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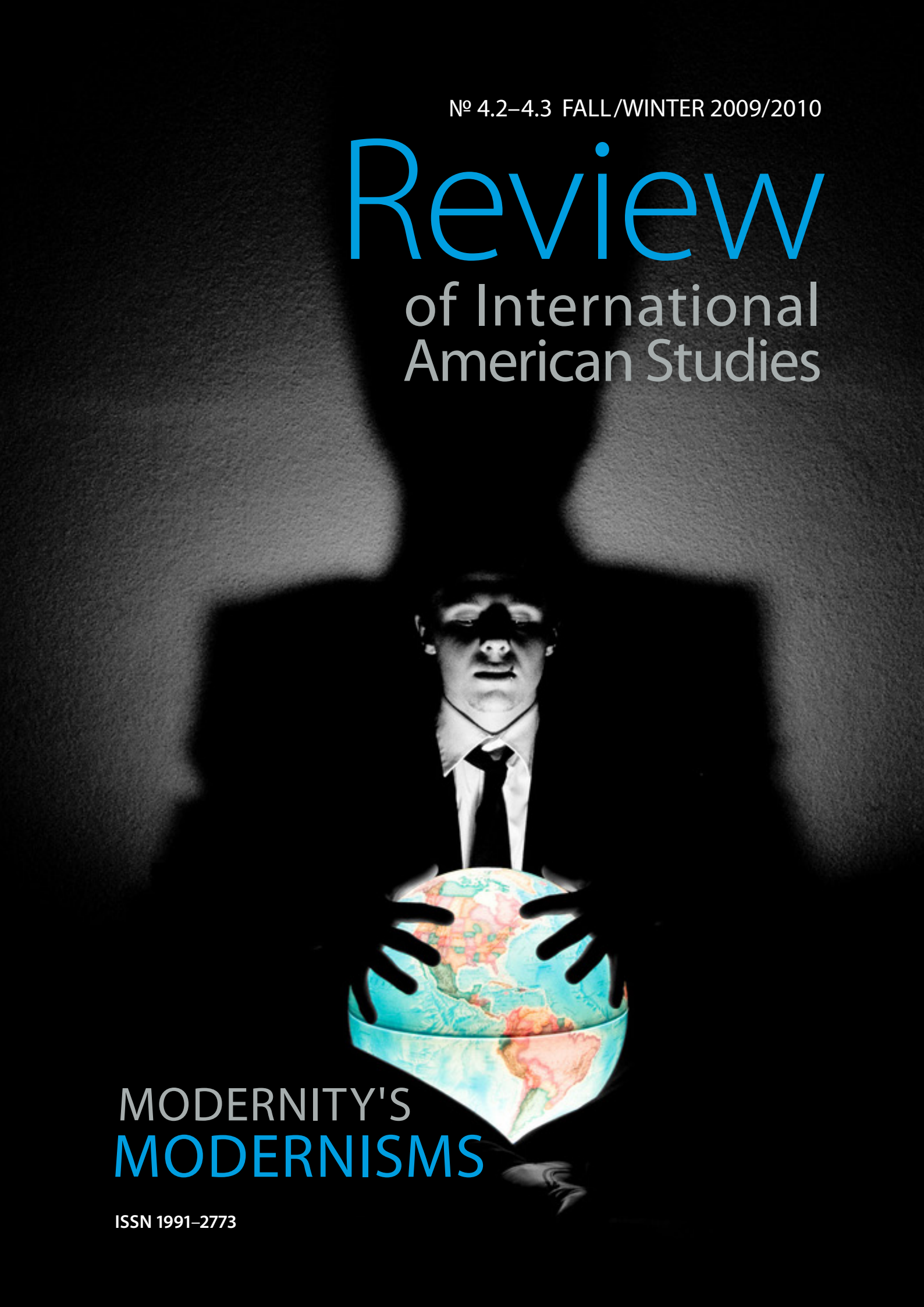

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SPECIAL ISSUE ON MODERNITY´S MODERNISMS: HEMI/SPHERES, 'RACE' AND GENDER

› Click on article page number

EDITORIAL

FORUM

HEMI/SPHERIC MODERNITIES, GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

FEATURE ARTICLES

MODERNITY'S MODERNS AND HISTORY'S HEMI/SPHERES

HEMI/SPHERIC TRANSNATIONALISM

In her groundbreaking treatise *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987), the late Gloria Anzaldúa wrote '… the future will belong to the *mestiza*. Because the future depends on the breaking down of paradigms, it depends on the straddling of two or more cultures. By creating a new mythos—that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave—*la mestiza* creates a new consciousness' (Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 80). In describing the existential significance of what she thus calls 'the new mestiza, ' Anzaldúa traces the jagged edges of hegemonic Western cultural reality, probing the silent (and often silenced) interstices between official cultures, initially revealing just the bare outlines of their unauthorized counterparts, watching them slowly yet steadily and inexorably come into hard focus by the book's end. The 'borderlands' she identifies are not just those heavily policed geographical areas which lie between the boundaries of recognized nation states. More importantly, 'borderlands' is also the name for those liminal cultural spaces where the primary mode of existence is that of in-between, not one nor another but always and inevitably many. In cultural terms this state of perpetual in-betweenness is both a transgression and an aberration: a radical rejection of imposed order that refuses interpolation and assimilation, a defiant insistence on the possibility, existence and right of proliferative identity. In perpetrating such defiance, Anzaldúa also brings into violent being this simultaneously multiple form of life, authorizing, supporting and solidifying it by surrounding it with its own 'mythos'—a new cultural story that serves as both figurative geographical location and metaphorical cultural context. But of what exactly is this new 'mythos' comprised? How does Anzaldúa approach the enormous task of recreating cultural reality while denying that reality as given, creating within it an alternative story, a rehistoricized history? Here interpolation becomes an imperative, part and parcel of re-opening the closed door of history and bringing it face-to-face with its own denial of itself; it is, and must be, an act of rhetorical violence, an interpellation tearing a ragged hole in the linguistic fabric of reality and pointing language outward, toward what she calls '…life in the shadows…' Out there, beyond the safety of known and established boundaries, in what Anzaldúa terms 'uncharted seas', the act of remaking becomes a sudden and urgent necessity, a striving to capture the moment of reversal both quickly and strongly enough to hold it fast before it can disappear into speculation, fantasy or frustrated desire. Once grasped, it must be fixed again in time—before time, in its endless forward progression, forces it once again into the shadowy nether realm from which it came. Securing the new 'mythos' in a rhetoric of origins, then, Anzaldúa writes:

> During the original peopling of the Americas, the first inhabitants migrated across the Bering Straits and walked south across the continent. The oldest evidence of humankind in the US—the Chicanos' ancient Indian ancestor—was found in Texas and has been dated to 35,000 B.C. In the Southwest United States archeologists have found 20,000-year-old campsites of the Indians who migrated through, or permanently occupied, the Southwest, Aztlán—land of the herons, land of whiteness, the Edenic place of origin of the Azteca… (Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 4).

Calculating this new mythos, this alternative origin, in years has a purpose: not hundreds but thousands of years, reflecting a history beyond the shock of Western culture, re-contextualizing that cultural influence as the outside of a broader, vaster, more lengthy and prior reality, yet, in its chronological import, speaking the temporal language of Western culture rather than its own. As such, it is understood and as such, it forcefully seizes an authority forcefully seized.

Deep within this new 'mythos', then, lies the question of modernity and a critique of belatedness, which underscore the theme of this issue of the *Review of International American Studies*, 'Modernity's Modernisms: Hemi/Spheres, "Race", Gender.' This recreated 'mythos' asks two central questions: what is modern, and whose modernity is it? The contributions to this issue think and rethink these questions while considering the tension between modernism and modernity, 'race' and gender, and by approaching the subject from a hemispheric perspective that denies what it conceives of as the artificial boundaries imposed by culture, history and time. While hemispheric studies has been commonly associated with the new American studies, or the shift from a focus on the US alone in the study of American culture to the study of the Americas (consisting of North America, including Canada and Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean) and the interrelationships between these national and geographical locations, this issue of *RIAS* takes a different tack in its exploration of the subject. Through a reconsideration of the 15th century moment of contact represented in the encounter of Old World and New as an important founding moment in the development of the idea of modernity with which Anzaldúa's 'mythos' is in conflict, the essays in this issue question the seemingly stable epistemological boundaries that would seem to hold them separate and apart, each in its own temporal and disciplinary space between which, in conventional terms, no productive intellectual interaction can occur. Bringing these essays into hemispheric relation, however, suggests a productive affiliation not immediately discovered, but realized only by digging below the surface, and recognizing the significance of their points of convergence.

In their re-readings of modernity, all of the essays in this issue speak in different ways to Susan Stanford Friedman's consideration of the meaning of the moment of encounter in the Western trajectory of the modern. In two important essays on this topic, 'Definitional Excursions' and 'Periodizing Modernism', Friedman discusses in detail the semantic complexity of the terms modernism and modernity, as well as what she sees as their inherent contradictions, in their simultaneous, problematic and completely inescapable alterity. While acknowledging the insufficiency of what she identifies as the two central ways to approach the concept of the modern, i.e., the nominal and the relational, in discussing that modernity arising in the 15th century West she yet leans more toward an understanding of this modern moment as nominal, and,

as such, not particularly useful in seeking to move beyond hegemonic conceptions of modernism and modernity into a more global, diasporic and/or transnational engagement, which she identifies as primarily relational in form. Describing her own 'relational' approach to modernity, Stanford Friedman writes:

> I advocate a polycentric, planetary concept of modernity that can be both precise enough to be useful and yet capacious enough to encompass the divergent articulations of modernity in various geohistorical locations I suggest that modernity involves a powerful vortex of historical conditions that coalesce to produce sharp ruptures from the past that range widely across various sectors of a given society. The velocity, acceleration, and dynamism of shattering change across a wide spectrum of societal institutions are key components of modernity as I see it—change that interweaves the cultural, economic, political, religious, familial, sexual, aesthetic, technological, and so forth, and can move in both utopic and dystopic directions. Across the vast reaches of civilizational history, eruptions of different modernities often occur in the context of empires and conquest. This definitional approach recognizes the modernities that have formed not only after the rise of the West but also before the West's post-1500 period of rapid change—the earlier modernities of the Tang Dynasty in China, the Abbasid Dynasty of the Muslim empire, and the Mongol Empire, to cite just a few.

In this view, Stanford Friedman describes such a vast and interrelated network that it can only be understood in terms of a 'planetary' concept of modernity, one that will both encourage and foster the consideration of multiple modernities having their beginnings and their ends throughout an unconstrained time and space. But in naming the Western moment of modernity and then moving beyond it to her much larger planetary understanding, Stanford Friedman also produces a critical juncture in which the nominal surreptitiously camouflages itself in the relational and then quickly recedes, unnoticed, into the background, leaving our understanding of Western modernity for the most part intact.

The essays in this issue return to the modern moment of the post-1500 West, asserting that it **does** become productive especially when considered in relation to race and, by association, gender, to the extent that these may also, like the many modernities that Stanford Friedman describes, be understood as relational, rather than nominal. In its emphasis on a hemispheric articulation of gender and race, this issue returns to that early modern moment in order to consider the myriad ways in which it may in fact be relational, and what the recognition of this relationality might mean for the study of modernism and modernity in the context of the Americas. Considered thus in relational terms, the ostensibly nominal moment of encounter between Old World and New reveals, in its engendering of modernity, a simultaneous and powerful silencing at its core, represented also in what may be identified as the 'underbelly' of modernism, or what has not often been said, written about, considered, or recognized, what others like Simon Gikandi, in his influential study *Writing in Limbo*, have written about at length. Returning in this way to this foundational moment, this issue of *RIAS* identifies, explores and interrogates such neglected 'modernisms', seeking unexpected revelation in their potentially fruitful juxtaposition. Articulated as so many modern 'hemi/spheres', these modernisms form multiple disparate locations of engagement from any number of inter—and multi-disciplinary, multilingual, transnational, trans-cultural, trans-historical and trans-geographical vantage points. Derived from within this consideration, then, these modern 'hemi/

spheres' become not isolated moments in radically separate disciplinary locations, but may be seen to form a complicated and interconnected fabric of cultural, political, historical, economic, geographic, migratory, and transnational experience that is, by nature of its constitutive moment, not actually limited to the Western hemisphere, but in truth, global in its reach. Thus, while at first glance these modern 'hemi/spheres' would seem to be locked in an epistemological consideration that is primarily geographically defined, a deeper investigation reveals that they actually exist in easy relation to the discourses of globalization and transnationalism. That deeper investigation can only take place, however, if the hemispheric approach is defined not by its geography, as a conventional perspective might read it, but rather by its significance in a reconfigured understanding of Western modernity, such as that suggested by Anzaldúa in her insistence on the necessity of a new 'mythos' in seeking understanding of her articulation of multiple identity.

The essays in this issue address the notion of modernity's modernisms construed in this way in three registers: the temporal, the spatial and the global. In its reconsideration of the Western moment of modernity, this issue's theme doesn't seek to identify this as the only, or even the most important, modern moment. What it does seek to do is to try to unravel its significance to Western conceptions of modernity. By opening up the historical in this way, it suggests another way to think about the temporal in our considerations of modernism and modernity by decentering the influence of periodization, which would lock cultural discourse in neat 100-year time periods, often precluding productive engagement outside of those contexts by refusing and/or denying any kind of common ground. In its reconsideration of space, by emphasizing a hemispheric over an isolated (and potentially isolating) national geography, the issue provides a productive way to bring the spatial and the temporal into dialogue, so that what others have called multi-directional currents, which are often found in the interstices between national entities, are emphasized over the narrative of pure and authentic national identity. This dialogue also provides the ground for productive interdisciplinary engagement, in that what can be considered common ground need no longer be determined only by discipline, but rather by object of knowledge, which is also often derived thematically. And it speaks in a global register because as a result of these other registers, it becomes possible to think about the global interrelationships, geographical, national, cultural, political, etc. that may exist between silenced or oppressed modernities that we don't know so well in relation to the hegemonic narrative of the modern that we all know **too** well. This is the way by which modernity's modernisms come to be understood or to represent multiple interconnected 'hemi/spheres', in which exist many possible relations of various (though not all) modernities through history, time, and space, across axes of east and west and north and south—linked also, through the shared quest of discovery, to disparate global modernities existing prior to the 15th century modern moment of the West. Viewed in terms of such multiple 'hemi/spheres', modernity's modernisms thus suggests both a transnational and a transhistorical approach, forming an important nexus between inside/outside, colonial/postcolonial, the West and the Rest.

As representations of just a few of modernity's modernisms, the essays contained in this issue of *RIAS* investigate both the meaning and the significance of modernity in

disparate modern moments brought together in their reconsiderations of hemispheric modern possibility. The Forum essays derive from the International Relations Open Forum Roundtable held at the Modernist Studies Association conference in Nashville, Tennessee in November 2008. Coming from extremely disparate cultural, disciplinary and historical locations, each of the essays included here struggles with the difficulty of re-articulating the modern 'mythos.' In investigating the tensions between the hemispheric and the transnational, Laura Doyle foregrounds the spatial interrelationships between Stephen Yao's exploration of a Pacific Rim modernity and Margaret Mills Harper's analysis of the significance of Cuchulain to a modern Irish mainland and diasporic American sensibility. Limiting the notion of the hemispheric to its geographical manifestation, the coherence of these three projects may not necessarily be immediately obvious. Stretching it beyond those confines, however, and reading it as the imperative to strive toward an alternative articulation of the modern, engenders a hemispheric transnationalism—an understanding of the transnational that shifts the focus of the hemispheric from physical geography to the cultural reconfiguration of the Western moment of modernity. In this context, each of these three perspectives can be seen to tell a different story that is yet in many ways the same story, in their effort to make sense of the new modernity they identify and examine (and the modernities reflected in this endeavor).

A continued analysis of such new modernity/modernities is undertaken in the work of Sonita Sarker, Cyraina Johnson-Roullier and Jeremy Paden, whose essays explore, in vastly different contexts and time periods, a reconfigured modern construction of race and gender that also finds itself expressed in some measure within the first three essays, while at the same time extending far beyond them, seeking to rewrite the parameters of both race and gender in hemispheric perspective. While in their analyses of modernism and modernity, however, all of these texts raise more questions than they answer, in so doing they also lay the groundwork for understanding the modern significance of the issue's feature articles. Giorgio Mariani's exploration of the meaning of the relation between speed and modernity pushes the investigation of the modern into modernization and a concomitant globalization--considering speed, understood as 'mechanical velocity' and 'acceleration', as a primary arbiter in a reconfigured American modernity, focused on the idea of a shift in the 'texture' of that modernity. But it is also through this re-textured modernity that both Tace Hedrick and Kirsten Strom continue the re-figuration of the Western 'primitive', simultaneously creating new understandings of the meaning of modernity in a hemispheric transnationalism—reaching beyond geography and trans-historical in scope—reimagining the West in the dawn of a new modern mythos.

Cyraina Johnson-Roullier
Co-Editor

THE RIPTIDE CURRENTS OF TRANSNATIONALISM

Laura Doyle
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As a hermeneutical tool in hemispheric studies, we might usefully think in terms of three interacting streams of transnationalism: an imperial-capitalist form; a regional form; and an activist-diasporic or cosmopolitan form. The American hemisphere provides a site for studying the intersection of all of these streams and at the same time, as I describe below, it can itself be understood as a regional-transnational formation. My hope is that distinguishing these three streams may help us to analyze both the movements of different texts and authors and the cultural work accomplished through their literary tropes or interventions.

My comments here are prompted by the other contributions to this forum, and they offer a provisional framework for bringing together our diverse materials. I am not aiming to offer a taxonomy of transnationalism or of the contributors' papers. Instead I conceive of something more dialectical. These three streams of transnationalism unfold together historically and they interact. Over time, into the present, they continuously constitute, strain, redirect or, in pockets, break up each other.

We might distinguish **the imperial-capitalist form of transnationalism** as an invasive or aggressive form of transnationalism which appropriates foreign lands and resources for mostly private profit while also uprooting and shipping laborers across continents and oceans. As analyzed by Immanuel Wallerstein and others, capitalism arose as a world-system that sought out distant markets and took advantage of disparate or unevenly developed economies throughout the world (Wallerstein, 1974). It fostered the banking and material infrastructure for a system based on wage labor, credit, and commodity consumption, a system requiring new markets and thriving on the surplus generated by the discrepant valuation of labor and capital. As many scholars have argued, the modern capitalist system gained its competitive edge especially via the seizure of Amerindian lands and the importation of enslaved Africans into the Americas and the Caribbean. In this way, arguably, capitalist-imperialism has distinguished itself from other or past imperialisms as a particularly aggressive financial, transnational, and globe-encircling 'settler' form of imperialism.

In the Atlantic world in particular, this transnationalism increasingly took shape, ideologically and economically, by way of the modernity/coloniality formation originally theorized by Arturo Escobar, developed by Walter Mignolo, and cited in this forum by Jeremy Paden (Escobar, 2004; Mignolo, 2005). In this formation, some nations

and peoples were deemed modern and capitalizing, others backward and colonial. As Escobar and Mignolo emphasize, there is no modernity without coloniality; the relation between them is utterly contingent and dialectical at both the symbolic and material levels. This formation furthermore became deeply racialized, so that the world's peoples came to be seen as races and then these were categorized as either 'civilized' or 'savage.' This imperialist and racialized modern/colonial formation is transnational not only in the sense that it arises within a system that cuts across national borders but also in that it creates dividing lines within nations, stratifying the nation's peoples and defining their identities across national lines—such as the black/white line that disenfranchised 'Blacks' within the US and aligned them with 'Blacks' throughout the Atlantic world. Jeremy Paden's work reveals how the modern/colonial formation of imperialist transnationalism is also organized within an imaginary of nearness/distance: 'we' *over here* are civilized and modern, while 'they' *over there* are backward and savage. Paden in turn argues that the poet Sor Juana Inéz de la Cruz troubles this formation by insisting on a 'we' over (t)here.

It may be that this dividing line, and the transnational imperial-capitalist structure, comes under strain from the next two kinds of transnationalism: that is, the regional and activist-disaporic streams, which sometimes cut through, resist, and unsettle this imperialist one and its racializations. In this sense, it may be that the historical pressure exerted by the next two forms are in part what has moved us toward deconstructions of race. If this is true, perhaps hemispheric and transnational studies will help to complete this deconstructive project provoked partly by those transnational travelers and again called for now by Cyraina Johnson-Roullier in her essay. That is, such studies will help us to dislodge even the 'interracial' model that, as Johnson-Roullier points out, implicitly retains race as a category.

The **regional form** of transnationalism is generated by geography, or the physical adjacency of nations. That is, nations have tended to form alliances, identities, and also conflicts in clusters, often organized around geographical formations and resources (e.g., the Mediterranean basin) and languages or beliefs (e.g., Islam, Arabic). In many cases, the regional identifications of these (trans)national clusters were originally generated by empire, as to some extent with the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean world and the Roman (Catholic) Empire in Europe. But thereafter they take on lives of their own as regional formations of culture and politics. This history of regional transnational formations is what makes it valid for scholars now to study cross-racial, regional forms of *modernism*—such as Stephen Yao's work on Pacific Rim modernism, Margaret Mills Harper's work on Irish/British modernism as it is 'haunted' by America, or on the Atlantic-world Anglophone novel and African-Atlantic and Anglo-Atlantic modernism in *Bordering on the Body* (1994) and *Freedom's Empire* (2008). These transnational clusters are constituted by the contested-yet-shared stories, rhetoric, religions, and sometimes languages that dominate in a region —creating what Yuri Lotman calls semio-spheres (Lotman, 1990).

Further, we might consider hemispheric studies as one variation of this regional and geographically-contoured kind of transnationalism (and attendant modernisms). While it is true that US Americans like myself who study Anglophone literatures are still unlearning false assumptions about similarities across the Americas,

it might nonetheless also be true that certain histories have indeed formed these many American peoples around some common mythemes and memories, or within shared semio-spheres. Such common imaginative formations might include, for instance, tales of ocean-crossing travelers, crossings that create a crisis of traumatic contact (disease, war, conquering, and colonization, and, for some, unprecedented opportunity and wealth) and also precipitate historical breaks (from Europe, or from African or indigenous ancestors). The images of a *vast ocean-crossing distance* (with its Biblical undertones) discussed by Paden hints at such a 'hemispheric' trope. And might this trope appear on the Pacific side as well, so that 'ocean-crossing' becomes one American-hemisphere trope, among others? Additionally, might such imagery appear in the writings of the activist transnational travelers that Sonita Sarker studies? And if so, we might ask how they inflect their feminist political solidarities and critiques. I raise these possibilities simply as questions for further exploration.

The last yet essential point to make about the regional form of transnationalism is that it can (like national stories and affiliations) tug on and even undercut the imperialist thrust and racialized divisions of the first form of transnationalism—and may perhaps likewise provoke modernist aesthetic de/formations. We might in this connection consider the way that New World hispanophone creole revolutions broke up the Spanish empire and created identities and literatures at odds with Spanish literature, even if ambivalently and partially—including, in some cases, through symbolic and problematic alliances with indigenous outlooks and expressive traditions. In the case of African-diaspora blacks in the US or the 'new world', these regional or hemispheric riptide strains of transnationalism have come into play in several ways, such as when indigenous and African-diasporic communities have gone to war on behalf of creole and colonial Americans in emergent nations against Europeans. Or to take another kind of instance, under circumstances ranging from the 18th century Sierra Leone project to the Ghanian Independence movement, African-American and Caribbean travelers to Africa reported that they quickly learned that they were after all 'American', in both a national and hemispheric sense. The differences of language, political beliefs, and individualist or communal orientations threw into relief their westernized American-ness. In these cross-hemispheric travels American-diaspora Blacks inevitably re-experienced the falseness of the imperial and racialized modern/colonial ideology that aligned all blacks regardless of continent or nationality. For some, this re-orientation fostered a broad and energizing perspective on the specific nature of their racial and national struggles back in the Americas, including by heightening their sense of the shared Caribbean/American histories of slavery, political languages of rights, and varieties of color oppression. Insofar as these cross-hemispheric movements involved activists, they bring us to the third stream of transnationalism.

The third stream of transnationalism—**an activist-diasporic or cosmopolitan form**—is comprised of persons, movements, and communities who suffer exile or travel deliberately for political reasons and who cultivate an activist orientation or critical cosmopolitan consciousness in the process, often as representatives of one or more diasporic communities. Their movements (in both senses) are often generated by the workings or legacies of imperialist transnationalism and yet they also work, intentionally in many cases, against its formations—in the process loosening or

reconfiguring the borders and identities of the regional within the colonial, modern formation. This is the stream in which we would place the transnational feminist writers that Sonita Sarker studies. Similarly, Elleke Boehmer has recently documented this kind of transnational formation in her excellent study of transnational postcolonial resistance movements, *Empire, the National, and the Postcolonial, 1890–1920* (2002). Such movements are also effectively analyzed within some new theories of cosmopolitanism, such as those collected in *Cosmopolitics* (Cheah, Robbins, 1998). As I hinted above, we might ask whether and how these activist transnational actors deliberately, or simply by their presence, tend to break up, or reinforce, or create aporias within the imperialist and regional forms of transnationalism—and vice versa.

Might it help us understand the relation among diverse modernisms, including but not limited to those outlined in the other contributions to this forum, to think about them as they are multiply shaped by these riptide streams of transnationalism? Are some forms of modernist practice shaped more by one stream than another, even while no text or author can escape being influenced by all of them? Are the tensions and contradictions in modernist literary or political works explained in part by the tensions and contradictions animating these intersecting streams or pressures of transnationalist modernity? These are some of the questions that a theory of riptide transnationalisms might generate.

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MODERN AMERICA: GWENDOLYN BENNETT AND VICTORIA OCAMPO CAPTURE THE CONTINENTS

Sonita Sarker
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Dedicated specially to the theme for this *RIAS* issue, my concept-paper outlines an idea-in-progress that I offered for discussion at the Modernist Studies Association conference which took place November 2008 in Nashville, Tennessee, USA. The last paragraph of this paper offers a glimpse of how the concepts under discussion inform the shape of a book that juxtaposes the authors included here with other and non-American modernists.

This discussion explores how americanidad/american-ness[1] develops during the early 20th century, in the writings of Gwendolyn Bennett and Victoria Ocampo. Placing Bennett adjacent to Ocampo produces a few effects. A Harlem Renaissance poet/social commentator (generally considered a 'minor' figure) next to an Argentinian author/social commentator (generally considered a 'major' figure) illuminates how gender, race, and class are variously axiological, constructed and naturalized, in their constitution of american-ness. Through their adjacency, early 20th century 'American Modernism' emerges more from a continental view than from a perspective based primarily in nation-state identities. For our own appreciation of their works, the juxtaposition of these two authors brings 'American' (which almost always signifies the United States, not-Canada, and not-Mexico) and 'Latin American' modernities into closer correlation by working with and beyond nation-state and regional identities.

Through, behind, and beneath Bennett's and Ocampo's texts is an 'American' modernity consisting of a heterogeneity of particulars related to globally operative ideological debates and competitions in the 1930s and 40s.[2] To broaden the context, this com-

[1] See the visionings of America in the works of Gabriela Mistral, Miguel de Unamuno, Julio Cortazar, and Octavio Paz for a partial genealogy. The philosophies of the Harlem Renaissance surrounding americanness remains relatively unexplored; the few analyses that address the 'American' nation, culture, and identity filter the idea mostly and only through the construction of blackness.

[2] See early 20th century international contentions around matters of political supremacy or independence and economic control in relation to mass culture as well as the cult of the individual. See examples that reflect the times, such as C. Noonan, *Chronic Unemployment: A Result of Prolonging Individual Ownership Control and Competition in Industry Beyond Their Natural Age* (Schenectady, N.Y.: [Citizen Pub.], 1914); B. Russell, *Political Ideals* (New York: The Century Co, 1917); E. D. Martin, *The Conflict of the Individual and the Mass in the Modern World* [Colver lectures, Brown University, 1931]. New York: H. Holt and Co, 1932).

parative study of Bennett and Ocampo illuminates how Americans viewed America relationally—to Africa as the source of an integral component of American identity, to Europe as a competing geopolitical concept, and to the rest of the world as the new house of capital power. This competitive idea of America pulled elements selectively from various old and new political ideological systems. In '50 Años de Pie', an essay in *Sur*, Ocampo says,

> Digo caricatura grosera al recordar que se me preguntó, con la mayor seriedad del mundo, si mi revista se proponía volverle la espalda a Europa. Sencillamente porque declare que su fin principal consistirla en estudiar los problemas que nos conciernen, de un modo vital, a los americanos. Volver la espalda a Europa? Siente el ridiculo infinito de esa frase?

Ocampo's vision of continental America as facing, speaking directly to, Europe is picked up in more elaborate form in the special *Sur* issue of *La Guerra America* (1941). Bennett's poem 'Lines Written at the Grave of Alexander Dumas' (*Opportunity*, July 1926) was written while she was on an art fellowship in France. Dumas would have been at the cemetery at Villers-Cotterêts.[3] The object of Bennett's poem is not whimsical, personal, or an ordinary salute to a universally recognized figure. Alexandre Dumas' father (Thomas-Alexandre) was the son of Marquis Alexandre-Antoine Davy de la Pailleterie, a French nobleman who was Général Commissaire in the Artillery in the colony of Saint Domingue (modern Haiti); and Marie-Cesette Dumas, a former slave from the Afro-Caribbean. The homage to a European icon is linked to a modern American history through a subterranean Black heritage.[4]

An American-hemispheric study, such as this one of Bennett and Ocampo, can reveal how such notions of hemispheres, and the continents contained in them, are both spatial and temporal ontologies.[5] For instance, in the symposium 'Tienen las Americas una historia comun?' Ocampo says,

> Yo creo que cuando escribo, por ejemplo, sobre Emily Bronte o sobre Virginia Woolf, o sobre cualquier otro escritor, lo poco que puedo decir sobre ellos lo digo siempre como americana. Y pienso, además, que la cantidad de americanismo que poseo no disminuye en nada por la pasión que siento hacia Europa, sino que, por el contrario, mi pasión hacia Europa lo enriquece.[6]

Ocampo indicates an intellectual connection as being both spatially and temporally multiple as well as integrated. In the poem 'Heritage', Bennett similarly declares, from an entirely different angle,

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[3] Dumas's body remained there until November 30, 2002 when it was moved to the Pantheon under Chirac's orders.

[4] The *RIAS* call mentions gender and race as critical axes but marks only the latter with double quotes to indicate its constructedness. The poem by Bennett cited in this paper is one of many in which race and culture appear to be primary foci but are consistently grounded in an interaction with implicit or explicit gendered identities that are crucial to the narratives.

[5] It bears mentioning that the class-based understandings of hemispheres, continents, and worlds during the early 20th century form part of our legacies of understanding Northern and Southern, Eastern and Western today. These perceptions and interpretations, in turn, affect how we construct and naturalize our own racialized, classed, and gendered locations.

[6] The text of the meeting was printed in Sur, 13 October 1941. Margherita Sarfatti, *Mussolini's Jewish mistress*, participated in this symposium.

I want to hear the chanting
Around a heathen fire
Of a strange black race.
I want to breathe the Lotus flow'r,
Sighing to the stars
With tendrils drinking at the Nile…
I want to feel the surging
of my sad people's soul
Hidden by a minstrel-smile

(Opportunity, December 1923).

The ancient and the modern, chronologically separated, become one in the spatial pastiches of both Ocampo's and Bennett's trans-continental view of America.

Now, I return to the first part of the title for the discussion, 'Modernity's Modernisms.' Jean-Francois Lyotard asserts that modernity is a constant state (Lyotard, 1993). Then one has to ask what is particular about the modernity of the 1920s-1940s trans-American consciousness in Argentinean Victoria Ocampo and Harlem Renaissance Gwendolyn Bennett's essays? Given these specific foci, the question would have to be: what is *this* modernity's modernism? In specifying the temporal location of modernity, one implication arises, namely, that its modernism (its cultural and artistic manifestations) has also to be rendered specific. Literary and cultural academic analyses today argue for period-flexibility, asserting that modernism doesn't end circa 1950, since the same tensions of structure and form, along with critiques and experimentations, exist today. The matter embedded in the question about this modernity's modernism is that of context and consequence (Habermas, 1987). If the same tensions of structure vs. critique of structure existed in the 1920s and 30s as they do later in the past century, then what were salient for Ocampo and Bennett that allow us to maintain perspective and difference? Thus, the question: What is *this* (or *their*) modernity's modernism in their works and their significance? And, in relation to the focus of this discussion, how do Ocampo's and Bennett's 'modernist American' consciousnesses manifest a particularized modernity?

Hegemonic modernities, and hegemonic interpretations of modernities, are comprised of some key features: figurations of a self-aware and reasoning individual, of history as teleological progress, and of the 'now' that is rupture from the old. It is the first two of these that this discussion will address in exploring the bases of Ocampo's and Bennett's modernisms, because it is from the first two that the third element emerges. In their writings, notions of national and continental selves/identities and understanding of self or individual are mutually dependent, and both are crafted out of, and continually responding to, two salient and related contexts. A significant one is the dialectics of mass and individual embedded in competing contemporary politico-economic philosophies that are also cultural philosophies. The other is the range of ideas about contemporary history, defined through these philosophies not only as time but also as a spectrum of old and new spatial perceptions.[7]

[7] The vocabulary of this essay, and in the larger work, is drawn in large part from Gramscian theories of power, citizenship, and international relations.

To look closely at both Bennett's and Ocampo's circumstances, decisions, and acts—different as those are—is to discover a number of simultaneities that invoke questions about the nature of their (trans) American modernity's modernisms, and how those may bear upon our present. Neither Bennett nor Ocampo abandoned a national (mass or collective) identity, intertwined as that was with gendered and racialized imperial histories and ambitions as well as with gendered and racialized democratic impulses. This claim to a national identity was not, in either case, contradictory to a trans-national consciousness, as some of the extracts above illustrate, explicitly or implicitly.

Stemming from this simultaneity and also contributing to it is, in both cases, an effort to craft an identity in the context of mass politics that is mobilized in contrary ways by liberal capitalist nations on the one hand and socialist movements on the other. As both Bennett and Ocampo experienced directly in their strategic adoption of liberal and socialist politics, the privileged universal cosmopolitan contrasted with the cosmopolitan proletariat respectively.[8] Within the contexts of community and individual self-determination, Bennett and Ocampo negotiated differently a gendered identity contextualized by racial-national legacies and (dis)affiliations from 'the masses.' Each also aspired, at the same time, to a supra-national consciousness that preserved their identification with a 'human' who was not confined by these moorings.

Running through these aspects of individual and community representation in Bennett's and Ocampo's works, an important element is that of the present-that-is-also-the-future. Their writings convey an overwhelming sense of present-ness that breaks from an imagined and constructed past, of which 'the primitive' serves as their counterfoil. This element of newness or modernness (and the two are often used interchangeably) has, of course, been noted in numerous academic analyses of 1920s and 1930s modernisms as demonstrative of the agendas of modernity. In my reading of early 20th century modernist America, these constructions of past and present-future have a particular salience when interpreted in relation to capitalist and communist perspectives on global power, as Ocampo's and Bennett's works addressed them. Within, against, and alongside this (trans) American context, in my readings of Ocampo and Bennett, the new is not merely about the linear passages of time but of its manifestations—the modern woman, the modern nation, the modern world. In other words, I am implying that each of these is not only a manifestation of philosophies of identity-in-space or identity-as-space but as expressions of time. So, for example, the matter of nation is a matter of not only space but also time; claiming national identity signaled (and signals today) a stepping into the present-future as a recognized entity, a macrocosm of the individual being recognized by virtue of its temporal as much as by its spatial demarcations.

To expand the original question then: who is, or how does one construct, the inhabitant of *this* modernity's modernism? And how does one account for *their* modernity's modernism? (Both of these questions, each dependent on the other, occupy

[8] For example, the New York World-Telegram printed an article titled 'Carver School Name Called Red Negro Ruse' (November 1943) in which Bennett is interviewed about the Washington Carver School for Democracy; she is quoted as saying that 'The school will be supported by the community.'

us today as well.) Modernisms that are comprised of the suturing of elements in Bennett's and Ocampo's practices towards complex socio-political belonging, elements that hegemonic political and cultural practices aim either to separate repeatedly and forcefully or use strategically in combination in particular contingencies. The 'modern', as Ocampo's and Bennett's works reveal, is not a clean break from or counterposition to the past nor from its perceived residues in their present. For both, their amalgamation is connected to their (dis)affiliations with past and present-future subjectivities that are slotted in terms of race, gender, and class. These (dis)affiliations stem from Bennett's and Ocampo's processes of reconciling their own public and private identities with formally political structures/ideologies across the Americas.[9]

Gwendolyn Bennett and Victoria Ocampo are two examples of what I term the new indigenous inhabiting early 20th century American modernity. Their works are accounts of the numerous and seemingly contradictory impulses of past/present-future, continent/world, nation/supra-nation, mass/individual, and (wo)man/supra-(wo)man. Bennett's 'To a Dark Girl' exhorts the titular persona to

[k]eep all [she has] of queenliness,
Forgetting that [she] once [was] slave,
And let [her] full lips laugh at Fate!

Even as she calls on an always-emerging African identity, she turns to

[t]he red men, the black, the white,
Lying end to end
Beneath cities and towns,
In river-beds… I died,
Building America

aligning her own self with the mixture that makes America appear in her essays as in her poems. Ocampo, in a discussion on Mary McCarthy's essay 'America the Beautiful' ('Norteamerica, La Hermosa') notes her view at the onset, in parentheses, debating directly the author's imagination of America and presenting her own in a dialectical relationship with Europe. In the course of noting her initial points of contention, she observes:

No creo, por ejemplo, que sea especialidad de los europeos el imaginar que el dinero hace la felicidad, mientras que los americanos (y me refiero al Continente entero, en toda su longitud) se han curado de esa illusion.

In the larger work, I indicate that the new indigenous include Virginia Woolf, Grazia Deledda, and Cornelia Sorabji. They are partially representative of the many modernist subjects that inhabit our studies of modernisms and modernities. As Bennett's and Ocampo's works demonstrate, the American new indigenous maintains selective alignments with the imagined or constructed indigenous-made-primitive that function as the anonymous mass in the background of the modern individual. She thus

[9] By 'formally political structures', I mean political parties and governments that are only some formations of the political.

muddies the supposed (modernist) rupture of the new from the past. The new indigenous holds as natural her particular national identity while striving to claim the continent as its expanded form; at the same time, this new indigenous also claims the universal as a position of intellectual and emotional power beyond gender and race.

The question of who inhabits modernism (and how, when, and where) itself as well as my response might appear to return the liberal humanist individual to view, and to focus on Bennett and Ocampo as 'extraordinary' individuals who become the model of a flexible, but nevertheless contained subjecthood. Even the response, in offering the figuration of the new indigenous, only appears to resurrect an individual subject. In recent modernist scholarship, the early 20th century dialectics of the deconstruction of the individual as an effect of power-structures and the fetishization of the individual has been largely abandoned in favor, largely, of a heavy dependence on the latter. New forms of this dialectic, between effects/issues and personages, continue to tilt in favor of the latter—one only has to look at some examples to declare that they are comparative, and see that they have only placed individual modernist figures as bounded subjects who speak separately on common topics. The concept of the new indigenous, or hybrid native, attempts to capture a relational methodology —of approaching individuals as effects of prevailing ideologies as also individuals who grapple with those same ideologies.

Describing Bennett and Ocampo as the new indigenous also allows for a discussion of a number of assumed positions in modernist studies scholarship, i.e., in the reception of a period called Modernism and a style called Modernist. One is the ascription of the status of 'cosmopolitan' to prominent and mobile modernist figures who appear to gain universality by apparently being anchored nowhere. The notion of the new indigenous acknowledges the complicated sense of material and political belonging, claimed even by those aspiring to or granted universal status. Another is the desire to remain resolutely lodged in fragments (read and repeated as modernist experimentation) or arrive at wholes (read and repeated as the project of political modernity). Both fragments and wholes are structures that we assign retrospectively to many of the contradictions of early 20th century modernity's modernisms. The new indigenous, as a concept and a practice, allows for the fractal relationships that cannot be reconciled or explained completely, yet still function meaningfully in the lives of those modernist figures.

My discussion at the MSA and for the *RIAS* draws out some aspects of the new indigenous through examples from Bennett's and Ocampo's experience and writings. For example, Bennett's education in New York and Paris, her career in Harlem and the Jefferson School for Democracy, and her cultural vehicle, *The Ebony Flute* in the magazine *Opportunity*. And Ocampo's education in Buenos Aires, primarily in French, her career across the Americas and Europe, particularly her intellectual relationships with Waldo Frank, Andre Breton, and Rabindranath Tagore, as well as some of her essays in her own cultural vehicle, *Sur*.

This particular comparison is the basis of an exploration of the legacies of Bennett and Ocampo on the issues of modernity's modernisms across the Americas, and follows the lines of affiliation as well as dissonance from the early 20th century into more recent understandings of the same. These diachronic hemispheric mappings aim to

contribute to our own contemporary discussions of American-ness as that is informed by prevailing and historically modulated concepts of race, class, and gender in relation to nation. In other terms, as deployed in daily life, American-ness is fraught with debates about the varying status of native, citizen, and immigrant (in relation to equity or patriotism, for example) as those are interpreted and enacted in late 20th century transnational and global late capitalist modernity. One only has to think briefly about the rhetoric of patriotism in the recent presidential campaign to reflect upon how American-ness arises. The studies of Bennett and Ocampo, and of the concept of the new indigenous, hope to contribute to analyses and reshapings of our own political and cultural practices.

The book-project, of which this particular comparison of Bennett and Ocampo is a part, expands a study of the new indigenous by juxtaposing Virginia Woolf (England), Grazia Deledda (Italy), and Cornelia Sorabji (India). The geopolitical relationships between the Americas and these nations/continents, through their use of political ideologies, form the backdrop to the study of the authors' works. The discussion of (trans)American-ness is part of the first chapter that is titled 'Genes' and that addresses issues of authenticity and belonging based on racial, gendered, intellectual and national 'genes', i.e., the inherited material that enables an instinctive as well as constructed sense of belonging.

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'I WIND MY VEIL ABOUT THIS ANCIENT STONE': YEATS'S CUCHULAIN AND MODERNITY

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In the academy as well as popular discourse, Ireland is usually referenced in geopolitical and cultural space with regard to its next-door neighbor, the island and then the empire that claimed Ireland in a 'semicolonial' status, to use a term patented by Derrick Attridge and Marjorie Howes (Attridge and Howes, 2000), for some seven hundred years. However, locating Ireland as England's Other should come with a number of conceptual qualifications. Some of these have to do with Northern Ireland, territory that can seem a standing affront to the easy binary of Irishness *versus* Englishness. Some others involve the larger diaspora, resulting from emigration around the globe, which has been estimated recently as encompassing some seventy million people (Kenneally, 2006: 108). Still others implicate in particular the hemisphere across the Atlantic.

Mere demography would seem to make the claim for a trans-Atlantic approach to Ireland: there are many more Irish Americans than there are people living in Ireland, and a lively trade of ideas has been commonplace for generations. With regard to academic politics, it is worth noticing two trends in which Ireland and the US are co-implicated. First, on the political left, the inclusion of Ireland into postcolonial area studies has tended to stress intellectual methods that posit unequal power relations or mediations like hybridity (for example, the 'hyphenated' status of Anglo-Irishness, whether the term refers to the upper classes of Ireland that were Protestant and part of the British power structure or simply to Irish writing in the English language). On the political right, Irishness has been linked with American-Irish relations, so that events in Irish history that are important to ethnic Irish America (such as the Famine), and writing that fans nationalist flames, receive the brunt of intellectual attention. Both the postcolonial and the nostalgic modes may sometimes hide a racist agenda (Irish people regarded as that rare and valuable thing in western culture, a 'white' oppressed minority). With regard to modernism, the popularity of writers like Joyce and Yeats in particular has been a feature of both trends. The positioning of the great poet and the great novelist as the two pillars of Irish modernism arose in tandem with ideological movements like New Criticism, with its high premium on close readings that reveal hermetic knowledge and humanist values, and it has been sustained since, even

by movements with very different political stances. As Cyraina Johnson-Roullier notes in her essay, not only polarities but also border crossings depend upon borders: for Irish modernism, the imagined border has consistently been the Irish Sea.[1]

I would like to suggest a different focus, one that does not reproduce the familiar dialogic structure of Ireland as Not-England, or, for that matter, other related polarities, like the one that sets up Yeatsian Romantic Ireland against Joycean avant-gardism, a timeless rural antiquity *versus* advanced urban cosmopolitanism. However, it is easy to see each of these Irish Revivalisms as determinedly not-England, the one resisting the Big Empire Over the Water by fetishizing a mythologized nationalist past and the other hopping over it to align turn-of-the-century Dublin with Homeric Greece as represented stylistically by means of the techniques of international modernism. My focus will be on the figure of Cuchulain, the warrior hero that Yeats fashioned out of the *Táin Bo Cuailnge,* the most well-known story from the medieval Ulster cycle of tales, into a figure in several poems and the hero of a cycle of plays. The plays claim my attention here, as they highlight not only the enacted embodiment of the figure of Cuchulain but also its significant change over a critical period of time.

The first of the plays is *On Baile's Strand* (1904), followed by the farce *The Green Helmet* (composed in prose in 1908, rewritten in verse in 1910). These two plays are intimately related, though that relation is not often noted: Yeats wrote of the first version that *The Green Helmet* was 'meant as an introduction to *On Baile's Strand*' (Clark and Clark, Appendix 3, Vol. IV, *Variorum Plays,* 454, *Collected Works,* 863). In 1921 (following public events of 'terrible beauty' on Irish, European, and world stages), Yeats published *Four Plays for Dancers*, which included two Cuchulain plays: *At the Hawk's Well* (from 1917) and *The Only Jealousy of Emer* (1919). *The Only Jealousy*, which is unlike the other plays for dancers in focusing not on the hero, Irish politics, or aesthetics but on the women that surround Cuchulain, was revised and retitled *Fighting the Waves* in 1930. Finally, at almost the end of his life, Yeats completed his last play, *The Death of Cuchulain* (1939).

The Cuchulain who treads the boards in these plays, of course, is far more Yeatsian than medieval. He is recognizably anti-British Irish in theme: through a figure that came to be identified by the poet and playwright as a personal alter-ego or anti-self, Yeats reworked the old sagas to create a usable past for Ireland, turning figures such as the sacrificial soldier and the lone adventurer from imperial discourse against the very empire that birthed them. At the same time, he is British modernist in style, appearing by means of costumes, set design, and dance that are shot through with British and European modernist modes. But Cuchulain is a multiply overdetermined sign, a regular palimpsest of a character, traveling from pre-Christian oral tale through monastic redaction, antiquarian restoration, Romantic adaptation, and nationalist populism, and brought into by modernity by Yeats. His modernity, which, I will argue, has

[1] It should also be noted that simple economics plays a considerable role in these arguments: Joyce and Yeats, the 'Great Men', act as live bait with which to attract US and Canadian students over the Atlantic to spend their much-needed dollars in summer schools and exchange programs in Ireland. In turn, major US Universities, particularly from the North East, run summer schools and even campuses in Ireland. So Irish Studies, to a large extent, is driven by Irish American ethnicity and the economic market place it provides.

reference to a trans-Atlantic paradigm, traces a different line of force in early 20th century Irish modernism than the more common, exclusively England-facing, trajectory.

I would like to offer here just an abbreviated sense of details I sketched out more thoroughly during the Modernist Studies Association roundtable. To begin with, this modernity is deeply racialized and gendered. Cuchulain is consistently an embodiment of anxious masculinity undone in the face of feminized otherness. He is nearly destroyed by women: both Medbh and Aoife (indirectly) in *On Baile's Strand,* the Hawk woman in *At the Hawk's Well*, Fand in *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, Eithne Inguba and the Morrigu (the Goddess of War) in *The Death of Cuchulain*. All of these women characters are associated with water, shorelines, borders of territories, including the border between the living and the dead. Declan Kiberd and others have traced the figure of Cuchulain as a 19th century 'symbol of masculinity for Celts, who had been written off as feminine by their masters.' For example, in the Gaelic Athletic Association, hurling (*camán*), a revived sport that was supposedly 'beloved of the young Cuchulain', became widely popular as 'militant nationalists … emulated the muscular imperial ethic with their own Gaelic games, Cuchulanoid models and local versions of the public schools' (Kiberd, 25, 44). In Yeats as in O'Casey and other later writers, 'the Cuchulain cult appears to the playwright less as a spur to battle than as a confession of impotence. It is only the timid and the weak, [O'Casey] implies, who desire the vicarious thrill afforded by the blood-sacrificing rhetoric of Pearse, the speaker at the window in the second act [of The Plough and the Stars]' (Kiberd, 224).

More importantly, this Yeatsian hero tries to hold identity but is surrounded by water, waves, wells, and the like. He is, in fact, islanded, a condition that has reference to England but only in passing compared to the psychosexual state itself. Like the common references to Hy-Brasil (citation: Graham) or Tir-na-Nóg, the Cuchulain myth, as interpreted by Yeats, is about being caught in a failed definition floating in indefiniteness, with the promise of completion just over the water. This hero must fight the waves and die, tied by an old lover's veils to 'an ancient stone', at the hands of the weakest of male foes but still holding the Gap of the North (a reference, especially in the 1939 *Death of Cuchulain*, to the North-South divide).

Interestingly, the earlier plays feature the hero fighting the waves or undone by the effort, an effort that is interpreted as failed masculinity as well as race (Aoife is Scottish; Emer, Irish in the myth, is an analogue for Yeats's British wife Georgie Hyde Lees). The late play performs a shift in the character as character, so that the play is not about him but about the female figures, the dance, and the *mise en scène* of the play itself, with an authorial stage manager playing the role of 'wild, wicked old man', outside the bounds of decorum (a figure common in late Yeatsian poetry). The titular character disappears into what Yeats would call a phantasmagoria, a revery, that paradoxically removes him from the frame of mythologized Irish history or the modernist effects that dominate the play, into another space/time, one with a larger frame of reference: as the final song of the play has it,

No body like his body
Has modern woman borne,

But an old man looking back on life
Imagines it in scorn

(Clark and Clark, 554).

That space is the space of the water and the vaguely fabled land beyond it; the time is the no-time of change itself. This is the modernist space/time I'll argue for, which signifies not a set of practices but change itself, within the confines of the modern frame. By the time Yeats finished with Cuchulain, he had made his hero into a symbol of recognition of the need to invent Irishness, and the complex crossings of water (critical and unstable figurations of race and gender) that this project entails, its inevitable failures in a post-independence Ireland and a trans-Atlantic-focused Europe, and its tragic poise in the face of death at the hands of a blind beggar—modern, truly.

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'BLACKNESS', MODERNITY, AND THE IDEOLOGY OF VISIBILITY IN THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

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In a bold departure from the established critical norm regarding the Harlem Renaissance and its relation to modernism and modernity, George Hutchinson's in-depth study, *The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White* (Harvard, 1995), seeks not to discuss the movement's success or failure (Huggins, 1971; Lewis, 1979; 1981) but rather to open up the possibility of examining what he has called the 'complicated cultural drama' (Hutchinson, 1995: 25)[1] within which the movement took place. But even as it posits a critique of the stated racial boundaries of the Harlem Renaissance, Hutchinson's study yet elides its own consideration of 'blackness', which underlies its exploration of the meaning of interracialism within the movement, or the objective manifestation of the 'cultural drama' of which he speaks. While it opens new ground with regard to the cultural significance of 'race' during this time, Hutchinson's re-articulation also stops short of the rigorous interrogation of 'race' necessary to undergird a re-conceptualization of the Harlem Renaissance powerful enough to shake its firmly entrenched critical and cultural position, and provide its proponents with not only a new vision of this moment in literary history, but one that could also provide a more profound and nuanced understanding of the deeper significance of its inherent and multiracial modernism. That cultural position, as the foundation of a black cultural nationalism derived from an inter-generational African-American conflict that ended with the valorization of what Martin Favor (Favor, 1999) identifies as the 'authentic blackness' of those designated as the black 'folk'—that is, those US blacks who are southern, rural, and poor—itself contains an uncritiqued and uncontested articulation of 'race' at its heart, what Michael Awkward has described as a situation harboring 'ghosts of a nostalgic essentialism' (Awkward, 1995: 6).

[1] For other studies of the relation between race and modernity, see James de Jongh, *Vicious Modernism: Black Harlem and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge UP, 1990); Laura Doyle, *Bordering on the Body: The Racial Matrix of Modern Fiction and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994); Michael North, *The Dialect of Modernism: Race, Language and Twentieth-Century Literature* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994); Houston *Baker, Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago P, 1987); Ann Douglass, *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* (Paris: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1995); and Daylanne K. English, *Unnatural Selections: Eugenics in American Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina P, 2004).

When explored in relation to Hutchinson's consideration of interracialism in the Harlem Renaissance, Favor's 'authentic blackness' figures as the dividing line which measures the distance between white cultural contributions to the movement, and those which are considered specifically black contributions—underscoring the existence of two distinct modern hemi/spheres whose interconnectedness Hutchinson's analysis of interracialism is positioned to examine. But while Favor's 'authentic blackness' divides white and Euro-American from black and diasporic African, it also helps to further a rigid understanding of the significance of 'blackness' and the certainty of 'whiteness' that refuses, in this context, to consider the meaning of modernity and its importance to a more complete knowledge of interracialism within the movement. In other words, to analyze the notion of 'interracialism' in the Harlem Renaissance, as Hutchinson has outlined, it is first necessary to assume the 'racial', and, within it, a certain fixity and stability regarding singular constructions of race, such as 'black' and 'white.' By assuming the stability of these terms, however, Hutchinson also simultaneously reinforces the binary logic that, through their opposition, both creates them and holds them in place as corporeal essence, to be accessed through what Robyn Wiegman has identified as 'economies of the visible', creating a 'violent equation between the idea of "race" and the 'black" body' (Wiegman, 1995: 3–4). But this fixity and stability of signification is also only possible when race, at least in the form of 'whiteness' and 'blackness', is held not only in relation to the visible, but also in a kind of Yin-Yang opposition, in which each term exerts the same amount of semantic force with regard to the other. This oppositional binary logic is precisely the rhetorical condition that, in his emphasis on the interracialism of the Harlem Renaissance, Hutchinson seeks to argue against. But because the 'racial' must also be assumed in seeking to examine what is '*inter*racial' within the Harlem Renaissance, this racial opposition cannot be dismantled at its core, and is thus also unable to adequately address the role of 'race' within modernism and modernity. The cultural meanings of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' in this instance do not disappear simply because the issue of 'race' cannot be satisfactorily addressed. Instead, they go below the surface, where their oppositional relation is both obscured and solidified, so that the racial divide they represent seems merely a reflection of an immutable, de facto status quo. Consequently, because the cultural meanings of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' are in this way hidden within the notion of interraciality, it also becomes impossible to denaturalize them, thereby ensuring that unless this situation is in some way radically altered, the role of race within modernism and modernity, understood through the exploration of interracialism, can only be partially examined. Thus, the new vision of the Harlem Renaissance suggested by analysis of its underlying interracialism can only become fully possible to the extent that the conventional binary, white/black, is also pulled apart to expose the cultural significance of the opposition between the two terms, through which the hidden nexus by which they are joined comes violently to the fore.

As a result, even in an argument such as Hutchinson's, which on its face purports to move beyond accepted critical boundaries in its examination of what might be conventionally understood as white participation in a black literary and cultural context, the historical reality of the Harlem Renaissance, its interracialism, its arguments over representation, representativeness, and the most 'authentic' way to articulate

black identity, its debates over the meaning of 'blackness' and the most true-to-life depiction of black experience, are made to give way to a cultural nationalist model that would reduce this cacophony of approaches and perspectives to one voice, whose primary function is to bring a culturally viable understanding of a true and pure 'blackness' into being. Hutchinson's effort to contradict the ascendancy of this single voice, while powerful, cannot completely dismantle it (so that the significance of interracialism may be fully comprehended in this context) without a concomitant and rigorous interrogation of the binary logic—the dichotomy between 'white' and 'black'—upon which it is based. Viewed from this perspective, Hutchinson's analysis of interracialism in the Harlem Renaissance reveals a host of unexplored questions, lying deep below its interrogation of interracialism in the movement, and urging us to consider more carefully the meaning of 'race' in relation to modernism, modernity and the Harlem Renaissance: what exactly is the meaning of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' in the Harlem Renaissance? What do 'white' and 'black' mean in the context of modernism and modernity? How does the modern sensibility inform, interrogate, interact with and/or speak to these seemingly immutable terms? What is the relation between modernity and race?

Such questions are crucial to an exploration of the role played by race in modernism, yet they also raise very difficult problems whose impact reaches far beyond the specific context in which they occur. Because issues of race and its relation to modernism are also encompassed by deep-seated, firmly entrenched cultural significations that have traditionally placed race and modernism on opposing sides of a seemingly unbridgeable disciplinary divide, the effort to transcend this difficulty is from the outset plagued by the discursive and critical power of these significations to create and maintain cultural meaning. And because this rhetorical power drives the consideration of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' by which these issues are described deep below the surface, it also, in so doing, renders them almost impossible to disengage and interpret. Paul Gilroy has studied this type of racial situation as an instance of what he calls 'raciology', or a dangerous form of 'race-thinking' that 'brings the virtual realities of "race" to dismal and destructive life' (Gilroy, 2002: 1). That 'raciology', in Gilroy's terms, produces a *virtual* racial reality is important here: when the rhetorical power of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' is driven underground, it creates another, hidden reality that has no foundation in actual, face-to-face time, but which yet exerts an almost superhuman influence over the terms within which such actual reality is encountered and experienced. This 'virtual' reality is, then, superimposed upon actual reality in such a way that the seams of this superimposition, while certainly there, are no longer evident. As Gilroy observes, 'Raciology has saturated the discourses in which it circulates. It cannot be readily re-signified or de-signified…' (Gilroy, 2002: 2). Yet unless the deeper meaning that 'whiteness' and 'blackness' represent within this 'virtual' reality is recognized and subjected to in-depth analysis, access to the invisible boundaries that pertain between modernism and race can never be obtained, and analyses that seek to consider what may be found in the gap which is the divide between them will not cease to struggle for critical relevance.

Gilroy is correct in establishing that such an examination must begin with a complicated analysis of the cultural reliance on a stable notion of 'race' in the West. While

'race' continues to be held as an essential truth of the body, it is impossible to move beyond the material reality represented by that body into an understanding of the 'virtual'racial realities by which it is translated into cultural meanings within what I describe as an ideology of visibility (Wiegman, 1995: 3)[2] in which the body is always necessarily and inevitably implicated, and from which no one can escape. This ideology of visibility also necessarily entraps both 'self' and 'other' in a tangled maze of representations grounded in a notion of corporeal essence, by which they resemble reality, while yet being completely divorced from it in actual terms, as Samira Kawash describes:

> … the modern epistemology of race posits a distinctive being, an essence… as the basis for racial distinction, and yet at the extreme this essence is revealed to be nothing more than the distinction itself (Kawash, 1997: 148).

Within this ideology of visibility, then, what is 'real' becomes only that which can be seen, whether or not what is seen is the same as what actually is. In Wiegman's terms, the body therefore becomes the point at which the 'virtual' and the actual collide—and clash—as the body must necessarily become the 'primary readable "text"' in the absence of any true reliance on actual reality itself' (Wiegman, 1995: 8). This is because, Wiegman asserts, 'the visible has a long, contested, and highly contradictory role as the primary vehicle for making race "real" in the United States' (Wiegman, 1995: 21). By moving beyond the body-as-truth in the effort to examine this ideology of visibility, as Michael Awkward and numerous other critics have argued,[3] postmodern perspectives have challenged the belief that the idea of 'race' represents a fundamental essence and purity recognized only in the body's visible existence. But while such critics have asserted that this essentialized racial idea has been forced, finally, to give way to another, more complicated understanding, in which 'race' becomes the result of complex social forces that bring it into being, and for which it serves a constitutive purpose, they also agree tha+t despite new knowledges in this vein, 'race' and 'blackness' remain still very much an almost symbiotic pair.[4] In Gilroy's analysis, this morass is brought about because both 'black and white are bonded together by the mechanisms of 'race' that estrange them from each other and amputate their common humanity' (Gilroy, 2002: 5). And because these 'mechanisms' are so completely intertwined, and since they rely on a stable conception of a visible 'blackness' that

[2] In a related perspective, Robyn Wiegman describes this as an 'economy of the visible'. While Wiegman's terminology remains extremely useful to an analysis of the constructed nature of race in the cultures of the West, I pefer to use the notion of ideology in this regard. While 'economy' suggests the parameters of an ordered system within which the visible becomes an important component of signification, I believe that the notion of ideology, which represents the foundational beliefs or the social needs and or aspirations of a given group, more accurately describes the reality of race and racial understanding in the cultures of the West.

[3] Ibid. See also Gayle Wald, *Crossing the Color Line: Racial Passing in 20th Century US Literature and Culture* (New Americanists), Chapel Hill, N.C.: Duke UP, 2000. Kawash; Martin Favor, *Authentic Blackness: The Folk in the New Negro Renaissance* (New Americanists) Chapel Hill, N.C.: Duke UP, 1999; Teresa Zackodnik, *The Mulatta and the Politics of Race* (Jackson, MS: U P of Mississippi) 2004. Wiegman; Ann DuCille, *The Coupling Convention: Sex, Text, and Tradition in Black Women's Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993).

[4] See Favor, Wiegman, Awkward, DuCille, Kawash. For an analysis of the relation between race, gender and the visual, see Wiegman.

implies, in its essence as 'blackness', an equally stable yet *in*visible conception of 'whiteness', 'blackness' becomes the pivot upon which the politics of race and color is made to turn, in those cultural contexts where the problem of race holds high importance. Thus, as Teresa Zackodnik points out, whether it is 'guarded on one side of the color line or the other, "blackness" continues to go carefully policed in American culture and elsewhere in the West…' (Zackodnik, 2004: 46).[5]

When the ground for understanding the concept of 'interracialism' must be the positing of a racial idea given reality by the terms 'white' and 'black', held in oppositional and forceful relation within a virtual reality tied to a material and seeming truth, and these terms are destabilized or, as Wiegman has argued, 'deterritorialized' (Wiegman, 1995: 8) then not only the idea of 'interracialism', but also its cultural significance must be brought under critical scrutiny. This would imply, as Wiegman identifies, a deterritorialization that 'entails examining the history, function and structure of visibility that underwrites the binary formation', and produces 'the epistemology of perception that simultaneously equates the racial body with a perceptible blackness, while defining, in its absence, whiteness as whatever an African blackness is not' (Wiegman, 1995: 8).

If 'interracialism' is taken as the ground for a critique of authenticity and the singular black voice found within accepted understandings of the Harlem Renaissance, then, it becomes impossible to address the complicated cultural underpinnings of the movement because in itself it does not solicit the simultaneous examination of the terms upon which its recognition lies that such 'deterritorialization' would demand. In the absence of this necessity, although it is still possible to discuss the conflicts, disagreements and inconsistencies between white and black contributions to and articulations of the movement, this is for the most part only in previously established discursive terms—which always seem to turn on the binary logic Hutchinson would desire to eschew, in that they carefully maintain the dichotomy between white and black leanings, tendencies, representations, and/or realities. This is not to critique the obvious value of Hutchinson's work, or that of other critics whose work may rely on the same binary logic, nor to suggest that this lack represents a kind of fatal flaw by which such work would necessarily be undermined. Rather, it is to assert that the effort to move critical examination of the Harlem Renaissance beyond its traditional parameters by considering the place of 'whiteness' within it, and to open up critical consideration of modernism and modernity in relation to the problem of 'race', can go only so far in the attempt to construct new boundaries within this time in literary history. It is not enough to effect a radical and transformative change in the way in which either movement is perceived, because it leaves the essential dichotomy between 'white' and 'black'—by which modernism and the Harlem Renaissance are covertly and respectively described—in place, rather than seeking to understand what may lie beneath this received discursive, often material and visual reality, and what compelling

[5] See also Awkward, 1995: 6–7. He writes 'The arguments over just what constitutes adequate expressions of difference are so hotly contested that, if we are forthright in our investigations of criteria used to determine artistic or interpretive "authenticity, " we must acknowledge that the outcome of such debates confirms merely the effectiveness of strategies to insist that these criteria are signs of indisputable truth or purity, not the existence of some irreducible essence itself.'

new insights the examination of these unexplored depths could bring to our understanding of one or the other of modernism or the Harlem Renaissance, or both.

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LETTERS TO THE METROPOLE: THE RHETORIC OF DISTANCE IN SOR JUANA'S POETRY

Jeremy Paden

There is precious little about the Novohispanic Baroque that could be considered modern by almost any aesthetic standard except those drawn up by the famously casuistic Novohispanic Creoles of the late 17th century who were always eager to prove that they did not lag behind Europe. To make their case, they no doubt would have relied on the etymological definition of *modo* (now or contemporary) and would have stressed their cultivation of an aesthetics of surprise and novelty. Most critics, however, would probably agree with Octavio Paz who leaves the Baroque at the threshold of modernity since it has no real revolutionary agenda and does not attempt to break with the past (Paz, 1998: 19). Paz understands modernity as a tradition of rupture, interruption, and constant new beginning (Paz, 1998: 17). Modernity, he believes, is a sort of creative self-destruction that couples an aesthetics of novelty with rupture (Paz, 1998: 20). Furthermore, Paz makes clear that modernity and its tradition of revolution and rupture can only arise after the French Revolution, which redefines revolution as rupture itself.

Paz's approach to the question is clearly nominal rather than relational and suffers from what Susan Stanford Friedman has noted is the characteristic circularity of the nominal approach to defining modern, modernity, and modernism. When considering, however, 17th century New Spain from a post-colonial, politico-economic point of view, like that developed by Enrique Dussel, Walter Mignolo, and Anibal Quijano, among others, the Novohispanic Baroque falls squarely within the bounds of modernism/colonialism. Such a consideration takes into account the relational nature of colonized America vis-à-vis colonizing Europe. Whether or not Latin America was colonial (in the nineteenth and 20th century form of the condition) and whether or not it could be considered as postcolonial (given that its colonial moment was quite different—in terms of purpose, mission, organization—than that of India or Africa, has been quite exhaustively discussed for a decade or more. Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel provides a good discussion of this debate in the context of Sor Juana in chapter four of her *Saberes Americanos*.

Though Sor Juana resided in Mexico, the colonial center, and though she associated herself with powerful, influential people born and bred in Spain (vicereines, viceroys, and archbishops), though Viceregal New Spain, to acknowledge Jorge Klor de

Alva's point regarding the difference between Colonial Latin America and other colonialisms, was not considered a colony, à la India, there is in Sor Juana's writings, especially those addressed to Europe, the deployment of a rhetoric of distance and difference characteristic of later colony-metropole relations. Indeed, the few poems where Sor Juana speaks to Europe, she marks and remarks upon the distance in order to vindicate the colonial subject vis-à-vis the metropole.

At the end of the introductory masque to the sacramental drama *The Divine Narcissus* (a masque that recasts the Spanish conquest of Mexico as a dialogue in which the Spanish characters convert the Amerindian characters by using natural theology to argue that their cannibalistic rite allegorically prefigures the Eucharist), the character of Zeal interrogates Religion about her desire to stage a play written in Mexico before the king and queen of Spain. He asks,

But does it not seem ill-advised
that what you write in Mexico
be represented in Madrid?

Immediately before Zeal poses this question, Religion extols the grandeur of Madrid, exclaiming that she is

the Royal Town,/the Center of our Holy Faith,
the Jewel in the Royal Crown,
the Seat of Catholic kings and Queens
through whom the Indies have been sent
the blessing of Evangel Light
that shines throughout the Occident (233).

Both the excess of Religion's praise, which casts Madrid as the center from which justice, mercy, and salvation flow, and Zeal's insistence on propriety serve to mark the colonial/dependent status of the Americas. Religion's response to Zeal's questioning, however, attempts to erase the distance by stating that the play celebrates the Eucharist and traffics in allegory, thus

men of reason [should be able to] realize
there is no distance that deters,
nor seas that interchange efface (235).

The position Religion takes regarding the intelligibility of the play to come—these are allegories, the outward forms matters less than the inner, universal meaning, thus ideas can easily travel—is, at the end of the day, the metropolitan position, especially in matters of religion and governance. However, Sor Juana reverses the direction of information flow—which, as the encomium urbis of Madrid makes known should move from the light-giving center to the penumbral hinterlands.

If in this masque Religion, in order to be heard by Madrid, espouses a universalizing reading that effaces any differences between the colony and the metropole, Sor Juana does not always collapse the distance between Mexico and Madrid and the difference between Spain and New Spain as easily. Indeed in the *romance 51* she takes up the problem of distance and difference in order to argue the exact oppo-

site of this universalizing reading. This poem is something of an *apologia pro vita sua* found unfinished after the poet's death and evidence that the nun returned to writing poetry even after having abjured all literary pursuits under ecclesial pressure. This *romance* marks the distance between the center and periphery, rejects the praise heaped upon the poet by the metropolitan literary establishment as the celebrated, exotic non-metropolitan prodigy, and speaks back to the center in order to assert her freedom. Throughout the poem Sor Juana plays with the rhetoric of humility in order to distance herself from the metropolitan readings/uses of her poetry.

The poem begins highlighting the distance between her Spanish/metropole admirers and the poet's own location, peripheral America. 'Has distance really the power/to magnify my likeness?' she asks. And again later,

What intervals caused by distance
could modulate the sound
of my works, and harmonize
something so wholly discordant? (105).

Throughout the poem, as Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel notes, 'the lyric voice establishes an opposition between a "there" and a "here" that resists the idea of a transparent cultural continuity between New Spain and Europe' (93). Consistently the poem presents the 'there' as continually misreading the 'here' where Sor Juana resides, the 'here' which gives meaning to her poetry.

Sor Juana marks the difference between the 'there' and the 'here' with references to the magical powers of Indian witchdoctors and the barren desert land in which the poet was born. Both references serve to mark the distance from the metropole by reinforcing stereotypical ideas about the periphery—it's barrenness and strangeness. She asks

What kind of sorcerer's brew
did the Indians inject —
the herb doctors of my country —
to make my scrawls cast this spell? (105)

Indeed, Sor Juana asserts:

I am not at all what you think.
What you've done is attribute to me
a different nature with your pens
a different talent with your lips.

Borne on your feather-pens' plumes,
my flight is no longer mine;
it's not as you like to imagine,
not what your fancy depicts. (103)

A particularly instructive passage on the problem of misreading that also plays, albeit in a veiled manner, with the center/periphery logic are stanzas 21–23 that casts Europe's reading of the poet's corpus as the sun attempting to penetrate dense, compact

bodies. Though this is a poetic elaboration on the rhetoric of humility, Sor Juana uses it to highlight the violence of the center/periphery relation. 'Whenever the sun attempts/to penetrate opaque bodies/though he wants to be beneficial/he ends up by showing faults' reads Trueblood's translation. However the last two lines 'el que piensa beneficio/suele resultar agravio' literally means, 'that which he thinks to be of benefit, ends up causing harm.' Their reading can only be the result of 'superficial contact' and 'merely gives rise to shadows' (107). The choice of the sun as the metaphor for Europe's reading gaze connects with the image of Madrid as irradiating the beneficial light of civilization and Christianity. The sun's incomprehension of the dark, dense object, product of a rustic and barren land and dark Indian rites, poetically underscores the distance and difference between Mexico and Madrid.

The *romance 51* is not the only time Sor Juana eschews the praise of the European literary establishment. The epistolary *romance 49* that begins '! Valgate por Apolo hombre!' ends with an image of the poet turned into a freak show being and dragged around Europe. The poem is a response to a mock laudatory poem in which a male admirer calls Sor Juana a phoenix and him the adventurer who has found the *rara avis*. Sor Juana, in turn, rejects his designating her a phoenix, because, after all, she is a person of flesh and blood, not a monster and asserts both her independence—by rejecting his reading of her—and her lack of independence—by reminding him that she is a nun in a convent and must obey convent rules. Near the end of the poem, she brings out the exploitative implication of her interlocutor's masculine adventure narrative—that is, she notes what happens when the spoils of conquest are brought back to civilization: they are toured around and shown off as strange, novel items.

The introductory masque and the two *romances* highlight the condition of the ultramarine intellectual. On the one hand there is the need to efface difference in order to establish a conversation with the colonial center and on the other the need to mark the difference between the two in order to remind the colonial center that meaning is highly contextual and not as transparent as the colonial gaze would want it. Meaning, it would seem, is not as easily transported from place to place without distortion.

Excising oneself from the dominating discourse is never easy. Indeed, as the *romance 51* notes, the metropole finds ways to read and revise the colonial subject, to domesticate and tame the colonial other. She of all writers would know this first hand. As Frederick Luciani has noted Sor Juana most likely did not provide the titles for her poems. These, instead, were written by the censor/priest, whose titles often attempt to control the reader's experience of Sor Juana's poetry by proffering a sanitized reading of the poem in the title. *Romance 51* is no exception. The title reads 'To the matchless pens of Europe, whose praises only enhanced her works. Lines found unfinished' (103) The editor's gloss correctly identifies the ostensible purpose of the poem—flattery of the metropole and humble self-effacement—it remains silent, however, regarding what the poem actually does, which is contest and resist all metropolitan readings by insisting on Europe's inability to understand the radical uniqueness and difference of the poet.

At the end of the day, the problematic relationship between the metropole and the colony and the problem of being a colonial writer caught in the tangle of the controlling discourse where one reproduces that discourse while trying to extricate oneself

from it, is not new. Perhaps the most eloquent testimony of the modernity/coloniality of late 17th century New Spain is testified to by Sor Juana being caught on the horns of this problem.

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A RIM WITH A VIEW: MODERNIST STUDIES AND THE PACIFIC RIM

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In what follows, I want to outline an agenda for the study of Modernism in which the rigors and opportunities of an expressly transnational comparative methodology take center stage. To do so, I also want to suggest some ways in which the field of Modernist Studies can enrich its approach to both the decidedly international cultural scope and subsequent global spread of Modernism by entering into an engagement not only with Area Studies, but also with more recently emergent (as well as non-historically defined) fields such as Ethnic Studies. For the aggressively multi-lingual and cross-cultural features of canonical Modernist literary production and its distinctive strategies of signification amount to much more than merely a pervasive thematic and formal interest among various European and American writers. Rather, they point toward a deeper dimension of transnationalism that itself comprises one of the most salient, yet still largely untheorized, conditions for the very historical emergence of 'Modernism' as a cultural phenomenon, not only in Europe and the US, but most especially in various other parts of the world and in different non-Western languages, particularly those of the Asian 'Orient.'

What I am calling here a 'Pacific Rim' approach to Modernism goes beyond either a concern with 'origins' or 'influence', taking as a premise the political dimension of cultural engagement and representation. Rather, it focuses on the dynamics of movement and transformation within the context of a particular geographical formation. In this way, we can begin to leave behind methods that seek to fix our conception of 'Modernism' as a stable and unified notion, a view that tends to reproduce established hierarchies of cultural value in which, not surprisingly, the West occupies a dominant and originary position, whether as source or teleological endpoint of different ideas and processes. Instead, we can open up new avenues of research and teaching that examine the constitutive interactions between traditional Western Modernism and other parallel movements around the world, to the mutual illumination of both.

Moreover, it seems a critically significant irony that Western domination itself reached various crucial junctures during the 'Modernist' era as it has conventionally been periodized. Thus, for example, the historical span from 1900–1945 (especially the years between the two World Wars) witnessed the steep decline and partial disman-

tling of various official European empires, most notably the British, and the solidification and expansion of the American one. Not insignificantly, these shifts in global power played out in large measure in and across the space of the Pacific Ocean. Complicating matters even further, the rise of a specifically Asian colonialism in the form of Japanese imperial expansion, which eventually came to be justified under the ideological euphemism of the 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere', also occurred within the same geographical region and historical span.[1] As a fundamental consequence of these transnational historical events, moreover, during this period many non-Western and so-called third-world nations and traditions began explicitly to engage in cultural terms with the advent of socio-political modernity. Together, these complex phenomena in turn led to such conceptually and historically related, yet still culturally and linguistically specific movements or phenomena as *xian dai zhu yi* in China, *modernismo* throughout Latin America, and *modanizumu* in Japan, among others.

Hence, the Modernist epoch offers not only the unique opportunity to examine both late and early stages of recent imperialism simultaneously, but also abundant possibilities for comparative studies of differing and perhaps even incommensurate 'modernisms' in various contexts around the globe. In addition, migrations of peoples from different parts of the world to various Western nations reached new levels of intensity, or at least critical phases in their history, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with correspondingly important developments in non-African (American) minority cultural production. And so, the emergence of a number of specific ethnic cultures within the West, especially those contained within the larger rubric of 'Asian American', can be usefully understood as a crucial, if perhaps obverse, dimension of Modernist expression. As David Palumbo-Liu has argued elsewhere, 'Managing the modern was inseparable from managing Asian America' (Palumbo-Liu, 1999: 17) in early 20th century US history.

Such unexplored territories, as it were, indicate the generative role that attention to comparatively non-dominant traditions can play in broadening the scope of Modernist Studies in its current state. Furthermore, the particular dynamics of the large-scale geo-political events and changes in the structure of global power that occurred during the early decades of the 20th century suggest the critical utility of an expressly regional frame for considering the spread of 'Modernism' and its historical emergence in different locations and cultures around the world. In order to build productively upon the implications of recent work both on Euro-American modernist Orientalism and on different Asian modernisms, I want to argue for both the importance and possibilities of a 'Pacific Rim' approach to the study of Modernism, an approach that self-consciously adopts as one of its organizing principles a particular geographical region and its attendant web of historical, cultural, and other interrelationships.

A growing body of scholarship has demonstrated both the complexity and the creativity of different particular responses throughout Asia to the historical and cultural forces that helped to instigate the spread of 'Modernism' as an expressly global phe-

[1] This policy was originally promulgated in 1940 by Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yosuke, though the idea went back much further as a means for justifying Japanese imperial conquest throughout Asia under the guise of freeing other Asian nations from domination by the West.

nomenon.[2] The value of this scholarship lies, at least in part, precisely in the extent to which it highlights the transformation, adaptation, and function of the very idea of 'Modernism' as it migrated and was constructed within contexts other than Europe and the US, that is, the very historical and cultural malleability of the term itself. In these works, both 'Modernism' and the 'Orient' emerge as thoroughly fluid and variable in both definition and function. 'Modernism' no longer designates a comparatively stable set of expressive or representational practices first developed in the West and then adopted more or less successfully by writers operating in other contexts and languages. Instead, it both signifies and operates differently in different historical and cultural contexts, functioning as what linguists call a 'shifter' to identify the range of cultural and intellectual responses to the advent of socio-political modernity throughout a variety of different locations. Thus, 'Modernism' becomes 'modernisms' in this regime, the seemingly insignificant orthographic change serving to promote a more global, yet also culturally, historically, and linguistically more specific conception of the term. Concomitantly, the directionality of cultural interaction flows in both directions. Asia, broadly speaking, gains History, not merely the chronology or duration of 'the Orient.' And the focus of our critical gaze moves beyond the boundaries of the West.

The conscientious development of a 'view from the Rim' entails more than simply acknowledging the fact of geography, though such a feat does amount to a necessary first step. Rather, it involves a dedicated attention to tracing the manifold historical and material relations among groups within the area and beyond along a number of different vectors, as well as attending to how these relations at once occasion and condition cultural production. For literary concerns in particular, such vectors include, but are by no means limited to, the particularities of language and various dimensions of power such as asymmetrical economic arrangements underwritten by military and political domination expressed through a variety of channels.

Such issues and methods already animate important work in Area and Ethnic Studies, as well as in the allied domain of Postcolonial Studies. And by actively engaging with developments in these comparatively recently emergent fields, Modernist Studies has the opportunity at once to open up new cultural terrain for exploration and to reinvigorate existing approaches to the established Euro-American canon. For undertaking such an engagement makes it possible to begin considering the significance of canonical Western modernist Orientalism not only in light of historical and coeval achievements in Europe and the US, but also in relation to local cultural production in different areas and languages of the Pacific Rim region. In other words, rather than continue to view them as separate, I propose that we consider these activities as tandem phenomena in order to trace the dynamics of exchange and relation between them, how the meaning of each at once interacts with and thereby modifies the other,

[2] See, for example, Sung-Sheng Yvonne Chang's *Modernism and the Nativist Resistance: Contemporary Chinese Fiction from Taiwan* (1993), Xiaomei Chen's *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter Discourse in Post-Mao China* (1995), Lydia Liu's *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937* (1995), Xudong Zhang's *Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms: Cultural Fever, Avant-garde Fiction, and the New Chinese Cinema* (1997), Shumei Shi's *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China*, 1917–1937 (2001), Andrew Jones's *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (2001), and within the field of history, Stefan Tanaka's *Japan's Orient: Rendering Pasts into History* (1993).

as well as how they differ in important ways as distinctive responses to contemporaneous historical events and processes.

By doing so, we allow conceptual traffic to move in multiple directions, rather than in only one way, from dominant to 'other.' Indeed, in this way Modernist Studies can even contribute to debates about contemporary culture by demonstrating the extent to which the process of 'globalization' itself has a history, one with roots in the Modernist period. Thus, we might consider such works as the classical Chinese poems written on the walls of the Angel Island Immigration Detention Center by Chinese immigrants to the US between 1910–1940 not only in relation to traditional literary achievement in Chinese, but also in light of the parallel movement of Chinese Modernism and the well-known Euro-American fascination embodied in the work of Ezra Pound, Ernest Fenollosa, Victor Segalen and others) with things Chinese at this time.[3] And we might further seek to understand the relationship between such work as the Angel island poems and the efforts of writers of the Harlem Renaissance, who also engaged with and sought ways to work against the dominant culture of the US and English literary traditions, but in markedly distinct ways. Such considerations would in turn necessitate a reassessment of the significance of canonical modernist figures like Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams, who each had their own conceptions of the ideal terms for establishing both a national and a distinctively 'modernist' culture. Thus, the warrant for a 'Pacific Rim' approach to the study of Modernism lies not simply in the putative reality of a geographical construction, but rather in the renewed critical productivity that it enables.

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[3] Timothy Billings and Christopher Bush have recently published ground-breaking edition of Segalen's collection, *Stèles*, see Segalen, V. (2007) *Stèles*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP.

SAFETY IS IN OUR SPEED.' READING BAUMAN READING EMERSON

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In an essay published some years ago, John Tomlinson calls attention to the fact that most studies of cultural globalization, even when wishing to qualify or criticize the cultural imperialism thesis, often end up

> reproducing a style of thinking about culture in terms of these compelling spatial power metaphors: metaphors of territory and borders, of flows and the regulation of flows, of invasion and protection (ism). Even the most sophisticated cultural-critical discourses that have emerged around the ideas of hybridity or transculturation … fail to break with the dominant imagery of cultural territories, liminalities, cross-border flows, fusions, and so forth (Tomlinson, 2003: 49–50).

This means, in Tomlinson's view, that despite all the talk about *deterritorialization* as a key feature of global modernity, we have often failed in the attempt 'to detach culture from a fundamentally territorial imagination' (50). While Tomlinson does not argue by any means that reasoning in terms of flows, transnational border-crossing, and cross-cultural formations is necessarily 'misguided or wrongheaded' (49), he does believe that there may be undiscovered virtues in 'another way of thinking about the cultural implications of globalization—a way that associates cultural phenomena less with territorial influences than with shifts in the *texture of the modernity* that has become globalized' (50).

Like Tomlinson, I also do not wish to call into question the importance of 'transnational flows' of people and cultures to the study of 'modernity's modernisms', but I would like to suggest that the relation between modernity and the cultural responses it has elicited can also be fruitfully investigated by exploring the impact of certain 'universal' traits of a modern, global modernity on the cultural imagination. In particular, I would like to take up the invitation formulated in the Call for Papers for this issue of *RIAS* to reflect on the way 'the relation between space and time' may appear 'in a reconfigured notion of modernism and modernity' by focusing on *speed* as both a factual reality and a cultural principle of globalized modernity, at least from the invention of steam power onwards. It goes without saying that even a tentative and sketchy analysis of the relations between American modernism and the notions of velocity and acceleration would be virtually boundless. My scope will be, instead, a rather limited one. Following the lead provided by one of the most interesting studies of

modernity to appear of late (Zygmunt Bauman's *Liquid Modernity*), I will mainly concentrate on a few passages from Ralph Waldo Emerson in order to show how ambivalent, problematic, and often outright paradoxical the relation between the lived experience of modernity and the literary response to it is. My task will be somewhat facilitated by a happy coincidence. In an appendix in which he goes over some of the major points discussed in his book, Bauman inserts a quotation from Emerson's essay 'Prudence'—'In skating over thin ice, safety is in our speed'—which I have taken as the title of the present essay. Unfortunately, Bauman is not really interested in exploring in any detail to what extent Emerson may, or may not, be considered as a theorist or critic of modernity. Yet a scholar of American literature can hardly fail to register the appeal of the tentative and loose connection established between Emerson, on the one side, and the notions of fluidity, lightness, and velocity which, according to Bauman, are crucial components of the socio-cultural galaxy of liquid modernity, on the other. But before moving on to Emerson, it may be worth offering a short summary of the thesis that Bauman puts forth in his study.

While not advancing any rigid periodization, Bauman is convinced that we should distinguish within modernity at least two phases that are linked by common traits, but also marked by significant differences. Early modernity, though interested in transforming and indeed melting down the solid bodies of inherited social and cultural traditions, was also very much animated by a desire to replace old with new, durable forms. The capitalism of such an early phase of modernity was of a 'heavy' kind, and was embodied in a 'Fordism' representing, according to Bauman, 'the self-consciousness of modern society in its "heavy", "bulky", or "immobile" and rooted, "solid" phase' (57). The capitalism of our current, late modernity is of a different type. Our world is a 'post-Fordist', 'fluid-modern' (61) one, in which a 'light' modernity has replaced, or is fast replacing, the old, heavy kind. Software triumphs over hardware and, what is most important for our purposes, 'it is the mind-boggling speed of circulation, of recycling, ageing, dumping and replacement which brings profit today—not the durability and lasting reliability of the product' (14). 'Liquid modernity' is therefore a universe in which solidity, durability, and stability are no longer culturally and practically as valuable as they were in the past. We are instead invited to embrace fluidity, flexibility, and an endless mutability as the new distinguishing traits of the modern individual. 'People who move and act faster, who come nearest to the momentariness of movement, are now the people who rule. And it is the people who cannot move as quickly, and more conspicuously yet the people who cannot leave at will their place at all, who are ruled' (120).

Even though Bauman's tone is less apocalyptic than the one to be found in the work of another contemporary theorist like Paul Virilio (1997), who has written extensively on the likely catastrophic consequences of 'dromospheric' pollution, as our planet increasingly falls prey to an 'immediacy' that devours both spatial and temporal distances, there can be no doubt that also Bauman foresees many dangers in the increased velocity characteristic of the age of liquid modernity. It is precisely with the intent of underscoring such perils that Bauman mentions Emerson:

Fragile individuals', doomed to conduct their lives in a 'porous reality', feel like skating on thin ice; and 'in skating over thin ice', Ralph Waldo Emerson remarked in his essay 'Prudence', 'our safety is in our speed.' Individuals, fragile or not, need safety, crave safety, seek safety, and so they try, to the best of their ability, to maintain a high speed whatever they do. When running among fast runners, to slow down means to be left behind; when running on thin ice, slowing down also means the real to threat of being drowned. Speed, therefore, climbs to the top of the list of survival values.

Speed, however, is not conducive to thinking, not to thinking far ahead, to long-term thinking at any rate. Thought calls for pause and rest, for 'taking one's time', recapitulating the steps already taken, looking closely at the place reached and the wisdom (or imprudence, as the case may be) of reaching it. Thinking takes one's mind away from the task at hand, which is always the running and keeping speed whatever else it may be. And in the absence of thought, the skating on thin ice which is the fate of fragile individuals in the porous world may well be mistaken for their destiny. (Bauman, 2000: 209–10, emphasis in the original)

Here Bauman, frankly but sadly acknowledges that it is virtually impossible to resist the acceleration imposed on our lives by liquid capitalism, though he simultaneously tries to resurrect the virtues of slowness. His appeal to take time, to 'recapitulating the steps already taken', and so on, is at one with a certain instinctive antipathy a great deal of critical thinking has always shown towards a universe marked by a tendency to 'shrink' the spatio-temporal dimension.[1] But where and how does Emerson fit into all of this?

It is quite clear from Bauman's text that he has no interest in an analytical appraisal of Emerson's relation to modernity. Bauman uses Emerson's metaphor because it is suggestive, but he does not explain what role the figure plays within the original discourse. On the contrary, by building on Bauman's incursion in a text which, though it predates by decades the advent of liquid modernity, it does provide us with a wonderful metaphor of both the euphoria and the danger marking this era, I would like to explore in greater detail how Emerson responds to the technological, social, and cultural accelerations of his own time. Let me begin by providing the context in which Emerson's image appears (the concluding paragraphs of the essay 'Prudence'). Emerson begins his argument by defining prudence as a quality that concerns 'the world of the senses' and by rebuking the young American civilization for displaying an excess of this 'base' kind of prudence,

which is a devotion to matter, as if we possessed no other faculties than the palate, the nose, the touch, the eye and ear; a prudence which adores the Rule of Three, which never subscribes, which

[1] Indeed, speed might well appear as a rather un-literary subject. We are all of course familiar with the interest that scores of modern authors have displayed in speed, especially as it is embodied in mechanical velocity. The Futurists', and in particular Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's, fascination with fast cars, motorcycles, and airplanes is only an extreme example in what is a long series of "odes" to the newly-discovered energies that would reshape the modern world. And yet we also know that speed as such has always been perceived as a deadly enemy of literature. From Romanticism to deconstructionism, the emphasis has always been on *slow* rather than *fast* reading. Nietzsche was fond of describing himself as a master of 'slow reading' in an era obsessed with velocity, thus anticipating the New Critics' insistence on *close reading* as a form of resistance vis-à-vis an increasingly technological and frenetic society. In short, slowness, not velocity, is what the literary text traditionally demands of its readers.

never gives, which seldom lends, and asks but one question of any project, – Will it bake bread? (Emerson, 1983: 358).

This is not to say that Emerson's argument has no place for practical or material worries. It is precisely while describing how prudence works on a practical level that the philosopher ends up praising the virtues of velocity. And no matter how that may seem contrary to common sense, which sees prudence as a form of caution, providence, and attention to detail—attitudes that do not easily square with speed—Emerson realizes that within modernity stasis might be fatal:

Strike, says the smith, the iron is white; keep the rake, says the haymaker, as nigh the scythe as you can, and the cart as nigh the rake. Our Yankee trade is reputed to be very much on the extreme of this prudence. It takes bank-notes, – good, bad, clean, ragged, – and saves itself by the speed with which it passes them off. Iron cannot rust, nor beer sour, nor timber rot, nor calicoes go out of fashion, nor money stocks depreciate, in the few swift moments in which the Yankee suffers any one of them to remain in his possession. In skating over thin ice, our safety is in our speed (364).

Here Emerson's voice is that of the enthusiast fascinated by the rapid growth of the United States; the admirer of the American genius and of the audacity of its capitalism. Even though, as we shall see in a moment, this is by no means Emerson's last word on prudence and its relation to modernity, these sentences seem to trace a sort of allegory of the development of American capitalism from its pre-industrial origins to a stage which closely resembles that of liquid modernity as described by Bauman. In particular, we may note how the concept of prudence changes as a consequence of its new relation with time. In the world of artisans and farmers time has a measurable quality. Prudence, meaning not only caution but, as its Latin roots suggest, also providence, the ability to imagine what the future might look like, may be embodied mainly in the capacity of seizing the right moment—of knowing that you must make hay while the sun shines and you must strike the iron while it is hot. But what Emerson chooses to call an 'extreme' case of this kind of prudence works in quite different ways. Now it is no longer a question of choosing the right moment; what counts is only the speed of your performance. While in an earlier period one could distinguish within time the right moment from the less favorable one, in a risk-laden economy—what we may well call 'thin ice economy'—time simply vanishes. The speed of Yankee finance is predicated on a flat time in which—analogously to what happens in Bauman's liquid modernity—the lighter you are and the faster you move, the greater the acceleration and the smaller (supposedly) the risk you take. The Americans' frenetic activism had of course often been noted by the observers of the US scene, but speed as such—in horse races, for example—was fascinating because *it was* dangerous. Emerson turns such point of view completely around by re-imagining velocity as a form of *protection* from the surrounding world. (Lienhard)

If we pause for a moment—let's slow down!—we must ask ourselves what dangers speed is supposed to protect us from. It is obviously supposed to keep us from sinking, because our weight may eventually crack the thin ice over which we skate. But we must also ask ourselves, why do we choose to skate in such perilous conditions? Why don't we look for better surfaces to move on? Velocity may provide an an-

chorage in a world that tempts us to make moves it may be wiser to avoid, or that perhaps is directly responsible for making unsafe the surfaces we must walk over by, say, digging tunnels underground—after all frozen rivers were also used as means of communication for lack of better routes, and ice-skating was not so much a leisure activity as a normal and necessary means of transport. The paradox, therefore, is that we resort to speed … in order to resist speed itself. As time inexorably flows onwards and makes everything impermanent since there is no cloth that sooner or later will not cease to be fashionable and no iron that will not eventually fail to rust, the 'light individual' responds by trying—though perhaps it would be more correct to say by deluding him or herself—that time can be annihilated. One protects oneself from the unwelcome consequences of the passing of 'natural' time by trying to invent a super-natural (mechanical) velocity to overcome its consuming, world-altering effects. Speed, in the last analysis, is nothing but an instrument to fight another kind of speed.

It is therefore not surprising that Emerson opens the paragraph immediately following the one we have just discussed not by inviting us to continue skating over thin ice, but by abandoning completely that scenario. Now Emerson asks his readers to 'learn a prudence of a higher strain' (364): a prudence that—as he writes a few lines below, as if to distance himself from the skating metaphor—

> does not consist in evasion, or in flight, but in courage. He who wishes to walk in the most peaceful parts of life with any serenity must screw himself up to resolution. Let him front the object of his worst apprehension, and his stoutness will commonly make his fear groundless (365).

Exactly like Bauman, Emerson, too, invokes the courage of slowness. Here prudence no longer consists in running at breakneck speed so as to avoid the worst, but in 'walking', in facing reality with a tranquillity and a peace of mind that is miles distant from the desperate velocity of the ice-skater. Emerson's language itself rediscovers the virtues of heaviness, as shown by the choice of a term like 'stoutness', which evokes the idea of something corpulent, bulky, and heavily built. Maybe, therefore, we should say of Emerson something analogous to what Bauman argues in relation to the celebrated image from Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto*, where they describe a world in which 'all that is solid melts into air.' According to Bauman, if it is true that modernity was from the very beginning a process that aimed at dissolving consolidated realities, 19th century modernity had no intention 'to do away with the solids once and for all and make the brave new world free of them for ever, but to clear the site for *new and improved solids*' (3, emphasis in the original). Even though he looks at the world from an idealist and not a materialist viewpoint, also Emerson sees in the restlessness of the Yankee a transformative quality that, he hopes, will not become an end in itself. It is not by skating over thin ice that modern individuals can find the strength to be resolute. It is not by running and endlessly escaping that they may hope to reach what, in the final lines of the essay, Emerson simply defines as 'well-being', insisting of course that the latter is first and foremost an interior not an external, material condition.

It would be wrong to conclude, however, by somehow resurrecting a worn-out and outdated image of Emerson as a thinker who, to the lightness of an incumbent 'liquid' capitalism prefers the solidity of a 'stout' will to 'self-possession' based on an intimate relation to undefiled nature. To begin with, that 'heavy' image is immedi-

ately undercut by the notion that the will can celebrate its lasting victory only when 'mountains, on which the eye had fastened, have melted into air' (366). As we can see, the 'pastoral' Emerson is as much in love with liquidity and airiness as the philosopher celebrating the arresting social and material transformations connected to the advance of the American civilization. As Leo Marx had shown already many years ago, Emerson is surprising because he joins 'enthusiasm for technological progress with a "romantic" love of nature and contempt for cities' (Marx, 1964: 252). Thus, to return to the theme of velocity, in a well-known passage from 'The Young American', a lecture delivered only three years after the publication of 'Prudence', Emerson praises the modern revolution precisely for its capacity to accelerate human movement across space, and especially across the vast American spaces:

> This rage for road building is beneficent for America… Not only is distance annihilated, but when, as now, the locomotive and the steamboat, like enormous shuttles, shoot every day across the thousand various threads of national descent and employment, and bind them fast in one web, an hourly assimilation goes forward, and there is no danger that local peculiarities and hostilities should be preserved. (Emerson 1983: 213)

Speed becomes an instrument of national cohesion; the local dimension, as we would say today, is overcome by the global one. Technology here is precious precisely because it brings into being a mechanical velocity without precedent in human history, indispensible to a nation as huge as the American one.

Yet, coherently with his own incoherence, Emerson sees a sort of exceptionalism at work in the way the speed of modernity operates in the New World. In the early part of his lecture, while praising the changes made possible by the railway, the philosopher notes that

> If this invention has reduced England to a third of its size, by bringing people so much nearer, in this country it has given a new celerity to time, or anticipated by fifty years the planting of tracts of land, the choice of water privileges, the working of mines, and other natural advantages (213, emphasis in the original).

It would seem that while in Europe speed has the effect of contracting *space*, thereby laying the ground for the crowding of cities so disliked by Emerson, in America speed acts mainly on *time*, by allowing its enterprising citizenry to skip transitional stages and proceed faster in the march of progress. On the other hand, if the extension of the land seems to offer a sort of natural buffer against the collateral damages of mechanical velocity—the rapidity of the modern means of communication bring Americans close enough to make them feel a part of the same national community, but not so close as to deprive them of vast tracts of more or less pristine nature—Emerson realizes that, in the long run, also the temporal accelerations he admires will result in spatial contractions. One of the key themes of 'The Young American' is in fact the necessity on the part of Americans to guard themselves from the negative influence of an impure European modernity, with its courts, its medieval remains, its grey industrial cities. The same mechanical velocity that Emerson has a moment before exalted is now seen in a different light since 'steam has narrowed the Atlantic to a strait'

(216), thus bringing the New World too close to the Old and therefore depriving the former of its original, beneficial distance from the latter.

'Luckily for us', Emerson proceeds, Americans can turn to 'the nervous, rocky West' (216), thereby responding to the acceleration of transatlantic crossing with the rapid movement towards the Pacific, even though in this case salvation is no longer primarily, as in 'Prudence', in our speed, but in the abundance of space—a space apparently so vast that it seems to resist the tendency to erase it prompted by the modern revolution in mass-transport systems: 'I think we must regard the *land* as a commanding and increasing power on the citizen, the sanative and Americanizing influence, which promises to disclose new virtues for ages to come' (217). However, by imagining America as a literal *atopia*—a place that is not a place since it is virtually boundless—Emerson ignores a truth that Bauman is instead careful not to forget. Bauman writes,

> 'Modernity' was born under the stars of acceleration and land conquest… The 'conquest of space' came to mean faster machines. Accelerated movement meant larger space, and accelerating the moves was the sole means of enlarging the space (113, my emphasis).

Within modernity, contrary to Emerson's hopes, the conquest of space is by no means a way to resist the temporal acceleration that makes space contract, but quite the opposite—the inevitable outcome of a world that is running at an ever-increasing fast pace. In sum, unknowingly, also in 'The Young American' Emerson continues to imagine that salvation may be found in speed, because within the modern universe more space inevitably entails a greater acceleration.

I would like to conclude with a postscript that will move my argument from the nineteenth to the 20th century, so as to briefly focus on that historical post-World War Two juncture when modernity finally hit its full-blown 'liquid' stage. Whether one agrees or not with Paul Virilio's notion that our planet has largely turned into an 'endotic' space (Virilio, 1997: 25), deprived of both spatial and temporal exteriority, science fiction, and in particular US science-fiction, has for a rather long time been projecting all hopes of salvation and renewal in the conquest of new interstellar spaces. This fantasy is of course predicated on the dream of building superfast starships that would allow humans to escape from a planet earth that has 'shrunk', ironically, precisely due to an increase in mechanical velocity as well as to the advent of other technologies of speed (internet, cellular phones, etc.) nearly capable of realizing the utopia of immediacy by abolishing the gap between 'departure' and 'arrival' (Virilio, 1997: 56), 'human desire and its fulfilment' (Tomlinson, 2003: 57–8). This paradox whereby the discontents of velocity end up being fought by holding fast to an ever increasing speed is emblematically captured in a text that can be taken to be a surprising continuation of Emerson's ruminations on speed and civilization. I am referring to the theme album with which a great psychedelic rock group of the Sixties and early Seventies marked its transformation from Jefferson Airplane to Jefferson Starship—as we can see the acceleration is already implicit in the name of the band. Appropriately entitled 'Blows Against the Empire', the album goes over some of the great utopias of the Sixties counterculture, by also revisiting some classic themes of both science-fiction and the

US literary tradition.[2] Its aim was not only to celebrate the rebellion of a generation but also that of negotiating the sense of frustration and disillusionment which the counterculture had to face once Woodstock was over, the war in Vietnam continued, and Nixon remained entrenched in the White House. As hope for radical change began to wane, the texts and music by Paul Kantner (the leader of the band and no doubt one of the most Emersonian figures of West Coast rock) and other great musicians of the time (Marty Balin, David Crosby, Jerry Garcia, and many others) do not rest content in composing an elegy for the Sixties movement, but also try to keep alive Utopian desire at least at the level of the imagination, by narrating the hijacking of an enormous starship allowing a few thousand courageous hippies to escape from the tyranny of an oppressive, technological and earth-polluting environment that is no longer limited to the USA but has managed to spread to the entire planet. If Emerson could not hide his discomfort at an Atlantic ocean reduced to a strait, and looked West for salvation, at the end of the Sixties Kantner and friends dream of the 'over human':

And more than human can we be
'Cause human is truly locked
To this planetary circle

(Kantner et al., 1970: 'Hijack')

Moreover, the speed of light of the starship allows the Jefferson to present in a different guise the ideal combination of speed and light that Emerson had indicated as the survival strategy of his daring ice-skater:

Spilling out of the steel glass
Gravity gone from the cage
A million pounds gone from your heavy mass
All the years gone from your age

(Kantner et al., 1970: 'Starship')

The Weberian iron cage of triumphant capitalism is broken by an acceleration that annihilates time—the years fall like a serpent shedding its skin—and makes the travellers ultra-light. The Jefferson imagine lightness, liquidity, velocity and immediacy as the traits of a renewed 'more than human' being, and of a new New World. Without being aware of it, like Emerson they too offer us a brilliant metaphor of the movement from heavy to liquid modernity. And like Emerson one hundred and thirty years before them, they continue to dream of 'free' spaces apparently oblivious to the fact that the very superfast machines needed to reach them make the Other world constantly recede from us.

My discussion of Emerson's response to the social and cultural implications of the increasing speed characterizing, according to Bauman and others, the existential and historical reality of modernity may be taken as a rather modest exercise in trying

[2] As a matter of fact, 'the underlying premise of the narrative was derived in part from the works of science fiction author Robert A. Heinlein, particularly the novel *Methuselah's Children*'. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blows_Against_the_Empire.

to think of a feature of modernity not so much 'as the original property of any one national culture' but rather as a feature 'of a generalized global modernity' (Tomlinson, 2003: 62). However, as my sketchy analysis has hopefully shown, this does not prevent us from noticing how such global traits of modernity may be differently perceived and culturally constructed within specific geo-cultural spaces. From Emerson to the Jefferson Airplane, for example, a certain strain of US culture has tried to come to terms with mechanical velocity by imagining that abundance of 'free' space could attenuate the more disruptive consequences of the reconfiguration of time and space relations. Emerson, moreover, also chose to interrogate the value and the modus operandi of a traditional virtue like 'prudence' in relation to the fast-paced transformations occurring within the American context. Aware that 'we must not try to write the laws of any one virtue, looking at that only' (Emerson, 1983: 365) Emerson realized that the notion of prudence may need to be reconsidered in the fast world of modernity. Fully sharing the tension between what Marshall Berman, in his celebrated study on the experience of modernity, has identified as the '"solid" and "melting" visions of modern life' (1988: 90), Emerson is visibly excited by the frantic pace of modern life and at the same time wonders about the fate of the 'slender human word among the storms, distances, and accidents that drive us hither and thither' (Emerson, 1983: 365). Perhaps the 'airiness' of his transcendentalist vision—often seen as a sign of an outmoded Romanticism or unrealistic optimism—should be reimagined as a response to the challenges of the 'melting' aspect of modernity—as a way to both incorporate and domesticate the promising and yet menacing facets of an incumbent 'liquid' transformation of our lives. But a more articulate discussion of such a hypothesis will have to await another occasion.

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OF INDIANS AND MODERNITY IN GLORIA ANZALDÚA'S *BORDERLANDS/LA FRONTERA THE NEW MESTIZA*

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Los Chicanos, how patient we seem, how very patient. There is the quiet of the Indian about us.
Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*

Let us hope that the left hand, that of darkness, of femaleness, of 'primitiveness', can divert the indifferent, right-handed, 'rational' suicidal drive that, unchecked, could blow us into acid rain in a fraction of a millisecond.
Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*

In this essay, I suggest that the work of Chicana lesbian feminist writer Gloria Anzaldúa, especially in her 1987 *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza*, belongs to a long-standing history of Latin American as well as United States Chicano conversations about race, sexuality, and modernity. Her late 20th century Chicana lesbian-feminist viewpoint is often read as the antithesis of a modernist viewpoint, and indeed it provides a lens through which modernist ideas are refracted. Yet much of the language she uses to appeal to the fusion or 'hybridity' of (racial) opposites and her portrayal of 'the Indian woman in us' (1987: 22), are found in Mexican discourses of *mestizaje* and *indigenismo* in the early 20th century as well as, later, in Chicana(o) appropriations of the same conversations from the mid-1960s through the end of the 1970s.[1] These are discourses which are modernist at their heart, not as an aesthetic category but as a socio-

[1] *Indigenismo* was often the other side of *mestizaje* for countries such as Mexico and Peru with large surviving indigenous populations. Indigenists were never, until much more recently, Indians themselves; *indigenismo* denoted a sense of sympathy with the plight of the conquered Indian, but also constructed 'the Indian' as sad, oppressed, and melancholic; the Indian was either 'asleep' or so downtrodden as to be almost constitutionally degenerate (Knight 1990: 71–113). As Nancy Stepan notes, *indigenismo* 'led to anthropological and sociological studies of the Indians … and to a romanticized celebration of their roles' in Mexico's culture (1996:146). Most importantly, ancient indigenous cultures were seen as the foundation for a modern national history, while contemporary indigenous peoples were viewed as culturally and often racially (evolutionarily) degenerate. *Indigenismo* took on specific political 'flavors' depending on where it was being deployed.

-historical one which founds its worldview on the assumption of conceptual differences between 'modern' and 'primitive.' Anzaldúa's invocation, in *Borderlands*, of the Mexican politician and thinker José Vasconcelos' 1926 *La raza cósmica* (*The Cosmic Race*) should alert us to the place of her work in the history of modernist thinking about race and sex in the Americas, particularly in Mexico.

Some scholars assume that Anzaldúa's use in *Borderlands* of terms such as 'hybridity' came from a familiarity with the theoretical language of post-colonial critics. However, Anzaldúa herself noted in a 1996 interview with Andrea Lunsford that such acquaintance as she had with this language did not come until much later, after she had first published *Borderlands*:

> I didn't even know I belonged in this postcolonial thing until Patricia Clough said in a bookflap that I'm a feminist postcolonial critic … In preparation for this interview, one of your questions was 'Who has influenced you as a postcolonial critic?' I couldn't think of anyone … When Homi Bhabha was here I … went to his lecture, which I didn't understand. I took a class with Donna Haraway in feminist theory and when I had to read [Spivak] … it took me a long time to decipher her … But I didn't have time to study a lot, so I made little notes about the things I wanted to think about. (2000: 255)

Rather than coming from postcolonial theory (although some of the racialist ideas of European colonial powers were also influential in Latin America), the conceptual scaffolding for *Borderlands* was both directly and indirectly inherited from modernist Mexican thought, when discourses of *mestizaje* and *indigenismo* were employed in building modern national futures on ancient indigenous pasts. Such projects were modernist in that they assumed fundamental differences between 'modern' and indigenous people: modern people were rational, scientific, light-skinned, and future-oriented, while indigenous peoples were the opposite: primitive, dark, and timeless, with an ancient spirituality.

Because 'modernism' can mean different things for different fields of study, I will restrict its definition considerably to mean a constellation of assumptions gaining prominence in the last half of the 19th century, undergirding progressivist ideas about modernity, modernization and nation. On both sides of the Mexico-United States border, the social sciences in particular popularized the notion that the indigenous heritage of Mexico was timeless and unmodern in nature, functioning best as the foundation for the nation's move into a modern future. This notion reached its cultural peak in the first decades of the 20th century, and the cultural nationalism of certain threads of Chicano *movimiento* in the 1960s and 70s drew heavily on such Mexican-inspired ideas about Indians. In this essay, I argue that the appearance of discourses of *mestizaje* and indigenism in Anzaldúa's work in the late 1980s does not necessarily mean, as many critics have assumed, that they have been reconceived or refigured as postmodern. Instead, I unlink 'modernism' from a rigid periodization in which modernism ends at certain time so that postmodernism may begin, and read it as an ongoing conceptual framework in American discourses of race and sexuality. In this way we can begin to trace a transnational genealogy—one with many layers, doublings, twists, and turns—of modernist ideas about race and sexuality from the beginning of the 20th century in Latin America through the last decades of the century in the United States.

Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar http://muse.uq.edu.au/journals/modernism-modernity/v013/13.3friedman.html—FOOT3, discussing what he calls the contemporary 'alternative modernities' of non-Western countries, maintains that

> To think in terms of "alternative modernities" is to admit that modernity is inescapable and to desist from speculations about the end of modernity … to announce the general end of modernity even as an epoch, much less as an attitude or an ethos, seems premature, if not patently ethnocentric, at a time when non-Western people everywhere begin to engage critically their own hybrid modernities (2001: 1, 14).

Although he uses the term 'modernity', I find his comments useful in thinking about a specifically Chicana critical engagement with long-standing modernist conceptual frameworks. Anzaldúa's work has most often been characterized as postmodern in part, I believe, because her work seems to resist hegemonic narratives of modernity. Indeed modernism is usually understood to privilege the modern subject over the primitive or traditional one. Thus narratives or representations which favor the primitive or traditional subject over the modern often intend to resist hegemonic discourses of modernity and progress. Yet, as we will see, the very assumption itself of such a binary locates such narratives within, rather than without, of a modernist conceptual framework.

Understanding the contradictory impulses of *mestizaje*—its seeming antiracist attitude toward racial mixing, based on racist notions of indigenous degeneration; its appeal to hybridity and the progress of modernity, based on assumptions about the unchangeable and even static nature of the 'primitive'—is important. It helps us understand Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* in the context of a history of sensibilities about indigenous peoples, and about the function of *mestizaje*, shared throughout the century by many Mexicans and, later, by many Chicanos. Indeed, it is within, rather than beyond, the structuring assumptions of Latin American and Chicano modernist ideas about race and sexuality that Anzaldúa's anti-technological, liberatory, lesbian-feminist *mestiza* subject begins.

In *Borderlands*, Anzaldúa explained the history of *mestizo* Chicanos(as) by asserting that those who were 'genetically equipped to survive' Old World diseases 'founded a new hybrid race' (1987: 5). Beginning the chapter *La conciencia de la mestiza* (The consciousness of the *mestiza*), it becomes clear that Anzaldúa has inherited the terminology and imagery of a long Latin American discourse of racialized genetics:

> At the confluence of two or more *genetic* streams, with chromosomes constantly 'crossing over', this mixture of races … provides *hybrid progeny*, a mutable, malleable species with a *rich gene pool*. From this *racial*, ideological, cultural and *biological cross-pollenization*, an "alien" consciousness is in the making (77; my emphasis).

Terms such as *mestiza*, 'hybrid', 'cross-pollenization', and 'fusion' came to Anzaldúa via the Chicano appropriation of a particularly Mexican racialism, itself deeply invested in ways that gender and sexuality could be controlled to produce a eugenically healthy nation. Anzaldúa's insistence on the material aspects of the body—its sexuality and race—undoubtedly made modernist language and imagery, itself deeply

concerned with bodies, their sexuality, and their racial heritages, as attractive to her as they were to Chicano activists.

Yet even more importantly, the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the language of modernist Mexican racial theories were in part why that language appealed to Anzaldúa. As Robert Young notes, the various ideas of racial hybridity, at the heart of what he calls racial theory's 'most sinister, offensive move', also map out 'the prospect of the evanescence of "race" as such … [this is] its most anxious, vulnerable site' (1995: 19). As we will see, the very nature of the terms of *mestizaje*, as they operated in Mexico and during the Chicano *movimiento*, slipped constantly between racialized and cultural readings of difference and unification; the fulcrum of such readings was the question of the nature of 'race' and an indigenous heritage—was such a heritage cultural, biological, or both? But this very slipperiness, or plasticity, meant that racial theory could be (mis)read positively. Important Latin American figures such as the (closeted) lesbian Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral, for example, worked for Vasconcelos in Mexico; and despite her public stance as the 'schoolteacher of the Americas', Mistral performed her own queering of modernist Mexican and Latin American racial theories, particularly in her poetry, where she reframed a mix of indigenism and *mestizaje* as sensual and woman-centered. In this sense, too, Anzaldúa takes the opportunities offered by the contradictory assumptions of modernist racial theory in Mexico, opening a positive, if ambivalent, space for thinking race as well as sexuality differently. It is this ambivalence in Anzaldúa's use of modernist ideas which interests me; tracing a transnational genealogy of conversations about race and sexuality through 20th century Mexican and Chicana(o) thought shows us the ways Anzaldúa queered these conversations while never fully escaping from their governing conceptual boundaries. Knowing this, it is easier to understand the slippage between biological, sexual, and social fusion in *Borderlands*, and to comprehend the persistence with which Anzaldúa uses a lexicon of evolution, animal, and plant sciences throughout this text.

In what follows, I will briefly discuss Mexican constructions of *mestizaje* and indigenism in the first decades of the 20th century, and their relationship with modernist nationalism, showing how these were inherited by the Chicano cultural nationalism of the 1960s through the 1970s. Discussing the ways *Borderlands* both uses and reframes its inheritance of this history also reveals how *Borderlands* has come to be decontextualized and ahistoricized in much scholarly writing. Finally, I show how *Borderland* is both invested in, but also queers, modernist Mexican and Chicano ideas about racial character and racial 'fusion.'

1. GRAFTING AND HYBRIDS

Just as it was in Europe and in the United States, by the 1920s the science of eugenics was deeply entrenched in Latin American thought. Yet in contradisctinction to the United States and Europe, where eugenics discourses mandated against the miscegenation of modern (white) and unmodern or degenerate (black, Jewish) people, the makers of public policy in countries like Mexico privileged an alternative eugenics—that of race-mixing. Such a move was motivated not by antiracist sentiment but, at least in part, because so much of the population of Mexico was already clearly mixed,

with Indian and Spanish mixture making up the majority, and African, Indian, and Spanish a smaller part of the total. But to bring such mixing under control, and to map out the way to a eugenically healthy nation, Mexican intellectuals, writers, and public policy makers alike employed a lexicon of ideas and metaphors from theories of evolution and eugenics, as well as from the biological and agricultural sciences. Among the most often-used metaphors were those of hybridity and grafting; these terms combined Mendelian theories of mating and cross-breeding with Lamarckian notions about the inheritance of acquired characteristics. In this way, Mexicans sought to prove that the *mestizo* 'race' mixture of Indian and Spanish resulted not in degenerate specimens but in a vigorous, forward-looking population. In *La raza cósmica*, for example, Vasconcelos maintained that 'The truth is that vigor is renewed with graftings … the soul itself looks for diversity in order to enrich the monotony of its own contents' (1997: 33).[2]

Even before Vasconcelos proposed a 'beneficial spiritual Mendelianism', the enormously influential Mexican anthropologist Manuel Gamio had been putting forward the idea of the fusion of the races, in his 1916 *Forjando patria* (Forging Fatherland). There, he asserted that it was time for Mexico to 'make rise from the … anvil the new nation of blended bronze and iron' (1960: 5–6). In the 1920s, Gamio felt that state-sponsored education for Indians, and a state-sponsored anthropology to understand them, would help constitute the 'anvil' for such a national blending. In a talk given in 1926 he asserted that 'social contacts' between the races must be 'normalized and orientated authoritatively, a thing by all means desirable since it requires convergent racial, cultural, and spiritual fusion' (1926:1 27). For Gamio, this meant the death, for example, of Indian languages, an event not only natural but 'beneficial to national unification' (127). But—and here is an important crux of the belief that the ancient needed to be brought into contact with the modern—'because these languages and dialects are the only path to the Indian's soul, we need some understanding of them' (126):

> … the Ford, the sewing machine, the phonograph come heralding the modern civilization and penetrate to the most remote Indian villages. It is not enough, however, to provide the Indians with modern machinery; an understanding of their mental attitudes … is essential to an effective substitution of the instruments and institutions of modern civilization, or to a fusion of the modern and the primitive. Unless a … fusion takes place, industrial instruments will have no cultural dynamic influence. (Gamio 1926: 122)[3]

Such language, advocating as it does the death at the very least of Indian cultures and languages, sounds racist and conservative to the present-day ear; yet in Mexi-

[2] Vasconcelos later repudiated his championing of *mestizaje*. As Marilyn Miller notes, 'Almost immediately after the publication of *The Cosmic Race*, Vasconcelos began to backtrack and lose faith in the notion of Latin America as providentially *mestizo*' (2004: 40). Miller's work is an excellent overview of the history of *mestizaje* in Latin America.

[3] Manuel Gamio was one of the founders in 1911 of the Escuela Internacional de Arqueología y Etnología Americana (International School of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Americas), where he worked with Franz Boas; he was its director from 1916 to 1920, during which time he began to advocate *mestizaje* as a way of reuniting Mexico, especially in his 1916 *Forjando patria* (Forging Fatherland). Vasconcelos adopted some of his ideas from Gamio, as Gamio served as Director of Anthropology of the *Secretaria de Agricultura de México* (1917–24), and Sub-secretary of Public Education (1924–1925).

co eugenics, *mestizaje*, and indigenism were in fact associated with the revolutionary politics of the government, as well as with radical and socialist groups. As Alan Knight and Nancy Stepan both emphasize, a pro-Indian *indigenismo* was in fact a new and revolutionary stance for the Mexican government (Knight 1990: 77, Stepan 1991: 56). For Mexico as a state, virtually in tatters after the armed phase of the Mexican Revolution and attempting to encompass large groups of people who did not necessarily think of themselves as 'Mexican', the discourses of *mestizaje* and indigenism proved a remarkably long-lasting and potent source of usable tropes for the invocation of a forward-looking nation with a deep and ancient past.

Indians, however—real, live ones—remained a problem. While Mexico's reshaping as a modern nation demanded a sense of a deep indigenous past, contemporary Indians were another matter. The many different Indian groups living in Mexico did not feel a sense of *mexicanidad*, or 'Mexicanness' although some may have fought in the Revolution. Many Indians in fact had, according to anthropologists like Gamio, 'forgotten' their own ancient and folkloric traditions, and during the 1930s several efforts were made to re-teach Indians their own traditional dances and crafts (Becker 1995: 62). Many *indigenistas* felt that indigenous folkloric traditions needed to be saved, but that contemporary Indians themselves, who were at best culturally degenerate, must be educated, acculturated, and 'disappeared' into the larger *mestizo* fabric of *mexicanidad*. For the Indians, it was felt, oppression had virtually become a part of their racial heritage, rendering a racial character which was 'asleep', 'melancholy', 'quiet', never to awaken; contemporary Indians needed to disappear, *qua* Indians, into *mestizaje*, while the Indian's spiritual, racial, and cultural heritage lived on in the *mestizo* character and in the traditions of the nation. As we will see, these seeming contradictions in views about indigenous peoples which were embodied in the discourses of *mestizaje* and indigenism could serve either pro- or anti-technological, pro- or anti-Indian positions; but all these positions used the metaphors and images of hybridity—of mixing—for their own purposes.

2. *THE NEW MESTIZA*

One of the most basic contemporary United States critical assumptions about *mestizaje* is that the term and its use are inherently resistant to white racist supremacy. This is a historical misreading deriving in part from Chicano movement thought, and often reinforced in current discussions of *Borderlands*. In the early part of the century, Mexicans in particular did resent United States imperialism and its racism toward Mexicans, and took pains to say so; yet many Mexican elites and intellectuals privileged whiteness as well as North American technological know-how at the same time as they advocated a *mestizaje* that could theoretically resist the attitudes and agendas of white supremacy. Vasconcelos, for example, noted that 'we accept the superior ideas of the Whites but not their arrogance'; North Americans, 'having fulfilled their destiny of mechanizing the world, have set … the basis for a new period: the period of the fusion and mixing of all peoples' (1997: 25). Yet he, as most other Latin American intellectuals of the time, was convinced of the technological superiority of white people; he praised the 'clear mind' of North American whites (1997: 22) and maintained that 'Latin

America owes what it is to the white European, and is not going to deny him. To the North Americans themselves, Latin America owes a great part of her railroads, bridges, and enterprises' (25).

Anzaldúa herself clearly assumed, within the context of a late 20th century United States racial politics, that privileging *mestizaje* could be an antiracist move. In *Borderlands* then, Anzaldúa continued the Chicano *movimiento*'s emphasis on *mestizaje* as inherently resistant. At the same time, this text's woman-centered, lesbian-feminist appropriation of *mestizaje* seemed to suggest a new and indeed queer way of going forward outside the restrictive boundaries of Chicano *carnalismo* (brotherhood, with an emphasis on the masculine) and identity politics. Thus, when it was published in 1987 by the feminist press Aunt Lute Books, *Borderlands*' antiracist, feminist, and lesbian orientation made it a remarkable book in the annals of masculinist Chicano cultural production, eclipsing in popularity Cherríe Moraga's earlier Chicana lesbian feminist work, the 1983 *Loving in the War Years*. The seeming 'newness' of *Borderlands'* treatment of *mestizaje* and *indigenismo*, heralded by its own subtitle *The New Mestiza*, has prompted many scholars to see this book as emblematic—indeed, iconic—of a kind of breaking-point within Chicano studies, marking a moment when Chicana thought and artistic production could no longer conveniently be ignored. Yet the book's very emphasis on *mestizaje* within a Chicana lesbian-feminist context has encouraged readings which disconnect it from the larger Latin American context in which it text belongs. Indeed, readings of racial mixture have been hailed as brand-new before; as Suzanne Bost notes,

> Mixed-race Americans have long been credited with the capacity to blur the lines of racial differentiation. Historical studies and works of fiction from nineteenth-and early-twentieth-century America often celebrate mixture as a way to transcend racial division. Yet today this fluidity is described as 'new', as a sign of millennial or postmodern transformation to America's face (2003: 6).

This helps to explain why there are only a scant handful of scholars who have read *Borderlands* within a historiography of the Chicano *movimiento* of the 1960s and 70s,[4] and even fewer within any extended discussion of Mexican modernist nationalism. Yet even those scholars who do make historical gestures toward a reading of *Borderlands* nevertheless insist that *Borderlands* itself is postmodern. Since postmodernism itself is read, in these essays, as conceptually and historically situated outside or after modernism,[5] this text is plucked out of history to stand as 'new' or 'post.' Such a con-

[4] Rosaura Sánchez connects the 'pre-Cortesian mythmaking' of Chicana writing with Mexican modernist nationalism: 'the reconstruction of mythic texts has served [in Mexico] to legitimate modernizing political and economic practices by coupling the new with the autochthonous' (1997: 357). According to Cristina Beltran, 'In *Borderlands*, the claim for a politicized notion of hybridity, combined with pre-Cortesian mythmaking, is … deeply indebted to Chicano discourse from the late 1960s and early 1970s' (2004: 595). Beltran also traces the notion of *mestizaje* in particular threads of Chicano civil rights discourse to Mexican intellectual and political thought of the 1920s: 'Anzaldúa recognizes that she is participating in an historical and ideological tradition that extends back at least as far as José Vasconcelos' 1926 [sic] *La raza cósmica*' (596). Judith Raiskin, for her part, has looked more closely into what she calls Anzaldúa's 'reworking of the modernist 'mestizo' of Mexican nationalism' (1994: 161–162). Yet despite her investigations into Anzaldúa's modernist influences, Raiskin posits modernism merely as historical backdrop to Anzaldúa's 'postmodern challenge' (156).

[5] A close look at contemporary readings of Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La frontera* shows critics often

ceptual framework makes it difficult to place *Borderlands* within a genealogy of modernist American ideas about race and gender.

3. QUIET AND TIMELESS BODIES

In privileging aspects of *mestizaje* seemingly resistant not just to white supremacy but to certain aspects of modernity, Anzaldúa inherited the idea that to be indigenous, or to be *mestiza* and to 'have' indigenous heritage, was to be not only socially and culturally different but, importantly, to be *temporally* different from so-called modern or developed peoples. As we will see, *Borderlands* was invested in presenting a rooted and aboriginal Chicana self inherited from Mexican/Chicano indigenist imaginings as inherently rural, 'totally immersed *en lo mexicano*, a rural peasant, isolated' (1987: 21).[6] Anzaldúa's investment in a 'natives of the land' historiography is part of a tradition of representing the native or indigenous person as almost literally rooted in the earth. In *Borderlands*, for example, Chicanos were stripped 'of their land while their feet were still rooted in it … we were jerked out by the roots' (7–8),[7] while Anzaldúa longed for 'a homeground where she can plumb the rich ancestral roots into her own ample and *mestiza* heart' (1987: 23). In fact Anzaldúa would make an implicit analogy between a Chicana deep history located–'rooted'–in the land, and her own upbringing, presenting us with the image of herself as a girl: 'I have a vivid memory of an old photograph… I stand… the toes of my flat feet gripping the ground' (1987: 15). That grip was evidence for an indigenous heritage; but more importantly for *Borderlands*, such an image foregrounds what seems to be a basic female experience as a Chicana *mestiza*. In *Borderlands* Anzaldúa saw it as part of her task to defend the 'Indian in us', particularly the Indian woman who 'hid her feelings; she hid her truths … She remained faceless and voiceless' (23).

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assuming that the modernist aspects of *mestizaje* are superseded, in that they read her work either as a manifesto for a postmodern ethnic stance or as embodying the stylistic or substantive concerns of postmodernism. Although Joséba Gabilondo's 'Afterword' to the 1997 edition of José Vasconcelos' *La raza cósmica* noted that in writers like Anzaldúa, we can see that 'Vasconcelos' work is important today … [because it] recovers a new urgency as the work that attempted to negotiate a position in relation to modernity and its institutions, not unconditionally but critically, ' he continues: 'It is not a coincidence that Chicano and Chicana writers have been the first to reuse Vasconcelos's work in new and original ways. These writers articulate their position from an awareness of not belonging to the formation of the nation-state; they come *after* modernity' (1997: 99–100; my emphasis). Readings of Anzaldúa's work as 'after modernity' have only intensified in the wake of Anzaldúa's death in 2004; for instance, Emma Perez's eulogy in the *NWSA Journal* maintained that ' [c] riticized by traditional historians who did not understand the creative impulse to move beyond Eurocentric Western European thinking, Gloria's scholarly study set up a new Borderlands. Her book became the progression toward postmodern, postnational identities for Chicanas/mestizas' (2005: 6). Alicia Gaspar de Alba's tribute in *American Quarterly* averred that " *[m] estiza* consciousness, ' in particular, became … a way of understanding hybridity of race, sex, language, and culture within a global, postmodern context' (2004: vi).

[6] Although Anzaldúa was raised from the age of eleven in a small town near the Texas border (Hargill) until she went to college, as she has said in a collection of interviews titled *Interviews: Entrevistas*, her travels took her away from such an environment pretty much for good. She moved to Austin to get her M.A., then worked with migrant workers in Indiana, and by 1977 had settled in San Francisco to write; she wrote some of *Borderlands* at a writing workshop in New Hampshire (2000: 42–45).

[7] See Tace Hedrick's 'Bloodlines that Waver South: Hybridity, the 'South, ' and American Bodies' (Fall 2003: 40, 45–52), for a discussion of the image of 'roots' in modernist Mexican and United States writings.

As theorists of modernism have pointed out, for many artists and thinkers immersed in the changes of modernity, a kind of 'anti-modernity' modernism prevailed: the authentic and timeless nature of the Indian was perceived both as modernity's opposite, and at the same time the necessary counterpart to the sterile, rational nature of modern people. In *Borderlands*, this was precisely the function of the Chicano's indigenous heritage: 'Let us hope', Anzaldúa wrote, 'that the left hand, that of darkness, of femaleness, of "primitiveness", can divert the indifferent, right-handed, "rational" suicidal drive that, unchecked, could blow us into acid rain in a fraction of a millisecond' (1987: 68–9). Yet because the history of *mestizaje* assumes an indigenous subject who is not just inherently silent, but whose racial character is apparent only through the surviving *mestizo*, throughout *Borderlands*, Anzaldúa maintained that *mestizo* Chicanos(as) would survive precisely because of the 'basic introverted racial temperament' (88) which Chicanos inherited from the Indians: 'Los Chicanos, how patient we seem, how very patient. There is the quiet of the Indian about us. We know how to survive… Stubborn, persevering, impenetrable as stone, yet possessing a malleability that makes us unbreakable' (63).

The notion of racial character, or 'racial temperament', was an important point of concern for Mexican proponents of modernization and *mestizaje*. In his pioneering 1901 'social psychology' of the Mexican character, *La génesis del crimen en México*, Julio Guerrero looked to countless 'observers' of indigenous peoples before him, quoting the influential naturalist Alexander von Humboldt: 'The indigenous Mexican is grave, melancholy, silent' Guerrero himself maintained that' [t]he Mexican … suffers lengthy attacks of melancholy, as can be seen in the elegiac, spontaneous tone of their poets, starting with [the Aztec poet] Nezahualcóyotl' (1901: 23–24). In countries like Mexico, the public policy of *mestizaje* often rested not on Mendel's but on Lamarck's theories, which asserted that an organism could inherit acquired characteristics. Thus, although by the 1920s Franz Boas' work in debunking much of the scientific eugenic tendency to conflate culture and biological race had filtered into the thinking of most of the important anthropologists in Latin America, racialist logic was still deeply ingrained in reflections about the present-day 'silence of the defeated Indian', as Gabriela Mistral put it in 1923 (1997: 174). A neo-Lamarckian approach to race was more amenable to the state's insistence that a public policy of *mestizaje* could biologically evolve indigenous peoples by 'grafting' them onto white bodies.[8] As Alan Knight puts it, for archeologists and anthropologists like Manuel Gamio, 'Indian inertia may … be historically and psychologically—not strictly biologically—determined, but it [was] nonetheless deterministically inescapable' (1990: 94). Thus a popular position held that the Indian had suffered for so long under the consequences of the Conquest that his behavior and the state of his culture–both suffering from a quietude

[8] Luther Burbank, a famous United States horticulturist and contributor to the science of genetics, was a neo-Lamarckian whom Mexicans much admired; both Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo met and subsequently painted him. An influential plant breeder, Burbank grafted seedlings to fully developed plants in order to quickly appraise hybrid characteristics. Burbank assumed that the results of his graftings were his own 'molding effect' and evidence for the Lamarckian argument that acquired traits could be passed on genetically. Many Latin Americans assumed that Burbank's conclusions provided scientific evidence that a social program of 'genetic' and cultural education and 'grafting' could be successful in molding and therefore genetically 'evolving' humans as well.

which seemed like inertia–were innate, as closely akin to a *racial* quality as one might get without actually saying so.

Such ideas about the racial temperament of the Indian have long and deep roots in Mexican as well as United States thought, and Chicanos inherited such notions from both countries. As we have begun to see, in Mexico the nationalist project of *mestizaje* has, for the 20th century and into the twenty-first, been premised on the idea of a progressive, modern nation rooted in an indigenous, timeless past, just as Indians themselves were imagined to be rooted to the land on which the nation stood. Thus, elite Mexicans who constructed themselves as *mestizo*, and who used images of Mexican Indians laboring in the soil to evoke a sense of inherent 'rootedness' in *mexicanidad*, would themselves not necessarily have any connection with working the land. Yet unlike these Mexican elites, Chicano *movimiento* rhetoric and historiography, invested in the Chicano as himself not just *mestizo* but as inherently rural, took the modernist connection between the land and the Indian and reframed it. In this rereading of the inherent connection between Indians and the land, Chicanos, as the *mestizo* inheritors of indigenous blood, called for a restoration of the land—the nation of *Aztlán*—to themselves. Chicano activism and history in the 1970s, followed by Chicano studies scholarship in the 1980s, often assumed that Mexican-Americans were inherently rural and 'traditional' (Valdivieso 1990: 2), adhering to what Antonio Rios-Bustamante called the 'natives of the land paradigm' of Chicana/o historiography (2000: 273). This particular way of envisioning the history of Mexican Americans circulated heavily both during and after the Chicano *movimiento* in texts such as Corky González' 1969 *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*, Roldofo Acuña's 1972 *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, and John Chávez' 1984 *The Lost Land: The Chicano Images of the Southwest*. As I have noted, this viewpoint tended to concentrate on the United States Southwest–Aztlán—as homeland for Chicanos(as), and relied on several key points in its general description of Mexican Americans: by virtue of their mestizo heritage, Chicanos/as were indigenous, and by virtue of their indigenous heritage, Chicanos were native to the Southwest, reclaiming their connection to the land. Thus in the 1970s and into the 1980s many Chicanos read 'nation' and 'land' slightly differently than did earlier Mexicans; for both Mexican and Chicano projects, however, the nationalist appeal to the trope of the autochthonous, rooted Indian imagined indigenous peoples in a specific way: as possessing a racial character which was inherently melancholy and/or quiet, much like the silent land to which the indigenous person was attached.

Borderlands' investment in this particular kind of historiography becomes clear in the first chapters, which connect the Mexican indigenous Virgin de Guadalupe (the 'brown Virgin' who first appeared to a converted Aztec farmer) with a folkloric notion of Chicano(a) identity. Here, Anzaldúa maintains that that 'most' Chicanos practice 'a folk Catholicism… La Virgen de Guadalupe's Indian name is Coatlalopeuh. She is the central deity connecting us to our Indian ancestry' (1987: 27). Mexican nationalism of the 1920s and 30s concentrated on imagining the Indian mother, often represented by the Virgen de Guadalupe, as the mother of the modern Mexican nation, producer of the modern Mexican *mestizo*. *Borderlands* re-emphasized the Virgin of Guadalupe and her Indian incarnation Coatlalopeuh to re-frame the masculinist privilegings of male Aztec figures in the Chicano movement; land was 'the source, the mother',

and even when she had to leave it, Anzaldúa kept 'the ground of my own being. On it I walked away, taking with me the land' (1987: 16). Once again, we see that it is the indigenous heritage of the Chicano(a) that connects directly to 'mother earth':

> Yes, the Chicano and Chicana have always taken care of growing things and the land … The soil prepared again and again, impregnated, worked on. A constant changing of forms, renacimiento de la tierra madre. This land was Mexican once/was Indian always/and is./And will be again (1987: 91).

As we will see, part of what is important to Anzaldúa about Vasconcelos's vision was his emphasis on the spiritual aspects of *mestizaje*. Yet, because his indigenism also followed the Mexican state-sponsored emphasis on the benefits of technology ('Indians have no door to the future but the door of modern culture' as he noted [1997: 16]), modernism like that of Vasconcelos (and others working for the state at the time) diverged in emphasis from artists and writers who were to some extent 'anti-modernity' or anti-technological while their work still operated within the conceptual parameters of a modernism which saw primitive and modern as opposites. Modernist artists in Mexico and the United States alike, looking for a cure for 'Western … materialism, individualism, and Eurocentrism' (Znamenski 2007: 55), felt that Native Americans held the 'key' to an evolution wherein people would lead 'more spiritually and emotionally fulfilled lives' (55). Like these people, Anzaldúa posited a fusion of the modern with the unmodern not so as to move into a technological future but to absorb the energies of, as she put it, the primitive, the dark, the female so that 'One day the inner struggle will cease and a true integration will take place' (1987: 63). The indigenism of state revolutionary art, such as the murals Diego Rivera painted in the 1920s and 1930s, also proposed a 'hybridizing' of the unmodern Indian with the modern Mexico, a fusion of 'organic' with 'modern'; yet for Diego indigenism would be used to celebrate technology rather than to reject it: in his 1930 Detroit murals, for example, Rivera looked for a way to fuse together the ancient, 'organic' nature of Mexico and the modern 'mechanical' nature of Detroit's factories by melding the image of a metal stamping machine with the squat, massive outlines of the Aztec image of Coatlicue, 'she of the Serpent Skirt.'[9] Like Rivera, Anzaldúa looked for a fusion of what she believed to be the ancient and the modern: 'I sit here before my computer, *Amiguita* [little friend], my altar on top of the monitor with the *Virgen de Coatlalpueh* candle and copal incense burning' (1987: 75). Like Rivera, she also used the image of Coatlicue to represent fusion; yet unlike his appropriation of this figure for a larger point about modernity, Anzaldúa saw Coatlicue herself as representing 'duality in life, a synthesis of duality, and a third perspective … a symbol of the fusion of opposites'—the indigenous Virgen and the modern computer, brought together in a 'new' *mestizaje* (1987: 46–47).

4. EVOLUTION, *MESTIZAJE*, AND HOMOSEXUALITY

Modernist thinking, as I have noted, could embrace seemingly contradictory assumptions about the primitive and the modern, and Latin Americans were no different. In

[9] See Tace Hedrick's *Mestizo Modernism: Race, Nation, and Identity in Latin American Culture, 1900–1940* for a more extensive discussion of 'fusion' in Diego Rivera's murals.

spite of their concerns with the degenerate nature of contemporary Mexican Indians, many Mexican artists and intellectuals looked to pre-Columbian Indian culture as a source especially for a spiritual energy which could counter the 'sterility' of modern materialism and technology. Chicano artists and writers in the 1970s, although not necessarily positing contemporary Native Americans as degenerate, followed Mexican cultural nationalism in appropriating an Aztec past as part of their historical heritage; and like their earlier counterparts, certain pre-Columbian native cultural beliefs and rituals came to seem a 'cure' for Western ills. In the first decades of the 20th century, in fact, many artists and writers in the United States, Latin America, and Europe were deeply concerned about the overly secular and materialist nature of modernity and its accompanying technology; but rather than looking to established religious authority, many were looking to alternative spiritual and esoteric beliefs which emphasized ancient wisdoms (often Asian or Southeast Asian), the most prominent of which was theosophy. Although we often do not think of spirituality and sexuality as linked, historians of religion such as Joy Dixon have shown that in their quest for a renewal of social as well as spiritual relations, theosophists in particular felt it was natural that gender and sexual roles be re-examined (1997: 408). In the 1970s, feminists concerned not just about spirituality and sexuality but also about the environment, such as Starhawk, were the inheritors of some of these ideas (Hammer 2001: 51).

Knowing this, we should not be surprised that Anzaldúa's (relatively) anti-technological stance took on some of the same concerns about modernity as did her predecessors. Thus, her work still resonates with early 20th century assumptions about the spirituality of the primitive: Anzaldúa recommends that the 'white sterility' of Anglos might be mitigated 'By taking up *curanderismo*, Santeria [sic], shamanism, Taoism, Zen and otherwise delving into the spiritual life and ceremonies of multi-colored people' (1987: 69). In fact, in its affirmation of the spiritual wisdom of ancient cultures, combined with a belief that the unification of opposites would result in a cosmic consciousness, such alternative religious belief systems as theosophy were enormously influential throughout Latin America through the 1940s, precisely because of their investment in a renewed sense of social as well as 'psychic … wholeness' (Pike 1983: 539). *La raza cósmica*, for example, is filled with references to theosophical and other esoteric doctrines; in fact, Vasconcelos was a member of a theosophist lodge in Mexico City, and deeply involved in readings of esoteric doctrine. As historians of alternative religions have shown, theosophists were not merely concerned with the spiritual plane, but were also deeply concerned with the place of sex, gender, and sexuality in the spirituality of a modern world.[10] In fact, as Joy Dixon notes, there were prominent theosophists who

> had for some years been developing a complicated understanding of sexuality and sexual identity in an attempt to explore in concrete ways the 'organic connections' between (homo) sexuality and spirituality (1997: 414).

[10] For example, Annie Besant, a prominent British socialist and women's rights activist in the first decades of the twentieth century, was elected President of the Theosophical Society in 1907. Theosophy provided a space where issues such as feminism and socialism could be discussed and debated.

Yet as we have seen, modernist theosophical notions about sexuality could just as easily be read for heterosexual purposes: Vasconcelos' appeal to 'A mixture of races accomplished according to the laws of social well-being', leading inevitably to a 'beneficial spiritual Mendelianism' was of necessity heterosexual (1997: 16). For others, such as Gabriela Mistral and, later, Anzaldúa herself, an emphasis on the ideas of hybridity and primitive spirituality could leave room for a specifically queer reading of the place of indigenous spirituality within the discourse of *mestizaje*.[11] Anzaldúa's same appeal as Vasconcelos, to 'the great alchemical work' which would lead to a 'spiritual *mestizaje*', would now be made in the name of a racial fusion which implied a queer rather than heterosexual reading of *mestizaje*: 'As a lesbian I have no race … but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races' (1987: 16).

An important image in the constellation of tropes signifying a beneficial *mestizaje* in *Borderlands* is that of 'cross-pollenization' or cross-breeding. The terminology of cross-breeding ties directly with Latin American artists and intellectuals for whom the agricultural and biological sciences provided an imagery of roots, grafts, and hybrids for an artistic vocabulary to represent the fusion of the antimonies of modern and primitive. As Frederick Pike observes, Latin Americans in the first part of the 20th century were particularly interested in imagining 'the merging of opposites in which… new life ensues from ecstatic union rather than from catastrophe' (1983: 480). Anzaldúa began the chapter in *Borderlands* titled 'Towards a New Consciousness' by providing 'her take' on Vasconcelos' exposition of this fusion in *La raza cósmica*: 'Vasconcelos…envisaged *una raza mestiza, una mezlca de razas afines, una raza de color—la primera raza síntesis del globo* … His theory is one of inclusivity … from this … cross-pollenization, an "alien" consciousness is presently in the making—a new *mestiza* consciousness, *una conciencia de mujer*' (1987: 78). Her reading of Vasconcelos' *mestizaje* as one of 'inclusivity' signaled her reframing of the modernist meanings of a term such as 'cross-pollenization' and at the same a reorienting of the historical questions of sexuality and desire implicit in Mexico's efforts to shape a unified *mestizo* nation.

In Mexico, Vasconcelos was one of the few to publicly theorize desire in *mestizaje*. How to make sure people of different races would want to have sex with the proper partners, in order to bring forth a new and eugenically healthy race? Here Vasconcelos departed (in somewhat bizarre terms, it would seem to us) from the much more careful assertions of racial and cultural 'approximations' advised by people like Manuel Gamio. Instead, Vasconcelos posited the emergence in the (not-so-distant) future of what he called an 'esthetic eugenics' whereby only the most beautiful specimens of each race would desire each other: 'in a few decades of esthetic eugenics', Vasconcelos asserted, 'the Black may disappear, together with the types that a free instinct of beauty may go on signaling as fundamentally recessive and undeserving…of perpetuation' (1987: 32). Although his assertion of an 'esthetic eugenics' might seem bizarre to our ears, popularized ideas of the new science of sexology were much on the

[11] Judith Raiskin reviews how 'Categories of sexual behavior and identity created by 19th and 20th century sexologists were also influenced by the classification systems of race, whereby people of color … and homosexuals were conflated through the ideas of evolution and degeneration' (1994: 157). She goes on to outline some of the basic ideas of modernist thinkers and writers on sexology such as Havelock Ellis, Krafft-Ebing, and Edward Carpenter.

minds of Mexicans. Latin American intellectuals read with intense interest those anthropologists who suggested associations between the sexuality and the spirituality of primitive cultures. For example, among the popular anthropological studies of the 'primitive' which were read both in the United States and in Mexico were works by Bronislaw Malinowski and Robert Marett, who both made the claim that primitive peoples were natural mystics. The influential gay socialist, theosophist, and writer Edward Carpenter, had already posited such a connection in his 1919 book *Intermediate Types Among Primitive Folk*, looking to anthropological and historical accounts of primitive priests and shamans who were 'especially suited in their roles as mediators and prophets because of their homosexuality' (Carpenter 1975: 98). Carpenter's investigations into the history and anthropology of the sexually 'intermediate' primitive concluded by asserting that 'I think there *is* an organic connection between the homosexual temperament and unusual psychic or divinatory powers' (1975: 49). The widely held idea that homosexuality constituted a mixture, or fusion, of masculine and feminine in the same body meant that Carpenter could claim that as the fusion of opposites, the 'double-engine psychic power' of the homosexual could 'point to a further degree of evolution … It may possibly lead to the development of that third order of perception which has been called the cosmic consciousness' (63). The idea that the 'berdache' or 'two-spirit' Native American was considered to have magical or spiritual power because of his presumed homosexuality has been a popular one since well before the beginning of the 20th century, and was revived around the first part of the 20th century as part of a larger body of ideas devoted to the notion that (primitive) homosexuals often served as magic or spiritual figures. Indeed, Carpenter cites, among others, Frazer's 1912 *Adonis, Attis, and Osiris* as well as John Irving's 1835 *Indian Sketches* as sources for his discussion of the connection between (primitive) spirituality and homosexuality (1975: 15). Such modernist notions of the primitive resonate with *Borderlands* assumptions both about a new cosmic consciousness and a queer subjectivity:

> I, like other queer people, am two in one body, both male and female … half and half, mita' y mita' … But there is a magic aspect in abnormality … sexually different people were believed to possess supernatural powers by primal cultures' magico-religious thinking (1987:19).

Thus when Anzaldúa maintained that queers are the 'supreme crossers of cultures … all colors, all classes, all races … Our role is to link people with one another' (1987: 84), she was making a fairly complex association between what were differing, though themselves connected, areas of concern: sexuality, racial theory, spirituality—all of which used some of the same imagery of (in this case, plant) 'hybridity' to think through the concerns of modernization and nationalism. Such an association becomes clear in *Borderlands* when she says, 'Indigenous like corn, like corn, the *mestiza* is a product of crossbreeding … the *mestizo* and the queer exist at this time and point on the evolutionary continuum' (85).

As we have also seen, thinkers in the early decades of the 20th century tended to frame their ideas not just about race but about sexuality with references to popularized evolutionary genetics. Anzaldúa echoes such language: 'if the center holds, we've made some kind of evolutionary step forward … the mestizo and the queer exist at this time and point on the evolutionary continuum for a purpose. We are

a blending that proves that all blood is intricately woven together' (1987: 85). Although early 20th century Mexicans would not be as open about homosexuality as, for example, Carpenter was, his work was read in Latin America: and the idea of a 'hybrid' (Carpenter's term) person, one who encompassed both masculine and feminine, would for Latin Americans thinking about homosexuality in a positive way, make a good fit with images of 'fusion' in discourses of *mestizaje*. Thus, like modernists in Latin America as well as elsewhere, Anzaldúa conflated what she thought of as racial/sexual 'evolution' with the notion of blending, or fusion. Although 'evolution' is today usually assumed to be metaphorical, the immensely popular Spencerian idea of a biological (racial) 'evolutionary' change which can be effected by, or which can effect, *social* (or even spiritual) change continues to carry much weight: 'For only through the body, through the pulling of flesh, can the human soul be transformed' (Anzaldúa 1987: 75).

Although she notes that many of her images are metaphorical, Anzaldúa's modernist heritage as well as her continuing emphasis on her own physicality warns us not to take her discussions of the biological nature of *mestizaje* as completely figurative: when she wrote '*soy un amasamiento* [literally, a kneading of corn dough], I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining' (1987: 81), if we understand her position in the American history of such imagery we as readers must take her both literally and metaphorically. As she mapped *mestizaje* onto her lesbian identity, despite maintaining that she 'made the choice to be queer', her queerness is clearly both metaphor and physicality. Thus we have to take her seriously when she averred in *Borderlands* that queers were two genders making a 'third'; for her, there was a literal aspect to this image. This is of a piece with her debt to, and reframing of, modernist ideas about genetics, fusion, *mestizaje*, and the spiritual and racial 'crossing' abilities of mixed-race and queer people.

5. A PROVISIONAL AND INCOMPLETE PROJECT

Toward the end of the prose section of *Borderlands*, Anzaldúa thinks about the book overall:

> In looking at this book that I'm almost finished writing, I see a mosaic pattern (Aztec-like) emerging … with the gesso underpainting that is red earth, black earth … I see the barely contained color threatening to spill over the boundaries of the object it represents and into other 'objects' and over the borders of the frame. I see a hybridization of metaphor, different species of ideas popping up here, popping up there, full of variations and seeming contradictions, though I believe in an ordered, structured universe where all phenomena are interrelated and imbued with spirit. (66)

Here Anzaldúa makes clear that she herself sees how her metaphors slip and bleed into each other and (I assume) the contradictory ways they also slip between categories such as biological race and culture, sexuality and (biological) sex. 'The whole thing', she continues, 'has had a mind of its own' (66). I suggest that this 'mind' is the text's 'political unconscious', one which remained, despite its queer, feminist, and antiracist sentiments, invested in modernist assumptions even as the United States moved more and more fully into the social and economic changes of late global capitalism. Metaphor operates in just this way: doing the work of embodying the

past in the present, materializing contradictions, relying on paradox. The metaphors on which the discourse of *mestizaje* has depended are so innately ambiguous, and lend themselves to such different projects, precisely because they depend on material bodies and processes to figure forth, even to 'prove', social and cultural assumptions. One of those assumptions, as we have seen, is that the quietude and timelessness of a mythical, dark, primitive body is the necessary other of the rationality and time-sense of white, modern bodies. As Hortense Spillers notes in 'Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe' (published the same year as *Borderlands*), framing 'ethnicity' under the aegis of a 'mythical time' 'enable(s) a writer to perform a variety of conceptual moves all at once. Under its hegemony … the body, in its material and abstract phase, becomes a source for metaphor' (1987: 66). There can be no doubt that pressing questions of race, sexuality, and culture are still with us, and Anzaldúa rightly felt the need to revisit and reframe those questions. But like the projects of earlier Latin American modernists, her *mestiza* body—particularly in its indigenous aspects—was often invested all over again, 'frozen', within a modernist vision of mythical timelessness.

Thus the outlines of modernist assumptions—especially about time, progress, race and sexuality—are still part of the conceptual framework of much late 20th century and early 21 century thought. The modern project was, and remains, as John Frow contends, 'an operation; it performs a certain work, it makes certain things possible, including some of the forms of difference from the past…that it imagines as given in the order of things' (1997: 3). That is, the continuing force of modernist concepts literally shapes our thinking, so that it seems to us that in fact traditional, minority, indigenous, colored, or 'underdeveloped' groups *are* categorically different from modern, 'developed' white nations and peoples. It is the organizing concepts of modernity themselves which make such differences seem so apparent. However much she posited the *mestiza* body as inherently moveable and changeable, Anzaldúa's metaphors under which her queer *mestiza* bodies operated constantly wavered toward their 'fixing' in a timeless and unmodern place.

In *Borderlands*, Anzaldúa's emphasis on fusion culminates in a vision of the gathering-together of 'the splintered and disowned parts of *la gente mexicana* (the Mexican people) ', holding them 'in [her] arms' (1987: 88). To say that she inherited a set of modernist assumptions which posited, in often negative ways, the dark and/or indigenous body as modernity's necessary other is only to make clear her place in a history of such assumptions. But more important is to show the ways that the contradictions inherent in those assumptions worked to allow her to reframe a modernist worldview of race and sexuality as positive, healing, and liberatory. Here, Anzaldúa looked to Latin American conversations about race and sexuality which appeared to talk truth to the technologically-driven and imperialist power of white supremacy in the United States. Yet as Helene Lorenz and Mary Watkins observe, there is no way to be completely free from those tropes and assumptions which, through our very language, construct a worldview; not even a post-colonial or a presumably postmodern consciousness 'can promise a safe distance in which we can stand free of the cultural constructs that have formed us and with which we constantly collude' (2002). Thus, even transformational projects such as Anzaldúa's will remain, as Lorenz and Watkins put it, 'always

provisional and incomplete', leaving such projects embedded in, but also re-visioning, a long genealogy of *mestizaje* and indigenism.

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REINVENTING ART AND ETHNOGRAPHY: HURSTON, DUNHAM, AND DEREN IN HAITI

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Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.
Zora Neale Hurston (1942: 143)

While 'modernism' has been defined by some as an age based on the Enlightenment pursuit of the purity of isolated disciplines (with post-modernism framed conversely as a corrective era of interdisciplinarity), this essay considers the work of three figures practicing decisively interdisciplinary research in the very heyday of the modern era. Indeed Zora Neale Hurston, Katherine Dunham, and Maya Deren were all to practice both the fine arts and the social sciences, frequently at the very same time. Specifically, I wish to discuss the ways in which, they used their 'dual citizenship' as an asset, relying precisely upon their identities as artists while pursuing ethnographic field research in Haiti in the 1930s and 40s. I will additionally contend, however, that this was hardly an academic exercise. Rather it was one deeply entangled in the urgent politics of race in the Americas.

HAITI

With this in mind, it is necessary, at least briefly, to consider the central role of Haiti, which arguably occupied a special place in the writings of both Hurston and Dunham, each of whom traveled extensively throughout the Caribbean. (Deren, by contrast, would travel *only* to Haiti.) In the 1930s and 40s, Haiti was indeed a hermeneutic battleground, as well as the site of a recent occupation by the US Marines[1] and a tourist industry marketing exoticism and 'black magic' to white American adventure seekers. At the same time, however, it was to become central to concerted efforts to value the richness of black cultures on their own terms. As I will illustrate, the latter position was at the very least implicitly espoused by Hurston, Dunham, and Deren. Indeed the

[1] The US sent troops into Haiti in 1915 with the declared intent of preventing German influence and preserving US interests. The troops remained until 1934 when newly elected Roosevelt withdrew them under increasing international disapproval. The occupation was characterized by numerous rebellions, some of which were violently suppressed.

three artist-ethnographers might all be said to have 'aimed', in the words of Katherine Dunham, 'at sociological as well as artistic targets' (in Waddington, 1948: 303).

Interestingly, what both the voyeuristic tourists and the more earnest sympathizers seem to have shared was a perception of Haiti as a kind of cultural bridge between the United States and Africa. For the tourists, this meant essentially that the same stereotypes applied: Haiti was an exotic, jungle land of mysterious dark-skinned inhabitants, somehow living outside of time and practicing mysterious, primitive—even 'savage'—customs. Those advocating a more nuanced and sympathetic point of view similarly stressed the tangibility of the relationship between Haitian and African cultural forms, but they did so, at least in part, to provide evidence for the resiliency of African traditions. Indeed within the US, African cultural forms were widely assumed to have been dismissed as inferior even by African peoples once they had been exposed to the 'superiority' of European cultural forms. Serious evidence for African 'survivals' in the Americas, some maintained, could be used to refute the myth that the 'Negro is a man without a past' (Herskovits, 1942: 2).[2] This point of view was advocated explicitly by Melville Herskovits, one of Dunham's two mentors, who wrote in 1937 what has been called 'probably the first sympathetic treatment of Vodou ever written by an outsider' (Cosentino, 1995: 129). Indeed, his *Life in a Haitian Valley* stressed a more sophisticated approach to cultural analysis, one recognizing the prevalence of syncretism, in what Herskovits would describe as the 'cultural mosaic' of Haiti, a living fusion of the cultural traditions of both Africa and Europe (1937: 249).

Indeed Voudoun,[3] the religious practice performed most visibly by the Haitian peasant class, evolved as a highly sophisticated and undeniably syncretic endeavor, as African slaves in Haiti, under Spanish and later French rule, developed strategies for continuing to observe African religious traditions by recognizing and exploiting analogies between African deities and what might loosely be called the 'pantheon' of Catholic Saints. For example, in an act of creative consumption, the Catholic Mater Dolorosa, commonly pictured in popular lithographs surrounded by jewel-encrusted hearts, widely comes to be seen as one manifestation of the *loa,* or deity, that is also Erzulie Frieda, the highly feminine and refined figure associated with love and heartache within Voudoun. Similarly, the serpent *loa* Damballah is frequently seen in the image of St. Patrick, who stands at the edge of the sea encircled by snakes at his feet, though he may also be recognized in the image of Moses. Such strategies were arguably rendered near impossible by Protestant slaveholders in the US, who honored no saints and tolerated nothing outside of a strict monotheism, ambiguities of the Holy Trinity notwithstanding. Dunham herself has written:

> My personal observation has been that the French, on the whole, were less concerned with dominating culturally their colonial peoples than the English, and consequently the integrity of African culture

[2] Herskovits's text is an extended rebuttal to the argument that nothing of African custom, language, etc. survived contact with Europeans in the 'New World'.

[3] It may be worth noting that there is little—if any—consensus on the spelling of Haitian terms. *Voudoun* may be alternately spelled *Vaudoun, Voudou*, etc., and in the US, it may also be written as *Voodoo*, though the term as it is popularly used in this country has little to do with Haitian tradition and practice. Similarly *loa* might also be spelled *lwa; Danto* as *Dantor, Damballah* as *Danballah*, etc.

and the sanctity of African religious tradition persists to a greater extent in, for example, Haiti and Martinique than in Jamaica or Trinidad (1941a: 217–18).

Nevertheless, the Catholic Church in Haiti has proven loathe to accept these correspondences between its own holy figures and the *loa*, who have been vigorously dismissed as pagan. Hurston, Dunham, and Deren were all to find, however, that its efforts to suppress Voudoun had met with little success. Maya Deren has commented on this point, astutely taking into account the political imperatives of Voudoun's syncretic nature:

Against the serviteur who sincerely insists that he believes in the trinity, who baptizes his children and his drums, places the saints on his private altar, and makes lavish use of the sign of the cross, the Catholic Church has been, in a sense, helpless. It is in the peculiar position of trying to convert the already converted. A religious system that opposed Catholicism would have been overcome. But in the face of such tolerance, the violent efforts to eradicate Voudoun have remained largely ineffective (1953: 57).

Though some Haitian *loa*, specifically many of the 'red' Petro strain, have been identified as original to the New World and even more specifically to the Haitian Revolution of 1804, most—if not all—of the *loa* associated with 'blue' Rada practice are understood to be 'spirits identified with "Ginen"—Guinea, or mythic Africa, whose roots can be traced back to Dahomey' (Cosentino, 1995: 58).[4] Herskovits, as previously suggested, furthermore stressed the survival of 'Africanisms' throughout daily life in rural Haiti, in everything ranging from food preparation to styles of singing. Though he was also to stress both the co-mingling of European influences in Haitian life, and the presence of African traditions within the United States, Haiti nevertheless seemed for many to hold a special prestige as a means for understanding confluences of 'race', politics, and culture. Herskovits would furthermore claim that in Haiti:

clues may be available not only for a clearer understanding of the processes of culture as a whole, but also to point the way toward a more fundamental approach to the immediate problems of race as they are found in the New World, thus at once furthering the ends of scientific understanding and a more satisfactory social adjustment (1937: 305).

Perhaps, however, one would be remiss not to note in this context a simple pragmatic consideration, that the mere physical proximity of Haiti to the US made it geographically and financially more accessible to artists and graduate students than travel to Africa itself. Indeed Hurston's first Guggenheim application for travel to Africa was denied, and of the three women who are the subject of this paper, only Katherine Dunham would ever reach the shores of Africa.

ZORA NEALE HURSTON

Though the particulars of Haiti cannot be denied, the central question at hand is how and to what degree the fine arts backgrounds of Deren, Dunham, and Hurston in-

[4] Rada and Petro are the two forms of Voudoun most frequently cited by Hurston, Dunham, and Deren. Other 'nations' within Voudoun include Congo, Nago, Mahí, Ghédé, and Ibo. Both specific names, including *Congo* and *Ibo*, and the description of related practices as *nations* indicate a clear consciousness of religious practices brought to Haiti from diverse African cultures.

fluenced and enabled their pursuit of an anthropological social science. Of the three, Zora Neale Hurston was perhaps the least specific in addressing this point overtly, though few would contest the point that her literary skills manifest themselves quite assertively in her published research. Indeed both *Mules and Men* and *Tell My Horse* are replete with narrative devices including metaphor, shifting subjectivities, and a poetically charged language exceeding that of simple description. Here, for example, is a passage from *Tell My Horse*, which acknowledges her limits as an anthropologist while reinforcing the distinctness of her voice as a literary narrator:

> During the process with the bull I heard the most beautiful song that I heard in all Haiti. The air was exquisite and I promised myself to keep it in mind. The sound of the words stayed with me long enough to write them down, but to my great regret the tune that I intended to bring home in my mouth to Harry T. Burleigh escaped me like the angels out of the Devil's mouth (1938: 172).

Already a published fiction writer with an Associate's Degree from Howard University and a growing reputation within the Harlem Renaissance, Hurston began formal studies in anthropology as an undergraduate at Barnard College in 1925. Her mentor there was Franz Boas, whose importance for both Hurston and the field in general must briefly be considered.

Boas is frequently credited as the founder of American academic anthropology, and he was indeed mentor, as Gertrude Stein might say to 'everybody who was anybody' within the American field at the time. This would include the likes of Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and Melville Herskovits. Though his legacy is not without controversy, Boas adopted what was, for its time, a 'progressive' methodology, conceiving of anthropology as a vehicle for establishing the relativity of cultural forms and values.[5] Such relativizing arguments, in his view, functioned to defy the ethnocentric and racist absolutism that measured non-European cultures by European standards only to find them lacking, in a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy.

In his preface to *Anthropology and Modern Life* (1932), for example, Boas declared:

> In writing the present book I desired to show that some of the most firmly rooted opinions of our times appear from a wider point of view as prejudices, and that a knowledge of anthropology enables us to look with greater freedom at the problems confronting our civilization (7).

The list of beliefs to which he consequently identified himself as 'diametrically opposed' included, 'The identity of race and nation, the superiority of the White race, the identification of absolute ethics with our modern code of behavior, [and] the resistance to fundamental criticism of our civilization' (7). According to this view, then, an-

[5] Both Boas and the notion of cultural relativism have indeed become the objects of critical scrutiny. Arguments against Boas's integrity include accusations of 'scientizing race', performing 'salvage' anthropology, romanticizing 'pure' cultures, and fostering condescending relationships with his students, including Hurston. Herbert S. Lewis provides an overview of such criticisms—all of which he roundly rejects—in 'The Passion of Franz Boas' published as the Afterword to the recent edition of Boas's *Anthropology and Modern Life*.

Cultural relativism, meanwhile, has faced attacks on two fronts, both reactionary (that it is tantamount to moral relativism) and post-colonial (that it ultimately validates iniquitous distributions of wealth and power). Clifford Geertz acknowledged the complexities of the debate in adopting the term 'anti-anti-relativism' in his 'Distinguished Lecture to the Institute for Advanced Study' in 1984.

thropology was a tool for demonstrating the falsehood of racial stereotypes, and as such it was an instrument of both human knowledge and cultural criticism:

> Anthropology is often considered a collection of curious facts, telling about the peculiar appearance of exotic people and describing their strange customs and beliefs. It is looked upon as an entertaining diversion, apparently without any bearing upon the conduct of civilized communities. This opinion is mistaken (11).

Under the tutelage of Boas, Hurston returned to her former home in rural Florida in 1927 to collect 'folk tales', or 'lies', as she often called them, on what was to become the first of several fieldwork trips. Later trips would take her to New Orleans and the Bahamas, where she collected songs and the 'folklore' of the black populations. In New Orleans, she would additionally study 'hoodoo' rites, training as an initiate. As an anthropologist in training who was herself also a published fiction writer, her research into community narratives clearly served both her interests, and indeed throughout the late 20s and early 30s, she continued to publish both research and fiction, including the novel *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934) and the anthology of southern tales *Mules and Men* (1935). 'Folklore' provided sources of narrative inspiration within the context of a living tradition, while her developing research credentials would enable her work to penetrate multiple contexts of reception, both popular and academic.

In 1935, she enrolled at Columbia University with the intent of pursing a doctorate in anthropology, again with 'Papa Franz.' Though she never completed her degree, and by some accounts rarely attended classes, Hurston received a Guggenheim grant to travel to the West Indies for additional research in March of 1936. After spending six months in Jamaica, she traveled to Haiti in September of the same year. It was here that she wrote her now celebrated novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, reputedly in seven weeks, and it was here too that she would spend a year, only briefly interrupted, gathering material on the study of Voudoun. Soon after returning to the US, Hurston assembled her findings into the book *Tell My Horse: Voodoo* and *Life in Haiti* and *Jamaica*, published in 1938.

That *Tell My Horse* represented a fusion, or what Herskovits might call a 'mosaic', of literature and social science was immediately remarked upon in several period reviews. C. G. Woodson, for example, wrote that, 'The work is entertaining and at the same time one of value which scholars must take into consideration in the study of the Negro in the Western Hemisphere' (1939: 146). Similarly, Harold Courlander, himself both a novelist and an anthropologist, noted in his review Hurston's efforts to mediate between romantic and analytic points of view:

> [William] Seabrook exposed [Voodoo] in sensational, wishful terms. Dr. Herskovitz exposed in its coldest mathematical terms. Miss Hurston tries both. To an extent she is successful, for Voodoo in Haiti is both warmer, possessed of more poetry, than Dr. Herskovitz realized, and less wild and orgiastic than Seabrook intimated (1938: 142).[6]

[6] The reference to Seabrook is to his 1929 text *The Magic Island*, which is widely held to be sensationalistic at best and at worst unapologetically racist, particularly in its inclusion of expressionistic caricatures by Alexander King.

Indeed, stylistically Herskovitz's *Life in a Haitian Valley* can read at times like a series of lists (African influences in food, African influences in clothing, African influences in architecture, etc.), and one finds also that the somewhat conspicuous use of the passive tense masks Herskovits's role as subjective observer. *Tell My Horse*, by contrast, vacillates between memoir and reportage. Readers indeed encounter multiple voices ranging from the omnipotent narrator, to the opinionated first person witness, to the simple vehicle through which other 'characters' tell their own stories. This is arguably only appropriate to the subject, for the story of Haiti is indeed a story of many traditions. Dozens of distinctive African cultures, the indigenous island culture, and European Catholicism, have all left their mark in language and culture. Hurston's skill as a narrator, however, renders a portrait of Haiti at once coherent and diverse.

Tell My Horse is perhaps somewhat less explicit than other writings in articulating Hurston's desire to '[point] Negro expression back towards the saner ground of our own unbelievable originality' (1942: 285). Nevertheless, the text on the whole reads as sympathetically authored. Perhaps the most notable exception to this rule is to be found in her discussion of the role of women, an issue only touched upon by Dunham and Deren. In the chapter of *Tell My Horse* entitled 'Women in the Caribbean,' Hurston wrote:

> If you [a woman] try to talk sense, they look at you right pitifully as if to say, 'What a pity! That mouth that was made to supply some man (and why not me) with kisses, is spoiling itself asking stupidities about banana production and wages!' It's not that they try to put you in your place, no. They consider that you never had any. If they think about it at all, they think that they are removing you from MAN's place and then granting you the privilege of receiving his caresses and otherwise ministering to his comfort when he has time to give you or such matters (57–58).

Additional comments acknowledge, however, that gender roles may be complicated by issues of race and class: 'Of course all women are inferior to all men by God and law down there. But if a woman is wealthy, of good family and mulatto, she can overcome some of her drawbacks' (58). In light of these scathing criticisms, however, it is interesting to note that Hurston makes little point of addressing her own gender in the body of her text. In this way she casts herself as an observer of gender inequity rather than a victim of it.

In another passage of note, however, Hurston seems to romanticize the US occupation of Haiti. In an undeniably poetic but politically curious passage, she wrote:

> A prophet could have foretold [peace] was to come to [the Haitian people] from another land and another people utterly unlike the Haitian people in any respect. The prophet might have said, 'Your freedom from strife and your peace shall come when these symbols shall appear. There shall come a voice in the night. A new and bloody river shall pour from a man-made rock in your chief city. Then shall be a cry from the heart of Haiti—a great cry, a crescendo cry. There shall be survivors, and they shall have a look and a message. There shall be a Day and the Day shall mother a Howl, and the Howl shall be remembered in Haiti forever and nations beyond the borders shall hear it and stir. The shall appear a Plume against the sky. It shall be a black plume against the sky which shall give fright to many at its coming, but it shall bring peace to Haiti' (65–66).

Elaborating upon the meaning of these portentous symbols, the last is revealed to be the 'smoke from the funnels of U.S.S. *Washington* … a black plume with a white hope' (72). Courlander was quick to chastise her for these remarks:

she could not have read the late Dr. James Weldon Johnson's articles which appeared in the Nation during the summer of 1920. The hardships inflicted by the occupation upon all but the merchants of Haiti have not been forgotten to this day (141).

Indeed, Dunham, too, would later comment that, 'The Americans occupied Haiti with very little consideration for the customs, desires, and habits of the people themselves, and with no wish, until the harm was done, to find out what the national character was like' (1969: 24). Hurston's passage on the contrary seems optimistic to a fault. While it is preceded by remarks on 'white oppression' and the 'spilt blood and tears [of] blacks,' her desire to find closure in the U.S.S. Washington might best be described as misplaced.

Some have furthermore found her presentation of Haitian life 'mythologiz [ing]' (Hurbon, 1995: 190), and perhaps there is indeed an undue emphasis on aspects of Voudoun that were already sensationalized in American eyes, such as 'zombies' and the 'Secte Rouge.' Though she makes a point of stressing that zombies are *not*, as American myth would have it, the living dead, and she furthermore emphasizes the popular disapproval of the Secte Rouge, the vividness of her own descriptions might well outweigh the rationality of her cautionary advice.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that her text also employed Boasian techniques of relativization to pointedly illustrate that Americans who would judge the people and culture of Haiti might well be living in glass houses. Of conversations she held with 'a very intelligent Hatian young woman', she has written:

We had gotten to the place where neither of us lied to each other about our respective countries. I freely admitted gangsters, corrupt political machines, race prejudice and lynchings. She as frankly deplored bad politics, overemphasized class distinctions, lack of public schools and transportation. We neither of us apologized for Voodoo. We both acknowledged it among us, but both of us saw it as a religion no more venal, no more impractical than any other (1938: 203–04).

KATHERINE DUNHAM

A number of striking parallels mark the career trajectories of Hurston and Katherine Dunham, though the latter would earn her artistic reputation in the field of dance. Like Hurston, Dunham had already shown a marked artistic tendency at the time that she began her studies in anthropology, and also, like Hurston, she grew up as an African-American living under the realities of Jim Crow. Indeed her memoirs are replete with references to the challenges facing an integrated touring group, including segregated theaters and hotels that refused them even in northern cities. Dunham, however, clearly viewed both the arts and anthropology, the much disparaged 'handmaiden of colonialism, ' as tools for combating racism. Indeed, she has stated explicitly, 'There is no doubt but what we are doing is creating a better understanding of, and sympathy for, the American Negro. From the beginning, I aimed at sociological as well as artistic targets' (in Waddington, 1948: 303).

Dunham's career in anthropology began in 1928 when she enrolled as an undergraduate at the University of Chicago, where she studied with Robert Redfield, who 'not only pioneered … new [documentary] methods … but involved himself in the

fight for equal opportunity of education in the US for blacks and other minorities' (Marcus and Fisher, 1986: 186n1). While Dunham took courses, she continued to train, to perform publicly, and to teach dance on the side, sometimes struggling to divide her time between two full-time pursuits. So it was that when she traveled to Haiti as a graduate student in 1935, she bore a calling card labeled 'anthropology and the dance.' Both Redfield and Herskovits at Northwestern encouraged her to forestall the decision of choosing between a career in dance and one in anthropology specifically because they believed that the two fields could so readily enhance one another. Indeed, they insisted that her dance skills and background would give her a unique perspective and point of entry into the cultures she would engage. Dunham biographer Joyce Aschenbrenner, has even written that at a fête held in Dunham's honor prior to her departure, 'Boas expressed his regret that he had not been a dancer while studying Northwest Coast Indians, and he predicted that she could discover cultural knowledge that was inaccessible to nondancers' (50).

Dunham's later memoir, *Island Possessed* (1969)**,** reveals that indeed her very particular background ameliorated some of the travails of gaining acceptance as an observer in a foreign land. She has said, simply enough, 'I explained that I was there to learn dances because I like to dance; to a people for whom dancing was an integral, vital expression of daily living this explanation seemed natural enough' (xxiii). Thus, she established her own credibility as a transparently interested person who liked to dance, rather than as a detached and culturally parasitic scientist, studying humans as one might study insects.

Dunham has also spoken of enhancing her credibility through what she has called, 'racial affinity.' On this point, she has written, 'Many liberties were permitted me because of my unofficial position as emissary of the lost black peoples from [Africa]' (1969: 15), meaning specifically those who were taken to the United States, where ancestral traditions were more dramatically curtailed. In this case, too, it was the confession of a personal interest that helped her to become an effective participant-observer, gaining the trust of a self-conscious people already weary—and wary—of tourists, marines, and journalists from the mainland.

Dunham's writings on the subject of Haitian culture included a Master's Thesis called 'Dances of Haiti,' eventually published in English, Spanish, and French. The latter edition included a preface by Claude Levi-Strauss, in which he affirmed the benefits of her unique credentials:

> An unquestionable originality marks Katherine Dunham's book … Her penetration into the life and local customs of the country was doubly facilitated by her common origin with the inhabitants and by her theoretical and practical knowledge of aspects of dance … In addition to these somewhat personal advantages, her book has the great merit of reintegrating the social act of dance, which serves as her central theme, within a total complex. Katherine Dunham proposed not only to study a ritual but also to define the role of dance in the life of a society (xvi).

As I have already indicated, Dunham's other book on Haiti is her memoir, which situates her accrued knowledge of Haiti within a framework both narrative and subjective. Aschenbrenner, for one, has celebrated such an approach, as one anticipating more recent critiques of the presumptions of neutrality and objectivity within traditional anthropology. Though she reports that *Island Possessed* was criticized as unsci-

entific at the time of its publication, Aschenbrenner has defended the liberties taken by Dunham as follows:

> A radical critique of traditional approaches depicts ethnography as a dialectical process, involving the people the anthropologist is studying in the creation of a statement about a culture. The contextual information Dunham provided is valuable to those who aspire to understand another culture because she openly portrayed her problems and tactics in relation to people. We see that she related to the people upon whose cooperation she depended in their terms, not by imposing her own conditions, and she exposed her own vulnerabilities in writing about her encounters. In this, she differed from her predecessors and contemporaries, who recorded such matters in private journals, not for publication (86).

Indeed, the first-person travelogue format of William Seabrook's 1929 *Magic Island* might also be said to have provided 'contextual information' revealing of his subjectivity and the dynamics of his relationships, but Dunham's text is marked by a greater sensitivity and a degree of humility lacking in Seabrook's account. Where Seabrook cast himself as a hero, the intrepid explorer, Dunham more openly acknowledged the complicated politics of her situation as a middle-class American: 'It was with letters from Melville Herskovits, head of the Department of Anthropology at Northwestern University, that I *invaded* the Caribbean [emphasis added] ' (1969: 3). Her text also addresses her situation as a woman and as a relatively fair-skinned African American:

> Of my kind I was a first—a lone young woman easy to place in the clean-cut American dichotomy of color, harder to place in the complexity of Caribbean color classifications; a mulatto when occasion called for, an in-between, or 'griffon' actually, I suppose; most of the time an unplaceable (4).

A seemingly nondescript listing of the contents of her luggage, furthermore includes reference to 'unworn lace underclothing', 'sanitary napkins', and 'hair ointment for the year', interspersed with the books, the camera, and the typewriter (10). This is the luggage of an *embodied* intellectual.[7]

Dunham's collected choreographic works drew their inspiration from a broad range of Caribbean and non-Caribbean cultural sources. Among the works specific to Haitian history and culture are *Christophe*, described as a 'dance drama of the first kingdom of Haiti' with a 'text of spoken lines being down by Langston Hughes' (Dunham, 1941–42: 289), and *Haitian Roadside*, a dance of 'Market people and wayside travelers' (1946: 292). Such works clearly situate the dance within larger frameworks of symbolic meaning, referencing in these instances the nation's political history and the social structuring of everyday life.

Dunham's contributions to the field of dance also involved the development of a pedagogical practice that would come to be known simply as Dunham Technique. According to Albirda Rose, central to her technique was a process of 'Progressions in Cultural Context', in which:

[7] Other than this, however, Dunham, too, makes little point of the role that her gender might have played in determining her acceptance or lack thereof, except to note that as an outsider, she was given opportunities to engage in activities normally reserved for men, such as handling the sacred drums.

rhythm forms are used … that reflect a cultural heritage of a specific group … These rhythms usually have specific dance steps that accompany them, and these steps usually reflect the basic concept of that dance or why that dance is performed (492).

Though Dunham Technique is widely described as borrowing syncretically from ballet, jazz, and modern dance, prominent elements associated specifically with African-based dance include a technique of articulating the joints through processes of rhythmic isolations and the establishment of 'a new vocabulary of movement for the lower body.' As Millicent Hodson has summarized, 'The Dunham Technique makes available to the "modern schools" of dance the liberation of knees and pelvis that is fundamental to African dance' (498). This, in combination with her emphasis on 'Progressions in Cultural Context', established what Hodson would term 'a new level of literacy in dance' (499).

Like Hurston, Dunham never completed her terminal degree in anthropology, but she can hardly be said to have abandoned anthropology for dance. Indeed, she continued to lecture internationally on her research, even as she developed a reputation for being the 'hottest thing on Broadway.' As she would declare in 1941,

Now that I look back over the long period of sometimes alternating, sometimes simultaneous interest in both subjects, it seems inevitable that they should have eventually fused completely (1941b: 214).

Though she considered the dances themselves to be anthropological of their very nature, in their stress of social context and function, she also, on occasion, combined the work of her two fields more explicitly. In 1942, for example, she presented 'A Lecture--Demonstration of the Anthropological Approach to Dance and the Practical Application of This Approach to the Theater' at UCLA (See Dunham, 1942: 508–13). This event combined a lecture, both autobiographical and theoretical, and a performance in which members of her troupe tangibly demonstrated the movements described.

In another noteworthy program reflecting the fusion of her two concerns, the Dunham Experimental Group of the Dunham School of Dance and Theater performed at Howard University in 1947. The program, entitled *Caribbean Backgrounds*, grouped dances and songs in thematic categories, such as 'social dances', 'ceremonial dances' (consisting of the Voudoun dances of Yonvalou and Zépaules), and 'work songs' (See Dunham 1947: 299–301). The program thus emphasized the role of function and context as a generator of (relative) meaning. Though the opening note stressed the search for 'authentic information concerning the dances and rituals of the people brought to the Western Hemisphere as slaves', the 'social dance' portion consisted of a comparison of a 'Traditional European mazurka', and 'The *mazouk*', a 'West Indian form of the mazurka brought to the Islands by the French.' Also integrated into the event was a screening of a film by Dunham illustrating both *La savante*, 'a French form of fighting with the feet' and *L'ag'ya*, 'the Martinique version.' This was followed by the performance of Dunham's own choreographed ballet of the *L'ag'ya*, thereby providing an immediate opportunity for audience comparison.

One of the more frequent criticisms of her work, however, is that she 'stylized' the dance forms. Though not referring directly to Dunham, Yvonne Daniel, for example,

has written that 'Haitian' dance in the US 'seemed rather theatrical' (6). Maya Deren would posit a related criticism:

> It should be obvious that a 'Haitian dance' which strains a trained, professional dancer and leaves him or her winded after a ten-minute performance could not be as 'authentic' as the program notes for such theatrical presentations of 'ethnic dance' would lead one to believe (1953: 229n).

Dunham herself was perhaps not as vocal as one might expect in defending against such charges, but Vèvè Clark has suggested that

> Criticism of this kind is irrelevant, because it fails to understand that Caribbean dance has been stylized and transformed throughout history. More importantly, stylization has been a tradition in American modern dance since its inception (1994: 324).

Indeed, one might further stress that such stylization merely acknowledges the reality of the artifice, that Dunham was both an anthropologist *and* an artist, and that her hybridized works were ultimately choreographed compositions for the stage performed by trained dancers. Even as such, however, they were deeply informed by the larger concerns that had motivated Dunham's joint pursuit: that dance as a human activity bears a history, a politic, and a language rendered meaningful by social and cultural context.

For its significance as a unique form of cultural history written with the body, dance had indeed been relatively overlooked by anthropologists coming from a western tradition with comparatively little emphasis on dance, particularly within a religious context, and thus many such anthropologists simply found themselves unqualified to consider it deeply. Aschenbrenner has even described an incident in which Herskovits referred to the content of one of Dunham's films, depicting the Koromantee, as 'that picture where men are hopping about very fast' (63). He failed in this instance to even recognize that he was looking at dance. Reiterating both the intellectual and the political necessity of her own interdisciplinarity, Dunham wrote in 1963:

> Disturbed in my early years of social anthropology at the lack of emphasis on the complex of the dance in primitive society, I proposed that my scholarship from the Rosenwald and Rockefeller foundations be directed toward an effort at repairing this lack. Also involved was an element of rebellion against the often condescending attitudes toward not only Negro performing arts but those of all deprived, minority, 'exotic' folk (1963: 522).[8]

MAYA DEREN

One year before she traveled to Haiti, in 1946, Maya Deren published the essay titled, 'An Anagram of Ideas on Art, Form and Film', which included her remarks on the relationship between art and science. Like Habermas (and Max Weber before him), she addressed the limits of disciplinary professionalism: 'Modern specialization has discouraged the idea of the whole man' (1946: Appendix 6). She, too, rooted this situ-

[8] Into the middle of the 20th century, the term *primitive* was still widely used within anthropological discourses to refer to what might now be more likely to be termed *non-industrial*. The context with which Dunham uses the term clearly indicates a lack of derogatory implications, however inevitable they may seem today.

ation in 17th and 18th century western philosophy, stressing that both art and science have evolved as efforts to redefine humankind's place in a world in which God is no longer the center. She has written, for example, that the 'task of creating forms as dynamic as the relationships in natural phenomena, is the central problem of both the scientist and the artist' (Appendix 12). Though her text seems to privilege the 'natural' sciences, Deren's work would soon come to explore the problems of representation shared by the artist and the social scientist.

Relative to Hurston and Dunham, Deren would even come to make the most explicit appeal for the merits of the artist practicing ethnography. Perhaps, this may be due in part to the fact that her own professional credentials were seemingly less substantial, as she was the only one of the three who did not major in anthropology at the undergraduate or graduate level. (Her BA from Syracuse University was in journalism and political science, and her MA from Smith was in English Literature.) Though Deren's book on Haitian Voudoun arguably conforms most conscientiously to scholarly conventions, including copious endnotes and a more comprehensive approach to systematizing the material she had gathered, in its introduction, Deren freely acknowledged her lack of formal training in anthropology. Indeed, she never claimed to have gone to Haiti as anything other than an artist, though the experience would clearly prove to be a transformative one, as I will discuss below.

Deren's interest in Voudoun seems to have been initially inspired by Dunham, to whom Deren served as a secretary for a period of nine months beginning in the spring of 1941. Six years later, when Deren received a Guggenheim grant to travel to Haiti in 1947, it was to make an art film that would essentially be a kind of visual essay on the aesthetics of Voudoun-related dance. Though she remains best known for the experimental short film 'Meshes of the Afternoon', at least two of her other previous short films, notably 'A Study in Choreography for Camera and Ritual in Transfigured Time', would already have established her as candidate well qualified for the role of dance cinematographer. And indeed she arrived in Haiti with, in her own words, 'a carefully conceived plan for a film in which Haitian dance, as purely a dance form, would be combined (in montage principle) with various non-Haitian elements' (1953: 5). These 'non-Haitian elements' were to include segments of Balinese ritual and dance and various games played by Western children.[9]

Though indeed she shot 20,000 feet of film toward this end, Deren never completed the proposed film. What she produced instead, and published in 1953, was a meticulous tome entitled *Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti*, which was preceded by a foreword by Joseph Campbell. In her own words, 'this book was written not because I had so intended but in spite of my intentions.' Further elaborating, she has claimed:

> I had begun as an artist, as one who would manipulate reality into a work of art in the image of my creative imagery; I end by recording, as humbly and accurately as I can, the logic of a reality which had forced me to recognize its integrity, and to abandon my manipulations (1953: 5–6).

[9] Sullivan provides a detailed discussion of Deren's original design of the project, including her consultations with Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson.

In other words, she realized the necessity of the relationship between form, content, and context, and that a process of decontextualizing the forms of the dances would render them incoherent. Indeed Deren herself has claimed quite directly that she 'realized that the dance could not be considered independently of the mythology' (7). This most decisively sets her apart from the image of the 'primitivizing' modernist, who stands accused of pillaging the styles of African and Oceanic cultures in decontextualizing gestures tantamount to cultural colonialism.

Though she would abandon the project of her 'art' film, Deren would nevertheless insist that artistic training may in fact be an asset in the practice of ethnography:

> I also discovered that my background as an artist and the initial approach to the culture which my film project induced, served to illuminate areas of Voudoun mythology with which the standard anthropological procedure had not concerned itself, or if so, from a different position entirely (6–7).

Her argument to this effect goes on to summarize the importance of subtle variances of form as providing important cues to understanding the underlying concepts motivating such forms, as in, for example, the difference between an apple painted by Raphael and one painted by Cézanne. She has claimed that her own sensitivity to visual form enabled her to distinguish intuitively between conceptually different types of dances, those of *rada* and those of *petro* Voudoun:

> Indeed, my interpretations of the rituals, based on my immediate experience and without the clues (and misguidances) of historical and esoteric research, proved so consistently correct that the Haitians began to believe that I had gone through varying degrees of initiation (9).

All three of the artists discussed in this paper have indicated at some point a sensitivity to the problem of gaining acceptance within a culture as an outsider, and as Americans in particular. Deren, however, was unlike both Hurston and Dunham in that she could claim no shared ancestral ties with Africa, something which Dunham in particular has stressed as an asset in her own experience. Somewhat boldly perhaps, Deren makes an alternate claim to kinship with the Haitian peasants and practitioners of Voudoun, so often the study of American anthropologists and the curiosity of American tourists. In her own words:

> in a modern industrial culture, the artists constitute, in fact, an 'ethnic group', subject to the full 'native' treatment. We too are exhibited as touristic curiosities on Monday, extolled as culture on Tuesday, denounced as immoral and unsanitary on Wednesday, reinstated for scientific study Thursday, feasted for some obscurely stylish reason Friday, forgotten Saturday, revisited as picturesque Sunday (7–8).

She has furthermore added:

> My own ordeal as an 'artist-native' in an industrial culture made it impossible for me to be guilty of similar effronteries toward the Haitian peasants. It is a sad commentary upon the usual visitor to Haiti that this discretion seemed, to the Haitians, so unique that they early formed the conviction that I was not a foreigner at all, but a prodigal native daughter finally returned … This affinity—resulting from a situation peculiar to an artist as citizen of an industrial culture—is a basis of communication which is not comprehended in any catalogue of professional field methods (8).

Deren extended her argument for the efficacy of the artist practicing anthropology with a claim to the effect that her own lack of methodological training afforded her an open-mindedness somewhat beyond that of the student trained in western anthropology. Of course the 'proof' of her thesis to the effect that artistic training is an adequate substitute for anthropological training is largely anecdotal: it seemed to her to be true of her own experience. But her remarks do tantalizingly suggest that there is indeed more than one path to knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

In a topic with so many facets, there are inevitably multiple conclusions. One, of course, is that the culture of Haitian Voudoun occupied a privileged place in the discourse of these artist-ethnographers. Perhaps the boldness of Voudoun's syncretic processes rendered it both politically and artistically inspiring by providing a model of culture as open-ended. This may well have resonated with the three artist-ethnographers who constructed their own identities in a highly syncretic fashion, piecing together 'cultures' including those of academia, fine art, rural Florida, the Harlem Renaissance, Broadway, Port-au-Prince, and rural Haiti. Dunham, for example, an African-American woman from the urban Midwest who practiced both dance and anthropology, and who designed presentations of Caribbean dance for American audiences has claimed that, 'Acculturation seemed such a natural phenomenon to me' (in Clark, 1978: 228).

A second conclusion has to do with the importance of this work within the context of the social history of the United States. Christine Obbo, for example, has characterized anthropology as both an 'international division of labor in which natives provide data and Westerners analyze it', and as 'a radical disciple … the only discipline that can competently study the "other" humanity not covered by the Western discourses' (297). Indeed it is a discipline with the power both to undermine and to rearticulate and reinforce power dynamics, perhaps even at the same time. Nevertheless, I would like to return to a point made earlier that Hurston, Dunham, and Deren, like Boas and Herskovits before them, viewed the work of the anthropologist as politically relevant and even quite urgent. Indeed, the politics of race in the United States in the 1930s and 40s—an era in which segregation was legal and lynchings were all too common—meant that the stakes in the project of simply taking black cultures seriously were high, higher than those of transgressing the boundaries of academic disciplines. Perhaps more so than Boas and Herskovits, Hurston and Dunham in particular may have even reached non-academic audiences, but they managed to do so with the professional credibility of scholars.

A third conclusion, however, pertains to the issue of interdisciplinary praxis and its implications for the study of modernism. James Clifford has described Hurston as a 'casualty of professionalization', who was 'marginalized…as too subjective, literary, or folkloric' (353n16). Recent decades, of course, have seen a largely positive reevaluation of her work, beginning with Alice Walker's symbolic discovery of her unmarked grave in 1973. Indeed contemporary scholars have looked more favorably upon her ethnographic work as well as her fiction, though these accounts have tended to favor Mules and Men and other documents related to her fieldwork in the US (see Herndández and Rony: 203–11).

The shift in the ability of Hurston's audiences to appreciate her work as anthropology seems to be due in part in the situation well summarized by Simon Ottenberg:

> The fact is that cultural relativism has been replaced by textual relativism. We have moved from ideas of the relativism of the cultures of the people we study to concepts of the relativity of interpretation and interpreter. This is possible because we have moved from employing scientific metaphors, particularly those relating to organic qualities (organic solidarity, society as a metaphor for a living animal) to using humanistic metaphors drawn largely from literature, literary criticism, history, and drama (symbols, the text, performance) (156).

Indeed, Ishmael Reed wrote in the preface to the 1990 reissue of *Tell My Horse*, 'With its mixture of techniques and genres, this book, originally published in 1938, is bound to be the postmodernist book of the nineties' (xv). But why must such work now be conceptualized as pre-post-modern? Why can it not rather contribute to an expanded concept of modernism? These practices are against the grain of modernism only if we accept narrowly construed definitions of modernism as a decontextualizing pursuit of pure form. If we imagine instead a pluralistic modernism—and why wouldn't we?—then we might find Hurston, Dunham, and Deren at the center of a discussion of an anthropological modernism, one which might be construed as a fusion of politics, the arts, and the social sciences.

Ultimately, then, this essay is not a manifesto imploring artists to practice ethnography and anthropologists to take up the arts. Rather it is to issue a challenge to rash dichotomies pitting the postmodern against the modern, a dichotomy perpetuated in part by the unsustainable notion that interdisciplinarity is what makes postmodernism special. Indeed this point is quite eloquently refuted by the evidence of three anthropologists, who were on the side a novelist, a dancer, and a filmmaker.

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ABSTRACTS

Kirsten Strom

Reinventing Art and Ethnography in Haiti: Dunham, Deren, and Hurston

While 'modernism' has been theorized by some as an age based on the Enlightenment pursuit of the purity of isolated disciplines (with post-modernism framed conversely as a corrective era of interdisciplinarity), this essay considers the work of three figures practicing decisively interdisciplinary research in the very heyday of the modern era. Indeed Zora Neale Hurston, Katherine Dunham, and Maya Deren, each of whom traveled to Haiti in the decade between 1935 and 1945, all practiced both the fine arts and the social sciences, very frequently at the very same time.

Before treating the three figures individually, however, the essay briefly discusses the question of Haiti's significance, framing it within the context of the progressively intended anthropological discourses of the era. Indeed, both Franz Boas, Hurston's mentor at Columbia, and Melville Herskovits, one of Dunham's advisors, practiced a relativist anthropology with the specifically declared intent of generating a greater respect and understanding of cultures widely dismissed as 'primitive' by the white, Western mainstream. The religion of Haitian Voudoun, in particular, had been widely stereotyped throughout the US as an irrational and violent cult based on witch doctors and zombies. As if in response, Hurston, Dunham, and Deren each conducted participant-observer research in Haiti which inspired both anthropological texts and works of art in the media of fiction, dance, and film respectively.

Zora Neale Hurston's time in Haiti yielded the text Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica, which effectively fused the genres of ethnographic reportage and autobiography, while delivering the text in a distinctively literary narrative voice. While several recent scholars have commented on the hybridized nature of her 'ethnographic' work, they have tended to privilege her work with rural African-Americans, leaving *Tell My Horse* in need of additional consideration, which this essay begins to provide.

Katherine Dunham journeyed to Haiti in 1938 with a calling card marked, 'Dance and Anthropology'. Her completed Master's Thesis, 'Dances of Haiti' was later hailed by Claude Levi-Straus specifically for the uniqueness of Dunham's interdisciplinary credentials. Indeed, as Dunham herself has claimed, 'I explained that I was there to learn dances because I like to dance; to a people for whom dancing was an integral, vital expression of daily living this explanation seemed natural enough'. Thus she established her own credibility as a transparently interested person who liked to dance,

rather than as a peculiarly detached and culturally parasitic scientist, studying humans as one might study insects. Her ensuing career was to include decades of choreography inspired by Haitian and other Caribbean dances in both 'high art' and popular venues.

Filmmaker Maya Deren traveled to Haiti on a Guggenheim grant, intending to produce an 'art film', that would be a document of the visual forms of Haitian dance. Somewhat to her own surprise, the ultimate product of her time there was the now classic text Divine Horsemen: Voodoo Gods of Haiti, an effort perhaps somewhat more 'anthropological' than 'artistic'. What Deren had concluded was that the forms of Haitian popular dance could not be severed from their context. Therefore, she, like Dunham and Hurston, provides an alternative to 'primitivist' models which evacuated non-European forms of their content and cultural context in order to reinvent them as aesthetic modernism.

The essay's conclusion suggests that the work of these three artist-ethnographers indeed warrants a broadened concept of modernism, one which more fully acknowledges the intellectual diversity and interdisciplinarity of those who had already fully recognized the social and political implications of arts and culture.

Tace Hedrick

Of Indians and Modernity in Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza*

In this essay, I suggest that the work of Chicana lesbian feminist writer Gloria Anzaldúa, especially in her 1987 *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza*, belongs to a long-standing history of Latin American as well as United States conversations about race, sexuality, and modernity. Her late 20th century Chicana lesbian-feminist viewpoint is often read as the antithesis of a modernist viewpoint, and indeed it provides a lens through which modernist ideas are refracted. Yet her appeals to the fusion of (racial) opposites and her romanticizing of 'the Indian woman in us' find some of their most basic language and imagery in longstanding 20th century Mexican discourses of mestizaje (indigenous and white Hispanic race-mixing)and indigenismo (romanticized readings of indigenous oppression). In fact Anzaldúa's invocation, in *Borderlands*, of the Mexican politician and thinker José Vasconcelos' 1926 *La raza cósmica* (The Cosmic Race) alerts us to the place of her work in the history of modernism in the Americas.

Thus I argue that the conceptual scaffolding for Borderlands inherited some key modernist assumptions from early 20th century Mexican thought, when discourses of mestizaje and indigenismo were employed in building a modern future on an ancient indigenous past. Such a project was modernist in that it assumed fundamental differences between 'modern' and 'indigenous' people: modern people were rational, scientific, light-skinned, and future-oriented, while indigenous peoples were primitive, dark, timeless, and more naturally spiritual. Tracing Anzaldúa's connection specifically to Mexican modernism resituates her work within a transnational genealogy of ideas about race, sexuality, and race-mixing, from the early decades of the 20th century in Mexico to the later decades of Chicano civil rights movements in the United States, and to the publication of Borderlands itself.

Giorgio Mariani

'Safety is in our speed': Reading Bauman Reading Emerson

Taking the lead from John Tomlinson's call to think of modernization and globalization not only in terms of 'metaphors of territory and borders, of flows and the regulation of flows', but also as 'shifts in the texture of the modernity', the essay offers a tentative exploration of how mechanical velocity and acceleration have contributed to the reshaping of the American cultural imagination. The essay focuses in particular on a few passages from Ralph Waldo Emerson, read through the lenses of Zygmunt Bauman's Liquid Modernity, and argues that the former's response to speed is not only ambivalent, but for the most part paradoxical. Speed is certainly a feature 'of a generalized global modernity' and therefore, as Tomlinson argues, it makes little sense to think of it 'as the original property of any one national culture'. On the other hand, the essay insists that global traits of modernity may be differently perceived and culturally constructed within specific geo-cultural spaces. Emerson, for example, tried to come to terms with mechanical velocity by imagining that abundance of 'free' spaces could attenuate the more disruptive consequences of velocity, a notion inherited by some of the more visionary US counter-culture of the Sixties and Seventies.

Cyraina Johnson-Roullier

'Blackness', Modernity, and the Ideology of Visibility in the Harlem Renaissance

This essay examines the relationship between race and modernity through a critique of interracialism in the Harlem Renaissance. The essay argues that the exploration of interracialism put forward by George Hutchinson in his groundbreaking study The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White (Harvard, 1995) cannot adequately interrogate the modern significance of white and black participation in the Harlem Renaissance, because the notion of interracialism on which it is grounded holds at its core an uncritiqued and uncontested understanding of 'race' that subtly and simultaneously reinforces a binary logic existing between conventional notions of 'white' and 'black'. The new vision of the Harlem Renaissance suggested by analysis of its underlying interracialism can only become fully possible in modern terms to the extent that this conventional binary, white/black, is also pulled apart to expose the cultural significance of the opposition between the two terms, through which the hidden nexus by which they are joined comes violently to the fore. Thus, in order to construct new (racial) boundaries between modernism and the Harlem Renaissance, the examination of interracialism in the Harlem Renaissance is not enough to effect a radical and transformative change in the way in which either movement is perceived. This is because it leaves the essential dichotomy between 'white' and 'black' - by which the two movements are covertly described - in place, rather than seeking to understand what may lie beneath this received discursive, often material and visual reality. Leaving this hidden dichotomy unexplored and uncritiqued will necessarily obscure the compelling new insights that the examination of these unexplored depths may bring

to an understanding of one or the other of modernism or the Harlem Renaissance, or both. This study is derived from a larger project that investigates the role of gender in unraveling the complicated relation between race and modernity in the Harlem Renaissance.

Sonita Sarker

Modern America: Gwendolyn Bennett and Victoria Ocampo Capture the Continents

This project presents the ways in which early 20th century national and continental consciousnesses, both of which contain universalizing tendencies, become key points in the identity making of 'Americans.' It juxtaposes Gwendolyn Bennett, the Harlem Renaissance writer of the Ebony Flute series with Argentinean Victoria Ocampo, the editor of the literary magazine Sur. This comparative analysis of 'minor' and 'major' women intellectuals argues that a kind of 'American Literature' emerges through particular formations of specific racialized and gendered identities creating, and created by, the politico-economic battle between modernist capitalism and socialism. The project is part of a larger work—including Virginia Woolf (England), Grazia Deledda (Italy), and Cornelia Sorabji (India)—that maps how the making of racialized and gendered 'natives' in the frames of political philosophies produces types of literature that are conflicted in terms of local and global aspirations. This synchronic study also has a diachronic dimension in that it traces the legacies of identity, nation, and literature for our own modernities.

Margaret Mills Harper

'I wind my veil about this ancient stone': Yeats's Cuchulain and Modernity

Analyses of Irish modernity require attention to diaspora, and global emigration from Ireland, totaling some seventy million people, is often figured in hemispheric terms. In particular, a transatlantic paradigm is relevant: there are many more Irish Americans, including Irish Canadians and emigrant communities in Latin America, than there are people living in Ireland. America was a fabled land of opportunity but also a Solomonic choice. Daughters and sons who emigrated were both lost, in that they did not return, and saved, from inhospitable conditions ranging from penury to famine. The imagined relation between Ireland and America expresses this profound relation. America appears in direct and indirect form in a number of cultural productions that speak of the instabilities and attractions of this hemispheric relation. The figure of Cuchulain, a character in medieval sagas that was recycled in 19th century popular culture and reinterpreted by the poet and dramatist W. B. Yeats, interestingly demonstrates the ambivalencies of a gaze across the Atlantic. Yeats used Cuchulain as part of a project to create a usable past for Ireland, turning figures such as the sacrificial soldier and the lone adventurer from imperial discourse against the very empire that birthed

them. At the same time, Cuchulain, who appears in a sequence of Yeats's plays and several poems, is British modernist in style, appearing by means of costumes, set design, and dance that are shot through with British and European modernist modes. But Cuchulain is a multiply overdetermined sign, deeply gendered and racialized, an embodiment of anxious masculinity undone in the face of feminized otherness and a subject that is, we might say, islanded, indefinite, with the promise of completion just over the water. This hero must fight the waves in one play and die in another at the hands of the weakest of male foes, tied by an old lover's veils to an 'ancient stone.' Finally, Cuchulain disappears into what Yeats would call a phantasmagoria, a revery, that relocates him in a space of water and the vaguely articulated lands beyond it and a no-time that is that of change itself. Cuchulain signifies the need to invent Irishness, of the complex crossings that this project entails, of its inevitable failures in a post-independence Ireland and a transatlantic-focused Europe, and of its end in the relentless economies of diaspora, as the hero dies at the hands of a blind beggar.

Steven Yao

A Rim with a View: Modernist Studies and the Pacific Rim

This essay outlines an agenda for the study of modernist cultural production that focuses on the dynamics of movement and transformation within the context of a particular geographical formation, namely the 'Pacific Rim.' In such an approach, I argue, the rigors and opportunities of an expressly transnational comparative methodology take center stage. The conscientious development of a 'view from the Rim' entails more than simply acknowledging the fact of geography. Rather, it involves a dedicated attention to tracing the manifold historical and material relations among groups within the area and beyond along a number of different vectors, as well as attending to how these relations at once occasion and condition cultural production. For literary concerns in particular, such vectors include, but are by no means limited to, the particularities of language and various dimensions of power such as asymmetrical economic arrangements underwritten by military and political domination expressed through a variety of channels. In advancing this set of concerns, I also suggest that Modernist Studies in general can enrich its approach to both the decidedly international cultural scope and subsequent global spread of Modernism by entering into an engagement not only with Area Studies, but also with more recently emergent (as well as non-historically defined) fields such as Ethnic Studies.

Laura Doyle

The Riptide Currents of Transnationalism

This paper suggests that it may be useful to think in terms of three interacting streams of transnationalism in modernity, especially as they shed light on modernist practices: imperialist transnationalism, regional transnationalism (including the hemispher-

ic), and activist or diasporic transnationalism. My comments are provisional, a thought experiment prompted mainly by the reading of everyone's papers. The intention is to give us a way to understand some of the relations among our very diverse materials.

I am not aiming to offer a taxonomy of transnationalism or of our papers. Instead I conceive of something more dialectical. I propose that these three streams of transnationalism unfold together historically and they interact. Over time, into the present, they continuously constitute, strain, redirect or, in pockets, break up each other. In the end I ask two questions: 1) how might these transnational actors deliberately or simply by their presence break up, or redirect, or create aporias within the imperialist and regional forms of transnationalism—and vice versa? And 2) how might (geo)modernisms arise out of these interactions?

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