the revolutionary movement from an anti-colonial movement to a liberation movement, was not easily made. As Hardt and Negri observe, with the establishment of the nation-state, the "revolutionaries got bogged down in 'realism'" (133).

Fanon delineates a multitude of objectives for anti-colonial opposition or resistance. At the most basic level, the native desires to evict the settler from the occupied land and the anti-colonial movement seeks to force an end to colonial rule. A more complete form of liberation, on the other hand, entails "the total destruction of the colonial system, from the pre-eminence of the language of the oppressor and 'departmentalization,' to the customs union that in reality maintains the former colonized in the meshes of the culture, of the fashion, and of the images of the colonialist" (Fanon *Toward* 105). While Fanon analyzes the construction of colonial identities and mentalities, ultimately, the over-riding concern of the colonized masses is to alleviate hunger, poverty and ignorance. Rather than simply a counter-discourse of colonial knowledge, nationalism may be seen as a function of this primary desire for an end to poverty as it is the only framework through which to imagine an end to colonial exploitation.

However, Fanon argues that simply wresting control of the means of production away from the colonial ruler will not provide the material or psychological liberation the colonized desire. For instance, he contends that not only are newly independent post-colonial nations dependent upon foreign investment, in terms of the way in which these new states continue to function within a world economic system dominated by capitalism, but that because the economies of Africa and South Asia were never fully capitalist themselves, the new governments are obliged to maintain the economic relationships created by the colonial regime; having wrested control over the means of production, the post-colonial nation's emergence into modernity is only possible by furthering the exploitative forms of industry and export developed by the colonizer (*Wretched* 100).

Fanon suggests that the Third World must convince the capitalist countries that the fundamental problem of the time is not the contest between socialism and capitalism. On one level, the poverty and underdevelopment of the formerly colonized world is a creation of colonialism and therefore it is the obligation of the world to ensure that "large-scale investments and technical aid must be given to underdeveloped regions" (*Wretched* 105). Yet, I would argue that Fanon suggests that without a fundamental and particular transformation of human relationships, not only does bourgeois nationalism lead up a "blind alley" but so too do political formations, including socialism, which wrest control of wealth within the post-colonial economy without transforming the conceptual structure of industrialism in a particular way:

> What [the Third World] expects from those who for centuries have kept it in slavery is that they will help it to rehabilitate mankind, and make man victorious everywhere, once and for all. But it is clear that we are not so naïve as to think that this will come about with the cooperation and the good will of the European governments. This huge task which consists of reintroducing mankind into the world, the whole of mankind, will be carried out with the indispensable help of the

European peoples, who themselves must realize that in the past they have often
joined the ranks of our common masters where colonial questions were concerned.
To achieve this, the European peoples must first decide to wake up and shake
themselves, use their brains, and stop playing the stupid game of Sleeping Beauty.
(*Wretched* 106)

Significantly, Fanon is not simply discussing economic redress in this passage. Rather he
is arguing that the material inequalities of the world system must be acknowledged as a
cultural phenomenon which requires the fundamental transformation of human
relationships, both materially and discursively. Parry argues that "Fanon's last writings
look not to the fulfilment of the Enlightenment's ideals within the existing order… [but
to] the anti-colonial struggle as a global emancipatory project… projecting the radical
hope of an oppositional humanism" (Parry "Resistance" 103). If "the underside of
Western humanism produces the dictum that… some human beings are more human than
others" (L. Gandhi, *Postcolonial* 30), then no material transformation such as that Fanon
calls for can be achieved until Western humanism is transformed into a truly universal
humanism.

In *Black Skins, White Masks,* Fanon provides historically and theoretically
undeveloped calls for a "new universalism" and a "restructuring of the world" in
economic, political and epistemic terms (82, 197, 230). In the conclusion to the book,
Fanon positions himself in the present looking towards the future. He argues, for
instance, that the fact of ancient African civilizations provides no solace to contemporary
child labourers in Martinique or Guadeloupe (230). As a man of colour, he declares that
he wishes only "[that] the enslavement of man by man cease forever… That it be possible
for me to discover and to love man, wherever he may be. The Negro is not. Any more
than the white man." (231-232). Bill Ashcroft argues that Fanon's contention "I am my
own foundation" in this concluding passage is the proclamation of an "almost Cartesian
agency for the colonized subject" (Ashcroft 40). However, as much as Fanon is indebted
to modern conceptions of the universal (European) individual, the subjectivity of this
"new man" is constituted by its relationship with others; Fanon concludes *Black Skin,
White Masks* with the question: "Was my freedom not given to me then in order to build
the world of the *You*?" (231-2, original emphasis). The conciliatory tone and future-
oriented recognition of the need for a new human bond among all peoples contrasts
starkly with Fanon's description of revolutionary nationalist movements in *The Wretched
of the Earth*. However, Fanon concludes this later work with similar assertions of the
need for a "new man;" his demand for reparations does not indicate a sense of blame,
which he argues against in *Black Skin, White Masks,* but a development in his thought
which recognizes the material aspects of a "new humanism;" Fanon's conceptualization
of a new humanism is a call for material and cultural reconciliation.

Fanon's conciliatory rhetoric and construction of liberation as the fundamental
transformation of human relationships is excised from treatments of his work that
postulate resistance as necessarily oppositional. To be fair to critics, however, the "new
humanism" of Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* functions as little more than an after-
thought. After providing a detailed narrative of the development of revolutionary

movements and the nature of nationalism, Fanon concludes with an abstract rhetoric of a revolutionary change in consciousness:

> Come, then, comrades, the European game has finally ended; we must find something different. We today can do everything... so long as we are not obsessed by the desire to catch up with Europe....When I search for Man in the technique and style of Europe, I see only a succession of negations of man, and an avalanche of murders....Let us decide not to imitate Europe.... Let us try to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth. (*Wretched* 312-13)

In contrast to his description in *Black Skin, White Masks* of the way in which the colonized man desires to be a "man among other men" (*Black* 112), where the implicit norm of those "other men" is the white man, this "new Man" Fanon imagines is based upon the rhetorical negation of modern European values and structures, including its "states, institutions, and societies" (*Wretched* 315). However, Fanon's new humanism, like Gandhi's demand for citizenship rights in South Africa, nonetheless derives from the recognition of Europe's failure to perform its own ideals, to be the "Man" of its imagination.

While the "native laughs in mockery when Western values are mentioned in front of him" (*Wretched* 43), the "new history of Man" Fanon imagines is very much indebted to European humanism. Fanon argues that "[a]ll the elements of a solution to the great problems of humanity have, at different times, existed in European thought. But the action of European men has not carried out the mission which fell to them" (314). Significantly, however, Fanon calls for a form of "development" which seems to be as much social as economic, and which is not confined to European models or the desire to "catch up" with Europe. As well, this revolution in consciousness, while it is sometimes constructed as a negation of, or in contrast to, Europe, on other occasions it is explicitly not developed through the oppositional binary of a Manichean colonial relationship: "For Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man" (316). This "new man" is based in a critique of European humanism and Western modernity at the same time that it is an attempt to fulfill these ideals. For critics such as Anthony Alessandrini, Fanon's new humanism goes beyond the expectations of the rights and responsibilities of liberal humanism or Hegelian thought and exists "beyond nationalism, and even beyond a united Africa, as a way of empowering 'all underdeveloped people'" (438). However, Fanon's assertion that "the real *leap* consists in introducing invention into existence" (*Black* 229, emphasis added) suggests a form of liberation as process and lived experience. The sort of "new humanism" Fanon imagines seems impossible within a climate of revolution based on Manichean notions of identity, the desire and political mandate to destroy the colonizer, and the creation of national states. This "new humanism" seems incongruous with the sort of resistance he outlines in his description of revolution.

Referring to Fanon's contention in *Black Skin, White Masks*, that it is in "going beyond the historical, instrumental hypothesis that I will initiate the cycle of my freedom," Ashcroft argues that the most intransigent argument in post-colonial politics is how this idea of liberation is to be effected (40). The "new humanism" Fanon imagines

is future-oriented and constructed outside historical experience and political praxis. Unlike Albert Memmi's contention that "the liquidation of colonization is nothing but a prelude to complete liberation, to self-recovery" (151), albeit a "self-recovery" or revolution in consciousness that will emerge over a long period of time (qtd. in L. Gandhi *Postcolonial* 6), the liberation Fanon vaguely describes is not explicitly related to the narrative of revolution he constructs. Memmi's vision of a new humanism in *The Colonizer and the Colonized* is less developed than Fanon's; Memmi argues that liberation simply entails the colonized becoming a "man like any other," a man who is "whole and free" (153). However, Memmi argues that this manhood or freedom requires that the colonized "free himself from those inevitable conditions of his struggle" (152). As Memmi makes explicit, these conditions of struggle include the Manichean or antagonistic relationship between the colonizer and the colonized: "every ideology of combat includes as an integral part of itself a conception of the adversary. By agreeing to this ideology, the dominated classes practically confirm the role assigned to them" (88). Rather than producing an identity independent of colonial discourse, resistance, as antagonistic opposition, reaffirms the subject-position of the colonized within colonial authority. As Nandy argues, "no theory of liberation can be morally acceptable unless it admits the continuities between its heroes and its villains and perhaps even its chroniclers" ("Towards" 1755). Fanon's "new humanism" assumes a basis of human interaction which is the antithesis of the adversarial and antagonistic relationship of the anti-colonial oppositional struggle. Divorced from the revolutionary struggle Fanon describes, if we assume Fanon's transnational humanism is emergent rather than revolutionary (Alessandrini 438), where is the space within the antagonistic, Manichean colonial relationship he describes for such a "new man" to emerge?

To conclude, this chapter, I would like to analyse Said's discussion of Fanon's concept of liberation in *Culture and Imperialism*. Fanon's conception of liberation as a revolution in social consciousness also provides the basis for Edward Said's discussion of the way in which a "rhetoric and politics of blame" constrains the vision of both public intellectuals and cultural historians. Said writes: "If I have so often cited Fanon, it is because more dramatically and decisively than anyone, I believe, he expresses the immense cultural shift from the terrain of nationalist independence to the theoretical domain of liberation" (*Culture* 268). Said posits his desire to formulate an alternative to both a politics of blame and a politics of confrontation and hostility as a central objective of *Culture and Imperialism*. Arguing that the world is "too small and interdependent" to allow the "hostility between Western and non-Western cultures that leads to crises" to continue (18-19), Said turns to Fanon's construction of liberation as a transformation of social consciousness and the development of a new humanism.

Said praises Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* for the way it represents colonialism and nationalism in their Manichean context, describes the anti-colonial independence movement which develops within this framework, and "transfigures that movement into what is in effect a trans-personal and trans-national force" (269). He argues that Fanon foresaw that unless "national consciousness at its moment of success was somehow changed into a social consciousness, the future would hold not liberation but an extension

of imperialism" (267). I read Fanon's call for a "new humanism" as confined by the theoretical domain within which it is constructed, and therefore outside, or in juxtaposition with, the quasi-historical-cum-theoretical narrative of anti-colonialism in *The Wretched of the Earth*. In contrast, Said interprets Fanon's call for a "new humanism" within a teleological model of decolonization as the "second moment," following the first, nationalist moment (*Culture* 234). Having described anti-colonial consciousness from the moment of the peasant's desire for the return of the land the settler occupies to the raising of the new national flags, Said understands Fanon's notion of liberation as the next and final stage.

Said constructs the moment of liberation as necessarily following the establishment of the independent nation-state. Nonetheless, he interprets Fanon's concept of liberation as a "process" rather than a goal or end:

> in the obscurity and difficulty of Fanon's prose, there are enough poetic and visionary suggestions to make the case for liberation as a *process* and not as a goal contained automatically by the newly independent nations... Fanon wants to somehow bind the European as well as the native together in a new non-adversarial community of awareness and anti-imperialism.
> (Said *Culture* 274, original emphasis).[15]

There are a number of problems with such a viewpoint. First, such a discourse of resistance elides the problematic of power revealed in a text like *Nervous Conditions*. Sylvia Wynter argues that a new conception of freedom must move us beyond "Man's 'freedom-package,' but also beyond those of Man's oppositional sub-versions, - that of Marxism's *proletariat*, that of feminism's *woman* (gender rights), and that of our multiple multiculturalisms and/or centric cultural nationalisms (minority rights), to that of gay liberation (homosexual rights), but also as a conception of freedom able to draw them all together in a new synthesis" (41-42). She maintains that liberation will have to account not just for the way in which post-Enlightenment humanism constructs "man" as superior to an "other," but for the production of gendered and sexualized subjectivities, as well as other forms of "identity" which cannot be confined to the imperial/nationalist binary. Fanon and Said's ideal of liberation implicitly seeks to overcome such binaries. Yet as much as they gesture towards the redress of material inequality, they fail to account in any substantive way for subjectivities produced within other registers of power. The parties to liberation cannot be limited to the "native" and the "European."

Second, as Anne McClintock argues, the term "post-colonial" is "haunted by the very figure of linear 'development' that it sets out to dismantle" (292). Like many other anti-colonial and postcolonial theorists, Said constructs liberation as a series of stages of change. Significantly, while Ngugi characterizes imperialism as occurring in two stages,

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[15] While Said is careful to define the concepts "culture," "colonialism" and "imperialism" in *Culture and Imperialism*, he is less careful with the concepts "resistance" and "liberation." He posits Fanon's "new humanism" as (unfulfilled) liberation. Yet, he nonetheless refers to anti-colonial nationalist movements which lead to independent nation-states as "successful Third World liberation movements" (*Culture* 242).

colonialism and neo-colonialism, he argues that national culture does not evolve in a mechanical process of steps and springs; rather "[t]he processes are often evolving more or less simultaneously with one process generating several others at the same time" (*Barrel* 89-90). For Said, in contrast, this "process" is constructed as a linear progression towards an amorphous end, allowing for the justification of various forms of inequality or mal-development within the process. As well, constructing liberation as a process that is the final stage of decolonization, Said recognizes this "process" as finite, only beginning *after* national independence has been achieved. Third, Said's characterization of the European and the native "somehow" becoming bound together and national consciousness "somehow" being transformed into a post-national social consciousness reveals the way in which the concept is limited by the "theoretical domain" in which it is articulated. As a result, Said fails to acknowledge the contradiction between the essential antagonism of the anti-colonial nationalist movement and the production of a "non-adversarial community" in the *process* of liberation.

The idea of liberation that Said constructs through Fanon's work is contingent upon the violence which precedes it. Noting that Fanon recognizes the nationalist phase of decolonization as crucial, yet insufficient, Said contends that "[o]ut of this paradox comes the idea of liberation, a strong new post-nationalist theme that had been implicit in the works of ... Cabral, and Du Bois, for instance, but required the propulsive infusion of theory and even of armed, insurrectionary militancy to bring it forward clearly" (*Culture* 224). Citing Fanon's assertion that "the violence of the colonial regime and counter-violence of the native balance each other and respond to each other in an extraordinary reciprocal homogeneity" (Fanon *Wretched* 88), Said ambivalently argues that liberation will not be won through armed insurrection. Ignoring Fanon's own acknowledgement of the way in which violence and counter-violence create a permanent cycle, Said argues that violence is necessary to reveal the fact that "[t]he struggle must be lifted to a new level of contest, a synthesis represented by a war of liberation, for which an entirely new post-national theoretical culture is required" (Said *Culture* 268). Said seeks to intervene in the "rhetoric and politics of blame" which seems to constrain political thought and cultural critique by developing Fanon's vision of a non-antagonist relationship replacing colonialism and nationalism. In doing so, however, he seems to disregard the way in which Fanon constructs this "new humanism" in relation to the necessity for material forms of compensation and cooperation; the ideal of global harmony among humans is necessary for the eradication of hunger, ignorance and poverty. While Said argues that the message of Fanon, Ngugi, Achebe and Salih is that "we must all write our histories and cultures rescriptively in a new way" (*Culture* 274), he does not challenge the narrative Fanon constructs of colonial authority and anti-colonial resistance by interrogating the "somehow" of liberation. Rather than expand the "material proposed for attention and controversy by public intellectuals and cultural historians" (39), Said problematically relies upon Fanon's narrative of revolution and call for a (theoretical) liberation.

While neither Fanon nor Said clearly articulate how such a process of liberation functions in practice, it clearly functions in a radically different way than Ashcroft's concept of postcolonial transformation. Ashcroft turns his attention from the way

colonized peoples struggle against colonialism to the way in which, through resistance, appropriation and interpolation, the colonized not only resist absorption into colonial culture but transform colonial culture in meaningful ways. For instance, Ashcroft argues that post-colonial acts and modes of representation are interpolated into the dominant discourse, thereby ascribing to the colonial subject and society a capacity for agency which is not completely autonomous but effected by the radically unequal relationships of colonialism (Ashcroft 14). Ashcroft investigates examples of "unprogrammed change," such as black music in the Caribbean and Americas or Indian cinema, to examine cultural transformation outside the binary framework of the antagonistic relationship of colonialism.

Such a binary framework, as much as it shapes political praxis, is nonetheless a means of representing the colonial relationship; it is not total. Said should certainly be cognizant of the limitation of structures of representation. Instead, Said contends that Fanon's oeuvre is *a response* to theoretical elaborations produced by the culture of late Western capitalism, and the aim of his work is to "invent new souls" (*Culture* 268). For the sort of liberation Fanon imagines, however, must "new souls" be "invented," grounded only in theory? As I will argue in the next two chapters, there exists in the history of (neo)colonialism not just examples of subversions and interpolations of colonial culture but values and concepts of "resistance" which reveal the way in which aspects of Fanon's "new humanism" have been articulated in political praxis and so need not be confined to the realm of abstract theory. Said contends that Fanon's failure to offer a "prescription for making a transition after decolonization to a period when a new political order achieves moral hegemony is symptomatic of the difficulty that millions of people live with today" (236); I would argue, in contrast, that the failure to imagine this transition is symptomatic of the impossibility of the oppositional paradigm and narratives of revolution such as those constructed by Fanon to foster the sort of relationships among humans Fanon imagines as liberation.

CHAPTER THREE

The Politics of Possibility: Gandhism and Resistance

I.   Placing Gandhi and Gandhism in Postcolonial Studies

Despite the widespread acknowledgement of Mohandas Gandhi's influential role in the Indian independence movement and his status as one of the most significant social and political thinkers of the twentieth century, Gandhism has been marginalized within the field of postcolonial studies. The absence of substantial analysis of Gandhi, the political figure (as opposed to a figure of "resistance" within Indian cultural consciousness), and, more importantly, the lessons of his "experiments with truth" is most obviously revealed in the indexes of the many anthologies of postcolonial criticism and theory which have been published since the early 1990s. The few references to Gandhi in these texts illuminate the extent of the omission of Gandhi, particularly as compared with contemporaneous anti-colonial intellectuals such as Frantz Fanon.[1] By engaging with the work of Mohandas Gandhi in this chapter, I do not seek to privilege Gandhi and Gandhism as *the* expression of a "genuine" resistance to colonialism. However, Gandhi's "experiments with truth," and particularly the Gandhian concepts of *swaraj* ("self government"), *sarvadoya* ("the welfare of all"), *ahimsa* (nonviolence) and *satyagraha* ("truth-force"), which guided and were the subject of those experiments, provide insight into ways in which resistance can be imagined and articulated alternatively to the dominant theories of resistance within postcolonial studies.

In seeking to deconstruct the binarisms of colonial knowledge, postcolonial discursive theories of resistance fail to account for the active role of organized resistance movements in challenging European colonial authority. On the other hand, oppositional models of resistance reproduce the binarism of difference colonial authority produces as knowledge, depend upon a teleological model of social change, and by assuming the "implacable enmity" between colonizer and colonized, lock the "native" into imperial ideology. In contrast, Gandhi conceptualizes oppression as an interdependent system of economic, political and cultural structures rather than as defined primarily by the presence of an oppressor. Resistance, therefore, requires the transformation of these structures. I begin my analysis of Gandhism with his critique of modern civilization. Rather than focusing his attention on colonial authority or on the exploitative economic structures of colonial oppression, Gandhi identifies the problem of Indian oppression primarily as the emergence of European modernity; he is concerned not simply with the structures and practices of capitalism or colonial governance but the value-system which legitimizes dominance and exploitation in India. Next, I discuss Gandhi's conceptualization of *swaraj*, or independence, not as a conceptualization of the nation-

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[1] For instance, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (1998) includes entries for "Fanonism" and "Critical Fanonism," but not for "Gandhi" or "Gandhism."

state but as an ethico-spiritual discourse concerned with the production of "welfare for all."

In the fourth section of this chapter, I turn to Gandhi's theoretical principles of resistance, *ahimsa* and *satyagraha*. Arguing for the consistency of ends and means within a struggle, Gandhi's theory of nonviolence formulates resistance as a struggle *for swaraj*, not a struggle *against* an oppressive other. To conclude, I argue that Gandhi's notions of nonviolence and liberation provide an alternative to dominant constructions of power and agency. In particular, oppression is understood as the way in which the subject *participates* within the interdependent economic, political and cultural structures of dominance. Gandhi radically reformulates the nature of conflict, constructing the self and the Other of conflict as interconnected. By postulating the unity of ends and means, Gandhian resistance requires no "leap" from "struggle" to some "new humanism." Gandhian resistance provides an alternative to the "rhetoric of blame" which continues to influence even the most nuanced articulations of oppositional models of resistance. Further, *ahimsa* and *sarvadoya* reveal Gandhism as praxis, shaped by and shaping various experiments with non-cooperation with colonial authority and with constructing alternative social and political structures.

There is little debate as to the profundity of Gandhism's role within Indian resistance to colonial rule and in unifying the peoples of South Asia in this struggle. While Partha Chatterjee argues that Gandhian ideology had a monumental historical impact on the evolution of Indian politics (*Nationalist* 110), indeed providing the "ideological basis for including the whole people within the political nation" ("Gandhi" 189), Aijaz Ahmad notes that "[f]ew political leaders anywhere in the modern world have commanded such hegemonic power over the social visions and even the spiritual life of so many people, as did Gandhi alone" (*Lineages* 180). Of course Gandhism was by no means the overriding foundation of resistance to British colonial rule. There was a complex web of internal and external influences which led to Indian independence and the particular shape that independence took. Indeed, as Leela Gandhi notes, with the rise to prominence of Nehru and his vision of the Indian nation-state, Gandhi became a threat to the establishment of that state ("Concerning" 138). Gandhi's absence from independence celebrations on 15 August 1947 and the fact that he was given a state funeral with full military honours reveals the way in which Gandhi had become a cultural symbol rather than a moral and political "leader" for the dominant political culture in the newly established India.

Apart from the treatment of Gandhism by Leela Gandhi and Ashis Nandy, to this point, Gandhi's place in postcolonial studies has been primarily limited to representations of his role as a figure in peasant consciousness. For instance, a number of early contributions to *Subaltern* Studies concentrate upon the way in which Gandhi and his ideals were disseminated within and incorporated by the South Asian peasantry. Drawing upon colonial documents which record, "with astonishment," the currency of the name "Gandhi" in the most remote villages, Pandey records the way in which Gandhi attained a mythical stature as a symbol of opposition to colonial rule for Indian peasants ("Peasant" 164). While rumours of Gandhi's supernatural powers circulated throughout rural South Asia, local leaders often appropriated the "supreme status" of Gandhi's word.

Pandey, among other critics (Amin, Sen), argues that British authority in rural areas was subverted more by Gandhi's stature as a symbol of resistance within peasant consciousness than by his ideology of resistance (163). Analyses like Pandey's reveal the way in which Gandhi, his ideology and the political demands and expectations articulated by Gandhi as a Congress leader were subject to interpretation, transformation and appropriation by local communities.

Similarly, in much "Gandhian literature" Gandhi is produced as a figure through whom resistance is articulated. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938), for instance, provides a narrative of Gandhi as a mythologized figure that complements the representation of Gandhi by contributors to *Subaltern Studies,* but also provides a counter-narrative of the function of Gandhi and Gandhism in peasant communities. Gandhism is central to the novel's narrative, but Gandhi, the Congress leader, is peripheral. In the preface to the novel, Rao explains that in the work he tries to tell one story "from the contemporary annals of a village" (vii). The story of the "Mahatma" is "mingled" with "legendary history," providing the context for a tale of social and cultural upheaval. *Kanthapura* is not so much about the struggle for an end to foreign rule and/as the production of the Indian "nation" but the transformation of Indian communities; it reveals the way in which Gandhian-inspired constructive programmes and non-cooperation campaigns troubled the social fabric as much as colonial power.

I will return to *Kanthapura* throughout this chapter in order to illuminate the way in which Gandhism has been constructed and interpreted. *Kanthapura,* like the work of the Subaltern Studies project, reveals the way in which engagement solely with anti-colonial "theory" is inadequate, as the theories of decolonization articulated by intellectuals and activists necessarily depend upon the performance of resistance and are subject to interpretation and transformation in practice. Unlike contributors to the Subaltern Studies project, who often do not hide their disdain for Gandhi and Gandhism, Rao is most certainly sympathetic to Gandhism. *Kanthapura,* however, as just one example of the way in which Gandhism is represented and interpreted within India, represents the social and cultural impacts of Gandhism as a philosophy. Rao's representation of the performance of and engagement with Gandhism in a complex social, political and cultural context also provides a stark contrast to the way in which Gandhism has been represented within postcolonial studies.

I believe that Gandhi's ambivalent status within the field can be broadly attributed to three causes. First, though Gandhi and Gandhism have received intense critical analyses from scholars outside postcolonial studies, and particularly within Indian political studies, Gandhi's writings do not lend themselves to scholarly analysis as easily as the work of other intellectuals of the period, such as Fanon. While Gandhi did publish a few books-length studies, most of his books consist of compilations of his numerous letters and essays; his *Collected Works* (1958) consists of 100 volumes totalling more than 50 000 pages. Further, the majority of his work was written for a mass audience – to be read, and read aloud to others – in his weekly newspapers *Indian Opinion, Young India/Navajivan,* and *Harijan.* These essays, columns, accounts of events, and responses to readers are marked by their immediacy and by the way in which journalism, philosophy and spiritualism are inter-mixed. Gandhi's writings on *ahimsa,*

vegetarianism, *sarvadoya*, etc, therefore, comprise a significant part of the Gandhian aspect of the Indian independence movement, and not just theories of social change. Further, because of the nature of their production, no unitary "theory" or "analysis" of colonialism and decolonization is easily accessible; as reflections on his "experiments with truth," Gandhian ideology is discerned out of writings about specific events and circumstances.

 Second, postcolonial studies has gained prominence in the Western academy, and though the field has developed out of the study of literature and continues to concentrate upon the experiences of peoples in colonial and post-colonial states or in the African, Caribbean or South Asian diaspora, the analytical framework is dominated by poststructuralism and Marxism. As Leela Gandhi argues, "postcolonialism fails to recognize… that what counts as 'marginal' in relation to the West has often been central and foundational in the non-West…. [P]ostcolonialism continues to render non-Western knowledge and culture as 'other' in relation to the normative 'self' of Western epistemology and rationality" (*Postcolonial* ix-x). While "anti-colonial intellectuals," such as Fanon, often positioned their critique of colonial authority and knowledge within a broader discourse of oppression and exploitation, Fanon's concern for issues of poverty and structures of material inequality has not been as recuperable for the postcolonial critic as his theories of colonial discourse and critique of nationalism. On one hand, then, postcolonialism has had a tendency to reduce "power" in colonized spaces to colonial authority. As a result, in analyses of Indian history, Gandhi is constructed as a "nationalist" leader, for despite the "deconstruction" of colonial power, organized resistance continues to be imagined only in the terms of that discourse (See Chakrabarty "Radical" 277). Similarly, Gandhi's writings on village communities are interpreted within the colonial binary of modernity and tradition; his critique of technology and capitalist labour relations within an idiom of India's "changelessness" becomes an essentializing nativism (see Needham 59). Gandhi's notion of liberation required a broad social, cultural and material transformation of South Asian society, which goes well beyond the rather narrow parameters of power and authority recognized within postcolonial studies.

 Although sometimes articulated as a critique of postcolonialism from the outside, Marxist influenced theory provides a significant body of critique within postcolonial studies. While current Marxist critique may foreground political economy and recognize the critique of colonialism as inextricable from the critique of capitalism (Bartolovich 6), as I argue in Chapter One, Marxist-inspired critiques of Indian historiography often read the Indian liberation movement for its failure to fulfill the teleology of a Marxist narrative of emancipation. Consequently, a number of contributors to *Subaltern Studies* represent Gandhism as a "non-confrontational" and "non-revolutionary" form of resistance. For instance, Alam argues that Gandhi mobilizes the peasantry only in fear that a "truly" radical or revolutionary movement may take form, thereby undermining the authority of Congress (48). Gandhi's privileging of *ahimsa* as the ethic of resistance and social conduct, his challenge to binary models of power and his unwillingness to recognize socialism, in the Marxist sense, as the only alternative to colonialism necessarily put

Gandhism in conflict with Marxism and, to a degree, accounts for the disdain with which he is treated by many Marxist critics.

Third, the marginalization of Gandhism within postcolonial studies, ironically enough may also be a result of its radical alterity. One of the few critics to study Gandhi from a postcolonial perspective in any substantive way, Partha Chatterjee, contends that Gandhi was "unhampered by the formal theoretical requirements of scientific disciplines and philosophical schools" (*Nationalist* 98); his thought was shaped by his cultural upbringing, from Hindu traditions and other religious teachings prominent in the region, as well as particularly Western cosmologies, including Christianity and modernity. Yet, Gandhism is "not conceived at all within the thematic bounds of post-Enlightenment thought" (*Nationalist* 98, 99). For instance, Gandhi's political praxis can not be separated from spirituality and morality. As Nandy argues, "Gandhi's politics involved the defiance of not merely authorities but of authoritative myths; …unlike the liberal and socialist thinkers, Gandhi sought to break down the norms and the shared assumptions of a culture assiduously built up by the Western society over the previous three centuries as the eternal verities of public life" ("From" 181). Gandhi's "experiments with truth" constitute neither a grand narrative of emancipation nor the repudiation of all such narratives. Further, Gandhism's construction of human agency and autonomy, and particularly the nature of suffering differs radically from Western liberalism.

While each of these partial explanations for the marginalization of Gandhism within postcolonial studies provides some insight into the limitations of postcolonialism, the active interrogation of Gandhism provides one avenue through which to critique the assumptions of postcolonial studies and how these assumptions shape the concept of "resistance." An engagement with Gandhism is necessary not only to understand the complexity of India's emergence from colonial space to nation-state, but to interrogate "decolonization" and its failures. Critics of postcolonial theory such as Neil Lazarus, Philip Darby, and Arif Dirlik suggest that the field needs to develop alternative understandings of power and agency in order to be a useful discourse for analysing contemporary structures of oppression. Despite the ambivalent status of Gandhi in Indian cultural consciousness, Gandhism provides one such alternative understanding of the nature of power, agency and resistance.

II.   Gandhi's Critique of Nationalism: From Decolonization to De-modernization

In *Empire,* Hardt and Negri argue that it was only at the moment of national independence – the emergence from colonization into modernity – that the liberatory forces of the "subordinated" countries "recognized that *the primary task is not getting into but getting out of modernity*" (251, original emphasis). I turn to the social and political thought of Gandhi in this project not only because he, like many others, argued many decades before the "flag independence" of the 1960s that true "liberation" was an alternative to modernity and not its attainment, but because his critique of Indian nationalism and his conceptualization of *swaraj* provides a valuable alternative to the dominant materialist postcolonial analyses which tend to equate modernity with

capitalism and neoliberalism, or to the discursive theories of postcolonialism which seem to elide material relations of power all together.

Gandhi became a prominent participant in the Indian independence movement in earnest with the publication of *Hind Swaraj*, or *Indian Home Rule* in 1910. *Hind Swaraj* frames its critique of Indian aspirations for *swaraj* or "self government" within a polemical denunciation of modern Western civilization. Gandhi begins *Hind Swaraj* by briefly mapping out the nature of the organized independence movement in order to examine the ideological limitations of nationalist consciousness. He writes of a movement largely based in London comprised of "moderates" who seek the attainment of Indian self-government through constitutional means, and "extremists," for whom violent force is recognized as necessary. These are the communities to which the book is directed and it is their respective ideas of an Indian nation-state that Gandhi seeks to challenge.

The book appears to present a simplistic critique of colonial authority and European modernity through appeals to an idyllic, even Orientalist, pre-industrial past, but as Anshuman Mondal argues, Gandhi deconstructs the binarisms of antiquity/ modernity, tradition/innovation, and spiritualism/materialism upon which the book appears to depend (Mondal "Gandhi" 432). *Hind Swaraj* takes the form of a dialogue between Gandhi and a composite "reader" who represents Indian nationalists who are calling for the eviction of the British from the subcontinent. The book is not a critique of colonialism or a treatise which presents a narrative of emancipation, but a very specific polemic against the ideological basis of the dominant Indian nationalist discourse of the time. For this reason, while I recognize *Hind Swaraj* as articulating key components of Gandhian thought, an adequate discussion of these ideas requires moving beyond this particular text. These ideas were reconsidered and rearticulated throughout his life within a model of "experimentation" that collapses the binary of scientific reason and spiritual faith.

In *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi begins to articulate two inter-related ideas which provide an alternative to both materialist and discursive postcolonial constructions of power and resistance. First, Gandhi reframes the debate over Indian independence from the presence of colonial authority to the economic, political and cultural structures of modern civilization. Second, premised on the idea that India can never be "emancipated" simply through the eviction of the figures of colonial power, Gandhi imagines *swaraj* as a particularly non-teleological expression of social, political and economic transformation based on the performance of non-hierarchical relationships. Significantly, the assumption that liberation requires the transformation of the structures which shape human relationships invests resistance in cultural consciousness as well as political acts. The link between the cultural and the political is particularly evident in the way *swaraj* is explained in Rao's *Kanthapura*. The story of a national independence struggle is articulated in particularly local terms, the religious framework of one predominantly Hindu community interwoven with a narrative of social transformation. The novel begins with a description of the community's goddess, Kenchamma: "'Siva is three-eyed,' he says, 'and Swaraj too is three-eyed: Self-purification, Hindu-Moslem unity, Khaddar'" (10). *Swaraj* is not a dream, another world, to be achieved through the

eviction of the British colonial rulers, but a social and political initiative that is articulated in cultural and spiritual terms as well as material and political ones.

Gandhi identifies *swaraj* as an ambiguous concept, as it circulates within anticolonial discourses. While "all Indians are impatient to obtain Swaraj," Gandhi notes the lack of consensus on its meaning, and argues that both "moderates" and "extremists" seek "English rule without the Englishman:" "You want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger; that is to say, you would make India English, and, when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but Englistan. This is not the Swaraj that I want" (*Hind* 26, 28). In *Hind Swaraj*, therefore, Gandhi appeals to his "countrymen" to recognize that by concentrating their efforts on battling the English colonist rather than challenging the ideology upon which colonialism is based, they are following a "suicidal policy:" "My countrymen... believe that they should adopt modern civilisation and modern methods of violence to drive out the English" (7). Gandhi argues that the dominant political notion of "home rule" sought merely the eviction of the English and imagined the new state of India in distinctly modern social, economic and political terms. Prefiguring Fanon's critique of anti-colonial nationalism, which would come some fifty years later in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Gandhi argues that political independence will not end "foreign" rule. National independence may change the faces of the "tiger," but the mentality of the "tiger" will not change; resistance must aim not at the figures of power but this "mentality."

Ashis Nandy argues that the "victims of a culture of hyper-masculinity, adulthood, historicism, objectivism, and hypernormality protect themselves by simultaneously conforming to the stereotype of the rulers, by over-stressing those aspects of the self which they share with the powerful, and by protecting in the corner of their heart a secret defiance" (*Intimate* 100). Gandhi identifies this ambivalent reaction of the colonized as the way in which colonial power is maintained. For Gandhi, therefore, resistance is not (entirely) directed at the "English." Instead, resistance, as it pertains to the structures of British colonial power, seeks to persuade Indians that their salvation from colonial domination cannot succeed by adopting the social, economic, political and cultural structures of the colonial state. It is these structures that construct Indian "national" identity, not the colonizer/colonized binary of colonial knowledge.

A number of critics have suggested that colonialism constitutes one aspect, or stage, in the development of global capitalism. Aijaz Ahmad, for instance, suggests that "we should speak not so much of colonialism or postcolonialism but of capitalist modernity which takes the colonial form in particular places and particular times ("Politics" 281). In contrast, Gandhi identifies the oppressive system within which the people of South Asia struggled more broadly as the emergence of "modern civilization." The distinction between Ahmad's and Gandhi's formulations may seem subtle but are significant. Gandhi critiques colonial authority and knowledge production as well as the exploitative political economy of imperialism (as the spread of a particular economic framework). In his conceptualization of resistance, however, he directs his attention specifically at the system of values which he believes informs both. As Chatterjee argues, Gandhi understands the source of modern imperialism as "the system of social

production which the countries of the Western world have adopted" ("Gandhi" 159). According to Chatterjee, Gandhi presents a "fundamental critique of the entire edifice of bourgeois society," including its presumptions of continuous expansion, private property, Adam Smith's conceptualization of the market, representative democracy, and scientific progress (162). As a result, Gandhi critiques the value-system and cosmology of modernity rather than capitalism or colonialism, per se.

    Hind Swaraj is not an attack upon the British or upon Indian nationalists, but a critique of the "civilization" to which both identify. In a letter to a friend that accompanies a draft of *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi lists the conclusions of the book:

> 1) There is no impassable barrier between East and West. 2) There is no such thing as Western or European civilisation, but there is a modern civilisation, which is purely material... 4) It is not the British people who are ruling India, but it is modern civilisation.... 6) If British rule was replaced tomorrow by Indian rule based on modern methods, India would be no better... 7) East and West can only really meet when the West has thrown overboard modern civilisation... They can also seemingly meet when the East has also adopted modern civilisation. But that meeting would be an armed truce, even as it is between, say, Germany and England, both of which nations are living in the Hall of Death in order to avoid being devoured, the one by the other. (*CW* 9: 479)

Gandhi speaks of modernity and civilization, rather than colonialism or the British, and his critique is not limited to economic structures of production and privilege. Rather, he is also concerned with what he identifies as the cultural or ethical structures upon which capitalism depends. The administrators of colonialism are not responsible for the structure; indeed the system produces these "creatures of circumstances," both European and Indian: "[i]t would be cowardly for three hundred million people to seek to destroy the three hundred authors or administrators of the system. It is a sign of gross ignorance to devise means of destroying these administrators or their hirelings... The purest man entering the system will be affected by it and will be instrumental in propagating the evil" (*CW* 43: 133). Unlike the Manichean framework which Fanon identifies as informing both colonialism and anti-colonial resistance, Gandhian thought does not conceive of liberation as possible through the destruction of an "Other." Such a framework appears to elide human responsibility for the violence of economic exploitation, poverty and authoritarianism. As I will argue below, the Gandhian praxis of *ahimsa*, or nonviolence, depends upon an assumption of the responsibilities of both those who benefit from the colonial manifestation of modern civilization and those who are impoverished by it. By framing the problem as the "system" of modern civilization, Gandhi critiques both the structures of the production and consumption of material goods and the *value* placed upon material wealth within modern civilization.

    Leela Gandhi links Frantz Fanon's denunciation of the European myth of progress and humanism to Gandhi's critique of the structural violence of modern civilization (*Postcolonial* 21). She makes this comparison to show similarities in the thought of Gandhi and Fanon. However, while Gandhi most certainly shared Fanon's critique of these post-enlightenment ideals, Leela Gandhi's distinction between Fanon's criticism of the failure of these modern myths to be realized and Gandhi's understanding of

modernity itself as structural violence reveals the way in which Gandhi's thought is distinct from Fanon's. For Gandhi, modern social relations, whether capitalist or communist, constitute a form of structural violence in so far as both are manifestations of the ideals of modernity, particularly in terms of the way in which they rely on an ethic of material progress. Unlike Fanon's critique of colonial relations of power and desire for a "new" humanism, Gandhi's critique of modern civilization is articulated in socio-ethical terms, primarily as the way in which this ethic of materialism limits human potential.[2]

As Nandy argues, Gandhi was one of the few major critics of modernity to attempt a radical critique of urban industrialism and scientific progress ("Outside" 189). For Gandhi, modern technological progress and the ethic of material acquisition constitute a brutal form of oppression: dehumanization. He writes: "Formerly, men were made slaves under physical compulsion, now they are enslaved by temptation of money and of the luxuries that money can buy" (*Hind* 36). In a 1916 speech to a college economics society, he argues that material affluence leads to moral degeneracy and characterizes materialism as a "disease" (*CW* 13: 316). Further, machinery in particular, Gandhi argues, had begun to "desolate Europe" (*Hind* 107). Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilisation, representing a great "sin;" it has made the workers of Bombay's mills "slaves." Gandhi writes that the "conditions of the women working in the mills is shocking. When there were no mills, these women were not starving. If the machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land" (107-8). Modern machinery, as it has been introduced to India, and the ideal of technological progress, displaces labour and "manufactures" deprivation.

Gandhi argues that industrialization and urbanization produce poverty by creating economies of dependence through, for instance, waged labour and the creation of employed and unemployed classes. Gandhi's Marxist contemporaries critiqued his representation of industrialism and progress in *Hind Swaraj* by arguing that "sometimes he says things about industrialization which can more rightly be applied to capitalism and not to other forms of industrial organization" (Bose, qtd in Mukherjee, S. 42). However, Gandhi argues that centralized industrial production, whether functioning in a capitalist market or in a socialist economy, misappropriates essential resources such as water and uses these resources inefficiently and in an ecologically unsustainable manner. Gandhi seems to arbitrarily condemn some products of technological progress such as the steam locomotive, and valorize others, such as the Singer Sewing Machine. As problematic as his critique of machinery may be, however, I believe that the central importance of this critique lies in the notion of human dignity he constructs through it.

Gandhi appears to condemn machines themselves, yet his critique of machinery takes place within a larger discourse on materialism; machines symbolize – because they facilitate – the dehumanizing effects of the ethic of material and technological progress. In his writings on technology and progress, Gandhi critiques the materialism of modern civilization in terms of the way in which a spiritual discourse of alienation and dehumanization intersects with a more materialist discourse of structural violence:

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[2] Galtung defines violence as "present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (110).

> What I object to, is the *craze* for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on "saving labour" till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation... I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of the few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed....It is an alteration in the condition of labour that I want. This mad rush for wealth must cease, and the labourer must be assured, not only of a living wage, but a daily task that is not a mere drudgery. (*CW* 25: 251-2)

Any culture which is based on technological progress and centralized industrial production will necessarily both alienate the worker and lead to structures of material inequality. In what now seems a prophetic assertion, Gandhi argues that such a system impedes *swaraj* or self-rule: "Machinery is a grand yet awful invention. It is possible to visualise a stage at which the machines invented by man may finally engulf civilisation" (*CW* 48: 353). As Nandy argues, unlike Marx, Gandhi wanted to give up modernity rather than reform its social relationships ("Outside" 189). Gandhi recognizes the necessity of not just a revolution in the control of the means of production and consumption, but the means themselves, and more significantly, the value-system in which they develop.

As an alternative to centralized industrial production and the social structures constituent of it Gandhi experimented with the "village republic." Gandhi spent much of his time during the independence struggles living in *ashrams* – small subsistence-based communal villages – experimenting with diet, spiritual enlightenment, and communal politics, and attempting, in practice, to reform the Hindu caste structure. He wrote extensively on the political, economic and social structures of small subsistence-based villages, theorizing the central-ideals of such communities as full employment, bread labour, equality, decentralization, self-sufficiency, and cooperation. For instance, based on the principle that all have the right to equal opportunity though all do not have the same capacity (*Village* 49), Gandhi revised the notion of *swadeshi* – which had provided the framework for nationalist campaigns against the British in which Indians were urged, and often coerced, to only purchase goods manufactured in India – into a concept of responsibility for the welfare of one's neighbour. He wrote extensively on education, village self-sufficiency through the development of "cottage industries" such as the manufacture of *khadi* or home-spun cloth, and meticulously described models of governance.[3]

Many critics of Gandhi have criticized these experiments with village life as indicative of Gandhi's "romantic" and even "reactionary" position within the Indian independence movement. While Ahmad argues that "there is also in Gandhi a full-blown rhetoric of an idyllic Golden Age somewhere in the Hindu past which was casteless, classless, ungendered" (*Lineages* 10), Gandhi's Marxist contemporaries argued that his rejection of Western civilization and technology, "glorification" of a simple life, and

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[3] See, for instance, *Village Swaraj* and *Sarvadoya*, both of which are compilations of Gandhi's writings on these subjects.

"popularization" of cottage industries constituted a "primitive philosophy which could never lead India towards progress and prosperity" (S. Mukherjee 121). Such criticism rejects the possibility of a post-colonial India not defined by material progress. Gandhi did not understand "progress" and "prosperity" in post-enlightenment, and purely material, terms. Yet, as both Ahmad and Mukherjee, acknowledge, the aim of Gandhi's appeal to an Indian "past" focuses on structures of power rather than some metaphysical, "nativist" Indian identity. His description of, and experiments with, village republics rejected much that was "traditional" in South Asian cultures, including what Gandhi called the "tyranny" of Indian princes (see *CW* 13:210-216). Gandhi sought to "transform" India in a way that collapses the modern/traditional binary; he sought a novel notion of the "state" in which the welfare of all was pre-eminent.

However, Gandhi did rely upon a rhetoric of a specifically Indian cultural superiority in what he characterized as India's "changelessness." In *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi appeals to India's "Ancient Civilization," which he calls the "best civilization" or the "Kingdom of God." Nandy suggests that Gandhi's use of a rhetoric of an idyllic Indian past was a political tactic: "[Gandhi] formulated the modern world in traditional terms to make it meaningful to his traditional society" ("From" 191). As some critics have argued, Gandhi's use of "traditional" Hindu idioms alienated non-Hindus, and may be considered as a precursor to the rhetoric of Hindu nationalism that continues to have a significant influence on Indian politics. In some ways, then, this rhetoric of a peaceful, non-competitive Indian past undermines Gandhi's experiments with the "village republic."

Gandhi's ideal village community is fundamentally concerned with individual and communal self-sufficiency as well as a sustainable value-system. In a 1945 letter to Nehru, after it had become clear that independence from British colonialism would take the form of the Indian nation-state, Gandhi writes:

> The village of my dreams is still in my mind… Men and women will be free and able to hold their own against any one in the world. There will be neither plague, nor cholera nor smallpox; no one will be idle, no one will wallow in luxury… I do not want to draw a large scale picture in detail… For me it is material to obtain the real article and the rest will fit into the picture afterwards. If I let go the real thing, all else goes. (Gandhi, "Gandhi" 151)

As utopian as this village sounds, the key to understanding Gandhi's critique of modern civilization and his conceptualization of *swaraj* lies in the values and ideals of alternative communities. In his critique of Indian nationalism in *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi denounces the civilization to which nationalists aspire. Rather than seeking the eviction of the British, Gandhi's critique of modern civilization posits liberation as the emergence of an economic, political and discursive system which seeks human dignity. While postcolonial theory has been preoccupied with the (deconstruction) of the Manichean relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, by critiquing modern civilization as the system of domination to which the people of India are subject, and not colonialism, Gandhism is an anticipatory discourse: Gandhi's conception of liberation is imagined as a process of transformation.

III.   Resistance for *Swaraj*: Transforming India

Gandhi's *swaraj* is not confined to the realms of political power and material autonomy, nor is it attainable through a narrowly anti-colonial framework. The *swaraj* that Gandhi begins to describe in *Hind Swaraj* entails a "total emancipation" from all forms of social, cultural, political and material structures of privilege and inequality. Expressed in this way, *swaraj* appears as abstract and utopian. Yet, in Gandhi's various explanations of the concept throughout his life, *swaraj* is defined not as an end-state but a process. Like other anti-colonial critics, Gandhi argues that liberation begins in the minds of the people of India. Significantly, however, the interdependence of personal and political transformation is central to the idea of *swaraj*. English colonial power depends not only upon the practical cooperation of the Indian people in the day to day functioning of the Raj, from civil servants fulfilling their duties to peasants paying taxes, but also the complicity – of at least the elite – not just in the production of colonial difference as colonial knowledge, but in the ideology of modern civilization. Liberation can not be attained by an Indian elite wresting power away from the British: "Everyone will have to take it for himself. What others get for me is not Home Rule but foreign rule" (*Hind* 112). Instead, as Gandhi concludes the book, *swaraj* will require radical social reforms that can only be derived from everyone's self-control or rule over their own mind (118):

> Complete independence through truth and non-violence means the independence of every unit, be it the humblest of the nation, without distinction of race, colour or creed. This independence is never exclusive. It is, therefore, wholly compatible with interdependence within or without. Practice will always fall short of the theory, even as the drawn line falls short of the theoretical line of Euclid. Therefore, complete independence will be complete only to the extent of our approach in practice to truth and non-violence. (*CW* 75 146-7)

Because social relationships never conform to theories of social interaction, Gandhian resistance necessarily collapses the binarisms of ends/means and personal/political; it invests the transformation of social and political structures in the transformation of "Indian" (and ultimately "human") consciousness.

Swaraj, therefore, is an individual and a social aim that is not so much a utopian ideal "state" but an ever-present practice. While Gandhi's vision of a post-colonial India may have been undermined by his rhetoric of the "retrieval" of past greatness, his conception of *swaraj* as both individual and political "self-rule" draws on diverse influences and is particularly future-oriented. Further, Gandhi's development of the idea of *swaraj* led to the conceptualization of *sarvadoya* or "the welfare of all" which overtly figures the "aims" of Indian resistance as the achievement of an equitable social relationship, rather than simply political independence and the end of British rule. As a result, the object of resistance is as much "traditional" systems of princely rule, the exploitation and degradation of the "untouchable" caste within the social structure of Hinduism, or child marriages, as it is the colonial structure of domination.

Like *swaraj, sarvadoya* is conceptualized as the social and political manifestations of a transformation of individual consciousness which is specifically articulated in ethico-spiritual terms. Gandhi writes:

> If we would see Panchayat Raj, i.e., democracy established, we would regard the humblest and the lowliest Indian as being equally the ruler of India with the tallest in the land. For this everyone should be pure. If they are not they should become so. He who is pure will also be wise. He will observe no distinctions between caste and caste, between touchable and untouchable, but will consider everyone equal with himself. He will bind others to himself with love. (*CW* 90: 420)

Sarvadoya appears utopian, yet the concept provides Gandhi the philosophical framework for articulating a programme of social transformation. The sort of structural transformation Gandhi imagines is not possible through a change in political leadership, but a transformation of lifestyle and values from one that is hierarchical, materialistic and coercive to one that is egalitarian and collaborative. *Sarvadoya* is not something to be won through a battle with those who represent, or are privileged within, the system of colonial oppression, but enacted through constructive activities that cultivate the reforms necessary for "genuine" *swaraj*: "Actual taking over of the Government machinery is but a shadow, an emblem. And it could easily be a burden if it came as a gift from without, the people having made no effort to deserve it….We have everywhere emphasized the necessity of carrying on the constructive activities as being the means of attaining swaraj" (Gandhi *CW* 47: 92). These constructive activities are aimed at transforming economic and political structures, but also require specific commitments on the part of the individuals taking part in these activities.

Sarvadoya is based on a discourse of "necessary virtues," including truth, nonviolence, non-possession, self-sacrifice, bread labour, respect for all religions and anti-untouchability. All of these "virtues" focus upon the dedication of the individual as the source of positive social change. These "virtues" of individual participants in resistance, Gandhi contends, inform the sorts of alternative structures and practices Gandhi envisions, including his specific theories of village self-reliance, economic "trusteeship," and *sarvadoya* democracy, with close attention to the rights of minorities and Hindu-Muslim unity, and the radical transformation of the caste structure and gender roles. In addition to constructive programmes such as the development of village industries – most notably *khadi* or home-spun cloth – in which communities produced and distributed their own goods outside the economic structures of British colonial rule, the principles of *swaraj* and *sarvadoya* were also tested in practice through resistance campaigns, or *satyagraha,* that were often not directed at colonial/foreign structures of figures of authority. Before utilizing *satyagraha* as a technique of mass action in the struggle to produce a post-colonial India, *satyagraha* was used by textile workers to secure increased wages and as the means of opening Hindu temples to members of all

castes. Significantly, these more "political" acts of non-cooperation and protest always included a "constructive" aspect.[4]

Because these programmes, however, were not conceived within the problematic of modernity and the *raison d'etre* of the Indian state, their effect (and intent) was to challenge the status quo, risking dividing the population rather than helping to foster a national imaginary against the common British "enemy." Gandhi's theory of economic trusteeship, for instance, was seen by the merchant class as an attack on their privilege while Marxists regarded it as a particularly bourgeois policy that would allow the privileged classes to continue to profit from the labour of the urban worker and the rural peasant. Similarly, Gandhi's position on anti-untouchability was extremely contentious. In *Hind Swaraj,* Gandhi defends the *principle* of *varna,* but he rejects the *institution* of the Hindu caste system. The eradication of untouchability became a dominant theme in Gandhi's message to the Indian people throughout the Indian independence movement. Yet, Gandhi's position on untouchability was subject to sustained critique both from those privileged within the system and those advocating for their rights.

In particular, B.R. Ambedkar, a prominent nationalist and advocate for the rights of untouchables, constructs the struggle of the untouchable caste as a nationalist struggle in itself; only through their own "independence" would they be free from both British colonial and Hindu oppression. On one level, Ambedkar regards Gandhi's campaign to eradicate untouchability as impeding the demands of "untouchables" for greater political rights, which Ambedkar believes would dismantle the "barrier" between them and Hindus. Ambedkar also identifies the failure of Gandhi to effectively translate his rhetoric of anti-untouchability into political praxis. Gandhi's discourse of anti-untouchability is, as Ambedkar asserts, "marked by so many twists and turns, inconsistencies and contradictions, attacks and surrenders… that the whole campaign has become a matter of mystery (Ambedkar 65). Ambedkar's critique of Gandhism, however, is structured within a modernist problematic. Ambedkar has a radically different conception of the relationship between ends and means, accuses Gandhi of looking to antiquity rather than the future (23), and contends that Gandhi's position impedes India's "progress" (139).[5]

Swaraj, for Gandhi, was the exercise of "self-rule" by the people of India, and not a political condition to be won by a vanguard elite. *Swaraj* and *sarvadoya,* and the constructive programmes and political activism that these principles activated, do not

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[4] Armed anti-colonial struggles have commonly included such constructive programmes as well. See, for instance, Sutherland and Meyer on FRELIMO's non-military initiatives in Mozamibque (117).

[5] Ambedkar's critique of Gandhism is at times rather contentious, if not fallacious (i.e. he claims that Gandhi was a staunch opponent of Christianity, eliminated morality from politics and introduced commercialism into Indian nationalism). As well, he focuses on Gandhi the political figure, at once criticizing Gandhi's status in Indian cultural consciousness as a "saint," yet finding fault in him for failing to be accountable for the interpretation and practice of his word by the masses.

constitute a "revolutionary" movement, in the Marxist sense, or the sense articulated by Fanon and reaffirmed by postcolonial critics such as Parry. In his survey of Marxist responses to Gandhian thought, Subrata Mukherjee argues that prominent Indian Marxists of the period criticized Gandhi for concentrating on "relatively minor issues of social reform" rather than leading massive political movements (140). Though Gandhi writes about, and experiments with, "ideal" village communities, *swaraj* and *sarvadoya* are not conceptualized as the final "victory" of a narrative of emancipation. Indeed, Gandhi argues that constructive work should be undertaken "for its own sake" and that Indians should be prepared to continue these programmes endlessly (*CW* 69: 275-6). Further, Gandhi argues that "Real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused… Swaraj is to be obtained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority" (*Village* 3). *Swaraj* and *sarvadoya* are shaped by an analysis of the structures of oppression which are not limited to colonial power, and function within a discourse of social transformation that does not adhere to History, in the Modern, or specifically Marxist sense. While Gandhi most certainly does utilize discourses of the Indian "nation," his notion of liberation is not the modern nation-state.

In Chapter Two, I argue that Fanon and Cabral's theories of resistance rely upon the binary framework of colonial authority. In these models of oppositional resistance, the national community appears to pre-exist struggle, but is actually a product of resistance *against* a colonial adversary as Other. For Gandhi, the struggle for *swaraj* is a means of forming a "national" community, but because the struggle for *swaraj* is primarily a programme of social and cultural transformation, and because it depends so much on the idea of individual empowerment, national identity is not produced negatively through the bond produced by shared antagonism against a foreign Other. As Leela Gandhi argues, "nationalist discourse may also be seen, through a Gandhian intervention, as releasing the 'object' of Orientalist theory into a subject capable of theorizing him/herself, in terms of his/her particular and utopian future" ("Concerning" 133). The Indian "national" community of Gandhian thought is produced through political and social programmes that are dependent upon an ethico-spiritual framework. Yet, Gandhi also appeals to a pre-colonial "Indian" community which is not based upon a shared identity in religious, ethnic or linguistic terms, but in terms of a particular "way of life" or "way of being:" "The English have taught us that we were not one nation before… This is without foundation. We were one nation before they came to India. One thought inspired us. Our mode of life was the same" (*Hind* 48). On one level, this appeal to India's shared social practices may be interpreted as a practical necessity for organizing the diverse and divided religious, ethnic and caste communities of South Asia. Further, as I have argued above, this nationalist rhetoric may undermine the possibility of the resistance Gandhi describes. However, not only did Gandhi's notion of *swaraj* not accord with the ideal of the secular modern state, but it entailed the rejection of the political state: "If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation is necessary… In the ideal state therefore there is no political power because there is no State. But the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that Government is best which governs the least" (*CW* 47: 91).

Despite Gandhi's criticism of the modern nation state, and signifiers of national unity such as the flag or anthem, Raja Rao shows how Gandhi and Gandhism was incorporated within anti-colonial discourses of a history of revolution and the Indian nation. During the violent suppression of nonviolent civil disobedience in *Kanthapura's* conclusion, a man is chased by police as he waves a flag and sings of the revolution and the memory of 1857 (Rao 167). Whether this nationalist symbolism reflects the way in which Gandhi was understood by participants in the *satyagraha* campaigns or is reflective of Rao's interpretation of Gandhi, it suggests that anti-colonial nationalist, local traditional, and Gandhian discourses intersect and compete, in practice.

Critics have charged that Gandhi's emphasis upon nonviolent forms of resistance and constructive programmes aimed at developing a national community based on the ethico-spiritual principles outlined above is not indicative of his "real" bourgeois interests or unwillingness to actively challenge British power. I would argue, in contrast, that Gandhian resistance is constructed outside Western discourses of national sovereignty and the modern political state. Gandhi writes in *Hind Swaraj*, "I have grave doubts whether I shall be able sufficiently to explain what is in my heart. It is my deliberate opinion that India is being ground down not under the English heel but under that of modern civilisation. Religion is dear to me, and my first complaint is that India is becoming irreligious [editors note: a people without dharma]... We are turning away from God" (42). Gandhi problematically constructs his critique of the individualism and materialism he associates with modernity in specifically religious terms. The Gandhian dialectic provides a radical alternative to the dominant theories of colonial power, as articulated by such critics as Guha, Bhabha and Fanon. Gandhi's critique of modern civilization and his articulation of *swaraj* do not depend upon a deterministic theory of History, or post-enlightenment conceptions of rationality, but constitute a discourse of possibility, which consequently requires a notion of resistance which is radically different from those dominant within postcolonial studies.

IV.   Ahimsa: The Politics of Possibility

Partha Chatterjee contends that Gandhi's concept of *ahimsa* constitutes a "science of resistance." He argues that *ahimsa* is "both ethical and epistemological because it was defined within a moral and epistemic practice that was wholly 'experimental'" (*Nationalist* 107). Chatterjee also argues, however, that Gandhi placed *ahimsa* before Congress as a "political weapon," recognizing that while *ahimsa* is his "creed" he does not expect Congress to accept it as such. As a result, Chatterjee identifies a disjuncture within Gandhian ideology between morality and politics, private conscience and public responsibility, and, ultimately between "Noble Folly and *Realpolitik*" ("Gandhi" 187). To argue for the existence of such a disjuncture, and to characterize *ahimsa* as merely a useful "tactic" in the struggle to win Indian independence, misidentifies Gandhi's critique of *swaraj* as simply a call for the end of British/foreign rule. In his writings on *ahimsa* Gandhi constructs the political and the moral, personal conscience and public responsibility, as interdependent:

> Literally speaking, Ahimsa means "non-killing"... It really means that you may not
> offend anybody; you may not harbour an uncharitable thought, even in connection
> with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. To one who follows this
> doctrine there is no room for an enemy... Those who join the Ashram have literally
> to accept that meaning.
>
> That does not mean that we practice the doctrine in its entirety. Far from it. It is
> an ideal which we have to reach... But it is not a proposition in Geometry; it is
> infinitely more difficult. (Gandhi, "Satyagraha" 138-9)

These seemingly contradictory assertions reveal the difficulty of constructing a tidy
theory of resistance out of the politics of possibility that is "Gandhism."

Since *ahimsa* is a theory of social conduct, rather than simply a political tactic,
Gandhi could not *demand* that Congress adopt it as an ethic. Recognizing that the
majority of Congress members accepted nonviolence only as a matter of policy, and not
an article of faith, in 1930 Gandhi wrote that he would start his movement only with
those who had committed to nonviolence as an ethic (*CW* 42: 497). In theory, at least, as
an ethic of resistance *ahimsa* seeks to transform structures of oppression by appealing to
the conscience of the administrators of that oppression; *ahimsa* works by persuasion not
coercion. Further, Gandhi's ideal of *ahimsa* challenged both the structure of political
power within Congress and the function of the party itself. Indeed, Gandhi called for the
dissolution of Congress as a political party. In addition, he appealed for lawyers,
politicians and bureaucrats to give up their positions and work in the countryside.

Ahimsa, as an ethic of conduct, and *satyagraha* – which may more accurately be
characterized as the "science of resistance" – are based upon an understanding of power
and the nature of oppression that is radically different from that which informs the anti-
colonial critiques of Fanon, Ngugi, or Nehru or the postcolonial constructions of power
of such diverse theorists as Guha, Parry or Bhabha. Gandhi's concept of *ahimsa* directs
attention to the oppressed – rather than the oppressors – not as an "object" in a
relationship of dominance, but as participants in a system of privilege and exploitation.
When applied to the concept of resistance, *ahimsa* radically reconfigures the role of the
"oppressed" within the dynamic of oppression, collapses the distinction between the
"ends" of struggle and the "means," and deconstructs the oppressor/victim binary without
eliding material and cultural "difference." *Ahimsa* provides a politics of conflict that
escapes the "rhetoric of blame" but does not dispense with responsibility.

Before turning to Gandhi's writings and a more developed treatment of the alternative
constructions of power, agency and the Other *ahimsa* provides, I wish to discuss a few
episodes from Raja Rao's *Kanthapura,* for I believe this novel provides an enlightening
preface to an examination of Gandhi's concept of *ahimsa.* In *Kanthapura,* Rao depicts
attempts to transform structures of domination within the social formation of a
predominantly Hindu village, from the caste system to child marriage. Upon his return to
the village to "work with the masses," Moorthy begins to work with the "pariahs" and as
a representative of Congress introduces the spinning wheel as a practical symbol of the
ideal of self-sufficiency. Significantly, Moorthy's initial acts concentrate on challenging
"pre-colonial" structures of privilege and subjugation within the community. The basis

for these initiatives, *ahimsa*, is introduced as an ethic of resistance in religious terms. The story of Gandhi, the Mahatma, is presented to the village as the story of a saint: "And as he grew up… he began to go out into the villages and assemble people and talk to them, and his voice was so pure… that men followed him… and so he goes from village to village to slay the serpent of the foreign rule. Fight, says he, but harm no soul. Love all, says he, Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian or Pariah, for all are equal before God" (Rao 11-12). This ethic of resistance which demands struggle without violence is not easily translated into practice, however. When Moorthy attempts to enter the Skeffington Coffee Estate to visit the exploited and abused workers of the plantation, he is stopped by the police. The Muslim police officer, Badè Khan, is berated and abused by the gathering crowd, leading him to strike Moorthy with his lathi. The group then attacks Khan, viciously beating him, while Moorthy pleads: "'No beatings, sisters. No beatings, in the name of the Mahatma'" (59). *Ahimsa* is not simply a tactical choice, derived from a rational assessment of the utility of violence in a particular conflict, but a moral imperative.

As discussed above, Gandhi draws upon discourses of Indian spiritual and cultural "superiority" in contrast to British preoccupations with the material. His dependence upon Hindu idioms as a medium of expression for articulating his notion of *swaraj* to India's primarily rural population may have served to alienate "untouchables" and Muslims. At the other end of the spectrum, Orthodox Hindu nationalists argued his conception of *ahimsa* was not a tenet of Hinduism (Bharti 19) or argued that *ahimsa* weakened the Hindu "nation" (L. Gandhi "Concerning" 134). In *Kanthapura*, *ahimsa* is not treated as an essentially Hindu concept, but it is very much represented as deriving from spiritual faith. Moorthy's efforts to introduce "constructive programmes" to his village and his willingness to suffer in confrontations with the administrators of state power derive from a "vision" of the Mahatma in which he hears: "'There is but one force in life and that is truth, and there is but one love in life and that is the love of mankind, and there is but one God in life and that is the God of all'" (Rao 33). Gandhi draws the God of his mind – which he sees as the only potential means of unifying India's diverse peoples – from various religious and ideological traditions and ultimately understands God as Truth or Love. While forms of resistance such as tax evasion or labour strikes have a political effect, Gandhi argues that unless the participants in such actions or campaigns are "non-violent in thought, word and deed and… living in perfect friendliness with all whether co-operators or non-co-operators" this effect will not be the establishment of *swaraj* but "no-*raj*" (*CW* 22: 225).

Rao's representation of Gandhian resistance in a small village is unquestionably celebratory of Gandhi and Gandhism. Unlike Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982), however, which idealizes and simplifies the ease with which Gandhi, and many other Indians, suffered and sacrificed, Rao depicts the difficulty of translating *ahimsa* as a moral principle into social and political conduct. For instance, Moorthy's "Pariah-mixing" is regarded as "polluting" his family and the community, and the participation of women in the picketing of toddy booths, among other contributions to the "movement," disrupts gender-role expectations both "inside" and "outside" the domestic sphere as well as the functioning of that sphere. For instance, the husbands of the women fear that their

wives will "vagabond about like soldiers" by participating in congress activities, and they blame the women for the way in which "this Sevi business" disrupts the production of their meals (Rao 105). The novel's chaotic conclusion, in which a nonviolent march erupts into a riot, and attempts to maintain nonviolence, both in deed and spirit, are juxtaposed with images of the national flag, provides an ambivalent representation of *ahimsa. Kanthapura* is not a fictional treatment of an historical event but an exploration of the difficulty of practicing *ahimsa* and its effect on India. The novel does not provide a counter-narrative to a dominant narrative of violent opposition so much as it presents *ahimsa* as one discourse of many, competing for the hearts and minds of the colonized, or more accurately, those who suffer within a complex network of structures of oppression.

While Anshuman Mondal argues that Rao constructs a homological tripartite structure in which the "Gandhian matrix" stands in a relation of opposition to both the colonial/modern and the orthodox matrices" ("Ideology" 110), I believe that the initiatives towards *swaraj* depicted in *Kanthapura* disrupt the ideological bases of these two matrices rather than "oppose" them. For instance, Chatterjee argues that rapid changes took place in the lives of women during the colonial period, "mostly outside the arena of political agitation, in a domain where the nation thought of itself as already free… [I]t was the home that became the principal site of the struggle through which the hegemonic construct of the new nationalist patriarchy had to be normalized" (*Nation* 133). The point of emphasis in the spiritual/material, home/world, and feminine/masculine dichotomies upon which the orthodox/nationalist discourse produces itself is different from those of colonial discourse in that, for instance, "India" is constructed as spiritually superior to Europe and spirituality is privileged over materialism. Chatterjee maintains, however, that nationalist discourse is nonetheless trapped within colonialism's "framework of false essentialisms" (134).

Significantly, Rao's depiction of *ahimsaic* resistance in the form of *Sevika Sangha*, a women's organization, transcends these dichotomies, challenging the colonial and capitalist structures of power in the "arena of political agitation" and the patriarchal structure of the "domain where the nation thought of itself as already free." As a result, *ahimsa*, as it is presented in *Kanthapura*, disrupts the dichotomies of home/world, Europe/India, and, significantly, masculine/feminine. In the work of Fanon and Ngugi, among others, violence, as the sole means of achieving liberation and self-determination, is a distinctly male practice. While critics such as Nandy and Leela Gandhi critique the masculinist preoccupations of nationalist discourse through Gandhi's specific critique of male sexuality and his construction of a bisexual, and asexual, gender ideal, I believe that *ahimsa* as an ethic of social and political conduct functions to transcend and collapse these hierarchal dichotomies.

The form of resistance shaped by Gandhi's notion of *ahimsa* was initially called "passive resistance." Gandhi, however, soon realized the inadequacy of the term for expressing the spiritual and political interdependence of the principles underlying Indian agitation for greater freedom: "When in a meeting of Europeans I found that the term 'passive resistance' was too narrowly construed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence, I had to demure to all these statements and explain the real nature of the

Indian movement" (Gandhi *Autobiography* 291). Following a competition advertised in *Indian Opinion,* the term *satyagraha* was coined. While Spivak flippantly reduces *satyagraha* to "hunger strike," (*Critique* 298), Leela Gandhi contends that Gandhi's use of militaristic metaphors, such as his characterization of the Indian struggle as a "nonviolent battle" reveals the way in which Gandhi "is not so much an inventor of insurgency as a discursive innovator of systems/meanings that are already in circulation" (L. Gandhi "Concerning" 133). To this end she quotes Nirmal Bose's assertion that rather than a substitute for war, *satyagraha* "'is war itself shorn of many of its ugly features'" (133). Characterizations such as these reflect the way in which *satyagraha* has become synonymous with non-violent opposition. Congress's nationalist discourse of liberation accepted *satyagraha* as a strategic tactic for precipitating political change but ignored the way in which *satyagraha,* as a mode of social change, requires the self-transformation of its practitioners.

Gandhi argues that *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* radically transform, if not reject, the "systems/meanings" of anti-colonial struggle. These concepts collapse the distinction between the domestic and the political, conscience and expedience. Gandhi recognizes *satyagraha* as part and parcel of the individual's on-going struggle for self-purification and self-realization. Further, he argues that the social or political transformation signified by the idea of *swaraj* is inseparable from individual transformation. In addition to the vows a *satyagrahi* must take, cited above, the *satyagrahi* must harbour no anger, refuse to retaliate against assaults, refuse to recognize British authority – but not insult its administrators or symbols – be willing to sacrifice his/her life but refuse to take the lives of others. The *satyagrahi* must have faith in those leading the *satyagraha,* and must be so conscious of respecting other religions that Hindu *satyagrahis* should be willing to sacrifice themselves to protect Muslims against Hindus, and vice versa (*CW* 42: 493). In Gandhi's concepts of *ahimsa* and *satyagraha,* there is an adversary, but this opponent is re-characterized as a "wrong-doer" (*CW* 17: 490). This is not simply a semantic alteration; the *satyagrahi* seeks to convert the opponent rather than defeat or destroy them. As a theory of conflict, *satyagraha* cannot be considered a "battle." Gandhi fails to consistently articulate his critique of colonial power through an *ahimsaic* discourse; at times, he characterizes the British system as "evil" and the Indian system as "good." Significantly, however, individual functionaries of colonial power are separated from the system which they administer.

In Fanon's description of oppositional resistance, colonial domination "can only be called in question by absolute violence" (Fanon *Wretched* 37) and the "intuition" of the "colonized masses" tells them that "their liberation must, and can only, be achieved by force" (73). In practice, however, as Fanon also acknowledges, "the atmosphere of violence, after having colored all the colonial phase, continues to dominate national life" (76). Liberatory violence has perpetuated a cycle of violence seemingly without end in Kashmir, Nigeria, Congo and Zimbabwe. Revolutionary violence, of course, is not simply a practical political tactic but the product of a specific discursive framework that cannot be confined simply to the colonial. The direct violence of civil war reinforces the cultural violence which legitimizes it as political strategy. Fanon describes the way in which the structural and direct violence of colonialism and the violent resistance it

produces leads to a cycle of violence, and he acknowledges that there must be coherence between the tactics of struggle and its desired "victory;" yet his theory of resistance is oppositional and teleological. Robert Young argues that (modern) radical politics require the future; such projects require a utopian goal, as a guiding desire, even though that utopia is impossible to realize. However, end-oriented or teleological discourses impede the achievement of the sorts of ends imagined through them: "[T]here is also a danger that such utopian moments, if projected uncritically, may in fact perpetuate the very structures of the systems that they seek to displace, that they may project the past back into the future, not changing history but repeating it" (Young 112).

Fanon imagines a "new humanism" as an alternative to both the particularly local and self-interested desires of the peasant (i.e. to take back the settler's land) and the ideal of the nation-state, which replicates the structures of material exploitation of the colonial order. Similarly, Cabral argues that the "victory" of national independence must be translated into a "cultural leap" for "liberation" to occur. In both cases, liberation follows the achievement of national independence; there is a clear distinction between the "means" of resistance and its intended "ends." As the dominant figure in Indian nationalist politics by the late 1930's, Nehru's conception of resistance constructs the establishment of the nation as the culmination of a liberatory narrative of historical progress: "'the real thing is the attainment of the goal and every step that we take must be taken from the viewpoint of the very early attainment of this goal'" (qtd. in Chatterjee *Nationalist* 156). Gandhi's *satyagraha* and his stature among the Indian "masses" provided Congress a useful tactic through which to achieve this goal. Nehru argues that social reform could only take place *after* power had been taken away from the colonizer and a nation-state had been established (Chatterjee *Nationalist* 132). For Nehru, the ends justify the means.

Gandhi's discourse of *ahimsa* provides an alternate conception of the relationship between ends and means. Gandhi's construction of "ends" and "means" in its simplest form draws on the idea that something "good" (egalitarian, democratic, empowering) cannot be constructed through "evil" (hierarchical, authoritarian, coercive) methods:

> Let us first take the argument that we are justified in gaining our end by using brute force, because the English gained theirs by using similar means. It is perfectly true that they used brute force, and that it is possible for us to do likewise, but, by using similar means, we can get only the same thing that they got. You still admit that we do not want that. Your belief that there is no connection between the means and the end is a great mistake… Your reasoning is the same as saying that we can get a rose through planting a noxious weed. (*Hind* 80-81)

Gandhi critiques the notion that liberation can be achieved through violence by arguing that, first, violent resistance replicates the tactics and structures of colonialism and material exploitation, and, second, that an egalitarian, democratic order cannot be achieved through coercion and based on an authoritarian structure of power.

Gandhi's conception of ends and means does not conceive of struggle within a teleological framework wherein the "goal" of struggle is imagined as a "state" of liberation. In contrast to the nationalist Hindu project which constructed a linear Hindu history of India along the lines of Western progress, Gandhi understands Indian history as

"a special case of an all-embracing permanent present, waiting to be interpreted and reinterpreted" (Nandy *Intimate* 57). Indeed, *ahimsa* as an ethic of struggle constitutes an alternate cosmology from the modern cosmology structured by an understanding of time as progressive. As Gandhian theorist Suman Khanna suggests, "ends" and "means" are "convertible terms" in Gandhi's discourse of *ahimsa*; because Truth and *swaraj* (as an ideal) are not directly accessible, the "means," or *ahimsa*, must become the focus of struggle: "if this account of the nature of means be accepted, it would seem that, according to Gandhi, the true means are only the various strands of the good life or the vows to which anyone can commit himself any minute if he only resolves to" (Khanna 48). Further, Gandhi justifies *ahimsa* as a tactic of resistance not in terms of political expediency but as a moral imperative: "Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes" (Gandhi *Hind* 91). While the attainment of Truth is the aim of the *satyagrahi*'s struggle for self-realization, their understanding of truth is necessarily relative. Therefore, Gandhi posits *ahimsa* or nonviolence as the means of struggle not just because, as inaccessible ideals, *swaraj* and Truth are not certain, but because they are "experimental."

Finally, as a much more complex concept than the precept of not doing physical harm to others, *ahimsa* also must be understood in terms of Gandhi's analysis of domination as a structure. By positing the structural and direct violence of colonialism, the caste system and the economic systems of India as the problem, rather than the "presence" of the colonist or the land-owner, Gandhi challenges the notion of struggle as opposition and the possibility of liberation through the destruction of the institutions and administrators of oppression. For Gandhi, violence is the "enemy:" the violence of colonial repression, such as the Jalianwala Bagh massacre; the violence of economic exploitation, such as unfair taxation; and the violence of hierarchies of status and privilege, such as colonial discourse or the Hindu caste system. As a result, struggle must be primarily constructive. *Ahimsa* constitutes not simply an alternative to the physical "battle" of war, but the ideological and discursive assumptions that construct battle as a means of achieving liberation. As Ashis Nandy argues, in *ahimsa* Gandhi produces a "model of dissent" which escapes the limitations of the "victor's values" (*Intimate* 111) because it is constructed not as a form of oppositional resistance – a reaction – but an ethic of social conduct.

V.   Power and the Duty of Resistance

As I argue in Chapter One, while Benita Parry suggests that Bhabha's theories of mimicry and hybridity allow spaces for the subaltern to speak, Bhabha recognizes subaltern agency only within the "gaps" of colonial order. Gandhi, in contrast, assumes a mode of agency much more consistent with that espoused by anti-colonial intellectuals. Yet, Gandhi understands the functioning of power much differently. In order to explore Gandhi's construction of power and agency, it is useful first to return to the work of

Ranajit Guha. In *Dominance Without Hegemony*, Guha responds to the prevailing British histories of India that represent the colonial endeavour as a hegemonic project, wherein the British rely on persuasion rather than coercion to establish and maintain their authority. Guha writes:

> [T]he presumption of hegemony makes for a seriously distorted view of the colonial state and its configuration of power.... In colonial India, where the role of capital was still marginal in the mode of production and the authority of the state structured as an autocracy that did not recognize any citizenship or rule of law, power simply stood for a series of inequalities between the rulers and the ruled as well as between classes, strata, and individuals. (*Dominance* 20)

Guha argues that democratic discourses of citizenship, legality and civil rights were largely absent from British rule in India. British colonial governance in India instituted and/or reinforced autocratic structures of power which produced order through coercion: "Order, as an idiom of state violence, constituted a distinctive feature of colonialism... it was allowed to intrude again and again into many such areas of the life of the people as would have been firmly kept out of bounds in Metropolitan Britain" (28). The 1857 "mutiny" takes on a presence in the Indian cultural consciousness not just as a symbol of resistance but as a reminder of the real physical, but just as importantly, psychological, power of the British "sword." Guha contends that "the exercise of authority in realms far from metropolitan Europe came to rely on fear rather than consent" (65). While Guha does not discount the nature of persuasion or the reality of consent, particularly in terms of the elite classes, he argues that British power in India constituted dominance without hegemony.

Despite their radical differences in perspective, Guha, Fanon and Bhabha all focus upon power as it is "exercised" by the colonizer. In contrast, Gandhi theorizes power at the level of the oppressed within a system of oppression that is not confined to colonization; Indians – the elite bureaucrats and officials as well as the "masses" – are not "victims" of oppression but active agents within a system of privilege and exploitation. Gandhi rejects the notion that British power is maintained by the sword. In *Hind Swaraj* he contends that while "some Englishmen state that they took, and they hold, India by the sword... these statements are wrong. The sword is entirely useless for holding India. We alone keep them" (41). Gandhi's analysis differs radically from that of Guha, and the other prominent anticolonial theorists and postcolonial theorists discussed in Chapters One and Two in that he is more concerned with understanding power in terms of oppression (colonialism, capitalism, caste, etc) than simply colonial authority. Gandhi's comments should be taken not as a contention that the British did not rely on coercive methods of control, but an alternate understanding of the function of the colonized within such a structure of domination. His writings on *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* concentrate on analyzing the function of the people of India as participants within, rather than as victims of, this structure of power.

Gandhi's perspective says more about the role of the "colonized" in their own oppression than the relative significance of the sword, or coercive structures, in producing and maintaining British "power." On one level, the "we who keep them" of Gandhi's discourse is the "English-knowing men, that have enslaved Indian," upon

whom the "curse of the nation" will rest, not the English (*Hind* 104). In a practical sense, Gandhi argues the British do not have forces sufficient to subdue India's enormous population; colonial authority is therefore maintained, in part, through Indian enthralment with modernity. Gandhi argues that the Indian nationalist lawyers, doctors and other elite figures must cease fighting "the imagined enemy without" and concentrate upon the "enemy within" by renouncing and unlearning their privilege. British power is not hegemonic, but certainly emergent modern capitalist values and relations *are* hegemonic, at least with certain segments of the Indian population.[6]

In so far as British authority was maintained through physical coercion – the use or threat of the sword – in Gandhi's theory of *ahimsa*, power still depends on cooperation. Where Guha concentrates on the practices of British authority, arguing that the British Raj maintained order not through acquiring the consent of the Indian population but by instilling fear through the threat, and exercise, of violence, Gandhi focuses on the Indian's experience of fear: "I found, through my wanderings in India, that my country is seized with a paralyzing fear. We may not open our mouths in public; we may only talk about our opinions secretly....if you want to follow the vow of Truth, then fearlessness is absolutely necessary. Before we can aspire to guide the destinies of India we shall have to adopt this habit of fearlessness" (Gandhi "Satyagraha" 142). Echoing Leo Tolstoy's contention that England is only able to enslave Indians because Indians "'recognised, and still recognise, force as the fundamental principle of social order'" (Tolstoy qtd. in Parel xxix), Gandhi constructs "force" or "coercion" as not merely material or physical acts and structures, but a psychological or cultural condition. It is not just the "sword" which establishes and maintains colonial authority, but the culture of fear that violence produces and depends upon. Intervention, therefore, can take place at the level of the experience of oppression by those who suffer within it rather than at the level of its exercise. If "fear" is the necessary condition of domination, as experienced by those who are subjugated, then to overcome the psychological and cultural condition of fear is to undo the control this fear produces and to undo the authority of those who depend upon violent coercion. For the *satyagrahi* to take the vow of fearlessness was necessary for the endurance of the suffering *satyagraha* often included, but this idea of "fearlessness" was just as significant in the broader cultural sense.

Dominance may not require consent, but both hegemony *and* dominance require compliance and cooperation. Remembering that Gandhi characterizes modern civilization as essentially materialistic and colonization as an enterprise motivated by commerce, if not in terms of the development of new markets than the exploitation of resources, for the purposes of the argument of *Hind Swaraj*, he simplistically argues that money is the "god of the English:" "it follows that we keep the English in India for our base self-interest. We like their commerce, they please us by their subtle methods, and

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[6] Significantly, in *Kanthapura* Rao represents material relations as distinct from the imposition of foreign rule in the minds of Indians. As well, in *Kanthapura* the desire for material development is not confined only to the traditionally elite classes. The mother of the lawyer, Sankar, for instance, takes pride in the earning potential of her son and expects that he will one day own a car (Rao 96).

get what they want from us. To blame them for this is to perpetuate their power" (41). To imagine oppression in terms of a Manichean framework or the Hegelian master-slave dialectic is to produce the illusion of that structure of power as reality; in other words, to understand oppression in terms of those who are actively dominant and those who are passive victims is to reinforce those who are privileged within that structure. Gandhi's emphasis upon *khadi* (the production of home-spun cloth) as a method of increasing rural self-sufficiency is a response to oppression not in terms of agitation against the "oppressors" but in terms of altering the system of oppression.

In practice, however, the *swadeshi* movement was nonetheless often regarded by Indians as a mode of struggle *against* the English. Gandhi argues that the textile mills of Manchester, and more importantly their workers, cannot be blamed for producing cloth for the Indian market (*Hind* 10). *Swaraj*, as Gandhi imagines it, will not come from depriving the workers of Manchester from producing cloth so that it can be made in industrial mills in Bombay, but through the transformation of the economy so that Indians *and* the English are no longer exploited by wage labour and are able to achieve a level of self-sufficiency: "The spectacle of three hundred million people being cowed down by living in the dread of three hundred men is demoralizing alike for the despots as for the victims. It is the duty of those who have realized the evil nature of the system, however attractive some of its features, torn from their context, may appear to be, to destroy it without delay" (*CW* 49: 133). The aim of resistance is structural transformation.

Leela Gandhi argues that resistance, for Gandhi, is not based in a "contest for power" but in a "concern with the 'purification of politics'" ("Concerning" 124). Further she contends that both Fanon and Gandhi reconceptualize the colonizer/colonized relationship so that the slave no longer regards "itself *as,* or in the image of, the master…" but is "urged to see itself *beside* the master" (*Postcolonial* 21, original emphasis). While I agree with Leela Gandhi's first assertion, the second is much more problematic; indeed it contradicts the first. While it may be true that Fanon worked to "demystify" colonial knowledge, helping to figure the native/slave as the subject of their own history (21), Gandhi's analysis extends beyond the colonial paradigm. Gandhi recognizes no homogeneous slave who is only named and subjugated by a colonial master; rather Gandhi's critique, as I have argued above, recognizes a myriad of subject positions within the Indian colonial moment, a moment shaped by the emergence of what Gandhi identifies as the structure of power of modern civilization, yet also informed by various pre-colonial structures. *Swaraj* marks not just the liberation of oppressed "Indians" from foreign colonial rule but also the end of the structural violence of untouchability, the cultivation of Hindu-Muslim unity and the transformation of the status, if not the role, of women. To argue that the slave should see him/herself beside the master is to recognize the colonizer/colonized relationship as dominating all other relationships of privilege and subjugation. *Ahimsa*, as an ethic of resistance, constructs conflict as neither *antagonistic* nor *agonistic*; it is not a battle between slave and master or a competition between two distinct and homogeneous groups. As I discussed in Chapter One, as a young lawyer in South Africa Gandhi was enamoured with the ideals and principles of the British constitution. Gandhi's feelings towards the English people, and more importantly, the ideals of the British Empire, were certainly altered by the 1919

Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Rowlatt Act and the Khilafat crisis. A*himsa* and *satyagraha,* however, are not defined as a mode of resistance *against* the British, but *for swaraj*, which necessarily includes the "conversion" of the British rather than their "defeat."

Gandhi's construction of power and change, which recognizes various modes of oppression, has profound consequences for understanding the nature of the participants in struggle, both those who are privileged within it and those who are not. Gandhi's *ahimsaic* discourse provides a profoundly different construction of individual agency and the self/Other relationship than the anti-colonial and postcolonial theories I discussed in Chapters One and Two. As a "politics of possibility" rather than a theory of social change or narrative of emancipation, Gandhi's notion of *ahimsa* undermines the construction of the subject as "native" or "worker." The subject within Gandhian theory is constructed in terms of its role within oppression and its ability to "act." He is not so much concerned with understanding the function of various groups within an oppressive structure of power but with the possibility and process of transformation, defined explicitly in social and political terms as well as ethical and moral terms, and in which the individual, the home, the village and the nation are interdependent concepts. If power does not rest in the hands of the administrators of the colonial administration but in all people who participate within oppression, and if oppression is maintained through their participation in the structures of labour, desire, identity, etc. of the system, then "resistance" requires individuals to participate differently, rather than struggle to attain "sovereignty."

As discussed in Chapter One, Gandhi's discourse of resistance, as it was articulated in South Africa, depended upon the modern conception of rights. The Indian campaigns in South Africa sought to prevent legislation which limited what few rights they had as subjects within the Empire with the ultimate aim of securing citizenship rights. After the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Gandhi all but gave up this discourse in favour of a discourse of resistance which depends on individual transformation, particularly in terms of human duties, or *dharma*: "In Swaraj based on Ahimsa people need not know their rights, but it is necessary for them to know their duties. There is no duty but creates a corresponding right, and those only are true rights which flow from a due performance of one's duties" (*CW* 69: 52). Gandhi's linkage between rights and duties, however, is not simply a reaction to his disappointment with the failure of the British Empire to live up to its democratic discourse of rights, but a condition of his construction of power. In *Hind Swaraj* he writes: "We, therefore, have before us in England the farce of everybody wanting and insisting on his rights, nobody thinking of his duty. And where everybody wants rights, who shall give them to whom?" (82). To demand or expect rights is to acknowledge the state as the pre-eminent legitimate authority, both in terms of investing one's well-being in the state's ability to provide protection and recognizing that such rights can only be granted by this authority.

Duty, in contrast, invests in the individual the regulation and control of structures of authority, like the state. The Hindu concept *dharma*, from which Gandhi derives his concept of "duty," denotes such ideas as morality, conduct, duty and custom, and

constructs relationships and roles within the caste hierarchy and local power structures (Guha *Dominance* 35). Guha argues that *dharma* reflects a radical alternative to Western democratic discourses in terms of these relationships. While the American Declaration of Independence claims that all "men" are created equal and, as citizens, have certain inalienable rights, *dharma* reflects the fact that Hindu society is essentially unequal and, because people are not "citizens," but, in many areas, the "subjects" of their King, they have no rights but only duties. While Rights and *dharma*, in this sense, are seemingly radically different discourses of social conduct, Guha's comparison reveals the similarity of the structures of power within which they function. In the democratic state, citizens have Rights, while in the *dharmic* state, subjects have duties towards the elite. However, the rulers also have duties towards their subjects, and members of upper castes have duties towards lower. In both discourses, the citizen/subject depends upon the protection of the State/King and has the obligation of overthrowing this authority if it should fail to adhere to its democratic ideals/*dharma*.[7] For Guha, Congress's reliance upon a discourse of *dharma* reveals the way in which Hindu wisdom and tradition is appropriated to serve the needs of the bourgeois elite. He argues, for instance, that during the 1903-1908 Swadeshi Movement, *dharma* was used by Congress as an idiom which fused Hindu religiosity with patriotic duty. This religious idiom reinforces hierarchy and subordination, solidifying the authority and privilege of the Hindu middle classes within the nationalist movement, with the effect of dividing the nation, "ranging the rural gentry against the peasantry, upper castes against Namasudras, and above all Hindus and Muslims against each other" (Guha *Dominance* 36). Further, Guha argues, the liberal-Hindu or liberal-nationalist formula, which he associates with Gandhism, was ultimately undermined by this idiom, as it was unable to harness and control subaltern insurgency in its *dharmic* idiom.

Gandhi's idiom of *dharma* or duty, however, derives from his unwillingness to separate political agitation from individual conscience. Gandhi conceives of *swaraj* in economic and political terms as well as moral and social terms. *Dharma* constitutes the "moral" point of this "square of Swaraj," meaning "religion in the highest sense of the term. It includes Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc., but is superior to them all" (*CW* 64: 191). Gandhi's conception of duty, while drawing upon the Hindu idiom of *dharma*, transforms the concept, at least in theory, from a mode of personal responsibility which structures and maintains systems of inequality, to a mode of personal conduct which recognizes human interdependence:

> If instead of insisting on rights everyone does his duty, there will immediately be
> the rule of order established among mankind. If you apply this simple and

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[7] Guha notes that the prince must protect his subjects, and his failure to do so can lead to protest expressed specifically in terms of *dharma*, and even including violent overthrow (*Dominance* 58). The U.S. Declaration of Independence states: "whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness" ("Declaration").

> universal rule to employers and labourers, landlords and tenants, the princes and
> their subjects, or the Hindus and the Muslims, you will find that the happiest
> relations can be established in all walks of life without creating disturbance in and
> dislocation of life and business which you see in India as in other parts of the
> world... What, for example, is the duty of the Hindu to his Muslim neighbour?
> His duty is to befriend him as a man, to share his joys and sorrows and help him
> in distress. (*Sarvadoya* 6-7)

Gandhi argues that every person has the duty to refuse to cooperate with institutions of
oppression, as well as the duty to recognize that their well-being is invested in that of
others.

As a result, the development of an egalitarian order requires the wealthy to
recognize that "everything belonged to God and was from God" and therefore "[w]hen an
individual had more than his proportionate portion he became a trustee of that portion for
God's people" (Gandhi *Sarvadoya* 48). Based on the notion that no just and egalitarian
society could develop out of the (violent) dispossession of the wealthy from their land
and possessions, Gandhi conceived of trusteeship as a duty of the wealthy. Guha, like
many Marxist nationalists of the period, interprets Gandhi's theory of trusteeship as a
way in which "the bourgeoisie used the idiom of Dharma in order to promote class
conciliation as well as to secure a place for its own interests" (*Dominance* 38). Guha
considers trusteeship a tactic to avoid a "class war" while providing the appearance of
economic reform.

Gandhi's theory of trusteeship is a deeply problematic idea articulated in vastly
different ways in different contexts, and constructed as an ethical imperative without a
clear description of possible modes of practical implementation. While Gandhi writes
that his "objective is to reach your heart and convert you so that you may hold all your
private property in trust for your tenants and use it primarily for their welfare" (*CW* 58:
247), he also argues that where the Socialists want to defeat or "do away with" the
privileged classes, he wants "them to outgrow their greed and sense of possession, and to
come down in spite of their wealth to the level of those who earn their bread by labour"
(*Village* 51). In effect, as Gandhi writes elsewhere, *zamindars* must reduce themselves to
poverty. The latter proposition allows the *zamindar* the maintenance of wealth, in name,
but in practice requires the forfeiting of the material privilege this wealth affords, while
acquiring a greater consciousness of human interdependence, though such practices as
"bread labour."

It is difficult to understand how this theory of trusteeship accords with Gandhi's
conception of village *swaraj*. However, it provides insight into Gandhi's construction of
agency. Gandhi writes that it does not matter how many trustees can actually attain this
ideal: "Absolute trusteeship is an abstraction like Euclid's definition of a point, and is
equally unattainable. But as we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realizing a
state of equality on earth than by any other method....It is my firm conviction that if the
State suppresses capitalism by violence, it will be caught in the coils of violence itself,

and fail to develop non-violence at any time" (*Village* 52).[8] As critics like Nandy and Ngugi have argued, colonialism –and here I would add other structures of domination – is a matter of consciousness and so requires a revolution of the mind in conjunction with a revolution in the material and political spheres. As with Gandhi's conception of "fearlessness," the notion of agency constructed within trusteeship reveals the intimate relationship between the dominant and the subjugated; the end of domination requires the participation and transformation of both. Unlike Bhabha's theory of "spectacular resistance" which occludes the responsibility for colonial domination of either those who are privileged or those who suffer within colonial order by constructing both the colonized and colonizer as products of colonial discourse, Gandhi's idiom of *dharma*, within the larger discourse of *ahimsa*, constructs oppression as a structure constituted by those who participate within it.

In her analysis of *ahimsa*, Leela Gandhi argues that despite the way in which Gandhism links the structures of violent oppression of the caste system, colonialism and the patriarchy of the Indian "home," and despite the way in which Gandhian resistance allows for the "liberation" of women from the home, the doctrines of universal love and absolute suffering "illustrate *ahimsa's* totalizing containment of its subject" ("Concerning" 135). The necessity of suffering, she contends, conflicts with the structures of individuation within which pain is situated (108). Leela Gandhi argues that *ahimsa* problematically appears to liberate women from patriarchal authority while also constructing their "goodness" in terms of asexuality and suffering. While I tend to agree with this assessment, I believe that as much as Gandhi's construction of the value of suffering is constructed through the value of renunciation, it reflects a construction of the subject in which individuation occurs through the interdependence of the Self and the Other. Speaking to fellow Indians in South Africa in 1906 on the decision to perform *satyagraha* against the so-called "Black Act" Gandhi explains: "We will only provoke ridicule in the beginning... We might have to go to jail... might be deported... some of us might fall ill and even die... [I]t is not impossible that we might have to endure every hardship that we can imagine, and wisdom lies in pledging ourselves on the understanding that we shall have to suffer all that and worse" (*Satyagraha* 99). If the welfare of all, or *sarvadoya*, is the goal of struggle, as opposed to what Gandhi calls "utilitarian goals," the votaries of *ahimsa* must see themselves as expendable in so far as this may aid the struggle: "He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realize this idea" (*CW* 32:402). *Ahimsa*, as an ethic of social conduct, relies upon such themes as simplicity and selflessness, which include conscious and purposeful self-sacrifice and suffering. Significantly, however, the concept of absolute suffering, or

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[8] Gandhi writes: "That possessors of wealth have not acted up to the theory does not prove its falsity; it proves the weakness of the wealthy" (*Village* 53). However, appeals to landowners to voluntarily give up their land to peasants did find some success. After Gandhi's death, Vinoba Bhave initiated the "Bhoodan" movement which succeeded in persuading landowners to relinquish their land to the peasants that lived on it (Editors Note to Vinoba Bhave's "Marx and Gandhi.")

suffering unto death, is constructed only within the specifically political discourse of *satyagraha*.

In her critique of the competing European and Orthodox Hindu discourses of *sati*, Spivak notes the way in which, within the principles of *tatvajnana*, suicide ceases to become a killing of the self when it is performed as the realization of enlightenment: "The paradox of knowing the limits of knowledge is that the strongest assertion of agency, to negate the possibility of agency, cannot be an example of itself" (*Critique* 292). While "selflessness" was central to the individual practice of *ahimsa*, as an ideal, rather than a tangible goal – in terms of seeking to reduce one's possessions and individuality, in so far as it was constructed in competition with that of others – suffering, and specifically suffering unto death, are necessary in a struggle which depends upon the recognition of one's duty to others: "Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant" (Gandhi *CW* 18:133). Unlike the *sati* that Spivak describes, in which orthodox Hinduism constructs the woman's self-immolation as an act of devotion to her husband, revealing "the structure of domination within the rite" (*Critique* 293), the suffering that Gandhi speaks of is either a personal suffering for the purposes of purification or a willingness to suffer in order to reveal or expose a structure of domination in order to "melt the stoniest heart of the stoniest fanatic" (Gandhi *CW* 27: 189). The *satyagrahi* suffers not in obedience to a superior "other," or as a "martyr." The absolute suffering of satyagraha is related to, but distinct from, the suffering of the desire for selflessness, in that as a mode of confronting oppression, it does not recognize the "opponent" or "adversary" as an antagonist.

The second effect of the construction of power within Gandhi's *ahimsaic* discourse, therefore, is the construction of an Other whose welfare is tied up in the welfare of the Self. While Gandhi invests the performance of resistance within both the Indian elite and those subjugated within the system, recognizing their responsibility in the maintenance of an oppressive structure of relations, he does not absolve the administrators and beneficiaries of colonial, capitalist or patriarchal relations of power from their responsibility. For Fanon, colonial discourse shapes the native's perception of the self as the mirror image of that of the colonizer; in response to the Manichean framework of colonial discourse – in which the settler constructs "the absolute evil of the native" – the native constructs his/her own identity against "the absolute evil of the settler" (*Wretched* 93). Within such a discourse, conflict can only be "resolved' through the total defeat or destruction of one or the other of the antagonists. Native resistance, Fanon claims, is constructed through the belief that "life can only spring up again out of the rotting corpse of the settler" (93). The *ahimsaic* struggle, in contrast, figures the "adversaries" in radically different ways than the discourse of "battle." While the tactics of *satyagraha* can quite accurately be characterized as simply a non-violent violence, in the sense that noncooperation or civil disobedience can function coercively within an ideology of power and conflict in the same way that guerrilla warfare, for instance, does, Gandhi's notion of *ahimsa* is not simply a tactic or philosophy of struggle. "True democracy or Swaraj of the masses," Gandhi writes, "can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to

remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists"
(*Village* 7). When Moorthy, in *Kanthapura*, pleads that his colleagues not beat the police
officer, he is acting upon the *ahimsaic* precept to hate the "sin" but not the "sinner:" "It is
quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount
to resisting and attacking oneself" (Gandhi *Autobiography* 254). Nonviolence, then,
derives from a respect for the inter-relationship between all living things.

Genuine "liberation" derives from neither the British *granting* India its
independence nor an elite group of nationalists *winning* independence by forcing the
British from the subcontinent. Instead, Gandhi's *ahimsa* is a discourse of social conduct
that recognizes the way in which all participants in oppression have responsibility for its
maintenance and are shaped by it. As much as *swaraj* requires the liberation of the
people of India from material exploitation and the cultural violence of colonial discourse
and the ideology of caste, it also requires the "liberation" of the British from the cultural
violence of colonial discourse. Leela Gandhi argues that the theoretical *satyagrahi*, by
definition, must assume that they possess truth: "the *satyagrahi*'s specific acts of
resistance against contesting or authoritarian discourses begin with the knowledge that
the moral victory has already been resolved in his/her favor" ("Concerning" 124). As
much as struggle shaped by the principles of *ahimsa* derives from the moral certitude of
the *satyagrahi*, however, it is nonetheless humble. By recognizing the humanity of the
Other, the path of *ahimsa* requires that the *satyagrahi* appeal to the conscience of the
adversary. Recurring throughout Gandhi's writings is the principle of conversion: "I
embark on my campaign as much out of my love for the Englishman as for the Indian.
By self-suffering I seek to convert him, never to destroy him" (*CW* 42: 484).
Nonetheless, Gandhi also argues that "[w]e must refuse to wait for the wrong to be
righted till the wrong-doer has been roused to a sense of his iniquity… we must combat
the wrong by ceasing to assist the wrong-doer directly or indirectly" (*CW* 17: 490).]

In Chapter Two I discuss the "implacable enmity" out of which oppositional anti-
colonial discourses of resistance derive, and upon which they depend. Fanon's
conclusion to *The Wretched of the Earth* appears incongruous with the Manichean
framework of colonial discourse/power he constructs throughout the book. He writes:
"For Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf,
we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man" (*Wretched* 316).
Fanon's "new humanism" has no basis in the ideology of resistance he theorizes.
Similarly, despite Said's contention that in *Culture and Imperialism* he seeks to formulate
an alternate to the politics of blame and political reality of confrontation, hostility and the
cycle of violence, as I argue in Chapter Two, he fails to acknowledge the contradiction
between the essential antagonism of anticolonial insurgency and nationalism and the
possibility of producing a nonadversarial community. Further, Said ignores the way in
which such a politics of blame was transformed in the praxis of Gandhian resistance.

Remembering his fascination with the British Empire as a youth, Gandhi
recollects the jarring effect of becoming conscious of the figure of the "enemy" in the
British anthem: "How could we assume that the so-called 'enemies' were 'knavish'? And
because they were enemies, were they bound to be wrong?" (*Autobiography* 167). The
material reality of privilege and deprivation, domination and subjugation is not ignored in

Gandhi's *ahimsaic* discourse. However, *ahimsa,* as an ethic of social conduct, confronts, and requires the transformation of not only the material and social domination of oppression but the ideology of oppression or colonial knowledge/discourse. As Nandy argues, "Ultimately, modern oppression, as opposed to traditional oppression, is not an encounter between the self and the enemy, the rulers and the ruled, or the gods and the demons. It is a battle between dehumanized self and the objectified enemy, the technologized bureaucrat and his reified victim, pseudo-rulers and their fearsome other selves projected on to their 'subjects'" (Nandy *Intimate* xvi). Resistance, therefore, as understood through the concept of *ahimsa,* does not signify the insurgency of the "oppressed" against the "oppressor," but the transformation of the material and discursive structures that maintain oppression; a "new humanism" *is* resistance rather than its after-effect or hope.

The Subaltern Studies' representation of the ideological framework of peasant insurgency constructs resistance as a politics of blame and antagonism: "We know, for instance, that the identification of the enemy in peasant revolts, the separation of the 'they' from the 'we,' occurs within a framework where the distinct communities are seen as being in antagonistic relations with each other" (Chatterjee "For" 12). Just as Rao reveals in *Kanthapura* the way in which Gandhi and Gandhism are subject to interpretation by peasant communities and are understood in terms of the dominant discourses of those communities, he also reveals the way in which the Gandhian construction of the enemy/Other challenges dominant notions of the nature of conflict and resistance. Following his beating by the police officer, Badè Khan, Moorthy attempts to explain that Khan is not the enemy:

> 'The great enemy is in us Rangamma,' said Moorthy, slowly, 'hatred is in us. If only we could not hate, if only we could show fearlessness, calm affection toward our fellow men, we would be stronger, and not only would the enemy yield, but he would be converted. If I, I alone, could love Badè Khan, I am sure our cause would win. Maybe – I shall love him – with your blessings!' Rangamma did not understand this, neither, to tell you the truth, did any of us. We would do no harm to no living creature. But to love Badè Khan – no that was another thing. (65)

Ahimsa does not accord with the "normative" understanding of conflict, in which the Self is constructed as "benign," "just" and acting only in "self-defence" while the enemy/Other is constructed as "evil," "unjust," and "aggressive."

Moorthy's desire to "love" Khan, however, when read within Gandhi's theory of conflict, does not reflect a utopian hope that the conflict situation can be simply transcended through a recognition of the common humanity of the adversaries. Gandhi counsels the *satyagrahi*:

> I want you to feel like loving your opponents, and the way to do it is to give them the same credit for honesty of purpose which you would claim for yourself... I confess that it was a difficult task for me yesterday whilst I was talking to those friends who insisted on their right to exclude the 'unapproachables' from the temple roads. I confess there was selfishness behind their talk. How then was I to credit them with honesty of purpose?... I am considering their condition of mind from their point of view and not my own... And immediately we begin to think of

things as our opponents think of them, we shall be able to do them full justice. I
know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to
reach... three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will
disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their
standpoint.   (*CW* 26: 271)

Gandhi's deconstruction of the self/Other binary of colonial discourse, and the dominant
discourses of resistance, therefore, reconceptualizes conflict without eliding the structures
of inequality that produce the conflict or the competing interests and perspectives of the
parties involved.

Gandhi's concept of *ahimsa* as an ethic of resistance (and social conduct)
provides an alternative construction of conflict than the theories of resistance that are
dominant in postcolonial studies. Homi Bhabha's theories of mimicry, hybridity and
spectacular resistance reveal the way in which the functioning of colonial authority is
never as certain or total as colonial discourse constructs it. However, the examples
Bhabha chooses to illuminate the impossibility of colonial power disregards the role and
responsibility of any colonial subject in the production and maintenance of the structures
of inequality that is colonialism. Gandhi's *ahimsaic* discourse, in contrast, not only
recognizes the way in which both the colonizer and the colonized are produced within
colonial discourse, but also the way in which colonial authority is maintained through the
performance of this discourse; power is dependent upon the participation of all subjects
within the system. While investing "change" in personal transformation, Gandhi
acknowledges both the existence of "groups" within the society, each with its own
perspective of its position within the oppressive system of colonialism, caste, etc, and the
inter-relationship of those groups.

Nandy argues that Gandhi was not a cultural relativist: "In the thousands of pages
of his collected works, there is hardly a sentence to suggest that he believed in
fundamental or irreconcilable differences between cultures" ("From Outside" 172). Yet,
as Ahmad argues, Gandhi's critique of the secular nation-state, in which difference was
ignored in the interest of the particularly modern and hierarchical structure of the state,
led to the practical reinforcement of particular (namely religious rather than secular) ideas
of Hinduism and Islam (*Lineages* 11-12). Gandhi's experiment with fostering Hindu-
Muslim unity in many ways, as Ahmad and others outline, impeded Hindu-Muslim
understanding. Of course, the same can be said of both Hindu and Muslim nationalist
ideologies. While the practical manifestations of Gandhi's rhetorical emphasis on Hindu-
Muslim unity may have, at times, exacerbated divisions between Hindus and Muslims
rather than transformed them, significantly, Gandhi's *ahimsaic* discourse does not
marginalize difference in the interests of constructing a homogeneous (resistant)
community. When Gandhi claims that Hindu-Muslim unity is *ahimsa's* most significant
"test," he constructs the path of *ahimsa* as the possibility of "difference" which is not
antagonistic.

CHAPTER FOUR

South Africa and Reconciliation: Resisting the Politics of Blame and Denial

I.   Resistance and the Apartheid Imagination

In *No Future Without Forgiveness* (1999), retired Archbishop of Cape Town, Desmond Tutu reflects upon South Africa's post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which he chaired. Tutu's reflections on the Commission and his hopes for South Africa are punctuated by the refrain that the end of apartheid constitutes a "miraculous" transformation of the centuries-long conflict resulting from white domination over and exploitation of South Africa's African majority: "[T]he world saw a veritable miracle unfolding before their eyes... Instead of the horrendous blood bath that so many had feared and so many others had predicted, here were these amazing South Africans, black and white together, crafting a relatively peaceful changeover and transfer of power" (*No Future* 10-11). Tutu was among those who feared that apartheid could only end in horrific bloodshed. For instance, in a 1976 letter to Prime Minister John Vorster, written just weeks before South African police violently repressed student demonstrations in Soweto, Tutu warned that unless the government initiated reform, violence and bloodshed were inevitable: "A people can take only so much and no more" (*Rainbow* 10). While Tutu constructs South Africa's transition as a process of reconciliation – with the TRC constituting merely an initial post-apartheid institutional element of that process – for many observers of and participants within South Africa's transition, the TRC is constructed as a necessary, though unfortunate, "compromise."

Many critics of the TRC view the commission as a problematic compromise resulting from the fact that the conflict of apartheid was not resolved, but ended in a "stalemate;" trials for government crimes against humanity would have provided a "just" resolution, but because there was no "genuine" ANC/black victory over the white government, such trials would have precipitated mass violence, or, more practically, were economically and logistically unviable. ANC leader Thabo Mbeki explains: "Within the ANC the cry was to 'catch the bastards and hang them' – but we realized you could not simultaneously prepare for a peaceful transition while saying we want to catch and hang people, so we *paid a price* for the peaceful transition" (qtd. in Villa-Vicencio 208; emphasis added). This compromise, then, is imagined as one between justice (and likely bloodshed) and a lack of justice (the TRC). Such critiques of the TRC and the South African "compromise," however, are based on the assumption that black resistance sought to *defeat* the government. Further, they are confined by apartheid's Manichean discourse of a relationship between white *perpetrators* and black *victims*. These critiques of the TRC, and more generally, the transition from apartheid to liberal democracy, reflect the way in which constructions of resistance and liberation are confined by what I call the "apartheid imagination."

Although Tutu himself acknowledges the way in which the end of apartheid was negotiated, rather than won, and the consequent limitations of such a negotiated settlement, his construction of the conflict, and specifically the nature of black resistance, does not conform to the Manichean framework of the apartheid imagination. Reflecting on the long lines of people waiting to cast their ballot in South Africa's first inclusive election in 1994, Tutu writes: "South Africans found fellow South Africans – they realized what we had been at such pains to tell them, that they shared a common humanity, that race, ethnicity, skin color were really irrelevancies;" in these lines people of all races stood together and whites discovered that those racialized within apartheid as "black," "Indian" or "Coloured" "had the same concerns and anxieties... They wanted a decent home, a good job, a safe environment for their families, good schools for their children, and almost none wanted to drive the whites into the sea. They just wanted their place in the sun" (*No Future* 7). Of course, the material consequences of the racialized discourse of apartheid were not an irrelevancy, during apartheid or after. In this statement, however, Tutu identifies the motivations for black resistance as transcending the oppositional framework of apartheid's colonial discourse of power. Rather than seeking to take the place of the white oppressor, or imagining black liberation as only possible through the destruction of whites – as Fanon's theory of anti-colonial resistance maintains – Tutu constructs black liberation as material equality and the destruction of the binary framework of the apartheid imagination. Rather than a failure of "justice," therefore, the reconciliation project does not conform to a discourse of resistance which can only be resolved through the "victory" of one side over the other; further, it provides the only method of facilitating a process that will perform this sort of liberation.

As I have argued thus far, the dominant models of resistance within postcolonial studies impede the possibility of a post-colonial space which is not conceived of within the discourse of colonialism. In South Africa's long transition from apartheid to a multi-racial democratic state, the ideal of reconciliation performs resistance in the sense that while it is not conceived of outside the relations of power of colonial or apartheid authority, it is not confined by colonial or apartheid discourse; reconciliation escapes the limitations of oppositional discourses, invests transformation in the acknowledgement and engagement with responsibility, and engages with discursive and material forms of oppression as interdependent systems. My purpose in this chapter, therefore, is to analyze South Africa's TRC – as a way of illuminating a concept of reconciliation in practice – as well as theoretical conceptualizations and critiques of the concept, in order to suggest that reconciliation provides a politics of postcolonial resistance.

First, I discuss what I call the "apartheid imagination," the dominant narrative of apartheid South Africa and the role of literature in both supporting and challenging this narrative. The apartheid imagination shapes the way in which power and identity are constructed and the way in which "resistance" may be imagined; it produces both the fear and the prediction of violence that Tutu describes. Second, I briefly discuss the TRC itself as well as the discontent that surrounded the TRC process. In particular, I argue that the TRC, as a government institution with a finite mandate (both temporally and with regard to its object of investigation) and the framework of restorative justice within which reconciliation is conceived are paradoxical. Third, I argue that reconciliation does

not simply deconstruct the Manichean framework of the apartheid imagination, but seeks to dismantle it as a politics of identity and social change. The Manichean discourse of apartheid power does not provide merely a framework through which the TRC is interpreted, and found wanting, but is the subject of reconciliation as resistance. In particular, I analyse the way in which the TRC's practical work – the victim and amnesty hearings – constructs the parties to particular events in terms of victims and perpetrators. I discuss the way in which this binary framework serves to both reinforce and challenge the apartheid imagination, and I draw on the work of Mahmood Mamdani to suggest that reconciliation, as a politics of postcolonial resistance, must be informed by a notion of power which recognizes those who benefit and those who suffer within an oppressive system of power, rather than oppressors and oppressed. While the TRC itself is fraught with contradictions and practical limitations as an institution, the concept of *ubuntu*, which informs South Africa's reconciliation project, provides a radically different way of conceiving of the subject, positioning the aim of resistance as the "re-humanization" of all participants within apartheid.

I develop these ideas in the fourth section of the chapter by analyzing Sindiwe Magona's representation of the life of a mother of one of the killers of the American student Amy Biehl, in *Mother to Mother* (1998). Finally, I conclude the chapter by returning to Said's idea of the rhetoric of blame, suggesting that the ideal of reconciliation would be better served by contending with the politics of blame and denial, rather than through the discourse of apology and forgiveness which dominated the TRC. I argue that through the interrogation of the way blame and denial maintain discourses of domination and material relations of inequality, reconciliation can provide a model of a postcolonial liberatory politics of transformation.

South African cultural production, from song, to poetry to the novel, provided a prominent mode of opposing the apartheid government in South Africa. As much as oppositional literature provides representations of power from the perspective of the "oppressed," however, it also often reinscribed the discursive construction of power and identity of colonial (apartheid) rule.[1] During the apartheid era, literary production challenged colonial authority and participated in the production of counter-narratives of South African identity. Many writers and artists were imprisoned or forced into exile. Alongside the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement in the 1970s, a genre of literature developed that conveyed narratives of protest, "a narrative form that aims not merely at historical and social documentation, but also at bringing about a movement towards commitment on the part of readers" (Watts 211). Such literature of protest records a history of oppositional politics occluded from the "official" narrative of apartheid. For instance, Jane Watts argues that "Soweto novels" such as Sipho Sepamla's *A Ride on the Whirlwind* (1981), Miriam Tlali's *Amandla* (1980) and Mongane Serote's *To Every Birth Its Blood* (1981), "educate the political awareness of

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[1] While some critics argue that apartheid constitutes a special case of colonialism and cannot be understood through a postcolonial framework, Mamdani argues that apartheid should be understood as the generic form of the colonial state in Africa ("When" 4).

the readers, help them to understand the mechanisms of community action, and... deepen their commitment to a common cause" (221). So-called "novels of liberation" such as these provide a narrative of oppression from the perspective of those seeking to dismantle it; these novels engage with the experience of violence. In contrast, works by Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee, among others, ground narratives of oppression and opposition not in particular historical moments of apartheid violence, but in the *condition* of apartheid violence. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), for instance, deconstructs the cultural construction of the barbarian/enemy.

Nadine Gordimer's *July's People* (1981) reflects the limitations of apartheid discourse for imagining the future; it represents the way in which the fears and predictions of violence that Tutu identifies constrain the possibility of other models of social transformation. Written in the wake of the Soweto uprising, *July's People* contributes to the cultural entrenchment of the uprising in the consciousness(es) of South Africans. The novel portrays a white Johannesburg family's escape from a bloody war between "whites" and "blacks" to the rural homestead of their black worker, July. Rather than reflecting on the social, psychological and cultural impact of the cycle of violence precipitated by the brutal repression of student demonstrations in Soweto, as the novels cited above do, Gordimer depicts the seeming impossibility of this cycle ever being transformed. Set in a "hypothetical, *but really inevitable* black rebellion" (JanMohamed 139, emphasis added), the novel provides insight into the nature of the apartheid imagination as both a limit upon the possibility of reconciliation and as the discourse that reconciliation seeks to transform. The novel depicts South Africa's future as irrevocably one of mass violence. This "bloodbath" is the unavoidable end of a structure of power in which there is no possible relationship between blacks and whites that is not hierarchical, unequal and antagonistic.

Tracing the beginnings of revolution to the industrial strikes of 1980, Gordimer constructs a narrative of apartheid's collapse, marked by riots in which white neighbourhoods are razed, and by well-equipped and well-organized black military insurgency. Hidden in the rural village of their servant July, the Smales hear reports on the radio of attacks from guerrilla bases in Mozambique and missile strikes against South Africa's cities. While the bloodshed of combat provides merely a backdrop to Gordimer's story, the relationship between the Smales and their African protectors mirrors the struggle between blacks and whites carried out in the battle zones of urban South Africa. Maureen is confused by July's "hope that everything will come back all right" (95) and Bam is awe-struck by the village chief's desire for Bam to teach him how to shoot, so that the village can defend itself against those from Soweto and Mozambique who the chief fears will come to "take this country of my nation" (119). Both Maureen and Bam, however, are also deeply troubled by their vulnerable position, suddenly dependent upon July's good-will.

The anxiety they experience over the "disappearance" of the keys to the car – their only means of escape – and then their gun – their only form of "protection" – signify their loss of mastery over their own well-being and over July/blacks. As much as Maureen and Bam self-identify as "progressive," the seeming reversal of their long established master/servant relationship is deeply unsettling. As JanMohamed argues, "as

[Maureen] becomes increasingly aware of the radical character of her dependency, she attempts to manipulate July in a progressively mean and desperate manner in order to retain her mastery" (140). The fact that blacks now also have guns and have begun to exercise this new-found means of struggle by blowing up the Union Buildings or burning of master bedrooms suggests an "explosion of roles" (Gordimer 117). However, the Manichean discourse of black/white relations is not challenged; only the certainty of who occupies the role of master and of servant has been disrupted. Indeed, the reversal of roles Gordimer constructs echoes Fanon's assertion that the colonized seek to take the place of the colonizer.

After Bam and Maureen's heated exchange with July over the whereabouts of the gun, Maureen contemplates the extent to which she and her family are now dependent upon their former black servant for water, soap, and protection, as well as the extent to which July had been dependent upon them: "She matched the remembered total dependency with this one. – Used to come to ask for everything. An aspirin. Can I use the telephone. Nothing in that house was his. – Well... he wasn't kept short of anything. Anything we had to give. – I wonder what would have become of him." (155). In this moment of realization there initially appears to be the possibility of understanding and the desire for reconciliation. Yet, while Maureen becomes cognizant of the relationship of dependence and control between herself and July, she is unable to translate this epiphany into a recognition of a possible relationship of inter-dependence that is not unequal. When a helicopter descends into the village, Maureen desperately runs toward the sound of the rotors. Not knowing the origin of the helicopter, she prefers the unknown to social relationships which cannot be imagined as other than (her) control and (black) subservience.

In his construction of the Manichean nature of colonial relationships, JanMohamed argues that the apartheid system constructs whites as independent from blacks through policies of "separate development," masking the real dependence of whites on exploited black labour: "while zealously fighting godless communist totalitarianism, he has in fact created the most ruthless, authoritarian, and systematically inhuman society in the contemporary world" (84). As a result, JanMohamed argues that the work of writers such as Gordimer or Alex La Guma must be examined within this "violent, antagonistic, and Manichean society." JanMohamed's reading of a novel like *July's People,* therefore concentrates upon – and I would argue reinforces – the Manichean relationship Gordimer constructs as irrevocable. Along these lines, Rosemary Jolly argues that "[a]s critics, teachers, and students, we need to forge a language beyond apartheid that refuses to hypostatize South Africa as the model in which the colonized black and the settler white eternally confront each other in the 'ultimate racism'" ("Rehearsals" 22). For critics like Leela Gandhi, Edward Said, and Jolly, postcolonialism has a particular political responsibility. Postcolonial critiques of apartheid or the deconstruction of colonial discourses cannot elide the way in which these discourses genuinely shape consciousness and action. While we can actively interrogate the fact that there was much more "diversity and division" within the homogeneous black and white "blocks" created through apartheid (Maluleke 193), such simplifications nonetheless shape political action. For instance, in her literary reconstruction of the 1993 murder of

Amy Biehl by black youth in Guguletu, Sindiwe Magona has the youth chanting "one settler, one bullet," a common rallying-cry of South African youth.[2]

Was the relatively peaceful transition from apartheid to liberal democracy in South Africa, however, really a miracle? Novels like *July's People*, or even the Soweto novels cited above, construct a cultural memory of violent conflict as power and resistance. The role of violent opposition in the cultural memory of the "New South Africa" is particularly evident in the ANC's ambivalent relationship with the TRC. While critics have suggested that the TRC's mapping of South African history has unduly emphasized the ANC, and particularly its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the ANC was also hesitant to allow members to seek "amnesty" for human rights abuses committed in the struggle for liberation. The simplistic equation of anti-apartheid resistance with the ANC – and armed insurgency specifically – privileges the mythology of violent insurgency over the multitude of other forms of intervention practiced by the ANC and other organizations.[3] Echoing the contention expressed in the TRC's Final Report that armed struggle was easily contained by the government (TRC I 36), Sutherland and Meyer, for instance, argue that ANC military insurgency never developed further than symbolic actions and that the MK functioned as the "propaganda arm" of the ANC rather than an organized guerrilla army (184).[4] The struggle against apartheid, though it included violence – both in the form of so-called "black-on-black" violence and in the form of attacks on the government – drew upon a variety of tactics, from campaigns of non-cooperation to the establishment of alternative social and political structures in communities to international divestment campaigns (See Christie 28).

Because the struggle was not primarily violent, however, does not mean that it was not constructed through the antagonistic discourse of apartheid. As Kenneth Christie argues, the structure of the ANC ideology is based on the antagonism between the oppressed and the colonist: "There is no language of moral ambiguities or nuances. The struggle is a just one, and there was no alternative to it" (Christie 29). By investigating particular human rights abuses, the TRC defines subjects as either perpetrators or victims. In its victim and amnesty hearings, the Commission utilizes a conceptual and legal framework of warfare, such as the distinction between combatant and non-combatant as defined within the Geneva Conventions. As a result, those aspects of apartheid and the anti-apartheid struggle which fall within the mandate of the TRC function within a narrative of war between two sides.

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[2] See: Tutu *Forgiveness* 152, Davenport, Pollard 116.

[3] Christie argues that "the ANCs version of history is couched in terms of an armed struggle, a massive period of heroic resistance against a criminal apartheid" (28). For examples of the way in which postcolonial critics collapse anti-apartheid resistance with the ANC, see: Mishra and Hodge 278, and Lazarus *Nationalism* 207.

[4] Former MK organizer and current ANC government minister, Ronnie Kasrils expresses similar sentiments, arguing that because the MK was small and poorly equipped, its main aim was to "create propaganda amongst the people to inspire the people... song and toyi toyi featured as a weapon" (qtd. in Page).

In *Long Walk To Freedom* (1994), Nelson Mandela states that when questioned on his commitment to the use of violence in the mid-1980s, he affirmed that while he would not renounce violence, he recognized that "violence could never be the ultimate solution to the situation in South Africa and that men and women by their very nature required some kind of negotiated understanding" (528). Significantly, Mandela suggests that "liberation" cannot come through violent revolution (alone) but through a negotiated and shared *understanding*. Within the apartheid imagination, such negotiation can only come *after* the struggle has ended. South African President F.W. de Klerk, who brokered the end of the institution of apartheid, stated in 1990: "'The season for violence is over. The time for reconstruction and reconciliation has arrived'" (qtd. in Yousaf vii). Similarly, ANC leader and successor to Nelson Mandela as President, Thabo Mbeki, conceives of reconciliation as an "end-product" of a period of transformation following the successful end of resistance against oppression (Krog 144). The historical narrative of the apartheid imagination constructs the cultivation of understanding, therefore, as a post-conflict endeavour – following the "genuine" struggle – rather than a means of conflict transformation.[5] Within such a narrative, reconciliation functions as that "great leap" from resistance to liberation. While the TRC, as a particular institution charged with *fostering* reconciliation, does occur *after* a period of negotiations and the first inclusive democratic elections, as I will argue in this chapter, in contrast to the narrative of the apartheid imagination, the ideals of reconciliation helped to shape many aspects of the anti-apartheid movement. The ethic of reconciliation played, and continues to play, a vital role in *resisting* apartheid oppression and its legacy.

II.   The Commission: Truth, Reconciliation, Justice

Much of the critical assessment of the TRC explores the extent to which the Commission has succeeded or failed to facilitate South African "liberation." For the most part, this analysis fails to examine the way in which apartheid discourse shapes perceptions of the TRC, and fails to acknowledge its own (particularly Western) assumptions of power and justice. Indeed, in most criticism of the TRC, both academic and popular, the TRC is referred to as the "Truth Commission," the idea of "reconciliation" marginalized by an over-riding interest with the concepts of Truth and (retributive) Justice. By discussing the idea of reconciliation in terms of the concerns of postcolonial theory, I do not wish to remove the reconciliation process in South Africa from the very specific social, cultural and economic conditions and expectations of that nation's transition; in fact, I am greatly concerned with analyzing the interdependence of discursive and material relations of power within the concept, as it is articulated in the South African context. Nonetheless, in this chapter I am concerned not solely with evaluating the TRC, but with an analysis of the construction of reconciliation within

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[5] Attwell and Harlow contend that the "remaking of South Africa" was "heralded by a period of… secret exchanges and public negotiation" *following* "a generation of *armed struggle* against a system of state violence" (1, emphasis added).

South Africa's transition – how it occurs and what it means for individuals and communities. If one of the primary concerns of postcolonialism is to deconstruct discursive structures of oppression and to articulate how these discursive structures represent and reinforce material dominance, reconciliation provides one possible model of a postcolonial politics.

Set up by South Africa's government of National Unity through the 1995 Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, the TRC provides an institutional mode of coming to terms with the history of a nation "soaked in the blood of her children of all races and of all political persuasions," to use Tutu's description (TRC I 1). Based on the Act, the main responsibilities of the TRC were to establish as complete a history as possible of gross violations of human rights committed between the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 and May 1994; grant amnesty to those who disclosed their participation in politically motivated violations; facilitate the restoration of human dignity of the victims of these violations by providing them a venue to share their stories, and for relatives by allowing them to learn of the fate of their relations; recommend a regime of reparations for victims; and recommend measures to prevent future violations (TRC I 55, 57). Both the TRC's mandate and the time in which it was given to fulfill this mandate were extremely limited. Further, the mandate of the TRC was, itself, a product of negotiation between the political parties involved in the government of national unity. As such, the TRC seems to have satisfied none of these parties: The National Party consistently portrayed the Commission as a witch-hunt against whites and proved entirely uncooperative; the ANC impeded the work of the Commission; and more marginalized anti-apartheid leaders, like Inkatha's Mangosuthu Buthelezi, argued that the Commission's framework simplistically produced the struggle as one between black resistance and white oppression, marginalizing human rights violations perpetrated among blacks, particularly by the ANC against members of Inkatha. While the antagonisms the Commission reveals, and perhaps reinforces, seem to provide an obstacle to reconciliation, the TRC should not be seen as synonymous with reconciliation. Fully cognizant of the narrow objectives of the TRC, members of the Commission take pains to position the TRC as a rather humble initial step in what must be a very long process; as Tutu argues, the Commission sought to "*promote* not to *achieve*" the particular objectives described above (*No Future* 165, emphasis added).

The TRC constitutes not an end itself, but is both a "goal and a process" (TRC I 106). Reconciliation, as it is defined within the Final Report, constitutes a complex process working on multiple, yet interdependent, levels. First, the TRC attempted to facilitate reconciliation, in a few cases at least, between the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) of particular abuses. While much importance is placed on the apologies of the perpetrator and the victim's forgiveness, perpetrators were not required to seek forgiveness as a condition of applying for amnesty, and forgiveness is not a necessary starting point for this form of reconciliation between individuals. Second, by constructing a narrative history of the apartheid regime and opposition against it, the TRC sought to foster the "nation's" reconciliation with its past, or a national "coming to terms with painful truth." In its Final Report, the TRC weaves a history of apartheid which

includes excerpts of personal narratives of the impact of human rights abuses and the conditions and motivation for the perpetration of those abuses, summaries of all of the legislation and policies implemented to institute and maintain white dominance, and statements by representatives of the country's religious institutions, political parties and organized opposition movements. As I argue in my discussion of *Mother to Mother*, below, this endeavour to reconcile the "nation" with its past is not framed in terms of a passive "acceptance" of the past, but an active engagement with how that past shapes present social, cultural and material relationships. Further, constructing a record which provides "as complete a picture as possible" is not synonymous with constructing a unitary "official" truth. Even if all a truth commission can accomplish is reducing "the number of lies that can circulate unchallenged in public discourse" (Ignatieff 113), as Michael Ignatieff contends, the creation of such a record makes it ever more difficult for those privileged within the system to deny that the gross abuses of human rights occurred or to deny knowledge of these abuses.[6]

Finally, by fostering initial steps at reconciliation between individuals and beginning a process of reconciling the nation with its past, the TRC was meant to initiate the process of reconciling communities and groups with one another, thereby fostering national unity in the "new" south Africa. This "new" South Africa, however, is not the product of the TRC's Final Report; it cannot be legislated and it cannot occur only at the level of historical narrative. It may be argued that one of the main functions of truth commissions is to restore confidence in basic procedural justice, constructed within the authority of the state and the subject as citizen (Bhargava 45, 56). However, national reconciliation, as it is defined in the TRC Report and by people like Tutu, has a much broader mandate than instilling confidence in the institutions of the state; indeed, reconciliation may challenge the status of such institutions. According to the TRC report, reconciliation seeks to allow individuals to come to terms with their own pain (TRC I 107), and neighbourhoods and communities to engage in their own formal and informal processes towards reconciliation. Such processes construct reconciliation not simply as "explanations" of local histories, but also in the form of a new politics of inclusion and participation.[7]

The TRC has much more complex objectives for social, cultural and material transformation and goes much further towards fostering these objectives than many critics acknowledge. The Commission is, however, limited by its narrow parameters of "gross human rights abuses," and a lack of resources. Further, as an institution of the

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[6] Maluleke argues that many critics of the TRC miss the Commission's "human factor;" he quotes Albie Sachs: "'I loved [the TRC Report] because it was so uneven, it was rough, it had seams... It contained the passion, the variety, and even the contradictions of the process itself'" (197).

[7] National initiatives, community relations and individual experiences were linked in unpredictable, but at times, significant ways. For example, Nicholas Links' acknowledgement of murdering Matan Jonga facilitated the initial step towards personal reconciliation between Links and the Jonga family and initiated a process of reconciliation within their community more broadly (TRC V 399).

state, particularly as the most acceptable government initiative to the main political parties, in practice, reconciliation becomes synonymous with "nation(state)-building." As well, as a government-initiated program, the TRC's credibility very much depends on the participation of the "leaders" of both the apartheid regime and the opposition against it. As a number of critics of the TRC have noted, despite the power to subpoena and to conduct investigations, the Commission failed to "call to account" political leaders (Maluleke 190, Van der Merwe 94). While Tutu's worry that few people would come forward to tell their stories of suffering and pain proved to be unfounded – the Commission received more than 20 000 statements (Tutu *No Future* 108) – there were far fewer requests for amnesty, and most of those were by members of the ANC or other opposition groups. By and large, few white perpetrators of abuses came forward and most of those who did were those who had carried out orders and not those who held decision-making positions. In its Final Report the TRC does account for structural forms of apartheid, but the majority of the Commission's work, and the work that received public attention, focused on individual experiences of direct violence, or gross human rights abuses, rather than individual and collective experiences of the structural violence of apartheid policies, from the pass laws to forced displacement to the Bantu education system. Following the publication of the TRC's Seventh Volume of its Final Report in March 2003, which includes recommendations on reparations and rehabilitation, in April 2003 President Mbeki announced a reparations programme which includes the payment of a grant of R30 000 to each "victim" designated by the TRC and a continuing program of "reconstruction and development" (Mbeki). As many critics have noted, national reconciliation cannot occur without radical structural change.

Unlike Chile or Sierra Leone, where blanket amnesties were summarily given to perpetrators of abuses and crimes against humanity, the TRC requires individuals to request amnesty, and, in order to qualify, to acknowledge and account for their actions publicly. While the TRC seeks to restore the common humanity of all parties to the conflict, its mandate is constructed within the binary framework of retributive justice, recognizing only "victims" and "perpetrators." As a result, many critics of the TRC, both inside South Africa and out, argue that the provision of amnesty, rather than of trials and punishment, is a failure to provide justice. An editorial in the newspaper, *The Sowetan*, for instance, warned that "reconciliation not based on justice can never work" (Gutmann and Thompson 22). In such critiques, justice constitutes retribution. Indeed, this lack of "justice" impedes reconciliation, for "a society cannot forgive what it cannot punish" (Rotberg "Truth" 7).[8] As Rosemary Jolly argues, however, such concerns belie an investment in the individual, bourgeois, liberal subject of Western democratic discourse ("Desiring" 694). Jolly further challenges these critiques by arguing that to assume that "victims"/survivors believe that the punishment of perpetrators would provide healing or restoration in a way that the TRC cannot, or that they are incapable of understanding their own personal trauma in the context of South Africa's dramatic social and political change, insults them and allows them no subjectivity. She claims that P.W. Botha's

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[8] See also Atwell and Harlow 2, Little 65, J. Gibson 546

refusal to be "judged" by the TRC and criticism that the TRC constitutes a failure of justice, though dramatically different positions, both fail to acknowledge the possibility of alternate legitimate forms of public and political accountability.[9] Unlike the Nuremberg Trials, the TRC is simply one tool in a process and does *not* depend on closure; rather the TRC includes a "surplus of meaning beyond the mechanics of secular and legal concepts of violation, testimony, proof, confession, judgment, punishment, financial compensation, even the truths the commission itself seeks to verify"(Jolly "Desiring" 710).   Justice, in the framework of South Africa's transition, cannot be confined to legal proceedings, but must account for the cultural and material transformation necessary for a "new democracy."

The TRC, itself, cannot facilitate such a transformation, but the notion of restorative justice at the core of the concept of reconciliation provides a crucial context for this process. As much as the TRC is the product of a negotiated settlement of a conflict that lacked a "victor," the ideal of reconciliation is not merely political pragmatism *in place of* the trials that *should* have happened, if they had been possible: "Confession, forgiveness and reconciliation in the lives of nations are not just airy-fairy religious and spiritual things, nebulous and unrealistic. They are the stuff of practical politics" (Tutu, qtd. in TRC V 353). The TRC and the larger reconciliation project aims to break the cycle of violence and build communities. Within the framework of restorative justice, the Commissioners define "crime" not as the breaking of laws established by a state, but as violations against fellow human beings. Restorative justice "restores" and "heals" both victims/survivors and offenders, and requires all parties to be involved in a process of conflict transformation, rather than relying on "resolution" provided by the state/third-party. Further, it aims to transform that which is "wrong" rather than punish the "wrong-doer" (TRC I 126). Reconciliation, as it is constructed within the TRC, seeks to "rehumanize" all parties involved in both apartheid and now the "new" South Africa.

While Jolly argues that the TRC is found wanting by critics who can only understand "justice" in terms of particularly western and bourgeois models of subjectivity, criticism of the TRC is also constructed within the teleological narrative of anti-colonial theory. Critiques of the TRC's failure to provide (retributive) justice place the Commission as a *post*-conflict measure mandated to provide a *resolution* to the centuries long conflict. In some respects, perceptions of the TRC's failures are shaped by the unrealistic expectations of the Commission's ability to *resolve* the conflict and *achieve* reconciliation; the TRC had neither the mandate, the resources, nor the commitment of political leaders to heal the social and psychological wounds of apartheid or redress the effects of decades of economic exploitation. Disappointment with the TRC echoes that which followed the achievement of national independence in states throughout the rest of Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In his critique of nationalist ideology, Fanon argues that Africans must not simply be liberated from foreign rule but from hunger, ignorance and poverty (Fanon *Wretched* 203). The newly

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[9] Former South African President, P.W. Botha was found guilty of contempt for failing to attend a TRC hearing for which he had been subpoenaed.

independent, post-colonial state failed to fulfill the implicit promises of national liberation. While the TRC was most certainly limited and flawed, much of the criticism of it can be accounted for in the way in which participants and critics have expected the Commission to perform that "great leap" from opposition to liberation.

III. Reconciliation/Resistance: Deconstructing Antagonism/Dismantling Apartheid

While the TRC, as a government institution with a specific mandate, follows the anti-apartheid struggle and marks an anticipatory moment of transformation, the process of reconciliation is not limited to the activities of the TRC; rather, reconciliation serves as both an ideal of liberation and praxis of resistance. Further, despite the dominant representation of the anti-apartheid movement as based on violent opposition to the oppression of apartheid, anti-apartheid resistance, including that of the ANC, is much more ambivalent than such a representation acknowledges. As well, power – in terms of the relationship between government authority and anti-apartheid opposition – is much more complex. Reconciliation provides a significant alternate narrative of resistance to the dominant narrative of ANC opposition as armed struggle seeking to overthrow the white government. The reconciliation project in South Africa is not simply a pragmatic post-conflict initiative or an "attempt to turn over a new leaf," to use Fanon's analogy of the nature of liberation.

By concentrating on the experiences of "victims" and "perpetrators," as well as by focusing upon reconciliation between individuals as the starting point for national reconciliation, the TRC, to some degree, privileges the experience of direct political violence over other forms of violence. As an attempt to permanently end the cycle of violence of oppression/opposition, however, reconciliation, as articulated within the TRC's Final Report, or the writings of Desmond Tutu, constitutes an inter-related process of material and cultural transformation and not just inter-personal reconciliation between the perpetrators and victims of gross human rights abuses. While postcolonial theorists problematize the binaries of colonial discourse as ambivalent, as I will argue in this section, reconciliation acknowledges the way in which colonial discourse constructs the colonizer and colonized, settler and African, oppressor and oppressed, and therefore shapes "knowledge" of the conflict. I begin this section by interrogating the way in which the ethic of reconciliation informed aspects of the anti-apartheid movement. I then go on to analyse the ambivalence of apartheid power. Rather than seeking to "deconstruct" this binary framework, reconciliation functions as a process which seeks to dismantle it as a politics of identity and change; as a form of resistance, the object of reconciliation is not the oppressor/oppression, but the antagonistic material and discursive relationship of colonialism. Based in the notion of *ubuntu*, a notion of subjectivity which constructs the self as interdependent with the other, reconciliation *resists* the antagonistic binary framework of apartheid.

Reconciliation is not simply a post-apartheid initiative but has its roots within the anti-apartheid movement. While the ANC is often conflated with all anti-apartheid resistance – or "black resistance" – against white rule, and the role of the MK tends to be

privileged over other aspects of the ANC's work or other anti-apartheid organizations and means of opposition, from its origins the ANC was a non-racial organization which imagined "liberty" not in terms of the eviction of the white settler but the creation of a non-racial state. The ANC's "Freedom Charter," adopted in 1955 and reaffirmed in 1989, states, for instance, that South Africa "belongs to all who live in it, black and white" and that "our country will never be prosperous and free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities." Organized around the call for democracy, equal rights, the nationalization of land and industry, the Charter's deviation from the dominant pan-Africanist discourses of the period set the ANC at odds with other nationalist movements.[10] Mandela is careful to describe the invitation to his jailer to be a special guest at his inauguration as President of South Africa in terms of ideology: "In prison my anger toward whites decreased, but my hatred for the system grew. I wanted South Africa to see that I loved even my enemies while I hated the system that turned us against one another" (Mandela 568).[11]

Government repression rendered the ANC politically ineffectual by the mid-1970s, forcing many of those members who were not imprisoned either into hiding or exile. The violent repression of the Soweto demonstrations in 1976 initiated a decade and a half of intense violence, primarily within the townships, pitting supporters of the ANC, UDF, Inkatha and other organizations against one another, as well as against government security forces. For political organizers like Inkatha's Buthulezi, "black-on-black" violence was a coordinated effort by the ANC to combat white rule indirectly by making black communities ungovernable (Christie 32). As evident from the rallying cry of "one settler, one bullet," opposition to apartheid was very often constructed within a Manichean framework of black against white. However, while the 1980s and early 1990s were particularly violent, this violence took the form neither of organized guerrilla opposition, nor was it the primary mode of opposition or dissent; resistance to apartheid was neither monolithic nor unitary. Initiatives and acts understood within apartheid's oppositional discourse – i.e. the anti-government discourse of "one settler, one bullet" – shared the same space with organizations and campaigns which did not simply pay lip-service to the ideal of a non-racial South African future, but incorporated non-racialism into the praxis of struggle.

While the dominant or official historical accounts of the anti-apartheid struggle continue to privilege the initiatives of the ANC, the most prominent organizing network of the 1980s, the United Democratic Front (UDF), constructed a discourse of resistance that was for the most part not conceived within the Manichean structure of the apartheid imagination. Characterized by Tutu as a "rainbow coalition" which sought the structural

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[10] Mandela notes that the governments of newly independent countries throughout Africa tended to support the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) rather than the ANC because the ANC policies and character did not conform to a "pan-African" ideology (300).

[11] Upon his release from prison, Mandela repeated a statement he made at the time of his sentencing: "I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony with equal opportunities" (qtd. in Pollard 123).

transformation of South Africa, the UDF drew together South Africans of all racialized groups and political ideologies in a loose network primarily composed of civic associations, women's groups and youth groups. Originally formed in 1983 to coordinate opposition to a proposed constitution which would permanently exclude Africans from the democratic process, the UDF adhered to the principles of the ANC's Freedom Charter and facilitated a wide variety of initiatives and actions throughout the 1980s. The UDF functioned in the interstices of apartheid power, providing links between diverse groups that shared the desire for an end to apartheid. As such, the movement fit neither within the political discourse of apartheid, which recognized parties and organizations and understood the conflict in terms of terrorism and security, nor the racial hierarchy which was the basis of that discourse.

The persistent call by Desmond Tutu for resistance imagined not as *opposition to* apartheid but the *production of* a nonracial, democratic, participatory and just South Africa provides another example of the way in which reconciliation constitutes not simply a politically pragmatic policy in the post-apartheid era, but an objective and ideal which served as a praxis of resistance. The warning of mass violence and suffering which recurs throughout Tutu's sermons and letters from the early 1970s onwards are coupled with the cultivation of the idea of reconciliation as its alternative. In his eulogy for Steve Biko in 1977, Tutu assures the crowd of more than 15 000 that liberation is coming, "where all of us, black and white together, will hold hands as we stride forth on the Freedom March to usher in the new South Africa where people will matter because they are human beings made in the image of God" (*Rainbow* 21). "Victory" is not constructed as the *transfer* of power from "whites" to "blacks," or merely the transition from minority rule to democracy, but the *transformation* of power, politically, materially, and culturally.

In a 1988 address to an interfaith service, Tutu repeats a message and tone expressed in many of his speeches, sermons and letters: "Freedom is coming, and we want it also for you, Mr. Vlok. We want you to be able to sleep at night and not wonder what we are up to... Freedom is coming even for you, Mr. P.W. Botha... We want you to be here with us" (*Rainbow* 143). Similar to Gandhi's overtures to Smuts, Tutu's appeals to National Party leaders not only articulate a hope of liberation as reconciliation – a process of re-humanizing all parties to the conflict – but constitute a reconciliatory act in itself, resisting the discursive construction of the antagonistic relationship between "blacks" and "whites." Tutu claims that true revolution in South Africa would entail the transformation of the nation from an exploitative state which is dependent upon racial hierarchy to one that is democratic and non-racial (*Rainbow* 142). Resistance as reconciliation, as Tutu articulates it, escapes the power/counter-power dynamic of oppositional discourses, which inform National Party claims to be acting in the interests of South African "security," as well as oppositional – i.e. anti-colonial/anti-apartheid – constructions of resistance. Reconciliation as resistance, therefore, provides a significant alternative both to oppositional discourses of resistance and postcolonial deconstructions of colonial power.

While the structure of identification of the TRC hearings – which constructed two

possible subject positions, the "victim" and the "perpetrator" – privileges direct violence over other forms of control and exploitation, the fact that a great many of those who sought amnesty were members of anti-apartheid organizations like the ANC complicated the dominant narrative of anti-apartheid resistance. Indeed, for many critics of the TRC and members of opposition organizations, the expectation that soldiers who had fought a "just war" against apartheid would have to acknowledge themselves as perpetrators of "gross human rights abuses" revealed the injustice of the TRC process; the Commission seemingly equates the actions of the oppressor with that of the "freedom-fighter." The TRC's Final Report makes quite clear, however, that the actions of security forces and ANC guerrillas were not "equated," but since reconciliation seeks to "heal" and end the cycle of violence, all acts of violence need to be named and explained. The TRC hearings functioned to "humanize" the experience of violence – both that of "perpetrators" of violent acts and those that suffered those acts – by providing a venue for individuals to tell stories and explain their experiences from their own point of view. Criticism of a process that would place security forces personnel and "freedom fighters" in the same position is at least in part attributable to the way in which power is constructed within colonial, or in this case anti-apartheid, discourse.

The TRC's Final Report records a summary of the development of apartheid legislation, including the Group Areas Act, the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, and the Bantu Education Act of the early 1950s. These acts institutionalized the racial hierarchy of South African society through separation, and they preceded the body of security legislation of the 1960s which directly responded to the campaigns of defiance and other forms of resistance against this apartheid legislation. As Mandela describes in his autobiography, the South African government and the ANC became locked in a relationship of escalating conflict wherein each reacted to the tactics of the other. When, for instance, the defiance campaign of the 1950s, a nonviolent campaign of noncooperation, produced violent state repression, Mandela and other members of the ANC advocated for, and to a limited degree began practicing, armed resistance. Characterized as "terrorism" by the South African government, this threat of guerrilla insurgency led to the banning of the ANC and the mass imprisonment of ANC activists. Significantly, initial resistance to apartheid in the form of nonviolent noncooperation was directed at illuminating and challenging structural violence. The mandate of the TRC hearings and amnesty committees to investigate gross human rights abuses reinforces the dominant discourse of black/ANC opposition to government violence and repression. However, the South African "security state" is as much a product of resistance – initiatives to foster unity and openness against the policy of "separateness" including, but not limited to, opposition and subversion – as violent opposition is a response to repression. While there are individual perpetrators and victims of particular abuses, the particular cases articulated at the various hearing of the TRC cannot function as a metaphor for the structure of power within which they occurred. The apartheid "security" state is not separable from opposition to it.

     The violence of South Africa's security forces was neither an initial structure nor a response to active insurgency *against* the state. Rather, it was a response to the refusal

of racialized groups to fulfill their positions within the political structures and, significantly, the discursive framework, of apartheid. The apartheid imagination had to be secured through violent repression. Mandela rationalizes ANC violence as both just and necessary because the oppressor "dictates the form of the struggle" against it (537); yet in the case of South Africa, state repression or the methods of maintaining white oppression are as much a product of resistance as resistance is a reaction to repression. As Kenneth Christie notes, mass non-cooperation in the 1980s and increasing violence in the townships during this period made the black population of South Africa progressively more ungovernable: "[t]he architects of the system of apartheid started to see power slipping away from them during the 1980s; it appeared to them that the only way to keep power was to increase levels of repression" (Christie 16).[12]   Gandhi's "ultimatum" to Smuts, the burning of passes by members of the PAC and ANC in 1952, or the use of guerrilla warfare tactics challenged the status of white minority authority. These acts – both discursive and material – escalated the conflict to the point where authority became impossible; violent chaos in the townships, mass boycotts of white commerce, the instability of labour, and growing unwillingness by foreign governments and multinationals to support, and profit from, South Africa, forced the National Party to negotiate an end to the political system of apartheid.

In *Empire,* Hardt and Negri conceptualize contemporary global power relations as a "new" paradigm in which previous notions of sovereignty and political space no longer provide a useful critical framework for understanding power and social change. As a result, "[t]he traditional idea of counter-power and the idea of resistance against modern sovereignty in general thus become less and less possible" (308). Hardt and Negri argue that with the emergence of "Empire," a "new type of resistance has to be invented" (308). I believe, however, that many of the qualities Hardt and Negri attribute to Empire can be discerned within South African apartheid, a social system which JanMohamed and others consider the most extreme example of the Manichean framework of colonial authority. Resistance (as opposition) may not precede power in apartheid, as Hardt and Negri suggest is the case in the Empire paradigm of power (360), but power and counter-power are interdependent and reinforcing. Various actions and practices may be characterized as "resistance" to apartheid, and the sum of these forms of subversion and opposition, I believe, led to apartheid power becoming impossible by the 1980s. However, while these various forms of "counter-power," to use Hardt and Negri's term, contributed to the escalation of the conflict, for Tutu, the conflict did not escalate into civil war because of the notion of reconciliation that informed resistance and the desire for liberation.

In response to Asmal, et al's *Reconciliation Through Truth* (1997) – but I think his argument speaks to a broader narrative of apartheid evident in anti-apartheid literature and certainly the most public elements of the TRC – Mahmood Mamdani argues that apartheid has been reduced to its "terror machine... its evil to its gross abuses - and resistance to the armed struggle" ("Reconciliation"). Mamdani shifts the focus from

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[12] Mamdani argues that from 1976 apartheid policy can be understood as attempts to prevent the confluence of organized popular resistance among rural migrants in the townships and organized labour ("Reconciliation").

direct violence to the economic and political *structures* of apartheid, and from the relatively limited and ineffective armed struggle to unarmed militant popular struggle. For instance, he emphasizes the 1973 strikes of white labourers in Durban and the 1976 Soweto "uprising" by black youth as a great "sea-change" in the struggle, shifting the agents of resistance from political organizations, largely operating from exile and depending on (the threat of) armed struggle, to community-based, largely non-violent popular struggle:

> From the point of view of establishing a trajectory of reconciliation, Durban 1973 is an important marker, since it signified the move of radical white youth to the mainstream of resistance, blurring the identity of race with oppression. Similarly Soweto 1976 and Black Consciousness signified an even more important breach in the apartheid-nurtured identities of ethnic particularism. (Here, I include 'Indian' and 'Coloured' as ethnic identities). ("Reconciliation")

Both of these moments, and the campaigns which developed out of them, respond not to violent government repression, but the economic and political structures of apartheid.

While much critical analysis of the TRC concentrates upon the idea of truth or the failure of (retributive) justice within the process of public hearings, the narrative the TRC constructs in its Final Report carefully links the direct violence of human rights abuses to the structural violence of economic exploitation, displacement, etc. For instance, in its initial recommendations regarding reparations in Volume Five, the Commission draws on testimony from the business sector hearing to identify how "political supremacy and racial capitalism impoverished Africans and enriched whites;" among other forms of structural violence, Africans were deprived of land and the right to own property, paid exploitative wages, and deprived of the human capital of education (TRC V 409-10). South African "liberation" has a significant political character, in terms of inclusive liberal democratic governance and political rights. The liberatory ideals of non-racialism and equity, however, also require a radical transformation of the economic system.

A central platform of the ANC's campaign in 1994 and major tenet, initially, of the new government, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), identified the major policy areas of the new South Africa as building the economy, meeting basic needs, developing human resources and democratizing society (Deegan 117). Significantly, in its Final Report, the TRC forcefully asserts that reconciliation requires radical social and material transformation, and not simply individual and collective acts of apology and forgiveness. The Commission acknowledges that concentrating on individual cases of human rights violations fails to challenge the structures of society (TRC I 130). As Tutu argues:

> [U]nless houses replace the hovels and shacks in which most blacks live, unless blacks gain access to clean water, electricity, affordable health care, decent education, good jobs, and a safe environment – things which the vast majority of whites have taken for granted for so long – we can just as well kiss reconciliation good-bye. (*No Future* 274).

The RDP, however, was "overambitious" and "short-lived" (Deegan 118).

As much as they are necessary for reconciliation, initiatives to redress the economic and social imbalances of apartheid, whether in the form of TRC recommended

reparations or policies of affirmative action, can also impede the cultivation of a non-racial political and social space. While Mamdani points to the Durban strikes and the Black Consciousness movement as important moments which blurred the distinction between oppression and racism, the impact of apartheid-era social and economic policies was to make "blackness" and "poverty" nearly synonymous (Deegan 116-7). A process of reconciliation which emphasizes the experience of individual victims and individual perpetrators accounts for a very visible, but relatively minor, facet of apartheid oppression. Rather than constructing the apartheid conflict in terms of "perpetrators" and "victims," Mamdani argues that we must contend with a structure comprised of "beneficiaries" and "disadvantaged":

> [B]eneficiaries are a large group, and victims defined in relation to beneficiaries are the vast majority in society. To what extent is the shift of focus from beneficiaries to perpetrators, and from victims as the majority to victims as a minority, likely to generate growing resentment amongst the excluded majority who understandably expect to gain from reconciliation and forgiveness? To what extent does a process that ignores the aspirations of the vast majority of victims, risk turning disappointment into frustration and outrage, creating room for a demagogue to reap the harvest? ("Reconciliation")

Reconciliation, therefore, cannot simply be about apology and forgiveness – whether individual or collective – *or* economic redress; it must engage with the discursive, or cultural, structures which legitimize socio-economic inequality and the resort to violence as a means of "security" or "resistance."

Jacqueline Rose asks: "what comes first? Which form of transformation – psychic and subjective, or material and redistributive – will provide the real, sure foundation for the other" (186)? Rose reverts to the idea of truth and history, drawing on the TRC's mandate which contends that issues of structural violence cannot be dealt with unless there is a conscious understanding of the past. As I will develop more fully in my reading of Magona's *Mother to Mother*, in the context of reconciliation, the initiative of "collecting" the truth – particularly in terms of material structures and personal experiences – is not so much about recording History, or, as a number of critics have suggested, reconciling disparate narratives of the apartheid experience, as it is about transforming the *conditions* of conflict (Dwyer 92, Asmal et al. 46). As important as it is to articulate the various group-based narratives of a conflict as a means of conflict transformation, I believe reconciliation postulates more than recognition of the narrative of the Other, or the harmonizing of the narratives of conflicting groups, but a radical transformation in the discursive construction of the relationship between those groups. Where Rose distinguishes between psychic or social truths and material structures, I am interested in the relationship between the material and discursive structures of apartheid – structural violence and cultural violence. The TRC is limited as a reconciliation project by the way in which Truth – or the transformation of historical memory – is privileged over, or placed prior to, material transformation. While the TRC provides only a partial and limited step towards reconciliation, it does however provide insight into the way in which structural and cultural violence are interdependent, and therefore the way in which

material and discursive transformation must be congruent. The Commission, and its critics, tend to concentrate upon "truth" of individual experiences as the means to a national history. Reconciliation, however, must comprise inter-related transformation of the material structures of inequality and the discourse which make oppression, and opposition to it, understandable or legitimate.

As ambivalent as the subject positions of colonizer and colonized, settler and native may be, colonial discourse – in this case, what I have called the apartheid imagination – made the material inequalities of apartheid, the political and social project of separation, and the elaborate "security" apparatus understandable. Critics such as Parry critique postcolonial theories of the hybrid colonial subject, arguing that such constructions of power and identity undermine the possibilities of anti-colonial resistance, and thereby social and political transformation. For other critics, as useful as such theories may be for understanding and challenging notions of power and knowledge, they have not provided a politically useful intervention in avoiding or transforming conflict (Jolly "Desiring" 703). I will conclude this chapter by discussing the way in which, unlike theories of hybridity or colonial ambivalence, reconciliation, in the sense that I have identified, provides a model of "resistance" which does not privilege material experience over discursive structures, or vice versa. Further, understanding reconciliation in South Africa as a long-term process of which the TRC was one significant institutional step, reconciliation provides a possibility of transformation not accounted for in either the dominant anti-colonial or postcolonial theories of identity, power and resistance.

Leela Gandhi suggests that Nandy postulates a postcolonial politics in which "the boundaries between colonial victors and colonised victims be replaced by a recognition of the continuity and interface between these old antagonists" (Gandhi, L. *Postcolonial* 137). Such a continuity is not synonymous with the collapse of settler and native into a singular, ambivalent or hybrid colonial subject. Among others involved in the TRC project, Tutu has echoed the sentiment of anti-colonial theorists like Fanon and contemporary postcolonial critics, arguing that as subjects of colonial discourse, all are "dehumanized by injustice and oppression;" the oppressor is dehumanized by oppression as much as the oppressed (Tutu *Rainbow* 124). Reconciliation has as its object colonial discourse, or the relationship between colonizer/beneficiary and colonized/exploited, and not one or the other party. While theorists of reconciliation have characterized it as both a process and a state, within the context of postcolonial theories of resistance, reconciliation is both political praxis and critical perspective.

Tangible moments which can symbolize reconciliation, quite understandably, are important markers of the success of the idea/process. These "moments" of reconciliation include Mandela's invitation to a former prison warder to attend his presidential inauguration, or the image of Ivy Gcina, one of the thousands who were detained and tortured under apartheid, hugging her former jailer Irene Crouse, the moment captured for posterity in the form of a front page photograph in the *Eastern Province Herald* (TRC V 393). Such symbolic moments of reconciliation as "embrace," however, belie the complexity of reconciliation among individuals and problematically construct such

moments as metonyms for national reconciliation, reproducing the inevitability of postcolonial disappointment: the historical *moment* of independence – symbolized by the unfurling of a new national flag, for instance – is not the social, political and economic *process* of transformation/redress it implicitly figures.

Indeed, such embraces between perpetrator and victim are symbolically so significant for the TRC because of their rarity. As mentioned above, few "perpetrators" of government violence came forward to acknowledge their actions or meet their "victims" again, person to person. As a result, the much more subdued and reserved characterization of reconciliation articulated by former Air Force Major Neville Clarence, appears to be more typical, and more politically useful. Clarence describes his "reconciliation" with former MK cadre Abu Bakr Ismail, the person who planted the bomb which blinded him, as an important "step" in South Africa's transformation, but their reconciliation includes no embrace:

> I don't have any bitter thoughts towards the bomber. I believe that spending my whole life bitter and twisted because of my blindness will achieve nothing… people should be realistic about what they think they can get out of reconciliation. Ismail and I are not really friends, but I can say that we mean a lot to each other. We have, by chance, become an inextricable part of each other's lives.
>
> (qtd. in Magardie 9)

Reconciliation, in this case, constitutes recognition of the way in which their lives are inextricably related. For Clarence, reconciliation is about understanding, not the achievement of "harmony." If reconciliation is to provide genuine healing, it requires time and "involves people being accountable for their actions and showing a commitment to right their wrongs" (Chikane qtd. in Mamdani "Reconciliation").

Reconciliation constitutes neither the utopian ideal of racial harmony nor a simplistic reduction of conflicting groups to a homogeneous "human" commonality. While the ideal of reconciliation articulated in the image of two individuals embracing (as a moment of reconciliation) belies the complex relationship between material and discursive transformation, such images are politically significant as symbols of hope. The testimony of the many hundreds who shared their suffering or acknowledged their abuses during the hearings of the TRC ground power, resistance and transformation in human experience. If all are dehumanized by apartheid, then a central function of the TRC, as an initiative towards reconciliation, is to begin the restoration of human dignity. In her testimony about the murder of her son, Cynthia Ngewu asked if "these *boers* have any feelings at all" (qtd. in Krog 252). On the concept of reconciliation, Ngewu says: "This thing called reconciliation… if I am understanding it correctly… if it means this perpetrator, this man who has killed Christopher Piet, if it means he becomes human again, this man, so that I, so that all of us, get our humanity back… then I agree, then I support it all" (qtd. in Krog 142). In this way, reconciliation seeks to acknowledge humanity in a way that *resists* the Manichean and antagonistic discourses of apartheid and anti-apartheid opposition which construct difference hierarchically or as total – discourses which justify the separation, exploitation and subjugation of blacks as a means of maintaining white "security," and which construct the oppressor as lacking human feeling.

As a form of restorative justice, reconciliation does not simply depart from dominant international modes of justice derived from a specifically Western history but conflicts with the discourse of modern and specifically secular retributive justice which constructs the subject as sovereign and individual in relation to the political state. As much as the ideal of reconciliation derives from a specifically Christian ethic, within the project of the TRC reconciliation is constructed through the southern African ideology of subjectivity, *ubuntu*.[13] In a 1991 homily, uttered against the backdrop of escalating violence in the townships between supporters of the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Desmond Tutu said: "It seems to me that we in the black community have lost our sense of *ubuntu* – our humaneness, caring, hospitality, our sense of connectedness, our sense that my humanity is bound up in your humanity" (*Rainbow* 229). *Ubuntu*, which the Final Report translates as "humaneness," constructs human subjectivity in terms of the way "people are people through other people" (TRC I 127). Reconciliation, therefore, is not so much about apology and forgiveness, as the Clarence-Ismail example attests, but the "restoration" of humanness through the active acknowledgement and understanding of first, the perspective of the other, and second, that the existence of the "victim" and the "perpetrator" are inextricably linked.[14] Reconciliation as resistance both challenges the antagonistic framework of colonial ideology and performs an alternative to it; it resists apartheid – a politics of separation – by producing a politics of connection. Liberation, consequently, becomes not the end or absence of a particular oppression structure (white rule), but the presence (as process) of a profoundly different construction of identity, subjectivity and human relations. Reconciliation's *deconstruction* of colonial antagonism requires the production of historical narrative (as accountability) and structural transformation (or the "righting of wrongs").

While colonial discourse theory's deconstruction of colonial identity problematizes the historical function of power and authority within the colonial project, it does not provide a framework for dismantling these structures of identity or contending with their political effects. On the other hand, while anti-colonial theorists such as Fanon, Cabral and Memmi imagine liberation as a "new humanism" or a radical breach with the colonial past, their constructions of resistance against colonial oppression are confined by the structures of identity and relationships established through colonial discourse. Writes Mamdani:

> If part of the legacy of apartheid is the identities enforced by it, then a healing process that transcends this legacy will have to take as its starting point the identities generated by the process of resistance. If power sought to impose a racial/ethnic grid on society, to what extent was resistance able to break out of it? ...Reconciliation may be a moral imperative, but it will not happen unless it is

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[13] For a discussion of the intersection of Christianity and the Southern African philosophy of *ubuntu*, as a basis for Tutu's conception of reconciliation, see Tutu and Battle.

[14] Clarence states: "What many fail to understand is that I have not 'forgiven' the bomber, because that would imply that he had asked for forgiveness, which he didn't. Nor did I offer it, although he expressed a deep regret at what had happened to me" (Magardie 8).

> also nurtured as a political possibility. This is why if truth is to be the basis of
> reconciliation, it will have to sum up not only the evil that was apartheid but the
> promise that was the resistance to it.("Reconciliation")

Reconciliation requires the production of an historical account – a coming to terms with the past – which does not simply acknowledge the abuse, structures and discourse of apartheid violence (as important as such an account is) but transforms the discourse which provides such a narrative meaning, not for the past, but for the present and future. The TRC's Final Report states: "The road to reconciliation... means both material reconstruction and the restoration of dignity. It involves the redress of gross inequalities and the nurturing of respect for our common humanity... It implies wide-ranging structural and institutional transformation and the healing of broken human relationships" (TRC I 110). As a narrative framework which shapes people's perceptions of their place in the world and their understanding of power, colonial discourse – or in this case, the apartheid imagination – requires deconstruction in order to become transformation.

IV. Sindiwe Magona's *Mother to Mother:* Truth, Ambiguity, Understanding

In a 1989 address to an ANC seminar on culture, Albie Sachs controversially argues that the ANC must no longer construct cultural production as a weapon of struggle. By limiting art to "just another kind of missile-firing apparatus," he argues, the ANC limits the potential of art to reflect the complexity of the experience of oppression and resistance, and to imagine transformation. Echoing Njabulo Ndebele's call for an end to a mode of realist writing which focuses on the horrors of apartheid oppression (Yousaf vii), Sachs contends that conceived of as a tool of struggle art conforms to a particularly oppositional anti-apartheid ideology which is constrained by the discourse of apartheid, rather than testing, challenging and shaping that ideology: "whether in poetry or painting or on the stage, we line up our good people on the one side and the bad ones on the other... never acknowledging that there is bad in the good, and, even more difficult, that there can be elements of good in the bad" (Sachs 240). Sachs laments the evacuation of love, tenderness or beauty from literature, and the way literature reinforces the Manichean framework of apartheid discourse. He argues: "the power of art lies precisely in its capacity to expose contradictions and reveal hidden tensions" (240). Reconciliation, as I have argued above, works to transform conflict rather than resolve it; in other words, it seeks to dismantle the antagonistic relationship of the apartheid imagination, or change the story. As critics such as Yousaf (xv) have suggested, literature is one venue through which this transformation can be effected.

In *Mother to Mother*, Sindiwe Magona portrays the 1993 murder of white American student Amy Biehl. She provides a story of the day on which Biehl was killed within the social, political and cultural context of South Africa's history of apartheid in its moment of transition. The novel does not conform to the sort of oppositional framework both Ndebele and Sachs decry, though it very much reveals the horrors of apartheid. While it is still an example of the art of resistance, the "story," or framework, of resistance, however, has changed. Through the voice of Mandisa, the mother of

Mxolisi, a fictional participant in Amy Biehl's murder, Magona reveals the ambiguity of the victim/perpetrator binary constructed within the TRC's amnesty process and the apartheid imagination. Consequently, she exposes the contradictions and tensions within (anti)apartheid discourse and within the TRC's endeavour to construct an historical record. Magona problematizes the construction of good versus evil, oppressors versus oppressed, while engaging with the antagonistic narrative within which Biehl's murder occurred. A visiting student in Cape Town, Amy Biehl was neither an oppressor nor, a direct beneficiary of apartheid, yet she was killed to a chanting chorus of "*Amabhulu, Azizinja/*Boers, they are dogs." While the poet Antjie Krog muses that after the 244 days of TRC public hearings, "maybe writers in South Africa should shut up for a while" (312), as works like Magona's *Mother to Mother* reveal, literature has a role in resisting the maintenance of the antagonistic binary framework of apartheid discourse, the simplistic construction of a history of perpetrators and victims.

Mandisa directs her tale to Amy's mother. She reveals to this American woman, whom she addresses as her sister-mother, the way in which hatred for whites was a "knowledge with which I was born – or which I acquired at such an early age it is as though it was there the moment I came to know myself" (173). Her father would return home from work to the solace of a bottle, grumbling about the "dogs" he worked for, while her grandfather told her tales of the origins of white rule and Xhosa culture that her school teachers dismissed as superstition. For instance, Mandisa remembers her grandfather's tale of the Xhosa Cattle Killing, in which, based upon a prophecy, the Xhosa killed their cattle and burned their crops in 1857 with the expectation that such a sacrifice would "drive *abelungu* to the sea, where, so the seer had said, they would drown. All, to the very, very last one" (178). The sacrifice, of course, did not lead to Xhosa liberation but ever greater dependence on white settlers for their sustenance, and with the necessity of working in the British mines came fulfillment of another prophecy, that the Xhosa would become subservient to Europeans through other forms of social control, like "the Good Volume and the button without a hole" (182). Narratives of the past produce a cultural identity which is intertwined with the "deep roots of hatred" for those who stole the land and kept the Xhosa people in subjugation.

This historical identity accounts for the discourse of antagonism through which each succeeding generation, including that of Mxolisi and his classmates, come to understand power and their place within it. As Mandisa tells Amy's mother, by the age of two, Mxolisi could recite anti-white slogans. The murder of Amy Biehl occurs within the context of this narrative in which resistance is understood as violent confrontation with the settler. Rather than fulfillment of "the promise of return to the way of before" (180), however, Magona represents this narrative as a self-fulfilling cycle of violence, emotional trauma and social upheaval. Mandisa begins her "testimony" with the statement, "My son killed your daughter" but goes on to ask the mother of Amy Biehl, "what was she doing, vagabonding all over Guguletu, of all places... Was she blind not to see there were no white people in this place?" (1-2). Though Mandisa characterizes Mxolisi as, from the beginning, "nothing but trouble," the story of his life she provides troubles the classification of him as "perpetrator." Mandisa, Mxolisi, and Amy Biehl do not fit neatly within a historical framework constructed through a discourse of justice,

wherein responsibility is unambiguous; there are perpetrators and victims, those who must apologize and those who should forgive.

While the historical past constructed by the TRC may reduce the number of lies that can circulate in the society, it certainly does not produce a single, monolithic Truth to be shared by the "nation." With its 20 000 submissions and hundreds of public testimonies in which individuals spoke the truth "as they see it" (TRC V 441), the TRC compiles a multitude of stories of individual pain which provide an element of South Africa's history absent in records of policy, representations of significant political events, or the facts and figures of specific crimes or the impact of structural violence. These "personal and narrative truths" as the Final Report characterizes the testimony, supplement "factual or forensic" truth, which together promote the development of "social truth" – produced through dialogue to reflect the essential norms and relations between people – and finally "healing and restorative truth" – wherein "facts and what they mean" are placed "within the context of human relationships" (TRC I 111-114). By providing a participatory process in which relatively large numbers of people could share their perspectives of their experiences of gross human rights abuses, and by promoting a venue wherein individuals could acknowledge their crimes and institutions identify their roles within apartheid, the TRC compiles a history (in progress) that includes a multitude of voices.

In a lecture at the University of Cape Town prior to the commission, Benita Parry "advance[es] the case for recollection, for the constant renewal of historical memory" ("Reconciliation" 91). Theory, Parry argues, has a responsibility to participate in the construction of the past by scrutinizing strategies that validate discrimination and oppression, and she contends that this sort of critical historical recollection resists injustice and repression (90-91). Parry's proposal for a critical and on-going production-cum-critique of South African history seems to promote a theoretical engagement which departs from the construction of cultural resistance as counter-narrative. The Commission positions the production of historical Truth(s) as a means of "knowing the past in order to avoid repeating it," and as the Final Report purposefully acknowledges, the Commission harboured no illusions as to its ability to either compile a "full" history of apartheid or effect reconciliation. Yet, the TRC constructs recollection only in terms of the ideal of reconciliation; future injustice and repression will not be avoided simply by knowing the past, remembering.

John Noyes argues that the "Truth Commission" in South Africa shows "how language can reveal events where there had only been 'history'" (279). The TRC begins the process of reconciliation. However, the commissioners acknowledge that the production of a history – even a history which concentrates on personal interaction – is not a sufficient response to the horrors of apartheid. As stated in the Final Draft, the process of reconciliation must continue between individuals, within communities and at the national level. South Africans must create spaces in which to recollect and make meaning of those recollections. In a novel like *Mother to Mother*, Magona does not simply provide a story of the Amy Biehl murder that answers the questions of what happened; the novel is not a documentary account providing the "full story" in hopes of some sort of closure. Instead, Magona translates the mode of recollection utilized in the

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TRC into an initiative towards reconciliation. Yet, departing from the TRC's discourse of apology and forgiveness, as the means of translating recollection into reconciliation, Mandisa's story is not an apology: "Let me say out plain," Mandisa declares, "I was not surprised that my son killed your daughter. That is not to say I was pleased… But, you have to understand my son. Then you'll understand why I am not surprised he killed your daughter" (1). Magona does not provide simply the background to the event of Biehl's murder but the social context in which such abuses occur – understanding rather than history.

In order to "understand" Mxolisi, it is necessary not simply to learn of his life, but to understand that Mxolisi's life can only be told in terms of his relationships with others, and with the larger social and cultural context of his experience. Mxolisi's birth is unplanned, separating Mandisa from her family. Indeed, having suffered the indignity of regular monitoring of her virginity, the fact that Mandisa becomes pregnant without ever having had intercourse further mocks any semblance of her control over her own body or future. The immediate context of Mxolisi's childhood and adolescence includes a community in which theft, murder and rape are commonplace. Magona's portrayal of Guguletu reveals the intersections and interdependence of the cultural, structural and direct violence of apartheid. Says Mandisa: "I came to Guguletu borne by a whirlwind … perched on a precarious leaf balking a tornado … a violent scattering of black people, a dispersal of the government's making. So great was the upheaval, more than three decades later, my people are still reeling from it" (48). The trauma of Guguletu is expressed through the experience of people; displacement separated people from land which they related to as sacred, and their reassembly in the township destroyed their self-reliance. Echoing the consequences of the Cattle Killing, the upheaval Mandisa describes reinforces the exploitative relationships between whites and blacks. Mandisa must work in the white suburbs for a woman who cannot pronounce her name in order to provide for the children she no longer has the time to nurture: "We laugh to hide the gaping hole where our hearts used to be. Guguletu killed us … killed the thing that held us together … made us human" (33). After witnessing security forces murder two young boys, after he, just a few years old, innocently pointed out their hiding place, Mxolisi became mute for over two years. Although he would regain his voice, he did not regain his compassion; the trauma of the experience permanently damaged his *ubuntu* – his humanness.

Sharing with Mrs. Biehl how all-consuming the Manichean framework of good and evil became, Mandisa describes the way in which adults were complicit with their children's vigilanteism. The Young Lions, who roamed the streets of the township would "necklace" the *gogga* (insects). Tyres would be placed around the necks of those considered "reactionaries" and be set ablaze: "Our children fast descended into barbarism. With impunity, they broke with old tradition and crossed the boundary between that which separates human beings from beasts. Humaneness, *ubuntu*, took flight. It had been sorely violated. It went and buried itself where none of us would easily find it again" (76). Yet the very structure of the novel, a second person narrative directly addressing the mother of Amy Biehl, beginning with back and forth vignettes of

the experience of Mandisa and her family and that of Amy Biehl on the day of her murder, function to begin to restore this violated relational understanding of humanity.

Further, the story Mandisa shares undermines the discourse which guides the actions of subjects within it. Having been led to her hiding son, Mandisa expresses her angst to Amy's mother about whether or not to help him hide or deliver him to the police:

> Shame and anger fill me day and night. Shame at what my son has done. Anger at what has been done to him. I am angry at all the grown-ups who made my son believe he would be a hero, fighting for the nation, were he to do the things he heard them advocate, the deeds they praised. If anyone killed your daughter, some of the leaders who today speak words of consolation to you ... mark my words ... they, as surely as my son, are your daughter's murderers. (199)

Mxolisi's actions are placed within the system of apartheid, both as a political and economic system of inequality and depravation, but also, significantly, a discursive system of good and evil, monsters and heroes. Mandisa's shame at the actions of her son, and anger at the life he has had undermines the discourse of power which constructs the world through a Manichean binary. In *Country of My Skull* (1998), Krog recounts a brief conversation with Wilhelm Werwoerd, an employee of the commission and grandson of the former Prime Minister, who shares with Krog the assertion that ambiguity is just as much a casualty of war as truth and suggests that peace requires the creation of space for ambiguity (126). Mandisa characterizes her son, and his friends, as "monsters," but the narrative of his life she shares with Mrs. Biehl reveals the ambiguity of the seemingly simple, and concrete oppositions of the apartheid imagination.

Mandisa cannot provide a definitive answer to the question of why Amy Biehl was killed, she tells Mrs. Biehl, but she can provide a representation of the context in which such violence could occur: "My son was only an agent, executing the long simmering dark desires of his race. Burning hatred for the oppressor possessed his being... The resentment of three hundred years plugged his ears; deaf to her pitiful entreaties" (210). Mandisa provides no apology and no excuse, but she does provide an explanation. To characterize Mxolisi as a "subject" constructed within a particular social context is not to ignore his responsibility. Understanding the murder of Amy Biehl and the horrific violence of the townships requires an understanding of the cultural and social structures which produced and legitimized that violence, and the way in which people participated in those structures: "your daughter has paid for the sins of the fathers and mothers who did not do their share of seeing that my son had a life worth living" (Magona 3). Desmond Tutu notes the way in which the construction of the enemy as monster makes it impossible to engage in a process of forgiveness and reconciliation, for a monster, by definition, is not human; the monster is incapable of understanding, remorse and redemption. In the poem from which Coetzee took the title, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, C.P. Cavafy asks: "Now what's going to happen to us without barbarians?" (qtd. in Jolly "Rehearsals" 26). Without barbarians, apartheid implodes. While Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* deconstructs the cultural production of the "barbarian," Magona places "barbarity" in a context of human relationships and collective narratives. *Mother to Mother* provides no solution or resolution to apartheid, but it illuminates the possibility of transformation.

V.   Resisting the Politics of Blame and Denial

Neither the effort toward "reconciliation" reflected in the story of Neville Clarence and Abu Bakr Ismail nor that represented in Magona's *Mother to Mother* depend upon a bond of apology and forgiveness. Ismail does not seek Clarence's forgiveness and Clarence does not offer it. While they have not become friends, the act of testifying before the Commission allowed them to articulate how they are an inextricable part of one another's life. Clarence characterizes the TRC, on the whole, as successful, "because until it took place, nobody knew what was going on in the minds of those who planned apartheid" (Magardie 9). Mandisa does not seek Mrs. Biehl's forgiveness, and as the addressee of a second-person monologue, Amy's mother is not provided a space to express forgiveness within the text.[15] Mandisa provides a narrative that explains the conditions under which such violence could take place, and the perspective of those constructed as "barbarian" within the discourse of apartheid. Significantly, however, by problematizing the narrative of apartheid, and the structures through which it is recollected – as a relationship between unambiguous "perpetrators" and "victims" – Sindiwe Magona privileges the importance of understanding not only the "personal truths" of apartheid's gross human rights abuses, but the discursive structures that legitimized those acts and impede social and material transformation.

The TRC's Amnesty Committee did not require those seeking amnesty to express remorse, and the Commission's mandate did not include *effecting* reconciliation between victims, the community and perpetrators (TRC V 392). Those cases in which "perpetrators" came forward to seek forgiveness were of great political significance, however, both for the legitimacy of the Commission and for the creation of a national dialogue. After Colonel Horst Schobesberger's apology during hearings on the Bisho massacre, Tutu responded: "It isn't easy, as we all know, to ask for forgiveness and it's also not easy to forgive, but we are people who know that when someone cannot be forgiven there is no future" (*No Future* 151). The request of a white security force leader for understanding, to be forgiven and accepted back in the community, was a rare occurrence during the hearings of the TRC, and for that reason all the more significant. Referring to the apologies of white security forces personnel during the Bisho massacre hearings, however, Commissioner Mapule F. Ramashala notes: "None of them has said: 'As a demonstration, perhaps of how sorry I am, this is what I would like to do.'" (TRC V 403). As symbolically significant as the utterance of apology is, for many participants in the process, such an utterance must also involve action; it must be an acknowledgement of responsibility.[16]

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[15] In the novel, Mandisa asks God to forgive her son "this terrible, terrible sin" but she does not ask for her sister-mother's forgiveness. Amy Biehl's parents did not oppose the amnesty applications of those who had killed their daughter; indeed, they attended the hearings and have set up a foundation for youth in Guguletu.

[16] There are examples in the Final Report of such acts of responsibility. For instance, Captain Brian Mitchell confessed to and requested forgiveness for his participation in the

As too-easy as it may seem to simply utter an apology without any commitment to making reparations, genuine apology and forgiveness are deeply emotional endeavours that do not come easily. For instance, Margaret Madlana made the following statement in regard to the death of her son:

> The way they killed my son hitting him against a rock, and we found him with a swollen head. They killed him in a tragic manner, and I don't think I will ever forgive in this case….[If] these two policemen, come and tell us why he killed these sons of the wars and also ask for forgiveness before the mothers of these children. It is then that I can forgive him. (TRC V 380-1)

Many observers contend that Commissioners exerted pressure upon victims to express forgiveness during their testimony, even in cases where the perpetrator was not present or had not sought forgiveness (Nagy 332). For influential architects of the reconciliation project in South Africa, like Tutu, the Christian ethic of forgiveness is paramount, and is regarded as the foundation for reconciliation, an act of agency on the part of those who have been wronged. Argues Tutu: "If the victim could forgive only when the culprit confessed, then the victim would be locked into the culprit's whim, locked into victimhood… In the act of forgiveness we are declaring our faith in the future of a relationship and in the capacity of the wrongdoer to make a new beginning" (Tutu *No Future* 272-3).

The Christian framework of individual contrition and forgiveness, however, does not translate easily into a framework of collective transformation. As deeply flawed and mismanaged as the Commission was, Antjie Krog argues that it "kept alive the idea of a common humanity" and "chiseled a way beyond racism" (364). Krog concludes her memoir of the hearings with a poem of apology that seems to link individual consciousness with collective healing:

> of my soul the retina learns to expand
> daily because by a thousand stories
> I was scorched
>
> a new skin.
>
> I am changed forever. I want to say:
>> forgive me
>> forgive me
>> forgive me
>
> You whom I have wronged, please
> take me
>
> with you.   (364-5)

Trust Feed massacre of 1988. After a long process of trust-building, the community and Mitchell agreed to a plan in which he would participate in the community's reconstruction as an overt act of repentance (TRC V 395).

It is in blanket apologies such as this that I believe the ethic of apology and forgiveness breaks down as a mode of communal reconciliation. The moment of embrace between "perpetrator" and "victim" certainly provides a spectacle of reconciliation which undoubtedly has an impact beyond the individual participants. While it may provide a measure of healing for the individuals involved – allowing them to regain their dignity and humanity – how can an apology or forgiveness for the "systemic, all-pervading evil," as the Commission characterizes apartheid (TRC I 29) be uttered and by whom? Systemic racism and inequality is not an *act* performed by one agent upon another which can be identified, understood and forgiven. The metaphor of individual reconciliation is not easily transferable on to the complex relations of power and privilege of apartheid. As a result, I would like to conclude this chapter by turning away from the discourse of apology and forgiveness as the means of reconciliation to an approach which recognizes reconciliation as the positive action of resisting blame and denial.

In Chapter Two, I discussed Said's critique of the rhetoric and politics of blame he identifies as a discursive impediment to the attainment of liberation. Blame is the source of the seemingly unending "politics of confrontation and hostility" (*Culture* 18) in the post-colonial world. However, Said's critique of how the rhetoric of blame constrains the vision of public intellectuals and cultural historians, impeding the possibility of transforming the antagonistic, hierarchical binaries of colonial knowledge does not develop beyond the "somehow" of Fanon's theory of resistance and liberation. In Fanon's argument in *The Wretched of the Earth*, national consciousness – itself a product of colonial discourse – provides the counter-narrative which shapes opposition *against* the colonizer; liberation requires that this national consciousness "somehow" be transformed into a social consciousness that is particularly non-antagonistic, restoring the humanity to colonized and colonizer, alike. Although Fanon "could not make the complexity and anti-identitarian force of that counter-narrative explicit," for Said, he had committed himself to combat imperialism and nationalism "by a counter-narrative of great deconstructive power" (Said *Culture* 274). As I argue in Chapter Three, however, people like Gandhi *were* able to articulate "another story" of human relations that resisted imperialism and nationalism by articulating through the means of resistance a "new non-adversarial community," to use Said's words, where European and native were bound together.

In my analyses of the TRC and Magona's *Mother to Mother*, I have attempted to illuminate the ambiguity of the terms "perpetrator" and "victim" and deconstruct the antagonistic discourse of apartheid power, arguing that this discourse and the material inequalities of apartheid (or colonialism) are interdependent; there can be no material change until the narratives that shape identity and understanding of power are transformed, and vice versa. To deconstruct the colonizer and colonized in this way is not to collapse the two into some unitary colonial subject. Though whites were as much a product of apartheid as blacks, and arguably therefore oppressed, diminished or traumatized because of this, as the testimony of those who spoke at the TRC hearings makes clear, the disappearances, murders and other gross human rights abuses of

apartheid were primarily experienced by blacks and were not simply discursive. Yet, like Said's "new humanism," the TRC's framework for uncovering these abuses, naming them, and building understanding about their causes and conditions places the onus for reconciliation upon those who suffered most under apartheid: "Forgiveness is not about forgetting. It is about seeking to forego bitterness, renouncing resentment, moving past old hurt, and becoming a survivor rather than a passive victim" (TRC I 116). Many critics of the TRC have pointed to the failure of "justice" in the case of the murder in detention of Steve Biko. Because the case is so well-known, there is great pressure on Biko's family to express forgiveness as a symbolic gesture which would further national catharsis. As Biko's mother said: "'Yes, I would forgive my son's killers... But first I must know what to forgive, which means I must be told fully what happened and why.'" (qtd. in Norval 191). How can one move past hurt and become a survivor, if those who abused them not only do not seek forgiveness but are unwilling to even come forward and explain their actions?

Part of knowing "fully what happened and why" includes understanding the collective memory and worldview in which those actions take place. In *Mother to Mother*, for instance, Magona portrays the role of "deep hatred" and the memory of the Xhosa Cattle Killing as necessary elements of understanding why Amy Biehl was murdered. For many white perpetrators, on the other hand, their participation in abuses took place within the discursive framework of "security." The South African police state was a product of the need for security against the "threats" of communist revolution and black disorder. Placing individual abuses within a context of how the events were understood by the participants provides a starting point towards understanding, forgiveness and reconciliation for those individuals. However, the TRC's focus on individual events, as well as the relationship between apology and forgiveness among individuals, does not necessarily challenge the discursive framework within which these abuses occurred. As the Commission states in the Final Report:

> The focus on the outrageous has drawn the nation's attention away from the more commonplace violations. The result is that ordinary South Africans do not see themselves as represented by those the Commission defines as perpetrators, failing to recognise the "little perpetrator" in each one of us. To understand the source of evil is not to condone it. It is only by recognizing the potential for evil in each one of us that we can take full responsibility for ensuring that such evil will never be repeated. (TRC I 133)

While the onus the TRC places in other passages on the sufferer foregoing bitterness and resentment and Said's focus on dismantling the rhetoric and politics of blame are not misplaced, as this passage acknowledges, the oppression of apartheid was not *only* marked by gross human rights abuses perpetrated by individuals against individuals within the framework of apartheid discourse; resentment or blame derives as much from the effect of structural violence or the ever-present "threat" of direct violence as it does gross abuses. Further, in this passage the Commission once again grounds national reconciliation in individual acknowledgement and transformation. Here, though, reconciliation depends as much on "forgiveness" (or foregoing blame) as on acknowledging complicity. Consequently, the "politics of denial" are embedded in the

"politics of blame." The antagonistic binary framework performed as a politics of blame cannot be deconstructed and dismantled without an acknowledgement of complicity.

The fact that just 5% of amnesty applications were filed by whites reveals the extent to which white South Africans have been unwilling to account for the violence of apartheid (Meiring 195). Some whites who appeared before the commission did express heart-felt contrition. For instance, in his amnesty hearing for participation in the torture of detainees, Captain Jeffrey Benzien was asked how the commission of these abuses affected him as a human being; he replied: "I, Jeff Benzien, have asked myself that question to such an extent that I voluntarily – and it is not easy for me to say this in a full court with a lot of people who do not know me … approached psychiatrists to have myself evaluated, to find out what type of person am I" (TRC V 370). Benzien's testimony likely represents a largely unacknowledged, in public at least, high incidence of psychological trauma for South African soldiers and police officers. It also represents one of the few cases where a "full" accounting of events was provided. The participation of many other white security personnel or government officials, however, as well as many anti-apartheid activists, only illuminates the complex rhetoric and politics of denial at work in South Africa.

While many conservative whites saw the amnesty process – despite the fact that amnesty provided "perpetrators" a venue to avoid criminal prosecution – as a "witch-hunt against Afrikaners, members of the ANC were confounded by the idea that their "resistance" should be characterized as gross human rights abuses; the MK acted in accordance with the Geneva Conventions, they argued, and theirs was a "just war."[17] Krog characterizes the contribution of the majority of SADF testimony as "Operation Shut Up and Deny" (76). On one level, denial was overt. Members of the old South African government covered up the abuses of the system. As Tutu describes it, they "lied as if it were going out of fashion" (*No Future* 24). The denial of others, however, took the form of refusal to acknowledge that their actions were abuses or criminal. Amnesty was refused the police officers who applied for their part in Steve Biko's death. They sought amnesty, but argued their innocence: "They denied in effect that they had committed a crime, claiming they had assaulted him only in retaliation for his inexplicable conduct in attacking them" (54). For others, atrocities committed in the name of South African security were described with little emotion and no remorse. For instance, commission members were stupefied by the way in which General Deon Mortimer described a 1983 operation in which the SADF attacked two ANC homes in Mozambique "as if it's nothing" and no human beings were killed (Krog 76).

While many government officials denied having knowledge of the abuses covered in the mandate of the TRC, blaming such actions on overzealous police officers, for instance, one of the aims of the Commission was to make it impossible for any South African to claim ignorance as a justification for inaction. TRC hearings provided a venue for these various modes of the rhetoric of denial, from obstinacy to rationalization, to be named and challenged. As Mandela argues, apartheid, as a politics of separation divided

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[17] When the ANC threatened to prevent its members from seeking amnesty because they had been involved in a "just war," Tutu, as Chair, threatened to resign (TRC I 10).

people on the grounds of racialized categories in order to prevent cultural understanding (Mandela 249). Many of the overt abuses covered in the TRC would have taken place in the townships or outside South Africa, far away from the gaze of the white population. However, the body of laws and policies which restricted black agency compiled by the TRC or the mass displacement of whole communities could not have occurred without the knowledge of the majority of the population. While few whites attended hearings in person, and the Afrikaans media in general did not provide the depth of coverage of English and African-language newspapers, the public accounting for apartheid abuses did affect the consciousness of many South Africans.[18] For instance, an 81 year-old loyal member of the National Party responded to the disclosures made in the hearings by claiming that "'I did not know that my people could have done such terrible things'" (Villa-Vicencio 215). A culture of silence (as denial) allowed the policies and practices of the South African government to be translated into a narrative of innocence: "Whereas before [the TRC], people denied that atrocities happened, now they deny that they *knew* they were happening" (Krog 115).

The rhetoric of denial utilized by the ANC can be explained by the anti-apartheid narrative of opposition within which their actions were undertaken. Similarly, the refusal of whites to acknowledge the abuses of the system may be explained not as malevolence but through the myth within which such acts took place. As discussed above, the white South African will to control both produced and was produced by black resistance. The ANC Freedom Charter, for instance, with its commitment to non-racialism, equitable distribution of land and resources, was understood within Cold War ideology. The ANC's non-racialism, therefore, only reinforced the government's ideology of separation, in part as a means of controlling what was perceived, or at least presented to the general public, as a communist threat. As Tutu observes, "White South Africans are not demons. They are ordinary people, mostly scared... If I was white I would need a lot of grace to resist a system that provided me with such substantial privileges" (*Rainbow* 102). Fear, then, was a manifestation of white denial. Similarly, the collective historical narrative of Afrikaner victimization, developed though the historical memory of the conflicts with the British, further defined Afrikaners as a "people" defined against an Other who is necessarily a threat. As Coetzee shows in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the barbarian other allows all misfortune that befalls the self to be blamed on that other. Jolly argues that the TRC uncovered the myth of white ignorance as a lie: "it has exposed the practice of (pro)claiming one's innocence, or ignorance, in the face of no verbal evidence to the contrary, for what it is: the coping strategy... of a society pathologically involved in deceiving itself" (Jolly "Desiring" 700). The rhetoric and politics of denial, therefore depend upon blame, and vice versa.[19] If it is the relationship of blame and denial, as a form of cultural violence, which legitimizes the violence of apartheid and its opposition,

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[18] Krog notes that for many white journalists, covering the TRC was a means of exploring their own guilt for their complicity in apartheid (224).

[19] Krog shares an interesting articulation of this relationship between blame and denial. Clinical psychologist Nomfundo Walaza tells her: "whites prefer to think they are being hated; then they don't need to change" (212).

reconciliation is the process of illuminating and transforming these narratives or myths of identity.

The few, yet powerful, examples of apology and forgiveness facilitated by the TRC, therefore, must be translated into a process in which the majority of South Africans must recognize the "little perpetrator" within them. Further, reconciliation, as resistance, must transform acknowledgement into responsibility, shame into redress:

> The emergence of a responsible society, committed to the affirmation of human rights (and, therefore, to addressing the consequences of past violations), presupposes the acceptance of individual responsibility by all those who supported the system of apartheid (or simply allowed it to continue to function) and those who did not oppose violations during the political conflicts of the past. (TRC I 131)

This formulation of the problem of apathy continues to be limited by the mandate of the TRC to investigate gross human rights abuses and compile these stories in the context of apartheid policies and structures of inequality. Returning to Mamdani's emphasis on reframing the relationships within apartheid power as that between beneficiaries and the disadvantaged – rather than victims and perpetrators – the politics of denial performed as inaction or apathy reinforces the way in which national reconciliation constitutes a radical reinterpretation of apartheid, by all of its subjects, in order to facilitate the radical change imagined through liberation.[20]   While the parameters of the TRC's public hearings create the illusion of closure – by articulating their stories publicly, asking for forgiveness, or granting it, participants are able to move on – as the Commission states in its Final Report, the Commission is merely a starting point, and "[i]n this process of bridge building, those who have benefited and are still benefiting from a range of unearned privileges under apartheid have a crucial role to play" (TRC I 134). The political changes which symbolize the "new" South Africa, including the repeal of apartheid laws, and the adoption of a new constitution which "ensures" equality, have neither transformed the discursive structure through which South Africans understand their experiences, nor drastically altered the demographic of who receives a quality education and who does not, who has access to clean water and who does not.

The Interim Constitution of South Africa included a brief postamble framing reconciliation as central to the nation-building project of a "new" South Africa: "The pursuit of national unity, the well-being of all South African citizens and peace require reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society" (TRC I 103). Reconciliation is framed as a means of transcending the divisions and strife of South Africa's past and developing a nation "on the basis that there is a need for understanding but not vengeance, a need for reparations but not for retaliation, a need for ubuntu but not victimisation" (103). The TRC provides a significant intervention in the dominant narratives of apartheid power and its opposition. This form of critical

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[20] Ironically, the two cases which I have come across in which South Africans have come forward to seek amnesty for their apathy involve an Indian woman (Rose 175) and a group of black youths (Krog 159).

reassessment is one way of "undoing" the politics and rhetoric of denial as well as resisting the narrative framework of blame. These narratives of collective memory, however, cannot be dismantled simply through legislation or the adoption of a new constitution. The political will to equality, in this case, precedes material and discursive transformation of the structure of power in South Africa. Deconstructing and dismantling these structures will not be accomplished through institutions like the TRC alone and certainly not in such a limited time period. Indeed, the very notion of the "accomplishment" of reconciliation needs to be re-evaluated. As Susan Dwyer argues,

> [R]econciliation between blacks and whites in South Africa… seems to involve the *dis*continuation of one story in favor of starting another… Given that the very identity (self-conception) of blacks and whites in South Africa has been constructed in terms of oppressed and oppressors, the dissonance between these prior narratives and proposed post-apartheid stories of nonracialism and social equality may preclude the possibility of coherently continuing the prior narratives.
>
> (88-9)

The "embrace" of reconciliation, however, does not symbolize the resolution of conflict – or the radical break from one story to another – but the beginning of a process of transforming both the narratives within which people understand their experiences and the material structures those narratives explain.

CONCLUSION

(Without Bitterness): Postcolonialism, Resistance, Love

I began my Introduction with a brief discussion of the 1915 rebellion organized by John Chilembwe against the European settlers and administration of the British protectorate of Nyasaland. Like similar rebellions in South Asia and Africa, the Chilembwe uprising has been constructed within the cultural imagination of Malawi as a significant moment of nation-building. Yet, the ideological framework Mwase attributes to Chilembwe significantly problematizes historical and theoretical positions which uncritically valorize armed insurgency, spontaneity and the assumed native desire to destroy or evict the colonist. By discussing the Chilembwe uprising I sought to foreground the relationship between colonial discourse and the emergence of capitalist values, if not relations, of power. I draw on this example to foreground my critique of the work of Bhabha, Guha, Fanon and Said, among others, for I believe that the story of the Chilembwe uprising Mwase constructs provides a significant alternative to Bhabha's "spectacular resistance" and the narrative of anti-colonial resistance Fanon describes in *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Mwase posits Chilembwe's ideal of liberation as the transformation of colonial consciousness and antagonistic relations of economic and social power rather than the utilization of such "implacable enmity," to use Parry's phrase, towards the ends of African independence. Yet, the incident also problematizes contemporary postcolonial retrievals of Fanon's work that marginalize his critique of European modernity and capitalist relations as well as his construction of "liberation" in terms of new identities fashioned through the alleviation of the material effects of the structural violence of colonialism: hunger, poverty, illiteracy. I intended my reading of Chilembwe to problematize the concept of resistance, raising questions about what resistance is "against" and what it is "for."

To conclude, I would like to briefly refer to another image from Malawi of resistance as the transformation of the antagonistic discourse of oppression. In 1997, Malawian poet Jack Mapanje was arrested and taken to Mikuyu prison. As a poet and teacher, Mapanje spoke the unspeakable in the era of Malawi's first president, Hastings Kamuzu Banda; he tried to change the story of post-independence Malawi. Mapanje spent more than three years in prison, but was never charged and received no trial. Like Chilembwe before him, and like the Little Bird Titi, Mapanje dared to question and alter the official narrative of authority. And like Chilembwe and Titi, Mapanje was punished for "talking" back. On one level, Mapanje uttered in his poetry a narrative of dominance from the perspective of the subjugated. The power of his words was not so much the story they told, however, but the fact that they were uttered at all. As Mapanje explains in a couple of poems in *The Chattering Wagtails of Mikuyu Prison* (1993), dissent under Banda's one-party rule was "meat for crocodiles."

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In *The Chattering Wagtails of Mikuyu Prison*, Mapanje uses the licence of the *imbongi*, or praise poet, to reclaim the tradition of the artist/writer as the conscience of a community, not simply to say "no" to authority but to reject the identity of the subjugated constructed through that authority. He does not simply protest the dictator or perform the role of the persistent ant in the ear of the great elephant, as the speaker of one poem self-deprecatingly quips ("The Release" 37-9). Instead, Mapanje subtly acknowledges the way in which the "implacable enmity" of anti-colonial discourse impedes the possibility of liberation. He writes: "Who'd/ have known I'd find another prey without/ charge without trial (without bitterness)/ in these otherwise blank walls of Mikuyu/ Prison?" ("Scrubbing" 33-7). Reminiscent of Chilembwe's desire to illuminate colonial rule as violence in hopes of educating and transforming the European settler, Mapanje imbues the oppressed with a strength of will that has the potential to overcome the binary and antagonistic framework of (neo)colonial power.

For a number of the theorists with whom I engage in this dissertation, postcolonial studies constitutes a critical practice which seeks to dismantle the antagonistic discourse of colonial power. For Leela Gandhi, postcolonialism has an ethical mandate to recognize ways in which the relationship between colonizer and colonized is transformed, with the ideal of an "utopian inter-civilisational alliance against institutionalised suffering" (*Postcolonial* 140). For Said, *Culture and Imperialism* attempts to challenge the rhetoric and politics of blame which impedes such a transformation from ever taking place. Bill Ashcroft refers to the "emancipatory drive of post-colonial discourse" and suggests that this "drive to re-empower the disenfranchised is too often conceived in terms of a simplistic view of colonization, or post-colonial response, and of post-colonial identities" (22). As I have argued, however, while postcolonialism may have an "emancipatory drive" there is no consensus as to what liberation means. It is, in different moments and locales: the entrance of the postcolonial nation into the international community of states; the dismantling of hierarchies of dominance and privilege, most particularly in terms of European exploitation of the land and peoples of their (neo)colonial holdings; the production of communal identities which counter those produced within modernity.

Further, if postcolonialism seeks to transform the antagonistic Manichean framework of colonial discourse or challenge the rhetoric and politics of blame which impedes such a transformation, the dominant conceptions of resistance within the field have failed to provide a framework for understanding such a transformation. Indeed, I believe these notions of resistance have impeded the recognition of alternative models and conceptions of resistance. The subversion of the colonial Christian mission by reading the Bible in a way not intended, insurgency against settlers and colonists, the production of hybrid identities, or "unspoken" forms of social and cultural resistance as a "saying no" to power all may problematize colonial discourses of power or even disrupt the operation of exploitative practices of colonial control. However, I do not believe these notions of resistance provide the theoretical framework for the sort of transformation Leela Gandhi or Edward Said attribute to the postcolonial.

After a couple of decades in which deconstruction and poststructuralism had seemingly made any emancipatory critical praxis hard to defend, a number of critics,

from Aschcroft to Parry to San Juan have argued – from a variety of perspectives – for particular forms of political intervention that postcolonialism, or contemporary critical theory more generally, should perform. For instance, two prominent recent works – Spivak's *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (1999) and Hardt and Negri's *Empire* – appeal to "love" as the signifier for such a politics. Like Fanon, whose appeal to the idea "[t]hat it be possible for me to discover and to love man, wherever he may be" (*Black* 231) functions as an afterthought in *Black Skin, White Masks*, both Spivak and Hardt and Negri conclude their works with under-theorized appeals to a politics of love. Spivak's formulation, however, lends itself particularly well to resistance, as I have theorized it through the work of Gandhi and in the idea of reconciliation. She argues that love provides a conceptual notion for the kind of sharing and learning that "the globe" requires:

> What deserves the name of love is an effort – over which one has no control yet at which one must not strain – which is slow, attentive on both sides – how does one win the attention of the subaltern without coercion and crisis? – mindchanging on both sides... The necessary collective efforts are to change laws, relations of production, systems of education, and health care. But without the mind-changing one-on-one responsible contact, nothing will stick. (*Critique* 383)

Significantly, Spivak draws together in this notion of love the material and the discursive, the need for structural change and the need for change in the values and ideologies which underpin those structures. Yet, this is as far as she goes.

In contrast, Chela Sandoval's argument in *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000) is developed through the idea of love as a "political apparatus." Sandoval contends "that a diverse array of thinkers are agitating for similarly conceived and unprecedented forms of identity, politics, aesthetic production, and coalitional consciousness through their shared practice of a hermeneutics of love in the postmodern world" (*Methodology* 4). While Sandoval acknowledges 1950s theories of "third world liberation," which she argues "shattered" the naturalized binaries of modern power (151), with the exception of Fanon, Sandoval's "thinkers" are limited to theorists aligned with the Western academy, and particularly deconstruction, including Derrida, Foucault, Barthes, Haraway, and Lorde. In particular, Sandoval draws on Foucault's contention that "our present moment" is distinct from the preceding historical stages of feudalism and capitalism. She argues that Foucault believes that "citizen-subjects who are interested in generating effective modes of resistance capable of confronting neo-colonial postmodernism must first recognize the fact that much of our perceptual apparatuses and tactics for action are based on past, outmoded yet residual conceptions of power and resistance" (162). It is important to acknowledge that the broad scope of Sandoval's contemporary historical moment is distinct from my more specific analysis of Gandhism in the context of British colonial occupation of India and the concept of reconciliation as it has developed in contemporary political discourse in South Africa at the end of apartheid.

The significance of my arguments regarding the way in which Gandhi, Tutu or Mamdani construct power in relation to these particular historical moments, however, reveals what I believe is an as yet uninterrogated gap in current calls for critical analysis to reflect the "newness" of contemporary power. The colonial enterprise was practiced

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differently in different locales and was experienced in a multitude of ways. Just as we cannot homogenize the colonial experience (Ashcroft 22), we must be careful not to homogenize the experience of global capital. I do not argue Foucault's contention that we can identify distinctions between relations of power in feudal, capitalist, late capitalist and a range of colonial and postcolonial moments. While recognizing the heterogeneity of the operation of power across spaces and time, I think it is important to emphasize the way in which Foucault refers to outmoded "conceptions" of power and resistance. Gandhi's *ahimsa* and *swaraj,* as well as the idea of reconciliation, as concepts of resistance and liberation provide a significant alternative conception of the colonial experience to those that are dominant in the field of postcolonial studies. As models of resistance, both Gandhism and reconciliation construct power much differently than it is conceptualized within anti-colonial and postcolonial theory.

Sandoval theorizes her "politically revolutionary love" through Foucault's principles of "opposition to authoritarian postmodern global powers." For instance, the oppositional agent should prefer what is positive and multiple over old categories of the negative; use political action as an intensifier of thought; recognize that the individual is the product of power and so should not demand individual rights, but seek "deindividualization" (*Methodology* 166). While Sandoval conceives of Foucault's work as "oppositional" – obviously in a different sense than I have used the term in this study – many of these ideas are performed in the resistance praxis of Gandhism and reconciliation. For instance, rather than theoretically "shattering" colonial binaries, Gandhism and reconciliation, as I have argued, acknowledge the way in which these binaries shape colonial identities and politics and seek to transform them so as to produce a radically altered, rather than simply reversed, structure of material relations of power *and* identities. Significantly, while Gandhism in India and reconciliation in South Africa have not become dominant political ideologies in the post-colonial/post-apartheid era, both require a form of "de-individualization" conceived of within the transformation of the inseparable or interdependent material *and* discursive structures of identity formation. In both cases the theories of resistance I have constructed are derived from praxis, wherein thought is intensified through action. The agent of resistance within Gandhism or reconciliation is not positioned outside of power, seeking to dismantle or destroy, but as a product of power, participating in the transformation of minds and structures from within.

I believe that my critique of the dominant notions of resistance within postcolonial studies and my analyses of Gandhism and reconciliation provide a more developed theory of resistance as love. In some ways, Spivak and Hardt and Negri's appeals to love may be understood in relation to criticism that postcolonial theory does not respond to contemporary neo-colonial or neo-imperial structures of dominance and exploitation. I have turned to Gandhism and reconciliation not simply to heed the call of Benita Parry and Leela Gandhi, who argue that postcolonial critics cannot continue to privilege Western theory, but because Gandhism and reconciliation reveal alternative "conceptions" of power and resistance. Parry argues that anticolonial theorists/activists:

> inaugurated the interrogation of colonialism and imperialism as projects of, and
> constituent forces in, western modernity… this body of theoretical writings *is* a

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legacy which we can both question and criticize, *and* prize as a resource for understanding not only colonialism's past, but also the contemporary oppressions perpetrated and perpetuated by some post-independence regimes on their native soil, and by a late imperialism across the globe. ("Reconciliation" 85-6)

Significantly, Gandhism and reconciliation do not simply help us understand oppression, but provide alternatives to the dominant constructions of power within postcolonial studies. As well, they provide these alternatives by foregrounding resistance as transformation. These recent appeals to a politics of love need to look to the future by interrogating the past, again.

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