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MMXXIII **NEW SERIES** **2023**

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Self-Portrait, Malvin Gray Johnson, 1934

SELF-PORTRAIT

Self-Portait is a 1934 oil painting by African-American painter Malvin Gray Johnson (1896 – 1934). Johnson was born in Greensboro, North Carolina and, at the age of sixteen, moved to New York City to study at the National Academy of Design. He took temporary leave on his studies as he enlisted to serve in the First World War. Returning to New York in 1923 put him at the forefront of the Harlem Renaissance – a revival of African-American culture centred in Harlem. The impact of both French art and the immigration of Francophone, Caribbean immigrants to New York can be seen throughout his work. Johnson was greatly inspired by the French impressionist and cubist movements and his work has been positively compared to that of Paul Cézanne.

Johnson's work was widely respected by his contemporaries. He worked on the Federal Arts Project through which his paintings were displayed in galleries across New York. He was also featured in the black-and-white silent film *A Study of Negro Artists*. The film depicts dozens of African-American artists, poets, and photographers all associated with the Harlem Renaissance.

Johnson became well known for his dignified depictions of African-Americans. Despite the indignities of segregation, Jim Crow, and economic disadvantage Johnson rarely painted downtrodden or victimised African-American figures. Instead, the subjects of his paintings are shown as dignified and often joyous. For example, his paintings of black musicians in Harlem, portraits of African-American soldiers enlisted in World War One, young farm workers in rural Virginia, or the triumphant Nat Turner leading a slave rebellion. His work is a powerful statement of the importance of African-American's defining and displaying their identity rather than having it defined or dictated for them.

Editor's Introduction

IDENTITY ENCOMPASSES THE QUALITIES, beliefs, personality traits, appearance, and expressions that characterise an individual or group. Our identities are shaped and exist in relation to others. Particularly, within the study of philosophy and decolonisation, dissecting parts of our identities, identities placed upon people and groups offers a way to highlight underrepresented scholarship and new ideas.

This edition of Critique provides a platform for writers across disciplines to explore what constitutes the identity of a group or a person. When planning a theme for this journal, I believed this to be a rather broad theme but I wanted to draw a broad range of interpretations within the lens of decolonisation.

A talented group of contributors examine identity from various perspectives, looking at how religion, professions, and notions of gender and race contribute to how people identify themselves and others.

I hope this edition offers readers an opportunity to explore how each discipline in the humanities interacts with philosophy in the context of identity.

I am immensely grateful to all the writers, editors, and reviewers who contributed, particularly Woody Jeffay, Dr. Phillip Goff, Dr. Stephen Mumford, and Dr. Aness Webster, with whom I worked closely in my role as Decolonisation Intern.

MICHAELA MAKUSHA

THIS EDITION COMES SOMEWHAT DELAYED. It is April 2024 at the time that I write this and astute readers will notice that this is billed as the 2023 double edition. I had nothing to do with *Critique* while this edition was being put together; Michaela did all the hard work in putting out the call for papers and organising the peer-review process. I want to thank Michaela and all of the writers who contributed to this special edition of *Critique*. There are some fantastic, interesting, and original works of philosophy in this edition.

When I was made editor in February 2024, it came with the attached job of having to put this missing edition together. It was for this reason, among others, that when I approached Professor Christopher Cowie about getting *Critique* running again, he responded simply "Don't."

In actuality, restarting *Critique* has been fun, albeit an occasional administrative hassle. Finding, fixing, and piecing the papers together has been challenging but genuinely cathartic and enjoyable. Discussing the journal with the previous editors, Michaela and Hyde, has been illuminating; their insights have been incredibly helpful and I would be completely lost were it not for them. I look forward to the future of *Critique*, the Winter 2024 edition is currently being compiled and based on the immensely positive response to the call for papers and reviewers I

am optimistic that *Critique* will continue to produce meaningful contributions to undergraduate philosophy in the coming years.

WOODY JEFFAY

Courtesans, Power, and Politics: Reviving a Forgotten Identity

GRACE DOBBIE
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THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE COURTESAN from histories of Indian music, song and dance, national histories of India, as well as broader political histories of South Asia, has motivated a host of historians to dig India's once beloved symbol of refined culture out of the dust. The resurrection of the courtesan also holds contemporary cultural significance, especially for Indian women, as expressed by *The Courtesan Project*, founded by Manjari Chaturvedi, who combines her identities as an academic and classical dancer to credit and respect the role of courtesans in Indian political history. Chaturvedi achieves this through a series of seminars and dance performances at Mumbai's Royal Opera House and her work has been heralded as an act of cultural renaissance and justice by her contemporaries.[1]

The development in methodological and ideological frameworks have supported this impetus for recovering courtesan histories. During the 1970s-1980s, feminist historians adopted reactionary methodologies to combat the conservative 'biology as destiny' bias against women's histories; some historians celebrated prominent female figures in public spheres, and others endeavoured to hold up the 'traditionally female sphere' of the home, alongside 'traditionally male spheres' of politics and commerce.[2] We can see these ideological methodologies applied in context of courtesan histories written in the decades following the flourishment of gender and women's studies. Likewise, once 'white' feminist approaches to history have developed to intersectional methods, to account for the silencing of 'othered' and racialised women in early Anglo-American theories. Hence, we see an impetus to approach marginalised histories through a combined lens of intersectional feminism and post-colonial thought.[3] Some historians develop this further, by considering postmodernist frameworks such as Meenal Tula and Rekha Pande who advocate for Foucault's genealogy, to create a methodology for a 'genealogical history'.[4] They argue that by deconstructing intersections of truth, power and knowledge in the context of post-colonial theory, we should challenge the writing of the courtesan into 'minority' history, and instead place her in new discursive spaces, such as the political sphere.[5]

Although courtesans have featured fictively in plays, novels, paintings and films for many years, until recently, scholarship has been sparse; the only works entirely devoted to the courtesan are limited to Amritlal Nagar's classic Hindi account *Ye Kothewalian* (1960) [These

[1] Chaturvedi, 2020; Rao, 2019
[2] Ko, 2012, p. 207
[3] Lewis & Mills, 2003, p. 4
[4] Tula & Pande, 2014, p. 67
[5] Ibid., p. 67

Courtesans],[6] and Moti Chandra's, *The World of Courtesans* (1973).[7] Many works of scholarship in this field, such as Trivedi's study of female performers in Northern India, focus on tracking the courtesan's linear history through changes in terminology, from highly sophisticated *ganika* to *tawa'if* and finally the pejorative, anglicised nautch girl; her 'fall from grace'.[8] Furthermore, even recent political and colonial histories of India restrict or omit the political role of the courtesan; for example Bayly's only mention of courtesans in his study of the formation of nationalist discourses in mid-19th century India, is a fleeting description of 'cultural performers' achieving 'power in court and urban politics', but with disappointingly limited focus on their 'poor backgrounds' placing them 'lower down the social scale'.[9] In contrast, Gavin Hambly's survey of women in the Medieval Indo-Muslim and Mughal states, places gender at the centre of his study, and focuses on making women more 'visible' in pre-modern histories.[10] In M.H. Fischer's chapter on women and 'the feminine' in the Awadh court in Lucknow, the writer emphasises in his conclusion, the opportunity of political and financial power available to courtesans through temporary marriages, such as the most sought after position of chief nikah wife. Although, Fischer's analysis is somewhat reductive, because he portrays a pressurised court which encouraged competitive dynamic between courtesans, who he suggests were reliant on 'personal relationships' to lever power, this disregarding their individual identity, education and cultural symbolism.[11] Further to this, the overall mention of courtesans is limited in Hambly's volume to a narrow focus on royal courts, such as the Awadh, and the roles of royal, or associated women, such as wives, daughters, sisters or wet nurses.[12] Nevertheless, the gradual emergence of female centred histories, where courtesans were not relegated to the margins, and instead were treated as figures with political power within their grasp, was revelatory.

A significant development to courtesan scholarship in context of political power, was Veena Oldenburg's widely cited article 'Lifestyle as Resistance'. Oldenburg examines a series of oral history interviews conducted by herself and a group of courtesans living in Lucknow in 1976. In the process the writer shows the impact of colonial urbanisation on Lucknow's courtesans, drawn from their memories, collective memories of the *tawa'if* history and her own research. Oldenburg's most distinctive contribution is her proposal for considering courtesan 'resistance' as a political act. She argues that their material needs combined with an ideological anti-patriarchal struggle, whilst maintaining cooperation and 'outward harmony' with a patriarchal system, mean we can draw broad comparisons to a Marxist 'class struggle' as seen in James Scott's study of peasant's struggles in Malaysia.[13] The terms of this definition are intended to empower the position of the courtesans in historical perspective, by emphasising the humanity in the courtesans protecting their own interests, despite criticisms of 'enabling men to perpetuate their double moral standards'.[14] Oldenburg's article also argues that preservation of the self-produced a form of empowerment for Lucknow's courtesans, for example the practice of *nakhra* (pretence). This enabled a separation of professional sexual

[6] An English translation of Nagar's work has not yet been made
[7] Chandra, 1973
[8] See Trivedi, 2002; mentioned in Sachdeva Jha, 2008, p. 14
[9] Bayly, 1997, pp. 196; 206
[10] Hambly, 1998
[11] Fischer, 1998, p. 489
[12] Hambly, 1998, pp. 3-29
[13] Oldenburg, 1990
[14] Ibid., p. 282

favours in a court context, and personal sexual desire and pleasure in the kotha; a lesbian alternative, which Oldenburg's interviews allude to, might be viewed as a dissent against hetero-normative restrictions.[15] Overall, Oldenburg's emphasis on the courtesan's political resistance in creating an alternative matrilineal, possibly lesbian existence, resisting socialisation of their contemporaneous society, is radical.

Building on Oldenburg's central idea of resistance through existence, Lata Singh highlights the existence of courtesans in Indian nationalist histories, by adopting feminist lens. By doing so Singh places the courtesan centrally in the political sphere, to explore their public and political role. For, example the writer studies one woman known as Azeezun, and her role in the Indian Rebellion of 1857.[16] This revolt has been characterised by different social classes and communities to represent many mutinies, but most prominently by nationalists and nationalist historians; Marx himself, observed it as a 'nation revolt'.[17] Nevertheless, nationalist histories, and indeed Kumar Sen's entry in *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism,* fail to acknowledge the active role of women or courtesans in their 'uprising of the masses'. Singh seeks to challenge this omission, for example the writer endorses British colonial accounts of Azeezun as a forceful military figure, 'on horseback in male attire decorated with medals, armed with a brace of pistols and joined the revolt.'[18] These portrayals show the courtesan to be physically and symbolically powerful; a figure whose transgressions of identity as neither the 'respectable' mother nor wife, Singh argues, disrupt nationalist discourse, dominant with anti-colonialist bourgeois ideals and the 'mother India' trope. By highlighting such as history Singh claims she is rewriting 'mainstream' histories and unearthing the 'lost' subjects of histories of anti-colonialist struggles.[19]

Karen Leonard follows this approach of placing courtesans in political spheres, however this author studies courtesans as significant 'political players' in Hyderabad – a princely state unaffected by British colonial rule until the late nineteenth century. By tracing the female performers' role in state politics from 'pre' to 'post' colonial times, Leonard finds that Hyderabad's courtesans worked within state bureaucracy in the 'pre-colonial' context. The writer emphasises them as 'wielders of political power' and elites in court life and state politics, in part due to the striking proximity of their residences in Hyderabad's old walled city, which – she argues – produced a 'sense of interconnection and intimacy' among courtesans and leading state official and nobles.[20] Their political power is bolstered by the creation and preservation of mythologies Hyderabad's foundation, which have courtesans, namely Bhagmati, at their centre, therefore these women were embedded in the foundation of the state and its cultural life. [21] Leonard also emphasises, in her findings, the limited impact of the British anti-Nautch campaign in Hyderabad (at least until the state's incorporation into India in 1946); the longevity of courtesan culture in this princely state is a testament to their political power.[22]

Furthermore, Richard D. Williams' article on courtesans in colonial north India also makes the case for substantive continuity in courtesan culture after 1857, despite a deliberate anti-nautch campaign of degradation by colonial bureaucracy and Indian journalists. The writer

[15] Ibid., p. 282
[16] Singh, 2007, p. 65
[17] Sen, 2021, pp. 1307-1311
[18] Singh, 2007, p. 65
[19] Ibid., pp. 58-78
[20] Leonard, 2013, p. 433
[21] Ibid., p. 429
[22] Ibid., p. 444

explores women's language, female singers and dancers, and how they continued to resonate with the Mughal elite. This is demonstrated by the continued circulation and appreciation of Urdu compositions, as well as collections of women's biographies and lyrics, which seem to signify the importance of cultural practices in sentimental terms, especially by men who valued Mughal society. In this way, we might view this cultural continuity as a dissent against the British anti-nautch campaign and therefore as a form of anti-colonial resistance, which empowered the voices of courtesans.[23] This concept is expanded on by Sachdeva, who explores how in the late 19th century the *tawa'if* formed self-representations with 'technologies of leisure', such as commercial printing, to achieve statuses as celebrity entertainers in cities across north India. Sachdeva builds on Ghosh's work on defining Indian women's 'self-representation' as a means of producing power in colonial India.[24] Sachdeva shows that by reaching new areas of patronage by combining images of courtly tradition with the new popular print culture, and by profiting from the mass circulation of cheap imitations of class novels (which recentred the *tawa'if* as main characters), postcards and posters, courtesans produced significant financial power, as well as power in self-fashioned visual representation. Furthermore, Sachdeva shows that increased patronage acted as means of resistance to British intervention; the courtesans wielded the power of public popularity.[25]

Following on from Sachdeva's findings, this sense of power in female subjectivity is energised spectacularly by Urvashi Dalal's exploration of the decline of the Mughal Empire in the mid-17th century, which she argues coincided with a destabilisation of the gendered state, where the deterioration of the masculine state enabled femininity (and its associated cultural traditions) to mediate it. Dalal surveys the powerful political position of women, emphasising the 'feminine qualities' in successful leadership, such as Ahilyabai, queen of Indore's renowned stability and caring for well-being of subjects' regency or the physical power associated with Laxmi Bai, the 'warrior queen'. This contradicts earlier scholarship, namely Srinivasan's wife/courtesan dichotomy, which reductively analyses femininity as dependent on male terms, which force women to compete against each other.[26] On the other hand, Dalal celebrates female subjectivity as a 'feminine force', with the collective autonomy to destabilise state masculinity.[27] This is particularly emphasised by the cultural feminine power of courtesans, who Dalal argues, embodied a power 'beyond the erotic'. A culmination of cultivated culture, from music and poetry to song and dance, to romance, sensuality, and instinct, acted as a resource to be used in negotiations for power. Subsequently, Dalal's contribution is a reframing of sexual politics in the precolonial history of the Mughal court, to focus on the unique power of united femininity.

Overall, by tracing the development of historiography on courtesans in Indo-South Asia across the 17th and 20th centuries, we can see firstly the recovery of courtesans as a historical subject, with greater depth than the reductive Orientalist tropes might lead us to believe. Secondly, we can see the need for, and move towards, their inclusion in broader discussions of Indian political history. Finally, these developments combined, enable historians to study courtesans as political players in their own right.

[23] Williams, 2017
[24] Ghosh, 2014
[25] Sachdeva, 2008
[26] Srinivasan, 2006
[27] Dalal, 2015, p. 132

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How African Rituals Shape Identity

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THE QUESTION AT HAND raises a broader question, which specifically invites me to ask if African rituals have the capacity to shape identities at all. Throughout, I shall maintain that ritual does possess the power to shape people's identities. Furthermore, I shall maintain that ritual participation can significantly alter a person's identity in three key ways. Precisely, rituals can alter personal, collective and perceived identity.

To support my thesis, I will begin by consolidating what I propose to be the best understanding of ritual by highlighting the purpose and structure of ritual practice. Next, I will provide a developed understanding of identity. I wish to highlight a common assumption found amongst ritual ethnographies. Namely, the assumption that ritual has the ability to shape only an individual. I believe that viewing identity to be an individual phenomena is not beneficial and often causes anthropologists to overlook the relationships shared between communities and persons. In contrast, this essay aims to highlight that ritual also has the power to shape the relationship shared between a person and a community. I shall draw upon the works of Marriott and Davies to highlight the dividual and dynamic nature of identity. However, I shall also provide a nuanced way of assessing identity supported by the work of Haslanger. I shall contribute that identity is affected by perception. The crux of this essay will argue that ritual can shape personal, collective and perceived identity. I will provide definitions for personal, collective and perceived identity, followed by ethnographic examples which highlight how ritual affects identities in such ways. I will highlight how identity is a phenomenon that is in a constant state of flux. In virtue of this, I will outline that ritual participation has the capacity to shape people's identities in various ways.

DEFINING 'RITUAL'

This section is dedicated to providing a clear understanding of ritual practice that is relevant across various ethnographic contexts. I begin with Turner's understanding of 'ritual'. Turner outlines that ritual is a 'liminal' process,[1] whereby it relates to a transitional phase.[2] What is important about Turner's contribution, is that it highlights that ritual does not merely mirror social values back to ritual participants and observers, but instead, transforms the very values

[1] Turner, 1969
[2] I draw upon this definition as it is influenced by the works of Van Gepp, which I shortly draw upon to explain the structural function of ritual.

Critique, vol. MMXXIII, nos. 1–2, pp. 7–14.

that define the identity of a community.[3] To illustrate how this definition functions more broadly take Ngcobo's definition of 'ritual'. 'Ritual is one which unites more than the residents in the same world' 'it is a medium that connects the dwellers of at least two worlds, the spiritual… and the physical one as a way to communicate'.[4] The concept of communication is central to this definition, as it is crucial to acknowledge that the purpose of ritual practice is to communicate, namely, to convey a 'truth'. For example, the 'truth' conveyed in a marriage ritual would be to communicate dedication, loyalty and unity. Often this 'truth' is something that cannot be conveyed with words alone. Ngcobo's definition of ritual highlights the importance of transformation which is needed to communicate such truths, which I argue lends itself to Turner's understanding of ritual. Throughout this essay I shall highlight that ritual functions as a transformative practice which connects individuals, communities and both the spiritual and physical realms.

Having established the purpose of ritual practice, it is essential to fashion an understanding of the structure of ritual practice. Van Gennep developed a threefold process which explains the key characteristics that rituals possess. Van Gennep outlines that rituals are structured around 'preliminal rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation)'.[5] This can be understood as separating a person from one status, leaving the individual apart from a social identity, and then reincorporating the person back into society with a new status.[6] Fundamentally, this understanding of ritual and liminal is essential in recognising the ability to depart from an old status and becoming endowed with a new status.

Understanding Identity

This section will outline a clear conception of identity. I shall be drawing the notion of dividuality, supported by the works of Marriott and Davies, to paint the richest portrait needed to understand identity. However, I shall also be drawing upon the works of Haslanger to provide more depth to the conception of identity.

I shall outline what I believe to be the strongest starting point for understanding identity. Marriott writes, 'to exist, dividual persons absorb heterogeneous material influences. They must also give out from themselves particles of their own coded substances – essences, residues, or other active influences – that may then reproduce in others something of the nature of the persons in whom they have originated…Dividual persons, who must exchange in such ways, are therefore always composites of the substance-codes that they take in'.[7]

Marriott highlights that the notion of the 'individual' is a specifically Western ideology, and instead, he proposes that personhood is best understood as dividual. It follows that human identity is necessarily a composite of the experiences that we have in our lived experiences. To develop this notion further I now draw on the works of Davies. Dividuality can be understood as the 'pervasive nature of social and natural environment engaging with or flowing into and out of a person'.[8] Simply, identity ought to be understood as inextricably

[3] Alexander, 1991, p. 62
[4] Ngcobo, 2020, p. 2
[5] Van Gennep, 1960, p. 11
[6] Davies, 2022, p. 37
[7] Marriott, 1967, p. 111
[8] Davies, 2017, p. 76

bound within a person's relationship with the world and everything within it. Precisely, this understanding of identity is strong in virtue to its relation to embodiment.

Embodiment recognises the relationship shared between mind and body, understanding that 'the body becomes an arena of ideological and sensory interaction'.[9] Simply, embodiment can be understood as a belief or value becoming manifest by the body. For example, Christians who believe that Jesus is the pinnacle of moral behaviour will embody similar actions and behaviours as Jesus. In essence, the embodied 'truths' that we learn from external influence becomes a part of our embodied identity. From this, our values, habits and behaviours evolve. This is in direct contrast to considering identity to be individual, which would assume that identity is not influenced by external factors. Hence, it is crucial that identity is understood as dividual in order to recognise the dynamic and adaptive nature of identity.

Whilst Marriott and Davies are correct to note the dividual nature of identity, I believe there is another key perspective on identity that ought to be contributed as to develop a further understanding of identity. Hence, I shall draw upon the works of Haslanger. Haslanger is working within a social philosophy framework, however I shall adapt their understanding of identity to create a clear notion of identity within the scope of this essay. Haslanger's main objective is to understand gender and race. Haslanger uses a social constructionist view to highlight that part of social identity boils down to the way in which a person is perceived by others.[10] The key idea is that 'observed or imagined' aspects of identity are vital in contributing to a persons' sense of self.[11] For example, if I am perceived to be a woman, I may experience societal disadvantages in a context where men are favoured.[12] In the context of this essay, this understanding shall be vital in recognising how a ritual can endow a person with observable or imagined features that are perceived by a community that can bestow a new sense of identity upon a person. I shall explore this concept further throughout this essay.

Overall, I suggest that dividuality, collective, and perceived identity must be acknowledged when studying African societies. This is because sociality, hierarchy and kinship are central values within African communities. In contrast to the individualist West, African communities engage heavily with social interactions and group practices, which will be evidenced throughout this essay. Therefore, it is essential to recognise how the external influence of group activities and shared relationships within African societies affect the way in which people(s) identify in relation to notions of dividual, collective, and perceived identity.

SHAPING PERSONAL IDENTITY

I now aim to highlight one of the ways in which ritual practice can contribute to shaping personal identity. Personal identity refers to the way in which a person self-identifies. I shall assess how puberty rituals endow people with altered personal identities.

Firstly, I shall examine the Tswapong mothei puberty ritual in Botswana. The ritual takes place when a girl begins to menstruate. The aim of the mothei is to 'ensure fertility while simultaneously guarding against promiscuity and unwanted pregnancy'.[13] Structurally, the mothei is a complex and timely ritual; it involves a process of seclusion, passivity and then re-

[9] Davies, 2022, p. 38
[10] Haslanger, 2012, p. 39
[11] Ibid., p. 39
[12] Ibid., p. 229
[13] Werbner, 2009, p. 447

inclusion into society over the course of seven days.[14] This ritual follows Van Gennep's liminal process. Firstly, when the girl starts to menstruate, she possesses a dangerous power, namely, her fertility has been signified,[15] and this is the pre-liminal stage. Following, when she enters seclusion and is covered by the blanket the girl is in a passive state, she possesses no determinate status; this is the liminal stage. In her final, post-liminal stage, the girl is reincorporated back into the social group and is endowed with a new social status. The girl 'emerges renewed, purified and feted'.[16] The overall message that has been communicated during this ritual has been to guard oneself against sexual exploration and to find strength within one's fertility.

Overall, the mothei ritual has shaped the participant's personal identity. To illustrate, the girl is now endowed with a sense of autonomy, agency and dignity. Werbner goes further and suggests that the girl is now bestowed with 'self-respect, bodily strength and potency'.[17] Not only this, but the girl has undergone a maturing transformation, she is allowed to identify as a purified woman in contrast to a tabooed child.

To consolidate how puberty rituals can shape one's identity I will now turn to male circumcision rituals that take place in Africa within the Church of Nazarites. The circumcision takes place amongst boys who wish to undergo a 'personal cleansing' and to create a new means of attaining Heaven.[18] A hybrid-circumcision takes place that respects both pre-colonial rites and Israelite biblical teachings.[19] Again, we can evidence Van Gennep's liminal processes throughout the circumcision rites. Before the boy enters the place of operation they possess a pre-liminal status, precisely, they are children. Upon entering the place of operation, the liminal stage is in motion, the boy is statusless. Once the circumcision has taken place, the post-liminal stage is in progress, the boy is now endowed with a new status of manhood.

A similar occurrence has taken place in the male circumcision ritual as it has with the mothei ritual. To begin, the circumcised male has experienced a personal change to their sense of identity, namely they feel purified and cleansed. Secondly, the participant has undergone a metamorphosis, having transformed from boy to man. They will inevitably feel endowed with a stronger sense of responsibility and religious commitment and therefore demonstrates the altered sense of personal identity.

Shaping Collective Identity

This section highlights the effect that ritual practice has upon collective identity. Collective identity relates to how members of a community create means of relating to a group. In essence, to have collective identity is to belong to a group. I shall focus on ancestorship rituals to highlight the power they possess in structuring social hierarchies, in turn affecting collective identity.

Throughout his work McCall argues that ancestors play an integral role in everyday life in Ohafia. He observed that children acquire knowledge on ancestors from an early age, agricultural plots are named after ancestors and much of domestic space is occupied by

[14] Ibid., p. 443
[15] Ibid., p. 451
[16] Ibid., p. 451
[17] Ibid., p. 441
[18] Sithole, 2012, p. 21
[19] Ibid., p. 15

ancestral shrines.[20] It is common in funerary rites to bury male ancestors beneath the floors of the houses and for female ancestors to be 'buried under the floor of their kitchen hut'.[21] The burial places are reflective of the gendered roles adopted by deceased family members. It is in this sense that ancestors remain closely connected to living family members both physically and in memory. In two senses ancestral rituals structure social ordering. Firstly, societies are categorised into gendered orderings. For example, when the women are buried in the kitchen huts a message is communicated, namely, that female duties lie within the domestic space. Secondly, ancestral rituals cosmologically order society. In essence, this means that the spiritual and physical realms are reconciled by integrating the history of the deceased into practices adopted by the living.

Overall, identity is shaped by ancestorship rituals in virtue of their ability to order a collective. Ancestral orderings create clear hierarchies and duties for living family members to adhere to. Living members of the collective are enabled to situate themselves within the cultural hierarchy as to adhere to the structuring of the collective. In turn, this helps people living in Africa to navigate their worldly experiences and how to identify with themselves amongst a collective as to situate themselves appropriately. Relationality is a key concept in this context, as ancestral rituals allow for members of a community to structure themselves in relation to others in the community to create a stable collective. For example, elderly members of the community may identify as possessing more wisdom in relation to the rest of the collective, and therefore demand more respect from others. Alongside this, female members of the community will identify themselves with domestic tasks as to adhere to the shared values and norms that the collective commit themselves to. This example further consolidates how ancestral rituals operate to shape collective identities, precisely by creating social hierarchies.

Shaping Perceived Identity

I will maintain a focus on how ritual practice contributes to shaping an overlooked aspect of identity, specifically perceived identity. I shall contribute ethnographic examples to illustrate how perceived identity is affected by ritual participation across various rituals.

I shall begin with puberty rituals, referring back to the mothei and male circumcision. Firstly, the participant of the mothei ritual is perceived differently by the female community. After the completion of the mothei, the female community now respects the girl's status and incorporates her into their social hierarchy. Werbner asserts that the undergoing change in the girl's identity creates the 'capacity for solidarity among women'.[22] Secondly, the mothei has signalled a change in the perceived identity of the participating girl from the perspective of the male community. Whilst the men do not take part in the ritual they are warned of the girl's taboo liminal status so are aware of her newly established agency, dignity and fertility after the ritual completion. Overall, the mothei ritual has been a catalyst for altering a person's perceived identity by appealing to female empowerment and 'spiritual dignity'.[23]

The circumcised male's perceived identity has additionally changed. The male is now regarded as a 'hero' within the community as they have sacrificed their flesh in order to commit themselves to a religious life.[24] Resultantly, the community views the previously perceived

[20] McCall, 1995, pp. 258-259
[21] Ibid., p. 260
[22] Werbner, 2009, p. 452
[23] Ibid., p. 358
[24] Sithole, 2020, p. 26

child to now be a man who can partake in social activities. Sithole reports that only circumcised and married men can partake in certain church duties, such as slaughtering cows.[25] Interestingly, the circumcision ritual also acts to mediate the physical realm with the spiritual realm. The community has witnessed the person's commitment to attaining a place in Heaven for themselves and their relatives which now allows for the person to be respected and integrated into the rest of society.[26] Conclusively, the circumcision ritual reaffirms a social hierarchy, in which one can situate themselves within based on their perceived identity.

Similarly, I shall examine how birth and naming ritual ceremonies in Nigeria also contribute to shaping perceived identity. Anagwo reports that naming rituals are days dedicated to 'prayers and introduction of the baby into society where they will dwell'.[27] The day includes 'opening prayers, prayers on each of the articles, the names of the child, naming the child, concluding prayer and entertainment'.[28] It is believed the baby has entered the physical world from the spiritual world and bears knowledge on the spiritual world.[29] It is evident from the naming ritual that the perceived identity of the baby has altered, even if the baby may have no sense of identity themselves. This is because the community who initially viewed the baby as a spiritual being have now initiated the baby as a physical being. The naming ritual acts as an initiation into the existing community. It marks the first part of the baby's journey in this world and their integration into society.

Purposely, I have mentioned naming and birth rituals in the latest part of this essay. This is to highlight how much a baby's perceived identity will change in their life, for example they will be perceived to have a different identity when they partake in puberty rituals, to how they are perceived after death. Overall, the identity of the child will change drastically over its life due to their participation in rituals, how they connect with the world and how they interact with others who dwell in the world. Hence, identity is a dynamic, adaptive and dividual phenomena which is significantly changed by African rituals.

Conclusion

I have maintained that ritual has the ability to shape personal, collective and perceived identity, in order to support my central thesis that ritual has significant power to shape identities. To evidence this claim I began by providing an in depth understanding of ritual. This essay highlights that ritual is fundamentally a liminal and therefore transformative process which aims to convey 'truth' as well as to connect individuals, communities and physical and spiritual realms. Supported by Van Gennep, I highlighted that rituals follow a threefold liminal structure that possesses the ability to transform a person's identity. Next, I highlighted the dividual and dynamic nature of identity as supported by the works of Marriott and Davies. However, to provide additional understanding to the concept of identity I drew upon Haslanger's notion of perceived identity.

Following, I evidenced how personal, collective and perceived identity is shaped by ritual participation. Beginning, I examined how puberty rituals affect personal identity. I highlighted that the liminal stages of the rituals allow for children to transform into adults. In turn, bestowing them with a sense of responsibility, purity and maturity. Following, I accessed

[25] Ibid., p. 24
[26] Ibid., p. 18
[27] Anagwo, 2016, p. 60
[28] Ibid., p. 60
[29] Ibid., p. 60

how ancestral ritual contributes to shaping collective identity. This section outlined how ancestral ritual orders communities, precisely by creating gendered social structures as well as a cosmological hierarchy. Finally, I outlined the ways in which puberty and naming rituals shape perceived identity. I demonstrated that rituals allow for a community to perceive the participant in a new, positive way. Cumulatively, I have displayed how identity is a phenomenon that is in constant motion with ritual participation.

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How Significant Is The Wales-England Border In Representing A Societal Delineation?

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The Border Squirms like a snake
Y ffin yn gwingo fel neidr
Safe lands, does it make
Yn gwyneud tiroedd diogel

Along rivers and ancient paths
Ar hyd afonydd a llwybrau hynafol
Hills, mountains and small crags
Bryniau, mynyddoedd a chlogwyni bach

From Connahs Quay to Chepstow
O Gei Connah I Gas-gwent
From Bristol back up to Chester so
O Fryste yn ôl i fyny at Gaer felly

We all live on this land
Yr ydym i gyd yn by war y tir hwn
Neither side have the upper hand
Naill ochr na'r llall yn cael y llaw uchaf

Two nations divided
Dwy genedl wedi'i rannu
By one strong tongue
Gan yn tafod cryf

Border Language (Iaith Ffin), Steven Thomas-Spires

THIS STRIKING POEM chosen from the Places of Poetry Project, itself divided between two languages, highlights the symbolic position the England-Wales border has in the minds of the citizens of both countries as a separation between land, language and lives.[1] But how relevant is this marker for differentiating between the two potential societies? In order to attempt an answer this question, this article will explore a variety of indicators of societal change. Language is posited as the primary differentiator in Thomas-Spires' poem but economic indicators, domestic politics and social welfare can all offer insight into the potential differences across the border. This insight will help determine how appropriate the border is for setting the line of demarcation between the distinctly English, and the distinctly Welsh. In using these factors and applying them geographically, this article argues that distinct cultural differences conform heavily to the 'squirm' of the England-Wales border. Welsh cultural traits like language and religion have stayed strong over centuries throughout most of Wales, despite close contact with the dominating force of England, and the border provides a surprisingly accurate delineator for their cut-off point. Similarly, economic experiences on either side of the

[1] McRae, 2020, p. 34

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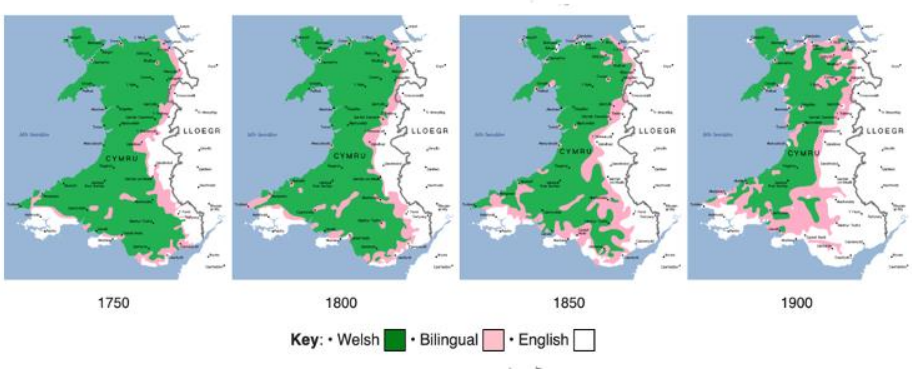
border are quite contrasted, with Wales experiencing greater disadvantage than across the border in England. The significant presence of Plaid Cymru in Wales does differentiate Wales politically from England. However, the rural/urban divide of Conservative and Labour parties is similar in both nations. Although this definitive cultural divide does exist it is if this constitutes a divergence in the societies of the two nations. England and Wales, although being nationally distinct, have been unified for over seven hundred years, and despite the continuing significance of the border demonstrated by this article, it remains the decision of the people to state how important this delineation is.

To effectively analyse the societal difference on either side of the border, it's important first to understand the meaning and composition of a society. Society is generally defined as a large group of people interacting in a defined territory, typically sharing a common culture or political organisation.[2] Therefore, a society contains shared norms and values, as well as shared practices and institutions.[3] The institutional distinction that the border symbolises is clearly stated, with the Welsh Assembly being founded in 1999 as a devolved government for the Welsh people. Legislative powers were granted under the 2006 Government of Wales Act which led to the foundation of the Welsh government as a distinct entity from the Westminster government. This was followed by further devolution with the introduction of a reserved powers model in 2017, giving the now Senedd primary legislative control over all but a few reserved areas of government, the rest being the responsibility of Westminster.[4]

In order to dig further into the potential societal divergence represented by the border, the separation in shared values, norms and practices – or culture – must also be understood than solely both societies' administrative structure. Culture is an incredibly complex and varied concept with a multiplicity of indicators. Language serves as the leading differentiator other than geography;[5] political norms and religious beliefs also act as strong aspects of culture. These differences are also based on a divergence in shared experiences which inform the culture of a society; an area in which economic indicators also become important for demonstrating and explaining a cultural dichotomy. It is this combination of factors that will be applied to the analysis of the border as a representation of a Wales-England social divide. Alternatively, culture and experience may vary too much within Wales for the border to be a definitive symbol of divergence, or by contrast there may be a majority of shared experience and culture across the border, reducing its significance as an emblem of societal divide.

Figure 1: Maps showing the geographical coverage of the Welsh Language between 1750-1900

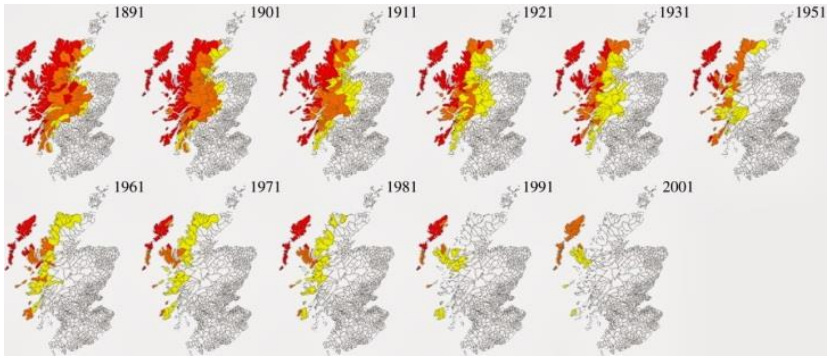


[2] Open Education Sociology Dictionary, 2013
[3] Kymlicka, 2003, pp. 1-2
[4] Senedd Cymru, 2020
[5] Kymlicka, 2003, pp. 1-2

First, the role of language in differentiating between societies on either side of the border will be discussed. The Welsh language has experienced significant decline over the last millennium of mainly English rule, with Henry VIII's act of union establishing governance and administration purely in the English language in 1536.[6] As Figure 1 shows, the encroachment of the English language mainly took place along the border regions where interaction with the English population was more prevalent and there was only a small Welsh population.[7] In areas of commercial interest or importance such as the port and University town of Aberystwyth, monolingual English also became the most widespread language by 1900. Similarly, industrialisation and urbanisation of the South East, supported by English and Irish immigration as well as English administration, also reduced the use of Welsh.[8] The regions of southern Pembrokeshire and the Gower Peninsular were subject to colonisation projects during the Norman conquest, in which Flemish and English immigrants were moved to the area. This displaced Welsh speaking inhabitants, and Figure 1 shows that these regions were monolingually English by 1750. Prior to the Norman conquest, these areas had also been occupied by Viking invaders making colonisation by immigrant communities easier to carry out.[9]

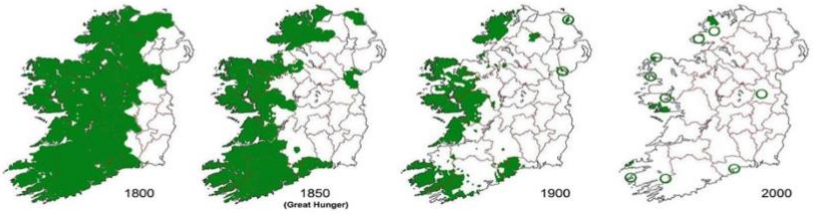
Despite these setbacks, the Welsh language has withstood occupation and suppression remarkably well compared to other native British languages. As shown in figures 2 and 3, Scottish and Irish Gaelic has suffered a far worse degeneration over a far shorter period of history, and the Cornish language becoming totally extinct by the 18th century. Welsh has also shown significant signs of regrowth in the past century, with government efforts to boost the Welsh speaking population and increase general understanding and appreciation of the language across the country, aiming at one million speakers by 2050.[10] Although there is no doubt that Welsh speaking has been threatened in the past, it still remains a central and tangibly prevalent part of Welsh society that can be seen in almost all parts of Wales. Some regions undoubtedly have a reduced population of Welsh speakers, but the impact of the Welsh language can be felt right up to the border with England, making the England-Wales border a relevant tool of linguistic division, and therefore supporting the idea of a societal divide.

Figure 2: Maps showing the decline of Scottish Gaelic between 1891 and 2001



[6] Davies, 2014c
[7] Pryce, 1978, pp. 1-36
[8] Ibid. pp. 1-36; Thomas, 1956
[9] Williams, 1985
[10] Jones, 1998, pp. 24-25

Figure 3: Maps showing the decline of Irish Gaelic between 1800 and 2000



Another essential aspect of culture that encompasses both the values and practices of a society is religion. Welsh religion, and in particular Welsh Christianity, is different to that of English Christianity, and has been significant in producing an individual cultural identity for Wales. A rich history of Celtic Christianity in Wales originating in the 5th century AD[11] helped to establish a religious identity distinct from that of England. After the conquest of Wales in the 13th century and the subsequent imposition of the Church of England in Wales during the reign of Henry VIII, non-conformist movements began to surface in the early modern period.[12] These non-conformist groups rose to prominence in the 18th and 19th centuries to become the majority religion in Wales as demonstrated by figure 4, coming to outnumber Established Church congregations by five to one at the turn of the 20th century.[13][14][15] Non-conformist Christianity was adopted partially because of its embracing of the Welsh language for Christian liturgy. It also opposed the Church of England, which was seen by many as an anglicised, state-controlled form of religious organisation. This history differs greatly from the experiences of much of England, which retained a high amount of devotion to the Established Church, not excluding the border regions with Wales in the West Midlands. There is little cross-over of religious experiences between England and Wales, with the trend of non-conformism being widespread across Wales; favoured in both the poor industrial centres of the south, and the Welsh-speaking agricultural regions of much of the rest of the country. In this respect, the border once again serves as a powerful emblem of division, this time a religious one, between English and Welsh society.

Figure 4: Statistics for the 1851 religious census

1851 Religious census

Of the 898,442 sittings available in Welsh places of worship, the percentages of the various denominations were as follows:

- Established Church 32%
- Calvinistic Methodists 21%
- Congregationalists 20%
- Baptists 13%
- Wesleyans 12%
- Others 2%

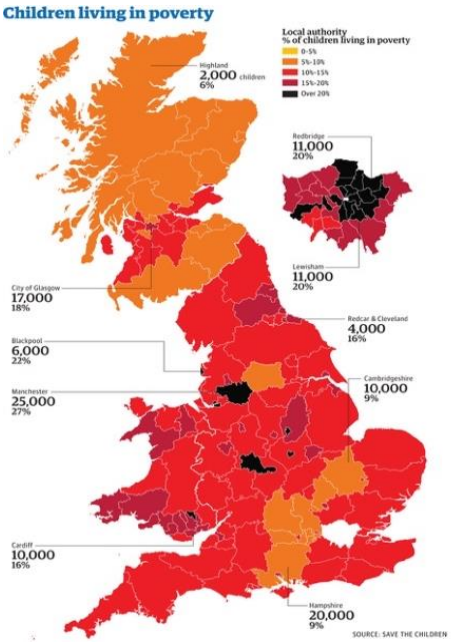
This religious divergence has contributed to several societal differences of practice in Wales, compared to England. The most striking of these is Sabbatarianism, beginning with the introduction of the Sunday Closing Act of 1881 that banned selling alcohol on Sundays throughout the entirety of Wales.[16] This practice persisted as late as 1996 before being extinguished by local referendums. This movement, unlike anything enacted in England in

[11] Davies, 2014a
[12] Morgan, 2009, pp. 22-36
[13] Wilson, 2006, p. 97
[14] Field, 2012, pp. 693-720
[15] Davies, 2014b
[16] Grice, 2020

recent times, has deep connections to non-conformism, in particular Methodism, which strictly denounces the consumption of alcohol. Another notable practice is the revering of several purely Welsh saints, such as Saint David and Saint Dwynwen who are culturally important for a large proportion of Welsh society, unlike more universally venerated saints, or those more connected with England such as St George.

This connection between religion and society can also be seen to flow the other way, with Wales having the largest number of non-believers according to the 2011 census.[17] Combining the factors of definitively separate religious institutions between Wales and England, and the practices and values these inspired within the Welsh population, it is clear that the border once again provides an almost exclusive divide of societal differences.

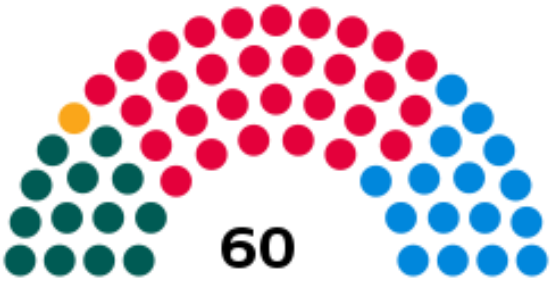
Figure 5: map showing child poverty rates across the UK



Connected to the manifestations of culture that have been discussed so far are the material experiences that potentially underpin them and represent a societal difference. There is undoubtedly variation in economic experiences across both Wales and England, but does the difference between the two constitute a big enough separation to be considered significant? To analyse this, one social factor commonly used is the number of children living in poverty. Figure 5, showing data from a 2008/9 Save The Children study clearly shows a disproportionate number of children living in poverty between England and Wales, with Wales having the highest proportion of Children living in Poverty (14%) of any British nation.[18] However, several regions of England suffer similar or even higher rates of child poverty, suggesting that, as a localised issue, it cannot necessarily be applied to national differences. Another similar statistic denoting quality of life is that of life expectancy. An Office for National Statistics survey of life expectancy in England and Wales (2012–14) shows a clear separation between the life expectancy of the English and Welsh population, with children born in England in 2014 living a year longer on average.[19] These socio-economic indicators demonstrate a clear statistical separation between the inhabitants of England and Wales on average. However, this does not consider geographical wealth inequality within England, meaning that many parts of England experience similar socio-economic conditions as in most of Wales. Despite this, there is undoubtedly a disparity between the realities of the 'average' Welsh and English citizen that is likely to contribute to a societal divide along the border.

[17] Office for National Statistics, 2011
[18] Guardian, 2011
[19] Office for National Statistics, 2015

Figure 6: Graphic showing the seat distribution of the Senedd: Labour (red), Conservative (Blue), Plaid Cymru (Green), Liberal Democrat (amber)



The most overt manifestation of a population's cultural and societal values is their democratic political representation. therefore, here I will study the politics of Wales, compared to England, to discern a societal difference. The Labour party in Britain owes much of its roots to Wales, the country where it was founded in 1900, with the Welsh town of Merthyr Tydfil electing Keir Hardie, the first Labour MP. From this beginning, Labour has subsequently become a potent force in British politics, and one of the two major parties in the current parliamentary session. Throughout the years, Labour has been influenced by its Welsh connections but remains a party representing all of the UK, as well as constituting the majority of Welsh parliamentary seats for the last hundred years, being most popular in the urban industrialised south. In this case, Wales shows significant unity with England across the border, as they both share significant support for the same political party, despite its uniquely Welsh origins. The popularity of Labour in poorer, urban regions of England mirrors that of Wales. A similar trend is found in support for the Conservative party in Wales and England, as it is more popular in rural, and in some cases wealthier, regions of both England and Wales. However, a divergence with the English experience of Conservative support is that it is not favoured in the Welsh speaking rural regions of Wales. This distinction is surprisingly accurate, perhaps best portrayed by the conservative seat of Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire, and Plaid Cymru seat of Carmarthen East and Dinefwr. Both are similarly rural but are separated by a defined linguistic division of the Lansker line, a line dividing the English-speaking south and Welsh-speaking north of the counties.[20] The presence of Plaid Cymru itself, coming a close third in popularity in Wales, with 16.5% of the popular vote in the most recent local elections, constitutes the greatest political difference between Wales and England.[21] The party upholds specifically Welsh issues and aims for further devolution and independence from the UK government. The significant support the party, and the idea of independence, garnered from the Welsh public is completely alien to anything experienced politically in England. However, overall, the Welsh and English populations identify with the same political causes. The politics on each side of the border represent more societal unity than division, indicating that the border is a less relevant delineator of political division.

To conclude, this essay has demonstrated a multiplicity of factors that suggest the England-Wales border is a salient tool of societal delineation. A significant divergence in culture on either side of the border is evident, with the presence of the Welsh language and

[20] John, 1972, pp. 7-29.
[21] Electoral Commission, 2019

significant differences in religious practices suggesting a separation in values, as well as divided cultural symbols that support this view. This difference is also underpinned by a distinct dichotomy in socio-economic experiences between England and Wales, with Wales experiencing higher levels of deprivation and lower economic development than England. As zoomorphised in Thomas-Spires poem, the border remains an alive and ever-changing emblem of 'two nations divided'.[22] Nevertheless, as the poem suggests, whether the border constitutes a genuine concrete societal divide is unclear. Perhaps the most important factor in deciding this is the conviction of the populations in each country. Wales currently stands divided on whether it feels part of the same society or not, with a 2021 poll reporting 39% in support of independence from England.[23] This decision may indeed change with time, but the question of whether there is a societal delineation between England and Wales will always be one to be decided by the people of both nations.

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[22] McRae, 2020, p. 34
[23] ITV, 2021

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How Judith Butler, Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser Theorise Individual Agency Within the Framework of Gender Identity

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> 'If gender is a kind of doing, an incessant activity performed, in part, without one's knowing and without one's willing, it is not for that reason automatic or mechanical. On the contrary, it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint'
>
> – Judith Butler.[1]

THIS ARTICLE FOCUSES on how literary studies theorise gender identity. It will analyse how the three literary theorists – Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, and Louis Althusser – understand identity formation. The opposing stance that (i) gender identity is static because it is pre-determined by biology or (ii) is fluid by being moulded by social conventions, will be debated.

Recently, discussions surrounding biological gendered identity have surfaced after the publication of Dr Kathleen Stock's book, *Material Girls.* The gender-critical feminist critiques the theory that gender identity is influenced by social environments over one's biological sex. Rather, biological sex is concrete and immutable; whilst trans identity is an 'immersive fiction'. Trans-rights protestors marched their way through Oxford, the city in which Stock delivered a speech at the Oxford Union. They carried signs with the words 'trans women are real women' and glued their hands to the floor during the talk.[2] This event confirms the importance of discussing gender identity, particularly at a time when gender fluidity is the crux of many discussions in today's society.

To look at how subject formation is theorised, Butler's theory of gender performativity will be first analysed. This theory suggests that because the body exists prior to subjection, gender binaries can be deconstructed through performatives. This allows one to construct their own gender identity free from conventions. This counteracts Stock's argument that gender binaries are fixed, and thus, unchangeable. This will be supported by Foucault's theory of subjectification. He claims that subjects can determine their sexuality, and thus, validates Butler's belief that one has individual agency to destabilise heteronormative ideology. However, these two theories will be counteracted by Althusser's theory of interpellation. He endorses Stock's characterisation of identity, suggesting that because subjection forms subjects, the body cannot exist prior to subjection. Yet, this essay will unite Butler and

[1] Butler, 2004, p. 1
[2] Turner, 2023

Critique, vol. MMXXIII, nos. 1–2, pp. 23–29.

Foucault's theories with Althusser's theory. This will be done through Foucault's panoptic power analogy that suggests subjects can control their subjection. Thus, identity is open to change because gender can be freely 'performed' even if this performance operates within 'a scene of constraint'.

Firstly, Butler's theory of gender performativity will be analysed. She challenges the notion of a subject's 'permeability being politically regulated' because gender binaries are maintained through performatives.[3] Butler believes that gender is not a 'natural fact',[4] namely that one is not born a gender, but rather that one becomes a gender through 'constrained cultural performances'.[5] This is because gender identity is formed via performative re-enactments. She argues that individuals are performative materialisations of ideology as heterosexual norms are re-enacted, and so, there is a 'body prior to inscription' that allows one to 'perform gender'.[6] This suggests that an autonomous body exists before being inscribed with heteronormative ideology as 'the terms that make up gender […] are outside oneself'.[7] This 'outside' placement of gender allows one to consciously 'will' a performance that challenges this 'inscribed' ideology. Butler utilises Young's categorisation of the 'inner and outer worlds of the subject' to illustrate this.[8] The 'inner' is a body's biological sex and the 'outer' is the enactment of traits associated with biology. The 'inner must become the outer' for 'identity-differentiation',[9] namely the formation and regulation of gender binaries. Hence, if one possesses the 'inner' biology of a female, they must perform conventional 'outer' feminine traits. This 'casual unity' is deemed a pre-conditioned necessity.[10] Young's concept of iterability applies to Butler's theory. Butler shows that 'inner and outer' boundaries are united via repetitions as performatives become citations, that is, repeated actions. She reveals that these repeated performances 'facilitate and articulate' gender binaries which creates the illusion that gender is 'natural and necessary'.[11] In turn, the expectation to maintain a gender binary can be 'resignified and recontextualised' through citationality.[12] This allows a body to act upon its individual agency: no longer do bodies have to align their 'inner' biology with their 'outer' performance. Rather, a body's biological sex does not determine performance, and thus, the 'reconstruction' of heterosexual norms is possible.[13] This shows that performatives can destabilise the normalised unity between 'inner and outer' boundaries, allowing bodies to express heterosexual performances. As this conclusion relies on Butler's belief in the existence of the body prior to 'inscription' – where the body is imagined as awaiting instructions to perform hegemonic performatives – the 'outside' location of the body is necessary for the deconstruction of gender binaries.[14] This allows one to perform their 'own ostensible construction'.[15] Hence, as Butler imagines individual agency through 'performative re-enactments', she counteracts Stock's belief in the fixed link between gender and biology.

[3] Butler, 2018, p. 2387
[4] Ibid., p. 2376
[5] Ibid., p. 2376
[6] Ibid., p. 2379
[7] Butler, 2004, p. 1
[8] Butler, 2018, p. 2382
[9] Ibid., p. 2382
[10] Ibid., p. 2386
[11] Ibid., p. 2374; p. 2386
[12] Ibid., p. 2386
[13] Ibid., p. 2385
[14] Butler, 2004, p. 1
[15] Butler, 1989, pp. 601–607

Rather, because 'gender is a fantasy',[16] performatives are not 'mechanical', but are freely 'willed' through performative protest.

However, as Butler theorises individual agency via her belief that the 'body is distinct from construction',[17] this raises the question of whether it is true that the body exists prior to 'inscription'. Here, Foucault's theory of subjectification is useful. He reveals that regardless of whether the body is dependent upon or interdependent on cultural 'construction', this process can be deconstructed through performance. His study of sexuality discusses the 'materiality' of the body,[18] where he enquires whether 'sex' supports the manifestation of sexuality or is an idea formed inside the deployment of sexuality'.[19] Here, he questions whether one's biology determines their sexuality, namely if one's 'inner' biology determines one's 'outer' sexuality – a take that Stock endorses – or whether 'outer' sexuality is determined through actions associated with conventional gendered traits. The former suggests that bodies have agency to change their 'presumptive heterosexuality',[20] whilst the latter proposes that bodies can 'will' their sexuality by deconstructing the alignment of the 'inner and outer' boundary. Here, the notions of subjection and subjectivity are separated. Essentially, if the body is 'politically shaped',[21] one is subjected to ruling ideologies that determine sexuality; yet, if the body is not 'politically shaped', one 'wills' their sexuality. This aligns with Butler's theory that gender is an 'activity performed'. By claiming that sexuality is 'organised by power',[22] he suggests that sexual norms are inextricably tied to power. Thus, what is categorised as normal and abnormal behaviour within society is determined through power discourses. However, Foucault rather claims that 'sex' is merely an 'ideal […] made necessary by the deployment of sexuality'.[23] This suggests that 'sex' is not necessary for the relationship between power and sexuality. Rather, he claims that 'sex' is an 'imaginary point determined by the deployment of sexuality'.[24] This implies that one's 'inner' biological sex does not determine their 'outer' sexuality, but that sexuality determines biological sex. When applied to Butler's theory of gender performativity, this suggests that 'performative acts' are not fixed by 'natural facts'.[25] Namely, a body's 'natural' biological sex does not determine gender, but rather one has agency to 'perform' a gender not 'determined by cultural binary distinctions'.[26] Thus, Foucault challenges the relationship between sex, sexuality, and power. Although 'sex' is an 'internal element' of the body's 'materiality',[27] a statement that Stock would agree with, it remains that this cultural construction is 'imaginary'. Therefore, one can act on their body prior to 'inscription' and 'perform' gender identity.

However, whilst Foucault reveals that 'socially established'[28] norms can be deconstructed regardless of whether 'the body is culturally constructed',[29] Stock's belief in the fixed nature of identity remains. This is because the 'cultural construction' of the body does

[16] Butler, 2018, p. 2385
[17] Butler, 1989, p. 601
[18] Foucault, 1978, p. 155
[19] Ibid., p. 152
[20] Butler, 2018, p. 2376
[21] Ibid., p. 2376
[22] Foucault, 1978, p. 155
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Butler, 2018, p. 2378
[26] Ibid., p. 2374
[27] Foucault, 1978, p. 155
[28] Butler, 2018, p. 2387
[29] Butler, 1989, p. 602

limit individual agency. This is best explained by considering Althusser's theory of interpellation. He states all individuals are 'interpellated subjects',[30] believing that subjects are formed through the process of interpellation. This is when ideological values are encountered and internalised. This process 'endows' ideology 'with material existence' by being translated into social practices,[31] which he names 'dominant Ideological State Apparatus'.[32] These sustain power discourses that shape identity, and thus, ideology must be naturalised within the body to form a subject. He proposes that because subjects cannot exist without ideology, bodies are formed post interpellation as 'individuals are already subjects'.[33] This is because there is no body prior to subjection: 'there are no subjects except their subjection'.[34] Althusser defines ideology as the 'imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence',[35] and reveals that subjection is necessary for the continuation of the 'existence' of a subject as 'the existence of ideology and the interpellation of individuals as subjects are the same thing'.[36] Here, Althusser suggests that ideology and subject formation become co-dependent. This is because without subjects, ideology cannot have 'material existence',[37] and without ideology, subjects are never formed. He exposes the 'ambiguity of the subject' here: one is simultaneously 'responsible for their actions' but is 'stripped of freedom except of freely accepting submission'.[38] This suggests that submitting to the ruling ideology paradoxically enables resistance. Essentially, subjection forces one to depend upon power, where this dependence paradoxically sustains individual agency as 'subordination is central to becoming a subject'.[39] If this follows, then a subjective identity is only achieved via subjection as interpellation forms a subject's identity, and therefore, 'power precedes the subject' as power forms a subject.[40] This suggests that subjects and ideology cannot be separated as 'submission is paradoxically marked by mastery'.[41]

When this idea is applied to Butler's gender performativity theory, it suggests that the regulation of heteronormative ideology, namely the 'casual unity' between 'inner and outer' boundaries,[42] must be 'mechanical' when bodies are 'regulated' by ideology.[43] This counteracts Butler's belief that 'the body is a blank page available for inscription' through the 'writing instrument of cultural significations'.[44] Here, the body relies on 'inscription' for its existence, and so, gender binaries cannot be deconstructed when 'performative acts' are 'interpellated' into bodies. It holds that the 'self-conscious practices through practices of liberation are constrained by the context the subject acts'.[45] This follows that the 'self-conscious' effort to resist ruling ideology is 'constrained' by the subject's 'interpellated' status. Hence, Althusser

[30] Althusser, 2018, p. 1306
[31] Ibid., p. 1303
[32] Ibid., p. 1297
[33] Ibid., p. 1307
[34] Davis, 2012, p. 887
[35] Althusser, 2018, p. 1300
[36] Ibid., p. 1306
[37] Ibid., p. 1302
[38] Ibid., p. 1310
[39] Butler, 1997, p. 7
[40] Ibid., p. 13
[41] Ibid., p. 116
[42] Butler, 2018, p. 2386
[43] Ibid., p. 2387
[44] Butler, 1989, p. 603
[45] Youdell, 2006, p. 517

challenges Butler and Foucault's theories of individual agency, suggesting that the process of interpellation constrains one from deconstructing gender norms, rendering identity immutable.

However, although Althusser suggests that individual agency is unattainable due to a subject's 'interpellated' status, arguably, ideology can still be deconstructed within this 'constraint'. Let us consider Butler's question: 'how can we think of resistance in terms of reiteration?'.[46] She enquires whether gender binaries can be resisted through performatives, whereby repeated actions simultaneously endorse and subvert ideology. Butler claims that 'agency precedes the power by which it is enabled'.[47] This suggests that individual agency overrides the power of ideology that 'enables' subjects to exercise their 'agency'. When comparing the powers of the subject and ideology – where the 'power that enacts the subject' conflicts with the 'power enacted by the subject' – Butler holds that the 'subject's own power' overpowers the process of interpellation. This is because although 'no subject comes into being without power', subjects sustain ideology. Essentially, as the 'casual unity' between the 'inner and outer' is maintained through 'reiteration' which reinforces the power of gender binaries,[48] the subject remains 'the site of repetitions'.[49] She argues that these 'repetitions' are not 'static' but are instead 'active'.[50] This allows subjects to freely sustain power discourses through their 'non-mechanical' performatives.[51] Butler reveals that because subjects have the agency to repeatedly perform actions that sustain ideology, this agency also allows them to subvert ideology, and thus, the choice to maintain or resist ideology. This coincides with Foucault's conception of power. He uses Bentham's Panopticon as an analogy for the omnipresence of power that allows subjects to freely regulate and 'normalise their bodily movements'.[52] The panoptic tower structure means the inmates are under 'constant surveillance' and is a system where although the inmates 'are seen', they 'do not see'. This means that despite being surveyed, they never see their surveyor. Foucault argues that this allows 'a state of […] permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power'.[53] This is because 'bars, chains, and locks' are not required to regulate inmates due to this 'field of permanent visibility',[54] meaning the prisoners become 'the principle of their own subjection'.[55] Here, Foucault suggests that because the power of surveillance has become 'normalised',[56] this normalised control does not subjugate the inmates, but rather brings about the conditions for their subversion. The subject becomes 'the guarantor of its resistance'.[57] When this analogy is applied to Butler's theory of gender performativity, it suggests 'normalised' gender ideology can be 'undone'. This is because a subject is 'responsible for the constraints of power',[58] namely, that they can resist the very power that constrains them. Whilst Foucault endorses Althusser's theory of interpellation here as 'the disciplinary apparatus produces subjects' that renders the 'inmate's individuality', [59] this interpellation allows subjects to 'subvert the

[46] Butler, 1997, p. 12
[47] Ibid., p. 15
[48] Butler, 2018, p. 2386
[49] Butler, 1997, p. 16
[50] Ibid., p. 16
[51] Ibid., p. 16
[52] Ibid., p. 85
[53] Foucault, 1995, p. 201
[54] Ibid., p. 202
[55] Ibid., p. 203
[56] Butler, 1997, p. 85
[57] Ibid., p. 14
[58] Foucault, 1995, p. 202
[59] Butler, 1997, p. 100; p. 85

apparatus' that 'constitutes' their 'individuality'.[60] This suggests that one has individual agency to resist the subjection that forms their status as a subject. Thus, gender binaries can be deconstructed regardless of this 'constraint'.

Therefore, the ways Butler, Foucault, and Althusser theorise individual agency counteract Stock's belief that biological sex is concrete and immutable. Rather, gender can be freely performed within 'a scene of constraint' regardless of how a subject is formed. Butler and Foucault both endorse the existence of the body prior to 'construction', and thus, theorise identity as a dynamic concept that can be deconstructed. However, Althusser argues that because subjects are formed by interpellation, one cannot resist the very ideology that constitutes their body. Yet, this essay unites these theories of identity via Foucault's panoptic power analogy. As a subject can become the agent of their subjection, it follows that performatives can operate 'within a scene of constraint' when this 'constraint' is necessary for gaining a subjective identity.

Thus, identities can be altered regardless of biological determinations, a freeing idea that supports current identity movements. Take the Durham Pride Celebrations. Here, the LGBTQ+ community and supportive allies celebrate the diversity of gender identity, a proof that identity is dynamic. Among thousands other movements, these pride events celebrate identity fluidity and promote equality and acceptance for all those in the LGBTQ+ community. These events materialise Butler's theory of the changeability of identity. They confirm that gender is not fixed by biology but is 'a kind of doing', that is, a 'performance' that anyone and everyone can 'will'.

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[60] Ibid., p. 100; Davis, 2012 p. 887

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Unmooring Blackness: Fanon In South African Coloniality and Post-Coloniality

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FANON'S ANTICOLONIAL POLITICS still resonate heavily within post-apartheid South Africa due to the persistence of coloniality within the state. This essay's core assumption is that South Africa since 1994 exists in a post-colonial state; derived from a Fanonian reading of colonialism which posits the process to be an encounter between settler and native, defined by violence, that creates separate zones of life.[1] Alongside this, I will also assume Fanonian pedagogy to be a political act – the principal step towards decolonisation.

In this essay, I shall explore Fanon's concept of the Two Zones and how it has been reformatted in the post-colonial space; through a haunting of white provenances in the policies of the post-colonial regime. From this, I will argue that decolonial activists in the post-colonial state must re-understand the settler-native dialectic as a process that cannot be synthesised away, but rather, must be negated. From this, I seek to demonstrate that the discourses and praxis undertaken by Azania House constitute a true Fanonian moment in the state – hence proving the continued resonance and vitality of Fanon's anticolonial thought.

THE TWO ZONES IN COLONIALITY AND POST-COLONIALITY

Fanon argues that the colonial world is a Manichean one that splits the settler and native into Two Zones of life.[2] These zones create 'two species' that are materially and psychologically distinct.[3]

During the colonial situation, these separate spaces exist in a state of 'reciprocal exclusivity' where each is 'superfluous' to the other.[4] The settler, as the dominant species, dehumanises the native, transforming them into the antithetical reflection of the settler. This reality creates a comparison,[5] where the native defines themselves through the 'white man's values'.[6]

The Two Zones of 'stone and steel' nestled between 'crouching villages' have continued into post-coloniality.[7] In essence, the post-apartheid compromise resulted in the reformatting of the settler species into a heterogenous class of black and white. This has been

[1] Fanon, 1963
[2] Ibid., p. 38
[3] Ibid., p. 40
[4] Ibid., p. 39
[5] Fanon, 1986, p. 211
[6] Fanon, 1963, p. 43
[7] Ibid., p. 39

Critique, vol. MMXXIII, nos. 1–2, pp. 31–40.

achieved through the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy which has multiplied the black bourgeois tenfold subsuming them into the settler species.[8]

The BEE emerged in the 1997 Green Paper on Public Procurement Reform with a vision to unify state, private sector and civil society under a common aim to 'generate economic wealth'.[9] This early formation of the policy stressed 'reconstruction' and 'integration' as the two pillars by which apartheid could be negated.[10] The application of the BEE has been heavily inspired by 'industry charters' that sought to increase the black share-hold of key industries.[11] One such case is the petroleum industry charter, introduced in 2000, that implemented a ten year plan for achieving 25% black ownership of the industry.[12]

At face-Fanonian-value, the BEE is easily dismissed as an explicit example of comparison in its replicating of white avenues to success. However, more pointedly the policy has some direct historical precedence within the settler politics of the apartheid colonial state. Namely, the BEE shares an ontological likeness to the National Party's Volkskapitalisme project.[13] This policy emerged to provide a middle-passage for the poor settlers in South Africa between 'Jewish bosses' and trade unionism.[14] Its aim was to 'foster an Afrikaner capitalist class' through loans, economic empowerment and access to capital.[15] As with the BEE, it focused on granting its chosen community greater share over key industries, like mining, which rose from 1% ownership by Afrikaners in 1949 to 22% by 1960.[16]

The Fanonian critique of policies such as the BEE stem from its reappropriation of white epistemological solutions to black decolonial issues, an affirmation in the native of the 'supremacy of the white man's values'.[17] As such, the BEE re-entrenches the Two Zones of coloniality by constraining itself solely within the settler thesis -ignoring the antithetical native. The policy does not transcend the colonial dialectic, but rather, moves back through it. As such, rather than an escape from coloniality, the BEE reinforces it by subsuming the upper-strata of the native population into the settler, through capital accumulation, enacting a process whereby the native's success is conditional to replication of the norms of the settler. In essence, the BEE holds a mirror up to the native that shows him resplendent in all the material and spiritual finery of the settler and claims this image sets him free.[18]

The BEE has failed to psychologically liberate the black middle-classes because it tied success to the replication of whiteness – a comparison.[19] Due to this, many of the 'born frees' feel disenfranchised as their only root to 'success' is one that negates their identity. One area in which the BEE has proven most ineffective is the symbolic core of social-mobility, the University, with only 15% of undergrads completing their degrees.[20] This stems in large part from the post-racial mythologising within the institution. An example of this is the 2014 statement released by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town (UCT) in response

[8] Businesstech, 2013
[9] African National Congress, 1994
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ponte et al., 2007
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Fanon, 1963, p. 43
[18] Fanon, 1986
[19] Gibson, 2011, p. 121
[20] Gibson, 2016

to two separate racist attacks by white students of the university against black workers. Pierce responded to the 'allegations' – as he is quick to call them – by stressing the need to act 'fairly' and not in 'haste' lest the student-cum-settler be 'unfairly' castigated.[21] The piece is loaded with allusions to the progressive politics of BEE-conditioned rainbow politics, yet, refuses to wrestle with the notion that this institution may play any part in the conditioning of the settler values underlying the racist attack.[22] Most disgustingly, Pierce states that it would be 'unfair' to paint the whole university institution as racist because it may paint all white students with 'the same brush' which he supposes is 'in itself a form of racism'.[23] In taking this position, Pierce affirms the insipidity of the settler in post-coloniality, which constantly atomises examples of colonialities persistence by focusing upon an individualised subject. As such, he represents the broad trend within South African higher education towards a mythologised present divorced from South Africa's colonial history.[24]

As shown, Fanon's theory of the Two Zones still resonates to post-colonial South Africa. The post-apartheid compromise has reformatted the zones rather than remove them. ANC policies such as the BEE have enacted a material comparison of blackness into whiteness. This has resulted in the integration of natives into the settler zone, reinforcing the colonial separations of the state.[25]

As such, whilst legal 'equality' may have been achieved. The institutions, norms and psychology of South Africa remains a reflection of the 'white-values' of the pre-1994 state; leaving most natives still peering over the fence into the colonial zones of life.[26]

This situation has given rise to new questions for the post-apartheid 'born frees':

(1) How can you construct black consciousness if blackness exists inside of whiteness?

(2) 'What does it mean to decolonise our minds?'[27]

Black Consciousness and Fanon

Black Consciousness rose to prominence within the apartheid state during the 1960s, spearheaded by its most prominent intellectual leader – Steve Biko. To Biko, the creation of a black identity was not 'a matter of pigmentation […] [it] is a reflection of a mental attitude'.[28] As such, to proclaim oneself as black during coloniality is a to start upon 'a road towards emancipation' the first, crucial step in decolonial liberation.[29]

One crucial discussion that was important to Biko was identifying what the origin of blackness was, in essence asking, Why is black? Like Fanon, Biko identified the racial division of coloniality to emanate from a positioning of whiteness atop black creating within them an identity – both material and psychological – as 'have-nots'.[30] This stemmed from the racial zoning of coloniality that synthesised the economic substructure into the socio-racial

[21] Pierce, 2014
[22] oNe StAB, 2015a
[23] Pierce, 2014
[24] RMF writing & education sub-committees, 2015
[25] Gibson, 2016; Huchzermeyer, 2009
[26] Fanon, 1963, p. 41
[27] oNe StAB, 2015b
[28] Biko, 1987, p. 48
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., p. 50; See pp. 100–102

superstructure, turning cause into consequence: ‘You are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich’.[31]

Ontologically, both Biko and Fanon were inspired by a Hegelian framework. Biko, for example, saw the process of ‘social revolution’[32] in South Africa to proceed through contestation between the immovable thesis of ‘white racism’ and the unstoppable anti-thesis of ‘ipso facto’ solidarity of blackness.[33] This would result in a new ‘modus vivendi’[34] a ‘balance’[35] created by the fact that eventually ‘somewhere along the line someone will be forced [to change]’.[36]

Due to the synthesis of sub-superstructure in coloniality, blackness became defined solely in its relation to whiteness. As such, Fanon – and Biko – saw the construction of a black identity to be an imperative anticolonial task that would produce a ‘mental picture of action’.[37] This was the first step of the anticolonial struggle in which the native became an ‘original idea propounded as an absolute’.[38] Put simply, constructing black identity was paramount and only possible through negating its relationship to whiteness.

Post-colonial South Africa’s mystification of the Two Zones through policies such as the BEE has not negated the white-black dialectic. Rather, it has subsumed sections of blackness into whiteness. Fanonian scholars like Mbembe have identified this to stem from South Africa being a post-revolutionary society where the oppressors lost nothing.[39] As such, the reality of post-coloniality in the state is one of subsumption rather than negation of the colonial dialectic. Therefore, the Fanonian imperative to understand black remains, most cogently found within the Fanonian work of Biko.[40]

Fanonian critiques of South African post-coloniality as a substitution of black into white are explored by Mbembe in his essay ‘Exorcise our white ghosts’. This piece critiques the post-1994 policies for having resulted in little more than ‘whiteness having claimed us’.[41] As such, there is still an urgent need for the decolonial movement as it exists in its current ‘psychic state’.[42]

To Mbembe, the task of this moment is to attempt to move beyond the colonial relationship and understand the Fanonian assumption that ‘whiteness has become this accursed part of ourselves’.[43] To rectify this, anticolonial politics should seek to create ‘new social forms’[44] and imaginaries of blackness that present it as more than just the ‘suffering subject’ of whiteness – a Fanonian imperative to negate black as contingent on white.[45]

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[31] Fanon, 1963, p. 40
[32] Biko, 1987, p. 90
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., p. 51
[35] Ibid., p. 90
[36] Ibid., p. 51
[37] Fanon, 1963, p. 40
[38] Ibid., p. 41
[39] Mbembe, 2015a
[40] Biko, 1987, pp. 48–55; 87–120
[41] Mbembe, 2015a
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.

Therefore, the necessity to foment a black consciousness remains an imperative. As a response to this many 'born frees' have begun to show a renewed interest in the crucially important work of Steve Biko.[46]

Biko explains black consciousness to be a 'realisation' by which blackness rallies around 'the cause of their operation', namely, 'their skin'[47]. Writing before the post-apartheid compromise, Biko saw the final 'harmony' between white-black to be possible solely through the dialectical unfolding of de-colonialisation creating a 'viable synthesis' of both communities.[48] To Biko, this new world would only be possible once black people do not 'regard themselves as appendages to white society'.[49]

However, for the new generation of post-colonial black activists. The notion of the synthesis of white-black is a provable failure,[50] driven by the ANC's compromise with whiteness. As such, the emerging generation of black thinkers have begun to posit that the dialectic cannot be synthesised away, but rather, must be negated.[51]

An example of the contemporary enacting of these new anticolonial responses to post-coloniality can be seen in Azania House – the spatial zenith of the decolonial student movement.[52] This occupied space was an important incubator for contemporary black thought, a transformative space within which blackness was 'removed from the white gaze'.[53]

Azania House represented the Fanonian imperative to decolonise both the mind and material.[54] To Fanon, this was the crucial first step towards the liberation of the colonised – as only when free of the 'nihilistic' dialectic of white-black could the latter be truly emancipated.[55]

Applying Fanon: Azania and Black Pain

Fanon identified the degeneration of decolonial movements to stem from hierarchies that transform the 'Spoilt children of yesterday's colonialism [into] today's national governments'.[56] To Fanon, this tragedy resulted from the epistemologically-haunting nature of western values within decolonial movements.[57]

Fanon suggested that these entrenched values could be moved past through engaging the colonised consciousness. This could be achieved through the liturgical acts of popular education that liberated the native to 'discover a landscape […] in keeping with human dignity'.[58] A process by which to organically construct horizontal pedagogical methods of thought production that allowed the native to bypass colonialities' tight-grip on him, a 'privileged occasion given to a human being to listen and to speak'.[59] Fanon believed that it

[46] Gibson, 2016
[47] Biko, 1987, p. 49
[48] Ibid., p. 51
[49] Ibid.
[50] Gibson, 2016; Mbembe, 2015b
[51] Ramadwa, 2015
[52] Sebambo, 2015
[53] Ibid.
[54] Fanon, 1963, pp. 58–61
[55] Gibson, 2016
[56] Fanon, 1963, p. 48
[57] Ibid., p. 42
[58] Ibid., p. 195
[59] Ibid.

was through these horizontal pedagogical forms that black knowledge and consciousness could be constructed through a negation of epistemologically western knowledge and pedagogy.[60]

The Fanonian liturgical act was a crucial anticolonial practice during the occupation of Azania House. This space demarcated itself from whiteness to construct a 'True Liberatory University'.[61] The application of Fanonian pedagogy transformed the site into one where black people could discuss themselves and mobilise to 're-engineer society'.[62] Azania House applied these pedagogical forms by constructing spaces with 'no head of the room, no centre, no spatial hierarchy'.[63] Crucially, this horizontality was applied within its understanding of the institutionally striated hierarchies of thought present in the university space. It sought to bring academics, undergrads, and university workers together as intellectual equals, eschewing the norms of intellectual superiority that reflect colonial pedagogy and can easily give way to a retrenchment of the settler's values and manners of thought. In doing this, the occupation was able to negate whiteness from blackness by creating 'spatial safety' outside of the pathologized zones of institutionally-colonial universities.[64] Because of this, Azania House became a site of negation, with black existing independent of white.

The discussions within Azania House were incredibly varied and covered a wide-range of topics; an example of this was the discussion of black pain.[65] This phrase symbolised the exploration of the university space as a site of 'self-definition' that due to the 'stench of colonialism' ostracised black students from defining themselves.[66]

The ever-present stink of coloniality in such a crucial site of identity creation was examined to its fullest during the occupation. For example, oNe StAB discusses the initial instance of coloniality they witnessed during their orientation week. Namely, they were fortunate enough to encounter an all-male accommodation's hazing ceremony chant.[67] This ceremony, chocked full of sexist language, was oddly reminiscent of the 'sporting culture at white private and model C schools' – the pedagogic heart of South Africa's settler species in coloniality and post-coloniality.[68] Witnessing this display shocked the newly arrived student, demarcating the institutionalised space as one where coloniality was not only tolerated but proudly chanted out loud in the middle of the day.

This, and instances like it, are crucial because they confront a student with 'the dominant value system of the institution'.[69] They are forced to react to it and 'decide how they will define themselves' in relation to it.[70] For black students, this initial wrestling with an entrenched culture that excludes them foists upon them an additional uncertainty during the crucially formative years of university. As such, not only must they personally wrestle with their internal identity, they must also wrestle with their externally demarcated identity as black. Due to this, the university becomes a site of constant confrontation with the dominant values of the settler. Because of this, familiarity in the institutional space is conditional and unstable for black students as their pain and discomfort is ignored and reinforced. Accounts like this

[60] Ibid., pp. 195–196
[61] Sacks, 2015
[62] Daniel & Miller, 2022
[63] Sacks, 2015
[64] Sebambo, 2015
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] oNe StAB, 2015a
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.

one, and many others, became crucial focal points for understanding the colonised experience of the university; fostering the initial impetus towards exploring the realities of Black Pain. Black pain became a 'cathartic' and sobering discussion within Azania House, creating a unified identity based in 'lived experience' outside of the 'white gaze' that treats the phenomena as 'black hypochondria'.[71]

Azania House's discussion of black pain became a site of contestation for black scholars. With some scholars critiquing the discourse as self-indulgent, overly subjective and a misapplication of Fanon's native-settler dialectic.[72]

However, as previously explored, South Africa today exists in a new situation where the post-colonial compromise reformatted the Two Zones of life. No longer do white and black exist as perfect thesis and anti-thesis, rather they have seen some degree of merger – due in part to ANC policies such as the BEE. However, these have not ended the psychological harm of whiteness on blackness but have rather unmoored it, as such, blackness now exists alone. Therefore, when Mbembe argues that the 'Other is our origin by definition',[73] he is correct. However, as a result of the changes to South Africa in its transformation into post-coloniality this origin point is no longer a constant.

The BEE has resulted in the merging of the species. The unified cause-consequence of coloniality has been split, with whiteness no longer existing as a totalising thesis upon which a black anti-thesis is constructed. Rather, post-coloniality in South Africa has unmoored blackness, a fact most visible in the 'post-racial' claims of Rainbow politics.[74] Therefore, Azania House's negation of the colonial dialectic where black is anti-thesis is not 'self-indulgent' but rather transgressive.[75] This transgression of the colonial dialectic is a product of the post-coloniality of South Africa and Azania House's refutation of the 'external forces' of whiteness.[76]

Fanonian scholars have also critiqued black pain's negation of the dialectic to be distinctly anti-Fanonian.[77] However, at its best, Azania House was a clear example of the resonance of Fanon's anticolonial politics in contemporary South Africa. It was a practical application of the liturgical act of education to the context it existed within. As such, Azania House is a metonymic example of the 'bubbling trepidation from which knowledge will emerge'.[78] This new knowledge was created through a mobilisation of Fanonian pedagogical frameworks, in essence, Azania House mobilised African pedagogy to create African knowledge. In doing so, it constructed an idea of blackness independent of coloniality that allowed 'born frees' to position themselves as an 'original idea propounded as an absolute' – a crucial first step in Fanonian anticolonial politics.[79]

[71] Sebambo, 2015
[72] Mbembe, 2015b & Nyamnjoh, 2021
[73] Mbembe, 2015b
[74] Gibson, 2017
[75] Mbembe, 2015b
[76] Sebambo, 2015
[77] Nyamnjoh, 2021
[78] Fanon, 2004, p. 161
[79] Fanon, 1963, p. 41

Concluding Remarks

To conclude, due to post-colonial policies, such as the BEE, the Two Zones of coloniality persist in the post-colonial state. This is because – as Fanon predicted – coloniality continues to haunt postcolonial regimes through the policies they enact and understanding of the scope of action open to them.

As a result of this, South Africa has not transcended the settler-native dialectic but rather reformatted it. With the ANC succeeding in breaking the substructure-superstructure monism of coloniality whilst retaining its settler norms – constructing in the upwardly mobile black subject a constant state of comparison and inadequacy compared to the settler subject. Therefore, the post-colonial reality of South Africa poses new challenges and avenues for constructing a new decolonial modus vivendi. Most notably, it has detached blackness from its position as the antithetical reflection of whiteness. As such, new avenues for negating the colonial dialectic have opened up. Contemporary activists, through the liturgical act of Fanonian pedagogy, have begun this process of negation most notably within the Fanonian moment of Azania House.

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Do Comparisons to More Recent Societies Help or Hinder Our Understanding of Ancient Greece and Rome? Answering Through Comparisons of Ancient Sexuality and Slavery

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THE COMPARISON OF ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME to more recent societies is a common and long-standing practice in classical studies, but its usefulness and limitations have been the subject of debate among scholars. While such comparisons can illuminate continuities and similarities between the past and present, they often oversimplify historical differences and fail to fully capture the complexities of ancient societies. Comparisons to more recent societies generally hinder our understanding of antiquity rather than helping it, and this will be explored through drawing examples from the work of Michel Foucault and M.I. Finley. The comparisons these scholars make often lead to the generalisation of evidence, mischaracterised information, and an oversimplification of the past. Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* is a four-volume exploration of sexuality, where 'recent societies' refers to the modern, Christian, Western world.[1] Comparison is used between this and antiquity to argue that modern Europe has 'the most insistent demands for austerity' in relation to the morality of sexuality whilst 'this was not the case in antiquity'.[2] In addition to this, 'the domain of male loves... have been 'free'... much more... than... modern Europe', stating that males had more sexual freedom in the ancient world.[3] Foucault's comparisons hinder the understanding of Ancient Greece, firstly because it is generalising an argument derived from ancient sources with limitations, which is not acknowledged, whilst oversimplifying the complexities of social regulations that pressured ancient citizens into conforming into certain sexual behaviours, or as Cohen and Saller convincingly argue, this comparison results in a 'seductive myth of freedom to self-fashion'.[4] In Finley's work regarding slavery in *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, recent societies refers to 'American Slavery'. He creates a distinction between 'slave societies' as opposed to a 'society with slaves'. The former is where slaves build a substantial proportion of the population whilst also being economically dependent on them. Comparison is drawn when classical Athens and Rome are placed in the same category as 'the United States, The Caribbean and Brazil'.[5] Furthermore, Finley argues that there is 'absence of the skin-colour stigma' in ancient slavery compared to recent societies.[6] Although these comparisons by Finley have been

[1] Foucault, 1990, pp. 14–15
[2] Ibid., pp. 22
[3] Ibid., pp. 19
[4] Cohen & Saller, 1994, p. 35
[5] Finley, 1980, p. 11
[6] Ibid., p. 118.

Critique, vol. MMXXIII, nos. 1–2, pp. 41-46.

useful in opening conversation, it is now faulting our understanding, firstly because of the lack of reliable demographic information for the ancient world, and moreover with the comparison there is implication that the slavery experience is be the same, when in reality in Ancient Rome manumission was possible and there are countless examples of social mobility. Finally, the implications that slavery was indiscriminative in antiquity is flawed as this was not entirely the case in the portrayal of slavery in Athens.

Foucault's assertion that ancient Greek male love was more flexible than in modern society due to its Christian values is problematic and distorts our understanding. His ancient evidence is primarily derived from using Plato's *Republic* and *Laws* as a source,[7] which means this claim is based on a limited set of evidence that oversimplifies ancient sexuality and generalizes Athenian sexual practices to all ancient Greek city-states. Although there were similarities in sexual practices among ancient Greek city-states, there were also significant differences. For example, Xenophon noted that 'among the Boetians... man and boy live together like married people', while in Sparta, male lovers were expected to 'abstain from boys', and the attraction to a boy's 'outward beauty' was considered an abomination.[8] Moreover, Hupperts' research shows that Boetian vase-paintings depict different courting practices than Athenian pederasty, suggesting that pederastic customs, including their artistic portrayal, varied across ancient Greece.[9] These variations demonstrate that ancient sexuality was more complex than Foucault suggested, and that his generalisations of Athenian law and practices as representative of all ancient Greece hinder our understanding of the multifaceted nature of sexual practices in the ancient world. Furthermore, Foucault's generalisation of Athenian male experience is flawed. In Plato's Symposium, through Pausanias, illustrates that even Athenian elite men had varying opinions on pederasty, with Pausanias stating that a law should have been implemented against the love of boys.[10] This indicates that Athenian pederasty practices were not universally accepted, even among the Athenian elite class. By presenting a narrow comparison of ancient sexuality with limited evidence, Foucault's comparison obscures the roles sexuality played in the societies of the past and it results in a distorted view.

In his comparison of male love between ancient Greece and recent societies, Foucault overlooks the social and cultural forces that influenced pederasty, as well as the complexities of the practice. While Foucault argues that there was more lack of moral guilt and social pressures which in turn allowed for more sexual freedom in ancient Greece, this fails to capture the nuances of the practice. For example, Plato's *Symposium* features Aristophanes' speech which suggests that some men were naturally inclined to love boys, but only married due to societal pressure.[11] Even elite Greek men, such as Agesilaus who loved Megabates, felt societal pressure to avoid scandal and censured themselves from engaging in pederasty.[12] Foucault's view of moral liberty and sexual freedom in ancient Greece ignores the societal pressures that existed both towards and away from pederasty. Cohen suggests that the lack of institutionalized courtship of unmarried women and the young age at which girls were married off and intensely guarded made courting boys a less risky option.[13] Athenian pottery also depicts boys as

[7] Cohen & Saller, 1994, p. 42
[8] Xen. Const. Lac. 2.12–13
[9] Hupperts, 2014, p. 190
[10] Plat. Sym. 181d
[11] Plat. Sym. 192b
[12] Xen. Ages. 5
[13] Cohen, 1994, pp. 186–187

womanlike and portrays courtship of boys and women in similar ways, suggesting that pederasty had elements of conforming to socially accepted gender roles.[14] However, boys became undesirable when they reached a certain level of masculinity, such as the development of facial hair and hair on thighs, reinforcing the idea that pederasty had a social pressure where men were strongly pressured into seeking 'feminine' boys.[15] Overall, pederastic relationships were a multifaceted process with different perceptions and reasons for its existence, including the education of young boys. Foucault's comparison of pederasty as occurring due to a lack of moral guilt oversimplifies the complex interplay of social, cultural, and individual factors that can control men's sexual behaviours. This highlights the need for nuanced perspectives in understanding ancient history, something that cannot be explored with a constricted comparison without hindering our understanding.

Another case study example of comparison hindering our understanding of the ancient world is Finley's slave society and society with slaves binary model, as it focuses too much on the similarities between what he considers slave societies, implying that they are of similar nature, when in reality the differences are extremely stark. As Noel Lenski puts it aptly, 'the Finleyan model has brought the dialogue forward in the mid-twentieth century, [it] is now preventing it from making further progress'.[16] For example, Roman society, as opposed slavery in the United States, had a propensity for manumission and social mobility for slaves, thus having a drastically different slave experience.[17] Indeed, the partiality for manumission is evident through the Lex Fufio-Caninia, which is a law set out by Augustus to limit the amount of slaves manumitted.[18] This implies that the rate of manumission was extremely high, to the point where a law had to be set out to stop this. Keith Bradley reinforces this point stating the law was a direct 'response to the haphazard manumission practice of the pre-imperial era'.[19] Indeed, it was in popular fashion for slave-owners to free their slaves in their will, an example being discussed by Pliny where he discusses Isidorus who upon his death freed 4116 slaves.[20] Manumitted slaves had the chance for social mobility, as the child of a freedman is eligible for Roman citizenship. Therefore, with the possibility of manumission and social mobility in ancient Rome for slaves, it is unfair to make a comparison of grouping ancient Roman slavery with American slavery, as there are implications that slaves would have a similar experience, though this was not the case, thus highlighting how comparison can negatively alter our assumptions of antiquity.

Finley's examination and comparison of ancient slavery to recent slavery is impeded by the absence of compelling ancient evidence to substantiate his arguments. One of the criteria for the conventional definition of a 'slave society' rest on the proportion of the slave population to non-slave population. However, the available evidence regarding Rome's population demographic is uncertain and fragmentary, rendering the task of determining the number of slaves difficult. Despite acknowledging the limitations of ancient evidence, Finley argues that a slave society needs to constitute 20% of the population, a figure that remains ambiguous and difficult to ascertain. Furthermore, Finley contends that the percentage of slaves in Ancient

[14] Ibid., pp. 193
[15] Halperin, 2016, p. 88
[16] Lenski, et al., 2018, p. 147
[17] Ibid., p. 137
[18] 8 Gaius, Institutes 1 : 43
[19] Bradley, 1994, p. 156
[20] Plin. Nat. 33

Rome is between approximately 30 and 35%,[21] respectively. However, this assertion lacks support, as Scheidel points out that there is no reliable method of determining slave totals, and previous studies using the same ancient evidence have produced significantly different population estimates.[22] This highlights the inadequacies of the 'top-down' approach, which relies on incomplete and inconclusive evidence, for making predictions about ancient societies. Conversely, the 'bottom-up' approach that evaluates slave numbers based on the size of the elite population and probable demand for slave labour, primarily in agriculture, appears to be more encouraging. For instance, the quantity of senators and city-councillors is more accurate and concrete than the number of slaves. Using this method, scholars have predicted that the population of slaves in Ancient Rome was between 15-25%,[23] which falls within or outside the definition of a 'slave society.' However, this prediction, regardless of the method applied, remains uncertain. The uncertainty regarding the prevalence of the slave population regardless of the method applied in Ancient Rome underscores the limitations of Finley's comparative study and its deficiency of evidence to support its claims. Moreover, comparing ancient societies to modern societies, which can have different cultural, social, and economic norms, can hinder our understanding of the past, emphasizing the need for more extensive and precise ancient evidence to be collected and analysed when making comparisons or otherwise the view of the ancient world will be misleading.

The argument that ancient slavery was entirely indiscriminate compared to slavery in the United States, as made by Finley, is flawed. While it is true that ancient slavery, particularly in Ancient Rome which has been described as ‘equal opportunity enslavers,[24] did not overtly discriminate against a specific group of people, it is misguided to assume that Ancient Athens was without discriminatory practices when it came to slavery. The concept of discrimination played a significant role in the justification and depiction of enslavement in Ancient Athens. Aristotle posited that some individuals were more susceptible to enslavement due to innate qualities that made them lacking in 'spirit', rendering them stuck in 'continuous subjection and slavery'.[25] This idea of some people being more susceptible to slavery was backed by Hippocrates' description of the 'Asiatics' as people whose 'souls are enslaved' because of their natural submissiveness under a king, a quality not attributed to the Greeks.[26] Although slaves were not distinguishable by ethnicity in visual attic pottery, Forsdyke contends that many paintings and sculptures were made by slaves, and thus the lack of differentiation between slaves and free individuals in these depictions may be a form of resistance against imagined differences.[27] Even in Athenian literature and drama, such as Euripides' Iphigenia, there are references to Greeks ruling over 'barbarians' and the belief that the latter were naturally inclined to be enslaved.[28] This reflects the public consciousness that foreigners were associated with slavery. Consequently, while the Greeks did enslave individuals from their own society, there was a prevalent belief that slavery was reserved for foreigners, who were considered naturally suited for such a role. Therefore, although discrimination may not have been as severe as in the

[21] Finley, 1980, p. 80
[22] Scheidel, 2005, p. 66
[23] Harper & Scheidel, 2018, p. 98
[24] Lenski, et al, 2018, p. 137
[25] Aristot. Pol. 7.1327b
[26] Hp. Aer. 23
[27] Forsdyke, 2021, p. 166.
[28] Eur. IA 1400

case of U.S. slavery, it would be incorrect to assume that discrimination did not play a significant role in Athenian slavery, thus highlighting the dangers of comparison that Finley puts forward and how it can hinder our understanding of the ancient world, as it may result in oversimplification of attitudes such as there being no discriminatory role in slavery in ancient Athens.

In conclusion, the usefulness of comparisons to more recent societies may initially seem helpful and beneficial in understanding Ancient Greece and Rome, and whilst both Michel Foucault and M.I. Finley were influential scholars that have contributed to our understanding of antiquity and have progressed it in the past, now their work that has been discussed is hindering it. The examples drawn from the works of Foucault and Finley illustrate the limitations of comparisons, as they oversimplify the historical differences and fail to fully capture the multifaceted nature of ancient societies. Foucault's comparison of ancient sexuality to modern sexual norms is flawed as it generalises ancient practices and fails to consider the social and cultural forces that influenced the practice. Similarly, Finley's comparison of ancient slavery to more recent slave societies is flawed as it implies that the slavery experience was the same across different societies and fails to acknowledge the complexities of ancient slavery. Both scholars, whilst illuminating aspects of ancient society, ultimately fall short in their comparisons in the contemporary era of scholarly work. The danger of these comparisons lie in the distortion of the past, as well as the perpetuation of myths and stereotypes about ancient societies. Scholars must be mindful of the limitations of such comparisons and avoid presenting them as definitive evidence for generalising the past. In the future, it is imperative that scholars continue to engage in nuanced and rigorous studies of antiquity that capture the complexities of ancient societies without imposing modern values and assumptions. This approach will result in a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of Ancient Greece and Rome.

Abbreviations:
Aer. = On Airs, Waters and Places
Ages. = Agesilaus
Aristot. = Aristotle
Const. Lac. = Constitution of the Lacedaemonians Eur. = Euripides
Hp. = Hippocrates
IA. = Iphigenia in Aulis
Nat. = Natural History
Plat. = Plato
Plin. = Pliny the Elder
Pol. = Politics
Sym. = Symposium
Xen. = Xenophon

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DISCUSSION

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN A VERY SHORT HISTORY OF FRENCH PHILOSOPHY

MIKHAIL KORNEEV, in his review of Stephen Gaukroger and Knox Peden's *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, accuses the authors of sexism in their selection of topics and thinkers included in the book.[i] He accuses them of choosing to 'ignore all female authors and female-related discussions before the 20th century', and bemoans 'the near absence of female philosophers' in the book.[ii]

Women, however, had very little impact on the history of French philosophy prior to the 20th century. It is a matter of fact that women played relatively minor roles in history generally speaking, simply because their social position disabled them from being able to do so. The matter of intellectual history, especially, seeing as women were not widely educated until at least the Reformation, and not properly until the 19th century, involves very few women at all, yet again those who made lasting contributions, and even fewer still are those whose importance was recognized within history to make an impact thereupon: unrecognized importance is not impactful.

One of the earliest, and perhaps most obvious, women to include within a history of French philosophy is Héloïse (c. 1100/1101 – 1163/1164). However, the authors maintain that French philosophy begins with Michel de Montaigne,[iii] so they would obviously not talk about a 12th century nun. Likewise, she wrote in Latin, and the authors' justification for starting with Montaigne is that his *Essays* were written in French. Furthermore, even if Mr. Gaukroger and Mr. Peden had examined mediaeval French philosophers, such a discussion would have been, and ought to have been, dominated by discussion of Peter Abelard, with whom Héloïse was romantically involved. If she would receive a mention at all, it would be by virtue of Abelard's affair with her, or her correspondence with him. Either way, she is 'a complementary figure, not… an independent philosopher'.[iv] Mr. Korneev would doubtless complain about this, as he does of Elizabeth of Bohemia – not a Frenchwoman anyway – but such a complaint is generally unfounded: it derives from the anachronistic desire for women to have played a greater role in history, and projects this desire onto the facts of history,[v] rather than letting the facts speak for themselves.

Herrad of Landsberg (c. 1130-1195) was another 12th century nun. Her *Hortus deliciarum*, for which she is now and was then known is in Latin and German, not French. Its chief claim to distinction is the three hundred and thirty-six illustrations which adorn the text. It is an illuminated encyclopaedia, not a philosophic treatise. It would be bizarre to include such a work in a history of philosophy. What one would even remark about 'Herrad's philosophy', it is difficult to conceive.

Christine de Pizan (1364 – c. 1430) was Venetian by birth, but was fundamentally a Frenchwoman. She was perhaps the first person in France to have earned a living by her pen. She was thoroughly polymathic as an author of novels, poetry, biography, and literary, historical, philosophical, political, and religious analysis. Most of her analysis, however, were unoriginal. This is in contrast to her works on the virtues of women. *Le livre du chemin de long estude* was political and moral in nature, and *Livre du Corps de policie* was a political treaty. Her importance, however, is limited to consideration as an early feminist and a literary figure.[vi]

Her actual political, moral and philosophic ideas were not especially influential in the history of French philosophy. She admittedly deserves the title of a philosopher, but her impression on the history of French philosophy was too insignificant to warrant inclusion within such a short introduction as *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*.

Even if we grant that all these women are philosophers worthy of consideration – and we need not grant this at all – it does not follow that they would be considered in a short introduction. There were, after all, several men excluded from the pre-modern period who had much greater impacts on the history of philosophy. The most pertinent examples of such exclusion are François Rabelais and Petrus Ramus. Mr. Gaukroger and Mr. Peden, of course, choose to exclude everything before Montaigne, so really it is not worth complaining about women excluded before him, unless we are also to complain about the great many others excluded in the pre-modern period.

Marie de Gournay (1565-1645) was a social and political theorist. She is the first woman in the history of French thought that could have been included within Mr. Gaukroger and Mr. Peden's history beginning with Montaigne – indeed, she edited his *Essays*. She was an advocate of women's education. In many ways similar to Christine, de Gournay's philosophic output was generally social and political: her main works, *Égalité des hommes et des femmes* and *The Ladies' Grievance*, were in keeping with this. Neither engaged in 'hard' philosophic problems such as epistemology or metaphysics, except very rarely. She is, however, remembered as a fundamentally literary figure, not a philosophic one.

Gabrielle Suchon (1632-1703) was a moral philosopher focussed on the 'female-related discussions' the absence of which Mr. Korneev laments.[vii] She argued for the equality of the sexes, and is therefore regarded as an early feminist. She is exceptional in this regard, making her a divergence from the main narrative of French philosophy and its concerns. Feminism, in a short introduction like *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, ought to be treated as one. There is no room for a 17th century diversion. Perhaps the authors are at fault for failing to mention such pre-20th century proto-feminists in their section on 20th century feminism, but this seems like a decision to focus on movements when they happened rather than on their precedents, which does not seem to me at all related to a decision to actively exclude women before the 20th century.

Another possible inclusion is Louise-Anastasia Serment (1642-1692), a disciple of Descartes. She was a natural philosopher, which of course means scientist in the Early Modern period. She is remembered as a poet and a collaborator with Philippe Quinault in his operas. If we are to include Descartes' disciples in such a short history, then we must first reproach the authors for excluding the likes of Arnold Geulincx (though he was Flemish) before we complain about the absence of a natural philosopher with very little presence within the history of philosophy.

Élisabeth Ferrand (1700-1752) contributed to Étienne Bonnot de Condillac's *Treatise on Sensations*, in the preface of which she is acknowledged for her contributions. Of course, it is quite right of the authors to focus on Condillac's *Treatise on Sensations*. A mere contributor would be, after all, an afterthought, secondary. It is quite justifiable to exclude mention of Ferrand from *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*. Likewise, it must be admitted, like Héloïse, that Ferrand is a peripheral figure of French philosophy, only worth mentioning in a detailed study of Condillac or the early history of Newtonianism.

A similar statement might be said about Émilie du Châtelet (1706-1749), renowned for her translation of Newton's *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* into French. She

was a scientist who synthesized Newtonian physics with Leibnizian metaphysics. Her *magnum opus* was *Institutions de Physique*. Her ideas were heavily represented in the *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*. Her exclusion might well be considered an oversight in a longer book, especially in one that delves into the history of science. Perhaps even in this book her exclusion is an error. But this can be said of a great many figures, men as well as women. For example, she was romantically involved with Voltaire, a much more significant figure. Voltaire, however, receives very little attention indeed.

Olympe de Gouges (1748-1793) was a political writer, pamphleteer, activist, early feminist, and playwright – but not strictly a philosopher. Though some of what she said can be construed in political-social philosophic terms, it is, firstly, too liberal to call this philosophy in a short history of philosophy which is necessary restrictive, secondly, too demanding to expect a short work to include a character that is, philosophically speaking, insignificant. It would be one thing to exclude thinkers such as de Gouges, Ferrand, de Gournay and Christine from a history of French thought, or culture, but it is quite another to exclude them from a history of philosophy; the former might be an oversight, the latter is sensible management of a thematic narrative. This goes for Mr. Korneev's complaint about the neglect of 'female-related discussions' also: the matters of enfranchisement and equality do not belong to a history of philosophy.

The same can be said for the even more famous Madame de Staël (1766-1817). She was a political theorist at most. A moderate of the French Revolution and a romanticist, we can certainly endorse her inclusion in an intellectual history or a cultural one: Madame de Chastenay remarked that 'there are three great powers struggling against Napoleon for the soul of Europe: England, Russia, and Madame de Staël'.[viii] But this does not make her a philosopher, or her exclusion from a book on French philosophy a sin.

Marie-Sophie Germain (1776-1831) was a scientist. She is known primarily for number theory and elasticity theory, for which she won the grand prize from the Paris Academy of Sciences. Her 'philosophic' works relate to psychology, sociology, the history of science, and the similarities between the sciences and humanities. She is, fundamentally, a mathematician. There are a number of mathematical principles named after her: a 'sophien', a Sophie Germain Prime (a prime p such that $2p + 1$ is also prime), Germain curvature – $(k_1 + k_2)/2$ where k_1 and k_2 are the maximum and minimum values of the normal curvature – Sophie Germain's Identity – for any $\{x, y\}$ it is the case that $x^4 + 4y^4 = ((x + y)^2 + y^2)\,((x - y^2) + y^2) = (x^2 + 2xy + 2y^2)\,(x^2 - 2xy + 2y^2)$ – Sophie Germain's Theorem regarding Fermat's Last Theorem, and the Sophie Germain Counter Mode (SGCM).[ix] The Sophie Germain Prize, awarded annually by the Foundation Sophie Germain, is conferred by the Academy of Sciences in Paris to honour a French mathematician for research in the foundations of mathematics. Really, she should not be thought of as a philosopher at all.

Julie Favre (1833-1896) is a 19th century educator who seems to have a claim to the philosopher's title. However, she was not an original thinker. Most of her books were pedagogical books on the moral philosophy of the Ancients and other previous thinkers.[x]

Clarisse Coignet (1823-1918), amongst other things, was a moral philosopher. She was associated with *La Morale Independante*, which advanced the independence of morality from science and religion. This is the topic of her most famous works: *La Morale independante dans son principe et son objet* and *De Kant a Bergson: reconciliation de la religion et de la science dans un spiritualisme nouveu*. It should, however, be noted that Ferdinand de Saussure, one of the three most significant French philosophers of the 19th century – with Henri Bergson and

Auguste Comte – receives no attention by Mr. Gaukroger and Mr. Peden; he is only mentioned by virtue of Merleau-Ponty's having been influenced by him. He is not discussed – his name is only mentioned twice in the entire book. Coignet's exclusion, then, seems to me another instance of decisive selection of philosophers and philosophic fields to discuss within the book. As is the case for various other women in the history of French philosophy, there were men a great deal more significant who were excluded.

Mr. Korneev seems to recognize that 'the historical presence of female philosophers is of course not in itself a substantial proof of their importance. It may well be that the marginal contribution of these authors has been insignificant in the long run'.[xi] However, he rejects this: 'There is, however, a difference between a moderate statement of this kind and the mere absence of any mention of female authors apart from Princess Elizabeth before the 20th century'.[xii] He takes the absence of mention to equate to a statement to the effect that there were no women thinkers. In reality, the absence means simply that they were too insignificant to warrant inclusion, especially in such a short work, which accords exactly with what Mr. Korneev is calling 'a moderate statement'. It is a base mistake to equate the selection of material for a book to entail the claim that what was not selected did not exist at all, and baser yet to say that the principle behind such election is sexist purely by virtue of their being few women included, without having first examined the history of French philosophy to observe that therein are few women also.

Furthermore, Mr. Korneev makes the mistake of appealing to works specifically on French women in philosophy as evidence that they should be included in a general work on French philosophy.[xiii] This is a category error. Likewise, he compares the topics included in *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* to those in *The Cambridge History of French Thought*. Not only is the latter considerably larger than the former, but emphasis should be put on the fact that it is a history of French *thought*, whereas the former is a history of French *philosophy* – another category error. This is especially relevant for his second criticism, that 'even if we accept the view that female authors are insignificant it is still unclear why female-related topics are ignored in the works of male philosophers who are covered in the book'.[xiv] The matters of enfranchisement and equality do not belong to a history of philosophy.

His third complaint is that 20th century feminism is not addressed properly. He says, 'all this critique could have been withdrawn if the feminist philosophy was properly addressed in the section on Simone de Beauvoir'.[xv] His only reason for saying that it was improperly addressed is the lack of discussion before the arrival of the topic, which he construes as the statement that 'feminist discourse emerges from out of nowhere and disappears quickly'.[xvi] The authors, however, never say this. This is a repetition of his mistake of equating the exclusion of material from a very short introduction with the assertion that what was excluded did not exist at all viz. only what is included in the book is included in the history of French philosophy itself. Mr. Korneev also says that, 'from the narrative of the book, it follows that Simone de Beauvoir was the first author in the history of French philosophy to raise a female-related question'.[xvii] The authors never assert this, and this does not follow from a selective narrative. He is reading too much into the exclusion of topics in a book so short that it is necessarily exclusory. This leads him to again condemn the authors: 'according to the reviewed book, French philosophers did not engage with any female-related problems before Simon de Beauvoir'.[xviii] Once again, *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* does not accord with what Mr. Korneev claims it does.

In fact, we can say independently that Mr. Gaukroger and Mr. Peden's treatment of feminism is quite satisfactory. They do not limit their discussion to the obvious candidate of Simone de Beauvoir, but include such figures as Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Catherine Clément. Their discussion of contemporary philosophy also includes women such as Catherine Malabou and Élisabeth Roudinesco; it seems to me to be without prejudice towards gender. This corresponds to the increase in female participation in intellectual life in the 20th century. Simone Weil is excluded, but this may have been due to the authors' excluding topics to which she most closely relates.

There are certainly complaints to be made about any short introduction to any topic. Some complaints are worse than others: when a book displays a dogmatic bent in what it calls traditional or accepted, then there is great cause for concern. Generally, exclusion is not something deeply problematic, especially in short introductions. *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, for example, does poor justice to Albert Camus. Misinterpretation or misconstrual is more problematic. What would be more problematic yet would be the inclusion of minor figures at the expense of excluding major ones in order to promulgate a narrative. In fact, were an introduction to French philosophy filled with women, especially before the 20th century, we would have good cause to suspect that it had committed this sin. On the other hand, if it were devoid of women, that would also be strange in light of the importance of feminist thought to the history of philosophy more generally. Since the book does neither of these, I see no cause for concern.

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[i] Mikhail Korneev, (2022), Review of French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction by Stephen Gaukroger and Knox Peden, *Critique*, vol. MMXXII, no. 1, pp. 91-95.
[ii] Ibid. page 92.
[iii] Stephen Gaukroger and Knox Peden, (2020), *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, page 5.
[iv] Mikhail Korneev, op. cit., page 92.
[v] cf. E. H. Carr, (2018), *What is History?*, London: Penguin, pages 7 ff., 19 ff. and 26 ff.
[vi] cf. Angus J. Kennedy, (2004), *Christine de Pizan: A Bibliographical Guide Supplement 2*, Woodbridge: Tamesis. cf. e.g. F. Douglas Kelly, (1971), "Reflections on the Role of Christine de Pisan as a Feminist Writer," *SubStance*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 63-71; Tracy Adams, (2017), "Christine de Pizan," *French Studies*, vol. 71, no. 3, pp. 388-400; Suzanne Roux, (2006), *Christine de Pizan: Femme de tête, dame de cœur*, Paris: Payot & Rivages; Françoise Autrand, (2009), *Christine de Pizan: une femme en politique*, Paris: Fayard; Marie-Josèphe Pinet, (1927), *Christine de Pisan, 1364–1430: étude biographique et littéraire*, Paris: Honoré Champion. *Contra*. Douglas Kelly, (2007), *Christine de Pizan's Changing Opinion: A Quest for Certainty in the Midst of Chaos*, Cambridge: D. S. Brewer; Charity C. Willard, (1998), "Christine de Pizan," in Edward Craig (Ed.), *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, New York: Routledge, 1998, page 12; Tracy Adams, (2000), "Christine de Pizan and Jeanne d'Arc: Above all Heroes Past," in Cecile T. Tougas and Sara Ebenreck (Eds.), *Presenting Women Philosophers*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pages 188-199; Mary Ellen Waithe (1989), "Roswitha of Gandersheim, Christine Pisan [sic], Margaret More Roper and Teresa of Avila," in Mary Ellen Waithe (Ed.), *A History of Women Philosophers II: Medieval, Renaissance and Enlightenment Women Philosophers, AD 500–1600*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pages 309-317; Gerda Lerner, (1993), *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness from the Middle Ages to 1870*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Andrea Echtermann, (1994), "Christine de Pizan und ihre Hauptwerke zur Frauenthematik: eine Einführung," in Elisabeth Gössmann (Ed.), *Kennt der Geist kein Geschlecht?*, München: Iudicium; Wolfgang Schild, (1990), "Recht und Gerechtigkeit bei Christine de Pizan," in Erhard Mock and Georg Wieland (Eds.), *Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie des Mittelalters*, Bern: Peter Lang, pages 141-167; Karen Green, (1994), "Christine de Pisan and Thomas Hobbes," *Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 177, pp. 456-475; Andrea Löther, (1994), "Unpolitische Bürger: Frauen und Partizipation in der vormodernen praktischen Philosophie," in Reinhart Koselleck and Klaus Schreiner (Eds.), *Bürgerschaft: Rezeption und Innovation der Begrifflichkeit vom hohen Mittelalter bis ins 19. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta,

pages 239-273; Martina Appich, Andrea Echtermann, Valeria Ferrari Schiefer and Ulrike Hess (Eds.), (1993), *Eine andere Tradition: dissidente Positionen von Frauen in Philosophie und Theologie*, München: Iudicium; Catherine Villanueva Gardner, (2000), *Rediscovering Women Philosophers: Philosophical Genre and the Boundaries of Philosophy*, Boulder: Westview; Jeannine Quillet, (2001), *D'une cité l'autre: problèmes de philosophie politique médiévale*, Paris: Champion; etc. These contraries seem numerous, but constitute a tiny fraction of the texts compiled in Mr. Kennedy's *Bibliographical Guide*.

[vii] cf. Gabrielle Suchon, (1693), *Traité de la morale et de la politique*, Lyon: B. Vignieu & Jean Certe; (1700), *Du célibat volontaire*, Paris: Jean & Michel Guignard.

[viii] Madame de Chastenay, (1896), *Mémoires de Madame de Chastenay, 1771–1815* (2 Vols.), Paris: Libraire Plon.

[ix] cf. Markku-Juhani O. Saarinen, (2011), "SGCM: The Sophie Germain Counter Mode,". *Cryptology ePrint Archive*, report 2011/326.

[x] cf. Julie Favre, (1887), *Montaigne, moraliste et pedagogue*, Paris: Librairie Fischbacher; (1888), *La morale des Stoïciens*, Paris: Félix Alcan; (1888), *La Morale de Socrate*, Paris: Félix Alcan; (1889), *La morale d' Aristotle*, Paris: Félix Alcan; (1891), *La morale de Cicéron*, Paris: Librairie Fischbacher; (1909), *La morale de Plutarque*, Paris: Henry Paulin.

[xi] Mikhail Korneev, op. cit., page 92.

[xii] Ibid.

[xiii] cf. e.g. V. A. Conley, (2007), "Feminism," in L. D. Kritzman (Ed.), *The Columbia History of Twentieth-Century French Thought* (pp. 39-47), New York: Columbia University Press; R. Wilkin, (2019), "The Querelle des Femmes," in M. Moriarty and J. Jennings (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of French Thought* (pp. 190-197), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; E. O'Neill, (1998), "Disappearing ink: Early modern women philosophers and their fate in history," in J. A. Kourany (Ed.), *Philosophy in a Feminist Voice: Critiques and Reconstructions* (pp. 17-62), Princeton: Princeton University Press; J. Still, (2019), "The Enlightenment and Gender," in M. Moriarty and J. Jennings (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of French Thought* (pp. 263-270), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; D. Holmes, (2019), "French Feminist Thought in the Twentieth Century," in M. Moriarty and J. Jennings (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of French Thought* (pp. 426-435), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[xiv] Mikhail Korneev, op. cit., page 93.

[xv] Ibid.

[xvi] Ibid. page 94.

[xvii] Ibid. page 93.

[xviii] Ibid. page 94.

REVIEWS

BLACK RIGHTS/WHITE WRONGS: THE CRITIQUE OF RACIAL LIBERALISM
CHARLES W. MILLS
New York, Oxford University Press, 2017, 304 pp.

THIS REVIEW has come several years after the publication of *Black Rights/White Wrongs* and it is, therefore, quite late. The book was very well reviewed too, so a late review is not really welcome. We are not going to look at the book broadly, though. Rather, we are going to address a claim in one of the book's chapters that has until now persisted and, what is more, has since become accepted as part of mainstream academia. The idea is that of white ignorance (Mills 2017, ch. 4).

Charles Mills thinks that white people are ignorant of the privilege they have on account of their racial domination of other races (Mills 2017, p. 55). This epistemic state is not passive, but resembles what has been called 'active ignorance' (Medina 2013). It is our contention that the epistemic state of 'white ignorance' is not one which is actually observed amongst whites, nor is the supposed object of ignorance – 'white privilege'. If it obtains that white people are neither ignorant nor privileged, then it cannot be the case that white people are ignorant of their privilege.

WHITE PRIVILEGE

Very fundamental to Mr. Mills' account of white ignorance is his claim that white people enjoy 'white privilege'. He thinks that cognitive apparatuses, through which people experience society, are shaped by the biases of the 'dominant' group – i.e. whites – which causes ignorance about the situation of non-dominant racial groups – i.e. blacks – and about the privilege of the dominant group.

We, however, object to this claim. One of the most well-cited articles that claims to the existence of white privilege belongs Peggy McIntosh (1989). In her article, she offers a list of things that she, as a white woman, can do that a black person cannot do. It is our contention that all the items on this list are either true of blacks as well as whites, false as generalizations, or circumstantial.

Ms. McIntosh claims that whites are economically privileged: 'I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live'. This is a claim unrelated to race: there is nothing in western civilization that means that white people are necessarily economically advantaged whilst blacks are disadvantaged in this regard: in fact, in 2016/17, 79% of UK council housing letting was to whites. To this it might be objected that blacks have suffered historically from economic discrimination, and therefore suffer from generational poverty (Mills 2017, p. 63 ff.). If this were true, what we would expect to see is a very large black population on minimum wage and with council housing and very few whites in the same position: but statistics reveal that there are only 2% more blacks on minimum wage than whites.

A further objection might be that this is economic privilege; white privilege is not economic but social, and what Mr. Mills is referring to is social privilege. Take, then, another of Ms. McIntosh's claims, that 'I can… see people of my race widely represented'. This is simply due to whites being more populous in the west and is therefore circumstantial. In Nigeria, for example, the opposite would be true. Likewise, Ms. McIntosh says that 'if I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher', but in Japan, for instance, a white foreigner or 'alien' (*gaijin* 外人) would seriously struggle to penetrate the native job market: they call this 'descent from heaven' (*amakudari* 天下り) and it is the direct consequence of Japanese ethnocentrism. Mr. Mills does not speak of *American* white privilege, but white privilege as a universalization, just as he does not speak of 'Japanese privilege' in Japan or 'black privilege' in Nigeria. We will concede to him as a merit of his account that there is always a certain localistic ignorance of other cultures, even those cultures within one's own culture. However, it is only natural that a majority culture will be represented *by* that majority culture without an active effort to multiculturalism. Mr. Mills is not making a merely descriptive statement like this one, but a potently normative one. In fact, he is going so far as to morally condemn this epistemic shortfall in whites all over the world (Mills 2017, p. 58 f.).

White Ignorance

Mr. Mills moves beyond classical epistemology, which focuses on individuals, by focussing on social structures and groups (cf. Young 2012). However, the *very problem* with prejudices such as racism and sexism etc. is that it punishes *individuals* for their membership of a *group* that they did not opt into.

It is acknowledged by Mr. Mills that 'whites are not a monolith' and that not all whites will exhibit what he calls 'white ignorance' (Mills 2017, p. 58). In fact, he even says that blacks may have white ignorance. This might raise the question of its nomenclature, but Mr. Mills explains away this concern: non-whites have 'white ignorance' when they believe the white paradigm.

This raises a greater question than the mere nomenclature of 'white ignorance'; namely, if blacks say that they are today equal to whites and that (systemic and systematic) racism has been left in the past, and whites say so too – who is Mr. Mills to say that they are wrong? It seems like an easy way to suppress objection to simply call the refutation of white privilege white ignorance: even when somebody from outside this racial identity group makes the same claims, they too are under the influence of white ignorance (Mills 2017, p. 57). It seems that Mr. Mills' position is to claim that whites are privileged and are wrong (hence the title of his book), anybody who disagrees is ignorant, and the name to which he gives this ignorance is 'white ignorance' in order to reinforce the causal relation between the white race and the 'white wrongs' he claims to exist. Mr. Mills' account of 'white ignorance' is, in effect, totally unfalsifiable, and in this respect resembles Marxism, or at least certain complaints about it (Popper 1945, ch. 15, sec. 3; 1998, p. 8). The harder one tries to deny that there is white privilege, the more they are said to exhibit white ignorance. For example, if we ignore racial distinctions and treat men as men rather than treating them as their races – i.e. we are 'colour blind' – then this is our white ignorance about the fact that men are not men but their races (Mills 2017, p. 63). Or if we are to maintain that Native American history is barely known because it was not written down, not because the white man destroyed it (one of the few sophisticated textbooks in an indigenous American language is *The Logik Primer* (1672)

written by John Eliot, a white man); such an argument can barely escape our lips before 'collective amnesia' is brought up and it is said that the history we are citing is written by the white man and therefore false (Mills 2017, p. 70). In this way, Mr. Mills' position defends itself and becomes almost impossible to refute, except for our saying that this *kind* or position – i.e. an unfalsifiable one that necessarily silences its enemies – is not one that we wish to endorse as a legitimate position.

CONCLUSION

What is positive about Mr. Mills' account has not been our focus. Certainly one merit is the recognition that people tend to be ignorant of other cultures; it is Mr. Mills' error to have drawn this on racial lines, but this cultural ignorance is present nevertheless. If he were simply propounding cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, then there would be greater room for discussion. However, epistemically condemning a *race* – rather than individuals, as per classical epistemology – is totally disagreeable. What is more, he condemns whites for their ignorance of a privilege that they do not have in the first place.

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INTERNAL REVIEWERS