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911—A Public Emergency?
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The opening ceremonies of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City featured, among the nods to Utah Native Americans and culturally diverse musicians, a U.S. flag disinterred from the carnage of the World Trade Center. The cause of some initial discomfort to officials of the International Olympic Committee, the wounded flag did make it to the February 8 event, carried into the stadium before a hushed crowd of 55,000. Too fragile to fly, this new symbol of global unity bore the hurt of all civilized nations. Yielded from the ground of ontological innocence, a space of victims and heroes, the flag arose phoenixlike from the ashes. Such are the conditions under which the catastrophe—encoded most simply as 911—has continued to circulate. The Olympic episode would stand as a banner for international cooperation, even as one nation exercised a supreme unilateralism that was reconciled with calls for infinite retribution. From Ground Zero, a new era dawned as the flag moved from the fallen global pinnacle to the world's level playing field. Henceforth, it was presumed, everything would be different. Whatever was building before that day—especially doubt at the fairness at the world's field—would have to be forgotten. For those of a critical disposition, the urgency would seem to be to remind the public of those other times, of those prior issues that remain.

So, the Dickensian terms of 911 have emerged: the best of times, the worst of times; everything has changed, nothing has changed. Whatever the bleak remnants of 911, it continues to stand as a Manichean frame of all-or-nothing that can only wreak havoc on the Left, which is spurred to imagine its own conditions of public access as existing in a state of emergency. To accept that everything is now different invites amnesia but also manacles the future to official crisis management. Simple refusal of these declared new times is, at best, unnewsworthy, and at worst, self-anesthetizing to what it is now possible to say. The cult of the news that raises the specter of public access clashes with those very critical traditions that would ennoble the voices of opposition. The results are bound to be disorienting and self-censorious to radical intervention long after the dust has settled. Whatever historical and political economic analysis that can be brought to bear on the straitjacket of 911 as an event needs to be coupled with an unhinging of the conditions under which the Left intervenes. This special issue of

*Randy Martin
and
Ella Shohat*

Social Text is devoted to opening up both the analysis and the interventions, to complicate the terms of good and evil, under the shadow of which we are supposed to think our world and operate within it. Our contribution comes amid many journals of leftist tendency that have had to grapple with the problem of publishing after the fact under the presumption of continued urgency to complicate reductive terms of public reception.

Manichean narratives are always tempting because they give us a false sense of moral security, wrapping us in a narcissistic cocoon, allowing us to digest the indigestible, to assimilate the unacceptable. Within this discourse, an orderly and peaceful world has been subjected to arbitrary and irrational attack, and our own regenerative violence will restore the everyday order of the world "before the fall," a prelapsarian order for which the "American Nation" is already nostalgic. The desire to narrate events in this manner is an understandable response in the wake of a traumatic crisis, but it is also our civic responsibility to be skeptical about such ahistorical narratives. Bin Laden, fingered so hastily as the incarnation of evil, was, as we know, at one point recruited and supported by the United States. In the 1980s, government-sponsored centers in Brooklyn recruited Muslim fundamentalists to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. At that time, bin Laden was on the good side of the Manichean divide. Our government, as in the *Rambo* imaginary of the day, called bin Laden and his fellow *moujadheen* "freedom fighters."[1]

Since World War II, U.S. foreign policy has repeatedly used Muslim fundamentalists against both communism and progressive forms of nationalism, recruiting fundamentalist allies among the Muslim Brothers in Egypt against Nasser, using the *Jamat-i-Islam* against Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, and encouraging bin Laden against the secular communist Muhamed Najibullah in Afghanistan. At the time of the Gulf War, George W. Bush's father offered us a similar discourse about another incarnation of evil, Saddam Hussein, who had previously been the ally of American policy and the darling of U.S., British, and German corporations. After his fateful mistake of invading Kuwait, Hussein was transformed into a reincarnation of Hitler with the rapidity with which new enemies for "Hate Week" were fabricated in George Orwell's *1984*. The short-lived Office of Strategic Influence, developed for the younger Bush's war, was meant to spread disinformation through foreign news media until it was slain by domestic editorial cartoons.[2] Manichean discourses, then, are all subject to these quick reversals of evaluation.

The discourse of "loss of innocence" is also disturbing, for it elides a primal U.S. colonial legacy: to wit, the earlier home-based crimes committed against Native Americans, African Americans, and others. The idea that "we" have only now lost our innocence implies a privileged, dominant point

of view. African Americans, for example, have long been the victims of homegrown horror: slavery, lynching, and the terrorism of the Ku Klux Klan. Indeed, we need an expanded and more precise definition of terrorism, one that also includes state terrorism and vigilante terrorism. The idea of an only-now-lost innocence is rooted in deafness not only to the dynamics of U.S. history but also to the consequences of U.S. foreign policy in the world. Implicitly, a sense of innocence is premised on the privilege of not knowing what has been done in "our" name. It is one thing for citizens of an isolated island that exercises no power in the world to be ignorant of that world, but it is inexcusable for the citizens of a powerful nation-state whose weight and pressure are felt around the world to be ignorant of the very world being dominated. (In answer to the question "Why do they hate us?" the joke goes that they hate us because we don't even know why they hate us.) Narratives of innocence simply reproduce the very kind of thinking and acting that has caused widespread resentment of the United States and its unilateral and self-serving interventions around the world—resentment on which death cults like that of bin Laden can build and thrive.

At the same time, the imperial policies of the United States—its oil-driven hegemony in the Gulf, its murderous sanctions on Iraq, its blind support for Israeli policies—do not turn the 911 terrorists into legitimate avengers of the crimes committed toward populations in the "Third World" in general. While we can share the criticism of U.S. foreign policy and even explain the causes of a widespread frustration against U.S. and transnational corporations, we must articulate a space for a forceful critique that would also address such a fundamentalist worldview. Terrorist crimes do not avenge other crimes; they simply add more crimes. A fundamentalist Manichean discourse projects a righteous East pitted against a corrupt and infidel West. Bin Ladenist discourse is a demonizing discourse that turns all Jews, Christians, Buddhists, and even Muslims who do not share his interpretation of Islam into infidels worthy of death. Such demonizing and reductivist discourses are shared, we must insist, by all fundamentalist movements, whether they be Muslim, Christian, Jewish, or Hindu. The geography of Islam cannot be singled out as the only space that produces fundamentalism. Bin Ladenism, furthermore, has posed a serious threat not only for non-Muslims around the world but also for the human rights and civil rights of Muslim citizens themselves in the Arab/Muslim world, in the United States, and elsewhere. Like Christian and other versions of fundamentalism, bin Ladenism's long-term goal is ultimately a religious war that would universalize its Truth. We who have been concerned with multicultural vision and minority rights must at the same time deplore not simply acts of terror, but *all* monological world visions and political philosophies.

The Muslim fundamentalist vision, furthermore, does not represent all Muslims or the multilayered culture of Islamic civilization. In fact, it is at odds with the practice of multiculturalism *avant la lettre* that has prevailed, for the most part, under the auspices of Islam. Pitting Western modernity against Eastern fundamentalist traditionalism is therefore another false binary. This extremist strain that has nominated itself to speak on behalf of all Muslims is very much a product of modernity.[3] Also, far from a natural and ancient blood feud, Jewish-Arab hostility is an invention of the past century. Muslims and Jews were oppressed together during the Spanish Inquisition, and subjected together to forced conversion and expulsion. The Ottoman Empire welcomed Jews both after the Inquisition in 1492 and with the onset of the Holocaust in the late 1930s. In fact, the Holocaust took place in the modern Christian West, never in the Islamic East. Unlike the tolerant Islamic tradition, which has valued Christians and Jews as protected minorities representing the "people of the book," bin Laden's discourse demonizes both Christians and Jews as infidels, creating a new tradition produced within modernity.[4] This is why it is wrong to refer to his ideas as "medieval," a word that is itself a Eurocentric designation, for what was in Europe the so-called Dark Ages was for Islam and for Judaism the height of civilizational creativity.

Reading Islamic civilization ahistorically and essentializing Muslims amount to a neoimperial fundamentalism incapable of forming complex discourses and policies. Yet when the fight against U.S. global dominance is coupled with an antidemocratic world vision, the Left is placed on the horns of a terrible dilemma. Any fundamentalist world vision, even when fighting against globalization or neoimperialism, does not make available the solidarities upon which the Left has historically depended or the transnational coalitions that the antiglobalization movement has pursued. At issue, then, is not only bin Ladenist terrorism but also the world order it seeks to create. At the risk of sounding nostalgic, one can safely say that there ain't no Che Guevara in that cave.

Fighting neoimperial violence with blind terrorism is not only unjust but counterproductive. Terrorist attacks tend to harden attitudes and legitimize repression. In the wake of 911, the antiglobalization movement, which was gaining momentum, has been placed on the defensive. When the World Economic Forum fled Davos, Switzerland, for the safer shores of Manhattan for its January 2002 meetings, its million-dollar diners were welcomed as citizens of the world. Protesters to the parties were portrayed as outsiders, regardless of where they hailed from. In the name of Ground Zero, an edict of zero tolerance mandated that not so much as spit could issue from the bodies of the demonstrators. While in the East Afghani women are liberated from their *burkhas*, at home antiglobalizers

are forcibly unmasked by police, as part of surveillance aimed at both exposing the protester's identity and depriving a political movement of its culture of theatricality. While Afghani women "gain face" by removing their veil, in what is seen as a triumph of Western modernization, protesters "lose face" by being deprived of their masks. And, as if to unveil Islam itself, pilgrims to Mecca this year had their eyes scanned so that their identities could be tracked wherever their faith might lead them. If, however, repression is a function of the magnitude of a threat, we must ask why the demonstrators in Seattle, Ottawa, Genoa, or New York are treated as if they are about to take the Winter Palace. Perhaps the mobile encampment of capital that traipses through these cities under so many aliases (WTO, G8, WEF, IMF) harbors a terror still more revolutionary.

Just as bin Ladenism makes no distinction between military and civilian targets, between the army general and the janitors working in the World Trade Center, Bush's war against terror readily substitutes a crime suspect for what he had previously taken as a legitimate national government, which is then made equivalent to the populace. In the name of war against terrorism, the Patriot Act erases legal and technical distinctions between domestic and international targets of surveillance and law enforcement in a manner that continues McCarthyite traditions. Calling the actions a war already begs the question of which antagonists are joined in battle. Although President Bush declared that we are at war, he has refused to regard the captured Talibans as prisoners of war. The same president who failed to sign the Kyoto Treaty for international cooperation regarding the global environment followed suit by flouting the Geneva Convention. If Enduring Freedom was a war, it was a war of excision, not of conquest, where territory was to be neutralized rather than appropriated. And if this is Bush's dog wagging, it is not only to displace blame for the recession (or for Enron) but also to further dispossess its own domestic victims. In meticulously orchestrated aerial maneuvers, bombing and starving the Afghan people (the latter done more indiscriminately than the former) effectively quarantined their national soil. While supposedly confirming a technological advance over the visually precise Gulf War, the bombing of Afghanistan was presented as a great cloud of dust that burned dim illumination over crackling videophones. While homeland security has been violated irrevocably, a sense of boundary is being reinstalled somewhere overseas. In contrast to the gaping visual spectacle, the choking dust and stench of death that have made the WTC site a local misery would be blown halfway around the world.

On the other hand, the quarantine of the Afghan people (while the most wanted slipped away) was twinned by the management of the anthrax mailings. Recycling old colonial tropes, the rescue operation of

Afghanistan in the name of veiled innocents finds an uncomfortable double in the operational fingerprints of domestic terror in the name of unborn innocents. Rescue narratives of raped lands and women continue to save a foreign and domestic policy of business as usual. While the airborne parcels were touted as humanitarian even as they obstructed other deliveries, the airborne spores seem to have floated into an investigational limbo. The terrorizing of women and abortion clinics by U.S. Christian fundamentalists is not a cause for the "American Nation" to mobilize its surveillance profiling and its antiterror machinery. There, the "axis of evil" discourse is disappeared.

The most publicly pursued lines of conspiracy are not domestic right-wing terrorist networks but unpatriotic academics. The vague insinuations by America's religious fundamentalists that postmodern relativism lay behind the attacks were quickly aired and dropped. The charges of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, whose political sponsors are Lynne Cheney and Joe Lieberman, received more sustained attention. The council's mission is protection of academic freedom, which it sees as threatened from within the academy by avatars of political correctness. This time, political correctness took the form of teach-ins, which to their participants may have seemed like the only beachhead against mindless unanimity available in the fall of 2001. The good trustees' published list of intellectuals they found unwilling to defend the nation's civilization would have been considered politically moderate before or after 911.[5] In this case, the emergency for the Left would be that it is elided by the term *liberal*. In publishing its lists of unpatriotic professors, the council claims to be only seeking balance, an invitation to the defamed to clear their names in the court of public opinion.

Such venues can be rather treacherous, as University of South Florida computer scientist Sami al-Arian found out after appearing on Fox network's *O'Reilly Factor* on September 26, 2001. Professor al-Arian, active in Palestinian politics in the United States, founded an Islamic think tank, the World Islamic Studies Enterprise, Inc., that was investigated and cleared by the FBI as a front for international terror. The show's host, Bill O'Reilly, aggressively accused al-Arian of terrorist links and concluded by threatening to follow the professor wherever he went.[6] The next day, Dr. al-Arian began receiving death threats at work, and within two months another body of trustees, the board at the University of South Florida, voted twelve to one to fire the tenured professor for disrupting the business of the university. Al-Arian, it seemed, would not survive public access. His case is but the clearest indication that there is a converging encirclement of academia and Islam that not even the clearest speech or

most public access can prize open. With such adversaries, the freedoms in the prison house of language become yet more circumscribed.

At the same time, terror and speech are closer now than during previous witch-hunts of political correctness. The task of the Left is to come up with an antiterror stance that recognizes the issue's complexity and sees that the groups—foreign and domestic—that produce terror are linked to state policies. It is not a question of simply condemning or condoning terror, as a certain level of violence is connected to all manner of politics. The difficult path is to enter a critique of violence that doesn't project the U.S. Left into an already liberated zone, a separate realm outside such entanglements. At issue is violence against progressive mobilizations, not simply how violence is legitimated. Not all resistances to U.S. hegemony are equal.

As a collective operating out of downtown New York City, we will begin with the contradictions closest to home. Our issue opens with a piece by Stefano Harney that refuses the connotations of anarchy and terror that have now become conventional, and rereads late New York through a different political lens. Meena Alexander's poems and reflections in an interview with Lopamudra Basu on the occasions for poetry after 911 access an alternate sensorium for processing proximity to disaster. Images from the installation *World Views* by Sandrine Nicoletta and Yigal Nizri provide late perspectives from within the WTC. Far from Ground Zero, Ban Wang explores the durability of the area studies frame and how this bears on the framing of events. Ella Shohat's contribution, written before 911, suggests the durability of a global multiculturalist/transnationalist feminist critique of gender studies and area studies confinements. By focusing attention on the misogyny that underwrites terror, Zillah Eisenstein imagines a new feminist international. Muneer Ahmad shows where the present repression of Muslims in the United States joins other racist logics, and Jasbir Puar and Amit Rai link the figure of a monstrous body to the production of docile patriots. Rosalind Morris takes a longer view of the justifications of war in the face of opposition to Islamic universalism. We close the issue with a contribution by Judith Butler, who examines the discursive space under which the Left operates with respect to 911, and Fred Moten's close look at how the homogenization of dissent operates in our midst.

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1. *Rambo III* (1988) was set in Afghanistan.

2. Eric Schmitt and James Dao, "A 'Damaged' Information Office Is Declared Closed by Rumsfeld," *New York Times*, February 26, 2002.

3. For more on this point, see, Minoo Moallem, "Whose Fundamentalism?" forthcoming in *Meridians* 2 (spring 2002).

4. Ella Shohat, "Taboo Memories, Diasporic Visions: Columbus, Palestine, and Arab-Jews," in *Performing Hybridity*, ed. May Joseph and Jennifer Natalya Fink (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

5. The report, "Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done about It," by Jerry L. Martin and Anne D. Neal, can be found at the American Council of Trustees and Alumni Web site, www.goacta.org/missionframeset.htm.

6. A transcript of the interview was published in an article on al-Arian by Sharon Walsh, "Blaming the Victim: A University Vows to Fire a Tenured Professor Facing Death Threats in the Wake of September 11," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 8, 2002, A10–13.

Stefano Harney

Kropotkin's history of the French Revolution has a revealing chapter on anarchists.[1] Kropotkin notes that they were greatly feared by both the Girondins and the Jacobins, and they dominated many key moments of action and deliberation in the Revolution. Yet they left behind little direct trace, except in the pamphlets of others in which they were attacked. And Kropotkin's great history enacts this presence. Anarchists are given only one short chapter, but they are present as a force in every scene. They were the people willing to make revolution at every turn, "even against themselves." These anarchists were precisely, in Kropotkin's history, both the movement and limits of the French Revolution.

The contemporary Italian anarchist Alfredo Bonanno points out in his introduction to Kropotkin's study that Kropotkin had a keen historical sense of these anarchists. He argues that Kropotkin understood their violence, and violence in general, as a bourgeois phenomenon. Neither this violence, nor the authoritarianism it makes possible, had any place in the communist anarchism that interested Kropotkin. Bonanno himself calls terror "a bourgeois ideal." Violence turns to terror in Kropotkin's history. But this is not a condemnation for Kropotkin. It is a question of historical limits. Violence limited what could be achieved politically. For Kropotkin, the Terror was both the achievement and the limit of bourgeois power. The Terror was not the beginning of anarchy in the French Revolution, but its end.

Today, violence continues to limit what can be achieved politically. But today this is still a historical question. Bourgeois violence, or *terror*, is fully achieved in many places today inside what Jacques Derrida calls the force of law.[2] And yet the force of law—that sophisticated attempt by a new class to hold all the terrors of the emerging capitalist world together by investing them with a participatory universality—begins to spend itself. The always already present question of our day—is legitimacy legitimate—swirls in the wind over every ground zero. But this time, the mass refusal of violence hints at an anarchy grown full.

The September 11 attacks sped up the decomposition of the force of law, and in its aftermath one could see most easily the naked attempts to refound law in the Terror. But such attempts were already desperately present on September 10, and already failing. Nowhere was the Terror more ineffective, more counterproductive in its own terms, than in New York City in the last eight years. But of course on September 11, the victim-hero of that terror, Rudolph Giuliani, had the chance to try again. And he and his supporters did try to put the force of law back together again by renewing his victim-hero status. And yet, this did not work; the terror no longer terrifies. And the evidence for this is striking.

Of course, this sounds wrong at first, and perhaps even feels wrong if one lives in the United States. It sounds wrong because following the attack there was indeed a global bourgeois riot, with the state and its ideologues rampaging from Washington, D.C., to Jakarta to Buenos Aires, looting and pillaging with renewed frenzy any alternatives to their rule. To give one bloody example, antiterror legislation in the United States has permitted renewed links with the Indonesian military, despite a congressional ban, no progress on the prosecution of Indonesian military and paramilitary war criminals, and the military's recent and brazen extra-judicial killing of a peaceful West Papuan independence leader. That pattern is the same everywhere. And it feels wrong here in the United States to say the terror does not terrify. It certainly feels like the force is with us more than ever at this moment, when no one can stop working, neither mothers nor billionaires, no one can stop spending, and where no one is safe without security, or secure without a homeland. Decisions about our safety have to be made, enacting the force of law again and again. Democracy and rights must be enforced, enacting the terror behind this force, again and again. Obedient tourists repossess the city, ceding their politics en masse as spectators to terror. In this sense, one can still easily agree with Alexander Berkman in his *ABC of Anarchism*, "If we speak honestly, we must admit that every one believes in violence and practices it, however he may condemn it in others. In fact, all of the institutions we support and the entire life of present society are based on violence."[3]

Sociologists for Terror

But does terror still hold history in its grasp? It was certainly the case once. In a repetition of the anarchist trace in the French Revolution, classical anarchist readings of violence, which were historical, were repre-

sented principally and ahistorically through their critics, the classical sociologists. Durkheim, Weber, Simmel feared anarchism as both a political movement and rival analysis, and they suppressed that fear.[4] Anarchism was inserted in history, and history inserted in terror. So, today it would seem easy to declare an endless war on terror, when history has been turned inside out and placed inside terror. But whatever the anarchists had hoped, or for that matter, whatever Walter Benjamin had hoped, one can ask now—is history still within this horizon of violence today?

On the one hand, it is. The violence of the Palestinians is a part of the historical violence of the Israelis. So too, with the Irish and English, Acehnese and Indonesians. It would be hypocritical to condemn one without the other, as one makes the other possible and both agree on the rules, the force of law—even, or especially, in the breach. So too, violence makes possible the terror of the peace processes, more properly understood, as Bernadette McAliskey has noted in the case of Ireland, as the pacification process.[5] (At another moment she refers to these putative peace processes revealingly as "constitutionalizing.") In these "conflicts" the terror waits for peace and this is precisely what once scared Frantz Fanon—the transformation of arbitrary violence into a violence of origin and into the promise of participation in the force of law. This is why a close reading of Frantz Fanon can lead one to believe he favored an arbitrary violence, a position not easily assimilated into a reasoning Left today (and thus the focus on his Caribbean work).[6] He did favor such violence—anything but the force of law that had produced his subjugation. His violence against violence was a revolution against himself. Perhaps he understood himself as one of the *enragés*, as one of Kropotkin's invisible anarchists, and perhaps he wanted to go beyond the limits of violence. Certainly, he could have hoped for more from his historical moment, since one way to understand the Cold War in the West is as a panic that terror might not be universal. And indeed, violent responses were inevitably greeted with relief in the anti-Communist world.

Fanon *Enragé*

On the other hand, today terror's universalism is challenged by a new Fanonian spirit inhabiting the peace movements in Ireland, Palestine, and elsewhere, in the Mothers of the Disappeared everywhere, and in the hunger strikes in the Turkish jails.[7] Like Fanon, these movements want to refuse the connection between violence and law that is terror. Like King, they want to refuse the distinctions of violence that law makes possible. But now it is the force of law that has grown arbitrary, that speaks a logic

of the arbitrary. The bombs drop and the police shoot. It is all terror and can be refused only by refusing all law.

Thus, for the anarchist mass there is no violence that is *not* legitimate, and therefore, to refuse violence is to refuse legitimacy. Their arbitrary development rejects not just the present violence but also the future law, the promise of force on the other side of violence, the force that brings participation to it, whether in Sinn Fein or the Palestinian Authority. The invitation of the Israelis to the Palestinians to make the common violence of the bourgeois order, to deliberate on a common terror, the invitation of the CIA and the International Monetary Fund to make the common terror globally, to harmonize all terror, these are faced with what C. L. R. James called self—movements that *for the sake of their own mobilization* refuse participation in the law in favor of "their infinite and from one point of view ungraspable and unpredictable variety" of social development.[8]

The Bronx and Brooklyn

To these self-movements, the force of law is therefore losing its power, if its power is understood as its ability to limit the politics of what Kropotkin called mutual aid. Of course, it is possible to be skeptical of this claim, but the forces of terror are not. The grip is slipping in an orgy of unmasked violence. Neither state terrorists like Bush nor semistateless terrorists like bin Laden even attempt to hold together the force of law. Instead they visit arbitrary violence on the innocent. The U.S. military does not even make a pretense of law, blissfully ignorant of universalisms like the Geneva conventions for instance, making participation in what Fred Moten calls the "pentagonal we" impossible for all but the most deracinated. The key component of the force of law, promising universal participation, lies wasted. Of course, it is well understood in critical scholarship that this participatory universalism was established and conducted by exclusion. But has it ever, in its short life on earth, admitted its own mortality in the way it does today?

In the past, the great mobilizations of mutual aid, in the soviets and workers' councils or in maroon communities, were drawn back into violence by law. Terror worked. Anticolonial movements began and often ended inside the bourgeois horizon, even if they arose from self-movements beyond this horizon, or strove themselves in this direction. Countless other moments of self-movement are lost to history, leaving only what was written in response to them, often without naming them. On the way to the bourgeois horizon invitations abounded, to human rights, property rights, families, and nation-states, invitations that require only terror, the great normalizer.

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But along this same road lies the possibility of too much participation in the force of law. Too much participation begins to draw attention to the participation itself and such participation becomes subject to organizational creativity in music, sport, sex, or language, for instance. These self-movements, drenched in their own surplus of participation, refused the force of law, calling into question its underlying compulsion. Limiting the argument just to New York City, this pattern of refusal was clear and widespread before September 11. On September 10, the symbol of this force of law, America's most well-known mayor, was in forgotten disgrace, but this is to miss what defeated him, and indeed what had called him into being.

Although attempts have been made on both the Left and the Right, for different reasons, to reverse this sequence, Rudolph Giuliani was called forth by Latinos, drowning in property rights, who created community gardens. He was called forth by African American communities, facing white vigilantism, that mobilized for Jackson and Dinkins. He was called forth by students at the City University of New York attempting to radicalize the university system once again amid the deepening depoliticization of their lives. He was called forth by organizations mobilizing people with AIDS, the homeless, immigrants, and reform unionists, among others. This included all of those who had been forced into an excess of participation in the force of law, and who now refused to do so. But Giuliani was finally formed by those still floating in participation, by those whose participation is imagined through victimhood. Developers victimized by rent control, young professionals victimized by alternative street life, and uniformed state and trade workers victimized by women and people of color. These needed the protection of terror. It was an unstable coalition that finally formed him, perhaps more unstable than similar coalitions that formed his predecessors like Koch and Wagner. It was unstable because one part of the coalition literally dumped on the other. One controlled all the space of the other. The Staten Island dump remains an apt symbol of the idiocy of the coalition for its junior partner. But if one wants to understand why suddenly the face of Giuliani emerging from the white dust on September 11 should be said to bring such comfort and reassurance, one has to look here, at this coalition. That face said, "our coalition, our victimhood is intact." White ethnic men would be our heroes and get the contracts, and people of property would have the white ethnic men at and for their disposal. But that comfort and reassurance came also from the sense of a second chance for what was in fact a failing coalition.

How has it failed? The coalition has taken two forms of violence and attempted to incorporate them into the force of law, to turn them into ter-

ror. As already mentioned, it became incorporated in the white ethnic vigilantism that erupted on the borders between expanding Latino and Anglo-Caribbean immigrant communities and the established, mostly Italian, homeowner communities. The second form of violence was an equally vicious attack on property that had been differently valorized, a self-valorization represented most famously by the growth of cultural centers, arts collectives, and community gardens. Prior to Giuliani, these floated as free violence, without universal participation, through the Koch and Dinkins administrations. The seeds of incorporation were already there, of course, as fear had been stood on its head, and violence attributed to those upon whom it was visited. But the Giuliani administration really subsumed this violence by inviting all the alleged victims to a war on drugs, a battle for quality of life, and the renaissance of the New York spirit.

This subsequent story of revanchism has been persuasively told by Neil Smith in this journal.[9] What is now apparent, however, is that rather than incorporating this violence, the force of law in New York City, the Giuliani administration was ultimately consumed by it and destroyed. Its universalism, not surprisingly, was ripped apart by the contradictory position of its junior partners and the excesses of its senior partners. For instance, although there was expansion in the police force, there was pressure from the senior partners to simultaneously cut the city budget, 40 percent of which was made up of such uniformed services wages. To achieve security for the whole coalition, the forces had to be kept as white as possible to maximize jobs for the junior partners. Out of hundreds of uniformed service workers horribly killed in the World Trade Center attack, only twenty-three were African American. And as columnist Les Payne noted, in a city "where among eight million residents the white male population is less than twenty percent, the staff of the entire fire department is only 2.7 percent black."[10] In fact, this department is made up of 94 percent white males.

Keeping wages down was another way to expand and contract at the same time. This was done most successfully in 1994 by stuffing ballot boxes during the union contract vote for workers in the largest city union, D.C. 37, setting the pace for all city workers. These practices would come back to haunt the coalition by further inciting an anticoalition movement among white union reformists to augment the movement of unionists of color.

Furthermore, a split developed between white young professionals who wanted to participate in the quality-of-life terror but not, many realized too late, in the renaissance that soon saw them marginalized and moved to Williamsburg by commercial property developers. These petit

bourgeois renters, the frontline supporters of the terror, soon found themselves both priced-out and embarrassed, in public at least, by their own cryptofascist tendencies. This public shaming came of course in the notorious rise of arbitrary and brutal police violence. It was soon clear that the arbitrary quality of the baseball bat had simply been transferred to the nightstick and the Glock. It became harder and harder for any of the coalitions' partners to participate as victims in this force of law, with each refounding from Abner Louima to Patrick Dorismond escaping into arbitrary violence. But, of course, neither public embarrassment, nor obscene violence, nor rapacious profiteering has ever ripped the force of the law apart completely.[11]

This was accomplished by the *enragés* of New York City, known only by what had risen against them, and it was accomplished in a way that would have interested Kropotkin. The revolution these *enragés* made against themselves was the one for which Kropotkin had been waiting. In the face of the Terror, violence was refused. The notorious broken window policy of the New York City Police Department, the cornerstone of normalizing white vigilantism, extended the long right arm of violence and the long left arm of the job. Everything in poor working neighborhoods, all other self-directed, alternative, or cooperative social activity, was to be caught up in this embrace of the force of law. Yet by 1994, King Tone, head of the Latin Kings and Queens, had announced that his organization would become a street justice organization called the Mighty Latin Kings and Queens Nation, rejecting the gang violence that prison life had fostered. The Million Man March in the African American community, although portrayed as a Nation of Islam event, led to new initiatives in peace and justice in many New York neighborhoods. The October 22 coalition developed as a Mothers of the Disappeared organization to reject the violence and the brutality of this normalized white vigilantism. Then the CIA–crack cocaine trafficking stories finally broke. Hillary Clinton compelled her husband to free Puerto Rican political prisoners to win votes in that community, a move that required admitting they existed. By then, Mumia Abu-Jamal had become America's most famous political prisoner. The Reverend Al Sharpton was arrested with Latino activists and politicians protesting the U.S. military destruction of Vieques. All of this occurred against the backdrop of the high-profile brutality cases already mentioned, and as importantly the daily abrogation of civil rights for all youth of color in their own neighborhoods. These youths were routinely subject to stop and search practices by police. This was also the era of the Rodney King and O. J. Simpson trials and the Klanlike murder of Robert Byrd in Texas.

This is by no means a comprehensive timeline. But on Flatbush

Avenue, on New York Avenue, on Grand Concourse Avenue, the rush of state violence and its refusal had become overwhelming by September 10, 2001. There was widespread rejection of the connection between violence and law in these communities and it took the form of a rejection of all violence (and thus opened up onto the rejection of law, of bourgeois terror). In short, incorporated white vigilantism had become so provocative as to be unworkable, culminating in the civil disobedience sit-downs in front of One Police Plaza that forced indictments on those who shot Amadou Diallo. By September 10, 2001, Giuliani had no successor, and it was unclear whether his coalition could retain electoral power. There was no one able to refound the Terror. The lack of a successor was lamely explained by the *New York Times* as an unhappy consequence of Giuliani's giant presence. This explanation made no sense on its own terms (why would he not groom someone as part of this egoism?), but was simply ridiculous given the shell of a man about whom it was being said. No, what Randy Martin has termed "the always already prepolitical mobilization," that anarchist mass in New York City, made succession impossible.[12] Even if someone had emerged to promise the continued social wages of whiteness in the service of speculation by September 10, neither the long arm of the job nor the long arm of the law could provoke the necessary participation in violence.

Return of the Victim-Hero

Who knew this coalition would get such help from a man George Caffentzis described as a disaffected member of the Saudi capitalist class, trying to gain state power back home?[13] That man's failure to anticipate the consequences of his solipsistic arbitrary violence—that is, a rejuvenation of participation by opponents in the universality of bourgeois terror—was a fatal mistake for him and his supporters, but a gift to New York City's ruling coalition. Giuliani seized his victimhood with the gusto once reserved for his putative suffering at the hands of fifteen-year-old children from East Harlem and Brownsville. Through his wounds he called to his coalition for unity. The people's rescue brigades that formed spontaneously after the collapse of the two towers gave way reluctantly, and in some cases under state force, to the binary of victims and heroes. The mobile subjectivities on the missing posters that adorned statues in Union Square were appropriately scraped away by Work Experience Program workers in an early-morning October downpour. Heroes replaced these brigades and posters in the public view, and the heroes were the Fire Department of New York officers, New York Police Department officers,

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and soon United States Special Forces and Central Intelligence agents. This was Derrida's self-conserving repetition of the force of law in high gear, where conservation refounds so that it can claim to be defending what it has refound. Terror reduced the victims to heroes, and the heroes to white men, relegating all others—the living to future victims and suspects, and the dead to serial newspaper obituaries. Hero and victim were refounded. And the harbinger of this refounding came in the appearance of the man who could be both.

From America's mayor, from the victim-hero, came the Jacobin call. There is no other way to understand him. Certainly there was nothing substantive in his September 11 performance. After all, very few victims were found alive or saved in the course of the day or thereafter, the city was broke, and money for victims was slow to come, especially for those many workers without private life insurance, not to mention papers. Giuliani's irrelevant command bunker, together with the New York offices of the CIA and the FBI, was destroyed, despite apparently credible warnings of more attacks after the 1993 bombing. But Giuliani was the right man again to invite participation. He was a victim of his love for the city's diversity, one heard, but heroic enough to continue loving it, just as the Pentagon would soon be a victim of its own feminism, forced heroically to oust the Taliban. In this moment his talent exceeded the mere alchemy of the social wages of whiteness in the service of property. He had been wronged, as in the classic theme in post-1960s "walking tall" action dramas where Clint Eastwood, Charles Bronson, or Sylvester Stallone (and usually their proplike families) suffer horribly, only to exact a later revenge that exceeds all law. But these acts of revenge are justified precisely as the violence necessary to refound law. A master of this invitation to terror, America's mayor nonetheless enjoyed the most temporary of victories.

We Can Be Heroes?

In the days after the attack it was just possible to glimpse a different city. To give one example, the people's brigades that formed in the rescue effort reminded one that services like the police and fire in New York should be largely voluntary or at least draft-based. While there are specialized skills and danger in some aspects of fire services and emergency medical response, policing requires no specialized skill, nor is it particularly dangerous (despite the propaganda). One saw, just for a moment, that decomposing the state into labor in this way would offer the possibility of more free association and simultaneously reduce the violent associations of the present voluntarism—that is, vigilantism—and of state vio-

lence. Nor was this the only place that labor emerged. One thinks of the odd call by city, state, and national leaders to get right back to work. This was symbolized by the manic work at New York's ground zero, even after it was clear that no one would be found alive and few—if any—identified from the remains. For a moment, it was apparent that the city's propertied classes, who had fantasized for eight years about finally separating capital completely from labor, were making panicky appeals to the working people in the city to work and to consume, to save them.

These glimpses did not last, but neither did the refounded regime of law. Within a month of this refounding, in fact, a more abiding alternative to the present city reasserted itself in the primary election of Bronx borough president Ferdinand Ferrer. Ferrer knew he had to run a campaign that explicitly refused the call to universal participation in quality of life and civic renaissance before the attacks on the city, and he knew his supporters wanted him to resist the call to unity after the attacks. He pointedly asked for redistribution in the wake of the attack and in so doing implied a material shift in power away from Manhattan and its dominating coalition. An imperfect vehicle, he was carried nonetheless by the city's refusalist Left to Democratic primary victory. Despite all of the victimhood and heroism at the coalition's disposal, at this point, in the face of this refusal, it was forced to turn to social democracy to stave off this threat from the Left. First Mark Green and then Michael Bloomberg emerged as the Tony Blairs of the moment to try to sap and divide this emergent electoral Left, having the added advantage over Blair of reracializing the election.

It worked, but only electorally. Signs of this refusal of the force of law continued to appear. In the midst of what might be the most disciplined performance by a state's media in history—a media that as Michael Parenti points out actually led the call to war rather than simply amplifying it—nonprofit listener-supporter radio won a historic victory, expelling corporate raiders from its five stations around the country, including WBAI in New York.[14] Thousands of listeners actively participated in this shift to the Left. Moreover, Pacifica was no lone voice. In the midst of this statist media blitzkrieg, one witnessed the first U.S. military operation to be comprehensively covered, critiqued, and exposed on the World Wide Web. Nor was this evidence of refusal limited to media activists. Within weeks of the war, 2,000 people showed up to hear the great historian and pacifist Howard Zinn speak in New England. And new forms of activism are also apparent. New immigrants and more established communities of color have been connected by the intersection of FBI disappearances, racial profiling, and the prison-industrial complex. All of this is without looking at the massive, militant nonviolence that the continued U.S. mili-

tary's arbitrary violence is producing through the Muslim and Third World, building on already strong and widespread refusals.

Nor does it take into account the better-noted democracy movement fighting corporate globalization, resurging for the World Economic Forum in New York (kicked out of Davos and moved brazenly to the Waldorf in Manhattan, out of the mistaken notion that the refounding of bourgeois terror had pacified this movement). A spokesman for this forum denounced this movement a week ahead of the meeting by saying that "the bottom line is that Americans and people around the world have decided violence is not acceptable or legitimate." And indeed, many in the black blocs and in other "anarchist" formations within this democracy movement have been eager to enter into legal and extralegal definitions of violence, seeking some kind of legitimacy in the face of "bad press" and heroic police.[15] They try to define violence as that which injures humans or separate violence used in self-defense against widespread and brutal police aggression. An assistant professor of anthropology at Yale University, anarchist Dr. David R. Graeber, is quoted in the *New York Times* as saying the protests "must send a pointed message," and he complains in the article about getting this message out through a hostile press.[16] But this kind of actually existing anarchy demonstrates some of the difficulties of trying to realize such politics from within the violence of history.[17] For the history of violence that can only be written with a communist refusal, a refusal of legitimacy as the form for the social, one also has to look outside this movement.

One place to look would be any given day at Brooklyn Supreme Court. On one such day recently, almost seventy prospective jurors were dismissed in a routine and unnoticed case of a child who had sold less than $20 of crack to an undercover police officer, and who was now subject, if convicted, to the so-called Rockefeller drug laws, mandating a long prison term. Almost all these jurors, new immigrants and old, refused. Those drug laws are the only thing for which Rockefeller and his family name remain famous among the anarchist mass. Just as America's mayor, unless he returns to politics to add to his crimes, will be known among them for those forty-one shots that killed unarmed street vendor Amadou Diallo as he attempted to show his identification to police officers.

The multiple offender and prisoner Kropotkin said, "the first duty of the revolution will be to abolish prisons." The prison was stormed by the French Revolution, but not abolished. That revolution promised instead to make the prison irrelevant by universalizing terror. The return of the prison in the United States is a sign of the end of that revolution, the end of participation, the end of the bourgeois ideal of terror, and the beginning of a struggle.

1. Peter Kropotkin, *The Great French Revolution, 1789–1793*, 2 vols. (London: Elephant Editions, 1986), chap. 16.

2. Jacques Derrida, "Force of Law," in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, ed. Drucilla Cornell et al. (New York: Routledge, 1992).

3. Alexander Berkman, *The ABC of Anarchism* (London: Freedom Press, 1973).

4. For examples of the ghostly demarcations of anarchism in classical sociology, see Durkheim's "Analysis of Socialist Doctrines," in *Selected Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Weber's aborted discussion of cooperatives in "Socialism," in *Selections in Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and Simmel's "Super-subordination without Degradation," in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel* (New York: Free Press, 1964).

5. Bernadette McAliskey, from an interview posted on the Web site of Radio Free Eireann, www.wbaifree.org/radiofreeeireann.

6. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove, 1968).

7. See, for instance, the rise of the International Solidarity Movement in and around Palestine documented in Edward Said, "A New Current in Palestine," *Nation*, February 4, 2002.

8. Grace C. Lee, Cornelius Castoriadus, and C. L. R. James, *Facing Reality* (1958; Detroit, Mich.: Bewick, 1973), 105.

9. Neil Smith, "Revanchism," *Social Text* 57 (winter 1998): 1–20. The related imperial form reversing victimizer and victimized has also enjoyed a revival as, for instance, George Monbiot noted recently in a piece for the *Guardian* in Britain, called "Both Saviour and Victim," January 29, 2002.

10. Les Payne, "FDNY Puts Out No Welcome Mat for Blacks," *Newsday*, January 27, 2002.

11. Nor for that matter would solid social science showing absolutely no necessary connection between the broken windows policy and the drop in crime. See most notably the work of Bernard Harcourt, *Illusion of Order: The False Promise of Broken Windows Policing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

12. Randy Martin, *On Your Marx: Relinking Socialism and the Left* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 209.

13. George Caffentzis, unpublished paper distributed to Brecht Forum collective.

14. Michael Parenti, "Globalization, Democracy, and Terror," public lecture, University of California at Irvine, January 31, 2002.

15. Jacob H. Fries, "Anarchy Has an Image Problem," *New York Times*, January 28, 2002.

16. Fries, "Anarchy Has an Image Problem."

17. These difficulties are demonstrated in a good and informative new book by Jeff Farrell called *Tearing Up the Streets* (New York: St. Martin's, 2001). Farrell's phenomenological vision of remaking the city comes across as enterprise that wants to dispense with social complexity even as it is born of it.

Lyric in a Time of Violence

*Meena
Alexander*

Aftermath

There is an uncommon light in the sky
Pale petals are scored into stone.

I want to write of the linden tree
That stoops at the edge of the river

But its leaves are filled with insects
With wings the color of dry blood.

At the far side of the river Hudson
By the southern tip of our island

A mountain soars, a torrent of sentences
Syllables of flame stitch the rubble

An eye, a lip, a cut hand blooms
Sweet and bitter smoke stains the sky.

(New York City, September 13–18, 2001)

Sweet and bitter smoke stains the air
The verb *stains* has a thread torn out

I step out to the linden grove
Bruised trees are the color of sand.

Something uncoils and blows at my feet
Sliver of mist? Bolt of beatitude?

A scrap of what was once called *sky*?
I murmur words that come to me

Tall towers, twin towers I used to see.
A bloody seam of sense drops free.

By Liberty Street, on a knot of rubble
In altered light, I see a bird cry.

(New York City, October 17–November 3, 2001)

Pitfire

In altered light I hear a bird cry.
By the pit, tor of metal, strut of death.

Bird song yet. *Liturgie de cristal.*
Flesh in fiery pieces, mute sediments of love.

Shall a soul visit her mutilated parts?
How much shall a body be home?

Under these burnt balconies of air,
Autumnal duty that greets us.

At night, a clarinet solo I put on:
Bird song pitched to a gorge, a net of cries.

Later a voice caught on a line:
"See we've touched the bird's throat."

(New York City, November 20–December 5, 2001)

> Girl grown woman fire mother of fire
> —Muriel Rukeyser

I

Darting lines of a petroglyph at Stornorrfors up north
by the river's rim, an elk with a lifeline through it,
to the right a human, arms stuck out, feet too,
a dancing thing sworn to four points of the compass.
A light wind strikes up,
drizzling grass seeds over a pile of ash,
our feet bound in leather knotted with floating strings.
Dear, I have nothing invested in narrative,
not in anyway that should make you nervous.
The earth our green & fragrant home.
Yes, *home* we like to say, mindful of what has brutalised
our soil and hurt the sheen of wind and rain.
And to argue as some do that fear incites
the sublime gets us precisely nowhere.

II

Remember the sage of Königsberg? Thirty-three,
burnt out already, pacing the stairwell, in tophat and spats,
figuring out footnotes to a doctoral dissertation on Fire.
Sparks fly from his wrist and from the throat
of a woman first glimpsed in a water meadow.
Who can tell what the brilliant Immanuel
can or can't have had in mind?
In his *Physishe Geographie* volcanoes blow their spouts off,
wild beasts clamber up higgledy-piggledy ruins.
On the ground, the thingness
of forms battered down as far as thought might latch
onto the tiniest button, tender bell of flesh.
Desire strapped lest it stray
into a mismatched nature, promiscuous geography.

III

White men being the flower of perfection, all others drop away
Burmese women dress in slovenly fashion;
Hottentots smell; Indians ruin everything with their oily skin.
Grass, though needful for the ox, also for man's subsistence,
cannot help us reckon why beings need to exist.
Why this taxonomy riveted by skin color?
Why strip some persons raw? Might we think space
through skin, muscle and bone as bright vitality?
Questions startle each other, hook & point to desire.
See, there's Kant by a stairwell in an inner room.
He paces, thought tormented, then stoops to listen hard.
Petals splatter from the plum branch by the river,
also fragments of a cheekbone, a earlobe dangling a pearl.
A hot, discordant music wells up from earth's core.

IV

After the glyphs cut in granite, after the broken sky,
we returned to the hotel by the river Umealv.
I drew back curtains and stared at black water.
A house was afloat on that river, bright the moon,
and in the bright house a child, her face covered
with a hat of wool so red, darkness fled from it.
I thought it you brought back in time's mercy
a breathing power, the present flashing.
In sleep I saw myself a five-year child
her house afloat and in that house a man
his flesh in tints no chords can stake.
Blunt, caustic red. What instrument of rage
can the wind fling? I hate your knucklebone!
The child cries. She sees Kant on his bookshelf.

V

When I was a child I saw the sea burn.
I need to tell you this. How often
I have written that line, no page to put it on,
no voice to mark it mine. On the Indian Ocean

I turned five, aboard a white steamer.
I left a house behind: red stone in the room
where the man stood, flesh marking a staircase.
Ribcage, a furious flower that cracks space.
Now I live on an island by the mid-Atlantic shore.
Home is where when I go, they let me in.
I sit by a window that gives onto a river.
I write at a small metal desk with rolling wheels.
Sometimes the floor tilts and clouds the color of salt
make me giddy, as if I were a girl again.

VI

I stare in the mirror and see a woman
I seem to recognise. Her hair a morning ruin she sings:
Consider these burnt balconies of air!
Whether we are in Asia or in a northern land
where the sun holes down at noon so darkness
frets our joints, we will speak to each other.
Our language pierced by gunfire, precise as it can get,
alphabets stripped to skin and ligament.
On lower Broadway under the hood of stone,
tall towers cherish bits of flaming bone.
Uptown where sky meets river, barges drift.
They bear jags of twisted metal, urns of priceless ash.
Who are we now?
What is this heavy water rushing to the sea?

VII

Once setting up your paintings in Buenos Aires
you shut the window tight, covered it in cloth to turn
the room entire into a white cube. You did not want to hear
young couples making picnic on wild grass
nor children striking fists against plastic balls,
nor older ones sniffing glue.
You set your paintings up, each echoing the other,
the whole entitled *Riposte*. Where the face went down
side up the room filled with invisible flames
that Kant had dreamt of. Later you said

"To fill a room with space is a transaction
I understand." Now your hand with the brush upright
scans space. You are searching for me.
In the very element that severs us.

VIII

By a rock in Europe's frozen north
we saw elks rear into the bitter blood of the sun.
We touched leftovers from a fire, a mound of ashes,
a man's coat, sleeves torn and muddied.
Or did it belong to a woman unhoused,
poverty's use, the horizon of care affixed to true north?
Turning from the river you pointed out a figure
scratched between twin elks, a face for hunger,
a female glyph, wide open on black rock.
Our clothes are prised off in a brutal wind
and these poems, cloud-tossed particulars,
sharp with need, sprung in the ash of my new country—
where a glass garden hung, searchlights twist,
iron cranes cluster, stanzas drop their skirts and flee.

IX

What war is this? On our island city
we cannot round its edges, pulse its scope.
The scent of flesh and charred wires infects our speech.
Riding the metal subways, underground passages
wired for speed, I read a poet who grew up here:
Towers falling   A dream of towers. | Necessity of fountains.
I stand by a burning pit, a burial ground for thousands,
souls loosed from their bodies, swirling.
I hear names for ancient places: Istalif, Kabul, Kandahar.
I see women shrug off their veils, let sunlight
strike their cheeks. Women casting burkhas
into flames no water can check. Children poking bits
of metal in unploughed land, a necklace of sorrow
mothers bear, throats parched with blood.

X

Yesterday I stood on the street where I used to live.
I watched a cathedral in flames.
Fire razed the wooden rafters of the northern wall,
and struck the chalice in Abraham's hand.
I saw votive candles, dew drops burst in heat.
I was near the door I had carried my infant through,
wrapped in a blanket the color of summer leaves,
her skull bones so frail, fingers of air could have poked through.
We are knit in secret. We bear the thumbprint of mystery.
I write to you in dreams. After birth where do we go?
Hidden on an island by the Baltic coast
where the wind whispers cold psalms of praise
you start a new self-portrait. *Woman With Petroglyph.*
Or *Self as Two Tall Women By the Sea.*

XI

I try to imagine what she understood
crouched at earth's ledge, the maker of petroglyphs,
her rough and ready skins blown about her,
hand with adze held out, reckoning an ancient shelter
this earth our green, imperilled home.
I try to imagine the philosopher on his deathbed
dreaming of fire that alters all substances
known to geography. Grass rock skin bits of bone
become in and of themselves ornaments of unity.
Immaterial insignia. So what sears the mind to order
need not subtract from the manifold of space,
cast love awry. Elsewhere in a meadow of hot bones,
grown girls make implacable plans
then rise on tiptoe with lost larks to sing.

(New York City, April 15, 2001–February 26, 2002)

Note

The poems "Aftermath" and "Invisible City" first saw the light of day on November 14, 2001, when I took part in the panel discussion "Artist in a Time of Crisis" at the Drawing Center, 35 Wooster Street, Soho. These two poems were part of the exhibit "Time to Consider: Arts Respond to 9/11" at the Deutsche Bank in New York City, February and March 2002. In the poem "Pitfire," *Liturgie de cristal* is Olivier Messaien's phrase. I have taken it from his preface to *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, part 1. In "Petroglyph," the lines rendered in italics, in the epigram in section IX are drawn from Muriel Rukeyser's poem "Waterlily Fire": see section 1 ("The Burning") and section 2 ("The Island") (*A Muriel Rukeyser Reader*, ed. Jan Heller Levi [New York: Norton, 1994], 201, 203). I am grateful to David Harvey for his discussion of Kant in "Cosmopolitanism and the Banality of Geographical Evils," *Public Culture* 12 (spring 2000): 529–64. The painter of "Riposte" is my friend Cecilia Edefalk.

Lopamudra
Basu

The events of September 11 and the aftermath: military retaliation, racial profiling of immigrants and international students, as well as the antiwar organizing in New York City, suddenly brought a new layer of urgency and complexity to our thoughts about artistic creation and critical dissent. I had been exploring the postcolonial novel as a literary form engaged in social critique. Reading Meena Alexander's *Illiterate Heart* in the months following the devastation made me reflect on the place of the lyric poem in the public sphere. What were the possibilities of this intensely private form to bear witness to history, to rely on the logic of images to press its point, free of the overarching frame of narrative?

It was against this background that the following conversations with Meena Alexander took place, the first at the cafeteria of the CUNY Graduate Center and the second at Alexander's home. We made written additions to the conversations after the initial meetings. Our informal, back-and-forth discussions helped us to reflect on the recent traumatic events in the public sphere. It seemed to me that there was a relationship between places and histories we were forced to confront. This is visible in Alexander's innovation of the lyric form, which grapples with multiple geographies and languages of migrancy and confronts the personal and public facets of dislocation and grief through the workings of memory.

Lopamudra Basu: Tell me about your use of lyric form. How are you fashioning it?

Meena Alexander: The lyric poem is a very important place for me. After the terrible events of September 11, I had been working on a prose book, which I put aside, because I needed the sharp fragility of the lyric.

It seems to me that the lyric poem is a place of extreme silence, which is protected from the world. To make a lyric poem you have to enter into a dream state. Yet at the same time, almost by virtue of that, disconnect; it becomes a very intense place to reflect on the world. Recently, I have completed three short poems related to what happened on September 11: one is called "Aftermath," another is called "Invisible City," and the third is called "Pitfire." I used couplets making twelve lines for each poem, and somehow the form helped me to crystallize and think through without

fear. And the question of fear is important, as these are poems that deal with traumatic events.

I have put aside the longish prose piece I was working on, a piece about childhood. After what has just happened in New York City I did not want to be swallowed up in the past, with so much molten and flowing all around, the world I love in turmoil. I need to bear witness to what is now.

The lyric poem allows me much better to catch the edginess of things, the sharp nervosity, the flaming, falling buildings. And I think I must work back from the pressure of the present into the past, for that is the only way I will reach into the real.

In all my work place is layered on place to make a palimpsest of sense. That is the kind of art I make. But the very indices of place have been altered by traumatic awareness.

LB: How can we reconcile the tragic reality of what we are faced with and the aesthetics of poetic composition?

MA: In the composition of poetry, something that is very difficult to face is brought within the purview of language, into a zone of images, and is crystallized. And that act of crystallizing the emotion through the image actually has its own peculiar grace, which frees one, if only momentarily, of the burden of the experience. This seems to be the great gift of poetry. It eases the burden of lived experience, if only very briefly, in a way that a piece of music might. So, the lyric does have this function, it makes for transport, but draws from the ore of bodily being. Unfortunately, the histories that we are part of are often brutal and violent. In making a poem, one mustn't turn one's face away, I feel that very strongly. I think the beauty has to exist within that history.

LB: With a traumatic event like this, does writing become more or less important than other forms of personal or collective action?

MA: Both—we flow into what breaks and burns around us. We march in the streets, we stand at the barricades, we break through barriers and pick up the pieces of broken glass strewn on the streets. We touch the bodies of our dead, the precious fragments of flesh. But then there comes the time to stand apart. To rejoin the rhythms of the inner life, to allow them to work their ceaseless change. In my case there came a period of very quick writing and jotting down of events.

But after writing there came a time of fearful fragmentation, being torn apart in so many directions: the fear here on this island, the condition of our lives, not knowing what could strike next, fire, racial profiling, pestilence—that bitty white powder filled with anthrax spores (a floor of the Graduate Center, since we are next door to the Empire State Building,

was shut down for a while). And on the other side of the globe in Afghanistan, the terrible bombardment, stones ground down, children starving, women in *burkha*s fleeing. Both are real, disjoined in space, they coexist in time, in a molten time.

Though sometimes I feel I just want to write about childhood, I sense now I cannot afford the luxury of writing about a world enclosed. Still, I still need to dig back. The personal past has to be knotted up in the present. I must carry it as a bundle, bear it as a migrant might a blanket tied up with all her worldly possessions. So in this way I feel very intimately the necessity of artistic work. It is what I am called to do. In a very simple way I have found my work. Or my work has found me.

LB: You have said you would walk down to Ground Zero.

MA: Yes, I kept walking down to Ground Zero, as close as I could get, making returns, a pilgrimage, the site a graveyard for thousands, the stench of burning flesh and wires.

On one trip down there as I walked past Liberty Street I was struck by the extreme youth of the soldier guarding the perimeter, a young lad freckled, fresh faced. Behind him was the shell of Tower Two, against which an ancient patriarch was being photographed. Small children screaming in delight at pigeons, a rescue worker, hands on his own throat, face sunk with tiredness, his gas mask at his hip.

About a year ago I had made a poem called "Rumours for an Immigrant" for an art show in Bordeaux and Fribourg that Hans-Ulrich Obrist was curating. The poem was published in *Arc en Rêve: Mutations Projects on the City*, with designs of Rem Koolhaas and others. My poem was set in Manhattan, on this island, in a plaza, a crowded street, and then in Central Park.

Now I made a darker, ghostlier companion for it, called simply "Invisible City." Like "Aftermath," it too is twelve lines, formed of six stanzas.

LB: So you are now speaking of how an artist responds to such events.

MA: Yes, events have a shock value on the psyche and we do respond as human beings. But art takes time, it needs to be distilled, it takes quiet, a pane of glass through which one looks even if the glass is shattered and one looks out onto a scene of devastation. One still needs the distance to look, to let the rhythms come, to make the poem.

I think there is a kind of mnemonic torsion necessary to map out a space lit by trauma. But what does it do to the richness and density of ordinary experience—might it be a curious way of maintaining it?

LB: What part did your childhood travels between India and Africa play in this aesthetic mapping?

MA: As a child I lived at the borders of war. Moving back and forth across the Indian Ocean between Kerala on the west coast of India and Khartoum in the Sudan in North Africa. In Sudan there was a civil war raging. On the way to India we often stopped in Aden, in what is now Yemen.

There were British Tommies on the rocks, and Yemeni fighters hidden by the broken walls. More recently in India, in the last few years there has been the rise of a fascist Hindu movement, ethnic violence, and now, with Pakistan, the fear of war. This has been part of my personal history and has left a mark on my poetry and my prose. How can these violent versions of the real that cut into memory be translated into art?

Art in a time of trauma, a necessary translation, "Fragments of a vessel . . . to be glued together," Walter Benjamin said. But what if the paste shows, the seams, the fractures? For us, here now at the edge of a city blown up at its southern tip, the work of art must use the frame of the real, translating a script almost illegible, a code of traumatic recovery.

In its rhythms the poem, the artwork, can incorporate scansion of the actual, the broken steps, the pauses, the blunt silences, the brutal explosions. So that what is pieced together is a work that exists as an object in the world but also, in its fearful consonance, its shimmering stretch, allows the world entry. I think of it as a recasting that permits our lives to be given back to us, fragile, precarious.

LB: You have used the image of fault lines in your memoir. Is it useful now?

MA: In what I write, fault lines, cracks appear in the givenness of things, of languages, streets, marketplaces. It's a world filled with migrants. And yes, suddenly that does seem closer, I think, for some people. Though for me it is just the way things are, multiple places, fluid selves. So many languages filled my head when I was a child: Malayalam, Hindi, English, French, Arabic. Now those borders are pressing in at the brink of this new century, in a time of war.

LB: Memory is a very important theme in your work. How does the lyric poem work with memory?

MA: The lyric poem is so tiny. It can be folded onto a bit of paper, put into a notebook, written on the backs of matchboxes. There is something about the portability of the lyric in a time of danger. For me, the lyric becomes the form par excellence in a time of crisis because it can be carried in memory. Also, it need not be bought and sold. So at least for a lit-

tle while it stands outside the buying and the selling, the shards of violation that are parts of our human world.

LB: In what ways is the lyric a transnational form? I really want to know if the lyric as you use it borrows from multiple poetic traditions.

MA: In Kerala as I was growing up as a child, there was always the presence of itinerant folk singers, who would go from house to house and recite or perform the Ramayana or the Mahabharata. There was also poetry that was recited from memory and in the Syrian Christian Church, services were recited in Malayalam or Syriac, parts of gorgeous poems, it seemed to me. I was raised very early with a sense of the oral power of poetry. Peasants in the fields and workers used oral poetry, revolutionary songs of violation and freedom. This is also a tradition which is very powerful for women who might not always have access to the script.

Then in Khartoum, where I also grew up, Arabic poetry was very important to me. My friends who were poets were breaking free of the classical forms and there was enormous excitement. But even earlier I had lived next door in Hai el Matar to the poet and scholar Abdullah el Tayib. I was a little girl but he would often recite Arabic poetry to me and it entered my consciousness so deeply. He was keen that I should really learn Arabic. The title poem "Illiterate Heart" of the new volume is about a woman who falls between languages, and has no script.

LB: You have said that poetry is crystallized knowledge. I am reminded of your poem "The Color of Home," written in response to a violent event, Diallo's death, and you read it at a public event, the rally of South Asians, "Desis for Diallo," under conditions of very peculiar police surveillance.

MA: The police are not new to me. As a poet I came into consciousness during the Emergency in India. About the Diallo case, it was quite a special event. For a long time I thought I am not going to write a poem about this. Then it caught hold of me. And reading it there on the flatbed truck, as part of this march of protest and solidarity, it was special. A lot of people could not hear what I was saying. Yet it was important that it was a poem. So it was private speech, but it was not private in a sense that we normally think of it. It was speech that returned in a way to the world, whatever the world is. I called that poem "The Color of Home," and it has come out in a journal.

I remember during the Emergency in India, in 1975 when civil liberties were taken away, I wrote a poem called "Prison Walls" and I sent it to *Democratic World*, published in Delhi. The magazine appeared, and there was a space where my poem should have been. It was censored, but there was that space. So that meant a lot to me. There was the blank space that

was exactly the same shape as my poem. It was a poem about prisoners being beaten. They were being beaten in the police station that was just across the wall from the office at the Central Institute of English where I worked.

LB: What have the events of September 11 done to language?

MA: We were bombarded by huge amounts of language, public language, sound bites and statements and visually the images of the two towers burning, and it was a terrible and devastating event. Then there is the language of hunting for terrorists. The reality of racial profiling and how it creates an aura of distrust around people like us. How one looks, how one can be at risk. For me one way of restoring the possibility of breath or thought is to write poetry, because it is like taking words and rinsing them clean.

I think for me writing a poem is like rinsing the language. In India, after you rinse, the clothes are hung out in a line in the sunlight. Perhaps presenting a poem in public space is like hanging it out in the sunlight because people can say what they want and do what they want with it.

Speaking of the outside and public space, there is an exhibit in February and March [2002] in the Deutsche Bank. Poets and Writers and a number of art institutions in the city are putting it together under the rubric "Time to Consider: Arts Respond to 9/11." There are poems by several poets as well as work by visual artists. Two poems that I wrote, "Invisible City" and "Aftermath," will be hung on a wall. People will come in and go out and just look, and I will come in and go out and just look. The idea of poems just being there as objects in the world, this interests me greatly. There is something material that is forced back on us. We seem to think that the poem is all spirit, but it's not. It is material, it is part of this world, and to make a poem is labor.

When my first poems came out in Sudan, I wrote them in English or French, they were translated into Arabic, they were published in newspapers, and then they were just put up on the wall of the university, where there was a wall journal that Khalid el Mubarak had organized. And they were just there. I like the idea that poems can just be there. In America we are so used to these billboards and enormous advertisements, in the management of public space. Poetry should be there, and it should be there for us. In contemporary American poetry, there is a strain of poetry that just needs to live on the page. But there are also powerful movements of oral poetry of rap and public performances.

LB: How is poetry a negotiation between trauma and healing? How does your personal experience of trauma get layered or stitched together with

other traumatic and violent moments that you have witnessed or learned about?

MA: I was born after the Partition of India. So the violence of Partition was there in the memories of those who raised me, even though we are from the south of India. The trains that crossed the borders, filled with the dead. Women abducted, families forced into refugee camps. Also more recent events. There is a prose poem in *Illiterate Heart* called "Taxicab-wallah," which is really a meditation on the events of 1984 in Delhi, and the massacres of Sikhs that occurred after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. These become part of the migrant memory of the *taxicabwallah* in New York City, so too the ghosts of Partition. There is a ghostly trace of histories and nightmares that we have barely awoken from. We hear echoes in what happens now.

I first went to Sudan on a boat with my mother in 1956, during the Suez Canal trouble. There were bombs. We arrived in Khartoum, and we were fine. But there was a very long genocidal civil war that was in process. We were at the edges of it but it did come very close from time to time in Khartoum. People we knew were tortured crossing the border, the southern Sudanese. There was tear gas being used on the streets and many other things. I am thinking particularly of when I was thirteen, I went with students on a march, about the Southern question, and two students, Babiker and Bedri, were shot. There was civil unrest.

When I moved back to India, there was the Emergency. My novel *Nampally Road* was written at that time. And now for us in New York City, there is this very complicated palimpsest of place. When you were reading this poem "Petroglyph," you asked what is this Königsberg, and you said Königsberg is unknown to me, as is Istalif, as is Kandahar. They are all unknown to us, all names but how do these names come together for us in our heads?

In a way there is a poetics of dislocation that I am trying to figure out, to lay bare, if you wish. What does it mean to be deeply attached to place? Or to be torn away from a place, to feel at the edge, not quite at home? So where is home for us here, now in the twenty-first century? Can language work to make a home, a shelter? These are questions that will never leave me.

LB: How do memory and language fashion migrant lives?

MA: When you write something down, it is a way of saying, I am remembering. A poem, particularly a lyric poem, can be stored in memory, or perhaps a line or an image. Sometimes when I am writing, it is not just events in my life but other poems that enter into my memory, poems that

I have learned, lines from poems, even from poems in translation, that evoke and trigger associations. A sensorium of being. The question of memory is one that has always been with me. For people like us, who are immigrants, it has a particular kind of poignance, a particular kind of cadence, one might say. Our memories are what we pass on, they have to enter into a relationship with a very different world. And we have this extraordinary architecture of memory that is part of our psychic lives.

Notes

Sandrine Nicoletta

This work was created after I had observed New Yorkers for some months. Rarely do they leave the city; they live in a grid made up of straight roads, and their personal life is conditioned by their careers. This installation is made up of the word EXIT placed at sky level on the windows at the ninety-first floors of the World Trade Center towers, the business center in New York City. A video of the flight of an abstract and ethereal creature is placed on the ground near a map of New York State, with the word EXIT written at the city's exit routes. A small photograph on a wall with a script that reveals the relationship between clouds and other ways of escape advises us to take a bit of freedom from both our bodies and our minds. This work was installed to give a magical feeling at first impact.

The map on the floor reflects the strong light from the windows, like a lake; just as in a mirage, the word EXIT appears to you slowly from the columns as you keep observing the installation. As you go deeper into the installation, the clearly provocative aspect becomes evident.

I saw in New York a strong condition of the precarious, and this precariousness corresponds to a continuous movement. I find these concepts looking at the physicality of places (wall of millboard, skyscrapers fluttering in the wind) and of the bodies (there is an empty space under the feet and it is not clear of what is it made; you can really lose or find a house, or a job, in a day).

I wonder how all this influences people: the tight psychologies all linked in an indissoluble plot on the relations among verticality, horizontality, and depth.

Structural elements of the city become evident and we see that, in fact, only the men of the World Trade Center wear polished shoes.

Note

This work is from *World Views*, an exhibition of socially involved artists that took place on the ninety-first floor of the World Trade Center, Tower One. The June 2001 program was supported by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Many of the pieces in the exhibition were lost on September 11.

Exit. Sandrine Nicoletta, 2001

Sandrine Nicoletta

Yigal Nizri

Cloud Bench 1

Someone once wrote the word *Believe* on one of those windows. Maybe they wanted to show how even from the crucial point of view of the ninety-first floor, vision is not a natural and neutral sense—rather, it requires believing.

Note

This work formed part of *World Views*, an open studio exhibition of socially involved artists that took place on the ninety-first floor of the World Trade Center, Tower One, April 2001. Yigal Nizri's installation included multiple slide projections of images that were taken in Morocco, mixed with computer-made samples of blue swatches. A wooden gray bench in the shape of a cloud was placed in the center of the space.

Cloud Bench 2

Among the victims of September 11 was Michael Richards, who participated in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council program. Michael worked in his studio on the ninety-second floor of Tower One of the World Trade Center at that time. This work is dedicated to his memory.

Ban Wang

In my local library in East Brunswick, New Jersey, military artifacts, weapons, and photos are on prominent display as a reminder of the days of the world wars, the military interventions of the postwar era, and the sacrifice of young men who grew up in local neighborhoods. If you want to know Chinese culture and history, you have no difficulty finding about thirty or forty books just a few steps away. These books can be readily divided into two categories. One set idealizes a long tradition of Chinese cultural heritage and the other is mostly narrative accounts of harrowing experiences of living in contemporary China. Books like *Red Azalea* by Anchee Min, *White Swan* by Jung Chang, and *Red Flower of China* by Zhai Zhenhua form a genre of semiautobiography. They tell stories of personal tragedy, tortuous bildungsroman, the purgatory experience under the "totalitarian regime." The first set seems to freeze China in a comfort zone of ancient civilization; the narratives appeal to an audience that would still like to see a "Red China" with demonic intents of the enemy.

In the wake of September 11, the proximity of the military memorabilia to books about China takes on uncanny significance. If the unconscious structure can be traced in physical layout of mundane objects, we may detect a hidden standoff between the weapons for national security and the fantasies of China or other foreign countries as real or imagined threats. The memorabilia testify not just to the world wars but also to the more extended agenda of national security through military interventions during the Cold War. We have been told that the Cold War ended in 1989 and things have moved on to the globalization track. The Cold War, with its confrontation between sovereign nation-states of leviathan power, its mutually assured destruction policy, and its ideological conflict, has gone the way of the dinosaurs. We are entering into a new age relieved of big power's confrontation and threat, blessed with accelerated economic momentum and free flows of capital without borders: where the modernist style of international politics is obsolete, taken over by the postmodern fluid dynamics of trade and commerce, under the imperial supervision of the supranational jurisdiction of an international system.

Events since September 11 came as a shattering blow to this myth of globalization. By conjuring up the specter of the Cold War, they compel us to question the neoliberal forecast of the global circuit of capital accu-

mulation and circulation and to reevaluate in a more realistic fashion a suddenly revealed force field of power struggle. The numerous references in the aftermath of September 11 to Pearl Harbor, the world wars, and the Korean conflict, the nostalgia about "the good old days" of the citizen army and righteous heroism, and the elevation of an elusive terrorist group into "the Enemy" endowed with state sovereignty "at war" with us, suddenly turned the clock back a half-century. The tremendous display of sentiments, passion, phobia, and policy initiatives is redolent of the Cold War. It is as if America and the civilized world had lived in a soothing dream, only to be rudely awakened and thrown back to the rugged terrain of Cold War conflict, to the paranoiac security needs, the bloody conflict of giant powers, the tightening of boundaries, and the hysterical assertion of national identity. Does the specter of the Cold War signal the return of the repressed lurking beneath the discourse of globalization? Does this return really signal any real change in the world system or simply reveal its secret? How does this event alter the production of subjectivity in the sphere of culture? How does it affect the area studies? These are the issues I will explore.

The Cold War, the Sleeper?

The Cold War provides a parameter to assess the so-called post–Cold War period since 1989. If it is true that we have entered a new era, the novelty of the current situation needs to be placed in a broader historical perspective, taking into account the interaction between modern sovereignty and capital's worldwide expansion. Capital, in its unceasing expansion and hostility to boundaries, is at odds with the sovereign structure of the nation-state. While capital favors horizontal "free" flows, the state tends to impose a transcendent, regulative power over its movement. Although modern sovereignty, in the form of imperialist and colonial powers, served and promoted the interests of capital in its worldwide expansion, the operation of capital has the tendency to disengage from state sovereignty, which wields power "over a bounded and segmented social terrain."[1] Capitalism, with its permanent creative destruction and ceaseless demand for ever widening markets, labor, and resources, is defined, as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have shown, by the generalized decoding of flows, the massive deterritorialization, and the breakdown of the established geopolitical, juridical, and economic boundaries and institutions.[2] In the light of sovereignty's centripetal control, as opposed to capital's centrifugal dispersal, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri see the entire history of modernity within a framework of constant tensions and

negotiation between the modern sovereign state and capital. The overwhelming tendency, starting from the latter half of the Cold War and culminating in the nineties, can be seen as a "one-sided movement from sovereignty's transcendent position toward capital's plane of immanence."[3]

In this distinction between sovereignty and capital, the high Cold War was marked by a confrontation between sovereign states enmeshed in the condition of great power politics.[4] Along with this condition of power rivalry and military confrontation ran the long-standing tendency in American society and the liberal elites to envision U.S. foreign affairs as an imperial project promoting progress and democracy for all humankind. In recent decades, this liberal tendency has escalated into a utopian vision of market economy as the necessary stepping-stone to international cooperation and global democracy, forming a language of Empire, ruled by law, norms, communication, universal subjectivity, and police management.

During the Cold War, however, capital obviously did not display this freelancing, benign profile now made familiar by the celebrants of globalization, but was spearheaded by sovereign powers, particularly the United States. In her book on the Cold War, Virginia Carmichael depicts a close alliance between the imperialist politics of the state and capitalist expansion.[5] She draws attention to both the hard-core issues of the operation of the military-industrial complex in the service of capital's worldwide expansion and the soft questions of culture. The cultural dimension extends to renaming the Cold War the "Cultural Cold War" or the merging of the military-industrial-academic complex into one monolithic politico-economic operation, unifying knowledge, capital, and the state's foreign policy. But the cultural dimension during the Cold War period was subordinated to the stark self-interests of sovereign power. George Kennan, the much-quoted American diplomat known to have initiated crucial Cold War concepts, first articulated the importance of the realistic, hard-core issues in a 1948 secret State Department memorandum. He urged that in both its foreign and domestic policy the United States should attend to the real politics of military and economic operation rather than indulge in moralistic rhetoric about things like human rights, democratization, and raising living standards. Kennan zeroed in on the basic fact that the United States owned 50 percent of the world's wealth, but had only 6.3 percent of its population. In the face of such a potentially inflammable situation, "our real task" in the coming period, says Kennan, "is to devise a pattern of relations which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security."[6] In the form of imperialist and colonial powers, the modern sovereign states served and promoted the interests of capital in its worldwide expansion.

Yet the operation of capital has the tendency to disengage from the state's hold on a bounded and segmented social terrain.

The Cold War agenda was largely an exercise of modern sovereignty in terms of its foreign and domestic policy in the service of capital. Capitalism in the West was still heavily dependent on centralized political power, the military-industrial complex, for its smooth operation at home and abroad. This is at the heart of the whole series of Cold War agendas in the United States. These agendas included, among other things, "the national security state, with foreign policy priority over domestic; massive military development and buildup; overt and covert non-democratic political, economic, military, and cultural intervention in, and manipulation of the affairs of the other nations; and the most effective and enduring dispersal and silencing of dissent in a (legally) totally enfranchised and constitutional democracy in history."[7]

This realistic picture was obfuscated in the post–Cold War era. What distinguishes the period from the Gulf War to September 11 seems to be the replacement of the hard-core issues of the military-industrial complex by a soft power of culture, communication, and trade. While the military-industrial complex still remained intact and active, it was the soft side of the Cold War that had come to center stage in public discourse and imagination. To be sure, the Cold War, declared as an ideological and religious war, had some use for the soft power of culture. The Cold War was a rhetoric, a narrative, a moral drama propelled by the Manichean myth of apocalyptical struggle between forces of good and evil, between capitalism and communism, between democracy and totalitarianism, rationality and barbarism. The intertwining of power and legitimacy, of military operation with the civilizing mission, the stick and the carrot, was a classical feature of the older imperialist project. The hard-core strategies need moral and ideological justification and rely partially on intellectual institutions and think tanks to supply notions of legitimacy, myth, imaginations, and narrative, not as cover-ups but as an intrinsic, serviceable part of military-industrial and strategic operations.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the existing socialisms on the way to the world market, the United States became the only hegemonic power in the world capable of maintaining the world order with military and economic might. It seems now that the ideology of economic liberalism does not need to serve the powers that be and can go along with the drift of "benign" capital, with the aids of markets, free trade, transnational organizations, and supranational juridical structures, to achieve the dream of Empire. With the bipolar structure out of the way, the global superhighway seems wide open for the realization of the world-historical spirit of free market economy—that is, if the liberal elites have their way.

Yet for all the euphoria of liberalization and the foreign engagements of the Clinton administration, the gap widens between the democratic mission and actual foreign policy in the interest of national security and capitalist expansion. The nagging question is, "How does America's express intention to realize the imperial dream of the New World Order relate to its relentless practice of maintaining its dominion and national self-interest?" Does the global, imperial rhetoric elide the secret imperialist agenda? Or are these dual tendencies the inherent contradictions in the state-sponsored global expansion of capital?

Obviously these two tendencies, at least in the United States, complement as well as conflict with each other in different periods. What is clear in the globalization discourse is that the parochial interest of national security and survival, embedded in the Cold War condition, is drowned out by loud, triumphant fanfares about the disappearance of the Cold War style of conflict, changed into smooth flows of global capital. The strident Cold War tone of military and ideological conflict between good and evil had almost vanished, except for the occasional reference to China's coming threat or the unruly terrorism of the rogue states and fundamentalist groups—until September 11 broke through the veil of globalization and began conjuring up the old specters.

The Mirage of Imperial Sovereignty and Subjectivity

In the post–Cold War era of the nineties, public discourse, economist pundits, financial experts, and the transnational media have spawned a new discourse of globalization that is intensely aesthetic in form and ideological in agenda. The globalization discourse is in the tradition of liberal thinking. The liberal view holds that people in the world are rational and capable of peaceful cooperation in accordance with universal principles. Conflicts of interest can be resolved by international organizations that rule over states and dispense justice by means of norms, laws, and police forces. The two familiar examples are Woodrow Wilson's initiative for the League of Nations and the formation of the United Nations. Thus, instead of a world torn asunder by warring states, we are invited to dream a world system where all sovereign powers are associated to become constituent members of a global civil society. When trouble and disturbances break out, the simplest response is police action. This worldwide imagined community endowed with civic virtue and governed by norms is derived from the ideology of the world market and free trade—the globalization of capitalism.

A certain image of the individual must fit into this picture of imperial

sovereignty. By invoking the philosophic-aesthetic apparatus of the Enlightenment, Slavoj Žižek rightly links this aesthetic image to the logic of late capitalism. He presents the Spinozist discourse of a positive, rationally organized reality to which Kantian practical reason, the notion of autonomous choice, comes as an opposition. The opposition between the two, I think, is analogous to the distinction between the bipolar power structure of sovereign nation-states of the Cold War and the supposedly decentered flow of capital where sovereignty is at bay. Spinozist substance is a form of universal knowledge unhinged from any master signifier, any privileged sign of paternal authority; it is not buttressed by an obvious power or interest. This replacement of God in metaphysics with the God of positive reality shifts from the contested, deontologized world of politics to a new ontology, recast in terms of a metonymical universe of "pure positivities." This colorless, disinterested universe, a plane of immanence, has no use for the moral imperative that for Kant underlies the autonomous, self-determining subject. A good illustration of this stealth logic that replaces the "ought" of subjective responsibility with the "is" of "objective" reality is Spinoza's interpretation of God's warning to Adam and Eve, "Don't eat the apple from the tree of knowledge!" For Spinoza this injunction sounds as prohibition only to the primitive mind, which is "unable to grasp the chain of causes that lie behind its message." A rational, enlightened mind, however, does not hear God's words as an imperative, but as "an insight into the state of things: this apple has properties injurious to health, which is why is it not advisable to eat it."[8]

Žižek's interpretation of Spinoza's rationalism illustrates the shift from the vertical regulation of sovereign power to the horizontal immanent movement of capital itself, enabling us to see capital and the market as the very medium of the flow of positivities. This slide from ethical injunction into fluid fluxes of reality with its inner causalities is framed by a global imaginary that is supposed to work for everybody and has no regard for cultural and geographical differences. I venture to call this imaginary "imperial aesthetics," which breeds its related subjectivity. For proponents of globalization, differences, mired in their age-old memory and ethnically drawn territories, only betray the primitive inability to grasp the world in its immanent necessity. Their deviation and nonconformity, under the enigma of nationalism or fundamentalism, are readily associated with the pathological and evil.

The imperial subject, in the image of the citizen of the world, can also be illustrated with reference to classical aesthetics. The aesthetic in Kant presents an imaginary solution to the central problem of modernity: how conceptual understanding can mesh with practical action. In the epistemological shortfall of a disenchanted world, the problem that preoccupies

Kant and many others is that the a priori lawfulness of the understanding provides no guarantee for the putative lawfulness of external reality, whose stony intransigency and heterogeneous contradictions do not answer to human freedom. The aesthetic comes to the rescue by providing a reenchanted look at the secularized, demythologized world, "as though it were itself a mysterious sort of subject or artifact, governed like human subjects by a self-determining rational will."[9] The aesthetic is thus a projection of the free play of the subjective faculties onto an unanswerable, disenchanted reality. Its pleasure comes from the pleasant surprise that certain things, no, the whole world, may conform delightfully to our capacities. While it is impossible to understand the unity of experience in actuality, it is a lucky chance that we can enjoy the unity and purposefulness of aesthetic experience as if it were real. The aesthetic imagination "creates a purposive synthesis, but without feeling the need for a theoretical detour."[10] The aesthetic reinstalls purpose within the self-delighting purposelessness of the imaginary. As Terry Eagleton summarily puts it, "it is the mode of religious transcendence of a rationalistic age."[11]

With an "invisible hand" outreaching to all corners of the world, the aesthetic is adept at overcoming the difference between a translucent self and the opaque other. Its capacity to level out difference is identical to—and in the network of global interdependence, already a function of—the universal leveling trend of capital. Eagleton gives an example of the aesthetic conquest of self through erasing the self/other difference. A statement like "I like x" cannot count as an aesthetic judgment by the standard of classical aesthetics, for it only refers to the subject's contingent, local inclinations. The genuine aesthetic must translate this personal preference into "We all agree that this is beautiful." Forget about private or local interests; a thing of beauty strikes a common chord among sensible, civilized people all over the world. This is a very short step toward the postmodern notion of the dissolution of the subject. "Postmodern" individuals do not form a community through the classical interaction between a self who seeks recognition by the other, but as Žižek points out, "through the mechanism of affective identification," through "the intermixture of partial affects," a series of structure of feeling or intensities that echoes and imitates each other.[12] Rather than a subject exercising self-determination, the notion of subjectivity becomes an empty placeholder, a ground zero for the traversing and inscribing by the network of affective images and sound bites. "I" recognize myself as a self-sufficient being insofar as I perceive this vast network as a reflected image of my boundless self. In postmodern terms, the Kantian subject of autonomy dissolves into "self-annihilation," through which a selfless self can somehow swim or perch on any position whatsoever to contemplate a self-

running, self-sufficient machinery of capital in its supreme beauty, because there is no special, privileged, differentiated point of entry into it. The aesthetic refers to sensual particulars, but now we have particularized universality: the concrete universal, where beauty is truth, truth beauty.[13]

For all its dissolution into flows of images, the aesthetic subject is still self-centered. This means in the nature of things that there can be no refashioning of the world in our narcissistic self-image. But the aesthetic subject somehow convinces itself that the whole world is unified and centered toward me. So it is unnatural and unaesthetic not to love Hollywood or McDonald's, for the beauty of McDonald's is not a personal affair; it is deep in human nature itself, deeply consistent with universal normal behavior. The beauty of McDonald's is consonant with other beauties: world markets, consumption, democracy, freedom: in Benjamin Barber's shorthand, the McWorld.[14] Pursuits of alternatives by other people only betray parochial inclinations and therefore become unaesthetic and ugly. Aesthetic taste can even be maintained by transnational organizations that police normal standards to maintain everybody's normalcy. In this image of the "selfless," cosmopolitan subject, America's pretension to world dominance is forgotten and cleansed of its parochial, nationalist self-interest. In other words, whatever comes under the sign of America also encompasses the whole world. It is thus in the best interest of "other people" to know the true taste of commodities, Hollywood images, and the universal *jouissance* of consumptive living.

This is why the World Trade Center was the most compelling symbol of an aestheticized world in the image of capital. To regard the twin towers as a financial headquarters is to undervalue their aesthetic, objective truth, for they are nothing less than a condensed package of a totalized way of life ruled by capital. After the disaster of September 11, the World Trade Center suddenly loses its universal halo and becomes more a symbol that pertains to the United States and New York rather than to the "world" at large.

The globalization discourse, with its related categories of development, markets, liberalism, and universal prosperity, generates a form of subjectivity that is aesthetically "disinterested," leveling out every particular interest in a selfsame cosmopolitan identity. Instead of Cold War, we have trade war and trade talks in the supposedly free international market; instead of moral struggle between ideological camps, we have development and underdevelopment; instead of politics and morality, we have economics and management; instead of nation-states, we appeal to supranational entities of all kinds. So the biased, local interest is aestheticized into a global subjectivity purged of parochial or ethnic biases. This seeming disinterestedness is most remarkable in the prevalent metaphor of an

imaginary fluid space of global flows: flows of capital and information; flows of images, ideas, and discourses; flows in border crossings; the flow of scholars, journalists, and peoples. The most overreaching system for conjuring up the free flow is the transnational multimedia. The free-wheeling flows initiated by multimedia conglomerates have bred a falsely cozy image of the global village where diverse peoples and cultures are freely commingled, as in a sprawling buffet of multiethnic food.

The imperial presumption of this aesthetic subject is that what is good for me must be good for everyone else. This widening gyre of self-aggrandizement not only erases the self, but also rules out the outburst of otherness as irrational and radical evil. As the classical subject of ethical autonomy gives way to the free-floating subjectivity of consumer ecstasy, the cog and screw of the capital machine, the "subject" is reduced to a thing or commodity. And the others, like us, are just things to be manipulated by the transcendent power of capital. If capital or the market run into local resistance there is always military intervention at hand. The insistent question "Why do they hate us so much?" asked right after September 11 betrays the inability to perceive the difference as real. The shattering of pax Americana comes as a blow to the narcissism of an imperial proportion and as a sobering reminder of the otherness of the other, who remains different and ready to inflict huge injury. Disturbingly, if there are others out there who do not like what we are doing, the touted universality of our enterprise turns out to be another particular in the global process. The events of September 11 can indeed be grasped as an instance of inherent and constant ruptures within the universalizing process: it reveals the stark impossibility and tragedy of refashioning other people in the image of capital.

On the other hand, a discovery of "we" is thrust upon us, "we" as one particular among many others. In the ruin of the imperial dream, the United States has emerged starkly as what it has always been: a sovereign nation-state. This discovery is what mobilizes the political will, the civic spirit, patriotism, and homeland security, while the silencing of dissent and curtailing of civil liberties are reminiscent of the Cold War. But these elements extend beyond the Cold War agenda; we have seen heightened political consciousness and more intense public debate over contending issues that cannot be consigned to the invisible hand of global trade and transnational corporations. If Cold War memory can still be of any use, it may be its vigilant sense of an unsettled, ongoing struggle for national sovereignty and a strong assertion of the sovereign subject that measures itself against the existence of the significant other. There is a humbling sense in recognizing the other as another sovereign entity, not lengthened shadows of the metropolitan centers to be globalized in our homegrown

image. In the post–Cold War era, this conflict-ridden situation, the classical terrain of power politics, appeared to melt away into an all-encompassing imperial aesthetics. Its rediscovery after September 11 may be salutary for perceiving alternative social imaginaries and for a form of international coexistence not dictated by one powerful party but premised on a notion of justice that respects both the sovereignty of the different states and universal rights. The globalization discourse buries international politics in an "apolitical" free market, extolling economy and development as the panacea for the problems of domination, violence, inequality, and oppression. It turns the unequal distribution of power and resources in a shrinking world into a "natural" relation between fortunate and unfortunate, between advanced societies and backward countries which, through their own faults, have not done well in modern times. All too quickly it leads to the forgetting of enduring clashes between national interests, between divergent histories embedded in specific geographies and, most importantly, between the contending appropriations of the future.

The effect of this neutral globalism is the universalizing of the parochial or national interests of Euro-America at the expense of underdeveloped countries, regions, and populations. Instead of hurrying to embrace the global flows, we need to attend to Edward Said's warning that huge populations of people who cross the borders are "harassed" and dispossessed refugees, uprooted from their ancestral land, who "try to become acculturated in a new environment."[15] With their struggle for identity and search for endangered cultural memory, it is hard to say how long it would take or how costly it would be for the immigrants to become neutralized into global cosmopolitans — trying desperately to make home away from home.

Meanwhile, the gigantic system of mass media is also migrating across — or rather pushing its way through — what it would like to see as a borderless world. A quarter of a century ago, Herbert Schiller presciently revealed how free flows of information sponsored by the American media obscured economic inequality, power imbalance, regional unevenness, and postcolonial struggle in self-determination. Media-induced flows of information seemed to bring together into a global village the rich and poor, the powerful and powerless, and peoples of different colors and beliefs. But less sanguine observers would interpret this free expansion as the agenda of "an aggressive and powerful industrial-electronics complex working to extend American socio-economic systems spatially and ideologically."[16] This diagnosis of the media flow comes as a sharper rebuttal to today's euphoria about the democratic potential of free flows of people, information, and the Internet. The smug satisfaction with free flows, with what Schiller calls "the American international cultural offensive," is of a

piece with the current embrace of the U.S. economic expansion indistinguishable from cultural invasion. This invasion is no less true of the cultural and humanistic studies of developing countries gathered under the rubric of area studies. The worldwide media system does not simply provide news, information, advertisement, or entertainment; it articulates and produces culture, notions of economics, and assumptions of authority and power side by side with the system of the military-industrial complex. As a result, the image factories of the transnational media have an "institutionalized tendency to produce out-of-scale trans-national images," and these media cultures are now "reorienting international social discourse and process" and manufacturing worldwide consensus concealing the fact of domination and violence.[17] The sinister effect is a thoroughly aestheticized world, a seamless web of simulacra, where free egos are supposed to recognize and to be involved with each other in an imagined global community.

How Not to Understand China: Area Studies

This neutralization has serious consequences for the academic discipline of area studies. During the Cold War, area studies targeted specific geographical areas of strategic relevance to the United States and was very much a power-driven project. In the atmosphere of globalization, along with the promotion of the multicultural curriculum, area studies apparently becomes more active. Yet stripped of its original power baggage, it has jumped on the bandwagon of multiculturalism as an ideology of pluralism. As such, it is becoming another depoliticizing instance of capital's worldwide circulation and production. Area studies, in short, makes great business sense in the domestic and foreign markets with demographical changes and global interdependence. David Palumbo-Liu suggests that the inclusion of ethnicity and non-Western cultures into the curriculum may be a professional way of assimilating differences into the mainstream presumptions of "aesthetic value." The opportunity of ethnic studies is its forum for "a critique of the ideological apparatuses that distribute power and resources unevenly among the different constituencies of a multicultural society."[18] Although this insight concerns ethnic difference in the university curriculum, the potential loss of critique applies as well to area studies, which may be seen as a multicultural critique on the global scale. Benjamin Schwartz reminded us that simply by applying "area studies" to Western civilization, one could raise very fruitful questions about how different national cultures, both within and without the West, contribute to Western civilization as a whole.[19]

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Between the Cold War legacy and globalization, the central challenge of area studies is how to preserve a critical edge and maintain its integrity independently of established powers. Events since September 11 have spurred a renewed interest in South Asia and the Islamic world, which also has implications for the study of other areas. Indentured previously to national security interests and later to global capital, area studies has not been able to claim its own territory as a critical form of knowledge. The recent skepticism of the myth of globalization forces us to see how much area studies is implicated in the myth. I will turn to Chinese studies to consider this disillusionment.

It is now a familiar story that in the last two decades China has been moving toward the liberalization of market economy, political reforms, and the opening out to global capital. In light of the Cold War binary of capitalism and communism, these developments signal the victory of capitalism over socialism. This perception informs much of Chinese studies these days. It is not possible in this short essay to go into detail about Chinese studies, but I will discuss perceptions of China that shape academic trends.

In the eyes of the American media, China generally presents an ambivalent image. One side is tainted with the harrowing narratives that I mentioned in the beginning of this essay. China, these narratives intone, has a miserable track record in human rights and individual freedom. The other is a benign China, on a racetrack to catch up with our modernity. The demonization of China continues the Cold War imaginary and posits an evil other so as to assure the voters of the righteousness of American democracy and the military-industrial complex. The idealization of China's reforms, on the other hand, is in tune with the neoliberal vision of globalization. Both perceptions misread China, not falsely, but in the sense of treating it as a shadowy entity whose significance is granted by an animating us. China is seen either as a reluctantly accepted member of the world community or as a threatening sovereignty ready to wield its ominous power. These views ignore China as a modern sovereignty engaged in its own trajectories, articulated in its own circumstances—a political and economic entity that is radically different from the fetishized images of the Tang or Ming dynasty. The urgent questions to ask are: What would China do with its modernity that cannot be defined by a straight line of capitalist development? Does the liberalization of the economy entail a rejection of the decades of endeavors to transform and reshape Chinese society? Does it mean that the dysfunctional socialist system gets a welcome blood transfusion from global capital and is on the way to normal health? Does it mean that China is lucky to be reborn in the age of globalization, and would do itself a great favor by making a clean break with its past?

The new transnational regime of simulacrum and media repeatedly

affirms the Cold War victory of capitalist development over one of its alternatives, China's socialist experience. Since the 1980s the image of China in the West has tended to merge with the official self-image disseminated by the Chinese government. It is a China that has finally awakened to the universal history of worldwide economic development and is in the process of repudiating a century of revolutionary-nationalist, social-democratic, and socialist experiences. Despite the official insistence on the socialist characteristics of China's modernization, the priority of official policy lies with unchecked integration into the global market and unbridled economic growth. China's recent entry into the World Trade Organization further indicates that it is resolved to make a clean break with the historical "aberrations" of its past.

This end-of-history trend is directly related to depoliticization and professionalization in humanistic and cultural discourse in Chinese studies. Ironically, depoliticization is a Cold War legacy that has been intensified by the globalization discourse. Depoliticization manifests itself in the modernization discourse as the guiding prism for studying developing and underdeveloped countries. Its related terms include modernity, tradition, development, backwardness, and so on, all enveloped in terms of economic growth. As the parameter for the study of Chinese history and society during the Cold War, the modernization discourse was subjected to occasional critique in the sixties and early seventies, but now it is becoming the hegemonic paradigm.

Historian Paul Cohen's analysis reveals that American historians working in Chinese studies during the postwar years, being part of the system that implicated itself in the making of twentieth-century China, had also "taken a leading part, as historians, in the creation of conceptual paradigms for understanding it."[20] This paradigm is the modernization discourse, or the tradition versus modernity approach. It posits Chinese culture as being devoid of real history and stuck in its timeless, immutable tradition, until it was jolted out of its age-old sleep by the impact of the imperialist West. It defines modern changes in China by how well or miserably the Chinese are able to make the grade in catching up with the West in economic modernization. From this point of view, the anti-imperialist revolutions, nation building, socialism, and the quest for and establishment of modern sovereignty—the inescapable experiences constitutive of modern China—are written off as huge aberrations. These experiences went astray from the proper, world-historical development exemplified by the liberal, market-oriented models of the West. The creative agency through which the Chinese make their history and reorganize their life in the face of dire consequences of modernity are regarded as passive responses to Western impact.

In challenging this West-centered view, Cohen resorts to an equally ahistorical notion of what he calls China-centered history, untouched by imperialist penetration and modernity. This image of China, with its internal and self-enclosed logic and cultural dynamics inaccessible in Western terms, rests on a mystified assumption of the essential other, shrouded in the dark and completely cut loose from the process of modern history. Yet even a cursory look at modern China will reveal a history that involved intense dialectical interaction and interweaving among cultures, East and West. Having said that, we need to appreciate how this reexamination of historiography's constraints challenges the objective, disinterested facade of area studies. Cohen repoliticizes area studies as a power-inflected discourse in the service of national security interest and the military-industrial complex. The historical context for this critical reflection was U.S. involvement in Vietnam and Indochina, the oil embargo of 1973, and the Iran hostage crisis of 1979–81. These events constitute for Cohen a symbolic meaning of Vietnam as a subject of criticism. He points to a critical space opened up for self-reflection, guilt, and heightened political consciousness. The meaning of Vietnam

> confronted us with the limits of our power, the very real constraints upon our capacity to bend the world to American purposes. This . . . meaning of Vietnam also . . . had a profound impact on American historians of China. By exposing the myth of American global supremacy—political, moral, cultural—it freed American historians, perhaps for the first time, to abandon Western norms and measures of significance and to move toward a more genuinely *other*-centered historiography, a historiography rooted in the historical experience not of the West but of China.[21]

It is surely ironic that the smallest evidence of critical vigilance during the Cold War seems to have been swallowed up quickly in post–Cold War area studies. In Chinese cultural studies there is a growing interpretive mode that privileges development and individualist-consumptive ideologies at the expense of political and social history. The neutral, disinterested notions of globalization and modernization, a brand-new positivity that seeks to replace the discredited positivist political and economic history, seems to prevail in the field of Chinese cultural studies.

Depoliticization is reflected obliquely in the above-mentioned books recounting the harrowing personal experience of living under the iron-fisted rule of communist China. Articles and books have been written on these narratives as the knowledge of China. It is true that these eyewitness accounts of hunger, oppression, and repression in the decades before the reform period of the eighties are believable. These accounts correspond strongly to the indictment and the search-for-roots literature in the mid-

eighties in China reflecting on the traumas of political catastrophe. The main plotlines of these stories are mostly a narrative of bildungsroman or a saga of freedom seekers in tragicomic combat against tyranny (the victims all come out scarred but unscathed). Rescues and redemption often come from the West, especially the United States. It is no accident the writers are mostly immigrants, safely nestled in the United States, who look back at the "other" shore with fear and trembling. While recognizing them as personal testimonies, one should be on guard against taking these narratives as representing the history of modern China. It is quite disturbing to see these books arranged in libraries and Barnes and Noble under the heading "history."

While acknowledging their subversive value against authoritarian politics, one needs to see them as fueling the fetishism of development and globalization. There is the real danger that a ready acceptance of these narratives as historical truth would put to rest all the historical drive, over a century, of millions of people to shape their alternative destiny. Treating these personal accounts as proof of a history gone awry erases the enduring, unresolved problems of modern China, problems that do not end with the end of the Cold War and the integration into the global economy. As Dirlik and Meisner rightly point out, these narratives reduce the historical understanding of complex, long-term problems embedded in Chinese history to "spatially and temporally limited tropisms" or figures.[22] These figures wield tremendous aesthetic and selling power, because they couch personal experience in a dramatic or melodramatic form and privilege personal encounters over a reflective memory and examination of inherent problems and issues. One is invited to like or dislike the images of China, not to look into the images' historical and social implications. Here again we get an aesthetic that says what you see is what you get and there is nothing behind or off the screen. A little knowledge here is a dangerous thing. This testimonial narrative is given to us not "in explicit arguments or by systematic analyses that bring up concrete issues for discussion and debate."[23] It functions as a rhetorical, emotive figure, a structure of feeling, in Raymond Williams's term. It plays on the desire for black and white simplicity and falls back on the victorious affirmation of the Cold War ideological divide. It denies China its own experience and quest, socialist or otherwise, and reconfirms capitalist globalization as the gateway to the future. It writes off a whole century of China's unique pursuit of modernity, which includes socialism as one option among a number of ill-examined social democratic visions for national independence, growth, freedom, and just society.

The problem of personal accounts is symptomatic of a larger problem of the visual appropriation of history. Area studies is now venturing into a

fashionable field of visual studies, so that a sort of specular tourism is becoming one of its most attractive components. As a subject, "Third World cinema" is geared increasingly toward the cinematic staging of the spectacle of history rather than delving into it. The cinema merges with the aesthetic of the simulacral flow of capital at the cost of history's real dynamics, until it becomes the quintessential expression of capital's world-wide expansion.[24] To get a sense of this phenomenon, we may consider the self-understanding implicit in a recent Chinese film entitled *Once upon a Time in Shanghai* [*Shanghai jishi*, 1999]. This film presents a good case of the self-conception of "Chinese globalists" in terms that mirror the metropolitan "other" and can be an allegory of the developmentalist logic in area studies. Professor Rebecca Karl has analyzed the film's ahistorical narrative and fetishism in contrast with a more contested historiography in an earlier Chinese film, *Crows and Sparrows*. I owe my observations to her research and will reframe the issue within the general orientation of Chinese cultural studies. The film was made in 1998 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the communist liberation of the city of Shanghai. It was commissioned by the Shanghai government and received large budgetary and technical assistance. The favorable reviews and a major prize the film has received indicate its popular success as a rewriting of Shanghai's history as a replenished self-image catering to the global market and investors.[25]

With the film's focus on the moment of Shanghai's liberation, one would expect it to give due attention to a historical state of emergency amid conflicting forces. A series of the film's superficial mise-en-scènes indeed depicts the chaotic situation resulting from the nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek's ill-conceived plan to regulate the financial market and economy. The rush on banks and stores, the riots, the wars with the People's Liberation Army, the police crackdowns on illegal speculation, and so on invoke the cinematic clichés of the war zones and economic collapse of a "Third World" nation in the turmoil of revolution. These retro-stylistic cosmetics strip the volatile and potentially dynamic circumstances of their political gravity. The simulation of chaos and war is obviously predicated on the film's underscoring of the financial woes of the city as a managerial, operational issue rather than political struggle. The battles between the Communists and nationalists, the day-to-day political activities of the population, the military action, the formation of political structure—all these seem to be bubbles in the film's single-minded gravitation toward the bottom line of the financial and economic fate of the city. The liberation of Shanghai is reduced to the unfolding of surface political conflict subsumed within economic and financial matters.

The operational and managerial logic of economy has its counterpart

in characterization. The real hero entrusted with a mission to pull the city through the economic deep waters is not a Communist, a worker, a soldier, or a political leader—the typical agent of politics, but a West-educated, management-savvy woman, Li Huirong. Li manages a textile factory jointly owned by her father and father-in-law, who reside in America as overseas investors. From the current vantage point of global capitalism, Li's role as a harbinger of capitalism in China is immediately apparent. As an offspring of the national bourgeois who dreams of building an independent industry, she would be a controversial and ambiguous image in the repertoire of available historical figures in Chinese cinema. In this film, however, she takes on the unambiguously heroic, "progressive" quality of capitalist spirit. With support from the Communists, she tries almost single-handedly to preserve the industry base, the capitalist infrastructure, from the terrorist sabotage of the defeated and retreating nationalists. It seems as though China's economic survival and revival all depended on the courage, will, and ingenuity of the capitalist daughter.

This image of progressive capitalism takes on a feminine quality as Li is also characterized as a lovely young wife, a typical street-smart, sophisticated Shanghai girl, the object of desire and affection to her husband, Guo Shaobai. The film's romantic episodes revolve around Guo's dilemma over taking his wife away to America or joining her in the resolve to rebuild the industry, a conflict of personal desire entangled with the historical dilemma of deciding on China's future. As a freelance journalist in America, Guo professes to take an "objective" stance toward reporting the events in Shanghai's liberation. His "objectivity" is based on his eyewitness accounts to inform the "outside world," but the objectivity is undercut by his ideological leaning toward his wife's trust in the Communists. The "outside world" that may benefit from his objective reporting turns out to be the United States, already in the process of implementing Cold War policy against a China lost to communism. Objectivity is meaningless and useless now for all the interested parties, except for the film's purely apolitical, growth-oriented backward look at a politically volatile moment in history. This neutral, balanced stance neutralizes the necessary one-sidedness, the inescapable ideological and political taking of sides in Shanghai's liberation. Making ambiguity into a virtue, this stance turns the moment of liberation into a transitory link in the impersonal chain of economic development and universal history of freedom.

An episode toward the end of the film depicts the terrorist act of the defeated nationalists in sabotaging the industrial infrastructure of newly liberated Shanghai. In fighting to protect a power plant, Li is murdered by a saboteur who turns out to be her classmate in business school back in the United States. As she dies in her husband's arms, the spectacular fire,

explosions, and destruction on the screen celebrate the tragic death of the capitalist, leaving no doubt about the seeds planted for China's future. The camera cuts from the ashes of destruction, magically traversing fifty years' worth of history, to Guo standing on the Huangpu dock in Shanghai against a dazzling array of neon-lit shop signs, advertisements, and the glaring silhouettes of towering office buildings—a metaphor of the phoenix rising to match the skylines. Guo retreats to America after his wife's death and returns fifty years later to Shanghai, only to find her memory forever young and frozen as a timeless image. The everlasting youth of the capitalist daughter blends into the new economic development zone of Pudong, a mesmerizing simulacrum complete with skyscrapers, the monumental TV tower, and myriad lights—a virtual Manhattan in the Orient.

Thus the cinematic spectacle short-circuits the rugged and twisted historical and political terrain to link a personal and melodramatic scenario to a mysterious, "objective" law of universal history. The nostalgic evocation of Shanghai in the image of a capitalist heroine, as Rebecca Karl observes, "proceeds with ostensibly direct reference to its pre-revolutionary other through appeals to the city as a stable place whose lure is inscribed in a mythology of a past, to which the present must inevitably return."[26]

This "backward" trip possesses a return ticket to the brilliant future of economic development, now suddenly accelerated, and affirms the hidden teleology of China's rush to the global market, whose proudest product is the replenished city of Shanghai. What gets liquidated in this cinematic spectacle is the fifty years of Chinese history which, ironically, are what the film is memorializing. A genuine history needs to be reconstructed, as Karl suggests, as the lived experience of a life-world through a detailed and contradictory account of the historical trajectories of modernity. The cinematic spectacle in this film can be seen as an instance of virtual reproduction of capital. In cinematic images capital, removed from confrontations and free to flow across borders, becomes the only historical teleology to guide interpretations of Chinese history.

The cinema as the spectacle of capital also penetrates the theoretical discourse of film studies in recent years. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the films of the Fifth Generation filmmakers galvanized international attention by depicting the corrupt, despotic stratum of feudal China as a metaphor alluding to the authoritarian China. They also exhibited stunning aesthetic and technological creativity. In line with the post–Cold War mood of the end of ideology, film scholars attempt to look back at the entire history of the Chinese cinema in the twentieth century in a new depoliticized light. The most remarkable move is to eschew the radical filmmaking and film criticism as ideological propaganda and as signs of a

dead or lingering socialism. The new research looks for traces in an archaeological fashion to uncover those archival remains, documents, and facts repressed and marginalized by the mainstream social and political history. Foucault's archaeology is edged with genealogy, and is a critical attempt to expose and analyze the condition of possibilities for generating reified social formations and discursive practices. The archaeologists of film history do not follow this critical, demystifying route. What they attempt to unearth from the ideological encrustations is something that is more "normal" and more in tune with historical inevitability of the global trend. The object of the search is the archival traces contributing to the formation of an autonomous stream of film production, techniques, apparatuses, and discourse removed from political and historical vicissitudes. The cinema's aesthetic form, its industrial organization, production, and circulation are treated as absolute values and proper objects of inquiry.

Professional concentration and subdivision are surely much needed in the emergent field of Chinese film studies. But what may be neglected is that the cinema is being reconsidered independently from its implication in historical junctures of social relations and power struggle. Various aspects of the cinema are taken as disciplinary topics that simply need to be studied in the empirical objective fashion of science and technology. The technological, aesthetic, and institutional facts are seen as repressed innovative endeavors that need to be uncovered so as to rehabilitate the individualistic-consumptive, cosmopolitan lifestyle. It is to restore an enduring, naturally accumulated *histoire de mentalité*: a substratum of tradition, popular practice, and entertainment forms. The recovered figure, endowed with the aura of a fallen hero rising from the ashes, is frequently a city-dwelling consumer with cosmopolitan taste, who enjoys streets scenes and shops, coffeehouses, movie theaters, and above all Hollywood. The Republican era and the city of Shanghai become the ultimate space-time coordinate that frames the search for earlier capitalist stirrings. This figure from the past is also symbolic of the global space-time of the present, a doubling of the developmentalist frenzy and the image of Shanghai as the Manhattan of East Asia, with its skyscrapers, Times Square, and World Trade Towers.[27]

I am not suggesting that it is wrong to look for aesthetic and technical innovations in film history and to restore the lived experience of consumers during the Republican era. The problem seems bigger than methodological preference and illustrates a growing trend in area studies under the spell of globalization and the regime of simulacrum. The search for China's past in this case proceeds on a rigid dichotomy between the historical experience of radical cinema and a depoliticized, consumer-oriented urban culture, a variant of the communism versus capitalism divide. This

residue of the Cold War dichotomy allows researchers to reject the history of politics and social movements, the struggle and quest for a modernity that does not toe the line of capitalism incarnate in consumptive urban culture. With "eyes wide shut" to a large swath of the Chinese population and experience, it blocks inquiries into the possible dialogue and mutual traffic not only between capitalist-consumerist lifestyles and the anti-imperialist Left, but also among many other political orientations and progressive practices. This approach in film theory ignores forms of art and politics that constantly cut across the capitalist and socialist divide, across city and country, tradition and modernity, the aesthetic realm and political activity. It uncritically endorses free market ideology, the myth of development and globalization as the undisputed key to China's past and the signpost for its future. September 11 may or may not have shaken this myth, but it has certainly shocked us into a sober reflection of the constraints and ideological baseline of area studies enveloped in the mentality of globalization.

Notes

1. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 326.

2. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 224.

3. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 327.

4. See John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001). Mearsheimer argues the realistic theme that power conflict and war will remain the basic condition of the twenty-first century.

5. Virginia Carmichael, *Framing History: The Rosenberg Story and the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

6. Quoted in Carmichael, *Framing History*, 36–37.

7. Ibid., 36.

8. Slavoj Žižek, *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993), 217.

9. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner Press, 1961), 37–81. See also Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 84.

10. Eagleton, *Ideology of the Aesthetic*, 85.

11. Ibid., 88.

12. Žižek, *Tarrying with the Negative*, 218.

13. Ibid., 217–18.

14. Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld* (New York: Ballantine, 1996).

15. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 309.

16. Herbert Schiller, *Mass Communications and American Empire* (Boston: Beacon, 1971) 14–15.

17. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 309.

18. David Palumbo-Liu, ed., *The Ethnic Canon* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 2.

19. Benjamin Schwartz, *China and Other Matters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 99.

20. Paul Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing to the Recent Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 150.

21. Ibid., 7.

22. Arif Dirlik and Maurice Meisner, eds., *Marxism and the Chinese Experience* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1989), 5.

23. Ibid., 7.

24. For a discussion of cinema as the image of capital, see Jonathan Beller, "Capital/Cinema," in *Deleuze and Guattari*, ed. Eleanor Kaufman and Kevin Heller (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 77–95.

25. See Rebecca Karl, "Liberating Shanghai, Then and Now: *Crows and Sparrows* and *Once upon a Time in Shanghai*" (paper presented at the International Conference on Shanghai, New York University, April 19–22, 2001).

26. Ibid., 2.

27. I base my observations and arguments in Yingjin Zhang, ed., *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai, 1922–1943* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999). For the restoration of the history of mentality, see specifically Zhang's introduction, 2–23.

Ella Shohat

Soon after September 11, the media resumed their habitual attack on "liberals," "progressives," "antiwar radicals," "unpatriotic leftists," and "politically correct multiculturalists." This time, Ground Zero was presented as evidence in the war not simply against terrorism but also against "PC multiculturalism." The advocates of "postmodernist cultural relativism," it was suggested, would have to admit their defeat in the Culture Wars. Islamic fundamentalism, Talibanism, bin Ladenism and, of course, the oppression of women, were now to be seen as documents of the barbarism of non-Western civilizations. Essentialist theses of the kind produced by Samuel Huntington and Bernard Lewis again occupied center stage, reenacting the consoling and narcissistic narrative of an ancient civilizational war now reaching our own megalopolis. Henceforth, the demise of the multicultural Left requires no further proof. Case closed.

Yet Manichean narratives and Enlightenment binarisms have also haunted coalitionary work along the whole spectrum of the Left, particularly when issues of multiculturalism and feminism have been at stake. The postmodern abandonment of the Universal has continued to produce anxieties about how to defend women's and gay/lesbian rights given the global plurality of cultures, at times triggering a full return to the false dichotomy of modernity versus tradition. Written in the spring of 2000, this lecture is included in the 911 special issue of *Social Text* in the hopes of engaging a more complex discussion about gender, race, and cultural difference in the context of violent transnational conflicts. Despite its traumatic magnitude, September 11 is neither the end of history nor its beginning. The multiculturalist/transnationalist feminist critique of the production of knowledge developed over the past decade has not lost its relevance; rather, it has gained renewed urgency.

When feminism is invoked in academic institutions outside of "Western" spaces, it is often subjected to an (inter)disciplinary order that anxiously and politely sends it "back" to the kingdom of area studies. There the experts of the day, it is assumed, will tell us about the plight of women; each outlandish geographical zone will be matched with an abused bodily part. A doubly exclusionary logic (that which applies to women and to their geography) will quickly allot a discursive space for women as well as

for gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender people from diverse regions of the world. Even within multicultural feminist and queer cartographies of knowledge, the diverse regions are often presumed in isolation from the "center" and from each other. Such approaches, I am afraid, have become a malady in women's studies programs, even those that have made an important step toward multiculturalizing the curriculum.

Here, I want to reflect on a relational understanding of feminism that assumes a nonfinalized and conjunctural definition of feminism as a polysemic site of contradictory positionalities. Any dialogue about the fictive unity called "Middle Eastern women" or "Latin American gays/lesbians"—especially one that is taking place within a transnational framework—has to begin from the premise that genders, sexualities, races, classes, nations, and even continents exist not as hermetically sealed entities but rather as part of a permeable interwoven relationality. Interlinking critical maps of knowledge is fundamental in a transnational age, typified by the global "travel" of images, sounds, goods, and populations. A relational multicultural feminist project has to reflect this (partially) new moment that requires rethinking of identity designations, intellectual grids, and disciplinary boundaries. We need, I believe, to reflect on the relationships between the diverse interdisciplinary kinds of knowledge constituting multicultural/transnational feminist inquiry: gender and sexuality studies, ethnic and race studies, area and postcolonial studies. Given that there is no single feminism, the question is, How do we orchestrate these conflictual perspectives in order to rearticulate the feminist terrains of struggle foregrounding the densely woven web of relationality?

In many institutions multicultural feminists have often faced criticism from feminist colleagues who had perceived multiculturalism as somehow "bad for women."[1] Multiculturalism, in the view of these colleagues, is at best irrelevant and at worst divisive for the feminist cause. And when multicultural and transnational approaches are approved, the solution to the production of knowledge often takes the form of an additive approach. In this sense, I'm not interested in talking about the "Middle East" or "Latin America" as unified categories of analysis. Our challenge, I think, is precisely to avoid a facile additive operation of merely piling up increasingly differentiated groups of women from different regions and ethnicities—all of whom are projected as presumably forming a coherent yet easily demarcated entity. In contrast, the notion of a relational feminism goes beyond a mere description of the many cultures from which feminisms emerge; it transcends an additive approach, which simply has women of the globe neatly neighbored and stocked, paraded in a United Nations–style "Family of Nations" pageant where each ethnically marked feminist speaks in her turn, dressed in national costume. To map histories

of women and gays/lesbians, we must place them in dialogical relation within, between, and among cultures, ethnicities, and nations.

There is also a tendency in critical discourse to pit a rotating chain of marginalized communities against an unstated white or Western norm. This discourse assumes a neat binarism of black versus white and Chicana versus Anglo, or East versus West, and North versus South—a binarism that ironically repositions whiteness and Westerners as a normative interlocutor. This conceptual binarism—as in black versus white or Eastern versus Western—puts on hold everyone else who does not fit in either category, sitting, as it were, on the couch awaiting a turn to speak. This "on hold" analytical method ends up producing gaps and silences. The relationships among the diverse "others" remain obscure. Therefore our challenge, it seems to me, is to produce knowledge within a kind of a kaleidoscope framework of communities-in-relation without ever suggesting that their positionings are identical. It is for this reason that I am not interested in having clear and neat categorization of spaces allocated to each specific region. I am more concerned with investigating the multichronotopic links in the hopes of creating an intellectual dialogue that bypasses the institutional scenario of feminist/queer studies versus area studies. In the first, the logic and discourse of postmodernity applies; in the latter, that of modernization and development.

Even in more critical frameworks within U.S. academia, the production of knowledge tends to reproduce an implicit and even invisible U.S. nationalism. It undergirds certain versions of First World feminism, and at the same time, we can discern the nationalism of certain versions of multiculturalism as articulated by women of color and queer discourses. I think we should especially pay attention to the ways universities erect disciplinary borders and maintain conceptual boundaries that continue to reproduce the discursive, overlapping quarantine of interconnected fields of inquiry. For example, the majority of women of the world form the margins of most curricula, fenced off within the Bantustans called "area studies"—such as Middle East studies—as though their lives are not also implicated by U.S. agendas, policies, and as though there aren't Middle Eastern women in the United States. Although nationalism is often seen as a specifically "Third World" malady, it is no less relevant to the labor, feminist, queer, and multicultural movements within the United States. In going over a substantial number of ethnic studies/women's studies/gender studies/queer studies curricula, it is not difficult to detect a submerged American nationalism that often undergirds such practices and epistemologies, giving us a star-striped nationalism with a tan, a nationalism in drag, and a rainbow nationalism. In my experience on various "diversity committees," I have found that educational institutions

often glimpse multiculturalism and feminist/gay/lesbian perspectives through a largely unconscious national-exceptionalist lens. And while I have no quarrel with the idea of U.S. uniqueness, I do quarrel with the idea that uniqueness is unique to the United States. Every nation-state has a palimpsestic uniqueness all its own. And along with that shared uniqueness, we find historical parallels and global links between different national formations. The implicit nationalism of many multicultural, feminist, and gay/lesbian curricula and agendas leads us to miss numerous opportunities for a relational analysis and for a cross-disciplinary and transnational connection.

It is fundamental to deploy a multiperspectival approach to the movement of feminist ideas across borders. We must worry about globalist feminism that spreads its programs around the world as the universal gospel, just as we have to be concerned about localist feminism that surrenders all dialogue to the dead end of an overpowering relativism. One of the challenges facing multicultural/transnational feminism has to do with the translations of theories and actions from one context to another. In an Arab/Muslim context, where feminism is often denounced as a Western import, and where Arab/Muslim women articulate their version of what constitutes gender struggle, what would it mean to deploy a poststructuralist perspective that would critique the notions of experience, authenticity, and essentialism? What kind of relational maps of knowledge would help illuminate the negotiation of gender and sexuality as understood in diverse contexts, but with an emphasis on the linked historical experiences and discursive networks across borders? While one does not have to subscribe to any grand Theory with a capital *T*, it would be foolish to deny that theorizing forms a forceful element in the envisioning of (any) social and political change. The multicultural feminist project as seen in *Talking Visions*, for example, attempted to synthesize the contribution of poststructuralism for multicultural feminism with that of historical materialism. Such a project gave an expression to the dilemmas resulting from, on the one hand, the difficulty with fully embracing an empiricist approach to experience—a method that implies the possibility of a direct access to a prediscursive reality and, on the other, the difficulty with fully subscribing to a poststructuralism in which experience never seems to exist outside of the discourses that mediate them. I was hoping, in other words, to transcend a referential verism (for example that writing about experiences directly reflects the real) without falling into a hermeneutic nihilism whereby all texts become nothing more than a meaningless play of signification. Experience and knowledge within a multicultural/transnational feminist project, in this sense, have to be defined as dialogical concepts that can be understood as a set of discursive practices based on personal and communitar-

ian interlocution, an interlocution situated in historical time and geographical space.

Some Third World women and U.S. women of color have at times denounced Theory itself as inherently Western, and as an impediment to activism. They have critiqued white, Western, or—to be more precise—Eurocentric theories for eliding experiences of women of color. This indispensable critique, however, should not also allow us to forget: (1) the importance of looking critically at activist practices, and of theorizing them as part of feminist agendas; (2) that every practice is undergirded by some kind of theory, philosophy, worldview, or discursive grid—even when the practitioners claim not to have a theory; (3) that theorizing and theories are not a Western monopoly, a view that would inscribe in reverse a colonialist vision of the West as theoretical mind and the non-West as unreflecting body; and (4) that Third World women and women of color have themselves contributed to theorizing not only by writing theory per se, but also by their own multiaxis thinking and activism, which has challenged multiple hegemonic discourses. In this sense, activism itself can be seen as a form of theorizing, a practical testing of ideas. Ironically, I think that many activists have underestimated their own historical contribution to the West's questioning of totalizing narratives.

In contrast, some feminist writers (such as Nelly Richards, Wahneema Lubiano, Inderpal Grewal, Caren Kaplan, and others) have insightfully suggested that postmodernism, for example, is relevant for women of color and Third World women. The various post-theories (poststructuralism, postmodernism, postcolonialism) are indeed useful, albeit problematic, tools for a multicultural feminist project. Here one may address this question from a different angle as well. The critique offered by anticolonial Third Worldist discourses was a crucial element in generating the critique of totalizing master narratives in the first place. Both structuralist semiotics and Third Worldism had their long-term historical origins in a series of events that undermined the confidence in European modernity: the Holocaust (and in France the Vichy collaboration with the Nazis), the postwar disintegration of the last European empires, and the Third World anti-colonial revolution. Although the exalted term "Theory" was rarely linked to anticolonial theorizing, Third Worldist thinking had an undeniable impact on First World "Theory."[2] The structuralists codified, on some levels, arguments made by anticolonial thinkers. The critical work of "denaturalization," performed by what one might call the left wing of semiotics—for example, Roland Barthes's dissection of the colonialist implications of the *Paris Match* cover showing a black soldier saluting the French flag—cannot be detached from the Third Worldist critique of European master narratives performed by such francophone anticolonial

writers as Aimé Césaire (*Discourse on Colonialism*, 1955) and Frantz Fanon (*The Wretched of the Earth*, 1961). Lévi-Strauss's crucial turn from biological to linguistic models for a new anthropology was, to some extent, motivated by his visceral aversion to a biological anthropology deeply tainted by anti-Semitic and colonialist racism. Indeed, it was in the context of decolonization that UNESCO asked Lévi-Strauss to do the research that culminated in his "Race and History" (1952), where the French anthropologist rejected any essentialist hierarchy of civilizations.[3]

The crisis of modernity is inseparable from Europe's loss of its privileged position as the model for the world. The discursive withdrawal from projecting Europe as a spokesperson on behalf of the Universal came into existence through and in relation to the critique of European humanism, explicitly addressed by Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*. The shared concern of the feminist and the anticolonial movements over the transformation of the "other" from object to subject of history has to be understood in this historical conjuncture. It is hardly a coincidence that Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1949) charts "the birth of the free woman" in images and reminiscent of and alluding to black struggle in the United States and anticolonial struggle in the Third World. Indeed, blacks and women in the United States, as numerous black feminists have suggested, began an uneasy dialogue over their parallel and intersected battles for political representation over a century ago. What is at stake, however, is the nondialogical and unilateral historiography that narrates the emergence of feminism as a linear march from premodernity to modernity and postmodernity. As with Eurocentrism that sees Europe as the unique source of meaning, as the world's center of gravity, as an ontological "reality" to the rest of the world's shadow, monocultural feminism simply traces its formation back to a Western modernity pictured as devoid of all dialogue with ambient antiracist and anticolonial struggles. This narrative also simplistically suggests that postmodernism—seen alone and unaided by any critical thought "outside" of the imaginary space of the West—has opened up a space for diverse others. The implied openness of this narrative, paradoxically, reveals its own closedness. While it is a common wisdom in feminist studies to euphorically link modernity to the rise of feminism, it can be argued that the crisis of modernity in the wake of anticolonial and antiracist interrogation has also helped to shape a different conception of feminism itself, one that has begun to free itself from the white man's and the white woman's burden of Enlightenment and its concomitant narrative of progress.

Feminist thought is also often caught up in a tension between essentialist and antiessentialist discourses. While poststructuralist gender, queer, and postcolonial theories entail the rejection of essentialist articu-

lations of identity as well as biologistic and transhistorical determinations of gender, race, and sexual identity, a desire for political agency leads to support for "affirmative action," implicitly premised on the very categories elsewhere rejected as essentialist, leading to a paradoxical situation in which theory deconstructs totalizing myths while activism has to nourish them. (Women from the Middle East face multiple exclusions in the United States, yet they do not qualify for affirmative action—but this topic requires another debate.) One of the challenges for multicultural/transnational feminism, then, is to articulate its project in relation to the issue of gender essentialism, on the one hand, and cultural essentialism, on the other. Looking into popular debates about women both in the United States and in the Middle East, we can see that it isn't easy puncturing the essentialism balloon about what "America" is and what "Arab," "Jew," or "Iranian" is and what "women" and "men" are all about. And, as we know, that kind of essentialist discourse tends to take precedence over analysis of power relations.

I want to insist that the concept of *relationality* should not be confused with cultural *relativism*. Although the concept of relationality goes back to structural linguistics, I am using it here in a translinguistic dialogic and historicized sense. The project of multicultural feminism has to be situated historically as a set of contested practices, mediated by conflictual discourses, which themselves have repercussions and reverberations in the world. A cultural relativist approach would oblige us to accept veiling or clitoridectomy, for example, as simply representing a different cultural norm, and therefore a legitimate practice of another culture. (In fact, this argument has found echo within the U.S. legal system; known as a "cultural defense," it is used to justify a variety of gender-based abuses such as wife battering within an immigrant community.) At the same time, it is important to avoid a universalist formulation of feminism, one premised on Eurocentric discourse of modernity versus premodernity or developed versus underdeveloped—concepts grounded in the feminist version of a Promethean civilizing mission.

Therefore, to articulate a complex critique of such practices as clitoridectomy we would have to achieve the following: dissect the global media's tendency to fetishistically focus on rituals that involve sexual organs and expose them as ambivalent sites of voyeuristic pleasure; avoid a Eurocentric framing narrative that would transform a conjunctural praxis into the essence of a culture, nation, or region, where clitoridectomy, for example, would be represented as at the very kernel of Egyptian, African, or Muslim culture; examine such oppressive practices in relation to other forms of oppressive practices of body mutilation and gendered pathologies in the West, thereby avoiding the ascription of cultural supe-

riority to the West implicit in the double whammy of downplaying Western abuses and amplifying everyone else's abuses; dispute the idea that traditions are coherent, static, and uninterrupted in any culture; compare the discourses about such practices associated with "tradition" with technologically based practices, such as cosmetic surgery, associated with postmodernity; examine the active complicity of women themselves in performing such oppressive practices, rather than suggest that they are merely passive victims of patriarchy; look into the ways the practice is contested within the community rather than produce a misleading image of a homogenous community; interrogate Eurocentric versions of feminism that envision the elimination of such practices as entailing (even if only subliminally) a total cultural assimilation to the West; study the history of the practice in relation to the voices of dissent, rather than manufacture narcissistic rescue narratives toward otherized cultures; examine such practices in the context of worsening social conditions due to destructive globalization policies and IMF-generated poverty, whereby women's bodies become the symbolic site of "preserving" tradition, an issue often addressed by fundamentalist religious organizations but overlooked by the state apparatus and transnational institutions; analyze critically the transnational asymmetries inherent in legislation affecting gender, immigration, and human rights, in which support for gender-based asylum often recycles old colonial tropes of dark women trapped in hopelessly retrograde and brutal societies.

Thus, to truly have a relational analysis, we would have to address the operative terms and axes of stratifications typical of specific contexts, along with the ways these terms and stratifications are translated and reinvoiced as they "travel" from one context to another. For example, historically, questions of race are less central in the Middle East/North Africa, where the operative terms have more to do with religion. In this sense, I do not define multicultural/transnational feminism either as a universalist project or as a cultural-relativist project. The universalizing Enlightenment discourse, which has been the subject of much postmodern critique, is a form of philosophical dogmatism; it excludes dialogue by making it impossible. Relativism, meanwhile, also excludes dialogue by making it pointless since within "I'm OK, you're OK" logic, everything is legitimate and therefore not debatable. At times, however, hegemonic feminism has challenged gender-based essentialism, while simultaneously inscribing notions of cultural essentialism. "Difference" became central for writings by women of color and Third World women writers, and in some quarters, it became associated with the idea of Eastern or African superiority over Western culture, virtually inverting Eurocentric hierarchical discourses. While gender essentialism challenged patriarchal ideologies, it

did not necessarily challenge the essentialist discourses about gender and sexuality altogether. Similarly, arguments for cultural differences among women (heterosexual, bisexual, or lesbian) interrogate the colonialist ideologies about difference as implying the superiority of Western culture, but again do not necessarily interrogate the notion of cultural essence altogether. By bringing together multiculturalism and feminism within a transnational frame, we can try to avoid replicating the idea of essentialist cultural differences among women. Therefore, to raise the question of difference among women (heterosexual/bisexual/lesbian) for me is not about delineating some essentialist ideas about the cultural differences between Western and Third World women, but rather about looking at different positioning vis-à-vis the histories of power, especially since the advent of colonialism. Having said that, I have not been interested in difference for the sake of difference, but rather in dialogical encounters of differences. My argument is not that "we're all different," a truism that forms the basis of cultural relativist arguments. My point is rather that multicultural feminism is a situated practice in which histories and communities are mutually coimplicated and constitutively related, open to mutual illumination.

Take the question of feminist historiography as an example. Third World women's involvement in anticolonialist struggles often was not seen as relevant for feminism in feminist writings. I have proposed to reread the history of Third World women, especially within anticolonial struggles, as a kind of subterranean, unrecognized form of feminism and as a legitimate part of feminist historiography, even if the activists themselves did not label it as feminism. Multicultural feminists have to disinter stories of survival from the rubble of the master narrative of progress. Historically, colonized women had been deeply involved in anticolonialist and antiracist movements long before their dialogue with the "women's movement." It was often their activism within anticolonialist and antiracist movements that led to their political engagement in feminism. This type of antipatriarchal and even, at times, antiheterosexist work within anticolonial struggles will remain marginal to the feminist canon as long as only one feminism retains the power of naming and narrativizing. The debate about what constitutes a legitimate feminist epistemology for a long time has had to do with the privileging of single-issue feminism over a multiaxis analysis. Recognizing invisible feminist histories is crucial for rearticulating what constitutes legitimate spaces, moments, and subjects of feminist studies.

We need to make connections in conceptual terms, linking issues of gender and sexuality in the context of colonialism, imperialism, and Third World nationalism on the one hand, and race and ethnicity and multicul-

turalism on the other. Many literary studies of culture and empire privilege the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but one could trace colonial discourses back to 1492, linking representations of "tradition" and globalization with contemporary discourses about, for example, modernity and postmodernity. The Columbus story for me was a way to follow Orientalism far back and to show the links between the *reconquista* in Spain— the expulsion of Jews and Muslims in 1492—and the *conquista* of America in the same year, in terms of the traveling discourses and practices. There are historical discursive links between the Americas and the Orient prior to the formation of contemporary geopolitics.[4] Perhaps the first modern Orientalist was none other than Columbus.

After his arrival on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, he wrote to the Spanish throne praising the war against Muslims and Jews, and thanking the queen for having sent him to the regions of India to convert its people to the holy faith. Here, discourses about Muslims, Jews, and (Asian) Indians crossed the Atlantic during Spain's continental *reconquista*, arming the conquistadors with a ready-made us versus them ideology aimed at the regions of India, but applied instead toward the indigenous peoples of the accidentally discovered continent. European campaigns against Muslims, Jews, and other so-called heretics and agents of Satan, such as witches, made a mammoth apparatus of racism and sexism available for recycling in the new continents. The colonial misrecognition inherent in the name "Indian" underlines the linked imaginaries of East and West Indies. Indeed, Columbus took to "India" (the Americas) *conversos*, fluent in Semitic languages, who were expected to speak to the Indians in their own language. (Was it with the help of such translators that Columbus wrote with great confidence and knowledge about the Carib and Arawak cultures?) My point is that the American colonial discourse did not simply take in Orientalist discourse, it was constituted by it. And colonial discourse, shaped within the Americas, sub-Saharan Africa, and East and South Asia, later impacted on the formation of specific Orientalist discourse directed at North Africa and West Asia—territories colonized quite late in the imperial game.

My point in making such links is to reimagine the study of regions in a way that transcends the traditional dogmatism of area studies. I have tried to show the links that preceded the contemporary "global village." As Robert Stam and I argued in *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, globalization is not a completely new development; it must be seen as part of the much longer history of colonialism in which Europe attempted to submit the world to a single "universal" regime of truth and global institution of power. The five-hundred-year colonial domination of indigenous peoples, the capitalist appropriation of resources, and the imperialist ordering of the world

formed part of a massive world-historical globalizing movement that reached its apogee at the turn of the century. Globalization theory, in this sense, has its roots in a diffusionist view of Europe's spreading its people, ideas, goods, and economic and political systems around the world. Thus patriarchal colonial diffusionism has undergone a series of metamorphoses: it transmuted into modernization theory in the late 1940s and 1950s, embracing the idea that Third World nations would achieve economic takeoff by emulating the historical progress of the West, and it transmuted in the 1980s into globalization theory. Women of the "underdeveloped world," it was assumed, would have to be further modernized to "catch up."

Terms such as "underdeveloped" and "developing" project an infantilization trope on a global scale. These terms have implied the political and economic immaturity of diverse Calibans suffering from a putative inbred dependency on the leadership of the diverse modernizing forces. The in loco parentis discourse of paternalistic gradualism assumed the necessity of rescue narratives and the integration of peoples in the "far" corners of the "global village" into the vision of the "advanced" and "mature" nation-states. Liberal academic curricula and well-meaning human rights programs thrive on a binarist demarcation of opposing twin concepts of modernity versus tradition and science versus religion. In this sense, modernization functions as the bridge between two opposite poles within a stagist narrative that paradoxically assumes the essential superiority of Euro-hegemonies, while simultaneously generating programs to transform the underdeveloped community "into" modernity. Within this discourse, the "developing world" always seems to lag behind somehow, not simply economically but also culturally, condemned to a perpetual game of catch-up in which it can only repeat on another register the history of the "advanced" world. When the First World reaches the stage of capitalism and postmodernism, the developing world hobbles along toward modernism and the beginnings of capitalism.

Like the discourses of the sociology of modernization, the economics of development, and the aesthetics of postmodernism, Eurocentric versions of transnationalism covertly assume a telos toward which "traditional" cultural practices are presumed to be evolving. Performed within the discursive framework of development and modernization, the study of Third World aesthetics tends to produce a Eurocentric narrative of "cultural development." Such narrative also produces segregated notions of temporality and spatiality. A more adequate formulation of these transnational relationships would not see any world as either "ahead" or "behind." Instead, it would see all the worlds as coeval, living the same historical moment but under diverse modalities of subordination and

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hybridization. The spatiality and temporality of cultures as lived is scrambled, palimpsestic in all the worlds, with the premodern, the modern, and the postmodern coexisting and interlinked globally.

To place gender studies and area studies in critical dialogue would require a multichronotopic form of analysis, particularly in terms of the ways geographies are imagined and knowledge is mapped within academic institutional practices. It would ask us to place the often-ghettoized histories, geographies, and discourses in hopefully politically and epistemologically synergetic relations. It would require critical voices to look for ways in which variegated pasts and presents parallel and intersect, overlap and contradict, analogize and allegorize one another.

Notes

This text was written as a lecture given in conjunction with book-signing events for *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age* (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Arts and MIT Press, 1998). The arguments here are based on my introduction to the book. I would like to thank Robert Stam for generously allowing me to use some shared material from our coauthored work. A shorter version of this piece appeared as "Area Studies, Transnationalism, and the Feminist Production of Knowledge," *Signs* 26 (summer 2001), a special issue on globalization and gender, edited by A. Basu, I. Grewal, C. Kaplan, and L. Malkki.

1. See, for example, Susan Moller Okin, "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?" in *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?*, ed. Joshua Cohen, Matthew Howard, and Martha C. Nussbaum (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

2. See Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism* (London: Routledge, 1994); and Robert Stam, *Film Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

3. See Stam, *Film Theory*.

4. See Ella Shohat, "Taboo Memories, Diasporic Visions: Columbus, Palestine, and Arab-Jews," in *Performing Hybridity*, ed. May Joseph and Jennifer Natalya Fink (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

This essay is about how women's rights as a complicated discourse, and the *burkha* as a complex symbolic, are the sites from which to understand the complexity of global power struggles at this moment. But first a note of context is necessary to clear some space for thinking—openly, critically, historically—in terms of a before and after of September 11. September 11 has not changed *everything*. It has just made clear how much context and perspective and location matter. Ask the people of Chile about September 11—when their beloved president, Salvador Allende, was gunned down in a coup d'état supported by the United States. Ask them the meaning of trauma and grief. Think back to the Gulf War and U.S. militarist terrorism of its smart bombs. Think across and beyond to the children of Iraq, today, this minute, who need cancer drugs or textbooks for their schools and cannot have them because of the economic sanctions imposed on their country. Do what women always do—multitask, so that you are not simply concentrated on yourself, or the United States, or this moment.

Please remember: The U.S. economy was in trouble before September 11; Boeing was angling for its defense contract before September 11; the airlines were in trouble before September 11. Also please think about the 3,000 wonderful people who were murdered on September 11, who came from over sixty different countries; the horrible tragedies in Nigeria and Sudan; the high school students like my daughter who were expected to wear flag pins and would not; the hundreds of thousands of workers who have lost their jobs since September 11; the incredible profits being made by the military-industrial complex on the present war; that Planned Parenthood has faced anthrax threats for years; that college campuses are being targeted as sites of antipatriotism.

Try to see what is not easily visible. Rethink invisibility; rethink as overt the covert realms of power that are not being named. Do not give into the falseness of the moment. This is a time of insecurity and trouble. Do not pretend that having to use a plastic spoon to spread cream cheese on your bagel in the airport—instead of a plastic knife—makes you safe. None of us will be safe until the world embraces democracy for us all.

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The quick and easy East/West divide is also not helpful politically, as the United States champions democracy while banding together with military dictators and kings.

A masculinist-militarist mentality dominates on both sides of the ill-named East/West divide. The opposition implied by this divide is not simple or complete. Flows between these locations have always existed and this is the case today more than ever. Further, the two sides of the divide share foundational relations, even if differently expressed, especially in terms of male privilege. Neither side embraces women's full economic and political equality or sexual freedom. In this sense fluidity has always existed in the arena of women's rights and obligations between the two. The Taliban's insistence on the *burkha* and the U.S. military's deployment of women fighter pilots are used to overdraw and misrepresent the oppositional stance.

At present, economic flows of the global economy simply lessen the divide further. The bin Laden family itself represents this form of globalism. The family's money is tied to multiple Western investments such as General Electric, Goldman-Sachs, Merrill Lynch, Microsoft, and Boeing.[1] One can easily assume that bin Laden's fury is directed as much at his family as at the West, which is a deadly combination. The quick and easy East/West divide is also not helpful politically, as the United States champions democracy while banding together with military dictators and kings.

As I try to think through these post–September 11 moments, I feel compelled to locate and name the privileging of masculinist power with all its destructiveness. The silencing of women's unique voices at this moment, but most especially the voices of Afghan women and feminists—who criticized the early U. S. support of the Taliban—needs to be exposed. Women have been fighting and resisting the Taliban as well as other forms of Muslim fundamentalist misogyny for decades. Fundamentalist misogyny has no one singular site or home. Women across the globe continue to resist gender apartheid and sexual terrorism in the diverse war sites where they continually reappear: Bosnia, Chechnya, Rwanda, Algeria, Nigeria, and Palestine. Activist groups like Women against Fundamentalism, Women Living under Muslim Laws (WLUML), and Women in Black give transnational voice to women struggling against the oppressiveness of misogynist law. They also indict the United States for supporting regimes that practice atrocities toward women.[2] Yet instead of seeing and hearing from these women activists, CNN presented Afghan women as *burkha*-covered creatures in need of saviors. After the Taliban retreat from Kabul, we were shown women's faces smiling as the air hit their skin. In all this, we need to be reminded that it has been women, since the Algerian revolution in that country, who have fought tirelessly for democratic rule. In Iran it

was the women's vote that allowed the more moderate Mohammed Khatami to be elected twice.

If we saw and heard more about these kinds of involvements by women, many more people would be wondering about how gender apartheid and sexual terrorism are crucial parts of these political times: how the patriarchal aspects of the global economy today feed the fires of hatred toward women everywhere, and how ending this hatred/fear of women is central to creating a democratic globe. Different forms of sexual terrorism affect women across the globe in similar and different ways. All the women I know have learned to live productive lives alongside the terror/fear of rape: we do not walk alone at night if we can help it, we do not put ourselves at risk if we can figure out what this means, we fear for our daughters' safety when they are among men we do not know.

I do not agree with the columnists who attribute September 11 solely to the anger of bin Laden and his troops toward the excessive greed and irresponsibility of global capitalism and its white supremacist ways. Nor did September 11 happen simply because the global economy is displacing men from their earlier livelihoods. These explanations are valid, but September 11 must also be viewed in relation to the way that male patriarchal privilege orchestrates its hierarchical system of domination. The age-old fear and hatred of women's sexuality and their forced domestication into womanly and wifely roles informs all economies. Global capitalism unsettles the preexisting sexual hierarchical order and tries to mold women's lives to its newest needs across the East/West divide. Differing factions within the Taliban are fully aware of the stakes involved here, which is, in part, why they root their war strategy in the active subordination of women.

When women in Afghanistan or Algeria are driven out of school and not allowed to hold jobs, we should remember that they continue to work as mothers and caretakers in desperate situations of famine and displacement and grotesque killing. Many of these women, who are sick of the war, are not obedient slaves. You do not bother oppressing those who are already docile and powerless. You only veil and stone and murder people you fear for the power they have. Women in countries throughout the Muslim world have been sorting out their own democratic conception of Islam for decades. Their effect has not gone unnoticed by radical fundamentalist misogynists of all sorts.

So in some sense, the Taliban are not simply traditionalist and patriarchal, because it is not always clear what this means, especially in terms of Islam. We only know the Taliban's readings and vested interests as men. We know that members of Al Qaeda seek to rescope their understanding of their male privilege in particularly anti-Western fashion for

this very contemporary global capitalist moment. And they use their religious beliefs, as they selectively interpret them, to do so. And although I am no friend of misogynist fundamentalism, wherever it thrives, demonization is not helpful. I rather choose to contextualize their masculinism as possibly as secularist as it is Islamic.[3] Demonization leads us too quickly away from Islam to the "West," where it is too easy to think all women should "be free like me"—whoever the "me" is.

At this moment the stance of protectionism toward women is often mobilized on behalf of misogynists in Muslim countries. Protection is a strange stance to take toward the individuals who are best at making life and peace. Supposedly, the Taliban seek to protect their women from public display and abuse; and yet the Taliban are also abusive to women. Women of the former Soviet Union decried the protectionist legislation that demanded they work in the labor force, but at lesser jobs, in order to protect them for maternity. Women in the United States have fought protectionism as a violation of equal treatment and equal freedoms. Many women in Muslim countries have been arguing similarly.

Thinking these issues through is not easy given the polarized war language being used by all sides. The selective use of terms like *terrorism*, *democracy*, *civilization*, *modernity*, *traditionalism*, and *fundamentalism* complicates the ability to think and see plurally and openly. Words carry their own context and closure. When U.S. officials are asked why they do not work more closely with other countries on the war effort, they respond that they feel more comfortable with "our boys and our toys." Our president speaks of the war as "enduring freedom" and "infinite justice"; and the antiterrorist bill is renamed the Patriot Bill. We are told to be alert, but not intimidated. Along with this elusive language, the political discourses of the moment do not theorize sexuality or its engendered meanings. As a result I find myself stretching words beyond their usual limits in order to create visibility for the incredible stakes at issue for women across the globe, and democracy alike.

Silences about women at present make it harder to think through and open up the very constructs of traditionalism and modernism. This is *especially* true if we want to think about women's relationship to building democracies that are earnestly humanist. Earnest democracy will be *polyversal* if written with women's bodies in their different cultural contexts: *poly* means multiple and diverse; *versal* means through and beyond. I wonder why the rape camps of Bosnia or the sexual slavery of women by the Japanese military during World War II were never called traditionalist and "backward." Yet the woman who is forced to veil and/or be covered by a *burkha* represents the "backwardness" of Islam—and the naked porn model the modernity of the market. The choices here for women are not

acceptable, and I do an injustice by using the term *choice* here at all. The choice between sexual exploitation (commodification) and sexual repression (denial) is no democratic choice at all.[4]

Women's freedom is crucial here, as is women's equality. But neither notion is best understood as simply of the West, because the West does not hold as an originary site for these ideas, even if Western imposition says it does. Women's struggle for their independence takes hold in its own way everywhere and elsewhere. No one system of thought can claim it. These blendings are what are feared the most. Further, although I am not equating all forms of male privilege, neither do I want to allow the so-called Western forms of patriarchy to stand in for democracy itself. Instead, I wish to bring the similarities between these different formulations of patriarchal privilege into fuller view. Neither form of masculinism—bin Laden's terror tactics or Bush's bombs—is good enough for women and girls across this globe. And Bush's bombs should not now be cloaked and legitimized by a defense of women's rights.

On Seeing Women's Rights: For and by Whom?

Given the flux and tensions that reside within the sexual and gendered relations of global capitalism, women are a key part of the messy political imagery of the times. On any given day women have appeared in the news in an astonishing array of roles: passive *burkha*-covered creatures, fighter pilots (although I think there is only one at present), bereaved widows of the September 11 carnage, pregnant wives of men who died in the towers, Pakistanis holding signs against the war, and members of the Bush administration—Condoleezza Rice as national security adviser, Victoria Clarke as the hard-line Pentagon spokeswoman, worldwide advertising agent Charlotte Beers, chosen to overhaul the government's image abroad, and key Bush aide Karen Hughes as the coordinator of wartime public relations. Hughes has resigned her post claiming that her family duties must come first. This has instigated much talk-show noise of whether (Western) women can "really" have it all.

These latter women, along with the well-known conservative Mary Matalin, who is chief political adviser to Vice President Dick Cheney, have been in charge of shaping the words and images of the war.[5] They were showcased as the movers and shakers of the moment alongside the grieving mothers and wives of September 11 and contrasted to the supposedly nonmodern women from abroad. The U.S. showcase masquerades as a modernized masculinity in drag. The showcase of Rice, Clarke, and Beers distorts the symbolic of power. They shore up white patriarchy

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by making it look gender- and race-neutral. Of course they represent change, but for themselves, not the rest of us. Coreene Swealty Palm, bomber pilot of an F-14, spoke about her love of flying even while dropping bombs, which were simply a misfortune of war. Again, the United States looks egalitarian in terms of its women. In reality, the military simply resexes the masculinist privilege of the military for a few women.

But the distortion is even more corrupt as these women supposedly speak on behalf of women in Afghanistan and their "deplorable conditions" under Taliban rule. Mary Matalin ignores the facts that in 1979 Jimmy Carter played an important role in the destabilization of the very government that brought significant gains to Afghan women: literacy, medical services, prohibition of the bride price, and so forth. This secular government, the Progressive Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), is credited with promoting the welfare and liberation of women. And it is this socialist government that the CIA targeted and overthrew through its support of bin Laden.[6] Women become easy barter here. First their successes are smashed by U.S. policy, and then they are used in their smashed existence to justify yet another war on their behalf.

Even Laura Bush finally found her voice in order to mobilize women for war. She delivered the president's weekly radio address—a first for a first lady—in order to speak on behalf of women's rights in Afghanistan. She said that the Taliban's treatment of women "is not a matter of legitimate religious practice," that the plight of women and children is a matter of "deliberate human cruelty." She further stated that the "brutal oppression of women is a central goal of the terrorists" and is a clear picture of "the world the terrorists would like to impose on the rest of us."[7] But I am wondering about the impetus of the administration's targeted focus and its real commitments, when women's rights have never been a priority of U.S. foreign policy.

And it makes no sense for Laura Bush to have thousands of school uniforms sent to Afghanistan while most children are starving and too hungry to concentrate on schoolwork. It is easy to fear that this emerging focus is more opportunist than truly progressive for women and children alike. Which women do Laura Bush and the rest of the administration have in mind? The war on "terrorism" exacerbates the misery for most Afghan women with new problems of starvation, homelessness, and their own terror. It is unforgivable to use women's rights as a pawn in war, to rally global forces for war.

It is worth noting that although U.S. foreign policy has never made the conditions of women's lives a key concern, our first ladies often speak on behalf of women in other countries. Hillary Clinton was well known for traveling abroad to speak for women's rights in Africa and India. Yet here

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at home, she never chose to speak as a feminist or develop a women's rights agenda. I am reminded of how she always turned the other way when issues of day care arose, or when confirmations of people like Lani Guinier or Zoë Baird got derailed.

Bush administration women do the same. Many speak negatively of feminism, and none has spoken on behalf of women prisoners, welfare mothers, day care, or other issues of concern to women. None has shown outrage at the religious fundamentalists who bomb and kill women in our abortion clinics. None has spoken out against the terror of domestic violence. I am uneasy with a women's rights agenda spoken for others while it is not used as a critique for our own lives. I am hesitant to believe in this present campaign, which chooses to ignore the incredible worldwide women's organizations speaking on behalf of women in these countries as well as the post-Beijing global network working toward women's equality. These Bush administration women should bring attention to these initiatives that are homegrown and vital instead of appropriating these struggles for the West and its version of democracy.

We must look elsewhere to find an honest embrace of democratic imaginings for women, like the "Proposal for UN Women's Strategies for Civil Conflict Resolution" drawn up by the Ugandan women's delegation. The declaration asks for an end to all terrorism and a worldwide culture of tolerance, for better conflict resolution and de-escalation of conflict, for an elimination of rich and poor, that each life be accorded the same human rights as all others, for the creation of a World Security Council of Women, and for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The delegation asks the world to embrace the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which presumes global pluralism and diversity. A twelve-point statement committed to peace was e-mailed to individual women and women's organizations all around the globe. Over a thousand people and organizations responded and endorsed the twelve points for peace.[8] Earlier, on October 30, 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1325, which states that "all actors negotiating peace agreements need to adopt a gender perspective which recognizes the special needs of women and girls."[9] It is significant that the Bush administration women do not speak on behalf of these international women's groups but rather as women of the West.

Women in the aftermath of September 11 are captured as both actors and passive receptors of historical moments. And there is little clarity of what a democratic and freely chosen femaleness and womanhood should mean. U.S. policy speaks against the Taliban's mistreatment of women at this juncture, but condoned it earlier. The United States also supports Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Pakistan, which all regularly violate women's

rights.[10] So what exactly is U.S. foreign policy toward women's rights, the very rights that the United States parlays as central to so-called Western democracy? At least one senior administration official said early on that the United States could not make women's rights a part of the post-Taliban package because we have to be careful not to look like we are imposing our values on them.[11]

The official went on to say that the championing of women's rights goes well with a domestic audience, but that we must be careful how it sounds abroad. But who exactly is this official thinking of here? Hundreds of thousands of women abroad, as well as men, applaud the rights of women. Thousands of Afghan women were active participants in everyday life before the Taliban. The anti-Taliban Northern Alliance had a female lobbyist in Washington and a position paper on women's rights, despite criticism by some Afghan women's groups that the Alliance has not been a friend to women in the past.[12] The divide between "us and them" is no simple divide and should not be used to occlude the similar patriarchal roots/routes of global capitalism. Also, if U.S. policymakers aggressively think they have a right to orchestrate aspects of a new Afghan regime, why exclude women's rights for fear of seeming too pushy? Why are women's lives made to seem inessential to the core issues of democracy and political transition?

There is no simple position here to analyze because the government's stance has continued to shift and change. The State Department released a report, "The Taliban's War against Women," which stated that "Islam is a religion that respects women and humanity," while the "Taliban respects neither." The report now advocates a role for women in a post-Taliban Afghan government.[13]

Meanwhile, here at home in the United States, post–September 11 has also become a very manly moment. The new heroism celebrates the American male worker, be he firefighter or policeman or welder. As the *New York Times* said: "The operative word is *men*: brawny, heroic, manly men. The male hero expresses the new selflessness of masculinism. Physical prowess is back in vogue along with patriotism."[14] There is little if any talk of women firefighters, or heroic women in general, for that matter. Women, who are busy trying to rebuild the lives of their families while they scramble to get to their jobs as well, are shunted to the side—seen only through the veil of motherhood and wifely duty. We may have a few women in the government, but it is men who make the system work. They are the heroes and patriots. Ironically, amid all this, it is the Taliban who are viewed as "living in a world without women," not us.[15]

Establishing a context for thinking about the universality of humanity is hard while the war against terrorism rages. A sense of genuine universal humanity is always the chief casualty of war.[16] When Islam is named as an enemy at the same time that the rights of women are used to define the war against bin Laden and the Taliban, Islam and democracy are positioned as oppositions. But I want to create a dialogue between the democratic essence of Islamic tradition as it is articulated by feminists in Islam and Western feminisms.

The Koran, which is the text for Islamic practice, has multiple interpretations and interpreters. Much of the interpretation is done within and through a misogynist rendering of patriarchal privileges. Women are then read as less than, different from, in need of protection, to be veiled and hidden away. This patriarchal reading matches similar readings in fundamentalist Judaism and Christianity. There is no clear divide between West and non-West when it comes to misogynist fundamentalism and patriarchal privilege. All religions can be read for the sinfulness of women, the contamination of their blood, their lust, and the need for their seclusion. The Taliban took this fear and rage toward women to a horrific extreme but this should not occlude the recognition of the universalizing practices of masculinist privilege.

A problem with calling the Taliban fundamentalist is that it implies they actually know the authentic fundamentals of Islam. But there are many feminists in Islam, both religious and secular, who argue that the Koran is potentially democratic for women.[17] The text itself has democratic capabilities. The Koran is filled with open meanings for what equivalence can and should mean for women and men. According to Azizah Y. Al-Hibri, nowhere does the Koran say that Eve was crafted out of Adam. Instead it states that males and females are created by God from the same soul or spirit (*nafs*). The founding myths are not inherently patriarchal when read in this way.[18]

Leila Ahmed chooses to think of at least two Islams: one of men, another of women. Men's Islam—an official textual Islam—is interpreted with several authenticities that are misogynist. Women's Islam evolves in practice through oral traditions that are always changing and developing as women sort through the meanings of Islam in daily life.[19]

The struggles between sectors of mainstream Islam, Islamic misogynist fundamentalists, and the Western culture of global capital with its discourse of freedom have become more visible. Established practices of patriarchal culture are unsettled as the universalizing practices of global capital redefine the secure divisions between public and private life, fam-

ily and economy, men and women. Women's lives are at the center of this flux and change, and they become the touchstones for defining and establishing cultural autonomy and nationalist identity. Yet many of these women, some who call themselves feminist, are not obedient and docile. Their democratic readings of Islam have not gone unnoticed by fundamentalist misogynists of all sorts. Women in countries throughout the Muslim world have been unsettling the masculinist divide while global capital appropriates as well as instigates women's freedom.

Women in Turkey, often as statements of defiance, are twice as likely to kill themselves as men.[20] In Tehran, Iran, although the law now requires women to cover their hair and conceal their bodies in loose clothing, women still have their individual acts of rebellion. Those wealthy enough have nose jobs and wear their postsurgical bandages as badges of honor. Others work out aerobically in their women-only gyms and wear long nail implants. Others wear their long coats and scarves over their black mini skirts imported from Italy. These acts should not be seen as simply "Western." A few teenage girls cut their hair short and dress as boys to rebel against the restrictive dress codes.[21] And so far, it is the women's vote that has kept the more moderate government of Mohammed Khatami in power. In Morocco hundreds of thousands support the government plan to reform women's status in terms of literacy and divorce law.

A few countries are attempting to articulate an Islamic politics that recognizes the multiple and plural meanings of Islamic practice. In Tunisia, according to Saba Mahmood and Talal Asad, Islamic leader Ghannushi, who has been banned from Tunis, has discussed the need to politically institutionalize the multiple interpretations of the founding texts. Recognizing the distinction between the Koran and its interpreters and interpretations, Ghannushi has suggested that the electorate be allowed to vote for or against policies that flow from any given reading. This uses the doctrine of *nasiha*—more than the right, the *obligation*—to criticize and debate. This formulation of Islamic tradition accommodates a plurality of scriptural interpretations; difference is understood as a blessing according to the *shari'a*. Asad reiterates that *ijtihad* authorizes the "construction of coherent differences," not the "imposition of homogeneity." In this view pluralism is not foreign to Islam, tolerance is not the same as indifference, and intolerance should not be equated with violence. As such, the richness of Islam lies in its openness rather than oneness with God.[22]

This is not the Islam that is easily put in view for the "West." The Islam of the West remains static and traditional: nonmodern. But Talal Asad asks us to see that tradition need not be fixed and unchanging. Authenticity need not be repetitive and uncreative. He gives as an exam-

ple the tradition of liberalism, which continues to change and adapt. Traditional practices allow for the possibility of argument and reformulation; thus traditions can be central to modernity itself.[23] Asad wonders why "western culture is thought to be pregnant with positive futures in a way no other cultural condition is," and why liberalism has acquired such a hegemonic status that all other cultures are seen and judged in terms of a teleological Westernized path to the future.[24]

Saba Mahmood also interrogates the way the global West thinks in terms of the oppositions between religiosity and secularism. Traditionalism is equated with patriarchy, modernity with women's freedom. She asks that religious practices in Islam not be viewed as a priori subordinating women. Instead, women's agency within these practices must first be explored. Mahmood studies women in the Mosque Movement in Egypt as "reconfiguring" gendered practices within Islamic pedagogy. These women defy the practice of male teaching and instruct women and girls on the meaning of the Koran. They have their own rendering of self-realization and autonomous will that cannot simply be read from the West for the West. The women's Mosque Movement aims to restore virtue and humility, to embrace "individual and collective practices of pious living." These women "subvert the hegemonic meanings of cultural practices" and defy tradition while doing so.[25]

Women's agency for Mahmood is "not simply resistance to domination" but is also an "action that is created and enabled by relations of subordination." If I understand this point correctly, it means that the simple oppositioning of oppression and freedom is ill placed and that agency develops from within resistances that are incomplete or less than total. Mahmood rereads the meaning of docility and humility as the effort to achieve a malleability to be instructed in the ways of Islam, but with women as teachers of this process. She sees agency instead of passivity. *Al-haya*, meaning to be diffident and modest, is seen as a process of learning shyness, not oppression.[26]

Cultural and religious practices can be habitually repressive, but rereadings are nevertheless still possible. Mahmood does not see secular reasoning and morality as exhaustive of "valuable human flourishings." She asks that nonliberal traditions be explored for their possibilities for liberation and not be subsumed into a "universalized seeing of subordination."[27] When women teach and study Islamic scriptures, this modernizes religiosity and does not limit it to a traditionalist misogyny. Islam is not simply custom and tradition; nor is the West simply modern.

For Mahmood, choosing religion can be an act of liberation, as can veiling, if the woman sees it as part of the process of teaching herself humility. The veil means "both being and becoming a certain kind of

person"[28] and contributes to the making of the self. Thus women can develop their individual selves even if not in a Western autonomized fashion. Yet the history of veiling is often also one of misogynist fundamentalism and Western colonialism, meaning different things at different times. Women have been forced to remove the veil as a sign of modernization and to don it as a statement of anticolonialism and anti-Westernization. Context matters before women's agency can be known.[29] Self-realization is not simply a Western construct, although its equation with autonomous free will is. More than liberal notions of self-fulfillment exist in these instances.

Little of this complexity comes through in the antiterrorist war rhetoric of post–September 11 between modernity and the West and religious fundamentalism and the East.[30] Women's rights become the rallying cry as women are once again made the pawns of war. The civilized world will protect the women of Afghanistan from the Taliban even though there are religious fanatics in the West and secularists and mainstream believers in the East. This use of women's condition is hardly new to the women of Afghanistan. The Soviets deveiled women and insisted they wear skirts as part of their modernization program. Then the Taliban passed laws enforcing the *burkha* and disallowing women to work or go to school, affecting up to 150,000 working women and about 100,000 girls at school as part of their anti-Soviet policy.[31] Clearly, the *burkha* became the symbol for the Taliban's atrocities, especially toward women. It is that, and, less clearly, it is also more complex.

Feminisms' Dialogues

The Feminist Majority, a Western liberal feminist activist group, was crucial in first bringing the plight of Afghan women to the attention of the world. The group's work was tremendously important and yet problematic in that its exposure of women's conditions in Afghanistan did not criticize U.S. policies for past support of Taliban rule. Little was ever said about women activists in Afghanistan or in exile, nor was there much recognition of the wide swath of feminisms that exist within Islam. Instead, the feminist rhetoric used by the Bush administration dominated the airwaves. This has very much to do with the way that the United States dominates globalized media in the first place. But it also has to do with the fact that much of the feminism in Islam is also anticolonial and anti-Western. Most Muslim feminists who speak against the Taliban also speak against U.S. foreign policy. Fawzia Afzal-Khan states quite clearly that Muslim feminist voices speak simultaneously against "Islamic extremism"

and the "unjust foreign policies of the United States that have contributed and continue to contribute to the 'hijacking' of Islam for terrorist ends." Most Muslim feminists argue that the United States must rethink its foreign policy as a whole, particularly in the Middle East.[32] The feminism that is publicized in and by the West largely silences these voices.

Fifty-seven men and five women—all of whom had been exiled activists—attended the peace talks in Bonn.[33] The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), which was at first excluded from the proceedings, was quite critical that the women chosen as negotiators were compromised by their husbands' and/or fathers' allegiances to the Northern Alliance, which is also misogynist fundamentalist.[34] After the fall of Kabul, the members of RAWA appealed to the United Nations. They stated that the people of Afghanistan do not accept domination by the Northern Alliance. They "emphatically" asked the United Nations to send a "peace-keeping force" before the "Northern Alliance can repeat the unforgettable crimes committed" from 1992 to 1996. They pleaded for the United Nations to "withdraw its recognition of the so-called Islamic government of Rabbani and establish a broad based government based on democratic values."[35] Amnesty International concurred, making a public statement that the Northern Alliance had previously oppressed women, and should not be allowed to dictate their lives again. Naeem Inayatullah argues that the Mujahideen parties are all fundamentalist and believe in the public and legal devaluation of women. The United States will have its hands full when the Northern Alliance clamps down on women's rights. This simply shows the complexity of the political struggles that lie ahead for Afghan women.

An Afghan Women's Summit for Democracy was next held in Brussels, and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton hosted a Forum on the Future of Women in Afghanistan along with the Feminist Majority on the importance of women in the reconstruction of their country.[36] At the hearings, many of the Afghan women spoke about the importance of support from U.S. women's groups and yet raised their fear of a cultural imperialism that does not fully understand Afghan women's particular situations.

When Dr. Sima Samar, the physician and exile who now heads the Ministry of Women's Affairs in the new Afghan government, was asked whether a liberated Afghanistan is a Western one she answered: "Why should everything be Westernized? Liberation is not just a Western idea. Everyone wants it." The liberated Afghan woman will have access to education, the right to vote, the right to work, the right to choose a spouse. But these are rights of all human beings, not just Western ones.[37] Yohra Yusuf Daoud, a former Ms. Afghan who is a radio talk show host in Malibu, California, speaks of her mixed views of women's liberation. "If a

woman has to wear a *burqa* head to toe but can go to school, then that is something I approve of."[38]

Yet another view expresses one more variety on this theme. The American journalist Amy Waldman says that she could not get used to speaking to women through the *burkha*. You don't see a person; "it feels like talking to a voice box." It distorts the woman; it is "an impenetrable wall of pale blue polyester where a human being should be."[39] She could not make sense of the contradictions she witnessed: the Taliban would trade sleazy pictures of Indian women and cover and seclude their own, while treating her with respect.

These contradictions are part of the context of an international women's rights discourse. The United States supports regimes that greatly limit women's rights when other more pressing policies are at stake. President Bush called for women's rights in Afghanistan while he plans to shrink or eliminate several federal offices charged with protecting women's interests here at home. Ten regional offices of the Labor Department of the Women's Bureau are to be closed; offices on women's health in the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are to be consolidated. Moreover, Bush did not continue the White House Women's Initiative and Outreach post created by Clinton in 1995. As a result, many programs assisting working women are now in jeopardy.[40] One senator, claiming anonymity, says of Bush's Afghan women's policy: "I think this is a great chance for them to do a gender gap number without rubbing up against the right wing."[41]

This hypocrisy makes the work of women everywhere all the harder. Afghan women walk the tightrope between being too traditional and too modern while neither choice is one of their making. They have to try to find a balance that works for them. As Rina Amiri, a senior associate in the Women and Public Policy Program at Harvard who was born in Afghanistan, says: "If we push the gender agenda too blatantly, and we push it too forcefully, not only will Afghans define their attitudes toward gender in defiance of the Taliban but also in defiance of the West."[42] Yet one should not see simple domination here because Afghan women defied the Taliban while wearing the *burkha*. Many women taught their daughters to read; others organized secret schools at great risk to themselves and others.[43] They will negotiate a new life from their incredible resilience, which is neither patriarchal nor Western.

Afghan women have suffered greatly from the selective interpretations of Islam. Many Muslim women believe that the Koran gives rights to women for education, health care, and paid employment. Yet they also know the practice of honor killings and acid burnings. Pakistan's woman's commissioner, the lawyer Sardar Ali, remarks that the interpretation of

religion is key to this moment and therefore women must "jolly well have the right to interpret it."[44] Asma Barlas argues that many Muslim practices wrongly interpret the Koran; that the Koran allows for equivalence between men and women with no oppositional notion of gendered meanings.[45] Nevertheless, struggles continue and are in place in Nigeria, where the Koran is used to justify the rollback of women's civil rights. In many Muslim societies across the globe, women's rights to education and public participation are readily accepted, while this terrain has also become a battlefield described by an East/West divide. The divide exists within the East itself. This divide is best understood as different notions of masculinisms that flow both to and from the West.

Osama bin Laden and Mohamed Atta have made quite clear that women are not to be actors in history. Atta, in his will, requested that no women attend to his body or participate in his funeral. This speaks his fear of women, his denial of their shared humanity, his need to separate and exclude them.[46] Bin Laden is quoted in an interview with al-Jazeera television as stating, "Our brothers who fought in Somalia saw wonders about the weakness, feebleness, and cowardliness of the U.S. soldier. . . . We believe that we are men, Muslim men who must have the honour of defending Mecca. We do not want American women soldiers defending [it]. . . . The rulers in that region have been deprived of their manhood. By God, Muslim women refuse to be defended by these American and Jewish prostitutes."[47] Ahmed Rashid, writing on the Taliban, says that most of these young men grew up in refugee camps without the love or camaraderie of mothers or sisters.[48] Meanwhile, bin Laden has five wives and some fifteen children.[49]

These attitudes toward women are hardly new or unique to Islam. Atta reminds me of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's wish to keep women from the developing bourgeois markets of France and relocate them in the earlier patriarchal ways of ancient Greece.[50] It is significant that at this particular historical moment when women are arguably more politically and economically active across the globe than ever, they are denied equality by Muslim misogynist practices. The terrorists are named for us as Arab, or Muslim, but there is no accounting for them as men. There is too much silence on this point for it not to be important.

The policies of the Taliban toward women reflect the centrality of women's lives in defining culture. The Taliban declare themselves the sole interpreters of Islam against women's changing demands. If Afghan women were not changing and demanding recognition of their rights as they understand them for themselves, there would be no need to rearticulate repression. It is the dynamism of women today, not their passivity, that instigates this struggle.

Women, especially feminists of all kinds, are often eager to find ways to build bridges across difference, rather than blow up the bridges, deny crossings, and find safety by securing border crossings. Yes, there is also Madeleine Albright, who was one of the biggest hawks during the Gulf and Bosnian wars; or Golda Meir, who was an early architect of Israeli militarism; or feminists of many stripes who are unwilling to let go of past hurts and repeat them over and over again. Nevertheless, I believe there are more people than ever, and more antiracist feminists than before, who can make the difference that we must make. Women all across the globe who move and shake these times—the haulers of water and firewood, the leaders in protecting the environment, the activists dealing with AIDS in Africa, the leaders in nongovernmental civic organizations—must mobilize a peaceful voice against all uses of terror.

We need antiracist feminist voices spoken more loudly here: for peace, for our cities, for our schools, against prejudice and discrimination, for protecting the environments across the globe, for the needed freedoms to speak and think and discuss and find new ways of finding coalitions across the differences that make this hard. Women are of all colors and classes, just like the people who died on September 11 and who die daily from terror politics.

If people were listening to women across the globe, there would be much greater focus on the need to end the present war. Many of us, though not enough, are asking for negotiation rather than aggression. We are looking to understand the provocation for the heinous acts of September 11 in order to see what might be done differently to try to prevent this from happening again. Many feminist activists across the globe ask for an end to the warrior mentality of all forms of terror.[51] Feminists in countries throughout the world are asking how we can come to recognize a notion of a global public good that counters the nationalist rancor of hatred and death. Women's rights activists are asking that women's rights be made a central part of the human rights agenda at this time. Human Rights Watch asks that there be an end to the violations of women's human rights, especially in Afghanistan.[52]

As women in poor countries are dragged into the sweatshop factory, as women are called away from their families in this country as reservists, as women hold high office in the Bush administration, as images of women are sold abroad as Western feminism for export to build new markets for cosmetics and porn, as girls and women are sold into prostitution in Thailand and elsewhere, as women drop their chadors as soon as they are in the privacy of their homes, as women protest their subservience in

myriad acts of defiance, as more and more women become refugees and migrants, as Muslim and secular feminists demand human rights, women remain and become anew both the terrain and the symbols of political struggle.

On the one hand, the misogynist despotism of the Taliban is represented through continual imagery of the confined and passive woman; on the other, it is women's activism in public arenas that has focused the Taliban against women's progress right here. Pre-Taliban, Afghan women were participating in government, schools, and other civic institutions. Women accounted for 70 percent of all teachers, 50 percent of civil servants, and 40 percent of medical doctors. Pre-Taliban Afghan women were active in most parts of life, much like women in Iran and Algeria, before the takeover by misogynist fundamentalists.[53] But now, after years of war, Kabul is home to some 70,000 war widows who live in abject poverty. Pregnant women throughout Afghanistan face the grave risk of miscarriage and other obstetric problems.

This moment must uncover the similar and yet specifically different patriarchal politics practiced toward girls and women across the globe. This is about the politics of patriarchy and masculinist privilege and the way it comes up smack against the contradictions of global capitalism's promise of democracy for all—for women in Muslim countries and women in the West. Neither capitalism nor Islam is a truly democratic regime for women. Traditional patriarchy, as it is defined by misogynist fundamentalists of all genres, has less freedom for women than Westernized forms, but equality is elusive in both. Global capitalism continues to negotiate the relationship between Western and Muslim patriarchal forms of freedom when Muslim and West are overly homogenized categories to begin with. The Taliban are symptoms of the complex twenty-first-century definition of male privilege. I dream of an end to the hate-filled politics of the Taliban toward women and the new levels of exploitation of women by global capitalist patriarchy.

Women's antiracist feminist activism must become a larger part of this political moment. Much of the discourse of human rights across the globe has been brought center stage by women's groups, very often not of the West, demanding equality as well as freedom, specifically for women. This has been done in the context of women's growing consciousness of themselves in war, as refugees, as laborers in the fields and sweatshops of the global economy. War rape, acid burnings, honor killings, sex trafficking, and prostitution should put terrorism toward women on the global map.[54] Women's demands for their rights and their freedom from oppressive religious fundamentalist regimes is very often blamed on the West and its excessive self-indulgences. It is important to be critical of the United

States for its excesses while recognizing that women's rights are not a Western plot. Women from across the globe demand their rights on their own terms, from their own understandings of what Islam means. They do not need the West for an assist. The true subversiveness of women's rights discourse is that it speaks from the needs of women's humanity, which is transnational even if culturally experienced in different forms. Women's bodies demand freedom from war and rape and freedom from unwanted pregnancy. One does not need to learn this from someone other than oneself.

Some young women who wear the *hijab* also choose to live in the United States. A student at Wellesley College says: "We have more freedom being American Muslims because we don't have the cultural baggage from the countries our parents are coming from."[55] No one tells them they must wear the *hijab*—they choose to do so as an expression of their faith and identity. It is therefore crucial that we formulate ways to think through the complex politics of global capital with its racist and sexist formations as well as the promissories of an antiracist feminist democracy that allows us to build a socially just globe.

September 11 brought Americans into the real globalized world of fear and misery. We must take this painful perspective and see more of the world from other locations than our own. We must look at ourselves and come to know others more deeply as we do so. We are more similar to each other than we are different. We must look for the inclusivity of what makes us all human with similar needs. The massacre of September 11 reminded me of how devoted I am to the human body. I wish to foil each and every attempt of terrorist actions, but not simply by the use of more terror. This tactic of "more" simply means the mightiest wins—with no judgment of who and what the mighty demand. My allegiance to the human body—not the nation—defines my struggle to see the complex negotiations necessary to really thinking our way through this moment. I want to pluralize our seeing so that it exists without the opposition between Islam and the West. As an antiracist feminist, I need to slowly bring into view the biggest picture I can of this humanity. I am reminded of Sa'di's poem, "All People Are Limbs of One Body."[56] And that one body is a woman's. Let this body speak for peace and justice and freedom for us all.

This essay derives from a talk delivered at a teach-in at Hamilton College, Clinton, New York, December 2001.

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3. I am indebted to conversations with Asma Barlas for much of my thinking here, although she differs with my use of the term *fundamentalist*. See her *"Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Quran* (Austin: University of Texas Press, forthcoming 2002).

4. The same day network news programs broadcast Afghan women removing their *burkhas*, the Victoria's Secret fashion show was first broadcast on television. See Alex Kuczynski, "Victoria's Secret on TV: Another First for Women," *New York Times*, November 18, 2001.

5. Peter Marks, "Adept Politics and Advertising, 4 Women Shape a Campaign," *New York Times*, November 11, 2001.

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Homeland Insecurities:
Racial Violence the Day after September 11

Muneer Ahmad

It would be naive to ignore how severely the systematic attacks of the Right since September 11 have stalled the critical project of the Left in deconstructing the current political moment. With much of the Left having abandoned its principled commitments and lined up, flags waving, in full support of the Bush administration's prosecution of the war, a reconstructive project has yet to begin. The decampment of the Left is so dire that the *Nation* recently proclaimed, without apology, the opinionating of fictional character Huey Freeman in the comic *The Boondocks* to be "the most biting and consistent critique of the war and its discontents in the nation's mass media."[1] For months we have been bracing ourselves for the next degradation; "things will get worse before they get better" seemed to be the mantra of despair. This may still be so: With Bush's threatened expansion of the war beyond Afghanistan, U.S. antipathy toward the Geneva Conventions, and the continuing detention of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians, the crisis shows no signs of abating. But it is in exactly this moment of nationalist, nativist, and militaristic excess that we might develop greater acuity not only in our critique of prevailing politics, but in the imagined alternatives. Decentering of September 11, as Judith Butler suggests,[2] is important to understand the meaning and import of the terrorist attacks. But decentering requires not only that we expand our frame of reference to include the world before September 11, we must envision a desired world after September 11 as well.

Among the enormous violence done by the United States since the tragedies suffered on September 11 has been an unrelenting, multivalent assault on the bodies, psyches, and rights of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian immigrants. Restrictions on immigration of young men from Muslim countries, racial profiling and detention of "Muslim-looking" individuals, and an epidemic of hate violence against Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities in the wake of September 11 recall the long history of racialized U.S. immigration and immigrant policy, such as the Asian exclusion laws[3] and Japanese American internment. They also recall the more recent national heritage of racialized infringements on citizenship and belonging, most notably racial profiling of African Americans and Latinas/os. The contemporary convergence of these two narratives—of exclusion and detention on the one hand and racial profiling on the other—high-

lights the extent to which immigration, naturalization, and citizenship have long been bound within a framework of subordination.[4] By examining the recent phenomenon of hate violence and racial profiling aimed at Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians, I seek here to situate our current moment of crisis within the multiple histories of racial oppression in the United States. But I also seek to envision what immigration, naturalization, and citizenship in the United States might look like outside a framework of subordination, and how communities of color might strive toward this imagined homeland.[5]

In an essay several years ago, Toni Morrison argued that the immigrant to the United States is not made fully American until she or he has learned and exercised racism toward African Americans.[6] Morrison's observation suggests the nonjuridical dimensions of naturalization that govern the admission and assimilation of immigrants into the United States, and their relationships with white and black Americans. In its most fundamental form, her argument is that the subordination of African Americans is inherent to being, and therefore becoming, an American. The social and cultural inroads made by multiculturalism in the past few decades notwithstanding, what we could consider naturalization law and tradition have remained largely impervious to such incursions. U.S. naturalization policy reflects an unreconstructed commitment to an assimilationist project, demanding the acquisition of majority-culture moral, civil, and political values, at the expense of homeland commitments. The inscription of racism toward African Americans in the historical and contemporary American polity determines that immigrants profess loyalty not merely to the sovereign state, but to its entrenched values of black subordination as well. Immigrants, then, become American at the expense of African Americans.

I suggest that Morrison is only partially correct in her description of the immigrant experience. Changes in immigration law in 1965 produced a dramatic shift in the composition of immigrants, transforming a largely European population to one that is now predominantly Latina/o and Asian.[7] One consequence of these demographic shifts is that immigrants today are made American not only when they learn to subordinate African Americans, but when they are racialized as subordinate as well. By this definition, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities in the United States have in recent months become more American, and September 11 and its aftermath constituted the citizenship ceremony by which this was accomplished.

Morrison's concern is ostensibly with the integrity of the citizenship status of immigrants, the racial costs incurred in obtaining such status, and who bears these transactional costs. But implicit in her argument that

immigrant naturalization perpetuates racial inequality for African Americans is a concern for the citizenship status of African Americans themselves. The myriad categorizations that exist within immigration law—everything from seasonal agricultural worker to "asylee" to "person residing under color of law" to legal permanent resident to naturalized citizen—reflect the multiplicity of claims on the nation-state that exist for immigrants in the United States. But even for the native-born, citizenship remains a contested notion, frequently mediated—and eroded—by race. Under the gaze of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, a third-generation Mexican American is indistinguishable from an undocumented person who recently crossed the border, just as a third-generation Chinese American and the recent immigrant from Taiwan are perceived the same. For African Americans profiled by law enforcement, there is no confusion as to their birthright, only a deep ambivalence about it, an ambivalence prefigured by economic, social, and legal histories that denied black humanity. Racial profiling and any number of other racial indignities daily challenge African American citizenship.

September 11 and its aftermath expose the precariousness of citizenship status for all people of color, immigrants and nonimmigrants alike. Naturalization for immigrants and resistance to denaturalization for African Americans are ongoing processes operating in the compromised environment of racial subordination. So long as citizenship is framed by subordination, these processes are incomplete, and the aspiration of becoming American remains deeply flawed. The hate violence and racial profiling directed against Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians and the apparent African American and Latina/o support for the profiling of these communities provide an important example of how racial positions in the United States have been reordered by September 11, and how the citizenship status of all people of color has been further degraded.

In the days and weeks following the attacks, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities in the United States have experienced a wave of violence, the likes of which they have never seen before. At least five people were killed: Balbir Singh Sodhi, forty-nine, a Sikh Indian in Mesa, Arizona; Waqar Hasan, forty-six, a Pakistani grocer in Dallas; Adel Karas, forty-eight, an Egyptian Coptic Christian in Los Angeles; Surjit Singh Samra, sixty-nine, a Sikh Indian in Ceres, California; and Vasudev Patel, a forty-nine-year-old Indian Hindu killed near Dallas.[8]

In total, close to 1,000 separate bias incidents were reported in a period of eight weeks, and though the rate of new incidents has slowed, it continues today.[9] Incidents have included the firebombing of mosques, temples, and *gurdwaras*; attacks with fists, guns, knives, and Molotov cocktails; acts of vandalism and property destruction; and numerous instances of verbal

harassment and intimidation. These are merely the incidents that have been reported; racial shame, uncertain immigration status, and the inaccessibility of law enforcement resources to many communities of color make it certain that the actual number of bias incidents is far higher.

And this is to say nothing of the racial profiling at the airports and the "voting off" of Arab- and Muslim-looking passengers on airplanes by the pilots, flight attendants, and even the other passengers, as if the dark ones were unsuccessful contestants on the TV program *Survivor*. We might relearn from this experience the age-old lesson of the tyranny of the majority. But instead of confronting our majoritarian tendencies and committing to meaningful state intervention to correct such imbalances, we have chosen instead to characterize these as isolated incidents perpetrated by a handful of misguided individuals, who can be punished discretely without implicating a larger segment of American society. In this process, the minority is transformed into the majority, and our democratic ideals of both majority rule and protection of the minority are saved.

Further examples of racial profiling continue to emerge. For example, the Justice Department's "Absconder Apprehension Initiative" purports to identify and deport 314,000 undocumented people who have ignored court orders to leave the United States, but has begun with 6,000 immigrants from Muslim countries despite the fact that such immigrants comprise only a small percentage of "absconders."[10]

Hate violence against and racial profiling of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians are best understood as different facets of the same social, political, and cultural phenomenon. Each is constitutive of the other: We might view hate violence as the end product of racial profiling's flawed logic (people who "look Muslim" are more likely to be terrorists, therefore if we are attacking terrorism we should attack people who "look Muslim"), just as racial profiling may be viewed as a form of violence—whether psychic or physical—flowing from bias. Our understanding of one enhances our grasp of the other, and for this reason I view the analyses of each as largely interchangeable.

The targets of these post–September 11 bias incidents have included anyone who is perceived to be Arab or Muslim. Thus non-Arabs such as Indians, Pakistanis, and other South Asians have been affected, as have non-Muslims such as Indian Sikhs and Hindus and Arab Christians. Sikh men in particular, readily identifiable by their turbans and long beards, have borne a disproportionate brunt of the violence. (Two of the five people killed were Sikh.) This violence depends on a fungibility of "Middle Eastern–looking" or "Muslim-looking" people with the individuals who committed the September 11 attacks and leaves Arabs, Muslims, and

South Asians enormously vulnerable. But the violence has also touched others who are, for lack of a better descriptor, merely brown-skinned: For example, Latinas/os in and around Los Angeles, misperceived as Arabs, have been harassed as well. What is at issue is not merely that one is Muslim or Arab, but that one is ostensibly not American, recalling the "perpetual foreigner" status frequently associated with Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, and other Asian American communities.[11]

The astonishing diversity of the contemporary immigrant population notwithstanding, the post–September 11 violence reinforces the continuing coherence of the category "immigrant." As Vijay Prashad has noted, "anti-Islam is not only about Muslims, but in the United States it frequently turns into anti-immigrants of color in general."[12] The most startling example of this is the total abandonment since September 11 of previously energetic Republican-sponsored efforts to legalize hundreds of thousands of undocumented Mexicans. And it again recalls the period of Asian exclusion, when initial restrictions on Chinese laborers were gradually expanded to cover Japanese immigrants, Asian Indians, and eventually all Asian immigrants.[13]

Perversely, the events of September 11 have brought blacks and whites closer together, or so it seems. A recent *New York Times* poll found that racial differences between African Americans and whites have narrowed since September 11, now that Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians have assumed the primary position of racial scorn.[14] In this regard, African Americans have become more American at the expense of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian immigrants.

One has to wonder if we are witnessing an organic convergence of black and white interests, or a cynical manipulation of black opinion, the better to subordinate new communities of color. The headline of a front-page article in the *New York Times* two weeks after the terrorist attacks announced, "Americans Give In to Race Profiling."[15] The article begins with an interview with an African American man who states that as someone who has been racially profiled his whole life, he knows that it is wrong, and yet he finds himself supporting racial profiling of Arabs and Muslims. Next the article presents a Latino man who says essentially the same thing. Contrary to its title, the story is not that Americans have given in to racial profiling, but that black and Latina/o Americans have. And so in the course of three paragraphs, the two communities most severely affected by racial profiling in the past many years are deployed in defense of the very policy that oppressed them and continues to oppress them today. Suddenly, racial profiling is no longer racist.

Is it merely coincidence that the story fixates on these interviews with

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What is at issue is not merely that one is Muslim or Arab, but that one is ostensibly not American, recalling the "perpetual foreigner" status frequently associated with Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, and other Asian American communities.

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African American and Latino men, or was there something more to it? News accounts such as this construct cover for whites against the charge of racism. White enlistment of one community of color, and African Americans in particular, against another abets an ideology of colorblindness—a mainstay of the Rehnquist Supreme Court and a critical tool in the dismantling of civil rights gains of the 1960s—in exactly a moment when it might otherwise be refuted; whites couldn't possibly be racist if African Americans and Latinas/os are in accord. White super-citizen status is burnished through the unwitting labor of African Americans and Latinas/os.

That black and Latina/o opinion favoring racial profiling has been deployed does not address the fact that many African Americans and Latinas/os do in fact favor profiling of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians. But we should not be surprised that communities of color, whose own sense of citizenship and belonging is compromised, choose to distance themselves from one another, or more particularly, that they attempt to elevate themselves by pushing the other down. Racial and ethnic competition among communities of color, and between African Americans and immigrants in particular, has long been a fixture of American race relations, particularly since the 1965 Immigration Act. Tension and violence between Korean and African American communities in Los Angeles in the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict, and between the same communities in New York at various times over the past two decades, are among the most prominent examples. Even tensions between African Americans and South Asians are not new, as evident from the recent charges that South Asian taxi drivers were refusing to pick up—in effect, were profiling—black passengers.

As critical race scholars have suggested, people of color do not merely learn the subordinating behavior of the white majority, they internalize their own subordination.[16] The felt inadequacy, incompleteness, and dispossession created by white supremacy is mitigated through the rendering of others still more inadequate, incomplete, and dispossessed. We might think of the resulting racial hierarchy as a citizenship exchange market in which the relative belonging of any one racial or ethnic community fluctuates in accordance with prevailing social and political pressures. What is more, communities of color learn the *imperative* of subordination of others. Racial subordination has enabled the acquisition and maintenance of white social, political, and economic power. Immigrants' and African Americans' adoption of the very strategies for self-advancement that have oppressed them is the predictable outcome of white supremacy. We are witnessing the latest chapter in what Mari Matsuda has called the "long, cold history of subordinated status generating subordinating impulses."[17]

The result is a sophisticated dividing and conquering—Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians abandoning African Americans and Latinas/os when racial profiling was their issue, African Americans and Latinas/os abandoning Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians now that it no longer is—that further ensconces white supremacy, and leaves the potential for community of color coalition in ruins. At the same time, the felt need of African Americans and Latinas/os to enhance their own belonging in the nation-state at the expense of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians serves to underscore their own unperfected citizenship status from which this need flows.

The response to the five hate killings from the public and the government has been muted, to say the least. Anyone who thinks otherwise might consider why it is that Matthew Shepard, the young man killed in Laramie, Wyoming, is a household name for antigay violence, but that the only thing Waqar Hasan conjures up is the vague image of a terrorist. The nation's empathy gap with respect to the victims of post–September 11 hate violence seems a consequence of our overprivileging of the immense grief felt by the nation not merely for the victims of September 11, but for itself. By attaching most favored nation status to our own sorrow, we have inured ourselves to the suffering of others, consistent with a long history of American exceptionalism. The result has been for the United States to express similarly compromised and inadequate levels of grief for the victims of hate violence as for the untold numbers of civilian casualties in Afghanistan.[18] The similar treatment of victims of hate violence and Afghan civilians—collateral damage, regretted but not dwelled upon—places Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities outside the nation-state, their juridical immigration status notwithstanding. Such casual removal of these communities from the American polity echoes the government's systematic targeting and deportation of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians and illuminates the permanent foreignness inscribed on the palimpsest of their citizenship.

Although the five killings since September 11 have been popularly described and in some instances legally defined as "hate crimes," they have been treated differently from other hate crime killings in recent memory—Matthew Shepard, James Byrd, the African American dragged to death in Texas, the children shot at the North Valley Jewish Community Center outside of Los Angeles, or Joseph Ileto, the Filipino postman killed during the same rampage in L.A. Unlike those cases, the prosecutions of the post–September 11 killings have received scant media attention, merely one more casualty of the Bush administration's programmatic exclusion of dissenting voices and experiences in the wake of the terrorist attacks and the national press's complicity in it. The crimes have been condemned, but the condemnation has been different in kind than in the other cases; as

much as we might in legal terms categorize all these crimes the same way, we understand them differently. The killings of people like James Byrd and Matthew Shepard were deemed incomprehensible. In contrast, the killings of Balbir Singh Sodhi, Waqar Hasan, and the others, while deplored as wrong, have been understood as the result of a displaced anger, that underlying anger being one with which the vast majority of Americans sympathize and agree. The perpetrators of these crimes, then, were guilty not of malicious intent, but of expressing a socially appropriate emotion in socially inappropriate ways. To borrow from criminal law, the hate crime killings before September 11 were viewed as crimes of moral depravity, while the hate killings since September 11 have been understood as crimes of passion.

Just as in the archetypal crime of passion—the enraged, loyal, humiliated husband killing his wife's lover upon discovering him in the marital bed—the crimes here are categorized as a type of murder, but with mitigating circumstances. The passion in question is love of nation, the crimes a visceral reaction born out of patriotic fervor. And so while we deplore the post–September 11 killings as social transgressions, our condemnation of the killers is mitigated by our sympathy and shared love for our country; we don't like that this has happened, but we understand why it did, because we, too, have been loyal, we, too, have been humiliated. We might even be able to imagine acting out such violence ourselves. The violence being done, while not wholly sanctioned, escapes the fullness of moral condemnation one would otherwise expect, and offers the perpetrators a kind of solace, even a form of encouragement.

That the present racial violence has occurred at a time of surging patriotism is hardly surprising. In the first days after the terrorist attacks, our patriotism helped many to grieve collectively for what had been a collective blow. But very soon after that, and predictably so, this coping mechanism gave way to an unreflective national fervor and a caustic nativism that was then expressed in violence. When the killer of Balbir Singh Sodhi, the Sikh gas station owner in Mesa, Arizona, was arrested, he stated, "I'm a patriot. I'm a damn American all the way."[19] A man who tried to run over a Pakistani woman with his car yelled that she was "destroying my country."[20]

All too often, the Left has been accused of being ruled by passion rather than reason. In the months since September 11, however, we have seen the Right not only ruled by emotion, but governing by it as well. While we have all been hurt by the attacks, the Right has chosen to externalize its grief as violence, unthinking patriotism, and militarism, recalling Freud's supposition that the opposite of melancholia is mania. The crime of passion archetype reveals how deeply masculinized this mania has been

in all its expressions. The hate violence, our national fervor, and our over-reliance on military solutions are all unquestionably gendered male.

The reliance on misogyny and homophobia in public depictions of the enemy highlights how gendered our nationalism has been. For example, flyers circulating in New York depicted Osama bin Laden being sodomized by the World Trade Center, with the caption "You like sky-scrapers, bitch?"[21] The Associated Press distributed a picture of a bomb intended for Afghanistan on which an American sailor had written, "Hijack this, faggots!"[22] As Eliza Byard notes, "The language and mind-set that our country uses to steel itself for conflict reminds women and queers that they are not assumed to be part of the national community."[23] Such deeply masculinized nationalism thus threatens the citizenship not only of immigrants and communities of color, but of all marginalized people.

Feminist legal critiques of the "heat of passion defense" further reveal the gendered dimensions of the hate violence. The heat of passion defense provides partial justification for murder motivated by the killer's sense of a humiliation. That humiliation is distinctly male; the "violation" of "his woman" is an attack on his masculinity. The killer "attacks not only to retaliate against the one who has harmed him; he attacks in order to undo the harm done to him. The act of violence restores his sense of self, trans-scends his feelings of deep humiliation, and thus becomes an act of self-protection."[24] Substituting the feminized nation for the killer's lover, the hate violence, and indeed our militarized nationalism, can be similarly understood as a masculinized attempt to restore a violated honor. We might think of the five murders since September 11 as homegrown honor killings. The mitigation offered by the heat of passion defense validates underlying sexist constructions of humiliation and honor in individual hate crimes and in our collective response to the attacks of September 11.

The gendered nature of the hate violence bears additional scrutiny, as women and men have experienced the violence differently. On college campuses across the country, Muslim women have reported their head scarves being violently torn off. Here, then, is the veil as a site for con-frontation with the perceived evils of Arabs, Muslims, and Islam. Indeed, much of the violence being done can be understood as a forced unveiling of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities. (The same sentiment has been expressed in the violent removal of turbans from the heads of Sikh men.) Frequently viewed as simply evidence of the oppression of women in Muslim societies, the veil is subject to multiple narratives, as Leila Ahmed and others have written.[25] For some Muslim women, the decision to veil is one of defiance, an expression of nationalism, a rejection of Westernization; for others it is a mode of defense against sexual harass-

ment and violence, a religious invocation of shame to repel would-be per-petrators; for others still the veil is quite literally an article of faith. A complicated, varied, and frequently nuanced expression of personal poli-tics, political commitments, and religious beliefs, the veil in the American context is reduced to a symbol of foreignness and clandestine terror.

For many Muslim women, the only means of protecting against such physical violence was to stay at home. The press has largely congratulated non-Muslims for their acts of charity—offering to escort Muslim neigh-bors to the grocery store or to do their shopping for them—and congrat-ulated itself for covering such good deeds, constructing local Good Samaritan tales resonant with the national propagandistic narrative that the war in Afghanistan is aimed to liberate Muslim women. At home and abroad, it seems that everyone from Laura Bush on down has taken up the plight of Muslim women. But in the same moment that we decry the Taliban's cruel restrictions on the mobility of Afghan women,[26] our racial oppression confines women in the United States to their homes as well. We have engaged in our own form of purdah.

Stripped of their own modes of personal and cultural definition, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities have been left naked in the face of continued attacks. But something peculiar has happened since. Amid all the flag-waving, the nativist fervor, and the growing anti-Arab, anti-Muslim, and anti-immigrant sentiment, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities have engaged in a strategic adaptation, a cultural and polit-ical accommodation. Many of them have seized the American flag as their own, waving it more fervently, and indeed, preemptively, embracing the flag as a shield. A recent issue of the *New Yorker* demonstrates this phe-nomenon. It shows a Sikh taxi driver cowering behind the wheel of his car, which is plastered with American flags.[27]

Certainly, many Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians might have put up American flags even if there had been no attacks on them or if the terrorists had not been Arab or Muslim. But the embrace of the American flag by these communities now hardly seems voluntary. Rather, it is a forced reveil-ing of the community, perhaps less given to personal interpretation than the decision of Muslim women to wear a head scarf. The interchange of these two overdetermined symbols—the veil on the one hand and the flag on the other—bludgeons the multiple histories of each and demands that both conform to a narrowly defined narrative of belonging.

Embrace of the flag is clearly an effort to assimilate with the white population, to spurn one's own marginality rather than oppose the forces that have created it. But this is not the only choice. A better choice, though certainly a more difficult one, would be to engage the position of the subordinate, something most Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians

(though certainly not all) have never had to do. The events since September 11 have proven the attempt of Arab and South Asian elites to escape the debasement of race by way of class to be the impossibility that those in the working class have always known it to be. Now that the computer consultant on an American Airlines flight has been subject to the same subordinating forces as the sales clerk in a dingy mini-mart, Arab and South Asian communities have reached consensus on a previously unconceded point: We are not white. This class consensus on the salience of race for Arabs and South Asians replicates similar phenomena and suggests similar class complications among other communities of color.

While profiling has affected all classes of Arabs and South Asians, it has not affected all classes equally; the computer consultant has been told to leave his flight, but the mini-mart clerk has been shot in the head. Just as racial profiling in the African American community assumed new levels of importance when upper-class blacks—the lawyers, the doctors, the businessmen—were stopped by the police, so, too, did racial profiling among Arabs and South Asians gain attention when their upper classes were implicated. It is, then, not enough for these communities to appreciate that race matters if they do not also appreciate how it matters more for some than for others.

Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities bear a special responsibility in this moment in American history. The enduring struggle against racial subordination has now been visited upon them. On issues like racial profiling and immigration policy, issues on which, by political necessity, many African Americans, Latinas/os, and progressive people of all colors have been forced into positions of silence, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities have an opportunity to maintain the fight for all communities of color, just as others—African Americans, Latinas/os, Japanese Americans and other Asian American communities—have done before. At some point in the future, this national crisis will subside, and we will look again at the issue of racial profiling of African Americans and Latinas/os on the Jersey Turnpike, or the question of easing restrictions on immigration from Latin America, or the vigor with which hate crimes should be prosecuted. What happens now with regard to Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians will have everything to do with what happens then. I wish that the Arab and South Asian communities had had the foresight to stand with the African American and Latina/o communities in opposition to racial profiling when the question was driving while black or brown instead of flying while Muslim. While a relative few have, most have not. Had they done so, we might be differently positioned, as communities of color and as progressives, to deal with the challenges of today. Still, the opportunity is there for these communities to forge necessary coalitions now, that they

might endure beyond the period of immediate self-interest, and begin to imagine a shared citizenship outside the bounds of subordination.

We might start this important process by honoring the subterranean histories of cross-racial solidarity that exist in pockets across the country. In Los Angeles, for example, AGENDA (Action for Grassroots Empowerment and Neighborhood Development Alternatives) has committed to organizing African Americans and Latinas/os in the many multiracial neighborhoods of South L.A. around issues of economic development. The newly formed Garment Worker Center has elevated cross-racial solidarity as one of its principal goals in organizing Asian and Latina/o garment workers in Los Angeles sweatshops, and KIWA (Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates) has pioneered multiethnic, multilingual organizing of Korean and Latina/o workers in Los Angeles's Koreatown restaurants. And in New York, groups like South Asians against Police Brutality and Asians for Mumia have advanced a similar vision of solidarity, taking up issues like driving while black or brown and systemic failures of our criminal justice system at a time when these issues were presumed irrelevant to the mainstream South Asian community.

In the months since September 11, new coalitions have begun to emerge. Communities of color in Seattle have launched a Hate Free Zone Campaign,[28] while a multiracial group launched a "Circle of Peace" around a mosque in Chicago, bearing messages of solidarity in Arabic, English, and Spanish.[29] In Washington, D.C., only a few weeks after September 11, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities joined with Japanese American and other Asian American leaders in front of the National Japanese American Memorial to invoke explicitly the living memory of the internment experience.

Coalitions such as these begin their work squarely within a framework of subordination inflected not only by race and immigration status, but by gender, class, and sexual orientation as well. Our ability to emerge from the terror of September 11, and all the terrors since, depends on our ability to appreciate these histories without being constrained by them. The price we pay to become American, the cost we exact from one another, is too great to bear, and the advantage we gain too compromised. It is time to imagine something we can all share, and it is time to build.

Notes

1. John Nichols, "Huey Freeman: American Hero," *Nation*, January 28, 2002, 11.
2. Judith Butler, "Explanation and Exoneration, or What We Can Hear," *Theory and Event* 5 (January 2002), reprinted in this issue.
3. See n. 11 below.
4. Not surprisingly, the months since September 11 have seen a dramatic rise in immigrants' applications for formal citizenship. Applications in November 2001 were 99 percent higher that the same period in 2000, suggesting the vulnerability that many immigrants have experienced since September 11. As one immigration lawyer assisting with citizenship applications in Houston stated, "We are getting a lot of people who think they have become suspects. They feel that getting their citizenship will give them more protection" (Kris Axtman, "A Boom in Citizenship Requests," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 11, 2002).
5. I borrow the idea of an imagined homeland from Salman Rushdie's "Imaginary Homelands," in *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991* (New York: Granta, 1991).
6. Toni Morrison, "On the Backs of Blacks," in *Arguing Immigration: The Debate over the Changing Face of America*, ed. Nicolaus Mills (New York: Touchstone, 1994), 97–100.
7. The Immigration Act of 1965 abolished the national origins quota system that had previously favored immigrants from northern and western Europe.
8. The exact number of backlash killings since September 11 is a matter of some dispute. The U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division has identified nine killings as "possible hate crimes," the Council on American-Islamic Relations eight, and the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee six. Still others have disputed whether more than one or two of the killings were motivated by anti-Arab or anti-Muslim sentiment. See Alan Cooperman, "Sept. 11 Backlash Murder and the State of 'Hate': Between Families and Police, a Gulf on Victim Count," *Washington Post*, January 20, 2002.
9. See "South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow," *American Backlash: Terrorists Bring War Home in More Ways Than One* (2001), www.saalt.org. Additional information is available at the Web site of the Council on American Islamic Affairs, www.cair-net.org.
10. Dan Eggan, "Deportee Sweep Will Start with Mideast Focus," *Washington Post*, February 8, 2002.
11. Leti Volpp has described this phenomenon as the consolidation of a new identity category—"Middle Eastern, or Muslim-looking"—and argues that the use of the "Arab terrorist" stereotype constitutes the redeployment of Orientalist tropes. See Leti Volpp, "The Citizen and the Terrorist," *UCLA Law Review* 49 (2002): 1575.

12. Vijay Prashad, "Nothing Good Comes from Terror," *Z Magazine*, n.d., www.zmag.org/ZNET.htm.

13. Starting with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, Congress began a decades-long prohibition of Asian immigration. Concerns about Japanese immigration led to the "Gentlemen's Agreement" of 1907–8, under which the Japanese government refused to allow laborers to immigrate to the United States. Growing Indian immigration led to prohibitions on nearly all immigration from Asia and the creation of the Asiatic Barred Zone. These restrictions on Asian immigration were accompanied by a variety of state and federal laws restricting the rights of Asian immigrants in the United States. For a discussion of this history, see Gabriel J. Chin, "Segregation's Last Stronghold: Race Discrimination and the Constitutional Law of Immigration," *UCLA Law Review* 46.1 (1996): 12–15.

14. Somini Sengupta, "September 11 Attack Narrows Racial Divide," *New York Times*, October 10, 2001.

15. Sam Howe Verhovek, "Americans Give In to Race Profiling," *New York Times*, September 23, 2001.

16. Charles R. Lawrence III et al., introduction to *Words That Wound: Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech, and the First Amendment*, ed. Charles R. Lawrence III et al. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1993), 13.

17. Mari J. Matsuda, "Pragmatism Modified and the False Consciousness Problem," *Southern California Law Review* 63 (1990): 1763, 1777.

18. An article in the *New York Times* reports that estimates on the numbers of Afghan civilians killed in the bombings ranges from the hundreds to the thousands, with one researcher putting it at nearly 4,000. The range is so broad as to be virtually meaningless. The U.S. government has not released any numbers itself. See Barry Bearak, "Uncertain Toll in the Fog of War: Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, February 10, 2002.

19. Laurie Goodstein and Tamar Lewin, "Victims of Mistaken Identity, Sikhs Pay a Price for Turbans," *New York Times*, September 19, 2001.

20. Stuart Millar, "Attack on America: Violent Attacks on Arab Americans," *Guardian*, September 14, 2001.

21. Eliza Byard, "Queerly Un-American," *Feminist News: The Newsletter of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender* 20 (January 2002): 6.

22. Ibid. The picture was withdrawn from circulation after protests from U.S. gay rights groups.

23. Ibid.

24. Donna A. Coker, "Heat of Passion and Wife Killing: Men Who Batter/Men Who Kill," *Southern California Review of Law and Women's Studies* 2 (1992): 71, 108. Coker provides an extended analysis not only of how partial justification in law for crimes of passion reinforces gender stereotypes, but also of the frequency with which the defense is raised in cases of men battering and killing their wives and the gender consequences of such cases.

25. See Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992).

26. The newfound American concern for the plight of women in Afghanistan is particularly troubling for its ahistoricism. The dominant narrative ignores European colonial culpability for conditions in the region: "One of the important elements missing from this picture is the fact that many women in Afghanistan are starving and faced with violence and harm on a daily basis not only due to the

Taliban regime but also due in large part to a long history of European colonialism and conflict in the region" (Paola Bacchetta et al., "Transnational Feminist Practices against War," 2001, action-tank.org/pfp/fem.html). Moreover, the sudden preoccupation with the Taliban neglects past U.S. investment in the regime. See Leti Volpp, "Feminism v. Multiculturalism," *Columbia Law Review* 101 (2001): 1181, 1206–7.

27. *New Yorker*, November 5, 2001.

28. See Samantha Chanse, "Hate Free in Washington," *ColorLines* (December 2001): 9.

29. See Hatem Abudayyeh, "Chicagoans in Defense of Arabs, Muslims," *ColorLines* (December 2001): 11.

Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots

Jasbir K. Puar
and
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How are gender and sexuality central to the current "war on terrorism"? This question opens on to others: How are the technologies that are being developed to combat "terrorism" departures from or transformations of older technologies of heteronormativity, white supremacy, and nationalism? In what way do contemporary counterterrorism practices deploy these technologies, and how do these practices and technologies become the quotidian framework through which we are obliged to struggle, survive, and resist? Sexuality is central to the creation of a certain knowledge of terrorism, specifically that branch of strategic analysis that has entered the academic mainstream as "terrorism studies." This knowledge has a history that ties the image of the modern terrorist to a much older figure, the racial and sexual monsters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Further, the construction of the pathologized psyche of the terrorist-monster enables the practices of normalization, which in today's context often means an aggressive heterosexual patriotism.

As opposed to initial post–September 11 reactions, which focused narrowly on "the disappearance of women," we consider the question of gender justice and queer politics through broader frames of reference, all with multiple genealogies—indeed, as we hope to show, gender and sexuality produce both hypervisible icons and the ghosts that haunt the machines of war. Thus, we make two related arguments: (1) that the construct of the terrorist relies on a knowledge of sexual perversity (failed heterosexuality, Western notions of the psyche, and a certain queer monstrosity); and (2) that normalization invites an aggressive heterosexual patriotism that we can see, for example, in dominant media representations (for example, *The West Wing*), and in the organizing efforts of Sikh Americans in response to September 11 (the fetish of the "turbaned" Sikh man is crucial here).[1] The forms of power now being deployed in the war on terrorism in fact draw on processes of quarantining a racialized and sexualized other, even as Western norms of the civilized subject provide the framework through which these very same others become subjects to be corrected. Our itinerary begins with an examination of Michel Foucault's figure of monstrosity as a member of the West's "abnormals," followed by a consideration of the uncanny return of the monster in the discourses of "terrorism studies." We then move to the relationship

between these monstrous figures in contemporary forms of heteronormative patriotism. We conclude by offering readings of the terrorism episode of *The West Wing* and an analysis of South Asian and Sikh American community-based organizing in response to September 11.

The Monster and the Terrorist

To begin, let us consider the monster. Why, in what way, has monstrosity come to organize the discourse on terrorism? First, we could merely glance at the language used by the dominant media in its interested depictions of Islamic militancy. So, as an article in the *New York Times* points out, "Osama bin Laden, according to Fox News Channel anchors, analysts and correspondents, is 'a dirtbag,' 'a monster' overseeing a 'web of hate.' His followers in Al Qaeda are 'terror goons.' Taliban fighters are 'diabolical' and 'henchmen.'"[2] Or, in another Web article, we read: "It is important to realize that the Taliban does not simply tolerate the presence of bin Laden and his terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. It is part and parcel of the same evil alliance. Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban are two different heads of the same monster, and they share the same fanatical obsession: imposing a strict and distorted brand of Islam on all Muslims and bringing death to all who oppose him."[3]

In these invocations of terrorist-monsters an absolute morality separates good from a "shadowy evil."[4] As if caught up in its own shadow dance with the anti-Western rhetoric of radical Islam,[5] this discourse marks off a figure, Osama bin Laden, or a government, the Taliban, as the opposite of all that is just, human, and good. The terrorist-monster is pure evil and must be destroyed, according to this view.[6] But does the monster have a mind? This begs another question: Do such figures and such representational strategies have a history? We suggest this language of terrorist-monsters should be read by considering how the monster has been used throughout history in Western discourses of normality. We could begin by remembering, for instance, that the monster was one of three elements that Foucault linked to the formation of the "abnormals."

> The group of abnormals was formed out of three elements whose own formation was not exactly synchronic. 1. The human monster. An Ancient notion whose frame of reference is law. A juridical notion, then, but in the broad sense, as it referred not only to social laws but to natural laws as well; the monster's field of appearance is a juridico-biological domain. The figures of the half-human, half-animal being . . . , of double individualities . . . , of hermaphrodites . . . in turn represented that double violation; what makes a human monster a monster is not just its exceptionality relative to the species

form; it is the disturbance it brings to juridical regularities (whether it is a question of marriage laws, canons of baptism, or rules of inheritance). The human monster combines the impossible and the forbidden. . . . 2. The individual to be corrected. This is a more recent figure than the monster. It is the correlative not so much of the imperatives of the law as of training techniques with their own requirements. The emergence of the "incorrigibles" is contemporaneous with the putting into place of disciplinary techniques during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the army, the schools, the workshops, then, a little later, in families themselves. The new procedures for training the body, behavior, and aptitudes open up the problem of those who escape that normativity which is no longer the sovereignty of the law.[7]

According to Foucault, the monster can be both half an animal and a hybrid gender (later in this text Foucault will go on to position the onanist as the third of the abnormals). But crucially the monster is also to be differentiated from the individual to be corrected on the basis of whether power operates on it or through it. In other words, the absolute power that produces and quarantines the monster finds its dispersal in techniques of normalization and discipline. What Foucault does, we believe, is enable an analysis of monstrosity within a broader history of sexuality. This genealogy is crucial to understanding the historical and political relays, reinvestments, and resistances between the monstrous terrorist and the discourse of heteronormativity. And that is because monsters and abnormals have always also been sexual deviants. Foucault tied monstrosity to sexuality through specific analyses of the deployment of gendered bodies, the regulation of proper desires, the manipulation of domestic spaces, and the taxonomy of sexual acts such as sodomy. As such, the sexualized monster was that figure that called forth a form of juridical power but one that was tied to multiform apparatuses of discipline as well.[8]

We use Foucault's concept of monstrosity to elaborate what we consider to be central to the present war on terrorism: monstrosity as a regulatory construct of modernity that imbricates not only sexuality, but also questions of culture and race. Before we tie these practices to contemporary politics, let us note two things: First, the monster is not merely an other; it is one category through which a multiform power operates. As such, discourses that would mobilize monstrosity as a screen for otherness are always also involved in circuits of normalizing power as well: the monster and the person to be corrected are close cousins. Second, if the monster is part of the West's family of abnormals, questions of race and sexuality will have always haunted its figuration. The category of monstrosity is also an implicit index of civilizational development and cultural adaptability. As the machines of war begin to narrow the choices and life
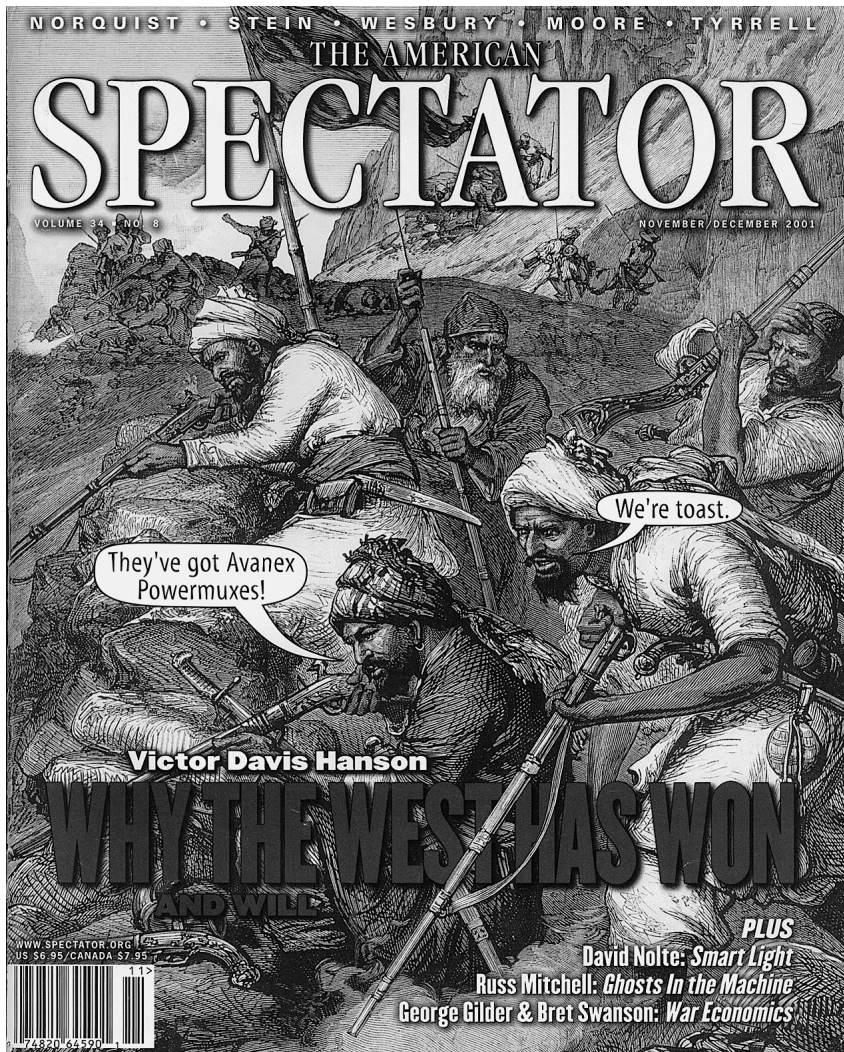
Reorienting colonial imagery for the new millennium: "Why the West Has Won." Courtesy *American Spectator*

chances people have here in America and in decidedly more bloody ways abroad, it seems a certain grid of civilizational progress organized by such keywords as "democracy," "freedom," and "humanity" have come to superintend the figure of the monster. We turn now to this double deployment of the discourse of monstrosity in "terrorism studies."

Today, we find the two figures of the monster and the person to be corrected in some ways converging in the discourse of the terrorist-monster. Which is to say that the terrorist has become both a monster to be quarantined and an individual to be corrected. It is in the strategic analyses of terrorism that these two figures come together. For the past thirty years, since 1968, the Western academy has been involved in the production and implementation of a body of knowledge that took the psyche of the terrorist as its object and target: "terrorism studies." The strategic analysis of what in the intelligence community is known as "violent substate activism" is at the moment a highly sought-after form of knowledge production. And it has direct policy relevance; hence its uneven integration into the broader field of what Edward Said once named as the disciplinary home of Orientalism: "policy studies."[9] Our own analysis has been usefully informed by the pioneering work of scholars and activists such as Said, Cynthia Enloe, Ann Tickner, Noam Chomsky, Shirin M. Rai, Edward Herman, Helen Caldicott, Philip Agee, Talal Asad, and others.[10] These writers have opened a space of critique that brings the epistemological and ethical claims of terrorism studies to crisis; their rigorous and impassioned interrogation of U.S. foreign policy has not only enabled subsequent writers to make connections to ongoing domestic wars against people of color and the working poor but crucially, their critiques have enabled the countermemory of other genealogies, histories, and modes of power: for example, sexuality, colonialism, and normalization. So, for instance, in the discourse of counterterrorism the shared modernity of the monster and the delinquent comes together in the knowledge of cultures, nations, and races. As one editorial in the magazine *Foreign Policy* put it, "The Global Positioning System, unmanned drones, unrivaled databases, and handheld computers—much has been made of the technological resources available to the U.S. military and diplomatic establishments. But what do you do if you're trying to wage war in or against a country where you don't know the locals, can't speak the language, and can't find any reliable maps? Welcome to the front lines of the war against terrorism, likely to be waged primarily in 'swamp states' about which the United States knows little."[11] The writer ends the piece by drawing a particular lesson from Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*: "'If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat.' If any war on terrorism is to succeed, the United States has some serious learning to do."

Terrorism studies is at the forefront of this knowledge production. In an article in the Rand Corporation–funded journal, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Richard Falkenrath notes:

The literature on terrorism is vast. Most of this work focuses on the practitioners of terrorism, that is, on the terrorists themselves. Different strands within terrorism studies consider, for example, the motivations or belief systems of individual terrorists; the external strategies or . . . internal dynamics of particular terrorist organizations; or the interaction of terrorist movements with other entities, such as governments, the media, or social subgroups. . . . Terrorism studies aspires not just to scholastic respectability but to policy relevance. . . . It has helped organize and inform governmental counter-terrorism practices.[12]

Counterterrorism is a form of racial, civilizational knowledge, but now also an academic discipline that is quite explicitly tied to the exercise of state power. This knowledge, moreover, takes the psyche as its privileged site of investigation. As another article in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* put it,

> Models based on psychological concerns typically hold that 'terrorist' violence is not so much a political instrument as an end in itself; it is not contingent on rational agency but is the result of compulsion or psychopathology. Over the years scholars of this persuasion have suggested that 'terrorists' do what they do because of (variously and among other things) self-destructive urges, fantasies of cleanliness, disturbed emotions combined with problems with authority and the Self, and inconsistent mothering. Articulate attempts at presenting wider, vaguer, and (purportedly) generalizable psychological interpretations of terrorism have been made by, among others, Jerrold M. Post, who has proposed that " . . . political terrorists are driven to commit acts of violence as a consequence of psychological forces, and . . . their special psychologic is constructed to rationalize acts they are psychologically compelled to commit."[13]

We should note how white mythologies such as "inconsistent mothering" (and hence the bad family structure apparently common in the East) are presented as psychological compulsions that effectively determine and fix the mind of the terrorist.

In this way, psychologists working within terrorism studies have been able to determine and taxonomize the terrorist mind. In a recent article in the journal *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, Charles L. Ruby has noted that there are two dominant frameworks in the interpretation of the terrorist "mindset": "The first camp includes theories that portray terrorism as the result of defects or disorders in one's personality structure. This first group of theories uses a broadly psychodynamic model. The second camp consists of theories that approach the phenomenon of terrorist behavior as a form of political violence perpetrated by people who do not have sufficient military resources to carry out conventional forms

Counterterrorism is a form of racial, civilizational knowledge, but now also an academic discipline that is quite explicitly tied to the exercise of state power. This knowledge, moreover, takes the psyche as its privileged site of investigation.

of political violence."[14] The personality defect model of terrorism holds that terrorists have fundamental and pathological defects in "their personality structure, usually related to a damaged sense of self." Moreover, these defects result from "unconscious forces in the terrorist's psyche." And, of course, the psyche is the site of a familiar family romance: "Terrorism is a reflection of unconscious feelings of hostility toward parents and . . . this feeling is an outgrowth of childhood abuse or adolescent rebellion. The terrorist's hostile focus is so great during childhood and adolescence that it continues into adulthood and becomes very narrow and extreme, ostensibly explaining the terrorist's absolutist mindset and dedication."

As a leading light in the constellation of "terrorism experts," Jerrold Post has proposed that terrorists suffer from pathological personalities that emerge from negative childhood experiences and a damaged sense of self.[15] Post argues for two terrorist personality types, depending on the specific quality of those childhood experiences. First, Post suggests, there is the "anarchic-ideologue." This is the terrorist who has experienced serious family dysfunction and maladjustment, which lead to rebellion against parents, especially against the father. Anarchic-ideologues fight "against the society of their parents . . . an act of dissent against parents loyal to the regime." Second, there is the terrorist personality type known as the "nationalist-secessionist"—apparently the name indicates "a sense of loyalty to authority and rebellion against external enemies." During childhood, a terrorist of this personality type experienced a sense of compassion or loyalty toward his or her parents. According to Post, nationalist-secessionists have pathologically failed to differentiate between themselves and the other (parental object). Consequently, they rebel "against society for the hurt done to their parents . . . an act of loyalty to parents damaged by the regime." Both the anarchic-ideologue and nationalist-secessionist find "comfort in joining a terrorist group of rebels with similar experiences."[16] The personality defect model views terrorists as suffering from personality defects that result from excessively negative childhood experiences, giving the individual a poor sense of self and a resentment of authority. As Ruby notes, "Its supporters differ in whether they propose one (Kaplan), two (Post and Jones & Fong), or three (Strentz) personality types."[17]

What all these models and theories aim to show is how an otherwise normal individual becomes a murderous terrorist, and that process time and again is tied to the failure of the normal(ized) psyche. Indeed, an implicit but foundational supposition structures this entire discourse: the very notion of the normal psyche, which is in fact part of the West's own heterosexual family romance—a narrative space that relies on the nor-

malized, even if perverse, domestic space of desire supposedly common in the West. Terrorism, in this discourse, is a symptom of the deviant psyche, the psyche gone awry, or the failed psyche; the terrorist enters this discourse as an absolute violation. So when Billy Collins (the 2001 poet laureate) asserted on National Public Radio immediately after September 11: "Now the U.S. has lost its virginity," he was underscoring this fraught relationship between (hetero)sexuality, normality, the nation, and the violations of terrorism.

Not surprisingly, then, coming out of this discourse, we find that another very common way of trying to psychologize the monster-terrorist is by positing a kind of failed heterosexuality. So we hear often the idea that sexually frustrated Muslim men are promised the heavenly reward of sixty, sixty-seven, or sometimes even seventy virgins if they are martyred in jihad. But As'ad Abu Khalil has argued, "In reality, political—not sexual—frustration constitutes the most important factor in motivating young men, or women, to engage in suicidal violence. The tendency to dwell on the sexual motives of the suicide bombers belittles these sociopolitical causes."[18] Now of course, that is precisely what terrorism studies intends to do: to reduce complex social, historical, and political dynamics to various psychic causes rooted in childhood family dynamics. As if the Palestinian *Intifada* or the long, brutal war in Afghanistan can be simply boiled down to bad mothering or sexual frustration! In short, these explanatory models and frameworks function to (1) reduce complex histories of struggle, intervention, and (non)development to Western psychic models rooted in the bourgeois heterosexual family and its dynamics; (2) systematically exclude questions of political economy and the problems of cultural translation; and (3) attempt to master the fear, anxiety, and uncertainty of a form of political dissent by resorting to the banality of a taxonomy.[19]

Our contention is that today the knowledge and form of power that is mobilized to analyze, taxonomize, psychologize, and defeat terrorism has a genealogical connection to the West's abnormals, and specifically those premodern monsters that Western civilization had seemed to bury and lay to rest long ago. The monsters that haunt the prose of contemporary counterterrorism emerge out of figures in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that have always been racialized, classed, and sexualized. The undesirable, the vagrant, the Gypsy, the savage, the Hottentot Venus, or the sexual depravity of the Oriental torrid zone shares a basic kinship with the terrorist-monster. As we know, in the twentieth century these disparate monsters became case studies, objects of ethnographies, and interesting psychological cases of degeneracy. The same Western, colonial modernity that created the psyche created the racial and sexual monster.

In other words, what links the monster-terrorist to the figure of the individual to be corrected is first and foremost the racialized and deviant psyche. Isn't that why there is something terrifyingly uncanny in the terrorist-monster? As one specifically liberal article in the Rand journal put it, "Members of such groups are not infrequently prepared to kill and die for their struggles and, as sociologists would attest, that presupposes a sort of conviction and mindset that has become uncommon in the modern age. Thus, not only the acts of 'terrorism' but also the driving forces behind them often appear incomprehensible and frightening to outsiders. Terrorism studies emerged as a subcategory within the social sciences in the early 1970s seeking to explain the resurgence of the seemingly inexplicable."[20]

It is the figure of the inexplicable that continues to haunt all the civilizational grids that the Western war machine would deploy in its attempt to "understand the terrorist psyche." We now turn to consider more explicitly the relationship between this will to knowledge and the practices and rituals of heteronormativity.

Heteronormativity and Patriotism

We start by simply noting some obvious factors that constitute the heteronormative character of American nationalism that have been exacerbated in the current political climate. These include, but are not limited to: heterosexual family narratives of trauma and grief (the images of the Cantor Fitzgerald wives come to mind, as well the "families" who are petitioning the government for increased bereavement funds); the problems gay survivors are having accessing relief and disaster funds; "sexually active" gay men being banned from donating blood; the lauding of national "gay heros" such as Mark Bingham by lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer conservatives such as Andrew Sullivan; the reevaluation of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in the face of military action and enlistment; and finally, even the Miss America beauty pageant, which took place just a few weeks after September 11, emphasized the national pride of the contestants ("There's so much ugliness in the world, we need to see beauty").

Yet again, we could interrogate the way in which patriotism has activated and transformed the historical memory of a militarist, racist, and class-specific masculinity. In the days and weeks following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, a rapid proliferation of mocking images circulated of a turbaned Osama bin Laden, not to mention of the turban itself. In a photomontage from Stileproject.com, even George Bush has been depicted sporting a bin Ladenesque turban.

Another Internet favorite is a picture of bin Laden superimposed into a 7-Eleven convenience store scene as a cashier (harking back to, among others, Apu of *The Simpsons*).

Posters that appeared in midtown Manhattan only days after the attacks show a turbaned caricature of bin Laden being anally penetrated by the Empire State Building. The legend beneath reads, "The Empire Strikes Back" or "So you like skyscrapers, huh, bitch?" Or think of the Web site where, with a series of weapons at your disposal, you can torture Osama bin Laden to death, the last torture being sodomy; or another Web site that shows two pictures, one of bin Laden with a beard, and the other without—and the photo of him shaven turns out to be O. J. Simpson.[21] What these representations show, we believe, is that queerness as sexual deviancy is tied to the monstrous figure of the terrorist as a way to otherize and quarantine subjects classified as "terrorists," but also to normalize and discipline a population through these very monstrous figures.

Though much gender-dependent "black" humor describing the appropriate punishment for bin Laden focuses on the liberation of Afghan women (liberate Afghan women and send them to college or make bin Laden have a sex change operation and live in Afghanistan as a woman— deeply racist, sexist, and homophobic suggestions), this portrayal suggests something further still: American retaliation promises to emasculate bin Laden and turn him into a fag. This promise not only suggests that if you're not for the war, you're a fag, it also incites violence against queers and specifically queers of color. And indeed, there have been reports from community-based organizations throughout New York City that violent incidents against queers of color have increased. So on the one hand, the United States is being depicted as feminist and gay-safe by this comparison with Afghanistan, and on the other hand, the U.S. state, having experienced a castration and penetration of its capitalist masculinity, offers up narratives of emasculation as appropriate punishment for bin Laden, brown-skinned folks, and men in turbans.

It seems to us that what we see happening in America is the active promotion of self-righteous aggression and murderous violence, which have achieved almost holy status in the speeches and comments of our recently enthroned president, George W. Bush (let us not forget the five-to-four Supreme Court decision that gave him the presidency). What all these examples show is that the historical connections between heteronormativity as a process and the monstrous terrorist as an object of knowledge have been obfuscated, and in some cases severed: indeed, aspects of "homosexuality" have come within the purview of normative patriotism after September 11. In other words, what we see in the deployment of heteronormative patriotism is, on the one hand, the quarantining of the

terrorist-monster-fag using the bodies and practices of a queered other, and on the other, the incorporation of aspects of queer subjectivity into the body of the normalized nation.

This dual process of incorporation and quarantining involves as well the articulation of race with nation. M. Jacqui Alexander has written that the "nation disallows queerness," and V. Spike Petersen locates "nationalism as heterosexism"; yet it is certainly the case that within a national as well as transnational frame, some queers are better than others.[22] The dearth of (white) queer progressive/Left voices is perhaps due to safety issues and real fears that many have about offering up dissenting voices; at the same time, racism and unexamined notions of citizenship seem to be operative here also.[23] Queer Left voices have also pointed out that the treatment of women by the Taliban extends to homosexuality, which is punishable by public stoning in Afghanistan.[24] When a U.S. Navy bomb aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise had scrawled upon it "Hijack This Fags," national gay and lesbian rights organizers objected to the homophobia of this kind of nationalist rhetoric, but not to the broader racist war itself.[25]

Clearly, a hegemonic struggle is being waged through the exclusionary and normative idioms of patriotism, humanitarianism, and, yes, even feminism. In this context, we see how the dominant media are using the figure of the *burkha*-ed woman in what are often racist and certainly chauvinistic representations of the Middle East. These representations, we should remember, have a very old colonial legacy, one that Gayatri Spivak once characterized as, "White men saving brown women from brown men."[26] Furthermore, the continuities between Bush's agenda and queer Left, feminist, and South Asian diasporic and even South Asian queer diasporic positions are rather stunning, especially in the use of "culture" and "cultural norms" to obscure economic and political histories, much in the way that terrorism studies positions the relationship of the psyche to the terrorist.

Now suddenly condemning the Taliban for their treatment of women, Bush's administration has in essence occupied the space of default global feminists in an uncanny continuity with Western liberal feminists, who also have been using Afghan women as an "easy icon" in need of feminist rescue (as the successor to female genital surgery). The Feminist Majority (headed by Eleanor Smeal), along with first lady Laura Bush and the former duchess of York Sarah Ferguson, represent liberal feminist human rights practices that are complicit with U.S. nationalism as well as older forms of colonialist missionary feminist projects.[27] While initially Afghan women were completely absent from media representation and discussion, now RAWA (Revolutionary Afghan Women's Association) is being propped up as the saved/savior other: on a speaking tour throughout the

Pin-up: Miss December, 2001. Northrup-Grumman, photo manipulation by
Charles Bork. Courtesy *American Spectator*

THINK GLOBALLY
ACT LOCALLY

U.S. AIR FORCE
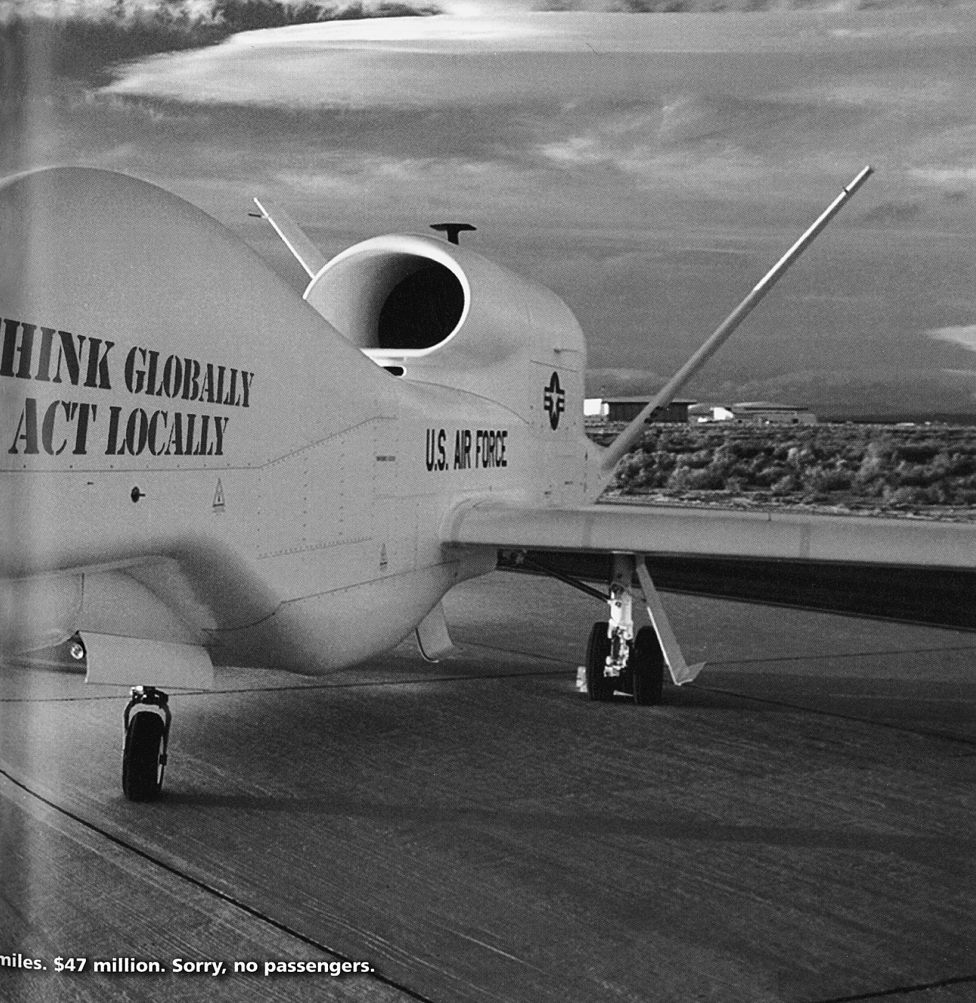
miles. $47 million. Sorry, no passengers.

United States, fully sponsored and paid for by the National Organization of Women, led by Executive Director Patricia Ireland. (This is not to minimize the work of RAWA, but to point out that the fetishizing of RAWA erases other women's groups in the region, ignores the relative privilege and access of resources that RAWA's members have in relation to the majority of women in Afghanistan, and obscures the network of regional and international political and economic interests that govern such organizations as NOW or even RAWA.)[28]

Another historical memory must organize our practice. As we begin to unearth these historical and discursive reticulations, we must not lose sight of the shared histories of the West's abnormals. All of these examples, and more, function to delimit and contain the kinds of responses that LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) communities can articulate in response to September 11. If we are to resist practically the "war effort" and the Us/Them and "you're either with us or against us" rhetoric, we must disarticulate the ties between patriotism and cultural and sexual identity. We must pose questions that allow us to construct practical solidarities with domestic and international communities and movements. If Western feminism has been complicit with certain forms of imperial and nationalist domination, how can feminists of color in the United States as well as "Third World" feminists (such as RAWA) undermine and displace these dominant agendas? If certain forms of queer and progressive organizing remain tied to forms of nationalist and imperial domination, how can queers of color both here and across the globe disrupt the neat folding in of queerness into narratives of modernity, patriotism, and nationalism?

Docile Patriots I: *The West Wing*

Here are two examples of contemporary cultural and community politics that speak to the network of discourses and practices we have analyzed. We have seen thus far that the terrorist-monster has a history, and through that history we can interrogate the norms and practices that aim to quarantine, know, eliminate, and correct the monster. This brings us to our next point: the monstrous terrorist, once quarantined in secret military courts, in prisons, in cells, in caves, in besieged cities or forts—this figure also provides the occasion to demand and instill a certain discipline on the population. This discipline aims to produce patriotic, docile subjects through practices, discourses, images, narratives, fears, and pleasures. One of the central sites for the construction of these docile patriots is the dominant televisual media. On CNN, FOX News, BBC, or ABC we hear

terrorist experts, psychiatrists, state officials, and journalists use the figure of the terrorist-monster as a screen to project both the racist fantasies of the West and the disciplining agenda of patriotism. Infantilizing the population, they scream with what seems to be at times one voice: "The terrorist is a monster. This monster is the enemy. The enemy must be hunted down to protect you and all those women and children that you do not know, but we know."

We can see this dual infantilization of the citizenry and production and quarantining of the monster on TV shows that have aired or are going to air in response to September 11. These sitcoms, serials, and dramas are in fact more ideologically diverse than the mainstream news media, which have egregiously failed to inform the public of the racist backlash against Arab American and South Asian American communities, as well as antiwar activism. As one *USA Today* article noted:

> Producers have been rapidly churning out scripts for future episodes based on the aftermath of last month's attacks, following an October 3 episode of NBC's *The West Wing* that attracted the White House drama's biggest audience yet. *Ally McBeal* will take an allegorical approach in a Christmas episode written by David E. Kelley in which a Massachusetts town official tries to block a holiday parade after a tragedy in which firefighters are lost, and the residents argue whether it is acceptable to be festive. *The Practice*'s law firm represents an Arab-American who argues that he is being unfairly held as a material witness in a fictional terrorist act in an episode of the ABC drama due later this fall. Popular new CBS series *The Guardian* plans a December storyline about a Middle Eastern family in Pittsburgh whose restaurant is vandalized by a white youth. "There's a lot of knee-jerk rage," says series creator David Hollander. "I want to touch on the reality that there's an incredible irrational fear." CIA-blessed drama *The Agency* originally planned to air a fictional anthrax attack last winter, but pulled the episode two days before it was scheduled to air due to anti-terrorist sentiments. And CBS has been pitched a new romantic comedy about a couple who lost their spouses in the World Trade Center attacks, says network president Les Moonves, who hasn't ruled out the idea. The interest marks a stark departure from the days immediately after September 11, when anxious censors rushed to excise any signs of the Trade Center or references to planes or terrorists from TV shows. Military drama *JAG* plans references to Afghanistan, and an episode about covert operations there, but producer Don Bellisario is treading carefully.[29]

Consider, as the first of such takes on September 11 to be aired, the October 3 episode of *The West Wing*. "The episode, entitled 'Isaac and Ishmael,' was written by the show's creator Aaron Sorkin, and was completed in less than three weeks. The script made no reference to the events

which inspired its creation."[30] The story line places the show's fictitious White House staff in a lock-out crisis mode following a "crash" (which "means there has been some kind of security break: no one in or out of the White House"; the Secret Service feared a suspected terrorist might actually be on the premises). We cut to an Arab American man, a White House staff member, smoking a cigarette out of a window in the Old Executive Building; a group of armed white Secret Service agents break down the door and, with guns drawn, arrest him on suspicion of plotting some kind of terrorist activity (he is later found to be innocent). Meanwhile, Josh Lyman, the deputy chief of staff, finds himself locked in a cafeteria with a group of visiting high school children who had won a trip to the White House. According to the BBC Web review, "They look to him for answers to questions similar to those asked by many Americans over the past few weeks."

Most of the episode takes place in one of two rooms. In the White House mess, "gifted" high school students ask questions of various staff members. Simultaneously, the interrogation of the "terrorist" goes on in a darkened room somewhere in the Old Executive Building. The show consists of intercutting between the interrogation of the man—whose name, Raqim Ali, matches one of the aliases used by a terrorist who has just entered the United States—and "the heavy-duty chat session in the mess."[31] Students ask such questions as "What's the deal with everybody trying to kill you?" Josh turns the conversation into an interrogation, or better, translation, of the "nature" of the Taliban. He asks the students, "Islamic extremists are to Islam as ____ is to Christianity." After hearing from the students, Josh writes down his answer: "KKK." He says, "It's the Klan gone medieval and global. It couldn't have less to do with Islamic men and women of faith of whom there are millions and millions. Muslims defend this country in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, National Guard, Police and Fire Department." When it seems he is running out of things to say, other White House staff members join the question-and-answer session. Toby Zeigler (Richard Schiff), the president's speechwriter, champions freedom of religion and equates the people of Afghanistan with European Jews under Hitler. "There's nothing wrong with a religion whose laws say a man's got to wear a beard or cover his head or wear a collar. It's when violation of these laws become a crime against the state and not your parents that we're talking about lack of choice. . . . The Taliban isn't the recognized government of Afghanistan. The Taliban took over the recognized government of Afghanistan. . . . When you think of Afghanistan, think of Poland. When you think of the Taliban, think of the Nazis. When you think of the people of Afghanistan, think of Jews in concentration camps." Toby then tells these very attentive

students a story he once heard from a friend who had been in a Nazi concentration camp. "He said he once saw a guy at the camp kneeling and praying. He said, 'What are you doing?' The guy said he was thanking God. 'What could you possibly be thanking God for?' 'I'm thanking God for not making me like them.'" Inexplicably, Toby concludes, "Bad people can't be recognized on sight. There's no point in trying."

At least one reviewer of the episode bristled at what he argued were un-American messages hidden in the dialogue of the episode. For this reviewer, the show's creator Aaron Sorkin was entirely to blame. Writing in the *Washington Post*, Tom Shales lambasted the show for its "tone of moral superiority."

> Terrorism is definitely bad. That was established by the talk with the students. It was pointed out that . . . Islamic extremists are to Islam what the Ku Klux Klan is to Christianity. But the main thrust of the episode was summarized in another line: "Bad people can't be recognized on sight. There's no point in trying." What if they're carrying guns and have bombs strapped to each limb? That wasn't asked or answered. What was really on Sorkin's mind was the mistreatment of the apparently guiltless American-born Muslim who, as played by Ajay Naidu, maintained a tone of suffering moral superiority throughout. Ali, it was revealed, had once been arrested for taking part in demonstrations against the presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, but he was indignant—and Sorkin was indignant—that investigating such a thing might be considered appropriate for a person working in the same building as the president of the United States. How dare they?

For Shales, "discrimination against Arab Americans and against people who even just look Arabic has been a serious problem in the wake of the terrorist attacks. And is to be deplored and, one hopes, stopped. But the attention given that problem by the *West Wing* episode, as well as by some talk shows and newscasts, seems to suggest that it's the major issue arising out of the attacks. Viewers of MTV, for instance, have heard more condemnation of discrimination ('Fight for your rights') than of terrorism itself." This passing nod to the massive suspension of constitutional rights for immigrants and noncitizens is overshadowed by Shales's insistence that not only did Sorkin miss the central moral to be learned from September 11 (terrorism demands a new security state, and true patriots—even when they are the targets of that state, will stand by it, come what may), but that his is not a legitimate voice of morality in the first place. Shales concludes: "It is fair to note that in April, Sorkin was arrested at Burbank Airport and charged with two felony counts of drug possession when cocaine, hallucinogenic mushrooms and pot were found in his carry-on bag. This would seem to have some bearing on his status as

moral arbiter for the nation. . . . the implications are unsettling—that even in this moment of pain, trauma, heartbreak, destruction, assault and victimization, Hollywood liberals can still find some excuse to make America look guilty. For what it's worth, that's crap."

Such responses oblige us to recognize that in a moment of what is termed "national crisis," even platitudinous dissent is beyond the pale of the proper. How does a drug charge disallow a subject from speaking from a space that is morally legitimate—how does any kind of impropriety disqualify a subject who would dissent from the norm? But what this reviewer's diatribe points to is the subtle and not so subtle forms of normalization that the new patriotism demands of us all. Consider, then, the show's double frame itself as a kind of technology that is supposed to manage dissent, a technology that demands allegiance even as it produces pluralism. For we see a double-framed reality. On the one side, brightly lit and close to the hearth (invoking the home and the family), is the classroom, a racially and gender-plural space. A space where normal, docile, but heterogeneous psyches are produced, in opposition to the terrorist-monster-fag. A space where the president as Father enters and says that what we need right now are heroes; where the first lady as Mother tells the precocious and sometimes troublesome youngsters a kind of bedtime story of two once and future brothers, Isaac (the Jews) and Ishmael (the Arabs); where male experts regale them with fantastic facts concerning the first acts of terrorism committed back in the tenth century by drug frenzied Muslims; where one woman staff member (C. J. Cregg, played by Allison Janney) declares, "We need spies. Human spies. . . . It's time to give the intelligence agencies the money and the manpower they need"; and finally, where Josh's parting advice to the students on how to relate to the terrorists is: "Remember pluralism. You want to get these people? I mean, you really want to reach in and kill them where they live? Keep accepting more than one idea. It makes them absolutely crazy."

On the other side of the frame, a dimly lit room, an enclosed, monitored space, managed entirely by white men, at the center of which is a racially and sexually ambiguous figure, a subject who at one and the same time is a possible monster and a person to be corrected. A tiny, darkened stage where the ritual of the examination, of the interrogation, is enacted on and through a subject who must perform both his racial and cultural difference and his normality. A subject quarantined, and so secluded, but whose testimony becomes a spectacle through which power will work. A subject whose greatest moment, it seems, comes when, after being terrorized at gunpoint, racially profiled, and insulted, he goes back to work. His interrogator, after stumbling through a kind of apology for his earlier

racist remarks, looks back over his shoulder and says, "Hey kid, way to be back at your desk."

This double frame stages the two forms of power that we have been marking here: to quarantine and to discipline. It is we who are the school children who must be taught why 'War means Peace' in Afghanistan, and certainly some of us match the profile of the monster to be quarantined, corrected, and neutralized. Let us remember that a Hindu South Asian (Ajay Naidu) plays the Arab Muslim in *The West Wing*. We can see the ways in which sexuality, gender, deviancy, normality, and power are knotted together in this TV drama: sometimes in explicit ways, as in the exchange between the interrogator and the Arab American man, or in Shales's diatribe against the immorality of Sorkin. But what we are in fact suggesting is that the entire double frame comes out of racial and sexual genealogies that imbricate the production of the radical other, as monster, to the practice of producing normalized and docile patriots. These practices, justified in the name of a Holy Crusade against Evil and legitimized through a knowledge of the psyche, follow a simple rule: "Know Thine Enemy."[32] It recalls what Sigmund Freud once wrote in his famous essay "Thoughts on War and Death." We should recall these words written in the midst of war, 1915:

> The individual in any given nation has . . . a terrible opportunity to convince himself of what would occasionally strike him in peace-time—that the state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrong-doing, not because it desired to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolize it like salt and tobacco. The warring state permits itself every such misdeed, every such act of violence, as would disgrace the individual man. It practices not only the accepted stratagems, but also deliberate lying and deception against the enemy; and this, too, in a measure which appears to surpass the usage of former wars. The state exacts the utmost degree of obedience and sacrifice from its citizens, but at the same time treats them as children by maintaining an excess of secrecy, and censorship of news and expressions of opinion that renders the spirits of those thus intellectually oppressed defenceless against every unfavourable turn of events and every sinister rumour. It absolves itself from the guarantees and contracts it had formed with other states, and makes unabashed confession of its rapacity and lust for power, which the private individual is then called upon to sanction in the name of patriotism.[33]

In the name of patriotism, a double-framed reality and a double movement of power tie together the production of docile patriots: those monsters who must be quarantined, whose psyches offend the norms of domesticity, of the properly masculine or feminine. Such monsters,

through their very example, provide patriotism with its own pedagogies of normalization. And then we have the space of the national family, inhabited by a plurality of subjects who find their proper being in the heterosexual home of the nation: these subjects are called forth, given being even, by the very figure of the monster, and they are called upon to enact their own normalization– in the name of patriotism. These docile patriots, committed to the framework of American pluralism, are themselves part of a history of racialization that is simply assumed. In our last section, we contextualize both this history and the subjectivities it engenders.

Docile Patriots II: Sikhs and Racial Formation

If in the name of patriotism a certain docility is being demanded of us, we would like to end this essay with a consideration of how communities of color can begin to reframe these discourses, and so articulate the complex pragmatics of solidarity politics. Recent immigration policy and the discourse surrounding it have had an impact on the production of "docile patriotism." How did the state and its ideological apparatuses prepare "us" for the aftermath of the events of September 11?

In response to increasing mobility of capital across national borders, the anti-immigrant agenda serves to psychically as well as materially prevent the further contamination of the nation. The absence of a concretized external other once embodied by the Soviet Union and other Communist states marks the prime setting for targeting internal others for expulsion or normalization. In advocating the sanctity of the national body through policing of individual bodies, 1990's anti-immigrant sentiment has been primarily and perniciously fueled by conservative American "family values" rhetoric, aided by the figure of the colored welfare mother as embodying failed heterosexuality as well as compromised production capacity. In fact, many feminist scholars have pointed to the patriarchal family as foundational to the appearance of national belonging as "natural," much as familial attachments are conceptualized. In the example of post–September 11 organizing by Sikh Americans, once again we see that the underpinnings of nationalism and patriotism are composed not only of demands to produce "good citizenship" status vis-à-vis outlawed undocumented immigrants but also of heteronormativity.

In the racist backlash of the immediate aftermath of September 11, turban-clad Sikhs were "mistaken" for the kin and national compatriots of Osama bin Laden. In fear of being the targets of racist backlash against Muslims and Arab Americans, Sikhs who wear turbans (albeit, as has been repeatedly pointed out by spokespersons for Sikh advocacy groups,

not the type worn by bin Laden) have discovered various counternarratives of respectable turban-hood. Many Sikhs, hearing early reports of turban grabbing and the fatal shooting of turbaned Sikh gas station owner Balbir Singh Sodhi in Mesa, Arizona, have simply abandoned their turbans, for the same reasons that many Sikhs abandoned them when they first migrated to the United States. While turbaned individuals in multicultural America have often been referred to as "towelheads," the repertoire of sophisticated references has expanded further still: On September 17, U.S. Representative John Cooksey explained to a network of Louisiana radio stations that anyone "wearing a diaper on his head" should expect to be interrogated as a possible suspect in the investigations of the terrorist attacks.[34]

Others have contributed to the current fervor of American patriotic/multicultural exceptionalism by donning red, white, and blue turbans. Organizations such as SMART (Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force, a Sikh American civil rights advocacy group) have released statements, "Talking Points," and photos explaining the differences between "those" turbans and Sikh turbans.[35] Sikhs are being stopped at airport security and asked to take off their turbans so they can be checked for knives. For this Sikhs are directed by SMART to patiently educate: "The turban is not a hat. It is a mandatory symbol of the Sikh religion. I cannot simply remove it; it must be unwrapped."[36]

To the average uninterested American eye, however, a turban is just a turban. And it symbolizes the revived, erect, and violent patriarchy of the East, of Islam, and of the Taliban; the oppression of Afghan women; the castration and the penetration of white Western phallic power by bad brown dick and its turban. (Lest one think that the backlash is "over" and that Americans are now educated about Sikhs, a *gurudwara* (temple) in upstate New York that was burned to the ground a few days before Thanksgiving was declared to be arson.)[37]

The turban is a complicated and ambivalent signifier of both racial and religious community as well as of the power of masculine heteronormativity (the shaving of the heads and beards of the suspected Taliban and Al Qaeda nonlegal combatants before being brought to Camp X-Ray at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, is one indication of just how powerful). As such, we are as troubled by the increasing forms of turban profiling and its consequences as we are about the reemergence of cultural nationalism in Sikh and South Asian communities, which often obscures issues of gender and sexuality (for example, the ongoing violence against women in the domestic spheres and the racist backlash against women wearing the *hijab*). The turban becomes a contested symbol for remasculinization and nationalization in the strategies of numerous middle-class Sikh communi-

ties. Such strategies, we should note, respond to and are in conversation with the initial emasculation of the white male state (signaled by the castration of the trade towers on September 11) and the ongoing remasculinization through the war on terrorism.

What these strategies of resistance collude with, however, is precisely the "good psyche" (as opposed to the terrorist psyche) that values and legitimates middle-class domesticity, heteronormativity, and the banal pluralism of docile patriotism. Much mainstream Sikh response has focused on getting the attention of white America, intent on renarrating themselves through American nationalism as respectable, exemplary, model minority citizens who have held vigils, donated blood and funds to the Red Cross, and were quick to cover their *gurudwaras* in American flags. Many national Sikh media outlets, attempting to counter the "mistaken identity" phenomenon, have put out messages to the effect of "we are not them" (Muslims), encouraging Sikhs to use this opportunity to educate people about the peaceful Sikh religion. They are also sending an endless stream of lawyers to Washington, D.C., to meet with senators and other public officials to expound upon Sikh commitments to American civic life.[38] Sikh *gurudwaras* across the country are hiring public relations firms to "deal with this misunderstanding among the American public." While much of this "damage control" colludes with Hindu nationalist agendas to discredit Muslims and Pakistan, Indian prime minister Vajpayee was actually reprimanded by Sikh groups for both suggesting that women wear *bindis* in order to pass as Hindus and also for asking the U.S. government to protect Sikhs against hate crimes while not mentioning the need to protect Muslim Americans.[39]

There is a complex history that ties Sikh communities to the discourse of terrorism. As is well known, the Indian state throughout much of the 1980s was involved in a massive ideological labor as well as bloody police repression that sought to mark off Sikh groups in Punjab and in the diaspora as terrorist, and to contain the movement for Khalistan (a separatist Punjab). This history positions Sikh identity in an ambivalent relationship to the current war on terrorism: on the one hand, Sikhs in India and in the diaspora, especially *gurudwara* communities, face severe repercussions from the antiterrorist act (known as the Patriot Act);[40] on the other hand, their self-positioning as victims of both state-sponsored terrorism (for example, of the 1984 riots in New Delhi) and, as American patriots, victims of the "Islamic" terrorism of September 11 simultaneously invokes a double nationalism—Sikh and American. For example, Sikhs are holding vigils to mourn September 11 in conjunction with the pogroms of 1984—in other words, to unite with Americans under the rubric of "victims of terrorist attacks."[41] In this way, we can see how Sikh

Americans face the threat of being quarantined as the terrorist-monster by refashioning themselves as docile patriots.

While the revival of Sikh middle-class "good citizenship" nationalist pride threatens to hinder possible coalitions across class, race, and sexuality, South Asian queer organizations have been relatively quiet about the racist backlash. Turbans have never been viewed as very queer-friendly, at least not in the diaspora. Community-based antibacklash/war organizing efforts—for example, a recent vigil in Jackson Heights, New York, organized by International South Asia Forum—have been conspicuously "straight." Religious differences have remained largely unaddressed in South Asian queer diasporic organizing contexts, which historically have been predominantly Hindu (and Indian). Unresolved issues of "difference" (class, immigration status, religion, caste) are now coming back to haunt the diaspora, while at the same time, clearly fear around the backlash, outing, and for some, immigration status may prevent many South Asian queers from organizing.

Within the spectrum of towelheads, diapers, and faggotry, the turban is a powerful reminder of the constructions of racial and sexual difference that inform both U.S. discourses of pluralism and South Asian, Middle Eastern, and Arab American community formations. The current climate is an opportunity for Sikhs to rethink the historical fissures among Hindus and Muslims while building stronger coalitions with other communities of color and for South Asian queers to address the pervasive Hindu-centric nature of diasporic organizing in the United States. It is unfortunate, of course, that the class specificity and specifics of violence against brown people are rarely discussed, nor is the perpetuation of this violence by other people of color available for much comment. In light of the fact that Arab Americans historically have not had a racial categorization and as such are coded as white by default, are there new racial formations emerging in response to September 11? What kinds of historically specific racial formations emerging out of model minority/postcolonial privilege and American pluralism and citizenship are South Asians struggling to hold on to or contest?[42]

Conclusion: Monster-Terrorist-Fag

In the contemporary discourse and practice of the war on terrorism, freedom, democracy, and humanity have come to frame the possibility of thinking and acting within and beyond the nation-state. We have sought to show how the uncanny monster-terrorist-fag is both a product of the anxieties of heteronormative civilization and a marker of the noncivilized—in

fact, the anxiety and the monster are born of the same modernity. We have argued that the monster-terrorist-fag is reticulated with discourses and practices of heteronormative patriotism but also in the resistant strategies of feminist groups, queer communities, and communities of color. We suggest that all such strategies must confront the network of complicities that structure the possibilities of resistance: we have seen how docile patriots, even as they refuse a certain racist positioning, contribute to their own normalization and the quarantining of those they narrate themselves against. This genealogy takes on a particular urgency given the present disarray of the antiwar Left, as well as the lack of communication, debate, and connections between white progressives and communities of color, especially those implicated by changing immigration laws, new "border" hysteria, the Patriot Act, and the widespread detention of noncitizens.[43]

Moreover, these questions of discipline and normalization serve to foreclose the possibilities of solidarities among and within communities of color; for instance, between Sikhs and Muslims or among Sikhs who inhabit different class locations. So that even if the long-time surveillance of African American and Caribbean American communities might have let up a bit after September 11, what we see is the legitimation and expansion of techniques of racial profiling that were in fact perfected on black bodies. If contemporary counterterrorism discourses deploy tropes and technologies with very old histories rooted in the West's own anxieties of otherness and normality, what transformations are we witnessing in the construction of the terrorist-monster? What innovations and reelaborations open new vistas to dominant and emergent forces in the hegemonic politics of the war on/of terrorism? The return of the monster today has enabled a multiform power to reinvest and reinvent the fag, the citizen, the turban, and even the nation itself in the interests of another, more docile modernity.

Notes

1. While we are critical of the circulation of imagery that produces the turban as the fetishized signifier of the terrorist, effacing the subjectivities of women and the multiple acts of veiling and unveiling that have predominated media representation of the war in Afghanistan, we acknowledge that in some part we reinscribe this erasure in our attempts to deconstruct the heteronormative masculinities of patriotism. We thank Negar Mottahedeh for her astute observations regarding this point. In future analyses we intend to draw on Frantz Fanon's "Unveiling Algeria" to further elaborate upon these complex relations of gender.

2. Jim Rutenberg, "Fox Portrays a War of Good and Evil, and Many Applaud," *New York Times*, December 3, 2001.

3. Rand Green, "Taliban Rule in Afghanistan Is a Horrible Reign of Terror," September 24, 2001, www.perspicacityonline.com/109/Talibanrule10924.htm. In a review of a recent art exhibition on the monstrous at the DeCordova Museum, Miles Unger glosses why a meditation on monstrosity is timely: "Having been thrust into a context never imagined by its organizers may perhaps work to the show's advantage, throwing into bold relief many aspects of the monstrous that might otherwise have remained harder to detect. Now, more than ever, it seems important not to neglect our fears and to inspect by daylight the demons that always hide in the recesses of the mind. Psychologists have often suggested a therapeutic role for tales of horror, which allow us to acknowledge real fears in a form made manageable through narrative conventions" (Miles Unger, "When Horror Can Be Healthy," *New York Times*, October 28, 2001).

4. In his Christmas address to the armed forces, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld "drew a comparison between the members of today's armed forces and those who served during earlier wars, such as World War II. 'Like those heroes of that earlier era, you too stand against evil—the shadowy evil of terrorism,' Rumsfeld said. 'And like them, you also will be victorious. Of that, there is no doubt.' He said the hearts and prayers of Americans are with them, according to his statement on the Pentagon's Web site. In his holiday message to the troops, General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Americans count the members of the armed forces among the blessings they have 'rediscovered' since September 11" (CNN on the Web, Washington, D.C. Bureau, December 25, 2001, www.cnn.com).

5. As Negri put it in a recent interview, "Indeed this confrontation is being played out between those who are in charge of Empire and those who would like to be. From this point of view it can be asserted that terrorism is the double of Empire. The enemy of both Bush and Bin Laden is the multitude" ("An Interview with Toni Negri by Giuseppe Cocco and Maurizio Lazzarato," trans. Thomas Seay and Hydrarchist, *Multitudes* 7 [December 2001], www.samizdat.net/multitudes).

6. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have remarked on how the deployment of the "human" and the demarcation of the "terrorist enemy" always seem to be the prelude to American police intervention: "Moral intervention serves as the first act that prepares the stage for military intervention. In such cases, military deployment is presented as an internationally sanctioned police action. Today military intervention is progressively less a product of decisions that arise out of the old international order or even U.N. structures. More often it is dictated unilaterally by the United States, which charges itself with the primary task and then subsequently asks its allies to set in motion a process of armed containment and/or repression of the current enemy of Empire. These enemies are most often called terrorist, a crude conceptual and terminological reduction that is rooted in a police mentality" (*Empire* [Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000], 37). In many ways, we find Hardt and Negri's argument prescient. Yet we also take issue with their own at times profoundly reductive and grossly overgeneralizing framework: we argue that, far from a "crude conceptual and terminological reduction," the term *terrorist* today references a heterogenous, meticulous, and multiform tactic of power.

7. Michel Foucault, "The Abnormals," trans. Robert Hurley, in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1997), 51–52.

8. We would add that our analysis of multiform apparatuses is also indebted to network metaphors—for example, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's "rhizome"—to situate varied bodies such as the Al Qaeda network of terrorist cells or even the rituals of the body associated with anthrax spores that suggest contamination, penetration, and contact. Thanks to Patricia Clough for foregrounding these connections for us.

9. As Said put it in *Orientalism*, "Modern Orientalists—or area experts, to give them their new name—have not passively sequestered themselves in language departments. . . . Most of them today are indistinguishable from other 'experts' and 'advisers' in what Harold Lasswell has called the policy sciences" (Edward Said, *Orientalism* [New York: Pantheon, 1979], 107). See Harold Lasswell, *The Political Writings of Harold D. Lasswell* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1951); Harold Lasswell, *A Pre-View of Policy Sciences* (New York: American Elsevier, 1971); and Daniel Lerner, ed., *The Policy Sciences: Recent Developments in Scope and Method* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1951). Later in his critique of Orientalism, Said remarks on how monstrosity was used by such "biological speculators" as Isidore and (his father) Etienne St. Hilaire in the first half of the nineteenth century in France. "Not only were Etienne and Isidore legatees of the tradition of 'Romantic' biology, which included Goethe and Cuvier . . . but they were also specialists in the philosophy and anatomy of monstrosity—teratology, as Isidore called it—in which the most horrendous physical aberrations were considered a result of internal degradation within the species-life." Such anomalies (whether physical or linguistic, let us keep in mind) "confirm the regular structure binding together all members of the same class" (144–45). One can, therefore, link monstrosity to nineteenth-century projects of physical anthropology and comparative linguistics that integrated concerns for "regular" structure within an overall framework of the intrinsic coherence of nature.

10. See Said, *Orientalism*; Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (New York: Pantheon, 1981); Philip Agee, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (New York: Stonehill, 1975); Edward S. Herman, *The Terrorism Industry: The Experts and Institutions That Shape Our View of Terror* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989); Edward S. Herman, *The Real Terror Network: Terrorism in Fact and Propaganda* (Boston: South End, 1982); Noam Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World* (New York: Claremont Research, 1986); Talal Asad, ed., *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (London: Ithaca, 1971); Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Shirin M. Rai, ed., *International Perspectives on Gender and Democratization* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000); Helen Caldicott, *The New Nuclear Danger: George W. Bush's Military-Industrial Psychosis* (New York: New Press, 2002). See also Ann Tickner, "Feminist Perspectives on Security in a Global Economy," in *Globalization, Human Security, and the African Experience*, ed. Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 42. The human security framework emergent in U.N. forums and human rights discourses seeks a new discourse that shifts emphasis from the security of states to the security of persons and that provides a framework for analysis of the obligations of states to ensure "human" security in a context that includes the "globalization" of problems across borders and boundaries. Feminist scholars are beginning to articulate a multifaceted gendered analysis of human security.

11. "Know Thine Enemy," *Foreign Policy* (November–December, 2001): 2.

12. Richard Falkenrath, "Analytic Models and Policy Prescription: Understanding Recent Innovation in U.S. Counterterrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24 (2001): 162. Rand Corporations Web page explains: "Our job is to help improve policy and decision making through research and analysis. We do that in many ways. Sometimes, we develop new knowledge to inform decision makers without suggesting any specific course of action. Often, we go further by spelling out the range of available options and by analyzing their relative advantages and disadvantages. On many other occasions, we find the analysis so compelling that we advance specific policy recommendations. In all cases, we serve the public interest by widely disseminating our research findings. RAND (a contraction of the term research and development) is the first organization to be called a 'think tank.' We earned this distinction soon after we were created in 1946 by our original client, the U.S. Air Force (then the Army Air Forces). Some of our early work involved aircraft, rockets, and satellites. In the 1960s we even helped develop the technology you're using to view this web site" (www.rand.org/about/).

13. David Brannan, Philip Esler, and N. T. Anders Strindberg, "Talking to 'Terrorists': Towards an Independent Analytical Framework for the Study of Violent Substate Activism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24 (2001): 6.

14. Charles L. Ruby, "Are Terrorists Mentally Deranged?" *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* (2002): 16.

15. Jerrold Post, "Notes on a Psychodynamic Theory of Terrorist Behaviour," *Terrorism: An International Journal* 7 (1984): 243. Accounts of Osama bin Laden's childhood and his psychological makeup reiterate such frameworks even as they defy them. See, for example, Mary Ann Weaver, "The Real bin Laden: By Mythologizing Him, the Government Has Made Him Even More Dangerous," *New Yorker*, January 24, 2000.

16. Post, "Notes on a Psychodynamic Theory." Like Post, Strentz also has offered a personality grid for terrorist psychopathology. Strentz's first type of terrorist is the leader. Such a person has the overall vision and intellectual purpose of the terrorist group. He or she understands the theoretical underpinnings of the group's ideology. Strentz proposes that such a person projects a sense of personal inadequacy onto society (thus the belief that society is inadequate and in need of change). The leader is suspicious, "irrationally dedicated," and uses "perverted logic" (T. Strentz, "The Terrorist Organization Profile: A Psychological Role Model," in *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism* [New York: Pergamon, 1981], 88). The narcissist and paranoid personality is attracted to this terrorist position. The second of Strentz's roles is that of the opportunist. Such a person has technical know-how and is the group's "muscle." Strentz suggests such a person has a criminal history that predates involvement in the terrorist group. According to Strentz, the antisocial personality is drawn to the opportunist role. Lastly, there is the idealist. This is the young person who is never satisfied with the status quo and who has a naive view of social problems and social change. Strentz claims that an inadequate personality best describes the person who is attracted to this role.

17. Ruby, "Are Terrorists Mentally Deranged?"

18. As'ad Abu Khalil, "Sex and the Suicide Bomber," November 13, 2001, professors_for_peace@yahoogroups.com (originally published in Salon.com).

19. The questions that are posed in this literature are: "Why does terrorism occur? What motivates terrorists? What strategies and tactics do terrorists employ

to achieve their goals? How do terrorists perceive their external environment? Under what conditions will terrorists abandon their violent struggle? The success of the terrorism studies literature in answering these questions is uneven. . . . the most powerful analyses of the origins of terrorism tend to be highly specific, applying only to a single terrorist movement of an individual terrorist, and rooted in particular social and psychological circumstances" (Richard Falkenrath, "Analytic Models and Policy Prescription: Understanding Recent Innovation in U.S. Counterterrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24 [2001]: 164). We would also add that recent articles in this journal do not indicate a monovocal diatribe against the "terror from the East." For instance, Peter Chalk, in his "Separatism and Southeast Asia: The Islamic Factor in Southern Thailand, Mindanao, and Aceh," argues rightly, we think: "The force of modernization pursued so vigorously by Southeast Asian states has, in many respects, aggravated the situation by undermining [older forms of horizontal community solidarity and hierarchical patriarchal sociality] traditional authority and socio-economic structures. This is especially true in remote, outlying areas that have suffered from administrative neglect and, in some cases outright exploitation, as a result of development programs whose prime purpose has been to further the interests and preferences of the dominant community. For these regions, the unifying ethos of secular modernization has not only acted as a major stimulant for the basis of a new sense of communal identity (ethnic, religious, or both); it has also worked to reinforce the separatist 'credentials' of local rebel groupings. The tendency of Southeast Asian governments to periodically crack down on outbursts of communal identity with draconian countermeasures . . . has merely served to further heighten this sense of regional alienation" (*Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24 [2001]: 242).

20. Brannan, Esler, and Strindberg, "Talking to 'Terrorists,'" 4.

21. See www.gzero.net/osamatron/osamatron.html and www.funblaze.com/media/osama/osama.shtml.

22. See M. Jacqui Alexander, "Not Just (Any)*Body* Can Be a Citizen: The Politics of Law, Sexuality, and Postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas," *Feminist Review* 48 (autumn 1994): 5–23; and V. Spike Petersen, "Sexing Political Identities: Nationalism as Heterosexism," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 1 (June 1999): 34–65. For a discussion of how queerness is produced for and through the nation-state, see Jasbir Puar, "Transnational Configurations of Desire: The Nation and Its White Closets," in *The Making and Unmaking of Whiteness*, ed. Birgit Brander Rasmussen et al. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2001), 167–83.

23. See www.andrewsullivan.com, Daily Dish, for responses to Mark Bingham's heroism as well as the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy of the military. For example, one gay man wrote: "You see, whether I admitted it consciously or not, one of my problems with gays in the military was not only the unit cohesion issue, but also the sense that gays just couldn't cut it. Well, as we found out last week, Mark Bingham could cut it. He's a hero, plain and simple. I simply can't say to myself anymore that gays have no place in the military" (September 22, 2001). On September 14, 2001, Bush authorized but did not compel the secretary of defense to consider a "stop-loss" order that could potentially suspend gay discharges. The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue, Don't Harass" order was never repealed nor suspended.

24. See, for example, Michelangelo Signorile, "Like the Taliban, America's

Middle East Allies Tyrannize Gays and Women Hate Crimes," villagevoice.com/issues/0140/signorile.php.

25. For example, GLAAD protested the homophobic caption, but neglected to voice any concern for the racist implications of the image. See www.GLAAD.org.

26. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313. The irony, if not hypocrisy, of George W. Bush coming out against the misogyny of the Taliban has been pointed out by Barbara Ehrenreich in her article, "Veiled Threat": "Feminists can take some dim comfort from the fact that the Taliban's egregious misogyny has finally been noticed. For years, the oppression of Afghan women was a topic for exotic listservs and the occasional forlorn Internet petition. As recently as May 2001, for example, President Bush congratulated the ruling Taliban for banning opium production and handed them a check for $43 million—never mind that their regime accords women a status somewhat below that of livestock" (www.latimes.com/news/opinion/la-110401ehrenreich.story). In this article, Ehrenreich puts forward a number of explanatory models to account for the misogyny of "Islamic fundamentalism." She notes that the increase of women in unskilled, low-waged labor under globalization and the consequent mass "lumpenization" of men in developing countries have led to a global crisis in masculinity. She argues, rightly, that it would be a mistake to take Islamic fundamentalism out of the context of other fundamentalisms, such as Hindu, Christian, or Jewish, where we can see a reaction to a global, Western modernity that always in specific ways targets women.

27. See Elisabeth Bumiller, "First Lady to Speak about Afghan Women," *New York Times*, November 16, 2001. In a similar vein, Global Exchange is now offering, in celebration of International Women's Week, a special tour by and for women to Afghanistan called "Courage and Tenacity: A Women's Delegation to Afghanistan." One can meet with Afghan women in refugee camps, visit the underground schools for girls and the newly reopened women's bathhouses, and meet with female professionals such as doctors and government officials. See www.globalexchange.org.

28. For an astute analysis of the complexities of feminist organizing, see Sharon Lerner, "What Women Want: Feminists Agonize over War in Afghanistan," *Village Voice*, November 6, 2001. See also Sonera Thobani, "War Frenzy"; and Paola Bacchetta et al., "Transnational Feminist Practices against War," both in "Creating an Archive: September 11: A Feminist Archive," *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 2 (March 2002): 250–315.

29. Gary Levin, "More TV Shows Work Attacks into Plots," *USA Today*, October 17, 2001, www.usatoday.com/life/enter/tv/2001-10-16-plotlines.htm.

30. "*West Wing* Airs Attacks Show," news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/entertainment/tv_and_radio/newsid_1579000/1579439.stm; see also Tom Shales, "*The West Wing* Assumes the Role of Moral Compass," *Washington Post*, October 5, 2001.

31. Shales, "*West Wing*."

32. As in the title of the article cited above.

33. Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts on War and Death," trans. E. Colburn Mayne, in *Collected Papers*, ed. Joan Riviere (New York: Basic, 1959), 4:293–94.

34. See Joan McKinney, "Cooksey: Expect Racial Profiling," *Advocate*, September 19, 2001, www.theadvocate.com/news/story.asp?storyID=24608. McKinney writes: "U.S. Rep. John Cooksey, R-Monroe, told a network of Louisiana radio stations Monday that someone 'wearing a diaper on his head' should expect to be interrogated in the investigation of terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and New York City." Apparently Cooksey did not retract his remarks, stating: "If I see someone [who] comes in that's got a diaper on his head and a fan belt wrapped around the diaper on his head, that guy needs to be pulled over." See also "SMART Calls for Action against Cooksey," www.sikhmediawatch.org, reporting a national letter-writing and telephone campaign protesting Cooksey's remarks. SMART (the Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force), founded in 1996 to promote the fair and accurate portrayal of Sikh Americans and the Sikh religion in American media and society, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. Its mission is to combat bigotry and prejudice, protect the rights and religious freedoms of Sikh Americans, and provide resources that empower the Sikh American community.

35. See "Understanding Turbans," seattletimes.nwsource.com/news/lifestyles/links/turbans_27.html.

36. See "SMART Initiates Airport Educational Campaign, Requests Community Involvement"; and "SMART Encourages Community Members to Educate Local Airport Security Personnel about Sikhs," November 16, 2001, www.Sikhnet.com/s/AttackonAmerica. Stating that many cases of "turban-removal have occurred at small or mid-size airports" like Raleigh-Durham, Albany, and Phoenix, but also at larger airports such as JFK, SMART urges Sikhs to initiate educational forums for security personnel and airline employees about turbans and Sikhism and has developed presentations and other resources for this purpose. See also "Federal Aviation Administration to Ensure New Security Procedures That Preserve and Respect the Civil Rights of All Americans," November 19, 2001, www.Sikhnet.com. The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) issued a set of directives detailing methods for conducting airport security based on information presented by the Sikh Coalition and other Sikh organizations (SCORE, Sikh Communications, SMART, and USSA) "about the racial profiling that has caused turban-wearing Sikh Americans to be denied air transportation while being publicly humiliated and embarrassed." "This kind of treatment to loyal Americans makes many feel humiliated, naked in public, victimized and most important, unwelcome in the country that many of us were born in," said Harpreet Singh, director of community relations of the Sikh Coalition. "It is especially upsetting since terrorists take great pains to wear typical American clothing in order to not stand out. We are grateful that the FAA has taken such a firm stand against this type of racial profiling as it is against everything America and Americans stand for." See also www.sikhcoalition.org/FAAGuidelines.pdf; www.sikhcoalition.org/airports.ppt; and "Your Rights and Avenues of Action as a Victim of Airport Profiling," www.sikhcoalition.org/AirportProfiling.pdf.

37. For example, the Sikhs of Richmond Hill held a parade (*Nagar Kirtan*) on December 1, 2001, stating: "After September 11, 2001, many people have mistaken Sikhs for Muslims and Arab Americans with the attacks on New York and Washington. This is one way for Sikh Americans to educate their communities about themselves and Sikhism." See "National Sikh Group Adds to Reward," Associated Press state and local wire, November 29, 2001: "A national Sikh organization has added $5,000 to a reward fund in the case of a Sikh temple

destroyed by arson. The money from the Washington, D.C.–based Sikh council brings to $15,000 a reward fund for information leading to an arrest and conviction in the case. The main building of the religious center, a 100-year-old converted farmhouse, was destroyed by fire early November 18. Officials last week determined the fire was deliberately set and are considering the fire a possible hate crime, a federal offense." Since September 11, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, the FBI, and U.S. attorneys' offices have investigated over 250 "backlash" incidents involving violence or threats against Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, Sikh Americans, South Asian Americans, and individuals perceived to be members of these communities. As of December 3, there were 217 pending FBI investigations—121 (56 percent) were incidents that had occurred within the first seven days after September 11, and 179 (82 percent) within the first eighteen days after September 11. In the month of November, there were only four reported incidents that resulted in FBI investigations. See www.usdoj.gov/crt/nordwg.html for other information on the division's Initiative to Combat Backlash Discrimination and www.eeoc.gov for statements from the participants at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's public hearing on employment discrimination since September 11. See also Orith Goldberg, "Valley Sikh's Beating Branded As Hate Crime," *LA Daily News*, December 8, 2001.

38. See "Sikh Representatives Meet U.S. Congressional Leaders," www. sikhnet.com/s/SikhMemorialDC. On December 11, three months to the day after the tragedy, Sikh leadership from the across the United States and Canada gathered under the dome of the U.S. Capitol Building for the first annual "One Nation United Memorial Program" sponsored by the Washington–based Sikh Council on Religion and Education. The program included senators, members of Congress, government officials, and top leadership from commerce, labor, and the interfaith communities. This was the first event of its kind hosted by the Sikh community in Washington. New York senator Hillary Rodham Clinton stated: "We will always remember the sacrifices that were made by the Sikh Community in the wake of the terrible terrorist attacks of September 11. No community suffered greater loss as a reaction to the terrible losses" of September 11.

39. For examples of Hindu nationalist lobbying against financial aid to Pakistan, see Online Resource for Indian-Americans, www.indiatogether.org/us/lobby.htm. See also www.usindialobby.net. "Sikhs Respond to Representative Saxby Chambliss on Bigoted Comments," December 22, 2001, www.sikhnet. com/s/Chambliss. Sikhnet, Sikh American Association, Sikh Coalition, Sikh Council on Religion and Education (SCORE), SMART, and the Sikh Communications Council state: "As Sikhs and as Americans, we are deeply distressed about the comments that Representative Saxby Chambliss made November 19 to a group of law enforcement officers in Valdosta, Georgia. He alluded to 'turning the Sheriff loose to arrest every Muslim that crosses the state line.' We in America look to our elected officials for responsible leadership and guidance." About SCORE: Founded in 1998, the Sikh Council on Religion and Education, a think tank based in Washington, represents Sikhs in various forums and venues. From the group's inception, its leadership has been invited repeatedly by the White House, Congress, and various nongovernmental organizations to present the Sikh perspective. The Sikh Council fosters understanding through education and interfaith relations, promoting the concept of community and working to secure a just society for all.

40. "Anti-Terrorism Bill Could Impact Nonprofits," November 14, 2001, www.ombwatch.org/article/articleview/288/1/18. The USA Patriot Act (PL 107-56) could pose big problems for nonprofits, especially those that advocate changes in U.S. foreign policy or provide social services to individuals who become targets of government investigations. The central problem is a vague, overbroad definition of a new crime, "domestic terrorism." In addition, greatly expanded search and surveillance powers can be invoked under a lowered threshold, requiring only that investigators assert that the information sought is relevant to a foreign intelligence investigation. For praise of the Patriot Act by Sikh organizations, see www.Sikhnet.com (October 31, 2001); and "Measure Supporting Sikh Americans Becomes Law," www.sikhcoalition.org. This law states: "The Civil Rights And Civil Liberties Of All Americans, Including Sikh Americans, Should Be Protected." S. Con. Res. 74 and H. Res. 255 condemn crimes against Sikh Americans in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks and mandate that acts of violence against Sikh Americans are to be prevented and prosecuted. "This law represents a significant milestone for Sikh Americans as it addresses the unique nature of the issues faced by Sikhs in the aftermath of September 11, and calls for protection of our civil liberties, along with those of all Americans," said Gurpreet Singh Dhillon, member of the advisory board of the Sikh American Association. (About the Sikh Coalition: "The Sikh Coalition was started as an effort to educate the greater North American community on Sikhs and Sikhism, the coalition seeks to safeguard the rights of all citizens as well as to promote the Sikh identity and communicates the collective interests of Sikhs to the community at large. The coalition serves as a resource for all organizations and individuals as well as a point of contact to Sikh people.")

41. USSA held a candlelight vigil in memory of the 1984 pogroms and September 11 on December 8, 2001, at Madison Square Park, New York City. See www.sikh.org/vigil; "Are Kashmiri Sikhs Next on India's Hit List—Again?" August 7, 2001, *Khalistan Calling*, www.khalistan-affairs.org/main/k_calling/kc08072001.htm; and "Thirty-five Sikhs Murdered in Chitthisinghpura, Kashmir, by the Indian Army," March 21, 2000, www.khalistan-affairs.org/main/k_calling/kc03212000.htm.

42. On South Asian racial formation, see Vijay Prashad, *The Karma of Brown Folk* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). For more nuanced analyses of gender, sexuality, and transnationalism, see Inderpal Grewal, *South Asian Transnationalities: Gender, Class, Ethnicity, and Diaspora* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002).

43. On the detainees and the connections between the 1996 Detention Act and the USA Patriot Act, see Mark Dow, "The New Secret War against Immigrants," January 30, 2002, www.gothamgazette.com/citizen/feb02/haiti-progres.shtml, as well as a special edition of *ColorLines*, "War on Terrorism: Profiled and Punished" (December 2001).

Theses on the Questions of War: History, Media, Terror

Why does the history of the East *appear* as a history of religions?
—Karl Marx

**Rosalind C.
Morris**

Then the war in which we refused to believe broke out, and brought—
disillusionment.
—Sigmund Freud

The spectacle of war is increasingly supplemented by that of "terrorism."
—Samuel Weber

In 1915, as the nations of Europe summoned the world to total war, calling up the bodies of their respective colonies in the service of emphatically European national goals, Sigmund Freud wrote his remarkable essay "Thoughts on War and Death."[1] Timely then (implicitly avoiding more Nietzschean aspirations), the essay has since been invoked in other times of war and repeatedly remarked for its continued timeliness and uncanny prescience. Freud framed the essay as a response to the sense of disillusionment that was afflicting the European noncombatants of the war, who believed that a civilized relation to war had been lost and that, in its stead, Europe had been returned to a violently primitive (and primitively violent) state. The task of "Thoughts for the Times" was at least partly to determine in what senses the war of Freud's time constituted a return to primitivity, and in what sense it marked the emergence of a new and particularly civilized form of barbarism.

We might pose for ourselves a similar task today, as we are returned to war, and as the events of September 11 are swept into a discourse that imagines such return as a return to the possibility of just war. Freud was not concerned with just war, of course, but with civilized war, with a question of means rather than ends. And he was responding to a sense of disillusionment that is, for the most part, lacking in the United States, where the affect of shock predominates. Disillusionment, for Freud, entailed both the colloquial sentiment of disappointment and malaise, but also the more rigorously etymological sense of revelation. Turning on this word, his essay asks what the war reveals about the civilized nations of Europe, and finds that their disappointment is misplaced, for they have been

deluded about the nature and extent of their own advancement. First, however, he defines what a civilized war might have been.

The delineation is simple, though it contains virtually all of the elements that would later be formalized under the Geneva Conventions. First, says Freud, a civilized war immunizes noncombatants against injury and suffering to the greatest extent possible. It also protects their property, which remains sacrosanct even when territorial jurisdiction is in question at the national level. Second, a civilized war must respect children and save them from injury, for they are the ones with whom future generations will live in peace, at the end and after war. And finally, a civilized war must recognize the international institutions by which the termination of war will be effected and through which war will be metamorphosed into trade. Thus a civilized war, for Freud, is one that maintains a distinction between war and "not-war," that anticipates its own termination, and that paradoxically acknowledges the institutions that will enframe and limit it. In other words, civilized war understands itself to be encompassed by its other, to be sustainable only when subsumed in and by "not-war" (which is not, in the end, reducible to peace). Freud does not raise here the demand that the international law to which even combatants of a civilized war must submit be enforceable, a fact that would reverse his formula for the dependence of war on not-war, returning him to a more Hobbesian position. But he claims (with Clausewitz, among others) that war cannot limit itself, and that unlimited war is indistinguishable from criminality, from murderousness.

If Freud's contemporaries were disillusioned, we are shocked. Neither they nor we could imagine the eruption of that kind of war that respects neither noncombatants nor children, neither property nor the institutions of international law. But if what disillusioned Europeans was the emergence of such civilized barbarism in the middle of Europe, as a function of European failure, what shocks Americans now is the arrival of this mode of warfare on U.S. soil in the mode of an attack. For almost a century, the residents of the United States have clung to that illusion by which the barbarism of civilization's total war was imagined as something out there, over there, as something fundamentally foreign. Having now appeared in the United States, this war is rendered foreign again, and the foreignness of this kind of warfare is instituted and shored up by the discourses of civilizational difference. For this very reason, the United States must deny that it is at war in the very moment that it is felt to be under attack. For this very reason, President Bush's initial declarations of a state of war were quickly displaced by a complex and ambivalent discourse of exceptional war, of pseudowar. The war against terrorism, like that against drugs, is not a war in the conventional sense but is, instead, an assertion

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that one's opponent is inadequate to civilized war. In a war against drugs or terrorism, one is at war against crime and criminality, against that which constitutes the outside of civilized war. In this sense, the war against terrorism is at least partly a war against the end of civilized war; it both seeks and surpasses the possibility of a terminal conflict. It is, as the U.S. president's men repeatedly say, a war without end, an "all-out war."

If we were not shocked but disillusioned, we—including both Americans as well as those in the West who, as British prime minister Tony Blair put it, are all Americans now—would have to ask not only where this event came from (what caused it, who perpetrated it), but what were the conditions of possibility for its emergence. We would have to ask not only about the criminal status of Osama bin Laden (a legitimate but inadequate question), but also about the histories of a "global civilization" in which the attacks on the World Trade Center and the bombings of Afghanistan's cities constitute two moments in a process that has impelled us all to the brink of total ("all-out") war. We would have to ask why total war seems the only solution to a criminal act, why murderousness cannot be contained by anything other than a war of civilizations. The present essay attempts to respond to that possibility, to harvest the bitter fruit of disillusionment by tracking the histories of a complex relation of overlapping complicities. These complicities entail (in different concatenations) the forces of Christianity and Islam, of socialist internationalism and Islamic internationalism, of colonialism and anticolonialism, of war and crime, of spectacular power and terrorist violence. It takes off from Walter Benjamin's notion that the task of radical historiography cannot be reduced to a recounting of events in homogeneous time, but that it must "seize hold of memory as its flashes up at a moment of danger," and "grasp . . . the constellation that [one's] own era has formed with an earlier one."[2] It attempts to understand the present moment of danger by taking account of previous wars and previous critical (historical materialist) analyses of those wars (especially the Crimean and the Vietnamese anti-imperial wars), wherein the Eastern Question and the Woman Question—those twin pillars of our present war—constituted the axes of orientation and the ground of a relation to war.

Freud's war, in which no one had dared to believe, ended without eliminating the possibility of its own recurrence. After the advent of that first total war, only the specter of absolute annihilation of the victor could effect the limit that European civilization had failed to produce for itself. That occurred with World War II, of course, the second coming and perhaps the perfection of civilizational barbarism. But World War II culminated in an event whose enormity seemed at last capable of instituting what the psyche could not achieve: a prohibition on total war. Although

there were many instances in which the oxymoron of limited nuclear warfare was contemplated following World War II (and not only at the Bay of Pigs but also in Southeast Asia),[3] the postwar period was generally characterized by a presumption that total war could not be won and that therefore it must be avoided (whether through intensified arms buildups and policies of massive retaliation or through other means). This did not in any way inhibit war per se, but it did somewhat circumscribe the scale and extension of military combat. The present war, the war of the new millennium, which imagines itself as infinite in scope and endless in duration, constitutes something of a break with Cold War policy even as it seems to rely on the rhetoric and ideology (and the personnel) of the Cold War. The rendering of this war as a kind of return to the possibility of a just (American) war works in a doubled fashion, summoning memory while inviting a pleasurable amnesia. It both effaces the history of America's undeclared war in and on Southeast Asia, and it restores the possibility of total war in the aftermath of such forgetting. Unbridled by institutionalized socialist opposition, in the impossibly (conservative) utopian space of a posthistorical moment wherein opposition is increasingly represented as criminality, total war has once again become thinkable.

We could perhaps have seen this return to war coming. For the past ten years, American popular cultural production has been the site of a repeated and cumulative displacement, by which Vietnam has been supplanted by World War II as the right object of cultural representation and investment. The quagmire, the decadent violence, the grotesquerie and deception of American practice in Vietnam, so indelibly inscribed in films like *Apocalypse Now* or *Full Metal Jacket*, or in novels like Michael Herr's *Dispatches*, has now been banished by the spectacle of a glorious and heroic kind of warfare, instantiated in films like *Saving Private Ryan* or *Pearl Harbor*. But whether or not we prepared ourselves, we have turned to war again. How has this occurred? Why has there not been more opposition? To answer those questions, one needs to understand the extraordinary insight of Marx's often overlooked writings on the "Eastern Question." One needs, for example, to understand what he meant when he described the unfolding of the Crimean War as the unfolding of a holy war, in which the true (nonreligious) nature of the conflict could be discerned. What would it mean to recognize the unfolding of the current war *as a holy war* as a revelation of its true (nonreligious) nature?

The Bush administration's repeated (if oftentimes retracted) reference to the present war as "a crusade," called momentarily by the name of "Infinite Justice," stages this war as a religious war, and even as a holy war. It justifies this rhetoric through reference to the principle of self-defense, that process by which one is incited to war, and incited to

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become that which one is not, by the hostile acts of another. Thus, the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11 are represented as the origins, indeed as the originary moments, of a war that is deemed both just and necessary, although its necessity is conceived less in terms of "positive" ends (the accomplishment of "peace" or U.S. hegemony) than in terms of the "negative" end that it will endlessly defer: the triumph of militant Islam. What is at stake here, now, is therefore not just a return to war, but a return to holy war, for holy war is that kind of war in which justice and necessity are merged in a theological mode. What makes this war necessary, from the perspective of its U.S. defenders, is that a Western, fundamentally Christian nation-state has been confronted by a politicized and militarized Islamic entity whose nature is precisely *not national*. This war originates not merely in an attack on America, then, but in an attack on the principle of nationhood, of which America claims to be the exemplary instance. Tony Blair understood this well, recognizing before anyone else that the present war is in many respects a war for the continuation of a form of globality that is deeply, perhaps irreducibly, American.

Of course, the idea of a holy war, so redolent of the premodern, is the sign of an undifferentiated terrain in which the theological and the political are fused, not yet rendered distinct by the putative autonomization of religion, and the putative secularization of politics.[4] A return to holy war therefore threatens or seems to threaten the modern West with the collapse of the opposition between the theological and the political, with the return of religion in the place of politics (because secularism is under threat from a politicized religion). Were we not shocked (and who could not be shocked in the face of such loss), however, we might be disillusioned, and therefore stripped of the necessary illusion that sustains secular modernity. In this way, disillusionment acts as revelation: of a history in which secularism has been the means by which Protestant Christianity has been made to appear neutral in order that it become global. Yet we cannot combat the present form of a return to war simply by invoking the idea or the cause of historicization. And we will certainly fail if historicization is reduced to the explanation of militant Islamism's rise (on the basis of support by rightist regimes, anti-Soviet militarization, or even to U.S. foreign policy).

Nor will we be aided by an analysis of the most banal and obviously odious caricatures that circulate in right-wing contexts as the flimsy justifications of a will to violence. My purpose here is to understand what resources are available within leftist discourse for an opposition to war, and to this war in particular. Necessarily, this entails a confrontation with the limits of leftist discourse as well—its prejudices, its failures of imagi-

A return to holy war therefore threatens or seems to threaten the modern West with the collapse of the opposition between the theological and the political, with the return of religion in the place of politics.

nation, its habits of Occidentalism. My thesis is simple: that the history of the present (including the present relation of the Left to this war) must be understood in terms of at least two prior moments in which the questions of freedom, internationalism, and women's emancipation have been posed. These are the moments of the Crimean War and of anticolonial nationalism, the moments of Marx and of Ho Chi Minh's intercolonialist rereading of both Marx and Lenin. I proceed from the presumption that September 11 announced itself as an unprecedented event, both in form and scale, but that its specularization of violence relied on the merging of tactics derived from both colonial terror and guerrilla resistance. Those tactics, as will be seen, were fundamentally gendered and emphatically sexed. The Eastern Question was always also the Woman Question, even for revolutionary Socialists and anticolonial internationalists. To understand the current moment as one in which the Woman Question dominates, constituting as it does the justificatory rationale for both Islamist and anti-Islamist policy, requires a recognition that this question is not interior to Islamism, but that it is perhaps the most important site of complicity and mutual entailment in a war that encompasses us all. The Woman Question is, in fact, the hinge or point at which a politics of the nation become that of international relations. It is there that absolute freedom and absolute lack of freedom turn on each other. Which is to say, the Woman Question is also always the Eastern Question. Let us then turn to the Eastern Question in order to understand better the Woman Question and the form of its specularization.

The Eastern Question

In his famous "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions," V. I. Lenin identified "pan-Islamism" as a force to contend with and a threat to the project of revolution, at least in those "backward states and nations, in which feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations predominate." The threat of pan-Islamism and similar trends, was, for him, their capacity to contaminate "liberation movement[s] against European and American imperialism with an attempt to strengthen the positions of the khans, landowners, *mullahs*," and the like.[5] "Theses" was written for delivery to the Comintern in June 1920. By April 1924, Trotsky could speak on the occasion of the third anniversary of the Communist University for Toilers of the East, and invoke Britain's support of pan-Islamism in Turkey and Afghanistan, and especially its effort to restore the caliphate, as a source of affiliation between the East and the Soviet Union as well as the Third International. The "toppling" of the "left national

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bourgeois wing" and the restoration "to power of the darkest and most reactionary element imbued with the worst prejudices of pan-Islamism," which Trotsky described as "two forces in their living conflict," could only precipitate that "catastrophic" transformation for which the students of the university would act as members of a "class leaven."[6]

For Lenin, and even for Trotsky, whose thought on revolution was neither as supple nor as theoretically coherent as was Lenin's, the Eastern Question—like the Negro Question—was one of enormous complexity, never reducible to a simple opposition between revolutionary socialist and Islamic internationalism (though this opposition would structure the relationships between communist or workers' parties and Islamic revolutionary parties in Iran, and other Islamic states in the decades that would follow).[7] The opposition—and there was one—rested on a shared critique of Western colonialism and imperialism, but emerged in the different analyses of property and of gender that informed either's form of internationalism (neither of which was as totalized as this schematic history suggests). To the extent that pan-Islamism offered a critique of the nationalist imperialism of Western states, it could, in Trotsky's analysis, be mobilized by the Socialists. Indeed, the metaphorics of leaven suggest that Trotsky himself imagined the project of the university as the transformation of a revolutionary potential interior to pan-Islamism, one that was nonetheless vulnerable to decay or dissolution—or, in Trotsky's own language, "contamination."

If, following World War I and the establishment of the Second International, the language and the problematization of pan-Islamism in Marxist discourse is oriented by the possibility of an alliance and, subsequently, a possible co-optation of Islamic internationalism, it nonetheless partakes of an earlier analysis according to which pan-Islamism is seen less as a mode of internationalism than as a mode of prenationalism or even extranationalism. Marx himself wrote sporadically on the question of Islam and Islamism, his most extensive comments appearing in the correspondence on "the Eastern Question," which was published in the *New York Tribune* during the years of the Crimean War, 1853–56, sometimes as letters and sometimes as headline stories. Perhaps the most notable aspect of these writings is that Marx identifies the religious claims of the competing sides as dissimulations of more primary geopolitical claims, while at the same time interpreting the conflict's unfolding *as a holy war* as a manifestation of its true nature: "The war has at last opened on the Danube—a war of religious fanaticism on both sides, of traditional ambition with the Russians, of life and death with the Turks."[8] If, for Marx, "these sacred rows merely conceal a profane battle, not only of nations but of races," and if the truth of the war is to be found in its religious polarity, this is not

because of any confusion or contradiction on Marx's part. It is because religion is the "reversed world-consciousness" of a "lost" or alienated humanity, one whose commitment to the idea of human essence must find its "fantastic realization" in the false truths of faith.[9] This analysis of religion, so familiar from the 1844 "Contributions to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," is easily misconstrued in sentimental terms, such that the "heart of a heartless world" appears as mere consolation for the injuries of exploitation. This would render it exterior and supplementary, whereas the point of the "Critique," like the *German Ideology*, is to posit religion as the unmediated re-presentation of an actually alienated humanity. It is in this sense that religion has a truth, one that is both inadequate and nonrelative (it is not just one truth among many). And it is for this reason that the Crimean War's becoming a holy war is, in some sense, a revelation of its true nature.

There are two moments entailed by this revealing assumption about religious appearance. One is practical and historical and has to do with the consolidation of Islamic alliances in Europe. The other has to do with the entrenchment of two counterposed ideologies: absolute individual freedom and absolute lack of freedom. In 1853, Marx could write:

> The Turkish army, then, may truly be said to be a mustering of all the available forces of Mohammedism in Europe, Africa, and Western Asia. The hosts of two religions which have long struggled for supremacy in the East, the Russo-Greek and the Mohammedan, are now fronting each other, the one summoned by the arbitrary will of a single man—the other by the fatal force of circumstances; according to their mutual creeds, as the Russo-Greek Church rejects the dogma of predestination, while Mohammedism centres upon fatalism.[10]

In these and other passages, one observes that the accusation of religious fanaticism has no intrinsic attachment to Islam or "Mohammedism." It is an attribute of both sides, each of which represents to and for itself an ideal image, albeit an inverted one. If, beyond its own self-image, there is something particular about Mohammedan fanaticism in the writings on the Eastern Question, it is not fanaticism per se but the merging of that fanaticism with the social form of the mob. In this merging, claims Marx, a regressive power arises, one that turns back the progress of history: "The fanaticism of Islam, supported principally by the Turkish mob in a few great cities . . . overturn[s] any progress that might have been made." He continues, unabashedly ethnocentric, as follows:

> The principle power of the Turkish population in Europe . . . lies in the mob of Constantinople and a few other large towns. It is essentially Turkish, and

though it finds its principal livelihood by doing jobs for Christian capitalists, it maintains with great jealousy the imaginary superiority and real impunity for excesses which the privileges of Islam confer upon it as compared with Christianity. . . . And certainly there will be, sooner or later, an absolute necessity for freeing one of the finest parts of this continent from the rule of a mob, compared with which the mob of Imperial Rome was an assemblage of sages and heroes.[11]

There are many factors adduced to explain this regressive force in the mob of Islam, but one of the most potent is the absence of private property in land other than that possessed by the "king." In Marx's mind, as expressed in his letters to Engels, this lack of private property is "the real key, even to the Oriental Heaven." He is citing François Bernier,[12] but he is answering his own extraordinary question, "Why does the history of the East *appear* as a history of religions?" And this question is posed to Engels in response to the latter's claim that "Mohammed's religious revolution, like *every* religious movement, was *formally a reaction*, an alleged return to the old, the simple."[13]

Engels's letter to Marx is, in brief, a discourse on the history of cultural form and in particular, on the relationship between mobility, invasion, urbanization, and empire building. In this discourse Engels argues that Mohammedism is precisely lacking in any distinctive character that would differentiate it from the Babylonians or Chaldeans or the traditions generated by the Tatar or Afghan invasions, and it is here that his invocation of religion serves to produce or restore an exception that his history has dispelled, an exception whose form is restoration. It is, in fact, the resemblance between the Arabians and the Egyptians or Assyrians that explains so much of the Mohammedan invasion for Engels. Mohammedism is "like every religion," and religion is invoked here as a general instance of illusion, as "religion, that fake." Yet in the progression of the text, Mohammedism acquires the force of a certain exemplarity; it ends up being the marker of a particular difference—to the extent that Marx, writing within the fortnight, can ask the question of why the history of the East *appears* as a history of religions, and answer it with reference to the absence of private property in land.

The question of property will become significant in both Marxian and non-Marxian treatments of war and violence, and I will return to it below. For now, I want to linger on the issue of Islamic exceptionalism. For the exception, which seems initially to flee Marx's interrogation, is both reconsolidated and transferred in his response to Engels. Based in a lack of property in land, the exception manifests itself as a lack of differentiation between military and civilian populations, a relatively high degree of militarization marked by great armies, and a corollary mobility

among not only military personnel but also the merchants and other classes of persons, and women, who serve and rely upon them.[14] These qualities constitute the signs of an Oriental "essence," as Marx sees it. They sustain the logic of a civilizational development that originates in movement and invasion. They are also the qualities that will haunt future discourse on Islamism on the Left and the Right. Invasiveness, the abstracted experience of the other's expansionism, will be posited as the definitive attribute of a society inadequately committed to the idea of private property in land. But so will that corollary absence of a distinction between civilian and military populations. Indeed, an investment in this latter distinction, which becomes the very ground of modern Western conceptions of civilized warfare (already discussed in relation to Freud), leads inevitably to a representation of Islam as an always already uncivilized entity, fundamentally incapable of achieving that separation of the theological and the political whose remarking lies at the base of modern Western states, and whose purest manifestation lies in the mode of its warfare. In the absence of such distinctions, Islamic polities will be deemed not opponents in civilized war but sites of criminality, confusers of the opposition between war and not-war, origins of a resurgent barbarism. But all is not simple. Marx's analysis ironically finds in this very exception, this incapacity to separate the theological and the political, the grounds for a similitude between East and West, one that implicitly informs the later critical writings of those, like Walter Benjamin and Jacques Derrida, who question the secular claims of Western modernity.

To repeat, Islam is like every other religion for Marx, and to this extent it is also exemplary of religion in general, but it is also the exemplary instance of a type of historical development. This development, in which fanaticism attaches itself to a mob, is unique with regard to Islam because Islam has its origins, for Marx, in that mobile, incipiently militarist and creatively invasive social formation whose representatives are the Tatars and the Afghans. That is to say, the risk of Islamic (as opposed to Christian) fanaticism for Marx is that it emerges in the mode of a real repetition and even of a return to origins, and not merely in the fantasy of a repetition or a false return. This is the untrue truth of Engels's frustrated remark about Mohammedism's apparently reactionary status, identified by Marx as the reason for the history of the East's appearance as a history of religions. And herein lie the seeds of an argument that will conceive Islam as always already "fundamentalist," though this latter term will not be coined until it is called up to explain developments in Protestant Christianity.[15]

It may help to recall here the Hegelian ground on which Marx's analysis of Islam is erected—not merely because of the continuities

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between their thought but because of the ways in which the Hegelian analysis of Islam, as a religion that seeks "world dominion" (like Christianity) and that lacks particularity or any authentic nationalist tendency (unlike Judaism)—haunts our contemporary predicament. In Hegel's reading, Islam is distinguished from Christianity by the form of its aspiration to universality. Whereas Christianity seeks dominion in the form of an "all-encompassing reality," Islamic dominion is "the One of thought," according to Hegel:

> Just as in Christianity it is said that God wills that all should come to a knowledge of the truth, so too in Islam the purpose is universal actualization, but of a spiritual nature, and individuals have their place in it as thinking, spiritual, free individuals; they are present in it, and the whole purpose is focused on them—it is not an external purpose. In this way they take the whole scope of the purpose into themselves. At the present stage, on the other hand, the purpose is still an external, empirical purpose, an all-encompassing purpose but on the plane of empirical reality—i.e., the purpose is a *world dominion*. The inherent purpose is one that is external to the individual, and it becomes ever more so the more that it is realized and externalized, so that the individual is merely subordinated to the purpose, merely *serves* it. [16]

The believer who merely serves a religious purpose, who is only the means for a project of world dominion is, of course, a slave of sorts, one whose servitude is ironically, in Hegel's reading, both fanatical and expansionist (Hegel speaks of the "formalism of expansion" in Islam).[17] Here, fanaticism is the privileging of belief over all else. Such belief is particular, and particularly so; it is belief in opposition to the demands of familial or national attachment. This kind of a belief, which opposes other social relations, is made possible in Islam, says Hegel, because "God's acceptance has occurred once and for all, and what replaces reconciliation and redemption is something that has implicitly *happened*, a choice, an election by grace, involving no freedom." It is, according to Hegel, a "view . . . grounded on power, a blind election, not an election made from the viewpoint of freedom."[18]

Less than three decades later, Marx's reference to the "dogma of predestination," the "fatalism" of Mohammedism, would constitute the radicalized citation (but a citation nonetheless) of an agonizingly knotted Hegelian premise. And lack of national or familial affiliation would find its figure in the mob, that formless mode of sociality in which all individuality is submerged, and all freedom obliterated. Crucially, the mark of this lack of affiliation is the willingness of the mob to be purchased, or persuaded by monetary means, to work for the Christian capitalist. In Marx's reading, the lack of local affiliations constitutes a certain kind of freedom

for the Muslims of Constantinople. It is that enslaving kind of freedom that makes any worker susceptible to capital. However, in this case, the ambiguous freedom is not alienation from the means of production, but rather is the inhabitation of a system in which private property does not obtain. The primary commitment to religion thus saves the Muslim from becoming completely subject to the capitalist because his freedom has been abandoned elsewhere, because it is always already abandoned in the past—to a future that originates there. Of course, such theological niceties fly in the face of the conversion experiences claimed by many new Muslims, and are utterly incapable of explaining the emergence of reform Islam or Islamism in places, like Indonesia, where the universal humanism of Islam may, at times, be congruent with nationalist programs aimed at the transcendence of more local, ethnic, or familial affiliation.[19] Nor can it accommodate the specifically nationalized forms of Islam or the sectarian differences that oppose Sunnism to Shi'ism, or Wahabism to other Islamic forms. Hegel, of course, was not offering an empirical history of Islam, and Marx, though writing about a history in which Islam would figure (albeit as the figure of a regression), was interested in the possibility of converting the mob into something else, in leavening a social form such that it would become truly international rather than spiritually universal.

Still, the question of freedom remained. In this context, it is imperative to recall that for Marx the Eastern Question is not the question of Islam, but is, instead, the question of a relation between Russo-Greek Christianity (and its fanaticism) and Turkish Mohammedism (and its fanaticism). This relation is the relation of two conceptions of freedom, but also two conceptions of dominion. And it would be resolved, or rather transposed, through an act of substitution and displacement, by which "Woman" became the site for deciding the question of both freedom and civilizational difference, for deciding the question of civilizational difference on the basis of women's freedom.

The Woman Question

Though Marx was not a Marxist, and though he could not have anticipated the form of institutionalization by which the Eastern Question would come to dominate the Communist University for the Toilers of the East, it is nonetheless more than coincidence that links the mob and the girl in Trotsky's 1924 discourse on the emerging conflict between Islamism and revolutionary socialism. Trotsky's "Tasks" lecture recounts the report of a female Turkish student who made an enormous impression upon the women of Kazan. For him, the episode evidenced "the strength and the

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essence of Bolshevism in that it addresses itself not to the labor bosses but to the mob, the underdogs, the millions and to the most oppressed of the oppressed." The incident also reminded him of another occasion on which he observed a "Turkic girl communist" addressing her young comrades, also girls, whose enthusiasm for the "passion of yesterday's slave of slaves," knew few bounds. It was on the basis of this encounter, proclaimed Trotsky, that he recognized the centrality of women and women's issues in the future of the East. In "the movement of the peoples of the East," he predicted, "woman will play a greater role than in Europe . . . because Eastern woman is incomparably more fettered, crushed and befuddled by prejudices than is the Eastern man and because new economic relations and new historical currents will tear her out of the old motionless relations with even greater force and abruptness than they will man."[20] He continues:

> the Eastern woman who is the most paralyzed in life, in her habits and in creativity, the slave of slaves, that she, having at the demand of the new economic relations taken off her cloak will at once feel herself lacking any sort of religious buttress; she will have a passionate thirst to gain new ideas, a new consciousness which will permit her to appreciate her new position in society. And there will be no better communist in the East, no better fighter for the ideas of the revolution and for the ideas of communism than the awakened woman worker.[21]

In this instance, the cloak was not the veil, but rather the "rotting piece of cloth" which is tradition, the "old prejudices, beliefs and customs."[22] Of course, coats and cloaks are enormously freighted images in this context, inevitably evoking Marx's famous reading of the transformations and translations of linen and coat on whose metaphoric ground Marx erected his theory of value. But Trotsky's allusion to Marx's *Capital* does not save it from a complicity with those anticommunist or bourgeois nationalist movements that would read the cloak of tradition more literally and make women's attire the site of both nostalgic investment and essentialist cultural revival. Partha Chatterjee's discussion of this process, by which women become the metonyms for cultural authenticity and the objects of sartorial regulation in nationalist India, is well known.[23] Dale Eickleman and James Piscatori have made related arguments about the politicization of veiling in Islamic contexts, as has Leila Ahmed.[24] The question of tradition as cloak or veil is an important one, insofar as it becomes the pivot in both nationalist rereadings of modernity and socialist exhortations to modernity, construed respectively as a demand for the restoration of propriety or as a denuding of illusion. But the Woman Question cannot be reduced to the veil or the cloak except insofar as this

very reduction is seen as a symptom of the larger and more profound processes by which the violation of women in a specular mode becomes a technology of domination.

There can be no doubt that the Woman Question is of incomparable significance for our present moment, providing, as it does, the putative justification for war and the means of assessing victory. For, just as British colonialism rationalized itself as "white men saving brown women from brown men," in Gayatri Spivak's agonizingly pointed summary, so too the American war proclaims itself the savior of Afghanistan's women, and finds evidence of its legitimacy and its success in the tearing off of veils and the enabling of public eroticism.[25] What I would like to suggest here is that the significance of this question is linked to the gendered structure of colonial relations and that the reemergence of the Woman Question in the new time of terror is not coincidental or contingent—rather, it is implicated in the very origin of modern "terrorism." It is therefore not to Trotsky but to Ho Chi Minh that one must turn.

Ho's own embrace of socialism is most frequently linked to his reading of Lenin's "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions,"[26] to which he penned his own response in the form of the "Report on the National and Colonial Questions at the Fifth Congress of the Communist International," and the later *French Colonization on Trial*. The bold accusation against the parties of the European nations in the "Report" was that, following their formal recognition of Lenin's call for solidarity with anti-colonial liberation movements, the efforts of European Communists had been "almost worthless." And this worthlessness, this doing "nothing at all," was counterposed in his reading to the "everything" that the "bourgeois class in the colonialist countries [had] done toward oppressing so many people enslaved by them."[27] In this light, he called for a publicity campaign, using the communist newspapers as organs of mass organization and consciousness raising around the colonial question. Ho's efforts in this regard were part of a broader project to establish a form of inter-colonial solidarity based on what Brent Hayes Edwards terms an anti-imperialist historiography.[28] He was joined in this labor by Lamine Seng-hor and other African radicals, whose influence is to be discerned almost everywhere in his copious commentaries on French colonialism, but per-haps especially in *French Colonization on Trial*.

Even today, after a century marked by the incessant refinement of cruelty, the text of *French Colonization on Trial* reads as a litany of nearly incomparable horror. Its rhetorical force is derived from a principle of massification, by which heaps of anecdotal testimony come to resemble the heaps of corpses whose incalculable deaths endlessly exceed the effort to calculate their value. In addition to the appropriation of resources, the

imposition of unjust taxes, the imprisonment of local inhabitants, the coercive recruitment of volunteers to staff armies serving national-colonial interests, Ho pays particular attention to the pedagogy of oppression. One can summarize his analysis of the "means of persuasion and coercion . . . which force everyone to comply" as being ultimately reducible to processes by which the bodies of the colonized are converted into signs of colonization that can then be transmitted. Ho notes that the precautionary "writing" with silver nitrate of an indelible number on the back or wrist of military recruits ensures that they will be answerable to their commander in chief and that the recruits become subject to the calls of colonial authority precisely to the extent that they become visible to both French and Indochinese eyes.[29] So too, Ho remarks the attachment of "customs stamps" to the bodies of men and women who have been made to stand naked before the customs officials and to submit to their sexual demands as the announcement of a proprietary relation which, at least in its aspiration, cannot be distinguished from any other slavery.[30]

Ho's analysis accords the abuse of women a special category. Indeed, he suggests that the technique of visual display received its most elaborate development in and through the exemplification of women, especially in North Africa. His discussion of "Blood Taxes," for example, focuses on the case of French officers in Senegal who answered the flight of young men (who were evading colonial service) by torturing their parents and arresting the young women of their villages. The women were stripped of their clothes (which were then burned before their eyes), then made to run through the district naked, during which forced "trot" they were beaten, as Ho quotes, "for an example."[31] Other explications of administrative injustice, the racialization of privilege, the conditions of labor, and the drugging of the Annamese also recite awful examples of the abuse of women. Even before writing *French Colonization on Trial*, Ho had published a piece entitled "Annamese Women and French Colonialism" in *Le Paria* (August 1, 1922).[32] It was a brief article, intended to make Ho's "Western sisters . . . realize both the nature of the 'civilizing mission' of capitalism, and the sufferings of their sisters in the colonies." At the end of his account, which describes the roasting of an old man on a fire and the rape of a woman and an eight-year-old girl by French soldiers, Ho remarks the awful detail of the girl's "stiffened left forearm raising a clenched fist to the indifferent sky." Such absolutely singular detail, in which both colonial terror and anticolonial resistance are figured, reveal a trait in Ho's short writings about atrocity, which generally enframe themselves as part of a pedagogic project proceeding to a kind of testimonial, the force of which exceeds any concluding frame. Nonetheless, in the longer treatise, the detail serves another purpose: to disclose the logic of

colonial terror in order that the still-incipient radicalism of the corpse's clenched fist, mute but signifying, be materialized and vivified.

In a section of *French Colonization on Trial* entitled "The Martyrdom of Native Women," Ho drives his argument about exemplary violence home by invoking another North African case, this one from Fetj-M'Zala, Algeria. There, according to Ho, the escape of a prisoner who had been arrested for theft and who continued to elude colonial police forces was followed by the summary detention of his female relations, aged twelve to seventy-five. These girls and women were systematically and repeatedly raped for more than a month by soldiers. Ho makes special note of the fact that "notables and heads of confraternities were forced to witness this spectacle. To impress them, so it was said."[33] Already atrocious as such, the acts assume their status as spectacle in the moment that they are performed *in order to be witnessed*. This is the moment when punishment, and indeed fear, are converted into terror proper, when a violence, even a sadistic one (Ho uses the term "colonial sadism" in both the Annamese women essay and *French Colonization*), becomes the means of its own surpassing. It is the moment when violence becomes both injury and sign, wound and wounding. This kind of terror, which coerces the male subjects of Algeria or Annam, Senegal or Saigon, into submission through the specularization of women's violation, performs a double violence and installs an awful patriarchal complicity, even as it emasculates the colonized male subjects of that complicity. For the violation of women, performed in an exemplary and spectacular mode, solicits patriarchal viewers as those kinds of viewers who can be wounded by the wounding of others, and who can feel this wounding as the assault on that which is proper to them. That is to say, the specularization of women's violation does not seek identification between the male spectator and the atrociously wounded woman, but rather situates the male viewer as someone who can feel that this is an attack upon his own rights and prerogatives, as well as his person and his affections.

The impresario of colonial violence therefore actualizes the social as the traffic in women, and, while deploying women as medium, denies the possibility of mediation, thereby conducting war without having to face the enemy directly. The enemy must look, must look upon this enactment of absolute power (as power over property in women), but he cannot exchange looks with his master. So it is that, through the spectacle of a violence performed on women, a native patriarchy is summoned and savaged, sexualized and emasculated. Wherever colonial domination has worked through this mechanism, it produces an inexorable link between terrorism and gender. Our current belief that the war on terrorism is the war to liberate women is a misrecognition of this historical fact, whose ori-

gins are to be found less in any indigenous oppression of women (though there is indigenous oppression of women, whose overturning can yet be supported) than in the histories of colonialism to which the United States is heir.[34]

This does not mean that women are merely the media of exchange, the instruments of a violently specular and asymmetrical relation between colonized and colonizing men. I am speaking here of a structural relation, not, as Spivak reminds us when performing her own analysis of the discourses surrounding sati, of any actual collective fantasies or experiences.[35] Colonized women, violated as they often were, did not simply receive the abuses meted out by colonialism, and as the histories of resistance in Algeria and Southeast Asia attest, many women were emphatically and politically resistant to French authorities, and many were significant figures in the radical movements of their days. But just as a structural relationship cannot be confused with, or collapsed into, the psychological experiences of individuals or the collective fantasies of groups, so the acts of individual women do not constitute an exception or a limit to structural logics. One can say that women were used by these structures and that such structures took place in and through women, without suggesting that women became their agents and without foreclosing the possibility of an agency outside or against such "occupation." And colonial terror was indeed such an occupation, the enactment of a violence that was internally divided and that sought and produced divisions both in the social fabric and in the psyches of those on whom it worked its awful, malevolent magic.

Spectacle in Question: Technology and Terror

Colonial terror, then, is violence of a particular sort, neither purely punitive nor wholly disciplinary in Foucault's terms. It is often cruel, and it is always public. Long after the *amende honorable* was abolished in France, it was being applied—with force, as it were—in the colonies. Colonial terror retains the body as the object of the penal process and continues to rely on the public spectacle as the means of inculcating order without positing a conscience, or an interiority, in colonial subjects. If it is true that the "slackening of the hold on the body" and the "decline of spectacle" marked the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Europe, as Foucault argues, it remained profoundly central to colonial regimes.[36] Yet as I have already suggested, the logic of colonial terror differed from the *amende honorable* in its reliance on media and in its instrumentalization of women as the means for extending and amplifying the message of power.

Colonial terror might therefore be said to restore or redeem penal spectacle by mediatizing it in a gendered mode. In the examples cited above, it works by inserting a substitute for the criminal and by relaying that substitution to a viewing public. So a woman, or several women, may suffer the punishments that a colonial regime deems are due to their male relatives. In that moment a new relationship is produced. First, the contiguity of the relation allows for the display of a presumption that colonial subjects are collectively responsible for the deeds of individuals, and that they are linked to each other by contact and association. Second, and on the basis of the first, viewers are allowed to dissociate themselves from this collective responsibility by substituting the relation of ownership for that of contiguity, so that, for example, the violation of family or community members becomes the violation of "their" (the viewers') women, while causality is attributed to the so-called criminal. Here, one observes, brown men are asked to fantasize themselves as being saved from other brown men in the moment that white men violate brown women. This is not just any moment, of course. It is the moment of industrial modernity's extension, the moment of technology, and the moment of the global economy's financialization (a process about which Trotsky could already write with some certainty in 1924).

This mediatization in the form of substitution seems to lead, inexorably, to a situation in which the medium of power's message becomes virtually irrelevant. At the very least, it becomes secondary to the primary assertion of power's capacity to manifest itself later, in another location. However, this is not a mode of sacrifice, in which the destruction of the medium of communication is necessary for the production of that relation. Here, by contrast, the mediatization of terror announces the mobility and the instrumentality of violence in the interest of a power that is effective only to the extent that it can convert itself into such violence. In colonial contexts, spectacle produces that dispersed power that we have come to associate with the "milder" and more occult forms of decorporealized punishment, but because colonial regimes are not in any way accountable to colonized populations, the question of public responsibility does not have to be posed. Public violence and accountability of the state for its violence do not entail each other outside of the metropole.

To the extent that the gendered mediatization of colonial terror allows the colonial regime to use (up) its medium, it performs the triumph of ends over means. But it does so by making a spectacle of means. In this sense, it enacts a logic that Hannah Arendt, invoking Engels, summarized as the peculiar interrelation of war and technology, a relation determined by the fact that violence "needs *implements*": "The very substance of violent action is ruled by the means-end category whose chief characteristic

if applied to human affairs, has always been that the end is in danger of being overwhelmed by the means which it justifies and which are needed to reach it."[37] At a time when "the technical development of the implements of violence [had] reached the point where no political goal could conceivably correspond to their destructive potential or justify their actual use in armed conflict," Arendt could offer a theory that turned Clausewitz's dictum—that war is the continuation of peace by other means—on its head, saying that, by 1968, the technologization of warfare had inaugurated a condition in which peace had become "the continuation of war by other means."[38] The specter of nuclear annihilation, which had led the Truman and Eisenhower administrations to develop a policy of "massive retaliation," had nonetheless been accompanied by a reversal in the relationship between power and violence, in Arendt's analysis. Her typology of violence, strength, force, and power—organized by the polar opposition between violence and power such that violence is seen as evidence of power's decline—led her to a sustained assault on the Sartrean and Nietzschean claims for violence's creative powers. But the conclusion of her essay (whose indictment of the society of technical specialists is legitimated by the crude biological metaphorics of behaviorism) haunts us still in its description of the apotheosis of power through its overdevelopment. The new "impotence of power" ensured by the possibility of total mutual annihilation is manifest for her in the incapacity of the United States to terminate its war in Southeast Asia.[39] That war, we now know, was won by those who could obtain power through the use of the most modest instruments, and who learned from Mao's experience that the most valuable principle in anticolonial guerrilla warfare is mobility sustained by intelligence.[40] The amnesia that allows pundits of the new millennium to describe the dispersed network of opposition incarnated in Al Qaeda as itself new is absurd, of course. What is new is the fact that it is no longer mere contiguity that sustains the network, but rather the deployment of communications technologies that are themselves mobile.[41]

The attentive reader—for whom perhaps all history now appears as prognostication—cannot help noticing that Mao identified the capture of transport as a necessary moment in the equipping of guerrilla forces[42] and wrote that transportation using enemy vehicles would be an extension of the primary and essential mobility of anticolonial forces. We cannot read these lines now and not immediately think of that moment on September 11, 2001, when four groups of men hijacked four planes and used them as bombs. They did so with the most modest technologies of violence imaginable. But it would be wrong if the resemblance between Mao's and Al Qaeda's tactics were understood in terms of the appropriation of technology in this crudely material sense—as the theft of mere "implements," to

use Engels's term. For the "capture of enemy equipment," which constitutes the maturation of the anticolonial forces for Mao, includes the appropriation and subversion of its specular logic as well as the appropriation of its technology.

Although he understood this specularity only as a matter of information (which is to say that he accepted the ideology of information technology), Samuel B. Griffith II's introduction to Mao's *On Guerrilla Warfare* rightly draws attention to the question of visibility at the core of anticolonial resistance and guerrilla tactics in particular. Describing the conditions that enable the guerrilla to act adventitiously on the basis of superior information, Griffith observes that, from the guerrilla's point of view, the "enemy stands as on a lighted stage; from the darkness around him, thousands of unseen eyes intently study his every move, his every gesture."[43] This is, of course, a residual colonial fantasy, but it is also a function of that technique of colonial domination described above in which the spectacle constitutes the moment of power's extension as violence (rather than its transformation into an opposite violence, as Arendt would argue). The possibility of being seen has been produced by the insistence on a power that must be displayed.

It is the doubled appropriation of technology and of a specular logic that renders the events of September 11 symptomatic of a shared but asymmetrical history in which are merged colonial violence and guerrilla resistance, spectacular justice and terroristic vengeance, that makes the present moment appear like a perverse return, a monstrous resurgence. Here, the question of complicity demands to be asked anew, not only as a relation of the colonized to the colonizer but as a relation that is internal to postcolonalism. Here gender and sexual difference must be addressed. For the question of mutual complicity does not end with the formal dismemberment of the colonies. It continues to have effects so long as it continues to be displaced in and through the Woman Question. There can be no real and effective anticolonialism that does not address the matter of gender. Whether anticapitalist and internationalist or nationalist and capitalist, decolonization that does not recognize the history of a coerced patriarchal complicity will always restore that complicity, even in the moment of most extreme anticolonial violence. If it appeared that the hijackers of September 11 had produced a spectacle of violence in which gender had become irrelevant, this is only because that question had been displaced elsewhere, in order not to be posed.

In this context, we cannot ignore the fact that the hijacking bears a certain resemblance to that sacrificial process by which the media of the message are destroyed in the act of transmitting the force of power. The passengers of the planes, like the occupants of the World Trade Center

towers, are not gendered as such, but they too, were made to secure the efficacy of a specular transmission. This does not make them "like women," but rather suggests that Woman is the form of a displacement or substitution by which East and West, one patriarchy and another, have engaged each other in violent, uneven, but mutually constitutive ways. What kind of relationship can one have to those who have been so instrumentalized, so displaced? How we answer this question will determine how we relate to the present war. According to anthropological readings of sacrifice, the destruction of a medium (of displacement) becomes an act of sacrifice only to the extent that survivors recast the event of destruction as a sacrifice on their own behalf. Nationalist narratives do this, of course, and they do so through reference to the language of martyrdom. However, the risk of that language is that it ultimately requires a retrospective complicity with the authors of destruction, one that converts loss into inheritance. It was just such complicity that Ho Chi Minh made available (without himself identifying it) when he described the spectacle of violation in Algeria as an instance of martyrdom, and then mobilized the new readers produced by communist newspapers for the project of anticolonial nationalism and socialist revolution.

What this suggests, I believe, is that the critique that will enable us to oppose both terrorism and the present war requires some recognition that the becoming-thinkable of total war at this moment in history requires a recognition that the truth of our war, like that of the Crimean War, lies in its "religious" nature. We note that the sacralization of victims is inseparable from the destruction of victims. But the sacralization of victims, which so characterizes our present narration of September 11, cannot be separated from the processes by which secular law and the law of secular modernity work precisely as the effacement or repression of a religious or mystical foundation. That effacement is produced through the carnalization of sacrifice, through the debasement of its media, and through the horrible displacements of power in and through women. The ideological armature that sustains this war—of martyrdom, heroic death, and patriotic duty, no less than service to religion—is nothing if not the transformation of death into a means—*and by means of women*—that threatens to become an end, because it consumes the future as well.

Mourning Becomes Electric

Once again, then, we are confronted by Freud's ruminations. "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" answered the question of modern war by asking how civilized people comprehend death. Indeed, Freud suggests

that the modernity of the West is fundamentally a matter of how death is conceived, and that it is marked by the disappearance of an ethical capacity that originates in the fear of the spirits of the dead. Primitive people, according to Freud, are murderous but cautiously so, and remain accountable for the deaths they cause to the extent that they must purify themselves after killing. Moderns, on the other hand, consign strangers and enemies to death without any anxiety of ghostly returns, even if only unconsciously.[44] What modern war liberates is the desire for another's death that is no longer constrained by the fear of consequence. Liberated by the development of an unconscious in whose murky depths the fantasy of another's death is submerged, modern people dream the deaths of their enemies with increasing frequency and, quite possibly, increasing cruelty. But the unconscious, liberated by war, unleashes this desire for others' deaths in a new way and in the absence of any demand for accountability, says Freud.[45] It seems to me that Freud's formulation works best if the denial of death is understood not only as a denial of one's own death (which fact binds both primitive and civilized people, according to Freud) but also as the denial of death's recurrence. This is an important distinction insofar as it allows one to distinguish that kind of heroism which believes itself immune to death from that which imagines survival precisely in and through death, as in suicide.

One might recapitulate Freud briefly as follows: modern warfare is marked by the failure to mourn the enemy's death. It does not, therefore, limit itself, and indeed, cannot limit itself—without some exterior force coming to bear upon it (a fact recognized by the institution of the Geneva accords, as we have seen). In Samuel Weber's reading, the simultaneous liberation of desire for the other's death and the denial of one's own is intensified by television and other electronic media, which make war a spectator sport. Reflecting on Freud's essay, Weber writes that "if television seems to separate the power of seeing and hearing from the attachment to the individual body, this attachment is only displaced: from the place of perception to that of reception. More isolated, dependent, and vulnerable than ever, the television viewer nevertheless inhabits a new type of space in which the denial of death can go hand in hand with the representation of lethal violence."[46] Weber describes terrorism as a supplement to the spectacle of war, identifying it and its efficacy with its affective force. Like the spectacle of war, he suggests, it thrives in the milieu of the televisual, where violence is recognized only when it becomes televisible.[47] I hope to have offered a slightly different and deeper genealogy of terror (which does not limit it to affect), but Weber's remarks do reflect the sense that terrorism today works in and through its mass mediation, and especially its televising. Attacks in different locations that are

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transmitted to viewers in the United States or around the world are under-taken in the anticipation of such transmission. Perhaps, however, the attacks on U.S. soil were an acknowledgment of the growing limits of the media to transcend the sensation of distance, even as they relied on those media to transmit the fact of the events beyond New York or Washington. In any case, the attacks of September 11 were not merely spectacles of violence, they were spectacles of terror—and not because of their emotional effects, as Weber suggests. Rather, they were spectacles of terror in the sense that they announced a power elsewhere, and in the sense that they deployed a logic of substitution without any sense of its possible interruption or termination.

In this sense, the fact of the hijacking was crucial, a horrible repetition of a horrible tactic in which unconsenting individuals are, as Blanchot says, like Levinas's hostages: transformed into the "unchosen guarantee of a promise [they had not] made, the irreplaceable one[s] who [were] not in [their] own place."48 The promise here is not of a release but of a return, as was the case in colonial terror, where the force returning would not be personal but collective, not deaths but death. This is how the hijackers, anticipating their own deaths with notes to loved ones and rites of self-purification, could imagine their individual ends as a form of survival—of themselves in heaven, and of their cause on earth. What they have allowed to recur through this denial of death is indeed its return, but also the surpassing of ends by means, and of peace by war. This complicity, on their part, can be and should be opposed. But that criticism cannot be the means by which we absolve ourselves of a responsibility that is neither reducible to the recent histories in which the United States supported militant Islam in opposition to socialism nor exhausted by the current return to war.

Weber's understanding of terror as a supplement to the spectacle of war also suggests to us something about the ways in which a specifically mass-media war comes to appear as incomplete and as that which requires or summons acts that would otherwise appear extrinsic to it, that would indeed seem to be the antithesis of "civilized" warfare. In what sense, or rather under what circumstances, can we say that terrorism, that spectacle of violence aimed at the transformation of victims into signs of a future violence, is called forth by the (televisual) spectacle of war? One may begin speculating here by recalling Walter Benjamin's prescient remarks on fascism, technology, and war written shortly before his death, when Germany and Europe stood on the threshold of World War II. Fascism, said Benjamin, offers the masses, which might have liberated themselves from their state of oppression, the pleasure of expression rather than the exercise of a right to overthrow property relations. In the moment that the

masses accepted that blissful reflection of themselves in the form of an ornament, fascism had won. For technological development could, in his analysis, produce war only in the absence of a transformed relationship to property. Such was Benjamin's analysis in 1936.[49] He did not live to see the televising of war, a development that might well have called into question his utopian hope for cinema as the instrument of a grand disillusionment, in Freud's sense.

What might constitute the means of such a productive disillusionment now? Not television, at least not in Weber's reading. If war has become our spectator sport, and if watching television only secures us at a distance, preventing us from establishing any ethically reciprocal relation with the living and the dead, then we will have to look elsewhere—at least until television can be associated with a broader critique in which the question of property, Marx's question, can be visited once more. But that would mean asking the Woman Question as well, for it is in women that patriarchy ultimately displaces its investment in property. This is why our history of the present must include an analysis of the processes by which the Woman Question and the Eastern Question came to substitute for one another, securing different patriarchies in their awful complicity and ensuring that technology of the highest and the lowest sort be used for a war that neither declares itself nor imagines the possibility of its termination. Against such delusion, we need once again to pursue disillusionment, to which end the preceding sketch of complicity's genealogy is offered as a small and preliminary step.

Notes

1. Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death," in *Collected Papers*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Basic, 1959), 4:288–317. Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts on War and Death," trans. E. Colburn Mayne, in *Collected Papers*, ed. Joan Riviere (New York: Basic, 1959), 4:293–94.

2. Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (London: Fontana, 1973), 249, 255.

3. Admiral Arthur Radford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1954, proposed dropping three tactical nuclear weapons on Dienbienphu to "clean those Commies out of there," and in 1964, the National Security Council contemplated the use of nuclear weapons in the bombing of the North to demonstrate American resolve and boost morale in the South. The issue would be repeatedly raised by the Nixon administration in the years that followed. See

Marilyn B. Young, *The Vietnam Wars, 1945–1990* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 33, 131.

4. This topic, the nonsecular nature of international law, is well beyond the scope of this essay. In this regard, I have found exceptionally helpful the writings of Jacques Derrida, especially his essays "Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of 'Religion' at the Limits of Reason Alone," translated by Samuel Weber, and "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority,' " translated by Mary Quantaince and modified by Gil Anidjar, both recently anthologized by Anidjar in *Acts of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 40–101 and 228–98 respectively. Note that the Anidjar anthology contains a version of the "Force of Law" essay that differs from the original presentation at the Cardozo Law School.

5. V. I. Lenin, "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions," in *Collected Works*, trans. and ed. Julius Katzer (Moscow: Fourth English Progress, 1966), 31:149.

6. Leon Trotsky, *Perspectives and Tasks in the East* (London: Index, 1973), 8.

7. On the relationship between the Eastern Question and the Negro Question, I am indebted to Brent Edwards, whose critical comments of an initial draft have been invaluable in clarifying my thought on these issues.

8. Karl Marx, "The Holy War," in *The Eastern Question*: *Letters Written 1853–1856 Dealing with Events of the Crimean War*, ed. Eleanor Marx Aveling and Edward Aveling (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1969), 153.

9. Karl Marx, "Contributions to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Religion*, ed. Reinhold Niebuhr (Chico, Calif.: Scholars, 1982), 41.

10. Marx, "The War Question," in *Eastern Question*, 143.

11. Marx, "Turkey," in *Eastern Question*, 4–5.

12. François Bernier, *Travels Containing a Description of the Domains of the Great Mogul* (Amsterdam: Chez P. Marret, 1710).

13. Marx to Engels, in *On Religion*, 121 (emphasis in original); and Engels to Marx, in *On Religion*, 120 (emphasis in original). Marx to Engels, June 2, 1853. Engels to Marx, May 24, 1853.

14. Marx to Engels, in *On Religion*, 121–22.

15. Roger Owen makes the point that the term *fundamentalism*, developed to describe American antimodernist Protestantism after World War I, could never differentiate the historically constant belief in the "literal inerrancy of the Qu'ran" from those forms of explicit revivalism such as *tajdid*, which emerged in the 1970s. Owen's point is well taken, but its historicist gesture does not yet address the tendency to construe Islam as a religion of "return," *avant la lettre* of fundamentalism's discourse. See Roger Owen, *State, Power, and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, 2d ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), 175.

16. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. 2, *Determinate Religion*, trans. R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson, and J. M. Stewart, ed. Peter C. Hodgson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 500.

17. Ibid., 742.

18. Ibid., 158. Gil Anidjar makes much of the same passages in his account of Abrahamic religions, paying particular attention to the place of Hegelian analysis in the problematization of the category "Arab Jew." See his "Introduction: 'Once More, Once More': Derrida, the Arab, the Jew," in *Acts of Religion*, 1–39, especially 5–6, n. 13.

19. On the history of Islam in Indonesia and its relationships to forms of nationalism, see James. T. Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000).

20. Trotsky, "Perspectives and Tasks," 9. Can one say that, despite all else, Trotsky was correct in his prognostication if not his diagnosis? Did not the women of India and China and Vietnam play a more central role in the now failed revolutionary movements of their nations than did the women of the equally failed revolutions of eastern Europe or Latin America?

21. Ibid., 9–10.

22. Ibid., 10.

23. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).

24. Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 4. It is simply impossible to adequately represent the enormity of literature on the question of veiling in "Western" writings about Islam, most of which use veiling as the model problem for thinking Islam vis-à-vis the question of freedom. Of note here are Frantz Fanon's classic "The Unveiling of Algeria," in *A Dying Colonialism*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (London: Grove, 1965); and, more recently, Leila Ahmed's *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992); and Marnia Lazreg's *The Eloquence of Silence: Algerian Women in Question* (London: Routledge, 1995).

25. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Cultures*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313. Spivak writes, "I have put together a sentence 'White men are saving brown women from brown men' in a spirit not unlike the one to be encountered in Freud's investigation of the sentence 'A child is being beaten.' . . . The use of Freud here does not imply an isomorphic analogy between subject-formation and social collectives. . . . I am not suggesting a *collective* fantasy symptomatic of a collective itinerary of sado-masochistic repression in a *collective* imperialist enterprise . . . . The sentence I have constructed is one among many displacements describing the relationship between brown and white men" (296–97). I take the point of Spivak's insistent distancing from social psychologization and hope to suggest that my argument about the reciprocal dependency of patriarchies under colonialism is, as Spivak says, "at least ambiguous."

Regarding "public eroticism," Diane Sawyer recently championed the return to "dating" of Afghan women, and the *New York Times* ran stories on the public reopening of beauty salons (which, nonetheless, had functioned clandestinely during the Taliban regime's rule) as evidence of emancipation and democratization.

26. Ho Chi Minh, "The Path Which Led Me to Leninism," in *Ho Chi Minh on Revolution: Selected Writings, 1920–66*, ed. Bernard B. Fall (New York: Praeger, 1967), 5–6.

27. Ho Chi Minh, "Report on the National and Colonial Questions at the Fifth Congress of the Communist International," in *On Revolution*, 59, 58.

28. Brent Edwards's essay, "Shadow of Shadows," provides an excellent account of Ho's relationship to Senghor. Edwards's description of the Vietnamese patriot's indefatigable efforts to write and edit new forms of anticapitalist and anti-imperialist history is unparalleled in its bridging of the discourses on African

and Southeast Asian radicalisms. Even more importantly, it demonstrates that the Union Intercoloniale's project was a historiographic one in which the future was not yet overdetermined by Comintern teleology ("Shadow of Shadows," [paper presented at the conference "Subaltern Studies at Large," Columbia University, November 2000]).

29. Ho Chi Minh, "French Colonization on Trial," in *Ho Chi Minh on Revolution*, 68–123. Originally published in French as "Le procès de la colonization française."

30. Ibid., 110.

31. Ibid., 71.

32. In Ho Chi Minh, "Annamese Women and French Colonialism," in *Ho Chi Minh on Revolution*, 13–14.

33. Ho Chi Minh, "The Martyrdom of Native Women," in *French Colonialism*, 106.

34. The inheritance is doubled, but also, perhaps, the result of a reversal. To the extent that French revolutionary discourse inherited something from American republicanism, it restored American political theory to its Europeanness. America repaid this unconscious debt by assuming France's colonial burden, to such an extent that even Charles de Gaulle could wonder about the fanaticism with which the United States held to Vietnam, the bastard child of French Indochina.

35. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak," 286.

36. On the transformation of penal processes, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1991). Foucault himself observes that the responsibility for penal justice in the colonies was never under the Ministry of the Interior, and that this fact explains in some measure the disjuncture between the developments in the metropole and its colonies (10).

37. Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), 4.

38. Ibid., 9.

39. Ibid., 86.

40. Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith II (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 46, 57.

41. Mao writes that "only adjacent guerrilla units can coordinate their activities to any degree" (ibid., 52).

42. Ibid., 83.

43. Samuel B. Griffith II, introduction to ibid., 23.

44. Freud, "Thoughts on War and Death," 312–13.

45. Ibid., 316.

46. Samuel Weber, "Wartime," in *Violence, Identity and Self-Determination*, ed. Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), 80–105.

47. Ibid., 82.

48. Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 18.

49. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, 211–44.

Introduction   **Judith Butler**

Since the events of September 11, we have seen both a rise of anti-intellectualism and a growing acceptance of censorship within the media. This could mean that we have support for these trends within the general population of the United States, but it could also mean that the media function as "public voices" that operate at a distance from their constituency, that both report the "voice" of the government for us, and whose proximity to that voice rests on an alliance or identification with that voice. Setting aside for the moment how the media act upon the public, whether, indeed, they have charged themselves with the task of structuring public sentiment and fidelity, it seems crucial to note that a critical relation to government has been severely, though not fully, suspended, and that the "criticism" or, indeed, independence of the media has been compromised in some unprecedented ways.

Although we have heard, lately, about the abusive treatment of prisoners, and war "mistakes" have been publicly exposed, it seems that neither the justification nor the cause of the war has been the focus of public intellectual attention. Indeed, thinking too hard about what brought this about has invariably raised fears that to find a set of causes will be to have found a set of excuses. This point was made in print by Michael Walzer, a "just war" proponent, and has worked as an implicit force of censorship in op-ed pages across the country. Similarly, we have heard from Vice President Richard Cheney and Edward Rothstein of the *New York Times*, among several others, that the time to reassert not only American values but fundamental and absolute values has arrived. Intellectual positions that are considered "relativistic" or "post-" of any kind are considered either complicitous with terrorism or as constituting a "weak link" in the fight against it. The voicing of critical perspectives against the war has become difficult to do, not only because mainstream media enterprises will not publish them (most of them appear in the *Guardian* or the *Progressive* or on the Internet), but because to voice them is to risk hystericization and censorship. In a strong sense, the binarism that Bush proposes in which only two positions are possible—to be for the war or for terrorism—makes it untenable to hold a position in which one opposes

both. Moreover, it is the same binarism that returns us to an anachronistic division between "East" and "West" and which, in its sloshy metonymy, returns us to the invidious distinction between civilization (our own) and barbarism (now coded as "Islam" itself). At the beginning of this conflict, to oppose the war meant to some that one somehow felt sympathy with terrorism, or that one saw the terror as justified. But it is surely time to allow an intellectual field to redevelop in which more responsible distinctions might be heard, histories might be recounted in their complexity, and accountability might be understood apart from the claims of vengeance. This would also have to be a field in which the long-range prospects for global cooperation might work as a guide for public reflection and criticism.

1. The Left response to the war currently waged in Afghanistan has run into serious problems, in part because the explanations that the Left has provided to the question, "Why do they hate us so much?" have been dismissed as so many exonerations of the acts of terror themselves. This does not need to be the case. I think we can see, however, how moralistic anti-intellectual trends coupled with a distrust of the Left as so many self-flagellating First World elites has produced a situation in which our very capacity to think about the grounds and causes of the current global conflict is considered impermissible. The cry that "there is no excuse for September 11" has become a means by which to stifle any serious public discussion of how U.S. foreign policy has helped to create a world in which such acts of terror are possible. We see this most dramatically in the suspension of any attempt to offer balanced reporting on the international conflict, the refusal to include important critiques of the U.S. military effort by Arundhati Roy (*Guardian*, September 29, 2001) and others within the mainstream U.S. press, the unprecedented suspension of civil liberties for illegal immigrants and suspected terrorists, the use of the flag as an ambiguous sign of solidarity with those lost on September 11 and with the current war, as if the sympathy with the one translates, in a single symbolic stroke, into support for the latter. The raw public mockery of the peace movement, the characterization of antiwar demonstrations as anachronistic or nostalgic, work to produce a consensus of public opinion that profoundly marginalizes antiwar sentiment and analysis, putting into question in a very strong way the very value of dissent as part of contemporary U.S. democratic culture.

2. The articulation of this hegemony takes place in part through producing a consensus on what certain terms will mean, how they can be used, and what lines of solidarity are implicitly drawn through this use. We reserve "acts of terror" for events such as the September 11 attacks on

the United States, distinguishing these acts of violence from those that might be justified through foreign policy decisions or public declarations of war. On the other hand, these terrorist acts are construed as "declarations of war" by the Bush administration, which then positions the military response as a justified act of self-defense. In the meantime, there is ambiguity introduced by the very use of the term "terrorist," which is then exploited by various powers at war with independence movements of various kinds. The term "terrorist" is used, for instance, by the Israeli state to describe any and all Palestinian acts of violence, but none of its own. The term is also used by Putin to describe the Chechen struggle for independence, which then casts its own acts of violence against this province as justified acts of national self-defense. The United States, by using the term, positions itself exclusively as the sudden and indisputable victim of violence, and there is no doubt that it has suffered violence, terrible violence.

3. The point I would like to underscore here is that a frame for understanding violence emerges in tandem with the experience, and that the frame works both to preclude certain kinds of questions, certain kinds of historical inquiries, and to function as a moral justification for retaliation. It seems crucial to attend to this frame, since it decides, in a forceful way, *what we can hear*, whether a view will be taken as explanation or as exoneration, whether we can hear the difference, and abide by it.

4. There is as well a narrative dimension to this explanatory framework. In the United States, we start the story by invoking a first-person narrative point of view, and tell what happened on September 11. And it is that date, and the unexpected and fully terrible experience of violence that propels the narrative. If someone tries to start the story earlier, there are only a few narrative options. We can narrate, for instance, what Mohammed Atta's family life was like, whether he was teased for looking like a girl, where he congregated in Hamburg, and what led, psychologically, to the moment in which he piloted the plane into the World Trade Center. Or what was bin Laden's break from his family, and why is he so mad? That kind of story is interesting to a degree, because it suggests that there is a personal pathology at work. It works as a plausible and engaging narrative in part because it resituates agency in terms of a subject, something we can understand, something that accords with our idea of personal responsibility, or with the theory of charismatic leadership that was popularized with Mussolini and Hitler in World War II.

And this is easier to hear than that a network of individuals dispersed across the globe conjured and implemented this action in various ways. If there is a network, there must be a leader, a subject who is finally responsible for what others do. Perhaps we can hear, in a limited way, about the

way in which the Al Qaeda group makes use of Islamic doctrine, and we want to know, to shore up our liberal framework, that they do not represent the religion of Islam, and that the vast majority of Muslims do not condone them. Al Qaeda can be "the subject," but do we ask where this comes from? Isolating the individuals involved absolves us of the necessity of coming up with a broader explanation for events. Though we are perhaps perplexed by why there is not a greater public repudiation by Muslim leaders (though many organizations have done that), we cannot quite understand why it might be difficult for Muslim leaders to join publicly with the United States on this issue even as they condemn quite clearly the acts of violence.

5. Our own acts of violence do not receive graphic coverage in the press, and so they remain acts that are justified in the name of self-defense, but also justified by a noble cause, namely, the rooting out of terrorism. Recently, it is reported that the Northern Alliance may have slaughtered a village: will this be investigated and, if confirmed, prosecuted as a war crime? When a bleeding child or dead body on Afghani soil emerges in the press coverage, it is not framed as part of the horror of war, but only as a critique of the military's capacity to aim its bombs right. We castigate ourselves for not aiming better, but we do not take the sign of destroyed life and decimated peoples as something for which we are responsible, or indeed understand how that decimation works to confirm the United States as performing atrocities. Our own acts are not considered terrorist. And there is no history of acts that is relevant to the self-understanding we form in the light of these terrible events. There is no relevant prehistory to the events of September 11, since to begin to tell the story a different way, to ask how things came to this, is already to complicate the question of agency which, no doubt, leads to the fear of moral equivocation. In order to condemn these acts as inexcusable, absolutely wrong, in order to sustain the affective structure in which we are, on the one hand, victimized and, on the other, engaged in a righteous cause of rooting out terror, we have to start the story with the experience of violence we suffered.

We have to shore up the first-person point of view, and preclude from the telling accounts that might involve a decentering of the narrative "I" within the international political domain. This decentering is experienced as part of the wound that we have suffered, though, so we cannot inhabit that position. This decentering is precisely what we seek to rectify through a recentering. A narrative form emerges to compensate for the enormous narcissistic wound opened up by the public display of our physical vulnerability. Our response, accordingly, is not to enter into international coalitions where we understand ourselves to be working with institution-

ally established routes of consensus building. We relegate the United Nations to a second-order deliberative body, and insist instead on American unilateralism. And subsequently we ask, Who is with us? Who is against us? As a result, we respond to the exposure of vulnerability with an assertion of U.S. "leadership," showing once again the contempt we have for international coalitions that are not built and led by us. Such coalitions do not conflict with U.S. supremacy, but confirm it, stoke it, insist upon it, with long-term implications for the future shape and possibility of global cooperation.

6. Perhaps the question cannot be heard at all, but I would still like to ask: Can we find another meaning, and another possibility, for the decentering of the first-person narrative within the global framework? I do not mean that the story of being attacked should not be told. I do not mean that the story that begins with September 11 should not be told. These stories have to be told, and they are being told, despite the enormous trauma that undermines narrative capacity in these instances. But if we are to come to understand ourselves as global actors, and acting within a historically established field, and one that has other actions in play, we will need to emerge from the narrative perspective of U.S. unilateralism and, as it were, its defensive structures, to consider the ways in which our lives are profoundly implicated in the lives of others. My friends on the Left joke about having lost their First World complacency. Yes, this is true. But do we now seek to restore it as a way of healing from this wound? Or do we allow the challenge to First World complacency to stand and begin to build a different politics on its basis?

7. My sense is that being open to the explanations, poorly circulated as they are in the United States, that might help us take stock of how the world has come to take this form, will involve us in a different order of responsibility. The ability to narrate ourselves not from the first person alone, but from, say, the position of the third, or to receive an account delivered in the second, can actually work to expand our understanding of the forms that global power has taken. But instead of remaining open to a consequential decentering of First Worldism, we tend to dismiss any effort at explanation, as if to explain these events would accord them rationality, as if to explain these events would involve us in a sympathetic identification with the oppressor, as if to understand these events would involve building a justificatory framework for them. Our fear of understanding a point of view belies a deeper fear that we will be taken up by it, find it is contagious, become infected in a morally perilous way by the thinking of the presumed enemy. But why do we assume this? We claim to have gone to war in order to "root out" the sources of terror, according to Bush, but do we think that finding the individuals responsible for the attacks on the

Our fear of understanding a point of view belies a deeper fear that we will be taken up by it, find it is contagious, become infected in a morally perilous way. But why do we assume this?

United States will constitute having gotten to the root? Do we not imagine that the invasion of a sovereign country with a substantial Muslim population, supporting the military regime in Pakistan that actively and violently suppresses free speech, obliterating lives and villages and homes and hospitals, will not foster more adamant and widely disseminated anti-American sentiment and political organizing? Are we not, strategically speaking, interested in ameliorating this violence? Are we not, ethically speaking, obligated to stop its further dissemination, to consider our role in instigating it, and to foment and cultivate another sense of a culturally and religiously diverse global political culture?

8. Part of the problem the United States is up against is that liberals have quietly lined up behind the war effort, and supplied in part the rationale that keeps our own violence from being labeled as terrorist. It is not just the conservative Republicans who do not want to hear about "causes." The "just war" liberal Left has also made plain that it does not want to hear from "excuseniks." This coinage, rehabilitating the Cold War rhetoric about Soviet Russia, suggests that those who seek to understand how the global map arrived at this juncture through asking how, in part, the United States has contributed to the making of this map, are themselves, through the style of their inquiry, and the shape of their questions, complicitous with an assumed enemy. But to ask how certain political and social actions come into being, such as the recent terrorist attacks on the United States, and even to identify a set of causes, is not the same as locating the source of responsibility for these actions or, indeed, paralyzing our capacity to make ethical judgments on what is right or wrong.

9. No doubt there are forms of Left analysis that say simply that the United States has reaped what it has sown. Or they say that the United States has brought this state of events on itself. These are, as closed explanations, simply other ways of asserting U.S. priority, and encoding U.S. omnipotence. These are also explanations that assume that these actions originate in a single subject, that the subject is not what it appears to be, that it is the United States that occupies the site of that subject, and that no other subjects exist or, if they exist, their agency is subordinated to our own. In other words, political paranoia of this kind is just another articulation of U.S. supremacy. Paranoia is fed by the fantasy of omnipotence, and we see this evidenced in some of the more extreme explanations of this kind, that is, the attacks on September 11 were masterminded by the CIA or Mossad, the Israeli secret police. It is clear, though, that bin Laden did apprentice to the CIA and that the United States supported the Taliban since the 1990s, when it was deemed strategically useful. These links are not precisely causal explanations, but they are part of an explanatory framework. They do not translate into the notion that the United States

performed these acts, but one can see how the connection becomes the occasion for the causal reduction, and a certain paranoia amplifies itself by seizing upon part of a broader explanatory picture.

10. What is generally heard when these opinions are expressed is that the United States is the culpable agent, that it is, effectively, the author of these events, and that the United States is solely responsible for this global outcome. This kind of reasoning is unacceptable to the press, and to the public in general, because it seems to blame the victim in this instance. But is this the only way to hear this point of view? And is this the only form this point of view takes? It seems that being most precise about this point, and publicizing it where one can, will be crucial for any effort by the Left to offer an antiwar viewpoint within contemporary public discourse.

11. If we believe that to think radically about the formation of the current situation is to exculpate those who committed acts of violence, we will freeze our thinking in the name of a questionable morality. But if we paralyze our thinking in this way, we will fail morality in a different way. We will fail to take collective responsibility for a thorough understanding of the history that brings us to this juncture. We will, as a result, deprive ourselves of the very critical and historical resources we need to imagine and practice another future, one that will move beyond the current cycle of revenge.

12. When President Arroyo of the Philippines on October 29, 2001, remarks that "the best breeding ground [for terrorism] is poverty," or Arundhati Roy claims that bin Laden has been "sculpted from the spare rib of a world laid waste by America's foreign policy," something less than a strictly causal explanation is being offered. A "breeding ground" does not necessarily breed, but it can. And the "spare rib" that is said to emerge from a world laid waste by U.S. foreign policy has, by definition, emerged in a strange and alchemical fashion. It is from waste that this rib is formed, as if the bone belongs to the dead, or is itself the animation of a skeletal remain. This is not God creating Eve from the rib of Adam, life generating life, but death generating death, and through a means that is figural, not precisely causal. Indeed, both of them make use of figures—grounds and bones—to bespeak a kind of generation that precedes and exceeds a strictly causal frame. Both of them are pointing to conditions, not causes. A condition of terrorism can be necessary or sufficient. If it is necessary, it is a state of affairs without which terrorism cannot take hold, one that terrorism absolutely requires. If it is sufficient, its presence is enough for terrorism to take place. Conditions do not "act" in the way that individual agents do, but no agent acts without them. They are presupposed in what we do, but it would be a mistake to personify them as if

they acted in the place of us. Thus, we can say, and ought to, that U.S. imperialism is a necessary condition for the attacks on the United States, that these attacks would be impossible without the horizon of imperialism within which they occur. But to understand how U.S. imperialism figures here, we have to understand not only how it is experienced by those who understand themselves as its victims, but how it enters into their own formation as acting and deliberating subjects.

This is the beginning of another kind of account. And this seems to be, for instance, what Mary Kaldor in the *Nation* (November 5, 2001, 16) points to when she claims that "in many of the areas where war takes place and where extreme networks pick up new recruits, becoming a criminal or joining a paramilitary group is literally the only opportunity for unemployed young men lacking formal education." What effect did the killing of an estimated 200,000 Iraqi citizens, including tens of thousands of children, and the subsequent starvation of Muslim populations, predicted by Concern, a hunger relief organization, to reach the number 6 million by year's end, have on Muslim views of the United States? Is a Muslim life as valuable as legibly First World lives? Are the Palestinians accorded the status of "human" in U.S. policy and press coverage? Will those hundreds of thousands of Muslim lives lost in the last decades of strife ever receive the equivalent to the paragraph-long obituaries in the *New York Times* that seek to humanize—often through nationalist and familial framing devices—those who have been violently killed? Is our global capacity to mourn not foreclosed precisely through the failure to conceive of Muslim and Arab lives as lives?

13. Former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani's response to Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal's remarks on October 11 in New York raises this question of the acceptability of critical discourse emphatically. The prince came with a check for $10 million in hand for the World Trade Center relief effort and expressed at the same time horror and moral condemnation of the attacks on the World Trade Center, asking that "the United States take a more balanced stand toward the Palestinian cause." Forbes.com (October 11, 2001) reported Giuliani's refusal of the check in this way: While in New York, Alwaleed said, "Our Palestinian brethren continue to be slaughtered at the hands of Israelis while the world turns the other cheek." At a news conference, Giuliani said, "Not only are those statements wrong, they are part of the problem. There is no moral equivalent to this attack. There is no justification for it." The mayor said, "The people who did it lost any right to ask for justification for it when they slaughtered four or five thousand innocent people, and to suggest that there is any justification for it only invites this happening in the future." The Saudi prince, the sixth richest man in the world, did say he

condemned terrorism, and he expressed his condolences for the more than 3,000 people killed when hijacked jets slammed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

14. In a television report that same day, Giuliani announced that Alwaleed's views were "absolutely wrong." I would suggest that it was not possible to hear both of these views at the same time because the framework for hearing presumes that the one view nullifies the other, so either the claim of grief or the offer of help is considered disingenuous. Or, what is heard is that the failure of the United States to offer a balanced approach to the Palestinian cause provides a justification for the attacks. Alwaleed is clear, and was subsequently clear in a *New York Times* editorial, that he did not think that the U.S. policy failure, which he deems true, to honor the Palestinian cause, justifies the attacks. But he did think that long-term U.S.-Arab relations would be improved were the United States to develop a more balanced approach. It makes sense to assume that bettering those relations might well lead to less conducive grounds for Islamic extremism. The Bush administration itself, in its own way, attests to this belief by pursuing the possibility of a Palestinian state. But here the two views could not be heard together, and it has to do with the word "slaughter," the utterability of the word "slaughter" in the context of saying that Israelis have slaughtered and do slaughter Palestinians, and in large numbers.

15. Like "terrorist," "slaughter" is a word that, within the hegemonic grammar, should be reserved for unjustified acts of violence against First World nations, if I understand the grammar correctly. Giuliani hears this as a discourse of justification, since he believes that slaughter justifies military self-defense. He calls the statements "absolutely untrue," I presume, not because he disputes that there have been deaths on the Palestinian side, and that the Israelis are responsible for them, but because "slaughter" as the name for those deaths implies an equivalence with the deaths of the World Trade Center victims. It seems, though, that we are not supposed to say that both groups of people have been "slaughtered" since that implies a "moral equivalence," meaning, I suppose, that the slaughtering of one group is as bad as the slaughtering of the next, and that both, according to his framework, would be entitled to self-defense as a result.

16. Although the prince subsequently undermined his credibility when he betrayed anti-Semitic beliefs, claiming that "Jewish pressure" was behind Giuliani's refusal of the check, he nevertheless initiated an utterance and a formulation that has value on its own. Why is it that these two sets of deaths are not viewed as equally horrible? And to what extent has the very refusal to apprehend Palestinian deaths as "slaughter" pro-

duced an immeasurable rage on the part of Arabs who seek some legitimate recognition and resolution for this continuing state of violence? One does not need to enter into the dreary business of quantifying and comparing oppressions to understand what the prince meant to say, and subsequently said, namely, that the United States needs to think about how its own political investments and practices help to create a world of enormous rage and violence. This is not to say that the acts of violence perpetrated on September 11 were the "fault" of the United States, and it does not exonerate those who committed them. One way to read what the prince had to say was that the acts of terror were unequivocally wrong, and that the United States might also be able to intervene more productively in global politics to produce conditions in which this response to U.S. imperialism becomes less likely. This is not the same as holding the United States exclusively responsible for the violence done within its borders, but it does ask the United States to assume a different kind of responsibility for producing more egalitarian global conditions for equality, sovereignty, and the egalitarian redistribution of resources.

17. Similarly, the *New York Times* (November 2, 2001) describes Arundhati Roy's critique of U.S. imperialism as "anti-U.S.," implying that any position that seeks to critically reevaluate U.S. foreign policy in light of September 11 and the ensuing war is anti-U.S. or, indeed, complicitous with the presumed enemy. This is tantamount to the suppression of dissent, and the nationalist refusal to consider the merits of criticisms developed from other parts of the globe. The treatment is unfair. Roy's condemnation of bin Laden is clear, but she is willing to ask how he was formed. To condemn the violence and to ask how it came about are surely two separate issues, but they need to be examined in tandem, held in juxtaposition, reconciled within a broader analysis. Under contemporary strictures on public discourse, however, this kind of dual thinking cannot be heard: it is dismissed as contradictory or disingenuous, and Roy herself is treated as a diva or a cult figure, rather than listened to as a political critic with a wide moral compass.

18. So, is there a way, in Roy's terms, to understand bin Laden as "born" from the rib of U.S. imperialism (allowing that he is born from several possible historical sources, one of which is, crucially, U.S. imperialism), without claiming that U.S. imperialism is solely responsible for his actions, or those of his ostensible network? To answer this question, we need to distinguish, provisionally, between individual and collective responsibility. But, then we need to situate individual responsibility in light of its collective conditions. Those who commit acts of violence are surely responsible for them; they are not dupes or mechanisms of an impersonal social force, but agents with responsibility. On the other hand,

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these individuals are formed, and we would be making a mistake if we reduced their actions to purely self-generated acts of will or symptoms of individual pathology or "evil." Both the discourse of individualism and of moralism (understood as the moment in which morality exhausts itself in public acts of denunciation) assume that the individual is the first link in a causal chain that forms the meaning of accountability. But to take the self-generated acts of the individual as our point of departure in moral reasoning is precisely to foreclose the possibility of questioning what kind of world gives rise to such individuals. And what is this process of "giving rise"? What social conditions help to form the very ways that choice and deliberation proceed? Where and how can such subject-formations be contravened? How is it that radical violence becomes an option, comes to appear as the only viable option for some, under some global conditions? And against what conditions of violation do they respond? And with what resources?

19. To ask these questions is not to say that the conditions are at fault rather than the individual. But it is to rethink the relation between conditions and acts. Our acts are not self-generated, but conditioned. But we are acted upon and acting, and our "responsibility" lies in the juncture between the two. What can I do with the conditions that form me? What do they constrain me to do? What can I do to transform them? Being acted upon is not fully continuous with acting, and in this way the forces that act upon us are not finally responsible for what we do. In a certain way, and paradoxically, our responsibility is heightened once we have been subjected to the violence of others. We are acted upon, violently, and it appears that our capacity to set our own course at such instances is fully undermined. But only once we have suffered that violence are we compelled, ethically, to ask how we will respond to violent injury. What role will we assume in the historical relay of violence, who will we become in the response, and will we be furthering or impeding violence by virtue of the response that we make? To respond to violence with violence may well seem "justified," but is it finally a responsible solution? Similarly, moralistic denunciation provides immediate gratification, and even has the effect of temporarily cleansing the speaker of all proximity to guilt through the act of self-righteous denunciation itself. But is this the same as responsibility, understood as taking stock of our world, and participating in its social transformation in such a way that nonviolent, cooperative, egalitarian international relations remain the guiding ideal?

20. We ask these latter questions not to exonerate the individuals who commit violence, but to take a different sort of responsibility for the global conditions of justice. As a result, it makes sense to follow two courses of action at once: it is surely important to find those who planned and imple-

What role will we assume in the historical relay of violence, who will we become in the response, and will we be furthering or impeding violence by virtue of the response that we make?

mented the violence, and to hold them accountable according to international war crimes standards and in international courts of law, regardless of our skepticism about such institutions (skepticism can furnish grounds for reform). In pursuing a wayward military solution, the United States now perpetrates and displays its own violence, offering a breeding ground for new waves of young Muslims to join terrorist organizations. This is poor thinking, strategically and morally. Ignoring its image as the hated enemy for many in the region, the United States has effectively responded to the violence done against it by consolidating its reputation as a militaristic power with no respect for lives outside of the First World. That we now respond with more violence is taken as "further proof" that the United States has violent and antisovereign designs on the region. To remember the lessons of Aeschylus, and to refuse this cycle of revenge in the name of justice, means not only to seek legal redress for wrongs done, but to take stock of how the world has become formed in this way precisely in order to form it anew, and in the direction of nonviolence.

21. Our collective responsibility not merely as a nation, but as part of an international community based on a commitment to equality and nonviolent cooperation, requires that we ask how these conditions came about, and endeavor to re-create social and political conditions on more sustaining grounds. This means, in part, hearing beyond what we are able to hear. And it means as well being open to narration that decenters us from our supremacy, in both its right- and left-wing forms. Can we hear at once that there were precedents for these events, and know that it is urgent that we know them, learn from them, alter them, and that the events are not justified by virtue of this history and that the events are not understandable without this history? Only then do we reach the disposition to get to the "root" of violence, and begin to offer another vision of the future than that which perpetuates violence in the name of denying it, offering instead names for things that restrain us from thinking and acting radically and well about global options.

Note

In 1946, in the shadow of the last century's most widely acknowledged versions of catastrophe, Louis Althusser described the formation of another International:

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> This "International" of humane protest against destiny rests on a growing awareness that humanity is threatened, and has become, in the face of the threat, a kind of *"proletariat" of terror.* Whereas the laboring proletariat is defined by sociological, economic, and historical conditions, this latter-day "proletariat" would seem to be defined by a psychological state: intimidation and fear. And, just as there is proletarian equality in the poverty and alienation of the workers, so too this *implicit proletariat* is said to experience equality, but in death and suffering.[1]

This new "equality" is perhaps more precisely understood as a new homogenization that now is manifest not only as the liquidation of dissent or of whatever marks the possibility of another way of being political, but even as the suppression of alternative tones or modes of phrasing as well.

In describing what he calls "the international of decent feelings," Althusser takes care both to imply and assert something outside of it, something on the other side of the limits within which this new equality operates. Recently, in response to the horrible events of September 11, 2001, and their aftermath, Geoffrey Galt Harpham—much like Albert Camus, André Malraux, and Arthur Koestler, the writers Althusser critically examined more than half a century ago—takes upon himself the task of resetting those limits, and, just as in the work of Camus, Malraux, and Koestler (which embodies the angst-ridden and exclusionary leveling of a certain existentialism), the limit of the new international of decent feelings that now emerges is terror. According to Harpham, terror now constitutes the fundamental "feature of the symbolic order, the vast mesh of representations and narratives both official and unofficial, public and private, in which a culture works out its sense of itself."[2] This is to say that terror now defines "our" collective identity. As it turns out, however, such a definition is nothing more than an intensified recalibration of the American exception. Intensified, now, because the U.S. response to terror is figured as the geopolitical reconstitution of the natural habitat—what Althusser might have referred to as the fatherland—of the human. The

achievement of the human will now be understood as the adherence to "our" national interest. Humanity is equivalent to membership in "our" coalition though it is provisional, contingent upon a nation's or a people's willingness to do something to "help us." Harpham would seem to question this new configuration of the human, but only reifies it by way of a thinly veiled romance with uncertainty, terror's primary manifestation, or with a supposed difficulty in "describ[ing] the most elemental of facts in a way that makes sense."[3] For Harpham, it is emblematic of such uncertainty that U.S. officials and their private policy adjuncts make charges of Iraqi complicity with the attacks of September 11 on the basis of no evidence save their feelings.[4] It is significant that Harpham's critique of such an appeal to feelings will ultimately align itself against evidence and analysis, as if proper thought will have taken place only in the obsessive oscillation between false alternatives. We'll return to this later. For the time being, note that the abstract human equality that lies at the foundation of this new international has been revealed in all its exclusiveness with increasing intensity over the last few decades, and many of us who identify ourselves as Left intellectuals have perhaps grown too confident in its apparent eclipse. But it reappears in Harpham's formulation and it has the same old features, features more insidious after the fact of their ongoing exposure and critique. The condition of possibility of the contemporary new international is the exclusionary nature of its concept of the human that is defined now by terror as limit-function. This is the essence of this old-new Left, this old-new international.

Significantly, the Third World simply fails to show up as a subject, or collective subjectivity, that is worthy of analysis for Althusser. The colonial question—which now seems to have been unavoidable in 1946 but was nevertheless avoided in the discourse of the international of decent feelings and its critique—is absent. And yet the military humanism that characterizes the international Althusser reads—and its contemporary recrudescence as manifest in Harpham's writing—is pinpointed by Althusser, thereby enabling the revelation of its cynical vulgarity in Harpham's text. It is the presentation of the Third World in Harpham's text that is the condition of his adherence to, rather than critique of, military humanism and its twisted sentiments. Meanwhile, in Althusser, it is as if Third World liberation is unforeseen, as if the colonized subject's very relation to the human is suspended by the irruption of the inhuman into what had been thought to be the human's exclusive domain. This is to say that the inhuman had become Europe's most pressing intramural matter, eclipsing momentarily the project wherein Europe had to discover, exploit and, in exploiting, humanize the heretofore in- or prehuman.

Luckily for Harpham, operating within a practically Conradian reca-

pitulation of the old paradigm, the inhuman is now returned to its natural locale, the Third World. This is the new exclusionary twist on the old international that must emerge when racialized imperial domination is an object of critique rather than a natural right. The justification of such domination can now be indexed to a delusion that Harpham takes to be self-evident—that the Third World is the place where the inhuman and terror converge in a new and horrible, because ineffable, realignment. The new international of decent feelings, of humane protest against an uncertain destiny or against uncertainty as destiny, takes the "daisy cutter" bomb as its most proper form. This is a First World affair, since the Third World continually finds itself unable to, or refuses to, achieve the humanity of counterterrorism that expresses itself in and as "our" dropped bombs, however temporary the satisfaction derived from such action might be. This is to say that for Harpham what is ultimately unsatisfactory about the bombings is not that they are inhuman or inhumane—they cannot be by definition because "we," the international of decent feelings, are perpetrating them—but that they are ineffective. Noam Chomsky, to whom we shall return precisely because the new internationalists obsessively return to him in order to renounce him—might say that this formulation is reminiscent of that liberal discourse that eventually emerged alongside American intervention in Southeast Asia whose fundamental point was that the war should have been stopped because of the impossibility of victory, because the satisfaction to be derived from the moral correctness of "our" intentions could not be achieved or sustained.

Althusser denounces the international of decent feelings because it attempts to erase antagonisms that are the necessary precursors of revolutionary theory and practice. Such cause for concern certainly has not disappeared. This erasure of antagonisms is bound up with the grotesque reduction and projection of terror that characterizes Harpham's discourse. The point is that when Harpham invokes what might be called "the Pentagonal we," it is merely the expression of the foreclosing power of a strange prematurity. This "we" makes we impossible. As Althusser argues, the terror that characterizes the proletariat is not some obsession with the horrible that might happen. "The worker is not a proletarian by virtue of what-will-happen-to-him-tomorrow, but by virtue of what happens to him every minute of the day. . . . poverty, in the proletariat, is not the fear of poverty, it is an actual presence that never disappears."[5] This is to say that the most immediate refusal to be terrorized with which Harpham ought to have been concerned is his own. This speaks to the virtuality of a new international that is fragmented not by the Third World's inability to "help us" but by our ongoing inability viciously to critique the fatal simplicity of this implied self-construction. The decision to face the facts of suffering,

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to analyze the causes of suffering, is a necessary condition of empathy that would both follow from such critique and is its condition of possibility. Significantly, Chomsky serves as the axis around which revolves the simple opposition between feeling and analysis—which accompanies that between us and them—that Harpham reifies in the midst of something meant to pass for critique.

> It is bizarre to see the hard right promoting *feelings* and the hard left—if that is where Chomsky is; it has become difficult to place him anywhere—so coldly analytical. . . . And it is disturbing, too, to think that there are so many intelligent people for whom there is simply no event so ghastly, so outrageous, so monstrously murderous, so wanton and ignoble that the United States would not be held to be ultimately responsible for it simply on the grounds that *we* could have no share in *that*. It is Chomsky's refusal to be terrorized, his insistence that the terror really makes sense, that it has a germ of rational motivation, that this germ can and should . . . be incorporated into our national self-description, included among the narratives we tell about ourselves, that is the most terrifying, and terroristic, aspect of his thought.[6]

Chomsky's "cold" analysis is figured here as a kind of terror. It is aligned with the act that it is accused of rationalizing and, as such, is understood, not only with the ones who perpetrate the act but with the kind of people who perpetrate and/or rationalize such acts, as not just irrational but subrational, as geographically and historically foreign to the national-humanist zone of rationality. Of course, whatever bombing we do in response to terrorist acts is not tainted by any sub- or prerational drive to rationalize, precisely because its rationality is self-evident or is, in the absence of any evidence, something that "we" feel to be right. This is to say that it is self-evident that *we* could have no share in *that* (set of acts where the irrational or the unrationalizable and the monstrously violent converge), no matter how much like *that* whatever *we* do is, no matter how many times *we* did things like *that* before *that* was done to *us*. Such clotted logic leads to the formulation that equates the principled and persistent critique of American foreign policy's almost constant violation of the principles it espouses with mass murder, or, just as problematically, with a kind of irrational fundamentalism whose fatherland is now nothing other than the Third World.

Why has Chomsky become such a problem? How do those who operate, as it were, under the protection of a kind of veil of the Left get so incensed by someone whose critique of capitalism, imperialism, and fascism has been so principled and uncompromising? Why is Chomsky's supposed absence of feeling so disturbing when so many other tragedies,

ones he has taken pains and continues to take pains to bring to our attention, seem to have produced neither a discourse of feeling nor chagrin over the absence of such a discourse on the part of critics like Harpham? What it is that we decide to say we feel something about and what it is that seems to bear no relation to the question of feeling is of interest here.

Harpham's presumption is not only that one should feel something (which is to say something *more*) about September 11, but that the event is properly approached only by way of feeling rather than by way of an analysis that seeks reasons for, and reason in, the event, however monstrous such reason and such reasons might be. Note, however, that for Harpham the bombing of Afghanistan seems more able to bear such analysis and that such analysis leads to the conclusion that American foreign policy since September 11 is just and justified. Whatever imperative there is to feel for the victims of "our" poignantly ineffective bombing is muted by its seemingly unassailable rationality, a rationality whose justification seems to be a kind of general confusion to which Harpham points but for which he has no remedy. Indeed, Harpham naturalizes this confusion that only serves, finally, to justify the ongoing execution of U.S. foreign and military policies that predate the event that is supposed to have prompted them. The point, again, for Harpham, seems to be that it's not that one should feel but that one should feel more about this than about other things, things that are either beyond or beneath feeling or things that are at least still subject to reasoned analysis though the reasoned analysis that would place such things within the context of a general history of world terror is properly understood as tantamount to terror. I should feel more about this because I'm an American. I should feel more about this because I'm a New Yorker. I should feel more about this because of the ultimate sacrifice of our heroes. Such justifications are naturalized and unquestioned.

Meanwhile, the appeal to feeling that had earlier been critiqued is now repeated. Such inconsistency marks the spot where confusion represents itself as a kind of national-humanist rationality, or as what Jacques Derrida has more precisely called "the onto-theology of national humanism."[7] What remains is the question of the compatibility of the assumption that one should in this case and with regard to this event feel, which is to say feel more, and certain fundamental principles of a Left politics that are now under the neo-pragmatist assault of self-appointed defenders of modernity and the foxlike guardians of the chicken coop of Enlightenment (as if the average rooster could have ever thought up some stuff like that on his own). More specifically, this is to think about the question of this imperative to feel more here now given the history of American policy, a history that is ongoing, a history that never paused for a second, a trajec-

tory that was never broken by the events of September 11 themselves, all claims regarding the fundamental disruption of world order to the contrary. American imperial policy took no time off to mourn. It does not stoop to feel even if it incorporates and controls a powerful discourse of feeling. Perhaps we ought to defer the question concerning whether or how Chomsky was terrorized just long enough to note that U.S. imperial power and its ideological apparatuses and apparatchiks most certainly were not.

Terror, like fear, is, as Althusser says, "captivity without possibility of flight."[8] The "we" who bomb is embedded in such captivity, though it is the captivity of the prison guard. In the end, Harpham's belated version of the pieties of the human condition fails to constitute, as Althusser might say, "a human fatherland. . . . The human fatherland is not the proletariat of the human condition," not the Pentagonal "we"; "it is the proletariat *tout court*, leading the whole of humanity towards its emancipation."[9] Already in 1946, by the way, even in the midst of his "Catholic communism," we see Althusser beginning to deploy a strategic antihumanism in the service of another, nonexclusionary human ensemble. When Harpham renews exclusionary humanism, the task of its critique in the name of the human is also renewed, and this requires a renewal of the discourse of truth in order to combat exclusionary humanism's anguished and confused delight in the indeterminate. To wallow in so-called terror as uncertainty, indeterminacy, confusion, or the fear of these is wholly to deny the epistemological register within which operates terror's ongoing lived reality. Althusser appeals to a kind of Christian truth to which I cannot appeal; nevertheless, a discourse of truth is available to us—the simple, banal, inexhaustible record of what "we" do and of "our" motives for doing it. Harpham takes great pains to discredit this discourse and the recourse to mystification seems to require, as one of its elemental ritual forms, the renunciation of Chomsky as that discourse's primary purveyor.

In fact, it is not coincidental that one must turn to Chomsky and his critique of the workings of another old-new international in the mid-sixties in order to find some precedent for Harpham's discourse and some framework within which to critique it. In his 1967 "The Responsibility of Intellectuals," Chomsky writes of a "growing lack of concern for truth" manifest in statements animated by "a real or feigned naïveté with regard to American actions that reaches startling proportions."[10] Chomsky points to the example of Arthur Schlesinger, who "characterized our Vietnam policies of 1954 as 'part of our general program of international goodwill,'" noting that "unless intended as irony, this remark shows either a colossal cynicism or an inability, on a scale that defies comment, to comprehend elementary phenomena of contemporary history."[11] But Schlesinger's

obtuseness seems no more extreme than that of Harpham who claims, in his conclusion, that "terror . . . is nothing other than the aggravated sense of the possibility that new forms of maleficence and horror are even now being harbored by our best intentions, lurking in the caves of our noblest ideals, ramifying in the dark, soft interior tissues of our most honorable attempts to secure peace and freedom in the world."[12]

As Chomsky points out, Schlesinger, in his capacity as a member of the Kennedy administration, was forthright about his own decision to lie in the national interest, a dishonesty he evidently thought justifiable. What's sad about Harpham is that he is not lying. Or, more precisely, his is a deception that seems inwardly rather than outwardly directed and therefore tells us something about the inner workings of the international of decent feelings in its present form. Self-deception, in discourse such as this, often manifests itself as an appeal to the self-evident. There are many, however, who would wonder what are the "honorable attempts to secure peace and freedom in the world" by the United States to which Harpham refers? Why renounce a mode of discourse that makes it possible to disabuse oneself of such evident delusions? These are matters of fact, of truth in its simplest and most uninteresting form, that finally allow the placement of the brutal and vicious attacks of September 11 within the context of an ongoing contemporary history of terror. Such contextualization is neither justification nor correlation. If it attributes reason to the bombers, it does so within the context of a history of instrumental madness that surpasses September 11, right up to the contemporary manifestation of "our" participation in the imperial administration of Afghanistan, whose justification is, for Harpham, on the one hand unproblematically reasonable and, on the other hand, in its incomplete satisfaction, the occasion precisely for the present renewal of the grotesque discourse of sentimental militarism.

What is at stake in the denial of the truth—which is to say the facts—of this history of instrumental madness as instrumental reason? What is at stake in the refusal to acknowledge that "we" are by far the most consistent and powerful perpetrators of this madness? Again, Althusser points toward an answer. What is at stake is the very possibility of another collective political being, and the point of such refusal is not the origin of the current crisis but whether we stand for its closure or its perpetuation. The attempted foreclosure of such possibility reads almost like a hoax. Ultimately, Harpham raises the undecidable question of causality only in order to deflect the question concerning "our" ethical and political stance regarding its continuation. The question of what, if anything, caused the bombing is independent of the fact that U.S. foreign policy is foul, just as the question concerning what, if anything, the attacks caused or what, if

> What is at stake is the very possibility of another collective political being, and the point of such refusal is not the origin of the current crisis but whether we stand for its closure or its perpetuation.

anything, "our" bombing of Afghanistan will have caused is independent of the fact that they are foul. And yet we do know something about what such brutality has caused and will cause. To think these questions without implicating ourselves is monstrous. Quite simply, Harpham would exclude from "our" symbolic register the critique of "our" foreign policy, critique he equates with what he sees as a Chomskyan refusal to be terrorized. Rather, he places a premium on the ability to conjure uncertainty or indeterminacy from the brutal fact of the millions whom "we" have killed or who have been killed in "our" name and on the ability to see U.S. sponsorship of and participation in mass murder as an effect of confusion and impotence.

However, Althusser provides the terms for a celebration of just such refusal as Chomsky's, though to do so is decidedly not to accept the perverse terms of Harpham's discourse, one that seems able to discern and judge the appropriateness of this or that person's feelings about an event that has come, for him, to define terror in and as an uncomfortably open futurity, even as his feelings concerning the ongoing everydayness of terror before and after this event remain unexamined. In the end, the question of whether the present crisis is old or new is not undecidable. It is both old and new. The real question is what you get out of trying to make it undecidable and out of saying that a subservient comportment toward such undecidability constitutes "our" collective political identity. So that the facile appeal to the self-evident in Harpham that is neurotically poised between the false alternatives of feeling and analysis, particularly the appeal to the notion that the old world order has been shattered and that a new world order has been born, must be challenged. All that's new is the time-honored repeal American liberalism enacts on its principles, principles whose ongoing violation has been the rhythm track of the American Century. What continually *announces itself* as the home or embodiment of Enlightenment, of modernity, of humanism, here reveals itself again as their ongoing negation; this is the true rhythm of the iron system, of instrumental rationality run amok; it's the backbeat and background of Harpham's essay.

Meanwhile, of Koestler, Malraux, and Camus, Althusser says: "We are entitled to ask *if these desperate people are not nurturing a secret hope, and are not serving a cause or master they do not invoke*: the cause of a 'Western' socialism without class struggle, that is, the cause of a Europe united in a verbal, moralizing socialism which conjures away social antagonisms, thus maintaining in actual fact, despite concessions of form, the essential positions of capitalism."13

It seems too elevating to ask such questions of Harpham since even a moralizing socialism independent of social antagonisms has been struck

from his horizons, however much he might associate himself with the Left. This text speaks for a replicant ensemble that is, necessarily, farce, not tragedy after all. Nevertheless, it seems important and just to point out how truly subservient to the mission of maintaining the status quo that ensemble's discourse on September 11 and its aftermath is. Its "we" is the collective subject for whom everything now is new and unprecedented, the one for and from whom declarations abound regarding the rupture and recalibration of military and political world order. This Pentagonal we, this Pentagonal—as opposed to fundamentalist—Left sounds like this: "And yet, it seems that we must bomb. This is the most just of just wars, and if we were not bombing, we would be doing nothing at all except grieving and fearing."[14]

Note that in Harpham's text the question of an alternative—later used to bludgeon Chomsky, who is understood as the one who produces no options—is closed. There is nothing to do but bomb, for this we, according to this we. There is no alternative but to engage precisely in that which is given as unsatisfactory, as the merely tactical. The Pentagonal we is left only with the option of bombing. This self-parodic yelp, these unself-conscious self-parodic sentences, the sententious self-parodic drone—imbued with the rigorously precritical, noninquiring correctness of a Chris Matthews model empty, though endlessly talking, head—is the hallmark of a time-honored American discursive strain. It's the noisy parallel track to American military/corporate power—an elite discursive line on which a small minority talks to itself in public with the whack propriety of the so-called public sphere. It's sad that English professors now want, though I suppose many have always wanted, to join this community and speak its vulgate, mouthing the nerdy but homicidal schoolboy rhetoric (reminiscent of some kids playing Battleship) of "exit strategies" and "endgames."[15]

Thus a brace of so-called Left intellectuals whose membership degrades the set to which they claim to belong flock to add their voices to a choir that is peopled by the genuine victims of thought control in democratic societies, namely those like Thomas Friedman and Cokie Roberts who seem intent on convincing themselves that the lies regarding the purity of American motives mouthed in the Vietnam era by the likes of Arthur Schlesinger for elite public sphere consumption are actually true. These are people to be pitied more than hated but for the fact that they constantly play out their daily attempts at self-deception in media outlets that are interesting now only because so relatively few people actually pay attention to them, letting the rest of us know, if we didn't already, that this delusional public sphere is one vigilantly to be monitored from a safe distance, if not altogether avoided.

It might appear to be the case that Harpham's uncritical and natural-

ized identification with American power renews and reinitializes the subject of the new military humanism. But such an observation would be imprecise. What is performed, rather, in Harpham's discourse is not the military humanist subject but that subject's chronicler—the strange cross between public relations man and scholar who always seeks the crumbs of a kind of influence over policy but is always more likely merely to play the seamy role of the so-called public historian. This chronicler insists on his or her leftism, though the Left—particularly in its convergence with Third World subjectivity—seems to be its only object of critique. In this formation, a principled stand for nonviolence or the legitimate enactment by a citizen of a critique of his or her government's rapacious foreign policy is perversely described by Todd Gitlin as a "left-wing fundamentalist" alignment with an anti-Enlghtenment, antimodernist formation whose primary twentieth-century manifestations as Nazism and communism are taken as much for granted as its supposed contemporary shift to Third World subjects in general and Islamic subjects in particular.[16] Meanwhile, one thinks of a certain connection between Harpham, Gitlin, and their ilk and Stephen Ambrose, not because Harpham and Gitlin are plagiarists—neither of them has been accused of plagiarism nor is there any reason to think they should be—but because what both make clear, each in his own way, each in ways not formally unlike Ambrose's brand of allusiveness, is the infinite curvature of the military humanist sphere and its discourse. The words and phrases must be the same whether they are copied or arrived at by way of some almost wholly virtual, individual, creativity.

What is particularly interesting is that entrance into this sphere is now securable by enacting a new manifestation of the old ritual exclusion of a broader public. Again, this new ceremonial form has, as one of its prime features, the renunciation of Chomsky, which is now a kind of inoculation, a kind of visa required for entry into this republic of letters. But what is at stake is not Chomsky so much as the rest of the world that he has come to signify: the alternative public that he inhabits and helps to build, the ongoing enactment of (the drive for) another social life that finally constitutes the clearest evidence of his feelings. More properly, Chomsky has become something like a sign of the myriad other modes of political being that do not fall under the umbrella of elite American exceptionalism and whose flourishing in the midst of the present crisis—as the construction and sustenance of new and active networks of information and organization, as renewed forms of cultural and political resistance—has occasioned the disciplinary efforts of Harpham and his crew. For them, the Left critique of U.S. foreign policy that maintains its principles after and especially in the wake of September 11 must be denounced and held off or away like some kind of viral embarrassment.

Meanwhile, the private public sphere is where the old-new Left can hope to be both rich and important while feigning an adversarial stance—in the very midst of its own self-absorbed self-deception, where to be an adversary is uncritically to enact what Judith Butler calls a "passionate attachment"—to the power to which it has perhaps always been cathected.[17] Still, the rewards for entering this sphere are only the etiolated simulacra of money and fame. Like Sam Donaldson, Harpham thinks he is asking the tough questions. Now English professors, in the warmed-over imprecisions of the pragmatist degradation of European critical theory, stake their claim, thereby reducing September 11 merely to the occasion for this leftover political formation—both old and new in the most problematic senses of both these terms—shrilly to announce itself. This announcement, and its failure to silence the other speech that it denounces, is hereby noted.

Notes

1. Louis Althusser, "The International of Decent Feelings," in *The Spectre of Hegel*, trans. G. M. Goshgarian (New York: Verso, 1997), 23.

2. Geoffrey Galt Harpham, "Symbolic Terror," *Critical Inquiry* 28 (winter 2002): 573.

3. Ibid., 574.

4. Ibid.

5. Althusser, "The International of Decent Feelings," 25.

6. Harpham, "Symbolic Terror," 578.

7. Jacques Derrida, "Onto-theology of Natural Humanism (Prolegomena to a Hypothesis)," *Oxford Literary Review* 14 (1992): 3–23.

8. Althusser, "The International of Decent Feelings," 25.

9. Ibid., 27.

10. Noam Chomsky, "The Responsibility of Intellectuals," in *American Power and the New Mandarins* (New York: Pantheon, 1967), 329. I should note that the ideas Chomsky expresses, by way of Dwight Macdonald, in the essay's opening paragraphs have much the same resonance that they did thirty-five years ago, though the climate for their reception is now not nearly so hospitable.

11. Ibid.

12. Harpham, "Symbolic Terror," 579.

13. Althusser, "The International of Decent Feelings," 30.

14. Harpham, "Symbolic Terror," 574.

15. Ibid.

16. Gitlin is quoted in Alexander Cockburn, "Weird Justice," *New York Press*, January 30, 2002: "To the left-wing fundamentalist, the only interesting or important brutality is at least indirectly the United States' doing. . . . In the United States adherents of this kind of reflexive anti-Americanism are a minority (isolated, usually, on campuses and in coastal cities, in circles where reality checks are scarce)."

17. See Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 6–10.

Extent And Nature of Circulation

Average number of copies of each issue published during the preceding twelve months; (A) total number of copies printed, 944; (B.1) sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales, 129; (B.2) paid mail subscriptions, 514; (C) total paid circulation, 643; (D) samples, complimentary, and other free copies, 60; (E) free distribution outside the mail (carriers or other means), 12; (F) total free distribution (sum of D & E), 72; (G) total distribution (sum of C & F), 715; (H.1) office use, leftover, unaccounted, spoiled after printing, 229; (H.2) returns from news agents, 0; (I) total, 944.

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