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Female Subjects of Globalization¹⁾

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In their academic blockbuster of 2000, *Empire*, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri make the polemical argument that postcolonial theory leads to a dead end because it remains obsessed with the modern form of domination associated with colonialism that is no longer the primary mode of power in contemporary globalization (Hardt and Negri 138–46). Regardless of the relative merits and weaknesses of their own account of the postmodern sovereignty they call “empire,” there is some truth to this claim. Because of its origins in literary studies, postcolonial theory has taken nineteenth century territorial imperialism and colonialism as the paradigm for oppression. Postcolonial theory’s signal contribution is to emphasize the important role played by cultural forms and discourse in the exercise of colonial and postcolonial oppression. Schematically put, the different variations of postcolonial critique have two common features: they regard power as something imposed on the colonized subject from the outside and suggest that the primary mode of this imposition is mental, imaginative, or psychical. Indeed, the nature of this imposition is so radical, thorough, and penetrating that it is formative. Colonial power is said to constitute or produce a corresponding subject of/for oppression by deploying mental, imaginary or psychical mechanisms such as Orientalist myth, racist stereotype, ideology, or discursive norms. In this vein, Edward Said argued that Orientalist discourse involved the imposition of a system of representation on the consciousness of non-Western peoples through the historical project of colonialism to the point that it fabricates a mythical collective mentality for these peoples. Similarly, Gayatri Spivak’s influential essay, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” is concerned with what she calls “the epistemic violence” of colonial subject formation through the civilizing processes of colonial law and education. These processes produce an array of ideologically fabricated subjects, such as the colonial subject/indigenous elite and the postcolonial/third world subject as native informant, that function to mute the subaltern’s voice and interests.

This understanding of power in postcolonial theory leads to a politics of resistance based on the corollary principles of the *disruption* of the colonial discursive or representational machinery and the *recognition* of the oppressed other. It is assumed that a residual

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reality-referent exceeds the colonial textual economy, and this is the basis of resistance. The perpetual undermining of the discursive economy through various internal slippages leads either to the full recognition of an autonomous subject who will figure forth with the destruction of the colonial economy, or to the partial and provisional recognition of this subject as a trace that cannot be destroyed or effaced.

In *Orientalism*, Said insists on the exteriority of Orientalist representations to the real Orient that they seek to describe. Such representations are impositions that silence the real thing. “The written statement,” Said writes, “is a presence to the reader by virtue of its having excluded, displaced, made supererogatory any such *real thing* as “the Orient” (Said 21). Hence, it is vital to distinguish a textual field from a referential field: “[T]he Orient was a *word* which later accrued to it a wide field of meanings, associations, and connotations, and these did not necessarily refer to a real Orient but to the field surrounding that word” (Said 203). Spivak, on the other hand, is more sensitive about the idea of “the real native” and is critical of the desire to give voice to the subaltern, regarding this as itself an instance of silencing through the epistemic violence of constructing a subject or consciousness for the subaltern. For her, the subaltern woman is that which repeatedly escapes even as she is silenced by colonial, neocolonial, and indigenous patriarchal systems of representation: “We should also welcome all the information retrieval in these silenced areas that is taking place in anthropology, political science, history, and sociology. Yet the assumption and construction of a consciousness or subject sustains such work and will, in the long run, cohere with the work of imperialist subject-constitution, mingling epistemic violence with the advancement of learning and civilization. And the subaltern woman will be as mute as ever” (CSS 295).

Philosophically speaking, we are in the terrain of the post-Hegelian ethico-political concept of recognition. The close connection between the psychical dimension of colonial power and the concept of recognition is best seen in the latter’s important place in Fanon’s critique of French colonialism. The primary effect of colonial stereotypes and racist images is precisely to prevent any reciprocal form of recognition between the colonizer and the colonized, thereby leading to the formation of an eviscerated and depleted corporeal subjectivity for the colonized. Fanon argued that in the French colonies, the liberation of slaves did not change anything. Because his freedom is not attained through revolutionary struggle, the emancipated black man merely wishes to be like the colonial master, and the relation between these subjects lacks the reciprocity of Hegelian recognition (Fanon 220–21).

Hence, it is with some justification that the contemporary heirs of the Frankfurt School, Jürgen Habermas, and his pupil, Axel Honneth, have characterized struggles against colonialism and its contemporary forms such as the struggle against Eurocentrism as struggles for recognition. The advantage of the recognition paradigm for understanding postcolonial conditions is that it elaborates a quasi-transcendental normative source for the progressive reordering or transformation of unequal geopolitical relations that is immanent to the structures of subject formation. Simply put, because subjects are formed

as distinctive identities in intersubjective relations, the process of individuation that generates the consciousness of a concrete ethical subject necessarily takes place within the context of communicative relations. Hence, an ethical struggle for recognition at various levels of collective life is built into the very medium of subject formation, and this constitutes a normative check on relations of domination and oppression. The full development of an individual, it is argued, necessarily involves the ethical imperative that he or she responds to the other's demand for higher forms of recognition. This struggle leads to a world that is more just: it causes the destruction of existing forms of ethical life that are inadequate for affording recognition and brings about the progressive development of higher forms of ethical life that can meet these demands for recognition.²⁾

We can say that the recognition paradigm explicitly thematizes the ethical charge implicit in postcolonial theory. In describing it as an expression of the West's will to power, Said notes that Orientalism refuses to recognize the autonomous development of cultures and peoples in the East and, therefore, silences them. Moreover, this willful non-recognition is also harmful to the West. It intellectually impoverishes and dehumanizes the West: the West's relations to the non-West are anti-human because in creating "the Oriental," Orientalist discourse obliterates him as "a human being" (Said 27, 44). Similarly, Gayatri Spivak emphasizes the importance of a vigilant structure of interlocution and address in challenging the "unquestioned muting of the subaltern woman": "In seeking to learn to speak to (rather than listen to or speak for) the historically muted subject of the subaltern woman, the postcolonial intellectual *systematically* 'unlearns' female privilege. This systematic unlearning involves learning to critique postcolonial discourse with the best tools it can provide and not simply substituting the lost figure of the colonized" (CSS 295). Indeed, the intuitive attractiveness of the recognition paradigm and its fundamental axiom of the intersubjective constitution of subjects is such that with appropriate modification, it can be broadened to include Judith Butler's extremely popular critique of heteronormative subjection.

But what are the limits of the recognition paradigm that silently informs postcolonial theory? And is the principle of the intersubjective constitution of subjects, which focuses on subject formation through the *internalization* of social and ethical images or norms, an accurate characterization of how power operates in our globalized postcolonial world? Put another way, in contemporary globalization, is power primarily exercised through psychical, mental or imaginary mechanisms? The feminization of labor today indicates that regimes of sex-gender are fundamental to processes of globalization. Hence, these issues can only be adequately explored by looking at the formation of various kinds of female subjects of labor in the postcolonial world.

The problem with the warm ethical scene of intersubjective recognition and the consoling image it projects of redress for the humiliation, shame, or injury that an oppressed subject experiences because of another's disrespect or lack of regard is that it sits all too comfortably with the operations of global capitalism. Colonial power functions repressively through physical violence and the (de)formation of the consciousness of the colo-

nized through ideology, myth, or discourse. Contemporary global capitalism, however, functions not by obscuring the voice of the oppressed through psychical mechanisms but rather by recognizing them, by incorporating their interests as subjects of corporeal needs into the very fabric of the global system of accumulation where they can be augmented and cultivated as human capital. One can certainly view the U.S. pre-emptive war against terrorism in the aftermath of September 11 as a revival of the imperial-colonial form of power, especially given the widespread deployment of Orientalist images about Islamic fundamentalism. But it seems to me that the more fundamental question should be: what are the material conditions of this ability to wage war in the first place? The form of power that sustains the exercise of U.S. imperial sovereignty is not repressive. It is the power of commerce and economic productivity within a global financial system of credit that endows the U.S. with its capability to exercise its military campaign of shock and awe.³⁾ More importantly, this financial power rests on and in turn feeds back into a web of political instrumentalities for the cultivation of human capital that now extends throughout the globe and continues its productive work in postcolonial countries without much critical attention.

More than anyone else, Foucault has attempted to analyze this modality of power in his account of bio-power. Broadly speaking, although Foucault is not always precise in his terminology, bio-power or power over life, as distinguished from the power of the sovereign over his territory, is concerned with the maximization of a state's forces (calculated in terms of its resources and possibilities). It is therefore directly concerned with the enhancement and regulatory control of the forces, aptitudes, and capacities of the living human being either as an individual body (discipline) or as a biological species divided into populations (government). It is now commonplace to say that this form of power is "productive." But what is often obscured is the fact that for Foucault, this production does not occur at the level of ideational form and its impact on consciousness, or even by delineating the form and contours of a corporeal or embodied subjectivity. Rather, the production occurs at the level of the physics and material logistics of bodies and biological existence within a natural milieu. Thus, Foucault emphasizes that whereas law works in the imaginary because its prohibitive character involves imagining things that can and must not be done, the apparatus of security, the basis of modern political society, "tries to work within reality, by getting the components of reality to work in relation to each other, thanks to and through a series of analyses and specific arrangements [*va essayer de travailler dans la réalité, en faisant jouer, grace à et à travers toute une série d'analyses et de disposition spécifiques, les elements de la réalité les uns par rapport aux autres*]" (STP 47, 49). The political domain, Foucault suggests, remains within the domain of physics and nature because it concerns "the interplay of reality with itself [*ce jeu de la réalité avec elle-même*]" (STP 47, 49).⁴⁾

Two other features of Foucault's account of bio-power are important for present purposes. First, because power does not work by prohibiting subjects of rights but by managing the population as a set of processes that are based in nature, its operations are largely

unregistered by the consciousness of its targets. Indeed, the targets of regulation can even be things “that seem far removed from the population itself and its immediate behavior, fecundity, and desire to reproduce [*qui sont apparemment loin de la population elle-même, de son comportement immédiat, loin de sa fécondité, de sa volonté de reproduction*],” for example, currency flows, exports and imports, etc., but that can have an important effect on the population through calculation, analysis, and reflection (STP 72, 74). Second, the ultimate aim of this kind of power is to shape desire. But it does so not by prohibition and censorship but by encouraging the spontaneous production of the collective interest by the play of desire. In Foucault’s words:

[T]he problem is how they can say yes; it is how to say yes to this desire. The problem is not therefore the limit of concupiscence or the limit of self-esteem in the sense of love of oneself, but concerns rather everything that stimulates and encourages this self-esteem, this desire, so that it can produce its necessary beneficial effects [*Le problème, c’est de savoir comment dire oui, comment dire oui à ce désir. Non pas, donc, la limite de la concupiscence ou la limite de l’amour-propre au sens de l’amour de soi-même, mais au contraire tout ce qui va stimuler, favoriser cet amour-propre, ce désir, de manière à ce qu’il puisse produire les effets bénéfiques qu’il doit nécessairement produire*]. (STP 73, 75)

This is precisely the scene of recognition where a subject is empowered because its claims to be recognized are acknowledged. But this is not, as it is for the contemporary Frankfurt School, the scene of intersubjectivity as the quasi-transcendental source of ethical normative force. It is instead the site of governmental intervention in and manipulative regulation of the natural processes that constitute the population. In Foucault’s view, such technologies of bio-power are accompanied by the rise of corresponding domains of knowledge. The various accounts of subject formation articulated in philosophical discourse are the thematic figures generated by epistemic reflection. “Man, as he is thought and defined by the so-called human sciences of the nineteenth century, and as he is reflected in nineteenth century humanism,” Foucault suggests, “is nothing other than a figure of population [*L’homme, ce n’est, . . . rien d’autre, tel qu’il a été pensé, défini à partir des sciences dites humaines du XIXe siècle et tel qu’il a été réfléchi dans l’humanisme du XIXe siècle, cet homme ce n’est rien d’autre, finalement, qu’une figure de la population*]” (STP 79, 81).⁵ This does not mean, however, that humanity as the bearer of rights is a mere ideological fiction that is opposed to concrete man, whose essence lies in his ability to fulfill his needs through creative labor as Marx claimed. Foucault is also not concerned here with how humanity as a norm is discursively defined to exclude oppressed groups. He is interested instead in how the concrete human being as the material subject of needs and interests is crafted by technologies of power. These technologies are the material conditions that enable any ethical claim for recognition.

For Foucault, this form of power gained ascendancy in the Westphalian framework of interstate competition, where growth and development of a state’s forces follows the principle of self-limitation so as not to upset the fragile equilibrium of the interstate system (see STP 291–92, 299–300). This intra-European competition leads to imperial expansion

and colonialism. But in general, the exercise of power in the colonies remains of the sovereign modality and is not concerned with the production of colonized subjects as human capital. For despite the rhetoric of imperialism as civilizing mission, the building of sustainable infrastructures in the colonies was limited precisely because the colonies were viewed as the source of raw materials and exotic commodities or as markets for cheap European manufactured goods rather than as the source of human capital. Postcolonial theory is concerned with this colonial-sovereign modality of power. But this modality is now no longer dominant because in the aftermath of decolonization, these governmental apparatuses have achieved a modular status and sustain postcolonial projects of economic development. Indeed, the deployment of biopolitical technologies has become more intense in rapidly industrializing East and Southeast Asian countries with strong developmental states.

This is the context for understanding the formation of female postcolonial subjects in the current dispensation of flexible global capitalist accumulation. Two fundamental changes to Foucault's cartography of bio-power occur here. First, in economic globalization, the circulation of commerce, money, and labor that was seen as positive to the vitality of a state becomes so intense that it breaks out of the territorial mold to the point that circulation renders state sovereignty problematic. In other words, technologies that initially gave rise to a new form of power that could secure sovereignty in the Westphalian framework of interstate competition can now actively undermine nation-state sovereignty. Second, the principle of self-limitation at work in the Westphalian framework, which also functioned to check imperial expansion in the age of territorial imperialism to a limited degree by dividing the prizes of the European scramble for colonies and concessions among different powers, no longer guides economic expansion in the current global economic order. This leads to the exacerbation of inequality and unevenness between knowledge- and resource-rich Northern countries and knowledge- and resource-poor countries in the postcolonial South. With the deindustrialization of capital accumulation, there arises a new international division of labor, where decomposed industrial production processes that are labor intensive are outsourced to developing countries with lower labor costs through foreign direct investment and international subcontracting even while research and development and technical and managerial control remain in the North.

Consequently, whereas the biopolitical project of developing human capital is accompanied by the demand for less government and the rise of neoliberalism in the North, it becomes aporetic for poorer postcolonial states desperately trying to climb up the new international division of labor. In principle, they wish to cultivate their populations and enhance their bodily aptitudes. But since attracting foreign capital is the best way to increase a country's forces, they also have to suspend care for some parts of their population and, indeed, have to sacrifice their welfare. In the name of development, there is greater governmental control, where states acquiesce to harsh labor conditions for local factory workers and actively promote the exportation of migrant workers who are vulnerable to abuse in host countries because they are not part of the population there.

It is important to emphasize that contrary to obvious appearance, these sacrificial practices are not a form of neo-slavery, a return to the repressive colonial form of power. They are part of the biopolitics of postcolonial states. The formation of female subjects is an indispensable element of this biopolitics. The new international division of labor is co-extensive with the feminization of labor at the national and transnational level. At the national level, one witnesses the entry of more and more women into low-paid work in multinational manufacturing production and the service sector. Female labor is preferred in export-oriented industries and newly established industrial zones because women workers are cheaper, perceived as more flexible, that is, more subservient to managerial authority, less prone to unionization, and easier to dismiss and replace, and because of their greater manual dexterity. The ready availability of a large pool of such female labor ensures the international competitiveness of a country as a destination of foreign investment in low value-added manufacture. At the transnational level, one sees the increasing migration of Asian women from the late 1970s onwards to fill low-status “feminized” occupations—domestic helpers, workers in restaurants and hotels, entertainers, and sex workers.

These two modalities of the feminization of labor are intimately related in various ways. For example, the demand for foreign domestic workers is stimulated by another gender dynamic in wealthier postcolonial economies: the entry of educated middle-class women into white-collar employment even while the traditional source of domestic work has been completely absorbed into export-oriented industry. Similarly, in the case of sex work, the rapid industrialization of a capital city such as Bangkok at the expense of rural regions such as North Thailand leads to the migration of young girls to the city in search of work for the alleviation of rural poverty. This increases the supply of potential sex workers since failure to find adequate income from non-sex work such as factory or service work can lead girls to enter into sex work.⁶ The confluence of this with the promotion of Thailand as a destination for international (sex) tourism opens up avenues for transnational migration for sex work, trafficked or consensual.⁷ All these forms of feminized labor occupy a transnational space where women are bought and sold as different kinds of labor for developing their nation-state’s forces within the global economy. They are therefore human capital in a very literal sense: commodities in a circuit of transnational exchange that profits many parties.

Such prosaic empirical descriptions of the formation of these female subjects of globalization are unavoidable. They indicate the difficulty of understanding this systematic, planned form of oppressive subjectification in terms of the colonial paradigm of power that informs postcolonial theory. How are we to grasp the production of this willing assent to be one of these types of female laboring subjects? Orientalism and patriarchal discourse are undoubtedly at work in the portrayal of these female subjects as docile, submissive labor or as objects for sexual exploitation who, being not-quite human, do not need to be recognized as rights-bearing subjects. But we should not assume that these projected images are internalized as part of the process of subjectification. As Pasuk

Phongpaichit has argued in her seminal study of young rural women who migrate to Bangkok as sex-workers, these women are not hapless victims who are blind to their true interests and needs. They see themselves as full earning members of the household and are considered so by others because their remittances help to bolster the family's agrarian economy. They do not seek to escape family life but are helping to support the family and to improve its position in village society. In Phongpaichit's words, "it is not some sort of helpless dependent status which ends them up in the business of selling their bodies. Rather it is the responsibilities which they themselves feel" (68). Indeed, family members often serve as agents for recruitment, and some families and villages have developed a vested interest in the business. But unknown to them, the material interests and needs of these various actors are shaped by governmental manipulation. As Phongpaichit puts it:

It is within an economic system structured in this particular way that the actions of the migrant girls must be understood. They were not fleeing from a family background or rural society which oppressed women in conventional ways. Rather, they were engaging in an entrepreneurial move designed to sustain the family units of a rural economy which was coming under increasing pressure. They did so because their accustomed position in that rural society allocated them a considerable responsibility for earning income to maintain the family. The returns available in this particular business, rather than in any other business accessible to an unskilled and uneducated person, had a powerful effect on their choices. Our survey clearly showed that the girls felt they were making a perfectly rational decision within the context of their particular social and economic structure, and they could not escape from it. The migration is thus an intrinsic part of Thailand's economic orientation. Thailand's strategy depends internationally on accepting a dependent and vulnerable role in the world economy A business which sets girls out of the poorer parts of the countryside and sells their services to the urban earner and to the foreign visitor is merely the mirror image of this hierarchy of dependence. (74-75)

Similarly, in the case of foreign domestic workers, it can be argued that what drives their temporary emigration is not only their ideological constitution as good wives, daughters, mothers, or sisters, but more crucially, the crafting of their interests as subjects of needs by bio-power, just as the ground for the importation of foreign workers is prepared by the crafting of their employers by similar governmental technologies. Their oppression/subjectification occurs not by silencing them but by incorporating their very needs and interests in the fabric of global capitalism. Whatever the role of ideology in making the wills of these women migrants, they also go with the firm desire to improve their lives because this is how their needs and interests have been shaped by governmental technologies. In extreme situations where female subjects of globalization revolt against these technologies as in the cases of spirit possession and extreme hysterical trauma in factory workers engaged in export-oriented manufacturing, it can be argued that they are in fact revolting against the concrete materiality of the bodies that they have become as a result of the physical milieu crafted by governmental action.⁸⁾

Let me conclude with some remarks on the theoretical implications of these processes of postcolonial female subjectification. I have suggested that in contemporary globaliza-

tion, power primarily works by productive incorporation rather than prohibition, exclusion, and repression through force or ideology. We have to understand incorporation in two senses: first, their bodily aptitudes and their needs and interests are crafted by biopolitical technologies. Second, they are crafted in such a way that they belong to the global capitalist system of means and ends in their very constitution as subjects. These processes of incorporation, of course, have oppressive effects. But they are essentially gestures of inclusion and not repressive or exclusionary. Postcolonial theory is unable to adequately understand these forms of subjection because it remains fixated with the colonial-sovereign paradigm of power.

It is not an accident that the founding texts of postcolonial theory by Said and Spivak contain tendentious misreadings of Foucault's account of power. Said's misappropriation of Foucault's ideas about the productive character of discourse—his reduction of discourse to myth and his attenuation of its functioning to the mystification of consciousness—has been ably discussed by others. Spivak, on the other hand, acknowledges Foucault's critique of the concept of ideology. But she insists that global capitalism is secured by the ideological constitution of postcolonial subjects that obscure the subaltern, and that Foucault's rejection of the concept of ideology prevents him from understanding how global political economy functions. The analysis of micro-power, she contends, fails to account for this silencing of the subaltern. Today, she writes, the "broad politics" of global development is "the silencing of resistance and of the subaltern as the rhetoric of their protest is constantly appropriated" (*Critique of Postcolonial Reason* 373). In Spivak's view, even transnational feminist NGOs concerned with women's rights are part of this instrumental appropriation of subaltern women in order to represent global unity as an alibi for the financialization of the globe. "What is left out is the poorest women of the South as self-conscious critical agents, who might be able to speak through those very nongovernmental organizations of the South that are not favoured by these object-constitution policies" ("Woman' as Theatre" 2). While radical NGO workers are not themselves subaltern women, their exclusion is a "stand in for the subaltern's inability to speak . . . by virtue of the fact that the subaltern's inability to speak is predicated upon an attempt to speak, to which no appropriate response is offered" ("Responsibility" 62).

For Spivak, subalternity, the structural space of difference that is obscured from public view by repression and representational mechanisms of object-constitution, is a residual space of resistance to the postcolonial national and global capitalist dominant. However if, as I have argued, oppression primarily occurs as an effect of the shaping of bodies and their forces and of intervening in the milieu in which the needs and interests of postcolonial women subjects of labor are formed, then the continuing pertinence of Spivak's understanding of the subaltern as a space of resistance that is structurally excluded is put into question because power works by the consensual incorporation of the subaltern.

We should also question here the relevance and pertinence of the general theory of subjection that Judith Butler has formulated by extrapolating from the operations of the

repressive law of heteronormative sexuality to postcolonial globalization. (Butler has recently extended her theory into a critique of the violence of Western secular norms in the war against terrorism). Butler understands subjection as the “internalization” of a hegemonic norm through incorporation, understood as the inscription of the surface of the body by discursive and signifying processes in order to generate a psychical interiority.⁹⁾ Although she claims to be influenced by Foucault and seeks to supplement his account of power with a theory of power’s psychic life, Butler’s theory is incompatible with Foucault’s in several respects. First, she understands the process of normalization as involving prohibition and therefore views norms in analogy with and as an extension and even a constitutive iteration of the repressive law (of heterosexual reproductivity) in daily practices. Second, by limiting the productivity of power to processes of signification at the *surface* of the body, performances or stylizations that delineate its meaningful, intelligible form, she obscures the *physical* nature of bio-political production and confuses it with the phenomenological topoi of embodiment and internalization, which she links to a psychoanalytical argument about the productive nature of prohibition.¹⁰⁾ Both these psychoanalytical and phenomenological themes are alien to Foucault’s thought. The understanding of the functioning of social norms in terms of internalization treats the norm as something like a law in that it possesses a prohibitive power that forms a psychical interiority. In contradistinction, Foucault rigorously distinguished between the process of normation found in disciplinary techniques, where a norm functions prescriptively to distinguish between the normal and abnormal through behavioral training, and the process of normalization in a stricter sense found in security mechanisms, for example, those dealing with disease and mortality. Foucault also emphasized the physical-biological effects of the latter in their impact on the population:

We have then a system that is . . . exactly the opposite of the one we have seen with the disciplines. In the disciplines one started from a norm, and it was in relation to the training carried out with reference to the norm that the normal could be distinguished from the abnormal. Here, instead, we have a plotting of the normal and the abnormal, of different curves of normality, and the operation of normalization consists in establishing an interplay between these different distributions of normality and [in] acting to bring the most unfavorable in line with the more favorable. So we have here something that starts from the normal and makes use of certain distributions considered to be . . . more normal than others, or at any rate more favorable than the others. These distributions will serve as the norm. The norm is an interplay of differential normalities . . . So, . . . what is involved here is no longer normation, but rather normalization in the strict sense. [On a donc un système qui est . . . exactement inverse de celui qu’on pouvait observer à propos des disciplines. Dans les disciplines, on partait d’une norme et c’est par rapport à ce dressage effectué par la norme que l’on pouvait ensuite distinguer le normal de l’anormal. Là, au contraire, on va avoir un repérage du normal et de l’anormal, on va avoir un repérage des différentes courbes de normalité, et l’opération normalization va consister à faire jouer les unes par rapport aux autres ces différentes distributions de normalité et [à] faire en sorte que les plus défavorables soient ramenées à celles qui sont les plus favorables. On a donc là quelque chose qui part du normal et qui se sert de certaines distributions considérées . . . comme plus normales que les autres, plus favorables en tout cas que les

autres. Ce sont ces distributions-là qui vont servir de norme. La norme est un jeu à l'intérieur des normalités différentielles Donc, . . . là qu'il ne s'agit plus d'une normation, mais plutôt, au sens strict enfin, d'une normalization.] (*STP* 63, 65)

A theory of subjection based on the coercive internalization of norms cannot account for the formation of postcolonial female subjects because the biopolitical technologies at work here neither function through prohibition nor at the level of ideational form but instead in shaping rational interests and physical needs by setting up processes of normalization that secure physical, geographical, and environmental conditions most favorable to the enhancement of the population. The focus on the law's prohibition and its performative subversion renders invisible the obscure but pervasive operations of bio-power in various physical domains. It also obscures the need for the laborious negotiation with governmental technologies that impinge on every facet of the daily lives of these subjects, such as directives concerning unemployment, the development of international tourism, and the export of migrant labor as means for increasing foreign exchange reserves.

I suggested at the outset that these accounts of power are based on the ethical principle of recognition. Even when it is acknowledged that structures of recognition are imbricated with power relations and involve the internalization of hegemonic norms, there are always claims of recognition by a non-Western other, the subaltern woman, or the queer subject. The cases of postcolonial female subjectification I have discussed render the recognition paradigm problematic because these oppressed subjects want to be invested more and not less by technologies of power. They want more and not less governmental intervention in their lives. Indeed, one might even say that power is a silently affirmative process of physical investment that forms them as subjects with needs that they then regard as being worthy of recognition. In the reflective gesture of demanding recognition, the subject willingly says "yes" to and affirms this initial investment. It asks to be invested with more power because this can improve its life. In other words, recognition is not a limit to power but is a negotiation with power, a sharing or partaking of power that is already in operation, power that has already invested the subject of recognition at the most physical level of its being.

In contradistinction, if we understand power in terms of a prohibition that forms the psyche, then power is essentially the withholding of recognition or a deficient, injurious form of recognition. An ethical critique aimed at making sovereign power ashamed of its oppressiveness is seductive because it makes us feel that we are doing something. But it is of limited effectiveness. For what is at stake is not the question of good and evil but the rational calculation of forces and interests aimed at their healthy, viable maximization in all subjects. In the final analysis, the fixation with prohibition leads to a myopic and even moralistic focus on contesting the exceptional decisions of sovereign or imperial power at the expense of tracking the complex functioning of the many more unexceptional quotidian forms of power that make us what we are. For example, why is it that in Southeast and East Asia, governmentality produces the kinds of oppressed female subjects discussed

above whereas in the Middle East, governmentality leads to a different kind of female subject who believes that religious faith is the way to freedom? How are these subjects related to the global spread of neo-liberalism championed by the U.S.? At the same time, why is this project of inculcating neoliberalism accompanied by a war against terror that is bad governmental practice because it depletes the economic resources of the state? A cartography of these shifting power relations at the global level cannot be undertaken within the current framework of postcolonial theory.

Notes

- 1) In Anne-Emmanuelle Berger and Eleni Varikas, eds. *Genre et Postcolonialité. Approches transnationales contemporaines* (Paris: Editions des Archives Contemporaines, 2010).
- 2) Axel Honneth develops this perspective from a reading of Hegel's Jena writings (Honneth 17).
- 3) For a lucid discussion of the economic basis of the U.S. war on terror, see Arrighi. One paradoxical consequence of this war is that although it is a war with biopolitical functions, the war can also weaken the commercial and financial power of the U.S., causing it to sink deeper into economic debt and recession.
- 4) Cf. Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*: "For political economy, nature is not an original and reserved region on which the exercise of power should not impinge, on pain of being illegitimate. Nature is something that runs under, through and in the exercise of governmentality. It is, if you like, its indispensable hypodermis. It is the other face of something whose visible face, visible for the governors, is their own action. This action has an underside, or rather, it has another face, and this other face of governmentality, its specific necessity, is precisely what political economy studies. [*La nature n'est pas pour l'économie politique une région réservée et originaire sur laquelle l'exercice du pouvoir ne devrait pas avoir prise, sauf à être illégitime. La nature, c'est quelque chose qui court sous, à travers, dans l'exercice même de la gouvernementalité. C'en est, si vous voulez, l'hypoderme indispensable. C'est l'autre face de quelque chose dont la face visible, visible pour les gouvernants, eh bien, c'est leur propre action. Leur propre action a un dessous ou plutôt elle a une autre face et cette autre face de la gouvernementalité, eh bien, c'est cela précisément qu'étudie dans sa nécessité propre l'économie politique*] (15–16, 18).
- 5) A similar argument is made with regard to the individual subject of discipline in *Discipline and Punish*, where Foucault argued that concepts such as "psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc." are based on the reality-reference of a non-corporal soul, and that "the scientific techniques and discourses and the moral claims of humanism" are also built on this reality-reference (29–30).
- 6) For a fuller discussion of the economic conditions that stimulate the supply and demand for internal migration of women for sex work and the link between sex work and the economic rationality of development in Thailand, see Phongpaichit, *From Peasant Girls to Bangkok Masseuses*, and Bales.
- 7) For a discussion of the transnational traffic of migrant sex-workers from and to Thailand, see Phongpaichit, Piriyarangan, and Treerat, chapters 8–9.
- 8) See Ong and Pun, chapters 6–7. My conclusions are not the same as those of these authors.
- 9) See Butler, *Gender Trouble*: "The redescription of intrapsychic processes in terms of the surface politics of the body implies a corollary redescription of gender as . . . the construction of the gendered body through a series of exclusions and denials, signifying absences" (135).
- 10) See Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power*: "In claiming that social norms are internalized, we have not yet explained what incorporation or, more generally, internalization is, what it means for a norm to become internalized or what happens to the norm in the process of internalization. Is the norm first 'outside,' and does it then enter into a pre-given psychic space, understood as an interior theater of some kind? Or does the internalization of the norm contribute to the production of internality?" (19).

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グローバリゼーションにおける女性の主体

フェン・チャー

学術的に多大な影響を与えた2000年の著作『帝国』で、マイケル・ハートとアントニオ・ネグリは、ポストコロニアル理論は行き詰まっているという議論を展開した。近代的な支配の形にこだわるコロニアリズムは、現代のグローバリゼーションにおいてもはや主要な権力として存在していないというのが彼らの論点である。彼らが「帝国」と呼ぶポストモダンの主権国家にも利点と

弱点はあるものの、こうした主張に真実がないこともない。文学研究分野におけるポストコロニアル理論や文化批評は、19世紀ヨーロッパの領土的な帝国主義や植民地主義の経験を根本的なパラダイムとする抑圧や支配、そして搾取についての分析に端を発してきた。よって、我々がサイドのオリエンタリズムの言説や表象のシステムや、ファノンを書き換えたバーバの「植民地主義的言説における人種差別的ステロタイプ」や、さらにはスピヴァクのいう、植民地主義的法律や教育の文明化的プロセスを経てつくられていく「植民地主義における主体形成」の認識論的な暴力などというものを考察しようとするとき、ポストコロニアル的文化批評の異なる位相は、植民地化された主体が生じる瞬間に押し付けられる神話やイデオロギー、あるいは、様々な基準との関係において理解され、「精神主義的」あるいは「象徴的／想像的」な性質を強調し、「権力に対する共通理解」と結びついていく。本論では、まず、現代のグローバリゼーションにおける権力を、精神論的なものとして理解することは不適切であるという点について述べていく。すなわち、現代のグローバル資本主義において必然的に「女性化」している越境的労働力は三種類あり、その三つのタイプの女性の主体がどのように作られていくかを論じたい。そこには、外国による直接投資の体制下にある女性工場労働者、外国人家事労働者、そして人身売買されて来るかまたは別の理由で越境して来る性労働者などが含まれる。物質中心的なシステムにおける主体形成のプロセスが、どのようにしてポストコロニアルやフェミニストの理論に関わる中心概念を根本から再考することにつながっていくだろうか。
