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Loyalty to White civilization

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City University of New York, 1995

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LOYALTY TO WHITE CIVILIZATION

by

KRIEMILD SAUNDERS

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
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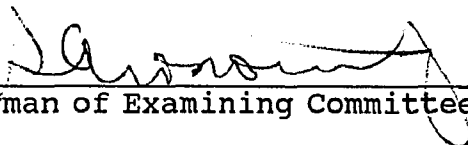
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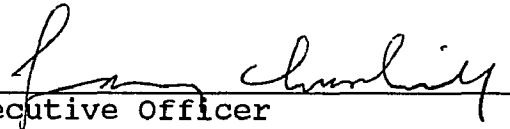
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Abstract**Loyalty To White Civilization**

by

Kriemild Saunders

Supervisor: Professor Stanley Aronowitz

The concept of Sovereign Subjectivity that has developed within post-structuralist thought, has been limited to the *general* concept of sovereignty of consciousness linked to the philosophical anthropology of man, largely within philosophy. This dissertation extends the concept of sovereignty to include hierarchal relations of power and authority implicit in the idea of the will, including its possessive attributes, in an examination of discursive texts that articulate **sovereign revolutionary subjectivity** in a *particular and close* reading of Adrienne Rich's "Disloyalty to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynephobia", "the domestic labour debates"-a theoretical discourse situated mainly in the 1970's; and **sovereign subjectivity** in the 'non-discursive' text of the life-activities of Jeffery Dahmer's serial murders and necrophilia. It is the presentation of hierarchal social relations (gender, race, class, sexuality etc.) linked to power and domination, unveiling, illumination, linearity and substantial presence, that marks these texts as loyal to **white civilization**.

To my family especially my mother Rosemary Saunders, my father Ransford Saunders (father), Marcelles Saunders (brother) and Carolyn Couch, who have all given me exceptional support throughout my academic life.

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Introduction

This dissertation entitled *Loyalty to White Civilization* is concerned with how **Sovereign Subjects** are produced and the role of desires, interests and **ego-identifications** (images produced by representations that appear as objects of identifications) in the reproduction of sovereign-effects.¹ This project engages two frames of analysis, one is the *discursive* (linguistic analyses that take account of grammar, logic and social linguistics), entailing a close reading of texts within *Western Marxism and Feminism*. Within post-structuralist and post-modern criticism of Western Marxism, Feminism and Radical Race Theory, there are numerous references to **phallogocentrism**

¹ Jacques Derrida's (1982, 209-271) notion of **whiteness** deals exclusively with the discursive features of **whiteness-western metaphysics**. From a Derridean perspective light and white are concept-metaphors of appearing and presence that constitute the fundamental ground of Western philosophy. In this dissertation I intend to incorporate both the discursive and the non-discursive aspects of **whiteness**. The non-discursive attribution is closer to the less developed Foucaultian notion of non-discursive realms-economic, political and social practices, that are conceived in terms of hierarchical relations of power. See Michel Foucault's works (1972, 157-165; 1986), for an indication of these non-discursive ideas. The terms white in the phrase "white, middle-class" and black in "black, middle-class", which appear in this dissertation refers to common sense notions and some scholarly conceptions of whiteness and blackness as indicative of racial morphology and cultural identification. See W.E.B. Dubois (1975); Joel Kovel (1970); Charles Johnson (1988) for a sample of the literature.

Loyalty refers to desires/interests/ego-identifications (an effect of the relationship between social action, location and language).

(masculine speech, logic and reason), **eurocentrism** (European-centered), and the **transcendental subject** (subject of pure consciousness) in general, but detail deconstructions of such Sovereign-subject positions, entailing an interrogation of the structure and logic of texts are few, and such a level of analysis has yet to be seriously approached. From the *non-discursive* (non-linguistic practices: political, economic, social etc.) aspect, I will examine the language of action which manifested itself in the narrative of Jeffrey Dahmer's multiple murders.² Jacques Derrida (1978, 198-231) has postulated that the world is a text with differentiations, but, precisely how "the world", "society" and social action could be formulated as texts has not been theoretically developed. It is in part as a result of the aforementioned limitations, that I have under taken this work, a minor intervention, as my dissertation project.

Sovereignty

I will present an elaboration of the connection between

² I favor a conception of discursive ideas (linguistic) versus non-discursive phenomena (non-linguistic) and their relationship to each other, that don't indicate a sharp break. See Peter Winch (1959). For a developed theoretical discussion of discursive forms see Michel Foucault (1972, 1980). In addition, Joel Black (1991) argues for a conception of murder as pure action, which I find problematic.

philosophical anthropology (the philosophical study of man)³, the Subject and Sovereignty, as they emerge historically and as they appear in respect to each object of analysis that comprise the chapters in this study. Such an elaboration examines Sovereignty as a problematic.⁴ Thus, Sovereignty is presented within the theoretical framework in which it is conceived, centering on the presence and absence of concepts and problems, namely, subjectivity and philosophical anthropology, which form its theoretical ground. This intricate mode of analysis will show the text and terminology of philosophical anthropology and the critical, symptomatic reading that traces its mark. Since **Sovereignty** is the core category in this study, it is around this term in its relevance to my analyses that I intend to present a *brief situating* in the theoretical literature.

The problematic of the sovereign subject has its historic emergence in the acknowledgment by Marxist intellectuals and other radicals, that the industrial

³ Philosophical anthropology concerned with the being of humanity appears at the foreground of Western thought at least from Kant onward. Marx inherited anthropological categories from the Hegelian tradition, in particular Hegel and Feuerbach, which were most manifest in his early writings.

⁴The term problematic acts as a guide to the mode of presentation of the concept of Sovereignty and the constellation of concepts to which it is related. Ben Brewster in the glossary of Louis Althusser's (1970) *Reading Capital* maintains that "a concept cannot be considered in isolation but only in the theoretical framework in which it is used: its problematic".

proletariat (**Subject**) was not self-conscious of and not fulfilling its historic (**revolutionary**) mission to transform the major industrialized countries of the capitalist world into socialist states. Contrary to expectations, Russia with its embryonic capitalism produced the first socialist state with other Eastern European countries joining after world war II. Movements for liberation sprung up in the third world against colonial domination; the civil rights and black power movements rose up in America, with women's liberation and gay liberation on its heels. This historic conjuncture precipitated the theoretical investigation into the revolutionary subject as sovereign subject, reaching its current expressions in Lacanian, Althusserian and post-structuralist thought.⁵

Sovereignty will be discussed in its intuitive and common sense expressions, but most importantly in its direct relevance to the objects of analysis that comprise this study. It is for this reason that I have focused on *philosophical anthropology as an expression of sovereignty of consciousness* and sovereign subjects, with its tangible **possessive form** emphasized in my discussion of G.W.F. Hegel, Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva; the latter aspect is

⁵ To ascertain the flavor of this critical discourse around the revolutionary subject see Martin Jay (1986); Stanley Aronowitz (1981); C.L.R. James (1963); Juliet Mitchell (1966).

central to the chapter on Jeffrey Dahmer.⁶

The starting point of Sovereignty in its multi-dimensionality, is most intuitively present in the idea of **Sovereignty** of consciousness, entailing the attribution of supremacy of power and authority, independence and excellence of consciousness; in addition to the idea of geographical and state sovereignty (the latter aspect is outside the realm of this study).

The discussion of the following examples of the concept of Sovereignty in the politics of the state by John Locke and Thomas Hobbes is to be distinguished from a critical discourse on the sovereign subject, since their works represent a rationalization of sovereign subjectivity. Both Locke and Hobbes were concerned with constructing rational forms of state government. Hobbes began from the pre-supposition that all men had an innate drive for power over others and were constituted by a condition of equality of abilities, equal insecurity and equal subordination, especially in respect to the capitalist market. These conditions were thought to be the bases for the necessity of the sovereign state. He thought that a political sovereign was necessary to guarantee order by enforcing rules. Sovereign power was understood as a political power whether

⁶ There is a growing literature on Jeffrey Dahmer see Anne Schwartz (1992); Don Davis (1991); Albert Drukteinis (1992); Brian Masters (1993) discussions are also found in court documents, popular journals, newspapers and his televised trial excerpts.

that of a monarchy or an assembly, to which every individual must resign all his rights and powers.

For Locke the preservation of property acts as the basis for the construction of sovereign government. He maintained that every man had a natural right to possessions and all men were naturally equal. Right is conceived as having its ordinary basis in a man's property in himself. Money is thought to remove the spoilage limits of natural right, and therefore, money in itself becomes a naturalized right since it accords with the possessive nature of man. Sovereign power is expressed in the agreement of each to give over power to the majority, which establishes civil society. Even in this instance it is clear that sovereignty could only be rigorously conceived within the problematic of philosophical anthropology, manifested in the discourse on human nature.

The current spotlight on philosophical anthropology is indebted to Louis Althusser's (1970, 1969, 1971) discussion of the revolution, which Marx produced in the field of philosophy around such fundamental concepts as temporality, presence, social formations, self-consciousness, linearity, historicism, totality etc. It is my reading that the beginning of the transformation in Marx's thought was elaborated in his critique of German philosophy, in which he **de-centered** his former anthropological categories e.g. alienated, natural, social, universal, free, self-conscious,

laboring **essence of being**. The *petite-aperture* that he made in Western philosophy entailed the creation of new categories to represent the new theoretical objects; for instance, social relations, modes of production, productive forces, labor power, labor-time, value, surplus-value, production, circulation etc.⁷ Louis Althusser (1970) takes a more radical position on Marx, in which the late Marx is conceived as producing a revolutionary, **epistemological break** with an irrelevant anthropological remainder. Conversely, the writings in support of the central continuity of philosophical anthropology are immense.⁸

The literature that encompasses the assault on philosophical anthropology emanates most strongly from post-structuralist/ post-modern criticism. It forms a central thematic for most of the major intellectuals in these schools of thought. For example, Michel Foucault (1965, 1970, 1972, 1977) in his various works has traced the emergence of the concept of man in Western philosophy and its elaboration by the medical, legal and psychiatric apparatuses of the West. Foucault (1970) further maintained

⁷ Karl Marx (1973a, 1973b, 1967) shows the transformation in the thought of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, and the new categories they formulated to represent their new perspective and object of analysis.

⁸ A number of philosophers have argued in favor of the idea of a continuity between the late and early works of Karl Marx, in which the latter works are regarded as a development of his early anthropology. See István Mészáros (1970); Lucien Sève (1978); G.A. Cohen (1978); Jean-François Lyotard (1993).

that the tabular representation of classical thought did not contain man; before the end of the 18th century there was no epistemological consciousness of man as such in Western thought. He added, "and man as primary reality with his own density, as the difficult object and sovereign subject of all possible knowledge, has no place in it." Foucault at the end of his discussion of "Man and his Doubles" spoke about the anthropological sleep. He identified the anthropological configuration of modern philosophy beginning with Immanuel Kant as a doubling at two levels, with the pre-critical analysis of the essence of man becoming everything presented to man's experience. The anthropology of man was denounced as a forgetfulness of the opening (discourse analysis) that made it possible, with this anthropology as an obstacle standing in the way of new thought. Jacques Derrida (1974, 1978, 1982, 1987, 1988) has concentrated on the concepts of philosophical anthropology in Western philosophy, deconstructing the works of many of the major philosophers of Western thought, giving some of the most elaborate and rigorous deconstructions to date. For example, Derrida (1978) in "From a Restricted to a General Economy: A Hegelianism Without Reserve" develops a concept of sovereignty through a reading of Georges Bataille's interpretation of Lordship and bondage. Sovereignty is a category that is framed in opposition to Lordship (a metaphor for elite power) and this sovereignty is the double

negative of Lordship in that it marks that which is doubled and concealed, differing and deferring infinitely in the productive-unproductiveness of knowledge. Lordship is grounded on the practices and categories of mutual recognition by the lord and the slave, life, self-consciousness and *aufhebung* in the illuminating, positive dialectic of the accumulation of knowledge; while sovereignty is based on death, loss, negativity, non-recognition, the unthought, infinite deferral and concealment in unproductive knowledge production. Only Lordship is sovereign subjectivity, Sovereignty is actually its negation; it is lordship that entails sovereignty of consciousness, unveiling and accumulation of knowledge.

Jean-François Lyotard (1988, 1991, 1993) has also elaborated on this thematic of philosophical anthropology in his legal and other Western philosophical criticism.

Another aspect of my notion of **Sovereignty** has its starting point in the Hegelian theory of **onto-genesis** (theory of the origins of being), entailing a discussion of the relations between having and being; however, it subverts this Hegelian philosophy by spatially and cognitively situating the subjective body in the logic of the social order, but this is no natural body, it is a socially inscribed one.⁹ Jacques Lacan (1977) impresses upon us the

⁹ G.W.F. Hegel (1967, 1977) is significant to the development of my ideas around the division of the subject and the concept of possession, which is most relevant to the

force of the law that is attached to such relations in his psychoanalytic conceptualization of the relations of the oedipal triangle to social onto-genesis, speech and designation in oedipalized, **phallogentric** (the onto-genic privilege of castration) social relations. Julia Kristeva (1986) attempts to extend these ideas, in thinking maternal relations in terms of '**semiotic**' rhythms (vocal and kinetic), in the pre-verbal order.

The thematic of possession and rights to possession in tangible bodily form, manifested in the physical and sexual sense, present themselves as a strongly demarcated figure. It is this feature of the possession of marked bodies and rights of power over bodies, that presents a particular aspect of the designation of **Sovereignty**.

Michel Foucault's analyses of madness in both *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1965), and *I, Pierre Rivière: having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother...* (1975), attempts to make sense of madness from the perspective of the production of madness, through the **apparatuses of legal, medical and psychiatric practices**-discursive and non-discursive.

Although I believe that this Foucaultian perspective is invaluable, the angle of vision focuses on the relationship between the victim/author/object of madness in the compulsion to speak the truth, and the **privilege of**

question of desire.

speech in the production of madness. It is the *discursive* text (speech) in this production that is Sovereign. The *non-discursive relationship* of the victim to the oppressor vanishes. In the case of serial-killers this relationship, in the form of the negative liberation of desire is extremely salient. The imposing articulations of discursive practices arising out of the aforementioned apparatuses, would benefit from the complications of discursive and non-discursive practices, emanating from social relations ensconced in material practices, namely, gender, race, class, generation etc. For example, the victim in the case of I Pierre Revière... cannot be reduced to the destruction of some ambiguous sign of *Sovereignty* or law, but has to be read in terms of the specificity of the gendered and sexualized functioning of *Sovereignty*, since, according to Reviere, these acts of murder were produced in salvation of the Sovereign father against the mother.

The *general tendencies of the literature on serial-murders* take the socio-pathological and psycho-pathological perspectives, which have their fundamental basis in *regressive analysis* (the temporal privilege of castration or the oedipal moment).¹⁰ This focus on childhood and oedipal

¹⁰ The discursive strength of regressive psychoanalysis in theoretical works on serial murders is so hegemonic, that it has the status of a self evident truth. See D. Abrahamsen (1973); Ronald Holmes and James E. Deburger (1988); Eugene Revitch and Louise E. Schlesinger (1981); Donald Sear (1991). Eric Fromm (1973), even this Marxian classic defines the roots of destructive necrophilia in oedipal relations-

relations constitutes a pervasive barrier; social theorists in this emerging field appear to be captivated and incapable of thinking outside of this paradigm. The poverty of theory in this body of literature dramatizes the limits of psychoanalysis and regressive analysis. Thus, I hope that my endeavor to displace regressive analysis, and philosophical anthropology, combined with their replacement by Marxian concepts, will generate a productive alternative, that could create a new object and perspective, from which to better grasp the social phenomena that constitute this project.

Textual Analysis

It is general social relations, which have their bases in Marx's class analysis, but expanded to include other relations such as sexuality, gender, race etc. based on mature marx's categories (eg. productive forces, mode of production, means of production, productive, unproductive, value, surplus-value etc.), which I regard as having greater potential for grasping the production of *Sovereign Subjects* and relations.¹¹ These categories will be applied to

regressive analysis.

For rigorous analyses of the concept of regressive analysis in the works of Sigmund Freud see Jacques Lacan (1988a); also see Frantz Fanon (1967); S. Freud (1965a, 1966). The literature on serial murders tend to employ a derivative, common sense approach to 'regressive' analysis with a focus on childhood and familial relations.

¹¹ The focus on complexes of social relations was encouraged by the perspectives of black feminists and other feminists of color. See Combahee River Collective (1979);

discursive and non-discursive texts.

Given the presuppositions that underlie the manner in which I intend to examine the relationship of knowledge to social relations, in opposition to the internality of psychoanalysis, I will seek to understand how knowledge-effects (mode of appropriation of the world peculiar to knowledge) help produce desires, interests, ego-affectations and identifications, and various modes of activities depending on their reception. The representations of social relations impose themselves on bodies and shape subjective identifications, code and enable the transmission and reproduction of knowledge-effects, that produce desires and interests.

A problematic that is partially examined in this work is how to best articulate the effects of interiority through the operation of the metaphysics of Western thought, which privileges presence. This effect connects speech to particular sites as authors and subjects, producing agency, desires, interests and ego-identifications. Such speech/texts become the property of authors, and mark determinate and appearing subjects. The effect of such presence(s) are power sites of social inscription. Although it is important to recognize and present such sites, it is also important to articulate these subjective-effects of

power that are appearing subjects. This dissertation strongly articulates the latter but presupposes the former, while recognizing the significance of its specification.

This textual analysis will draw on L. Althusser's (1970) *symptomatic reading* in the writing of the section Sovereign Subjects/Revolutionary Subjects. However, the other chapter (on a "non-discursive" realm) is less directly influenced by any particular language theorist, although there is bound to be some resemblance to Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, Michael Foucault's archeology and even the language theory of Lacanian psychoanalysis, since their works have benefited from much cross fertilization of categories, but much more importantly because attempts to discern and produce alternative perspectives on texts are bound to produce and point to absences and presences, distinct logic, valuations etc.¹² The categories that I will employ are also likely to be similar to those used by such **feminists** as Gayatri Spivak, bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Terese De Lauretis, Monique Wittig, Gloria Anzaldua etc. since they utilize metaphors of margin-center, inside-outside, excess,

¹² Jacques Lacan's (1973,1977,1991) works are significant to the discussion of the de-centered subject, the location of speech, and the latter work for the development of the relationship of presence to absence, particularly on the section on the purloin letter. Jacques Derrida (1978,1987,1988) continues this dialogue with a critical engagement of J. Lacan. Michel Foucault (1972) most strongly problematizes the question of speech in connection with the articulation of discursive forms.

visibility, face etc.¹³

In *symptomacity*, Althusser developed categories that helped grasp the *anthropologizing and sovereignizing* of subjectivity, that had particular significance to Marx's theory. These categories and the **Subject** of the analysis are an asset in the development of a mode of analysis centered on the *revolutionary subjectivity-as-Sovereign*, but, a perspective that does not degenerate into a tendency to essentialize the sovereign text that **White**, Western, Marxists have produced in the perpetuation of their interests.¹⁴ *The general tendency of the critique of the*

¹³ The aforementioned concepts are quite general throughout feminist theories and have had a productive relationship to post-structuralism see Gayatri Spivak (1988b) for a discussion of this. For a nice discussion of marginalia see G. Spivak (1988b, 1990), and bell hooks (1984). hooks makes ample use of the metaphors of margin and center. However, Spivak in contrast to hooks denies any sense of wholeness or a totalistic perspective, recognizing the limits of any discursive frame of reference and the repetitious return of the margin on a new horizon. b. hooks (1981), Elizabeth Spelman (1982), Combahee River Collective (1979), Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (1983) represent a sample of feminists that have at the foreground the relationship of knowledge and social relations to social and discursive visibility. Audre Lorde (1984), Teresa De Lauretis (1987), Monique Wittig (1992) make considerable use of the insider-outsider concepts on questions of visibility, with the two latter feminists integrating the category of excess.

¹⁴ Louis Althusser's attempt to underwrite Marxism as a science is generally held to be a failure and lies within the theoretical endeavor to restore the Proletariat to its proper place. The value of marxism is generated in the presentation of subjugated knowledge and in aiding practices of social resistance. However, I am inclined to agree that the theory and practice of resistance is best facilitated by the development of the categories of marxist political-economy, in a more generalized sense of the term. The

proletariat within Western Marxism by White Marxists, has been in the form of an anguished mourning of the passing of the *Sovereign-Proletariat*, that has been monumentalized as the essential text of Marxism and Marx.¹⁵ This is a regrettable tendency, but, the effect of the *ego-identification and cathexis* (an emotionally charged attachment) of *White Marxists* to the *Proletariat*.

Major post-structuralists such as Derrida and Foucault have tended to avoid a detail deconstruction, or archeological analysis of Western Marxism and have retreated from the scolding critique that L. Althusser delivers, on the petty-bourgeois intellectual.¹⁶ *This general discursive tendency has supported a recuperation from within Western*

movements for resistance have yet to tap the potentiality of such categories, released in radical reconstruction. Although Althusser's scientificity could be read as putting a brake on his deconstructive impulse, his deconstructive approach to classical political-economy in *Reading Capital* (1970) is a marvelous pedagogical exercise in the development of a deconstructive approach to Marxism. See *Essays In Self-Criticism* (1978) for his reassessment of the relations between ideology and science, which entails a notion of the continuity of ideology rather than break in relation to Marx's science.

¹⁵ This mourning is expressed in the emotive, repetitious return to the crisis of Marxism, de-Sovereignization—the site of the death of the proletarian-Subject, the site of tragedy. See Perry Anderson (1976), Neil McInnes (1972), David McLellan (1979), Alvin Gouldner (1979), Stanley Aronowitz (1981).

¹⁶ There has been some half-hearted attempts to engage Karl Marx. Jacques Derrida's (1981) position on the radical exteriority of materiality and Jean-François Lyotard's (1993) libidinal reading of Marx—"old man Marx" and "little girl Marx".

Marxism (e.g. Nicholas Poulantzas, 1978; Terry Eagleton, 1976; D. Lecourt, 1975; Pierre Macherey, 1978); this is exemplified by Martin Jay's (1984) discussion of Western Marxism, in terms of the totality, employing Althusserian categories to repress (non-self-conscious forces (libidinal, discursive, social) of attraction and repulsion that have a repressive-effect), the **Sovereign** tendencies of Western Marxism. This takes the form of producing de-Sovereignizing-effects and making the Sovereign features invisible. This is typified by Michael Ryan's (1981) Marxist deconstruction in which his examination of Leninism and the phallogocentric (male-centered) category of the Proletariat entailed a recuperation, manifested as a generalized notion of the Proletariat and its supporting categories. Many others express pessimism and, or ambivalence (e.g. Christopher Norris, 1982; Barry Smart, 1983; Fredric Jameson, 1981), in the face of the radical Nietzschean mode of post-structuralism.

White feminists have also begun to criticize Western philosophy, and Marxism in particular beyond the preoccupation with male biases, and to a lesser extent engage in an internal critique of their own *Sovereign tendencies*, but, the engagement of the latter tends to be too tentative, implicit, general and ambivalent, rather than specific and detail discussions of how the logic of Sovereignty operates in such texts. **Polyvocality** (multiple

meaning of speech) and **heteroglossia** (multiple meanings) have become strategies of avoidance and **repression** of texts of Sovereignty, particularly around the thorny categories of Subjectivities, such as, race, class, sexuality, nationality, generation etc. This is a repressive and violent use of the theoretical tools of post-structuralism. This *repressive apparatus* is juxtaposed, to the *loud clamor* of the *deconstruction and critique* of the *Sovereign Subject-in-general*, by its various names, the transcendental subject, phallogentrism etc.¹⁷

Radical race (male) theory emanating from Black radical thought has yet to seriously engage in a self-interrogation of its own **Sovereign** tendencies, at the fundamental level of the *logic of the categories* of Black radical thought, especially in terms of its various biases (gender, class, national, sexual etc). In addition, there is a blindness to the *enormous debt* to the categories of *Western Philosophy*, which rises up in the midst of the

¹⁷ There is a general discursive imperative to reproduce Sovereignty within Feminism, from the site of the white, middle-class, which represents their interests; and this is reproduced even among those that have been forced to become aware of the conspicuous absences of key categories of subjective signification, which effects a non-innocent, self-affective symptom of discursive power. See for example Hester Eisenstein ed. (1980), Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron eds. (1984), Susan R. Suleiman ed. (1985), Teresa De Lauretis ed. (1986), Linda Nicholson ed. (1990), Judith Butler and Joan Scott eds. (1992).

critique of Eurocentrism.¹⁸I had tended to continue my discussion of symptomaticity by looking at a number of the categories that arose out of such a perspective, particularly in the section on Sovereign Subjects/Revolutionary Subjects, supplementing such categories by others that appear to be more appropriate or adequate, to the kind of sense that I wish to convey in the other chapters. However, the limits of the dissertation project didn't allow me to do the kind of detailed analysis of the functioning of Sovereign Revolutionary subjectivity in respect to the Black Subject that I had hoped to do. This is a project that I have postponed for subsequent work.

Symtomaticity

Although I have sought a *symptomatic reading* of texts mentioned above, it is important to focus on *social relations that remain latent* in a terminology that is

¹⁸ Traditionally there has existed some critical consideration of class, in particular the conservative role of the black, middle-class and the black intelligentsia in the black revolutionary process. See C.L. R. James (1980), especially his essays on "Black Power", "Peasants and Workers" and "Marxism and the Intellectual". Also see W.E.B. Dubois's (1971) self-conscious distancing from the concept of the self-interested, middle-class, black, intelligentsia to that of a talented tenth devoted to the service of the race. Manning Marable (1984) discusses black power, giving presence to activist criticism of the black, middle-class on non-violence, capitalism and racism, also identifying the emergence of the revolutionary lumpenproletariat. Also see Frantz Fanon (1967) on this question. However the complexities of subjective interrelations of race, gender, class, etc. are repressed, the effect of the ego-cathexes of black men to the category race, which marks self-interest, self-affection and black male homoerotic speech.

heavily indebted to psychoanalytic theory—the power relation of the doctor/psychoanalyst/Subject to his patient/object/symptom. It also entails the idea of a diagnosis of a diseased entity. Such implications of symptomaticity in their legislation of intellectual and scientific *authority* are problematic; at the same time that the relationship of the *author* to the text is not innocent, but, interested. The author is a *substantial* site of social inscription and power.

Another important distinction that is immediately apparent, is that the development of the notion of *symptomaticity* that Althusser applies is grounded on a comparison of classical economics to the elaboration of the *theory of value by Karl Marx in Capital*. This difference is not judged by him as a mere quantitative difference that could be read as a linear development of a notion, but one in which the difference in theoretical accounts is based on the transformation of the object of analysis, it is not a mere change in perspective.

My account of differences between theories and in respect to concepts is not indebted to any notion of progress that could be inferred from the differentiation and multiplication of categories that manifest themselves in various theoretical undertakings. Rather than the linearity of progress that reduces qualitative differences to

linearity of quantification, *my analysis of each of the objects will concentrate on the relations of the categories to the centralization of the Subject.*

Louis Althusser's (1970, 11-194) **symptomativity**, worked out through an analysis of Marxian versus Classical economics, **identifies moments of breaks, blanks and silences within a theoretical discourse—a silence that marks a discourse as ideological and anthropological.** In this theoretical endeavor, Althusser produced a number of theoretical categories, (e.g. centered-de-centered subject, centered-de-centered totality, expressive-non-expressive totality/subject, genetic subject, empirical subject, synchronic-diachronic history etc.) to give visibility to blanks, identify silences and mark the site of ideological and philosophical replacement.

The *basic question* that Sovereign/Subjects Revolutionary/Subjects will address is that of the relationship between the Sovereignty of consciousness (philosophical anthropology), and the various theoretical discourses of the *revolutionary subject*-identified with the proper names *Proletariat and Woman*. To this end I will take-up fragments of philosophical discourses, in which texts of Sovereignty are situated, in order, to show the production of Sovereignty and ego-identifications that are invested in such formulations, which function to reproduce sites of speech and social relations of power. Within this section on

Sovereign Subjects/Revolutionary Subjects I will begin with a critical analysis of Adrienne Rich's radical-feminist formulations of subjectivity, racism and gynephobia in her essay entitled "Disloyalty to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynephobia" (1979) to determine the construction of the Sovereign, Revolutionary Subjectivity of Woman. The second part of my analysis of Sovereign/Subjects Revolutionary Subjects, will be on the *production of Sovereignty in Marxist-Feminist/Western Marxist perspectives on the domestic labour debate* associated with such authorial names as Angela Davis, Mariarosa Dalla-Costa and Selma James, Ira Gerstein, Wally Seccombe, Paul Smith, Lise Vogel etc. The objective is to show how the Sovereign is produced as the revolutionary subject. I am going to focus on certain sites of revolutionary speech that give presence to Sovereign relations; sites that attempt an articulation between Marxism and Feminism, efforts that mark the **over-determined** (multi-layered contradiction)¹⁹ sites of crises, in the conflict between the Proletariat and the Woman Sovereigns in the works of several Western marxists.²⁰

However, the categories that I intend to employ in order to

¹⁹ Louis Althusser (1970) appropriates the concept of over-determination from Sigmund Freud (1965) and develops his insights, an example of which is the formation of an internal concept of "cause".

²⁰ For a discussion of the concept of Western Marxism see the topological descriptions of David McLellan (1979); Martin Jay (1984); also see Stanley Aronowitz (1981) who underscores the vacuousness of the term.

describe Sovereignty in these instances will be very schematic, given the diverse theoretical territories that I will cover.

The previously cited categories of Louis Althusser produced in fruitful interaction with other philosophers, have generalized into Post-structural/post-modern thought, associated with such philosophers as Etienne Balibar, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida etc. The intellectual currency of post-structuralism has dramatically increased in recent years.²¹ This has been accompanied by an association of Sovereignty with Western Marxism and a concomitant decline in the value of Western Marxism, especially Hegelian Marxism. The rise in value of post-structuralist and post-modern thought, has resulted in the generalization of the categories that have emerged out of these philosophies. Martin Jay's (1984) *Marxism and the Totality* is a prime example of this generalization. Jay's participation in this *economy of discursive annexation* (appropriation and deployment of post-structuralist categories), has increased the value of Marxism in a discursive maneuver that has helped to counteract its declining value caused by protracted economic crisis. He has

²¹ Gayatri Spivak (1990) opposes the use of the analogy of the production of value to language. Michel Foucault (1972) makes ample use of the concept of value in his theoretical formulations of discursive forms. Jacques Derrida (1982) makes extensive use of the concept of the production of value to analogies and metaphors in Western philosophy.

effected this ideological miracle, by spotlighting and producing de-Sovereignizing features of Western Marxism, and *repressing the logic of Sovereignty*. Given this emerging tendency in Marxist thought, I intend to concentrate on the Sovereign-Proletariat/Woman relationship in Western Marxism/Marxist-Feminism, to identify the kinds of classifications and repressions that were effected and help lift the bar of repression by representing the texts of Sovereignty.

Positions: Center-Margin, Eccentricity, Dispersion...

In the development of my conceptual schemes in this introduction, I will begin with a discussion of the metaphoric value of spatial metaphors of location. Within post-structuralist, post-modern, feminism, radical race theory and Marxism, there has been a proliferation of *categories of position* (e.g. center-margin, centered-de-centered, veil, eccentric, dispersion, beyond, excess, face etc). These categories have substantially framed the categories and discursive products in these schools of thought.

Most intellectuals utilizing spatial categories, have found them useful in designating distinct points of views, predicated on two opposing positions in which one position predominates over and above the other. Thus, the categories always form a couplet that represents this relationship

(e.g. center-margin).

Perspectivistic strategies of analysis frequently remain heavily in debt to categories of positions linked to points of views often invested with philosophical anthropology, the interiority of sight and the contemporaneity of presence and speech. The end result is a collection of reductive categories, producing a simple linearity, a transcendental subject and object.²²

The metaphors of spatiality present positionality and visibility, however, what is important to this theoretical undertaking is the visibility or invisibility of the *logic of social relations*, and how they are produced within texts. In other words, this is a social logic; such a strategy is focused on the order of relations, its archetonic structure, the hierarchy of relations and the strategies employed to inhibit chaos that frequently visits, various theories of social relations-Marxism, Feminism, Radical Race Theories etc.

Even though spatial categories such as left-right, top-bottom, are predicated on a body centered basis of judgement of position and are susceptible to philosophical anthropology, what should be foreground is the specificity

²² The anthropological tendency is strongly evident in stand point epistemologies. See Sandra Harding (1986), Cedric Robinson (1983), Alfred Sohn-Rethel (1978), Patricia Hill-Collins (1990).

of the relations of the body.²³ What I wish to underscore is the logical underpinnings of any judgement of positionality, and their relationship to interests and desires, which are never neutral. Given that *positionality is a core concept* in the frameworks that I am developing, and have a central place in each of my essays, it is important to clarify what this concept entails.

The analyses encompass scanning the texts for the presence of originary, indelible marks that form the basis of the **Transcendental Object** (essential and invariant), that the perceiving Subject recognizes. It also entails the identification of a centering, that marks the *hierarchization* of social relations, the sign of a *Sovereignizing* process. This textual analysis maps the discursive strategies of Sovereign production, the calculations of the text that leave their trace in the form of gaps, absences, ambiguities, contradictions, valuations etc., manifestations of repressions and discursive calculations that are the basis of valuations of social relations and power. This complex of forms-gaps, ambiguities, social valuations etc., investment of knowledge that reaps truth-surpluses, and excess of productive consumption, make-up the archetonic structure of the categories.

²³ See M. Merleau Ponty (1962) for a body-centered phenomenology of perception.

In each chapter, the analyses will be characterized by the *displacement of the logical order* that frames each theoretical formulation. In chapter I, the first part of the section on Sovereign Subjects/Revolutionary Subjects, the essay by Adrienne Rich-"Disloyalty to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynephobia" (1979), will be subjected to a detail analysis of the logic of her categories, presenting the object that emerges through such an analysis.²⁴ This will be accompanied by a simultaneous "construction" of another logical order that will entail no disruption of the literal statements made. However, this *logical transformation* will present a reading that appears contrary to Rich's self-interpretation. My representations of these (discursive) texts, will not only show the capacity of texts for multiple meanings, but, it will suggest that sometimes these Other-texts that are overshadowed, repressed and marked by gaps, are highly productive. But, contrary to the author's intentions, they unleash an avalanche of discursive violence that can be glimmered from the margins, but, have to be mapped to see the damage. It will also show, in the case of Rich's essay, how a White, middle-class, lesbian-feminist, appears to pursue her immediate self-interests/**White loyalties (repression)**, apparently without

²⁴ There has been some brief commentary on Rich's essay (e.g. Gloria Joseph, 1981; bell hooks, 1981; doris davenport, 1983), but, no careful and systematic deconstruction of it.

knowing it, while seeing herself (ego-identification) as forwarding the universal interest-disloyalties-fecit cui profuit.²⁵

Loyalty...:Summary Notes

Introduction

Introduction: Part I (a) The introduction began with a statement of the problem of the *Sovereign Subject*. (b) It identified the connection between the Sovereign Subject and philosophical anthropology. (c) I showed the historic emergence of the discourse on the Sovereign Subject and its connection to the Marxian revolutionary subject. Part II In this section I identified the objects of analysis as discursive and non-discursive texts, beginning with the discursive, proceeding to the non-discursive text. I gave an exposition of *textual analyses*, including symptomaticity and positions... situating them within discourse analysis. I discussed how these approaches will help me to grasp the presence of Sovereign Subjectivity through blanks, silences, ambiguities, contradictions, hierarchical relations of subjective identity expressed in centering-decentering, marginalization, dispersion etc. In part III I made a concise review of the literature on Sovereignty, looking at the common sense expressions of Sovereignty of consciousness, geographical and state sovereignty. I quickly moved on to the central focus on philosophical anthropology

²⁵ 'He did the deed who gained by it'.

as expressive of sovereignty of consciousness, looking at the writings of Karl Marx, G.W.F. Hegel, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva etc., in addition to its post-structuralist critics. These authors are important to discursive and non-discursive texts that comprise this work. To reiterate, the forms of sovereignty of consciousness that will be foreground are revolutionary, and possessive, sovereign subjectivity.

Sovereign Subjects/Revolutionary Subjects

Rich Metaphysics

Chapter I In this first chapter of the section on Sovereign Subjects/Revolutionary Subjects I did a deconstruction of an essay by Adrienne Rich (1979) entitled "Disloyalty to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynephobia". I showed how Adrienne Rich constructs the Sovereign identity **Woman** and a revolutionary project that attempts to confront gynephobia and racism. I continued by identifying the discursive maneuvers which she practices, through silences, gaps, valuations and contradictions of her theorizing, to **purify** the white woman as Sovereign subject—a purification that is in opposition to her stated intention-disloyalty to civilization. Thus, I attempted to identify how this discursive product, supplemented by desire finds its way home to the dominant discursive forms of white-feminism entailing the centering of the category woman.

In Rich Metaphysics there is a peculiar, sovereign

operation in the relations between the key categories of racism, gynephobia and patriarchy that begins with her meditations on the problematic of acknowledging racism in feminist writings. Rich complained that white feminists tended to pursue an intellectualized understanding or idea of racism rather than the emotional content of the experience that black women were communicating. It is the emotive expression that is of value (feminine). She distinguishes "guilt feeling" from "actual guilt", maintaining that "accountability" is a serious question for feminist ethics.

Rich defined white women as passive and active *instruments* in the practice of inhumanity against black people; but also maintained that intra-racial violence between women occurs giving one example of the mother-daughter relation in African 'genital mutilation' and chinese foot-binding. However, she continued that overarching or beneath the aforementioned violence is Patriarchy (white male). Therefore, we saw the usefulness of intra-racial violence of women of color in the third-world as a counter-balancing term to white women's racism in the ledger of violent accounts. Patriarchy becomes a means of purifying white women's racism and the atrocious violence of women of color who are nationally undifferentiated to produce this effect.

What is seemingly advanced is a political offer in

which Patriarchy is held accountable for social violence, but entailing the nullifying, purifying and instrumentalizing of women's violence; in exchange for their ideological complicity, women of color would be allowed into the White, Lesbian-Feminist sisterhood. Thus, their political, social and discursive relation would be ordered dominant to subordinate.

Kettle-logue: Sovereignty and Domesticity

Chapter II The essay in this chapter identified the operations that produced the *taxonomy* and *geneticism* of the Sovereign, Revolutionary Subject who exhibited sovereignty of consciousness in those discourses on the revolutionary subject (Proletarian and Woman), within the "domestic labour debate" by Western Marxism/Marxist-Feminism. Those discourses that were identified as *over-determined sites* of contradiction were the foci of the analyses.

The debate is characterized by a "kettle-logic"-a metaphor of contradictory propositions and gaps, which is an effect of conflicting accounts within the debate as a whole, and in terms of the internal 'coherence' of individual accounts. The participants utilized the categories of Marxist political-economy to produce the various **systems** of domesticity that were composed of positive and negative values (eg. productive (+) unproductive (-)) that produced **positive and negative configurations of domesticity**. All of the configurations posit domesticity as empirical and

external to the capitalist production process. I have asked what is the level of analysis of marx's abstract-formal categories (e.g. Productive forces, labour-power etc.), could domesticity be read as entailed in them, and at what level of analysis could they require empirical concepts.

In the course of my analyses I have examined the key function of the productivity of the **play of the difference of value** in the production of values in the labouring activities of domesticity. The taxonomic designations of values (positive and negative) produced **sexed Revolutionary Subjects** as the full realization of these discursive productions. The **transference** or non-transference of domestic labour constitutes the central mechanism in the valuative operation that produces Sovereign, Revolutionary Subjectivity. Each essay in the debate licenses a version of the lawful Revolutionary Subject. **Authentication** takes two major forms: firstly, the housewife as an independent, **Self-certain**, Proletarian Subject with a status equal to the industrial (male) Proletariat, based on the positive configuration (domestic labour as productive, creative of surplus-value and profits); secondly, in the negative form of the systematicity of domestic labour (unproductive, not creative of surplus-value or profits) that grounds the subjectivity of the housewife as not (independently) Proletarian, however, leaving open the possibility of an *uncertain* but dependent status. The subjectivity of the

industrial proletariat remained *certain*. The desire for the self-certainty of the Woman Subject is most strongly manifested in the *early* writings, but in the course of the debate, the problem of the transference of domestic labour into value and surplus-value shook and undermined the bold, initial formulations. The decisive challenge to these ideas which came from Paul Smith (1978) and Ira Gerstein (1973) supported the **Absolute, self-certainty** of the Sovereign, Revolutionary subjectivity of the **Proletariat**.

Sovereign Subject

Jeffrey Dahmer: Loyalty to White Civilization

Chapter III This chapter examined the serial murders of Jeffrey Dahmer, a white male of German ancestry, born in 1960, high school educated, and from a middle-class origins. He confessed to and was convicted of killing seventeen young men in Milwaukee, 15 of whom were men of color. Dahmer engaged in necrophilic sex, dismemberment and cannibalism. His victims were described as being of lower class origins, unemployed and effeminate. This chapter will identify the operations of *possessive sovereignty of 'consciousness'* in his acts of serial murders. Dahmer's socio-political centering and being-in-origins was constituted as white, middle-class, heterosexual. He was reconstituted and repositioned as working-class, homosexual, criminal etc. as a function of the *contradictions of his libidinal drive energies* which reconstituted his life experiences, effecting

a marginalization and de-valuation vis-a-vis his original status. Dahmer is thought to articulate a fixed, essential and **substantial** conception of identity/being, as being in origins-sovereignty of consciousness. Dahmer is theorized to act on a right to appropriate (have) the objects of his desire through monetary exchange in accordance with his true, substantial, sovereign positioning (being). The mode of appropriation was sexual and homicidal. These acts of appropriation affirmed his fixed, substantial and superior identity-in-origins as eternal and true, a mode of thought that is grounded on White, Western notions of being.

The core of my analysis focuses on the contradictions of his libidinal drives, interests and 'consciousness'. He was described as having men as his exclusive sex objects. But, he was ambivalent about identifying as a homosexual. I argued that his homosexual practices defaced his heterosexual identity in origin. I read this attachment as indicative of a substantial consciousness and *metonymic relationship to language*, entailing a marginalization of the metaphysics of social relations. In the context of this substantiality the effacing and re-facing of aspects of subjectivity was experienced as an assault on his essential being.

Dahmer held a strong predilection for men of color and expressed an attraction to physical beauty and youthfulness. He also exhibited skin, hand, skull and penis fetishes. His

residential self-exile in a black/hispanic neighborhood and building, and his inter-racial sexual practices represent **social proximity**, a subversion of the rules of social distance in American society, producing a blackening-effect as a function of the symbols of biological and social community.

He came from a middle-class origins which he couldn't reproduce. Instead, he dropped out of college, enlisted in the army in 1978 and was discharged in 1981. He later worked at a blood bank and lastly as a store clerk. His working-class position enabled him to lure many unemployed, lower working-class men of color with offers of money. Dahmer identified himself as a compulsive spender, which supports the notion of his *attachment* to his class origins.

Dahmer described himself as driven by a urge to murder and dismember men whom he desired, and cannibalism was a sexual thrill. I attempted to link necrophilic sex, murder, amputation etc. into a **coherent narrative or fabrication**, recognizing that it is a statement about the subjective-effects of the text of Dahmer's acts than a philosophical account of Dahmer's consciousness per se.

I speculated that these men whom Dahmer desired sexually represented **being-as-difference:colored**, effeminate, lower working-class/ lower-class etc., real, tangible matter. But, possession at close proximity transformed his being from heterosexual to homosexual,

produced a racial blackening, facilitated a class demotion, and upset the surety of his gender identity. I considered that he was engaged in rituals of proximity (eg. sex, residential relocation (non-white)) which facilitated his access to the objects of his sexual desire but that the effects of proximity transformed his identity-in-origins as white, masculine, heterosexual and middle-class. I considered murder, dismemberment, cannibalism and the dissolving of remains as his means of **determining difference with certainty**, in order to chart a course that would bring him **home** to his identity-in-origins.

It is up to the reader to assess the extent to which the categories I have developed grasped the object of Sovereignty of consciousness in both the discursive and non-discursive realms, and whether they help broaden and deepen our understanding of Sovereignty. In my estimation the analyses in each of the chapters have shown through detailed and close readings, the articulation of sovereignty of consciousness and hierarchical relations of power in the logic of the theoretical constructions, but in a mode that goes beyond broad generalizations-the predominant tendency, to a careful examination of the mechanisms of such productions in the section Sovereign Subjects /Revolutionary Subjects. It is my hope that this dissertation will *contribute to the sociological literature*, and social theory in general by theoretically developing the thematic of

Sovereignty, which is expressed in discursive and non-discursive phenomena, within areas in which its expression has been unrecognized.

Sovereign Subjects/Revolutionary Subjects

Rich Metaphysics:

Forging Loyalties/Forging Disloyalties

In this chapter I will engage in a discussion of the forging of loyalties and disloyalties around the relations of gender, race, class, generation etc. in respect to Rich's sexual politics. I would like to underscore that I am playing on a *double connotation of the term forge* implying the act of *shaping* and *forming* social relations, and the mirror of the specular *presentation* of relations. This category does not include the presumption of a transcendental signifier, but rather, a reading that posits Rich's texts as the product of missing relations within her essays, beginning with and placing at the foreground "Disloyalty to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Genophobia".¹

In my accounting of this mis-representation (representations

¹The title of Adrienne Rich's essay was taken from Lillian Smith in her polemic with Sigmund Freud. She stated that, Freud said once that woman is not well acculturated; she is he stressed, retarded as a civilized person. I think what he took for her lack of civilization is woman's lack of loyalty to civilization...(Smith 1979, 191). Freud (1963, 36, 193) makes repeated judgements about the intellectual inferiority of women, a product of their sexual inhibitions. In addition, he argues that women are ethically limited by the influence of emotion on their judgements. Freud (1961, 56) further states that woman is forced to occupy the background of civilization and adopts a hostile attitude towards it-she represents the interests of family and sexual life. The notion of disloyalty... appeared to be aimed at challenging the ethical and intellectual character analysis of women (caucasian) and the spheres of social interests that white women occupy-thus raising the value of women above men.

marked by defined omissions) I will trace the calculations of the text, the ledger of debits and credits, debt and profiteering that designates hierarchical social relations.² Although Rich's "Disloyalty to Civilization..." will be the focus of my analysis, I will make tangential references to a number of her other essays, especially those included in her collection of essays entitled "Lies, Secrets and Silences: Selected Prose 1966-1978" and "Blood, Bread and Poetry: Selected prose 1979-1985".³ I would like to locate my own loyalties in this chapter as positioned on the margins of White feminism as a function of my critical posture in relationship to it.⁴

² Mis-representation in this context does not refer to an error or a mistake but to an erasure or white-out. The term error is the binary opposite of Truth which I am attempting to problematize in this gesture. For some interesting philosophical attempts that question 'Truth' see Jacques Derrida (1981, 104-105); Michel Foucault (1980, 110-133); Mary Hawkesworth (1989, 327-351).

³ There have been limited critical responses to "Disloyalty..." See Ann Barr Snitow (1984); Ruth Frankenberg (1993); Gloria Bowles (1981); bell hooks (1981); doris davenport (1983) for a variety of responses. Criticism has taken the form of Gloria Joseph's identification of the privilege of the white woman's voice on racism. bell hooks directly questioned the claims to first wave feminist disloyalties, arguing on the contrary that they perpetuated racism. Davenport maintained that Rich intellectualized and evaded the issue of racism.

⁴ This mode of positioning is not only a critical stance but one that puts the security of an outside that is a complete break into question; in addition to eschewing the presuppositions of an essential identity. This is not the mark of an aspiration to be a centered subject. See bell hooks (1984, 1-15) for a margin to center perspective; Teresa De Lauretis's (1987) insider-outsider positioning identifies an overlapping relation; Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989, 7) speaks about the compulsion of the woman of color as

I am going to take Rich on her woman's honor when she states that "when someone tells me a piece of truth.... it may bring acute pain, but... also... relief" (Rich 1979, 133), I hope that the "relief" that presents the violence of this other-reading will come into focus.

Mirror Mirror

In order to do legible decompositions and analyses of Rich's texts it is productive to peruse the texts under consideration at a slow painstaking pace. Rich begins the essay on "Disloyalty..." proper with a series of citations by a diverse group of women intellectuals (Rich 1979, 276-279). Rich does no examination of the introductory citations, in fact they are not even discussed-they appear as pristine, innocent excerpts or forgeries. The first reference quotes Mary Boykin (1861) statement that " I have seen a *Negro woman sold upon the block at auction...*" ending this with "you know how women sell themselves and are sold in marriage from queens downward eh ?.... Poor women, poor slaves" (italicized mine). Next is a statement by Sarah Grimke, "Letters on the Equality of the Sexes (1838)", who comments that white women are educationally deficient with marriage as their only avenue to distinction; then critically identifying the representation of woman as an instrument of pleasure. The subsequent citation quotes the

writer to position herself and locate her loyalties.

New York Herald statement on " how woman first becomes subject to man...By her nature, her sex, just as the negro..." (italicized mine). Even in the excerpts from Fannie Lou Hammer, "The Special Plight and Role of Black Women (1971)", the key element is "...her freedom is *shackled in chains to mine*, and she realizes for the first time that she is not free until I am free....She ends with "He made her think she was an angel" (italicized mine). Finally, Audre Lorde's "Power (1976)", is presented starting with " I have to touch the destruction within me... And as I beat her senseless and set a torch to her bed....A greek chorus will be singing in 3/4 time. Poor thing she never hurt a soul. What beasts they are." This reading of a pre-sentiment of **black women's misogynym** should be tied to its relevant referents through a remapping of the spatialization of the text.

The quotations make repeated references to blacks located in race relations in which the presence of the black woman is especially prominent. The display of the discourse of black women writers within the text of a White feminist author was a welcomed relief in the context of a near universal repression of race relations and colored figures by White feminism and the charges of racism by women of color.

Blacks and whites are identified within Western culture with the presence of particular bodily morphologies, in

addition to linguistic and other cultural attributes. However, the **appearance** of racialized body morphologies since at least the 16th century mark an over-determined locus of being, which is linked to the discursive privilege of sight and presence.⁵ Blackness and Whiteness are not simply names, they are bound to the presence of identifiable **figures**.

The black figures in Rich's texts strongly enable **comparative** analogies between white men, black men, white women and black women characters. At the foreground of these frames is the delineation of a **resemblance** between the black and women figures in opposition to the white male. Given the general tendency of the aforementioned discursive and political texts of White feminism, such black figurations were expected to incorporate the subjectivity of others, proving the viability of feminism as a liberatory project. However, the figures of **black racial others** became the primary characters through which the White Feminist subject could **differentiate** herself from the dominant images, which were seen as a product of White male authorship and self-affection.⁶ These quoted fragments

⁵ Cornell West (1990) has linked the racialization of Western society to the cultural ideology of blackism in the medieval period and capitalism. Frantz Fanon (1967) took an existential-psychoanalytic approach to racial domination.

⁶ The mirror has been a useful theoretical construct in the conception of distorted representations and erasures of the subject, see Sheila Rowbotham (1974, 12-48); Linda Phelps (1978,

present a series of sketches and forgeries of an emerging White womanhood, positioned as a centered self-the **Subject** of this discourse, with black figures functioning as the **mirror** through which White women recognize their existential and essential selves. Through black figures, most especially black women figures in the plotting of resemblances and distinctions, the White, woman subject can glimpse her Self-made profiles in the majesty of a **metaphysical circularity** that moves from self to other to self.

I would like to consider the movement from self to other, what does this repositioning to the frame of the Other produce? The articulation of the figure and speech of the Other raises the expectation of a momentary centering of the subjectivity of the Other. The attention on the Other in the text, such that it becomes the subject in the grammar of a sentence or of the motion of the eye, may facilitate the anticipation of the centering of the other and the relations that enable such a centering. Thus, this function would support the replacement of the lengthier statement of the complex relations of subjects within the text-self-other-self, by the image. Such a partial angle of vision encouraged by the desire for such a centering would produce a highly limited reading, missing the circular, self-relationality of the text. Therefore, one would be presented

with a thesis on White, Women's racism, from the site of a centered White, Woman subject-argumenum *ex silentio*.

The categories of self and other refer to identifications forged in oppositions-man-woman, black-white, young-old etc. The composites of these oppositions produce complex subjective figures that in turn enable the markings of identities and differences. These images of White womanhood that are produced in comparative, analogical, discursive processes, present heterogeneous, mirror fragments rather than a homogeneous, coherent representation of self-hood.⁷ As a result, the self to which the other refers is multi-faceted and divided, marking breaks within the circularity of the self-other relationship. From the standpoint of an essential self, these heterogeneous images are alienated, inverted reflections, produced in the light of an Other. Such heterogeneity and gaps within this metaphysical circle, disable the self-possession of the forgery of an essential subject and consequently must be sutured. Heterogeneous appearances such as these are co-ordinated into a substantial, homogeneous, autonomous, regal, Sovereign Self-

⁷The notion of the fractured subject has been especially prominent in the post-modern thought. See Jacques Lacan (1977, 1982); Helen Cixous and Catherine Clement (1986); Donna Haraway (1991) for an indication of this literature. Feminist of color have utilized the concept of a differentiated self as an effect of subordination within the social order. See Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa eds.(1981); Gloria T Hull et al eds.(1982).

Mirror Mirror....

Double Crossings

Rich is heralded for her fearless and risky theoretical initiatives into the frontier of race relations and the black woman subject, going where White feminism dared not venture, rigorously demonstrating the usefulness of the inclusion of Others?

Rich thinks her location as a site of anger and pain, a gathering, crossroad, public place and she doesn't want her words to be distorted, she wishes to preserve their true meaning. This crossroad appears to mark a position of risk, a treacherous space with the possibility of a hazardous MIS-READING (Rich 1979, 279). This metaphor of crossroad indicates a possible acknowledgement on her part that the text could be subjected to multiple meanings but, she resists this by reinforcing a transcendental signified.⁸ I intend to bracket such a presumption and open the text to the risk of another reading, the "true meaning" of the text designated as a "closure", proceeding to an analysis of the valuations of the text in respect to gender, race and class relations. Rich goes on to CAUTION her readers against inclusion in a male order and the denial of "real"

⁸ Jacques Derrida (1981, 347-355) critiques the notion of the presence of being standing alone, through the pun of the play between "Est"[East] and "est"[is] and the idea of being under erasure. The cross-roads-word also entails a point of intersection of meaning. This reading is in distinct contrast to Rich who is uncritically grounded in Western Metaphysics.

differences among women. She begins by presupposing that every woman be self-identifying and self defining, a self-affective gesture; she then foregrounds the problem of acknowledging racism in feminist writings, citing Barbara Smith's claim that "feminist scholarship has been written as if black women did not exist." She goes on to say that,

Even where racism is acknowledged in feminist writings, courses, conferences, it is too often out of a desire to "grasp" it as an intellectual or theoretical concept; we move too fast, as men so often do, in an effort to stay "on top" of a painful and bewildering condition, and so we lose touch with the feelings black women are trying to describe to us, their lived experience as *women*. It is far easier, especially for academically trained white women, to get an intellectual/political "fix" on the *idea* of racism, than identify with black women's experience: to explore it as part of our own. (Rich 1979, 281)

The notion that each woman is self-identifying and self-defining also appears as an individualistic disclaimer of differences in conceptions and modes of acknowledgments of racism. Racism in this structuration is configured from the pole of non-existence to an intellectual "grasp" of racism, which elides and **dis-counts** a significant presence of feeling. In other words black women are communicating the emotional content of experience not an intellectualized understanding of the *idea* of racism.⁹ This emotive content

⁹ The concern with the theoretical in feminist thought and in particular the lack thereof in black feminism has been taken up by various intellectuals. Adrienne Rich (1981) again problematizes experiential discourses linking them to feelings of victimization vis-a-vis Theory. Diana Fuss (1989) has also criticized the authority of experience that supports the speech of oppressed groups in opposition to the Theoretical. Allison

is one mark of real differences between women. Such a valuation **re-counts** the text of black feminist speech on White women's racism, such that there is a **displacement and erasure** from the ledger of **Theoretical** accounts and **transfer to and re-iteration** on the account of the psychodynamics of the **Imaginary-a White feminist mirroring**. What significance does this *opus operatum* have for the prospect of the manifestation of black feminist subjectivity within White feminism? But, isn't Rich's text replete with the forged figures of blacks, the majority of whom are black women? The presence of the black feminist figure as subject disappears. This double absence appears as presence, a virtuality, an absent-presence. The black figure becomes the silhouette that enables the presence of a self-identified, White, feminine Subjectivity. Judy Simmons (1979) in a poem about the erasure of the black woman states,

fragments of myself/the women
whom i love
a glint of wit, a shard of laughter,
broken soul-unease, all
mirror me

Jagger (1983) has identified what she regards as the lack of an original Theoretical contribution by black feminists. Barbara Christian (1988) calls the "race for theory" into question, denounces the privilege of particular theories and identifies the tyranny of theoretical endeavors. Aido Hurtado (1989); bell hooks (1984, 1991) and Chela Sandoval (1992) have challenged the claims that feminist thought by feminist of color is un-theoretical or lacking in theory. The order of writing as empirical, experiential vis-a-vis the Theoretical more or less, demands that we ask what is writing and how does it order relations (dominant-subordinate) between women intellectuals, intellectuals generally, literate and non-literate peoples.

Narcissus shattered
 long before conception
 sees the barest glimmer,
 longs completely

the loneliness
 of knowing no reflection;
 is it any wonder
 that i touch them

Rich speaks about White-feminist attempts to "grasp" racism and the effort on their part to be "on top" of an emotive condition. However, for Adrienne Rich such desires encourage White women to act to hastily, make wrong turns and false accounts from the standpoint of Women's history. What would be the effect of such "accountability", clearly wrongful debt, bewilderment, pain, false admissions and responsibilities.

These terms indicate a possessive and dominative desire, for a position of discursive power that cannot be realized by false accounts. In another reading entailing the sexualization of their desires, a graphic figuration of the black feminist intellectual becomes a surplus repository of "femininity"-the function of feeling, the experiential domain, bottom. The White feminist is engendered with a surplus of "masculinity"-distance, emotional aloofness, intellectual Mistressing. This White, self-identified, self-possessive, discursive centering would effect the specular manifestation of White feminist phallic power-the pornographic production of a hard-on. A continuation of such imagery, would present the superimposition of a White

feminist figure over and above the black feminist figure, strapped with **White** discursive power.

She attributes this aggressive, possessive, masculine function to guilt. Rich argues that,

Beneath all this, I believe, lies a deeper, more insidious problem: a great deal of White feminist thinking and writing, where it has attempted to address black women's experience, has done so laboring under a massive burden of *guilt feelings and false consciousness*, the product of deeply *inculcated female self-blame*, and of a history we have insufficiently explored. (*There is a profound difference between actual guilt-or accountability-and guilt feeling*.)...It is time that we shed these *unuseful* burdens and look with fresh eyes at the concept of female racism. For true accountability is a serious question for the feminist ethic-and indeed for any lasting and meaningful feminist action.

Women did not create the power relationship between master and slave,...but in the history of American slavery and racism white women have been *impressed* into its services,... as their *active and passive instruments* (*italicized mine*). (Rich 1979, 281-282)

This constitutes a very clever rhetorical Maneuver. On the one hand there is the projection of actual carrots with in the body of the text-**"female racism"** and **"feminist acknowledgment of racism"**. Carrots that are supported by guilt feelings, feelings by women of color that White women are guilty, and feelings by white women of being guilty. These phrases conjure up anticipations of recognition and admissions-*pro confesso*. But, these ideas spin magically on an axis, disappearing from the ledger of accountability. Rich collapses these two aspects of guilt as unuseful, general products of false consciousness and the inculcation of female self-blame. The debt, responsibility and

recognition of White women's racism is **not-acknowledged** but deposited elsewhere. Thus, the gesture of the gift of recognition is **Misread appearing as White lie**, disingenuous, provocational. **This iteration is a Dangerous crossing, Double crossing!**¹⁰

White feminists engage in a self-representation as object in the very act of claiming rights to self-identity-a voice. An even more perplexing function is the splitting moment, active White womanhood as disloyal but, loyal White woman as passive instrument-how convenient!

Rich continues this duplicitous depiction of the white woman as passive and active instrumentality, implicitly extending the **frame-up** to women of color, thus maintaining that,

The passive or active instrumentality of white women in the practice of inhumanity against black people is a fact of history. (So, also, is the passive or active instrumentality of women of the same race against each other: African women excising and mutilating the clitoris and vulva of the young girl; the chinese mother crushing her daughter's feet into tiny "lotus hooks" to make her marriageable; the token woman betraying her sisters in exchange for her place in the male establishment: *loyal to masculine civilization (italicized mine)*.) But **beneath** that indisputable fact-or **overarching** it-there are other facts. White women like black women and men have lived under white male domination of the constitution, law and state machinery...And it is important for white feminist to remember that... our white foresisters have been in Lillian Smith's words "**disloyal to civilization**"

¹⁰ Double crossing in this chapter identifies a process of iteration, a transaction that transforms the meaning and value of a text. It also gestures to an unexpected de-valuation of subjective values.

and "have smelled death in the word 'segregation' often denying patriarchy for the first time, not on their own behalf but for the sake of black men, women, and children...It is that tradition-rather than guilt feelings or "liberal" politics-that I wish to invoke in this paper (emphasis mine). (Rich 1979, 284-285)

I have made this lengthier citation in order to draw attention to a text that I regard as a central manipulation, a moment that could go unnoticed in its brevity and mistressful jerking-off of the White feminist phallus, which appears as an obscene exposure in the very act of its discursive insemination and reproduction. "

Rich describes white women's inhumanity against black people as a "fact" of history, which she naturalizes and separates from self-consciousness and intentionality through the notion of instrumentality, a tool of white men. This inhumanity is juxtaposed to inter-generational, intra-racial violence of women of color against their daughters, invoking African clitoridectomy/excision and chinese foot-binding, which is then juxtaposed to the token woman betraying her sisters for a place in the male establishment. The structure of the text demands that *I ask myself why there is a displacement of the local, national text of black/colored women's relationship to their daughters here in the United States, in favor of distant, international texts that invoke visions of "unconscionably", "atrocious", "horrors",*

" White mistressing should be understood as a gendering function of discursive and non-discursive command between women."

texts that any woman located within a Westernized scene would have extreme difficulty reading. But, for **White feminists** this scene is made **transparent** through the forging of the self-evidence of **Patriarchy-the White lighting of the Beautiful White feminist subject**. The strategic use of African genital mutilation as the privileged content of discussions of black women's foremothers frequently to the exclusion of all other representations has been aptly commented upon by Audre Lorde in an "Open Letter to Mary Daly". She maintains that,

Then to realize that the only quotation from black women's words were the ones you used to introduce your chapter on african genital mutilation, *made me question why you needed to use them at all*. For my part, I felt that you had in fact *misused my words*, utilized them to *only* testify against myself as a woman of color...

So the question arises in my mind, Mary, do you really read the works of black women? Did you ever read my words, or did you merely finger through them for quotations which you thought might *valuably* support an *already-conceived* idea concerning some old and distorted connection between us? This is not a rhetorical question. To me this feels like another instance of the knowledge, crone-logy and work of women of color being ghettoized, by a *white woman dealing only out of a patriarchal western-european frame of reference* (italicized mine)...(Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa 1981, 95-96)

I am not alone in questioning the value and usefulness of 'genital mutilation' to White feminism, this is the context in which Lorde was concerned about the misuse of her words and the "already conceived" ideas of White feminism emanating from a patriarchal, Western frame of reference. For Lorde, the text of 'genital mutilation' was opaque, not

transparent and she never presented it as such.¹² But, she saw the effects of such interpretations as in the service of racism, separation, and violence against black women through the presentation of black women as victims. Lorde underscored the trivialization of women of color which she saw as engendering hostile relations, racism and blocked communications among women.

In "Disloyalty to Civilization..." there are Rich reference sources in the footnotes to books and articles that discuss the foremothers of black women although unquoted by the author, which suggest cognizance of the relationship of black women to their families. Isn't this local text evident, markedly present? *PENUMBRATING*: In order to throw some shade on this White lighting, and apparent mis-casting I will look at some sources, limiting myself to the references she cites on black women in the article itself. Rich refers to the Black Feminist Statement. What does this statement have to say about the black family?

Here is the way male and female roles were defined in a black nationalist pamphlet from the early 1970's.

We understand that it is and has been traditional that the man be the head of the house/nation because his knowledge of the world is broader, his awareness greater, his understanding is fuller and his application of this information wiser... -they are made by nature to function differently... Equality between men and women

¹² Within feminism there have been few attempts to render the "atrocious" violence of the mother figure opaque and intricate. See Gayatri Spivak (1987); Nawal El Saadawi (1980, 5); Angela Gilliam (1991, 215-236); Chandra T. Mohanty (1991, 51-80) for some indications, albeit limited.

is something that cannot happen even in the abstract
...(Combahee River Collective 1978, 168-169)

A few pages prior the collective stated that "merely naming the pejorative stereotypes attributed to black women (eg. mammy, matriarch, sapphire, whore, bulldagger), ... indicate how little value has been placed on our lives during four hundred years of bondage in the Western hemisphere." These statements show the acute awareness of black feminists of devaluative, black feminine imagery and narratives that naturalize their low positionality in the social order.¹³

In a section entitled "Black Women Speak of Womanhood" in Gerda Lerner's *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History*, we hear repeated references by black women about their families. For example Mahalia Jackson (1973, 585) in "The Strength of the Negro Mother" is quoted as saying, "...it was usually the negro mother that had to keep a certain dignity in the family to offset the inferiority the white man inflicted on her husband..." In another paragraph she continues that "when I hear people talking about communists being behind colored students, I

¹³ The problematic of stereotypic images of black women has probably been the most pervasively thematized ideas among black feminists, although analyses of stereotypes of white women were quite widespread within early white feminism. See Toni Cade Bambara ed. (1979); bell hooks (1981); Gloria T. Hull et al (1982); Barbara Christian (1985); Patricia Hill Collins (1990) for some of these discussions in respect to black women.

have to laugh. It is not communists-its the negro mother...". Renee Ferguson in "Women's Liberation has a Different Meaning for Blacks" discusses the instability of the black inner-city family stating that,

Competing with the them for jobs would just add to the problem that already exists. Black women have been able to find work when their husbands couldn't and have often been head of the family not because they wanted to but out of economic necessity...(Ferguson 1973, 589)

In some of these and other references we see a problematizing of the notion of the **black matriarch**. Even Rich in her discussion of being mothered by a black woman questions such sentimentalizing. This strategy of de-pedestaling the black mother was a way of resisting the representation of her as a castrating bitch-dominatrix. This **di-vestment was not intended to discredit** the contributions that she has made and continues to make to the reproduction of the black community on a multiplicity of levels. However, Rich's maneuver places a black feminist in a precarious location in thinking and presenting the achievements of the black mother, or the gorgeous and inspiring African goddess myths, in resistance to this **White-out**. Such presentations **risk** rekindling the **Monstress trans-figuration** of the black/African mother. The attempt to normalize and humanize this figure has been exploited as an absent figure. For black feminists to strategically re-appropriate this powerful figure would appear contradictory, deceptive and

anachronistic, and require skillful rhetorical justification.

Rich argues that,

Throughout this text I say "black" and not "first (or Third) World", because although separated by skin color and class is by no means confined to that between black and white women, black women and white women in this country have a special history of polarization, as well as shared oppression and shared activism, and I address myself to that history here...(Rich 1979, 280)

The collapsing of the terms first or third and black is rationalized in terms of constructing a de-polarized black-white relationality. However as I have demonstrated this homogeneity has an unaccounted surplus, an additional frame that obliterates the necessity or expectation to refer to the national, inter-generational text of relations between women of color.

The black feminist, face to face with the rhetorical violence of the black nationalists, taunted by the monstress image of the Black Matriarch, engaged in a strategy of normalization. With her back turned in a 'safe' discursive site she engaged the sexist, black nationalists text only to receive a surprise attack. Rich discusses the bad faith of the white, male left and black nationalist in their charges of racism, giving an inciting quotation from Ishmael Reed saying that,

They got a lot of power now... these types are well known in everybody's folklore; the shew, the bitch... -all of a sudden these people gonna come along, these feminist intellectuals or whatever you call them, and

they're gonna change the whole thing, they're gonna change biology...People been fucking 50,000 years without dildoes...(Rich 1979, 288)

In a quotation directly prior, Rich (1979) refers to Audre Lorde's "Scratching the Surface: Some Notes on Barriers to Women and Loving" in which Lorde spoke out against the violence black women endured making coalitions with white feminists. Within lesbian feminism, male violence against feminine jouissance and lesbian sex is a major transgression.¹⁴ Reed also referred to black feminists as "house-black" and "house feminist" implying that theirs is a subordinate status in the white feminist world. The juxtaposition of these texts enables one to read this as a dispute between two rivals concerning rights to sexual domination of the black woman, "this bridge.. ", discursive ground, a double-crossing. This curious *mis-casting doesn't appear to be a mis at all but a phallogocizing, from behind.*

Julia Kristeva (1986) situates the beginning of the practice of chinese foot-binding within the feudal and patriarchal stage of chinese history, and identifies this text as an over-determined representation of women's castration that may be symptomatic of feudal patriarchal

¹⁴ Lorde (1984) also reiterates the myth of the black matriarch as a derogatory figure, but engages in a strategy of positive valuation of black women's power, independence and erotic desires for each other. Of all the stereotypes of the black woman this imagery has had the most extensive and sustained resistance by black feminists.

doubt and anxieties that women may possess penile, symbolic or other forms of power. In speculating about the anxieties of the feudal patriarchal order, Kristeva mentions the possibility of a "matriarchal advantage". She states that,

Freud saw in the custom of foot-binding the symbol of the castration of woman which chinese civilization was unique in admitting...But then the insistence on underlining what's 'missing' in her by additional symbols (crippling the foot) would tend to prove that they're not all that certain; that some doubt still persists. Does feudal patriarchal society suspect that woman possesses-if not a penile power-a social and symbolic power that remains with her from the early matrilineal tradition?...As if the first archaic matriarchal model had avenged itself on the patriarchy by slipping in under the door and drawing certain advantages from the very oppression itself. (Kristeva 1986, 83-84)

Although this theoretical reading is embedded in a text of victimology, this gesture complicates simplistic notions of absolute patriarchal power, displacing and avoiding a pure identity of maleness with patriarchy. Kristeva's difficulties are manifold but maybe linked to the abstruseness of the heterogeneity of the representations- "perfumed lily", "golden lily", "lotus hooks", "crippled-feet" etc., that appear to indicate not just a specifically 'barbaric patriarchal' expression of feminine 'castration', but may simultaneously claim or represent the lacuna of a suppressed feminine sexual power (perfumed lily). Could this be in part the socio-symbolic surplus/joy/jouissance which Chinese women had a compulsion to inscribe for ten centuries?

Clitoridectomy/excision has been incessantly interpreted as the transparent expression of patriarchy and male dominance. The question of the socio-symbolic place that such a hieroglyphic text may have for women in excess of a 'barbaric patriarchy', the possibility that this is a text of feminine sexual power is unthinkable within white feminism, which compulsively and self-affectively repeats the script of mother-patriarchal agent/youthful victimization ad infinitum. What is the basis of this white compulsion? Isn't this compulsion bound up with the script's valuative effect on white womanhood and white feminism within the ideology of western sexual progress and feminist discursive dominance? This idea of an excess of feminine sexual power would shake the self-assurance of an absolute and 'barbaric patriarchy', and the higher rank of white womanhood that is grounded on the phallogocentrism of sexual progress. It is precisely in support of such a disturbance of the aforementioned scripts that I have introduced these heretical speculations. Rich moves discursively from black feminine inter-generational violence in the form of 'genital mutilation' to bi-racial forgeries and false charges of racism against white feminists entailing a de-valuation of sexism and women identifying as women. Thus, we have a set-up in which the black feminist is guilty on **double accounts**-according to separate ledgers-effecting a **double crossing**. How could the feminist of color

ever hope to right-off the **Horrorific** debt-effect of 'genital mutilation' and 'crippled feet', a guilty, mind-fuck that Rich helps reproduce for the glory of White feminism. The passive and active instrumentality of White women under patriarchy pales in comparison to the atrocity of clitoridectomy, chinese foot-binding and sati that women of color perpetrate against each other, if they choose to assume the debt of agency and guilt feelings. It implies an invitation to a forging of an alliance that many feminists of color at this historical conjuncture have since accepted.¹⁵ But, what exactly is being negotiated? This holy alliance is an invitation to a **re-visioning**, to make a distinction between "guilt feelings" and "actual guilt", iteration, the deployment of the debt elsewhere-absolution.

This forging, impressing and framing of White feminine memory, reflects the White woman-as-victim, helpless object of white, male will. Is the White woman so innocent? The white feminist paints her past as subjectless, frail White ghost deprived of rights, interests, desires and power. In this relation the White patriarch becomes the guilty one, the original debtor, the shitload of civilization is heaped on him almost entirely-via the **spectacles** of white feminist revisioning. **The White male is re-knighted as shield,**

¹⁵ A number of feminist of color have accepted the White feminist reading and frame-up uncritically, in which Patriarchy is a means of purification. See Olayinka Koso-Thomas (1987) Alice Walker (1992) Alice Walker and Parmar (1993).

protector and hymen of White womanhood. The patriarch/Sovereign is enthroned again, unseen, what an ironic contradiction. White feminist resistance, womanly protestations, producing an inscription in the very site she so strenuously flees, but, how far? Such distance now appears as close proximity, the white feminist enclosed in the arms of the White knight-without knowing it-feminine, safe, virginal. What a lovely romance! But, protection is not free-dangerous crossings! White 'mythologies'. Within White, feminist metaphysics, the white feminine being is subjectless; this forgery marks the 'mythical' socio-ontology, the beginning or origins as white womanly unconsciousness, with the awakening of sleeping beauty in all her virginal coming to consciousness-*amour propre*. Mirror Mirror! Who is the Sovereign Subject?

Promissory Notes

Here is a catalogue of several promissory notes from among the many statements that Rich makes. The alluring, hymenic inscriptions of "true accountability", "feminist ethic", "honest recognition", "female racism" etc. are materially engraved into the body of the text; signifiers whose signified could be Misread, Mis-represented, presumed missing. The cataloguing of key statements in the list below is intended to identify the phrases in the mode in which they are **immediately** embedded in the text. Rich makes

strong demands and claims for racial accountability. I am also re-presenting these statements in order to underscore the force of her interests. She states that,

1. (there is a profound difference between **actual guilt-or-accountability-and** guilt feelings)...It is time that we shed these unuseful burdens and look with fresh eyes at the concept of **female racism**. For **true accountability** is a serious question for the feminist ethic-and indeed for any lasting and meaningful feminist action...Accountability might begin with a serious effort to separate the strands of patriarchally induced female self-hatred from our **honest recognition** of instrumentality in the past, a recognition which is not self accusation, which is *truly historical and usable* (emphasis mine).(Rich 1979, 281-307)

2. The passive or active instrumentality of white women in the practice of **inhumanity** against black people is a **fact of history** (emphasis mine)... (Rich 1979, 284)

3. We need more study of the dynamic between misogyny in the abolitionist movement and racism in the movement for women's rights....**Not to exonerate the nineteenth-century white feminists of racism**, but to see further into the tangle of sex and race, to shed light on our mistakes, and to stop repeating them (emphasis mine). (Rich 1979, 286)

4. In choosing to examine **female racism** (emphasis mine) from a feminist perspective, I can more accurately perceive the white solipsism which surrounds me and which I partly internalize and help perpetuate; the mythic misconceptions I held, first about black women but also about other women who seem to me to have some special access to truth, magic and transforming power, some right to *take their conditions seriously*, which I was denying myself.(Rich 1979, 306)

Real/Reeling

When I examine these statements of accounts I reel in the vertiginous circularity of the text, from the title

"Disloyalty to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynephobia" to the very last phrase-"to skim across" and back again, checking, blinking, perplexed!, reading out loud, counting the long chain of promissory notes in the order that I register them:-1. female racism 2. true accountability 3. white women's inhumanity...fact of history 4. non-exoneration of 19th century white feminist racism 5. female racism-a feminist perspective etc. These statements circulate but do they enter the ledger of racial accountability? Yes! Let us look at table 1.

Statement of White Feminist Accounts

Table 1 Statement of Subjective Social Accounts

| Subject Forms | Racism | Gynephobia |
|---------------|--------|------------|
| White Men | + | + |
| Colored Men | - | + |
| White Women | + | - |
| Colored Women | - | - |

Table 1 is a representation of subjective (imaginary) social account balances of the social debtors of various subjectivities in disLoyalty...¹⁶

¹⁶ Table 1 and table 2, in addition to figure 1 and figure 2 attempt to represent the calculations of the text in some mathematical symbols but not the mathematics.

Rich does not utilize the term debt but refers instead to the question of accountability. The statement of accounts are put forth in terms of descriptions of oppressive acts, namely racism and gynephobia, perpetrated by a subject against another. They do not indicate an individual instance of oppression but a general oppressive tendency. This text is then referred to the magical category of patriarchy. I have represented these subjective

The promissory notes and the above representation of the social accounting of Rich's text on the issues of racism and gynephobia clearly register surplus debt for both white men and white women on the issue of racism, signifying and "marking" racist practices. On the issue of gynephobia white men and men of color are marked by debt. Only the category of the women of color remains "unmarked". But, table 2 has a different registration of debt.

Table 2 Statement of Actual Social Accounts

| Subject Forms | Racism | Gynephobia |
|---------------|--------|------------|
| White Men | ++ | + |
| Black Men | - | + |
| White Women | - | - |
| Colored Women | - | + |

Table 2 is a representation of actual account balances of the social debtors of various subjectivities.

If table 1 is a factual account of racist and gynephobic accounts then how is it that the accounting balance of table 2, actual social accounts differs? Are the promissory notes forgeries? The text entitled "Disloyalty to Civilization:

relations and oppressive acts in tables and figures of accounts as surplus debt. Rich makes simple statements of accounts, there is no reference to complexities, the gynephobic-effect of racism or the racial effect of gynephobia. This plotting of accounts allows one to recognize the primary repression of Rich's text around the debt account of white women and the debt surplus of women of color—a virilization of women of color via the logic of oppression—the operation of castration, clitoridectomy/excision, chinese foot-binding the discursive law of the white phallic mother.

Feminism, Racism, Gynophobia (1978), copyright 1979 is legitimate, true, honest accounting. What a chasm, gap, language game, forte-da, symptom. How could White women's account of racism register nil? Reeling! am I sane? The statements did enter the racial account, they are printed in black and white, but what about the balance in table 2? What is the 'truth' of the promises? To whom are they addressed? How is it possible for white women to express racial domination, benefit from racial exploitation, but, share none of the responsibilities? How is it that they could maintain such purity and innocence? What kind of calculation could erase such debt? Do white women have subjectivities? Do they have desires and interests of their own? Could a white woman tell a 'lie'?

In a discussion of black feminist politics the Combahee River Collective speak about their disillusionment with the civil rights movement, the black power movement, the black panthers and the white male left. They also spoke about going beyond white feminism by looking at the interrelations of sex, race and class. It is within this context that they stated that,

Black feminists often talk about their feelings of **craziness** before becoming conscious of the concepts of sexual politics, patriarchal rule, and, most importantly, feminism, the political analysis and practice that we women use to struggle against our oppression (emphasis mine). (Combahee River Collective 1979, 364)

Within the theoretical works of women of color the

metaphors of multiple and schizoid selves are prominent, so also is the speech of such multiple selves-speaking in tongues. Such a representation implies a problematic of autism and an outsider position. This marks an over-determined, re-presentation of "craziness", alienation, the inhuman and non-being within the discourse of white feminism. These techniques that effect inscriptions of subjective non-presence are homologous to the mechanisms of debt erasure.

In the ledger of gynephobic accounts white men and black men are represented as heavily in debt, although the violence against woman-woman bonding is cited prominently in respect to black men and rhetorically reinforced by the excerpt from Reed. Clear-cut comparative assessment of gynephobic debts of black men and white men are not well defined.

In order to gain a perspective on the representation of the baffling surplus debt-effect that accrues to women of color, it is imperative to refer to the intra-racial violence of women of color against their daughters: clitoridectomy/excision/chinese foot-binding. Such misogynous, sexual, excesses are immeasurably atrocious from a lesbian-feminist perspective. How could the pot call the kettle racist? "What is the fruitfulness of hierarchies of oppression?", reduction, homogeneity this is the *sine qua non* of honest accountability. Rich refers to Barbara Burris

et al in a discussion of the male left in the politics of guilt, identifying the valueless game of hierarchies of oppression (Rich, 1979 288-289). Let us look at the logic of this text, Burris et al state that,

The male left tries, through guilt, to play one oppressed group off against another oppressed group in much the same way the establishment plays one against the other. They are always going in circles with the "who's most oppressed" musical chairs... Let us suppose for the moment, that we are in a male left meeting and they are trying to decide who is "most oppressed," therefore who most deserves their solicitous attentions and rhetoric. First of all they decide that blacks are most oppressed. But someone says black females are more oppressed than black males. Someone else counters that black females in Third World countries are even more oppressed than are black females in the U.S. Then another person realizes that a black female in the Third World country who is in the working class is more oppressed. But the most oppressed, and therefore logically and morally the only people they should try to "organize" and work with, are black females in Third World countries, in the working class, under eighteen years of age, pregnant and culturally defined as ugly... The fact that has to be faced by the male Left at some point is that everyone in society-including the white male-is both oppressor and oppressed. Psychologically this could be a revolutionary concept for the Left... The male left has become so hung-up on guilt and "who's most oppressed" that they have lost an elemental sense of justice for all human beings... Also, women were the first group to be subjected as a caste all over the world, thousands of years ago-long before blacks were subjected to whites in America or anywhere...There are incidental advantages to being white for a woman who is white, there are also advantages for black males in being males in this society. But the incidental advantages-which are meaningless in terms of woman's true class position as a sex-comes to her mainly in her affiliation with a dominant white male. (Barbara Burris et al, 1973 330-333)

I presented this rather extensive citation within the main body of this chapter in order to bind these texts together, to show the reproduction of this logical principle which links the question of "female guilt", to the white male and also to that of the hierarchy of oppressions which Rich is polemicizing against. Hierarchies of oppression within this framing is a guilt-effect of the white male left. The argument that we are all oppressors and oppressed is brilliantly and concisely argued and soundly undermines the logic of vanguardism and revolutionary sovereignty. But, as these white feminists deconstruct the *circulus vitiosus* of this Western Marxist text, another White text is reconstructed on the phallogocentrism of an original oppression, the first caste, Woman. Thus, the same closed circle is reproduced-Patriarchy. In fact, the display of the clearing of the ground of the revolutionary vanguard and the logic of the "most oppressed" enables the emergence of the Sovereign, category Woman. However, the category Woman is substantially carved out of the logic of the first oppressed, a hierarchical relation, a metonym for the logic of the most oppressed. This is a curious reproduction of the same, but, symptomatic of what! what is being avoided. Why is there this feigned abortion of the logic of the hierarchies of oppression in the interest of the supremacy

of Woman.¹⁷ In Rich's account the unmarked position of women of color within the imaginary social accounts and the logic of the hierarchy of oppression would make her a revolutionary Sovereign—a catathesis, speculative forgery, Mirror Mirror! Clearly, what is being resisted in Burris et al and Rich is a privileged, vanguard positioning of the woman of color through a de-valuation of racial and national oppressions in the case of Burris et al and special reference to the atrocious for Rich. In Rich's essay there is the homogenizing of women of color, across nationalities, framed as aiding in the bonds of Sisterhood (white). What is the surplus-value of the substitution of the horrific, gynephobic, international text for the local text—a strategic omission: "honesty", "feminist ethics", "true accountability". This surplus-value is precisely the de-valuation of 'women of color' and resistance to their enthronement, the *sine qua non* for Sovereign white womanhood. Here is the repressed value of the pure category Woman, that remains a gap and symptom in disLoyalty.

Women of color need to keep the situatedness of the

¹⁷ The idea that woman was the first oppressed has occupied a prominent place in both the Radical feminist and Socialist feminist schools of thought. The question of the construction of history of oppressive relations could considerably further our understanding of feminist theorizing. See Janet Sayers et al eds. (1987); Sheila Rowbotham (1972); Zillah Eisenstein ed. (1979); Mary Daly (1978); Catherine McKinnon (1982a, 1982b) for some diverse applications of this notion.

alluring phrases anchored in their textual referents: racial accountability, female guilt, gynephobia, clitoridectomy/excision, chinese foot-binding...What a mind fuck! White feminist phallocizing! The debt of gynephobia that accrues to women of color nationally and internationally is not comparable to the economic and psychological benefits white women have enjoyed for hundreds of years to this day, since white women are mere passive and active instruments of patriarchy—a debt erasing mechanism. This white feminist text has written-off its racial and gynephobic debt. The forgery of the inflated value of the White feminine subject within the textual calculations of Disloyalty to Civilization... requires close scrutiny. Women of color cannot afford to skim lightly over the surface of the text and be inveigled with the carrot-inscriptions of "female racism", "female guilt", "racial accountability", "true accountability" etc. White feminists are calculating on silence, obsequiousness and the skill of their intellectual prowess in the specular production of the White feminine Ego.

Patriarchy: Hymen of White Feminism

It is necessary to examine another accounting function, that fulcrum responsible for the erasure of White women's debts, that magical term, that wonderful insignia Patriarchy!, the white phallus itself, that which white feminist not only wish to possess but to be, the white

phallic mother, having is just not enough!¹⁸ This miraculous signifier turns white women's racism into its other, anti-racism and woman-loving. Dumbfounding!, No! No! No!, not possible, this is honest, true accountability. Adrienne Rich (1979, 185-194) made herself into a more honest woman, I have this statement in writing. Even the misogyny of white women both intra-racial and interracial is obliterated by this brilliant machine, mistress function, patriarchy: **hymen of white feminism**. What is hymen [signaculum] in this instance, but, the **sovereign seal [signum]** or mark of the **authenticity of white femininity**.¹⁹ What is this forgery? The most developed explanation of this inscription arises in Rich's discussion of feminine consciousness entailing a "double think" which she explicitly connects to white women's racism. In the 'preface' to this connection Rich refers to the effect of male-identification set in opposition to female-identification, quoting Kathleen Barry on male identification, who states that identification means,

internalizing the values of the colonizer and actively participating in carrying out the colonization of one's self and one's sex...Male identification is the act

¹⁸The uses of the phallic metaphor in representing White feminism is evident in brief rhetorical interjections within the works of feminists of color. See Gayatri Spivak (1988); Gloria Joseph (1981).

¹⁹ Giulia Sissa (1989, 143-154) states that the virginal membrane is known in Latin as signaculum derived from signum (seal) which appears to mark the virginal body as sealed.

whereby women place men above women, including themselves, in credibility, status and importance in most situations, regardless of the comparative quality the women may bring to the situation...Interaction with women is seen as a lesser form of relating on every level. (Rich 1983, 190)

Rich goes on to talk about the relations of female-identification to male identification that is constitutive of "double think".²⁰

What deserves further exploration is the double-think many women engage in and from which no woman is permanently and utterly free: however woman to woman relationships, female support networks, a female and feminist value system, are relied on and cherished, indoctrination in male credibility and status can still create synapses in thought, denials of feeling, wishful thinking, a profound sexual and intellectual confusion. [continuation fn4] Elsewhere I have suggested that male-identification has been a powerful source of white women's racism, and that it has been women who were seen as disloyal to male codes and systems who have actively battled against it...(Rich 1982, 190, 204)

What is being authenticated in this forgery is the truth of the virginal essence of white womanhood, signum: DOUBLE-THINK, and foremost, the Sovereignty of White feminism. Each of the signifiers of white women's racism and misogyny always refers back to themselves in otherness "Patriarchy" as *causa finalis*, a metonymic linguistic function. They reel

²⁰ The notion of "double-think" has been significantly developed by Adrienne Rich (1979, 1983). It refers to the articulation of both male-identification and female-identification in women's thought. Mary Daly (1978) underscores the idea of "double thinking" in her discussions of the "horror show of barbaric patriarchy, namely "suttee", "Chinese foot-binding" and "African genital mutilation". Double-thinking refers to the absence of male responsibility in such atrocious acts, when in fact patriarchy is the "sine qua non", hidden and originary cause for the existence of such practices.

in a repetitious return to their place of origin, home Patriarchy. Rich stated that,

When I began writing this paper I wanted to annihilate it [racism] I thought it carried to much of a burden of **shame** on the one hand and pure abstraction on the other, to be of use to us. I thought of trying to claim other language in which to describe, specifically, the white woman's problem in encountering the black woman; the differences that have divided black and white women; the **misnaming or denial** of those differences in everyday life (emphasis mine). But I am convinced that we must go on using that sharp, sibilant word; not to paralyze each other with repetitious, stagnant doses of guilt, but to break it down into its elements, comprehend it as *female* experience, and also to understand its inextricable connections with gynephobia. Our stake, as women, in making those connections, is not just abstract justice; it is integrity and survival. (Rich 1979, 304)

Well! Rich got her wish, she followed through on her most **penetrating desires**, a paradisiac production of virginality and Sovereign presence, entailing the destruction of racism (*malus pudor*) and gynephobia, augmenting the value of white feminism.²¹ This text shows the extent to which **desires and interests forge the social relations of the text**. The transformative power of the signifier patriarchy as white mistressing, allows white feminists to write-off debts: racism, classism, misogyny now appearing as actually-anti-racism, anti-classist, woman-loving, while being absolutely consistent with identifications made manifest in this reading, White loyalties.

²¹ The relationship of desire to writing has been emphasized by a number of intellectuals Fredrick Jameson (1981); Gayatri Spivak (1988); Luce Irigaray (1985); Michel foucault (1977, 1980) Jaques Derrida (1978, 1988).

The expected positivity of white women's debt in the actual ledger of racial accountability whose excesses ought to have colored the gynephobic and classist accounts presents white women as means/phallus/equipment in the production of gynephobia, classism, nationalism and the relative gynephobia of men and especially women of color. Maybe means of production are not pure, innocent or virginal but, reconstructed textual seals, that inscribe a blank surFACE while working-up a phantasmagorical phallus, the actuality of the transcendental signifier.

The structure of the text of accountability, grants white feminism ownership/trusteeship of the political economy of the transactions of social accountability. What is the mode of possession-penetrating phallogocentrism. What we have here is the white, phallic mother reaching out to the patriarchal account, pretentiously over-extending herself grasping her self made phallic insignia which she exercises as means, a fortification of the white gynelocentric order, a sacred, white phallic be-coming.

Feminine Jouissance

WW[+R -G] CM[-R +G] CW[-R +G]
WM[+R +G]=Patriarchal Account

WW=white women CM=colored men CW=colored women
R=racism G=gynephobia Account balance(positive & negative)

Figure 1

This figure of Rich's accounts shows a White feminist

jouissance that appears in the marked form as white feminine racism and colored feminine gynophobia, black male gynophobia and white male gynophobia and racism. Racial and gynophobic antagonism between white women and colored women appears depthful. This is one of the **appearances** of the text that disregards white feminist monopoly over the withdrawals from the patriarchal account. This privileged white mistress relationship to the notion of patriarchy enables white feminists to erase substantial debts through the strategy of the obliteration of White feminine subjectivity at least prior to a woman-identified, feminist consciousness.

Carrot of Carrots: Feminine Jouissance

Rich makes sweeping erotic gestures to women of color. This is most succinctly expressed in Rich's contemplation.

how are black and white women going to name, to found justice between us? For even making love together we can and often do, perpetuate injustice...

If then we begin to recognize what the separation of black and white women means, it must become clear that it means separation from ourselves...(Rich, 1979 307)

In the aforementioned citation Rich juxtaposes the idea of justice to lovemaking. I think that juxtaposing indicates a value-making function in Rich's metaphysics. The feminine jouissance account is **enriched substantially** by the speech and text of gynelocentric seduction and flirtation with women of color that is evident in the political economy of

this metaphysics. Rich represented the separation of black women from white women as a self-separation. Separation is **forged** as a splitting and fracturing of a unified body. What bond enables Rich to manufacture sameness out of a range of differences between women? What ethical value is sought in the production of a unified body?

Feminine Inter-racial Jouissance

Gloria Bowles maintains that the origins of the lesbian continuum lies in creating bonds between black women and white women. She states that,

In the Signs article, black women are one illustration of the lesbian continuum. There, Rich makes few distinctions between black and white women writers since her main purpose is to advocate the idea of a continuum. In the New Women's Times Feminist Review articles on black women writers, Rich is more explicit about the origins of the lesbian continuum. "Do we identify first as white or first as female, we who claim that the bonds of sisterhood are the original and primary connections?" (Bowles, 1984 319-328)

Rich in her construction of Disloyalty... cites Susan Cavin's accounts of the "voodoo queens" of New Orleans. She states that,

despite a law against the assembling of white women and slaves the communal and ecstatic experiences of voodoo ceremonies was shared by black and white women, under the tutelage and authority of the mamaloi or black voodun queen...The newspapers described these dances of the women as orgiastic and indecent..(Rich 1979, 295-296)

Rich foregrounds the sexual erotic tone of the text of the voodoo ceremonies in addition to **forging** such erotic

rituals as resistance to white, male law. This text is consistent with a reading that makes it a referent of resistance, in the form of inter-generational desire exemplified in the presence of the mamaloi figure, in addition to lesbian, inter-class and inter-racial erotics. Thus, this reference to inter-racial eroticism is pregnant with other libidinal flows that refuse legitimate boundaries, while gesturing to a full, feminine, libidinal fusion.

Rich again makes allusion to womanly, inter-racial erotics and patriarchal divisions in her statement that,

What illusions do we harbor still, of our own or each other's Amazon power or incompetence.. how we play the mother or the daughter, how do we use each other to keep from touching our own power?(Francis Dana Gage, describing the effect of Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman" speech: "She has taken us up in her strong arms and carried us safely over the slough of difficulty, turning the whole political tide in our favor."...What caricatures of bloodless fragility and broiling sensuality still imprint our psyches and where did we receive these imprintings? What happened between the several thousand northern white women and southern black women who taught together in the schools founded under Reconstruction by the Freedman's Bureau, side by side braving the Ku Klux Klan harassment, terrorism, and the hostility of white communities? [She contrasted this to racial separation at the turn of the century]...How did the old sexual wounds between black and white women break open yet again in the 1960s civil rights movement? How has the white man, how has the black man, stood to gain from pitting *white bitch* against *nigger cunt*, "yellow gal" against black? (Rich 1979, 298)

Rich is clearly unhappy with Gage's chivalrous and heroic figuring of Sojourner Truth's Ain't I a woman speech-Truth saving the political day. This is delegated to

imaginary accounts in Rich's calculations. Is Rich envious of this Sovereign phallic forgery? This envy has an erotic excess, bloodless fragility (a white metaphor) and broiling sensuality (black metaphor) that imprint psyches. This eroticism is **juxtaposed** to speculations on what happened between these women during reconstruction. She seductively invites us to imagine an underground of inter-racial lesbian bonding that elude the sanctions against both lesbian sex and inter-racial sex. This mythical fusion is then juxtaposed to a portrait of civil rights and the 1960s as an inter-racial, masculine advantage, producing divisions against a full, voluptuous rising up of womanly jouissance.

The eroticism of inter-racial lesbianism is extended in this statement,

Taught to deny my longings for another female body, taught that dark skin was stigma, shame, I look at you and see your flesh is beautiful; different from my own, but taboo to me no longer. Whether we choose to act on this or not (and whatever pain we may explore in touching one another) if my flesh is beautiful to you and your to me, because it belongs to us, in affirmation of our similar and different powers, in affirmation of scars, stretchmarks, life-lines, the mind that burns in each body, we lay claim to ourselves and each other beyond the most extreme patriarchal taboo. We take each other up in our strong arms. We do not infantilize each other; we refuse to be infantilized. We drink at each other's difference. We begin to fuse our powers. (Rich 1979, 295)

Rich effects a transformation of dark flesh as stigma/shame to the sign of the beautiful; "taboo to me no longer" represents a White womanly re-visioning, that erases

taboos in a possessive gesture. This fragment appears as the obliteration of a taboo, a slippage into the white gift of recognition. This man(euver) is softened by a reference to "whether we choose" in the subsequent line and beyond. This explication is informed by the political economy of feminine jouissance, which is explicated in my analysis.

Pain is expressed as an externally induced inter-subjective suffering; an affect that implodes in resistance to the masculine law, within the context of the destruction of intra-psychic remnants of stereotypic mirages. The beautiful touch/friction of different flesh, the surcharge of libidinal powers from a mature fullness, is contrasted to the pervasive denigration and infantilization of lesbian sex in the expressive style of the mother-daughter bond. The issue of infantilization also appears to refer back to the description of Truth's speech and Rich's reading of those relations; a description that appears consistent with the devaluation of the black mother figure. A momentary centering and enthronement of the black mother figure is unbearable for Rich. For Rich pain becomes a moment for erotic exploration when situated within a feminine inter-racial jouissance. This sado-masochistic tonality within a feminine inter-racial jouissance is doubly enriched as it, the suffering intensifies in a delicious marking of a negativity that is reversing itself, becoming other, fuller pleasure.

In the development of her ideas Rich elaborates on a transcending feminine jouissance. She states that,

White feminists are not going to transcend the past through the careful inclusion of one or more black women in our projects and imaginings nor through false accountability..**Real transcendence-and use of the past** demands more difficult work. But it also **brings into play the lightening rod** conductor between women which I think as pulsating at the core of lesbian/feminism: love experienced as identification, as tenderness...[emphasis mine](Rich 1979, 307)

Adrienne Rich begins this statement by arguing that the accomplishment of real transcendence entails the necessity of generalizing the figure of the woman of color in White feminist imagination and projects, but, not through false accountability entailing *malus pudor*. Rich desires to make **use of the past**, this is the transformation of the past into a value and instrument, a discursive power. This inclusion, "use of the past", and discursive dominance brings into play **the lightening rod** that pulsates at the core of lesbian/feminism: **love/identification/tenderness**. This transcendence/aufhebung/pulsating, lightening rod is not only over-determined but doubled as discursive and lesbian sexual value-**double think**. The **identification** of white women and women of color enables the **ejaculation and augmenting** of White feminist accounts since it would legitimate black feminist accounts as **Imaginary**, and order the social relations between them as top to bottom. This White feminine jouissance (carrot) is grounded on the engraved insignia of

a pulsating lightening rod, phallic-mothering and penetrating White gynelocentrism.

Several paragraphs later Rich maintains that,

The contradictions, the taboos, of difference. They said to us: that flesh, darker or lighter than your own, encloses a foreign country. You cannot know it. It speaks another language, it is alien territory: otherness. At the same time they told us: You cannot find wholeness with one whose body is formed like your own, one who like you is in a state of lack...With her you can only be two halves, unbalanced, mutilated contemptible.

But with you I seek both difference and identity..the pulse of your orgasm; the figures of your dreams..the range of your hunger...What has stopped me short, what fuses my anger now, is that we were told we were utterly different, that the difference between us must be everything, must be determinative, from that difference we each must turn away; that we must flee from our likeness.

In this statement Rich examines the forms of interdiction that prohibit sexual relations-racial difference and sexual sameness, a prohibition that is over-determined in respect to inter-racial lesbian sex. In terms of inter-racial sex, the racial other is marked as an alien body in which otherness becomes the bases of the interdiction. However in respect to sexual relations between women it is sameness that is the basis of the taboo since women as a group lack means in the production of sexual pleasure. Rich foregrounds the aforementioned interdictions which when juxtaposed, appear as contradiction, a contradiction that propels her anger.

Rich ends her essay with a dramatic metaphor, she

states that,

As I thrust my hand deeper into the swirl of this stream-history, nightmare, accountability-I feel the current angrier and more multiform than the surface shows: there is fury here, and terror, but there is also power and the fury (emphasis mine). We need to go beyond rhetoric or evasion into that place in ourselves, to feel the force of all we have been trying to skim across. (Rich 1979, 310)

Thrust hand appears as a re-iteration, doubling, over-determined representation of the lightening-rod pulsating at the center of lesbian/feminism, which, is entwined with accountability, fury, terror and power. She is angered by the multi-form interdictions and the command to turn away from that which she wishes to grasp, the pulse of your orgasm, figures of your dreams, the range of your hunger-power. This text is stunningly terminated by the gesture of the hand thrust deeper into a stream, swirl, reeling force that cannot be skimmed across. No wishy washy, superficial pussy kissing here, thrust hand/lightening rod/ depth/ Rich Metaphysics.²²

Rich's seductive invitation to feminists of color to enter the white feminist sisterhood entails an invitation to

²²"Lightening rod" and thrusting hand are not arbitrary signifiers but symbols that mark the center of this text. They are symptomatic of emphatic, self-affective speech, *plein du désir*, which identifies the phallic ordering of relations between women of color and white women. See Louis Althusser (1979, 1980) on over-determination, linearity and symptomatic texts. Also see Michel Foucault (1979) on doubling and self-affective writing. Jacques Derrida (1976, 1981) and Jacques Lacan (1977) have produced developed theories on the relationship of the phallus to writing.

debt erasure, the erasure of the excessive misogynyn that they accrue: clitoridectomy, chinese footbinding and other atrocities that women of color perpetrate against girls and other women. However, such a gift is predicated on taking the Oath of Virginity, purity and innocence, bearing the forged insignia of "Double Think" in this induction into White feminism. What would such a calculation look like?

Double-Think

$$\text{Woman} \frac{=WW[-R -G] \quad CW[-R -G]}{WM[++R +G] \quad CM[-R ++G]} = \text{Patriarchy}$$

Figure 2

According to Rich's Metaphysics the appropriation of value from the patriarchal accounts of white men and men of color would effect a rise in the value of the subjectivities of both White women and women of color, relative to the prior textual calculations. Within White feminism, at the level of the **Real** there would be no actual distinction between women; different women would be homogenized into the category Woman [-R -G]. However, at the **Imaginary** level a surplus of racism, discursive and libidinal power would accrue to white women. This technique of producing subjective values would bankrupt the Patriarchal accounts, especially the white male account. The account of the white patriarch would be substantially overdrawn [++R +G], showing a major de-valuation and de-facialization via this white feminist-effect. The men of color would sustain an added de-

valuation, over-drawn [-R ++G] on account of the extra burden of misogyny-clitoridectomy/ excision, chinese footbinding etc.

These formulations and representations depict the operation of a debt mechanism that valorizes the category Woman and de-values all other forms of subjective representations. However, what about the genitalization of feminine jouissance as a substantial reward for complicity within this White feminist calculation; this is a limited reward that is not totalizing and cannot incorporate all women. Heterosexual women may not find lesbian genital sex in itself an adequate expression of feminine jouissance. For such contingencies Rich has forged a comprehensive libidinal plan: the lesbian continuum which entails a de-genitalized account. Much of the critical response to *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence* (1982) is based on the presumption that Rich de-sexualizes lesbianism. Rather, it is my reading that she sexualizes woman-identified speech and valorizes lesbian genital sex; feminine jouissance is a doubled, over-determined, Rich Metaphysics.

Rich (1986) is self-critical of her former attempts to frame her theorizing in terms of first causes. In fact Rich in her reflections stated specifically in respect to *Disloyalty...that,*

But the woman trying to fit racism into a strictly radical feminist analysis finds that the box won't pack (Rich 1986, xii).

However, in "The Problem of Lorraine Hansberry (1979)" Rich yearns for and speculated on the essential thoughts of Lorraine Hansberry, in its Truth, unfiltered and unmediated by her husband-editor and other external forces. Rich raises the question of her conscious and unconscious conflicts and choices, in addition to her limits as a black-woman writer. She stated that Lorraine Hansberry remains a problem and a challenge to be resolved by black feminist access to her original manuscripts-the relatively unsuppressed Hansberry. Rich is again harping back to an originary essence and essential text that has been subject to an overwrite. As a consequence all references to works purported to be authored by Lorraine Hansberry remain interpellated by a desire for what is missing, the real-truth of Hansberry, and Rich ends up encircling all of her cited texts in this *plein du l'idéologie*, making any other reading of the existing texts that bear her name illegitimate. This knowledge-effect on Hansberry is a strategy of avoidance that designates *du jure* the available texts to the realm of the imaginary and marks them as untruth. Rich's criticisms which acknowledge the limits of Radical Feminism on various forms of exploitation and oppression (eg. imperialism, class and racism etc.) don't impede the reproduction of the same theoretical constructs, Rich metaphysics!

Rich Metaphysics is highly productive and a valuable White-feminist instrument in the postmodern feminist future

that cannot survive the technique of the radical absence of the figure of the woman of color. Rich demonstrates the value of forgeries/ white truths/ strategic omissions and transparencies. White postmodern feminism will effect and even more potent white feminist phallus, with powers far beyond the strategy of radical absence. This potentiality makes the deconstruction of these early white feminists of the second wave an urgent project, since their instruments and *flosculi sententiarum* will be repetitiously reproduced, *ad nauseum*.

Kettle-logue: Sovereignty and Domesticity

Introduction to the Kettle-hole of Domesticity

Sigmund Freud (1965, 153) in a discussion of the first dream he submitted to a detailed interpretation, which concerned itself with **Irma's injection** stated that he recognized, that his rationalizations of Irma's pain in the dream were equivocal, he stated that they were **"not entirely consistent with one another"**, he added further that they were **"mutually exclusive"** analogizing them to the case of the borrowed kettle: A man accused of damaging his neighbors kettle asserted firstly, that he had given back the kettle undamaged, secondly, that the kettle had a hole in it when he borrowed it and thirdly, that he had never borrowed the kettle. The metaphor of the **"kettle-logic"** draws dramatically on the speech of a malefactor who is caught in an **"untruth"**, the effect **de jure** of contradictory propositions. The kettle-logic operates at two major levels within the domestic labour debate and is over-determined. It is produced as the effect of the conflicting accounts in the debate as a **whole-positive and negative configurations**, and secondly, internally at the level of the coherence of individual accounts, taking the form of gaps, contradictions, missing accounts etc.¹

¹ The Freudian concept of kettle-logic has been utilized and developed by post-structuralists. See Jacques Derrida (1982, 103; 1981, 110-111) and Francois Lyotard (1988, 15) for an indication.

The kettle-hole of domestic labour appears in one form as the 'disappearance' or rather the lack of an account of domesticity within Marxist theories of the whole of the capitalist production process. In other words the conundrum is if total labour=surplus labour-necessary labour then what happens to the prior labours of women-domestic labour. This kettle-hole has been extremely productive, disseminating creative operations and a high accumulation of theoretical presentations to account for and give visibility to this missing-object-the collection of accounts mainly from the late 1960's and 1970's dubbed the "domestic labour debates".

An important question is what discursive and non-discursive context supported this discursive formation and what drives the incessant return to this issue? An evident propellant is the fundamental discrepancies on the conceptualization of domestic labour (eg. (a) the proper object of analysis (b) methodology (c) the 'product' of domestic labour (d) its status as a materialist base of women's oppression etc.) fuelled by a general dissatisfaction with attempts to integrate domestic labour within Marxist political-economy and accompanied by failing confidences with a Marxism judged to be masculine identified. This context supported the conclusion that the domestic labour debate was a "dead-end", "conundrum", "absurd", "non-sense", "economistic", "reductionist", "functionalist" etc., reinforced by the demand to go

"beyond" the domestic labour debates-marking a desire for resolution, a Marxist/Feminist jouissance.²

The irresolution of the theoretical proposals, symptomatic of **missed** opportunities, reiterated the gap, separation and division, re-marking a **hysterical drive** within Marxism-the pursuit of the materialist base of women's oppression, to release the limbic subject-Woman, suspended in history.

Like Irma's injection and Freud's concern with his diagnosis and treatment of Irma, more specifically his culpability and responsibility, the **interjection** of accounts of women's domestic labour was recognized as the starting point of an accountability and rectification: doing justice to women , **filling-in-a-hole**, theoretically responding to their complaints, in the political context of a burgeoning Women's Movement. However, rather than indemnification: **filling-a-hole**, the domestic labour debates displayed the comedy of a **missed step**, a falling into a hole.

My theoretical objectives are two-fold and intertwined, they entail the formulation of a thesis, that is a **critical positioning** on the construction of the objects of domestic

² For example see Michelle Barrett (1988, 152, 172-173, 249) on limitations, reductionism and functionalism; Maxine Molyneux (1979, 4, 20-22) on economism, reductionism, functionalism and the imperative to go beyond the debate; Margaret Coulson et al (1975, 71) on economism; Christine Delphy (1984, 79, 91, 175) on dead-ends, absurdities and nonsense; Beverly Brown (1990, 66) on conundrum. These evaluations among others have become generalized commentaries on the domestic labour debate.

labour that have emerged thus far within this discourse. This criticism is launched from the standpoint of an alternative positioning on this question, **such a location draws-a-line that marks a distancing and resistance to philosophy.** In this process the question of the relationship between domestic labourers and the working-class, that has been tacit, relatively adumbrated and in this mode at the margins of the debate, is **re-positioned** at the center of the problematic. To the aforementioned ends I will proceed with an exposition of a sketch of Marx's methodology that will help to map the topography of the analyses.

Mis-Stepping Into General Abstraction

I would like to reiterate that this analysis begins by drawing a theoretical demarcation-a detour that is the production of **a position of resistance** in respect to the discourse of **philosophy**, in particular philosophical anthropology, epistemology and its relationship to the knowing subject. This entails the identification of an **ideologico-philosophical terrain**-a methodological apparatus and its products, a web of a priori categories and propositions that make-up the ideologico-philosophical subsystems that tend towards totalizing, closed ethico-political systems. These systems conceptualize 'women's domestic labour' and its relationship to capitalism, and

contest space within an anthropologized Marxism.³

The entrance of 'women's labour' within Marxism had the effect of producing oppositional, **feminal** philosophical systems and (wo)maneuvers in these masculinist ideologico-philosophical games, creating complications in the webs of their propositions, heavily exposing much of Marxism as hierarchal and anthropologized ethico-political systems and apparatuses. These feminal and seminal categories and systems combine to produce an **over-determined vortex of incoherence**, via the mode and effects of feminal appropriations and seminal contestation, there by allowing one to see the hierarchal and exclusionary functions that constitute these apparatuses. But, **what is at stake but inarticulate in these ratiocinative games** that express these ideological struggles, is the installation of **Sexed Sovereign Subjectivity** and hierarchal relations of power.⁴

Before I identify the apparatus of General-Abstraction,

³ Lise Vogel (1973, 20) critiqued the idea of Woman as subject in developing a theory of women's liberation; Mark Cousins (1990, 71-80) and Parveen Adams and Jeff Minson (1990, 81-109) have introduced a radical critique of the subject, including the Woman subject, in their discussion of a materialist analysis of women, in which domestic labour was discussed.

⁴For some interesting references on the scopic drive and the import of sex see Jacques Lacan's (1981, 155, 194) note on the weight of sexuality, the scopic drive and the genital focus of vision. Also see Luce Irigaray (1975, 13-146), especially the sections on "Penis-Envy", "Metaphoric Veil of the Eternal Feminine" and "Woman is a Woman as a Result of a Certain Lack of Characteristics" where she discusses phallic desires, feminine narcissism and the covering up of castrated sex organs, indicative of the gravity of sex.

its categories and range of values, I would like to make a slight detour to Marx's discussion of the "method of political-economy", in which he describes two basic procedures, the discussion of which has important implications for the attempt at the abscission of and resistance to the specificity of the systemic thought of philosophy that is articulated in this debate.

Marx (1973, 100-101) describes the first path as beginning with a chaotic representation (vorstellung) of the whole population (subject) proceeding to simple concepts (begriff), in the process of which the full representation was erased to yield abstract determinations. He then contrasts this with the second path stating that,

The economists of the seventeenth century eg., always begin with the living whole... but they always conclude by discovering through analysis a small number of determinate, abstract, general relations...[then begins] the economic systems which ascended from the simple relations...to the level of the state...the abstract determinations lead towards a reproduction of the concrete by way of thought. In this way Hegel fell into the illusion of conceiving the real as a product of thought, concentrating itself, probing its own depths, and unfolding itself out of itself, whereas the method of rising from the abstract to the concrete is the only way in which thought appropriates the concrete, reproduces it as the concrete in the mind. But, this is by no means the process by which the concrete comes into being. For example the simplest economic category, say eg. exchange-value...It can never exist other than as an abstract, one-sided relation from an already given, concrete living whole. As a category, by contrast, exchange value leads an antediluvian existence. Therefore, to the kind of consciousness-and this is characteristic of philosophical consciousness-for which conceptual thinking is the real human being, and for which the conceptual world as such is the only reality, the movement of the categories appears as the real act of

production...this is correct in so far as the concrete totality is a totality of thought, concrete in thought, in fact a product of thinking and comprehending; but not in anyway a product of the concept which thinks and generates itself outside or above observation and conception into concepts...The real subject retains its autonomous existence outside the head just as before; namely as long as the head is merely speculative, merely theoretical. Hence, in the theoretical method, too, the subject society, must always be kept in mind as the presupposition [bold mine]. (Karl Marx 1973, 100-102)⁵

What will become evident in the ideologico-philosophical mode of exposition, is that although the domestic economic-systems appear formally as following the second path, from the chaotic representation of the whole to the determinate representation of the whole or partial-whole; the first moment from the chaotic representation of the whole to a few abstract, general concepts and relations **dominates** the ideologico-philosophical apparatus. The "full" or determinate representation of the whole appears as faint, **partial traces**. The domination of the first moment and the privilege of the simple concepts, support an Hegelianized moment—a General Abstraction in which **simple abstract categories unfold out of the General Abstraction** (the total range of possible categories), such that *the 'real'*,

⁵ This discussion of the materialist method has received various readings. Althusser (1970, 13-82; 1991, vii-xx, 205-240) admittedly bent-the-stick to far in his conception of the difference between the order of the real object and the object of knowledge. Jacques Derrida (1981a, 39-96; 1981b, 3-59) reiterated similar ideas in the notion of the radical exteriority of materiality and pointed to place of materiality in Marx and Lenin's resistance to idealism.

*expected to take the form of the relations of abstract-objects of partial-wholes, appears as a product of thought-an ideologico-philosophical operation.*⁶

Hegel's philosophical system eschews the **creator subject** and **origins** as causal agents, empirical subjects constitute effects in the expression of his totality and Absolute Idea.⁷ In anti-humanist readings of Marx, the creator subject and an absolute origins is foreclosed. However, in anthropological appropriations of Marx, the working-class is the creator Subject and **analytical starting point**; it is he who alienates his labour to form commodities [objects of his labours], and who becomes the **subject of knowledge** through the labour process, thus following **Vico's seminal epistemological principle "verum et factum convertuntur"** (the true and the made are interchangeable).⁸ Therefore, by **being-in-the-truth**, the Working-Class Subject becomes the guarantor of **Truth**. This mode of appropriation

⁶ Marx's (1975, 326-346; 1977, 135-144) critique of Hegel is concisely formulated in his "Critique of Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole" and in his criticisms of idealist philosophy in the "Holy Family".

The privilege of the first moment is thought to be characterized by the dominance of abstract categories that do not constitute a whole-this is its defining feature. Such categories manifest themselves primarily as symbols of value in impoverished systems of domesticity.

⁷ See Louis Althusser (1990, 205-240) and Jacques Derrida (1978, 251-277; 1981, 3-59) for such appropriations of Hegel.

⁸ See Max Harold Fisch and Thomas Goddard Bergin (1975); Martin Jay (1984) and Eugene Kamenka (1969) for a discussion of Giambattista Vico's influence on Marx and Marxism (eg. linear history).

has the knowledge-effect of constituting Marx's theoretical formulation of the capitalist production process and capitalist society within the **neo-Kantian epistemological problematic**-the relationship of the **Subject** to the **Object** of knowledge. Thus, we have the preoccupation with conditions that disable the creator subject, the Subject-in-the-truth, such that he does not follow his **class-instincts** and interests, but is instead trapped behind a **veil of false-consciousness-symptomatic of subjective uncertainty**. The worker is **de jure** the Originary Subject, not merely a subjective-effect or support of the capitalist production process, but Subject-the active, self-conscious, intentional agent. This marks the effulgent inscription of the specific Western inheritance of the neo-Kantian problematic on Marxism.

The articulation of these diverse philosophemes are central to the **ideologico-philosophical mode of exposition** that produces the formation of the systematic **wHole** of domestic labour in the aforementioned debate, in which these Marxist philosophers have stepped into a **wHole**. The **General Abstraction** is comprised of Marx's abstract-formal objects or theoretical concepts and other philosophical concepts (eg. Mode of production: capitalist (+), pre-capitalist (-), forms of labour: abstract (+), concrete (-), productive (+), unproductive (-); product: use-value (-), exchange-value (+); value (+), surplus-value (+); social relations:

exploitative (+), dominative (-); Proletariat (+), other-working class (-); forms of consciousness: revolutionary (+), non-revolutionary (-); social (+), non-social or natural (-); universal, free, essence etc.⁹ These categories among others constitute the apparatus of General Abstraction containing positive and negative values that represent the articulation of the **White Metaphysics of presence and absence, a frame of reference**, that is applied in a technical diagnosis of domesticity. **Knot/kNOT** refers to the positive and negative configurations respectively, presenting the operation of **presence and absence, causa sine qua non** in the articulation of the systematicity of the **White Metaphysics of domesticity**.¹⁰ In other words what becomes most **apparent**, is the play of presence and absence in the **systems** of domesticity, in which domestic labour is the basis of the operations, such that the taxonomic designations arising out of **General Abstraction** are framed in terms of what **is** and what **is not** present. This comprises the principal form of the analyses. Domestic labour is assessed in terms of the **positive and negative** representations that operate at a fundamental level in

⁹ For a discussion of Marx's abstract-formal categories which are distinguished from empirical categories see Louis Althusser (1991, 45-67).

¹⁰ Jacques Derrida (1981, 1982) and Jacques Lacan (1991, 175-190) have presented extensive theoretical analyses of the play of presence and absence, with Derrida identifying this articulation as a motif of Western thought.

Marxist Philosophy and anthropology. This operation is directly connected to what is constituted as the **Object** in the spectrum of the frame, versus what is marked as the **negative** in the **optical** constructions of these discursive productions. Thus, it should be clear that the **Mirror or Optical** moment predominates in the figuration of **sexed Subjectivity and Sovereignty** in this debate.¹¹ The analysis entails the plotting of values of the previously mentioned concepts that map an **aperçu** of the system of domesticity, that sustains a **specular and sexed Sovereignty** (eg. masculine presence and feminine absence).

The starting point of the ideological order of exposition in the domestic labour debates is the formation of **women-as-Subjects and domestic labour as Object**, producing the recombinant "women's labour". This form is indebted to the objective, empirical, self-evidence of the practical, household labour of women. The subject-object relationship appears to be modelled on the anthropology of the Proletarian subject form in the industrial sector of the capitalist production process. It is also resting on the presupposition that although domestic labour is not women's natural work, the **generalization of women** in the sphere of domestic labour constitutes this form of labour as

¹¹ Jacques Lacan (1981, 1991a); Richard Rothy (1979) and Jacques Derrida (1982) have made interesting contributions to the place of the mirror in Western thought with Lacan producing important ideas on the relationship of the mirror to sexed subjectivity.

specifically feminine or female, and is therefore central to *woman's identity and subjectivity*. The problematic of the category women's labour will be resumed in detail in the next section.

Although the **expressive** appropriation of Marx's abstract-formal objects as philosophical categories in the strong sense constitutes the Abstract Generalities, which appear as the circularity of a closed totality, they are in part the knowledge-effect of the articulation of both philosophical anthropology and his abstract-formal objects, that can resist the philosophical mode of exposition. In the subsequent examination of the systemic thought of domesticity, I will show that the knowledge-effect of this articulation produces creative openings, invaginations and appropriations that are the effect of philosophical interpretations in the **production of truth**. What was evident in the course of the debate but, contained in a silence was the operation of such openings that were the subject of incessant attempts at closure, but without achieving a welcomed interpretation. Quite the contrary, **dissatisfaction** abounded and the re-occurring theoretical initiatives reiterated and magnified the kettle-openings. These invaginations produced major shifts and discontinuities (eg. the revision of the labour theory of value in a number of conceptualizations). The repetitious motion of openings and closures of interpretive operations to address this kettle-

hole, is predicated on the desire for resolution of the problematic of "women's labour" and the Subjective identity of women.

The framework of General Abstraction produced by the over-determined kettle-openings constitutes the matrix that sketches the taxonomy of each system of domesticity. It provides the substratum for the abstrusely teleological movement of categories in an expressive totality, that manifests an *aufhebung*, the unveiled phallus: the Subjective relationship to Sovereignty or revolutionary essence. Each sketch is predicated on a diagnosis of domesticity through the designation of the values of General Abstraction that are mapped and co-coordinated. This entails a process of consolidating an ideological order of exposition and a *dis-articulation* of a theoretical exposition that is engaged in a resistance to philosophy and anthropology.

Mode of Exposition: Demarcating Outer Space

In the previous section I attempted to schematize the ideological mode of exposition, but in this section I intend to develop and elaborate the nuances of this process in respect to domesticity. A focal question of the domestic labour debate has been, **what is the relationship of domestic labour and domesticity to the capitalist production process?** Within the debate this relationship has been posited in terms of the apparent **positioning** of domestic labour at the

'center', 'margin' or outside (a distinct mode of production) of the capitalist production process. Each positioning effects the meaning of values (meanings) of the categories of General Abstraction in each configuration, and therefore even if the terminology and values (+,-) are identical in form (eg. surplus-value (+)) they would not possess the same signification. In other words it is the **systematicity** of each configuration or mode of arrangement of its structure which explicitly determines meanings in these **White Metaphysical** operations.

In all of the ideological expositions there is a presupposition that there can be an abstract-formal object and conceptualization of a **separate sphere** or realm of activities distinct from the capitalist production process-as-a-whole, this is part and parcel of the **operation of identification and difference**. The topography of capitalism that Marx (1967a, 1967b, 1977) outlines is reduced to or made identical to the particularity of the site of capitalist industrial production or waged labour. This **reduction** is necessary in order to posit an outer space (domesticity), a sphere that is **outside the articulation of the abstract-formal categories** that Marx utilizes to describe capitalist society. This marks the **differentiation** of capitalist society into two distinct spheres-wage labour and domestic labour. What does this differentiation indicate? It signifies an **unthought shift of terrain** from a

theoretical conceptualization at the abstract-formal level to the ideological level, an effect of the lack of an account of levels of abstraction. Some intellectuals in this debate speculated that the **kettle-hole: dead-ends, limitations, nonsense etc.**, maybe a problem of levels of abstraction in particular-domesticity as situated at the empirical level of analysis, but the **radical** import of this notion was left unconceptualized.¹² Superficial speculations have frequently arisen within Marxism in the face of **knotty** theoretical issues. *It is my reading that levels of abstraction constitute a fundamental and radical problematic in respect to the conception of domestic labour within Marxism.* The technical application of anthropological and abstract-formal categories in the domestic labour debate is mechanical and involved **no radical consideration of the level of analysis of Marx's abstract-formal analysis of capitalism and capitalist society.** Not only should there be a regard for the abstract formal level of analysis but the **linkages and discontinuity** between an empirical level of analysis and the abstract formal level. The empirical level of analysis is not the self-evidence or **appearance** of the **givens of everyday life experience** but another level of theoretical explication with the specificity of **empirical**

¹² A number of intellectuals have discussed the issue of levels of abstraction in the context of an examination of women's labour. See Iris Young (1981); Lise Vogel (1983); Paul Smith (1978); John Harrison (1973); Maxine Molyneux (1979) for some expressions.

concepts.

The circumvention of the radicalism of the question of levels of analysis is **symptomatic** of a dogmatic empiricism that is simultaneously a conception of Marxism as an **Absolute** set of categories and truths. There is the assumption that Marxism is suppose to directly and naturally **reflect** the real and **reveal** the **essence** of the **Objects** of social life and domesticity in particular. The complexities of knowledge production, intellectual labour, interests and anthropologies are unthought.

The first step in rethinking a marxist theoretical exposition may well begin with (a) the **appreciation** that Marx's analysis of capitalist society could be constructively thought at the abstract formal level (b) the fabrication and determination of the levels of analyses of the objects of investigation and their **nodal points** of connection and discontinuity with the their respective levels. These distinctions were not made in the domestic labour debate and therefore the given of everyday domestic **experience** [chaotic Whole] constitutes the **fundamental ground** for the ideologico-philosophical mode of exposition, in which the absolute categories-General Abstraction-and the structure of their systematicity became the means of making domesticity **transparent**, in the **presentation** of the transcendental subject.

Mode of Exposition: Outer Space and Labour Power

Anthropological empiricism, the foundational principle for conceiving domesticity in the domestic labour debate appears most profoundly in the privilege of a temporality (linear time) and spatiality of everyday life. In this tempo-spatial frame of reference the household and the work place constitute distinct locals and the **linear temporal framework** is the basic unit of the workday for both sites, and time is always progressive. In the everyday temporal frame, the housewife prepares the husband-worker and the children in the morning (a referent of spatial anteriority) for their respective destinations (eg. work place and school). The spatial movements of the husband-worker and children are presupposed as initiating from the household to the work place and other destinations, then back home again. During the day she engages in such chores as cooking cleaning, shopping, childcare etc. The privilege of the tempo-spatiality of everyday life erects the household subjectively as **an original matrix**: the site of daily and generational reproduction. It is my reading that the **temporal priority** of everyday life is not only presumed in every instance but contained in the **silence** of its **self-evidence**. This presupposition is partly constitutive of the notion that the housewife produces labour power-as-a-commodity in the home, in the immediate embodied form of the

husband-worker, and the future potentiality of the children. It is also connected to the preconception of the homogeneity of the temporality of life.

The temporal priority of the empiricism of everyday life effects the mode of conceptualization of **women's labour** as domestic labouring activities in general and as the husband-worker and product of the 'housewife's labour'. In other words this empiricism expresses the **externalization** of the housewife's labour as positioned **outside** the capitalist production process-as-a-whole. It also constitutes her activities as a **semi-autonomous** labour process that produces the product labour power and other useful labour in the household. This prepares the bases for the diagnosis of 'women's labour' and the determination of its properties in relation to value-creating activities (use-value, value, surplus-value etc.) in the production of labour power.

The Productivity of the Play of the Difference of Value

The most innovative anthropological reconstructions that attempt a quietus, seize General Abstraction and produce positive valuations. The most extensive signification of positive valuations that produce strong feminal speculations appear **early** in the debate. The conservative standpoint expressed negative valuations and contested the strong unconventional claims of the

relationship of domesticity to the capitalist production process. Such productions gained discursive dominance during the latter part, and especially during the decline of the debate. The axis on which such philosophical expositions rested were comprised of the categories of value and labour. One popular starting point of the unconventional analyses was the determination of the concept of labour power-as-a commodity, produced in the externality of the household. Both the conventional and the unconventional perspectives diagnosed the products of domesticity and determined their relationship to the creation of value, surplus-value and profits in the capitalist production process.

Given the centrality of the ground of the categories of value in this debate it is prudent to touch on the problematic of the mode of exposition of the fundamental category of value and its relationship to labouring activities in Marx's analysis of the capitalist production process. In *Capital* (1976, 125-177) Marx starts with a theoretical elaboration of the determination of the value of a commodity in his discussion of the process of the production of capital. In this abstract discourse he talks about qualitative and quantitative aspects of the commodity, its value as a useful thing and its value as a bearer [träger] of exchange-value (the form of appearance of a content (value) that is the measure of the exchange of use-values). This content is identified as quantities of

abstract human labour, measured in time that embodies the commodity. Marx gives an illustration of the simplest value relation, based on an exchange between two commodities (eg. x amount of commodity A = y amount of commodity B, or 20 yards of linen = 1 coat). The equation expresses the **relative and equivalent forms of value** respectively. In other words the 1 coat only expresses the **form of the presentation** of the value of 20 yards of linen and its exchangeability; commodity A expresses 20 yards of linen as **use-value**. The equation expresses a substance that is equally represented on both sides of the equation, namely labour.

This order of exposition has generally been interpreted as constituting labour as origin and value, in addition to the representation of a human and therefore an anthropological subject. Such an illustration entailing the prioritizing of labour could be read and reconstructed as having no significant import on the workings of the capitalist production process, and as merely expressing a confused and fictive imperative to formulate an origin that **represents** and binds the 'proletariat' to capitalism. However, let us take a cursory look at the **orthodox interpretation**-the order of the category of labour, the linearity of its causal and determinate import, and the quagmire of its contradictory expressions. For example, the systemic problematic of value as origin and subject, that structures the relation of value to the capitalist

production process produces the endemic transformation problems: the transformation of values into prices; the transformation of value into wages (prices); the transformation of the values of constant capital to the product; the relationship of the organic composition of capital to capitalist crisis (eg. over-production and under-consumption theories) etc.¹³ *It will become evident in the course of this analysis that the problematic of transformation is not limited to the analysis of the capitalist production process, but is a general problematic for Marxism and is at the center of the controversies of the domestic labour debate.* These contradictory knots and kettle-holes represent Marxism's debt to White Western metaphysics in the form of an imperative to keep the presence of the Subject close and transparent in the expressive and linear articulation of the capitalist production process. These formulations begin with a simple abstract category (eg. value) and accords it the function of a first principle in the representation of the being of capitalism, produced in a philosophical order of exposition. This anthropology begins with labouring activity, more specifically the originary form of value in the temporality

¹³ For some analyses on the transformation problems in Marxism see Ian Steedman (1977); Gerard Demenil (1983); Duncan Foley (1982); Luisi Pasinetti (1977); Anwar Shaikh (1977); Hans Ehrbar (1989); Louis Althusser (1991). The domestic labour debate is not thought of as fundamentally constituted by the problematic of transformation.

of the labour process of capitalist production. Clearly, Marx's major work **seethes** with the systemic effects of philosophical and anthropological expressions and appropriations that require careful, critical examination and deconstruction, and a **re-construction that attempts to avoid the contradictory knots of white, philosophical speculations**. I believe that an adequate reconstruction could begin with the concreteness of the labour process, the total product and its price that represents the money form of both wages (value) and profit (surplus-value). Thus, both value and surplus-value refer to money, which puts these ideas broadly in line with Negri's claims about the theoretical advantages of the irruption of money. He states that,

Here it seems to me that the *value-money knot immediately concretizes the theme of value as it never elsewhere occurs in Marx*. **The passage from money-form to commodity-form-Grundrisse to Capital, only adds abstraction and confusion...it is a more idealist, Hegelian method**. We will see further on-in Lesson 4-how one can only speak of the theory of value as part of the theory of surplus-value: the reduction of value to money, while it also removes the tendency to the theory of value, introduces instead the sequel of investigation; it initiates the good route. Money is a concrete thing which contains all the dynamism and the contradictions of value, as much from the formal as from the substantial point of view, **without possessing the abstract void of the discourse on value**.

From the formal point of view money can describe, and here it describes the potency, the dynamism of the tendency and that of the antagonism...Money and division of labor, money and exploitation, constant relation of a deepening of the scission as a result of its extension; all this is given the perspective which introduces and develops the critique from within the immediacy of money. There is nothing, from the formal point of view, that the theory of value can give us and that the theory of money doesnot give us here in a more effective or colorful form that the movement of value

is pure precariousness, that its solidity is only tendential and can only determine itself in the continuous alternation between the social averaging of necessary labor and its compulsory over-determination. It is necessary to insist on these motives which constitute the basis on which the theory of surplus-value can and most be established. But that is constituted as a law of class struggle only in the sense in which the law of value becomes a horizon, not a self-sufficient category. *And money well represents this reduction of the law of value to a mere horizon.* Through the theory of money, in fact, on one side, we have the possibility of eliminating the *caput mortuum* of the theory of value: the relation of value-price. It is money which constitutes, immediately, this relation, interpreting the oscillation between the social averaging of values of social labor and the over-determination of prices. Money represents this oscillation in itself, there is-outside this oscillation-no other reality: money is a constitutive oscillation, which mediates and demonstrates the complete value produced by social labor. On the other hand, it is also money which demonstrates, in its appearance as money, as "abstract sensuality," the route which *capitalist command over society* travels in order to over determine continually the oscillation of exploitation. Money will permit us to understand how surplus value is consolidated in social command; how to command crisis in the normal situation of capitalism. Centralizing the analysis of money permits Marx to therefore *radically innovate with respect to the theory of value of the classics*, in a double dimension: to reduce the theory of value to the figures of the averaging of social labor, and therefore to define it as oscillation, as conflicting, as potentiality of antagonism [bold mine]. (Antonio Negri 1984, 39-40).

These changes would constitute a *neue darstellung* by displacing the originary subject (substance) of labouring activities or abstract labour as the starting point of analyses; a **substance** that refers to the **essence** of human subjectivity and which generates a series of contradictions in the **linearity** of its articulation.

The philosophemes that account for domesticity and 'women's labour', center around the nodal points of the categories of value that enable a technical diagnosis that

will map and lay the foundation for the systems of domesticity and a sexual anthropology that figures **Sovereign desires**. *What is the productivity of the value categories? This productivity is an effect of the play of difference of the labouring activity of labour power that is inherent in the anthropology of the capitalist production process. The articulation of the difference of value tending to a **passee-partout**, and a **White, Phallogentric** movement grounds the expressions of **Subjective Identifications and differences**.*

Gayatri Spivak (1987) thinks the notion of differential as entailed in the theory of value, but as defined by the abstraction of use-value from the product to obtain value. She states that,

Yet the definition of value in Marx establishes itself not only as a representation but also a differential. What is represented or represents itself in the commodity-differential is Value: "In the exchange-relation of commodities their exchange values appears to us as totally independent of their use-value. But if we abstract their use value from the product of labor, we obtain their value, as it has just been defined. The common element that represents itself (sich darstellt) in the exchange-relation of the exchange-value of the commodity, is thus value" [Capital I 128; translation modified]. Marx is writing, then, of a differential representing itself as being represented by an agency ("we") no more fixable than the empty and adhoc place of the investigator or community of investigators (in the field of economics, planning, business managers) (bold mine). (Gayatri Spivak 1987, 158)

Negri speaks about Marx's method as not only tendential but as a collective risk, going on to talk of the **difference of value as use-value**,

To use other terms, the relation between *Forschung* [research] *Darstellung* [presentation], and *neue*

Darstellung [new mode of presentation] is here perfectly delimited, and one must recognize that "*die wirkliche Bewegung*" (the real movement) becomes in effect the subject of science. Still, something is lacking. It is quite true that the materialist method which considers the object as foreign to the mind belongs to science, is animated by the perspective which the tendency outlines, and is subjectivized by the criterion of the "true in practice". But, that said, one must here acknowledge the irreducibility of the real to some recomposition of idealism; the dynamics of the real, its laws and its articulations, are only assured by "**difference**", by the fundamental aspect of historical materialism-in as much as the latter can be dynamized and subjectivized. Inversely, in the Grundrisse, the movement is assured by antagonism and by the direct importance it has in the formation of the category: **difference is made into antagonism**, the frame of the method is very much loosened, shattered in several dimensions...it [Grundrisse] prepares all the conditions for the passage towards the rule of antagonism as the fundamental rule of all categories... Marx, in order to engage the category of "value," thus puts the method to work: he insists on the **dialectic of unity and difference which defines value**. The *difference of value is given as use-value* [italicized bold mine]. (Negri 1984, 51-52)

These notions of the difference of value that offer some resistance to philosophy are to be distinguished from the subsequent formulations that constitute a resource for feminal and seminal speculations in the debate.

A clear presentation of the difference of value is formulated in Marx's (1977, 320-441) analysis of the working day, A-----B----C in which a part of the working day (eg. A-----B) expresses the length of necessary labour-time congealed in the necessary portion of the total product, an equivalent of the value of the workers labour power. The portion of the working day, B-----C expresses surplus labour-time, the congealed form of the product in excess of

necessary labour, that is the surplus product and surplus-value of the worker's labour.

Here we see that it is the relation of necessary labour to total labour that determines surplus-labour, and this **difference** is an effect of these relations. Thus, in an anthropological exposition these categories constitute a chain of relations, a change in necessary labour has a systemic effect. The play of difference is **inherent** in the linearity of an anthropological presentation in which the magnitude of value-congealed necessary labour-time, effects the proportion between value and surplus-value. This movement interjects **kettle-holes**, is a major reserve that is highly productive in facilitating **claims** of positive valuations of the categories of General Abstraction in the systems of domesticity. In the subsequent section I will describe two broad tendencies of the mapping of the configuration of domesticity derive from General Abstraction, which takes the form of positive and negative designations of value and surplus-value that are basilar in the **systematicity** of the anthropological edifices. I have chosen to select the following texts within the domestic labour debate not only because of their positive and negative valuations but also because of the "rigor" and knowledge-effects that they have had on the debate from the standpoint of the analysis of sovereignty. Although there have been subsequent formulations, they tend to be a

repetition of the same logic. ¹⁴

Knot: Positive Configurations of Domesticity

Margaret Benston (1970, 279) puts forth the proposition that the roots of women's "inferior" and "secondary status" were in fact **economic** rather than psychological, social or interpersonal. She attempted to show that women had a definite relation to the means of production and that personal and psychological factors "**followed from**" their special relationship to production; thus locating them within a class analysis. In what follows we will see the main features of the systematicity of the configuration of Benston's interpretation of Marxist philosophy, applied to domesticity. Benston defined the starting point of the analysis of capitalist society in the division of society into the owners of production and those who sell their **labour-power**. She added that a corresponding "**structural definition of women**" was **lacking**, calling for a **materialist analysis** rather than the symptom of their status. Benston (1970, 281) went on to not only identify the production of commodities and exchange-values within capitalist society, but also other products, that were not commodities but

¹⁴ Other positive contributions have been put forth see Mary Inman (1973); Isabel Languia and John Dumoulin (1972a, 1972b); Beatrice Ferneyhough (1974). For other negative contributions see Alva Buxenbaum (1973); Margaret Cowl (1972); Paddy Quick (1977).

simple use-values produced in the home. She described women as that group of people who were responsible for the production of simple use-values in those activities associated with the home and family. This expresses the inscription of gender within labour. The author relies on the authority of Frederick Engels, quoting his statement that,

[The] first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry... And this...modern large-scale industry ... strives to convert... into a public industry (Benston 1970, 283).

In this statement she reiterates the thematic of capitalist progress vis-a-vis housework, later metaphorically referred to as **pre-capitalist**. Thus, wage labour is regarded as a **progressive** direction for women.

In taking issue with the prevailing psychological definition of the family as fulfilling emotional needs, Benston (1970, 285) maintains that the wages of a man buys the labour of two people and that it is in the case of divorce that the primacy of the economic function of the family emerges, in which the ex-husband and father pays for the labour of the ex-wife and mother through the economic support he provides subsequent to divorce. She continued that the nuclear family as an economic unit is a valuable **stabilizing force** in capitalist society, undermining the husband's ability to withhold his labor from the market, supporting female dependence, passivity and conservatism. In

addition, the family is thought to be an ideal consumption unit, with women as a reserve-army of unemployed. In addressing the need to keep women in the home, Benston argued that,

First, the amount of unpaid labour performed by women is **very large and very profitable** to those that own the means of production. To pay women for their work, even at minimum wage scales, would imply a massive redistribution of wealth [bold mine] (Benston 1970, 288).

Benston **side-steps** the knotty question of the transfer of domestic labour into profits. But, she questions the capacity of capitalism to expand to put all women to work, adding that the current trends create "underemployment" in the home, maintaining that they do not create new jobs for women. Benston appears to be alluding to the double-work burden of many women. She concludes with the statement that,

There is a material basis for women's status; we are not merely discriminated against, we are **exploited**. At present the unpaid labor is **necessary** if the entire system is to function [bold mine] (Benston 1970, 289).

Benston (1970, 289) advocates a strategy that undermines housewifery and promotes women's entry and continuation in the labour force, linking this to the process of revolutionary change that she hopes will end women's oppression.

Domesticity and the Creation of Surplus-value

At the beginning of their essay on women and the power

of the community, Dalla-Costa-James (1972, 21-22) gave one of the most transparent indications of what the housewife represents within this feminist discourse on women's identity. The starting point is anchored in a philosophical anthropology that is grounded on the tempo-spatial plane of everyday life. Housewifery was described as the **central feature** in the female role because it constituted the **common condition** of all women. In addition, the **position** of the **working-class** woman was thought to be **determinate** for all women. From what is nominally referred to as a Marxist-Feminist perspective, we have the emergence of an **essential** notion of being, founded on a form of **labour** (child rearing, bearing, and the reproduction of labor power) that is defined as '*universal*' for women. This presents at the outset the core elements (**laboring** and **natural** essence) of an emerging **philosophical anthropology of woman** that is consistent with Marx's early works, which will be elaborated in the course of my analysis. There is a weaving of Marx's early anthropology and his later political economy which are appropriated in the service of the construction of a **coherent system** of domesticity whose configuration guarantees the **Subjectivity of Woman**.

Dalla-Costa-James then goes on to describe the conditions of the social relations of the household, most especially the relationship between husband and wife. Dalla-Costa-James (1972, 31) identify women's resistance to sexual

exploitation and the **political emergence of lesbianism**, that pursues the possibility of sexual relations free of sexual power, in opposition to the repression of sexuality, especially female sexuality, in the interest of the reproduction of labour power under capitalism. Here lesbianism is thought as the awakening of a **free, womanly expression** in the sphere of sexuality. Julia Matthaei (1989, 76-77) in one of a series of essays that re-examines domestic labour, acknowledges gender oppression in general and in taking an example of a lesbian household, problematize the exploitation/oppression dichotomy, but in so doing manages to preserve the lesbian coupling as a potential sphere of freedom. The complex articulation of forms of power should not prevent its identification and analysis. Lesbian and gay households and many non-white households offer rich opportunities to think such complexities, but unfortunately they have been largely exclude and unthought. The authors go on to identify the **exploitative unfreedom** that is leveled against Woman. They maintain that it is through the wage that the organization of the exploitation of the unwaged housewife is constituted. They maintain that the wage **commands** a larger amount of labor than appears in the factory bargaining. They state that,

What has been neither clear nor assumed by the organization of the working class is that *precisely through the wage has the exploitation of the non-wage laborer been organized*. This exploitation has been even

more effective because the lack of a wage hid it. That is, the wage commanded a larger amount of labor than appeared in factory bargaining. Where women are concerned, their labor appeared to be a personal service outside of capital. Woman seems to be suffering from male chauvinism, being pushed around because capitalism meant general "injustice" and "bad and unreasonable behavior"; the few men who noticed convinced us that this was "oppression" but not exploitation...The rule of capital through the wage compels every able-bodied person to function, ... in ways ... profitable to the expansion and extension of the rule of capital [*italicized mine*]. Mariarosa Dalla-Costa-Selma James (1972, 28).

This reading of exploitation is consistent with the Negrian de-centering of production, value, the priority of surplus-value and the capitalist production process as a totality. The materiality of exploitation is supported by the money form (exchange-value) rather than the generality of immorality.

Dalla-Costa-James have been criticized for reasoning *per ambages*, but what is being expressed in part is an appropriation of Marx, in which Negri is theoretically valuable. Negri (1984, 51-52 53) identifies the antagonistic difference of value given as use-value, he then goes on to discuss the division of the commodity into use-value and exchange-value which splits apart and raises the question of the formal mechanism through which difference becomes antagonism (eg. the law of the tendency, centralization of capital and the state, and the deepening contradictions and antagonisms at the level of the world market). Here the emphasis is on the mark of the difference of value rather than its originary substance as determinate ground. Negri's

work appears in many aspects to be more resistant to philosophical anthropology than Dalla-Costa-James's analysis of domesticity, which can be indicated in the categories of "women's labour", showing Woman as creator subject in the production of labour power, a labour that is productive and creates surplus-value etc.

Dalla Costa-James then remonstrated the notion that domesticity was outside social productivity, maintaining that they are "clearing the ground" of "orthodox marxism". It should be noted that *sociality* is simultaneously connected to the constitution of the *human essence* and the *geneticism* of the working class Subject. The authors proceed by initiating an assault on the presumption of the unproductiveness of domesticity. They contested the supposition of the unproductiveness of domestic labor, identifying it productively as social services in the reproduction of labor power. It is the unwaged domestic services that are thought to form the *basis* for the free waged labour of men. But, it is the problematic of empiricism that secures the legitimate externalization of domestic labour which has the knowledge-effect of making such *claims* appear metaphoric and unsubstantiated from the standpoint of orthodox Marxism. Their divergence from Negri is definitively expressed in referring domestic labor to the reproduction of labor power as-a commodity and therefore to the **kNOT** of transference, rather than exclusively to the

production of surplus-value (money). The authors maintain that,

Domestic labor is not essentially "feminine work"; a woman does not fulfill herself more or get less exhausted than a man from washing and cleaning. These are social services inasmuch as they serve the reproduction of labor power. And capital, precisely by instituting its family structure, has liberated the man from these functions so that he is completely "free" for *direct* exploitation; so that he is free to "earn" enough for a woman to reproduce him as labor power. It has made women wage slaves, then, to the degree it has succeeded in allocating these services to women in the family, and by the same process controlled the flow of women into the labor market. (Dalla Costa-James 1972, 33-34)

Here the authors are critiquing the idea that certain forms of work are naturally performed by women. This is not a critique of the laboring essence of women in general, but, the binding of their general capacity for labor to a particular form. The sociality of women's labor is produced in its functionality in the reproduction of labor power. It appears that they are wage-slaves to the extent that they are dependent on the wages of their husbands for their own economic survival and controlled in their access to the labor market. They *claim* not only the sociality but the productivity of domesticity. Such claims are also dismissed as rhetorical and metaphorical posturing without any theoretical substance, since social is a term that is rigorously used to define the capitalist organization of the labour process. Let us examine how this is framed. Selma James in the introduction has this to say,

The community is not therefore an area of freedom and leisure auxiliary to the factory, where by chance there

happens to be women who are degraded as the personal servants of men. The community is the other half of the capitalist organization, the other area of hidden capitalist exploitation, *the other, hidden, source of surplus-labor*. It becomes increasingly regimented like a factory, what Mariarosa calls a **social factory**, where the costs and nature of transport, housing, medical care, education, police, are all points of struggle. And this social factory has as its pivot the woman in the home producing labor power as a commodity, *and her struggle not to [bold mine]*. (Dalla Costa-James 1972, 11).

This mode of reasoning appears to have some basis in the central Negrian conception of the connection between money and the law of the tendency towards division and antagonism. However, the tendential function does not simply appear but is teleological in advoluting the actualization of the Idea of the factory. In other words regimentation, **a tendency, goes beyond itself** immediately and becomes identical with factory, there is no intervening process of the "truth-in-practice". This gap is symptomatic of the **disjuncture** that is produced in the mode of appropriation of Marx's abstract-formal categories in *filling in a hole*. This represents a striking example of the effects of the strategies of Identification in the production of Sovereignty.

In regard to this crucial problematic I need to examine the relationship between domestic labour, labor-power, exploitation, value, surplus-value and the unwaged condition of the housewife. Negri makes a case for the subordination of the theory of value to that of surplus-value, placing at the foreground the materiality of money. I would like to call attention to what appears to be an

important divergence in perspective between Negri and Dalla Costa-James, the movement from the money-wage to domestic labour in the reproduction of labor power. Is this movement consistent with a Negrian perspective? Let us examine what Negri has to say about the relationship between labor and valorization,

We cannot presume generically that labor is the foundation of this multiplicity [M-C-M']...

We can, we should consider capital as objectified labor. But does this also permit us to understand valorization? *Can the theory of value identify the mechanisms of valorization?* No. *In no case whatsoever.* When one advances on the terrain, it is there that "*capital is conceived as a thing not as a relation.*" "Capital is not a simple relation, but a process, in whose various moments it is always capital" (*Grundrisse*, P. 258; 170). Thus, its **neither a linear logic nor a simple conceptual extension of the presupposition. But what is the relation if it is not simply that of circulation?...**[bold mine]

Labor can therefore be transformed into capital only if it assumes the form of exchange, the form of money. But that means that the relation is one of antagonism, that *labor and capital are present only at the moment of exchange which constitutes their productive synthesis, as autonomous, independent entities..*

What does this antagonism consist of? It consists in the fact that capital must reduce to an exchange value that which for the worker is a use value [not-value]. (Antonio Negri 1984, 66-68).

The Negrian perspective, especially as presented in the last two quotation from that author, appears to not only argue for a discontinuity between labor and the money-form, but most significantly regards the movement from the money-form to the commodity-form as an idealist, Hegelian movement. Dalla Costa-James continually asserted that women reproduce labor power as a commodity and *it is the unwaged labor of the wife in the transformation of the wage into*

conumerable goods and services, which is an exploitative production of surplus-value, and therefore constitutes a focal point of the housewife's resistance. It is the focus on labor and the commodity that would embody an idealist digression from the logic of Negri's neue darstellung of Marx's conception of capitalism. However, since Dalla-Costa-James have not identified the labour theory of value as a key problematic for any exposition of domesticity, nor have they queried the category of women's labour but, have on the contrary made substantial use of these categories, the explication appears to have an openness to labour as the measure of value, an articulation which operates-in-silence. But, more significantly the kettle-hole is most manifest in that, the externality of domesticity requires the anthropological operation of the difference of value in order to claim that domestic labour is transferred into surplus-value.

Dalla-Costa-James (1972, 35-50) in their outline of a schema of organized resistance for housewives held that it is an error to consider housewives and tacitly most women as external to the working class and engaged solely in the production of use-values. They maintained that *emancipation* is not achieved through waged-work and that the struggle around domestic work demands a *specific* struggle within the family. These feminists call for a higher subversiveness of women to smash the role of the housewife, not a higher

productivity of labour for women. They see it as a challenge to the women's movement to resist double slavery (waged labour and unwaged domestic work of women), and refer to parallels existing between underdevelopment in the third world and in "the kitchens of the world"-a reference to the low level service sectors where women are concentrated.

The emphasis of the authors on women's consumption, the defense of the standard of living of the working class, the overthrow of the asymmetric relationship between domestic work-time and non-domestic work-time and waged labour itself, is wholly consistent with the Negrian politics of the expansion of leisure time and consumption (use-values); so also is their call for **wages for housework** as an antagonistic political strategy. This tactic is said to mark the distinction between reformism and revolutionary politics for these feminists. Dalla-Costa-James (1972, 50-51) conclude with the identification of the Freudian notion of *woman's castration* as the expression of their separation from the development of *civilization*, and feminist resistance as the point of their inclusion.

Surplus-Value and the Housework Mode of Production

John Harrison (1973, 35) defined his objective in the political-economy of housework, a philosophical system of domesticity, as an analysis of the mechanisms of the

appropriation of surplus-labour performed in the household and its beneficiaries. Thus, the systematicity of this text is focused on such mechanism in the elaboration of its configuration and end-product of Revolutionary Subjectivity. In so doing the author confronted the problematic of transference in his dissemination. This issue is connected to his concerns about *feminist arguments* that the "male metropolitan working-class is no longer a revolutionary force because it is living off the backs of blacks or women."

The author outlines the organization of his essay as beginning with the concept of the mode of production, proceeding to a discussion of the conditions of the production and mechanisms of appropriation of surplus labour in the household. The mode of production is viewed as composed of *two levels*-the labour process and the distribution or mode of appropriation of the product. The mode of appropriation operates through free commodity exchange in the market between buyers and sellers. He maintains that *real economic systems* contain more than one mode of production and that the housework mode of production was not dominant in the past nor in the present. The concept of the *housework mode of production* positions domestic labour in an external relationship to the capitalist mode of production. The dominant mode of production has the greatest determination in the structure and development of the total

social formation. What appears in Harrison's discussion are **levels of analyses** that relate to the internal structure of the mode of production (labour process and mode of appropriation) and the level of the social formation containing more than one mode of production. These ideas like other notions of levels of analyses is frequently applied in Marxism to connote a distinction between abstract and concrete descriptive analyses. However, the full ramifications of such a distinction is not usually pursued.

*Labour Activity and the Difference of Value in the
Production of Surplus-Value in Housework*

The **value of labour power** (1973, 41-42) is said to be known through the calculation of necessary labour-time, based on technology and goods to be produced. He states that the value of labour power is specific to the capitalist mode of production and that wages and consumption fluctuate around value. He maintains that Marx presupposes a *pure capitalist production* and therefore that all goods are produced capitalistically. Harrison in his discussion of the value of labour power states that,

Value of labour power is clearly not just the labour-time involved in the production of the part of the worker's subsistence produced within the capitalist sector. We must also take account of labour performed outside the capitalist sector which contributes to the worker's standard of living (John Harrison 1973, 41-42).

In an analysis of the production of labour and surplus labour in housework, he maintained that the housewife

produces use-values for herself, their children and her husband; and that she performs surplus labour if labour-time exceeds the labour-time in the production of the means of subsistence. Harrison discusses the **mechanism of the appropriation of surplus-value** that incorporates the **transfer** of surplus labour from the household to the capitalist sector. He states that housework is measured in actual labour-time, the capitalist sector is measured in socially necessary labour-time and in this connection warns against reductionism. *Socially necessary labour-time is defined as the average of actual labour-time.* He presupposes that the same labour-time is required to produce use-values in domestic labour and also in the capitalist mode of production. Even though Harrison warns against the reduction of necessary labour-time to actual labour-time, he conceptualizes the difference between them as purely quantitative, thereby he is able to posit necessary labour-time as an average of actual labour-time. His critics have taken issue with this quantitative notion of the social labour; instead, it is conceived as a qualitative difference. But, even sociality appears quantified in Harrison's reading, he speaks about the low level of sociality in the household. This **reduction** is the basis on which he is able to propose a transfer of surplus-labour from the household to the capitalist mode of production. This convoluted maneuver involving a quantification of this

difference of value, is the basis of his subsequent determination of feminine difference.

The author (1973, 42-43) presents an *illustration* of a family comprised of a husband, wife and no children, identifying the *distribution of a day's labour*. Total labour (husband and wife)=20 hours-a-day. In the household sector the wife works 5 hours for herself and 5 hours for her husband, making-up a total of 10 hours. In the capitalist sector the husband works 5 hours for the capitalist and 5 hours for the family, $2\frac{1}{2}$ for the husband and $2\frac{1}{2}$ for the wife. This represents a total of 15 hours in the production of means for family subsistence, 5 hours in the capitalist sector and 5 hours in the household sector. Harrison maintains that the husband requires $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours in means of subsistence but receives 5 hours from the capitalist. He states that "there is a 'net flow' of $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours (wife's surplus labour-time) from the household to the capitalist sector." Therefore, the profit are not thought to be equal to surplus-value created within industry. Although, Harrison disputes the claim that the housewife produces the labour-power of the husband as a commodity, he speaks about the husband's subsistence needs in the illustration as amounting to $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours with the capitalist mode of production paying the equivalent of 5 hours. Thus, the husband-worker appears as a key function in the mechanism of the transfer of surplus labour to the capitalist sector. The appropriation

of surplus labour in the form of use-values from the household is conceived to be analogous to the notion of the aristocracy of labour (the classic model being the appropriation of surplus labour from the periphery which is transferred to the center) in which a certain sector of the proletariat, in this case male labourers obtain an 'artificially' high level of subsistence working for capital. Thus, it is argued that *capital is able to pay wages below the value of labour power*. In this transference of surplus-value what is most significant is the operation of the difference of value in the form of labouring activity, the substance that allows for the calculation and transfer of 2 1/2 hours of the housewife's labour to the capitalist mode of production. **This difference is the key to filling-in-a-hole, that is the kettle-hole of domesticity.** Harrison (1973, 46-50) identified cases in which there were gains by capitalism and/or the husband from housework, the gains to capital was higher when both husband and wife work. The household is also recognized as an industrial reserve army of the unemployed. He also states that women occupy a double class membership as proletarians and as housewives. Housewives are defined as having a distinct *form of consciousness* but with the same objective interests in overthrowing capitalism.

KNOT: Negative Configurations of Domesticity

In this subsection I will do a reading of some essays that define domesticity negatively, in opposition to the positive evaluations (namely the notion that it creates surplus-value and profits) of the aforementioned feminal works in the previous section.

Value, Not-Surplus-Value of the Housewife's Labour

Wally Seccombe's essay entitled "The Housewife and Her Labour Under Capitalism" (1974) was considered one of the most compelling arguments framing the housewife's labour as a value creating activity. Seccombe's work is characterized by an unexpected twist, a level of contradiction from the standpoint of the difference of value which he espouses, thus, domestic labour is argued to **create value but not surplus-value**. This constitutes a **fulcrum** in the logical operations of the **systematicity** of his notion of domesticity, having consequential Subjective implication which will become apparent in the course of this analysis. He began his essay by identifying the denial of the economic function of the domestic labour linking it to the **sexual division** of labour, in which women are situated in the domestic unit and men in industry. He discusses the separation of the domestic worker from the means of production and the means of exchange, with the redistribution of the wage as a private matter between

husband and wife. He maintains that the privatization of domestic labour makes the law of value "inapplicable" and that the productivity of labour-time interest the capitalist only within the capitalist production process. Here we see that Seccombe's philosophical exposition is grounded on the tempo-spatial plane of everyday life, without specifying and integrating abstract-formal or empirical levels of analyses, rather it entails the positioning of the household on the margins of the capitalist production process. This 'margin' from the standpoint of the abstract-formal level of analysis is a position of externality, indicated by the inapplicability of the labour theory of value.

Seccombe in his discussion of the relationship of domestic labour to capital situates the housewife and the family within the capitalist social formation between the commodity market and the labour market. The family consumes the means of subsistence in the reproduction of labour power to sell to the capitalist in the labour market. Seccombe then goes on to lay the theoretical basis for the conception of labour power as a commodity. He states that labour power in exchange with the wage takes the form of a commodity and *has value by the necessary labour expended in its production*. He begins this proposition by a reference to Marx's text in the first paragraph and then continuing on, he states that,

The value of labour power is determined, as in the case of every commodity, by the labour-time necessary for

the production, and consequently also the reproduction of this special article. So far as it has value it represents no more than a definite quantity of the average labour of society incorporated in it...

Revealed here are two aspects of the commodity labor power. *On the one hand its origins in labor expended in its production, and on the other its equivalent value expressed in the wage [italicized mine]*. As properties found in all commodities, Marx terms these two polarities relative and equivalent forms. As a simpler way of stating the same relation we might say: two commodities, labor power and the wage, are exchanged for one another at equal value (Seccombe 1974,7).

Seccombe then goes on to formulate the origin of the commodity labour power in laboring activity. He argues that,

When the housewife acts directly upon the wage to purchase goods and necessarily alters their form, her labor becomes part of the congealed mass of past labor embodied in labor power. The value she creates is realized as one part of the value labor power achieves as a commodity when sold [italicized mine]. All this is a consistent application of the labour theory of value to the reproduction of labour power itself-namely that all labor produces value when it produces any part of a commodity that achieves equivalence in the market place with other commodities (Seccombe 1974, 9).

The first paragraph of the citation that quotes Marx's definition of the value of labour power continues with the statement that "...in other words, the value of labour power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of its owner." The author conceptualizes labour power as a commodity from the illustrative mode of analysis in which Marx demonstrates the substance and the measure of the value in the abstract. In this mode of analysis Marx

begins with simple commodity exchange of two commodities.

However, Seccombe in a discussion of the specificity of capitalism maintained that domestic labour creates value in spite of the "privatized" rather than "social" character because of the *higher abstraction that a totalized commodity market sets up* entailing the measurement of labour on the average, expressed in the universal commodity money. This entails the positioning of the production of value in the sphere of circulation (exchange), in other words the orthodox claims in which the production of values occurs exclusively in the capitalist production process, as distinct from exchange is revised. This marks a **creative-opening** in the logic of the production of value. In this framing the production and the circulation processes including the interstices of the commodity market and the labour market (eg. household production) are productive of value. This opening constitutes in part the ground on which the proposition that the housewife creates value is put forth.

Marx's discussion of the value of labour power can be read from the standpoint of the **internality of the abstract-formal categories of capitalism**. Therefore, even though it is customary for the labourer to advance the use-value of his labour power to the capitalist before he receives a wage Marx states that,

Its value [labour power] like that of every other commodity is determined before it enters into

circulation, for a definite quantity of social labour has been spent on the production of labour power... The price of the labour power is fixed by the contract, although it is not realized until later, although it is paid for at a later period. It will therefore be useful, if we want to conceive this relation in its **pure form**, to presuppose for the moment that the possessor of labour-power, on the occasion of each sale, immediately receives the price stipulated [italicized bold mine] (Marx 1977, 277-279).

The aforementioned formulation which is slightly ahead of the subsequent quotation places it in a non-linear temporal perspective, such that one does not fall into the trap of the preconception that the value of labour power can be theorized as determined in the exterior of the capitalist production process. Marx resolves the value of labour-power into the value of the means of subsistence, which is more congruent with the terms of *average social labour* and *average income*. He states that,

But, in whatever way the sum total of these outlays [subsistence] may spread over the year, they must be covered by the average income, taking one day with another... Suppose that the mass of commodities required for the average day contains 6 hours of social labour, then everyday half a day of average social labour is objectified in labour-power, or in other words half a day of labour is required for the daily production of labour-power. This quantity of labour forms the value of a day's labour-power, or the value of labour-power produced every day (Marx 1977, 276).

This is further supported by my reading of the order of exposition in his discussion of the calculation of the value of labour-power, which begins with the value (money-form) of the means of subsistence. He states that,

Given the value of the means of subsistence, the value

of labour power can be calculated; and given the value of his labour-power, the duration of his labour-time... (Marx 1977, 430).

Seccombe (1974, 9) conceives the creation of an originary but hidden form, the value of labour-power in the household, the product of the house-wife's labour in the higher abstraction of exchange in the capitalist production process.

The author having argued that domestic labour creates value **outside the law of value**, examines the question of the presence of such value. He maintains that domestic labour figures in the relative value form but **not** in its equivalent form: **domestic labour doesnot create surplus-value**. Here we have the **encoding of feminine sexual difference as lack**, and framed as "value outside the law of value" and as "not in the equivalent form". He then goes on to ask, if the wage equals the value of labour power but the value of domestic labour is not paid in the wage-is this not an unbalanced equation? Seccombe states that this is a *problem of bourgeois appearance* in which the wage presents itself as a payment for labor rather than a payment for labour power, a result of the phenomenal wage-form. He contends that the value of the housewife's labour remains hidden without a paycheck to signify its **presence**. In this context the husband is the *immediate agent* of a portion of the housewife's oppression. Seccombe's preconception of the limits of the creative-effects of the housewife's labour

props his contention that the housewife has difficulty locating the ultimate source of her oppression, with the privatization of the home constituting a lack of a collective area of struggle, producing objective limits on her opportunities for struggle. He ends with the claim that the housewife is unable to prefigure the new social order.

Paul Smith's *qui vive* in "Domesticity and Marx's Theory of Value" (1978), which adminiculated a quittance was considered one of the most rigorous critical responses to the claims that domestic labour creates value, surplus-value/profits. Smith stated that,

The case for domestic labour as value producing has not been well argued-rhetoric often substituting for understanding of Marx's theory of value-and this has allowed the 'orthodox' Marxist response to rely on mere assertion to dismiss rather than refute the case (Paul Smith 1978,200).

His ethical rationations proported to appeal to correct argumentation overcoming the appearance of inconsistency in Marx's definition of the value of labour power-*summun jus, summa injuria*.

He began with a polemic with Seccombe, a focal figure around which much dialogue was addressed, objecting to the interpretation of Marx's notion that,

The value of labour-power is determined as in the case of every other commodity by the labour-time necessary for the production...[that] can reduce itself to that necessary for the production of the means of subsistence since, an additional labour-namely housework-is necessary in order to convert these

commodities into regenerated labour power (Smith 1978, 200).

Smith (1978, 203) advances the proposition-"if domestic labour contributes to the production of a commodity then it too is abstract labour, value creating and a branch of social labour". This sacrosanct proposition is a concise expression of the *axioms* on which his argumentation rests, and the *form of proof* that this rationality entails, which ultimately defines his version of the configuration of the system of domesticity. It is on this *sine qua non* that he stated that not all labour produces value, but only that which is performed within the social relations of commodity production, taking the form of socially necessary, abstract and social labour. This lays the foundation for the proper, *de jure* site and form of value producing labour.

The author then took up the problematic that domestic labour produces labour-power-as-a-commodity with its labour determined by labour-time. He contended that such claims presented a "challenge" rather than application of Marx's labour theory of value since,

It suggests one commodity, labour-power, is always sold below its value, since this would be equivalent to the value of the means of subsistence brought with the wage plus the value said to be created by domestic labour (Smith 1978, 202).

What Smith is presenting is the cost of extending difference, filling-in-this gap-doing justice to women. The transaction of the transference of domestic labour into the

commodity labour-power, is thought to shake the foundation of the labour theory of value in a risky, speculative investment-feminine indemnity, in order that domestic labour be value and for its product to have value-opus operatum. Thus, the valorization of domestic labour is thought to implode the very ground on which it stands. Smith is on a mission to close the apparent opening that the difference of value supports that is the kettle-hole of domesticity. This exegesis that forecloses transference is an axial, not only in vitally structuring the form of the systematicity of domestic labour but it is most significant in obturating an Identification of the housewife that resembles the Revolutionary Sovereignty of the Proletariat.

Building on his if-then proposition on domestic labour Smith maintained that,

The first reason domestic labour cannot be subsumed under commodity production is that in a commodity economy labour is allocated between branches of production by the law of value, and equilibrium between branches of production consists in their products exchanging at value [bold mine](Smith 1978, 204).

This reasoning ignores the relationship of allocation to gender, race, class, immigrant status, citizenship etc. and other political relations such that the operations of the 'law of value' is problematized even within waged labour. He extends his claims by stating that the production of domestic labour is unaffected by over-production and is not equal and interchangeable with other labours. Is Smith bending-the-stick a bit too far in making his point? He goes

on to state in response to Seccombe that exchange is not a phase of the process of reproduction but is also a definite social form of the production process-thus private labour takes the form of social labour, socially regulated. It appears from this logic that the development of the service sector that capitalizes on much of the demand of household production, would be seen as the proper mode of incorporation of domestic labour into social labour under capitalism. It is unclear what the status of waged domestic would be-a major blindspot. He states that there is **no mechanism** through which individual domestic labour is transferred into socially necessary labour. For Smith the point is to show that domestic labour presents **no evidence** of its abstract and social forms, which it genetically ought to **have** if it is of value. Thus, speculations on the value of domestic labour appears as **wish fulfillment**.

Smith (1978, 211) exaggerates in his claim that domestic labour **reproduces** value-it transfers value to replenished labour-power but **does not** add value, therefore it is not a problematic for Marxist theory of value because it is **not** part of its object-the production and exchange of commodities. The labour theory of value is itself a problematic for Marxism, one in which domestic labour is implicated, evidenced by the proliferation of texts on the relationship of value to domesticity. In any event this **interpretation** appears to place domestic labour in an

analogous position to that of the genetic differentiation of capitalists into industrial, finance and merchant capitalists, in which the activities of the two latter capitalists help in the reproductive realization of capital, but not in the originary process of the production of profits. Rather, fractions of profit are distributed to them, not created by them. The designation of these non-industrial capitalists in the capitalist production process is not outside of commodity production as-a-whole. Therefore, it is difficult to grasp from this perspective given Smith's claims about the reproductive function of domestic labour, why it is not part of the object of capitalist production, and why domestic labour is characterized as an external necessity for capitalism, but entailing the separation of domestic labour from social production and its reproduction as a private, backward sector. Smith (1978, 207-209) maintains that the burden of the responsibilities for the maintenance and reproduction of the working-class falls to females as the main bearers of domestic labour, with legal-economic dependence on the wage earner. He criticized the *sociologistic and empiricist conflation* of the mode of production and social formation (eg. Ian Gough 1975; Dalla-Costa 1974) by distinguishing the mode of production from domestic labour and state enterprises.

Ira Gerstein's (1973) "Domestic Work and Capitalism"

was a slightly ambiguous analysis **opposing** the notion that domestic labour creates value and surplus-value. Although the author begins with the ambitious intention of extending Marx's categories, he ends up applying the categories of Marx's political-economy quite conventionally. He locates domestic labour within "capitalist reality". However, the category of domestic labour is viewed "as becoming an increasingly independent sphere of capitalism". In other words a differentiation is made from within capitalism, maintaining the general empiricist tendencies within the debate that marks an outer-space.

Gerstein (1973, 104-105) defines domestic work as "a production relation centered upon the production of labour-power". He distinguishes between the point of view of the capitalist concerned with the production of commodities and consumption of labour-power, and the **point of view of the working-class** who are the starting point of his **system of domesticity**, and involved in the production of labour-power as a commodity-albeit a special one. He states that,

Domestic labour in the home maintains and reproduces this labour-power, and so is itself real productive activity (Gerstein 1973, 105).

This is regarded by the author as a positive conception from the standpoint of the producers of the commodity labour-power. He never considered the possibility that the **idea that labour-power is a commodity** be read as an **analogy** within Marx's analysis of capitalism-the idea is taken

literally. This literal appropriation is a source of ambiguity within this orthodox analysis. This is evident in his digressions that discuss domestic labour as if it created value, referring to the contribution of material commodities, productive and unproductive labour to its value. These arguments follow directly from the proposition-labour-power is a commodity. Gerstein raises the question, is the production of the value of labour-power the production of surplus-value, answering no. He maintains that,

The production of labour-power is merely the production of value and is **not** the production of surplus-value [bold mine] (Gerstein 1973, 114).

The author discusses the contribution of material commodities (eg. bread) to the value of labour-power, this is termed a simple transference. Productive and unproductive labour is thought to contribute to the value of labour-power in proportion to the labour-time spent. However, when it comes to the specificity of the contribution of domestic labour it is vitiated; he states that it requires "independent economic categories. Gerstein (1973, 119) states that its invalidity within Marx's economic categories makes it "obvious" that domestic labour doesnot create value; although the argument is "not air-tight". His judgement is integral to the taxonomic formation and systematicity of his system of domesticity.

How does Gerstein (1973, 121, 124) then account for

domestic labour? He makes use of Marx's ideas on the "historical and moral element" in the determination of the value of labour-power; more specifically in the norm of the non-working wife which operates outside the usual means of value determination-*opus operatum*. He stated that the analysis of the historical level of the value of labour-power is, at the same time an analysis of the articulation of the family. Gerstein criticized the notion that labour-power, the product of the housewife's labour belongs to her, an idea that is represented in the metaphors of "slave", "serf", "hidden wage worker" etc., throughout the debate. He points out that the norm under particular conditions maybe too costly for capitalism.

The key component of Lise Vogel's (1983, 129, 145) exposition of domestic labour is manifested in the concluding chapter of her book entitled "Beyond Domestic Labor", where she articulates the relationship of domestic labour to value and surplus-value, favoring the point of view of social reproduction in which women's position is rooted in their differential location with regard to generational replacement processes. Vogel (1983, 157) identified the formulations of Ira Gerstein (1973) and Paul Smith (1978) as providing the most satisfactory answer to the question of the contribution of domestic labour to the value of labour-power-*regium donus*. The privilege of differential location and the above definitions of value are

the elemental components of Vogel's **system** of domesticity that are determinant in the form of Subjectivity that she posits. She supports the notion that,

Both argued that domestic labor, as concrete, useful labor, simply transfers the value of the commodities purchased with the wage to the labor power borne by the worker (Vogel 1983, 157).

She elaborates on the "proper interpretation of the moral and historical element", discussing the limits of the "norm" of the family wage, stating that it is not available to most working-class households in capitalist societies. In addition, she sees it as threatening to female-headed households. The author sees the relationship of domestic labour to **surplus-value** as manifested in the socialization of its tasks and subjugation to the profit-making sector, or in the case of public childcare and education, the distribution of costs through taxes.

Vogel examines the labour-force participation of whites and non-whites in the U.S.A. and sees a convergence, speaking about the equalization of the labour-force, moving on to talk about competition and the equalization of the profit rate, but she fails to speak about income distribution relative to job qualifications etc. among women and other inequities. She tends to presuppose a strong tendency towards the equalization of differences in human labour in the capitalist mode of production, which implicitly trivializes the historic inequality along race, gender, class, national and other lines.

The author identifies the working-class as the site for the reproduction of labour-power with the performance of such labour by women, the necessary labour and material pivot of the working-class family. This is seen as a highly institutionalized repository of women's oppression. Vogel argues that,

Given the contradictory character of equality in capitalist society, struggles for democratic rights potentially have serious revolutionary import (Vogel 1983, 1965).

Vogel (1983, 175) sees the task of socialists to reduce and redistribute domestic labour as a serious one and the only basis for the economic, political and ideological conditions for women's liberation.

In *Women Race and Class* Angela Davis maintains (1981, 222) in the section-"Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective" that housework is "invisible, repetitive, exhaustive, unproductive and uncreative". Davis (1981, 225) stated that capitalism is hostile to the industrialization of housework because it is unprofitable and points to the diminished status of women as housewives under capitalism. These evaluative determinations concisely reflect most of the core attributes of the form of the systematicity of Davis's notion of domesticity.

She is distinguished in the domestic labour debate as an author that has actually taken-up the issue of waged domestic labour in the U.S.A., in which Black women have

historically played a significant role.¹⁵ Davis described the conditions of black women as welfare recipients and as a segment of domestic wage labourers, a valuable vantage point from which to critique the political and economic strategies of the **Wages for Housework** movement. The operations of the institutions of domestic wage labour and the welfare system have shown the possibilities of de-politicization, and the reproduction of economic impoverishment in the reproduction of labour-power.

Davis (1981, 225, 229) argues that the housewife is a historic product a century old and "**partial-reality**", a symbol of economic prosperity enjoyed by and emerging out of the 19th century middle-class. In a stated opposition to Margaret Benston, Dalla-Costa-James and Mary Inman, Davis (1981, 234) challenges the notion that the housewife is "a special class of workers exploited by capitalism". In disagreement, she defines their labour as a "**precondition**" rather than an "integral component of capitalist

¹⁵ Racism was eschewed in the domestic labor debate and rarely mentioned. Bettina Aptheker's (1981) essay at the decline of the debate made extensive use of the categories of slave relations and the slave mode of production, in order to show that the patriarchal relations of this form supported male power, the wagelessness of housewifery and the low, semi-slave status of the waged, black domestic worker. However, the aforementioned categories became the means of grounding a theory of white, male patriarchy in the household. The **maid-madame** relationship in the class order was avoided as a serious object of analysis.

Other theorists that have dealt with domestic labour outside the terms of the domestic labour debate proper, have heavily engaged the issues of race and class see Evelyn Nakano Glenn (1986); Judith Rollins (1985) and Vicky Ruiz (1987).

production".

Davis presupposes that the,

Abolition of housework as the private responsibility of individual women is clearly a strategic goal of women's liberation. But the socialization of housework-including meal preparation and childcare-presupposes an end to the profit reign over the economy (Davis 1981, 243).

kNot: Complex and Ambiguous designations of Domesticity

Although I have indicated some ambiguous explications of domesticity in the debate there are those whose evaluations take a more ambiguous form, tendencies most strongly argued from a negative standpoint but with the interjection of a slight positivity, the basis for which is unspecified, marking an evident gap since their logic firmly tends in a negative direction-for example, domestic labour as not-productive, not-value, not-surplus-value etc. Two of these essays will be the subject of my analyses.

Gardiner et al in "Women's Domestic Labour" take precisely such a contradictory position in respect to the relationship of domestic labour to the production of surplus-value in their socialist-feminist conceptualization. An important entry point for their theorizing was the defining of the notion of the mode of production as entailing an abstraction of a principle contradiction, referring to Marx's statement that,

The specific economic form...determines the relationship of the rulers to the ruled as it grows directly out of production itself and turn reacts upon it...This doesnot prevent the same economic base-the

same from the standpoint of its main contradiction—due to innumerable different empirical circumstances, natural environment, racial relations, external historical influences etc. from showing infinite gradations and variations in appearances (Karl Marx 1969, 791).

This principle contradiction—the relationship between labour and capital existing under British capitalism is thought to stamp other relations of production. The authors were concerned about the implications of other theorizing that domestic labour constituted a separate mode of production and the housewife a separate class. But, they cautioned that although women were positioned within the capitalist mode of production they had specific interests, adding that there was precedent in Marx for detailed class analyses. This concept of mode of production that recognizes variations and gradations of appearances that emanate from the main contradiction, presents other levels of analyses for examination.

The authors proceeded to an analysis of the taxonomy of domestic labour distinguishing it from the capitalist production of commodities. They maintained that housewives do not cooperate in domestic activities and that the marriage contract is binding, the couple is not free to re-contract like wage labourers. In addition housework is thought to produce use-values; repudiating the notion of the transfer of domestic labour such that it produces value and surplus-value (profits). Gardiner et al's (1975, 6)

criticism is based on the view that such a **transfer** presupposes the comparison of heterogeneous labours, such labours are thought to form the basis of models of unequal exchange relations (eg. exchange between husband and wife, or indirectly with the capitalist).

The authors argue for an orthodox interpretation of the labour theory of value, defined as socially necessary. They hold that the value of labour-power is not synonymous with labour-time embodied in the reproduction and maintenance of labour-power, and also that the wage is not an adequate material basis for the reproduction of labour power at the daily or generational level. This argumentation is consistent with an **oppositional and negative** configuration of the disposition of domesticity. However, the contradiction stems from Gardiner et al's (1975, 7-9) contention that the existence of **domestic labour benefits the production of surplus-value and makes such production possible**. They also claim that men benefit from women's labour. In other words domestic labour appears as a beneficial matrix or onto-phenomenological function. The introduction of this positivity into the negativity of the taxonomy tendentially effects the form of the **systematicity** of domesticity ambiguously.

They take-up the ideological basis for the under-valuation of women's work in waged and unwaged labour, linked to the material dependence of women on men's higher

wages and the ideology of dependent wives whose place is in the home. Two processes are identified as at work in the socialization of domestic labour, the production of commodities and state services, and the increased participation of women in wage labour. Gardiner et al (1975, 9-11) identified a reduction in time spent on housework as a precondition for the entry of women into wage labour, calling for a concept of minimum time necessary for tasks in the home. The question of what happens to the value of labour-power in the process of socialization is regarded as a **complex question**. The authors end with the claim that capital is eroding the material basis of women's oppression in the family by drawing them into wage labour-thus spreading the value of labour-power over men and women.

The contradictory propositions of Susan Himmelweit and Simon Mohan appear at the outset, they maintain that,

There is a whole sector of production central to but existing entirely outside, capitalist relations of production...domestic labour...private production within individual families....

Domestic labour is integral to the process whereby the capitalist mode of production is a self-reproducing whole, for it is...the labourer himself. But it continually requires raw materials, which are commodities...Domestic labour is a two-fold process; it is both the means of maintenance and reproduction of the worker, and it is the means whereby,... the worker is continually 'freed' to reappear in the labour market (Susan Himmelweit and Simon Mohan 1977, 1, 15).

Not only are the participants in capitalistic and domestic labour processes thereby reproduced; so are the respective

relations of production. This assertion about the location of domesticity and its relations appear problematically in the form of an integral and central externality. Is domestic labour at the center or the margins of capitalism? The authors appear to be arguing in favor of both positions. This framing typifies the **symptomatic difficulties of positioning** that has plagued this debate, the question of an adequate designation—a site that has been routinely informed by empiricism, the tempo-spatial form of the home and the work-place. In this analysis domestic labour was compared and contrasted with **what it is not**, waged labour, with industrial labour as the ideal-typical form. Domestic labour in the household is described as private production, **entailing no division of labour**, with housewives performing similar tasks in isolation. It is said that there is **no work-leisure** distinction and domestic labour produces use-values. In this context the authors critique Dalla-Costa-James's demand for wages for housework as founded on the validity of the notion of the productivity of housework. Dalla-Costa-James defined their demand specifically as an act of resistance against capitalist exploitation rather than simply an economic demand for its productivity. Himmelweit and Mohan (1977, 1, 22-23) maintain that the categories of productive and unproductive relate to wage labour and that unproductive labour exchanges with revenue in a direct exchange, and domestic labour **does not**.

Therefore, it cannot be designated as either. From this perspective or insertion into their system of domesticity, they critique the concept that labour-power is a commodity and oppose the theoretical approach that begins from the point of view of the proletariat (eg. Vogel 1975; Gerstein 1973), arguing that such an angle misses the relationship of domestic labour to capital. They maintain that the proper starting point is capital not the proletariat. They commend Seccombe for pursuing the correct point of departure, but criticize him for the nonsense that domestic labour produces value outside the law of value. They argue that the attempt to conceive domestic labour as value-creating demonstrates the difficulties (not-impossibilities) inherent in an analysis that combines value and non-value production. Regardless of the standpoint pursued the claims that domestic labour creates value or surplus-value encounters the kettle-hole of domesticity-the difference of value.

In their specification of the relationship of domestic labour defined as the biological production, care, maintenance and socialization of human beings on a daily and generational basis, to capitalist relations, they maintained that housewifery is concerned with the production of use-values and that 'domestic slaves' form a major component of the reserve-army of the unemployed. The Himmelweit and Mohan (1977, 1, 16, 29) argue that women are the focus of the contradiction between capital's need for wage labour and the

maintenance of the nuclear family. In addition, the **value of labour-power is said to be determined partly** by the extent of domestic labour and related by the number of wage-labourers. This statement appears to support the idea that domestic labour not only creates use-value but also value in conjunction with wage-labour; although the question of transference constitutes a major omission. Thus, there is no conceptualization of the processes that allows one to define domestic labour as value creating. But, more importantly there is the **re-articulation and speculation on the difference of value**. The incision of this concise remark is not only a **merveille** given the general critical examination of theorists in the debate that espouse such ideas, but definitively alters the **systematicity** of the notion of domesticity and its subjective import in an ambiguous direction. The authors' conclude with the argument that capitalism's absorption of women into wage labour shows its historically progressive tendencies.

**A Note on Rethinking Domestic labour: Breaks,
Discontinuities, Preconditions and Entailment**

Marx's perspicacious ideas on objectification, the presuppositions-breaks relation and entailment could be a useful starting point in rethinking the relations between domestic labour and capitalism. In the Grundrisse:

Foundations of the Critique of Political-Economy, Marx discusses the course of capital through its different moments. He states that,

Regarded as a whole, circulation thus appears three fold: (1) the total process-the course of capital through its different moments; accordingly, it is posited as being in flow; as circulating, in so far as the continuity is virtually interrupted, and may resist the passage into the next phase, capital likewise appears as fixated in different relations, and the various modes of this fixation constitute different capitals...

(2) Small-scale circulation between capital and labour capacity. This accompanies the production process and appears as contract, exchange, form of intercourse; these things are presupposed before the production process can be set going Karl Marx (1973, 678).

Presupposition in this passage could be read as marking a break and starting point of a different social formation and an entailment transformed by the specificity of this formation. The notion of presupposition in this debate characterizes domestic labour as a matrix: an onto-phenomenological form or process that allows for the production of value and surplus-value. A radical concept of break would intervene and disrupt the operation of the difference of value that constitutes the debate and the normative reading of Marx's labour theory of value. It is my contention that such a conceptualization precludes and forecloses all questions of the transference of domestic labour into value and surplus-value. Such a preclusion doesnot thus legitimate the conception of domestic labour as not-value, not-surplus-value, not-productive etc. but

regards such White Metaphysics as unthinkable within a frame of reference of a radical rethinking of a marxist notion of value determination. Any conceptualization entails the abandonment of the specific form of domestic labouring activities per se in favor of the privilege of the materiality of money and the notion of process-as-subject- thus marking a break and discontinuity that is the form of capitalism.

Revolutionary Subjectivity

In the concluding section of the discussion of domestic labour I will examine how the taxonomic designation of the categories of **General Abstraction**, in particular the fundamental categories of value produce **Creator-Subject(s)** as the **proper and full realization** of these discursive productions. The Revolutionary Subject position and its occupation is the ultimate **end** of the **phallogoc** of these theoretical configurations/or systems of domesticity that are simultaneously anthropological expositions. The **operation** of Sovereign/Revolutionary Subject legitimation and de-legitimation will be foreground particularly via the **knotty mechanism** of **Transference** that enables the **aufhebung** of Sovereign Revolutionary Subjectivity through the mapping of its genetic attributes. In this regard the categories of value constitute its fundamental ground and manifest its

essence-to have a labour of value is to be a subject that has value and **Revolutionary Substance**. This text allows one to think the over-riding significance of **speculative investment** in the discursive generation of value-making categories or the resistance that presents them **negatively**. This abutment supports an edifice of branch categories. In the polemics over what labour is properly value-making, a logical series of categories have been articulated that construct boundaries and produce exclusions on what labour could be so appointed. Orthodox and unorthodox **positions** on taxonomic designations represent maneuvers to open or close what is defined as a **proper** Marxian analysis.

Each essay licenses a version of the lawful subject position of housewives-Subject of domestic labour. Legitimation is an effect of the phallogocentrism of the categories of each theoretical **system**. Generally, authentication has taken two broad forms-the positive notion that the housewife is an **independent** Proletarian Subject, implying an equal status with the industrial (male) Proletariat, and which is **certain** and not subordinate or dependent on the male industrial worker for Sovereign Subject status; secondly, a conception of the housewife defined negatively as **not-Proletarian**, leaving open the possibility of a dependent proletarian status but in actuality left undetermined; in addition there is the idea that the housewife is not-Proletarian but a **separate subject**

with an interest in the abolition of capitalism. I will pay close attention to what I regard as an immanent construction of the Revolutionary Subject position and its geneticism within the texts as presented in a number of these essays, in the Marxian based analyses of domestic labour.

What comes to the foreground is the **desire** for the **self-certainty** of the **Woman Subject** as a Sovereign Revolutionary Subject, which is strongly manifested in the *early writings that were most self-assured, but in the course of the debate the problematic of transference and the theoretical difficulties and resistances to such formulations, particularly the theoretical opposition of Ira Gerstein (1973) and Paul Smith (1978) who brought the issue to the center of the discourse, shook such bold, early self-assured Identifications of the Housewife as Proletariat.* In such precarious speculations the **ruination** of the labour theory of value was brought into perspective, the discursive cost of the self-certainty of the Woman revolutionary position was recognized as Marxism itself. Gerstein deployed the category of moral and historical element-as-an-alternative to the notion of value-making domestic labour. The consequence of these discursive productions is that intellectuals writing after these key texts tended to capitulate to the **kNOT** of transference and made detours around speculations on the transfer of domestic labour into value and surplus-value etc., in the process undermining the

surety of the taxonomic bases for the Revolutionary Sovereignty of Woman.

Benston claims that housewives are **exploited**, she alludes to their double burden and maintained that domestic labour is **necessary** and **profitable** to the functioning of the capitalist system. In addition, she stated that housework is "**pre-capitalist**" and supported the political strategy of women's incorporation into the labour force. The author's full exposition appears to preconceive the housewife as a latent Proletarian Subject. The **key genetic referent** is the concept of profits which necessary entails the idea of the production of surplus-value. The claims to profitability donot involve an examination of the mechanism of its production thus, profitability forms a weak tie in the figuration of the **desired** Subjectivity from the standpoint of transference, an important concept at the foreground, later in the debate.

Dalla-Costa-James clearly present the housewife as a secret, invisible Proletariat from whom surplus-value is extracted. They imply that capitalist society can be divided into an industrial center where the male is a central protagonist and the **community** in which the home and woman is focal, thus opposing the idea that the male worker is the only subject of politics. Selma James states that,

What they proposed for the struggle in the community it turns out, was just an extension, a mechanical projection of the factory Struggle: the male worker continued to be the central protagonist. Mariarosa

Dalla Costa considers the community as first and foremost the home, and considers therefore the woman as *the central figure of subversion of the community*. Seen in this way, women are the contradiction in all previous political frameworks, which had been based on the male worker in industry. Once we see the community as a productive center and thus a center of subversion, *the whole perspective for generalized struggle and revolutionary organization is re-opened* Dalla Costa-James (1972, 16-17, 20).

In this formulation the authors constructed a schema that produced subjective and political parity through the formulation of separate spheres of dominance in the Revolutionary process. They have putforth a number of claims to this end: domestic labour and the community as productive of surplus-value, as social and factory-like etc., but avoiding the problematic **KNOT** of transference in their **specular Identifications**. The issue of the productiveness of the female role is postponed to a future work for elaboration. Here, the question of the hierarchical relations are resolved such that Woman's independent Proletarian status is **positively** affirmed. Woman's lack and invisibility is discursively embellished and so is the **certainty** of her Proletarianism. The **anxieties** of these feminists with woman's castration and separation from the development of **civilization** is discursively settled through the taxonomy of a full, virile femininity, a filling-in-of-a-lack, the production of her Sovereignty/ Revolutionary Subjectivity.

Seccombe (1974) work is an expression of the housewife as **not-Proletarian**. In his discussion of the activist

potential of the housewife Seccombe stated that "this absence of a readily available arena of struggle has been, historically, a profound *barrier to radicalization* of housewives...". He criticizes Dalla Costa and James for ignoring the limitations on the household stating that,

For them, the household *is* a factory, and it follows as a matter of course that a general strike of housewives will shut it down...This is surely the stuff of *revolutionary fantasy*-a general strike of housewives, crippling the economy...These limitations are not merely one's of mobilization. On a larger historical plane they place limits on the role of housewives in socialist revolution. Revolutionary transformation is only possible because the proletariat is engaged directly in socialized labour and therefore bears as a class the pre-requisites of a socialist mode of production. While the labour of the housewife remains privatized, they are unable to prefigure the new order nor spearhead the productive forces in breaking the old Seccombe (1974, 22-23).

The author later stated that the mobilization of housewives in raising demands for the socialization of housework, demanding price-watch committees etc., would make a tremendous contribution to the advancement of the class struggle, particularly if they were combined with proletarian initiatives. He maintained that the history of revolutions provides a rich display of the effects of the cross-fertilization between various unevenly developed fronts of struggle.

Seccombe ends with the claim that women wage workers and students struggling for full equality with men within unions and schools will be in the vanguard of struggles that will diminish the sex divisions of the class. He adds that,

Furthermore it will be primarily these women that inject radical women's consciousness back into the population of women who remain exclusively housewives. This arises from their objective location in the social formation which will after all be the starting point for any revolutionary strategy Seccombe (1974, 24).

What is most strikingly manifest in these formulations is the **re-iteration and affirmation** of a dominant, Sovereign, Revolutionary Subject in the masculinized form of the industrial Proletariat, entailed in the **de-legitimation** and **Revolutionary negation** of the Housewife. In other words the end-product of this discursive production is the privileging of the superior genetic form and Sovereign consciousness of the industrial working-class-a figure that is strongly invested with white male identity. The housewife as a subordinate member in this hierarchalized relation is unable to prefigure or **spearhead** (a potent phallic metaphor) the productive forces. Thus, what is centered is the **bonus** that Seccombe generates through the **abscission** he scalps in the operation of the difference of value, such that the housewife creates value but not surplus-value-**Proletarian appurtenance**. The housewife's labour can be value but not surplus-value-the latter is the privilege of the Proletariat and guarantees his Sovereign Revolutionary position. However, Seccombe avoided the problematic of the operations of the difference of value in his discussion of revolutionary potentiality, rather he sets-up a differentiation as operating between private and socialized labour-**aegis**. The author ends by affording women wage

workers and students the privileged position of vanguard-an **enthronement** at the pinnacle of Sovereign Revolutionary Will from which they could inject consciousness into housewives.

John Harrison in the political-economy of housework posits the idea that housework is characterized by a separate foetal mode of production in a dependent and symbiotic relationship to capitalism. This conceptualization contains the proposition of an outer-space (housework) that is the basis of the notion of distinct social relations, with women occupying a double-class membership, one of which is as housewife.

At the outset of his article Harrison expressed concerns about feminist arguments that the male metropolitan working-class was living off the backs of women and blacks but *cadit quaestio*, he keeps the terms in reserve-a surplus.

Harrison could be identified as one of the early writers to take a position: **standing-up** to the problematic of transference: a knot and sink-hole that is constructed in a teleological linearity, a phallogocentric path or opening. The focus of his essay was an analysis of the mechanism of the appropriation of surplus-value entailing the transfer of surplus-labour from the household to the capitalist sector, grounded on a process of quantification-a means of homogeneity and identification of labours from these distinct sectors. But, in limning this process Harrison argued that wages were paid below the value of

labour power-recognized by others as a **dangerous** proposition, generating a swing towards orthodoxy.

Although, Harrison (1973, 50-51) saw both capitalists and husbands as potential beneficiaries of women's labour, the subjective import of this discursive production was to posit a *double-class membership for women and a distinct form of consciousness*-to be investigated, but with housewives having objective interests in overthrowing capitalism. Therefore, he bound the interests of the housewife and the industrial (male) proletariat together, while de-demarcating an essential difference. Why is the question of the revolutionary status of the white male metropolitan working-class advanced and avoided in addition to the issue of the Sovereign Subjective import of housewifery on the production of this labour **Aristocracy**.

A significant kettle-logue is that homogeneity became the basis for the production of the heterogeneous Subjectivity of Woman in his conception of the production of surplus-value, a function of the logic of the difference of value, that operates in the process of the transference of labour from the household to capitalism. To account for this heterogeneity Harrison refers to sociality and supervision in the capitalist production process, that effects proletarian consciousness, but these do not have a positive valiative effect on domestic labour. The play of this logic has the **unanticipated** consequence of subverting the ground,

de-identifying and de-legitimizing a Sovereign Revolutionary positioning of the housewife. This is unexpected because value and surplus-value constitute a **fundamental determinant** of the taxonomy of Sovereign Revolutionary Subjectivity. In this process the consciousness of the housewife can be allowably left for future determination. As a consequence **no independent Proletarian** or Revolutionary identity can be established for the housewife, even though she creates surplus-value-**non sequitur**. In fact she is **not-Proletarian** and her Revolutionary potentiality is dubious. Thus, the decisive term in the determination of the **Certainty** of Revolutionary Subjectivity is entailed in the specificity of the capitalist production process, and **coded** in the sociality and supervisory practices that constitute the **Self-certain** Revolutionary form of the Proletariat.

Gerstein (1973) situates domestic labour 'within' "capitalist reality" and it is conceived as production centered on the production of labour power. He links the point of view of the Proletariat to the production of labour power. The production of the value of labour power is theorized as **not** the production of surplus-value; this distinction marks a boundary defining domestic labour in an essentially different and **negating** form. However, a second distinction is made between the production of value as a **simple transference** of added value and the **creation** of value maintaining that it is "obvious" that domestic labour

doesnot create value. The play between the two forms of value enabled Gerstein to speak in ambiguous terms of domestic labour as if it created value, thus it appears to be imaginary. Gerstein links the production and determination of the value of domestic labour to Marx's category of the "historical and moral element" defined as outside the usual means of value determination and as the norm of the non-working wife. As with Smith (1978) there is an obturation: a cession that is a restriction on the linear operation of the difference of value, propped by the externality of domesticity that is not-transferred into value and surplus-value. Thus, the production of value in domestic labour even as added value, appears as non-value and superstructural in the register of materialist production, due to its positioning in outer-space. In this process the genetic encoding that constructs the Sovereign form is decisively represented as not-present-quietus.

Paul Smith in opposition to the notion that domestic labour creates value, surplus-value and profits, claims that such argumentation lack rigor. He presents the implication of the idea that domestic labour creates labour-power as a commodity, as a challenge to Marx's labour theory of value rather than its application. In this respect he presents the kNOT of transference as a step off into a sink-hole-a speculative loss. He is arguing that the configuring of the genetic basis of feminine Subjectivity that valorizes Woman

in history has the **contradiction** of generating the destruction of the discursive apparatus of Marxism-ben trovato.

Smith in this **opus operatum** is **stepping-up** resistance in a strong maneuver towards Marxist orthodoxy. In this regard he presents the key proposition that there is **no mechanism** of the transference of individual domestic labour into socially necessary labour. Such occluding fundamentally **blocks** the configuration of value forms, necessary for the taxonomy of Woman as a Revolutionary Subject. In the process, the Revolutionary Sovereignty of the industrial Proletariat is **assured** and **certified** through the presentation of correct and rigorous explications of Marx's categories of sociality, the law of value, productiveness etc., that **guarantee's** Proletarian Sovereignty. What is foreground is the genetic form of this Sovereignty; the subjectivity of the housewife is **de jure** negatively **reflected** as **not-Proletarian**.

Lise Vogel links domestic labour to social reproduction and the differential location of the sexes in generational replacement processes. In respect to the value of domestic labour she favors the formulations of Smith (1978) and Gerstein (1973), expounding on the limits of the "historical and moral element" putforth by the latter, maintaining that the norm of the family wage was not available to working-class families. After identifying what I regard as a

problematic notion of the convergence of labour-force participation of whites and non-whites and the equalization of the profit rate. She identified the struggle for democratic rights as potentially revolutionary with the sexual redistribution of domestic labour as an important task for socialists. This cautious approach to the issue of Woman's Revolutionary Subjectivity emerges in the context of a discussion on the inconclusiveness of what domestic labour is in the debate as a whole. She states that,

As for politics and strategy, few today would use their analyses of the material foundation for women's oppression to draw easy conclusions about the role of women in revolutionary struggle (Lise Vogel 1984, 24).

However, Vogel does favor certain formulations such that prohibitions are set on what domestic labour is. The reservations of the author in making a decisive determination on the Revolutionary Subjectivity of Woman is typical of assessments in the 1980's that have capitulated to the resistance to transference mounted by Gerstein (1973), Smith (1978) and their supporters.

Angela Davis (1981) having defined housework as "invisible", "repetitious", "exhaustive", "unproductive", "uncreative" and "unprofitable", and describing the black woman's experience in the welfare system and in waged domestic labour in a polemic against the Wages For Housework movement, she goes on to characterize the housewife as a historic product and partial reality—a symbol of economic

prosperity emerging out of the 19th century middle-class. This notion of partial reality appears to have a **double connotation** as a reality **confined** to the middle-class and as a **superstructural identification**. This idea implicitly challenges housewifery as a **general and essential** identity of Woman.

In addition, Davis describes this labour as a **precondition**, a matrical designation, rather than an integral component of capitalist production—thus, an externalization. Within the operation of a White Metaphysics, Davis defined domestic labour as **invisible, unproductive, unprofitable, unreal and superstructural**. In a polemic against Dalla Costa's political strategy of the housewife's strike, Davis maintains that,

But if women are to leave the home, where are they to go? How will they unite with other women?...Is it not much more realistic to call upon women to "leave home" in search of outside jobs—or at least to participate in a massive campaign for decent jobs for women?...As workers, as militant activists in the labour movement, women can generate real power to fight the mainstay and beneficiary of sexism which is the monopoly capitalist system (Angela Davis 1981, 240-241).

The socialist feminist explication of domestic labour by Gardiner et al began with a conception of the mode of production as entailing a principle contradiction—the labour-capital relationship that emanates variations and gradations of appearances. The authors engaged in a taxonomy of domestic labour in which housewives were defined as **non-cooperating, producing use-values not-value, opposing the**

idea that domestic labour is transferred into a labour of value or surplus-value, because it presupposes a comparison of heterogeneous labours. But, they also contend that domestic labour **benefits** the production of surplus-value and men. Although women were conceived as having specific interests there was no further specification of the subjectivity of the housewife or Woman-the designation remained **vague** and it is unclear what the taxonomic designations implied about the housewife's subjectivity in this **negative** form. The idea of benefits appears to be a **residue** of a desire for a positive designation which could not **withstand** the discursive resistance to transference.

Susan Himmelweit and Simon Mohan (1977) in their analysis appeared to have difficulty locating domestic labour at the center or margins of capitalism. The genetic configuration of domestic labour was defined **negatively** in relation to capitalism; it has **no** division of labour, **no** work-leisure distinction, it is regarded as **neither** productive or unproductive, the proper starting point was capital **not-Proletariat**. They also stated that the value of labour power is determined partly by domestic labour, but they make no claims that this labour creates value. However, they do not rule out the possibility that domestic labour is value creating. They seem comfortable with the language of benefits. The question of the Revolutionary Subjectivity of the housewife is withheld-an effect of the **stalling** of the

apparatus of valuation in a positive direction by the **KNOT** of transference.

At this juncture it is important to examine the ramification of the **substantiality** of the **geneticism** of the Sovereign Subject of domestic labour, in particular the relationship between the **discursive** domain and the **Image** of the specular Sovereign Self, in which **desire** and much theoretical investment is made in **sexed** subjectivity. In this debate as this overview has shown there is the predominance of the **Mirror** in which the rationality of the discourse is pursued in the service of Revolutionary, sexed Subjectivity. Lacan (1981) in his writings on the mirror, reflection, petit objet a and the Other, speaks about transference in terms of the locatedness of the analyst in the opening up of the unconscious, and access to the Other in respect to the play of the Subject-Object relationship in the process of analysis. For Lacan the recognition of the Other is foreground in shaking the certainty of Self. But, in this work on domestic labour what is predominant is the contrary, the **discursive substratum** for the genetic Revolutionary Subject. In this regard transference is a **fulcrum** in the determination of Revolutionary substance, whether as independent or dependent Proletariat, or not-Proletariat or Revolutionary in essence. The predominant discursive technique that has effectively blocked the **uprising (aufhebung)** of the desire for the Proletarian

Sovereignty of Woman (housewife) is the de-legitimation of the process of the transference of domestic labour from the outer-space of the household to the capitalist production process.¹⁶ Legitimation entails crossing the **kettle-hole** in which the transference of labour would become a key determinant of Revolutionary Proletarian Subjectivity, producing surplus-value through the difference of value. To restate, Gerstein (1973) and Smith (1978) have been key texts in *resisting the effusion of such desire* by occluding the transference of domestic labour into value, thus discursively supporting the tendency to an incessant reiteration of the **conundrum** of the kettle-hole. Such obturation simultaneously endorses and makes the **possessive, Sovereign, Self certainty of the Proletariat** transparent-**finis coronat opus/ long live the king!**.

¹⁶ Jacques Derrida (1982, 1986) has extensively discussed the "aufhebung" in Hegelian philosophy and frequently utilizes the idea of "transfer" in thinking the changing values (eg. the use of metaphors in conceptualization).

Sovereign Subjectivity

JEFFERY DAHMER:

LOYALTY TO WHITE CIVILIZATION

In brief Jeffery Dahmer is a white male, born in 1960, high school educated; immediately prior to his conviction he was a store clerk with a middle-class origin (his father was a chemist). He has admitted to killing 17 young men, 15 of whom were non-white men of color (black, latino, asian and native american). None of the victims were described as being of comparable class origins. Dahmer confessed that he had drugged and strangled victims, engaged in necrophilic sex with them, which entailed visceral sex, excoriation and dismembered, and the dissolving of most bodies in acid. He preserved body parts as masturbatory mementos and subjected their severed remains to cannibalistic consumption; in addition kept a photographic diary of his necrophilic deeds.¹

¹ Descriptions of Dahmer's homicides were highly publicized in many of the popular journals. In addition, there have been a number of largely non-academic books on this media sensation. See for example Anne Schwartz (1992), Don Davis (1991), Brian Masters (1993) and Lionel Dahmer (1994).

Gayatri Chaturvorty Spivak (1988) in 'Can the Subaltern Speak' makes linkages between the division at labour and subaltern speech which appears to be significant to the presentation of subjectivity in the mass media and the afore-mentioned books. Even a superficial presentation of the subjectivity of the victims was lacking. They were leveled and homogenized as one poorly differentiated mass of matter (dead), objectified and speechless. I would like to underscore that Spivak was making a much more radical statement about the possibilities of such speech. On the other hand, a concerted effort was made by the major media and a number of psychiatrists to uphold the human identity of this homicidal, cannibalistic necrophile. He was usually

It is my intention to apply an approach informed by Marxism and post-structuralism to sexuality (a framework-in-process) which I have developed at the macro level of analysis, but applied to the articulation of the libidinal drives and desires/interests of an individual. The case of Jeffery Dahmer was selected precisely because of its apparent irrationality and incomprehensibility; as such it provided a complex case for the evaluation the possibilities of this formulation.

I will schematically indicate that the case of Dahmer involves the textual interrelations of **gendered** sexual relations (**active/passive**); male homosexual relations which from the standpoint of normative heterosexuality is **unproductive**, and interracial/inter-class sexual relations which is **unproductive** from the standpoint of white middle-class community. In this paper I will be focusing on the specificity of the complex logic of libidinal drives, desires and interests that appear to be at work in the expression of Dahmer's life existence.

Childhood and Animal Dismemberment

Family and neighbors of Jeffery Dahmer indicate that as a youth he had a preoccupation with death and dismemberment.

referred to, respectfully, as Mr. Dahmer, by contrast Mike Tyson was labelled monster for his alleged rape, on the cover of the Globe and Susan Smith was also labelled monster on the cover of the Daily News (5th November, 1994) for admittedly killing her children.

It was states that,

Neighbours recalled Jeffrey's fascination with dead animals, at first merely a child's collection of insects preserved in jars with some type of chemical, but later a stash of dead animals retrieved after they had been run over or hit on the neighbouring roadsides- animal heads impaled on sticks in the woods behind the Dahmer home and dried-out animal skins. He even fashioned a little animal cemetery in his back yard. Years latter, not far from the burial ground he created as a child, he would scatter the human bones of his first murder victim (Anne E. Schwartz 1992, 39).

Dahmer's stepmother, Shari Dahmer stated that the young Jeffery "like to use acid to scrape meat off dead animals."² Lionel Dahmer (1994) (father) has corroborated Jeffery Dahmer's proclivity to collect dead animals and dissect them and his interests in taxidermy.

Freud (1963a, 51, 142, 1963b, 191-193) in his discussion of Little Hans argued that the presence and absence of the penis (widdlers) was in correspondence with animate and inanimate objects. Freud not only recognized these set of correlations as expressive of an inquiry into life but generalized this moment in the psycho-sexual and cognitive development of this particular boy to all children, presupposing that the penis was indeed the mark of a specifically human existence. An analogical relation was then constituted between penis-presence and penis-absence, and the measure of rationality of the animal. This presumption grounds a theoretical conception derived from

² See Paula Chin and Civia Tamarkin (1991, 34).

the popular commonsense of European society and the fundamental tenants of Western Philosophy, on the basis of which arose an elaborate **calculus of the degradation** of nature/body and the diverse forms of natural being. This debasement takes the form of a **radical non-identity** between the **animate** and the **inanimate**, and the construction of **rationale animalis ratios** that manifest the degree of presence of rationality in the diversity of natural, human forms. This produces a gigantic, specular image of the narcissistic profile of the privileged populations of Europeanized Western Societies. This is grounded on a radical differential of non-identity.

The lower working classes, the feminine-effeminate and the lesbian/homosexual populations have been characterized at the lower end of the moral-rational scale and have frequently been depicted morbidly. The Negroid animal has only recently ascended into the **homo-animalis** within intellectual thought and their humanity is still seriously questioned in the discourse of common sense in many societies.³ The representations in the mass media and

³ For two interesting sources discussing black and African-Americans as human subjects see Norm R. Allen (ed.) (1991) and Bell Hooks(1990). In these works one grasps the strategic, philosophical and political importance of humanism to supporting the notion of black as human beings in the fight against racialism

Heidegger (1977, 193) in "Letter to Humanism" critiques the metaphysical conception of man on the order of animals and maintains that the animal rationale is not false but is not the highest determination of essence. He foregrounds care, space and time and thinks language as the home of

everyday commonsense bear ample witness to this humiliation of the Negroid populations, in addition to the effeminate-feminine and lower-working class communities. Can one imagine what calculus of infinite negativity, social regression and psycho-terrorism is perpetrated against a black, lower-class, effeminate male-homosexual in the signification of the rational animalis ratio?

Given that the devaluation and destruction of nature is so general within Western Society, is it any wonder that Dahmer in my reading, like many other children had difficulty establishing an identity with animal life. This non-identity may have discouraged the positive possibilities of identity with animal and natural life in general, such a grasp of existence may have helped to foster a tendency towards the destruction of nature.

Lacan (1988, 78-90) interprets Freud's death and life drives as inseparable tendencies of integration, as coming together and disintegration, and as a tendency to division, to rupture and to redispersion, most especially of inanimate

being. As we begin to engage the postmodern critique of metaphysics and humanism we should be mindful of the strategic circulation of such ideas in resisting racism, sexism, classism. Heidegger's intentionality to surpass the dualism and the technologizing of reason appears as the devaluation of animals. However, rationality in its dominative mode violates and conceals the de-animation that it effects. I believe that the strategy of the valorization of both animality and the essence of being in the Heideggerian sense should be considered as a vital political project.

matter. For Lacan these conflicts go beyond human beings, they are metaphysical. He regards life and death drives as categories of thought.⁴

If Dahmer dissected insects and animals as a youngster this may indicate an interrogation of the physiological basis of life that begins with the living and ends with dead and disintegrating matter. Dahmer's attempt to dissolve the flesh of the animals with acid suggests that he was preoccupied with the full range and degree of disintegration in living existence. **What does it signify to engage in a repetitive preoccupation with the integration-disintegration mechanism of life?**

Eric Fromm's (1973) book on the anatomy of human destructiveness is a landmark piece of work in marxian psychoanalysis that theoretically conceptualized the development of the normal anal character into a sadistic, and then to a necrophilic character. This work is the best and most appropriate object of a critical examination of a marxian psychoanalytic approach, that would be germane to a conceptualization of the case of Jeffery Dahmer, albeit from an approach that is to be distinguished from mine which

⁴ Jacques Derrida (1987, 257-409) continues this line of reasoning of beyond the pleasure principle as a metaphysical concept in his speculations on Freud in which he privileges concealment but is unable to throw any light on the pleasure-pain enigma, instead he makes the gesture of applause.

focuses on his sovereignty.

His essay appears to be a general theory of destructiveness with a particular focus on advanced capitalist society. Fromm (1973, 387) begins from the hypothesis that there is a development from the normal anal character to the sadistic and then onto the necrophilous character which is determined by increasing narcissism, unrelatedness and destructiveness. In summary Fromm (1973, 387, 327) illustrates the anal character as concerned with elimination, feces-the symbolic expression of interest in the decayed or putrid, and all that is not alive. In this characterology he describes distance-keeping, controlling, rejecting, and hoarding modes of relatedness. He points to orderliness, space control, irrational punctuality or time control, compulsive cleanliness-undoing contact with the hostile or dirty world; when there is no reaction-formation, dirtiness-a saving of what is in the fortress; intimacy is threatening, remoteness and possession means security. Fromm (1973, 322-333) describes the core attributes of sadism as the passion to have absolute and unrestricted control over others. He sees this as sadism's answer to being born human and creates in the process the illusion of transcending the limitations of human existence. Fromm (1973, 323) describes this mode of being as devotional-"it is transformation of impotence into the experience of omnipotence; it is the religion of psychological cripples." He maintains that life

frightens the sadist because it is unpredictable and uncertain. In love the sadist fears rejection and failure. Fromm sees the conditions that fosters sadism as those that make the child feel empty and impotent, producing fright. He underscores that such conditions are not linked solely to the constitution of the family but to locatedness in the social system and the spirit of the system. The author recapitulates the characterology of necrophilia as

The passionate attraction to all that is dead, decayed, putrid, sickly; it is the passion to transform that which is alive into something unalive; to destroy for the sake of destruction; the exclusive interest in all that is purely mechanical. It is the passion to tear apart living structures (Eric Fromm 1973, 369).

Fromm (1973, 377) maintains that these traits are easily identifiable-lifelessness in conversation, stiffness, coldness, aloofness, presentation is pedantic and lifeless. Only the past is experienced as real, not the present or the future-what is dead is thought to rule his life. He describes a predilection for dark clothes, attraction to mechanical and non-alive artifacts.

Fromm (1973, 389-393) raises the question "is necrophilia really characteristic for man in the twentieth century?" He points to the new man's disinterest in feces and corpses but maintains that he turns away from life, sexuality becomes a technical skill, feelings are flattened, and joy is replaced by "fun" or excitement. He states that he has no plans or goals for life, except doing what the

logic of technique determines. He argues that death is no longer symbolized by feces or corpses but clean, shining machines, but that this is superficial and that man is transforming the world into a poisonous (stinking) place. He also sees man as totally alienated and cybernetic with schizoid or schizophrenic tendencies- splits between thought-affect-will. He describes him as monocerebral, the intellectual approach is typify by a concern with what things are, how they function and how they are constructed or manipulated. Fromm states that behavior of such a man tends to be routinized, stereotypical and unspontaneous, he analogized it to autistic children. He outlines M.S.Mahler's description of the autistic syndrome, noted for,

The lack of differentiation between living and lifeless matter, the unrelatedness to other people, the use language for manipulation rather than communication, the preponderant interest in the mechanical rather than the living (Eric Fromm 1973, 393).

Fromm (1973, 398-404) speculates on conditions contributing to the development of necrophilia; pointing to an unalive, necrophilous family environment and genetic (not-biological) factors. He then puts forth a hypothesis of the roots of necrophilia, referring to the incestuous desire of the oedipus complex. Fromm focuses on pathological development and irresolution of the oedipus conflict leading to "mother-fixated men"; he takes up the infants' attachment to the mother, mainly a narcissistic frame of reference- "intrauterine" life (living through the mother). He talks

about the normal course of the infant's development in which the mother changes from a quasi-intrauterine home into a person for whom a child feels warm affection.

The author sees the adult in the course of life as located in helpless and powerless situations rooted in human existence. He states that,

The affective tie to mother is so intense because it represents one of the basic answers to man's existential situation: the desire to return to "paradise" where the existential dichotomies had not yet developed—where man can live without self-awareness, without work, without suffering, in harmony with nature, himself and his mate... (bold mine) (Eric Fromm 1973, 104)

Fromm differentiates between the aforementioned type of incestuous fixation and that which is related to necrophilia which maybe malignant. His starting point is children who do not develop affective bonds with their mothers, but still emerge to break-through the shell of autistic self-sufficiency. He continues stating that,

Such infants never develop warm, erotic, and later, sexual feelings towards mother, or that they ever have a desire to be near her. Nor do they later fall in love with mother substitutes. For them mother is a symbol: a phantom rather than a real person. She is a symbol of earth, of home, of blood, of race, of nation; from the deepest ground from which life emerges and to which it returns. But she is also the symbol of chaos and death; she is not the life giving mother; her embrace is death, her womb is a tomb...The person tied to mother by malignant incestuous bonds remains narcissistic, cold, unresponsive, he is drawn to her as...the ground in which he wants to be buried. The reason for this development seems to be that the state of unmitigated narcissistic aloneness is intolerable...the wold must become one final union in death (bold mine) (Eric Fromm 1973, 403).

In his summary of the etiology of this process he states that,

Benign incestuousness is in itself a normal, transitory stage of development, while malignant incestuousness is a pathological phenomenon that occurs when certain conditions inhibit the development of benign incestuous bonds (bold mine) (Eric Fromm 1973, 404).

Fromm sees satisfaction and success in life as inhibiting the overt expression of such tendencies and failure as promoting malignant tendencies. He also holds that genetic factors, the child's genetically given disposition to coldness maybe responsible for his failure to develop warm attachments to the mother. The author also identifies traumatic experiences during the first years of the child's life that creates active hate and resentment, and an intrusive mother as producing a freezing-up.

Jean-Francois Lyotard (1991, 2) in a discussion of two sorts of inhuman maintained that the talks in the collection betrayed a suspicion,

What if human beings, in humanism's sense, were in the process of, constrained into, becoming inhuman,...what if what is 'proper' to mankind were to be inhibited by the inhuman?(Jean-Francois Lyotard 1991, 2).

The author warns against assuming that the inhumanity of the system of development gives expression to the "hostage of the soul". He illustrates with education, stating that the acquisition of communal life is dependent on the initial misery of childhood, and asks whether this dialectic leaves a remainder. Lyotard maintained that,

The child's initial delay in humanity, which makes it the hostage of the adult community, is also what manifests to this community the lack of humanity it is suffering from, and which calls on it to become more human (Jean-Francois Lyotard 1991, 3).

He continued that having interiorized the values of civilization the "adult can pretend to full humanity...and to the effective realization of mind as consciousness, knowledge and will." He concludes that between the two versions of humanism, there would only be a difference of emphasis in the idea that,

What is proper to humankind is its absence of defining property, its nothingness, or its transcendence, to display the sign no vacancy (Jean-Francois Lyotard 1991, 4).

Lyotard (1991, 4-5) resists the haste to harmonization and holds onto a reserve: the unharmonizable indeterminacy. He identifies the oscillation of the human in indeterminacy and reason, arguing the same for the inhuman. He reiterates that the inhuman entails the human (eg. constraint and terror in education and the Freudian concept of castration that cuts deep with distress and indeterminacy. He ends the essay by underscoring that development takes away the hope of an alternative, leaving only the politics of resistance to the inhuman-the means being the debt to the miserable indeterminacy of childhood.

I will attempt to place Fromm's essay on destructiveness in dialogue with Lyotard's analysis of the inhuman. A critical formulation being his warning against the idea that the inhumanity of the system of development

gives expression to the "hostage of the soul". He appears to be arguing against the notion of the externality of the inhuman to the human in his discussion of the educational processes, conceived from castration to the constraints and terror of the educational institution. The warning against the hostage of the soul is to be contrasted with maturation that makes the child the hostage of the community, the latter is general, the former appears to be specifically tied to development. Lyotard is engaged in a conversation with a silent interlocutor that presupposes the externality of the inhuman. Fromm's essay is open to a number of readings but his statements about the new man in the second half of the twentieth century attempt to demonstrate an articulation with the general, anal/necrophilous characterology in the particular predisposition of this man, also rooted in genetic and social expressions of malignant, incestuous tendencies. This formulation appears to valorize a negative dialectic of development. By undermining the text of development or linear historical progress he puts forth the politics of resistance to the inhuman. Through the disarticulation of the inhuman from the development of civilization Lyotard is interjecting a caution signal against the valorization of linear history.⁵

⁵ I will attempt to give two rather brief, simplistic and superficial rendering of psychoanalytic perspectives. I will employ some of Kristeva's categories, since she foregrounds the sacrificial features of the socio-symbolic contract and elaborates the pre-oedipal moment of psychosexual

development; I will also utilize some of Fanon's (1967, 50-51, 154-161) categories to think interracial homosexuality. Kristeva's (1982, 1986, 90-136, 240-271) conceptualization of the pre-oedipal moment of psycho-sexual development entails the formation of the abject, which is defined as the "pre-object" and represents the first effort of the future subject to separate itself from the archaic mother. The archaic mother represents jouissance fused with Nature. However, that space that is abject remains empty reflecting an emptiness and superficiality that is characteristic of "borderline cases", in such instances patients are on the frontier between neurosis and psychosis. These patients are identified as being marked by a peculiarly "postmodern" relationship to language and the sacred; nothing is taboo because nothing is meaningful. For Kristeva such patients have foreclosed the name of the father and maintain a primary narcissistic relationship to being. She argues that for Freud there is a possible linkage between the archaic identification and the oral phase of libidinal organization. Thus, having amounts to being. There is a definite continuity here between the abject and the Heideggerian "nothing", non-being and its connection to the "being of being" which is linked to its "home" in language and anxiety (objectless)-Dasein.

Parallels could be established between integration and disintegration and the differentiated and undifferentiated. The intimacy of the interconnection is such that from this perspective a certain degree of disintegration is essential for human existence at the psychical level. Dahmer's obsessive rituals of body integration and disintegration correspond to Kristeva's notion of desire for undifferentiated fusion and jouissance with the archaic mother; and disintegration of the object of love for the pleasures of oral incorporation as cannibalism and necrophilic sex, in the interest of permanent jouissance, fusion, integration and undifferentiated relations. For Kristeva orality is in line with the substratum that constitutes man's being, namely language. For language to appear, the repression and displacement of the drive to devour is required. Dahmer's chanting and rhythmic motion could be thought of as expressive of regression back to the pre-symbolic mode of the semiotic chora. However, most significantly, being is possessive incorporation. Such a relationship to being is fundamental to the capitalistic order in which consumption poses a necessary moment in the capitalist production process.

I believe that I can succinctly argue from a psychoanalytic perspective that the homosexual is one who both desires to be and to have the penis/phallus. This could constitute an ambivalent sexual relation. Fanon locates the

desire for interracial sex in the Hegelian dialectic of being and having the white phallus. He links the pre-occupation of black men with attracting the white man with the desire to overcome feelings of insignificance. He characterizes the Negro as phobo-genic-a state that he subjectively links to the absence of the mother (separation). He states that the necrophobic man is a repressed homosexual, he continues that the hatred of the white man for the black is genital and biological. Fanon's reference to separation suggests that the anxiety that the Negro generates in whites has a sexual tone, which has to do with the correspondence of the signification of his corporeality with the jouissance of fusion. The double moments of attraction would account for both Dahmer's interracial desires and those of his black colored victims. Dahmer could be thought of as the case of a reversal, a homosexual man who is a repressed negrophobe. Here in this account we see an attempt to anchor interracial affect in the oedipal-pre-oedipal configuration.

From the psychoanalytic perspective this conceptualization enables one to think the basis of interracial homosexuality, in terms of the relations of the racialized feature of the penis-phallus in such an instance penis is background and race is foreground. The penis-phallus identity breaks down, the penis is displaced by race. However, the bio-genital relation breaks out of the configuration of the oedipal-pre-oedipal triangle onto the ground of the Satrean existential relations of radical alterity, in which love is imprisoned in objectification entailing a sadistic moment. Although for Fanon the subject-object relationship of race-relations (namely black-white subjects) is not symmetrical because the black man frequently has a weak ego structure. The opening onto the existential plane is necessitated by the limits of the analogical relations between gender and race within the psychoanalytic perspective.

This kind of rendering of interracial desire would situate it within a drive for fusion fueled by anxiety, ambivalence and sadism. The bio-genital signification of the black penis would serve to amplify and multiply the erotics of primary narcissism in addition to the aforementioned anxiety, ambivalence and sadism. Such a perspective would place race at the explanatory foreground of Dahmer's homicidal violence. It would be a catalyst to sadistic and fusionist tendencies of this primary narcissistic relation. Kovel (1984) links white racism to the white man's ambivalent relationship to his body, a relationship that is founded in Western nationality and the domination of nature. An analogical linkage can also be made in respect of class in terms of the significance of the working-class/lower-

It is not unfair to state that psychoanalysis consistently fails to grasp the specificity of race and class relations and even its strength in respect to gender is unsatisfactory. All relations cannot be adequately reduced to the pre-oedipal/oedipal configuration. The elaboration of the pre-oedipal moment, the development of object-relations and the introduction of linguistic ontogenesis, which has significantly extended the life of psychoanalysis, serves to plunge this paradigm into a metaphysics of subjective interiority that foregrounds and situates speech and action in a limiting frame of reference. It is for this reason that I have kept to the ground of actual sexual practices/texts that do not privilege infantile sexuality and are heavily influenced by Marxism and post-structuralism. In spite of the limits of Sartrean existentialism within Fanonian psychoanalysis at least it maintains an interest in some relationship to "being" and "existence". Fanon's attempts at a reconstructive salvaging of psychoanalysis, foregrounds its limits and forges a rupture that is indicative of a way out of the iron cage of psychoanalysis.

Sex Drive Articulation

To begin with I would like to represent a configuration of sexual drive relations as white metaphysical social

class.

that forms impressions that generate exiguous forms (e.g. masculine-feminine). The abstract values (e.g. + -) reduce and impoverish the rich complexity of impressions. Thus, the focus is shifted from the sensory images of everyday life to that of the relations between forms. This 're-valuation' functions as a restructuring movement, which in some rhetoric appear as illumination and unveiling. This forms the speculative basis for the relationality of the structural forms according to space-time (motion) configurations.⁸

This outline informed by Marxism and post-structuralism is constituted by a composition of time (motion) space configurations comprising gender, race, class, sex, generation, etc. It would be accurate to comprehend this as a combinational analysis that is a force-field of spatial

think that it is valuable to think separation, in order to conceptualize their articulation-the mode of 'unity'. Lacan (1981, 161-173) discusses the idea that drive is invested in a field.

| Productive Forces | Mode of Production | Necrosis | Social Relations as 'whole' |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Labor Power | (I) capacities | (I) strangulation | |
| (ii) sexual-capacities | (iii) laboring activities | (ii) penetration | |
| (iv) sexual labor | (v) metonymic consciousness | (iii) metonymic | |
| (vi) strangulation | | (iv) wage-labor | |
| | | (v) activity/passivity | |
| | | (vi) other social relations | |

This schema in table 4 in some general fashion facilitated my efforts to think the complexity of the articulation of libidinal drives and social relations of production.

and temporal articulations. Such a process is both **compositional** and **de-compositional**, in addition to being manifestly transformational.

I think the drawing of a solid line from the productive forces to social relations which is usually indicative of **primacy** within Marxism—a concept around which there is considerable polemic. But, the notion of primacy connotes order, stages of succession, original and derivational sequences. However, the interconnections and relations that I am invoking constitute a **heteromorphic** frame of reference that specifies location and motion (time) relationally. Most philosophical conceptions of positionality and time that provide the basis for the notion of order do not think discontinuity at the spacial and temporal level.⁹ Instead there is a strong tendency towards linear and structural closure of an entity or process.

The conceptions of spatiality and temporality that I am presenting do not present the real, but are representations that pretentiously extend themselves toward social relations, that are ever extending the horizon of the text of the "real"-for-us, generating an elliptic horizon that tends to appear as stabilized, actual or transparent

⁹Theodor W. Adorno (1973, 135-158) thinks motion as not only progressive but retrogressive. He tends to underscore difference and discontinuity in motion and cautions against formal reversals and the genetic point of view. He criticizes Hegel and Marx in this regard.

entities, the operation of a substantial mode of thought and desires. This theoretical endeavor entails motion, step, and operations which include a mathematical reduction that shifts; a maneuver and speculative investment that attempts to disrupt the objectification of the existing order and is a de-constructive-reconstructive analysis.

This outline of the production and reproduction of necrophilic sex in the case of Jeffrey Dahmer is provisional, the relational nexuses will emerge in the foregoing discussion in this essay. The essay's 'empirical' support is based in the mass media accounts, books and court records, material designed for other theoretical conceptualizations. There is limited information about his relationship to each of his victims, his fantasy life and his relationships with living bodies. I do not expect to construct a rich 'narrative' because of the unavoidable gaps, not because the acts are untranslatable into language.¹⁰

The Postmodern Condition of Jeffery Dahmer

Dahmer's sexual history is specular in its negrocidal-

¹⁰ An indication of his fantasy life and sexual relations with living people was put forth by Dr. Patrick Berlin, in **Jeffery Dahmer: Insanity, Defense**, Channel 23, February 3rd - 15th 1992.

retroculatory excesses which I hope can engender the encorpsement (a specification of the decomposed body) of the skeleton of the celebrated, other-worldly categories of ambivalence, irrationality, incoherence etc., of the "postmodern" subject. I will give an overview of activities and statements that are resurrected as the contradictions of Dahmer's libidinal drives, interests and consciousness.¹¹ This movement, at the individual level forms a retrogressive spiral, a **negative dialectic** from the standpoint of life, that is an effect of the **substantiality** that is embedded in everyday life and experience, a movement that I will follow up on.¹²

Dr. Berlin, a psychiatrist at John Hopkins University, a specialist in paraphilia stated during his trial (widely publicized on court television) that in his interview with Dahmer he expressed an interest in women but never followed through on such desires, instead he sought out men.

In 1989 Dahmer was quoted, in response to a question concerning sexual preference by Judge W. Gardiner, as saying

¹¹ The term consciousness is a poor signifier for what I am referring to, which is specifically language and its relationship to desires, interests and actions, since it tends to presuppose an essential or genetic internality.

¹² Michel Foucault (1989) in the introduction to Georges Conguilhem's book on the normal and the pathological, concisely reiterated his statement of the links between the ethical value of life and preservation that is embedded in biological sciences, privileging health and the notion of normality.

"yes I am a homosexual I admit that it is not easy to admit."¹³ In another source he is described as picking up lovers at gay bars while denying his homosexuality and telling acquaintances he detested gays.

Jean-Paul Ranieri a lay brother in the Episcopal church who counsels gay men was quoted by Jamakaya (1992, 26) as saying that he, Dahmer, maintained that "I am not as gay as everyone else in here," Ranieri concluded that Dahmer implied that AIDS was God's judgment on gays. What is striking about such references, if we are to believe that they are an accurate reflection of his attitude, is the sharp contradiction that such an attitude expresses, in contrast to his apparent strict homosexual practices. The mass media or legal accounts did not identify or suggest any heterosexual sex. This suggests a sharp tension within Dahmer's interests, that strongly allied themselves with heterosexuality as the sexual practice ordained by God, in contrast to homosexuality which appeared to be associated with sin in his mind. Homophobia and reluctance to assume a homosexual identity is not unusual among persons that engage in homosexual sex and is especially contradictory in one who has such an exclusive object choice or attachment.¹⁴

¹³ See Jamakaya (1992, 26).

¹⁴ Barbara Ponse (1978), Ruth Baetz (1980) and Margaret Cruikshank (ed.) (1980) discuss the social construction of lesbian identities that speak of ambivalences and dis-identifications by some with exclusive homosexual object choices.

Dahmer's homosexual practices negated and **de-faced** his heterosexual identity-in-origins. Defacement invokes related terms such as de-formation, dis-figuration and effacement. Intuitively de-face and efface connote a strong sense of faciality, deform and disfigure have a strong bodily accentuation.¹⁵ Homosexual relations are counter-productive

¹⁵ The common linguistic usage links deform in physics to change in shape by pressure or force in addition to associating deform and disfigure with animate objects/beings. However, because I wish to foreground subjectivity and rely on the value of faciality as a form/image I will appropriate defacement with its signification of making illegible, incorporating the idea of mar as a de-valuing movement, that will be general throughout this conceptual complex (although efface is complex, sliding into the force notions of physics entailed in de-form).

Gloria Anzaldúa (ed). (1990, XV-XVI) "inffaciendo cares una entrada" in **Making Face, Making Soul** introduced the volume by discussing the concept of masks and interfacing. She described the face as a naked, vulnerable and as a significant topography of the body. She introduces the notion of multiple layers of mask compilation and the distinction between our inter-subjective personhood and the word. For Anzaldúa interfacing-the connections between masks are spaces where self-hatred and internalized oppressions can be destroyed and assumed.

Jacques Derrida's (1978) in a polemical engagement with Hegel and Levinas, critiques the ideal sense of hearing and its linkage to the soul. Derrida like Lacan makes the connection between the other-speech and the unity of face/form, this unity is connected to presence and the expression of essence.

Frantz Fanon (1967) takes up the question of mask, face and subjectivity, the most striking moment being his critique of black intellectuals and their desire to be white. He devises a strategy to circumvent the game of recognition in the play of masks through existentialism and the call to the black man to recognize his human subjectivity.

Judith Butler's (1990, 134-141) discussion of figuring identifies gay drag as parodic masquerade a style that resists call the metaphysics of substance into question. However, the articulations of power have a way incorporating deviance and bending these expressions to reproduce

and negative from the standpoint of a heterosexually dominated, majority community, at both the bio-reproductive and social levels. These relations constitute antagonistic and competitive modes of sexual production. This is why they are represented in polarized form-heterosexual (+) and homosexual (-).

In my considerations of Dahmer's heterosexual desire, I have had to ask myself what does it symbolize for a practicing 'homosexual' whose sexual energies are actively directed towards men, to manifest a strong desire for heterosexual identity. On what material ground or register could such desires be comprehended. There is a strong desire to trifle, a term that indicates a de-valuation process, a notion that contaminates the objective and *de jure* categories of sexual existence (e.g. heterosexual and bisexuality). Thus, there is an inclination to de-value one of the two terms in contestation, namely heterosexual and homosexual, making one term or mode of existence unauthentic, merely performative, a disguise to enable one

dominative power. At any rate the central point at issue is that she is attempting to deconstruct the essentialist moment within feminist ideology.

The juxtapositioning of these intellectual perspectives is not to simplistically stage a polarization between the post-structuralist/postmodern tendencies and the humanist strategies around the notion of face and subjectivity but to situate this notion within an on going struggle of ideas, and to identify the various strategies of resistance. But, within feminism there is a strain towards holding onto a substantial and anthropologized subjectivity even if contingently.

to function more productively in the world; more often than not the heterosexual world.

I have speculated on the register in which such desires could be understood and tied them in part through a course of mediation, to a substantial mode of consciousness and metonymic language¹⁶ that grasps homosexual identity as an embodied object derived from identity-in-origins or home. As a result identities-in-origin are perceived as objective, natural and eternal essences. From this perspective they are **inalienable** rights, **mater** granted at birth.¹⁷ Dahmer holds tenaciously to his sovereign, absolute, will, "the magic of

¹⁶ See Georg Lukács (1971). Karl Marx (1976) Capital Vol. 1 is rich with a multiplicity of references to reification and fetishism of the commodity form.

Theodor Adorno (1973, 189-192) discusses the tireless changes of reification and the difference forms of valuation that reification can engender under different circumstances and he identifies moments of de-valuation and re-valuation of reification in Marx's works. This is a significant gesture to temper the tendency to give a trans-positional judgment of the function of reification.

Jacques Derrida (1978, 104) critiques the primacy of thought in relation to language of Western Philosophy. This interrogation foregrounds the ideological significance of spatiality and temporality, proximity and distance in articulation-parole/language. However, as a theoretical category, the differentiation of the moments of "thought" and language, albeit objectively fictitious, it is a strategy to enable one to identify particular thought forms from the generality of language thus, it is not an absolute starting point-primacy, or onto-genesis, but a moment that shifts and is displaceable. The critical stance of postmodernism is an important point of resistance to substantiality.

¹⁷ The neologic reference "mater" is appropriated because of its latin root, mater refers to mother, an allusion to the maternal body. It is intended to specify body-matter.

nature", "capricious will", "rights objectified at birth in the course of nature", the "zoological" code of power.¹⁸

What form of consciousness and language does such a mode of being express? This represents a substantial consciousness and metonymic language, one in which relations between people are objectively and zoologized into a rigid, impenetrable armour. It is a psycho-social mode of being that is resistant, it is the mobilization of an opposing force against the metaphysics of the law, shifts in the positionality of social relations maintain themselves at the boundary of consciousness, the ego is unreflective. This is a 'pre-prepositional' mode of thought,¹⁹ in which shifts in social relations cannot be anticipated but only experienced concretely. This mode of thought has nothing to do with intelligence, it is connected to the construction of desire. Thus, the effacing and re-facing processes of subjectivity are experienced as an assault against the hyletic foundation of being and the will of desire to traffic-in-mater. This mode of consciousness and language may involve a depthful, erectile, potent, penetration, of the commodity of form, entailing a resistance to the metaphysical comprehension of

¹⁸ Karl Marx (1975, 2, 40, 54-129) in the "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law" discussed monarchical authority and legislative authority, utilizing the aforementioned expressions.

¹⁹ See George F. Hegel (1977, 1-45, 208-209) for a discussion of this issue.

social relations in the world.

Dahmer assured in the solid, impenetrable armour of his heterosexual identity-in-origins reaches out to embrace and seize the object of his desires. Hegel maintains that the identity of any object is maintained by the non-absorption of otherness/difference/non-identity. This requires the distancing of otherness and the securing of boundaries-the externalization of the other. However, at the very moment that Dahmer had possession of the object in his sensuous grasp, his armoured existence is penetrated, it cannot hold out under the violence of the metaphysics of social relations; thus slipping into the vertiginous space-time series of the metaphysics of desire, grounded in the dead weight of the 'general', over and against the particular, the individual or the idiosyncratic.

Dahmer suffered a disassociation and defacement in the calamity of the collision of forces, being heterosexual transformed itself into being homosexual at the very moment of having the male body as an object of sexual possession. At that moment Dahmer is possessed by the mysterious powers of the beyond, nothingness, metaphysics; he is in arrears, in retrocopulation, in line for retribution, the debt paid for transgressions. To express in a mathematic analogy, he is subjectively heterosexual (+) = homosexual (-) = (0) or nothingness, ambivalence, the homosexual that wants to be heterosexual. However, in the 'objective' (actual and socio-

symbolic terms), **de jure** logic of the metaphysics of the socio-cognitive order, he is homosexual (-), a subordinate sexual relation, because **objective** designation is grounded in sexual action between body morphologies of similar and different forms. Idiosyncratic desires suffer a social suppression and repression. For Dahmer this is a condition of debt and onto-genic displacement.

Object Choice: Men of Color

The negativity of Dahmer's desires was doubled by the fact that he was not only sexually attracted to men but had a strong predilection for men of color. The notion of negativity is formulated in respect to a mode of activity that produces a **scaring** of his racial identity-in-origins, effecting a **negro-loiding** movement.

Felony reports of Dahmer's statement of confession has him saying that he choose his victims on the basis of the physical characteristics of youthfulness and attractiveness. He denied any racial dimension to his sexual objects, but the racial component is quite manifest and difficult to dismiss as a factor in the articulation of his drives. Dahmer also claimed according the aforementioned reports that he only killed those he liked. He was also cited as attempting to preserve the skin of his victims but without success because his chemical treatments dissolved them.

This indicates that Dahmer harbored a **skin fetish** which gives greater plausibility to the racial components of his erotic desire. He also collected other momentos (e.g. skulls penises, hands, etc). Dahmer's partial object choices correspond to the **fetishism of Western civilization** around the body of the black male. For example, the skin-skull (brain) relation to intelligence, and skin-penis linkage to sexual prowess.²⁰

What was the negating activity that produces this **blackening-effect**? Such a conceptualization presupposes an indication of key components of racial production that are relevant to my preliminary understanding of this case. This notion is grounded on the assumption that body morphology is fundamentally articulated with social and bio-reproductive processes, with **social distance** and **interracial sex** as significant moments of these processes. The foundation of the social distance relation was exinanited by his **residential self-exile** in a colored community. By **exinanition** I am referring to a loss, depopulation and devaluating process. The oxford apartments in which Dahmer lived was described as situated in the "city's rundown west side", and he was also depicted as the "only white male in

²⁰ The following literature show the expressions of racist ideologies and practices that contain these relations and linkages. See Jacquelyn Dowdhall (1988, 328-349); Allen Chase (1977) and George M. Fredrickson (1987).

the building". What this practice indicates is that Dahmer's sexual desires were of such a character and intensity that he was willing to forego residing in a white neighborhood. Milwaukee like other urban cities in the United States is highly segregated. For a white male to place himself in such a community is atypical and conspicuous. It maybe effectively argued that Dahmer resided in such a location because it was a propitious cite from which to engage in **negroicide**. This is unquestionably true but its propitiousness necessarily propelled him within the black/hispanic/colored communities in the production of necrophilia.

Additionally, if I conceive Dahmer's interracial sex as a further force subverting the authorized rules and practices of interracial, social distance that is constitutive of the foundation of the reproduction of race relations in the United States, then we could understand the extend to which Dahmer's reproductive **life-activities** are a definitive, unwitting and **protensious expatriation** which produced a **blacking defacialization** process.

The material ground of the socio-symbolic dimension of inter-racial sex is the dominant, most fully actualized mode, heterosexual inter-racial sex, whose fullest actualization is the black progeny, therefore at the specificity of the bio-social reproductive level of life, interracial sex is symbolically a **negroloiding** function at

the level of generational reproduction. Dahmer's ejaculations and production costs, were **over-spent** at the familial and racial (white) level, a progenitorial loss, fortified by unproductive homosexuality. The black repatriation and symbolics of interracial sex constitute the 'truthful' moments of Dahmer's claim that he is not a racist.

The residential repatriation and socio-symbolic aspect of interracial sex which constitute moments of Dahmer's desires and life activities can be expressed in a mathematical analogy. They can be **subjectively** represented as Dahmer's wants, in which White (+) = Black (-) = 0 or nothingness, a want-to-be. However, in the **objective de jure** logic of his interracial sex economy as grounded in the socio-cognitive order in the United States, these desires and activities were white (+) greater than (>) black (-) = whiteness (+) as (surplus).

The reified, armoured entity of Dahmer's white being that survived the suppressed, subversive, **anti-matering**, exilitated bombardments that pierce and threatened to shatter his being: a process brought on by his incessant, protensious, ejaculatory over-expenditures that scarred, blackened, reproduced and effected a level of **racial effacialization**, a violent diremption from being-in-origins, the (mater)nal)-the still-born, self-othering anti-mater. In the objectivistic logic of the manifestations of the socio-

cognitive order, his armoured whiteness is preserved, even if *whitewashed*, since race is a highly reified entity relative to other relations (eg. gender and class) because the existing morphological characteristics of race (signs) remain bonded to the prevailing social relations.

The blackening functions of the racially dislocating social relations encountered a highly resistant, reified, morphological barrier/*hymen/mater* that has rarely been fully descended or transcended, even at the individual level. At this level, bio-reproductive (passing), surgical and chemical whitening and blackening have been the instances of a degree of realization which traffic in *mater*, a necessary moment in the process. The racial **refacialization** function has not had the degrees of freedom of class, sexuality (heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian) on sex-gender relations. The sex-gender category recognizes non-identity and identity e.g. female - masculine, male-masculine. This is due to the hard work of the feminist and gay liberation movements. However, a corresponding diremption has not occurred in the area of race relations, facilitated by the lack of development of these categories, which I am working to rectify (e.g. race-defacialization (whitening-blackening)). Fanon's metaphors of **lactification** and **skin mask** relations have not been adequately developed.²¹In addition, no

²¹ In Frantz Fanon's (1967, 41-62) work, the skin-mask metaphor is continuous throughout the text, but that of lactification linked to black women's desire for the white

corresponding social movement has had the force to effect a full diremption/rupture/invagination, maturing, a new birth has yet to emerged. Such a development presupposes a strong, sustained anti-racist movement that the United States and the world has yet to manufacture.

Gender Refacialization

Ranieri maintained that Dahmer frequently voiced racist views but particularly despised black "queens". Jamakaya a news editor at Wisconsin Light stated that some of Dahmer's

man is limited. The skin-mask metaphor has been taken in differing directions. Homi Bhabha (1985, 163-184) thinks this in terms of difference and identity in the colonizer-colonized relation, while Abdul R. Jan Mohamed (1985, 98) foregrounds difference, discussing the function of racial difference rather than identity in colonial literature.

The issue of silence is taken up for Lacan (1977, 199-225, 247-253). In reference to the signifieds below the bar of repression that enrich metaphor and the nonsense of the foreclosing of the name of the father (zero in arithmetic formulation). In respect to madness, silence becomes a central thematic for Michel Foucault (1965) in "Madness and Civilization" and for Derrida in (1978, 31-63) "Cognito and the History of Madness"; although he cautions against the essentialism of madness, this nevertheless does not prevent, but merely constitutes a pause in his utilization of madness in a critique of Foucault's attempt at an archaeology of silence, a historical study of the madness in itself, a madness which Foucault speculates to be a founding presupposition for the category of history. He concludes arguing that "the crisis is that reason is madder than madness, it is non-meaning and oblivion." This linkage of reason to non-meaning has been a central thematic of Western Marxism since Marx and Weber. However, this comparison of madness to the non-meaning of Western rationality is doubly valuable in what I perceive to be a collision between sovereign, individual desire that is interpellated by the power of the rationality of the logic of social relations.

victims were effeminate, black men.²² Dahmer to all indication expressed himself as an active and dominant 'partner'. He was described in his statement of confession as penetrating the oral and anal orifices of his victims, explicit references were made to the anal penetration of Koneral Sinthasomplone and Oliver Lacy. He was also described as engaging in oral penetration and visceral penetration. In fact the death of his victims/partners and the necrophilic focus of his sexuality would appear to place his active, masculine identity beyond question.

Within sado-masochistic sex, the question of who is dominant, the sadist or masochist is heatedly contested. In fact strong arguments (See Pat Califia (1981, 30-34; Samois (1981)) are made to the effect that it is the masochist who is the subject of power.²³ What is important here is that

²² See Jamakaya (1992, 22-26).

²³ Michael Fouçault (1978, 1980, 183-194) recommended a disinvestment from the sexual apparatus via a desexualization process which also entailed a disinvestment in sexual criminal status e.g. sexual assault, rape incest, homosexuality, adultery etc. This political strategy sharply diverges from many strongly invested feminist political strategies.

Winifred Woodhall (1988, 167-176) discusses Fouçault's recommendation for the re-classification of rape from the category of sexual crimes to that of assault. She criticizes him for not recognizing the specificity of sexuality in assault. Woodhall points to the sexual specificity of many assaults and critically evaluates his politics. However, the critical issue is what is sexual power and how does the apparatus for the reproduction of this power works. Only on this basis can a judgment on political strategies be satisfactorily determined.

some domain of contestation is maintained. However, in the case of Dahmer and homicidal necrophilia it is difficult to construct/imagine such a moment. This maybe due in part to the lack of accounts within reports of the specifics of sexual relations both prior to and after the death of his 'partners', since, such knowledge is constructed within legal and psychiatric knowledge production for which such particulars would be irrelevant. There appears to be a misogynous moment in Dahmer's hatred of black queens.

However a major contradiction is that activity necessitates and helps construct passivity and effeminate existence at the specifically sexual level. But, Dahmer was merely **metonymically** producing the identity (effeminate) and opposing sexual practice (passivity) that he despised, but ironically, metonyming his active identity rather than esconcing it in the actuality of the living metaphysics of social relations.

Dahmer assured in the armour of a sexually-active masculine identity-in-origins, to all accounts pretensiously reaches out to the objects of his desire, whom he physically forces into submission; a mode of conduct that has a long history. So enamoured by the **mater** of his possession, and solidified in the objectification of his being, he is again over-spent, engaged in speculative loss. I believe that Dahmer like many individuals is unreflective in his sex-object possession. Who is possessed? The being-

having relationship is again reversed.

Dahmer maintains an active existence at the physical level but what about the sexual level? Sexual dominance has to be earned at the sexual level in the form of seduction. **Necrophilia** (like rape) **obliterates** the possibility of seductive struggle and contestation. Thus, Dahmer's active-sexual being-in-origins is reproduced but withdrawn from circulation. He is defaced, deactivated through the fixing of the gamble in his favor before hand, which rises-up as loss. This is a profit which his victims could not individually capitalize on, it is **escheated** elsewhere.

This was the most counter-intuitive moment of effacialization in my analysis. In a mathematical analogy of the **potentiality of his drives** the active (+) and passive (-) relation could be represented as active (+) greater than (>) passive (-), therefore, Active is a surplus(+). Such a potentiality in his case is grounded on the idea of the **social possibility of an identity** between physical activity and specifically sexual activity. The aforementioned potentiality is widely preconceived in everyday and juridical language (eg. sexual assault). I believe that a chasm exists that can in all probably never be surpassed.

Subjectively these relations could be represented as active (+) = passive (-) = 0 nothingness, wanted-to-be, the narcissistic, autarkic, self-rational economy. In such a reading the active and passive would be inwardly directed

(A(+)) = P(-)=0) and subjective.

In the objective *de jure* logic the active (+)/passive (-) schema would resemble 'active' (+) less than (<) passive (-) = passive (-) surplus. In translation Dahmer nullified his economy by eschewing the sex-struggle. Since, there is no outside of the sex struggle, no way of outwitting the sex-economy as a whole, his efforts effected a (sexual) loss. Dahmer's possessive protensious, over-speculation, engendered a devaluation, a defacement, a deactivation he could not recuperate from. Thus, he ended up being passive (-) that very position he despised through default.

Class

Dahmer was described by his father Lionel Dahmer (1994) as having been born and raised in the well-to-do community of Bath Ohio just outside Akon. His father was identified as a chemist. At Revere High School he played tennis and clarinet and was considered a bright student but unwilling to apply himself. After attending Ohio State for a few months he dropped out and enlisted in the army in 1978. He was stationed in Baumholder West Germany and was discharged in 1981, his dismissal was linked to alcoholism. He then lived with his paternal grandmother Catherine and worked for a downtown blood bank until 1985, when he took a job at the Ambrosia Chocolate Company, as a stock clerk. There is

almost no information on his victims. They are conflated and objectified into a poorly differentiated hyletic mass of near anonymous victims. Thus far no attempt has been made to lend them a voice. The media focus has been on the subject rather than objects of power and domination. Their desires and interests have been on the subject rather than objects of power and domination. The reports on the particulars of the class background of the victims stated that they were primarily lower-class and lower working class men of color, most of whom had criminal records.²⁴

For example, Steve Hicks one of the white males mentioned was described as a hitchhiker, Mat Turner was described as a runaway, K. Sinthesomphone was described as a Loatian boy of fourteen and Tracy Edwards stated that he had just started working when he met Dahmer, but he did not identify his occupation or place of work, during the hearings he stated that he was unemployed. Dahmer was characterized as luring his victims with the offer of money

²⁴ See Anne Schwartz (1992) and Thomas H. Cook in the foreward to Lionel Dahmer's (1994, 8) story. Cook stated that Jeffery Dahmer had choosen a population already victimized by poverty and racism, adding further that they were a part of a desparate under-class of street hustlers and ex-cons.

to pose for pictures at his apartment and encountered them at malls, bus stations, bathhouses, pornographic bookstores etc. His life history presents a picture of a white, working-class male who was unable to reproduce the middle class origins into which he was born. We could expect that if Dahmer had finished his college education instead of or after enlisting in the army, he would have had a better chance of reproducing his class origins, although there are no guarantees in a capitalistic economy, with its rigid discipline, inter-class competition, displacements in the wage labor market and periodic crises. Instead, he pursued his libidinal interest in death, dead bodies and destruction. Did Dahmer hope for combat action and the chance to encounter dead bodies and engage in necrophilic sex in the army? Vietnam did produce a high rate of black bodies returning from the front lines, life was not kind to Dahmer, he was born a bit too early. His next job in a blood bank was also a continuation of his interest in disintegrating and dying bodies. Dahmer's occupations appear to enable a slight sublimation and continuation of his seeming interest in the integration-disintegration processes of living bodies (tissue), that appeared early in his childhood.

Even though Dahmer was born into a white middle class family and had failed to successfully reproduce his class, thus suffering a *declassification*, a *de-motion*, an

individual loss and de-valuation at the socio-economic and bio-reproductive levels, but he still had the means to lure those less fortunate than himself, who came in the hope of quick money for photographic services, sex, etc. Dahmer was described as a compulsive buyer with financial problems. It seems that he was trying to live up to a life-style that his financial means could not afford.

Dr. Judith Becker testified at his trial on Court Television that Dahmer stated that he intended to use the human remains he possessed to build an alter or shrine to obtain financial and social power. It appears that since he was unable to realize economic and social power through the social world he pursued magical means. These instances seem to indicate an attachment to his class origins.

Dahmer's desires protensiously over-extended themselves in this moment, overflowing their legitimate boundaries, undermining and imploding the will to sublimate, and effect a detour in the reproduction of his class origins. Dahmer's necrophilic drives appeared to have been a key factor inhibiting and imploding his ability to contribute to the reproduction of his social class, whose normative characteristics entailed a white, intra-racial heterosexuality with an education, occupation and salary commensurate with his normative class.

So ecstatically metonymized in his existence-a reified class subjectivity, he could not grasp the metaphysics of

social relations that propelled him into a descending spiral towards the working-class/lower-class objects of his desires. This was a metaphysics of social forces that switched and transformed **having into being**. He not only possessed such objects but they possessed him in his very being, effecting a full realization, a narcissistic fusion of being in them. He thus effaced the boundaries of distinction between himself and them, producing an actualized de-facialization.

A mathematical analogy would schematize the subjective as middle-class (+) = working-class (-) = an identity, nothingness, 'ambivalence. Objectively (de jure), Dahmer's class existence could be symbolically coded as middle-class (+) less than (<) working-class (-) = working-class (-) as surplus.

Desolation: Being Homeless

Dr. Patrick Berlin, a psychiatrist for the defense at Dahmer's trial underscored and placed at the foreground the necrophilic component of his fantasy life as an index of Dahmer's urges, and represented murder as his capitulation to these desires. These waves of desire appeared to carry him away, overflowing the legitimate boundaries of the reproduction of bodies, entangling, knotting and confounding itself in its opposite, radical death. Berlin also attempted to make a correspondence between orgasmic release and

necrosis, the production of death. He went on to point out that Dahmer claimed that he rarely attained an orgasm outside of necrophilic contact. The defense strongly resisted such understandings of Dahmer's sexuality, since this problematized their proposition that he had adequate control of his will and it therefore embarked on a strategy of suppressing Berlin's reasoning.²⁵

Berlin reported that Dahmer fantasized having sex with dead bodies prior to his first murder and he was described as having fantasies of digging up dead bodies from graves to use for sexual gratification. Berlin maintains that Dahmer struggled with his necrophilic urges for eleven years between his first murder in 1978 and his second murder, which he claimed "opened a flood gate of emotions" that he couldn't resist. The other murders followed in rapid succession. Dahmer's homicidal *modus operandi* was summarized in his statement of confession as characterized firstly by the lure of money for photographs or sex, drugging his victims in his home (with one exception) with halcion, strangling them and then engaging in oral, anal and visceral penetration, followed by dismemberment, cannibalistic consumption and refrigeration of some body parts (eg. a

²⁵ Sigmund Freud (1959, 1970, 487-453) and Wilhelm Reich (1970) have each formulated a theory of the relationship between sexual damming-up, frustration and anxiety, pointing to the conflict between instincts and the outer world.

heart and forearm), the collection of some body mementos (eg. skulls, penises, hands etc.), the photographing of bodies at some point during this process and an eventual disposal (some were dissolved in acid).

Dahmer was cited in his statement of confession as admitting that he was "fully aware" that the acts he committed were "wrong" and that he was "horrified" that he was able to carry them out. At this point most psychoanalytical perspectives would take a detour into the unconscious mind of Jeffery Dahmer. His consciousness of his acts would be deemed superficial and the truth of his violence would be judged as symptomatic of problems of differentiation and separation from the archaic mother or the father complex, entailing murderous impulses expressed in actual castration and disassemblage of bodies. A regressive analysis would be engaged with linkages back to his childhood of animal decomposition quite common in 'serial killers' and necrophiles.

However, if we sought an alternative explanation it would entail a meditation on what enables Dahmer to kill with such ease. Dahmer himself appeared to be surprised by his ease in killing and **dissemblance**. It seemed to him to be an external **alien force** which I believe grounded his belief in **evil forces** in the world. A woman who befriended Dahmer "Ester" recalls spending hours talking with him about "how the world would end and people would turn into cannibals....

He would preach about how God would come to earth and put bad people in hell with the devil". In his statement just prior to sentencing Dahmer stated that he had chosen to go on trial, rather than simply plead guilty because he "wanted to find out just what it was that caused me to be so bad and evil". In this way Dahmer seems to separate himself from the murderous acts he perpetuated against others. It seems to me that Dahmer experienced his desires and activities of homicide and necrophilic sex as an external force that his body was delivered over to. What I do not accept is his christianizing of these forces, but I believe that he is quite perceptive in recognizing this as an alien, external and imposing force. I am not persuaded that this force originated in the internal dynamics of pre-oedipal-oedipal-post-oedipal dilemmas of psychosexual development. Although I believe that libidinal forces circulate and configure desire. If this configuration is irrelevant then what could be the conjuncture of processes that disabled Dahmer, making necrosis and necrophilic sex (ir)resistible.

Sacrificial Rituals

Freud's (1950) discussion in Totem and Taboo of totemic sacrifice, attempted to interpret the event of the sacrifice of an animal (usually a totemic animal that symbolizes the community) as symbolic of the actual (or fantasized) murder

of the father. He sees the playing out of infantile impulses to be rid of the father and possess the mother, and the guilt generated by these horrific acts as the recognition that they had become the father. Thus, the sacrifice is regarded as a commemoration of this event and the upholding of the incest taboo.

The sacrificial ritual is described by Freud as characterized by costuming in the likeness of the animal, obligatory witnessing of the sacrifice, the mourning of the animal and participation in the sacrificial meal. This costuming in the likeness of the animal or semblancing could be read as placing at the foreground the first progenitors of existence, to image both an identity and non-identity as identity. It is a graphing of the equation-human=animal/animal=human. The grieving for the animal is simultaneously a wailing for the self that appears as separate but is not, to witness is to know the self and face the actuality of our animality. The consumption of the animal is productive consumption, the transformation of the animalistic self, the self-in animality. Thus, even though kinship may deviate from blood relation, that is an actual appearance, a temporal and spatial objectification, a blood-semblance, since, we are all of one substance-nature is the real progenitor, all others are secondary and derivative. This ritual is not mere mimicry, this is "becoming-animal" a becoming-inanimate a self-conscious process of becoming,

that is simultaneously a becoming human.²⁶

What is the conjunctural significance of symbols and rituals in the production and reproduction of being self-conscious/being homeless? This obligatory witnessing itself entail psychological risk in the construction of an 'animal' identity or subjectivity. These rituals have the status of a 'pharmakon', both remedy and poison.

In advance capitalist-industrial societies we have engendered a process of defacing animality. Animation is an intellectual and emotional achievement, not an automation. Mechano-surfacing is a blanking-out, unreflective, objectifying de-animation-the domination of the inanimate. This produces a tendency towards a closed circuit of self-rational signifiers that plasticly circulate, entangling and ensnarling themselves, a machine-language. It is social relations that enliven signifiers granting some anchoring, rather than engendering wild, vertiginous, revolutions-non-sense. Animal-facing is a fundamental social relation. The defacing of animality produces a tendency towards a descension to the inanimate-the mechano-surfacing.

Dahmer's desire for God and the law is a desire for

²⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatterri (1987, 233-309) exclude totemism from the process of becoming animal. For them this is mere mimicry. I was unable to deduce whether they would view Dahmer's condition as a becoming-animal process. The critical question here is what does it means to become and the processes at work in this becoming.

order and sense, but he is encircled by a chain of self-relational signifiers. For Dahmer the metaphysics of social relations constitute the "sacred text", the ground of his salvation, the sense of being that for him forms an elliptic horizon. *Dahmer drives along oblivious to the mapping of social relations, the borders between having and being.* When Dahmer turns towards the object of his desire its positionality is clear, positioned-as-subject he throws himself into his other, unself-consciously. This unself-conscious process of becoming-other is a slippage, an unintentional movement.

The rituals of identification with the sacrifice of many 'primitive' people reinforces a specific construction of our relationship to nature, a self-conscious social relationship. The subject sees him/herself mirrored in a nature that appears wholly natural (in itself) but becomes nature for us, not-as-possession but being.

Many children in advance capitalist societies attempt to comprehend our social relationship to a large extent on their own without the reinforcement of rituals in an intense, self-directed, epistemological engagement with the world. I believe that more often than not the spontaneous sacrificial acts (e.g. killing of small crawling things) are all indications that the child has not made, but is trying to make an actual-face. It seems to me that this 'instinctive' and isolated engagement maybe even more risky

than ritualized self production. To know that one is animal is to abandon the domination of nature ('sadism'), to make an identity is such that, mortiferous acts against nature become a self-mortification. This is a self-conscious becoming animal, self-consciousness engenders us with an excess/surplus of animation, thus we become more animal. However, in many cases in advance industrial society this animal-facing is partial lending towards a de-valuing, de-animation and in some individuals and mass instances annihilative. Does the commodity form and its objectification in the social relations of possession implodes as the mass destruction of bodies (e.g. warfare and serial murders)?

A regressive analysis beginning from the termination of these mortiferous acts backwards, appears to produce a future-past perspective on the terrain of the subjective, but such a 'truth' is what Marx called working a "wonder" and "Metaphysics". Such an onto-theological manipulation imports the objective into the subjective while appearing to remain on the subjective plane. An adequate conception of reflective modalities should respect the integrity of each metaphysical region.

In Dahmer's case the subjective could be formulated in a mathematical analogy as animal-face = mechino-face = nothingness....., the symbolic potentiality as animal-face > mechino-face = animal-face (surplus). The objective is

animal-face < mechinoface = mechinoface (surplus).

| Table 5 | | Necrosis and Necrophilia | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| | | Social Designation | | | | |
| Dahmer's | Origins | Wh | Ma | Md | Ht | A |
| Social Forces | | (+) | (+) | (+) | (+) | (+) |
| Positive (+) | Location | C | Ma | Wk | ho | P |
| Negative (-) | | (->+) | (->+) | (->+) | (+) | (->+) |
| | Object Choice | C | Ma | Wk | Ho | P |
| | | (-) | (+) | (-) | (-) | (-) |
| | Home: Desired | Wh | Ma | Md | Ht | A |
| | Social position | (+) | (+) | (+) | (+) | (+) |

Abbreviations: White (Wh) Male (Ma) Middle-class (Md)
 Working-class(Wk) Active (A) Passive(p)
 Working-class(Wk) Heterosexual(ht) Homosexual (ho)

Table 5 represents the mapping of the coordination of social class origins to actual designation, object choice and objective intentionality of desire in terms of social force relations.

In accounts concerning Dahmer's sexual conduct it was claimed that he rarely had orgasms with living bodies and couldnot have an erection with an awake person. If we are to accept this statement as an adequate reflection of his sex drive articulation even if somewhat exaggerated we could reasonably suggest that this constituted a powerful stimulus to the reproduction of death. Now, there was no claim that Dahmer was incapable of getting sexually aroused otherwise. It was asserted that living bodies impaired his ability to attain orgasmic release. Thus, it appears that living bodies

acted as barriers and blockages to his realization of orgasmic release. Thus, we have an incessant rising up of excitement within the body without actual externalization.

At this juncture a major problematic is why Dahmer did not pay to have sex with the dead bodies in the local morgue. This issue forces me to contemplate the status of homicide, and the pleasure and drive towards sadism that eventuated in the deaths of individuals in his possession. Neighbors, Pamela and Vernell Bass were quoted as hearing buzzing noises coming from Dahmer's apartment and after it stopped, they heard him yell "mother-f--er, I told you god damn it." It seems that the destruction, disintegration (dismemberment) and incorporation of bodies of particular inscriptions and designation was very exciting to Dahmer and constituted a definite of pleasure. Dahmer in a conversation with Dr. Judith Becker stated that cannibalism gave him a sexual thrill and he reported having an erection. In eating the flesh he felt that the man would become a part of him. He was also reported to have a preference for visceral sex.²⁷

The **having-being** relationship which is linked to the metaphysics of social relations is central to the expression of homicidal acts. I will employ an approach to this at the subjective, objective and symbolic levels. The subjective:

²⁷ See Anne Schwartz (1992, 13, 194, 205-206).

this is the desire that being be spatially unrelated to having. In other words, the positioning in which proximity equals (=) distance, from the standpoint of the **objective law**, this is **nonsense**. The desire to have one's cake and eat it. The iron law of social generality will never remain a nothing, wholly incoherent. An example of Dahmer's predicament is that he wants to be heterosexual and have men as objects of sexual possession, which is a violation of the current laws of social relationality, since having men defines what it means to be homosexual. A similar contradiction is expressed in class, gender and race relations, although the latter (race) is highly reified and better supports the form of Dahmer's desire. For Dahmer the **desired being** does not correspond with having, it lies outside and corresponds to another mode of being. His necrophilic possessions constitute ejaculatory, over-expenditures.

Dahmerian necrosis/necrophilia was engendered under the destabilizing conjuncture of blinding myopia, alcoholism,²⁸ high libidinal drive accumulation, anxiety, and a strong tendency towards dominative mechano-facing; an inorganism,

²⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987, 282-284) have linked drug intoxication to speed and motion, the desire for de-terrorization and "fantasy subjectification". I am inclined to believe that drug intake may have facilitated Dahmer's homicidal tendencies by lowering his inhibitions in a hyper-metonymization.

that is antithetical to animation entailing the breakage of the chain human=animal/animal=human/human=inorganicism. The objective conditions are founded on the law that change in having results in change in being at some magnitude or/and quality. In other words, proximity is not equal (\neq) to distance. The symbolic potentiality that is significant in Dahmer's case is connected to the *solution to the equation: if origins = (+) actual existence = (->+) and object choice = (-) then how does one effect a surfacing in socio-positionality. Dahmer knew his actuality to be an alien positionality and knew where he wanted to go to be, at home-in-origins.*²⁹ But, his spatial sensibility is disoriented,

²⁹ Barbara Smith (1983, 11) explored the notion of "Home" for black feminists. She maintained that "it is above all a place to be ourselves." Home is a complex spatial metaphor that is dense and opaque in the richness of its multi-layered meanings that range from blood connections, a feature that is underscored by Cenen and Barbara Smith, sexual bonds and divisions, to the production of political community, an aspect then Bernice Reason features.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987, 1-13) in a discussion of homeland (Artlan) discusses the US-Mexican border. The expropriation of Mexicans and the dispossession of their lands, border crossings, safety and risk.

Norma Alarcon (1987) examines the relations between subject formation resistance to traditional feminine roles and the production of familial bonds.

The notion of social-ontogenesis-as-Home in this chapter is conceived in terms of one's locatedness in a network of social relations beginning with one's place at birth and extending throughout an individual's socio-historical, life-trajectory, plotting the motion of social identity, location, promotion or sur-facing, demotion or de-facing, relative to the positionality of the dominant 'majority'.

Carole C. Gould (1978) writing from a Hegelian-Marxist perspective (1978) makes the claim that Marx gives ontological primacy to individuals but thinks a communal subject and a differentiated totality of relations among individuals in an organic community. The question of the

metonymic and partial. He engages in wild speculation on the real-as-reified being-homicide. The directedness of Dahmer's aims is evident in a report from Dr. Park Elliot Dietz that he stated that,

It's a strange situation to be in, I was so intent on having a great deal of control and shaping my own destiny, and now its all out of my hand (Ann Schwartz 1992, 210).

In order to grasp the rationality of the ensemble of homicidal acts it is necessary to displace the nothingness of desire with a fragment of sense from the objective textual region that grounds the symbolic as intentionality. This strategy, akin to ventriloquism, attempts to give the unnameable a voice and a rationality. This strategy is a reiteration of the cautious imperative of truth and

being of beings or articulation, is not introduced or problematized.

The notion of the Totality is undoubtedly a fiction, an ungraspable, elliptic horizon that reinforces a power maneuver, a strategy of resistance that has repressive dimensions and possibilities. However, I am not convinced that the notion of the totality as a theoretical construct should be abandoned, I believe it should most certainly be problematized as a finite, closed and absolute system, and as a political rhetorical category. No identity should be made between the fiction of an organic community and total "existence." I believe that a definite movement away from the essentialism and the privilege of this notion is important. Has the notion of the totality as an open category outlived its usefulness, that remains to be determined.

Michel Foucault (1972, 225-236) pondered his debt to Hegel and the closeness of anti-Hegelianism to Hegelianism. The gesture to save Western man via the infinity of the totality. I believe that Jacques Derrida's (1978, 278-293) critique of closed structures is also open to the same caution.

narrativisation. Dahmer, blindingly myopic, guided by (mater(ial), *reaches out towards tangible bodies as the index of a border between having that is, and is not being (as self-being). The question is how to reconstruct a wall that has been obliterated/de-faced by pretentious over-extension? An identity has been effected, having transformed itself into being, now it is a question of a reversal, to transform actual being into having-sur-facing.*

Mater(ial) icons of being-as-difference; colored, effeminate-male, working/lower-classes etc. They are **true, real, tangible mater.** Such entities feel real secure for a moment, then disappear on contact; having at proximity disrupts his being, non-identity changes into identity. The beloved is deceptive, illusionary, unreal and untrue. Sexual tension, anxiety, vertiginousness, disorientation and disassociation sets in. The subject is frustrated, desperate and tormented by the metaphysical oblivious, the world is mad. He attempts to soothe himself with chants and rocking motions, he has become a wandering nomad in a state of homelessness, a sufferer.

Radical death, this is an unquestionable mater of difference. What could be more different, the **corpse** is the absolute negation of living animality, the on becoming inorganic. Disembodiment, the decoupagic art on display, photographed, now this is ever more different-distant. But, what is the difference/boundary between the organic and the

inorganic, even this is uncertain. The bodily substance is submitted to the **acid test; nothingness**. This is the **true difference**.

Dahmer goes on to submit them to the test of the symbolics of **proximity** comprising necrophilic sex and intercourse, oral genital sex, visceral sex and other caresses of the dead bodies, in addition to cannibalistic consumption of bodily flesh entailing hearts, intestines forearms, penises, etc. A body that is truly dead is an ungraspable entity. These interactions of intimacy validate the actuality of the life of the bodily entity. Dr. Partick Berlin testified that,

He has fantasies and urges about having initial sexual contact with someone while they're alive. He then fantasizes and imagines continuing sexual acts in a transition state between life and death; at time he has called it a zombie-like state [continuing that he acted on such fantasies by relating to the bodies after death] (Anne Schwartz 1992, 202).

These sexual fantasies and necrophilic activities indicate some ambivalence, he wanted them to stay alive because he dreaded the loss of his 'partners' but he wanted them in a state in which he could satisfactorily enjoy them.

However, Dahmer's desire circulates destructively in **mater** in order to **know difference with certainty**. To know difference is to know the route, the trajectory, the mapping that surfaces to origins/home and the mode of possession de jure-the **proper being**.

Hyper-Metonymization

In the Lacanian (1977, 146-178) formulaic representation of metaphor S..., the signifier is fired and animated by the extra energy that it receives from the "sparks" of the signified (meaning referent), a circular, diachronic movement in which the signifier is able to extract a form of feeling through the vibration and permeation of the desire of the body; thus effecting *aufhebung*, transpiration into vocalization-echo a transcription that is the signified. This mater(ial) metaphor is graphically *insighting* in the interiority of the oedipal configuration.

The formula for metonymy is S..... schematizes a superficial synchronic movement in which the referent is the chain of signifiers. Such a relation is described synecdochically (part represents the whole) a perspective grounded in the exclusion of the signification by the bar of repression.

I intend to frame a linguistic reading of Dahmer's actions in terms of the relationship between the signifier, the signified and the bar of the law. This figuration is one in which the relationship between the signifier and the signified entails the demotion of the signifier such that it violently collides with the bar, shattering into fragments. The context of this "dissentation into hell" is a paroxysm of anger, frustration and metonymic de-clivity. The metonymic

signifiers are overwhelmed by the weight and gravitational pull of passion towards the axis of the mater(nal). There is a designification, an excess/surplus of desire that is displaced, divested and withdrawn from the voice of the signifiers. This appeared as a transfer of libidinal investment from the voice to sight and the signified-the mater(ial), the **real index of the other/difference** that separates having and being. *Dahmer constructs a wall of tangible, sightable non-identical, differences (effeminate) colored, young, working/lower-class and real homosexual (sexually passive men), layered one upon the other, staging a spectacle of difference, sure of itself. This hyletic stack constituted a barricade, a fortified position from which to resist the on slaughter of the metaphysics of social relations.*

The razor sharp signifiers impassioned by the motor-force of desire pierce skin, disfiguring human dermatography, engendering a bloody, incisious, track of signifiers circulating in magnetic, **self-relational** attraction-infinity or what Jacques Derrida refers to as sovereignty in opposition to lordship. This **sanguinary exhibition** grips the gaze, producing a sensory over-valuation; thus effecting a relative dis-articulation of the voice of the subject and a de-animation in the movement of the fascinated gaze, peering into the opening up of the **real**.

Dahmer's mechano-facing entails a strangulation of the voice of suffering, the choking off of unutterable screams, silent pleads for relief from unspeakable torment and mutilation. These maneuvers produced distance at close proximity and gave Dahmer relief from pity and guilt.

Thus, we have the circulation of signifiers in horrific, pen-knife motion, caesuring human flesh rather than rising up as passionate signifiers graphing the unnamable as parole or langue. Mater constitutes a hyletic obstruction to the discursive text, entailing propositions, grammatical forms, a paradigm that thinks social relations, etc., there is a limited analogy to film. Can a 'text' be conceived from infinity/sovereignty? Yes, it is possible, but only as a fabrication. The signifiers refer back to each other in the mater of the fluidity of action. Therefore, the metonymized fragments, bits moving within mater-"language-of-action" produce caesured, disjointed 'expressions', weighted in signifieds (referent), a combination of 'sense' and 'nonsense' welded together in a hyletic gathering, dominated by nonsense. Even 'sense' is reconstructive from the standpoint of the subjective/want/chasm, a backward glare into nothing/infinity/sovereignty, that of necessity marks and frames 'sense' within its boundaries.

Lacan, (1977, 199-225, 1991, 247-253) in his discussion of metaphor talked about the problematic of the zero and the nullification of the metaphoric formula. It is the mark of

the infinity of the subject. The nothingness of desire that effects this break and the gist of the 'muteness' of the language of action, a 'muteness' from the standpoint of a presuppositional moment which I am refusing, in support of a notion of a 'non-discursive' text, that does not literally correspond and translate into a proper discursive text, in spite of the maneuvers of a seemingly productive paradigmatic formation of social relations in my writing of this text.

What Dahmer dramatically brings to the foreground is the violence of metaphors, the profanity of speech, the many tragic, suffering, figures that animate impassioned language. Phrases such as "chewing someone out" "down-in-the-mouth," etc. become loaded, valorized and pregnant with graphic pain. They no longer have the innocence of unselfconscious, worn out, intangible parole, you feel the violence and blood of their inscription.³⁰

At this point I will attempt a metaphoric transposition of this "writing" in red ink, the decoupagic art of the mesmerized sight of real dismembered body parts on pornographic display. This is one of the most developed

³⁰ Carol Cohn (1986, 107-138) in "Sex and Death in the Rational world of Defence Intellectuals" discusses the abstract language, euphemism, romantic and sexualized discourse of defense intellectuals that distances one from the reality of nuclear death. Dahmer's "language of action" appears as a reversal, it is a mode of articulation that presents the violence of words.

forms of objectification manifested in a linguistic metonymization that has effected a negative, qualitative transformation-an excess. This gesture foregrounds polyvocality and the nonsense of dislocated, metonyms caught in the vertiginous ambivalence of unnamable desire, a **dereliction** to desire radically outside the law.

Dahmerian (Colon)ization (;)

Intestines/Colons/Fragments of a Poem

Libidinal Highway/Greenlight/high on drive/ Border crossing/
 (Stop)/Having=Being/ Crash/too late/libidinal homicide/de-
facing

the law of the father/thou shalt have/from a far

In and Out! In and Out Fuck!

Affaire d'amour/having/

De-virgin/splitting/slicing/simmering/displaying

Let live! until I kill you.

Unhappy/Brooding/Eatin' a heart out

Blackballing/Expatriation/Want-To-Be

Losing Head/Uncool/Lost Heritage

Oraling/taking-in/conceiving a plan

Trumpet ear/Rapid Fire thumps

Working-hearts/Homo-hearts/Young hearts

Black-hearts/beating-hearts/Lifted on fingertips

Pulsating/de-animation/forever mine/Filet Mignons

Fell-Chop/Penis-in-a-pot

Fell-a chio!/Mother Fucker!

Drill! Drill! Over Kill!

Hole-in-your-head?/ Told you So!/ Sucker

Down-in-the-Mouth/Depressed/Sad

White Knighting/Erectile Potent/Prick

Fore-arm-ouring/Bloodwork/Purification Rights

Choke/lynch/Holding black-Pink-Plague

Dark/Obscene/Visceral/Dirty Sex

Analysis/Decoupage/Pornography/Colorful fairy Queens

Profiling Skulls/Gesturing fingers/Eyeballing Ghosts

Penile Speculum/Evil/White-lighting the beyond

Retro-copulation/In arrears/ejaculatory over expenditure De-
classification

Demon-etization/Betting-on-death

Sacrificial incantations/Ejaculatory Pacification

Nullifying Retribution/God's Salvation/ for the want of

Surfacing-Home

Learning How To Die

The crisis that Dahmer was faced within his life existence was learning how to die. The failure to subordinate and appropriately locate the mechano-facing function constituted Dahmer's "Home"-as-desolation, privileging de-animation. He could not withstand the violent diremption of his being by the metaphysics of social relations. Objectification and hyper-metonymization appeared to constitute his mode of being, a reinforcement of the attachment to the mater of home: being-in-origins, a holding from the terror-anxiety/pandemonium of desolation.

The predicament of having a staggering desire for other(s), to flow with a desire that is out of bounds. The normal tendency of the stream of erotic feelings in their accumulation, is not unique. The desire to reproduce being-in-origins, sovereignty in normative. The sex-gender-race-class-generational etc., calculus of the reproductive-politic produces a strong ethical/social compulsion on individuals to comply with their socio-ontological formation. But, the vital question is the moment of homicide. The divide, necrosis or learning how to die.

Is the question of learning how to die the displacement of the unnamable-as-metaphysics on to the unnamable-as-taboo? I am not convinced that the unnamable-as-the metaphysics of social relations is totally non-conscious,

there is a sense of the effects of the unnamable in Dahmer's positionality and resistance to this locatedness. There is a moment of lived borderline-consciousness and a reaction of resistance. However, his inclination to mechinofacing and carelessness did bias him to destruction on the order of mater. Learning to die is a step towards the possibility of replacing the homicidal strategy to surfacement and negative reproduction, in the midst of a tidal wave of erotic desires for the other, rising up as a new identity, copulation/ the newly born self.³¹

There is horror at Dahmer's means of surfacing, they are crude/blatant/oblivious; they show, the truth of terrible-power/domination/exploitation. But, there is no abhorrence, rather an **effluvial carnivoracity** at the mass murder of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi soldiers in desert storm in 1992. There is a vested interest in pulling the welfare safety-net from the unfortunate-single mothers, minorities and the homeless. Not to mention the

³¹ Timothy Maligalim Simone (1989, 163-191) maintains that "the end of racism means knowing how to die." He identifies modes of resistance against death, for example, wastefulness, death as real-difference, fearing loss of self-presence etc.

Charles Shively (1983, 151) states that "I think the issue is not the self-destructiveness of miscegenation nor by extension, the self destructiveness of homosexuality, masturbation or sexuality in general. The issue is rather the destruction of capitalism, middle-class culture and Western Civilization....Do not cry/Let Western Civilization die."

lame/disinterested attempt to combat aids or racial/gay/woman "bashing" and biases, to take a slice of power. The maneuvers of interests/desires in sovereign-government power formations are the legitimate sanitation of normality. However what should terrify us is the conjuncture of 'reification', metonymization and de-animation that presents an explosive articulation, naked violence, an **insighting sure of itself.**

When there is a strong libidinal contradiction with Home: being-in-origins, one has to learn to give up the 'post-modern' ambivalence that colludes with power; ambivalence/incoherence is not essentially destructive of oppressive power, there are possibilities, moments of 'productive' articulation. One has to **learn to die**, relinquish the socio-ontogenic drive, animate and create a new home. Such a re-directionality of drive in Dahmer's case would entail/require a de-facialization and loss of power-**desovereignization, a disloyalty to white civilization.**

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