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74 See Michael E. Meeker, 'The new Muslim intellectuals in the Republic of Turkey', in Tapper, *Islam in Modern Turkey*; Binnaz Toprak, 'Islamist intellectuals: revolt against industry and technology', in Metin Heper, Ayşe Öncü and Heinz Kramer (eds), *Turkey and the West: Changing Political and Cultural Identities*, I.B. Tauris, London, 1993.

75 Quoted in Atacan, *Radical Islamic Thought*, p. 8.

76 Ali Bulaç, 'Medine vesikası hakkında genel bilgiler', *Birikim*, 38–9, 1992; 'Sözleşme temelinde toplumsal proje', *Birikim*, 40, 1992. On the significance of the Medinan regime in Islamic utopianism, see Al-Azmeh, *Islams*, pp. 97–8.

77 Rusen Çakır, 'Islami bir liberalizm doğacak', *Aydınlık*, 15 July 1993.

78 Nilüfer Göle, 'Ingénieurs islamistes et étudiantes volées en Turquie: entre le totalitarisme et l'individualisme', in Gilles Kepel and Yann Richard (eds), *Intellectuels et militants de l'islam contemporain*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1990, p. 181.

79 Nilüfer Göle, 'Islami dokunulmazlar, laikler ve radikal demokratlar', *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 27 March–April 1994, p. 17.

80 On the dangers of right-wing nationalism, see Étienne Copeaux, 'Le rêve du Loup Gris: les aspirations turques en Asie Centrale', *Hérodote*, 64, 1992.

81 Pir Sultan Abdal was an Alevi Muslim. The Alevis are in the Shi'ite tradition, and constitute a large minority in the Turkish population (somewhere between ten and fifteen million). Historically they have aligned themselves with Kemalism, as a defence against hostility from Turkey's majority Sunnis. The Sivas massacre also highlights the tensions, then, between Sunni and Alevi Muslims. On the Alevis, see Altan Gökalp, 'La question réligieuse en Turquie', *Projet*, 231, Autumn 1991.

82 Göle, 'Islami dokunulmazlar', p. 14.

83 Ahmet Insel, 'On unachieved democracy', *Thesis Eleven*, 33, 1992, p. 89.

84 Jonah Goldstein and Jeremy Rayner, 'The politics of identity in late modern society', *Theory & Society*, 23, 1994, pp. 381–2.

85 Özal, *Turkey in Europe*, pp. 304, 302, 317.

86 On the anti-western sentiments of the extreme Right, see Copeaux, 'Le rêve'. On the way in which such sentiments have been intensified by western attitudes to Bosnia, see Copeaux and Yérasimos, 'La Bosnie'. With regard to the potential for anti-western and anti-European attitudes among Muslims, see Rusen Çakır, 'Les mouvements Islamistes Turcs et l'Europe', *Cahiers d'Etudes sur la Méditerrannée Orientale et le Monde Turco-Iranien*, 14, 1990.

87 Corm, *L'Europe et l'Orient*, p. 372.

88 Djait, *Europe and Islam*, p. 1.

89 François Ewald, 'Jean Baudrillard: "une ultime réaction vitale"', *Magazine Littéraire*, 323, July–August 1994, p. 22.

90 Ibid.

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6

Identity and Cultural Studies: Is That All There Is?

Lawrence Grossberg

There are many surprising aspects of the current success of cultural studies. I want here to focus on one of the most puzzling: namely, that even as the space of cultural studies seems to encompass an expanding range of theoretical positions, disciplinary matrices and geographical traditions, cultural studies itself seems to be identified with a shrinking set of theoretical and political issues. There is a noticeable tendency to equate cultural studies with the theory and politics of identity and difference, especially as a result of the influence of so-called postcolonial theory and critical race theory. I do not mean to deny the importance of such work in cultural studies, or for contemporary political struggles. But I do want to question some of its theoretical underpinnings and political consequences. Of course, a concern with the politics of identity is not limited to cultural studies, and broader currents of feminist, anti-racist and anti-colonialist investigation have produced important and influential work. Certainly, the assumption that contemporary politics is and should be organized around struggles over identity is not limited to contemporary academic movements. The model of identity and difference, as the dominant model of political organization, is in fact very recent. What constitutes such a politics is the assumption of a self-defined constituency acting in the interests (for the politics) of that definition. Within such constituencies, every individual is a representative of the totality. But in fact, such constituencies do not and need not exist, except as the work of power – or of articulation. My argument is not with the fact that identity has been – and may still be – the site around which people are struggling, nor even with the significant advances that such struggles enabled over the past decades. Rather, it is a question of whether this is a fruitful path to continue following. Appropriating a statement from Bailey and Hall (1992: 15).

> It is perfectly possible that what is politically progressive and opens up new discursive opportunities in the 1970s and 1980s can become a form of closure – and have a repressive value – by the time it is installed as the dominant genre. . . . It will run out of steam; it will become a style; people will use it not

because it opens up anything but because they are being spoken by it, and at that point, you need another shift.

Again, I do not mean to reject the concept of identity or its political importance in certain struggles. I do however want to challenge a number of elements of contemporary work: the subsumption of identity into a particular set of modernist logics and the assumption that such structures of identity necessarily define the appropriate models and sites of political struggle. That is, I want at least to raise the question of whether every struggle over power can and should be organized around and understood in terms of issues of identity, and to suggest that it may be necessary to rearticulate the category of identity and its place in cultural studies as well as in cultural politics. Thus, my project is not to escape the discourse of identity but to relocate it, to rearticulate it by placing it within the larger context of modern formations of power. I want to propose that cultural studies needs to move beyond models of oppression, both the 'colonial model' of the oppressor and oppressed, and the 'transgression model' of oppression and resistance. Cultural studies needs to move towards a model of articulation as 'transformative practice', as a singular becoming of a community. Both models of oppression are not only inappropriate to contemporary relations of power, they are also incapable of creating alliances; they cannot tell us how to interpellate various fractions of the population in different relations to power into the struggle for change. For example, how can we involve fractions of the empowered in something other than a masochistic, guilt-ridden way? My feeling is that an answer depends upon rearticulating the question of identity into a question about the possibility of constructing historical agency, and giving up notions of resistance that assume a subject standing entirely outside of and against a well established structure of power.

For example, discussions of multiculturalism too quickly assume a necessary relation between identity and culture. But in what sense does a culture 'belong' to a group? If it is historical, then we are likely to be pulled into strongly conservative positions (for example American culture is European) and certainly, in that case, the ideology of progress will reinscribe structures of racism, imperialism and ethnocentrism. If it is ethnic, then the US – in fact, every society – is, and probably always has been, multicultural. If it is spatial, then the problems of contemporary mobility appear insurmountable. I would suggest that the question of a multicultural society is a normative ethical one: to what extent can a society continue to exist without a common, albeit constantly rearti-culated and negotiated, culture? What are the conditions through which people can belong to a common collective without becoming representa-tives of a single definition? After all, one cannot deny that the US is and has been a multi-ethnic society with a wide range of cultural practices. What is it that is changing? What are the questions that need to be addressed? What are possible new models of political communities and alliances?

It is by now common to assert that the centrality of the concept of identity in both theoretical and political discourses is a 'modern' development. If identity as a central problematic is modern, there are at least three aspects or logics that constitute the terrain within which that relationship is constituted: a logic of difference; a logic of individuality; and a logic of temporality. I want to contest the current direction of cultural studies by locating its theoretical foundations in each of these logics, and offering three corresponding alternatives: a logic of otherness; a logic of productivity; and a logic of spatiality. If identity is somehow constituted by and constitutive of modernity, then the current discourses of identity fail to challenge their own location within, and implication with, the formations of modern power. Obviously, I can only hope to provide the barest outlines of my argument here.[1]

Identity and difference in cultural studies

Within cultural studies, investigations of the constitution and politics of identity are often predicated on a distinction, nicely articulated by Hall (1990), between two forms of struggle over – two models of the production of – identities. It is important to recognize that Hall offers this, not as a theoretical distinction, although it certainly can be mapped on to the dispute between essentialists and anti-essentialists, but as a historical and strategic distinction. The first model assumes that there is some intrinsic and essential content to any identity which is defined by either a common origin or a common structure of experience or both. Struggling against existing constructions of a particular identity takes the form of contesting negative images with positive ones, and of trying to discover the 'authentic' and 'original' content of the identity. Basically, the struggle over representations of identity here takes the form of offering one fully constituted, separate and distinct identity in place of another.

The second model emphasizes the impossibility of such fully consti-tuted, separate and distinct identities. It denies the existence of authentic and originary identities based in a universally shared origin or experi-ence. Identities are always relational and incomplete, in process. Any identity depends upon its difference from, its negation of, some other term, even as the identity of the latter term depends upon its difference from, its negation of, the former. As Hall (1991: 21) puts it: 'Identity is a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself.' Identity is always a temporary and unstable effect of relations which define identities by marking differ-ences. Thus the emphasis here is on the multiplicity of identities and differences rather than on a singular identity and on the connections or articulations between the fragments or differences. The fact of multiple identities gives rise to the necessity of what Kobena Mercer has called 'the

mantra of race, class and gender (1992b: 34). 'The challenge is to be able to theorize more than one difference at once.' This suggests a much more difficult politics, because the sides are not given in advance, nor in neat divisions. As Michele Wallace (1994: 185) says, echoing June Jordan, 'the thing that needed to be said – women are not to be trusted just because they're women, anymore than blacks are to be trusted because they're black, or gays because they're gay and so on.' Here struggles over identity no longer involve questions of adequacy or distortion, but of the politics of representation itself. That is, politics involves questioning how identities are produced and taken up through practices of representation. Obviously influenced by Derrida, such a position sees identity as an entirely cultural, even an entirely linguistic, construction.[2] While this model certainly suggests that the identity of one term cannot be explored or challenged without a simultaneous investigation of the second term, this is rarely the case in practice. Most work in cultural studies is concerned with investigating and challenging the construction of subaltern, marginalized or dominated identities, although some recent work has begun to explore dominant identities as social constructions. Rarely, however, are the two ever studied together, as the theory would seem to dictate, as mutually constitutive.

It is obviously this second model which defines work around identity in cultural studies, but I do not mean to suggest that this model defines a singular theoretical position or vocabulary. On the contrary, there are a number of different, overlapping, intersecting and sometimes even competing figures which, taken together, define the space within which cultural studies has theorized the problem of identity. Often, they function together to define specific theories. Interestingly, these figures construct a continuum of images of spatiality, although, as I will suggest, they are, for the most part, structures of temporality. I will describe these figures as: *différance*, fragmentation, hybridity, border and diaspora.

The figure of *différance* describes a particular constitutive relation of negativity in which the subordinate term (the marginalized other or subaltern) is a necessary and internal force of destabilization existing within the identity of the dominant term. The subaltern here is itself constitutive of, and necessary for, the dominant term. The instability of any dominant identity – since it must always and already incorporate its negation – is the result of the very nature of language and signification. The subaltern represents an inherent ambiguity or instability at the centre of any formation of language (or identity) which constantly undermines language's power to define a unified stable identity. We can identify two variants of this figure: notions of the 'supplement' locate the other outside of the field of subjectivity as it were, as pure excess; notions of 'negativity' locate the other within the field of subjectivity as a constitutive exotic other. In the former, the subaltern constitutes the boundaries of the very possibility of subjectivity; in the latter, the subaltern may be granted an incomprehensible subjectivity. There are numerous examples of these

two variants of the figure of *différance* in contemporary theories of identity. For example, Lyotard (1990) sees 'the Jews' as that which European culture cannot identify because its exclusion, its unnameability, is itself constitutive of European identity. Similarly, Bhabha's (1994) notion of mimicry as an intentional misappropriation of the dominant discourse locates the power of the subaltern in a kind of textual insurrection in which the subaltern is defined only by its internal negation of the colonizer. De Certeau's (1984) attempt to define subordinate populations only by their lack of a place which would entitle them to their own practices or strategies similarly ends up defining the subaltern as pure *différance*. Finally, there is a common reading of Said's *Orientalism* (1978) in which the dominant power necessarily constructs its other as a repressed and desired difference.

The figure of *fragmentation* emphasizes the multiplicity of identities and of positions within any apparent identity. It thus sees a particular concrete or lived identity as 'a kind of disassembled and reassembled unity' (Haraway, 1991: 174). Identities are thus always contradictory, made up out of partial fragments. Theories of fragmentation can focus on the fragmentation of either individual identities or of the social categories (of difference) within which individuals are placed, or some combination of the two. Further, such fragmentations can be seen as either historical or constitutive. This is perhaps the most powerful image, certainly in British cultural studies, with echoes in Hebdige's notion of 'cut "n" mix' and Gilroy's notion of syncretism. Donna Haraway (1991: 174) also seems to offer such a figure in the image of a cyborg as 'a potent subjectivity synthesized from the fusion of outsider identities'. Or, from David Bailey and Stuart Hall (1992: 21): 'Identities can, therefore, be contradictory and are always situational. . . . In short, we are all involved in a series of political games around fractured or decentered identities . . . since black signifies a range of experiences, the act of representation becomes not just about decentering the subject but actually exploring the kaleidoscopic conditions of blackness.'

The figure of *hybridity* is more difficult to characterize for it is often used synonymously with a number of other figures. Nevertheless, I will use it to describe three different images of *border* existences, of subaltern identities as existing between two competing identities. Images of a '*third space*' (as in Bhabha) see subaltern identities as unique third terms literally defining an 'in-between' place inhabited by the subaltern. Images of *liminality* collapse the geography of the third space into the border itself; the subaltern lives, as it were, on the border. In both of these variants of hybridity, the subaltern is neither one nor the other but is defined by its location in a unique spatial condition which constitutes it as different from either alternative. Neither colonizer nor precolonial subject, the postcolonial subject exists as a unique hybrid which may, by definition, constitute the other two as well. Closely related to these two figures of hybridity is that of the '*border-crossing*', marking an image of between-ness

which does not construct a place or condition of its own other than the mobility, uncertainty and multiplicity of the fact of the constant border-crossing itself. Often, these three versions of hybridity are conflated in various ways, as in Gloria Anzaldua's (1987: 37) description of the *Atzlan*: 'A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. . . . People who inhabit both realities . . . are forced to live in the interface between the two.'

Finally, the figure of *diaspora* is closely related to that of border-crossing, but it is often given a more diachronic inflection. This figure has become increasingly visible, through the work of anthropologists such as James Clifford and Smadar Lavie, cultural critics such as Paul Gilroy, and various postcolonial theorists. As Jim Clifford describes it (1994: 308), 'the term "diaspora" is a signifier not simply of transnationality and move-ment, but of political struggles to define the local – I would prefer to call it place – as a distinctive community, in historical contexts of displacement'. That is, diaspora emphasizes the historically spatial fluidity and inten-tionality of identity, its articulation to structures of historical movements (whether forced or chosen, necessary or desired). Diaspora links identity to spatial location and identifications, to 'histories of alternative cosmo-politanisms and diasporic networks' (Clifford, in press). While this figure offers significantly new possibilities for a cultural politics that avoids many of the logics of the modern – by rooting identity in structures of affiliations and ways of belonging, it is, too often, drawn back into the modern. Identity is ultimately returned to history, and the subaltern's place is subsumed within a history of movements and an experience of oppression which privileges particular exemplars as the 'proper' figures of identity.

Such theories – built on the range of diverse figures described above – have recently come under attack (e.g. Parry, 1987; O'Hanlon, 1988): for ignoring the fragmentary and conflictual nature of the discourses of power (different at different places and spaces of course); for ignoring the heterogeneity of power and apparently reducing it to discourses of representation and ignoring its material realities; for ignoring the positivity of the subaltern – as the possessor of other knowledges and traditions; as having their own history in which there are power relations defined within the ranks of the subordinated. And one might add yet another problem concerning the status of the marginal or subordinate in these figures. On what grounds do we assume that a privileged or even different structure of subjectivity belongs to the subaltern? And if, as Hall suggests, the marginal has become central, is it not descriptive of the contemporary subject? The other side of the question is, can one form of subordination become the model of all structural domination? In so far as we have now created a figure of the subaltern, have we not developed another universalizing theory, providing answers to any local struggle before we have even begun, since we know we will always find the production of the other as different?

Cultural identity and the logic of difference

But, as I have said, I want to contest such theories of identity on broader grounds: namely, that they have failed to open up a space of anti- or even counter-modernity. In other words, they are ultimately unable to contest the formations of modern power at their deepest levels because they remain within the strategic forms of modern logic: difference, individu-ality, and temporality. I will begin by considering the nature of the logic of difference which offers a particular interpretation of the relation between identity and modernity, an interpretation which, by its very logic, denies the possibility of any alternative which might escape its logic (the logic of the modern). Since the modern constitutes its own identity by differ-entiating itself from an-other (usually tradition as a temporal other or spatial others transformed into temporal others), identity is always constituted out of difference. The modern makes identities into social constructions. And thus a counter-modern politics has to contest the particular relations of identity and difference that have been constructed by, offered and taken up in the modern. Here, we have no choice but to start with questions of difference, and to explore the nature of difference and its relation to identity. This is certainly the dominant response in cultural studies, but the real question is, to what end? If difference is irrevocable, then modernity is inescapable. It may seem somewhat ironic that just as we discover that not only particular identities but identity itself is socially constructed, we organize political struggle within the category of identity, around particular socially constructed identities.

But there is, of course, an alternative understanding of the relation of the modern and identity which suggests that the modern transforms all relations of identity into relations of difference. Thus, the modern constitutes not identity out of difference but difference out of identity. The modern never constitutes itself as an identity (different from others) but as a difference (always different from itself – across time and space). In this sense, the fundamental structures of modernity are always produc-tions of difference. Here the problem is to avoid starting with questions of difference; a counter-modern politics has to elude the logic of difference, and to (re-)capture the possibility of a politics of otherness. If the first interpretation condemns itself (and every possible counter-strategy) to remaining within the modern, the second attempts to escape the determining boundaries of the modern by seeing the first interpretation as itself an historical product of modern power.

Let me attempt to clarify the relation between theories of difference and what I will call theories of otherness. The former are certainly dominant in contemporary theories and are built upon a very strong notion of difference, derived largely from structuralist and post-structuralist theory: that the identity or meaning of a term depends entirely (except perhaps for a necessary but indeterminate excess) on its relation to, its difference from, other terms. In fact, theories of difference take difference

itself as given, as the economy out of which identities are produced. Theories of otherness, on the other hand, assume that difference is itself an historically produced economy, imposed in modern structures of power, on the real. Difference as much as identity is an effect of power. While such theories obviously accept a weak notion of difference (a is not b or c or d), they do not see such differences as fundamentally constitutive. Rather, they begin with a strong sense of otherness which recognizes that the other exists, in its own place, as what it is, independently of any *specific* relations. But what it is need not be defined in transcendental or essential terms; what it is can be defined by its particular (contextual) power to affect and be affected. That is, such views of otherness grant to each term an unspecified, but specifiable, positivity. After all, modern thought is not just binary but a particular kind of binary-producing machine, where binaries become constitutive differences in which the other is defined by its negativity. As Deleuze and Guattari put it (1987: 42):

> How to think about fragments whose sole relationship is sheer difference – fragments that are related to one another only in that each of them is different – without having recourse to any sort of original totality (not even one that has been lost), or to a subsequent totality that may not yet have come about.

In more philosophical terms, these alternatives can be located within the argument between Derrida and Foucault: for example, around their differing readings of Descartes (Derrida, 1978; Foucault, 1979). Derrida argues that Descartes's exclusion of madness from reason itself constituted the possibility and identity of reason. The relation between reason and madness is, then, an originary structure of difference in the sense that, once again, difference always exists at the centre of identity. And in that sense, for Derrida, Descartes is still alive since any conception of reason must produce and negate madness. For Foucault, on the other hand, Descartes's exclusion of madness was a philosophical representation of a real historical event; the exclusion was material and spatial as much as discursive. While this exclusion was necessary to establish the status of reason and to naturalize the identification of reason and subjectivity, it is not itself constitutive, either of reason or of madness. Each of these terms has its own positivity or exteriority which can and does affect the other. In that sense, for Foucault, Descartes is irrelevant today. It is not coincidental, of course, that Derrida argues that philosophy can never escape the logocentrism which, I would argue, is constitutive of modernity. Foucault often writes as if he had already done so.

Much of the contemporary work on identity can be seen as a struggle taking place in the space between Derrida and Foucault. Thus, for example, Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) influential work, which has contributed significantly to the theoretical frameworks within which cultural studies has approached questions of identitiy, can be seen as an

attempt to bring Foucault and Derrida together (with the aid of Gramsci). But what has really happened is that Laclau and Mouffe have reread Foucault as if he were Derrida. Foucault's notion of the regularity of dispersion becomes an ensemble of differential positions; the rarity of discourse becomes exteriority as an excess found in the surplus of meaning. And Foucault's concern with subjectivization becomes the centrality of the production of subjects as the basis of the chain of discourse which produces both temporary fixity and the excess which destabilizes it.

Similarly, Edward Said claims to have based much of his work in *Orientalism* (1978) on Foucault. As numerous commentators have pointed out, however, the notion of 'Orientalism' is intentionally ambiguous in a way that makes it quite difficult to actually pin down Said's theoretical position. At times, Said seems to suggest that Orientalism is a mode of representation by which we distinguish ourselves from others, but again, as numerous critics have pointed out, this is insufficient for it would seem to condemn any attempt to represent the other. At another point, Said describes Orientalism as 'a style of thought based on an ontological and epistemological distinction', but he fails to consider the political history of the relationship between epistemology and ontology. Is it that any ontological distinction is an act of power, or is it that when such ontological distinctions are defined by and placed in the service of knowledge – that is, when epistemology is equated with or supersedes ontology – Orientalism emerges? Of course, Said actually does begin to sound like Foucault when he connects specific discourses and their distribution to the institutions of colonialism itself. Here we can see the crucial ambiguity in Said's thesis, an ambiguity which has itself defined the field of identity theories. To put it rather too simply, the question is, does 'the Oriental exist' apart from Orientalism? While many interpreters have responded in the negative, they have failed to distinguish a number of possible explanations. One possible interpretation of the existence of the Orient is tautological: since the Orient and the Oriental are constructions of colonial discourses, they cannot exist outside of those discourses. The Orient as an object of knowledge is the product of colonial relations of power. But is it so simple because, as numerous critics have pointed out, if this is the case, then all knowledge – and the construction of any object of knowledge – must itself be condemned as appropriative and oppressive. Is it not the articulation of knowledge into particular geo-economic and political relations that reconfigures curiosity into power?

There are at least three different positions on the existence of the Oriental which can be laid out along a continuum: the first sees it as pure excess or supplement, as the negativity at the heart of the Occident's own self-understanding. On this view, if it weren't the Orient that the West created, it would have had to have been somewhere else (and obviously, it was other places as well). The second position places the Orient and the Occident in an unequal relation of constitutive difference; each is

necessary to the self-definition of the other. Each defines itself by marking itself as different from the other. But like any theory of constitution, there is a necessary uncertainty at the centre, for the fact is that each must exist independently of the relationship in order to be appropriated into the relation, and each must therefore, in some sense, have its own positivity. But this positivity is itself never specified for it is always deferred, always irrelevant to the constitutive relation itself. The third position would seem to have been Said's – that Orientalism involves actual material processes of colonization, travel, exploitation and domination. That is, people travelled to places and cultures that already existed. The Oriental, as it were, existed independently of the Orientalist. The act of power comes not in creating something from nothing, but in reducing something to nothing (to pure semantic and differential terms), in negating the positivity of the Arab world with all of its diversity, for example, to nothing but a singular constitutive other, to the different. Thus, it is precisely the articulation of difference on top of otherness that becomes the material site of discursive power and which is, I would argue, a fundamental logic of formations of modern power.

Starting from the last position, Said has, in his more recent work, explicitly attempted to define a practice that both inscribes and transcends cultural identity. As Benita Parry (1992) and others have pointed out, such a project opens up a series of potentially significant materialist questions: about the interdependence of metropolitan and colonial histories and cultures; about the changing modes of western capitalist penetration into other worlds; about the possibilities of (morally) representing others; about the relations between power and distinctions; about the specificity of western structures of power; about the relations between the cultures of imperialism and colonialism, and imperialism's non-discursive or non-cultural dynamics; and about the geopolitical configurations of power and power relations within cultural processes. But instead, the dominant deployment of Said has been to establish a simple chain from colonialism to the construction of cultural identities to the production of subjects (and sometimes, the 'discovery' of resistance). Thus a very different range of questions is raised: about how colonialism produces a particular subjectivity of the colonized or how it closes off the possibility of subjectivity, or some combination of the two. As Parry describes it, this involves theorizing 'the specificities of a (polymorphic) (post) colonial condition', understood almost entirely in terms of identity and subjectivity, whether it is assumed to be 'authentic' or not.[3] This use of Said also raises questions about how (post)colonial subjects (via cultural production and practices) subvert western colonial authority (usually as it is embodied in cultural forms themselves).[4] Or finally, it can be used to raise questions about the very politics of subjectivity and the search for a subject-position for the colonial subject, because subjectivity is only possible in the places constructed by the colonizer.[5] In fact, Spivak (1988) seems to argue that subjectivity is itself a western category and

that, in the colonial relation, the West seeks to construct a subject as its other, what Parry refers to as the subject as the 'space of the Imperialist's self-consolidating other'. What all of these questions leave unanswered is the relationship between subjects, identities and agents, even though each is ultimately interested in the complex intersection of these questions. Instead, they seem content to study 'the continual struggle of the colonized to resolve the paradoxes which this displacement and dehumanization of indigenous processes of identification sets up in [his] daily existence' (O'Hanlon, 1988: 204–5).

I have already suggested that the modern itself is constituted by the logic of difference through which the modern is constructed as an 'adversarial space' living in 'an anxiety of contamination by its other' (Huyssen, 1986: vii). As Nietzsche pointed out, this logic of difference, in which the other is defined by its negativity, can only give rise to a politics of resentment. Increasingly, this logic of difference has come under attack: 'There is nothing remotely groovy about difference and diversity as political problems. . . . The management of diversity and difference through the bureaucratic mantra of race, class and gender encouraged the divisive rhetoric of being more marginal, more oppressed' (Mercer, 1992b: 33). And despite the intentions of anti-modernist critics, celebrations of difference do not give up a totalizing speaking situation of the modern; instead, 'it becomes the master of differing, offering a unified theory of difference' (Wark, 1992: 436). The alternative is to begin to construct a theory of otherness which is not essentialist, a theory of positivity based on notions of effectivity, belonging and, as Paul Gilroy (1993) describes it, 'the changing same'.

Cultural identity and the logic of individuality

Renato Rosaldo (1989: 201) has argued that we need to move away from the tacit assumption 'that conflates the notion of culture with the idea of difference' and towards an alternative notion of culture as productive. Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 210) suggest such a notion: 'the question . . . is not whether the status of women, or those on the bottom, is better or worse, but the type of organization from which that status results'. But I do not believe that the failure to articulate such a theory of culture is the product of the logic of difference; instead, what has prevented the development of a view of culture as production is a particular (modern) logic of individuality which has equated the various processes of individuation and thus collapsed the various planes of effectivity through which individuality is constituted into a single and simple structure.

In political terms, this is the modern invention of what O'Hanlon (1988) calls 'the virile figure of the subject-agent', that is, the modern 'humanistic individual' which is predicated on the identification of three different planes (and hence, three different issues): (1) the subject as a position

defining the possibility and the source of experience and, by extension, of knowledge; (2) the agent as a position of activity; and (3) the self as the mark of a social identity. This equation of different 'maps of identification and belonging' – maps which define and produce where and how individuals fit into the world – inevitably gave rise to a paradox, especially when anti-essentialist arguments were mounted against any claims to the unity of both the subject and the self (again, often conflated in these arguments) and when critical arguments were mounted to demonstrate the social construction of both the subject and the self. The paradox is, quite simply, how can the individual be both cause and effect (an old question), both subject and subjected? Or in other words, how and where does one locate agency? This problem has animated the large body of contemporary political and theoretical work on the production of subordinate identities and the possibilities of resistance, whether in the name of the subaltern, feminism, anti-racism or postcolonialism. But the paradox may in fact be a disguise for the operation of modern power, if we see these three aspects of individuality as three distinct individuating productions. In this case, the task is to locate the 'machinery' by which each of these planes of identification and belonging is produced and subsequently articulated into structures of individuality (including bodies). Such machines describe the nature of human subjectivity, identity and agency as technologically produced relations which impose a particular organization and a particular conduct on the specific multiplicities operating on different planes of effects.

The question of the subject is an epistemological one, in the broadest sense of the term. The subject describes a position within a field of subjectivity or within a phenomenological field, produced by a particular subjectivating machine (since not all subjectivations are subjectifications). In so far as everyone experiences the world, subjectivity in some form must be a universal value (which in fact may be available to more than just the human). Everyone has some form of subjectivity and thus, in at least one sense, exists as a subject, although further research would have to specify the different forms of the existence of the subject. Everyone exists at the centre of a phenomenological field and thus has some access to experience, to some knowledge about themselves and their world. Of course, it may be that subjectivity as a value necessary for life is also unequally distributed, that some individuals may have the possibility of occupying more than one such position, that some positions may offer specific perspectives on reality that are different from others, that some positions come to be more valued than others. We can specify something about the modern form of subjectivity by drawing upon – and rereading – Althusser's (1971) argument: modern subjectivity must function, to some extent, to 'authorize' experience itself, even though, again, some positions may be better able to articulate and defend their 'authority'. In this sense, subjectivity⁶ is not an ontological question but a contextually produced epistemological value. In Deleuzean terms, it is

the product of a stratifying machine which produces the real as a relation of content (bodies) and expression (subjectivity as value).

Of course, subjectivity in this sense is abstract. And within human societies at least, it is always inscribed or distributed within cultural codes of differences that organize subjects by defining social identities. Such codes differentially value particular positions within the field of subjectivity. In other words, although everyone exists within the strata of subjectivity, they are also located at particular positions, each of which enables and constrains the possibilities of experience, of representing those experiences and of legitimizing those representations. Thus, the question of identity is one of social power and its articulation to, its anchorage in, the body of the population itself. In that sense, the self as the material embodiment of identities, the material points at which codes of difference and distinction are inscribed upon the socius, exists only after the inscription of historical differences. Hall (1992: 16), for example, describes the work of racism as being 'directed to secure us "over here" and them "over there", to fix each in its appointed species place'. In Deleuzean terms, the self is a product of a differentiating machine.

While it is clear that structures of subjectivity and self may influence and be articulated to questions of power and the possibilities of agency, there is no reason to assume that they are the same or equivalent. In fact, the question of agency is a matter of action and the nature of change. In its most common form, it is Wittgenstein's question: what is the difference between my raising my arm and my arm rising? It raises questions of intentionality but without assuming a mentalist or voluntarist answer. Obviously, within cultural studies, the question of agency involves more than a simple question of whether or how people control their own actions through some act of will. In classical modern terms, the issue of agency raises questions of the freedom of the will, or of how people can be responsible for their determined actions. But in broader cultural terms, questions of agency involve the possibilities of action as interventions into the processes by which reality is continually being transformed and power enacted. That is, in Marx's terms, the problem of agency is the problem of understanding how people make history in conditions not of their own making. Who gets to make history?

As O'Hanlon (1988: 207, 221) has argued, when the issue shifts to questions of agency and the possibilities of action, 'the subaltern is not a social category but a statement of power'. She continues:

> the subaltern is rendered marginal . . . in part through his inability, in his poverty, his lack of leisure, and his inarticulacy, to participate to any significant degree in the public institutions of civil society, with all the particular kinds of power which they confer, but most of all, through his consequently weaker ability to articulate civil society's self-sustaining myth.

That is, agency involves relations of participation and access, the possibilities of moving into particular sites of activity and power, and of belonging to them in such a way as to be able to enact their powers. In that

sense, marginalization is not a spatial position but a vector defining access, mobility and the possibilities of investment. The question of agency is, then, how access and investment or participation (as a structure of belonging) are distributed within particular structured terrains. At the very least, this suggests that agency as a political problem cannot be conflated with issues of cultural identity or of epistemological possibilities. In other words, agency is not so much the 'mark of a subject, but the constituting mark of an abode'.[7] In Deleuzean terms, agency is the product of a territorializing machine.[8]

Cultural identity and the logic of temporality

But the modern is not merely defined by the logics of difference and individuality; it is also built upon a logic of temporality. That is, the modern embodies a specific temporalizing logic and a specific temporality. But the relationship goes deeper, for at the heart of modern thought and power lie two assumptions: that space and time are separable, and that time is more fundamental than space. This bifurcation and privileging of time over space is, I would argue, the crucial founding moment of modern philosophy. While many would locate the beginning of modern philosophy in the Cartesian problematic of the relation between the individual and reality (or truth) which was 'solved' by postulating the existence of a self-reflecting consciousness, it is, I believe, the Kantian solution which opened up the space of modern thought. Kant identified this consciousness with the mediating position of experience (giving rise to both phenomenological and structural theories of culture and knowledge). This privileging of consciousness (or in Romanticism, of imagination) as the space of the mediation of opposition depended upon two identifications: of opposition with difference and of subjectivity with temporality. Only thus was consciousness capable of appropriating the other in order to totalize and transcend chaos. The unity of the subject depended upon the unity of time. When this is filtered through the post-structuralist notion of textuality, the result is the assumed temporal discontinuity of discourse or what Bhabha (1992: 58) calls the 'temporal non-synchronicity of discourse'. The result is not only that identity is entirely an *historical* construction but that each of the three planes of individuation is constructed temporally: subjectivity as internal time consciousness; identity as the temporal construction of difference; and agency as the temporal displacement of difference. However, rather than developing this critique, I would like to briefly elaborate how the three planes of individuation might be understood within a spatial logic.[9]

Subjectivity as spatial is perhaps the clearest, for it involves taking literally the statement that people experience the world from a particular position – recognizing that such positions are in space rather than (or at least as much as in) time. In fact, much of the contemporary writing on

diaspora points in this direction in so far as diaspora is understood as 'a whole range of phenomena that encourage multi-locale attachments, dwelling and travelling' (Clifford, in press). According to Gilroy (1992), such identifications or affiliations, rather than identities, are ways of belonging. They are the positions which define us spatially in relation to others, as entangled and separated. Similarly, Eric Michaels (1994) argued that people's access to knowledge is determined in part by the places – of conception, birth, death and residence – from and by which they speak, for one is always speaking for and from a specific geography of such places.[10] That is, subjectivity describes the points of attachment from which one experiences the world.

The self, or identity more narrowly understood, can be reconceptualized in spatial terms as different modes or vectors of spatial existence. Thus, if we wanted to describe the complex politics of identity in contemporary American urban society, we could contrast four such vectors: first, a population largely demobilized, with little or no ability to move out of predefined and enclosed spaces; second, a population with highly constrained but extensive lives of mobility; third, a highly mobile population which is nevertheless excluded from certain key places; and finally, a population living in a voluntarily imposed, increasingly fortress-like space but which, from within that space, as the result of a variety of technologies, is granted an extraordinary degree of mobility. These rather abstract descriptions can be made more concrete if we apply them to the antagonisms which erupted not long ago in Los Angeles. At the time of the event, the antagonisms seem to have been defined in largely essentialist terms. The only apparent alternative, based on the social construction of identity, seemed to preclude effective alliance as much as the antagonism itself. But it may be possible to displace the antagonisms from questions of identity *per se* to the more potentially sympathetic relations among different maps of spatial existence. Los Angeles would be seen then, not merely as a 'dual city', but as a complex system of competing and overlapping mobilities (which of course, would have to be located within national, regional and global spaces as well). The various populations of Los Angeles would not be defined simply in ethnic or racial or class terms but in terms of the ways these identities are articulated by the different maps of spatial existence available in contemporary urban America with the groups identified by the press as, respectively, 'Black', 'Latino', 'Korean' and 'White' replaced by the above spatial vectors (since the ethnic identifications were often mistaken in their simplicity).

Finally, agency, like identity, is not simply a matter of places, but is more a matter of the spatial relations of places and spaces and the distribution of people within them. As Meaghan Morris (1988) points out, such places do not pre-exist as origins; they are the products of efforts to organize a limited space. It is a matter of the structured mobility by which people are given access to particular kinds of places, and to the paths that

allow one to move to and from such places. If such 'ways of belonging', operating on the plane of subjectivity, define kinds of persons in relation to the kinds of experience they have available, then 'ways of belonging' constitutive of agency define a distribution of acts. If subjectivity constitutes 'homes' as places of attachment, temporary addresses for people, agency constitutes strategic installations; these are the specific places and spaces that define particular forms of agency and empower particular populations. In this sense, we can enquire into the conditions of possibility of agency, for agency – the ability to make history, as it were – is not intrinsic either to subjects or to selves. Agency is the product of diagrams of mobility and placement which define or map the possibilities of where and how specific vectors of influence can stop and be placed. (I am deliberately avoiding a language which would make it sound simply like people who stop and place themselves.) Such places are temporary points of belonging and identification, of orientation and installation, creating sites of strategic historical possibilities and activities, and as such they are always contextually defined. They define the forms of empowerment or agency which are available to particular groups as ways of going on and of going out. Around such places, maps of subjectivity and identity, meaning and pleasure, desire and force, can be articulated. A territorializing machine attempts to map the sorts of places that can be occupied and how they can be occupied; it maps how much room there is to move and where and how movement is possible. It produces lines of specific vectors, intensities and densities that differentially enable and enact specific forms of mobility and stability, specific lines of investment, anchoring and freedom. It maps the ways mobility is both enabled by and limited within a field of force. Agency as a human problem is defined by the articulations of subject positions and identities into specific places and spaces – fields of activity, in O'Hanlon's terms – on socially constructed territories. Agency is the empowerment enabled at particular sites, along particular vectors. At the very least, this analysis, however sketchy, suggests that cultural and political identities which do not themselves correspond exactly to self and agency, while always articulated together in any instance, are, nevertheless, neither equivalent nor reducible to each other. And neither is equivalent to or reducible to epistemological positions of subjectivity.

Culture and the politics of singularity

Recently, a number of authors have challenged the particular confluence of logics which have defined modern theories of identity. Ahmad (1992), for example, argues that there is often a rather easy slide from an 'absence of belonging' to an 'excess of belonging' predicated on the assumption of migrancy as an ontological and epistemological condition. Similarly, Dhareshwar (1989: 142–3) warns against the desire for 'an identity that

fully coheres with the narrative force of theory', which takes the figures of a theoretical system as the 'storyline' for narrative identity: 'for example, "decentered subjectivity" as postmodern reality, dissemination as "im-migritude" (my word for the whole narrative of displacement which has become a normative experience in metropolitan politics of cultural description)'. I would argue that, in so far as the various theories of identity remain grounded in modern logics of difference, individuality and temporality, the radical implications of the increasingly spatial language of such theories remains unrealized and unrealizable. With Dhareshwar (1989: 146), I wonder whether we need to raise 'the possibility and necessity of an entirely different theoretical practice'.

I am interested in the implications of the alternative logics of otherness, production and spatiality for a theory of human agency and historical change. In particular, for the moment, I am interested in the possibilities of political identities and alliances. My discussion of agency – and its difference from either subjectivity or 'identity' (self) – would seem to suggest the need for a radical rethinking of political identity (and the possibilities of collective agency). It seems to suggest the concept of a belonging without identity, a notion of what might be called *singularity* as the basis for an alternative politics, a politics based on what Giorgio Agamben (1993) has called 'the coming community'. This project is political at its core, for as Young (1990: 11) says, this quest for the singular can 'be related to the project of constructing a form of knowledge that respects the other without absorbing it into the same', or, I might add, the different. As Dhareshwar (1990: 235) points out, 'the fetishization and relentless celebration of "difference" and "otherness" [used here to describe a post-structuralist appropriation of Said's thesis] has displaced any discussion of political identity'.

Agamben describes singularity as a mode of existence which is neither universal (i.e. conceptual) nor particular (i.e. individual). He takes as an example of such a mode of existence, the existence of the example *qua* example itself, for the example exists both inside and outside of the class it exemplifies. The example exists 'by the indifference of the common and the proper, of the genus and the species, of the essential and the accidental. [It] is the thing with all its properties none of which, however, constitutes difference. Indifference with respect to properties is what individuates and disseminates singularities' (1993: 19). Moreover, the status of the example is not accomplished once and for all; it is a line of becoming, 'a shuttling between the common and the singular' (ibid.: 20). In other words, the example is defined, not by an appeal to a common universal property – an identity – but by its appropriation of belonging (to the class, in this instance) itself. The example belongs to the set which exists alongside of it, and hence it is defined by its substitutability, since it always already belongs in the place of the other. This is 'an unconditioned substitutability, without either representation or possible description' (ibid.: 24–5), an absolutely unrepresentable community. This community

– that on which the example borders – is an empty and indeterminate totality, an external space of possibilities. Thus, a singularity can be defined as 'a being whose community is mediated not by any condition of belonging . . . nor by the simple absence of conditions . . . but by belonging itself' (ibid.: 85). To put this all in simpler terms, Agamben is arguing that the example functions as an example not by virtue of some common property which it shares with all the other possible members of the set, but rather by virtue of its metonymical (understood both literally and spatially) relation to the set itself. Any term can become an example of the set because what is at stake is the very claim of belonging to the set.

Agamben turns this to politics by considering the events – the alliance – of Tiananmen Square:

> Because if instead of continuing to search for a proper identity in the already improper and senseless form of individuality, humans were to succeed in belonging to this impropriety as such, in making of the proper being – thus not an identity and an individual property but a singularity without identity, a common and absolutely exposed singularity . . . then they would for the first time enter into a community without presuppositions and without subjects. (ibid.: 65)

Consider, how one would describe the common identity of those who gathered in Tiananmen Square and, whether intentionally or not, came to define and embody a community of opposition, not only to the Chinese state, but to the state machine itself. In fact, there is no common identity, no property that defines them apart from the fact that they were there, together, in that place. It was the fact of belonging that constituted their belonging together. Such a singularity operates as a 'transport machine' following a logic of involvement, a logic of the next (rather than of the proper). It refuses to take any instance as a synecdochal image of the whole. It is only at the intersection of the various lines at the concrete place of belonging that we can identify the different processes of 'individuation carried out through groups and people', new modes of individuation and even subjectivation with no identity. Such a community would be based only on the exteriority, the exposure, of the singularity of belonging.

In this sense, we might also reconsider the civil rights movement as a machine of mobilization whose product was a singular belonging rather than a structure of membership. A politics of singularity would need to define places people can belong to or, even more fundamentally, places people can find their way to. Hall and Held (cited in Giroux, 1994: 31) describe this as the problem of citizenship: 'the diverse communities to which we belong, the complex interplay of identity and identification and the differentiated ways in which people participate in social life'. Similarly, Mercer (1992b: 33) describes 'what was important' about the politics of race of the 1980s as the result of the fact 'that we actively constructed an elective community of belonging through a variety of practices'. Perhaps Hall and Mercer would assent to the argument that, in

specific contexts, identity can become a marker of people's abiding in such a singular community, where the community defines an abode marking people's ways of belonging within the structured mobilities of contemporary life. That would be an identity worth struggling to create.

Notes

1 For a fuller elaboration of some of the arguments here, see Grossberg (1993). I would also like to thank Stuart Hall, Cameron McCarthy, John Clarke and Henry Giroux for their encouragement and comments. I am aware of the potential charge that, as a white middle class man, I am attempting to undermine a concept which has proved to be empowering for various subaltern populations. I can only plead that I am not trying to undermine political empowerment and struggle, but to find more powerful theoretical tools which may open up more effective forms and sites of struggle.

2 This points to another 'modern' logic which I will not discuss here: what might be called the semanticization of reality or, in other words, the reduction of the real to meaning. It is only on this basis that the modern can assert its most fundamental proposition: that reality is socially constructed.

3 Here one might consider the work of, for example, Trinh Minh-ha.

4 The work of Homi Bhabha would be an obvious example.

5 One might consider the work of Rey Chow here.

6 In Deleuzean terms, subjectivity is the content of the body as expression, produced as a folding of the outside upon itself to create a stratum of the inside.

7 It is here that we can understand Foucault's distinction between different machines of power – societies of sovereignty and disciplinary societies – as different ways in which agency is itself constituted. In the former, agency is constructed on the materiality of the body; in the latter, through vision (surveillance) and structure (normalization). In disciplinary societies, the individual is placed into a mass space and monitored. Life is organized through enclosed environments (and capitalism is defined by processes of concentration and production). I might add a third category here – societies of disciplined mobilization – in which agency is organized through the control of mobility (and capitalism is defined by dispersion and futures/services).

8 For a more adequate description of these three machines, see the discussion in Grossberg (1993).

9 I am using the notion of a logic of space as an anti-modern alternative, rather than a more conciliatory notion of space-time, for two reasons. First, without a lot of work on other issues, such a 'synthetic' notion is likely to appear as a dialectical resolution of the antitheses of the modern. Second, like any other repressed term, it will probably continue to be repressed in such new compromise formations. We might start with space-time but it will quickly fall back into modern formulations and assumptions.

10 We must be careful not to assume that the notion of 'geography' is either universal or politically neutral.

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