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WOMEN AND MILITANCY: NARRATIVES FROM GUATEMALA, INDIA, AND SOUTH AFRICA

By

Basuli Deb

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ABSTRACT

WOMEN AND MILITANCY: NARRATIVES FROM GUATEMALA, INDIA, AND SOUTH AFRICA

By

Basuli Deb

Moving beyond the Subaltern Studies paradigm of negotiating national narratives between the state and its disenfranchised, this post Subaltern Studies dissertation makes three major arguments. The first asserts that the category of the "postcolonial woman" disputes the logic of revolutionary nationalist unity since the contest for power between the state and its insurgents is often played out over women. The next significant claim is that in the postcolonial context of human rights abuse during militancy the violated woman is not a passive victim to be rescued by imperialist interventions, but embodies the empowered return of the oppressed herself to counter such atrocities. Finally, this study contends that literary productions that narrate the postcolonial nation's violence against women can galvanize transnational human rights politics to restore justice to women. Disseminated in global circuits mediated by intellectuals, these stories are both testimonials of persecution and instances of activist solidarity for justice between the powerless and the empowered.

Bringing human rights discourse and feminism, both of which have often been marked as propagating Eurocentric liberal individualism, together with postcolonial theory, this dissertation foregrounds human rights concerns peculiar to postcolonial

women. The purpose is to understand how literature can revise the current frame of human rights discourse dominated by the male as the political actor, and hence the endangered target, that renders the political labor of women and the distinctively gendered effects of conflict on them invisible. The intersection of gender and the postcolonial nation-state is examined through geopolitically specific categories—indigeneity in Guatemala, caste in India, and post-apartheidism in South Africa. The first chapter which focuses on the testimonials I, Rigoberta Menchú and Crossing Borders argues for a human rights paradigm that recognizes sexual violence against women as a political weapon in conflict zones, and examines the unique interventions of the female leader in the state sanctioned genocide of the Mayans in Guatemala. Exploring the convict narratives India's Bandit Queen and The Bandit Queen of India, the second chapter studies the life of a lower caste woman bandit, bellicose against the anomalous caste-democracy of India, and questions the violent criminalization of such militant poor women. Chapter three discusses the viability of novels like David's Story and Mother to Mother in the struggle of women intellectuals against the discursive violence of post-apartheid South Africa which silences the narratives of the liberation movement's own violence against women. Finally, examining the national reconciliation projects of Guatemala, India, and South Africa, my dissertation asks if historical wrongs against women during revolution can at all be addressed by post-conflict nation-states. It explores if a more adequate forum for reconciling the rights of violated women with those of the state is transnational feminist politics, despite the need to guard such venues against the pitfalls of neo-imperialist impositions.

To all who taught me to feel the pain and the spirit of those on the losing end of life

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A dissertation like mine which studies the suffering and resistance of people at the threshold of human tolerance brings with it its own peculiar emotional demands on the researcher. In the bastion of institutionalized cognitive development—the Euro-American academia—the project of formal education markets a philosophy which stages emotional insights into an issue as inversely related to an intellectual grasp of it. Such an indoctrination refuses to acknowledge how emotions enhance cognition and vice versa, and hence the validity of emotional development itself within the academia. This isolates scholars whose research experience have pushed them beyond the bounds of cognitive mapping and market value of their research interests to embrace the intense upheavals of emotions that accompany intellectual understanding of issues. My work on human rights violations of women in zones of collective suffering was such an intense experience of writing from within the academia and the simultaneous alienation from the world of institutionalized research. Faced with this excruciating pain of birthing myself anew while I wrote, I anomalously turned to alternative spaces within the academia itself.

Without the sustenance to overcome the emotional pain of writing about the trauma of people at the bounds of human forbearance, this project would not have been completed. When almost no one around seemed to understand the toll this project was taking on my health, I turned to Lisa Davidson. Her gentle and generous guidance toward health realization and in centering me despite the ache of navigating through various states of mood and mind released fresh emotional energy and gave me clarity to carry on with the project. Off campus Annette Barton's ability to continue the work that Lisa had

begun to help me finish my dissertation was the long term sustaining factor behind my research and writing. Annette's empathy with me by virtue of being an MSU alumnus herself and her flexibility in accommodating my impromptu out of town trips forged a relationship between us beyond the boundaries of traditional health realization work.

One person without whom my research, my thinking, and hence this dissertation would never have taken the direction that they did was Michael Brandon Crow. My turbulent connection with him while he was a psychology intern at MSU and the clash of our respective disciplinary training led to an excruciating but necessary process of self-excavation. It was a process through which this dissertation and I myself were empowered to challenge not only disciplinary knowledge across the spectrum, but also institutionalized modes of cognitive research and thinking. Brandon's insistence on breaking down cognitive defenses to connect emotionally, his humanitarian work ethics to foreground the health of the researcher in the face of a high-pressure system which prioritizes high-powered research, and his ability to push me to uncover years of ideological conditioning about the demarcation between the personal and the professional has brought untold wisdom to the research and writing of a dissertation which has refused to be written according to the strict tenets of clockwork academic research. It was written only in moments of creative inspiration; it was written only when I could intensely sense the palpable pain of the characters that I was researching on. In other words, the writer in me remained unstifled by the researcher.

My guidance committee held my hand all through this difficult test of endurance. Their faith in me flagged never for once, even in the face of a daunting task of re-envisioning the entire project midway through writing it. In this regard I am more

indebted than words can express to my advisor Kenneth Harrow for his unquestioning acceptance of my decision to rewrite the project and his unconditional prioritizing of the interest of the project before the niceties of hierarchical decision-making. My admiration for such an advisor is uncontested. My gratitude to Salah Hassan for his bold and assertive move to step up as co-advisor of my dissertation when Ken was away in Senegal and take responsibility for helping me reimagine and boost the project is boundless. His ability to move back and let Jyotsna Singh help out whenever it was necessary was a tremendous positive influence on this challenging project. Jyotsna's quick insights into how the dissertation will move fast toward a conclusion and her ability to extend a supportive hand of friendship to a researcher in crisis was once again tested through her meetings with me over the winter and the summer breaks. Over the years my thinking has been influenced strongly by Scott Michaelsen's discussion on issues of social justice. Throughout the project Scott remained an influential friend and mentor on my committee, often negotiating between other committee members and me. His investment in my project was immense, but his ability to stand back and let the project move was exemplary.

Amidst all this the Dean of Graduate Studies, Karen Klomparens, was a tower of unconditional support and understanding, sometimes in the face of the incomprehensible logic of a foreign student who was operating according to the principles of an academic system back home. Tony Nunez, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, was a source of support in the pre-defense stage. In Judith Stoddart, the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies, I found an unfailing friend who stood by me during the trials of dealing with the intensity of a dissertation on human rights violations. Throughout my graduate career

Scott Juengel has remained a friend, philosopher, and guide, never for once turning me away from his door, more than once accommodating me unquestioningly in his impossible schedule to take the pressure off me.

This dissertation would never have attained the clarity of perception that it has if it had not been for my research on the ground in Guatemala and India. My debt to Carmen Camey who co-founded the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission will remain unforgotten. Her generous gesture to serve as my reference, escort, and interpreter to help me gain access to various government and non-government organizations paved the way for my highly successful research trip to Guatemala. Paul Menchu, the Director of the Rigoberta Menchú Foundation threw open the organization's archive to me as Marvyn Perez patiently, hour after hour, translated documents to me. Ileana Alamilla, the head of the alternative news agency, CERIGUA, whose journalists defied torture and death to resist state repression, even at the peak of the genocide, offered me perspectives on the revolution that no text or research material that I came across recorded. The hospitality and help that Miguel Ángel Albizures and Ruth de Valle of Alianza Contra la Impunidad extended to me for facilitating my research at their organization is a testimony to the unconditional commitment of Guatemalan human rights workers. Besides, Anabella Noreija and Gabriella Ostrich of Defensoria de la Mujer, Engma Azuzena Socoy of Defensoria de la Mujer Indigena, Christina Laur of CALDH—the legal action cell for human rights, Jorge Arriaga of SEDEM, Sandra Moran of Sector de Mujeres, and Jose Alberto of the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission accommodated me in their extremely demanding schedules. The warmth and welcome I received in Guatemala is inexplicable. For my research on the ground in India, I extend my deepest appreciation to

Kumarappa, the Assistant Librarian and Information Officer of the National Library in India, who went out of his way to extend personal help in facilitating my material collection. The welcoming environment of the Center for Studies in Social Sciences and the scholar-friendly attitude of its library staff were key factors in my very positive research experience in Kolkata. Raghu Chakraborty of APDR—Association for Protection of Democratic Rights—was dedicated in extending any help for research on human rights abuse in India. Mahasweta Devi's flexibility in accommodating me during my tight schedule in India speaks only of her grace, and once again attests to her intense commitment to the cause of the indigenous groups in India. At Delhi the Indian Law Institute Library proved a goldmine for my research. The Jawaharlal Nehru University library, the Nehru Memorial Museum archive, and the National Human Rights Commission also extended their services to facilitate my work. My research in Delhi would not have been so smooth without the help that Pritwish Dutta extended in acting as my escort. For my research on South Africa, Peter Limb, the bibliographer of African Studies at Michigan State University, proved an invaluable force and resource. Without his guidance, my work on South Africa would have taken much longer to complete.

Last but not the least, this dissertation would have remained a fantasy if not for the unquestioning faith of my parents in me, and their ability to let me go. Since the day I caught my flight as a foreign doctoral student to the United States, they have borne the agony of separation from an only child, sometimes for years together, when I did not go home during the breaks for fear of interrupting the intensity of my research and writing. Despite consistently realizing and reminding me of the effects of isolationist research, they put their best foot forward when I needed them, not only as parents, but as

experienced academics and mentors. During my research in India my father, Dhiren Deb, not only traveled with me during my research trips on a highly controversial topic in India, but also spent hours by my side skimming through research material to help me out. My transcontinental telephonic discussions with my mother who is a retired English professor generated ideas for my research and made the struggle so much easier. The sustenance that I drew from my phone conversations with my parents in India over all these years of doctoral study in the US cannot be recorded in words. But above all, I remain thankful to my parents for their emotional strength to understand a daughter whose research on a brutal topic had for years turned her into a complete stranger, their pride in my ability to endure the rigor and the strain of doing human rights work, and their belief in my springing back to LIFE once the dissertation would be done!

PREFACE

Though the category of oppression has been a major lens for doctoral research in literature departments within the United States academia, the study of the struggle for human rights through literature is an emergent dissertation genre. A critical approach to literary texts as public memorials that not only commemorate crimes against humanity, but also aim to galvanize social movements against such atrocities on collectives opens up possibilities for reading literature as a culture of resistance—as activism. However, having inherited a legacy of resistance to British colonialism by the accident of birth in post-independence India and into a revolutionary family, the logic of my postcolonial reading of human rights violations steers clear of much of Eurocentric human rights work which ends up strengthening the imperial claim that certain parts of the world are essentially violent, and hence need to be saved by the disciplined coalition of Euro-America. Instead, my dissertation traces the sustaining linkages between colonial and postcolonial violence. This methodology is crucial in contesting neo-imperialist invasions of the postcolonial world in the name of a protectionist ideology of intervention in human rights abuses without any attempt to address the unequal division of international labor. Such a division feeds the structural inequalities of postcolonial geopolitics that is more often than not the mainstay of postcolonial violence on women, as my dissertation has throughout argued. Last but not the least, though this dissertation on women's militancy against the continuum of colonial and postcolonial violence has challenged institutionalized units like the traditional family, the project was nonetheless inspired by the stories that I was an heiress to—the narratives that my mother handed down to me about the anti-colonial militancy of my grandmother against the British Raj in India.

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INTRODUCTION

Women and Militancy: Narratives from Guatemala, India, and South Africa studies the relationship between the postcolonial nation and its women in literary texts that map popular insurrection in the three diverse settings of Guatemala, India, and South Africa. However, in each case the intersection of the literary tropes of nation and gender are examined through different categories that have evolved out of the geopolitical and cultural milieu of each nation—indigeneity in the context of Guatemala, casteism in that of India, and post-apartheid democracy in that of South Africa. The basis of each case study is the narratives of or about militant women within armed struggle against state despotism directed at subjugating selected populations of the nation. By foregrounding, within people's revolution, human rights concerns linked particularly to being female, my project aims to address how women's insurgency within resistance movements can be located within a framework of human rights. This attempts to revise the myopic domain of human rights largely defined by the hegemonic image of the male as the political agent, thus rendering the female political actor invisible. My perspective of postcolonial feminist humanism will interrogate if state sovereignty can be reconciled with the rights of the fringe populations of the postcolonial nation around the specific issue of political women of disenfranchised groups.

The first major claim in this study is that the category of the "postcolonial woman" within militancy forecloses the possibility of a unified myth of revolutionary nationalism. Caught in the contest between state patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy, the female figure becomes symptomatic of the ideology of ownership of women that marks both the state and the revolution within projects of postcolonial

nationalism. As such, my dissertation challenges the power of the nation to prescribe the identities of the people solely in terms of national affiliations and argues for transnational forums of restorative justice for women in conflict zones.

The second significant argument in this dissertation is that though the figure of the postcolonial woman is a site of oppression, it also reconfigures itself as the site of resistance to that oppression. This claim is an attempt to resist the Eurocentric discourse on human rights violations in postcolonial contexts that often portrays the violated as victims needing to be rescued by Euro-American intervention. As a corollary of this resistance to imperialistic claims on postcolonial women, my work also contends and demonstrates how postcolonial violence on women is a legacy of colonial violence.

The final claim that my dissertation makes is that cultural productions about postcolonial violence on women can galvanize a global politics of women's human rights in the material world of activism by opening up avenues for transactions between the postcolonial nation and transnational feminism. The drive is obviously toward how texts, with their transnational readership, become sites of revitalization of the image of different victim groups as agents of their own history.

My enterprise can be seen as a post-Subaltern Studies project.[1] Subaltern Studies surfaced as a discipline in 1982 with the publication of the first volume of Subaltern Studies: Writings on South Asian History and Society. It attempted to alter the elitist official liberation history of India documented both by colonial British historians and

[1] The word "subaltern" first used by Antonio Gramsci—the Italian communist—in his Prison Notebooks denotes an emergent class as opposed to the elite or dominant groups in power. See Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, eds. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

postcolonial Indian historians who had strong ideological and class alliances with the British Raj. South Asian Subaltern Studies ventured "to rewrite the history of colonial India from the distinct and separate point of view of the masses, using unconventional or neglected sources in popular memory, oral discourse, previously unexamined colonial administrative documents" (Said vi).[2] The Latin American Subaltern Studies Group, which emerged in 1992 having modeled itself on the South Asian Subaltern Studies Collective, also asserted how the histories of the disenfranchised are overwritten by the governing discourses of statism. But it approached this discursive gap differently: "While the South Asian Subaltern Collective was criticizing the postcolonial liberal state and the nationalist independence and the anticolonialist movements from the Left, we were criticizing leftist states and party organizations for their liberalism. It was the same question attacked from pre- and postrevolutionary fronts" (Rodriguez 3-4). The aftermath of the Soviet collapse and the positions of women and indigenous peoples within anti-imperialist and nationalist movements of the left led to the disillusionment of Latin American Subaltern Studies with the Marxist tradition. Though there is no identifiable Subaltern Studies scholarship on Africa, a tradition of South African Subaltern Studies can be gleaned from the accumulating critique of the very foundation of post-apartheid national unity—the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Commission is said to have synthesized a truth about apartheid in league with the political goals of the militant resistance group--ANC (African National Congress),

[2] In 1988, by injecting the woman question into the hermeneutics of the field, Gayatri Spivak's interventionist essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" forced South Asian Subaltern Studies to interrogate its own elitist negation of gender. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture, eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988) 271-313.

thereby silencing narratives of betrayal by the post-apartheid state headed by ANC. The most scathing among such critiques are perhaps works like Mahmood Mamdani's "Amnesty or Impunity? A Preliminary Critique of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (TRC)" and "The Truth according to the TRC." My project attempts to go beyond the Subaltern Studies mode of negotiating national narratives between the state and its subalterns. It argues that a Subaltern Studies framework remains trapped in preserving the paradigm of the nation-state rather than theorizing a possibility for just governance of all citizens. Moving past such a paradigm of the nation to that of the 'trans-nation,' my post-Subaltern Studies project examines transnational fictional narratives about postcolonial violence on women as well as testimonials produced collaboratively between elite activist-writers and dispossessed women in postcolonial conflict zones. My enterprise also explores how such narratives about state sanctioned human rights violations of women and their dissent against the state can be positioned within an argument that tries to negotiate between the postcolonial claim to national sovereignty with respect to internal dissent and the transnational contention of global justice, and hence the privilege of intervention in crimes against humanity. The analytical frame of human rights that my work brings into conjunction with my post Subaltern Studies methodology is that of collective human rights rather than individual human rights. Hence, the focus is on the rights of social groups.[3] A classical liberal theory of individual human rights contests "the statist perspective of the inviolable sovereignty of the nation-state" (Felice 25) by placing the individual subject of liberal humanism above the nation-state as a free-floating atomistic monad, unattached to any

[3] For an understanding of collective human rights, see William F. Felice, Taking Suffering Seriously: The Importance of Collective Human Rights (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

group claims. On the other hand, a theory of collective human rights locates the individual as part of a suffering group whose collective claims are above that of the nation-state. As such, transnational social movements become a means of pushing the collective claims of suffering groups onto a global civil society.[4]

My choice of literary texts specifically about Guatemala, India, and South Africa as nodes of analysis vis-à-vis human rights concerns of dissident populations has been strongly influenced by the global political scenario from the 1980s to the present. Published in 1983, I, Rigoberta Menchú is the testimonial of the indigenous leader from Guatemala, Rigoberta Menchú. It catapulted the Mayan Indian resistance to the Guatemalan state onto the international podium, and became an iconic human rights text about indigenous self-determination. In 1992 Menchú was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace, and the UN declared 1993 as the International Year of the Indian Peoples. Menchú was selected as the Goodwill Ambassador for the year. The years 1994 to 2003 were proclaimed by the UN as the International Decade for the Indigenous Peoples and Menchú was appointed as its spokesperson. Crossing Borders, published in 1998, is a sequel to I, Rigoberta Menchú that recounts Menchú's experiences as an indigenous woman in global leadership of the aboriginal peoples. The context of India is seminal to an understanding of caste-based discrimination. Though casteism affects other countries, its discussion in the international arena has mainly been blocked by the Indian government. Nonetheless, in 2000 the UN passed a resolution against "Discrimination on the Basis of Work and Descent."[5] At the WCAR (World Conference Against Racism,

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[4] Felice 99.

[5] See Peter Prove, "Working Paper on Discrimination On The Basis Of Work And Descent: Call for submissions," online posting, 6 Nov. 2000 <http://www.ambedkar.org/UN/WorkingPaper.htm>.

Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance) between August 27 and September 1, 2001 the issue was staged for the first time at the UN. This came in the wake of the assassination on July 25, 2001 of Phoolan Devi, a militant bandit chief turned political leader of lower-caste Indians. India's Bandit Queen and The Bandit Queen of India explore the revolt of lower caste Hindu women of India against a democracy which anomalously upholds a Brahminical ideology.[6] The crucial importance of South Africa lies in that its liberation from white racial oligarchy on April 26, 1994 marked the end of apartheid. The UN General Assembly had adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in December 1960, and in 1962 a Special Committee on Apartheid had been created to deal with the racial practices of the Republic of South Africa.[7] However, South Africa remained the last country in Africa to be freed from racial apartheid, and in its violent transition to non-racial democracy some South Africans in the post-apartheid state came to be defined as more "authentic national

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[6] In the Hindu pyramid of castes in India the Brahmins or the priestly caste is at the apex of the caste system, followed by the Kshatriyas or kings. The Vaishyas or merchants form the next step in the pyramid and the Shudras, comprised of laborers and artisans, make up the lowest caste within the hierarchy. Stigmatized by the kind of labor they performed, the scavengers found no place within the Hindu caste pyramid and became the untouchables or the outcastes. They are identified as the Dalits in contemporary India. Despite the fact that the constitution of postcolonial India banned untouchability and put in place affirmative action policies for the Shudras and the Dalits, caste discrimination still prevails in India today.

[7] See Roger S. Clark, "Human Rights Strategies of the 1960s Within the United Nations: A Tribute to the Late Kamleshwar Das," Human Rights Quarterly 21.2 (1999): 316-317.

subjects" than others.[8] ANC's masculinist nationalism strived to construct a new South Africa by silencing the testimonials of pain that Sindiwe Magona's Mother to Mother and Zoe Wicomb's David's Story portray.

All the texts that my project involves can be positioned against the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985). A World Plan of Action for the Decade impelled the UN General Assembly into adopting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1979. With women on the international human rights agenda, a plethora of women-centered texts were published both by scholarly and non-scholarly, feminist and mainstream presses. My project draws on such texts published between 1983 and 2003. The women in development agenda of the UN Decade for Women also saw the initiation of a dialogue between women of the "North" and those of the "South." In July 1985 at the Non-Governmental World Conference of Women in Nairobi women researchers and activists from developing nations presented a report--Development Crises and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspective. In it they underlined that in addition to the weight of cultural and political processes through which women across the world have less access to resources for development, the poor women of the postcolonial South bore the heritage of colonialism. With the establishment of a transnational feminist dialogue around the impoverished women of developing countries, the publishing industries in both the North

[8] Ivor Chipkin, in her study of the violent conflicts in three South African townships, through a perspective which distinguishes between the nation and a democratic community, defines the members of a nation as "authentic national subjects" who may also be citizens with democratic rights and the members of a democratic community who merely are citizens with democratic rights but who do not bear the national mission like authentic national subjects. See Ivor Chipkin, "Nationalism As Such: Violence during South Africa's Political Transition," Public Culture 16.2 (2004): 316.

and the South disseminated accounts of and about these women.[9] Among these many were about gender linked violence against women and aimed at redefining the patriarchal epistemology of human rights itself from within a feminist paradigm. By raising human rights concerns typical to postcolonial women within political resistance, my project intends to situate itself within this revisionist paradigm of women's rights as human rights.

Women and Militancy: Narratives from Guatemala, India, and South Africa is divided into three chapters which are framed by an introduction and a conclusion. This introductory chapter lays down the schematic overview of the project and its claims and locates it at the intersection of postcolonialism, feminism, and human rights. It positions my post-Subaltern Studies project with respect to Subaltern Studies, attempting to provide a corrective paradigm to the latter. By situating the literary texts in the global political scenario of the 1980s to the present, this chapter justifies why this project draws on primary texts which are particularly about the postcolonial contexts of Guatemala, India, and South Africa. The introduction locates my project vis-à-vis the UN Decade for women, thereby underlining the revisionist paradigm of women's rights as human rights which make up the critical scaffold of the project. Finally, the chapter highlights the key points and the specific claims in each chapter which lead to a coherent argument that underwrites the whole project.

Through a reading of I, Rigoberta Menchú and Crossing Borders, the first chapter of this dissertation, "The Fourth World Revolution: Indigenous Women's Testimonials,"

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[9] For this history of Third World women's intervention into the UN Decade for Women, I am indebted to Pietilla and Vickers. See Hilkka Pietilla and Jeanne Vickers, Making Women Matter: The Role of the United Nations (London & New Jersey: Zed Books), 1990.

examines the particular configuration of Mayan women within the contest between indigenous self-determination of the Mayan Indians of Guatemala and the sovereignty of the Guatemalan military state. The chapter attempts to feminize the present masculinist epistemologies of revolution through a study of the literary and political representations of indigenous women's leadership in guerrilla narratives about postcolonial Guatemala. The subaltern position shared across locations of militancy between the female leader and the masses is explored through the portrayal of the sexual atrocities of rape and forced impregnation of Mayan women during the state's counterinsurgency genocide against the indigenous population. However, my reading of the themes of revolutionary maternity and ecological activism emphasizes how the figure of the Mayan woman returns to contest her victim status and reclaim herself as the agent of her own history. National reconciliation between state patriarchy and revolutionary patriarchy which follow internal dissent often involve an ideology of concession that includes forgetting the traumatic past of indigenous women. Such schemes not only legitimize as natural the gender-specific oppression of women during mutiny, but also co-opt indigenous resistance into the status-quo, in the process re-congealing national sovereignty. By opting for texts like I, Rigoberta Menchú and Crossing Borders that replace the leadership of the indigenous patriarchy by staging the indigenous woman as the militant leader of the revolution, my dissertation intends to circumvent the rubric of a compromise between the national patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy based on a politics of forgetting. My project claims that an analysis of indigenous movements against state repression needs to refrain from legitimizing the category of the nation by locating popular insurgency at the intersection of Fourth World transnational revolution and global feminist cultural politics.

Such a paradigm will enable human rights discourse and politics to address the gendered violations of indigenous women within revolutions from within a feminist epistemology of Fourth Worldism rather than from within an ideology of national compromise. Thus, unlike Latin American Subaltern Studies, my work does not merely problematize the status of women and indigenous people within left nationalist movements that resist the colonial legacy of imperialism. It offers an alternative possibility for indigenous women's activism by relocating indigenous insurgency from within the revolutionary left to a transnational Fourth World politics of feminism.

My second chapter, "The Global Movement Against Discrimination: Lower Caste Women's Convict Narratives" is an analysis of India's Bandit Queen and The Bandit Queen of India. This chapter explores the violent criminalization of resistant lower caste women who challenge Brahminical power-structures like the caste system that remain anomalously interlaced with the cultural base of the constitutional democracy of India. Such violence is upheld both by the structures aligned to the nation-state like family, marriage, law, and the penal system as well as those mutinous ones beyond the pale of the nation-state's law like banditry. Sifting through the characters of the girl child and the concubine offers insights into the logic and effect of caste violence in this incongruous caste-conscious democracy. Nonetheless, in a colossal comeback the lower caste woman revitalizes herself as the warrior goddess and the border-crossing feminist to not only militate against caste injustice within the nation, but also to resituate caste marked human rights violations on the global map of discrimination based on work and descent. The violence experienced by lower caste, outcaste, and non-Hindu tribal women in India is structured by a caste system that is a vestige of precolonial feudalism and that which has

been diversified in its manifestations by a bureaucracy left as a legacy of the colonial administration. By engaging in revolutionary politics against caste hierarchy, women like Phoolan Devi have violated the cultural order of Hinduism as well as the privileged status of masculinity within politics. The punishment for tainted political women like Phoolan Devi who transgress their caste and gender boundaries is criminalization. In selecting works in which lower caste women figure as insurgent leaders against casteism, this chapter seeks to underline the double bind of caste and gender politics—a bind which argues that caste based abuse against women in India cannot be addressed through a framework of national reconciliation between the state patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy. Moreover, the chapter contends that casteism itself needs to be positioned within an international framework of discrimination rather than within a national framework of Hindu culture. My project claims that a study of the violations of lower class women within political struggle against the state should be located at the junction of a discourse against discrimination based on work and descent and one of transnational feminist politics. Such a discursive field will enable human rights to define an epistemology of justice for lower caste women, equipped to resist a common front Indian patriarchy which co-opts brutalized yet resistant female bodies through an ideology of state protection offered to the lower castes during national reconciliation. Thus, my work intends to transcend the paradigm of South Asian Subaltern Studies which merely critiques the bourgeois nationalism of the anti-colonialist independence movement and the failures of the postcolonial Indian democracy to offer just governance to all its citizens. In my post Subaltern Studies reading the category of caste has returned to forge new opportunities for progressive politics through transnational political citizenship.

The third chapter, "The Supranational Struggle for Desegregation: Women's Post-Apartheid Resistance Novels," focuses on Mother to Mother and David's Story. Through the theme of masculinist nationalism and its variant of womanist nationalism, the chapter questions the very notion of truth in the South African national reconciliation hearings through which certain kinds of violence against women during the apartheid era were suppressed by the post-conflict nation building project. The project of national catharsis foregrounded spectacular violence and silenced the deep structural violence in the everyday lives of South African women. Moreover, the reconciliation scheme individualized victims and perpetrators of human rights violations during the apartheid regime into two distinct categories, thereby muting the patriarchal violence against women which marked the revolution itself. However, through the transnational figures of the writer and the research scholar, my chapter underscores how these stories are resuscitated. The supranational discursive militancy of transnational writers of South African heritage like Sindiwe Magona and Zoe Wicomb as well as that of scholars from postcolonial cultures researching in the metropoles of the world unleash these muted stories of national embarrassment onto the visible forum of a transnational feminist politics. Thus, such feminist hermeneutics cuts across the national reconciliation mission that scripts "his story" of the post-apartheid state and chronicles the traces of "her story" left by the gaps and silences within the national archive. My post-Subaltern Studies work claims that such a discursive politics aims to challenge the post-apartheid rhetoric of the "nation" replacing it with the global governance category of the 'inter-nation' in which feminist gender politics remains insubordinate to the patriarchal politics of the state, contesting through a common front feminism the boundaries of the nation which repress

the narratives of national shame. A fledgling field of African Subaltern Studies can be defined around a critique of post-conflict national reconciliation. Recognizing texts as sites which generate discursive resistance, my post-Subaltern Studies project extricates the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from the political grip of the post-apartheid state to question its premises from the perspective of a supranational struggle against both raced and gendered segregation.

Without forgetting the dangers of foreign intervention in domestic politics, the conclusion attempts to provide a corrective to a human rights paradigm in which the nation-state remains the basis of just governance. Critiquing the national reconciliation projects of Guatemala, India, and South Africa vis-à-vis the categories of indigeneity, caste, and apartheid, the conclusion foregrounds the project of transnational justice through the Pinochet trial. However, my postcolonial conceptualization of transnational justice for women differs significantly from the "Pinochet paradigm" which allows for the legal intervention of the courts of any country in the internal justice system of another country in situations of crimes against humanity. A postcolonial understanding of transnational justice for women neither ignores the possibilities of imperialist intervention in the name of justice for violated women, nor the likelihood of proprietorial tyranny over women by the state as well as the revolution against the state.

CHAPTER ONE
The Fourth World Revolution: Indigenous Women's Testimonials

I. Introduction

This chapter specifically examines the literary and political representations of the subaltern position shared across locations of militancy by the testimonial self of the militant indigenous female leader and the Mayan masses in the guerrilla narratives of I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala and its sequel Crossing Borders. This contention is complicit with the theoretical frame of the larger project of this dissertation. In this chapter rape and forced impregnation serve as significant tropes that define subalternity as a link between the woman leader and the masses. However, the collective politics troped as "revolutionary maternity"[1] and ecological activism are keys to an understanding of the resistance that emerges from within the ranks of indigenous women to such sites of violent marginalization. The project addresses the crucial issue of transnational or transethnic solidarity politics around texts produced collaboratively between subaltern women and their transcultural mediators, in spite of the unequal power relationship between them. Through such a selection of literary texts that foreground the indigenous woman as the militant leader, this chapter makes a gesture of resistance against locating testimonials of indigenous self-determination vis-à-vis state repression in a post-insurgency frame of national reconciliation between the state patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy. Such reconciliations are based on a politics of forgetting the traumatic past of the nation's women and its masses, and thus they co-opt indigenous

[1] See Ileana Rodríguez, Women, Guerrillas, and Love: Understanding War in Central America, trans. Ileana Rodríguez and Robert Carr (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) 160.

militancy into the status quo, thereby re-congealing state sovereignty. Instead, this chapter avoids validating the category of the nation and attempts to feminize the existing epistemologies of revolution against the nation-state by situating guerrilla texts about popular insurrection in a Fourth World episteme of global feminist cultural politics.

II. History of the Revolution: The "Small Voice" of Mayan Women

In "The Small Voice of History" Ranajit Guha cites how the male leadership's account of the Telengana People's Struggle (1948-51)[2] in India erased the "small voice" of its female participants.[3] Guha asks: "But suppose there were a historiography that regarded 'what the women were saying' as integral to its project, what kind of a history would it write?" (11). For Guha, in a revisionist history of popular insurgency that integrates the small voice of female political actors, women are agents rather than "passive beneficiaries" of the movement whose voices once heard will galvanize and make audible the other small voices. The other small voices of children and the masses do resonate in harmony when the small voice of Mayan women is activated in the following rewriting of the history of the guerrilla insurgency of the indigenous people in Guatemala.[4]

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[2] The Telengana People's Struggle was the armed guerrilla resistance of peasants waged against the feudal oppression by the Muslim ruler of the Nizam dynasty and the Hindu landlords of Hyderabad in south India.

[3] Sacrificing the discursive authenticity of myriad revolutionary voices for the unity of the struggle, the avant-garde narrative replicated the homogeneity of a statist discourse that refuses to hear the "small voice" of the people. Ranajit Guha, "The Small Voice of History," Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society, eds. Shahid Amin and Dipesh Chakrabarty (New Delhi: OUP India, 1996) 8-9.

[4] While researching in Guatemala in the summer of 2004 and in the United States after that I could find no historical texts pertaining exclusively to the activism of indigenous women during the insurgency and the counterinsurgency in Guatemala. So, to incorporate the "small voice" of Mayan women in the history of the civil war I was largely dependent on truth commission reports and on feminist anthropology.

In the nineteenth century indigenous communal lands were seized by the Guatemalan government for redistributing them to coffee plantation owners for promoting coffee export. Again, in the twentieth century communal lands were reallocated to the US enterprise—the United Fruit Company—for banana plantations. This was symptomatic of Guatemala's bid to join the free market economy.[5] The Mayan revolution against the Guatemalan state started as an armed struggle over appropriated indigenous land. The thirty-four years (1962-1996) of civil war culminated in a state-sponsored genocide of the Mayan Indian population. The Report of the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) records 42,275 victims. Of the fully identified victims eighty-percent were Mayan and seventeen percent were Ladino (18).[6] Ninety-three percent of the human rights violations that CEH documented were state-sponsored (20). A quarter of these were women who were

> killed, tortured, and raped, sometimes because of their ideals and political and social participation, sometimes in massacres or other indiscriminate actions. Thousands of women lost their husbands, becoming widows and the sole breadwinners for their children, often with no material resources after the scorched earth policies resulted in the destruction of their homes and crops. (23)

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[5] For my understanding of the relationship between the indigenous insurgency and the Guatemalan oligarchy's attempt at modernizing Guatemala I am indebted to the works of Cambranes and Dosal. Julio Castellanos Cambranes, Coffee and Peasants: The Origins of the Modern Plantation Economy in Guatemala, 1853-1897, rev. Carla Clason-Hook, (Guatemala City, Guatemala: University of San Carlos, 1985) and Paul J. Dosal, Doing Business with the Dictators: A Political History of United Fruit in Guatemala 1899-1944 (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1993).

[6] Ladino implies someone of mixed Indian and Spanish heritage. Today any Guatemalan who has rejected Mayan Indian values, irrespective of individual economic status, is called a ladino. Rigoberta Menchú, I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala, trans. Ann Wright, ed. Elisabeth Burgos-Debray (London and New York: Verso, 1984) 249.

More often women were the ones to be left behind after counterinsurgency attacks on suspected guerrillas in which their fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons were destroyed or disappeared. Nevertheless, through their collective gender-based experiences within political repression many of these Mayan women fashioned political spaces for the emergence of a new indigenous feminism. Surfacing as political protagonists of the Guatemalan nation, these women's organized struggle against impunity came to be read as structured and staged social movements. Widows who comprised a large social sector affected by violence came together to form CONAVIGUA—National Coordination of Guatemalan Widows. Their demands went "beyond the search for relatives to protest the militarization of the countryside and particularly, forced recruitment [of indigenous people by the army]" (REMHI 85). In 1984 two dozen people, mostly women, formed GAM--Mutual Support Group. Its membership consists of

> relatives of some of the estimated 42 thousand people who "disappeared" in Guatemala over the past three decades. [. . .] They went to government offices to demand that the authorities investigate crimes against their families. [. . .] As they marched in silence every Friday in front of the national palace with placards bearing the photos of those who had disappeared, they ruptured the official silence, bearing testimonies with their own bodies about those who have vanished. (Green 240)

The revolution also saw indigenous women like Rigoberta Menchú playing out their leadership roles on the global stage through their testimonials about the war. Challenging "official histories of Guatemala and romantic representations of Maya women," these guerrilla texts, with their international readership, became sites of revitalization of the

image of Mayan women as agents of their own history: "Rigoberta's standing in the world community as Maya, female, and campesina [rustic] was transformed by her book and multiple speaking engagements in Europe and the United States. Thus, Rigoberta came to represent the antithesis of stereotypes of Maya women as silent, traditional, static, without politics, and without agency" (Sanford, "From *I, Rigoberta*" 17). However, the testimonial self of the indigenous female leader never constructs herself as an elite vanguard alienated from the insurgent masses. Rather, she forges a political space for solidarity not only between women guerrillas and the indigenous masses, but also between women guerrillas and the transethnic mediators of their narratives.

III. Scaffold for Textual Analysis: Women, Guerrilla War, and Testimonials

The critical scaffold of this chapter brings into conjunction the discourses of postcolonialism, feminism, and human rights to examine subalternity as a mode of activism against state repression through narratives of female leadership within common-front politics. My readings of women's guerrilla narratives in this section draw on contemporary critical perspectives in Feminist Guerrilla Studies, Latin American Subaltern Studies, and *Testimonio* Studies.

I attempt to resist the hierarchical logic of patriarchy in insurgency literature that constitutes the revolutionary vanguard as male, and women and the collective as mere instruments of social transformation. Examining the very different literary representation of power by cultures of insurrection when women occupy the political frontier, my work argues for the democratization of revolutionary power. Such an egalitarian paradigm is based on a reconfiguration of subalternity in which the revolutionary vanguard and the collective share a peripheral social location that becomes a site for solidarity politics. The

discursive frame of my analysis draws on Women, Guerrillas, and Love: Understanding War in Central America by Ileana Rodríguez. In her work she offers a consequential critique of the epistemic violence operative in the masculinist literary tradition of twentieth century Central American guerrilla texts which depict women "now as 'repose of the warrior,' now as 'revolutionary pussy.' " Rodríguez contends: "since women are located in the same discursive and geographic spaces as people, masses, and bases, the site of woman draws attention to the typology of political ideology that (re)constitutes "democracies" as autocracies" (xvii). As opposed to this received tradition of guerrilla narratives based on a hierarchical relationship between men and women/masses within collective politics, Rodríguez understands the feminist methodologies of women constituting women as "solidarity in affinity"—a paradigm in which the revolutionary woman is an ally of the masses, sharing a common cultural context of repression with them (168). The subsequent sections portraying sexual violence on women during genocide and transgressive sites of women's militancy which challenge such brutality will draw on this democratic paradigm to examine the relation in which the militant female leader stands vis-à-vis the masses. For Rodríguez, the crucial signifier of the democratization of the revolutionary process is the recognition of female eroticism: "what we women still dream of is a sincere acceptance of our sexuality and freedom of choice, expressed mainly as our possession of our bodies—womb, vagina, and brains. We want to make the personal political, to write our rights to our own bodies into the legislation" (xxi). What we have here is not only the desire for the sanctioning of woman as revolutionary subject, but also an appeal for the enfranchisement of women's sexuality within politics. Rodríguez summarizes: "My argument is that the casting of women as

corpse, and the gradual exclusion of love from literature, signals the nation-state's deconstruction, and the people's de-nationalization—the representation of love for women and love for country operating in tandem" (xix). Nevertheless, Rodríguez's emphasis remains on reading the nationalist nature of contemporary Central American literature which entwines "the fates of nations, women, and the people in the process of revolutionary nation-building" (xxv). In sharp distinction to this conflation of the trope of woman with that of nationhood, in my work the category of the nation as a venue of justice for women and other subalterns is called into question. Moreover, whereas Rodríguez urges for the legitimization of women's sexuality within revolutionary discourse through the acknowledgment of their desire for romantic love, in my work the female body figures in the trope of state sanctioned sexual violence against indigenous women through rape and forced impregnation. The discursive recognition of the gendered torture of women during repression contests the male-defined norms of human rights discourse that renders the female political subject invisible.[7]

This chapter is directed at comprehending how testimonial literature of cultures in revolution helps them to establish sites of resistance against structures of state terror to move toward defining an epistemology of justice. For examining this futuristic drive of testimonials, I draw on Victoria Sanford's Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala which is a study in forensic anthropology of the state sponsored genocide of the indigenous Mayans. Sanford examines how post-conflict justice can be constructed from collective local memory through testimonials that remember, retell, and historicize

[7] In the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment adopted in 1984 the universal masculine pronoun defines the legal subject of torture as male. Charlotte Bunch, "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights," The Politics of Human Rights, ed. Obrad Savić (London & New York: Verso, 1999) 39.

violence. A crucial intervention in human rights discourse, Sanford's anthropological exhumations are also excavations of the collective truth of the Mayan Indian experience of violence and terror as the unearthed relics are contextualized against eye-witness accounts of the genocide. The North American anthropologist's field-work and the act of generating discursive evidence of injustice from it becomes a practice in transnational solidarity with the violated community. Just as the exhumations symbolize the regaining of indigenous agency through the "retaking of public space" (17), similarly "giving of individual testimony represents an expansion of both potential and real individual agency that, in the collectivity of testimonies, creates new political space for local community action" (72). Sanford's work offers a valuable theoretical perspective on the interplay between memory, violence, and truth telling as a process of healing the collective trauma of a community. The exhumations and testimonies of the "living memory of terror" were part of the research project of the Commission for Historical Clarification that formed the basis of national reconciliation between the state and the URNG guerrillas.[8] This was integral to Guatemala's transition from the violence of authoritarian statism to the justice of popular democracy. The forensic anthropologist's methodological understanding of testimonials as generative of political spaces for survivor communities to reclaim their human rights through solidarity politics between the subaltern testifier and her ethnographer becomes a significant lens for my analysis of guerrilla testimonials as sites of common-front politics. However, unlike Sanford's work which imagines an economy of post-conflict justice for the indigenous through national reconciliation via truth-telling,

[8] Sanford identifies seven phases of violence which she refers to as the "phenomenology of terror": premassacre community organizing and experiences with violence, the massacre, post-massacre life in flight in the mountains, army captures and community surrenders, model villages, ongoing militarization of community life, and the living memory of terror. Victoria Sanford, Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 123.

my analysis of violence asserts that the category of the nation is inadequate for restoring justice to women of the nation and all those who share her subaltern subjectivity.

National reconciliations, being negotiations between the state patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy for preserving the category of the nation, re-crystallize state power since such reconciliations are based on a politics of forgetting the painful past of the people. In her introduction to The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader Ileana Rodríguez underlines that acts of speaking for the people are "unfortunately pervasive not only in liberal nationalist projects but also in those organized in the name of socialism" (3). In fact, the inclusion of the subaltern voice in ventures of the left like that of the Guatemalan insurgency to enunciate a common-front politics between the elites of the left and the subalterns becomes the project of Latin American Subaltern Studies. However, my post-Subaltern Studies project is an endeavor to go past the Latin American Subaltern Studies paradigm of left nationalist projects to re-imagine the "trans-nation" as the site for just governance of the subaltern.[9] I argue that women's testimonials are opposed to the narrative genre of national truth commissions that enable reconciliations merely between the fathers of the state and the fathers of the revolution. In fact, the genre of testimonials which testifies to state atrocities against a collective before a global readership is a significant medium for enabling justice for the nation's women and the masses through Fourth World venues of transnational politics.

[9] I use the word "re-imagine" to enforce my awareness of both Beverley's and Rodríguez's deconstructive reading of the trans-nation as the site for the flow of global capital which is both the pre-condition for and challenge to subalternization. See John Beverley, Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth, (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2004) 8-12 and Ileana Rodríguez, Women, Guerrillas, and Love: Understanding War in Central America, trans. Ileana Rodríguez and Robert Carr, (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) xviii. Also see Footnote 8.

For my contention I draw on John Beverley's critical paradigm of the Latin American postcolonial *testimonio* as an activist practice. Beverley's Against Literature and Testimonio are crucial to my understanding of this aspect of the genre. In Testimonio the author argues that the genre "is located at the intersection of the cultural forms of bourgeois humanism, like literature and the printed book, engendered by the academy and colonialism and imperialism, and subaltern cultural forms" (52). He claims that by staging the voice of the voiceless, narratives like I, Rigoberta Menchú assert "the authority of oral culture against processes of cultural modernization and transculturation that privilege literacy and written literature as norms of expression." Furthermore "as an *énoncé*—that is, as something materialized in the form of a transcript or text" it extends "what counts as expression in civil society" (19). Hence, by articulating gender specific atrocities against women by the state, testimonials inject the subaltern female voice into the public sphere, both at the national as well as the global levels. Beverley contends: "[Since] [t]he situation of the narrator in testimonio must be representative (in both the mimetic and the legal-political senses) of a larger social class or group" (Against Literature 74), the powerful textual assertion of the testimonial voice "evokes an absent polyphony of other voices" (75). Beverley's emphasis is on the reality-effect of the testimonial produced by its constructed nature as an "aesthetic-ideological" tool for political propaganda. This is in sharp distinction to the claim that testimonio embodies the real and hence the singular truth of the referent. In Beverley's words:

> the presence of a "real" subaltern voice in the testimonio is in part an illusion; we are dealing here—as in any discursive medium—with an effect that has been produced, in the case of a testimonio by both the direct narrator—using devices of

> an oral storytelling tradition—and the compiler, who, according to literary norms of narrative form and decorum, makes a text out of the material (81).

However, such solidarity work between the narrator and the compiler is not free from complications. Because of the lack of writing ability of the narrator (74), educated mediators of oral testimonies who are often positioned differently in the racial and geopolitical power structure "begin to enter into direct relation with the forms of political agency of subaltern social groups" (18). In Testimonio Beverley forcefully summarizes the potential for violence in such crossover alliances:

> In its very situation of enunciation, which separates radically the subject positions of the emitter and the receiver, testimonio is a form of the dialectic of oppressor and oppressed, involved in and constructed out of its opposing terms: master/slave, literature/oral narrative and song, metropolitan/national, European/indigenous or African, elite/popular, urban/rural, intellectual/manual work. (60)

Nevertheless, the argument is that despite being generated by political solidarities fraught with tension, the genre of testimonial is a form of global cultural politics that challenges hegemonic structural relations that the alliances themselves embody:

> In the creation of the testimonial text, information and control of representation do not just flow one way: someone like Rigoberta Menchú is also manipulating her metropolitan interlocutor in order to have her story reach and influence an international audience, something that, as an activist for her community, she sees in quite utilitarian terms as a political task." (Against Literature 80)

Testimonio engages the reader's "standards of ethics and justice in a speech-act situation that requires response. [. . .] Testimonio in this sense has been important in maintaining and developing the practice of human rights and solidarity movements, both within regions and countries and in transnational circuits of cultural representation" (78). The global circuits of production, distribution, and consumption of Menchú's testimonial did indeed activate an international recognition of the indigenous cause of self-determination, culminating in her Nobel Peace prize in 1992.

In Testimonio Beverley argues how the reading of testimonials itself as human rights discourse has been transformed. Beverley states: "Generally speaking, protagonists of testimonio in the Cold War years, like myself, saw it as a narrative form linked closely to national liberation movements and other social struggles inspired by Marxism." The author adds that he continues to see in testimonio a way to re-imagine the identity of the nation. But there is also another contemporary trend of interpreting the testimonio: "[t]oday the context in which testimonio is read and debated is not the Cold War but globalization, not a bipolar world but one dominated by U.S. military and geopolitical hegemony, not national liberation movements or big Communist parties but the so-called new social movements, often operating at sub- or supranational levels" (x). Though I draw on Beverley's work, my reading of Menchú's testimonials diverges from his understanding of the genre in that I read testimonio against social movements that link the subnational and the supranational. Beverley resists the contextualization of testimonio against subnational and supranational social movements because he asserts that such a critical scaffolding of the genre assumes that the flow of global capital, which deconstructs national borders resulting in transnational alliances, is the necessary

precondition for the mobilization of the subaltern. He argues that global capital is rather both the precondition for subalternization of labor and the premise for challenging such subalternization. For Beverley, the frame of the nation-state is crucial for disrupting the hegemony of global capital (8-12). Through its differential relation with the identity politics of the state, the subaltern " 'interrupts' the 'modern' narrative of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, the formation and consolidation of the nation-state, and the teleological passage through the different stages of capitalism (merchant, competitive, monopoly, imperialist, now global)" (Testimonio 18). My attempt, on the other hand, is to inject the gender question into the race and class question of subalternity in a context where the genocidal activities of the Guatemalan state against the indigenous Mayans is networked closely with the capitalistic ambitions of a Cold War US in a contest for global hegemony. In my work the nation and global capital are not oppositional categories, but form a resistant alliance that perpetrates the silencing of gender related physical and psychological violence by both the state patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy within national borders. Other defiant coalitions like that of women and the masses across locations of militancy, connecting the subnational indigenous and the supranational global elites, can provide points of intervention into women's human rights violations that challenge the category of the nation itself by highlighting its inability to include subaltern voices in a meaningful way even in post-conflict reconciliations.

Beverley argues that though the political and the ethical-legal aspects of testimonio sometimes overlap (xvii), the genre is linked to the political identity of the nation rather than to the ethical-legal conceptualization of human rights. Nonetheless, despite Beverley's contention that his choice of I, Rigoberta Menchú as a representative

testimonial for his analysis of the genre was guided by his feminist sympathies (xi), his theorization of the genre refuses to examine how his reading of testimonio, through the rubric of the postcolonial nation-state, addresses the specific issue of gender and left nationalism. On the contrary, my point of entry into the analysis is the category of women and the ethical-legal dimensions of human rights violations of women and children (read as the masses) in the contest for ethno-nationalism. Vis-à-vis women and children, my work goes on to underscore the dangerous essentialist bias in a politics of crystallized cultural identity on which ethno-nationalism is based. Thus, in my contention the unit of the nation itself marked by violent ethnic politics proves an inadequate analytical model for negotiating subaltern human rights. A more appropriate mode of advocacy lies in transnational commonality across varied locations of politics, connecting the sub and the supranational. Through this model my post-Subaltern Studies project on transnational feminist politics aims to transcend the Latin American Subaltern Studies endeavor to provide a corrective to the exclusionary politics of left nationalism from within nationalism itself.

IV. Sexual/Textual Violence: Re-membering Women within Genocide?

My examination of the textual representation of state violence against indigenous women during the genocide in Guatemala will foreground the relationship between restorative justice for brutalized women and collaborative postcolonial texts like I, Rigoberta Menchú.[10] Scholars like Victoria Sanford have argued about the vital

[10] For this perspective on postcolonial writing I am indebted to Annedith Schneider's Call for Papers for the fifth Crossroads in Cultural Studies Conference held in Urbana-Champaign in June 2004. The panel was titled "Writing Violence: Explorations and Solutions in Postcolonial Literatures." In my analysis justice for tortured women is initiated by testimony and the collective's re-witnessing of brutality through it. The testimonial voice disseminates itself through print in the form of a public appeal for restorative justice through a change of an oppressive social order based on military dictatorship.

importance of activist writing like forensic anthropology in documenting violence--a crucial stage in helping a culture of protest heal and make a transition from violence to justice through truth telling. Through her argument Sanford has laid out the political solidarity between the violated and forensic ethnographers who transcribe violence. Forensic anthropological excavations of genocidal massacres formed the basis of truth telling for the Guatemalan national reconciliation. Sanford's contention about the activist potential of forensic anthropology and hence of ethnographers to enable truth telling can be usefully applied to guerrilla testimonials as well. In the logic of counterinsurgency human rights abuse, violence as state sanctioned torture silences the dissenting voice through pain and terror. Guerrilla testimonials like Menchú's redeem the silenced terrain of dissent through its commitment to a genre of narration that testifies internationally to the gagging of the dissenting voice through statist torture of the indigenous collective.[11] In the terrain of silence and telling an understanding of the narrative possibilities of testimonials against the state, like Menchú's, are augmented when contextualized against the then legal status of the tortured voice in international law to testify against the torturer.[12] As such, landmark verdicts by the International Tribunal and United Nations conventions and declarations will signpost my analysis of state violence against women. The aim is to underline that those violent acts of the state which exist in legal vacuums and hence cannot be legally narrated as evidence against the torturer can be forcefully defined, if not codified, as torture by the narrative power of the testimonial voice. An act

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[11] Joseph Slaughter's "A Question of Narration: The Voice in International Human Rights Law" has been a resource in clarifying my perception about the tortured voice. Joseph Slaughter, "A Question of Narration: The Voice in International Human Rights Law," Human Rights Quarterly 19.2 (1997): 422.

[12] Slaughter 428.

of "retaking public space" by unsilencing the collective truth drawn from the local memory of terror, Menchú's testimonials, like Sanford's anthropological discourse, thus forge new political spaces of indigenous agency. Nonetheless, testimonials by indigenous women about state violence are themselves caught in unequal power relationships when mediated by the educated elite to represent collective trauma through a singular testimonial voice. Hence, a judicious handling of Sanford's frame needs to problematize the notion of re-presentation of the cultural memory of violence as common-front political practice for justice.

The politics of historicizing violence raises critical questions about representation and ethics—about the violence of representation itself when, by repeating violence discursively, it re-creates as textual violence the material violence that it is recording.[13] On the other hand, accurate description remains a high priority in the responsibility that comes along with archiving violence for generating justice through the pressure of public opinion. Hence, co-ordination of affect through explicit descriptions rather than aestheticized ones becomes singularly important for making the readership sense the impact of the material violence. However, within a patriarchal frame of social reference the literary portrayal of sexual violence against women takes on the prurience of violent pornography that objectifies women, as through the disseminating circuits of the publishing houses the brutalized female body becomes commodified as a spectacle for mass consumption. Acknowledging the dilemma that texts are caught in with respect to literary representations of gendered atrocities, the final goal here is to examine whether

[13] Wendy Hesford's reading of the trope of rape was especially helpful in my analysis of rape as a textual construct of material violence. See Hesford, Wendy S, "Rape Stories: Material Rhetoric and the Trauma of Representation," Haunting Violations: Feminist Criticism and the Crisis of the "Real," eds. Wendy S. Hesford and Wendy Kozol (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001) 13-46.

postcolonial writings that reiterate such violence and hence are complicit in it can also be recuperated as transgressive sites of political praxis against such material/rhetorical violence.[14] In this section the literary tropes of rape and forced impregnation provide a frame for my analysis of how postcolonial texts like I, Rigoberta Menchú articulate sexual brutality against poor indigenous women. The dynamics of voicing gender violence is then contrasted with the politico-military strategy of silence about sexualized torture of women. The goal is to underscore how testimonials like I, Rigoberta Menchú that are collaboratively produced by the indigenous and the elite who, despite being unequally located in structural relations of power, generate sites of activist alliances through the joint witnessing of injustice. By reclaiming petrified words so long unable to structure traumatic experiences at the limits of human endurance, such mediated stories of collectivities, in spite of being enunciated by an iconic voice, resist the violence that erasure of women's wartime history of sexual trauma by the military state unleashes.

Rape: Of central importance here is the fact that the original Spanish version of I, Rigoberta Menchú was published in 1983, long before the Hague International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in 1998 publicized rape of women as a systematic method of torture by state actors during genocide.[15] Against this historical context of

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[14] By praxis I am suggesting the intersection between discourse and practice.

[15] Geoffrey Robertson, Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice (New York: The New Press, 1999) 306-7. According to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment adopted in 1984: "the term 'torture' means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity." The Convention, however, remains silent about the issue of rape as a method of political torture. "Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984," Basic Documents on Human Rights, ed. Ian Brownlie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) 38-51. Till 1998, through its silence about rape of women as torture, human rights law and practice privatized political rape

human rights jurisprudence vis-à-vis the tortured voice of the object of genocidal state-rape, what is the ideological role of the rape narrative in I, Rigoberta Menchú?

In Menchú's testimonial genocidal rape is defined through the torture and assassination of her mother by the Guatemalan army after she was kidnapped. During sexualized torture of the female body the targets of violence are the sites of difference from the normative male body. As such, the pain of the victim is objectified as a sexual commodity for the pleasure of the state patriarchy.[16] In examining the power of postcolonial testimonials of genocide to politically bargain for tortured women it is imperative to critically explore the dynamics of the narrative itself. Does the sexual violence depicted in the text engage in re-commodifying the sexual agony of the victim for mass consumption by the readership? The testimonial narrator recounts:

> My mother was raped by her kidnappers, and after that they took her down to the camp—a camp called Chajup which means 'under the cliff.' They have a lot of pits there where they punish the people they have kidnapped and where my little brother was tortured as well. They took my mother to the same place. There she was raped by the officers commanding the troops. After that she was subjected to terrible tortures. (198)

Rather than foregrounding the rape of the female body in an exhibitionist attempt at constructing a spectacle of official sadism, the testimonial voice embeds the rape within

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as personal acts of sexual depravity by individual men rather than addressing it as official violence. Lisa M. Kois, "Dance, Sister, Dance!" An End to Torture: Strategies for its Eradication, ed. Bertil Dunér (London and New York: Zed, 1998) 90.

[16] Kois 94.

the narrative of abduction, disappearance, and captivity.[17] The disintegration of the body of Menchú's mother is played out through the spectacle of assassination which I deal with in the next section rather than through the narrative of rape. By refusing a pornographic detailing of the official rape of a specific female body the narrative generates a paratext of terror for the readership in which abduction of women during genocide often results in rape.[18] Underlining the difference between the abducted male and the abducted female, the paratext of emotions thus makes a distinctive case for women's human rights during genocide without objectifying the female body. By exposing the censored chronicles of the state, and engraving the muted wartime histories of official rape of women in the cultural consciousness, the rape narrative consolidates the state as the object of sexual terror in the paratextual zone of the reader. With the state denuded, the borders of the text become sites of praxis as political onslaughts by

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[17] In my analysis of the rape narrative I have claimed that rape was an official strategy in the context of the Guatemalan genocide. The Official Report of the Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala argues: "A premeditated strategy of violence specifically targeting women cannot be inferred from the information compiled by the REMHI project. The testimonies do indicate, however, that the army's counterinsurgency tactics against women were consistent at different places and times and formed part of its strategy of mass destruction." The Report adds: "This counterinsurgency tactics acquired certain genocidal characteristics. It attacked the community social fabric at its foundations by attempting to exterminate women and children in their capacity as vessels for the continuity of life and the transmission of culture." See REMHI (Recovery of Historical Memory Project), Guatemala: Never Again, (Guatemala City: Archdiocese of Guatemala, 1999) 79-80. Since the counterinsurgency policies did assume a genocidal make-up and rape consistently played a significant part in disintegrating the community, I argue that though rape cannot be directly documented as an official policy of counterinsurgency, its vital role as a weapon for fragmenting the indigenous community in the context of genocide makes it imperative to read rape as a deliberated strategy of state violence rather than a manifestation of indiscipline of a few aberrant soldiers. Irene Matthews makes a similar case about rape as a state sanctioned strategy based on its role in an official policy of ethnocide: "Organized rape plays a special role in a policy of ethnocide; it violates the rules and customs of the group, spreads fear, morally and physically disintegrates the family and the community, and submits women to the most monstrous evidence of the power of violence." See Irene Matthews, Translating/ Transgressing/Torture...," Frontline Feminisms: Women, War, and Resistance, ed. Marguerite R. Waller and Jennifer Rycenga (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2000) 99. In this context it is also important to remember Kois's argument cited above that the privatization of political rape as the personal depravities of a few sexual perverts had largely hindered the treatment of political rape as torture till 1998. See Kois 90.

[18] By "paratext of terror" I refer to the interface between the text and the reader—a region beyond the text haunted by the emotions generated in the reader by the text, which in turn influences its reading.

informed global opinion initiate a process of stripping the terrorist state of its power. This is the logic of advocacy that underwrites postcolonial texts like I, Rigoberta Menchú that vocalize women's human rights.

However, despite the powerful textual representation of the rape of the female body, the political aesthetics of the portrayal of male sexual trauma in the text is problematic. The sexual violence on the male body is explicit in the lurid description of the torture of Menchú's brother: "They tied him up, they tied his testicles, my brother's sexual organs, they tied them behind with strings and forced him to run. Well, he couldn't stand that, my little brother, he couldn't bear that awful pain and he cried out, he asked for mercy" (174). The body of the male guerrilla does not bear the same burden of sexual objectification within a patriarchal realm of gender construction. Nonetheless, the public performance of private narratives of male sexual trauma destabilizes the romantic notion that women's oppositional discourses against violence unarguably deconstruct violence. When the only woman in captivity with Menchú's brother and twenty other men is remembered, however, once again the narrator is reticent about the details of the rape. All she says is: "They had raped her and then tortured her" (174). There is no voyeuristic circulation of women's trauma through a re-scripting of the material rape on the rhetorical body of the woman guerrilla.

In the narrative scheme of I, Rigoberta Menchú where violence mediates literary truth and textual representation the trope of rape becomes a metonymy for the shared subaltern subjectivity of all indigenous female bodies in the text. In the testimonial economy of counterinsurgency sexual terror the rhetorical bodies of the female guerrilla leader and that of all indigenous women are linked through their metonymic correlation

with the high possibility of being raped.[19] This leitmotif of rape in I, Rigoberta Menchú is also pivotal in interpreting how the text constitutes subalternity as a political practice across unequally empowered locations of militant cultural activism. The rapeability of the guerrilla leader's body connects it with raped bodies as well as what I call "imminently rapeable bodies" in the testimonial. In the rhetorical domain of rape these imminently rapeable female bodies take on different valences of marginalization which, instead of ultimately precipitating rape, get refunctioned as vantage points for indigenous collective politics. Mobilizing feminine youth and beauty as people's weapons, pretty young girls in Menchú's testimonial successfully ambush soldiers without being violated, and thus in an astounding subversion of the hegemonic narrative of state rape female sexuality gets recoded as indigenous power. Menchú's text also reconfigures the disability of the imminently rapeable aged body when old women unable to withstand life in flight stay back only to trap and fatally assault soldiers instead of getting raped. Hence, imminent rape of the aged body gets re-scripted as militant cultural politics. Thus, in a metonymic reading of rape in I, Rigoberta Menchú the unraped body of the leader, the raped bodies, and the imminently rapeable bodies all stand ideologically related to each other across varied locations of common-front politics.

[19] The raison d'être of my metonymic reading of the trope of rape as connecting all rapeable bodies has been drawn from that of George B. Handley's metonymic reading of the genre of testimony. In " 'It's an Unbelievable Story': Testimony and Truth in the Work of Rosario Ferré and Rigoberta Menchú" Handley argues that in a metonymic reading of testimony "one account only points to the possibility of, indeed the need for, further accounts rather than seeking to stand in their stead" (65). In Handley's contention, unlike a metaphorical reading in which one testimonial can silence another through an effect of substitution, a metonymic reading links various attempts at reconstructing history despite their differences in testimony. George B. Handley, " 'It's an Unbelievable Story': Testimony and Truth in the Work of Rosario Ferré and Rigoberta Menchú," Violence, Silence, and Anger: Women's Writing as Transgression, ed. Deirdre Lashgari (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1995) 65.

Forced Impregnation: By the same logic of a metonymic reading of rape, bodies marked by rape induced pregnancy also share in the subaltern subjectivity of raped and rapeable indigenous women in Menchú's text. What is historically significant here is the fact that forced impregnation gained juridical recognition only in 1998 in the context of the Balkan genocide,[20] fifteen years after Menchú's testimonial about the Guatemalan genocide was published. In this pre-Balkan-genocide political imaginary of women's wartime human rights, what is the role of the narrative of rape induced pregnancy in I, Rigoberta Menchú?

In Menchú's excavations of the cultural memory of the genocide in Guatemala, the collective truth of Mayan women's experience of mass rape culminates in a narrative of forced impregnation and subsequent abortion. Rape induced pregnancy as biological warfare is based on an ideology of patrilineal descent which traces the identity of the child through the paternal gene, and hence delegitimizes the child's genetic link with the mother.[21] Even when impregnation is not an official policy to systematically erode the victimized culture but an aftermath of official rape, the defining potential of women's

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[20] Nonetheless, forced impregnation was identified as a war crime only to help in framing rape as genocide by underlining the power of rape induced pregnancy as an official policy for fragmenting the target culture. Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, 1949, states "Women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honour, in particular against rape, enforced prostitution, or any form of indecent assault." However, since before 1998 rape was not perceived as torture jurisprudentially and forced impregnation was not even juridically acknowledged as a wartime phenomenon, the enlisting of "torture or inhuman treatment" among the grave breaches in Article 147 did not in any way offer a legal means to address the issue of rape induced pregnancy as a serious contravention of wartime ethics. Incidentally, the Fourth Geneva Convention pertains to the protection of the noncombatant population. "Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War," 12 August 1949, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2002, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland, 24 January 2006 <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/92.htm>.

[21] R. Charli Carpenter, "Surfacing Children: Limitations of Genocidal Rape Discourse," Human Rights Quarterly 22.2 (2000): 457. In this context it is important to point out that I am not assuming that the soldiers were not Mayans. Rather this argument is based on the observation that soldiers of Mayan origin who were involved in forced impregnation as a terrorizing strategy are seen as being lost to the ladino culture, and hence the enemy as well.

reproductive capacities is similarly erased. In a critical analysis of postcolonial testimonials of state terrorism as sites of political praxis to negotiate for women's human rights, a close reading of the reproductive politics that emerges through the narratives of rape induced pregnancy and abortion in the text is crucial. Concurrently, exploring the ethics of representation of sexual violence against women remains vital to assessing the activist potential of the genre. The testimonial voice in I, Rigoberta Menchú reminisces about the excruciating dilemma of two indigenous women impregnated during the military gangrape of four Mayan women:

> While I was living in the house of one of my friends who was pregnant, she told me: "I hate this child inside me. I don't know what to do with it. This child is not my child.' She was very distressed and cried all the time. But I told her: 'You must love the child. It was not your fault.' She said: 'I hate that soldier. How can I feed the child of a soldier?' The *compañera* aborted her child. She was from a different ethnic group than ours. Her community helped her by telling her that it wasn't unusual, that our ancestors did the same when they were raped, when they had children without wishing to, without any love for the child. But my two friends suffered very much. I didn't know what to do, I felt helpless. (142-3)

Once again, the testimonial declines to present wartime atrocities against women through titillating spectacles of violent impregnation. Neither are graphic images of sexual violence rejected only to be replaced by an aesthetic sublimation of military brutality through figurative language. Instead, through a candid and unembellished narration of the exchange between the raped woman and Menchú, what comes across is the trauma of women impregnated through military rape. In the interface between the reader and the

text the rape victim's agony at her prospective mothering of a military child translates as affect intended to stimulate public consciousness about women's human rights. This tactic of advocacy endorsed by postcolonial texts testifying to gendered violence against women by the state is a campaign for global pressure as a counteroffensive to state terror.

Nonetheless, a more rigorous study of the narrative of forced impregnation reveals the ideological intricacies that underlie the two philosophies of rape induced motherhood that surface in the account.[22] If the expletive "I hate this child inside me" becomes the template for reading the narrative of forced impregnation, what emerges is the raped woman as the atomistic legal subject of liberal individualism entitled to her right to abort a rape induced pregnancy. Within such a discursive logic "This child is not my child" is interpreted as a victim of rape acting as a free agent by terminating a pregnancy violently forced upon her.[23] However, the referential possibilities of language in the above excerpt open up alternative routes of discursive resistance against structures of state terror like rape induced pregnancy, in the process questioning the philosophical

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[22] Feminist legal critical studies and discourses on children's human rights that emerged in the wake of the Balkan genocide resisted the containment of the language of forced impregnation by a discourse of rape, and respectively insisted on constructing it in international law as an independent category of war crime, torture, and genocide against women and children. Drawing on these discursive trends, this critical analysis re-locates the rhetoric of abortion after state rape in Menchú's text from the discursive terrain of rape to that of ethnocide. War Crime Under International Law: A Special Report of the International Program (New York: The Center for Reproductive Law & Policy 1993) and Carpenter 428-77.

[23] Mary Poovey's "The Abortion Question and the Death of Man" has been an influential resource in my reading of abortion of rape induced pregnancy in I, Rigoberta Menchú. Like Poovey, I question the discursive justification of abortion based on the metaphysics of substance which assumes that abortion is an act of an individual's free will (241). In my analysis I locate the abortion issue in a matrix of collective politics like Poovey. However, while Poovey's argument locates the issue in peacetime civil society in which women's decision to abort their pregnancies are connected to social systems like family, employer/employees, health care, social-welfare, and the tax system, my examination of forced impregnation in testimonies of genocidal rape by the state situates the narrative of abortion in the revolutionary collective's proprietory politics over the reproductive identity of the raped woman, hence challenging a positivist reading of all abortions as acts of reproductive autonomy (252). Mary Poovey, "The Abortion Question and the Death of Man," Feminists Theorize the Political, eds. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

premises of a narrative of abortion in the context. If the raped woman's hatred for the fetus is contextualized against her dilemma expressed in her agonizing admission "I don't know what to do with it," the import of the narrative of forced impregnation shifts as the reference point is no longer the assumption that the raped woman's act of abortion is an operation of resistant agency. The parameter of reference here is the immobilized condition of the raped woman resonated by her anguished question: "I hate that soldier. How can I feed the child of a soldier?" In this philosophy of rape induced motherhood in which maternal genetics is completely invalidated, woman becomes merely a reproductive vessel to transmit the father's gene to the child whose identity is tracked through paternal genetics.

Against this ideology of imperiled motherhood represented by the masses, the female revolutionary leader bargains for a philosophy of motherhood based on defiant love: "You must love the child. It was not your fault." The rebel leader's philosophy of resistant love opens up a discursive space that contests the ideology of protection that the revolutionary community draws upon in its archetypes of violated women from Mayan history who aborted rape enforced pregnancies. Such a protectionist ideology which contends "our ancestors did the same when they were raped, when they had children without wishing to, without any love for the child" crafts the raped woman as an agent of her own reproductive history who, like her ancestors, re-appropriates her raped body by terminating a forced pregnancy as an act of individual will. In constructing the abortion as an act of choice, such an ideology of protection suppresses a symptomatic reading of the raped woman's internalization of a brutal ethics of revolutionary ethno-nationalism based on the socio-sexual policing of women's bodies. Within such a violent patriarchal

ideology the maternal genetic link in a rape induced pregnancy is denied and the civic and ethnic identity of the child of rape is traced exclusively through paternal descent.[24] The ethno-nationalist contest between the state patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy is thus staged on the pregnant body of the raped woman through violent acts of appropriation of her sexual autonomy, demonstrating how revolutionary communities themselves are fractured along gendered faultlines.[25]

However, though philosophically a terminated pregnancy like that of the forcefully impregnated indigenous women in Menchú's text does not result in the legal personhood of children coming into existence as rights bearers, a reading of forced impregnation as ethnocide remains incomplete without examining how the narrative of

[24] In this context I would like to underline that my analysis does not intend to deny that rape induced pregnancies are often aborted by women as an attempt to erase the traumatic reminder of sexual violence on them. However, the trauma of rape that individual women experience is magnified by the patriarchal logic that the child of rape is merely the child of a violent rapist.

[25] For this argument I am indebted to Anna M. Agathengelou's study of how ethno-nationalism was recuperated by capitalizing on ethnic rape in the state-sanctioned sexual violence against women during the 1974 Turkish military invasion against the Greek Cypriot population in Cyprus and against women during the 1991 disintegration of the erstwhile Yugoslavia. Like Agathengelou, my argument on abortion of rape induced pregnancy emphasizes how a feminist understanding of the politics of consolidating cultural identity in an ethno-nationalist strife can "make visible suppressed inequalities and struggles concealed by discursive nationalism's solidarities, and violences against women of the Third World (12-13). Agathengelou examines how in the 1990s the re-stabilized Greek Cypriot state, in its continuing wrestle with Turkish Cypriot nationalism, strategically manipulated the global attention to the mass rape in disintegrated Yugoslavia. The Cypriot state centralized its suppressed history of Greek Cypriot women raped during the 1974 aggression in order to campaign for global recognition of its brutalized female bodies as testimonies for the ethno-nationalist cause of Greek Cyprus. The premise of such a communal philosophy lies in the proprietorial conflation of the bodies of indigenous women with the body of the community. By insisting on maternal love for a child of rape, Menchú resists the indigenous community's discourse of abortion, and hence challenges its attempt at defining its ethno-nationalist boundaries through the bodies of pregnant women. Later on, I will contend how Menchú's testimonial, despite negotiating for the Mayan cause with global politics, challenges a patriarchal ideology of ethno-nationalism by contesting the category of the nation itself through transnational solildarities. Such a critical scaffold will explore how sexual violence against women needs to be understood not merely as wartime state terror, but as regional manifestations of material conditions premised on unequal global structural relations of gender and socio-economic power. Ann M. Agathengelou, "Nationalist Narratives and (Dis) Appearing Women: State-Sanctioned Sexual Violence," Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme 19.4 (2000): 12-21.

abortion is theoretically premised vis-à-vis the rights of the child.[26] The woman's termination of her pregnancy is an attempt to pre-empt the birthing of a child who, by being identified solely through his/her paternal genetic link in an ethno-nationalist context, will be marked by the immediate family and the community as the enemy. In addition to being marked as a child of rape and an illegitimate child, the child also becomes a constant reminder of the violation of the reproductive identity of the revolutionary community—an identity signified by Mayan women who produce racially pure Mayan children. The logic of genocide based on group cohesion is hence operative not only through structures of state terror, but also within the revolutionary community itself as children with contested identities are excluded from membership in the insurgent ethnic group. Menchú's text needs to be historicized against the fact that the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations in 1989—six years after I, Rigoberta Menchú was published. This offers an enhanced understanding of the political space for the agency of children of war rape that is opened up by testimonials that identify spaces of statist mass injustice that fall outside the scope of international humanitarian jurisdiction.[27]

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[26] My analysis of forced impregnation with respect to children's human rights draws on Carpenter's analysis of the limitations of framing genocidal rape only as a gender issue. Like Carpenter, I demarcate children's human rights vis-à-vis rape induced pregnancy as distinct from a war rape discourse on women's rights. However, Carpenter's analysis maintains that since the right to life of unborn children is contested in international law, the claim that a child of rape is a victim of human rights violation only holds for born children. Unlike Carpenter, my examination of children's human rights during ethnic conflict is argued from the premises of aborted rape induced pregnancies. Carpenter 447.

[27] The Convention on the Rights of the Child ensures children against discrimination based on "the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status." "Convention on the Rights of the Child," 20 November 1989, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2003, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland, 5 February 2006 <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm> Incidentally, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child was proclaimed three decades before the Convention.

My study of rape induced pregnancy as a war crime demarcates its treatment as a gender issue from its exploration as a children's rights concern. Nevertheless, in the rhetorical terrain of forced impregnation both pregnant mothers and potential war rape orphans are connected through their shared subalternity. Consequently, in my literary analysis in this section the testimonial self of the female revolutionary leader stands linked with both women and children via her metonymic relationship with the raped bodies of the pregnant women through her vulnerability to gender violence in a war zone. Drawing on the above study of the textual representation of a genocidal ideology of rape and forced impregnation, the concluding section of this chapter will challenge the category of the state itself by arguing that subaltern human rights can be meaningfully negotiated only through a Fourth Worldist common front politics on the global stage.

Military Politics of Discursive Silence vs Common-Front Politics of Representation:

In stark contrast to women's conscientious reconstitution of social memory that attempts to rupture the misogynic military-police structures of the state as well as the logic of revolutionary patriarchy, silence about gender-specific torture of women characterizes discourses of the Guatemalan state even at the peak of repression. This was during the regimes of Lucas Garcia (1978-1982) and Rios Montt (1982-83). The Digital National Security Archive preserves 2,071 declassified documents about U.S. relations with Guatemala between 1954 and 1999. The particular emphasis is on human rights violations by the Guatemalan military state. However, there is no statement by either the Garcia or the Montt regime about the sexual atrocities against women.[28] These discursive

[28] Digital National Security Archive, 2005, Proquest, 13 February 2006 <http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/introx.htm>. Moreover, extensively researched books on the Guatemalan military project, like Schirmer's, indexes "Women" in three pages, out of a total of three hundred and forty-five, without any mention of

gaps underscore the violence of patriarchal social relations between a military state and its female citizens that erase the wartime history of the gendered torture of women, and hence their claim to human rights. In The Guatemalan Military Project: A Violence Called Democracy Jennifer Schirmer succinctly summarizes the conception of human rights in the Guatemalan military state. Human rights "become 'securitized': continuously subject to qualification or denial whenever they are deemed to be in conflict with security interests of the State" (135). Thus, in this juridical framework indigenous women's political dissent is perceived as a threat to the security of the state, defined and controlled by masculine authority that mark the military profession.[29] In the militaristic culture of Guatemala "the principle of consent (i.e., the socially approved use of force as the distinguishing element of law), upon which the philosophy of human rights is based, is blatantly ignored (135)." As such, what is particularly pronounced in such a philosophy is a state-arbitrated rather than a democratically sanctioned use of force against dissident women who challenge the gender defined public order maintained by a hyper-masculine ethos of militarism.[30] In this logic the punishment for tainted women who violate their gender roles is sexual brutality or whoredom: "One of the essential ideas behind the sexual slavery of a woman in torture is to teach her that she must retreat into the home and fulfill the traditional role of wife and mother [or daughter]" (Bunster 110). In such a

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attacks on them. Jennifer Schirmer, The Guatemalan Military Project: A Violence Called Democracy, (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998) 345.

[29] For an analysis of the relationship among women's political resistance, the military state, and sexual torture in the Latin American context, see Ximena Bunster, "Surviving Beyond Fear: Women and Torture in Latin America," Surviving Beyond Fear: Women, Children, and Human Rights in Latin America, trans. Janice Malloy, ed. Marjorie Agosin (New York: White Pine Press, 1993) 98-125.

[30] The "subculture of obedience" to authority that mark the armed forces profession condition the military state to view the voice of dissent in civilian society not as an exercise of political freedom, but as a subversive threat to the militaristic ideal of public order based on "disciplined civic solidarity." Schirmer 255.

context, sexual sadism against any woman of the collective which is identified as insurgent is perceived as a step toward eliminating dissent. The documentary film on the Guatemalan civil war—When the Mountains Tremble--shows a clip from a national television broadcast in which the then president, Rios Montt, declares: "One thing is certain. We are at war. In a war one has to impose his will on another. We have been saying that Guatemala is marvelous. But we need a change. And this change consists in imposing your will on another." In this political topography disciplining of women's dissident behavior against the state through rape gets naturalized through presidential rhetoric as a wartime imposition of one's will on another. Moreover, what is erased in the process is the narrative of an unequal contest between poor indigenous women and the security apparatus of the state. The former is a makeshift revolt of women fought with "people's weapons" like "machetes, stones, sticks, chile and salt" (I, Rigoberta Menchú 137), while the latter is officially organized, funded, and technologically empowered into a military-police structure comprised mostly of men.[31]

Erasure of the story of women's sexual agony in the unequal contest for power is symptomatic of the discursive violence in Guatemalan military narratives. On the other hand, the potential for violence in the articulation itself of gendered trauma also requires questioning on more levels than the one addressed in the above discussion on literary re-presentation. When sexual atrocities on poor indigenous women's bodies are

[31] For a discussion about the differences between state violence and indigenous violence see William Westerman, "Official Violence and Folk Violence: Approaching *I, Rigoberta Menchú* from the Perspectives of Folklife and Peace Studies," Teaching and Testimony: Rigoberta Menchú and the North American Classroom, eds. Allen-Carey Webb and Stephen Benz (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996) 91-104. However, whereas in Webb's and Benz's work indigenous violence and state violence are presented as binaries, my work on violence aims to deconstruct monolithic oppositions between the state and the subaltern by not only examining various locations of subaltern militancy, but also by exploring how militancy itself is fissured along faultlines within a subaltern ideology.

disseminated by a singular indigenous voice like Menchú's, there is a strong possibility of violence through misrepresentation. David Stoll's Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans is precisely an argument against the violence of such totalizing representations of the oppressed indigenous. Stoll's text claims that by privileging the testimony of one Mayan voice over the others, the academic left is feeding its own ideological prerogative of unified guerrilla warfare against state oppression of the Mayans. However, through the tropes of rape and forced impregnation my above analysis has argued how the testimonial voice is metonymically/associatively rather than metaphorically/substitutively related to the collective's experience of structures of organized violence. What is necessary is an understanding of the testimonial voice as a textual construct, shifting its valences from the radical subjectivity of the indigenous female leader to its metonymic relationship with the experience of the collective.[32] As the factual truth of parallel and divergent individual experiences gives way to a conceptual truth of the collective trauma of the Mayan community, the conflictive space of Menchú's text destabilizes the semantics of the ethnographer's text and its agenda of re-presenting the "real" indigenous through a complete access to a singular truth. Beverley's reading of I, Rigoberta Menchú as a tense textual space sustaining a political alliance between the indigenous narrator and her mediators is thus extended to embrace the relationship between the testimonial voice and the collectivity.

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[32] My reading of I, Rigoberta Menchú as a terrain in flux between the leader's subject position and her relationality with the community has been influenced by the work of Sánchez-Casal who argues: "the narrator emerges at the end of the text as a multiply situated, nonunified self, a revolutionary survivor of and witness to a historical cataclysm whose experience and agency has been equally marked by material structures and by exceptional, transgressive, individual choices." See Susan Sánchez-Casal, "I Am [Not] Like You: Ideologies of Selfhood in *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*," Haunting Violations: Feminist Criticism and the Crisis of the "Real", eds. Wendy S. Hesford and Wendy Kozol (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001) 78.

When testimonies of indigenous women are transliterated from its oral narration into a written text by elites like Elisabeth Burgos-Debray and translated by the privileged like Ann Wright, the question about violence is also raised on the level of truth-telling through transnational common-front politics. In transcribing testimonials like I, Rigoberta Menchú Mayan cultural history is converted from its indigenous *lengua memorial*—Quiché--into *castellano*--the language of Spanish colonialism.[33] It is then translated into English--the language of global imperialism for transnational routes of production and consumerism.[34] Hence, the repertoire of possible textual violence against tortured women is now extended from the voyeuristic consumption of their bodies to a postcolonial reiteration of colonial violence and its structural relations of unequally raced and classed power between the European and the indigenous. As Menchú and her mediators engage in a conflicted negotiation in a tense "contact zone,"[35] the question of gender intersects with that of race and class. Menchú's project aims to define the Mayan insurgency as a function of unequal distribution of material resources. She introduces her testimonial

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[33] However, such cultural-linguistic transactions can also be read as empowering: "For her, appropriating the Spanish language is an act which can change the course of history because it is the result of a decision: Spanish was a language which was forced upon her, but it has become a weapon in her struggle." See Rigoberta Menchú, I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala, trans. Ann Wright, eds. Elisabeth Burgos-Debray (London and New York: Verso, 1984) xii. Moreover, there is a transformative process operating in borrowing the politically dominant language: "Rigoberta's Spanish is qualitatively different from that of the 'ladinos' who taught it to her. And her testimony makes the peculiar nonstandard Spanish into a public medium of change." See Doris Sommer, "Not Just a Personal Story": Women's *Testimonios* and the Plural Self," Life/Lines: Theorizing Women's Autobiography, eds. Bella Brodzki and Celeste Schenck, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988) 128.

[34] Irene Matthews, "Translating/Transgressing/Torture...," Frontline Feminisms: Women, War, and Resistance, eds. Marguerite R. Waller and Jennifer Rycenga (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2000) 85.

[35] Marie Louis Pratt theorizes "contact zone" in the context of imperial travel writing. A 'contact' perspective "treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and 'travelees,' not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power." See Mary Louis Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) 7.

with: "My story is the story of all poor Guatemalans" (1). Later on in the text she reflects on how the systemic deprivation shared by the poor ladinos and the Mayans who worked together on the plantations is sustained: "I wondered: 'Why is it that when I say poor *ladinos* are like us, I'm spurned?' I didn't know then that the same system which tries to isolate us Indians also puts up barriers between Indians and *ladinos*" (119). Breaking discursive and hence political solidarity with her ethnographic subject, in her introduction to the text Elisabeth Burgos-Debray erases the identificatory marks in Menchú's narration of a distinct geopolitical crisis that links the indigenous with the poor ladinos. Though the ethnographer is aware that "Rigoberta Menchú is not fighting in the name of an idealized or mythical past" (xiii), she renders Menchú into the transcendental signified who represents both the living and dead of indigenous history in seamless essentialism:

> Her life story is an account of contemporary history rather than of Guatemala itself. [. . .] What she tells us of her relationship with nature, life, death and her community has already been said by the Indians of North America, those of Central America and those of South America. The cultural discrimination she has suffered is something that all the continent's Indians have been suffering ever since the Spanish conquest. (xi)

Robert Carr offers a clinching observation of the effects of mythologizing the indigenous: "In the construction of the transcendental signified, we can note, the instances of guerrilla warfare, labor exploitation, and genocide that dominate *Me Llamo Rigoberta Menchú* dissolve into thin air" (159). The ethnographer's tendency to romanticize the subaltern into a monolithic category devoid of agency in designing her own political text is

nowhere more evident than in Burgos-Debray's attempt at "concealing the impure or real conditions of the text's production" (Sánchez-Casal 82):

> I soon reached the decision to give the manuscript the form of a monologue: that was how it came back to me as I re-read it. I therefore decided to delete all my questions. By doing so I became what I really was: Rigoberta's listener. I allowed her to speak and then became her instrument, her double by allowing her to make the transition from the spoken to the written word. I have to admit that this decision made my task more difficult, as I had to insert linking passages if the manuscript was to read like a monologue, like one continuous narrative. I then divided it into chapters organized around the themes I had already identified. I followed my original chronological outline, even though our conversations had not done so, so as to make the text more accessible to the reader. (xx)

In acknowledging the "colonial signs" of anthropological questioning in the encounter between the ethnographer and her subject at the "contact zone" Burgos-Debray once again aims at presenting the indigenous as the seamless "real," thereby negating Menchú's agency in using her testimonial as what Beverley calls an "aesthetic ideological" construct for political propaganda. In doing so the ethnographer also mutes the history of colonialism which marks the "perturbing history of cultural politics and struggle present in this new encounter of native informant and Latin American intellectual."[36] This textual play of the colonizer-colonized dynamics between her mediators and Menchú is intensified in Ann Wright's English translation that deletes the manifesto of the Committee of Campesino Unity (CUC). The manifesto condemns the exploitation of both indigenous and ladino labor and the abuse of natural resources by

[36] Sánchez-Casal 82.

Guatemala's tyrannical oligarchy which is supported by multinationals and the governments of Europe, Japan, and the United States. Carr argues: "What is silenced is a historical specificity that opens onto the role of First World economic interests in the superexploitation described in the book, and a call to arms" (161). In my next section I argue how this conflictive space of ethnographic contact which attempts to restrain the agency of the indigenous is destabilized by the radical exceptionality of the figure of the militant female leader which nonetheless, across locations of militancy, links her to the collective.

V. Transgressing Sexual/Textual Violence: Red-Green Feminist Politics

This section explores how the radical exceptionality of the leader gets troped as revolutionary maternity and ecological activism in I, Rigoberta Menchú and its sequel Crossing Borders. They also become transgressive sites of female empowerment, contesting the leitmotifs of sexual violence against women that the earlier section has examined. The tropes of revolutionary maternity and ecological activism portray the indigenous peoples' fight for social justice at the national and the international level under the leadership of women. These narrative strategies serve to activate public consciousness for the indigenous cause, and thus define the relationship between postcolonial testimonials of indigenous women and restorative justice for their people. The section also considers how these tropes delineate the "contact zone" of ethnographic struggle between the mediators and the testimonial narrator. The "contact zone" is shaped as much by the radical subjectivity of the leader who defies prescribed gender roles for Mayan women as through her mediators who launch her iconic subjectivity as a Mayan. Thus, the uniqueness of women leaders is not defined through an 'unsubalternizing'

gesture of their liberation from the struggle of the masses. Rather it is marked by their radical re-subalternization that links them with their people despite the local, regional, and global recognition of their leadership at the frontiers of revolutionary thinking and action. The radical exceptionality of Menchú's mother in alchemizing her personal anxiety into an opportunity to lead communal political action at the local level cannot but remain linked to the people that she unites. Again, it is this connection between the Mayan base and Menchú's iconicity as a human rights crusader that enables a feminist politics of justice for all indigenous people on the world stage. The figure of the female revolutionary leader, discursively and politically linked to the masses, has been a crucial paradigm for Ileana Rodríguez. In her work this paradigm, with its democratic prospects, deconstructs the male defined tradition of a strongly hierarchical leadership in Central American guerrilla narratives. However, for Rodríguez "the terrain of the struggle for power" between men and women/masses is through deconstructing language.[37] On the other hand, my study of the tropes of revolutionary maternity and ecological activism as linkages between the female leader and the Mayan people engages in their literary analysis through red-green feminist thought. Such critical scaffolding brings into conjunction the perspectives of red feminism and green feminism.[38]

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[37] The author argues: "Language empowers us to moor ourselves fast in the place where signs shift, where, writing the peasantry or women, the revolutionary writer discloses his own unconscious—or positivistic, bourgeois, colonial, elitist thinking. [. . .] But grappling with, and proposing alternative meanings for, the text is a way of writing women within the narratives of social change. " See Rodríguez, Women, Guerrillas, and Love, (xvi).

[38] Teresa L. Ebert outlines the project of red feminism as "transformative politics": "Red Feminism does not reject the cultural or discursive as sites of political struggle but rather argues that these need to be understood in their specific historical connections to the relations of production and the class struggle in order to open up a space for an emancipatory politics to end the exploitation of women and all people globally." Ebert adds: "It is based on a historical materialist theory and praxis and works dialectically, engaging the interconnections between base and superstructure; between relations of production and signifying practices." See Teresa L. Ebert, "The Knowable Good: Post-al Politics, Ethics, and Red Feminism," Rethinking Marxism 8.2 (Summer 1995): 40.

In an earlier section the literary analysis of rape and forced impregnation was largely framed by the discursive, materialist reasoning of red feminism. Such a methodology based on the transformative politics of writing combined literary analysis with a historiographical approach to political change.[39] This section uses the same method. But it specifically foregrounds red feminism which upholds an emancipatory ideology for women based on their historical contribution to the productive work of the entire community.[40] In my critical use of this frame of international socialism the boundaries of the family and hence of private property are contested by women's political work as mothers of the whole social group. This becomes instrumental in bargaining for the collective economic rights of the community. This red feminist scaffolding of revolutionary maternity, defined through women's militant political labor for the community, intersects with a green feminist paradigm.

Green feminism calls into question ecological degradation brought about by the patriarchal logic of corporate nationalism and global imperialism. As such, it helps us understand how abuse of the bionetwork affects indigenous people whose physical and

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[39] In this context it is worth mentioning that critics like Florencia Mallon have traced the tension between the two distinct trends of textual analysis (of both historical documents and literary texts) and political transformation in the field of Subaltern Studies (1498). In discussing these, Mallon has underlined the constructed nature rather than the transparent reality of both the archive and the text (1507), as well as that of subaltern political alliances with their shifting solidarities (1500). The discursive material feminism that forms the groundwork for my Post-Subaltern Studies project combines such a textual approach with one of material activism, the necessity of which Mallon points out. See Florencia E. Mallon, "The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History," The American Historical Review 99.5 (Dec 1994): 1491-1515.

[40] According to Ebert, "The issue is not that women's work within the home is not productive labor but that the condition of women's lives and their 'rights' depend on whether their labor *directly* contributes to *social* production (to the 'work of the whole community') without being mediated through (and often *owned by*) the patriarchal family and its male 'head'—and, second, whether women have direct (unmediated) access to the products and value their labor produces." Hence, the breakdown of the monogamous family premised on private property releases women from domestic labor so that they can earn a wage labor and own property through social contribution. See Ebert 50.

cultural survival is often closely related to the preservation of the local ecosystem. Indigenous women's resistance against ecological violence in testimonials like Crossing Borders emblematically opposes textual spaces portraying sexual violence on Mayan women. In such a green feminist reading of women's transgressive politics postcolonial thought is brought into a critical conversation with ecological concerns.[41] Postcolonial thinking is committed to unfolding the colonial legacies of abuse that structure the lives of decolonized populations across the world. In an era of global imperialism postcolonial nations still act as resource centers for the neocolonial empire. Concomitant with industrial imperialism is the ecological mismanagement of resources that affects large numbers of indigenous people in postcolonial nations who draw their sustenance from the ecosystem. This creates a forum for a dialogue between postcolonialism and ecological integrity. At the interface between them stands the figure of the female revolutionary linked through her leadership role to a postcolonial indigenous population which has witnessed violence on its ecosystem.

In my critical frame of red-green feminism indigenous women's leadership as revolutionary mothers of the community at the level of local action is bridged with their spearheading of the ecological justice movement at the international political frontline. This challenges both the borders of the family and that of the nation. For my reading of the trope of revolutionary maternity in I, Rigoberta Menchú and Crossing Borders, I draw on the portrayal of the leadership roles of Menchú's mother and Menchú. The trope of

[41] For my critical paradigm situated at the crossroads of postcolonialism and ecocriticism, I am indebted to Graham Huggan's perspective of how postcolonialism with its obligation to formerly colonized people is compelled to address the issue of ecological abuse: "[P]ostcolonial criticism has effectively renewed, rather than belatedly discovered, its commitment to the environment, reiterating its insistence on the inseparability of current crises of ecological mismanagement from historical legacies of imperialistic exploitation and authoritarian abuse." See Graham Huggan, "Greening" Postcolonialism: Ecocritical Perspectives," Modern Fiction Studies 50.3 (2004): 702.

ecological activism will be discussed largely through the role of Menchú's leadership depicted in Crossing Borders.

Revolutionary Maternity: Reading the trope of revolutionary maternity through a red feminist perspective is particularly useful in my corrective effort, in the tradition of Ileana Rodríguez, to demasculinize the geography of revolutionary hermeneutics. Like the tropes of rape and forced impregnation, the trope of revolutionary maternity constitutes the female militant leader as woman. By not constructing her in the image of the normative male political agent of the literary/social text of transformation, the tropes resist defeminizing her.[42] Thus, in contrast to a liberal feminist frame of equality premised on sameness between men and women, my postcolonial feminist scaffolding argues for a revolutionary unity between them based on the politicization and mobilization of differences. My postcolonial feminist approach incorporates a red feminist frame of study. In this model the trope of revolutionary maternity radicalizes maternal labor into militant leadership against the postcolonial state. Radicalizing maternity through the recognition of women's revolutionary work for the collective deconstructs the biologically determined nature of motherhood into the political category of social motherhood. With this, the mother's labor no longer remains invisible in its contribution to maintaining the family and the structures of private property that sustain it.[43] Narratives of the modes of production that identify male labor with public space and

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[42] This is one of the major premises of my argument in this chapter, and I have explained it more thoroughly in the section entitled "Critical Scaffold."

[43] In this regard it is important to underline that the two characters which define revolutionary maternal labor in my analysis--Menchú and her mother—were never confined only to the domestic space of the family home, but worked outside it on the plantations. Hence, their agricultural work was visible wage labor, deconstructing the association of women solely with the private space of the home. Even so, their labor went into the upkeep of the structures of the patriarchal family and its private property, and hence was owned by the male 'head.' As a result, these women's access to the products and value of their labor was

confines female labor to the realm of the domestic are thus challenged.[44] The limits of the family itself are contested as biological linkages get politicized as insurgent communal solidarity. The socialization of maternity through political participation of revolutionary mothers has become an archetypal political phenomenon through the weekly gatherings of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina. Since 1977 they have regularly met to protest against the disappearance of their dissident children by the military government during the Dirty War in the country between 1976 and 1983. The social motherhood of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo will serve as a template for my reading of revolutionary maternity in I, Rigoberta Menchú and Crossing Borders.[45]

The new mode of collective maternal behavior upholds the relatedness between the home and the plaza. In I, Rigoberta Menchú the testimonial voice describes how for the first time the women of the Quiché community of the Mayans in Guatemala

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controlled by patriarchy. With their leadership in the militant movement of the collective, their labor gets truly socialized.

[44] While discussing Claribel Alegria's They Won't Take Me Alive: Salvadorean Women in Struggle for National Liberation, Rodríguez points out that because Eugenia, the protagonist, "is critical of the gendered division of labor and gender roles, she is culturally mandated to prove herself as a man. In the process, she disapproves of any 'little' deference given to her by her companions-in-arms." The author adds that "[e]quality, male and female, is defined here as identity (sameness)" and that "[t]he underlying assumptions for this *récit* are, naturally, narratives of modes of production, for they acknowledge the division of labor—masculine/feminine—as one of their primary structures." See Women, Guerrillas, and Love 159.

[45] My exploration of the trope of revolutionary maternity based on the phenomenal politics of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo is indebted to Marguerite Bouvard's analysis of this exceptional spectacle of radical maternity. In the context of my red feminist analysis of the revolutionary labor of mothers, it is important to remember the relationship in which working class women stand with respect to discourses on feminism. What Bouvard highlights about the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo can be used to understand the Quiché women in Menchú's text: The Mothers "did not theorize about gender differences, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo were determined to project their experience of attachment and affection onto their political style and goals. Like working-class women in other societies they rejected the label of feminism while developing ideas and concerns falling within the repertoire of feminism." See Marguerite Guzman Bouvard, Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, (Wilmington, Delaware: SR Books, 1994) 221. My study of the trope of revolutionary maternity also draws on Rodríguez's study of the treatment of familial love in women authored revolutionary literature. See Ileana Rodríguez, Women, Guerrillas, and Love.

organized themselves under the leadership of Menchú's mother to protest against the disappearance of children of the community:

> I remember when my little brother disappeared, our whole community united and joined together in a protest, after my mother had gone to enquire after him at the police, and the army, and had received no reply. So, they all went, all of them. The community acted together for the first time; the majority of them were women. (196)

Thus, the text traces the futile search of the solitary mother for her missing son at the very centers of political detention and torture of dissenting citizens, like the police station and the army outpost.[46] The questioning voice of the mother creates an ethical space of maternal love, both discursively and materially, that ruptures the violent spaces of interrogation of dissidents at the police station and at the army outpost. These feminine sites of insubordination resist the sexual atrocities against women discussed in the earlier section. Thus, a symbolic transgression of state violence against women happens both on the level of the narrative as well as on that of material politics. As the courageous mother replaces her thwarted attempts to find her son with her militant leadership that unifies the Quiché women, her personal mission turns into a shared quest of all mothers for the missing child of the community. Collective maternal fury transgresses and infiltrates

[46] Bouvard summarizes the sense of powerlessness that a family experiences after political disappearance of a member: "When a family suffered the *disappearance* of one of its members, it was propelled into a netherworld where there were no rules, no institutions to which one could direct one's concern, and no death to mourn. The family lived in a surreal limbo; deprived of all information and recourse and stripped of social support and comprehension, relatives found themselves in complete isolation." See Bouvard 36-7. *Disappearance* of dissenting relatives plunges a family into a trance-like state that cannot be brought to a closure through mourning the dead. It leaves behind the silhouette of the disappeared not to be commemorated through the socio-historical space of the grave.

bureaucratic public spaces of rigid masculine authority:[47] "They reached the town, occupied the administrative offices, and took the mayor prisoner. If he saw justice was done, they would respect him, but if he turned his back on justice, he would be executed" (197).[48] The anger of a politicized motherhood demands the restoration of justice for the indigenous by imprisoning and threatening to annihilate representatives of establishment power like the mayor. Suspending governmental power, once again political motherhood symbolically resists textual/material sites of state violence like rape and forced impregnation against Mayan women.

This powerful image of red maternity in public spaces of governmental administration is not only "a stark reminder of the state's brutal interruption of maternal tasks,"[49] but also serves to reinterpret the concept of motherhood vis-à-vis the men, women, and children of the collective. The "demonstration of women and children," directed by Menchú's mother, exposes itself to the risk of possible massacre to protect the men of the community from being kidnapped and tortured. The presence of men in the political arena of dissent would be more threatening to the state authorities than a contingent of women and children. Article 38 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, empowers the state to prohibit children below fifteen from

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[47] Likewise, the Mothers in Argentina demonstrated at the Plaza de Mayo that has been the seat of governmental authority since the eighteenth century. Francesca Miller, Latin American Women and the Search for Social Justice, (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1991) 8.

[48] In this regard it is important to recognize the difference in political mode of these mothers in Menchú's text and the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. The latter "have become a metaphor for the thousands of Latin Americans who have dared to protest the practice of state terrorism against the populace through nonviolent means." See Bouvard 11. The Mothers' nonviolent means proves "that it is possible to work openly with democratic values in authoritarian settings, contradicting a political history in which those oppressed by the state have in turn often adopted oppressive methods." See Bouvard 239.

[49] Bouvard, 182.

participating in armed conflict.[50] In such a frame the mothers of the revolution in a post-Convention milieu can be held accountable by the state for initiating children into dangerous political activism in violation of international humanitarian law. At the same time the state can refuse to acknowledge the enlisting of child soldiers within the ranks of its own army.[51] This problematizes the UN's approach to protecting human rights through the instrument of the nation-state. In I, Rigoberta Menchú the narrator reminiscences: "My mother used to say that through her life, through her living testimony, she tried to tell women that they too had to participate, so that when the repression comes and with it a lot of suffering, it's not only the men who suffer. Women must join the struggle in their own way" (196). Under the leadership of Menchú's mother the women do contribute to the struggle in their very own way by initiating children into political participation to contest the state's appropriation of Mayan children. As the kinship unit of the Quiché Mayans restructures itself into political comradeship irrespective of gender and age, the revolutionary leadership of Menchú's mother effectively links men, women, and children of the collective across various locations of militancy. The leader herself remains closely connected to the people in her need for their

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[50] The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasizes that in the context of armed conflict "States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities." See "Convention on the Rights of the Child," <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>.

[51] In fact, the maternal army of indigenous women, linked in solidarity with children, was a significant act of resistance against a system of coercive recruitment of indigenous children in the Civil Defense Patrols (PAC), set up under President Rios Montt (1982-1983). Menchú testifies to this system in Crossing Borders: "For years, our young men have been captured and forced into the barracks. Many, from the age of fifteen, go into hiding to avoid it. They are brutally beaten when found. No one has been able to change the system. Many of those who have tried have died horribly" (164).The PAC drafted Indian peasants from the war-zone into a permanent military reserve force, and refusal was considered to be a subversive act against the state. George Black states: "For all able-bodied men between the ages of 15 and 60, the patrols were obligatory. In mountain villages, it was not uncommon to see children of ten or eleven drilling with wooden rifles" (147-8). This was a counterinsurgency method of the Guatemalan state to disintegrate the indigenous community.

collective wrath that translates itself into the political power of demanding the return of her disappeared son. Children, in rally with their revolutionary mothers, evoke a potent image of children of the collective reclaiming their political voice silenced through the disappearance of Menchú's brother--a child of the community. In Revolutionizing Motherhood Marguerite Guzman Bouvard points out how the political behavior of women and children in such contexts can be read as "a form of street theater." In the 1980s in Argentina

> artists working for the Mothers created white masks representing the *disappeared.* Thousands of young people wearing these masks paraded down the main streets in a display aimed at keeping the plight of the *disappeared* in the public consciousness. The artists have also created props of life-size white silhouettes for the Mothers' marches. Watching a parade of hundreds of ghostly silhouettes or chalk-white masks file silently through the streets is a powerful, emotionally jarring experience. (232)

Bouvard underlines how the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, convening publicly to demand justice for their missing children, "came to include in their new view of maternity not just their *disappeared* children but all the present and future youths of Argentina" (181). Flouting "the passive, grieving model of motherhood held up in the tradition of *marianismo*" (248),[52] the mothers break down the boundary between the private and the public spaces with their love and care for their children taking up political valences outside the home.

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[52] Bouvard underlines: "As the secular expression of the homage rendered to the Virgin Mary, *marianismo* holds the woman as morally superior to the man on the basis of her humility and self-sacrifice. In popular culture she is portrayed as a grieving woman, draped in a black mantilla and praying for the souls of her sinful menfolk to whom she is nonetheless submissive." See Bouvard 184.

The private-public construct repeatedly disintegrates in Menchú's text in the context of maternal grief directing political destiny. Menchú describes the anguish of her mother politicized into anger that permeates the private space of other family homes after the assassination her brother:

> My mother traveled through many provinces organising. She actually went to the women and said that when a woman sees her son tortured and burned to death, she is incapable of forgiving anyone or ridding herself of that hatred, that bitterness. 'I can't forgive my enemies,' she said. [. . .] [Y]ou didn't have to go to a meeting to talk to my mother because she'd go to houses and recount her experiences while they all made *tortillas.* (196)

When politics leaves the rally to enter the kitchen, maternal labor, like preparing *tortillas* for the family, gets radicalized as the time for the mother's stories about her dead child overlaps with the time when other mothers prepare meals for their families. Collective maternity replaces individual maternity as the motherhood of the women in the kitchen gets politicized through their shared plight in a regime of terror where the possibility of children being radicalized against injustice is high, and all dissident children risk a cruel death. Similarly, every woman in the rally outside with Menchú's mother becomes the mother of all the children of the collective. These revolutionary mothers and their activist children together move beyond crippling fear to a remedial anger that unlocks a social space of uninhibited moral protest.[53] Faced with arbitrary detention-disappearance of

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[53] The 1984 annual report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights states: "habeas corpus remedies were ineffective during the Government of General Efrain Ríos Montt, either under the state of emergency or otherwise." It adds: "nearly one thousand habeas corpus writs presented by the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission [. . .] in connection with the disappearance of persons under this Government have nearly all been declared null." "Guatemala," Organization of American States, 1984, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Washington, D.C., USA, 2005 <http://www.cidh.org/annualrep/ 83.84. eng/chap.4c.htm>. The writ of habeas corpus is a judicial mandate to a prison officer to produce a detained

children and with no judicial protection of the disappeared through habeas corpus writs, the mothers defy their inaccessibility to the power structures of the state through their performance in the street play. The open moral space of voicing that emerges in the process reestablishes the political existence of abducted children in the face of a secretive politico-military system of disappearance, torture, and assassination of the political opposition. The family is the unit of the nation because it is the site of production of the good citizen through good mothering.[54] By abducting delinquent children from their families, the state demolishes dysfunctional units of the nation-state. Through political mentoring of children in common-front politics in public spaces of demonstration against the state's tyranny, the mothers resist locating their children in the family which is the building block of the nation-state that is supposed to school them in the ways of correct nationalism.

The trading of biological motherhood for revolutionary maternity founded on a shared political calling with the children of the kinship group is nowhere more pronounced than in the figure of the testimonial narrator herself in I, Rigoberta Menchú. Menchú rejects marriage and biological motherhood for her commitment to her political

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person before the court to ensure that the detained has been lawfully imprisoned. It protects citizens from arbitrary state actions.

[54] Bouvard describes how the media in Argentina tried to instill a sense of guilt in the families of the disappeared of the Dirty War about how they raised their children. It was an attempt by the government to "create a link between political dissidence and social deviance in public opinion and to isolate the families of the *disappeared*." See Bouvard 176. In Chile the erstwhile dictator Augusto Pinochet consistently highlighted the relation between the family and the nation with regard to the woman's role in defining it: ' "The family is the basic unit of society. It is the first school . . . , the mold in which the moral character of each citizen is founded. . . The Nation is truly the reflection of the hearth." According to this doctrine, the Chilean woman must understand the importance "of her mission, the superior destiny of her maternal vocation, her role as wife and educator." If she does not, if she "rejects her feminine identity," she can easily fall into error: "Animals do not form families. They unite temporarily in order to procreate. . . .The animal has no spiritual liberty, simply instincts. . . . [For humans] the family is an institution of natural order. It is necessary to inculcate in woman the fundamental importance—for the future of society—of making a home. It is especially important to insist—as we already have in speaking of patriotic values—on the dignity which emanates from the concept of service." See Miller 211.

leadership. This defines the radical exceptionality of the leader who disregards the Quiché cultural precept "to multiply the seeds of [. . .] her ancestors" to make a transgressive individual choice of politically mothering the whole community instead:[55]

> [T]he time came when I saw clearly—it was actually when I had begun my life as a revolutionary—that I was fighting for a people and for many children who hadn't anything to eat. I could see how sad it would be for a revolutionary not to leave a seed, because the seed which was left behind would enjoy the fruits of this work in the future. But I thought of the risks of having a child. It would be much easier for me to die, at any time or place, if I weren't leaving anyone behind to suffer. (224)

This is in sharp contrast to romantic narratives which contain the dangers of feminine sexuality through the culmination of the romance in marriage. In revolutionary women's testimonials the "risks of having a child" for an insurgent leader whose life dances on the threshold of death imperils coupling in heterosexual love through marriage.[56] So, the traditional patriarchal narrative of biological maternity captured in the clinching image of the seed that is not left behind is rewritten into the subversive account of social motherhood where the combative mother struggles to feed all the children of the

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[55] I am indebted to Casal for helping me think through the radical singularity of the leader and the relationship in which it stands with the homogenizing trends of the culture of the Quiché community: "Menchú's agency is configured in the motivated relationship between the needs of the "I" and those of the "we" and in the complex effects of Menchú's epistemological travel between these two locations. In other words, the specific human image of Menchú constituted in the text is produced in the uneasy conjunction of representative and exceptional (individual) sites." For Casal, the "complex agency of Rigoberta Menchú materializes in this shifting chronotype of the self." See Casal 87-9. Casal's reading has helped me reinforce the female leader's unique position within militancy, without either divorcing her from the collective or essentializing her into a monolithic Quiché space of reductive culturalism, devoid of political agency for women. It is aligned to Rodríguez's paradigm of linking which I draw upon, and thus strengthens my postcolonial feminist understanding of revolutionary unity as common-front politics across social locations of activism.

[56] My study of the relationship between heterosexual love and revolutionary narratives has been influenced by Rodríguez's reading of the same in Women, Guerrillas, and Love.

collective. I, Rigoberta Menchú portrays women's insurgent leadership of the community's children as collective maternity. As such, in constructing the female revolutionary leader soldiering is never constituted as antithetical to mothering, and hence the militant woman never gets resignified as male. Despite the narrative linking of the subjectivity of the leader with that of the collective that she leads, her radical individuality circumscribed by the reiterative "I" of the speaking subject remains in tension with the "people" of the collective. This strain between the "I" and the collective is set in relief as, through her radical choices, the leader dismantles patriarchal notions of authentic indigenous motherhood. In her essay "I Am [Not] Like You" Susan Sánchez-Casal argues: "By staying close to shifting subject positions, we can expose the significant causal link between " I" and "we" and at the same time challenge exotifying readings of the text that have viewed Menchú's collective consciousness as essential native selfhood" (89).

With Menchú's entry into the realm of love, coupling, marriage, and maternity in Crossing Borders—the testimonial sequel to I, Rigoberta Menchú, the radical exceptionality of the leader's life choices are reconfigured into a more inclusive narrative. Such a narrative entwines the sentiments of individual maternity with the radical story of the mother of the collective at the vanguard of the revolution. Crossing Borders depicts the sham kidnapping of Kalito—the son of Menchú's niece Cristina, by his own parents. Publicizing the auto-kidnapping by the family became the regime's weapon against Menchú to discredit her contribution in the voter registration drive for the presidential elections in 1995. The episode evokes the trials of child raising for the revolutionary mother as Menchú expresses the ultimate maternal apprehension that the

state will harm the child as vengeance against the politicized mother: "I was also terrified at the thought that they had got mixed up and had thought Kalito was my son. Kalito and my son look very much alike" (30). This is what Rodríguez in Women, Guerrillas, and Love calls the "New behavior" of revolutionary parents engaged in a space where "prior private and public categories" struggle, where "the military and romantic narratives seek to strike a balance" (164). This

> New behavior is mandated by regulations that mothers and fathers—mainly "revolutionary" mothers—must acknowledge. Freedom to have children means freedom to have them live on the edge of death and danger. [. . .] For to accept one set of premises—military insurgency, for instance—is to accept the other—children on the verge of a nervous breakdown. (Rodríguez 164)

In I, Rigoberta Menchú we learn about the sixteen-year-old daughter of a union leader who was gangraped by the state troops because her mother had organized a campaign for the release of forty peasants detained by state forces: "[T]he girl was saved but went out of her mind. She couldn't talk or move her body because of the repeated rape. They gave her three hours to leave the country and now she is out of the country, but she still can't speak or move" (235). However, the narrative of heterosexual love, individual maternity, and parental trauma breaks out of the precincts of the family as Menchú's concern for Kalito links her maternal existence on the brink of horror to the searing pain and anguish of all mothers/masses searching for their disappeared children: "Now that it's all over, I have an even better understanding of a mother's pain; the pain of those who have had children kidnapped, and who have searched for them with passion and desperation. How

long will this go on?" (44). Once again the narrative of mutiny leaves the home and marches toward the plaza with the mothers of the revolution.

As the mothers of the plaza politicize the home, the bourgeois morality of the state that confines child rearing to the private space of the family breaks down. What we witness with that is not only the entry of children into politics, but also the mother's schooling of the children for the maternal army. In I, Rigoberta Menchú the maternal narrative tells the story of how children came to be included as soldiers in the new army: "We began forming groups of women who wanted to join the struggle. And I saw that teaching the children how to act when the enemy came was part of the struggle too" (122). In this politico-emotive account the networking of grass-roots attempts by women and children reconfigures maternal and filial love as unified dissent against the state.[57] The metonymic association between the subaltern groups of women and children marks itself off from military narratives of homosocial bonding between able-bodied males, standing in for the nation through metaphorical substitution. In these discursive/material moments of political mothering radical ideology politicizes blood-ties with the biological parents as well. Children of the community become prudent political actors for whom the family becomes the site of revolutionary solidarity as they guard the political secrets of their parents from children of other villages, and hence serve as sentry to their own: "We began teaching our children to be discreet. They're usually discreet anyway, but we advised them not to say a single word to any children who weren't from our village about what their parents were doing" (125). As the narrative of revolutionary maternity unfolds, we learn the story of children acting as spies for the community: "But our children can

[57] I am deeply indebted to Rodríguez for her reading of the differences between politico-emotive narratives about women and politico-military narratives about men in Women, Guerrillas, and Love.

easily recognize soldiers, by the way they walk, and dress, and everything about them, so the lookouts knew they were soldiers in disguise" (135). The children risk abduction, torture, and death to warn the community of the army raid on the village. In Women, Guerrillas, and Love Rodríguez directs us to how radicalizing childhood is related to radicalizing motherhood: "Bringing up children as revolutionaries from an early age, enrolling them in revolutionary activities as informants, might not easily be accepted. The idea of children growing up within a collective, confined to a party cell, explodes bourgeois ideas of maternity" (163). The representation of children as militants is politically charged with the implication that children in a revolutionary community are not only tied through their bloodline to their natural mothers. They share ideological bonds with a collective maternity through which all women within the community become their mothers. This strategic essentialism of communitarian politics deconstructs any notion of motherhood as biologically determined.

The solidarity of women and children extends even to death as the biological itself becomes the ideological when the revolutionary leader defends her guerrilla children unto her destruction:

> The first day they shaved her head, put a uniform on her and then they said: 'If you're a guerrilla why don't you fight us here.' But my mother said nothing. While they beat her, they asked her where we were, and said that if she made a confession, they'd let her go. But my mother knew very well that they did that so that they could torture her other children and would never let her go. She pretended she knew nothing. She defended every one of us until the end. (198)

In this description of the death of Menchú's mother the text tropes the postcolonial maternal body as a site of both oppressive violence and a politic of resistance against it. The politico-emotive story of enduring maternal love in the face of violent annihilation splits open the politico-military narrative of criminality that the state constructs around the figure of the recalcitrant mother. The tormenting images of the mother's shaved head and of her body clad in a guerrilla uniform, both of which are punitive markers to signify criminality, are ruptured by the mother's steely determination not to reveal anything about her children. This is resonant in the reiteration of "nothing" as in "But my mother said nothing" and "She pretended she knew nothing." In Menchú's literary construction silence takes up different valences in different contexts. My work has already explored the repressive function that silence takes on in the context of rape and forced impregnation of indigenous women. On the contrary, speechlessness becomes empowering in the assassination episode of Menchú's mother as her resistant silence frustrates military atrocities on women operating at the limits of human tolerance and resilience. My contention about the torture of Menchú's mother is presented both here and in my previous argument about the rape narrative. I have examined how the text encases an austere delineation of the rape of the maternal body in a narrative of abduction, disappearance, and captivity, instead of projecting it as a spectacle of gender trauma. I have argued that by avoiding a spectacle of sexual torture I, Rigoberta Menchú resists the voyeuristic circulation of the female body with its attendant weight of sexual objectification in a patriarchal ambit of gender formulation. Nonetheless, following the reticent narrative of rape is the lavish spectacle of the violent disintegration of the mother's indigenous body. Through a stage by stage showcasing of the details of the

grisly episode, Menchú inventories how on the third day "they cut off her ears," then "cut her whole body bit by bit," how the first tortures "became infected," and how they "didn't give her any food for many days" till her mother "began to lose consciousness and was in her death throes" (198). The mother's tortured body is medically treated and fed to revive it for the continuation of torture. But the story of the brutal assassination of the mother is not restricted to a literary economy of sensibility in which the experiential evokes the presence of the individual subject of the patriarchal bourgeois family.[58] The narrative of maternal affection/protection constructs a woman who belongs neither to the patriarchal realm of the family nor to that of the nation-state. She is the social subject whose experience of pain is her ethical politics—her contribution to the political labor of the dissident collective. As the mother's clothes are displayed by the army in the town hall in Uspantán as bait to lure her guerrilla children to their deaths, the children reinscribe the story of the mother's vulnerability with their own story of immunity. Emulating the emotional resilience of the martyrs of the movement, Menchú and her brothers affiliate with their dying mother not only as her children but also as comrades in solidarity: "We have to keep this grief as a testimony to them because they never exposed their lives even when their grief was great too" (199). As the absent children pay their tribute to the revolutionary mother by replicating her political agency through the resistant act of silence before extreme anguish, the military extends the pageantry of torture into the landscape as they leave the dying mother under a tree. The testimonial construction of the dead maternal body as a disintegrating site, festering with flies and

[58] Rodriguez 152. On the other hand, it might be argued that such a description aimed at the coordination of affect sanitizes reality and censors the truth. Thus, representation becomes falsification. Such an argument does not take into account the importance of conceptual truth as opposed to factual truth which becomes key in dealing with the violations of marginalized communities whose voices are erased under regimes of terror. As such, factual truth becomes a difficult cornerstone in representations under repression.

worms and urinated upon by the soldiers, becomes a narrative act that places the army within a discourse of bestiality, strengthened by the cannibalistic image of the sentry as "they ate near her" even as "she started to smell very strongly" (199). The conflation of the soldiers with the animals is reinforced as the image of the soldiers feasting by the rotting body overlaps with Menchú's description of preying birds like *zopilotes*, dogs, and other scavenging animals who together devour the carcass. By refusing to surrender herself to save the mother's tortured and disintegrating body, the daughter honors the mother's determination to protect her children. Irene Matthews argues that the daughter's text about the "terrible ethical dilemma" of sacrificing the mother unravels the complex role of mothering and daughtering in war: "A daughter's denial of a normally 'attentive' response, her refusal to comply with the torturers' demands that she present herself, may have been the only way to break the cycle that was destroying her family—her father, brother, and now her mother—and her people" (101).[59] In preserving herself the daughter also conserves her own voice to articulate the story of maternal love at the borders of human strength. But, the story of this daughter is not only one of relational pain, nor is it merely a story about her family. Through the story of her mother the daughter tells the

[59] My reading of the mother's assassination has deliberately foregrounded the resistant silence of this particular mother and her children in the face of pain as a political act of communal integration. This contests the alternative interpretation of the mother's crumbling body as a symbolic disintegration of the indigenous community. The latter conflates the woman's physical integrity with the cultural integrity of the community. I have resisted this stance in my reading of the trope of forced impregnation. The understanding of the female body as a metaphor for the community leads to a reductive ideology of protection for women that enables the appropriation of indigenous women's bodies both by the state and by the revolutionary collective, as my examination of forced impregnation has underlined. Also see footnote 25. However, at the same time it is important to perceive how the torturing of the mother's body "might fill varying categories of 'otherness' that conflate the imperialistic, masculinist, racist, and professional inversions of an 'orphaned' military based on often reluctant recruitment and socialized into 'selfhood' through techniques instilling fear, obedience, alienation, objectification, and brutality." See Matthews 101. Group torture of the 'other' thus defines not only a sense of self, but also a solidarity with the group by participating together in a ritual initiation into selfhood. See Matthews 99.

story of her community, and in her lead(er)ing her people through storytelling about their oppression, daughtering transforms itself into mothering.

Ecological Activism:[60] When we meet her in the sequel Crossing Borders published in 1998-- fifteen years after I, Rigoberta Menchú, the labor of this daughter-mother has not only left the precincts of the family home and the kinship group; it has transgressed national boundaries to clamor for global justice for indigenous peoples. Through her latter testimonial what repeatedly comes across is how violence against the ecosystem translates into violence against the indigenous population worldwide. Menchú's leadership contests the conceptual framework of the nation-state as inadequate for resisting this violence. Instead, she offers a transnational paradigm of Fourth World Revolution which is located at the crossroads of postcolonialism and ecocriticism, red feminism and green feminism.

In Crossing Borders the struggle for Mayan land in Guatemala translates into the politico-textual representation of women's campaign for the global preservation of indigenous cultural heritage, and its associations with the earth. Menchú explains the role of the land in defining the indigenous people and their relationship to each other, and hence to the collective:

> Mother Earth, for us, is not simply a symbolic expression. She is the source, the root, the origin of our culture and our existence. Human beings need the earth, and the earth needs human beings. This balance of co-existence on earth has been

[60] I have deliberately used the word 'ecological' instead of 'environmental' to underline Menchú's plea for systemic changes in the handling of natural resources. Andrew Dobson has helpfully pointed out the distinction between the two categories: "[E]nvironmentalism argues for a managerial approach to environmental problems, secure in the belief that they can be solved without fundamental changes in present values or patterns of production and consumption, while ecologism holds that a sustainable and fulfilling existence presupposes radical changes in our relationship with the non-human natural world, and in our mode of social and political life." See Andrew Dobson, Green Political Thought (London and New York: Routledge, 1990) 1.

slowly eroded. According to our forefathers, the ancient civilizations, the 'first peoples', possessed these values. In all aspects of life there should be harmony and one of the most important sources of this harmony is the community. That is precisely what has been lost today. People do not remember that the earth is their mother. They no longer remember their duty to the community" (152).

Refusing to annex nature with the struggle of a particular nation, Menchú, nonetheless, brings nature into conjunction with a sphere of radical global politics.[61] What is significant here is the fact that Crossing Borders was published after Menchú won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. Following this the UN declared 1993 as the International Year of the Indian Peoples. Menchú was the Goodwill Ambassador for the year. The context of this testimonial is largely that of Menchú's work at the UN and beyond as the spokesperson for the International Decade for the Indigenous Peoples (1994 to 2003). As such, in her representational practice the Guatemalan land struggle is not to be lodged in a discourse of Mayan patrimony. Instead, the leader ties all indigenous peoples in a communal relation through their filial link with and claim to "Mother Earth." She also links all humanity through a discourse of duty to each other by protecting their common link with the archetypal mother. Personifying the earth as the mother of all human beings and representing her as engaged in a relationship of mutuality with them, Menchú's rhetoric is an effort to authenticate the need for reestablishing a "balance of co-existence on earth" between nature and its human children. In this radical 'politicscape' the borders of the nation-state are disrupted as the indigenous peoples' bioethical value of harmony

[61] Neil Sammells's work was helpful in framing my argument about the representation of nature as an act of radical politics against legitimating the nation in Menchú's text. See Neil Sammell's "Wilde nature," Writing the Environment: Ecocriticism and Literature, eds. Richard Kerridge and Neil Sammells (London and New York: Zed Books Ltd, 1998) 132.

between the natural world and the human world is legitimized as a global mode of living. This way of life, maintained by the "first peoples" of "ancient civilizations", is validated even as Menchú questions the notion of a pure cultural space of essence through her conception of culture as "dynamic," "a kind of dialectic," and "something that progresses and evolves" (152).

Menchú's resistance against ecocultural insensitivity to indigenous philosophy is even more sharply defined in her criticism of the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro in 1992. By voicing the irony of the Earth Summit—the very site of ecological defiance against global capitalism—firmly in the grips of an ethos of business profit, Menchú engages in a textual practice of ecological activism by travestying elite venues of nature protection.[62] She exposes them as phony sites of money making and "fad"(173):

> I had gone to find out what their idea of the earth, plants and nature might be, and what I found was a commercial version of ecology. There were T-shirts with tigers, lions and parrots painted on them, and plastic bags with animals' faces. It was a case of businessmen making money out of the environment. They usurped indigenous wisdom, and made films to sell to make even more money. (172)

Once again, the boundaries defined by the Earth Summit are that of the entire globe as an ecological site in need of protection, not that of the nation-state. Concomitantly, Menchú's critique of the Summit is aimed at the commercialization of the global environment, not of any specific landscape or the de-authentication of any particular indigenous community. Underlining the superexploitation of the ecocultural resources of

[62] For an analysis of how ecocriticism, postcolonialism, and globalization can be thought together despite philosophical tensions, see Susie O'Brien 140-180.

indigenous mainstay, Menchú archives the incompatible images of T-shirts and plastic bags together with the images of tigers, lions, and parrots. The former signifies a global economy of mass consumerism cutting across geopolitical divides and the latter stands for a borderless wilderness. However, this wilderness is domesticated since the value of the fauna lies only in its ability to enhance the consumptive worth of the T-shirts and the plastic bags by exoticizing them. In the context of globalization, with its reaches in the nooks and crannies of human experience, in Menchú's text the commercialization and the circulation of "indigenous wisdom" as saleable films in the international market takes on the analogy of prostitution. Commercialization of indigenous culture thus becomes as taboo as the commodification of an intensely private experience like sex: "They prostituted the thoughts of the indigenous peoples" (172). Menchú's challenge to such acts of appropriation of the indigenous culture by the systemic structures of knowledge within capitalism's increasing global reaches is evident in her final statement that closes I, Rigoberta Menchú: "Not even anthropologists or intellectuals, no matter how many books they have, can find out all our secrets" (247). The narrator's representational practice speaks to the nature/culture split that entered the epistemological horizon with capitalism, and which led to the exploitation of the natural world for the benefit of culture. Her resistance to selling indigenous "secrets" to capitalism points the reader in the direction of an alternative culture which is metonymically associated and in harmony with nature.[63]

[63] M. Killingsworth's and Jacqueline Palmer's essay offered me insights into this split as the source of overexploitation of nature. See M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Jacqueline S. Palmer, "Ecopolitics and the literature of the borderlands: the frontiers of environmental justice in Latina and Native American writing," Writing the Environment, 197.

Menchú's critique of the nature/culture relationship gets framed through an anti-globalization rhetoric that also draws attention to how nature can be made instrumental in the social construction of difference through the policing of variously raced bodies, and hence in the formations of different postcolonial identities.[64] In this role nature charts how colonial practices of unequal distribution of resources along racial identities get translated into postcolonial contexts, and are subsequently refunctioned as economic practices of globalization. I, Rigoberta Menchú tells us the story of an oligarchy, largely of a mixed European and indigenous ancestry which, through land appropriation, continues the legacy of colonial oppression of the indigenous people in postcolonial Guatemala. Crossing Borders, in addition, traces how such postcolonial structures of tyranny are bolstered and held in place by an alliance between global finance and the national politics of neocolonial elites. Menchú summarizes how such alliances result in material manifestations of extreme economic disparities within a postcolonial population:

> How can the World Bank allow huge areas of land to be used to pasture a few cows, so that land-owning and bourgeois families can spend their weekends killing deer? How can they allow this at a time when millions of people are starving because they have no land? How can it permit huge land concessions that destroy the natural world by trafficking in wood, rare animals and archaeological remains? (175)

What Menchú clamors against is the ongoing extractive ambitions of colonialism, demonstrated at the turn of the twentieth century in the form of global imperialism that devastates ecological reserves by facilitating deforestation, extinction of rare animal

[64] See Gretchen Legler, "Body politics in American nature writing. 'Who may contest for what the body of nature will be?" Writing the Environment 73-4.

species, and business in archaeological heritage of places through technological capitalism. Previously conquering peoples still control the structures of global economics like the World Bank. As such, the prerogative is theirs to use international finance to order the distribution of natural resources among postcolonial populations of nation-states along the boundaries of ethnic and cultural differences, privileging social bodies marked as racially and culturally similar to the distributors. Hence, acute material differences are sustained and protected by a global coalition of elites, as bourgeois leisure is entitled to more ground for hunting in the wild than the starving millions are to land for food cultivation for daily sustenance. Through affiliations with and surveillance of national territories global capital thus upholds at the same time as it dissolves "imaginary yet fatal lines that divide First from Third World, brown people from white, haves from have-nots, North from South" (Killingsworth and Palmer 198). The enslavement of the indigenous peoples thus continues. The regional symptoms of these material conditions, based on unequal global structural relations of socio-economic power, find expression in insurrection and counterinsurgency violence. Menchú's indictment of the structures of global finance defines the conquest of natural resources in terms of the conquest of her people:

> I have been very critical of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. I think these organizations deal very badly with problems of human-rights violations and the environment. If they didn't deal with them so badly, the scorched-earth campaign in Guatemala could have been prevented, and new laws governing land distribution introduced. (175)

The scorched-earth campaign of the Guatemalan government, in an effort to destroy guerrilla bases, massacred four hundred villages in Guatemala. By testifying to the link between global finance and the genocidal violence, the indigenous leader delineates the relational bearing of human cultural and economic practices to the material world. The discursive and material value of Menchú's ecofeminist activism lies in foregrounding the interconnection between the health of the ecosystem and that of all humanity. But the revolutionary labor of the leader also rests in acknowledging the asymmetries of cultural and economic practices that affect ecological health: "To personify humanity, using the pronoun 'we', as the perpetrator of environmental damage, is to mask important differences. 'We'—men, women, different cultures, rich and poor—are not all in the same way responsible for ecological damage" (Kerridge 6). Therefore, ecofeminism continuously brings into conversation with global ecology the small narratives of the local ecosystems and the differing accountabilities of the agents of ecological destruction along various lines of identity. In the process, it reconstructs and deconstructs the grand narrative of a global ecosystem linked to a global humanity. Kerridge says: "This makes ecologism a vital testing-ground for relations between post-colonial pluralism and new 'globalization' " (7).

Finally, it needs to be underscored that through the global dissemination of the "green stories" of the indigenous peoples Menchú transforms her testimonial labor into ecological praxis.[65] This red-green feminist paradigm is founded on the logic that narratives play crucial roles in shaping and altering material practices.[66] The transmission

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[65] See Dobson 117.

[66] See Susie O'Brien, "Articulating a World of Difference: Ecocriticism, Postcolonialism and Globalization," Canadian Literature 170-171 (Autumn 2001): 150.

histories of such narratives are marked by a particular politics of representation that, by its international appeal, affects economic circuits of production, distribution, and consumption globally.

Inscribing the Cosmopolitan Self and Mediating the Iconic Indigenous Subjectivity:

The link between the individual and the collective, the exceptional and the representative in Menchú's testimonials offer an index to the relationship between the political value of the texts and their standing in the global market:

> While some critics of the testimonio have sidestepped the more critical ambiguities emerging in testimonial narratives, muting a critical discussion of native exceptionality or radical individuality by asserting that "it does not matter who speaks," clearly it not only matters but plays a determining role in the commodifying of texts for the international market and in the testimonio's function as a political tool—think of how the singular image of Menchú has been exploited to facilitate the sale and circulation of *I, Rigoberta Menchú* and to attract the focus of international attention to the systems of oppression directed by the Guatemalan state. (Sánchez-Casal 101)

What Sánchez-Casal highlights is how in I, Rigoberta Menchú the representational politics of Elisabeth Burgos-Debray in constructing Menchú's "radical individuality," signified by the cosmopolitan globe trotting Mayan peasant woman, becomes a political ploy to campaign for the human rights of the Mayans. This is possible because despite her exceptionality the leader is at the same time iconic of the oppressed indigenous population. The leader's exceptionality and iconicity respectively set her apart and allows her to symbolize the collective emergence of the Fourth World as a new force in

transnational indigenous politics. In Crossing Borders the exceptionality and iconicity of Menchú is to a large extent constructed through her role as the Goodwill Ambassador and spokesperson to the UN for the indigenous peoples. In these capacities Menchú underscores the possible role of the UN in defining a Fourth World indigenous identity, cutting across the borders of the nation-state across the world:

> One of our aims was to secure a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. If the UN were to declare indigenous people legal, they would have a legal framework within which to work. At present, national constitutions do not recognize indigenous peoples, nor do international law and institutions, because we don't appear as specific peoples in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We simply do not exist; we have no rights. The UN, however, could recognise our legality. (144-5)

The significance of a corrective paradigm of global governance is repeatedly designed in Menchú's discourse as the political ground that challenges the colonial legacy of nation-states built on delegitimizing the indigenous population by excluding them from the dominant legal frame—European in case of colonial law and Euro-American in the case of international law. Menchú pays homage to Chief Descage, the first indigenous leader to go to the League of Nations at Geneva way back in the 1920s because perhaps he understood "that international organisations might some day defend the rights of indigenous peoples" (141). Thus, the identity of the female leader is marked by her world-wide travel as the UN representative—an identity that intersects with her communal subjectivity. The communal subjectivity of the leader is in metonymic association with the physical and cultural disintegration of the indigenous peoples of the

world. Standing at such crossroads, the leader subverts monolithic narratives of national belonging at the same time that her Mayan heritage foregrounds the Guatemalan human rights crisis.[67] Through this correlation between testimonial and human rights, of international politics and literature, acts of remembrance "enter and travel through global circuits of exchange that affect the import of the stories: through official UN mechanisms for recognition and redress; through national inquiries and international tribunals" (Schaffer and Smith 5). In other words, these global intersections of cultural productions and politico-legal discourses are marked by circuits of production, distribution, and consumption of human rights texts for various purposes. The global forces of consumerism further cut across national boundaries as publishing houses convert women's testimonials of human rights violations like Menchú's into stories with an international readership.[68] Such a reading public is invested in narratives of suffering that generate transnational coalitions of human rights activism, often with strong feminist wings in them that are particularly interested in defining the unique ways in which women experience human rights violations in situations of state terror. Thus, despite the conflictive space of ethnographic contact between the transcriber and the transcribed that has been discussed in the previous section, the radical exceptionality of the militant female leader undermines the tense power relationship at the "contact zone." Destabilizing the conflictual power relationship by the sheer force of her radical individuality, the leader links herself through the narrative act with the indigenous base and launches a collective politics of Fourth World self-determination on the global stage.

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[67] Schaffer and Smith, 19.

[68] Schaffer and Smith 23.

VI. Conclusion

In the final analysis, I would like to point out that in testimonials like I, Rigoberta Menchú and Crossing Borders produced collaboratively by indigenous women and their elite mediators, "the subaltern, by definition not registered or registrable as a historical subject capable of hegemonic action [. . .], is nevertheless present in unexpected structural dichotomies, fissures in the forms of hierarchy and hegemony" (111). As this Founding Statement of the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group suggests, the subaltern in these testimonials are "not only *acted on*, despite the tendency in traditional paradigms to see it as a passive or 'absent' subject that can be mobilized only from above; it also *acts* to produce social effects that are visible" (111-112). In other words, though the subaltern is incapable of assuming a dominant position, she erupts through the cracks of the hegemonic order as Menchú's testimonials burst open the seams of a militaristic state based on an alliance between the political and the business elite and terror and torture of the subaltern. Into this rigid structure of the nation-state Menchú intervenes through her transnational network, not only forged through her collaborative testimonies of oppression with ethnographer Elisabeth Burgos-Debray and translator Ann Wright, but also through the global activist alliance for the Mayan cause that she inspired across various locations of militancy. The female revolutionary leader's alliance with both survivor witnesses of the Mayan genocide and its observer witnesses worldwide deconstructs the idea that the testimonials are the stories of a particular individual's experience. It becomes the story of individual human rights under collective threat, and the fact that the international community witnessed the massacre, activates corrective energy that circulates worldwide as the trace of state brutalities in a particular

geopolitical context. Of special importance here is the relationship between the author-witness and the reader-reviewer as the latter, despite not being in the same pain, stands in relation to it and hopes to end that pain for others.[69] Framed differently, women's human rights narratives like Menchú's which uncover the unique ways in which women experience the tyranny of the state in situations of political crisis generate Fourth World transnational alliances which, through the cultural politics of human rights activism, challenge the despotism and the absolute power of the nation-state over its citizens. Marking such disenfranchised citizens as global denizens with affiliations to other solidarity groups beside the nation-state, global human rights movements challenge the category of the nation by legitimating processes of telling and listening against the nation-state.

[69] I am immensely indebted to Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg for her insightful paper "Authenticity and the Distanced Observer Witness: Reading Pat Barker and Youssef Chahine" at the Resistance to Tyranny: Representing Human Rights through Literature conference hosted by the New York College English Association between April 28-29. It has helped me think through the significant politics of the observer witnesses that generate societal transformation.

CHAPTER TWO
The Global Movement Against Discrimination: Lower Caste Women's Convict Narratives

I. Introduction

As its main contention, this chapter focuses on the representation of lower caste Indian women's leadership in resisting caste hierarchy in postcolonial narratives from India. More specifically, through a study of life-writing it explores the relationship in which women who resist caste atrocities stand with respect to criminality. The chapter goes on to examine the potentiality for cross-caste feminist politics that emerges out of such lower caste militancy. Finally, my argument inquires how contesting the Indian caste system leads into the international politics against discrimination on the basis of work and descent.[1] This builds up the broader argument of transnational feminism that is pivotal to my dissertation. India's Bandit Queen: The True Story of Phoolan Devi and The Bandit Queen of India: An Indian Woman's Amazing Journey from Peasant to International Legend are the central texts considered here. These works are about Phoolan Devi who was born into a lower caste sharecropping family in India in the 1960s. She transformed herself from a violated girl into a tough outlaw, avenging caste outrage. In 1983 she negotiated her surrender to the government of India, and was elected to the Parliament in 1996. She was finally assassinated in 2001. Reading life writings of Phoolan Devi as convict narratives that allow for a reconstructive reading of women's criminality, the chapter analyzes the caste politics of the criminalization of women

[1] The UN resolution of 2000, passed against "Discrimination on the Basis of Work and Descent", forms the basis of this attempt to classify caste based oppression as part of the global movement against discrimination based on labor and lineage.

through the organizing characters of the girl child and the concubine. Subsequently, using the figures of the warrior goddess and the border-crossing feminist, I examine the social militancy of these women against such caste oppression. Thus, the chapter reads the figure of the lower caste female leader as a site of both oppression and resistance.

The short story "Draupadi", written by the Indian author Mahasweta Devi, will offer a historical template for understanding the complicity between colonial and postcolonial law concerning the criminalization of certain communities in India. More specifically, the critical frame of the chapter will draw on complementary figures of delinquent women, like Draupadi, from Indian literature to study the relationship between caste and law in the criminalization of females. Linking postcolonial resistance figures like Draupadi and Phoolan Devi with oppositional women confronting the colonial state will be useful not only in constructing a history of women rebels militating against colonial and postcolonial law and order, but also in highlighting a continuity in women's disobedience for resisting the continuum of violence.

This chapter will be structured to uncover texts like India's Bandit Queen and The Bandit Queen of India as activist prison writings by disobedient women that rupture such a continuum between the violence of the colonial and the postcolonial legal systems. Contextualizing such texts against India's colonial history through readings of historical and critical writings, the framework will set the stage to expose how the ideological myths of colonial criminality extend their legacies into the existing legal apparatus of the contemporary Indian state. The context will reveal how such myths came to be constructed around certain castes and tribes and codified into colonial law. Since this dissertation specifically engages with the paradigm of women's human rights, my interest

lies in historicizing this nexus of criminality and caste politics by deploying the figure of the woman through her absence/presence in colonial/postcolonial criminality.

Like the historical frame, the theoretical scaffold of the chapter will destabilize the continuum of violence between colonial and postcolonial law by presenting a frame that allows for a re-constructive reading of women's criminality. The critical frame of this chapter builds itself upon colonial discourse analysis, socioeconomic colonial history of caste, and convicted women's writing. This framework brings together Parama Roy's Indian Traffic: Identities in Question in Colonial and Postcolonial India, Susan Bayly's Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age, and Barbara Harlow's Barred: Women, Writing, and Political Detention. The subsequent literary analysis of the life-writings about Phoolan Devi will explore both her criminalization as a lower caste woman and her transgressive politics against the caste system in the context of its negotiations with transnational feminist issues.[2]

II. History of "Disobedience": Legends of India's Unruly Daughters

For insights into how, in the first place, delinquency came to be defined with respect to identity in both colonial and postcolonial Indian criminality, it is crucial to probe into historiography. This helps us in comprehending the politics behind determining what constitutes crime. Of special interest as to the parameters of this chapter are the colonial and postcolonial discourses on the gendered history and practice of "crime" when confronted with the figure of the female delinquent. An archetypal case

[2] In this context it will be helpful to mention about the two systems to comprehend the category of caste—the national system of 'varna' and the local system of 'jati.' Following the national system of caste classification, the Brahmins (priests) occupy the top of the ladder, followed by the Kshatriyas (warriors), the Vaishyas (traders and artisans), and lastly the shudras (laborers). Within these four groups are many sub-castes which vary regionally. See Joanna Liddle & Rama Joshi, Daughters of Independence: Gender, Caste and Class in India (London, UK & New Delhi, India: Zed & Kali for Women, 1986) 58.

in point in colonial female criminality can be conceptualized around the role of the women "rebels" in the historical battle of 1857 when native soldiers in the British army of the East India Company rose up against their British officers for the injustices they faced within the military.[3]

To trace how the representation of women's insubordination in 1857 was marked by colonial politics, a brief historical overview of the causes that culminated in these women's dissidence is in order. The annexation policy of the British Governor-General Dalhousie was arguably the most decisive factor in impelling women to join the battle of 1857. Dalhousie's "stance toward states whose rulers died without natural heirs was in fact an established and tested doctrine: lapse of the state to the British" (Lebra-Chapman 25).[4] In many of these cases the appropriation of the state was tantamount to the confiscation of women's and children's private property. Such was the case with Lakshmibai, the Rani (queen) of Jhansi, who in Indian iconography has become emblematic of anticolonial female militancy.[5] Though the Rani's husband—Raja (King)

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[3] One of the most notorious causes of the 1857 war was "the introduction of the new Enfield rifles, whose percussion caps were greased with the fat of cows and pigs and thus defiling to Hindus and Muslims alike. This, if nothing else, served to unite the Sepoys [soldiers] in their antagonism to their officers and helped to precipitate the first spark of revolt when those officers called their men to parade to prove their loyalty." See Joyce Lebra-Chapman, The Rani of Jhansi: A Study in Female Heroism in India (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986) 3. According to Manmohan Kaur, On April 24 "[o]ut of ninety Sepoys present, 85 refused to accept the new cartridges. As a result they were court-martialled and were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment extending upto 10 years." On May 9 they "were deprived of their uniforms and then were handed over to the smiths for fastening shackles around their arms and legs." That evening prostitutes taunted the rest of the soldiers for their cowardice and their indifference to the humiliation of their peers who refused to "swerve from their creed." This inflamed a spirit of revolt among the soldiers against British injustice. See Manmohan Kaur, Role of Women in the Freedom Movement (1857-1947) (Delhi & Jullundur, India: Sterling Publishers, 1968) 37.

[4] Dalhousie's tenure (1848-56) "saw the absorption of nothing less than eight States which meant that a quarter million square miles of [Indian] territory was added to the East India Company's territorial limits." See Kaur 36.

[5] The following background to Rani Lakshmibai's involvement in the battle of 1857 has been drawn from Lebra-Chapman.

Gangadhar Rao--on his deathbed in 1853 adopted a five year old relative as his legal heir and "entrusted the charge of the state during his heir's minority to Rani Lakshmibai" (Lebra-Chapman 25), Dalhousie declined to recognize the adoption. Jhansi lapsed to the British in 1854. So, when the 1857 war spread to Jhansi, it fed into the injury of annexation. In the ensuing battle queen Lakshmibai led her own troops and died fighting the British.

Begum (queen) Hazrat Mahal, was another primary figure of female defiance against the British in 1857.[6] In 1856 the British deposed her husband Wajid Ali Shah, the king of Oudh, to annex his kingdom. As such, by joining the war of 1857 the queen tried to reestablish native rule over Oudh. Yet another leader in the revolt of 1857-1858 was the Rani of Ramgarh, Awanti Bai.[7] When her husband, Raja Lachman Singh, died in 1850 leaving behind a mentally disabled son, the "British authorities, true to their policy at this period of increasing their territorial limits took over the management of the estate" (Kaur 68). The Rani led her own troops to join the revolt of 1857 to redress the situation. There were also dissident queens like Rani Jindan Kaur, wife of Maharaja (Emperor) Ranjeet Singh of Punjab, who aided the rebel cause of 1857 from outside the country.[8]

Critical to unlocking how political privilege came to define female colonial criminality in 1857 is the recognition of the fact that British colonial historiography

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[6] For the following history of Begum Hazrat Mahal's rebellion, see Kaur 38-45.

[7] For the history of the Rani of Ramgarh's rebellion, see Kaur 68-9.

[8] She wrote to the Maharaja of Kashmir in cipher to urge him "to initiate an attack on British territory when Jung Bahadur would simultaneously descend from Nepal." See Kaur 71. Besides, Maharani (Empress) Baiza Bai, wife of Maharaja Daulat Rao Scindia of Gwalior, Basti Begum, the daughter of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last King of India, Chauhan Rani, the wife of Raja Pratap Chandra Singh of Anoopshahar, Rani Tace Bai, a descendent of Gangadhar Govind, the former Raja of Jaloun were few of the other names of women warriors that we encounter in the history of the 1857 battle. See Usha Bala & Anshu Sharma, Indian Women Freedom Fighters 1857-1947 (New Delhi: Manohar, 1986) 35-62.

constructed the war as the "Sepoy (Soldier) Mutiny," while native history configured it as part of the liberation struggle.[9] How did such colonial and native discursive politics construct women rebels who joined the battle against the British in 1857? Did caste politics play a role in redefining the transgressive acts of these women in colonial and postcolonial history? To track this nexus between historiography and criminality, it is vital to examine how the figures of these disobedient daughters of India took on different valences in the British colonial imagination and in the ethos of Indian nationalism.

The historiography of the classic case of the Rani of Jhansi enables a perceptive appreciation of the modalities of representing colonial female criminality. The historian Joyce Lebra-Chapman asserts: "Whether or not she [the Rani] was actively implicated, the assumption that she was nevertheless became official with English administrators, who planned to bring her to trial and punish her for her alleged offenses" (164). The author also underlines how the genre of historical fiction written by English authors "tends to portray Lakshmibai as either murderous and treacherous in her political dealings or as lascivious and unscrupulous in her sexual relations, generally with British officers" (164). A significant example is George Macdonald Fraser's Flashman in the Great Game (1975), a novel about a military hero Flashman who is sent to Jhansi to investigate into the portentous "Sepoy Mutiny." The arrogant lasciviousness of Flashman is evident from his first encounter with the queen after which he imagines "what that voluptuous tawny body would look like when I peeled the sari off it." He speculates "on

[9] "Hundreds of military memoirs and regimental histories chronicled the events of 1857 from the British perspective and witnessed the horror and shock felt by English men and women both at home and in India. The Indian perspective was of course different, and Indian historians for many years have described the Rebellion as the first phase of India's war of independence, a glorious war fought by passionate heroic patriots." See Lebra-Chapman 1-2.

the novel uses to which the pair of us could put that swing of hers, in the interests of diplomatic relations" (81). In a crude portrayal of her alleged sexual exploits with the imperial agent, the Rani is in the pavilion "thrusting up and down like a demented monkey on a stick, raking me with her nails and giving little shrieks into my mouth, until the torchlight procession which was marching through my loins suddenly exploded, she went limp in my arms." The narrative continues: "I slid gently to the floor in ecstatic exhaustion with that delightful burden clinging and quivering on top of me" (99). Flashman's post-coital sleep is interrupted by thugs attempting to murder him, and a sneaking suspicion creeps in his mind about the Rani's involvement in the plot. Fraser's endnotes to the text claims that in the milieu of the "mutiny" "Lakshmibai was credited with every vice [. . .] but there is no evidence that her private life and behaviour were not entirely respectable" (340). Fraser however adds: "That is not to say that she would not use her feminine power (or any other weapon) for political ends; in this may be found a logical explanation of the pavilion incident. [. . .] To lead him on, to lure him to the pavilion, and to arrange for an attack on him by professional assassins, was simple; that something of the sort actually happened is indicated by the confession which Ilderim Khan extracted from the captured Thug" (340).

On the other hand, Lebra-Chapman argues that the unlawful behavior of the Rani criminalized by the politico-discursive privilege of the British administration was reconfigured by native history as a glorious act of resistance to British imperialism: "the legend of the Rani grew through political reinterpretations and served the interests of the nationalist movement. In the first three decades of the twentieth century the Rani's image was particularly useful as a metaphor for resistance to the British, which could not be

voiced openly" (142). With India's independence in 1947 "it became possible for the first time for Indians to write freely about 1857." Banned previously, Vrindan Lal Verma's novel on the Rani, published in 1946, depicts the events of 1857 as "an early stage of the freedom struggle." Verma "credits the Rani with being the first woman in Indian history to encourage women to become a fighting force" (147). Thus, the criminalized Rani is reconfigured in native history as a liberator from foreign rule. The glorification of the Rani, however, also became part of the discursive repertoire of the British after her death: "Alive, for the English, she was 'the horrid Ranee,' the 'Jezebel of India,' 'the Indian Boadicea,' and 'perpetrator of the most heinous crimes.' Dying valiantly in battle, however, she was purified almost overnight in British eyes, transformed into 'the best and bravest of the rebels,' in Rose's famous phrase" (120).[10]

However, I argue that a key factor in the resurrection of the criminalized Rani was her elite status as a Brahmin in the Hindu caste hierarchy and her aristocratic marriage to a Kshatriya. My contention is based on the differential treatment of the participants in the 1857 war whose social locations were either outside the caste structure or lower down in it.[11] The solidarity of the "hill tribes" with the 1857 anti-colonial resistance movement

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[10] Lebra-Chapman emphasizes how the "rehabilitation of the Rani" really started with the battle narrative of General Rose, the Rani's opponent: "It was partly through the prism of English military romanticism, then, that the legend of the Rani had its inception. General Rose's comparison of the Rani to Joan of Arc in his battle report served a significant function." According to Lebra-Chapman: "The Rani's valor, fierce determination, discipline, knowledge of weaponry and horsemanship, and excellent tactical instincts were all traits with a long and honored tradition in British military annals and ethos" (120).

[11] As the caste Hindus like Rani Lakshmibai, theirs was an anti-annexation movement: "hill tribes determinedly resisted the attempts by the British to annexe their land for establishing plantations, and to try and use them as plantation labour." The author adds: "A number of tribal chiefs, especially in the north, participated in the 1857 events, and earned the title of traitors and renegades with the British government." See Meena Radhakrishna, "Dishonoured by History," The Hindu Folio July 16, 2000 <http://www.hinduonnet.com/folio/fo0007/00070240.htm>. In this context it is important to remember that none of the communities led by the rebel queens of 1857, whether Hindus or Muslims, came under such legislative surveillance after their insurgencies. In fact, in the case of Rani Awanti Bai, her last words before she

became a key historical factor leading to the colonial legislation which identified entire communities as unlawful through the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, later known as the Criminal Castes and Tribes Act of 1911. The Government of India denotified them in 1952, but in 1959 passed the Habitual Offenders Act which is almost a repetition of the Act of 1871.[12] Not only was the continuity of the colonial state reassured by the legislative philosophy and policy of the postcolonial administration,[13] but, this act, in conjunction with the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793, would be instrumental in unleashing a dynamics that would alter caste transactions in India.

At this juncture of historical analysis of the caste bound criminalization of lower caste peasant women like Phoolan Devi and non-Hindu tribal peasant women like Draupadi, it is vital to understand how the legacy of the colonial ruling class was handed down to their postcolonial counterparts. The answer lies in the legislative violence unleashed on native land and property relations by foreign rule. Such legal onslaughts facilitated the imposition on the indigenous feudalistic arrangements of local agrarianism

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committed suicide, admitting that she incited her people to rebel, could absolve her entire community from blame in the insurrection. See Kaur 69.

[12] See Mahasweta Devi, "Badge of All Their Tribes," Times of India Jan 5, 2000: 14. <http://www.lib.virginia.edu/area-studies/mahasweta/badge.html>.

[13] However, the last pre-liberation constitution of the British colonial rule in India--the Government of India Act of 1935--also introduced the colonial category of "Scheduled Castes" to define all sectors of the subject population that would qualify for affirmative actions. India was officially liberated from British colonial rule on August 15, 1947. The Constitution of independent India, which went into effect in 1950, adopted the rubrics of colonial anthropology--caste and tribe, and categorized this citizenry as "Scheduled Castes" and "Scheduled Tribes." See Constitution of India. Art. 341 <http://www.astro.virginia.edu/~sk4zw/india-const/p16341.html> & Constitution of India. Art. 342 <http://www.astro.virginia.edu/~sk4zw/india-const/p16342.html>. Moreover, the Constitution also made provisions for the "backward classes." See Constitution of India. Art. 340 < http://www.astro.virginia.edu/~sk4zw/india-const/p16340.html>. As Human Rights Watch defines it: "Referred to as "other backward castes" (OBCs) in administrative parlance, backward castes are defined as those whose ritual rank and occupational status are above 'untouchables' but who themselves remain socially and economically depressed." See Human Rights Watch, Broken People: Caste Violence Against India's Untouchables, (Human Rights Watch: New York, Washington, London, & Brussels, 1999) 37. As a shudra, Phoolan Devi belonged to this group.

of colonial administrative structures with their world market interests.[14] The Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 legislated the recruitment of landholders as revenue collectors for the colonial state. This administrative strategy spread from Bengal to other parts of India.[15] Under pre-colonial customary law the property of landlords could be used by peasants as long as it was not damaged.[16] The colonial legal code altered this by granting absolute ownership of land to the landlords, and pressuring them into collecting impossibly high rates of revenue from cultivators.[17] This transformed the feudal relations of patronage and loyalty between the landlord and the peasant as productivity now became a criterion for tenancy. The Rent Act of 1859 did eventually protect the tenancy rights of peasants cultivating the land for at least twelve years,[18] but the non-Hindu nomadic tribes and migrant peasants, mostly lower caste Hindus, remained unprotected.[19] The oppressive system was intensified when another group of intermediaries—the *jotedars*—entered the chain of command.

The vulnerability of women of these sharecropping class/caste groups was increased by their gendered experiences of sexual abuse by landlords and intermediaries.

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[14] See Rabindra Ray, The Naxalites and their Ideology (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988) 179.

[15] However, the British attitude toward intermediaries underwent a change till in 1856, after annexing Oudh, the colonial administration tried to circumvent the landed gentry in collecting revenues from the region. Ray 192.

[16] "By the fact of the peaceful defence of proprietary interests—whether of the intermediary or of the tenant—heritable, alienable rights to the usufruct were created that could be delegated." See Ray 195.

[17] See Marius, Damas. Approaching Naxalbari (Calcutta, India: Radical Impressions, 1991) 112.

[18] Ray 194.

[19] "At the time that intermediaries were the only sources of revenue-collection they were known as, zamindars in Bengal and elsewhere, and taluqdars in Oudh. Jotedars [. . .] were a variety of sub-infeudatory or a mass of such, that gradually grew up between the zamindar or taluqdar and the actual cultivators [. . .] The situation that prevailed at the time of independence was that of a series of individuals arranged in a hierarchy based on legal agreements appropriating parts of the surplus of the cultivator, before the portion due to the government was delivered up to it." See Ray 182-3.

These women contributed to social production through their domestic as well as field labor. They were subjected to gender based wage discrimination. During the 1943 Bengal famine the colonial authorities ignored the suffering of the Bengal peasantry to possibly deny that Britain's participation in the Second World War led to the diversion of food stocks for military needs. They continued to export grains and the bureaucrats made profits from emergency supplies for civilians.[20] In resistance to this Bengal's rural peasant women led--"the combined anti-feudal and anti-colonial agrarian movement"--the Tebhaga Uprising (1946-7). It started as "a movement of sharecroppers to retain two-thirds share of the produce for themselves and thereby to reduce from one-half to one-third of the produce the rent paid to Jotedars" (Singha Roy 48).[21] Historians have claimed, "In terms of class leadership Tebhaga was a peak in the history of women's resistance!" (Custers 11). The legacy of subaltern insurrection against the colonial state in the Tebhaga Movement was inherited by the Telengana People's Struggle (1948-51) against the postcolonial state. It was a guerrilla insurgency of peasants against the feudal oppression by the Muslim ruler of the southern state of Hyderabad and the Hindu landlords there. Agricultural women "moved militantly into the struggle for land, better wages, fair rent, reasonable interest in cash and grain loans" (Kannabiran and Lalitha

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[20] For this background to the Tebhaga movement, I am indebted to Custers. See Peter Custers, Women in the Tebhaga Uprisings: Rural Poor Women and Revolutionary Leadership 1946-1947 (Calcutta: Naya Prakash, 1947). 24-31. For many such works on subaltern uprisings, I am indebted to Partha Chatterjee, Director of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences in Kolkata, India for allowing me access to the Centre's collection and its critical resources on Bengal's subaltern history during my research in India in the spring of 2005.

[21] The bulk of the population in Khanpur village—the hub of the Tebhaga movement—was comprised of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and an ex-tribe. In the zamindari system the Naib was the direct representative of the zamindar. The naib and the jotedars belonged to the upper castes. Being moneylenders, they appropriated most of the land from the peasants in lieu of debts and mortgages. See Debal Singha Roy, Women in Peasant Movements: Tebhaga, Naxalite, and After. (New Delhi: Manohar, 1992) 52.

182).[22] In addition to their exploitation as laborers, these women had been subjected to sexual violations like rape and *adi bapa*.[23] When the revolution ended in 1951 the Nizam had been dethroned, and the abolition of forced labor and a resistance to the *jagirdari* system had been achieved.[24] As in the Tebhaga and the Telengana struggles, in the Naxalite movement (1967-71) of Bengal "women were in the forefront of the struggle with the police, in forcible harvesting of the crops, in the meetings and campaigning and organising activities, in supplying food and maintaining communication network among the underground activists and in stimulating the moral strength for resistance" (47). The target of the Naxalite movement was also "the long-established oppression of the landless peasantry and the itinerant farm worker, sustained through an unofficial government-landlord collusion that too easily circumvented the law" (Spivak, Foreword 6-7). In this conflict the women of peasants groups suffered in very different ways than men, and their militant politics against the system took on different valences of criminalization than did men's in the postcolonial nation-state.

This question of political resistance and the caste politics behind the criminalization of women is pried open by Mahasweta Devi's short story "Draupadi"

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[22] "The peasants on the Nizam's personal estate were practically bonded to the ruler. Under the *jagirdari* (tenurial system in which lands and/or revenues were granted by the State either for services rendered or in lieu of debts and advances) system various illegal taxes and forced labor were exacted from peasants by the landlords. Apart from this there were the *deshmukhs* and *deshpandes* (principal revenue officers of a district who became landowners over time), or tax collectors of the Nizam who grabbed thousands of acres of land and made it their own property. Peasants thus became tenants-at-will." See Vasantha Kannabiran and K. Lalitha, "The Magic Time: Women in the Telengana People's Struggle," Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History, eds. Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1989) 201.

[23] "Rape was an everyday reality, the undenied right of the landlord or moneylender. *Adi bapa* or concubinage was prevalent. Adi bapa was a form of concubinage peculiar to Telengana, where a young girl usually from a bonded family, had to accompany the bride to her husband's house to tend to her mistress, and to provide sexual service to the master. Her virginity was therefore as important as the bride's." Kannabiran and Lalitha 182.

[24] Kannabiran and Lalitha 202.

which will serve as my paradigm of bahujan crossfeminist discourse to explore the convict narratives about Phoolan Devi. Unlike Phoolan Devi who was a shudra and under constitutional law belonged to the category of backward castes,[25] the fictional character of Draupadi was a Santal and hence was a member of the Scheduled Tribes. Furthermore, while the former draws her revolutionary ethos from the practice of social banditry, the later hails from the realms of Naxalite insurgency. However, what makes them literary complements of each other in my work is the shared plight of lower caste Hindus and non-Hindus in a democracy anomalously operative on the Brahminical ideology of work and descent. Caught in the vortex of violence generated particularly against such women by the imposition of colonial modernity on a feudal tradition, and the coexistence of both in the postcolonial nation state, both Phoolan Devi and Draupadi who are landless laboring women become militants challenging the caste/class politics of the landed patriarchy patronized by the structures of the postcolonial state. What emerges in my reading of the criminalization of the defiant politics of these women is the intractable complicity between the violence of colonial and the postcolonial legislation against the lower castes and the non-Hindu tribes of India.

III. Scaffold for Textual Analysis: Women, Banditry, and Convict Narratives

The women rebels of 1857 constitute a crucial node in the history of the criminalization of women in terms of my work. On one hand, they can be seen as precursors of peasant women like Draupadi, militant in the Naxalite movement against

[25] In her preface to "Draupadi" Spivak states: "As Mahasweta points out in an aside, the tribe in question is the Santal, not to be confused with at least nine other Munda tribes that inhabit India. They are also not to be confused with the so-called untouchables, who, unlike the tribals, are Hindu, though probably of some remote 'non-Aryan' origin." See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Draupadi: translator's foreword, Breast Stories by Mahasweta Devi, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Calcutta; Seagull, 1998) 12-13.

the postcolonial state and outlawed by it--non-Hindu tribal women who are violently tortured in police custody in independent India. On the other hand, the defiance of the women rebels of 1857 against the colonial state connects them to the *thuggees* of Central India who, together with the Rani of Jhansi in the First War of Independence, "posed a threat to British power in early 1858, a threat both political and military" (Lebra-Chapman 78). Phoolan Devi belonged to this tradition of rural banditry. The rebel Rani is "now part of the legend of the Chambal Valley" where Devi operated (Sen xxi).[26]

In Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age Susan Bayly explains the link between colonial racism and the legislative violence of a caste based construction of criminality. She underlines how "rather than proven individual acts of criminality", at "the end of the nineteenth century, this principle of guilt by collective genetic or social inheritance was extended very widely under the enactments of colonial India's notorious Criminal Tribes and Castes Acts (1871, 1911)" (118).[27] About the discursive constructions of criminality by scholar-bureaucrats like

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[26] See Mala Sen, Introduction, India's Bandit Queen: The True Story of Phoolan Devi, (New Delhi: HarperColliins, 1993) xxi. Sen adds: The history of rural banditry in the Chambal Valley dates back to the twelfth century when Raja [King] Anangpal Tomar, driven out of Delhi by his cousin Prithviraj Chauhan, took refuge in the ravines just south of Agra. From here he made repeated attacks, without much success, on his cousin and on Delhi. Ever since that time this terrain has been known as baghi—or rebel—territory. Later, in the sixteenth century, when the Moghuls took control of Delhi, the region served as a buffer zone between Muslim powers in the north and Hindu kingdoms of the south. Still later, when the East India Company entered the fray, opening up trade routes that skirted these forests and ravines, travelers were constantly killed and robbed by gangs of Thugs." Sen xx-xxi.

[27] According to Bayly: "This is consistent with the adoption of measures which allowed supposed Thugs to be convicted of criminality solely on the testimony of a so-called approver (a confessed Thug), who deposed that an accused person had either been initiated as a strangler or was the offspring of a Thug." In other areas colonial law operated on traditional British legal philosophy based on "evidence and definitions of personal guilt" (118). However, Indian scholars like Meena Radhakrishna have argued that unlike in England, "hereditary crime in India never got seriously linked to biological determinism [. . .] because of a particular view of Indian social structures." According to her hereditary notions of criminality in India were based "on crime as a profession passed on from one generation of criminal caste to another". See Meena Radhakrishna, Dishonoured by History: 'Criminal Castes' and British Colonial Policy, (New Delhi, India: Orient Longman, 2001) 5.

William Sleeman,[28] Bayly adds: "These accounts certainly made much of the contrast between the rational white man and the fiendishly depraved 'oriental' ", heralding the discourses "in the wake of the Mutiny-Rebellion about the ever-present dangers that could threaten British interests in India, and about the role of the eternally vigilant intelligence-gatherer as a civilizer and guardian of empire" (117).

Parama Roy's Indian Traffic Identities in Question in Colonial and Postcolonial India tracks this category of the native criminal—*thuggee*—through its discursive formation in British India. Roy states: "The thugs, as they are represented in nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonial representations, were a cult of professional stranglers who preyed on travelers—though never on Englishmen—as an act of worship to the popular Hindu goddess Kali" (45).[29] In Roy's own words, her work "examines the phenomenon designated *thuggee* by colonial authority in nineteenth-century India, a phenomenon whose emergence, codification, and overthrow was to become perhaps *the* founding moment for the study of indigenous criminality" (41). This becomes "an enabling moment for the colonial state in its quest for the consolidation of judicial power" (42). However, Roy's interest lies in the "performative subjectivity of the thug, as it is constructed in the discourse of the *thuggee*" (43). She resists reading *thuggee* as an anticolonial subculture to avoid demonizing the category further. In sharp distinction, this chapter acknowledges the resistive potential of the postcolonial criminal in convict

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[28] William Henry Sleeman was appointed to head the Thugee and Dacoity Department of the East India Company administration in 1829, and became a critical figure in the "interventionary reform" of the orientalist project of 'discovering India' (41). Roy credits Sleeman for the emergence of the "grand narrative of *thuggee*" (43). See Footnote 2.

[29] After the 1830s "the term came to include all kinds of organized and corporate criminal activity (including poisoning and the kidnapping of children) that was understood to be hereditary and/or itinerant" (48). Ibid.

narratives recounting violence against them. My work inquires into the textual dynamics of criminalization that unravel how and why certain caste identities came to be demonized. However, the weight of my analysis is borne by examining how the figure of the woman criminal, in particular, comments on this dynamics of othering. In my analysis of convict narratives I contend that postcolonial constructions of delinquency in India are founded upon this violent colonial legacy of demarcating and marginalizing certain sectors of the population in a caste informed system. This amounts to a vision of a pristine postcolonial nationhood marked by a legal, executive, and judicial system which monitors and segregates populations along bloodlines.[30]

I have identified the genre of the texts that I examine here as the convict narrative rather than its well theorized counterpart—the prison narrative--because neither of the texts deal with the prison system as such, and neither India's Bandit Queen nor The Bandit Queen of India was written from inside the prison. However, Barbara Harlow's Barrred: Women, Writing, and Political Detention offers me a frame to negotiate with narratives like these to forge a link between their status as convict discourses and their site of production outside the prison walls. Harlow problematizes the penal and judicial systems themselves by questioning the politics of criminalization. The author emphasizes the "intimate and ideological relationship [. . .] between criminal (or social) and political prisoners." She underlines how radically "reframing the stories of their individual 'crimes' as constituted by a sociopolitical system of economic exploitation and political disenfranchisement" can become a site of praxis for convicts against the authority of the

[30] "*[T]huggee*, later rewritten as dacoity, continues to function within the law-and-order context in the colonial and postcolonial state formations as a trope for the unruly and unreformable energies that cannot easily be accommodated to the needs of the civilizing mission." See Parama Roy, Indian Traffic Identities in Question in Colonial and Postcolonial India, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) 56.

state to define what constitutes criminality (11). In other words, Harlow is highlighting the critical role of convict literature in writing human rights--writing that can generate judicious witnessing through which the reading experience can be translated into moral responsibility to rally for social justice.[31] Thus, discursive politics opens up possibilities of material dissent against the corrective violence of state technology. What remains central to both Harlow's work and mine is how the "demands of women for access to the public modalities of confrontation and processual change" force "a radical rethinking of the mobilizational tactics and structures of contestation that historically have been articulated on masculinist grounds". Women's "need to circumlocute the cultural traditions and social mores that prescribe their positioning in the inherited arrangement of public and private space" are enunciated as discursive and material struggles both against the state and the opponents of the state—both bulwarked by patriarchal thought structures (33). However, while Harlow's focus is on the writings of female political detainees, my work attempts to address the writings about the criminalization of the abject female who engages in antisystemic endeavors for self preservation from the limits of the political.[32] It is as the figure of the politically unrecognized female abject that the protagonist of Mahasweta Devi's short story "Draupadi" allows us to theorize a space for the criminalized as the revolutionary. Devi's text about the violence against the *adivasi*

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[31] Harlow draws upon H. Bruce Franklin's concept of the politicized aesthetics of the criminal in this regard: "[T]he spectacle of prisoners actually publishing books which were being received as literary achievements or intelligent social analysis or both was fundamentally threatening." See H. Bruce Franklin, The Victim as Criminal and Artist: Literature from the American Prison (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) 161. Like Franklin, D. Quentin Miller explains this in the context of the American penal system: "The very publication and circulation of this literature compromises the ability of the state to isolate, to suppress, and to deprive prisoners of the rights afforded to all Americans". See D. Quentin Miller, Introduction, Pros and Cons: Essays on Prison Literature in the United States, ed. D. Quentin Miller (MacFarland & Co.: Jefferson, North Carolina & London, UK 2005) 4.

[32] See Dylan Rodríguez, Forced Passages: Imprisoned Radical Intellectuals and the US Prison Regime (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) 5.

women of postcolonial India also embodies a site of radical cross caste/class praxis between the intellectual and the subaltern against the machinery of the state. This is particularly resonant in the context of "Draupadi" since the Naxalite movement was a coalition between the peasant and the intellectual. In her foreword to the story, Gayatri Spivak alludes to the "gentleman revolutionaries" in the movement who "persistently engaged in undoing class containment" by unlearning "the opposition between reading (book learning) and doing" (7-8). Devi's story itself unabashedly eulogizes this category of grass roots intellectuals: "They keep company with the poor harvest workers and the tribals. They must have forgotten book learning. Perhaps they are *orienting* their book learning to the soil they live on and learning new combat and survival techniques" (27). Nonetheless, Spivak is cautious enough to point out the cumulative structures of privilege that makes it impossible for the benefactors of institutionalized learning to "inhabit a clearly defined critical space free of such traces" of complicity with the "object of her critique" (Foreword 3). It is this discursive-material site of radical praxis through intercaste/interclass human rights advocacy against the caste regulated criminalization of women that is scrutinized in my work as much as the sites of correctional violence against lower caste women and their resistance to it.

IV. Criminalization of Women: Penalized for Being Socially Devalued?

Gender, caste, and class oppression intersect to express social malady in distinct ways. Such social deprivation, manifested as criminality, is violently penalized by the state's legal mechanism of social control. Mona Danner argues that the "material reality of women's lives within social structures" that leads to their militant challenges to the social order is disregarded (31). By patrolling, monitoring, and punishing such conduct

rather than eradicating the causes that culminate in such expressions, what actually gets violently criminalized is social deprivation. Danner adds: "The criminal justice system assists in the maintenance of inequality through the process of criminalization whereby the law is selectively applied in a manner detrimental to those groups and persons most disadvantaged in unequal relations" (31).[33] Phoolan Devi's stories narrate how, in the context of India, lower caste women's resistance to caste based social devaluation leads to their criminalization. The postcolonial state thus reiterates the politics of colonial governance as lineage and collective social inheritance once again becomes a marker of criminality, thus keeping the population segregated along caste lines as the Criminal Tribes and Castes Acts did. As the *thuggee* became a preoccupation of the colonial authority in nineteenth-century India, the 'bandit queen' became an obsession for the postcolonial state. My reading of India's Bandit Queen and The Bandit Queen of India emphasizes the revisionary attempts of convict narratives to portray how and why the postcolonial phenomenon of the 'bandit queen' came to be. What role does lower caste women's struggle against gender roles, regulated both by the state and its adversaries, play in their criminalization?

The Girl Child: In the introduction to Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History David Arnold and Stuart Blackburn emphasizes that the central objective of their anthology "was to examine life histories in order to question the view that Indian society is dominated by collectivities." This would "demonstrate the

[33] I am indebted to Danner for this insightful perspective on the relationship between gender and criminalization. However, while she argues that "state apparatus assumes the task of controlling the behavior of women where superior male advantage is threatened" by women's access to material resources, mine is a postcolonial reading of how caste plays a significant role in the criminalization of women. See Mona J.E. Danner, "Gender Inequality and Criminalization: A Socialist Feminist Perspective on Legal Social Control of Women," Race, Gender, and Class in Criminology: The Intersection, eds. Martin D. Schwartz and Dragan Milovanovic (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1996) 39.

significance of individual agency and of notions of self in a region of the world where people have historically been seen to identify themselves in terms primarily of caste, but also kinship and religion" (19). The authors underline that in their edited collection, nevertheless, the life histories brought together do not reliably or unequivocally bring to light the monadic self. Rather they reveal what the editors call a "formulation of self-in-society." Though Arnold and Blackburn had set out to contain the logic of colonial construction which subsumed Indian society under the overarching category of caste collectivity, from their editorial encounter with at least the Indian life writings that go into their collection they witness individual Indian lives within a network of "larger frames of reference, especially those of family, kin, caste, religion, and gender" (19). Though I hesitate in an essentialist understanding of Indian life as generating the condition for "self-in-society"—an epithet that can make an argument for any life in any form of contact with another, the lower caste girl child becomes a particularly eloquent phenomenon to explore how the battles of the Indian "self-in-society" take on unique characteristics at different social locations. As opposed to individual choice through which a person can affiliate oneself with others when it comes to friendship, the categories of family, kin, caste, religion, and gender are custom sanctioned and prescriptive which often overwhelms the individual self. This is piercingly visible in the girl child in the accounts of Phoolan Devi.

Devi's stories construct the biological family as a highly contested site for women. India's Bandit Queen depicts how the devaluation of women starts even before the conception of the girl child. The pathos is especially strong as the text portrays how the deep parental anxiety for preventing the birth of girls becomes the ground for

exploitation of the intensely poor like Devi's father—Devidin.[34] The narrative recounts the "sad" story of the birth of Devi. A "Holy Man" had advised Devidin "to feed his wife a crushed pearl on the night of the next new moon. It would guarantee the birth of a boy. Devidin walked into a jeweller's shop for the first and last time in his life to buy a single pearl." In addition, the "Holy Man" "had to be paid and fed in a manner more lavish than their own"(56). Nonetheless, thwarting all expectations, their second daughter--Phoolan Devi--was born. The succession of girl children in the family culminates in the refusal of the mother to nurse the fourth child, and in The Bandit Queen of India Devi recounts how the onus of fighting for the newborn's survival fall on the other children: "If a goat strayed near our house [. . .] we milked it quickly [. . .] We mixed the milk with water and gave it to Bhuri. I knew it was wrong to steal, but surely God hadn't meant her to have no milk"(15). That the girl child would be mercilessly beaten in such a family setting at the slightest provocation comes as no surprise then. When Devi's younger sister Choti complains to their mother that Devi was unwilling to graze their calf, Devi's mother grabs her by the hair and beats her with a stick, leaving her paralyzed with pain. Devi narrates the after effects of this motherly "disciplining" of the undutiful girl child: "There were two big weals on my left buttock, and another came up the following day, as swollen as a mango." The journey through pain continues as the little girl cries through the whole day: The abscess grew bigger each day and it burned as though it was eating

[34] This needs to be contextualized in India's socioeconomic structure in which the birth of a daughter implies the impossible financial burden of paying dowry for a daughter's marriage. In the absence of state welfare for the poor who reach old age without any financial security through savings or pensions, the male child also becomes the prop for old age, ill health, and disability. The daughter in such situations becomes an "investment" with no returns.

my flesh. Soon I couldn't even walk. I had to lay on the khat and I couldn't even go to the field to relieve myself" (42).

In this regard, the notion of domestic violence which is confined to "marital or intimate violence" in India can be useful in comprehending the domain of parent-child relationship.[35] This feminization of violence through the character of the lower caste mother challenges the linkages between masculinity and abuse when it comes to domestic violence against women. It also offers an insight into the workings of same sex violence as the overburdened mother finds an outlet for her anger against an unjust caste society through the only other figure who is less empowered than her. This is not to deny that the ideological sanctioning of violence to discipline children in India does not play a role in this mother-daughter relationship. What Nata Duvvury, Madhabika Nayak, and Keera Allendorf say in the context of marital and intimate violence can also help us to understand the philosophy underlying such parental control over children: "If physical violence is perceived as instrumental for maintaining order, use of violence may be perceived as a duty, not a choice" (63). Hence, arbitrary violence against the girl child can also ensue from any perceived threat to the family order and gets sanctified as "parenting."

The figure of the girl child in Phoolan Devi's life writings also becomes an especially poignant site because it uncovers the alliances between the extended family

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[35] See Nata Duvvury, Madhabika Nayak, and Keera Allendorf, "Links Between Masculinity and Violence: Aggregate Analysis," Domestic Violence in India: Exploring Strategies, Promoting Dialogue, (Washington, DC: International Center for Research on Women, 2002): 62. From a children's rights point of view I argue that the category of domestic violence needs to extend itself to include not only child spouses, but also violence in parent-child relationships, even when they do not tantamount to sexual abuse.

and the state in criminalizing her poverty.[36] Devi's prison diary enabled Mala Sen to reconstruct her through the biography India's Bandit Queen. Quoting from the diary, Sen contextualizes Devi's criminalization against violent socioeconomic deprivation. Devi's literate uncle—Bihari—had cheated her illiterate father—Devidin—by bribing the village headman "who kept the land records, to transfer all [. . .] [of Devi's] grandfather's property into his name" (IBQ 31). It is the setting in motion again of this class connection between the empowered male relative and the civic structures which initiates the criminalization of Devi. In Devi's mediated autobiography--The Bandit Queen of India--when the family seeks justice from the law after Bihari's son—Mayadin--steals their tree, the policeman retorts: " 'How dare you accuse Mayadin? He is already a rich man,' [. . .] 'what would he want with your tree?' " (63). The tree was reserved as Devi's marriage dowry.[37] In a touching metaphor of her social death through the loss of personal property, the tree becomes the slain husband of the widowed girl: "He was in Mayadin's cart, dead, and cut into pieces! They had murdered him! That was the noise I had heard in the night, the noise of axes dismembering my handsome tree. I saw the pinkish-yellow heart of the tree bleeding its rich juice" (58). The little girl's fury fails to be contained by the authority of her older male relative, and the seam of the narrative bursts open with her indignation at the proud display of his markers of class conceit: "when I saw Mayadin climb up on his rich man's cart in his clean white dhoti hanging loose between his knees and his silk kurta buttoned up to the neck, I flew into a rage" (59). A violent tussle ensues

[36] Rajeswari Sunder Rajans's understanding about the relationship among women, institution, family, and the state has been helpful in shaping my argument about the figure of the girl child in Phoolan Devi's convict narratives. See Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, The Scandal of the State: Women, Law, and Citizenship in Postcolonial India (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2003) 97-106.

[37] Money, valuables, or property that the bride's family offers to the husband's family during marriage.

as little Phoolan tries to stop the tree being carted away by grabbing "the rope harness that ran through the nose of one of the bullocks." As Mayadin whips her and four men try to stop the bleeding girl's determination to fight injustice, the extended family becomes a significant site of physical brutality against the girl child.

The construction of Indian masculinity and femininity through the respective characters of Mayadin and Devi in this episode makes for an interesting comment on the social issue of dowry in India. The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 prohibits the demanding, giving, and taking of dowry in marriage. It was amended in 1986 to include dowry deaths as a separate category of murder.[38] But, the practice of dowry continues to exist in India.[39] However, feminist legal critical scholars, such as Julia Leslie, have argued for an inheritance perspective of dowry: "a daughter clings to her dowry because that is all she is likely to see of her parental inheritance. Men (father, brother, male relatives) resent having to find large sums of cash and moveable items as dowry, but they would rather pay dowry than give a daughter or a sister equal inheritance rights" (25).[40] The fracas between Devi and Mayadin is reflective of the gender politics between the bride and her male relatives around the issue of dowry. What Mayadin attempts to deny

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[38] The 1986 amendment to the act states: "Where the death of a woman is caused by any burns or bodily injury or occurs otherwise than under normal circumstances within seven years of her marriage and it is shown that soon before her death she was subjected to cruelty or harassment by her husband or any relative of her husband for, or in connection with, any demand for dowry, such death shall be called 'dowry death,' and such husband or relative shall be deemed to have caused her death" (60). See "The Law in India," Bride Burning and Dowry, Special Issue of Kali's Yug: Women & Law Journal March 2001: 59-82.

[39] A marker of status, for a long time the lower castes and outcaste were outside its clutches, though in imitation of high caste customs they have also adopted the system of dowry. See Julia Leslie, "Dowry, Dowry Deaths, and Violence Against Women," Bride Burning and Dowry, 21.

[40] The dowry is always smaller than what the brother will inherit in terms of immoveable property. Leslie argues for the bride's ownership of her property instead of the transaction of her property between her biological and conjugal families. She insists that to combat dowry related violence, the law needs to focus itself on demanding inheritance rights for women. Thus, she opposes a legal realism that refuses to take into account the sociological framework within which dowry operates. Leslie 25.

Devi is her parental inheritance—her only means of economic empowerment. His class-gender politics aims to obstruct the power that Devi's dowry can purchase through her marriage into a rich family. In other words, the brother who grudges his sister any immoveable property and hence has to accommodate the lesser of the two 'evils--parting with moveable property given to his sister as her dowry--gets re-signified as the male cousin who secures his own socioeconomic position by seizing his cousin's dowry. This episode where the girl attacks her older cousin in retaliation also sets the stage for the criminalization of the girl child for her resistance to the physical and psychological violence committed upon her.

In the episode of the girl child's marriage to the widower--Putti Lal, this pattern of corporeal and emotional violence is again manifested in the vulnerability of the girl child created by poverty, gender, and age. The Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929, enacted by British colonial governance, prohibited the formalization of child marriages. However, once the marriages were conducted, they were not marked as illegal or null. India gained its liberation from British foreign rule in 1947. The postcolonial state in 1978 amended the act to only increase the age of consent to eighteen for women and twenty-one for men.[41] In India's Bandit Queen Mala Sen situates the Indian penal code in the socio-economic realities of the postcolonial nation: "Present laws in India prohibit both child marriages and the payment of dowries." However, "[t]hey are only used to

[41] "The Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 had raised the age of consent from 12 to 14 for females and 14 to 18 for males. The age limit had been further raised from 14 to 15 for females by an amendment in 1949." See Siddharth Narrain, "Ambivalence in the Law," Frontline 22.14 (Jul 02-15, 2005) <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2214/stories/ 20050715004802300.htm>. However, under the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, amended in 1976, a girl can repudiate a child marriage before attaining maturity, whether the marriage has been consummated or not. See National Council for Teacher Education, Discrimination Based on Sex, Caste, Religion and Disability: Addressing Through Educational Intervention (Delhi, India: National Council for Teacher Education) 8.

extract bribes and intimidate those whom the authorities wish to prosecute. Otherwise, age-old traditions are not only allowed to continue but encouraged within village society" (36).[42] In the absence of sincere national efforts to eradicate poverty, the criminalization of these marriages often amounts to the penalization of poverty rather than crime, as with that of Devi's sister--Rukmini. This is because poor parents are frequently compelled to secure their uneducated daughter's future as soon as possible. However, The Bandit Queen of India depicts how such parents are both able to protect their daughter's future as well as her present welfare through the local custom of *gauna*. *Gauna* is an agreement guaranteeing a certain time only after which the child bride moves in with her husband. An illustrative case is that of Rukmini's marriage to Rampal after which she stays on at her parents place till she is sexually mature enough to lead a conjugal life. Against all customary laws, Devi is compelled by her husband to follow him soon after her marriage. Thus, it is really the violation of the customary law of *gauna* that leads to the domestic violence that Devi experiences in her conjugal family. The atrocity of the marital rape of an eleven year old Phoolan by the thirty year old Putti Lal is emoted through images of bestiality and monstrosity. Putti Lal becomes "a man who ate women," a strong demon with "hairy limbs," who "smelled disgusting, like a hyena," causing the child bride unbearable pain with his "nauseating serpent" as he threatened to knife open her hymen for his pleasure (99). Physical violence follows the child's flight from rape. She feels her

[42] The Bandit Queen of India recounts how Devi's uncle—Bihari—"managed to put a stop to three marriages" arranged for her sister—Rukmini: 'The girl is a minor,' he told them [the groom's family]. 'She's only fourteen years old and her father wants to sell her! It's against the law.' He conspired with the Pradhan [village leader, probably Brahmin] and they brought the police with them. The groom was from a good family, and they had been so embarrassed they turned around and went back without a word to my father." The traumatized Rukmini contemplated suicide after the incident. Powerful relatives can thus harness the resources of the state to conspire against the girl child and her poor family. See Phoolan Devi, Marie-Therese Cuny, & Paul Rambali, The Bandit Queen of India: An Indian Woman's Amazing Journey from Peasant to International Legend (Guilford, Connecticut: Lyons Press, 2003) 51.

"scalp on fire as he yanked out whole tufts" of her hair to discipline her into submission to his sexual desire (105). It is the girl child's breakout from this horrific marital abuse that consolidates the criminalization of her marital status by both her extended family and her conjugal family. In the name of family dishonor Mayadin rebukes Devi's father: " 'Your daughter has blackened our family name in front of the whole village. She is a delinquent. Send her back to her husband immediately' " (131). Putti Lal and Mayadin initiate a criminal proceeding in the *panchayat*--village council--against Devi's family for kidnapping her from her husband, though the case is ultimately lost.

The Protection from Domestic Violence Bill was introduced in India only in 2002 to protect women from marital or intimate abuse.[43] But, though marital rape is not a criminal offence under the rape laws encoded by Article 375 of the Indian Penal Code,[44] it enshrines that sexual intercourse between a man and his wife "with or without her consent, when she is under sixteen years of age" amounts to rape of the wife. This rape law was operative in the 1970s when Devi was married to Putti Lal. But the rape of the child bride—Phoolan—also needs to be understood through the construction of marital sexuality itself. In her essay "Sexual Violence, Discursive Formations and the State" Veena Das underlines how judicial grammar and judicial semantics "comes to mediate the everyday categories of sexuality and sexual violence, sorting and classifying the normal and the pathological in terms of marriage and alliance" (2412). The author claims that underlying rape laws is the state's concern with the regulation of male and female

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[43] See Dipa Dube, "Domestic Violence Bill: A Critique," Indian Bar Review, XXX.2 & 3 (2003): 442.

[44] The Indian Penal code of 1860, drafted by T. B. Macaulay among others, is still operative in India. The 1860 Penal Code was based on Victorian sexual mores. The drafters "presumably assumed that a woman, through marriage, foregoes forever her right to refuse sexual intercourse with her husband and the husband, thereby acquires an unconditional & unqualified licence to force sex upon his wife." See K. I. Vibhute, " 'Rape' and the Indian Penal Code at the Crossroads of the New Millennium: Between Patriarchiast and Gender Neutralist Approach," Journal of Indian Law Institute 43 (2001): 27-8.

sexualities rather than the protection of the "body integrity" of the woman. She traces this back to Macaulay's framing of the 1860 Indian Penal Code which stated that sexual intercourse between a man and his wife, if she is not under ten, is not rape. This law went through subsequent legislative amendments till the age of consent was fixed at eighteen in the postcolonial state. However, I argue that the personal laws of the Hindus encoded in the Manusmriti plays a significant role in postcolonial society because of the British policy of highly selective interest in the personal laws of the colonized population.[45] The laws of Manu state: "A man, aged thirty years, shall marry a maiden of twelve who pleases him, or a man of twenty-four a girl eight years of age; if (the performance of) his duties would (otherwise) be impeded, (he must marry) sooner" (195). Reading Veena Das against the construction of marital sexuality in Manu makes for an insightful comprehension of the violation of the customary law of *gauna* by Devi's husband Putti Lal—a law which poor parents use to protect their married girl children. Moreover, such a reading also proves useful in examining how the culmination of Devi's marital rape results in the coalition between Mayadin and Lal in initiating a criminal proceeding

[45] Liddle and Joshi highlight how the British were highly selective in their non-interference, and in their dilly dallying with personal laws how they affected the rights of Indian women. They state: "Official British policy was not to interfere in the personal law, a policy which was attacked for in inhibiting social change, yet in 1772 Warren Hastings, the governor of Bengal, had decreed the religious texts of the Brahmins [. . .] as the sole authority on Hindu law. [. . .] Personal law comprised those areas which particularly affected women such as marriage and inheritance, and each religious community had its own law, usually a body of local custom." Nonetheless, from 1864 Hindu pundits were no longer consulted for interpretation; instead Western-educated judges decided personal law on the basis of developing precedent. The result was to rigidify legal interpretation by tying it to past precedent, and to impose the moral constraints of upper-caste women on women of all castes in the form of binding legal statute" (26). In 1934 the All India Women's Conference demanded a reform of the Hindu Code reforming areas of personal law as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The contradictions within the nationalist movement became clearly visible in the opposition of nationalist men to the demands: "They supported the principle of sexual equality and its implementation through women's suffrage, which undermined Britain's position of power. But they opposed the implementation of the principle in marriage and inheritance, which threatened their own privileges as men in the family." The Hindu code was finally enacted after the first general election in independent India (36-7). See Liddle and Joshi. However, many other personal laws remain in need of reform in the postcolonial state which makes it difficult for women to attain distributive justice at par with men, not to say anything about restorative justice for cumulative structures of dispossession.

against Devi for deserting her husband and tarnishing family honor. According to Das: "In Hindu society, the young girl, with her body unmarked by sexual desires (lusts) of men, is considered the appropriate gift in marriage that establishes alliance between men. [. . .] The sexual offence of rape against a young girl thus becomes an offence against the code of alliance"(2416). In the intersection between the discourse of sexuality and the discourse of alliance the relation between men are not threatened when the rapist is the husband as it creates no disturbances in the social order of exchange of women which consolidates the relationship among men of different families. As Das argues, rape is only criminalized "if acting out this 'instinct' leads to stigmatising men as husbands or fathers" (2421). As such, the unformed bodies of girl children like Phoolan become the husband's property despite laws on the contrary. The state has no vested interest in protecting the integrity of these bodies. The married girl child's "body has been so sexualised by the experience as to make it unexchangeable in marriage" (2416). So, marital rape does not threaten the order of alliance among men that constitutes 'family,' and hence the state itself. Launching themselves on their confidence in the construction of married girl children's sexuality, men like Mayadin and Putti Lal can sum up the courage to catapult an ideology of honor onto legal platforms like the village council, despite laws that encode sexual intercourse with an underage wife as rape. In this ideology of honor the husband's pathological sexuality gets normalized as "marital right" simultaneously as the little girl's terror of rape gets pathologized and re-signified as deviant and unwifely sexuality.

Devi's texts trace how rebellion becomes the only means of attaining justice for the poverty-stricken lower caste girl child. At fourteen or fifteen, Devi realized that she

"was a woman who belonged to a lowly caste" and "[f]aced with power and rupees [Indian currency]" "used any trick [. . .] [she could]." Deprived of the inherited land by Bihari, the family turns to sharecropping which is rife with the exploitation of women's labor, and the girl's resistance to it: "I encouraged the other girls to sabotage the crops if the landowner wouldn't pay us" (BQI 155). In one such episode the daughter of the Pradhan (village leader) turns violent when Devi's family declines her demand for free labor from them. The Pradhan intervenes as Devi opposes his daughter's attack on them. This culminates in the episode where Devi unleashes her wrath publicly against the upper caste Pradhan by grabbing him by his genitals when he beats her in retaliation. This can be read as the culminating episode defining the girl child's aberrant sexuality: "I had become a disreputable girl in the eyes of the villagers, someone the young men thought they could treat how they liked because she belonged to no one, she had no husband to protect her" (169). She attracts the attention of the son of the *sarpanch* (village headman) as she earns a reputation as an erotic object of men's desire. Her defense against his sexual advances leads to her gangrape at gunpoint before her parents. Mala Sen recounts her ethnographic encounter with this myth of Devi's sensuality. The young girl's romance with her married cousin, Kailash, is circulated as folklore long after his death: "One old woman told me, 'Phoolan Devi used to dance naked in the moonlight for that man!' " (IBQ 48). As her deviant sexuality becomes an expression of resistance to the traditional concept of femininity, state technology needs to place her gendered body under surveillance and control. She is falsely implicated in a *dacoity* (robbery) at Mayadin's house. This is also framed to prevent her from addressing the land dispute between her family and Mayadin's in the high court where Mayadin did not have

connections. The police custodial torture of the young girl starts with stripping her in front of her father and coercing her to admit to the crime she had not committed. In The Bandit Queen of India Devi recalls: [T]he officers dragged me naked out of the cell and down the corridor into another room." Grisly torture follows: "They put my hands under the legs of the chair, and one of them sat down on it. Some of the others stepped on my calves with their heavy boots (196).

Veena Das underlines the gendered ideology often underlying the sexualized torture of "husbandless" girls: "women who are described as of easy virtue, 'habituated to sexual intercourse' with men who are not their husbands, do not have rights to the protection of the state" (2418). Her illicit desire "places her within the power of any man and especially within the power of the agents of the state such as policemen" (2422). The author asserts: "I believe it is this definition of certain kinds of sexual violence as stemming from the order of nature, which allows agents of the state such as policemen to commit rape and sexual assault on those women, who have come within their jurisdiction due to the disturbances in the code of alliance" (2420). My reading of the social construction of Devi's transgressive sexuality as rapeable and violently useable also intends to underline how the potentiality for such gender violence is dependent on the relationship in which such single women stand with respect to social structures of protection. Women like Devi lack security from caste and class status derived from 'belonging' to upper caste/class men—fathers, husbands, or sons, and hence are not safely ensconced in systems of patriarchal alliance.[46]

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[46] "In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent." See The Laws of Manu, trans. G. Buhler (Delhi, Varanasi, Patna, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1964) 195.

The narrative of selective torture of lower caste women in police custody in India is reflective of the custodial brutality inflicted on tribal women in India. The custodial abuse of the childless widow Dopdi Mehjen in the short story "Draupadi" by the Indian author, Mahasweta Devi, portrays the plight of one such woman. Arrested for murdering the landowner, Surya Sahu, who refused "untouchable" sharecroppers like Dopdi water from his well during a severe drought,[47] Dopdi is gangraped in police custody and "her breasts are bitten raw, the nipples torn" (35). The intensity of police custodial torture of untouchables like Dopdi can only be imagined through cosmic magnitudes. So, "a billion moons pass" and so do "a billion lunar years" before Dopdi wakes up and "the bloodied nailheads shift from her brain" (34). But, " she feels her arms and legs still tied to four posts. Something sticky under her ass and waist. Her own blood. Only the gag has been removed. Incredible thirst. In case she says 'water' she catches her lower lip in her teeth. She senses that her vagina is bleeding. How many came to make her?" (34). The traumatic objectification of the female body in rape is reflected in the metonymic dismemberment of psyche through the image of the bloody nails in the brain. The cataloguing of body parts—arms, legs, ass, waist, lip, teeth—culminates in the image of the raped and bleeding vagina which is the site of the psychic and physical alienation of the woman from her integrated self. This fragmented female body also stands for the ideological other of the consolidated structures of masculine hegemony that the bureaucratic structures of the state like the police force stand for. The representation of custodial violence like this in convict narratives are really commentaries on the

[47] "Untouchability" was abolished in 1950 by the Constitution of independent India, and its practice in any form has been forbidden: "The enforcement of any disability arising out of "Untouchability" shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law." See Constitution of India. Art. 17. <http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/welcome.html>.

criminalization of lower caste and tribal women in India who are caught in the throes of social devaluation. In a moving passage on how the woman criminals come to be, Devi summarizes: "I had become a dacoit in the minds of the elders of my village. [. . .] I knew little of the world and its laws. I had refused the fate marked out for me by my birth; I had fled my village, my family and my community. That was my only crime" (BQI 188). This kind of social rejection is merely symptomatic of women's lack of private property, exploitation of women's labor, the patriarchal domination of women, and the role of the nation-state in upholding caste-gender deprivation.

The above narratives about the lives of outcaste women like Dopdi Mehjen and lower caste women like Phoolan Devi are part of the current discourse around the criminal justice system in India. The very first section of the National Human Rights Commission of India's anthology of instructions/guidelines between 1993 and 2004 is entitled "On Custodial Deaths/Rapes." The first letter in the compilation addresses the Chief Secretaries of all states and union territories of India, laying down that in case of custodial rapes or deaths District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police should report such cases to the Secretary General of the Human Rights Commission within twenty-four hours of their occurrence. Moreover, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act was passed by the Indian government in 1989.[48] The Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, adopted by the UN General

[48] See Human Rights Watch, Broken People: Caste Violence Against India's Untouchables, (Human Rights Watch: New York, Washington, London, & Brussels, 1999) 218-45.

Assembly in 1979 and 1984 respectively, has influenced the judiciary.[49] Nonetheless, custodial atrocities, especially of lower castes, outcastes, and the poor remain a pervasive social justice issue in India, and numerous Dopdi Mehjens and Phoolan Devis in contemporary India remind us of the untold stories of caste oppressed women which have not been heard.

The Concubine: India's Bandit Queen and The Bandit Queen of India not only narrate caste injustice upheld by structures of the state, but also chart the complex terrain of caste that operates within communities in resistance against the postcolonial nation-state. This section explores how lower caste women who join such communities to protest against injustice are further quarantined within them. The figure of the concubine in Devi's convict narratives launches a robust critique of how statist criminalization of resistant women's sexuality is extended by the subversive community of bandits. This is played out over the body of the lower caste woman through a violent caste politics.

The social hieroglyphic of caste that the trope of concubinage within postcolonial banditry inscribes articulates the female subaltern as the singular-within-collective—a space left void by the colonial thuggee discourses of British India. The colonial thuggee archive is curiously bereft of the figure of the woman thug or accomplice, and the criminal community of thugs is discursively constructed ignoring the realm of sexual difference within it. A possible reason might lie in the fact that the sphere of native sexuality was the domain of caste and domesticity regulated by the personal laws of the

[49] "The Supreme Court of India has declared any form of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, death in custody during investigation or otherwise to be a violation of right to life and within the inhibition of Article 21 [Protection of Life and Personal Liberty]. Thus, "the Supreme Court has elevated immunity against torture and deaths in police custody to the status of fundamental right under Article 21 though it does not specifically enumerate it as a fundamental right in the Constitution" See Balvinder Kaur, "Torture and Deaths in Police Custody—A Violation of Right to Life," National Capital Law Journal Vol. II (1997): 109-10.

Brahminical legal ideology. So, even when communities operated at the edge of the domestic, women did not come within the purview of the colonial administration. They were the subjects of native ideology. The corporeality of their bodies within the community was defined by an absence that exceeded the legality of the British colonial administration which ironically crystallized its judiciary by its vehement attempt to annihilate the criminal "community." But, the postcolonial archive has been marked by the woman thuggee as the singular-within-collective through convict narratives of women bandits like Phoolan Devi. These narratives construct the corporeality of the female thuggee's body not as social discourse, but as literature. In this regard, Debjani Ganguly's comment on the political power of literature is especially significant: "I [. . .] carry over the notion of the discursivity of caste by shifting the focus from hegemonic articulations in academic-knowledge formations to representations of caste in the domain of art and narrative. I argue that the mythographic and the literary can give us insights into the 'political' that social science by itself can never give" (125). The re-signification of the girl child as the concubine in my reading attempts to attack precisely those lacunas in social discourses about the thuggee which bear the potential to uncover the formation of the postcolonial thuggee. Such an uncovering is not to be achieved in the isolated legal-administrative discursive construction of a criminal community of male thugs, but in its everyday practices of relationships between men and women within the bandit community, as reflected through literature. It is such a reading that pleads for the figure of the concubine to understand the self-in-collective of the gendered subaltern within such communities.

As with the character of the girl child, the narrative constructs caste-gender violence as initiated by the alliance among patriarchal structures—this time of the family, state, and banditry—as Devi is "convinced that Mayadin had been the instigator" of her abduction by the bandits. This would assure Mayadin's future assistance to the gang: "He was, after all, a 'senior citizen' of the village and had influential friends in the panchayat" (IBQ 70). The character of caste based female criminality is movingly captured through Mala Sen's citation of an official press conference in 1983. In it Devi stands the logic of criminalization on its head, as state authorities become social offenders for negligence of their duty to protect citizens under the threat of violence: "Today I am a criminal who should be hanged. But what happened when I was abducted and raped? Where were the police then? I had gone to the police on the day of my abduction to ask for protection, yet today the policemen are officers and Phoolan Devi a murderer" (IBQ 124).

This caste war on the level of the bureaucratic structures of the nation-state is again enacted through the contest for leadership of the bandit gang. The brutal rivalry between Babu Gujar Singh and Vikram Mallah is played out on the body of the lower caste woman. Babu Gujar Singh was "a Gujar, on a par with Thakurs, both belonging to the same warrior caste of Kshatriyas." On the other hand, "Vikram Mallah ranked among the lowest, belonging to a sub-caste of Sudras, as did Phoolan Devi, Madho Singh, Bharat Singh and a handful of others." Under the leadership of Babu Gujar Singh, "the hierarchy in the gang had more or less reflected the social order as it stands in villages" By killing Gujar and "taking over leadership of the gang, he [Mallah] had completely reversed the balance of power within it" (75). The violence between Gujar and Mallah is provoked when Gujar "repeatedly raped her [Devi] during the first two days of captivity" (72). That

the rape is not merely the rape of Devi by Gujar, but the rape of the lower caste body politic by upper caste phallic arrogance is depicted through the dehumanizing sequence on the second day when a drunk Babu Gujar "dragged her [Devi] by the arm from one man to the next, asking if anyone wanted 'a taste of this Sudra [low caste] whore". Reading Mala Sen's biography against Devi's mediated autobiography--The Bandit Queen of India, enables us to understand how Vikram Mallah's intervention between Gujar and Devi renders Devi's body merely into a sign of caste honor: " 'Why are you trying to protect her?' asked one-eye. 'Why her?' We've had so many other girls before. What is it about this one?' Mallah replies: "I told you not to touch her. She belongs to my community" (240). Returning to India's Bandit Queen, Gujar says that no "Mallah dog" would stop him, and declares: "I'll teach you to remember that this is a gang made up of Thakur men . . . not fishermen" (74).[50] The fracas ends in Mallah shooting Gujar dead.

However, for the only woman in the band protection from violence can only be bartered: "That night, at another campsite, Vikram Mallah informed her that she was now his woman and therefore beyond the reach of other men." Mala Sen offers a clinching summary of the groundwork of the relationship between Mallah and Devi which later flourishes into 'love' and 'marriage': "When asked by a journalist, soon after her surrender, why she had become Vikram's mistress so readily she replied: 'A piece of property has no choice' (76). In another touching reflection of her complicated feelings, Devi confesses in her testimonial: "But many years later, thinking about it, I would ask myself why didn't this man, if he loved me as he said, just let me go? Then I wouldn't have become a bandit like him" (BQI 270). For all intents and purposes, the woman

[50] As Thakurs and Gujars are subcastes of Kshatriyas, ranked just below the Brahmins, the Mallahs are subcastes of Sudras, who belong to the lowest rung of the caste system.

bandit thus remains sexual property for both upper caste and lower caste male leadership. Hence, romantic love within banditry is secured by caste politics as well as by the contest between male prowess.

As Mallah's upper caste mentor—Shri Ram—is released from prison and joins the band, the caste war is re-staged in the conflict between mentor and protégé over Devi. Mallah is killed, and in a culminating spectacle of public shaming for transgressing caste hierarchy by repelling Shri Ram's advances, Phoolan Devi is paraded naked through the villages of the Chambal valley in northern India: "I saw crowds of faces and I was naked in front of them. Demons came without end from the fires of Naraka [hell] to rape me" (370).

The theme of concubinage brings together the stories of Phoolan Devi and Dopdi Mehjen in Mahasweta Devi's "Draupadi". The name Dopdi is the dialectical version of Draupadi in the classical epic Mahabharata. Draupadi was married to five husbands, and provides an exceptional instance of polyandry, "not a common system of marriage in India". Her honor is waged in a game of dice between her husbands and their rival cousins. Mahasweta Devi's short story rewrites the classical epic "by placing Dopdi first in a comradely, activist, monogamous marriage and then in a situation of multiple rape" (Spivak Foreword 10). Resembling stories of non-Hindu tribal women such as Dopdi Mehjen, the convict narratives of lower caste Hindu women like Phoolan Devi revise conventional notions of the feminine in the founding epics of Hinduism by re-signifying the wife as the concubine to unlearn the discourse of male protection. This redefines the traditional relationship of the protector and the protected between men and women.

V. Defying the Definition: Recast(e)ing the Woman Criminal

The framing of the lower caste woman as the goddess and the feminist becomes a point of entry to extend my argument about the caste dynamics of criminalization into the domain of Indian electoral politics and the transnational human rights politics. Of particular regard here is the transformation of these textual accounts into material politics, and the unsettling of the ideological assumptions about caste-gender identity through such politics. In this respect, it is crucially important to mention that the trope of the warrior goddess in this section is not a means to glorify lower caste counter-violence, but a lens to examine how violence begets violence. Lower caste women who have been violated to the limits of human tolerance turn to violence for "empowerment." For a human rights project like this the critical need is to dissociate violence from empowerment on both sides of the divide. Nonetheless, to examine how the cycle of violence can be stopped, it is of significance to examine the reaches of its brutality if it is not halted. It also remains vital to separate personal faith that empowers and personal faith that "empowers" through violence. My examination of the trope of the warrior goddess intends to examine the nuances of such an understanding of the leitmotif of the goddess. I aim to underscore the violence underlying the prescriptive clamp down on the religious practice of faith as much as the violence inherent in championing violence as a project of faith. Through the study of how the image of the warrior goddess operates in Devi's text and the politics that it can generate, this section attempts to go beyond the left-liberal nationalist project of questioning the validity of popular religious faith and its potential for violence and seeks to identify a representational politics of caste that can relocate such faith nonviolently on the transnational map of cultural *praxis* for human

rights. Hence, the goddess is re-troped as a nonviolent border-crossing feminist who forges problematic yet productive alliances with both men and women across the globe. But the trope of the goddess can be called into question in other ways too.

The Warrior Goddess: When the lives of lower caste women, militant against the Hindu caste system, are mythologized as the exploits of Hindu warrior goddesses, it leads to an uneasy and ironic realm of signification. However, can there be an alternative and a more empowered reading of such an allegorical representation? What kind of values do such goddess identified lower caste women take up in the context of caste marked minority politics on the national and the global platform?

Durga and Kali become the reigning metaphors for the mythical subtexts of India's Bandit Queen and The Bandit Queen of India. The searing agony of Devi's marital rape by Putti Lal invokes the fierce iconography of Durga: "There was nothing I could do to stop him. But I swore to the goddess Durga who drank the blood of demons that he would pay for the pain he caused me" (BQI 127). She returns to castrate Putti Lal and leaves him bleeding and naked by the wayside. Exulting in her own code of justice, Devi celebrates the relief that accompanies her gruesome assault on Putti Lal: "That night, for the first time in my life, I had tasted revenge. I had tasted it for myself! [. . .] The only thing to do with men like that was to crush their serpents, so that they could never use them again! That would be my justice!" (282). The text is again articulate with Devi's goddess-identified rhetoric of empowerment after she survives the police custodial torture for her alleged *dacoity* at Mayadin's place: "I began to wonder if there was some force in me they were all trying to crush, a force that made me retaliate, a force that drove me desperately to survive. [. . .] I resolved to hang onto this force that was a gift of

Durga" (200). Finally, in a mythic tableau in which Devi literally reincarnates Durga's slaying of the demon—Mahisasur, Devi unleashes the rage of the goddess in a bedlam of castration and carnage. In a spectacle of sexual revenge, she strips the village men who had once protected her torturers who had raped and paraded her naked through the village. Likewise, she marches them naked through the village. The text inscribes the sadistic jubilation that records the event: "I beat them between their legs with my rifle butt. I wanted to destroy the serpent that represented their power over me . . ." (396). Devi is ecstatic in her bloody *jouissance*: "I crushed burned, impaled! "396). Her orgasmic euphoria continues: "And then I laughed to see them leap like castrated horses and fall at my feet and cry like women, begging and pleading for mercy, as I had" (396). Not only does Devi avenge her own wrongs, but for her social banditry becomes a means of restorative justice for the socially devalued: "Being a bandit meant taking from the rich and giving to the poor, punishing the rapist and chastising the cruel landowner to make them understand that women and poor had their dignity too" (465). The translation of personal vengeance into social reordering reconfigures itself as cosmic retribution, and Devi's dance of destruction comes to signify the embodiment of peace for the panfeminine. Her narrative scripts the allegorical sacrifice of the violent upper caste male before the warrior goddess. He had outraged the village women, raped his daughter and daughter-in-law, engaged in bestiality, and pedophilic violations of young boys: "This thakur was a pervert and a sadist. Nothing could satisfy his greedy lust [. . .] His serpent first, then his hands, then his feet . . . I cut them off. I did it before the image of the Durga, to give her peace" (398). This is the resilient rage of Mahasweta Devi's Dopdi Mehjen. Unlike the classical Draupadi who prays to Lord Krishna to prevent her public

stripping by her husbands' cousins, Dopdi "remains publicly naked at her own insistence." Spivak summarizes: "the story insists that this is the place where male leadership stops" (Foreword 11). Emasculating her torturers like Phoolan Devi by refusing to continue in the realm of shame, Dopdi declares: "There isn't a man here that I should be ashamed. I will not let you put my cloth on me" (36).

However, it is only with the unprecedented massacre of twenty-two high-caste men by Devi that her avenging spirit gains national recognition. Her fierce devotional justice is transmogrified into the politics of caste votes which mark the electoral politics of postcolonial India. In her introduction to India's Bandit Queen Mala Sen frames this ironic interplay between the feudal dynamics of caste and the electoral politics of the modern democratic nation-state:

> Never before in the history of rural banditry had a low-caste woman been accused of killing so many high-caste men. The incident created a political furore in the country, particularly in Uttar Pradesh (UP), where the men she was said to have gunned down controlled the rural vote. The Thakurs (landowners) of UP organized demonstrations in neighbouring towns calling for justice, and the government in Delhi, led by Indira Gandhi, could not ignore their protest, for they delivered "block votes" from just such isolated hamlets scattered throughout the region. (xix)

With her entry into the realm of national politics, the press reconstructs Devi in the image of Kali rather than Durga. She "was called the Bandit Queen, a poor mallah girl who, ever since her lover was killed by thakurs, wielded the fearsome sword of Kali, the patron saint of thuggees" [bandits] (408). Sarah Caldwell argues: "Whereas Kali embodies the

pure power of destruction and is a manifestation of ultimate disorder, Durga is self-controlled and protective, a representative of the true cosmic order" (174).[51] Joanna Liddle and Rama Joshi's analysis of Indian goddesses offers an interesting caste subtext to the significance of this symbolic metamorphosis of the bandit queen:

> Kali is malevolent because her uncontrolled passion is liable to introduce impure blood into the caste and to dissipate [upper] caste wealth, making a mockery of patrilineal inheritance and the accumulation of property, and thereby destroying the caste system itself. Unconstrained, mortal women are much to be feared as potential destroyers and robbers of the patriarchal heritage—cultural and material—as are members of the lower orders. (68)

On the other hand, despite her role as the slayer of demons, Durga destroys them to restore cosmic order, not to disrupt it. The shift in Devi's iconicity from Durga to Kali is also played out on the eve of Devi's conditional surrender to the Indian government. The event becomes a social text in itself which is read as a pilgrimage to the shrine of the warrior goddess to worship her mythologized triumph over the nation-state:

> Thousands of villagers had walked many miles to witness the event (of her surrender). Phoolan Devi was a national legend. Songs had been written about her exploits, although she did not know that at the time. Clay statues of her dressed in a police uniform carrying a gun, sold in the markets of Kanpur at sixteen rupees a piece, next to statues of 'gods, goddesses and other national leaders of the year', as one report put it. Women had begun praying to her, whispering in confidence

[51] Caldwell's argument has been particularly helpful in locating the goddess discourse in The Bandit Queen of India. See Sarah Caldwell, "Subverting the Fierce Goddess: Phoolan Devi and the Politics of Vengeance," Playing for Real: Hindu Role Models, Religion, and Gender, eds. Jacqueline Suthren Hirst & Lynn Thomas (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) 160-78.

that she was the reincarnation of Kali, warrior goddess worshipped throughout the Chambal Valley. (IBQ 215)

Nonetheless, such a reading of female criminality can be criticized as problematic in the current Indian context of majoritarian Hindu politics against the Muslim minority. Critics like Rajeswari Sunder Rajan have questioned the "deployment and role of a majority religion's idiom in a postcolonial 'secular democracy,' India" (212).[52] Rajan claims: "Hindu goddess worship is radical in so far as the goddess is not inscribed in the mainstream of deities and her devotees are drawn largely from lower castes, women and even non-Hindus, thus clearing certain spaces of alternative belief and practice in the monolith of Brahminical Hinduism" (213). Rajan acknowledges the "rise and dominance" of "folk heroines like Phoolan Devi" who "have been accommodated and accepted within the cognitive frame provided by goddesses or the allied historical/mythological figures of the *viranganas*" (215). However, she also warns us against the dangers of Hindutva feminism, especially in the current context of Hindu religious revivalism in postcolonial India,[53] underlining "women's agency (like their empowerment) can neither be viewed as an abstraction, nor celebrated as an unqualified good" (220). Rajan also questions the political valence of Hindu goddesses as icons of feminist empowerment vis-à-vis the lower caste and religious minority women of a democratic nation-state who might fail to identify with them. Rajan's argument gains ground in the context of the Rashtra Sevika Samiti--the women's wing of the paramilitary

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[52] See Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, "Feminism and the Politics of the Hindu Goddess," Feminist Locations: Global and Local, Theory and Practice, ed. Marianne DeKoven (New Brunswick, NJ, & London: Rutgers University Press, 2001) 212-26.

[53] See 218.

Hindu nationalist organization--Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh—mobilizing the fierce divinity of Bharatmata and Ashta Bhuja. They are symbolic of a violent feminine Hindu nationalism against a demonic Muslim male sexuality.[54]

However, I argue that the figure of the goddess identified woman bandit opposes such majoritarian politics because Phoolan Devi's warrior goddess is not derived from majoritarian Vedic Hinduism, but from the Tantric and Shaktic practices of the Hindu minority who the Sangh was to exclude from citizenship.[55] In India Tantric and Shaktic practices of Kali have been traced to pre-Aryan times via archaeological evidence of the worship of fertility through the mother goddess.[56] David Kinsley has more to offer on the Kali as the goddess of the liminal population: "Kali's association with the periphery of Hindu society [. . .] is also seen in an architectural work [text] of the sixth to the eighth centuries, the *Mana-sara-silpa-sastra*. There it is said that Kali's temples should be built far from villages and towns, near the cremation grounds and the dwellings of Candalas (very low-caste people)" (118-9). Kinsley adds: "Many texts and contexts treat Kali as an independent deity, unassociated with any male deity" (116). She represents "Durga's personified wrath, her embodied fury" (116). Kinsley traces Durga back into the indigenous non-Aryan cultures as well:

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[54] See Bacchetta, Paola, " 'All Our Goddesses are Armed': Religion, Resistance and Revenge in the Life of a Militant Hindu Nationalist Woman," Against All Odds: Essays on Women, Religion and Development from India and Pakistan, eds. Kamla Bhasin, Ritu Mennon, Nighat Said Khan (New Delhi, India & Quezon City, Philippines, 1994) 134-7.

[55] See Zakia Pathak & Saswati Sengupta, "Resisting Women," Women and the Hindu Right: A Collection of Essays, eds. Tanika Sarkar & Urvashi Butalia (New Delhi, India: Kali for Women, 1995) 293. Also, see Bacchetta 135.

[56] Liddle and Joshi 54.

> In addition to there being no similar goddesses among the deities of the Vedic tradition, many early references to Durga associate her with peripheral areas such as the Vindhya Mountains, tribal peoples such as the Sabaras [. . .] Although Durga becomes an establishment goddess in medieval Hinduism, protecting the cosmos from the threat of demons and guarding dharma [order] [. . .], her roots seem to be among the tribal and peasant cultures of India, which eventually leavened the male-dominated Vedic pantheon with several goddesses associated with power, blood, and battle.

Thus, it was the Brahminical religion of the Aryans who migrated to India around 1500 BC which restricted the powerful sexuality of these female divinities by "providing orthodox male deities as husbands for the mother goddesses" (Liddle and Joshi 52-4). In a Tantric/Shaktic reading of Phoolan Devi as the militant goddess, the lower caste woman resists being appropriated by Vedic Hindutva in which the woman remains "inconsequential without relationships with men." Through her Tantric/Shaktic practice she "maintains the world and fights without male directions and support against male demons" (Pathak & Sengupta 295). Like Durga, she "challenges the stereotyped view of women found in traditional Hindu law books [like Manusmriti]" (Kinsley 99).

Such an understanding of militancy refuses Rajeswari Sunder Rajan's democratic feminist argument that salvaging the goddess to empower women will inevitably lead to a majoritarian stand. Hindu goddesses here serve as routes of multiple modalities through which the lives of India's millions can be imagined. Nonetheless, this brings us to the problematic conjunction between the popular and the communal.[57] The South Asian

[57] "Power is strategic for the state and it exercises and retains power by actively institutionalising a hegemonic masculinity. And it is this masculinity that is the underbelly of street power and a lumpen

Subaltern Studies Group has recently tried to address this in the context of the appropriation of the popular by the Hindu elites in the service of Hindu communal politics.[58] They have theorized the popular as the co-optable while the subaltern remains an emergent category of politics at the edge of the dominant. However, for many lower caste women in India, like Phoolan Devi, *bhakti* (devotion) to the warrior goddess remains a matter of personal faith—an everyday practice rather than an institutionalized religion.[59] I argue that Phoolan Devi's *bhakti* remains a subaltern rather than a populist faith because of its subversive political valence. Rightfully so, because the Samajwadi Party with a largely lower caste constituency, instrumental in Devi's release from prison and in shaping her political career, failed to contain her resistive feminist vision of a separate women's wing of the party. *Bhakti* is "widely recognized as a historical challenge from within to the caste-fixed inflexibility of high Hinduism" (Spivak "Moving Devi"126). As a subcultural practice which gave "the lie to caste and scripture," *bhakti* "opened doors for women's agency" (127). By overwriting the faith of lower caste women in the interest of national unity in the secular democratic nation-state, one fails to

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culture that legitimises and provides popular support for the state with all its contradictions arising from its communal, caste and class interests." See Vasanth Kannabiran and Kalpana Kannabiran, "The Frying Pan or the Fire? Endangered Identities, Gendered Institutions and Women's Survival," Women and the Hindu Right: A Collection of Essays, eds. Tanika Sarkar and Urvashi Butalia (New Delhi, India: Kali for Women, 1995) 131.

[58] See Swati Chattopadhyay and Bhaskar Sarkar, "Introduction: The Subaltern and the Popular," Postcolonial Studies 8.4 (2005): 359.

[59] Debjani Ganguly emphasizes the importance of defining caste as everyday practice rather than through historical movements against injustice. However, I explore how convict narratives define caste through everyday practices like that of *bhakti* which nonetheless take up revolutionary dimensions, often influencing the international arena of anti-discrimination politics through collaborative storytelling. Ganguly's insistence on the need for a subversive theorization of *bhakti* has triggered my interest in the issue: "Even Ranajit Guha, who formulated a way of interpreting the domain of power and politics in South Asia that would resist both secular-historicist readings of India's past and the paradigm of modernization, is unable to theorize *bhakti*. He does not, however, talk of the democratic potential of *bhakti*." See Debjani Ganguly, Caste, Colonialism and Counter-Modernity: Notes on a Postcolonial Hermeneutics of Caste (London and New York: Routledge, 2005) xxii, 175.

step out of the colonial frame which established the nation-state as the marker of political identity and indigenous faith as an impediment to modernization. In the transnational realm of feminist politics it is lower caste women like Phoolan Devi who unsettle the dominant logic of Euro-American political correctness. In this secular agnostic world of left elitism she injects her own brand of faith—*bhakti*--derived from practical rather than scriptural Hinduism—itself a minority culture in the global scenario.

The Border-Crossing Feminist? Through her convict narratives that transcribe the social text of caste for the international human rights community, Phoolan Devi relocates her caste experience in the continuum between national and global feminist politics. She both resists and harnesses cross-caste male and female, national and the transnational alliances with the lower caste woman. Despite asymmetrical relations of power in these coalitions beyond borders, they enable the disenfranchised who is "rewritten and visualized in the global media" to exert "pressure on sign systems that uphold existing political and moral hierarchies" (Bishnupriya Ghosh 461). This transnational *praxis* of lower caste women lies in inflecting the material politics of human rights through the transcription and circulation of their stories. It contests a representational philosophy that attests to subaltern subject-constitution either through the complete silence of the subaltern or a problem of discursive politics that allows for only an interventionist representation of the subaltern by the elite.

In fact, in their discussion about the outcastes of India, Josiane Racine and Jean-Luc Racine have powerfully articulated the necessity of mediation as an empowering *praxis* for the subaltern. Asserting themselves against the taboo of interventionist representation, they claim: "In intellectual quests, as well as in the politics of identity, the

urge for absolute purity—and its counterpart, absolute doubt—is dangerous." For them the politically correct niceties of representation take a backseat when it comes to waging a war against a system in which power is defined through the written word and the only voices which are audible are those which can inscribe their life histories onto a readable cultural text. The authors nail their argument about the value of representational politics in this subaltern war with a clinching summary of their contention: "The inner world of Dalit [outcaste] illiterates can only be heard or read through mediation. As is true for subalterns around the world, they have to be heard" (277). Mediated convict narratives of illiterate lower caste women such as Phoolan Devi contain precisely this counter-inscriptive potential to challenge what Ioan Davies in the context of prison writing calls "the imposed texts." Through their narratives these disenfranchised women cut "against the grain of the plethora of texts that would define them out of existence" (92). In other words, Phoolan Devi's collaborative narration resists the dominant inscription of a certain Indian caste ideology that argues for violence as a mode of maintaining caste order as well as a global penal philosophy which champions institutionalized violence for social control. In its onslaughts against legal discourse that is the foundation of criminology, cultural texts of "criminals" formulate a counterculture that question received social practices entrenched by law: "Ultimately, the ideal of law as an equitable principle, after being fought over by governments and freemen, landlords and peasants, jurors and lawyers, becomes enshrined in the folklore of constitutional practice. The enormous script of common and legislative law becomes the terrain within which rights and freedoms are negotiated, because it embodies both the form within which any discourse can take place and also the experiences of earlier negotiations." It is this topography of

postcolonial law as given and set by tradition rather than law as contextualized justice that the countercultural narratives of convicted women, transcribed by intellectuals, aim to contest, despite the ongoing tensions within such an unequal collaboration itself. The colonial prison of British India between the mid 1890s to the mid 1840s saw quite a number of educated middle-class men and women.[60] These "political prisoners often authored life stories for those 'common criminals' who left no written record of their own" (Arnold 31). In the globalized context of postcolonial India it is once again the educated class who mediate the life stories of the abject underclass of postcolonial "criminals." This time these scribes are the global elites who, despite being physically free to trot the globe, remain "prisoners of conscience" in an unjust world, traveling back and forth to tell the stories of injustice in India to the world. In the process they often come under attack by the very abject lives they recount.

The role of cultural texts in forging such necessary but problematic alliances between the elite and the subaltern is powerfully demonstrated by the narratives as well as the film on Devi's life. The movie Bandit Queen (1994), based on Mala Sen's biography, meandered through severe censorships for "misrepresenting facts", placing Devi's "life and security in jeopardy", and "violating Devi's "right to privacy" by re-raping her in public through the portrayal of her rape (Shohini Ghosh 154). Devi withdrew her litigation after Channel 4 of UK which commissioned the film, and the director--Shekhar Kapur—made an out of court settlement with her by paying her forty

[60] See David Arnold. "The Self and the Cell: Indian Prison Narratives as Life Histories." Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004) 52.

thousand pounds.[61] The authenticity of Mala Sen's script also came under severe interrogation. In a brilliant reverse performative the thuggee reappeared in the social text of material dissent. The female outlaw who ventured "into the terrain of lawlessness" because of her "conviction that legal systems can neither provide protection nor deliver justice" (Shohini Ghosh 152), stepped right back into civil law to reclaim her citizenship rights by litigating against upper caste intellectuals like Kapur. Nonetheless, riding on a wave of lower caste political mobilization, Devi "used the film as part of her campaign for political office in 1996 where she and a surge of other lower-caste politicians were elected to parliament" (Longfellow 238). Produced in UK, directed by an Indian, based on a script by an Indian journalist moving between India and UK, "the film functions as a postcolonial object par excellence, generated and capitalized, as it is, in a continuous shuttle between East and West" (239). So do Mala Sen's biography India's Bandit Queen (1993) and the mediated autobiography The Bandit Queen of India (2003), the latter published in the United States and collaboratively produced by Phoolan Devi with the Parisian author Marie Thérèse-Cuny and the Paris based British journalist Paul Rambali. The production process of this text was quite unlike that of the biography India's Bandit Queen or the film Bandit Queen, challenged by Devi. The Bandit Queen of India bears the traces of a postcolonial subaltern subjectivity that participates and authorizes the cultural production of the self. Published posthumously after the assassination of Devi in July 2001, the transcribed manuscript of the text was read back to Devi for comments and each page was certified by her signature (Rambali xii-xiii). Otherwise, the politics of

[61] Shohini Ghosh, "Deviant Pleasures and Disorderly Women: The Representation of the Female Outlaw in Bandit Queen and Anjaam," Feminist Terrains in Legal Domains: Interdisciplinary Essays in Women and Law in India, ed. Ratna Kapoor (New Delhi, India: Kali for Women, 1996) 153-4.

translation between the disenfranchised like Phoolan Devi and elites like Thérèse-Cuny and Rambali would reconfigure the politics of Senanayak in "Draupadi".

Senanayak is both the "specialist in combat" [against Naxalite revolutionaries like Dopdi] and an expert in extreme-Left politics: "Whatever his *practice*, in *theory* he respects the opposition. [. . .] ***In order to destroy the enemy, become one.*** [I]n his written work he will demolish the gentlemen and ***highlight*** the message of the harvest workers" (22-3). The final trajectory of information retrieval from the enemy that this scholar-bureaucrat, Senanayak, embarks on results in the violently sexualized interrogation of Dopdi which is designed by Senanayak. It unleashes her resistant rage, and in a final sequence of the return of the repressed, Dopdi tears the piece of cloth which Senanayak's men throw over her raped and brutalized body to cover her humiliation. Refusing to buy into a patriarchal construction of the raped female body through an ideology of shame, Dopdi walks toward Senanayak with "her head high" as "the nervous guards trail behind." In her subversive rage she "stands before him, naked. Thigh and pubic hair matted with dry blood. Two breasts, two wounds" (36). Shaking with indomitable laughter, she stops to spit a "bloody gob" at Senanayak's white shirt, "pushes Senanayak with her two mangled breasts, and for the first time Senanayak is afraid to stand before an unarmed target" (36). Writing about another "untouchable" tribal woman in Mahasweta Devi's short story "Douloti the Bountiful," Gayatri Spivak says that the author's narrative terrain "contains problematic representations of decolonization after a negotiated [Indian] *political* independence"(97). This space of the postcolonial bonded laborer like Dopdi and Douloti does not operate within the organized labor of imperialism and capitalistic logic. This is the landscape of internal colonization of the subaltern: "Mahasweta invites

us to realize that, in the context of this fiction, "Empire" and "Nation" are interchangeable names, however hard it might be for us to imagine it" (97-8). It is this space of "superexploitation" of subalterns like Douloti, Dopdi Mehjen, and Phoolan Devi that "makes the agenda of nationalism impossible" (113). In fact, it is this space of the empire-nation that activates the wrath of Dopdi against Senanayak, a possibility in 'benevolent' elite-disenfranchised collaborations like Shekhar Kapur's as well.

The arc of subaltern political and cultural agency in such a translational *praxis* needs to be located in the contradictions of postcolonial citizenship in democratic India vis-à-vis gender and caste. The colonial legacy to the postcolonial state in the form of the of sovereignty, constitutionality, and laws of governance marking the "public" sphere of British administration are often at cross-purposes with the "private" domain of culture ruled by personal/customary laws of Indians which the British left largely untouched.[62] As such, there is a disjunction between the two. As Rajeswari Sunder Rajan asserts: "The difficulties posed by this dispute for, among other things, justifying *women's* rights and equality as citizen-subjects are obvious and emerge most clearly in the conflicts around personal law"(5). Thus, while the concept of citizenship atomized Indian nationals as individuals with their ties to an impersonal state replacing the former filial bonds of the populace with a landed gentry that in turn were tied to paternalistic kings,[63] in the sphere of customary laws Indians still retained these codes of "piety." In this infrastructural chaos of colonial imposition, male and female citizens were affected differently because

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[62] See The Scandal of the State 4-5.

[63] "During most of India's history, however, there has not been a single centralised monarchy. Instead there have been hundreds of small princedoms and a pattern of local governance involving representative committees, called *panchayat* (a council of five)." See Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Rise of Hindu Nationalism," Ethical and Political Dilemmas of Modern India, Ninian Smart and Shivesh Thakur (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993) 235.

of their differential access to the structures of government as well as their dissimilar experiences with the extent to which they were regulated by cultural prescriptions. Similarly, the everyday practice of caste which the colonial government used as a marker of Indian identity largely remained in the realm of "culture," except for the administration's use of the category to monitor certain sectors of the subject population as in the Criminal Castes and Tribes Act. In this colonial transaction between government and culture lower caste female citizenship in the postcolonial state came to bear the legacy of "culture." It is only by bringing the status quo of the postcolonial state to a crisis that the female outlaw can forge "a specific conjuncture for the constitution of female subjectivity in the reactive mode" (30), and refuse to participate in the notion of citizenship which the state has used to define her out of "political" existence to confine her to the "cultural." In my reading of caste and gender as cultural constructs the category of culture is the site of public protestation by the postcolonial female outlaw for a transnational realm of feminist *praxis* that contests the category of the state.[64] With the colonial thuggee archive largely marked by the absence of the female thuggee, the production of thuggee as difference marked the superiority of respectable British masculinity over the deviance of Indian masculinity. Into this social text marked by the absence of female criminality, enters the postcolonial female thuggee informed by the gendered history and practice of a caste identified social banditry in independent India. In the light of the above examination of the contradictions of postcolonial female

[64] I would like to point out, in this regard, that both Sunder Rajan and I claim about the political role of "culture" in women's lives. However, whereas her understanding of culture is invested in negotiating benefits for women with and through the existing institutions of the state, my approach to culture lies in its subversive role in contesting the state through the postcolonial mapping of "culture" as political onto transnational feminism through collaborative cultural projects between the global elite and the postcolonial subaltern.

citizenship, especially of the lower castes, it is not surprising that only after her criminalization that Phoolan Devi is able to enforce her constitutional right to protection by the law.[65] Her criminality can thus also be constituted as her ironic entry into the realm of constitutionality and governance that she ironically ruptures.

Devi's entry into "law" happens not only through her litigation in the film case, but also as she negotiates the terms of her surrender to the Indian government in 1983: among her claims was reprieve from death penalty, land, house, and employment for her family, adequate food in prison and a certain amount of freedom, and rehabilitation after her release (IBQ 212-3). In the film Bandit Queen the last advice of Vikram Mallah to his paramour underlines the politics of the postcolonial state in dealing with its segregated criminalized population when the lower castes of the state threaten to upset the status quo vis-à-vis its upper castes: "If you kill, kill twenty, don't kill one. [. . .] If you kill one, you will be hanged. If you kill twenty, you will gain infamy. They will call you a revolutionary. The government will run after you. They will pay you." Irrespective of the caste complexion of the gang, surrender of bandits thus becomes the high moral ground for the non-violent reconsolidation of upper caste state power. However, when such negotiations involve lower caste women like Devi, the urge to arrest her resistive potential and reform the female outlaw into the in-law takes new directions. The Queen of Chambal Valley is domesticated as "a brave girl" by the negotiating officer—Rajendra Chaturvedi (IBQ 211). Among a spectacular populist support, she enacts the surrender of her accomplished outlaw career, joining her palms to greet the then Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh—Arjun Singh--in a gesture of daughterly humility (471). Indian

[65] The Scandal of the State 231.

feminists, however, remained "unenthusiastic about embracing militant feminist models" like her (The Scandal of the State 216). Brahminical feminism's "highly selective understanding of women and their lives" does not allow for differences in the experiences of Indian women as they live through a diverse range of patriarchies. Having "the luxury [. . .] to escape their caste persona through a turn to the (progressive) problem of gender and "women", Brahminical feminism asserts that "feminism and caste cannot sit together" (Rao 278). In this vacuum stepped in lower caste patriarchy to reclaim its prodigal daughter in the name of a caste constituency in the electoral politics.[66] The Samajwadi Party president--Mulayam Singh Jadav--rallied caste votes for his party around the image of the anti-heroine--Phoolan Devi--whom he not only released from prison after the party came to power in 1992, but also recruited into the party. She provided a foil to Mayawati—the charismatic leader of the Bahujan Samaj Party, Samajwadi's chief political rival. Devi also became iconic for the possibilities of lower caste lives, and when she became a member of the Parliament in 1996 Samajwadi became symbolic of the route to re-determining the status of the lower castes as entitled citizens.[67] Devi remained political capital for lower caste electoral patriarchy even in death, as against the wishes of her family who wanted to cremate her in Delhi, she was

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[66] The following political history has been drawn from my intimate contact with India as an evolving student of cultural history, both while I lived in India and after my relocation in the US. In the latter case, the history came through to a diasporic Indian like me through the numerous telephonic conversations and my visits back to India.

[67] Bahujan literally translates as many (bahu) and people (jan) in Hindi, the national language of India. It implies the "majority of the people." Till 1994 the long term goal of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) of India, formed in 1984, "was the political consolidation of caste and religious minorities in India, who collectively constitute a majority of the population, in opposition to the Hindu upper castes." See Kanchan Chandra, "Why Ethnic Parties Succeed: Patronage and Ethnic Head Counts in India," Theory and Research in Comparative Social Analysis Paper 8 (2003): xxxii <repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article =1013 &context=uclasoc>. The Samajwadi Party (SP) which came into force in 1992 offered significant competition to BSP for lower caste votes within the state of Uttar Pradesh.

cremated at her constituency in Mirzapur. Mulayam Singh Jadav declared that "his Samajwadi Party was her family" (BQI viii).

VI. Conclusion[68]

Nonetheless, though her mortal remains were appropriated by the state, the lower caste woman did rescue her spirit from both national and transnational 'benevolence'. Challenging both the feminist and patriarchal constructions of Indian women as lacking in political agency and hence in need of being rescued, she claimed a postcolonial and transnational feminist advocacy against caste oppression and human rights violations of women on her own terms. Despite defining her choice of a personal faith in proto Hindu religious icons, her convict narratives uphold her militancy against the oppressive social configuration of Hinduism. Nonetheless, it needs to be underlined that though Devi did not step into it, there is surely an ongoing postcolonial reclamation of the lower castes through the mobilization of goddesses in the interest of Hindu religious revivalism in India. All the same, one cannot discount the fact that the category of caste has returned to forge new opportunities for progressive politics through transnational political citizenship. Caste is haunting the postcolonial nation-state, not as tradition but as the "critical enumerative category" (Dirks 302) of modern electoral politics, based on an oppositional mobilization of lower caste votes (314). It has placed the lower castes and the casteless on the national and the transnational map of historic injustice by relocating caste from the realm of culture to that of racial discrimination. Though caste politics affects other countries, its discussion in the international arena had

[68] Nicholas Dirks' insightful understanding of the progressive role of caste in the postcolonial context has been specially useful for my comprehension of a postcolonial-transnational politics of caste. See Nicholas B. Dirks, Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001).

so long mainly been blocked by the government of India.[69] In the wake of the assassination on July 25, 2001 of Phoolan Devi, between August 27 and September 1, 2001 caste was staged for the first time by the UN at the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.[70]

Nevertheless, it needs to be reinforced that women's oppression within caste discrimination is implemented through gender specific modes of oppression, and the issue of caste remains incompletely mapped in the transnational terrain of resistance in the absence of international laws to complement the struggle against caste injustice. Though the Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was ratified by India in 1993,[71] the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) remains unratified by India.[72] Since police custodial torture of outcastes and lower castes often results in torture and even death, in the case of women torture more often than not resulting in sexual atrocities, refusal to ratify the CAT affects the remapping of the terrain of caste at the transnational level of human rights politics. Though the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture

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[69] See Footnote 1.

[70] It is important to note that this can be read as a strategic move in many ways. With its colonial history, India has been a party to the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination since 1968 As such, mapping caste as race is a construction that is politically viable to pressure India into acknowledging the injustice of discrimination in the postcolonial context. See Amnesty International, "India: The Battle Against Fear and Discrimination: The Impact of Violence Against Women in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan," Report (May 2001) 4.

[71] See Ajay Pandey, "Granting the Right to an Individual Petition, Optional Protocol to CEDAW Comes into Force," Kali's Yug 103.

[72] "It is an irony that the individual human being is still on the margins of international human rights instruments, even after fifty years of the Declaration. The basic reason for this marginalization is the focus on the state as the basic unit in international relations. In this situation the plight of women, who are almost half of the population, yet so marginalized a section in society, is more worrisome. A right to petition under human rights treaties, though a very limited right, is a step towards putting individuals at the centre stage of the international system, and thereby treating them directly as subjects of international law, wherein they could claim their rights as well as be held accountable for violating others." See 101.

(OPCAT) which is to monitor the implementation of CAT by states has come into force in 2006, it is binding only for states which have ratified the CAT.[73] As such, the only platforms for caste justice, as of now, still remain confined to the nation though the relocating of caste in the transnational topography of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance has at least allowed a global witnessing of caste discrimination as injustice rather than culture for the first time.

[73] See "Dialogue on Globalization: Fact Sheet on the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture," 8 (August 2006) <http://www.fes-globalization.org/publications/FES%20Fact%20No8%20-%20OPCAT.pdf>.

CHAPTER THREE
The Supranational Struggle for Desegregation: Women's Post-Apartheid Resistance Novels

I. Introduction

This chapter deals with the politics of postcolonial fiction in representing intra-racial and interracial violence against women in post-apartheid South Africa. It is organized to trace, through the figure of the woman, post-apartheid violence as a continuity of the social dislocations of the apartheid era, and hence of the incomplete process of decolonization. The chapter also studies the very notion of truth and reconciliation which attempted to construct a post-apartheid "democracy" by silencing the stories of South African women. However, expatriate writers and scholars from postcolonial cultures researching in the metropoles of the globe resuscitate and remap these tongue-tied stories of national shame confiscated by the nation onto the audible platform of a transnational feminist politics. The novels that I examine in this chapter are Mother to Mother (1998) by the New York based writer Sindiwe Magona and David's Story (2000), a narrative by Zoe Wicomb writing from Britain, both authors being of South African heritage. Mother to Mother is imagined as a fictionalized address by Mandisa, the mother of Mxolisi, to Amy Biehl's mother. Mandisa's son Mxolisi was part of the violent mob of black South African youth who assassinated Amy Biehl, a white American Fulbright scholar from Stanford, in 1993. She had been helping out in developing voter registration programs for South Africa's first democratic elections coming up in 1994, and hence was brutally murdered by the very people whose cause she was working for. David's Story is a fictional rendering of how post-apartheid South Africa strived to construct a democracy by silencing the testimonials of pain of female

anti-apartheid activists who were betrayed and tortured by their male peers within the revolution itself. It has a strong biographical component in that it is resonant with the life of Rita Mazibuko, the only female revolutionary who has testified to sexual violence at the hands of her own comrades. Examining novels about post-apartheid violence as a legacy of colonial and apartheid violence, this chapter explores how the nationalist project of post-apartheid South African democracy has been achieved at the expense of women through the dual phenomenon of "phallic nationalism" or masculinist nationalism and "uterine nationalism" or womanist nationalism.[1] (The term "phallic nationalism" and "uterine nationalism" respectively signify the gendered expectations that national liberation movements impose on men and women in defense of the nation.) Nonetheless, in the phenomena of transnational-postcolonial writing and the transnational-postcolonial research which emerged in the wake of decolonization, my work attests to the resistant power of women's discourses to contest such material violations within nationalist struggles. In the process the acts of writing and research themselves become material

[1]I draw on the terms "phallic nationalism" and "uterine nationalism" from Geraldine Heng's and Janadas Devan's study of the gendered claims of nationalism on the reproductive capacities of upper and middle class women professionals of Chinese ancestry in the context of Singapore. Such demands were made by the state to offset the "inordinate reproductive urges" of the racial minorities of "working-class women of Malay and Indian ethnic origin" (345). Heng and Devan draw our attention to the "sexualized, separate species of nationalism" that Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew advocated for Singapore's educated women in 1983: "as patriotic duty for men grew out of the barrel of a gun (phallic nationalism, the wielding of a surrogate technology of the body in national defense) so would it grow, for women, out of the recesses of the womb (uterine nationalism, the body *as* a technology of defense wielded by the nation). Men bearing arms and women bearing children; maternal and/as military duty: the still-recent history of Nazi Germany grimly but not uniquely reminds us that certain narratives of nationalism and dispositions of state power specifically require the exercise of control over the body, the track of power on bodies being visited differently according to gender" (348-9). See Geraldine Heng and Janadas Devan, "State Fatherhood: The Politics of Nationalism, Sexuality, and Race in Singapore," eds. Andrew Parker, Mary Russo, Doris Sommer, and Patricia Yaeger, Nationalisms and Sexualities (New York and London: Routledge, 1992). However, in my argument the concept of phallic nationalism, while retaining Heng's and Devan's understanding of the concept as associated with force, seeks to unpack how such an ideology is advocated not only in national defense, but also becomes a premise for violence against both the otherized white woman and the female peers within the revolution. Uterine nationalism, in my chapter, rather than sustaining the notion of the woman's womb in the service of nationalism, questions the nationalist mythification of the womb as a ground for revolutionary unity between men and women.

activism which attempt to dismantle the socio-political structures that sustain gender apartheid within nationalist revolutions. Thus, the female figure here will be examined both as a site of violation as well as a site of contest against it.

Tracing the continuity among colonialism, apartheid, and post-apartheid violations, this chapter will situate Mother to Mother and David's Story historically to unmask how novels about the lives of women during radical protest against racial segregation comment on truth and reconciliation in post-conflict South Africa. Staging the texts against this frame ruptures the myth of a unified post-resistance nationhood and articulates how post-apartheid South Africa needs to come to terms with itself around untold narratives of gender that fracture the myth of revolutionary unity against the apartheid regime.[2] Of particular interest here is the examination of how the violence of racial apartheid shaped the identity of South African youth active in the nationalist movement, and the relationship in which women stand vis-à-vis the project of nationalism and its deployment of youth power.

The theoretical frame of this chapter will draw upon feminist studies of the South African nationalist struggle like Beth Goldblatt's and Sheila Meintjes's essay "A Gender Perspective on Violence during the Struggle against Apartheid." It is a feminist study of

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[2] The South African writer and scholar Ndebele argues: "The problem is to be located in the nature of South African oppression and how its unabating pervasiveness has induced, almost universally in the country, a distinctive manner of thinking about the socio-political realities, an epistemology in which reality is conceived purely in terms of a total polarity of absolutes." He adds: "[T]he greatest challenge of the South African revolution is in the search for ways of thinking, ways of perception, that will help to break down the closed epistemological structures of South African oppression. Structures which can severely compromise resistance by dominating thinking itself." According to Ndebele, "The challenge is to free the entire social imagination of the oppressed from the laws of perception that have characterised apartheid society. For writers this means freeing the creative process itself from those very laws. It means extending the writer's perception of what can be written about, and the means and methods of writing." See Njabulo S. Ndebele, Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Essays on South African Literature and Culture, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2006) 55.

the truth and reconciliation process with regard to apartheid violence against women. Mahmood Mamdani's "Amnesty or Impunity? A Preliminary Critique of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (TRC)" and "The Truth According to the TRC" will help in positioning women in civil society during the revolution not only as targets of violence by human agents, but also as objects of structural violence in a system in which resources are unequally distributed according to racial categories.[3] Finally, Rosemary Jolly's and Derek Attridge's edited anthology Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995 will provide a framework for how cultural productions like literature can become meaningful sites of political resistance that contest dominant discourses that shape human perceptions and hence actions. In the textual readings that follow abuse of women will be explored through the theme of TRC's discursive violence, while the struggle against such violence will be examined through the phenomenon of post-resistance literature. Recognizing texts as sites which generate discursive resistance, this chapter extricates the TRC from the political grip of the post-apartheid state to question its premises from the perspective of a potential supranational struggle against both raced and gendered segregation generated by cultural productions and academic activism.

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[3] For the incisive force of this argument I am indebted to Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg's abstract of her paper for the American Comparative Literature Association's (ACLA's) Annual Convention in Puebla, Mexico in April 2007. Her paper is entitled "Living in the Awakened Dark: Race, Poverty, and Genocide in Edwidge Dandicat's The Farming of Bones". As one of the organizers of the seminar panel "The Politics of Representation: Human Rights Violations, Witnessing, and Transnational Readership", I was especially fortunate to have access while writing this chapter, even before the convention, to Swanson Goldberg's reflections on the literary representation of the link between Haitian genocide of 1937 and "the structural poverty and racism that caused Haitians to migrate en masse to the Dominican Republic—which was only too happy to absorb their labor into the brutal economy of cane production." See Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg, "Living in the Awakened Dark: Race, Poverty, and Genocide in Edwidge Dandicat's The Farming of Bones," (American Comparative Literature Association, Puebla, Mexico; April 2007), Abstract. 26 February, 2007 <http://acla2007.complit. ucla.edu/restricted/papers>.

II. History of Radical Protest: Violent "Stories" and South Africa's Resilient Women

To study the literary rendering of how the effects of racial apartheid on South African youth defined both interracial and intra-racial violence on women, and how women's response to such violence formulate a critique of the patriarchal ethos of regime change, the historical trajectory of South Africa's transition from colonialism through apartheid to post-apartheid national liberation needs to be mapped. Crucial to tracking this history of regime change is the tracing of the figure of the woman, both in civilian and revolutionary life, through the interaction between systemic violence and that propagated by individual human agents.

South Africa's liberation from white racial oligarchy in 1994 marked the end of legal racial segregation or apartheid. European colonization of the region, now known as South Africa, had begun in 1652 when the Dutch East India Company opened a refreshment station for its ships in the region populated, among others, by the San (Bushmen) in the north and Khoikhoi (Hottentots). Eventually, there came to be formed a creolized Dutch or Afrikaans culture. During the Napoleonic Wars of the first two decades of the nineteenth century the British took over the Cape to protect its sea route to India. The Dutch formally ceded the Cape to the British in 1814, but the animosity between the Dutch farmers, also called the Boers, and the British lasted for another century. This led to the Anglo-Boer War between 1899 and 1902 which concluded with the defeat of the Boers. The British colonies of the Cape and Natal as well as the Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal formed a federation under British control. Between 1908 and 1909 an all white National Convention met to frame a constitution for a unified state. With the British Parliament passing the South Africa Bill

on May 31, 1910, the Union of South Africa was formally recognized as a political entity.[4] Under this Bill though South Africa obtained internal self-rule under Afrikaner and English white minorities, the Union achieved sovereign status within the British Empire only with the end of British control over foreign affairs in 1934.[5] Codifying white supremacy, the 1910 constitution of South Africa granted civil and political rights to whites only. Under the Black (or Natives) Land Act of 1913 most black Africans were no longer able to rent or own land "outside of designated reserves (which amounted to approximately 7% of South Africa's land, and which was finally increased to 13%). The Cape was the only province excluded from the Act as a result of the existing Black franchise rights which were enshrined in the South Africa Act. During the Apartheid era, the reserves were converted to Bantustans and later into independent states within South Africa."[6] The African National Congress (ANC), originally the South African Native National Congress, founded in 1912 was formed partly in response to this oppression of black South Africans.[7] In 1948 when the National Party came to power it introduced

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[4]For this colonial history of South Africa, see The Closest of Strangers: South African Women's Life Writing, ed. Judith Lütge Coullie (Johannesburg: Wits UP, 2001) 14-16.

[5] In 1934 the Statute of Westminster is ratified by inference in South Africa. See "1934 in South Africa," Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, 22 September 2006, Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., USA, 6 February, 2007 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ 1934_in_South_Africa>. The Statute of Westminster 1931 is an Act of the British Parliament that established legislative equality between the self-governing dominions of the British Empire and the United Kingdom. The Statute could, by inference, become domestic law within each of the other Commonwealth Realms "after the patriation of the particular Realm's constitution, to the extent that it was not rendered obsolete by that process." The Statute marked the independence of these countries, either immediately or upon ratification. See "Statute of Westminister 1931," Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, 31 January 2007, Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., USA, 6 February, 2007 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Statute_of_Westminster_1931>.

[6] See Alistair Boddy-Evans, "Pre Apartheid Era Laws: Black (or Natives) Land Act No. 27 of 1913", About: African History, Our Story, 2006, The New York Times Company, 26 November, 2006 <http://africanhistory.about.com/od/apartheidlaws/g/ No27of13.htm>.

[7] See Coullie 46.

more laws to reinforce this racial segregation. It extended Pass Laws which monitored and controlled the movements of South African blacks. The 1949 Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and the 1950 Immorality Amendment Act barred interracial marriages and any interracial sexual contact. The Group Areas Act of 1950 facilitated "the mass relocation of any population, including whites, that inhabited areas designated for other race groups. It had the effect of reserving 88 percent of the country for whites (who made up about 14 percent of the population of some 42 million people)" (Schaffer and Smith 57). The Bantustan system demarcated separate homelands for the blacks, but nonetheless was instrumental in keeping the various indigenous ethnolinguistic groups separate. Through the Separate Amenities Act of 1953 all public amenities and facilities were exclusive to specific racial groups, and the 1950 Suppression of Communism Act authorized the suppression of all dissent.[8] Finally, the

> Bantu Education Act in 1953 further disempowered black South Africans by replacing mission schooling, which ensured literacy for those blacks prepared to convert to Christianity and fostered an educated elite, with a system of inferior education, destined to prepare the majority of blacks for labor and service jobs. Coupled with the Bantustan system, strict state-enforced censorship laws functioned to contain knowledge production and dissemination. (Schaffer and Smith 58)

Later on in 1976 the Bantu education system would trigger the greatest student resistance against the apartheid state in the history of South Africa.

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[8] For this historical overview of the constitutional codification of human rights violations of South African blacks, I am indebted to Schaffer and Smith. See Schaffer and Smith 57-8.

At the Nuremberg Trials of 1945-6—a few years before the South African National Party launched apartheid as an official policy--Nazi leaders had been tried as war criminals.[9] As a preventive response to the atrocities of the Second World War, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had been adopted in 1948--the same year as the National Party came to power. Subsequently, in 1960 the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,[10] and in 1962 a Special Committee on Apartheid was created to deal with the racial practices of the Republic of South Africa.[11] Nonetheless, in the wake of decolonization the last country on the African continent to be released from racial apartheid was South Africa. In transitioning from apartheid segregation to post-apartheid integration some South African voices were muted by this new ideology of national unity just as they were by the apartheid project of a white oligarchy. In this post-apartheid project of nation-building untold narratives of women's lived experiences during the apartheid that could fracture the myth of anti-apartheid revolutionary unity came under special surveillance. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as Schaffer and Smith point out, "limited the scope of its activities, placing certain stories inside and some outside its scope." Moreover,

> attention was directed to killings and murders, abductions and disappearances, and incidents of torture and physical maiming. Vigorous critique of these terms of

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[9] Robertson 211-220.

[10] See "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples," 14 December 1960, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2002, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland, 6 February 2007 <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/c_coloni.htm>.

[11] See Roger S. Clark, "Human Rights Strategies of the 1960s Within the United Nations: A Tribute to the Late Kamleshwar Das," Human Rights Quarterly 21.2 (1999): 316-317.

> reference came from women's advocates who argued early in the process that the focus on abuses of bodily integrity rights limited the purview of the Commission in ways *that erased women's experience of apartheid from consideration* [italics my own] and thus limited the history collectively reconstructed through the processes of the TRC. (68)

It is the goal of this chapter to historically situate and examine the figures of women whose stories both of structural violence and violation of bodily integrity, caught in the maelstrom of regime change and in the patriarchal precepts of national liberation, were muffled in the interests of post-apartheid South African solidarity.

In "I Saw a Nightmare": Doing Violence to Memory: The Soweto Uprising, June 16, 1976 Helena Pohlandt McCormick makes representational space for articulating the vanquished voices of women whose lives were defined by the political violence that the young men in their lives—sons—were both subjected to and adopted as a mode of survival in apartheid South Africa. This kind of documentation itself is an act of political significance because of the apartheid policies of censorship as well as the racially marked literacy levels that the apartheid enforced through the Bantu education system.[12] "I Saw a Nightmare" recounts the 1976 student uprising in the South African township of Soweto when schoolchildren who were demonstrating against the apartheid government's decision to impose Afrikaans—the language of the white ruling class--as the medium of instruction within the Bantu education system were mercilessly shot by the apartheid

[12] Couillie argues: "social context is also crucial in determining who is likely to want—or be able—to record their experiences, and whose texts will find their way into public expression. [. . .] In the early decades of the twentieth century, white males' autobiographies dominated the field. Before the 1960s, no prose narrative autobiographical texts in English by black South African women appear to have been published. [. . .] Until the 1950s most educational institutions for Africans were mission-run; thereafter, a policy of state-controlled inferior education for blacks, known as Bantu education, was adopted. For young black women, this disadvantageous situation was compounded by the widespread preference in traditional communities for educating boys" (8).

police. What began as a peaceful protest by schoolchildren had soon turned into a bloodbath of violence and mayhem as the apartheid police fired into the demonstrating crowd instigating the students to retaliate. As the first two victims-- thirteen year old Hector Pieterson and seventeen year old Hastings Ndhlovu--were slain, Sam Nzima's photograph of the eighteen year old student, Mbuyisa Makhubu, carrying the dying Pieterson in his arms made headlines in world news. In the photograph Pieterson's sister is running alongside Makhubu, eyes closed in horror and a hand warding off the nightmare. Helena Pohlandt McCormick's "I Saw a Nightmare" positions this photograph in the archive of human rights photojournalism:

> Like other famous photographs, such as that of the child running naked from napalm bombs in Vietnam and of the student shot at Kent State, it has taken on meaning beyond the original historical moment. This image became the symbol of resistance. It became an icon of history—constituent part and instrument of collective history and memory. (1-2)[13]

Nonetheless, for the purpose of this chapter what is of critical import is McCormick's construction of the Soweto student uprising by injecting it with the individual voice of the mother of the revolutionary student--Mbuyisa Makhubu. The author clearly underlines the distinction between the two official versions of the Soweto uprising—those of the

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[13] See McCormick < http://www.gutenberg-e.org/pohlandt-mccormick/PM.c1p1.html>. The violence triggered by the police firing into the student demonstration lasted till early 1978. The violence had spread to Cape Town and the Cape townships of Guguletu, Langa, and Nyanga. McCormick records: "Within two months after June 16, violence had swept into 80 African communities, townships, and rural Bantustans (homelands) (8)." Though the death toll was officially recorded as 700 between June 1976 and October 1977, the other side of the story has been recorded by Tebello Motapanyane, former student and secretary-general of South African Students' Movement at Naledi High School, who in his interview with McCormick, rated the toll higher than 1,200. See <http://www.gutenberg-e.org/pohlandt-mccormick/PM.c1p1.html#txt21>.

apartheid state and of the ANC in exile—and the individual perspectives of the direct participants and of the witnesses to the state violence against the uprising.

In "I Saw a Nightmare" Helena Pohlandt McCormick retrieves the voice of Mbuyisa Makhubu's mother--Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu—from the plethora of testimonies before the TRC. The hypertext of "I Saw a Nightmare", with its links to the TRC's hearing of the mother, enables the individual memory of personal suffering to negotiate with the jubilant master narrative of the anti-apartheid revolution held in place by ANC's control over the public understanding of history. In this respect Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu's testimony before the TRC forms a subtext to McCormick's work. As opposed to the narrative of heroism that the photograph of Mbuyisa Makhubu bearing the dying Hector Pieterson generated for the public memory, his mother's account before the TRC framed the event through the rhetoric of fatal mistakes: "Mbuyisa's sin was to pick up Hector where he had fallen."[14] The trauma of the child-hero on the run with the apartheid police on the hunt for him intertwines with the nightmare of the family: "He also met Nzima who took that photograph. From there we never got any rest because of this photograph that was taken of him."[15] Highlighting the systemic violence of simultaneous global fame and domestic notoriety which destroys both Mbuyisa Makhubu and his biological family, Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu eloquently jettisons the heroic persona of Mbuyisa Makhubu—the Soweto revolutionary--and humanizes him as the traumatized son of a poor black woman:

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[14] See TRC <http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/methodis/makhubu.htm>.

[15] Ibid.

> The police also came to me asking me how do you feel like being a mother of an unsung hero. I said according to my culture Mbuyisa is not a hero he just did what was natural because we are our brother's keepers, according to our culture. He just saw Hector falling down. It would have been a scandal for nobody to pick Hector Petersen up from the ground. As far as we are concerned he was never a hero for picking up Hector Petersen.[16]

Recounting the many contradictory and maddening versions regarding the whereabouts of her son in exile, Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu deconstructs a heroic myth of nationalist unity and sacrifice by claiming an inclusion of her fragmented narrative of pain and betrayal by the post-apartheid nation: "I really want to know what has happened to Mbuyisa. All of us are going to die but I do want to know *how* my child died and *when* did my child die. And I've come here because this is my last hope, that maybe the Commission could help me find out what happened to my child."[17] McCormick underlines the continuity between the structural violence against women who lost their children to apartheid atrocities and the psychological violence against them in a post-conflict regime which is apathetic to tracing the whereabouts or remains of its lost martyrs. McCormick's text is eloquent with the contrast between the resistance movement which gained international leverage from the image of the death-defying Mbuyisa Makhubu and the painfully disorienting personal struggle of his mother that followed when the high-profile event ultimately forced him to flee South Africa forever in 1977:

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

> The almost mythical proportions of this single photographic image, so often used in representations of the struggle against apartheid, paled both before the enormity of a mother's pain as she tried to make sense of her loss and before the determination with which she argued for a son's rightful search for continuity with his father's past.[18]

McCormick's study injects into the text the mourning voice of Mbuyisa Makhubu's mother and reconstructs the son as the signifier of individual loss and trauma within liberation struggles. The mother's voice in McCormick's archival study of the Soweto unrest attempts to resist defining the demonstrating students as faceless ideologues of the revolution. Rather "I Saw a Nightmare" portrays the state violence against the students not only as racial violence against the black community, but also as brutalizing to the individual psyche of the South African mother.[19] With its analysis of the loaded signifier of the black township of Soweto and the 1976 student uprising in it, "I Saw a Nightmare" also offers an insight into an apartheid era history of forced removals, black resettlement, ghettoization, and segregated education. As such, it provides a powerful historical lens to understand novels like Sindiwe Magona's Mother to Mother which unfolds around the

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[18] See <http://www.gutenberg-e.org/pohlandt-mccormick/PM.c1p1.html>. Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu testified to the existence of a grandson fathered by Mbuyisa Makhubu in exile in Botswana. The child visited her in South Africa every year. It is the claim of this child to his father that McCormick refers to here.

[19] In this regard McCormick's reflections on the post-Soweto role of ANC is especially helpful in understanding how the individual and collective agency of revolutionaries can be appropriated by political parties: ANC "impressed its own meanings and interpretations on these events, quickly declaring the participants heroes, publicly claiming its own hand in the organization of the uprising, while rapidly organizing its own practical and discursive responses. The ANC faced its own set of challenges: Almost immediately after the beginning of the uprising, it would need to organize itself to meet the needs of those young participants in the uprising who were secretly crossing the borders out of South Africa to flee police persecution and who looked to the ANC for help and inspiration." <http://www.gutenberg-e.org/pohlandt-mccormick/PM.c3p1.html>.

murder of the white American student, Amy Biehl, by black youths in the segregated South African township of Guguletu.

Helena Pohlandt McCormick's insistent integration of the forgotten voice of Mbuyisa Makhubu's mother in "I Saw a Nightmare" to question the gender politics of a post-apartheid South African democracy is only part of a pattern that women researchers and writers are demonstrating. This pattern has been discussed more elaborately in a later section. Like McCormick, in Mother to Mother Sindiwe Magona injects the lost voice of Mandisa--the forgotten mother of Mxolisi. Mxolisi is part of the group of revolutionary youths who assassinate Biehl. Like Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu's, the maternal voice of Mandisa articulates the stifled stories about the unique ways in which women in post-apartheid South Africa inherited the violent legacies of apartheid.

However, the history of South Africa's radical protest against apartheid is not only marked by sustained assaults on familial relationships of women, but also by the narratives of the revolution's own violated women. These are the violent stories of female activists of the ANC who were betrayed and tortured by their male peers within the revolution itself. Through the TRC the anti-apartheid nationalism of the ANC strived to construct a new South Africa by silencing the testimonials of pain of these women activists in the interest of a nationalist narrative of revolutionary unity against apartheid. Nonetheless, the resilient voice of the revolutionary woman has come back to haunt the official history of South African national liberation, and has garnered both solidarity and suspicion from other women in the process. In effect, this has re-constituted the ANC master narrative of racial desegregation as a crossover of the multiple narratives of South

African revolution in which the fight for gender justice is interwoven into the claims for racial justice.

In March 1996 Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjes spearheaded a workshop called "Gender and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission" at the University of the Witwatersrand. The workshop led to an in-depth submission to the TRC underscoring the flawed methodology of the gender-neutral truth finding that the TRC was adopting. This resulted in TRC's special women's hearings at Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg.[20] Goldblatt and Meintjes later observed: "Rita Mazibuko is one of the only woman to have spoken about sexual violence at the hands of her own MK (umbrella organization of ANC) comrades in Swaziland and Mozambique where she was accused of being an informer" (Agenda 1997).[21] In Country of My Skull Antjie Krog highlights the silence around sexual atrocities during the reconciliation process:[22] "Although rumors abound about rape, all these mutterings are trapped behind closed doors. Apparently high-profile

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[20] Sheila Meintjes and Beth Goldblatt. "Brief Historical Background." The TRC Related Files South African History Archive University of Witwatersrand <http://www.saha.org.za/collections.htm? collections/AL3119f.htm>.

[21] In the absence of my direct access to this rare document I am citing this from Jo-Anne Prins, "Mediating Difference: Politics of Representation in Antjie Krog's Chronicling of the Women at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Country of My Skull," Discourses of Difference and Oppression Conf. University of Venda, Thohoyandou, South Africa, July 21, 2000 <http://www.geocities.com/culdif /prins.htm>.

[22] In her introduction to Country of My Skull the journalist Antjie Krog who covered the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's hearings for the South African Broadcasting Company and later on published the coverage in her book summarizes: "The commission was organized into three committees: Human Rights Violations, Reparations and Rehabilitation and Amnesty. All told, commissioners took more than 20, 000 statements from survivors and families of political violence. They held more than fifty public hearings, all around the country, over 244 days. The Amnesty Committee, by law independent of the others [. . .], received approximately 7,050 amnesty applications—fully 77 percent of them from prisoners. All three committees were plagued by a huge workload and inadequate resources. And even Archbishop Tutu's most eloquent pleas could not persuade whites to come forward to testify in significant numbers. Near the end of the process, one poll suggested that the Truth Commission had done more to hurt race relations than to promote reconciliation. Indeed, the commission itself had to confront internal allegations of racism." See Antjie Krog, Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow, and the Limits of Forgiveness in the New South Africa (New York & Toronto: Times Books, 1998) xi.

women, among them Cabinet ministers, parliamentarians, and businesswomen, were raped and sexually abused under the previous dispensation—and not only by the regime, but by their own comrades in the townships and the liberation camps" (239). Krog recounts Rita Mazibuko's testimony before the TRC about her prolong and gruesome sexual torture at the hands of her own ANC comrades. Mazibuko, after undergoing military training in Angola and Mozambique, was stationed in Swaziland. She was responsible for working out routes for cadres to move in and out of South Africa. When nine cadres were shot, she became the target of ANC's suspicion. The arbitrary nature of revolutionary justice is underlined through the irony implicit in Krog's statement: "The fact that she [Mazibuko] had R35,000 (about $5,800) in her bank account was proof enough for the ANC that she worked for the apartheid regime" (240). Nevertheless, the difficulty of representing sexual brutality, especially those afflicted by one's own comrades is most eloquently and ironically brought to life through the comments of Antjie Krog herself. She cites Sheila Meintjes who argues that the hypothesis behind the sexual torture of men is that it will facilitate passivity and demolish political power, "while the torture of women is the activation of sexuality" (240). In the same breath as she cites Meintjes, Krog questions the integrity of Rita Mazibuko's testimony of sexual atrocities: "It is a strange testimony. Is this woman with the good-natured face, who speaks of rape as if it is water, who emphasizes the youth of her rapists, nothing more than a prostitute?" Krog's cynicism about Mazibuko resounds as she wonders: "And is her sexual history perhaps the reason why Phosa [ANC Executive Committee member] says afterward that he has never heard of Rita Mazibuko or "Mumsy Khuswayo"—her code name in the ANC?" (242). As if in support of her unease with Mazibuko's

testimony, Krog summarizes the TRC's response to Mazibuko's story: "The Truth Commission does not utter a single word in Mazibuko's defense. Not one of the commissioners, not one of the feminists agitating for women's rights, stands up and says: 'We respect the right of Rita Mazibuko to tell the truth as she sees it, just as we respect the right of Mathews Phosa to tell the truth as he sees it. But we expect him to do the same' " (242). Responding to the distinction between manly honor and feminine wiles that Krog's discourse clearly encodes, in her conference paper Jo-Anne Prins has scathingly declared: "Krog seems to fall into the patriarchal discourse of rape in response to Rita's testimony."[23]

That the TRC denied the existence of gender-apartheid within liberation movements through its silence over the sole testimony of Rita Mazibuko underscores that though post-apartheid South Africa has made a concerted though controversial effort to foster racial amity, when it came to a contest between race and gender justice, as with Mazibuko, the TRC tilted in favor of racial unity in the new nation at the cost of acknowledging past violations of ANC women by the liberation struggle itself. The suspect voice of Rita Mazibuko before the TRC portrayed in Antjie Krog's Country of My Skull provides a historical backdrop to Zoe Wicomb's David's Story. Wicomb's text is a literary enactment of how the voice of the brutalized female revolutionary, suppressed by the revolution itself, fractures the monolithic narrative of anti-apartheid militancy. It is a comment on the refracted nature of South African national reconstruction that ironically establishes racial unity by reinforcing the social and epistemological structures of apartheid with respect to women.

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[23] See Ftnote 16.

III. Scaffold for Textual Analysis: Women, Anti-Apartheidism, and Post-Resistance Novels

Post-resistance novels like Mother to Mother and David's Story are studies in the complexity of relationship among the past, present, and future in South Africa—in how the violent history of the apartheid era structures the lives of South African women in the post-liberation period. As such, they formulate a strong critique of the TRC through which the post-apartheid state claims to have come to terms with its violent past through forgiveness and to have moved toward national unity through reconciliation.

Understanding how the structural legacies of apartheid injustice inherited by the post-conflict state defined the discursive violence against women in the South African racial reconciliation process is vital to a study of the position of women in national liberation militancy. In "A Gender Perspective on Violence during the Struggle against Apartheid" Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjes underscore how "[t]he sexual dimensions of power relations" blatantly expressed in the state sanctioned torture of female dissenters under The Terrorism Act of 1967,[24] "also found expression within political movements. Men from all quarters found it difficult to accept women's growing prominence in political movements." The authors cite the example of Thenjiwe Mtintso who "had difficulty as a woman in maintaining discipline among her comrades. [. . .] Men found it

[24] The Terrorism Act No 83 of 1967 allowed the indefinite detention of an individual by a policeman of rank lieutenant-colonel or greater since "the act allowed detention until all questions were satisfactorily answered or until no further useful purpose would be achieved by keeping the person in detention. Only a magistrate could visit the detained once every two weeks, and no one else besides the police and security services was allowed access. Moreover, "[u]nlike the previous 90-day (General Law Amendment Act No 37 of 1963) and 180-day (Criminal Procedure Amendment Act No 96 of 1965) detention laws the public was not entitled to information about people held, including their identity – this meant that people could effectively 'disappear' for official legal reasons." See Alistair Boddy-Evans, "Apartheid Era Laws: Terrorism Act No 83 of 1967", About: African History, Our Story, 2007, The New York Times Company, 16 February, 2007 <http://africanhistory.about.com/cs/apartheidlaws/g/No83of67.htm>.

difficult to take orders from a woman, and attempted to undermine her authority by using sexual innuendoes" (231-2). This gendered dimension of power relations within liberation movements is poignantly portrayed in the depiction of the glass ceiling for women activists and through the brutalization of the body of the female revolutionary in Zoe Wicomb's David's Story. However, unlike Mtintso who attributes her sexual harassment "to the cultural norms of South African society" (232), my analysis refrains from a monolithic understanding of South African cultural norms and endeavors to frame the gendered power structures in militancy within a socioeconomic parameter—a discourse that can be glossed as African Subaltern Studies. Such a theoretical frame draws upon the criticism engendered around post-conflict national unity through truth and reconciliation processes in various African countries like Nigeria, Uganda, Senegal, South Africa, and Rwanda, locating gendered oppression in a continuum with the structural inequalities established through racial tyranny.[25]

In the context of South Africa one of the most scathing critiques about the selective silencing of apartheid violence by the post-conflict nation-state has come from Mahmood Mamdani in his critical essays "Amnesty or Impunity? A Preliminary Critique of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (TRC)" and "The Truth According to the TRC." In the former essay Mamdani's analysis of what he calls the "racialized/ethnicized legal structure" of apartheid South Africa offers a critical scaffold to comprehend the intra-racial violence against women revolutionaries within the ranks of the anti-apartheid militancy itself, which has been largely unrecognized by the truth and reconciliation process. Mamdani underlines how according to the Natal Code of

[25] See Ifi Amadiume & Abdullahi An-Na'im, "Introduction: Facing Truth, Voicing Justice," The Politics of Memory: Truth, Healing, and Social Justice, eds. Ifi Amadiume & Abdullahi An-Na'im (London & New York: Zed Books, 2000) 1.

Native Law (1891) the officer governing the British colony of Natal was recognized as the Supreme Chief. The authors asserts: "In addition to providing the legal basis for absolute authority over natives, the 1891 law also laid out the legal basis for patriarchal control over all minors and women in each kraal" (52). According to the law, all inmates of the kraal, except married males or widowers, or adult males who were not relatives of the kraal head, were minors. As such, women had no property rights. The head of the kraal was the absolute owner of all the property of his kraal, and could inflict corporeal punishment upon the kraal's inmates for any just reason. The unification of the country in 1910 meant that the united English and Afrikaans population of white South Africa would be ruled by democracy while the natives would be ruled by decree.

> The rule of apartheid was bifurcated: the law simultaneously racialized and ethnicized the population. *Races* were defined as those not native, not indigenous; whether they were accorded full civil rights (whites) or only residual rights (Coloreds, Indians), races were governed through civil law. In contrast, *tribes* were defined as those indigenous, those native to the land; set apart ethnically, each tribe was ruled through its own patriarchal authority claiming to enforce its version of colonially sanctioned patriarchy as "customary law" (53).

This colonial administrative structure of native law-enforcing authority and its ethnic subjects set the stage for the intraracial violence during the apartheid era. Contextualizing Zoe Wicomb's David's Story against Mamdani's argument, the intra-racial violence on black women militants by their male comrades can be justifiably perceived in terms of the structural violence against women unleashed by apartheid. The foundation of such an apartheid project is built on colonialism which strengthened the existent patriarchy by

reinforcing native customary laws. This adequately contests any notions of gender related violence on women as symptoms of an essentialist South African culture.

Mahmood Mamdani's "The Truth According to the TRC" as well as Beth Goldblatt's and Sheila Meintjes's "A Gender Perspective on Violence during the Struggle against Apartheid" also provide a critical understanding of how the structures of apartheid not only resulted in agential violence against women but also systemic and structural violence against women. Agential violence against women, depicted in David's Story, was recognized by the TRC, while much of the structural violence of which women became the indirect but primary victims was not recognized by the TRC as apartheid brutality. Sindiwe Magona's Mother to Mother offers a poignant exploration of apartheid's indirect violence against black women at the same time as it acknowledges how such systemic and race-marked violence against black South Africans resulted in retaliatory atrocities on white women. Mamdani's as well as Goldblatt's and Meintjes's critical essays thus provide crucial theoretical parameters for understanding apartheid tyranny against women in South Africa.

In "The Truth According to the TRC" Mahmood Mamdani criticizes the "highly individualized notion of truth and responsibility" (182) which led to a political compromise between state agents, largely defined as perpetrators, and political activists who formed only a small minority of victims. Mamdani underlines that without locating "agency within the workings of a system" (180), "[t]he TRC defined over 20,000 South Africans as the 'victims' of apartheid, leaving the vast majority in the proverbial cold" (178). This is what the author calls institutionally produced truth by the TRC "whose search was so committed to reinforcing the new power" of the ANC (177). Institutionally

produced truth linked truth to power while individually produced truth opposed truth to power. According to Mamdani:

> An understanding of gross violations that would have included the violence done to the 3.5 million victims of forced removals, and an understanding of context that would have highlighted the colonial violence leading to the dispossession of land and the militarization of labour, would have produced a different kind of truth. It would have illuminated apartheid as a reality lived by the majority, a reality that produced racialized poverty alongside racialized truth, both equally undeserved. It would have redefined our understanding of the victim of apartheid. (180)

In his article "Amnesty or Impunity?" Mamdani contests the distinction between bodily integrity rights and subsistence rights which the TRC made, validating only the claim of the former to enter the discourse of the TRC. This distinction between the political and the economic—the direct oppression by the state and the structural inequalities created by the market, Mamdani argues, falls apart when faced with injustices like coerced labor and forced removal where "political power directly intervened in the sphere of economic relations." He asserts: "They could not be dismissed as structural outcomes lacking in agency and therefore not signifying a *violation*" (39).

In "A Gender Perspective on Violence during the Struggle against Apartheid" Goldblatt and Meintjes emphasize how women especially reconfigured the concept of the apartheid victim. The authors acknowledge the direct violence on women by the agents of the state and the revolution, but also highlight how the home itself was politicized as women became indirect objects of violence through the loss and abduction of their family members. In fact, the Detainees Parents Support Committee (DPSC) was one of the

forums which drew women out into the political struggle. Sindiwe Magona's Mother to Mother is such a narrative about the systemic violence on women's relationship with their children as the latter are brutalized and hardened by the structures of the apartheid state. Goldblatt's and Meintjes's interview of Lydia Kompe, a former trade unionist and campaigner of rural women's rights who went on to become a member of the Parliament in the post-apartheid era, succinctly defines the problematics around the understanding of apartheid violence against women. The influx control of the urban population by the apartheid government severely restricted rural women from joining their husbands who worked in the urban areas. Kompe asks: "Can one actually say it's violence... It's not as serious as my husband being killed in jail. [. . .] So that's what I always say to myself, what is this violence? How can one express it to somebody who can actually feel sympathetic? [. . .] And this was where it actually crippled me in my mind" (236). In this context Goldblatt and Meintjes underscore the significance of the Promotion of Truth and Reconciliation Act which recognizes relatives or dependents of victims as direct victims of human rights violations. However, the nebulous nature of violence that Kompe underscores hinders the acknowledgement of structural violations that women experienced under apartheid rule and leaves the maternal voice in Mother to Mother groping for the only sympathetic response it can expect in a landscape where truth about violence is racialized and gendered—from another bereaved mother.

Texts like Mother to Mother and David's Story are about specific spaces of otherized violence—on women--which rupture the generalizations of the doctrinal narrative of apartheid violence in South Africa, and as such the ideological directives

aimed at post-apartheid South African cultural productions.[26] In their introduction to Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995 Rosemary Jolly and Derek Attridge point out: "It was as early as the 1920s that Peter Abrahams, staunch Communist and anti-apartheid writer, refused to accept the Party's demands that he submit his work to be vetted; and as recently as 1993 that André Brink expressed his misgivings over the bureaucratic 'management of culture' by the ANC's Department of Arts and Culture" (7). The push is toward resisting the totalitarian control of intellectual productions in the name of the political exigency of revolutionary justice so that the master narrative of the revolution does not erase the smaller narratives of violence against women that slice through essentialist notions of identity—of victims and perpetrators. In the context of post-apartheid South Africa fictional literature like Mother to Mother and David's Story, through their imaginative rendering of repressed stories of revolutionary injustice against women, reflect how ethical priorities for artists and intellectuals change in response to power shifts in politics.[27] Such meta-narratives are reminiscent of the apartheid era when "whole territories of historical consciousness [were] silenced by the power establishment and invaded by the dominant discourse in order to make them

[26] "South Africa has passed through a period that has for obvious reasons produced a large body of what one might call judgmental texts, both critical and creative; texts that assume an ethical sufficiency to exist in the condemnation of apartheid and its agents. For this reason, the current South African situation forms a productive arena for the exploration of the uses and limitations of, as well as alternatives to, judgmental writing. For one can grant a historical strategic importance to judgmental writing in the struggle against apartheid without denying the fact that it has produced a paucity of options for creative responses to post-apartheid freedoms and their attendant challenges" (7). See Rosemary Jolly and Derek Attridge, "Introduction," Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[27] See Jolly and Attridge, 1. Such a call for artistic and cultural visions with "its capacity to expose contradictions and reveal hidden tensions" had also come from Albie Sachs from within the ANC. See Albie Sachs, "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom," Writing South Africa, 240.

inaccessible to other voices" (Brink 15). Thus, fictional literature becomes a site of historical praxis.[28]

IV. Violent Nationalization: United in Revolutionary Silence?

In her extensive study of the correlation between the South African nationalist struggle and the women's struggle in Women's Organizations and Democracy in South Africa: Contesting Authority, Shireen Hassim observes: "As a discursive framework, nationalism had an authoritative status akin to a master narrative, and within it there were distinct and politically upheld boundaries to women's agency" (34). These boundaries typically defined by the overwhelming male leadership in the anti-apartheid nationalism thus limited women's political agency within the parameters of the national struggle. On the other hand, literary productions like Mother to Mother and David's Story foreground how the counter-discourse of truth and reconciliation, aiming to rectify the discourse of apartheid, blocks out other narratives counter to itself. In the process these texts challenge the TRC's language of clemency, reconciliation, and national unity around which it attempted to construct a post-apartheid non-racial democracy based on Archbishop Desmond Tutu's highly contested theology of forgiveness. In his book No Future Without Forgiveness Tutu justifies such a theology of national reconciliation, arguing that the TRC's approach to enabling a nation-wide closure on violence during the apartheid era through post-conflict amnesty was founded upon the spirit of *ubuntu*—"restorative justice, which was characteristic of traditional African jurisprudence." In *ubuntu* "the central concern is not retribution or punishment." It is "the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken relationships, a seeking

[28] See André Brink, Writing South Africa, 18.

to rehabilitate both the victim and the perpetrator, who should be given the opportunity to be reintegrated into the community he has injured by his offence" (55). By setting up apartheid violence as an exchange between monolithic categories of perpetrators and victims in No Future Without Forgiveness, ironically dedicated "To the women and the 'little people' of South Africa", Tutu derecognizes the entire repertoire of structural violence in apartheid South Africa which affected women brutally in ways distinct from men. On the other hand, South African women's fiction like Mother to Mother and David's Story form "a literary archive documenting the indivisibility of social and economic rights from the civil and political rights that international human rights NGOs spend most of their time addressing."[29] It is only by acknowledging the "deep structural connection" between colonial and apartheid exploitation and their "attendant civil and political brutalities" that affected both men and women in South Africa that restorative justice for South African women violated in distinctively gendered ways can even be imagined.

Masculinist Nationalism: In my exploration of Mother to Mother and David's Story masculinist nationalism connotes not only defensive onslaughts but also the homoerotic nationalist bonding among collectives of racially subjugated men who empower themselves by unleashing brutal violence on defenseless women from across the racial spectrum. Mother to Mother which pivots around South Africa's transition from apartheid into non-racialism is a profoundly moving study in the gendered ethics of nationalism—more specifically in the "hysteria of masculism", to borrow Gayatri Spivak's phrase from A Critique of Postcolonial Reason (134). A near portmanteau term, compounded from masculine and muscular, "masculism" asserts the rights of men in an

[29] See Goldberg <http://acla2007.complit. ucla.edu/restricted/papers>.

already unequally empowered world--fractured along gendered lines of privilege. The celebration of men's privileges in such an unequal world further intensifies the imbalance of power to almost Dionysian levels of social disproportion, clinchingly signified by Spivak as the hysteria of masculism. The episode of Amy Biehl's murder in Sindiwe Magona's Mother to Mother captures this orgiastic nationalism of South Africa's sons as, in a plethora of knife stabs, they inscribe and consolidate black youth power on the white female body of Amy Biehl. As the jubilant crowd of youngsters approach Amy Biehl's car, Magona registers their "wild and thunderous, chanting and screaming, fists stabbing air. Fists raised towards the blue, unsmiling heavens" (19). The vertical appeal to the skies is not in the shape of a prayer, but in the form of fist stabbing assaults against the very injustice of the "heavens." As the mythopoeic heavens of a politically transient South Africa loom unsmiling on the reiteration of imminent racial injustice against a powerless white woman, revolutionary zeal gets encoded not as just but as "wild"—the force of its injustice "thunderous" as it chants and screams in orgasmic violence. Magona's muted rendering of the act of murder effectively encapsulates the unutterable latency of such collective phallic behavior. As the author traces the reaction of Mandisa, Mxolisi's mother, while she learns about the event from her neighbor, Skonana, the novel creates a literary world in which imagination trembles on the threshold of excruciating agony, hesitant to envision the magnitude of obscenity in this bacchanalian revelry of violence. In this world all that the mother of an assassin can do is pray so that unspeakable acts of vehemence are rendered a little benign. Mandisa pleads to divine benevolence: "How could a person die from the car she's in being stoned? Terrible visions of necklacing flared before my eyes. Oh no! No! Not that! Dear God! Not that!"[30]

[30] Necklacing was a common act of violence in South Africa where a person was garlanded with a tire

The brutal force of the mob violence against a lone defenseless woman is arrested tellingly through the contrasting gentleness with which Skonana narrates Mxolisi's "sin" to his mother: "Knife," she said quietly. Her right fist, thumb up, plunged into the cupped palm of the left hand, making a noise softer than that produced by two hands clapping against each other. Softer and duller than a smack or fist hitting hand. Harder, though. A *thunk*, lacking sharpness but heavy as hell. 'They stabbed her' " (46-7). In the final confessional scene of Mxolisi's repentance before his mother the herd psyche of masculinist nationalism is in full display as the young revolutionary asserts: "Mama, believe me, I was just one of a hundred people who threw stones at her car." Mxolisi was one of the " 'many people [who] stabbed her.' " The mother's agony at her son's participatory role in this collective black masculine rite of passage is shrill: "Were you one of them? One of the many people who stabbed the girl? How I prayed, even as I asked the question, how I prayed that the answer would be an unequivocal NO [. . .] Not the knife. He had not plunged a knife into her body. Not even one of many, many knives" (195). The bacchanalian orgy of violence attains a narrative closure in another orgasmic sweep of emotions as the son unable to satiate the mother's inordinate entreaties for his confession of innocence in the act of murder breaks down in his mother's arms to "cry himself on and on till the sobs became dry gasps as of one fighting for air" (196).

Tracing other narratives of masculinist nationalism enunciated through the violence marking the bodies of helpless white women, the mother's narrative places Biehl's assassination on a continuum with other racialized and gendered acts of mayhem

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which was set aflame.

and massacre. Recalling the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960,[31] Mandisa testifies to the "little difference it made to black people that some whites were sympathetic to their cause." She recounts how three young nurses from Belgium, hearing about the state sponsored Sharpeville Massacre, came to South Africa. "[T]hinking the presence of outsiders might act as a deterrent, they came to bear witness," only to be beaten by a group of South African men "bearing sticks and God only knows what else." The pathos of such undeserved suffering flows into the texture of Biehl's undeserved fate as the pain of the narrative voice resonates with that of the suffering women: "Three, defenceless, unarmed women. Beaten by a troop of men. One suffered a broken jaw. Another, several deep cuts at the back of her head. The third, a sprinter, twisted her ankle. As soon as those poor women were discharged from hospital, they left the country. Back to Belgium" (70). As a schoolgirl Mandisa had sung: "Oh, what abominable misfortune—in East London/They burnt a nun—in East London." In retrospect she traces the celebratory violence underlying such songs: "we sang the song of the nun who was killed by black people, Africans, in far-away East London. Sang the song when not one of the teachers had taken the trouble of explaining to us that the people of East London should not have

[31] The Sharpeville Massacre signifies the beginning of armed resistance in South Africa. It prompted worldwide recognition and condemnation of South Africa's apartheid policies. On March 21, 1960 sixty-nine people were killed when South African police opened fire on approximately three-hundred demonstrators. Unofficial statistics of the injured goes up as high as three hundred. They were protesting against the pass laws at the township of Sharpeville. See Alistair Boddy-Evans, "Sharpeville Massacre: The Origin of South Africa's Human Rights Day", About: African History, Our Story, 2006, The New York Times Company, 28 February, 2007 < http://africanhistory.about.com/library/weekly/aa-SharpevilleMassacre-a.htm>. Commonly known as the Pass Laws, the Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, Act No 67 of 1952 required black people to carry identification papers with them at all times. A pass included a photograph, details of place of origin, employment record, tax payments, and encounters with the police. Not being able to produce a pass when required to do so by the police was a criminal offence. Black people could not leave a rural area for an urban one without a permit from the local authorities. On arriving in an urban area one had to obtain a permit to seek work within seventy-two hours. See Alistair Boddy-Evans, "Apartheid Legislation in South Africa", About: African History, Our Story, 2006, The New York Times Company, 28 February, 2007 < http://africanhistory.about.com/library/bl/blsalaws.htm>.

done that" (74). Thus, Mandisa's argument is not merely against violence toward her own community; it is against perpetuating the cyclical pattern of violence.

Relocating these narratives of youth violence on white women in Mother to Mother against the 1976 student uprising in Soweto, in an interview with David Atwell and Barbara Harlow, Sindiwe Magona emphasizes how the violent legacy of apartheid dehumanized South African youth, resulting in retaliatory violence on women. Magona's stand is critical of the ideological underpinnings of the Soweto revolution: "there must have been people who didn't want to do this. This for me is 1976. [. . .] [T]here was this movement, this feeling that to advance we had to retreat." Magona traces the continuum between the student protest in Soweto and the mob violence that Amy Biehl encounters in the black township of Guguletu. She questions the anti-apartheid struggle's *exploitation* of youth power during the Soweto revolution and the cycle of violence that was perpetuated by such an ideology of revolution:

> every child should just abandon their education. [. . .] And when they stop going to school, nobody's teaching them anywhere else? There are no alternative arrangements until the end of the year, and then they don't sit for exams? And subsequently, the young people who were now not in school began to look to the killing of people, and the necklacing, and the burning of people's houses if they were suspected of being collaborators. (289)

Magona's is the perspective of a parent with foresight into her children's future. In her interview she elaborates on how in the last public meeting that she attended at the Anglican Church in South Africa before leaving the country she had asked if children were allowed to sink to the level of burning people's houses how would parents recall

them back one day. Magona adds: "And I was dismissed, of course, because that was not the revolutionary statement that was needed for this occasion" (290). She calls these children "the lost generation"—children "who have no qualms in killing; young people who have learned to get their way by force" (290). She is talking about a whole generation lost to violence—as victims of violence as well as its agents. In a clinching and daring analysis that fractures the monolithic anti-apartheid ideology of revolutionary unity, Magona highlights how the coalition between parents and the revolution went a long way in depleting the human resources of a whole generation of South Africans: "We were there when the generation was getting lost, and we didn't stop it. To allow children, to let our children sacrifice so much, who is going to ever give them that back? Can I give children who never went to school for ten years--can I give them those ten years back?" (290). Magona's words resound the TRC testimony of Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu in which she pleaded for help from the post-conflict state in her search for her son--Mbuyisa Makhubu, the lost hero of the Soweto revolution. Magona continues asking hard questions: "Do you hear the government or anybody else saying, 'O.K., let's talk now, let's go back. Anybody between the ages of this and this, go back to school for free'? The country hardly has resources to cope with the current crop of young people who should be in school. Never mind that loss" (289). Magona's argument is of critical significance in the discourse of a new South Africa.

As Meg Samuelson puts it, Magona's "is a voice perhaps only made possible by the demise of apartheid" (232). The rigidly defined boundaries around racial identities during the apartheid era which also made possible an essentialist black political space from which to launch offensives against the apartheid state is contested in the new South

African writing. Thus, in Mother to Mother the narrative voice of Mandisa condemns the masculinist nationalism of the mob of black youth in killing a white woman in the name of retributive racial justice for black South Africans. Samuelson's essay discusses the tension in Mandisa's narrative voice which refuses to be united in revolutionary silence with black men when faced with their masculinist violence on other women and at the same time upholds a systemic understanding of violence on South African youth and their dehumanization. Examining the different ways in which the narrative voice explores the mob violence against Amy Biehl, Samuelson goes on to point out how through a range of disturbing imagistic comparisons between the crowd that attacked Biehl--ants, millipede, forest, and pig intestines--the novel captures the anxiety of the narrator over the collective identity of the black community. Moreover, on the morning of the killing, the group "swallows" Mandisa's son, Mxolisi, who is "lost" in the crowd.[32] When the crowd splits into two, Mandisa's analogy for the mob is drawn from protozoan life marked as simplistic in biological functional logic—unicellular and undifferentiated, and hence headless: "[t]o facilitate mobility the amoeba divided itself" (15).

However, it is critical to ask if Magona's critique of black nationalism is only possible because Biehl was a white American rather than a white South African.[33]

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[32] See Meg Samuelson, "Reading the Maternal Voice in Sindiwe Magona's To My Children's Children and Mother to Mother," Modern Fiction Studies, 46.1 (2000): 230.

[33] "I suggest, though, that Magona's attraction to this particular event has more to do with her location and the spaces which living in America, as opposed to South Africa, has opened up for her. We can conclude that the figure of the white American mother instead of the white South African mother makes significant differences in the claims that I have been making for this text as a herald of the mythical "New South Africa" [The Rainbow Nation]. The address to the white American mother does not necessarily imply the dissolution of differences we have seen operating among South African women. Once again a fictional device, this time of distancing, is used to resolve contradictions embedded in the text--here between a wish to cross barriers and a lingering reluctance to make affiliations with white South African women." See Samuelson Modern Fiction Studies 46.1(2000): 234.

Samuelson has argued that the narrator is caught between communal affiliations and gender coalitions with women across racial barriers. Extending her contention, I argue that despite this dilemma of the narrative voice, women of Mandisa's generation is also witness to the political passion of white South African women like Ruth First for the rights of South African blacks. Biehl's activism reiterates this passion of those women who fought across racial divides for justice in South Africa.[34] In her prison memoir 117 Days which she composed during her incarceration under the Ninety-Day Detention Act as a suspected ally of the accused in the Rivonia Trial,[35] Ruth First (a child of Jewish American immigrants) ponders the unique social location of white South Africans activists protesting against the apartheid. She says that though their consciences were

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[34] In this context I would like to mention that Sindiwe Magona's use of the trope of the mother demarcates itself distinctly from the biologically determined gender discourse of national liberation which strategically deploys this as a central trope to encourage women to bear the next generation of soldiers. Rather it is the motherism trope of South African indigenous feminism which "was shaped by the twin but not always compatible needs to address the interplay of gender, race, and class identities, on the one hand , a moral imperative to base women's organizations on the idea of nonracialism—that is, on the notion of some commonality of women's interests that extended beyond apartheid-defined identities. The link between these goals was provided by the ideology of motherhood and the political language of 'motherism': a celebration of women as mothers, a link between women's familial responsibilities and their political work, and an emphasis on this aspect of women's roles as cutting across class and race barriers" (76). See Shireen Hassim, "Voices, Hierarchies and Spaces: Reconfiguring the Women's Movement in Democratic South Africa," Politikon, 32.2 (November 2005). The cross-racial bond between Mandisa and Linda Biehl is a bond forged by the fears and worries of women whose children could fall prey to the brutal system anytime. Hassim goes on to add: "This politicization of traditional roles was part of a revolutionary nationalism in which woman, mother, and nation were part of a continuous discourse. Several campaigns that included different races of women, such as protests against troops in the townships and against detention of activists, were conducted under the banner of motherism" (76-7). See Hassim.

[35] In 1963 under the Ninety-Day Detention Act Ruth First was detained in solitary confinement without warrant of arrest, charge, or trial. Due to her immediate re-arrest after the ninety-day period, her imprisonment lasted for one-hundred and seventeen days. Rivonia was the farm that was initially used for the meetings of Umkhonto weSizwe (MK), the ANC's armed wing. Ruth First's husband, Joe Slovo, was a founder member of this group. See The Closest of Strangers 201. Also see ftnote 18. Ten ANC leaders, one of whom was Nelson Mandela, were tried in the Rivonia Trial and charged as "collectively responsible for two hundred twenty-two acts of sabotage" (310). Mandela states: "We were charged with sabotage and conspiracy rather than high treason because the law does not require a long preparatory examination (which is highly useful to the defense) for sabotage and conspiracy as it does for treason. Yet the supreme penalty—death by hanging—is the same. With high treason, the state must prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt and needs two witnesses to testify to each charge. Under the Sabotage Law, the onus was on the defense to prove the accused innocent" (308). See Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1994).

clear in a guilt-ridden society, yet with the intensification of the struggle this group came to lead a "more and more schizophrenic existence." With "complete absorption in revolutionary politics and defiance of all the values of [. . .] [their] own racial group", "the privileges of membership in the white group were overwhelmed by the penalties of political participation" (122). In my analysis of the critique of black masculinist nationalism violently etching the bodies of white women that Mother to Mother embarks upon, I argue that it is not merely Biehl's identity as an American that unleashes the vehement censure of her killing by the narrative voice of Mother to Mother. It is also the fact that South Africa has witnessed the involvement of prominent and dedicated figures like Ruth First in anti-apartheid activism that makes such a critique of essentialist politics possible. The silenced voices of South African women which rupture the continuity of the nationalist myth also recapture the violence of black nationalism on black revolutionary women. In an interview with Hein Willemse, Zoe Wicomb outlines the problematic nature of nationalism that she sets out to expose in all its complexity in David's Story: "One of the things I am critical of in the novel is the value of military value. Again, how would this have happened without these so-called nasty people who are prepared to take up arms and are prepared to kill" (151). Advocating Spivak's notion of "strategic nationalism", Wicomb underlines the absolute need for a South African nationalism to overthrow the old system of apartheid. However, in a clinching summation of her literary project in David's Story she asserts: "I'm simply interested to know what happens to that nationalism once it's not needed strategically" (151). In other words, Wicomb questions the post-apartheid nationalism that proclaims enfranchisement for all and denies the counter-narratives to South African unity that articulates the dispossession of certain

people within the post-apartheid nation. Though David's story is also the story of Dulcie—the female ANC revolutionary, Dulcie cannot be fully articulated in the text just as her aberrant story cannot be accommodated at the TRC hearings for it goes outside the scope of the Commission's prescriptive model of victims and perpetrators. Dulcie's story would claim the recognition of faultlines along which power distributes itself between men and women within the anti-apartheid revolution itself.

It is this unrepresentability of the discourse of truth and trauma, especially with respect to sexual brutality inflicted on revolutionary ANC women in a display of gender power, which is portrayed in David's Story in the torture of Dulcie. The depiction of this episode resists a clear narrative about whether Dulcie was tortured by her male peers within the ANC or by the regime. This becomes a deliberate ploy to capture the anomalous treatment that the TRC reserved for the female victims of sexual violence. As Dulcie's attackers undress her and wave the electrodes, one of them says: "Not rape, that will teach her nothing, leave nothing; rape's too good for her kind" (178). This underlines the asexualization of the female militant by the revolution that the text repeatedly highlights though we can never know for sure if Dulcie's attackers are ANC guerrillas. However, that the revolutionary patriarchy did not hesitate to use the sexuality of female militants as a weapon against them is evident when Dulcie is described as a woman "who has turned her muscles into ropes of steel," and "who even as an eager girl in the bush wars resisted the advances of those in power, resisted her own comrades, having worked out that fucking women was a way of preventing them from rising in the Movement" (179).

Phallic nationalism marked by gender violence against women is depicted in David's Story as a crucial marker of brutal hierarchy within the liberation movement. Training the female militant to accept gender hierarchy becomes an integral part in revolutionary training, as is vividly portrayed in the guerrilla education of David's wife—Sally. Though she enjoys the water, she performs poorly in her swimming class at the training camp in Mozambique, "unable to confess her terror" as "the comrade with his hand under her belly barked his instructions" (123). As the contingent walks back across the sand he says:

> A fuck, that's what you need, and she saw his bulging shorts and knew that her time had come, as she had known it would come sooner or later, this unspoken part of a girl's training. [. . .] [S]ince she had long forgotten the fantasy of the virginal white veil, it did not matter, she told herself, no point in being fastidious, there were more important things to think of, there was freedom on which to fix her thoughts. (123)

Fixing thoughts on national "freedom" erases the blatant and violent power divide between men and women in the revolution. Denying the humiliation and pain of betrayal within the movement itself as her own fastidiousness about sexual propriety, Sally excuses the heroes of the revolution as untarnished because of their devotion to the greater cause of a democratic nationhood. Thus, violent and unattached passions get unofficially licensed by the revolution.

This "unspoken part of a girl's training" in liberation struggle in southern Africa was also portrayed in the controversial film Flame, directed by Ingrid Sinclair. The context is the civil war in Zimbabwe between 1972 and 1980. The untold stories of

women combatants who fought with men in comradeship are also stories of women who were violated by their comrades. In Sinclair's film, Florence, renamed Flame by the revolution—the beautiful and dynamic militant who leaves home for the liberation war to join the charismatic leader Danger--is raped by another comrade Che. The outcome of this is a son who is not claimed by the father. In another particularly touching scene in the film, we see the women's contingent starving since they are the reserve force, and in the face of food shortage, meals were being distributed only to the active force of men. The extent of physiological disruption of the starving women in the camps comes through to us in the words of a woman who says that even her menstrual cycles have stopped in the face of acute hunger. In such conditions of scarcity, sexual favors to leaders become decisive in obtaining food for women. Thus, in both Ingrid Sinclair's film and Zoe Wicomb's novel the alliance of diverse agents of tyranny against women is a crucial narrative vector that defines the relationship between women and nationalism.

Womanist Nationalism: In my reading of the two texts, womanist or uterine nationalism stands for the critical nationalism of South African women. These texts restore the figure of the black woman from the discursive terrain of nationalism and examine the stakes for women in patriarchal strategies of nation-building. The critical nationalism of black women, however, never fails to contextualize women's stakes in revolutionary nationalism against the legacy of colonialism and apartheid.

In depicting the relationship in which African and European men stand with respect to the reproductive bodies of South African women like Sally and her Khoi Khoi ancestor--Saartje Baartman, David's Story offers a penetrating insight into the meeting of both black nationalism and European imperialism over the body of the black female. The

uterine nationalism of South African women lies in re-appropriating their own reproductive bodies from the discourses of nationalism and imperialism. The patriarchal alliance between anti-apartheid nationalism and European imperialism is highlighted by Wicomb as she draws out the affinities between her revolutionary hero—David—and the eighteenth century French scientist--Georges Cuvier—whose racialization of the natural sciences led to one of the most dehumanizing of scientific spectacles known in history. Saartje Baartman—a Khoi Khoi woman, later known as the "Hottentot Venus" became an icon of racial inferiority and savage female sexuality as Cuvier's imperialist scientific research of black female anatomy brutally rendered her into an object for the European gaze:

> For it was not only the spectacular steatopygia [generous buttocks] that she strutted in her cage for all of England and France to giggle at—no, the entire world, thanks to Cuvier, could peer in private at those parts of which no decent person would speak, let alone make drawings. [. . .] It was the shame in print, in perpetuity, the thought of a reader turning to that page, that refreshed David's outrage. (33).

Enraged by the thought of another reader's objectification of the black female anatomy, David nonetheless becomes the voyeur himself. Among six books in his hotel room David chooses Curiosities of Natural History and turns to the reference to Cuvier. David finds "his interest deflected from outrage on Baartman's behalf to fascination with Cuvier's mind, with the intellectual life that he imagined for the anatomist. [. . .] That Cuvier rejecting the obviousness of form, should have invented a system based on features hidden from view appealed to the guerrilla" (32). Thus in spite of the racial

animosity, David makes connections between Cuvier's racialized system of classification of organisms and the tactics of a guerrilla war that contest racial hierarchy. What serves as a barrier between David and Cuvier is not an empathy with the personal story of a suffering woman, alienated from her people, and displayed naked in a cage before the eyes of the world, but a South African man's outrage at Europe revealing the secrets of the black female body. In the process, the body of the Hottentot Venus becomes a terrain of racial struggle between David and Cuvier, as the psychological pain of the woman who dies is lost and she becomes merely the sign of European colonial victory over the black man. Tracing the body of Saartje Baartman in the discursive exchange between Cuvier and David, texts like David's Story become exercises in uterine nationalism of the critical variety by women writers of South African heritage who attempt to restore justice to such lost female bodies by returning them to the discourse of women's critical nationalism like that of Wicomb where they properly belong.

The link between the European colonizers of the past and the South African liberators of the present is reinforced not only by David's connection with Cuvier, but also through the relational similarity in which the women of the past and the present stand vis-à-vis the projects of imperialism and the nationalism. In David's Story Baartman's fabled buttocks become metonymic of women like Sally whose bodies are in the service of men like David: "Steatopygous Sally, turning to the tune of the collapsed springs of the mattress, presses a buttock into David's thin hip, and offering warmth and well-being that brings a sleep-smile to his lips, does not as yet know of the epithet or its meaning" (16). With his influence in the movement David has released Sally from her underground militancy so that she can become the homemaker for David and the mother

of his children. Sally is offered the portfolio of a community worker for the revolution, resulting in "an emptiness, a hollowness inside as if she had aborted, no miscarried, and a rush of unfamiliar hormones left her listless for weeks." After she marries David and has a baby boy, Wicomb states that she looks like "an emaciated scarecrow of a woman with uneven, vegetal tufts of hair and liverish spots on her brown skin" (14). The violence with which women's bodies are appropriated by sanctioned institutions like marriage and colonial scientific research, and the ways in which their bodies are rendered into instruments for male benefit at the cost of women's well-being, inextricably connect Sally to Saartje Baartman. This also serves to forge the crucial link between nationalism, upheld by marriage and family which is the smallest rubric of the nation, and imperialism bolstered by the infrastructures of scientific rationality, both achieved at the expense of women. The post-resistance critical nationalism of South African women writers like Wicomb challenges a monolithic reading of nationalism and imperialism as opposed to each other by their incisive discourses of uterine nationalism that bring to light the invisible connections between imperialism and nationalism around the female reproductive body.

In Mother to Mother the authorial voice of Sindiwe Magona which is conflated with the narrative voice of the protagonist—Mandisa—takes on the potent force of uterine nationalism to scathingly denounce the legacy of apartheid that led to the structural violence against black women whose children were dehumanized by the system. In an interview Sindiwe Magona tells David Atwell and Barbara Harlow how Mother to Mother came to be written in "*empathy* for the mother of the perpetrator of such a crime" when the author realized that one of the four men implicated in the murder

of Amy Biehl was her childhood friend, Mandisa (283). She says that the book also expressed an urge to explain to the Biehls that "sometimes with the best intention in the world, there are situations where parents cannot be effective parents." Magona stands on its head the reproductive demands on women (to bear soldiers) that conventional uterine nationalism makes and instead launches an uterine nationalism that condemns the failure of a nation to make parents available to raise their children: "The [apartheid] government of South Africa was waging war against African families. If the father was working it was never for enough wages. So the mother had also to be working; the children were being brought up by who? And today we wonder that all these young people are lost" (285). The authorial preface to Mother to Mother succinctly contextualizes the murder of Amy Biehl in the unequal structural division of global resources between the privileged world of the United States and apartheid South Africa. The author asks: "What was the world of this young women's killers, the world of those, young as she was young, whose environment failed to nurture them in the higher ideals of humanity and who, instead, became lost creatures of malice and destruction?" (v). Defining "the legacy of apartheid" as "a system repressive and brutal, that bred senseless inter- and intra-racial violence as well as other nefarious happenings," Sindiwe Magona holds apartheid responsible for promoting a "twisted sense of right and wrong" (v-vi). Questioning a singular narrative of the South African people's fight against racial injustice, the author calls it "the warped prism of the overarching *crime against humanity*, as the international community labelled it" (vi). Magona's is one of the polyphonic *her-stories* that enhance the meta-narrative of black patriotism to identify spaces of grief that can bring the killer's mother and the victim's mother together across the divide of racial anger.

Openly declaring the terror posed by youth violence in the black townships, Magona refers to the youngsters of the community as "these monsters our children have become" (2). This condemnation is swiftly followed by an assertion of the systemic violence of apartheid on black youth. In this unequally resourced system which deprived black children of the amenities for healthy development, the responsibility for the monstrous outcome in the form of violent children lies with the failed parenting of the collective of all South African parents that was brought about by the apartheid. Mandisa's is a cryptic rendering of the cycle of violence: "It's been a long, hard road, my son has travelled. Now, your daughter has paid for the sins of the fathers and mothers who did not do their share of seeing that my son had a life worth living" (3). This philosophy of collective parenting of the community's children is elaborated in the author's interview with Atwell and Harlow where she emphasizes the role of the extended family, the community, and in fact the whole village in effectively parenting children: "it doesn't matter if it is your child that I see going wrong, that child isn't only going to be a nuisance to you when he is eighteen or twenty, he will be a nuisance to me too" (286).

The absence of the village in parenting South African children becomes an important narrative strand in Mother to Mother, underlining the connection between youth violence and forced removals. Through the pre-apartheid and apartheid machinery of influx control, black South Africans were compelled to move from their native villages to black townships.[36] Mandisa's narrative voice testifies to the disbelief with which the

[36] The internal influx control and the migrant labor system were two factors that wreaked havoc on African families during the apartheid era. See Samuelson Modern Fiction Studies 46.1 (2000): 229. The policy of "influx control" was "used to regulate the inflow of black Africans into South Africa's urban areas." Enforced by the Native (Black) Urban Areas Act No 21 of 1923, it "imposed a system of segregation which allowed black Africans access to towns only to serve white labor needs. Domestic workers were allowed to live in town, the rest would be restricted to finding housing in townships on the outskirts. Legislation in 1937 restricted black African males a window of 14 days in which to find employment or return to the

people of Blouvlei greet the news that they would be moved to Nyanga. The "fantastic sense of security" offered by the "sea of tin shacks lying lazily in the flats, surrounded by gentle white hills, sandy hills dotted with scrub" made it an absurd rumor. The incredulity is all the more so because the community is "convinced of the inviolability" of their "tremendous numbers," "the size of the settlement, and the belief that [. . .] their dwelling places, [. . .] their homes, and [. . .] their burial places were sacred" (54). In the absence of civil and political rights for blacks in apartheid South Africa, the only access that Blouvlei residents had to the Parliament was through white men and women like Mr. Stanford and Mrs. Ballinger—"the official Native Representatives" (63). Mandisa describes the chain reaction of the forced removals on the children of the community as "Blouvlei awoke to find itself under siege" as the army, the police, and volunteer university students with vans, bulldozers, and trucks defied "stubborn residents [who] chained themselves to the doors of their homes" (64-5). The "long line of wearied humanity" is hounded by government vehicles, their back prodded by bayonets till they reach "the barren land that the government has designated to be their new home" (66). Here members of "solid, well-knit communities" find themselves among strangers (29). In this land the meager wages of the fathers needed to be supplemented by those of the mothers who worked as domestic help in white homes. Here children came back from schools to exhausted and angry mothers, and eventually spent a purposeless life, loitering from house to house like Mxolisi. It is this history of segregating black South Africans into separate townships that returns to destroy Amy Biehl when she drives into Guguletu, defying the racial claim that only blacks had to the township.

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reserves." Later this window was further decreased to seventy-two hours. See Alistair Boddy-Evans, "Influx Control", About: African History, Our Story, 2006, The New York Times Company, 4 March, 2007 <http://africanhistory.about.com/od/apartheidterms/ g/def_influx.htm>. Also see Ftnote 27.

However, the narrative voice also records this violence in relation to other historical events--the Bantu education system and the 1976 Soweto student uprising. In this world of confused value-systems, the narrator's maternal voice is shrill with desperation as "children are aided and abetted by adults we call leaders" and parents "have become toothless dogs whose bark no one heeds" (73). These townships are rife with children's loud slogans: "Liberation now, education later!" and "One settler, one bullet!" (161), where foreign nationals like Biehl working for social justice in South Africa are brutally murdered for being white, and black men from Guguletu are "necklaced" by children "mesmerized, dazzled by the brilliance of their handiwork. Drunk with power." Applauded by the leaders as a means to freedom, children execute: "Without benefit of trial, with neither judge nor jury. No due process. No recourse to defence or appeal" (77). Johan Jacobs points out: "Mandisa interprets the descent of the young into murderous gangsterism after the general breakdown of the in education in 1976 as a disregard for *ubuntu*, or traditional humaneness. The barbarous execution by "necklacing" represents to her a grotesque violation of language and of the very being of these children who refer to themselves as 'students' or 'comrades'" (182). This is the world where four-year-olds like Mxolisi once innocently revealed the whereabouts of their activist friends to the police only to see them being shot dead before their eyes. Here such traumatized children not only lose their innocence but also their speech as they become mute for years after such violence, only to grow up and reiterate murder and mayhem. Magona's interview with Atwell and Harlow makes it amply clear how this emotional brutalization of South Africa's children results in the psychological violence against South Africa's women. Mothers like Sindiwe Magona are bewildered by the

systemic effects of the apartheid legacy on gun-wielding burglarizing children. The excruciating pain of these women is eloquent in Magona's analysis of the selective distribution of national resources according to racial categories. Her analysis of resourcing black children later on in their lives instead of at the beginning is astute: "Build bigger and better jails, where people are fed and clothed and get three meals a day, for a child who has never had three meals a day. Suddenly when he's eighteen and in jail, he can get three meals a day!" (291) Magona's is among the polyphony of women's voices--marked by their understanding of the self-destructive cycle of violence internalized and perpetuated by South African history through colonization, apartheid, and anti-apartheid resistance.[37]

V. Refusing to be Gagged: The Outcry of Nation-less Women

Postcolonial writers of South African heritage like Sindiwe Magona, writing from the United States, and Zoe Wicomb, writing from Britain, have fractured the talkative tales of post-apartheid harmony. They have resuscitated, through their stories, the unique experiences of women and the unrecognized cruelty against them during national liberation which continues into the post-liberation era. The complexity of the relationship among the past, present, and future of South Africa is documented through the discursive dissidence of these "nationless authors" who launch a transnational struggle for women's human rights from the metropoles of the world.[38] In the process they resist the TRC's

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[37] See Samuelson Modern Fiction Studies 46.1 (2000): 238.

[38] Though neither Magona nor Wicomb is in exile, I borrow the phrase 'nationless authors' from Valérie Orlando's presentation to define them because, like writers in exile, these writers writing from abroad refuse an ideology of patriotism and critique their own nation. In their refusal to affiliate blindly with the "patria" (fatherland), they become nationless. Valérie Orlando, "Nationless Authors and Literature without Nations: Contemporary Francophone Writing of the Maghreb," Questioning the Global, The Global Literary and Cultural Studies Research Cluster, Michigan State University, East Lansing, November 3, 2006.

juridical paradigm of defining human rights violations during apartheid through a victim and perpetrator model to push for a more complex transnational understanding of raced and gendered human rights violations in South Africa. This model attempts to view the nuanced ways in which apartheid violations operate to define a complex continuity of violence embracing everyone in its fold. The crucial import of these stories lies in the sensitivity and accountability of a national and pan-national readership which acts as witness to the nuances of oppression and rallies against such violence,[39] as these narratives highlight the maltreatment of women by diverse agents of tyranny within the precincts of the nation itself. They aim to highlight ways in which transnational literature like David's Story and Mother to Mother circulate the narratives of women's suffering and relocate them onto global maps which galvanize a human rights politics of resistance, opening up avenues for transactions between the postcolonial and the transnational.[40] Thus, the aesthetics of "literature without nations" intersects with the ethics of human rights campaign. The separatism of the domains of politics and literature upheld by conservative thinking within the academia breaks down as the interdisciplinary study of literature creates "[h]uman rights platforms and mechanisms [that] make possible a legitimating process of telling and listening that demands accountability on the part of states and international organizations" (Schaffer and Smith 3). Global researchers,

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[39] In this regard it is vital to mention that such public response to human rights violations, however, is unavoidably generated through the interface between postcolonial narratives and the forces of consumption. Once such texts enter the global market, postcolonial violence is commodified concomitantly as awareness of human suffering is raised through storytelling which establishes a relationship with human rights politics.

[40] Transnational texts such as Mother to Mother and David's Story facilitate exchanges between the postcolonial and the transnational through these global circuits of cultural productions, dissemination, and consumption—interfaces that bring into conjunction public intellectuals and the forces of transnational finance and global publishing.

especially women internationals traveling from the ex-colonies of the globe to the metropolitan research centers of the world generate conferences and seminars that recycle these postcolonial stories of gender violence against women to activate venues for transnational feminist politics that cut across national identities to contest the power of the nation-state to define women's loyalties only in terms of the nation. These platforms hold accountable the patriarchal structures of the nation-state in pre-revolutionary, revolutionary, and post-revolutionary times. Across national boundaries, these forums clamor for fair governance of all citizens in the post resistance milieu, and question the asymmetrical organization of post-resistance state power that refuses to provide restorative justice to women mistreated during the revolution.

Postcolonial Writing: In David's Story Zoe Wicomb articulates how fictional literature becomes a more authentic medium to recuperate the historical truth about South Africa than the reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In the preface to the text the female amanuensis recruited by the former ANC activist David to tell his story (history) contends that the fragmentary nature of David's story ensues from the fact that "he both wanted and did not want it to be written" (1). She adds: "David was simply unable/unwilling to disclose all. He believed it possible to negotiate a path between the necessary secrecy and a need to tell, a tension that caused agitation which in turn had to be concealed, but it drove him to view the story of his life as a continuous loop that never intersected itself" (2). The play on "unable/unwilling" captures the stern demands of a revolution against tyranny that in its turn dictated the sacrifice of both the voice and the sexuality of its militants. Attraction in the world of revolution cannot be consummated in physical passion: "To indulge in such passion is to betray the cause, and there is far too

much of that already." Appropriating Dulcie's voice, David speaks for her: "Besides, Comrade Dulcie, herself a disciplined cadre, could not possibly have that kind of interest in him, would, like himself, have nipped it in the bud" (137). The silences and gaps in Wicomb's text that faithfully define a more nuanced relationship between victims and perpetrators and the complexities of their identities in the context of apartheid challenge the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's narrative about the apartheid era being composed of monolithic categories of victims and oppressors. The contradictions in Wicomb's text themselves together forge meaning rather than any linear narrative of torture, amnesty, and national unity. Referring to the omissions in the text, the amanuensis tells the reader: "David instructs me to remove all references to a special relationship between him and Dulcie' (137). However, David's talkative story about rigorous anti-apartheid nationalism and revolutionary choice of privileging duty over passion is contested as Dulcie, in the absence of speech, gropes for words to write down her life. She believes that somewhere such a possibility exists though "she fears for any such writing. Although they come in the early hours she has to be vigilant at all times. Worse than any instrument of torture is the thought of such hard-found words being fingered by them—jabbed, clubbed, defaced into a gibberish that would turn the thing between David and herself into nothing" (198). Accepting the fact that as a militant woman she has no claim to private passions, she enshrines her love for David as the secret of the text that she writes, and professes her text to be about a "private teenage obsession," nothing to do with "the weighty matters of the liberation movement" (198). Seizing silence as a mode of refusal to enunciate her passions, Dulcie forges a space of

autonomy by standing on its head the repressive silencing of passions that the revolution had enforced upon her.

Thus, the truth about David's Story can never be told since the truth about David's Story is also the truth about Dulcie's story, about Sally's story, and about Saartje Baartman's story, all of which rupture the talkative tales of South African national unity—of a non-racial democracy of blacks and whites, of men and women, unified in upholding principles of race, gender and class egalitarianism. In the afterword to Wicomb's text Dorothy Driver summarizes the dilemmas of post-revolution representation that David's Story illustrates in two pointed questions: How can we be post-apartheid (in the metaphysical sense) if truth is still "black and white"? Moreover, what kind of world do we live in where love constitutes political betrayal?" (251). The inability of "post-apartheid" nationalism to articulate the truth about the gender apartheid that formed an enclave within racial apartheid literally makes truth stutter across the page. In the sheaf of notes on his life that David hands over to the amanuensis he has, "having tried and failed", displaced Dulcie "by working on the historical figure of Saartje Baartman instead" (134). However, Baartman's story also remains unfinished in David's version—"a mess, schoolboy scribbles that ought to have been thrown away" (135). In the version of the amanuensis, David's story is difficult to retell. Despite the inferences the amanuensis makes from the last page, she does "not quite know how to represent it. It is a mess of scribbles and scoring out and doodling of peculiar figures that cannot be reproduced here. [She] [. . .] know[s] that it is his attempt at writing about Dulcie, because her name is written several times and struck out" (135). The beginnings are mapped all over the page, and underscore the possibility of alternative narratives which

remain untold. But in this form the fiction about David most faithfully captures the truth about TRC as the text admits: "Truth, I gather, is the word that cannot be written. He has changed it into the palindrome of Cape Flats speech—TRURT, TRURT, TRURT, TRURT—the words speed across the page, driven as a toy car is driven by a child, with lips pouted as spit flying, wheels squealing around the Dulcie obstacles" (136). As the truth about women falters in David's Story, so does it stutter in the TRC hearings. The TRC denied the existence of gender apartheid within liberation movements through its silence over the sole testimony of Rita Mazibuko. This underscores that though post-apartheid South Africa has made a concerted though controversial effort to foster racial amity, when it came to a contest between race and gender justice, as with Dulcie and her real life counterpart Mazibuko, the TRC tilted in favor of racial unity in the new nation at the cost of refusing to acknowledge past violations of ANC women by the liberation struggle itself.

Like David's Story, Mother to Mother also enunciates "a culture engaged in self-critique at a critical historic juncture" (Jacobs 190). However, the self-critique in the latter text establishes itself as a chiastic and polyglot discourse mapping out reciprocities between the historically oppositional groups of blacks and whites.[41] This discourse plays out the traumatic terms of "[t]he shift in cross-cultural relationships with the advent of democracy in South Africa from a vertical to a horizontal axis" (Jacobs 191). Mother to Mother attempts to re-conceptualize this trauma into a relationship of empathy, across

[41] "Chiastic configurations are both oppositional and reciprocal, and in their continual creation of potentialities of relation, are premised on co-subjectivity, which is a condition for a cross-cultural discourse." See Johan Jacobs, "Writing Reconciliation: South African Fiction After Apartheid," Resisting Alterities: Wilson Harris and Other Avatars of Otherness, ed. Marco Fazinni (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2004) 185.

racial barriers, through which Amy Biehl's mother becomes Mandisa's "Sister-Mother" with whom Mandisa is "bound in this sorrow" (198). The mothers share the gruesome injustice of a racist system which demands a violent cycle of sacrifice from its children: "Your daughter. The imperfect atonement of her race./ My son. The perfect host of the demons of his" (201). Mandisa is angry at "all the grown-ups who made [. . .] [her] son believe he would be a hero, fighting for the nation, were he to do the things he heard them advocate, the deeds they praised" (199). Nonetheless, after Amy Biehl is killed the mother who was congratulated one day for bearing a son who saved a woman from being raped becomes the "[m]other of the beast", the [m]other of the serpent", and the "Satan's mother" (115). She spends sleepless nights and "[f]ood turns to sawdust in [. . .] [her] mouth" as other children throw stones at hers. She despairs: "I am a leper in my community" (199). TRC's "quasi-judicial and nation-building mandate" refuses to encompass within its orbit these unique experiences of violence that marked women during apartheid (Samuelson 128). Sindiwe Magona highlights the everyday (as opposed to the spectacular) violence against women that the apartheid unleashed. Fiona Ross's seminal text, Bearing Witness: Women and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, which explores women's relationship to suffering and testimony underlines:

> Forty per cent of the victims about whom women testified were their sons, while husbands account for a further 16 per cent. Seventeen per cent of testimonies concerned other male kin, 6 per cent, unrelated men, and 14 per cent of women's testimonies concerned their own experiences of gross violations of human rights.

> Six and a half per cent of testimonies concerned women kin and a further half per cent concerned unrelated women. (17)

Thus, women testified before the Commission mostly in their roles as mothers of sons. Only one percent of men testified on behalf of their mothers (18). In contrast, "Mandisa's act of witnessing [which] works against the construction of Mxolisi as satanic figure by humanising him as beloved son while simultaneously reaching beyond the racial binary to address Biehl's mother *as a mother*" (Samuelson 132), foregrounds the structural violence that mothers experience from their subject positions as mothers whose children are subject to the violence of the system. By condemning the children and "instead [. . .] placing her allegiance with the other mother" Mandisa creates "openings in the absolute divide of 'we-them' [. . .] which 'the children' of Guguletu acted upon" (Samuelson 237).[42] In the process she reclaims the parental authority that broke down in post-1976 South Africa by aligning herself with another mother to critique the behavior of children.

Despite this critical self reflexivity about her own community and her effort to re-conceptualize racial relationships, Sindiwe Magona's writing is defined by a postcolonial mode of subversive writing. This mode resists English—the language of the Sister-Mother--as a feasible postcolonial medium for opposition to master discourses like that of apartheid. The interspersing of the novel with "Xhosa words and expressions constantly remind the reader that Mandisa's linguistic world is not an English one."[43] It "conveys something of the cross-cultural assimilations that have occurred in the multi-lingual South African society, but the italicized non-English words and cultural idiosyncratic

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[42] See Samuelson, Modern Fiction Studies 46.1(2000): 236-7.

[43] Samuelson points out that in addition to isiXhosa, Afrikaans, and isiZulu phrases also intersperse the narrative. See Modern Fiction Studies 46.1 (2000): 233.

expressions also signify unbridgeable differences" (Jacobs 182). Reading this linguistic resistance in Mother to Mother against the Asmara Declaration on African Languages and Literatures offers insights into how postcolonial literature can be an avenue of resistance to colonialism without denying the material and structural effects of colonialism.[44] The Asmara Declaration adopted by writers and scholars from across Africa and the African diaspora in a historic conference entitled "Against All Odds: African Languages and Literatures into the 21st Century", held in Eritrea in January 2000, "identified a profound incongruity in colonial languages speaking for the continent" and declared that in the new millennium "Africa must firmly reject this incongruity and affirm a new beginning by returning to its languages and heritage."[45] The linguistic medley, as a fledgling oppositional discourses of the indigenous and the colonial, in postcolonial texts like Mother to Mother is illustrative of how Anglophone postcolonial writing itself can resist and refuse the imperialistic drives of the English language, and hence of racist political structures like the apartheid. The occasional Zulu or Xhosa term in this English text is oppositional without pushing toward an originary myth of linguistic isolation that denies the colonial history of Africa that the Asmara Declaration seems to argue for. Pumla Dineo Gqola argues: "Magona's narratives suggest that the route to nuanced 'systems of representation' does not lie in contrived narrative consistency, static obstinacy, or political safety" (63). Magona entitles postcolonial subjects like Mandisa to not only appropriate the gaze and to "generate knowledge" and

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[44] For this standpoint on postcolonial writing I am indebted to John Hawley's Call for Papers from the MLA Division of Literature in English other than British and American for the December 2007 MLA to be held in Chicago. The panel is titled "Resistance to English in Anglophone Literature."

[45] See "Against All Odds: African Languages and Literatures into the 21st Century, Asmara, Eritrea January 11-17, 2000," Outreach Penn State University, March 13, 2007 <http://www.outreach.psu.edu/C&I/AllOdds/declaration.html>.

"[lay] bare the processes of apartheid" (Gqola 59-60), but also to acknowledge colonial history as the trace in South African cultural productions, and hence to renegotiate postcolonial identities with colonial categories like the empire's language. Thus, Magona's linguistic usage is merely a reflection of the transnational thrust of her thematic treatment.

Postcolonial Research: In the vein of expatriate postcolonial writers like Sindiwe Magona and Zoe Wicomb,[46] metropolitan women researchers, migrating from ex-colonies to global centers of transnational finance to reclaim "economic citizenship" through the high-powered world of the Euro-American academe,[47] militate against the epistemic violence of postcolonial historiography and its erasure of women shaped by the nationalist agenda of the post-apartheid archive.[48] This does not in any way discount the work of postcolonial scholars working from within South Africa against the limitations of the archive vis-à-vis historic knowledge formations about the legacy of unrecognized violence against South African women. The argument here is about the unequal international division of intellectual labor and its concomitant benefits within a system of transnational capital in which academic labor in postcolonial geographies cannot be

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[46] Magona returned to South Africa in 2003 and is now writing from there. See Siphokazi Koyana, "Introduction", Sindiwe Magona: The First Decade 11-12.

[47] See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present, Cambridge, USA & London, England, 1999. 69.

[48] For the conceptualization of the erasures in South African women's history through the metaphor of the archive, I am particularly indebted to Gqola's conceptualization of archival absences vis-à-vis the narratives of the lives of slave women in pre-colonial and pre-Union South Africa. See Pumla Dineo Gqola, " 'Like Three Tongues in One Mouth': Tracing the Elusive Lives of Slave Women in (Slavocratic) South Africa", Women in South African History: Basus'iimbokodo, bawel'imilambo / they remove boulders and cross rivers, ed. Nomboniso Gasa (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007). 21-41.

resourced by accessible research grants and conference funding.[49] As such, the ease with which intellectuals from postcolonial contexts working at the centers of global academic power can launch a transnational platform of a feminist cultural politics of human rights onto conventional academic sites of discursive resistance differs significantly from scholars writing from within postcolonial geographies of resistance. Spivak calls the former the "globe-girdling nationalist-under-erasure Southern [. . .] subject", emphasizing the ideological aporia of the migratory intellectual subjectivity of the transnational-postcolonial (69). This postcolonial migrant "does not forsake the concern of local populations, but rather recognizes the systemic relationship of national causes to global capitalism" (Richards 20) at the same time as she denounces the nation-state's homogenizing of the aspirations of the local population with respect to the "cause". The historic sites of revolutionary praxis of this category of scholars are often publishing houses and high-profile seminars and conferences. The publishing industry that disseminates critical works on postcolonial writings like Mother to Mother and David's Story and the various circuits of cyberspace information like mailing lists which distribute CFPs for populous international conferences that include panels/seminars on such postcolonial texts become scholarly forums for reinforcing the resistant presence of postcolonial cultural productions. As transnational women researchers interpret and reinterpret postcolonial discourse, attempting to revive the female voice in national liberation movements, new modes of understanding anti-colonial resistance are

[49] My understanding of the international division of intellectual labor has been greatly enhanced in the process of co-organizing a seminar for the American Comparative Literature Association in Mexico in 2007 as well as co-organizing a panel for the 2007 MLA scheduled to be held in Chicago. The wealth of strong proposals from researchers in postcolonial geographies that we had to turn down because the applicants did not have access to funding to make space for presenters who had access to conference grants was a statement in itself on cumulative structures of privilege that ironically mark radical and subversive areas of research.

circulated. For instance, the 2007 seminar "The Politics of Representation: Human Rights Violations, Witnessing, and Transnational Readership", structured within the internationally conspicuous American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) convention, included two papers on South African literature--"Untold Stories of Women in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Truth and Reconciliation in David's Story and Red Dust" and "Apartheid Spectacle: The Drama of Race in South Africa."[50] These historic traces from an alternative archive work in synergy with postcolonial fiction like Mother to Mother and David's Story by rejuvenating the feeble stories of South African women in the post-apartheid state. Together they challenge the imperatives of the conventional archive—the memory-spaces of the South African TRC that catalogue and classify according to monolithic and unproblematized categories of victims and perpetrators. By speaking truth to the power of the state-sanctioned archive which creates knowledge systems that erase the tracks of South African women's suffering, postcolonial narratives and research around them generate circuits of transnational anxiety that stimulate human rights politics for women.[51] This is what Edward Said in his 1993 Reith Lectures for the BBC called "the public role of the intellectual as outsider, 'amateur', and disturber of the status quo" (x). This is the work of breaking down the "reductive categories that are so limiting to human thought and communication" (xi)—categories like those ironically perpetuated by the South African TRC's amnesty and reparation process. "[F]igures

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[50] The proposal for the ACLA seminar was largely based on my dissertation work and was co-organized by Annedith Schneider from the Sabanci University of Turkey and me. Marian Eide of Texas A&M University will be delivering the paper on "Apartheid Spectacle" and I will be presenting the paper entitled "Untold Stories of Women in Post-Apartheid South Africa".

[51] See Gqola, "Like Three Tongues in One Mouth" 37.

whose public performances can neither be predicated nor compelled into some slogan, orthodox party line, or fixed dogma" (xii), the labor of intellectuals is directed at "scouring alternative sources, exhuming buried documents, reviving forgotten (or abandoned) histories" (xviii). This is the heretical archive of postcolonial researchers like Fatima Mernissi whose inquiry into the sacred texts of Alqur'an and Hadiths is based on her own memory archive of personal experiences, though she combines historical and sociological analysis with it.[52] This is also the death-defying archive of the Amy Biehls of the world for whom the dangerous field of liberation's political work is also the archive—an archive for radical research at the limits of death which deconstructs the conventional demarcation between field work and archival work, between scholarly life and dangerous activism. Mernissi's and Biehl's are the kind of research that generate theses, dissertations, articles, and books which engender tremendous anguish in the conventional archive of state-controlled knowledge systems.

VI. Conclusion

My argument in this chapter has focused on the discursive resistance of postcolonial writers and researchers to the structural violence against women like Mandisa that continues in the ANC-constituted rule of post-apartheid South Africa as the systemic legacy of apartheid, and the deep connection between such systemic violence and the violation of bodily integrity of both white and black women like Amy Biehl and

[52] Fatima Mernissi is a Moroccoan intellectual whose 1973 doctoral dissertation from Brandeis University--Beyond the Veil became a key reference for the understanding of women and Islam. Mernissi's investments in Islamic women's rights have led her to contest and reinterpret the canon of Islamic religious texts. See "Fatima Mernissi: Rebel for the Sake of Women," 12 Oct 2003, Liberal Islam Network, 2001, Bhasha Indonesia, 2006 <http://islamlib.com/en/page.php?page=article&id=461>.

Dulcie.[53] Thus, my work directly contests TRC's foregrounding of the violation of bodily integrity simultaneously as it denied any reparation for the pervading structural violence of apartheid.[54] Such an approach does not address the workings of gender power disparities in the violence against women like Amy Biehl and Dulcie and how such violence becomes an avenue to compensate for the racial and economic disempowerment of black men.

The post-nationalist reconstruction of South Africa has generated a whole repertoire of criticism of the TRC which, in conjunction with the critique of the truth commissions of other African nations, can be defined as an emergent discourse of African Subaltern Studies.[55] The Subaltern Studies paradigm, as I have previously argued, offers an analysis of the relationship in which the collective rights of the

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[53] In this context it is critical to underline that the point I am making is that ANC saw black women as victims of the structural violence of apartheid just as men, but denied the distinctive ways in which such systemic violence was connected to violence against bodily integrity. That is why the South African TRC could so easily separate out and individualize victims and perpetrators of the violation of bodily integrity from systemic legacies of the apartheid. In her critical essay "ANC Positions on Gender, 1994-2004" Natasha Erlank states that ANC's developmental approach to women's issues "views poverty, rather than subordination, as the source of inequality between men and women. [. . .] The problem with this approach though, is that it assumes women's development is prevented by structural constraints and ignores the power relations which operate at a social level to prevent women challenging roles that marginalize them (201). See Natasha Erlank, "ANC Positions on Gender, 1994-2004," Politikon, 32.2 (November 2005). Erlank's study of ANC's gender policy needs to be read in conjunction with Shireen Hassim who declares that though "[f]ew other national liberation movements or political parties globally have incorporated notions of gender equality to the extent that the ANC has done," certain political issues were excluded from the gender equality policy of the ANC: "National liberation activists—women and men—placed issues of sexuality, gender-based violence and reproductive rights in the category of 'western feminism' and saw women's organizations' attempts to deal with these as distracting from the key struggle against apartheid" (179). See Shireen Hassim, "Voices, Hierarchies and Spaces: Reconfiguring the Women's Movement in Democratic South Africa."

[54] The question definitely arises as to how this would have been possible on the scale of millions of people.

[55] "Thirteen countries have convened 16 truth commissions to date. Nine of these commissions have been held in Africa; Uganda held the very first one in 1971 (and another in 1986). The African National Congress (ANC) sponsored South Africa's first in 1992 (the Skweyiya Commission) and its second in 1993 (the Motsuenyane Commission). The third was created by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act in 1995" (27). See Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjes, "South African Women Demand the Truth," What Women Do in Wartime: Gender and Conflict in Africa, ed. Meredith Turshen and Clotilde Twagiramariya (London & New York, 1998).

disenfranchised of a nation stands with respect to the sovereignty of the nation-state. As this chapter has underlined, critical discourses on the South African TRC like Mamdani's, and Goldblatt's and Meintjes's feminist critique of the TRC vis-à-vis human rights violations of women in South Africa have argued about the injustice of a reconciliation process which denied the overarching structural violence that sustained the apartheid machinery and instead individualized victims and perpetrators. Ifi Amadiume and Abdullahi An-Na'im have criticized the political compromise of a TRC in which "reconciliation is dependent on amnesty" where "the security of the old order remains intact." Thus, "amnesty prevents the punishment of crime" and denies justice. The critics also argue that the TRC's "memory is limited to only 30 years" (5). With no "programme of radical redistribution" of resources, the TRC has no power for restitution (15). However, Desmond Tutu's African philosophy of *ubuntu* which formed the basis for the principle of amnesty in the South African TRC, though his ideology of forgiveness has also been resisted as Christian theology which excludes non-Christian South Africans,[56] was also the only route to achieving a nonracial democracy without unleashing further violence.[57]

The parameters of a post-Subaltern Studies project, however, allows for the theorization of a transnational feminist venue for addressing the invisible ways in which women in post-apartheid South Africa bear the brunt of the systemic legacy of colonialism and apartheid. Such a platform would focus on the structural links between

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[56] See Lyn S. Graybill, Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Miracle or Model? (Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner, 2002) 39.

[57] Graybill also adds: "Supporters of amnesty maintained that to bring the National Party on board, concessions were necessary, and that without the amnesty guarantee the NP would have walked out of negotiations altogether. Amnesty was a compromise the ANC was forced to strike because it did not ride victorious into Pretoria on tanks, but rather came to power through a negotiated settlement" (59).

socioeconomic deprivation and gender-specific violence against South African women—a corrective response to the national reconciliation model which focused on individual responsibility rather than collective and systemic ones. A forum like this would also contest the patriarchal texture of the South African national negotiation in which gendered injustice against women like Dulcie received a skeptical response from the TRC itself. Unlike the TRC which prioritized an ideology of race over an ideology of gender, whether through skepticism about intra-racial sexual violence or through denying the violent effects of structural disparities on women, a transnational caucus of women would address human rights violations of women to forge a politics of nonracial nonsexist democracy in South Africa. In such a political scheme various forms of marginalized identities would not be viewed as ideological oppositions that are competing for reparation, but as ideologically aligned. Such a transnational forum of women unaffiliated to the nation-state would be able to negotiate with the fathers of the nation for the kind of restorative justice that takes into account global standards of women's human rights as well as a workable justice for women within the geopolitical specificities of South Africa.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has sought to advance a tenacious critique of the colonial category of the nation-state by critically exploring literature that maps the violence against women which is unbridled from diverse directions when state machinery functions without accountability to the inhabitants of the nation.[1] The impunity enjoyed by the nation-state in both situations of conflict and post-conflict reconciliation argues against a notion of absolute state sovereignty because justice itself can be skewed according to the mandates of the heads of the state. Such an argument, however, never forgets the colonial invasion of certain regions of the world, its violence, the historic impunity of colonial rule, and its continuing predatory impulses in the guise of its neo-imperial cousin, rendered highly conspicuous in the twenty-first century by the US invasion of Iraq. That violence within postcolonial nations cannot be de-linked from the infrastructural violence of pre-colonial, colonial, and neo-imperial invasion is a central contention of my dissertation. The complicity of colonialism and neo-imperialism in the historic continuity of violence against indigenous women in Guatemala is borne out in my examination of the violent legacies of Spanish colonialism and US neo-imperialism. Effects of caste violence on women in post-independent India make it imperative to study the intensification of pre-colonial caste based violations by British colonization. My analysis of brutalities against women in South Africa is a study of the legacy of violence left behind by Dutch colonization, British colonization, and the apartheid era which continues as obdurate structural inequalities in the post-apartheid nation. Exploring the

[1] Before colonialism many of the appropriated territories were divided into kingdoms (the region which is now India) or empires (Ottoman empire). Colonial rule administered these territories by dividing such regions into nation-states.

narrativity of state power and its vicious underpinnings that unfold in each of these contexts, this dissertation has throughout asserted the significance of the "trans-nation" as an alternative forum for violated women of dispossessed communities to seek justice. In this concluding chapter my dissertation delves into the theoretical aspects of transnational coalitions and asks if historical wrongs against women during revolution can at all be addressed by post-conflict nation-states, or whether the only forum for reconciling the rights of aggrieved women with those of the state is the venue of transnational feminist politics. In doing so, my work bears in mind the precarious balance that postcolonial thinking requires in the face of brutal state sovereignties as well as violent foreign invasions. Hence, in conclusion my project inquires both into the ramifications of national reconciliations between the state and its subjects and the implications of transnational venues of non-nationalist justice that question the sovereignty of the state vis-à-vis its subjects.

In any discussion of the compensatory negotiations that take place between the nation-state and the selected populations of the nation whose human rights have been violated the Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH)[2] and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa need to be examined. In the case of India there has been no nation-wide insurgency against caste violations on the scale of the civil wars that Guatemala and South Africa have respectively experienced in regard to the human rights abuses of indigenous and black people. As such, there has been no

[2] My research on the process of historical clarification in Guatemala has been informed by three major sources—Forsberg, Tuomas and Teivo Teivainen, The Role of Truth Commissions in Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Promotion (Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 1998), Christian Tomuschat, "Clarification Commission in Guatemala," Human Rights Quarterly 23.2 (2001): 233-258, and Christian Tomuschat, Otilia Lux de Coti, and Alfredo Balsells Tojo, Guatemala Memory of Silence: Report of the Commission for Historical Clarification: Conclusions and Recommendations (Guatemala City, Guatemala: MINUGUA, 1999).

official project of national reconciliation around caste issues in India. However, the Mandal Commission of India can be perceived as somewhat akin to the project of negotiation between the state and its disenfranchised population that Guatemala and South Africa have embarked on, though in no way was India's Mandal Commission a colossal project of testifying to violence like the truth commissions in Guatemala and South Africa.[3]

My inquiry into the testimonial representation of gender-specific atrocities on Mayan women in I, Rigoberta Menchú and Crossing Borders has focused particularly on the crimes of genocidal rape and forced impregnation. Besides, the CEH also reports on "the opening of the wombs of pregnant women" during genocidal torture of the indigenous population by state agents. However, though these unspeakable brutalities against women were recognized by the CEH, the Guatemalan truth commission, with no subpoena powers,[4] got only nominal responses on inviting high-ranking military and police officers of the regimes to testify to human rights violations.[5] Moreover, though

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[3] The Mandal Commission was established to make recommendations for affirmative action in the interest of India's Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. For the terms Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, see Chapter 3, Ftnote 13.

[4] Subpoena is a writ necessitating appearance in court as a testifier.

[5] The Ministry of Defense was resistant to CEH claiming that it did not know the addresses of the officers to be invited and refused to deliver the letters to them (246). The Ministry of Defense also denied the existence of files in the military archives about the conduct of military operations during the worst years of the armed struggle. After a CEH staff member discovered "an evaluation paper assessing *ex post* certain fighting activities of that epoch" in a regional military headquarter, all direct assistance by regional commanders to the CEH was forbidden by the Ministry of Defense. From then on all requests for information had to go through a fruitless centralized channel through which the CEH accessed only "a number of prospective annual campaign plans and some fairly insignificant statistical figures" (250). The secret services were even more impenetrable. See Christian Tomuschat, "Clarification Commission in Guatemala," Human Rights Quarterly 23.2 (2001). Incidentally, Christian Tomuschat was the coordinator of CEH—an academic specialist in constitutional and international law from Germany who represented the United Nations. The other two members were Guatemalans—the Quiche Mayan academic Otilia Lux de Coti and the lawyer Alfredo Balsells Tojo. In September 1994 the United Nations Mission for Verification of Human Rights and of the Accomplishment of the Global Human Rights Accord (MINUGUA) was formed in Guatemala, and its presence there has been vital to facilitating the peace process. According to

CEH did not have the prerogative for penal prosecutions of parties responsible for the armed atrocities, the CEH report has come under heavy criticism for its refusal to name the perpetrators of violence. As such, there has been no identification of perpetrators of genocidal rape, forced impregnation, and other kinds of sexualized torture of women during armed struggle. Because of what is considered a feeble ground for the national reconciliation of Guatemala that CEH enabled, in 1995 the Catholic Church established its own truth commission--Reconstruction of the Historical Memory of Guatemala (REMHI) project--under the leadership of the Archbishop's Human Rights Office.[6] Furthermore, though the 1996 Law on National Reconciliation provided that the amnesty decreed by it did not apply to genocide, torture, forcible disappearance, and other offences not subject to any statutory limitations, the Law of National Reconciliation has been debated because it not only intensifies impunity by leaving "open what kinds of crimes can be considered 'political'," but also "removes those who have committed 'political' crimes during the armed conflict from the reaches of judicial responsibility, which for many human rights groups is in itself a clear violation of both universal human rights norms and the 1994 Global Human Rights Accord" (Forsberg and Teivainen 104).

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the Global Human Rights Accord signed by Guatemala in 1994, the MINUGUA was responsible for verifying whether CEH was fulfilling its responsibilities. See Tomuschat 238-41.

[6] The REMHI project has collected 5180 testimonies, all tape-recorded and signed, many in Mayan languages." Its report published in 1998 "registered 55 201 direct victims, of which 25 123 were cases of death. Of the registered victims, the REMHI report attributes 91% to state security organs (army, police, civil defense patrols, military commissioners, and death squads). The guerrilla is shown to be responsible in 9% of the cases" (100). The REMHI report recommends various forms of compensation like economic aid, development projects, study programs, scholarships, memorial days, monuments, psycho-social treatment for victims and survivors, and future policies of recompense and assistance. (107). See Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, The Role of Truth Commissions in Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Promotion: Chile, South Africa and Guatemala: Research Report for the Department for International Development Cooperation, UPI Working Papers 10, Comp. Tuomas Forsberg and Teivo Teivainen (Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 1998). On the other hand, CEH registered a total of 42, 275 victims. See Guatemala Memory of Silence 17.

Within such a legal frame of national reconciliation, accountability for political crimes against women is doubly erased, firstly because of the lack of penal strictures on political violence,[7] and secondly because the hegemonic image of the target of political violence or the prisoner of conscience in human rights discourse is always male. In addition, in this scheme of national reconstruction which grants amnesty to many political acts, the everyday violence against women enjoys impunity as acts of political expediency.

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), brought about by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act of 1995, differed from the CEH in disseminating the "truth" via public hearings covered extensively by the media, integrating massive reparations for violations into the reconciliation process, naming individual perpetrators and wielding immense investigative and witness protection authority,[8] and operating "alongside a relatively robust judicial system" that penalized applicants who were not granted amnesty (Quinn and Freeman 1123-4).[9] Nonetheless, as my discussion on Mother to Mother and David's Story has amply illustrated, by defining apartheid violence through individual perpetrators and victims, the TRC has encountered heavy criticism for its erasure of the structural violence of apartheid and its vicious accompanying effects on women. Moreover, Desmond Tutu's philosophy of *ubuntu*

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[7] See Susan Kemp, "The Inter-Relationship Between the Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification and the Search for Justice in National Courts," Truth Commissions and Courts: The Tension Between Criminal Justice and the Search for Truth, eds. William A. Schabas & Shane Darcy (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic) 69.

[8] Unlike the CEH, the TRC had the power to summon people to appear before it, but could not "through ordinary legal process, cross-examine people to determine the accountable truth" (69). See Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert, "Truth Without Reconciliation, Reconciliation Without Truth," After the TRC: Reflections on Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa eds. Wilmot James and Linda Van de Vijver (Athens: Ohio University Press and Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2001).

[9] Joanna R. Quinn and Mark Freeman, "Lessons Learned: Practical Lessons Gleaned from Inside the Truth Commissions of Guatemala and South Africa," Human Rights Quarterly 25.4 (2003).

(traditional African jurisprudence based on restorative rather than retributive justice),[10] demanding superhuman powers of forgiveness from victims and kin of victims for violence at the limits of human imagination,[11] has raised crucial questions about the powers, privileges, assumptions, and demands of the patriarchs of the nation in times of national reconstruction.[12] Moreover, the Amnesty Committee of the TRC was scathingly criticized by the scholarly and the activist community for breaching international law by granting amnesty for gross human rights violations. The South African Court claimed national sovereignty over international human rights law on the ground that it was not incorporated into municipal law by acts of legislation, and refused to prosecute apartheid cases brought to it. In effect, the pattern of refusing criminal prosecution of atrocities that marked the apartheid era has continued through the post-apartheid Constitutional Court, thus re-circulating apartheid impunity in the post-conflict state.[13] Susan Kemp's comments in the context of the Guatemalan historical clarification seem quite relevant to the South African reconciliation process as well. Kemp argues that taking a detour around criminal law should be a final resort in reconstruction "given that it not only subverts the rule of law but violates the individual rights of hundreds if not thousands of victims to seek protection and recourse through their legal institutions" (71). Kemp has rightfully

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[10] For more details see Chapter 3, 24.

[11] In the context of Guatemala Kemp has pointed out the dangers of merely "[c]laiming that information about the past is itself a form of accountability." It validates the perpetrator's resistance to penal justice and further diminishes victims "who seek criminal accountability as out for revenge or as obstacles to 'national reconciliation'" (72). Accountability which is a perquisite for democratic consolidation which both Guatemala and South Africa targeted through their truth commissions has been undermined in the name of truth seeking (73).

[12] Kemp argues that "the perceived negative effects of criminal justice on stability [. . .] can justify hasty wide ranging amnesty legislation or other measures of direct benefit only to parties brokering power following the collapse of a regime or the end of armed conflict" (71).

[13] Linda Van Vijver, "The Amnesty Process," After the TRC, 131-2.

pointed out that among other factors "the nature of the regime-change" and "the motivations of all interested parties to cooperate" determine the interrelationship between truth seeking and criminal justice. Since the marginalized populations of neither Guatemala nor South Africa emerged clearly victorious, there was no accountability of state power that brutalized women of these nations. The pervasive effects of both agential and systemic violence against women and their children in South Africa remained unaccounted for and uncontested in the "post-truth" nation. In Carrots and Sticks: The TRC and the South African Amnesty Process Jeremy Sarkin highlights the criticism that the TRC has faced in its dealings with the issue of rape. The ANC acknowledged the serious problem of the sexual harassment of women in its exile camps, but claimed that prompt remedial action was taken to stop the crisis. When the MK commander, Teddy Williams testified that "young female recruits and wives of soldiers were commonly sexually abused in an ANC camp in Angola", the TRC did not allow the witness to testify further and the Commission came under criticism for its bias in handling the case (346). Moreover, the TRC refused to recognize rape as political torture and separated political atrocities on women from the realm of the criminal.[14] Cases of sexual assault and rape did not qualify for amnesty, but the reason why it did not qualify for amnesty was because TRC denied the recognition of apartheid rape as a politically motivated crime.

Though not a post-conflict truth commission, the controversial Mandal Commission in India can be seen as a platform for restoring justice to people marginalized by caste discrimination. In an earlier chapter my examination of The Bandit Queen of India and India's Bandit Queen has pointed out how the Samajwadi Party was instrumental in Phoolan Devi's release from prison and the shaping of her political

[14] See Sarkin 353.

career. The Samjwadi Party which is largely the electoral constituency of India's lower castes was formed in 1992 in the wake of the Mandal Commission. The Mandal Commission Report (MCR), published in 1979, had made recommendations for what has been called "positive discrimination" for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in India.[15] Quotas were already operative in education and employment, but the MCR "by recommending a further quota of 27 percent for the OBCs, had raised the percentage of reserved jobs in government and public-sector organizations to 50 percent, thus leaving only 50 percent for open competition on the basis of merit (Sengupta and Pathak 551-2). When on August 7, 1990, the government of India under V.P. Singh notified its intention to implement recommendations of the 1979 MCR, India witnessed the fracturing of the myth of a united Hindu nationalism that marked India after the country's decolonization from British rule in 1947 and the partitioning of India into the nation-states of India and Pakistan. Susie Tharu and Tejaswini Niranjana argue: "The methods of protest ranged from street-cleaning and boot-polishing to self-immolation; the discourses deployed [against reservation] significantly were those of Unrewarded Merit and Salvation of the Nation" (97). The authors particularly focus on how the resistance to the national reconciliation project of the Mandal Commission was defined through the foregrounding by upper caste women of their citizenship rights to a democratic, secular, and egalitarian nation. In so doing these women were basing their claims of merit, as opposed to reservation, on an ideology of the free will of the individualistic subject of liberal humanism. Their argument constructs a myth of unified Indian citizenship,

[15] For this historical sketch of the Mandal Commission, see Sengupta, Saswati and Zakia Pathak, "Between Academy and Street: A Story of Resisting Women," Signs 22.3 (1997): 551-2.

undifferentiated by cumulative structures of oppression and privilege which define merit, and thereby redeploys Indian citizenship as upper caste, upper class, and educated.[16] Thus, the possibility of women's coalitions across caste to facilitate dialogue about the gendered nature of violence that visits women of all classes is stalled as upper caste women affiliate with upper caste men against lower caste and outcaste women.[17] Sukumar Muralidharan makes a powerful analysis of how caste fractures the myth of Hindu nationalist unity, and the rift is strategically soothed over through upper caste appropriation of the subaltern castes to reunify a Hindu citizenry against a demonized Muslim minority.[18] Thus, national reconciliation between upper caste Hindus and the lower castes and the outcastes results only in a scheming pseudo Hindu unification across castes by demonizing religious minorities of the nation.

As an alternative to the failed projects of post-conflict transitional justice through national reconciliation discussed above, my conclusion argues for legal constraints on impunity through transnational jurisdiction. Roht-Arriaza says that the Pinochet case has "strengthened the idea that proper accountability for such crimes is the business of justice everywhere, and that domestic laws enshrining unfair trials or shielding perpetrators are

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[16] See Tharu and Niranjana 95.

[17] Ibid. 99.

[18] Sukumar Muralidharan, "Mandal, Mandir aur Masjid: 'Hindi' Communalism and the Crisis of the State," Social Scientist 18.10 (1990): 27-49. The author highlights how in the wake of the Mandal Commission the Bharatiya Janata Party razed to the ground the Babri Masjid (a mosque in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh with a significant Islamic population)—a disputed site between Hindus and Muslims. It was believed that a Mandir (temple) once stood at the site of the mosque to commemorate the birthplace of the mythological Hindu prince Ram. This temple is believed to have been destroyed by the Mughal empire in the sixteenth century to construct the mosque in its place. Muralidharan argues: " 'Mandal' and 'Mandir' work at cross purposes and tend persistently to undermine each other. [. . .] 'Mandir' as a metaphor seeks to bring the entirety of the undifferentiated 'Hindu' community within its ambience, keeping out only the Muslims, whose patriotism is allegedly suspect on account of their supposed extra-territorial loyalties. 'Mandal' cuts the ground from under this pretense, by bringing the deep divisions within the Hindu *dharma* into prominence, and demanding their redressal" (28).

subject to outside scrutiny" (197). However, my conceptualization of transnational jurisdiction differs from that which Naomi Roht-Arriaza underlines in her study of the Pinochet trial--a universal jurisdiction "which gives the courts of any country authority to investigate and judge international crimes no matter where committed and by whom" (xii).[19] A postcolonial conceptualization of transnational justice refuses to overlook the fact that colonial injustice continues as neo-imperial invasion of ex-colonies by powerful nation-states of the world. On the other hand, it refuses to forget the brutal dictatorships that postcolonial populations have faced in the name of national sovereignty. Against this historical backdrop, my postcolonial philosophy argues for transnational tribunals that will enjoy subpoena powers over countries to try agents of states for crimes against humanity under transnational criminal law rather than the domestic criminal law of any particular nation-state.[20] The success of transnational investigations will exert pressure on nation-states to alter conditions of the nation and the behavior of its agents that lead to such criminal proceedings before the eyes of the entire world. Such transnational prosecutions will not be based on the nationality of either the perpetrator or the victim. For instance, in Rwanda "the National Tribunal has become a means of revenge"

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[19] Later on in her study the author emphasizes how Chileans and Argentines prosecuted in an ex-colonial country like Spain and Rwandans by another ex-colonial state like Belgium might make transnational prosecutions appear like an act of colonialism, particularly when the defendants are from regions that these countries once colonized. However, for the author this is a necessary evil since "it is easier to keep track of dictators who travel to rich countries, where the exile and activist networks that sustain investigation tend to be strongest." See Roht-Ariazza, Naomi, The Pinochet-Effect: Transnational Justice in the Age of Human Rights (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005) 181.

[20] On grounds of health, Britain's stopping of legal proceedings against Chilean dictator, Augusto Pinochet, for severe human rights violations during his rule offers a seminal argument as to why domestic law is inadequate in dealing with crimes against humanity. While Britain released Pinochet who was arrested in October 1998 in London, Belgium decided to fight the Pinochet case. One of the important grounds for Belgium's justification to fight it was that Belgian law did not grant exemptions on health grounds. From this it is evident how if domestic law does not provide justifiable grounds to criminalize heads of state, human rights violations cannot be prosecuted. Roht-Ariazza 61-2.

(Amadiume and An-Na'im 12), while in South Africa the project of conditional amnesty has been perceived as an unjust and paternalistic decision by the leaders of the nation. Transnational law in international tribunals will supersede any amnesty law which dominates domestic roundtables for reconciliation. Moreover, domestic courts are often compromised when perpetrators still retain state-powers. But nonetheless, domestic courts need to remain open to try cases of human rights violations by the state if the victim prefers domestic prosecution.[21] Meanwhile, truth commissions should refrain from acting as tribunals and only engage in recording violations so that the need for restorative justice for victims can be substantiated by tracing the legacy of injustice.[22]

In a discussion on transnational justice it is crucial to emphasize that national reconciliation projects are even more shaky platforms for post-conflict negotiations vis-à-vis human rights violations of women during internal conflict. Transitional justice in post-conflict situations is typically negotiated between the state patriarchy and the revolutionary patriarchy, and since the image of the dominant political actor is male, violations of political women and women caught in the political crossfire are almost erased from the rhetoric of post-conflict restorative justice. An excellent example is the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission's hearings into which Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjes made an intervention with their lengthy report and recommendation "Gender and TRC." Using the category of gender to frame truth and reconciliation, the authors brought about special hearings sensitized to atrocities on

[21] Roht-Ariazza 195. I have explained the rationale behind such an argument in the following pages.

[22] I have also explained the potential limitations of such transnational institutions later on in my argument, especially with regard to their power in the context of global hierarchy.

women before an exclusively female audience.[23] Drawing on the transnational tribunal conceptualized above and the special hearings for women in the South African TRC, in my conclusion I argue for a permanent transnational court which deals exclusively with abuses of women during civil war and genocide like in Guatemala and South Africa as well as national stalemates like that in India around caste. The caste impasse in India led to structural violence against lower caste and outcaste women in the same way that the apartheid has left a legacy of structural violence in which women have been caught since the inception of apartheid. The existing International Criminal Court (ICC) established in the Netherlands in 2002 to exercise jurisdiction over crimes against humanity requires states to be parties to the Rome Statute that established the ICC to try cases of state-sanctioned violence like war crimes and genocide. The ICC will also try such cases only when national jurisdiction is unavailable.[24] The transnational court trying crimes of the state against women, which I am proposing, will not need signatures/ratifications by state parties so that the states do not have any control over whether their citizens can appear before the transnational court. In such a situation the verdicts of the transnational court will not be binding only on those states which have ratified it. Moreover, it will be the victim's discretion whether to choose jurisdiction under domestic law or transnational law to not only avoid expensive travel to the transnational court if she wants to, but also to have autonomy over deciding the nature of the legal perspective that will benefit her case. Such a transnational tribunal is to be run only by women who will be vested with subpoena powers and the authority to demand restorative justice and reparations for victims from both individuals and states concerned.

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[23] See What Women do in Wartime 27-9.

[24] See Robertson 324-68.

Nonetheless, such transnational institutions of justice for women are prone to the same issues that all "[t]op-down institution-building efforts" suffer from in their "lack of grounding in a specific local reality" (Roht-Arriaza 203). Moreover, despite its autonomy, the transnational court for women will be dependent on money from states, and thus strong states can always exercise control over the transnational court and indirectly over weak states.[25] In addition, the question remains as to whether such transnational platforms can at all be neutral spaces of justice. Can they avoid being marked by the unequal relationship along the international division of cultural and socio-economic power which influences legal discourse? It is imperative to do a legal critical discourse analysis vis-à-vis local and cultural justice as well as a study of the modes of strategic control of justice by strong states. This is because only an understanding of the relationship among legal, political, and cultural justice can attempt to undo centuries of colonial/neo-imperial economic, political, and cultural dominance upheld through discourse. Only then can we push for a truly just transnational court for women. Ideally the court will reverse the "norms of power" operative in the existing legal discourse conditioned by Euro-American values touted as universal ideas so that invisible cultural violence on already brutalized victims is not recycled as justice.[26] As for how to create such a tribunal that would not be the instrument of those who create it and pay for it is largely the work of political scientists rather than that of literary critics. It is here that the role of the public intellectual comes in as academics sit together with policy makers and

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[25] Roht-Arriaza 203.

[26] Edward Said, Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994) 98.

activists to forge a transnational politics of discursive and material justice. But as Edward Said points out, "the intellectual is not an uncomplicated automaton" either (98).

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