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Property, Postsocialism, and Post-Yugoslav Identity: A Feminist Communication Performance Ethnography

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PROPERTY, POSTSOCIALISM, AND POST-YUGOSLAV IDENTITY:
A FEMINIST COMMUNICATION PERFORMANCE ETHNOGRAPHY

A Dissertation Presented

by

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ABSTRACT

PROPERTY, POSTSOCIALISM, AND POST-YUGOSLAV IDENTITY:

A FEMINIST COMMUNICATION PERFORMANCE ETHNOGRAPY

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This dissertation analyzes how women in the postsocialist former Yugoslavia perform gender in the transition from socialism to capitalism by considering their material and symbolic relationships to property. Using performance ethnography to theorize the relational, embodied, and discursive ways in which identity has been mobilized in the former Yugoslavia, the central question is how insights from the postsocialist world can critique notions of the individual as well as global capital. Through the prism of postsocialist and postcolonial feminist theory and performance studies, I focus on three contexts: women's feminized labor as sustaining the tourism industry in Montenegro, my rape and women witnesses/survivors of rape testimony at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, and representations of the nation in the work of Yugoslav performance artist Marina Abramović. Each chapter theorizes how symbolic and material property ownership performatively and relationally manifests on women's bodies.

Private property ownership is more than an economic relation, it is a discourse of power that determines the possibilities of gender, nation, and labor. In the former

Yugoslavia, the development of capitalism happens on the backs of dispossessed women and women's labor. I offer property as performative lynchpin of capitalist and patriarchal oppression to theorize resistance to these systems of power. In postsocialist global capitalism, discourses of property ownership continue to interpellate humans as individuals (men) with the potential to own property and others as property (women, people of color). I argue that this performative property relationship is and foundational to the capitalist nation, enables conditions of violence, and must be resisted through feminist coalition.

My dissertation contributes to three lines of thought: 1) it centers the performativity of property as a political site for transnational feminist coalition 2) it offers a theoretical analytic based on a cohabitation of postcolonial and postsocialist feminist theory 3) it builds on standpoint theory to disrupt the notion of the individual and to move toward structural critique and radically relational social justice. By theorizing performative radical relationality, the dissertation offers property as a site of resistance at the borders of identities, nations, genders, and bodies.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When the caller identification on my phone flashed my father's name for the first time in seven years, I knew instantly that my father's uncle had died. Although my father and I had not spoken, but for an occasional fight over land in Montenegro or my grandfather's will and testament, this courtesy call and reverence in death remained an ethnically traditional tether that bound us. My great uncle, George, dead at 91 was the last formal patriarch of our family. Interpellated into our roles of gendered mourning by a tribal discourse that stretched back before both of our births and lunged forward into our imagined futures, the reverberated custom of tribal grief for our patriarch was the only acceptable caveat to break a father and daughter's seven-year silence. A performance of ethnic belonging, we suspended our interpersonal turmoil in service of a larger Montenegrin symbolic order. I watched my hand tremble as it reached for the receiver and felt the news before he uttered the words. "Hey, kid. I'm so sorry. George died."

Two years before my father called and last time I saw George and his wife Kika—George's stature had been cut in half by his failed knees and new wheelchair. Kika made tea and offered cookies while George and I held hands. I visited them upon my return from the family home in Montenegro and a year of ethnographic research in Montenegro. My father had recently sent me a litany of text messages admonishing me and threatening me for staying in the family home without his permission. I confessed to George that I had not spoken to my father in five years, the last time we did speak my father told me to stay out of his business, not to visit our Montenegrin family, nor stay in the house that he co-owned with George. My meeting with George and this confession was a symbolic plea to the head of our tribe to invalidate my father's demands. I was testing the waters, and knew as a third generation Montenegrin woman, pitting these two against each other might backfire. George calmly explained,

"No. That is my fucking house. He cannot tell you if you can stay or not. You go there and tell everyone I told you to stay. If they have a problem with it tell them to talk to me. You can always stay there as long as I have anything to say about it."

Two years after leaving George's house, silently holding the phone whole tears fell down my face, my father said, "I'm sorry. I am so sorry, Jen." I remained silent. He cried. He told me if I could not pay for it, he would pay for my plane ticket to California for the funeral. I knew my attendance was required, muttered "Okay." Through tears he said, "I love you." I whispered, "I love you too" and hung up.

The story of a nation exists in relation to representation and narration. In the vignette above, I perform my Montenegrin identity with my father, great uncle, and great aunt in relation to our varied claims to property in Montenegro. This dissertation is an

attempt to tell the stories of the former Yugoslavia, a formerly socialist Balkan nation in Eastern Europe, as they intersect with identity stories of property, family, gender, labor, and diaspora. Broken into separate, but co-constitutive chapters, my dissertation focuses on the performance of national identity and property in three different contexts. Setting out to qualitatively observe and understand how post-Yugoslav women symbolically produce, maintain, repair or transform the reality of their gender, the larger contexts are Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia but the more focused contexts are of women working within Montenegro's tourism industry, mass rape in the Bosnian Genocide of the 1990s, and the art of Yugoslav performance artist Marina Abramović. In general, these chapters form a tripartite dissertation that uses the lenses of property, gender, performance and nation to theorize connections between the economy, national rape and sexual violence, and the art and culture. The analysis chapters focus on how women in the postsocialist former Yugoslavia perform gender in the transition from socialism to capitalism by considering their material and symbolic relationships to property. Utilizing women's studies, performance studies, and critical cultural studies as the nexus of my conceptual framework through the methodological lenses of performance ethnography and autoethnography, I draw on these fields even as I hope to contribute to them.

As alluded to in the opening vignette, the trope of property and its centrality to familial relationships is both the catalyst that brought to me do research in the former Yugoslavia as well as the lens through which I analyze identity in the postsocialist former Yugoslavia. This dissertation operates from an understanding that the postsocialist condition, while particular to formerly socialist nations, is also a condition that informs and constitutes a new world order of postsocialist global capitalism. Since the transition

from socialism to capitalism was only possible through the socio-economic seizure of public property and the development of private property markets, I focus on the ways in which property articulates to identity within these contexts. I begin from the assumption of a shared condition of postsocialist global capitalism to further develop analyses of property as the co-performative lynchpin of oppression in capitalist systems. Property is a malleable trope that can be mobilized to analyze all forms of precarity and marginalization. A unique form of analysis, property also holds potential to provide material solutions to oppression. Property, property ownership, dispossession, and the propert(ies) of the body are a few places on which I focus that provide fruitful critical analysis.

The second chapter of this dissertation traces the historical contextualization of the meanings invested in women, and women's gender roles throughout significant geopolitical changes in Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia. Chapter two provides a frame and contextual rationale for my dissertation by reviewing the prominent literature about women in Eastern Europe and postsocialist nations. Chapter three situates my theoretical and methodological framework to articulate my understanding of subject formation and identity. I focus on the radical relationality of the subject and of identity to highlight relationality as the condition for potential feminist coalition. I also use this chapter to broadly discuss my feminist standpoint. Then, I outline methodological and theoretical assumptions that undergird performance ethnography and autoethnography by explaining the co-constitution of performance methodology with performance theory through the process of ethnographic research and fieldwork. My theoretical and methodological framework operate within and from a standpoint that advocates relational

being and relational knowledge production. While chapters one through three introduce the contexts of my analysis, each individual analysis chapter provides its own theoretical and methodological arguments, practical findings, and implications.

The fourth chapter, titled: “Transitioning properties of gender in postsocialist Montenegrin tourism: A feminist performance ethnography” analyzes analyzes women’s roles in the tourism industry in the seaside town of Budva in Montenegro. I traveled to Montenegro for three months in the summer of 2016 to study the geopolitical effects of the transition on Montenegrin women working in tourism. My research agenda and semi-structured interview questions emerged from my immersion in Budva’s tourism culture. The initial findings permitted me to focus on how discourses of property in and around tourism produce Montenegrin performances of gender.

My analysis hinged itself on the trope of property to theorize and rethink socialist feminism of the 1970s. My analysis of property is divided into three categories that were drawn for thematic ease but overlap in their conception and how they are experienced. The themes are: foreign male ownership of property, women’s bodies as patriarchal male property, and women’s bodies as male sexual property. Tending to the ways in which property enacts the frame of transition, I claim that critiquing property can resist the gendered violence of liberal capitalism. Using performance ethnography, I argue that tourism in the former Yugoslav nation of Montenegro depends on gendered and performative property relations of global postsocialism. I analyze private property ownership as more than an economic relation and explain that it is a discourse of power that determines the possibilities of gender, nation, and labor.

Gendered dispossession and precarity are not only integral to postsocialist capitalism, but, inform the practice of capitalism as it travels across borders. Since capitalism depends on racialized and gendered precarious labor, capitalist expansion in the context of transition in Montenegro makes these global forms of property violence explicit. The global condition of postsocialism amasses new relational and performative power to property ownership. Analyzing property discourses and how they are embodied in relations of capital illuminates how property in the body (reproduction), property of the body (labor), and property of the state (nation, law, ownership) are performatively accomplished in gender through capitalism and patriarchy. The condition of global postsocialism requires us to think through the ways in which the practice of capitalism depends on the relative dispossession of certain bodies and their precarious labor. Property ownership, as a gendered relationship animates and structures relational hierarchies of value and worth. I argue Corporeal ownership over one's body, over one's bodily labor, and ownership of material property are spaces to start feminist coalition guided by the heuristic of socialist feminism to disarticulate ownership from masculinity and male bodies.

The fifth chapter, "Properties of postsocialist sexual violence: A feminist autoethnography of rape, resistance, and coalition," analyzes mass rape in Bosnia through the trope of property to theorize our relations to the "other" within global capitalism. The chapter is based on my analysis of the over 6,000 page transcript of the Kunarac trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). This trial is important because it declared rape a crime against humanity in the aftermath of the Bosnian genocide where an estimated 20-60 thousand women were raped. This chapter

uses my corporeal experience, while geographically similar to women in the former Yugoslavia yet indefinitely different, to critique the regimes of power that silence the raped female body, and use her body as the instantiation of ethnic and national property claims. By textualizing my experience alongside ICTY witness testimony I do not intend to equate the two, but rather, to performatively put our trauma in relation as that which connects us to the other while also differentiating us from each other. My goal is to recognize possible sites for coalition over similar experiences of dispossession of one's own body. While I remain reflexive of my inability to speak for the other (Alcoff, 1992), or to understand the other's experience of trauma, voicing trauma can build community through coalition with others who have experienced similar corporeal evacuations; and this community can, in turn, create spaces for feminist solidarities.

Focusing on the gendered relationships of property, land, sex, and ethnicity that are enacted on and in women's bodies, I tend to the ways in which nationality as corporeal property metes out trauma and becomes a matter of life and death for some women. My themes of analysis are: the body as property, nation as property, and trauma as property. I offer trauma in general, and rape in particular, as the embodied experience of our ontological and epistemological relation to the other. I claim that this relation is fraught with the language of property and material property ownership. Focusing on rape as the enactment of violent claims to property, I explain how rape is a form of trauma and pain that destroys language, lays bare the explicit way in which treating women *as* property, representative *of* property, and as reproducers of property is integral to male dominance and global capitalism.

Coming to relational (and communal) terms with (what appears and has been institutionalized as) individually experienced trauma can begin to hold institutions accountable for the violence they enable. I argue that the precarious conditions of the postsocialist world are made possible through relationships to/of property that are accomplished and structured by (gendered and racialized) violence and trauma. In postsocialist global capitalism, discourses of property ownership continue to interpellate humans as individuals (men) with the potential to own property and others as property (women, people of color). Specifically, property relations depend on dispossession of women which makes them more vulnerable to sexual violence. While the specificity of the Yugoslav context is important to my analysis, it is also critical to this chapter to acknowledge that common experiences of rape and trauma are fundamental to capitalist nation/al formations transnationally and historically and thus ghosted by the language and politics of property. My argument in this chapter is that moments of violence where pain and trauma are most isolating— are always already moments of radical relation. I argue that regimes of private property and ownership (identity, nation, capital) are instantiated through violence, and so to form coalition over these violences both can resist the violence perpetuated as well as the system of property ownership that marks and exposes bodies to/for violence.

The sixth chapter “Embodied ex-Yugoslav borders and property: Theorizing the nation in Marina Abramović’s performance art,” analyzed three of Abramović’s performances to theorize the co-performative relationship of nation/ality and how this identity is a performative process of relational claims to property. I analyze three of her pieces from her early, mid, and late career. The titles of the performances are, “The lips

of Thomas” (1975), *Balkan Baroque* (1997) and *Balkan Erotic Epic* (2005). Read through the lens of nation and national property, I analyze Abramović’s performances as disruptions of identity that aim to transform the very foundations of society. I argue that Abramović’s work undoes the seemingly material borders between us/them and is a direct threat to discourses of power that mobilize violence to maintain these borders. In the performative undoing of national identity, I argue that there can be a hybridity of coalition against the precarity of otherness. Disrupting the normalized distinctions between self/other that are imbued in the borders of nation, Abramović’s relational performances demonstrate how no “I” can exist without “you.”

I interpret Abramović’s work through the lens of performance and property to articulate how her performances are evidence of ontological relationality and are always already shot through nation/national origin. Performance and Abramović call into question the epistemic function of identity as property and product of nation. Her performances suggest that we can epistemologically question and undo, through performative affect made real in performance, histories of trauma that articulate to nation and nationality. As a relational process, performance offers up symbolic, material, and corporeal possibilities at the liminal space of borders—to rethink, redo, and reframe the ways in which national borders function in our daily lives. Analyzing Abramović by using property to theorize relationships of identity, nation, and nationality, I claim that the nation marks its citizens as property, identity functions as property of the body, and nationality is a performative claim to ownership of national property. Theorizing liminal moments where self/other hinges on performative recognition, I argue that while the mark of nationality bears itself out to dispossess or possess bodies in the name of the

property of nation, that these articulations can be resisted in co-performative signification at the border (of intelligibility, nation, gender).

Although each analysis chapter focuses on a different context and utilizes different aspects of theory and method, when placed side-by-side, the chapters provide a more robust relational analysis of property as performative and embedded in nation, identity, and violence. Each of the abovementioned analysis chapters uses the lens of property to theorize the possibilities of recognition of ontological and epistemological radical relationality. From these three Yugoslav-specific contexts and chapters, the dissertation contributes to three lines of thought: 1) it centers the political and performative issue of property as a site for transnational feminist coalition 2) it offers a theoretical analytic from the cohabitation of postcolonial and postsocialist feminist theory 3) it builds on standpoint theory to disrupt the notion of the individual and to move toward structural critique and radically relational social justice.

The dissertation argues that property is the material and symbolic performative lynchpin to power in postsocialist global capitalism.

The final chapter of the dissertation summarizes the ways in which the analysis chapters can be read against, across, and through each other to provide some concluding thoughts on the dissertation and its contributions to performance studies and women's studies. Now, I turn to the history of Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia to articulate a trajectory of women's experience from the mid 1800s to present day.

CHAPTER II

MONTENEGRIN AND YUGOSLAV HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Framing the backdrop of this dissertation, this chapter provides a condensed overview of the changing meanings invested in women, and women's gender roles in Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia by highlighting their changing relationship to significant geopolitical changes. Situating Montenegro historically provides a lens with which to understand current iterations and embodiments of discursive gendered hierarchies of national value and identity. This gendered historical context provides rationale for the dissertation by outlining previously studied relationships of identity, nation, body, labor, gender, and socialism in postsocialist Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia.

What will be clear at the end of this chapter is the need to update and nuance research from these postsocialist spaces as most of them focus on determining if the effects of the transition from socialism to capitalism were good or bad for women. Aiming to move beyond these binary distinctions, my goal is to complicate notions of identity that enable and constrain performative agency within the time period of transition from socialism to capitalism. Given the massive overhaul of all institutional structures, the poor governmental handling of the privatization process in transition—I locate my analysis from and within the shifting notions of property ownership as it relates to identity formation. Suchland (2015) helps to complicate the notion of transition by critiquing its development focused rhetoric and the harmful impact of superficially gender-neutral transition language on women's socioeconomic position in transitioning postsocialist countries. Positioning myself within a feminist conversation about

postsocialist realities, both symbolic and material, I critique the discursive and embodied structures of power that condition women's experiences. What now seems like two disparate lines of thought, namely historical context and my theoretical approach will unfold in a clearer cohabitation below and in the analysis chapters.

Unable to tend to every nuance of Yugoslavia's complicated and turbulent history, for the purposes of this dissertation I briefly review transitions in Montenegro's history by focusing on the gendered implications for women throughout these changes. I focus on Montenegro because it is the context of my first analysis chapter, it is where my sexual assault took place, because Marina Abramović is from Montenegro. The national trends of Montenegro, while specific to Montenegro and Montenegrins, provide insight to the larger cultural trends of pre-socialist and postsocialist Yugoslavia. The history of women in Montenegro is instructive to think the history of women in each of the former six republics of the former Yugoslavia. While the main focus of the dissertation will be contemporary and specific embodiments of post-Yugoslav women's gendered experiences, this brief historical contextualization aims to highlight the discourses, material conditions, and ideologies surrounding the position of women in Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia. To begin, I focus on socio-traditional law that continues to influence contemporary patriarchal discourses in Montenegro.

A. Early History

The story of a family can also portray the soul of a land. This is especially so in Montenegro, where the people are divided into clans and tribes to which each family is indissolubly bound. The life of the family reflects the life of the broader community of kin, and through it the entire land (Milovan Djilas, 1958, p. 3).

Montenegro's history is anchored in its national identity as a land of twenty-four tribes that were self-governed through systems of blood-feud, honor and extreme patriarchy (Djilias, 1958; Durham, 1928; Zlatar, 2005). The first written Code of Laws in Montenegro, created by Vladika Petar I in 1796, clearly outlines women's place in the tribal land. Law 21 as quoted by Durham (1928) explains, "Women have no independence. They are forced to work in the house and the fields, the man occupying himself with fighting. The heads [of tribes] arrange marriages and the young have no choice" (p. 81). The rule of law during the 1800s also included a head for a head and shame upon your entire family if a man did not defend his honor in the face of a challenger. Such challenges to one's honor ranged in their offense from encroaching on somebody else's land, stealing a cow, coveting another's wife, insulting one's manhood or strength, or simply looking at a man in a funny way in the town. Some of these customs and traditions regarding honor still exist today. According to Boehm (1984), "The Slavic-speaking Montenegrins are among the few 'tribal' peoples surviving today in Europe...partly due to their geography which locks them into isolated mountain valleys" (p. 5). Geography conditioned the possibilities of Montenegrin identity and set up a system of surname recognition based on geographic tribal origin. The notorious landscape gave birth to Montenegro's official international tourism slogan, "Montenegro: Wild Beauty." This is no coincidence; the campaign capitalizes on the geographic while hinting at the regional stigma of the not quite European, Balkan country.

The Ottoman Turks never conquered Montenegro and Montenegrins claim this victory a result of Montenegrin men's warrior spirit as well as their expert knowledge of the treacherous terrain. The Turks, however, did conquer other parts of pre-socialist

Yugoslavia such as Bosnia. (This information will become more important in Chapter five when analyzing the Bosnian War). From very early on, the fabric that holds the idea of the nation of Montenegro together is unwavering allegiance to the system of tribal patriarchies that are anchored in land and turf battles (or blood feuds) for honor and the tracing of patrilineal family blood. Milich (1995) explains Montenegro in the 1800s as a time when “Montenegrins lived in a perpetual state of war or preparedness for war against the ever-threatening Turks” (p. 9). Using a history of war as evidence of causality for future wars, Milich (1995) further explains that centuries in which Montenegrins were “in blood” (blood-feuds) and fought to be free from Ottoman control resulted in “warrior ethos and a society in which males were inordinately valued not only as fighters who strengthened the tribe but as symbols of clan continuity” (p. xxv). Notably, this warrior mentality rests on the fulcrum of immobile gender roles that are enacted and dependent on the sexual division of labor. The gendered hierarchy is based upon backbreaking domestic work that women do to maintain and sustain these male warriors.

Women during this time were useful if they produced male heirs (i.e., warriors) and their status in society was effectively based on this human (re)production. The safety of the country and Montenegrin families was dependent on male warriors; thus, women were relegated to the domestic sphere to reproduce the warrior by taking care of the psychological and physiological needs of men of the tribe. This system, Milich (1995) explains, “resulted in the development of a cult of male superiority to an almost incomprehensible degree” (p. 13). Male superiority was reinforced by a symbolic order of male dominance worsened by the social vulnerability caused by the continual state of war and blood feuds between tribes.

Normally, a blood feud was enacted due to a violation of honor, and typically, honor involved the honor of the women in the tribe. Many blood feuds deal with the arrangement of marriages and the trading of women as property. Like Strauss (1969) explains, it is through the continual exchange of women that reinforces the patriarchy by bonding men to men (p. 479). One's honor could be compromised simply if a glance was interpreted as confrontational, if one heard a rumor about their wife, or if real threats of violence were made between tribes. Within the tribal patriarchy, moments that are seen as threatening one's "honor" (or more likely, masculinity) must be avenged in blood. In many cases, entering into blood with another tribe was a measure enacted in protection of women's virginal honor, chastity, and sexual faithfulness within the tribe (Boehm, 1984; Djajić Horváth, 2011; Milich, 1995; Young, 2000).

More evidence of the extremity of the tribal patriarchy can be found in former laws that included such things as: a woman was not allowed to be seen in public speaking with her husband and was only to take orders from him (Durham, 1928). Furthermore, women were not allowed to inherit property nor did they have any claim to the children they produced since blood was traced through the father and blood law regulated inheritance. These inheritance laws, while no longer official, still socially regulate inheritance in Montenegro (Zenovich, 2016). These traditions continued long after the laws no longer exist, and the reverberating patriarchal ritual structures the discursive and embodied effects of Montenegrin gendered hierarchy. From before the 1800s and through the turn of the century, Montenegro was ruled by blood, blood feud, and blood inheritance understood as patriarchal right. The next section highlights important moments in the national sovereignty of Montenegro.

1. National Formations

In 1878, the congress of Berlin recognized Montenegro as an independent nation under the poet, Bishop, Prince Petar II Petrović Njegoš (Djilas, 1958; Zlatar, 2005).

Then, in 1905 Montenegro wrote its first formal constitution claiming its own nationhood and the Prince, Njegoš, remained the ultimate sovereign (Pavlović, 2003). Shortly after Montenegro becomes an internationally recognized nation, World War I began, and Montenegro hid Archduke Ferdinand's Serbian assassin within its borders (Durham, 1928). In the aftermath of WWI, according to Morrison (2009):

A 40-year period of independence ended in 1918 when Montenegro was unified with Serbia following the Podgorica Assembly, before being incorporated into the kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (which became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929) (p. x).

In 1929 the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed the kingdom of Yugoslavia (which means Southern Slavs). Rastoder (2003) explains, "Montenegro's political, economic, cultural and national role was marginal considering that the Kingdom was centralized and that Montenegro comprised only two percent of its population" (p. 133). However, the political alignment provided a sense of security of the oft-warring Montenegro. The kingdom conspired to protect its borders from the invasion and occupation of the Austrians and Italians, yet, was not strong enough to ward off attack. During WWII (1941) Italy, under the fascist leadership of Mussolini in alliance with Hitler's Germany, invaded the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and attempted to implement communism by force in each republic. The Italians occupied Montenegro until 1943 when Germans took over occupation (Rastoder, 2003). The different nations in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia fell back upon the warrior mentality and formed guerilla units to combat these military occupations.

Milovan Djilas, a peasant-cum-intellectual from Montenegro is a key figure in this fighting and raising consciousness for the cause of an anti-fascist socialist federation of the former monarchies of Yugoslavia. Another prominent figure and soon to be leader of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, worked with Djilas to wage war and convert the Kingdom into a socialist nation. In 1943, the respective governments of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia formed the Anti-Fascist Council for the Liberation of Yugoslavia (Rastoder, 2003). After WWII, former partisans Tito and vice-president Djilas created a socialist Yugoslav nation. In 1945, six republics entered the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. These new members of the federation are; Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina with two autonomous provinces in Serbia: Kosovo and Vojvodina. Under Tito and Djilas, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia began to distance itself from Stalinist socialism.

The rift between Yugoslavian Socialism and Soviet Bloc Socialism ended with the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Soviet Bloc in 1948 due to Yugoslavia's position of non-alignment and preference for open-market and mixed-market economic practices. Yugoslavian rupture with Stalin consequently forged different paths for the two countries and ultimately their citizen's experiences of socialism (Djilas, 1962). The difference in Yugoslav and Soviet-style socialism is incredibly important to my dissertation because postsocialist research often focuses on experiences of soviet socialism and soviet satellites while ignoring the Yugoslav context. Differential experiences of socialism are important to theorizing the meaning of identity in these postsocialist spaces.

Yugoslav socialism enabled shared national Yugoslav identity and through a Yugoslav workforce of both men and women. Women were mandatorily brought out of

the private sphere, which facilitated the mixing of people from different tribes and ethnicities in the workplace. Yet, the notion of equality that was purported and developed as socialism's modus operandi was an illusion that politicians propagated to talk and make laws about what "Was best for women and for gender relations" while claiming that "Only Tito's system actually adopted gender equality as a central and explicit goal of policy" (Ramet, 1999, p. 5). Although each nation-state within Yugoslavia is bound by its own specific pre-socialist history and culture, socialism in Yugoslavia functioned as a federal social contract, thereby linking laws to communal constitutive reality. The Yugoslav identity was, thus, important for the citizens in each of the six republics of the former Yugoslavia because it propped up the notion of inclusivity and community where, perhaps, these ideas had not previously flourished. According to Coulson (1993) it is "Impossible to overemphasize the complexity of the multiethnic, multinational composition of the country and the intricacies involved in trying to create a coherent new order at the end of the Second World War" (p. 95). Although each nation under Yugoslavia still maintained its national ethnic identity, citizens tended to foreground their Yugoslav identity and identify secondarily according to ethnic identity. The next section provides an overview of women's experience during socialism.

2. Women Under Socialism

The first thing that socialism did was bring women out of the private sphere under the ideological privileging of production in the public sphere. Socialists argued that bringing women into the public sphere as workers, combined with the socialization of domestic tasks, was key to emancipating women from the drudgery of the private sphere (Engels, 2010). Women flooded the public sphere and were put to work in positions that

replicated the sexual division of labor produced in private, but provided evidence to some that women were emancipated. Glass (2008) claims that the assumption under socialism was that people were equal in their identities as workers. However, Glass (2008) also notes that while women were given new responsibilities in the public sphere, they were expected to maintain their responsibilities in the private sphere— or at home.

Women's responsibilities ranged from shopping for food, food preparation, food service, meal cleanup, child rearing, child bearing, house cleaning, and more. Men, on the other hand, were only responsible for their roles in the public sphere and their roles in the private sphere remained unchanged. For example, women would have breakfast and lunch prepared for their husbands at the start of each workday. When the man returned from work at the end of the day it was the wife or mother's responsibility to have food on the table and make sure that the children were fed, bathed, and that they had done their homework (Ghodsee, 2004; 2011). During this time one could go out to the street on Saturday afternoon and see men in coffee shops, holding newspapers, smoking cigarettes and chatting with other men about the weather (Einhorn & Server, 2003). On that same day at that same time, one could also go to the market and see women strapped with groceries for Saturday's meal. Although mundane, these observations clarify the ways in which the sexual division of labor structures gendered differences between leisure, work, and home.

Feminists note that the entry into the public workforce combined with the socialization of things such as public laundry, public food places, public child-care, and maternity leave were good steps in creating the conditions for women's emancipation in socialism. Some countries even provided safe access to abortion for women, which would

later disappear during the transition to capitalism in the context of heightened nationalism and national tensions. However, it is important to note that these provisions are based on the understanding of women's natural role as a reproducer. These sorts of socialized domestic safety nets (Ghodsee, 2012) were simultaneously progressive and regressive because they maintained the essential view of women as sexually and reproductively different from men. Socialist social provisions were hinged on the social requirement for women to be mothers—where motherhood is imagined as the validation of female citizenship— and provided a quasi-balance to their required social/public role as workers and their (state-sponsored) private role as mothers.

Žarkov (2007) explains that motherhood as citizenship was not all bad for women, as women often found agency and a particular embodied power in their roles as mothers. While many feminist scholars also claim that while this version of the private/public divide is riddled with asymmetrical and often oppressive gender roles, many women did not see themselves as victims (Corrin, 1999). Motherhood, within the larger symbolic order, was and often still is, the highest value for women to attain. Traditionally respected, motherhood provided political clout before and throughout the transition. Some feminists claim motherhood as an institution provides the conditions to resist nationalism via nostalgia and solidarity through women's roles as mothers (Drakulić 1990; Gal & Kligman, 2000; Havelková, 1993). Therefore, the meanings of woman during socialism do not shift or transform as much as some claim, but rather, the progressive socialist agenda reinforced specific forms of biological essentialism that locked the meanings and possible meanings/significations of the female body as always already tied to reproduction in a heterosexist patriarchal discourse.

Further solidifying the enforcement of women's natural role in the private sphere of reproduction is the fact that many socialist countries provided subsidies for families that had babies. Feminist scholars claim that socialists did more than any other party during this time to secure specific social provisions through generous policy for mothers (Ramet, 1999). Guaranteed maternity leave was one way in which the state could say it had women's best interest in mind but in practice, it was a way for women to "comfortably" perform their national duty. Additionally, the more babies that a woman had, the more their family would be paid by the government. In some socialist countries, families were paid more for male babies than female babies (Einhorn, 1994). These incentive programs fueled male autonomy and tethered women to the private sphere by increasing the care-intensive labor needed to rear the children. Socialism itself does not alter or emancipate women from oppressive domesticity. In the case of the former Yugoslavia, socialism reinforces the sexual division of labor through the naturalization of women's place in the private sphere (Einhorn & Server, 2003).

Women in the former Yugoslavia and other socialist countries shared similar frustrations over the social expectation to be Superwoman. Kiczková and Farkašová (1993) highlight the Superwoman trope as having significance and resonance with women in other parts of Eastern Europe. After working in a job that—government mandated— would not alter or harm the woman's reproductive capacity for eight hours, exhausted, women under socialism returned home and domestically worked for another eight hours. This Superwoman experience is commonly referred to as the "double burden" and some scholars claim that the term double burden is not sufficient as some women had triple or quadruple burdens (Ghodsee, 2003, 2004, 2004a, 2005, 2010, 2011;

Ramet, 1999; Gal & Kligman, 2000). So, the public and the private divide, although never really fully conceptually or experientially separate from each other, are reformulated in the experience of women under socialism.

Under socialism, the public/private split can be better understood as the state/family split. While both public/private are “nested” in each other (Einhorn & Server, 2003), their political meaning carries different weight during and after socialism.

Duhaček (1998) explains that under socialism, “The economic attire of the public/private split in Eastern Europe is engaged in political crossdressing” (p. 132). The home (private) was seen as a refuge from the state (public), so the feminist “the private is political” did not resonate with socialist women because to them it sounded like state surveillance.

Duhaček (1988) argues that for many families the home, instead, became a political escape from the socialist state that controlled everything else. The symbolic significance of home is especially important given that socialism is frequently characterized by progressiveness so pervasive and relentless it can be interpreted as anti-traditional.

However, patriarchal traditions enabled by the sexual division of labor in the public and private sphere persisted to such a degree that efforts to organize and mobilize feminist consciousness were thwarted. The next section provides a brief overview of the trajectory and failure of feminism in the former Yugoslavia.

3. Feminism Under Socialism

Socialism, nationalism, and patriarchy created a complex network of discourses that often functioned to divert women from focusing on women’s issues and rights, and instead recruited them to fight for causes that obscured, but reinforced the fight for patriarchal norms (Ramet, 1999). Jancar-Webster (1999) writes of women’s involvement

in the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement only to conclude that, “The economic and civil rights accorded Yugoslav women...impressive as they looked at the time, were in the last analysis, a reward bestowed by the male victors for favors performed” (p. 87). In the 1990s, when the beginnings of autonomous feminist movements in the former Yugoslavia were beginning to spring up as a result of consciousness raising, political organizing and agenda setting, these potential feminists “realized very early that they did need the state and party influence if they wanted to push their interests through” (Jalušić, 1999, p. 126). Feminism in the Former Yugoslavia was not as active as, perhaps, it could have been because it required validation from an already anti-feminist state.

This lack of activity can be attributed to three reasons; firstly, women were working all the time and did not have time to organize, secondarily, because women were told that they were equal and simply had to do their part, and finally, because to value women differently was not in line with socialist ideology. As Milić (2004) explains, over the past century no autonomous women’s movement was sustained in Montenegro or Serbia because women remained “ambivalent in part deriving from a deep-rooted traditional expectation that left them feeling guilty for ‘wasting’ their time on activities of the groups that had no direct benefit for their family members” (p. 74). Advocating for women’s rights or equality was seen as ancillary to the equality granted by the very existence of the socialist state. Androcentric equality language fueled by male dominance and heteropatriarchy conveniently ostracized any woman daring enough to suggest the need for women’s rights. As the flawed logic of male dominance goes, there are larger and more important economic and national concerns than women’s rights.

The dominant discourse of socialism aimed to convince citizens that every worker was equal while silencing women's work and making their experiences invisible. Indeed, feminism smacked of Western capitalism's influence, of bourgeoisie ideology, and was accused of anti-communist thinking (Ramet, 1999). If being accused of symbolic treason was not enough to fend off an autonomous feminist movement, women who identified as feminists or pushed a semi-feminist political agenda were socially stigmatized by the anti-feminist trifecta: being hairy, lesbian, B/Witches. Ramet (1999) explains, "In the age of politicized nationalism...feminists who dare to challenge the patriarchal agenda of the nationalists [were construed] *as witches*" (p. 6). In the former Yugoslavia feminism was viewed as treason. Milić (2004) explains, "Prior to 2000 Women's organizations were treated as ideological enemies to the state and nation, even though their status was legal" (p. 81). The political doublespeak of the socialist state permitted feminists to organize while simultaneously classifying feminists as potential enemies of the state and marking them as social pariahs. Yet, as Ramet (1999) clearly states, "The mere realization that society is patriarchal does not, however, in and of itself constitute a feminist conversion or even a sufficient impetus to action" (p. 3). The depth of tribal patriarchal ideological hegemony, thus, advanced and evolved largely unchallenged.

According to Saltzman (1969) cited by Milich (1995), "The ideal of womanhood involved obedience and submission," subsequently, survival for women is often based on the performative embodiment of non-threatening femininity (p. 13). Milich (1995) relates this specifically to Montenegro by claiming that Montenegrin women "did not rebel against their position... they helped to foster it by their behavior, by teaching their daughters submissive behavior and by ridiculing women who did not conform to this

role” (p .13). Submission, thoroughly prescribed by the symbolic order, thus, perpetuates and reinforces the tribal patriarchy, but also affords women status in the patriarchy. Ghodsee (2003, 2004, 2012) reminds feminists trained in the US, that women in socialist spaces were told that the mere institution of socialism secured emancipation for women. Funk (2007) explains, the historical notion that women’s emancipation was secured through socialism is a staid discourse that continues after socialism disappears. Accordingly, there is a large disconnect between feminist analysis and intervention and women’s experience in postsocialist spaces. Not only are “Western” feminisms origin not easily applied (Goldfarb, 1997), but often are dismissed as not needed. Pre-socialist tribal patriarchies contributed to the embedded sexism of socialist Yugoslavia and the reverberations of these discourses continued to affect gender roles during the transition to capitalism. The naturalized sexual division of labor persists and is reinvigorated in the transition, as many turn to the home and its moralized traditions as cultural safe-haven during the uncertainty of the transition. Next, I outline some significant socioeconomic effects of the transition to capitalism as they relate to women.

B. Women in Transition from Socialism to Postsocialist Capitalism

When socialism “fell” there was an upheaval in every aspect of life for people who lived in now postsocialist states. Women immediately disappeared from the public sphere. The combination of mass firings, political propaganda that urged women to “return” home, and women simply making the choice to be with their family (the source of their political agency) created a strikingly gendered exodus of the public sphere. Glass (2007) notes that the statistics are shocking in the years immediately after socialism because there is high unemployment and lots of evidence that women left the public

sphere in a hurry after they were no longer required by the state to be there. In fact, women in the former Yugoslavia privileged their husband's employment and male employment in general over their own (Einhorn, 1998). This ideologically gendered sentiment of Yugoslav women during the transition and its corresponding inflation and unemployment, both reinforces a gendered hierarchy and articulates the patriarchal conditions for gendered precarious labor in the transition to capitalism.

Corrin (1999) explains that it is not just that women "returned" home as some national propaganda campaigns claim, but that women were easily fired as state provisions no longer protected their vulnerable, in terms of possibly becoming pregnant, bodies. The incentive to hire females decreased as the market became privatized and there were no longer government subsidies for maternity leave. There is evidence that women did return to the private sphere happily, in an effort to rid themselves of the double burden, but it is not a coincidence that as the safety net of the socialization of childcare and reproductive health become privatized, women could not afford to leave the home. Furthermore, as Papić (1999) notes, the transition from socialism to capitalism meant that the private was aggressively thrust into the public and the formerly feminized private was taken over by a masculine private market. What remains important is that whichever sphere is gendered feminine is made to be less important in order to prevent women from attaining actual political representation or power—during socialism and after.

Women are continually told that their concerns will be dealt with later and that economic changes are more important than their "individual" needs (Suchland, 2015; Atanoski, 2013). Ghodsee (2004a) explains that women experience "time poverty" both

in socialism and in the transition by being eclipsed from linear (masculine) time and by quite literally not having any time to accomplish the things that are demanded of them (p. 24). Initiating the slow erosion of the rights that women had previously been guaranteed during socialism, the transition is also met with heightened nationalism in the face of Yugoslav demise. Notably, each republic of the former Yugoslavia began media campaigns to bolster the symbolic imagery of the heteronormative, traditional, and ethnically pure family.

Pavlović (1999) explains that before war broke out in Croatia the government began heavy ideological lifting to re-imagine and rigidify Croatian identity through a series of national quasi-public-service announcements. These announcements included images of nuclear families with a stay at home mothers, working fathers, as well as a boy and a girl child that performatively prescribed the ethnic ideal of the good life of Croatian citizenship. Coinciding with the economic transition, this campaign did crucial work in the Croatian imaginary to remind, restructure, and redeploy national identity through the trope of family. Family and familial representation, in turn, structure the possibilities of identification with this ideal while deploying the conditionality of the properly embodied Croatian family. Pavlović's argument, in a critique of state media, claims family representation by the state regulates familial formation and by extension the formation of hyper-national post-Yugoslav republics in transition.

After socialism, each republic experiences a national identity crisis, which is intensified by economic crisis, and eventually, leads to war. In order to remedy this crisis, women's mythos, symbolic representation, social roles, and identity are renegotiated and redeployed. The next section will contextualize the role of land and property in the war

efforts during the break up of the former Yugoslavia with attention to Montenegro to preface the ways in which women's symbolic and material bodies undergird militaristic movement.

C. Break Up of Yugoslavia

The death of Yugoslav socialist leader, Joseph Broz Tito in 1980, symbolically marked the end of Yugoslav socialism, a turn to a destructive brand of communism, and the advent of the re-traditionalization of gender roles (Papić, 1999). The death of Tito cannot be overstressed as a major turning point in Yugoslavia. Not only did his death mark the end of Tito's socialism, but also it marked the death of the embodied symbol of Yugoslav ethnic multiculturalism. Without this benevolent patriarch to keep the nations in line, Yugoslavia imploded and each republic attempted to divide the property of the former Yugoslav estate.

As Yugoslavia began to break-up in the early 1990s Montenegro and Serbia formed what was left of Yugoslavia which is commonly referred to as "The Rump of Yugoslavia" (Ramet 2005; Morrison, 2009). Morrison (2009) explains, "As that state collapsed in the early 1990s, Montenegro remained within the rump of Yugoslavia... simply as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and then a looser federal structure dubbed simply Serbia and Montenegro" (p. x). Serbia and Montenegro stayed together to jointly develop their resources and build their economies. Montenegro, the smaller and less developed of the two countries relied heavily on economic and political support from Belgrade, Serbia. Although this geopolitical formation was seemingly easy, the other former Yugoslav states were not able to secure such a peaceful disintegration from Yugoslavia. Infamous travel writer Robert Kaplan (1993) observes that the Balkans

became a place that was clearly unstable, remarking that, “one could see that declining economies, erosion of communist power structures, and a history of ethnic rivalries might one day lead to conflict” (p. ix).

Any mention of the war tends to halt all conversation and initiate fights about which country started the war and who was more culpable. I will not spend time thoroughly explaining each side here, but do pause to note that my version of events is saddled within a US geopolitical lens which painted Serbia as the eviler of the two so the US was justified in sanctioning NATO strikes against Serbia (Atanasoski, 2013). In this history chapter, I trace the meaning of the war for women and in the Chapter five, I build off this context to develop a more damning analysis.

War broke out in Bosnia in 1992 provoked by the Serbs under the guise of the Federal Yugoslav government. Serbs living in Bosnia wanted to claim land in Bosnia as rightfully theirs. During this time, leaders emerged with a penchant for ethnocentric, nationalist, xenophobic, and often sexist visions of the postsocialist future. Slobodan Milosević of Serbia carefully orchestrated his ascent to presidency by utilizing nationalist and ethnocentric rhetoric to incite riots and to encourage Serb nationalists to form militias. In charge of the Yugoslav army too, Milosević had the formal military and an informal nationalist militia at his disposal. His claim, supported and inspired by the Serb nationalists, was that Bosnian identified Serbs had the right to identify as Serbs and reclaim their land/property in Bosnia. The nationalists wanted to redraw national lines and be a part of the larger Serbia (and Montenegro technically). Croatia’s president Franjo Tudjman also saw this moment as an opportunity for a land grab, claiming that there were Croatians in Bosnia who wished to be a part of the larger Croatia.

Milosević pressured the president of Montenegro, Momar Bulatović, to stay in Yugoslavia because Montenegro (already suffering from hyper-inflation and unemployment) would not survive without Serbian economic and military support. This economic reason was reinforced by the fact that many Montenegrins ethnically identified as Serb. While most official reports maintain that there was no war on Montenegrin soil, Montenegro did storm Croatia's Old Walled City of Dubrovnik in the early stages of war on orders from Milosević. This detail often evades textbooks, and Montenegro is often used as an example of stability in the Balkans and former Yugoslavia (Beiber, 2003a). In an effort to paint Montenegro as distinct from the mania of the Bosnian war, Bieber (2003) explains that Montenegro has "been a story of continuity throughout the 1990s. In the absence of war, Montenegro has experienced few radical breaks" (p. 11). Although not directly involved in the wars of the 1990s, it is important to note Montenegro did function as a temporary safe haven for war criminals as well as refugees of war and was indirectly implicated in the aftermath of war (Fraser, 2003; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2004c).

The aftermath ranged from social and psychic trauma to inflation and economic restructuring. In Chapter five, I will look more deeply at the effects and meanings produced by ethnic conflict, ethnic cleansing, and the mass rape incurred in this war. Yet, Montenegro's formal ability to remain out of war for the most part, when Montenegro still was legally in a loose confederation with Serbia was remarkable. According to Gallagher (2003), "Montenegro was initially on the side of Serbia" but later refused to contribute to the bloodshed of the break-up (p. 64). Although counterintuitive, Gallagher (2003) points to the strong discipline of the patriarchal tribal system of Montenegro as the reason that Montenegro was able to avoid entry into this conflict. Specifically, since

Montenegro did not see itself in blood with any of the former Yugoslav nations and was not fending off foreign invasion there was no need to go to war. Although Montenegro's absence from the war can be partially attributed to the strength of the tribal patriarchy, the horrific experience of war for women can also be attributed to the tribal patriarchy. The next section will discuss the manipulation of Yugoslav women's bodies, representative of national property and borders, by briefly outlining the gendered trauma of the breakup of the former Yugoslavia.

1. Yugoslav Women in War

Women's bodies are a common thread in the transition from socialism to postsocialism. Women's bodies are ideologically mobilized to reconstruct ideals of femininity/masculinity, to redraw geographic boundaries, to represent the public and private endeavors of the state, and finally to obscure and confound time and space through the reproduction of the nation. As is often the case, women's bodies are the first to be mobilized toward nationalist agendas. Perhaps this manipulation is no more apparent than in the former Yugoslavia and its' descent into ethnic war, genocide, and mass rape. The Bosnian Crisis of the 1990s clarifies how the distinction between public and private is inscribed upon women's bodies in time and space. The convergence of nationalism, sexuality, and violence in the Serbian/Bosnian conflict of the 1990s after the collapse of Yugoslav socialism provides a disorienting and anguishing example of how the public and private are disrupted and enforced in the postsocialist context.

Women in war are representative of nation in such a way that their bodies become the borders of states: their sex is preceded by their ethnicity and their babies are owed to military masculine penetration. In the transition from communism to capitalism, the

national imagination of each newly drawn boundary is embodied in the signification and recognition of the female body. Hromadzic (2007) explains that more than 20,000 women were raped during this time, most of them Bosnian women. While Ramet (1997) notes that 20,000 is a low estimate for the number of women who were systematically raped, Atanasoski (2013), claims that 60,000 is a median estimate for the rapes that took place. The goal of mass rape was to produce a technique of genocide; if successful in impregnating their victims, Serbian soldiers constructed new Serbian nations within the Bosnian woman's body. Her raped body, although signifying the space before the rape (Bosnia) is transformed by this violation and the product signifies a new (Serbian) nation. The extreme privileging of masculinity and the patrilineal bloodline is rendered visible across the borders of the female body. The act of rape is intended to erase the woman's history (her past time and arguably socialist time), but not her entire self, as she is the vessel needed to reproduce the (now capitalist) nation. Women are erased through the "private" act of rape (producing both private and public shame) for public/private and nation building. Yugoslavia (as nation, as geography of ownership) provides a frame with which to realize the ways that the borders of the former Yugoslavia are erected upon the bodies of women.

The private is brought into the public through violence, and these acts of violence cannot be disentangled from the formation of the capitalist state as it intersects with sexuality and gender. During the war there are other ideals that animate this devastation. One is the cult of hyper masculinity which defines itself first by opposing ethnicity (to be Serbian is not to be Bosnian) and secondly by homophobic sexuality (Serb as virile hetero male not as gay Croatian) (Papić, 1999; Pavlović, 1999). Other tropes that

undergird this time are that militarization, fighting, and “protection” is inscribed on the public/masculine persona whereas victimhood, penetration, and mourning are projected on the private/female persona (Hromadzic, 2007; Nikolić-Ristanovic, 2004c). The transition and the militarization of these identities are crucial to the rise of new national formations in this space and this combination and materialization of these ideals (upon female bodies) was one way in which women’s bodies are made docile by these convergences of masculine nationalism (Milić, 1993). The next section provides a few more details of the gendered violence of the socio-economic transition to capitalism after the war and concludes with a few strategies for empowerment.

2. Some Gendered Effects of Post-War Transition

After the turbulent 1990s, the end of the Bosnian war, NATO’s bombing campaign against Serbia headed by President Bill Clinton, and throughout the geopolitical transition, women in postsocialist Yugoslavia were seemingly and endlessly victimized. The transitional period after socialism has seen a resurgence of traditional values, wherein women experience incongruities in public and private spheres of life and discourses of male dominance reign. Capitalism itself exacerbates gendered hierarchies and precarious labor, marking women as undesirable workers in an postsocialist global capitalist economic market. Nikolić-Ristanović (2004a), points to the material effects of transition (high female unemployment, no maternity leave, lowest number of female government representatives in twenty years) on women and claims that gender roles, too, are in transition. The significant material economic changes affect the reality of gender roles and point to the shift in the discourses surrounding gendered participation in economic systems.

Another effect of the transition, according to Copic (2004), is the increase in domestic violence, specifically wife abuse. Copic (2004) explains, “Women have been taught to endure, and even blame themselves, for the things that happen to them, so that violence often becomes part of their everyday lives” (p. 55). As transition has increased the gendered experience of violence and precarity, it has also seen an increase in neoliberal discourses of individualism and liberal rationality that accompany capitalist formation and isolate victims from structural justice (Suchland 2015; Atanasoski, 2013). Scholars note that serious intellectual work remains to be done to theorize and materialize conditions that enable a liveable life in postsocialist spaces while holding institutions responsible for producing these conditions (Butler, 2004b, 2010, 2015).

In tandem with the symbolic meanings imbued in the intersection of the cult of motherhood and the mass rape of women that exposes the monstrous materiality of nationalism on the public/private bodies of women, women in these postsocialist post-war spaces are not only victims. They find agency and solidarity in their experiences as mothers and as postsocialist women (Žarkov, 2007). Some scholars point to the ways in which women organized, through their representation as the nation that mourns the loss of their soldier sons, to call for the end of war. Utilizing their symbolic power as reproducer of the nation, women brought their bodies into public space to protest and resist genocidal nationalism. Ghodsee (2004) and Todovora and Gille (2010) suggest that nostalgia for the recent socialist past can be an effective strategy to end violence. They suggest that reference to the past has the potential to unite people from different backgrounds in the memory of happier times.

Scholars working to analyze the implications of nostalgia explain that when studying postsocialist spaces, it is important not to throw the proverbial baby out with the bathwater. They claim that nostalgia is imagination work that attempts to think through the past in the present, typically in critique of the present. If socialism is future orientated, and capitalism is about instant gratification, nostalgia sits somewhere in-between these time continuums to imagine a different world. Nostalgia that imagines new worlds is especially important for women in postsocialist countries who have been displaced from their “time” on account of other more important social transformations. Duhaček (1993) explains that in postsocialist countries, women’s nostalgia for the past disrupts gendered violence because nostalgia is rooted in the remembrance of social safety nets that helped women to balance their roles as mothers and workers. Gendered performances of postsocialist nostalgia fly in the face of Cold War rhetoric that claims that socialism unequivocally oppressed women (Suchland, 2015). This dissertation does not rely on nostalgia to resist violence. I instead offer the performative trope of property as the necessary point of resistance and the site of coalition in postsocialist global capitalism. The next and final section of this historical context delineates Montenegro’s independence, contemporary geopolitical formation, and provides concluding thoughts on the aforementioned historical significance.

D. Montenegrin Independence in Transition and Historical Context

Conclusion

Montenegro’s governmental dealings with Serbia had been progressively fraught with tension since they remained in the union in 2002. While there were many reasons for Montenegrin independence, Fraser (2003) explains the main reasons that propelled

independence was “a strong sense of their history as an independent state and total skepticism about the possibility of having their interests taken fully into account in such a lopsided union” (p. 380). Feeling both neglected by Serbia and part of Serbia (ethnically and geographically), Montenegro’s citizens voted for independence in early 2006. By a narrow majority, the referendum for Montenegrin independence passed in May of that year (Morrison, 2009). Many still complain that this election was corrupt and rigged because the same people from the same party (Democratic Socialist Party) have remained in power since the end of socialism to today. Shortly after the referendum, Montenegro became internationally recognized as a fully independent, sovereign state. Now, Montenegro is struggling toward the European Union, using the Euro as national currency, and working toward joining NATO. Montenegro has made large strides since independence to secure an international presence in the global economic and political scene. On its list of areas that need improvement for EU accession: gender equality, mitigation of government corruption and nepotism, and enhancing the freedom of the press, to name a few (Montenegro EU Commission Report, 2015).

The aforementioned historical situation is that which haunts Montenegrin memory and identity performance. The history of Montenegro, robust in patriarchy and political turmoil, lingers in everyday enactments of gender. As a researcher, and a Montenegrin, I too, remain reflexive of this storied history as I move to analyze how women in Montenegro and in the former Yugoslavia perform their gender. The next chapter of my dissertation will outline my theoretical and methodological framework in order to analyze identity in the postsocialist former Yugoslavia with the previously articulated historical context in mind.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

This dissertation is grounded in the critical qualitative paradigm, which not only aims to expose, critique, or understand the operations of power in societies, but to transform the operation of power and ultimately of society itself. Aiming to add to communication theory about the performative possibilities of identities at the borders (of nations, genders, bodies), I analyze gender in hopes of producing feminist strategies for transnational coalition in projects of social justice and equality. My interdisciplinary approach recognizes that knowledge, like the figure of the subject, is formed/interpellated through a series of conflicting epistemologies, ontologies, ideologies, axiologies.

Therefore, one theoretical approach or disciplinary orientation does not provide enough depth to reckon with the endlessly relational subject as it is constructed in language, discourse, and communication. Since I have decided to divide this dissertation into three separate analysis chapters with their own specific contexts, each chapter will delve more deeply into the literature needed to theorize that chapter. Specifically, each chapter uses literature from performance studies, communication theory, feminist property theory, socialist feminism, postcolonial theory, postsocialist theory, and transnational feminism. This chapter provides a more general overview of my theoretical and methodological conceptual framework to broadly introduce concepts addressed in the analysis chapters.

The first section of this chapter briefly traces Anzaldúa's approach to radical relationality through *nosotros*, the border, and performance. The second section outlines my feminist standpoint. Then, I offer a short genealogy on performance studies and performance ethnography to situate myself and this dissertation within performance

studies. Next, I comment on the ethical implications of using performance ethnography outline a heuristic of reflexivity that guided my research and the representations produced in the dissertation. I conclude this chapter with a short overview of autoethnography (which I employ in Chapter five) and its potential to decolonize. The next section discusses Anzaldúa, Butler, and Sandoval to discuss subject formation through recognitions of the Other.

A. Subject Formation Through Recognition of the Other

Drawing on her experiences as a queer woman of color in the US, Anzaldúa (2012) claims that whatever is not us *is* us by way of colonial history. Anzaldúa's marginalized experiences within the US allows her to name the ways in which the US feminist movement reproduces these same tendencies, privileging middle-class, white, straight women's experiences over women of color's experiences of oppression. Instead of excluding themselves on the basis of identity politics, Anzaldúa claims that feminist women of color and white women feminists should consider the ways in which the identities they claim are only comprehensible in opposition to and through one another. Anzaldúa offers the Spanish word *nosotros* as a means of articulating consciousness of the false binary opposition between women in the feminist movement. *Nosotros* means we, but when broken up *nos* means *us* and *otros* means *others*. Her argument is that there is no we without the other, no me without you, no us without them. Her claim is also an attempt to impel activists to recognize the other on which their understanding of self is based. Anzaldúa asks about identity—I identify with this and that, but what do I *not* identify with that shapes who I am?

For Butler, performance is a thing done, an identity affected or secured and recognition sets up the conditions for the performances or effects of identity to be realized. However, Butler also contends that performances are always open to resignification, reiteration, and redeployment. For Anzaldúa, the process of making identity is not so singular since Anzaldúa theorizes from the many intersections of her embodiment. Anzaldúa explains that women of color can never escape their embodiment and that they must *Haciendo Caras* (1990) (making faces, making souls) to survive in different contexts. Like Sandoval's (2000) notion of differential consciousness, *Haciendo Caras* are types of identity survival performances that women of color often employ to protect themselves in situations where their bodies are symbolically or materially threatened. The different "masks" women of color must use to survive within the US gives Anzaldúa the experiential knowledge to claim that identity is a relational contextual performance. Butler agrees, by way of Spivak (1988), that strategic essentialism is a useful strategy of both resistance and survival for people of color. Extending this formulation to my dissertation, identity performances and the possibilities of recognition are lucrative in the tourism industry of Montenegro, were tactics of survival for some Bosnian Muslim women, and are integral the work of performance artist Marina Abramović.

Performances of identity are also wrapped up in the possibilities of signification. Anzaldúa (2012) poses the dialectic of the border (theorized as the literal border of US/México, as the bodily border between *nos/otras*, and the divide between binary thinking) to open possibilities for play between identities. For my dissertation, the borders of identity materialize in property discourses that articulate physically,

symbolically, and corporeally in the shifting national geographies of the former Yugoslavia. Anzaldúa claims that the border, where differences between people collide, is the space where new worlds can be made. The play between old and new, brown and white, self and other, straight and gay are opened up at the thresholds of difference. The border and borderlands are concepts that Anzaldúa deploys to resist the sedimentation of identity. Oftentimes, the borders are deployed and used for the exact opposite reason—to enforce nation and identity boundaries. However, Butler and Athanasiou (2013) use the trope of performativity to get at the possibilities for resistance that arise from the moments of binary (border) implosion.

Performativity is the repetition of acts through citation to affect certain material effects of identity. The reason that performativity and the border are connected is because they both imply the opening up of representation and the deployment of new significations. Thus, for Anzaldúa (2012), the Borderlands are the space of performative possibilities for relational subjects. Butler (1993/2011) in *Bodies That Matter*, claims that Anzaldúa moves us to the edge and to the crossroads to continue to reexamine our identities. This edge is where we can begin to see the formation of possibilities for coalition. The trauma of dispossession in the maintenance of the border becomes an effective trope to analyze spaces for transnational alliances across precarity (Butler, 2010). In the borderland, the imagining of new worlds becomes possible through performativity. The following analysis chapters theorize what worlds of identity are made at the borders of the former Yugoslavia— corporeally, geographically, emotionally, and in relation to labor.

At the borderlands, where self/other and nos/otras collide, feminist coalition work can be done. The point of coalition is to challenge and consolidate power to utilize the possibilities of the border in the imagining of anti-sexist, anti-colonist, anti-heteronormative, anti-racist worlds. Anzaldúa (1984) offers the image of the bridge as the methodological metaphor for the collaborative work needed in feminist coalition. In her body of work, Butler does not outline a method for coalition but instead claims that one must continually iterate and reiterate identification. She claims that to fix an identity, as some do when employing identity politics, is to fall into the trap of rigidifying the power relations in whatever struggle one sees themselves. Therefore, Butler's approach to coalition, much like Anzaldúa's is one of constant struggle in the process of relation. One is continually re-positioning oneself in coalition in order to keep identity fluid and keep representation open to performative possibilities which can subvert oppressive or dominant structures. Neither of these authors see identity politics as the final answer to social justice agendas but suggest that social justice is a constant effort and struggle—a process never complete. Like the continual repositioning of identity in alliance, the next section discusses my feminist standpoint in relation to identity research and the heuristic of reflexivity that guides my analysis.

B. Feminist Standpoint

Informed by Harding's (1987) explanation of feminist methods as praxis for and by women, this dissertation looks to women's lives as instructive for critiques of socialism and postsocialist global capitalism. A feminist standpoint can be developed in the multiplicity of irreducible differences of experiential embodiment where one lives “within limits and contradictions—of views from somewhere” (Haraway, 2008, p. 350).

Standpoint theory claims that specific positionalities provide spaces from which to critique larger hegemonic norms and structures. Harding, (2008), explains that standpoint “Epistemologies propose that there are important resources for the production of knowledge to be found in starting off research projects from issues arising in women’s lives rather than only from the dominant androcentric conceptual frameworks of the disciplines and larger social order” (p. 333). In this sense, women’s lives and experiences are the prism through which hegemonic androcentric structures can be named as oppressive and transformed. Therefore, I begin each chapter from women’s lives and experiences, including my own.

Using standpoint theory outside a US context allows me to incorporate the insights of feminist communication scholars who interrogate meanings as they are constructed between and through geographic borders (Hegde, 1998; Cooks, 2000, 2001; Shome & Hegde, 2002a; 2002b; Shome, 2006; Mckinnon, Chávez, & Way, 2007). These scholars note the importance of reflexivity of feminist communication across and in-between borders (geographically, disciplinarily, ontologically, experientially). As a feminist conducting research outside of the US, I remain reflexive of my positionality in order not to generalize my feminism onto participants of this study or assume that feminism will unlock “truth” of the experiences of the participants (Golombisky, 2006; Golombisky & Holtzhausen, 2005; Mohanty, 1988; 2003, Spivak, 1988; 2005).

Hegde (1998) reminds me “to pay attention to the locations from where we speak, the network of social relations from where difference is constructed” (p. 285).

Articulating my feminist standpoint requires reflexivity about my own positionality as a US feminist. Alcoff (1991) requires me to check my institutional privilege as a researcher

and question the ways in which my representations of the participants in my studies are more accurate reflections of my own political investments and ideological commitments. Standpoint theory and methodology through the lens of communication allows me to analyze women's self-articulated representations of themselves and attempt to understand how these representations unhinge themselves from the conceptual landscape of a US-based feminism. Ferguson (1998) claims that this effort to recognize and affirm certain marginalized identities as well as to simultaneously resist and negate privileged identities is a dialogic practice of ethico-politics in feminist research. Ethico-politics as practice means that the researcher is committed to research informed by the participants and recognizes the symbolic effect of this ethical commitment is that both the researcher and the participant are profoundly transformed in their negotiations of power. Alcoff (1991) reminds researchers of the harmful effects of speaking over and for research participants. Ethico-politics as well as not speaking for others informs my feminist ethic and creates the possibility for solidarity over ideas, feminist values, and political action across borders.

Crenshaw (1993) advocates intersectionality as a guiding theory to analyze identity performance and identity politics. She writes, "My focus on the intersections of race and gender only highlights the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed" (p. 1245). Since culture and identity are created through performance and performativity in different contexts, identities necessarily align themselves with differing ideologies of contextualized discourses. Identity is formed at the intersecting subjectivities of the body and co-performative possibilities for recognition. While the performance of identity may privilege a particular

aspect of an intersectional identity (in moments of *Haciendo Caras*), these performances are always informed through the nexus of identity and identity markers that function intersectionally. This thick intersectionality means that subjects of discourse are constantly in flux because they are being formed and deformed through competing discursive positionalities and contexts (Yep, 2003). McCall (2005) claims, “feminists are perhaps alone in the academy in the extent in which they have embraced intersectionality—the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations” (p.1771). However, accounting for the intersectionality of identity is a complex project that must be attended to carefully. While feminists hope to account for all the ways in which one’s positionality is formed, intersectional analysis is often constrained to identities performed and recognized within the context. Hence, my intersectional analysis will focus on the intersections of identity that meet in performance: in Chapter Four through participant observation and interviews, in Chapter five through ICTY transcripts about Bosnian Rape alongside vignettes about my sexual assault, and in Chapter six through Abramović’s staging of her body.

Feminist communication allows researchers and participants to name the discourses that are oppressive, and then work to correct, deconstruct, or subvert them. As Bell (2010) explains, “The goal of feminism is to move feminist theory off the page, into our lives, and back onto the page, starting the process all over again as we live our theoretical claims as our political commitments” (p. 97). On the premise that women are marginalized and oppressed within societies, feminism asks how to correct and address this marginalization. One part of feminism is resisting discourses of patriarchy. Adrienne Rich’s (1976) defines patriarchy as the “power of fathers: a familial-social, ideological,

political system in which men...determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male” (p. 57). Through the realization that patriarchy oppresses women, feminist scholars can theorize ways to resist patriarchal oppression and even find ways to transform it. hooks (2000) writes, “Simply put, feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression” (p.1).

Some feminists point to language, enabled by patriarchal symbolic orders, as the mechanism that enforces sexism (Kroløkke & Sørensen, 2006; Foss & Foss, 2009, Tong 1998, 2009). In the West and the US, language creates categorical gendered differences, as does the term “gender” itself, “because men collectively perceive and define woman as second sex, each man becomes an I, or self, and each woman becomes an it, or other” (Tong, 1998, p. 57). Androcentric discourses operate hegemonically, oppress women, and maintain power by reserving subject positions for men (specifically white, straight, propertied men). Feminists mark this perpetual othering and seek to undo its harmful effects. Tong (1998) reminds us that otherness can be used to our advantage, explaining, “It is a way of existing that allows for change and difference. Women are not unitary selves, essences to be defined and then ossified” (p. 7). Although this belief can be seen as a unifying goal of feminists and cause for feminism, feminists must remember that simply identifying as a woman or as other does not unite feminists or feminisms. Feminism and feminisms are always informed by the context of particular patriarchal discourses. My feminist goal in this dissertation to highlight the instability of categories marked self/other through the lenses of property and performance, and use this unstable relational category to challenge transnational male dominance in global capital. The next

section positions this dissertation within the field of performance studies by outlining performance ethnography and autoethnography.

C. Performance Studies

As a performance studies scholar, blurring the lines between theory and method is integral to my approach to research. These blurred lines are a result of centering the body as a site of knowledge to produce critique of dominant forms of discourse and power. Rooted in the critical turn as developed by Conquergood (1982a) and feminists of color, I anchor my methodological framework in the convergence of experience, theory, and method. This section outlines the co-constitution of performance methodology and performance theory by explaining performance ethnography and autoethnography. While each analysis chapter operates from a methodological foundation of performance studies, each chapter also uses slightly different but similarly informed procedural methods of analysis. The following section describes performance ethnography by first providing a brief overview of how it differs from traditional ethnography. I then focus on shared heuristic themes that guide performance ethnographers, with special attention to Conquergood's explanation of the differences between positivism and performance ethnography. Finally, I briefly highlight my understanding and approach to autoethnography.

1. Traditional Ethnography and Performance Ethnography

Differing from traditional ethnography, performance ethnography attempts to present many and contested versions of reality. Traditional ethnography is grounded in notions of "objectivity," undergirded by the theoretical assumption that culture is quantifiable, describable, and static. The point of traditional ethnography is to capture

and freeze-frame reality without acknowledging the power dynamics that produced that snapshot of a highly-curated research product. Performance ethnography challenges the production of knowledge from the traditional standpoint because traditional ethnographies can enable and perpetuate epistemic violence on those that are not in control of the modes of knowledge production.

In resistance to the use of traditional ethnography to colonize, performance ethnography struggles with the problem of representation. Specifically, performance ethnography grapples with the representation of the bodies encountered in the field and the chasm between representation and meaning in ethnographic texts. Performance ethnography, unlike traditional ethnography, is rooted in the critical paradigm. The trope of performance as both metaphor and observable phenomenon provided an innovative framework with which to rethink traditional ethnography in a postmodern moment. Phelan (1993) and Denzin (2003, 2005) agree that performance developed in tandem with the postmodern moment in the academy. As its starting point, performance ethnography begins at the fragmented, multiple, and contested meanings that postmodernity breaks open. Critical performance ethnography starts at the crossroads of theory and method, of difference and identity.

Performance ethnography is a field in which the trope of performance grounds and drives research praxis. Envisioned as an interdisciplinary response to positivism, as a methodology, performance ethnography resists ethnographic narratives that reinstitute colonizing hierarchies in its approach to theory, method, process, and product. Performance uniquely claims that identity, and identity markers, are always being constructed through performance. Performance as ethnographic theory and method makes

space for ethnographers to rethink traditional ethnography by challenging “the visualist bias of positivism with talk about voices, utterances, intonations, multivocality” (Conquergood, 1991, p. 183). Performance itself is a contested concept, which is under constant revision by those who employ it. Whereas traditional ethnography privileges the researcher’s omnipresent eye sans reflexively to position the researcher’s body, performance ethnography requires the peeling back of the layers of privilege that shroud the researcher’s voice and body and puts the co-performative situation of ethnographic research at the forefront of meaning. Traditional ethnography seeks to quantify and categorize the world whereas performance ethnography seeks to transform the world through co-performance and co-production of knowledge.

Conquergood (1984, 1991) claims that performance ethnography resists positivism in three ways that are at once both theoretical and methodological interventions. These interventions do not remove the implications of power from the body of research/researcher, but provide ways to reflexively think through power. The first thing that distinguishes performance ethnography from traditional ethnography is that it is dialogic. Performance ethnography recognizes that reality and the interpretation of reality is only made possible in conversation with the other, and so it struggles to hold up and open dialectics when it comes to inscribing meaning. This requires, as Conquergood (1991) notes, not operating from an *either/or* stance, but rather approaching meaning as polysemic, multivocal, *both/and*. In dialogic conversation, each party learns from each other and does not speak for or over one another (Conquergood, 1986).

The second methodological/theoretical intervention that distinguishes performance ethnography from traditional ethnography is its emphasis on embodiment

(Conquergood, 1986a). Informed by feminists of color, Conquergood (2002) claims that the body is a privileged site of knowledge. Focusing on embodiment in performance ethnography is an attempt to decenter the authority of textual representation and to resist the politics of who gets to write about whom. Performance ethnographers are expected to spend time in the field and to sensuously know what the everyday performance of life is like for the people with whom they do research. As Conquergood (1991) points out, ethnography utilizes fieldwork and, “doing fieldwork— requires getting one’s body immersed in the field for a period of time sufficient to enable one to participate inside that culture. Ethnography is an embodied practice; it is an intensely sensuous way of knowing” (p. 180). This is different from traditional ethnography, which treats the people that it does research with as subjects or specimen. The method of research in performance ethnography is participant observation instead of “objective” observation. Participation in another’s culture through embodiment means that the researcher is responsible to the people who co-create the ethnography with them. The focus on embodiment means that non-traditionally valued ways of knowing become privileged through a collapse of the mind-body dualism. Furthermore, this embodied approach to performance ethnography requires the researcher to reflexively position themselves in the field and attempts to hold them accountable for their representations.

Performance theory enables researchers to interpret the ways in which the effects of discourse are made real and/or accomplished through the symbolic communication of the body. As metaphor-cum-theory, performance ethnography offers ways to think subjectivity and agency as embodiment, difference, and resistance to a symbolic order. Specifically, in attending to the body, performance allows for researchers to deny that

identity is essential and/or innate. Feminist scholars, critical race scholars and queer theorists lean on performance to make this claim (Butler, 1988; hooks, 1984, 1990; Muñoz, 1999; Halualani, 2008; Halulani & Drzewieca, 2008; Johnson, 2001; Pathak, 2008; Moreman, 2008, 2009, 2011; Moreman & McIntosh, 2010). Locating identity in performance underscores that identity cannot be accomplished without another person. Schnieder (1997) asserts, “Performance implies an audience/performer or ritual participant relationship— a reciprocity, a practice in the constructions of cultural reality relative of its effects” (p. 22). Thus, culture, identity, and identification are ever-occurring performative processes in constitutive relation, recognition, and intelligibility. In the context of post-Yugoslav transition and the following analysis chapters, these identity processes become even clearer.

The third difference from traditional ethnography is that performance ethnography focuses on process (Conquergood, 1991). In performance ethnography, there is no final meaning and the text must not suggest otherwise. The resistance to closure stems from Turner’s (1988) theory of performance, which claims that since culture is produced through performance, culture is always changing and open to resignification in performance. Focusing on process is meant to reflexively guide the researcher to make ethically informed decisions by considering the meanings they co-create, their relationships to the participants, and their relationship to power. Performance ethnographers recognize that the meanings continue to change after the researcher leaves the field, after the paper is published, or the play’s curtain falls. Holding process as central to performance ethnography means that there is no finished text, final say, or ultimate truth.

Conquergood (1982) and Della Pollock (2006) claim that the writing process itself should utilize a performative approach that attempts to recreate dialogue between the representations on the page, the reader, the author, and the actual text. This process of writing/reading performance ethnography is intended to begin the process of critical dialogue through textual embodiment. I employ performative writing throughout my dissertation to resist the foreclosure of representation, since the realities experienced and expressed on the page are both ephemeral and changing. The next section focuses on how performance ethnography disrupts the mind-body dualism to orchestrates the performative convergences of theory and method.

2. Performance Studies as Praxis of Performance Ethnography

This methodological approach cannot be separated from the theoretical implications of the embodied execution of performance ethnography research. Conquergood (2002) claims, “Performance studies struggles to open the space between analysis and action, and to pull the pin on the binary opposition between theory and practice” (p. 145). Fusing the arbitrary distinction between theory and practice is the participating and researching body, which transgresses and straddles both sides of this binary. As Madison (2012) explains, “[Theory and method] are the same in that theory is used in ethnography as an *interpretive or analytical* method” (p.14). Madison and my understanding of the relationship between theory and method is strongly informed by Conquergood (1982a, 1982b, 1982c, 1983, 1984, 1986a, 1986b, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995, 2002). His work and influence in ethnography refocused researchers to consider a more performative approach to the process and product of ethnographic research by beginning research from the body. Conquergood (1991) explains, “Ethnography’s

distinctive research method, participant-observation fieldwork, privileges the body as a site of knowing” (p.180). This political epistemological move is located in the project of collapsing the hierarchy of logical/rational mind over wild/uncivilized body.

Privileging the body as a site of knowledge invokes the work of Moraga and Anzaldúa (1983a) who offer a “theory in the flesh” as a form of resistance to traditional modes of knowledge or “truth” by explaining the material effects discourses have on the body. More concisely, “A theory in the flesh means one where the physical realities of our lives— our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings— all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity” (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983, p.23). Specifically, turning to the body as an epistemological site causes researchers to ask which stories are privileged as intelligible in discourses that discount the body (or the incorrect body) as an illegitimate (feminine other) source of reality? Performance ethnography, as a corporeal methodology with epistemological claims, attempts to hold the body and mind in dialogical tension when constructing theory.

Madison (2005, 2012) further encourages ethnographers to think of theory and method as being implicitly linked to each other, claiming that they function as dialectics in the repertoire of the researcher. To explain this relationship Madison (2012) suggests, “Theory, when used as a mode of interpretation, *is* a method, yet it can be distinguished from method when a set of *concrete actions* grounded by a specific scene are required to complete a task” (p. 15). Yet, Conquergood (2002) warns, “The division of labor between theory and practice, abstraction and embodiment, is an arbitrary and rigged choice, and like all binarisms, it is booby-trapped” (p. 153). As a performance ethnographer, one must be cognizant that their physical relationship to the field and their research is always

already constitutive of the possible theoretical interpretations co-created with participants, both in the field and on the page. Since researchers cannot escape embodiment, performance scholars use their bodies to theorize the relational and embodied meanings made with participants in the field. Madison (2012) writes, “Ethnography becomes the ‘doing’ —or better, the performance— of critical theory” (p. 14). Doing critical theory requires ethnographers to expose hegemonic symbolic systems, and discourses of dominance. Conquergood (1991) explains, “Critical theory is committed to unveiling the political stakes that anchor cultural practices— research and scholarly practices no less than the everyday” (p. 179). Performance ethnography holds researchers accountable and responsible to the representations they produce not only because of a moral commitment to their participants, but because the researcher’s body is also implicated in the political stakes of the participant’s reality. The next section details some ethical heuristics of performance ethnography that guide my research in the dissertation.

3. Heuristics of Performance Ethnography

A dialogic approach to performance ethnography cracks open critical space for those who are oppressed by colonizing research to speak back to power. Although it is problematic that the researcher mediates the voice of the other, this approach resists traditional ethnography through dialogic production of knowledge. By insisting that performance ethnography be dialogic, the authority of the researcher to determine the other is called into question as part and parcel of the performance ethnography. Performance ethnography as dialogic requires that the researcher be accountable for their

representation of the other by bringing back their research and engaging in continual dialogue with the ethnographic participants.

Through the resistance to positivism, and within the call to reflexivity, one must also recognize that good intentions with regard to the “other” are not enough to prevent ethical quagmires that reproduce epistemic violence. In his article “Performing as a Moral Act” (1982), Conquergood outlines four ethical pitfalls of performance ethnography as a methodological heuristic for performance ethnographers. These ethical dilemmas are set between the dialogic tensions of identity and difference as well as commitment and distance. In the center is the ethical goal to achieve dialogic performance or genuine conversation. Unethical research uses participants for its own gains, whereas ethical research keeps of these impulses in tension with each other, aiming to enable conditions for dialogic meanings and understandings.

My approach to postsocialist gendered realities in Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia is guided by the performance ethnography heuristic of reflexivity. Specifically, I see myself as employing a blended feminist and performance ethnographic approach to reflexivity. I situate myself within the field and I critically analyze the realities co-produced in moments of performative interview or deep hanging out (Madison, 1993,1998; Madison & Hamera, 2006) as fundamentally influenced by the intersections of my identity and embodiment as they come into contact with the women who participated in my ethnography. Conquergood (1982c) explains, “[the ethnographer] respects the Difference of the other enough to question and make vulnerable her own a priori assumptions. When we have a true respect for the difference of other cultures, then we grant them the potential for challenging our own culture” (p. 9). I add feminist

reflexivity to the reflexive impulse in performance ethnography specifically because a feminist ethic of reflexivity requires that the researcher do member checks by bringing the research back to the community (Alcoff, 1991; Gluck & Patai, 1991; Ellis 2009; Golombisky, 2006; Golombisky & Holtzhausen, 2005; Madison, 1993).

Starting from a critical paradigm that takes performance ethnography as methodology means that my dissertation aims to evoke performative relation between myself and the reader and it requires that I enter the field not as distanced observer but as a participant within the culture that I represent. My goal is to critique structures that marginalize and oppress women within Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia while maintaining that I cannot speak for them. Performance and performance ethnography has the power to re-open the field of representation that structures our perceptions of reality. I employ performance ethnography to resist dominant regimes of power that only allow one version of reality to be heard or seen. The next section expands on my co-performative understanding of research by explaining my approach to autoethnography.

D. Autoethnography and the Researcher/Researched

Autoethnography assumes that culture performatively manifests on our bodies and asks how the body of the researcher negotiates this power on the page in in their research. This section traces the theorization of the researcher/researched and the collapse of the subject/object within autoethnography. Specifically, I explain how autoethnography is a decolonial methodology that operates from a social justice perspective. Centering the body and gaze of the researcher as the object of inquiry is an attempt to decolonize knowledge production. I claim that by employing a heuristic of

reflexivity, autoethnography seriously considers how the gaze of the researcher as co-constructing knowledge.

Autoethnography considers the ways in which the self is implicated in culture as well as positioned within relations of power. Operating from the assumption that there is no form of self-representation that does not implicate the cultural context from which it is wrought, autoethnography blurs of the distinction between the subject and object of inquiry and the researcher/researched. Autoethnographers claim that there is no such thing as a clear separation between the researcher, the analysis, and the thing analyzed. The separation of the other from the self in the write up of ethnography is an illusion to maintain power.

Trinh (1989) explains the impossibility of objectivity, or distinction in self/other, in research through her use of i/I. She explains, for instance, that one cannot write without implicating the other. In an attempt to represent oneself, there is no escape from the embeddedness of the speaking I of authority and individuality always already implicated the unsaid or unspeakable i of experience. Autoethnographic writing mirrors the moment of subject formation (mentioned in the above sections of this chapter and more explicitly in Chapter five). Experience itself cannot be spoken or written without the other precisely because reality is co-created and co-performed with and through the other.

Similarly, Phelan (1993), explains that there is no looking that does not at once implicate the looker in what is seen. Whereas traditional ethnography may claim to describe objectively the happenings of the cultural other in a particular cultural context, autoethnography takes the radical standpoint that there is no representation of the other

that is not simultaneously a representation of self. While there are certain identities and bodies that have been normalized and idealized by the imperialism of Western European powers, the point of autoethnography is to disrupt the determining power of a habituated Western European gaze. The critique at the heart of autoethnography is to make strange the ways in which reverberations of power are deployed (often times violently, and regularly epistemically) to mark and produce the other (Diversi & Moreira, 2009). Further, Phelan (1993) explains that there is no form of representation in which the marked does not implicate the invisible. This means not only that representations of the other in traditional ethnography are already always shot through with the limiting gaze of the ethnographer, but that the disciplined body of the ethnographer must be marked as well.

Pulling from the work of third world feminist scholars, like performance ethnography, autoethnography privileges the body as a site of knowledge. Specifically inspired by the daily negotiations of power as it realized through the body in performative and intersectional embodiment, autoethnographers critically come to terms with the ways in which these identities bear themselves out in and with the self/other. Part of the impulse to collapse this divide (self/other, mind/body) is based in experience and the realization that representations of the other (self) often tell a story, which benefits imperialist regimes of knowledge. Trinh (1989) explains, “For if you don’t [tell your story], they will not fail to fill in the blanks on your behalf, and you will be said” (p.80). The dissertation attempts to speak my story in conversation with the people and culture from which it has been wrought. The next section discusses how autoethnography is a political project to decolonize.

1. Writing Autoethnography to Decolonize

Autoethnographers write in an evocative manner in order to implicate the reader in their story. Trinh (1989) explains that in order to make this connection one must attempt to empty oneself out onto the page. There is a sort of performative experience that is at work in the production and reading of autoethnographic texts wherein the autoethnographer calls out to the reader to build and transform community. Calafell (2007) explains that autoethnographic work starts from the body to affirm shared lived experience and then attempts to transform experience through communal coalition. The process of representing the self, a self that has been historically represented as other by way of race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, as well as claiming that this writing self implicates the reading body of the other—is a move to reimagine and resist the colonization of bodies within regimes of power (Calafell, 2007; Trinh, 1989; Moreira & Diversi, 2011; Anzaldúa, 2012).

Trinh (1998) and Sandoval (2000) remind those writing autoethnography that any text that does not attempt to critique the mode of representation one employs in writing the body is complicit with the oppressor. These feminists claim their corporeal experiences of marginalization, pain, oppression, and dispossession as integral to their theories of the flesh (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983)—which are the source of their survival within the world and within academia. These feminists also claim that the representation of their experience cannot be secured by traditional textual forms, nor traditional (colonizing) theoretical explanations that eschew their bodies and voice from the textual record in preference of disembodied theory. They advocate the necessity to speak from their bodies in order to imagine worlds outside of marginalized experience as well as to

critique their realities and finally to disrupt the determination of their bodies. Sandoval (2000) explains that the resistance to naturalization of hegemonic ideology through continual shifting or repositioning (of identity) is crucial to survival within that context. Sandoval (2000) reclaims her experience of dispossession as the experiential training necessary to developing oppositional consciousness needed in the work of decolonization. The next section explains a few strategies and techniques that realize autoethnography as a project of institutional decolonization and critique.

2. Autoethnography as Institutional Resistance

For third world feminists calling for the collapse of the mind and body divide on the page of the ethnographic text, decolonization is not so much about a movement from the margin of the academy to the center, but more about the troubling of the disciplinary boundaries that police the personal out of the center (Lorde, 2007). They aim to expose the invisible centrality of the personal and how it becomes normalized under the misnomer of objectivity through the production of knowledge. Writing through my experience and making my positionality explicit is an attempt to resist colonizing logic. Writing about myself decolonizes by questioning who has the authority to write about whom. This theoretical movement from the body to the critique of structures of power is a hallmark of autoethnography.

However, Hill Collins (2000) notes, she is also within the institution; she works there and has been trained there. She claims that this split consciousness from the experience of inside/outside; a type of embodiment experienced by many women of color within the academy is not a detriment but an asset to her praxis. Hill Collins (2000) explains that because of her specific experience as a black woman, she can formulate

critiques of the institution that those who feel at home cannot. Yet, she does not say that the insider/outsider position can only be claimed by black women, she explains that those that are made to feel marginalized within the academy perhaps have access to a standpoint which allows them to critique the academy while working within it. As a woman researching and sojourning to Montenegro, I occupy a similar insider/outsider position as a US citizen with Montenegrin ethnicity.

Spry (2011) notes that autoethnography is invested in the critique of the structural and how these (both material and discursive) structures of power manifest specific lived realities. An “autoethnography” that does not critique systems of power nor aim to disrupt consolidated systems of power is not autoethnography. Denzin (2003) explains that some of the goals of autoethnography are 1. Decolonization, 2. Healing 3. Transformation (Social and Political) 4. Mobilization (p. 246). By writing one’s story, one can begin to come to terms with the meanings invested in their own identity and start to heal the pain of the experience. I expand upon this goal in Chapter five and briefly in the Conclusion Chapter. In its very praxis, by way of turning the gaze back upon itself, autoethnography grasps at the project of decolonization both in the academy and more largely in the field of representation. Thirdly, a performance autoethnography does not shy away from a political commitment to change the world. As Holman Jones (2005) explains, there is no story that is not political. Autoethnography is an intervention that takes the personal and deploys it as an evocative, embodied, artful, attempt to shift from dehumanization toward relationality.

While my positionality within the academy oscillates between (dis)privilege and (disem)power(ment) as a white straight middleclass woman, my body is often imbued

with more power and privilege than not. I often return to the call for reflexivity as a strategy of resistance within autoethnography. In thinking about my own project, I am frequently reminded that reflexivity in research (or a listing of one's positionality) is not enough to transform reality or to transgress disciplinary inculcation. The contrived list of one's positionality as a disclaimer and evidence of reflexivity employed by scholars in the 1990s no longer is due diligence nor does it prevent one from reproducing familiar colonizing operations of power. However, my attempt at decolonizing the academy is to remain vigilant in critique through oppositional consciousness. I critique the methods of ethnography while using them and am critical of my researching gaze, and in the following chapters I indicate the ways in which my body is implicated (and co-creates) in the story through vignettes or the use of the first-person. Most importantly, in my project, rooted in performance ethnography resists the textual closure of representation of the other by implicating myself in as an other while acknowledging that my representations are never final—neither for myself nor the participants in my study. The next chapter employs performance ethnography to theorize women's roles in the tourism industry of Montenegro.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSITIONING PROPERTIES OF GENDER IN POSTSOCIALIST MONTENEGRIN TOURISM: A FEMINIST PERFORMANCE ETHNOGRAPHY

They often say, if you enter fieldwork looking for something, you find it. Today wasn't an oddity but rather striking in how many times I saw the often invisible labor of women in Montenegro's seaside tourism industry. Leaving my tourist rental apartment, the maid greeted me with pleasantries while noting that I was too pale and advised that I get to sea for my health, the Mother of the male owner of the rental shouted to me while watering her flowers, "You will find a good big Montenegrin man today mali naša (little ours)," and a woman in an orange jumpsuit carrying a toilet brush at my favorite cafe interrupted my writing by tapping on my shoulder and saying "study hard djevojka (little girl)" with a wink. Carefully worrying about why these women decided to give me advice today, I walked to one of the first tourist resorts in the former Yugoslavia: Slovenska Plaža and decided to take the hidden beach-path behind the resort. Grumbling to myself and walking quickly, I ran into four women with gray hair in white smocks. They were hunched over and sweeping the path with brooms made from dried switches. I apologized for getting in their way, and told them I was headed to the sea "for my health" they looked at me confused then laughed.

Tourism on the Adriatic coast of the former Yugoslavia has maintained its old-world glamour from socialism through its transition to capitalism. To the nascent observer, there is something whimsical about old pictures of actress Sofia Lauren visiting a farmer's market next to Montenegrin women vendors in traditional dress, or old images of brutalist socialist architecture dotted with former President Josip Broz Tito's lavish posse. From modern infinity swimming pools overlooking cobblestone walled cities, to private island villas closed to the public but visited by Beyoncé and Angelina Jolie, these visible contradictions are emblematic of the larger cultural trends and historical residue that make tourism in the former Yugoslav state of Montenegro thrive. Integral to the survival of the tourism industry is the precarious and gendered division of labor upon which capitalism and nation rest. The tourism industry in Montenegro operates primarily through private foreign ownership, local management, and the monetization of women's domestic labor which has economically sustained Montenegro since socialism. This

chapter argues that Montenegrin tourism depends on gendered property relations of postsocialist global capitalism.

At the end of Soviet socialism in 1989, it was clear that Yugoslav socialism would also soon come to an end. Since Yugoslavia practiced a blended form of socialism with a relatively open market economy, it was primed for capitalism in ways that other socialist countries were not (Poznański, 1995). Yugoslavia's open market tourism industry on the coast capitalized on its natural resources during socialism and after. Even though tourism in Yugoslavia in the 1980s generated more profits than the rest of Eastern European tourism combined (Popescu, & Hall, 2004), as Woodward (1995) explains, Yugoslavia in the 1980s also registered the highest unemployment in all of Europe. High unemployment and a booming tourism industry was just one of the many paradoxes that accelerated the demise of Yugoslavia, and is a paradox that haunts Montenegro today. Severe economic depression, extraordinarily high unemployment, and the death of Tito are often named as the loci of Yugoslavia's destruction (Ramet, 2005). The precarity of unemployment, coupled with federal allotment of Yugoslav monies to certain republics instead of others increased national, ethnic, and gender tensions which culminated in the end of socialism and exploded in the Bosnian War of the 1990s.

Although Yugoslavia was not part of the Soviet Bloc, the end of the Cold War had consequences for all Eastern Europe and was especially consequential for the regional practice of socialism. Specifically, the fall of the Berlin Wall marked the beginning of a postsocialist global condition (Shih, 2012; Atanasoski, 2013). More than a temporal marker of "The End of History" (Fukuyama, 1989) or of the uncontested triumph of a new world order under global capitalism (as a misnomer for democracy),

postsocialist scholars have begun to interrogate the possibilities of postsocialism as a praxis of critique. Although Scott (1974) warned that socialism would not liberate women more than ten years prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the material consequences of postsocialism require US socialist feminists to again reconsider their transnational theorization of women's liberation. To think through this global moment and rupture, theoretical models must be revisited and revamped to address contemporary concerns and experiences of transition (Ghodsee, 2010; 2011; Fraser, 1997). The "dual-oppressions" of patriarchy and capitalism, a phrase made useful by the socialist feminism of the 1970s, is made explicit in the violent developmental socioeconomic transition. Fraser (1997), writing from a US perspective after the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe, asks how to rectify the socialist imaginary, the Left, and socialist feminism in the face of the unequivocal failure of these really existing socialist projects. Fraser (1997) asserts that the solution lies in an approach that oscillates between the material and symbolic to theorize new ways out of capitalist oppression by offering "redistribution" and "recognition" as central to amending the broken socialist feminist project. Building on Fraser (1997) I begin from women's experiences of postsocialism to understand what transition means for women in the postsocialist former Yugoslav country of Montenegro.

In order to analyze women's position in transition I ethnographically studied women working in the tourism industry in postsocialist Montenegro. Since tourism accounts for the largest part of Montenegro's economy and because the industry predominantly employs women, it is a good place to analyze women's postsocialist relationships to gender, labor, and nation. Balkan postsocialist scholar, Ghodsee (2005), claims that tourism is unique in that women have been able to support their families by

retaining steady employment in the transition from socialism to capitalism. Feminist tourism scholars claim that women's employment in tourism is often made possible through feminization of the industry in general (Kinnaird, Kothari & Hall, 1994). Despite the persistence of the sexual division of labor, tourism has provided some stability and empowerment for some women in some postsocialist countries (Jordan, 1997; Ghodsee, 2005). In Montenegro, women often find agency in their more traditional roles as mothers through the sexual division of labor. Yugoslavia's legacy of tourism has implications for Montenegrin national identity and the gendered labor of tourism.

Central to the frame of my study of national identity and gender are the shifting meanings of property and property ownership in the transition from socialism to capitalism. The polysemic meanings of property under each socioeconomic system has had and continues to have effects on women by marking them as property, conduits for property, or as unable to claim, own, or inherit property. My analysis hinges itself on the trope of property to theorize women's experience by rethinking the socialist feminism of the 1970s. Tending to the ways in which the trope of property enacts the frame of transition, I claim that critiquing property offers resistance to the gendered violence of liberal capitalism. Centering property relations and ownership in the redistributive process of transition traces how transition eliminates communal property and institutes hierarchies of value aligned with gendered private ownership (Verdery, 2004). My performance ethnography begins the work of untangling how material and symbolic property ownership in transition structures the possibilities of nation, gender, and these relationships to labor within the context of tourism.

I analyze women's experiences in the tourism industry to come to terms with the expectations and opportunities for women at home and at work in postsocialist transition. I am specifically concerned with how the relationships of women to and of property in transition produce the gendered nation in tourism. In what follows, I analyze how property ownership affixes itself to the body, to labor, and to nation. First, I offer a brief Marxist genealogy with socialist feminist interventions to mobilize the trope of property. Secondly, I articulate women's position in socialism and transition by contrasting postsocialist feminist analyses of women's work in transition. Next, I outline my methodological approach, performance ethnography, and detail my time spent in the field. Then, I provide my analysis which focuses on how performances of gender in the tourism industry emanate from the relationships of gender to property in male ownership of landed property, the relationship of property to women's bodies, and women as sexual property. Throughout this essay, I employ vignettes to contextualize the reflexive presence of my researching body in the field and to emphasize the contours of co-performed gender in my interviews in Montenegro. The next section briefly articulates a genealogy of property in Marxist and socialist feminist theory.

A. Property of the Nation and National Ownership

The conceptualization of private property and its subsequent abolition is heavily trodden ground for scholars that imagine socialism as a socioeconomic alternative to capitalism. Pegged as the totem evil within a capitalist market, the elimination of private property is viewed as the key to socialist revolution and often general human equality. Private property is a material and discursive trope that is employed to analyze society and history as structured by class imagined through ownership and labor. While Marx,

Engels, and Bebel, for example, point to the gendered ways in which private property functions to structure a division of labor between the sexes—going so far as to claim that a woman within capitalism is a domestic slave—their theorization of private property as an exclusively gendered phenomenon is lacking. deBeauvoir (2010), an early socialist feminist, explains that we cannot ignore the ways in which the gendering of the female body precedes women’s relationship to labor within patriarchal societies. Fruitful analysis of the convergence of private property/capitalism/women’s oppression takes hold when feminists theorize women’s experiences in capitalism by combining Marxist and Feminist theory.

Out of this “Unhappy Marriage” (Hartmann, 1997) of Marxism and Feminism is Socialist Feminism of the 1970s, which is better able to grapple with the task of theorizing and realizing women’s emancipation. Socialist feminist contributions to the theorization of private property do not offer one size fits all emancipatory rhetoric, but rather, explain that the dual systems of patriarchy and capitalism must be addressed together to see both women and men’s emancipation. Socialist feminists explain that there exists no form of capitalism that is not founded in male dominance. They argue that patriarchy and capitalism form a nexus of oppressions that produce racism, colonialism, and heterosexism by continually reproducing the slave/master and worker/owner dynamic (Radical Lesbians, 1997; The Combahee River Collective, 1997). Chodorow (1979) explains that in late capitalist societies, the psychic and physical labor of mothering reproduce capitalism and labor. Interrogating theory itself, Rubin (1997) claims that blending Marxism and Feminism is only possible when one takes for granted that society is heteronormative. Rubin explains that the heterosexist lynchpin inherent to

both Marxist and Feminist Socialist conceptualizations of women's emancipation redeploys the biological imperative to naturalize women's role as human and labor reproducer. As long as women are tied to the reproductive role, culturally or "naturally," their emancipation will not be realized through feminism or socialism.

While socialism imagined itself to exist independent of patriarchal structures of power, in the end, many of the socialist nations became systems of patriarchal socialism (Ramet, 1999; Rai, Pilkington & Phizacklea, 1992; Gal & Kligman, 2000). Western-based and specifically US socialist feminists tried to explain away these patriarchal leftovers by insisting that socialist revolution was not accompanied by a sufficient autonomous feminist movement (Ferguson, 1989; Funk, 1993; 2007; Fraser, 1997). While an autonomous feminist movement might have produced more egalitarian socialisms in Eastern Europe, this US-based feminist analysis silences those who did organize during socialism and after. Prescriptive socialist feminist critique of the postsocialist condition ignore the lived experiences of women in postsocialist countries and redeploy three-world metacartographies that privilege first world power and expertise. I consider it naïve to assume that socialist feminist politics are enough in our global postsocialist condition, however, I concede and argue that a heuristic of socialist feminism is integral to theorizing postsocialism and women's emancipation within postsocialist global capitalism. I approach this project by starting from the body and its symbolic and material relationship to property and ownership.

My analysis of property is divided into three categories that have been drawn for thematic ease, but often overlap in their conception and how they are experienced. The themes are; property ownership as foreign and masculine, property of the (reproductive)

body, and the labor and services produced by women commodified as sexual property sold in tourism. These intersecting forms of material and discursive property are inflected through embodied performances of gender and nationality within the tourism sector. Property disciplines the feminine in Montenegro, at times rendering those marked feminine as non-human property.

Property remains integral to imagining agency within these spaces of neoliberal capitalism because it keeps bodies docile to/for recognition. As Rose (2004) explains, “property is making a claim *that others recognize*” (p. 279). Recognition is a relation of the self to an other, and the conditions of recognition exist before the unified individual subject emerges. Property ownership is the condition for recognition as a human and this precondition is always already racialized and gendered. Liberal (Western, US, and first world) epistemologies claim a person (or a free person) is one who owns their own body (property) (Weheliye, 2014). Analogies of person to property teleologically lock theory in capitalist discourses of commodity which allocate gendered, racialized hierarchies in favor of androcentric ontologies of the individual that refuse relational perspectives of the human. My goal, then, is to argue the relational aspect of property and property ownership as the fundamental component of postsocialist global capitalism as well as a rallying point for feminist politics and coalition. In the next section, I trace women’s relationship to labor in socialism and transition.

B. Women in Socialism and Transition

Socialists argued that bringing women into the public sphere as workers, combined with the socialization of domestic tasks, was key to emancipating women from the drudgery of the private sphere (Engels, 2010). Under socialism, women flooded the

public sphere but were put to work in positions that replicated the sexual division of labor produced in private. Women's visibility in the workforce allowed politicians and citizens to claim that women were emancipated (Ghodsee, 2012). The assumption was that socialism made people equal in their identities as workers, however, no effort was made to challenge pre-socialist patriarchal gender roles (Glass, 2008; Ghodsee, 2003; 2004; Papić, 1999). Indeed, women were not the androcentric workers as imagined by Marx, and therefore, entered the workforce under different conditions than men (deBeauvoir, 2010). For instance, women were not allowed to work in jobs that compromised their reproductive organs, but men could work with no concern over their reproductive potential. Women's bodies were policed through what appeared to be progressive state-sponsored socialization policy (maternity leave, child subsidies, public laundry) that managed the sexual division of labor by rewarding it (Einhorn & Server, 2003; Duhaček, 1993).

Socialized domestic safety nets (Ghodsee, 2012) were good for creating the *conditions* needed for women's emancipation, but fell short by maintaining an essentialist view of women's purpose and value. Social provisions, thus, were hinged on women's identities as mothers—where motherhood was imagined as the validation of female citizenship— and babies were the state-sponsored property of the nation. Linking citizenship and value to women's reproductive bodies, socialist agendas reinforced a biological essentialism that fixed the meanings and possible meanings/significations of the female body as always already tied to reproduction in a heterosexist patriarchal discourse. Furthermore, most socialist countries provided subsidies for children. These subsidies reinforced the naturalization of women as reproducer and anchored her

(usefulness) value to the private sphere.

Even though child subsidies functioned as the literal payment for the property manifested through labor of the female body, it is also true that socialists did more than any other party during this time to secure specific social provisions through generous policy for mothers (Ramet, 1999; Dasklova, 2007; Havelková, 1993). Guaranteed maternity leave was one way in which the state could say it had women's best interest in mind, but in practice, it was compensation for national duty at the service of men. The more babies that a woman had (surplus value), the more their family would be paid by the government (Corrin, 1999). Additionally, since women do not inherit property and bloodlines are strictly patrilineal, women are dispossessed of their property-bearing children after birth. In Yugoslavia, families were paid more for male babies or "future defenders of the nation" than female babies (Einhorn, 1994, p. 121). Incentive programs fueled male autonomy and tethered women to the private sphere by gendering of care-intensive labor and service feminine and female.

When socialism "fell" there was an upheaval in every aspect of life during privatization and decentralization projects. Women immediately disappeared from the public sphere, were fired en-masse, political propaganda urged women to "return" home, and women simply made the choice to be with their family—the source of their political agency. During this time, in most postsocialist countries, women's unemployment was exponentially higher than men's (Glass, 2008; Margit, 2007) except in the feminized tourism industry where women remain employed (Ghodsee, 2005). Female employment in tourism is odd because women workers and their vulnerable pregnant bodies were no longer preferable in a capitalist market absent state mandate to employ them. The

socialization of domestic tasks evaporated overnight and socialist provisions of maternity leave no longer existed but now depended on the attitudes of new private owners. This precarity fostered dependence on male family members for economic survival in the crisis of transition. Einhorn's (1998) ethnography in the former Yugoslavia is demonstrative of the extreme male privilege when a Yugoslav woman asks Einhorn rhetorically, "How should I want to get a job when men cannot even get a job in this country?" (p. 25). Male preference and privilege in work is not new, but is clarified in the focusing powers of socioeconomic transition to capitalism which is always already undergird by gendered precarity.

Transition marks the importance of property to structuring new ruling classes in the former Yugoslavia. When privatization begins, and communal property is dissolved, life becomes unpredictable absent guaranteed labor, land, or capital. Hyperinflation, mass unemployment, and the Bosnian War of the 1990s make property ownership integral to experiences of stability or dispossession. Butler and Athanasiou (2013) explain that precarity is the process or experience of being dispossessed of the material conditions needed for a livable life, such as: food, water, land, homes, and citizenship, but also explain that precarity is a result of the condition of being dispossessed that affects social relation and belonging. Thus, we can understand "Economic precarity in the form of temporary, low-paying, and insecure jobs, in combination with cuts to welfare provision and expropriation of public education and health institutions" that affect social relations and makes people vulnerable to exploitation and injury (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p.11). In the former Yugoslavia, the flows of property ownership and dispossession affect and effect the gendered assignment and experience of precarity. The violent development

of capitalism in the former Yugoslavia clarifies how private property ownership operates as the manifestation of power that relationally animate nationalist, ethnic, and gendered discourses of identity and self. The next section explains my methodological approach to identity, performance, and postsocialism.

C. Performance Ethnography and Postsocialist Relationality

As metaphor-cum-theory, performance ethnography offers ways to think subjectivity and agency as embodiment, difference, and resistance to symbolic orders. Performance ethnography uniquely claims that local knowledge or truth is co-produced through the corporeal body as it engages in communication with others (Conquergood, 1982; 1983; 1986;1991; 1992; 2002). This approach grapples with the representation of the bodies encountered in the field and the chasm between representation and meaning on the page. As its starting point, performance ethnography contends with the fragmented, multiple, and contested meanings that postmodernity breaks open (Phelan, 1993; Denzin, 2003). Resisting foreclosure of meaning and focusing on the reflexive process of research are now hallmarks of performance ethnography. Doing performance ethnography in Montenegro requires me to consider my positionality as a US researcher.

The ghosts of socialism, the 1990s Bosnian genocide, and US-led NATO bombardment haunt the possibilities of meanings at the intersections of gender and nation as well as the possibilities of meaning in the context of participant observation and interview in the former Yugoslavia. Like Hall (1996; 2000; 2010), Anzaldúa (2012), Butler (2016), and hooks (1984) explain, cultural identities are always already caught up with the other. In the postsocialist context it is imperative to consider the rigged binarisms of Cold War rhetoric and acknowledge that the first and second world

performatively co-constitute each other (Suchland, 2011). Shih (2012) explains that we must approach the “‘Post’ in postsocialism in its polysemous implications not only of ‘after,’ ‘against,’ and ‘in reaction to’ but also of ‘ineluctably connected to’ and ‘as a consequence of,’” to understand how Cold War subject positions still affect identity in the US and in postsocialist spaces (p. 42). I use performance ethnography’s co-performative perspective to argue for a relational approach to postsocialism and global capitalism.

To articulate this relational approach, I employ postcolonial and poststructural theory in the postsocialist context to argue we cannot have one without the other— just as there can be no me without you (Butler, 2015), no I without i (Trinh, 1989), no nosotros without nos and otros (Anzaldúa, 2012). Butler (2005) explains that recognition of the ontological relationality between the self and the other is integral to deconstructing possessive and hegemonic individualism. Butler claims that we must “Vacate the self sufficient ‘I’ as a kind of possession” (p. 136). I argue that we extend the radically relational “I” (self/other) constituted through (performative, linguistic, dialogic) power-laden recognition systems. The “I” relationship is always already structured by tautological self-authorship and corporeal self-ownership— where the self (subject) is only a self in its relation to property ownership. The recognition of the other as necessary to the self is bounded in historical effects of individualist ideologies of the colonizing, racializing, gendering discourses of liberalism central to capitalism, which, are never free of the reverberating effects of their slave/master dynamic.

Paying attention to the meanings forged out of these moments, I¹ am interested in the degrees of corporeal ownership over one's body, over one's bodily labor, and of material property. Conquergood (2002), informed by feminists of color, acknowledges that the body is a privileged site of knowing, or, as Moraga and Anzaldúa (1983) explain, "A theory in the flesh." Performance ethnographers spend time in the field and corporeally participate in everyday rituals of life with people with whom they do research (Conquergood, 1991). I critically analyze the reality co-produced in moments of performative interview as fundamentally influenced by the intersections of my and the participants' embodied identities (Madison, 1998; 2012; Madison & Hamera, 2006). Next I discuss my method, ethnographic context, and describe the participants.

D. Performance Ethnography and Postsocialist Montenegro

Capitalizing on Montenegro's idyllic coastline, Budva's old walled city on the beach incorporates the tourism of socialist past whilst encountering the changing meanings of transnational tourism in the present. Officially recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Budva undergoes future-oriented change by way of intercultural exchange. Tourism in Montenegro has gone through four distinct phases. According to Ane, a professor of tourism,

The 1st phase is something we can call WWII tourism and it operated through the family. There was predominantly family run businesses and quasi hotels and mostly family and friends that came from other former Yugoslav spaces. The 2nd phase starts in 1962, when the first hotel opened in Montenegro. It was a big era of communist work and many Western European officers came here to get married. The 3rd phase happens after the last war of the 1990s, when many hotels closed and it was debatable who the owners were. During this time, the mob

¹ I use the first person I throughout to make my body present as a co-producer and co-performer in the ethnographic scene and on the page.

would take hotels from families and from people and then stall the development because nobody really knew who was in charge. In the 1990s there were international sanctions because we were still in a union with Serbia. However, friends in the international community and politicians from each respective country were happy to vacation in Slovenska Plaža. Western European tourism as well as the Euro itself lost a lot of value during that period. It was a whole decade of inflation and unemployment. The 4th Phase, beginning in 2000 and especially 2008 [after Montenegrin independence in 2006], is when tourism becomes more internationalized. Lots of people began to vacation in Montenegro, mostly Ruskis.

While Montenegro's geopolitical changes have affected the local practice of tourism, what remains consistent is high female employment and the feminization of the labor in tourism. I traveled to Montenegro in the summer of 2016 to study these geopolitical effects on Montenegrin women working in tourism. As a fourth-generation Montenegrin American with ancestral ties to Budva, who previously lived and researched in Montenegro on a year-long grant, my researcher position is complicated by my ethnic insider/outsider status (Hill-Collins, 2008). At times, I could pass as Montenegrin, and this simultaneously granted me varying access to insider cultural knowledge and located me as a US citizen/tourist. Building on my previous experience conducting ethnography in Montenegro, I met most of the participants using word-of-mouth referrals from friends. My research agenda and semi-structured interview questions emerged from my immersion in Budva's tourism culture. I spent three months in Budva with a rotating schedule dedicated participant observation, interview, and transcription. Modeled after feminist organizational communication research (Ashcraft, 2000) and feminist tourism performance ethnography research (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998), I observed women in their workplaces and held informal interviews with them. The interviews typically lasted one to three hours. I interviewed twelve women and two men whose jobs included professors, tourism students, government workers, hotel managers, massage therapists,

tour-guides, Air BnB hosts, maids, and bartenders, souvenir shop workers, and restaurant workers.

The initial findings permitted me to focus on how discourses of property in and around tourism produce Montenegrin performances of gender. I asked participants questions such as: “How has tourism changed in the past few years and since the transition? What is it like to be a woman in this industry? Who owns the place where you work?” Throughout my stay in Montenegro I performed member-checks with participants to clarify my findings and ask for feedback (Gluck & Patai, 1991). All the participant names have been changed to protect their identity and preserve anonymity. Although the sample size is not large, the participants’ explanations of their experiences have wide reaching implications for the theorization of postsocialist gender and socialist feminism. In what follows, I analyze tourism in Montenegro by theorizing women’s relation to national conceptions of property.

E. Foreign Male Ownership of Property

I ride a bus to the capital to meet with old friends and interview women going to school for tourism. I was greeted by one of my best friends who recently bought a car and we drove to her apartment for lunch prepared by her mother. Since Tito’s time, her parents have lived in the same three-room apartment. My friend, in her late twenties, still sleeps in her childhood bed. Her sister shared this bed until she got married and moved out last year. Their grandmother also lives in the apartment. I am greeted with kisses while my friend’s mom asks, “How is Budva? Because it is way too expensive for us. Is it manageable for you?”

The former Yugoslavia began the transition from socialism to capitalism almost thirty years ago. Although some of the women I spoke with were not yet alive to experience the “shock therapy” (Poznański, 1995) of transition, their identities are made possible in and through the histories that precede them and continue to affect the possibilities of identity in the future. Montenegro’s independence and subsequent

recognition as a sovereign nation in 2006 was another step in the elongated transition to (late/advanced) capitalism via discourses of development couched in modernity, liberalism, and the promise of economic prosperity. Everyone I spoke to made it explicit that Montenegro was still in a state of transition. All industry is motivated toward development with the goal of becoming a developed (first world) nation and recognized as such. Like other Eastern European nations, the transition is accompanied by increased precarity and dispossession through privatization (Verdery, 2004).

When landed communal property was returned to its pre-socialist tribal patriarchal owners, these owners found themselves unemployed and without the capital to farm or cultivate tourism on their own land (Alexandar, 2004). Economically depressed communities and families sold their land to foreign venture capitalists to survive hyperinflation, unemployment, and uncertain development in transition. After these lands were parceled and sold for pittances, the new foreign owners developed the spaces for tourism and specifically sought to employ local managers and staff to run the new tourism establishments. The experience of losing one's landed property and then being made to work on it was common for many Montenegrin people. My argument is that this dispossession is gendered feminine and is emblematic of women's experience in transition in Montenegro. One woman restaurant worker explained,

It [transition and foreign investment] was happy in the beginning but now it is not so happy because Russians own the property with no connection to the land. There was lots of money laundering to purchase the land and the government doesn't give a shit because they were already dealing with hyperinflation, so whatever way they [the government] procure the money, just as long as they procure the money, they don't care.

This response shows how the transition to capitalism was framed as a positive process to create new property owners, but ended up consolidating ownership among men who had

capital and landed-property to exchange. Like Atanoski's (2013) analysis of soviet transition, Montenegrin transition also saw a time of lawlessness analogous to Russia's Wild-Wild-East that was accompanied by the violence the metaphor implies. Another participant explains that the transition was, "A kleptomaniacs' transition" wherein confusion and contradiction over property ownership allowed government to sanction the foreign takeover of tourism in exchange for short-term profit. As one participant explained, "Foreign owners can own land but it must be 100 meters from the beach because that 100 meters is public land. But, if you have money you can buy whatever you want." The understanding and voicing of the fact that money will open all doors is common parlance in Montenegro. While there have been efforts to reduce corruption, most participants are clear about the role money (as property/capital) plays in determining the hierarchy of power in tourism and specifically in transition. A professor of tourism remarked,

We rely on the private sector and private investors and they get our best resources for so cheap. We need to be more strategic. Tourism in itself is not helpful. There are low taxes for investors, actually the lowest taxes in the nation are for investors, and to top this all off there is zero documentation and so we get horribly corrupt investors.

However, not all agree with the above sentiment. Many of my participants are under the impression that what is needed is Adam Smith's invisible hand and real market competition. It should be noted that the term foreign investors always already implies male ownership. For Andreja, a 24-year-old student working on her PhD in tourism,

The solution to slow economic growth is tourism management by foreign capitalist investors. Perhaps a unique way to improve this is to show the importance of the hotel industry to the government and when we get big chains into the country this can force our tourism sector to improve and get better at regulation and protection of workers. We need real capitalism and real competition.

The transition has caused socialist nostalgia (Todorova& Gille, 2010) for some and socialist rejection for others. In Andreja's answer, she rejects the socialist past in favor of developing the modern capitalist future. Others complained that the transition has caused undetermined futures where planned economies used to dictate career trajectories. One participant explained,

It is hard to get used to working for a private company. There are way less workers' rights, no unions, just way too much work with no life. Equality has been compromised for profit, but profit does not mean equality.

Another participant who is a migrant worker from Serbia explains,

The payments are too small now. I rent a place now and 50% almost of my salary goes to rent and 40% goes to food because food is expensive. It is just so expensive to live. Their [socialist Yugoslav citizens] jobs used to give them houses, health insurance, and school. The system has gone through a huge change. You used to know how your life was going to be— and now— you just don't know.

Transition enacts violence in its quest for profit through unpaid and overworked feminized labor. However, there is no option to opt out of capitalist development and its gendered assignment of precarity. Another common thread in my interviews was the suggestion that Montenegrins did not know how to run their own economy and this was the reason for foreign investment. Yet, the reason for local management was to maintain the local aesthetic of the cultural experience one expected in the tourist context. As one participant explained,

The ownership of the hotels is mostly foreign. Mostly Russians, but the managers, the people that actually have to do the day to day face-work with the employees is typically Montenegrin.

When I asked why this was, she responded, "The owners are foreign because hotel staff is bad so we need foreign management." This participant's response and her

accompanying body language signaled the end of this line of questioning. However, responses about the ineptitude of Montenegrin owners hinted that Montenegrins without property are also without economic knowhow. In another interview with a woman who worked in the Budva Tourism Office, I asked what she thought of the foreign ownership and she responded, “The big problem is the management, because most of them are still Montenegrins and they act like they are owners and find all the holes in regulation.” It is unclear if the specter of Yugoslav socialism and the failures of its open market tourism haunt these women’s descriptions of the relationship of ownership and management in Montenegro’s tourism industry or if “bad staff” are the result of threatened masculine authority. Either way, Montenegrin male management is not good at taking directions, which may be because men make the rules and women follow them at home and in the workplace.

The trend of foreign male ownership and local male management manifests gendered forms of property ownership in tourism. Ana and Mara agreed that during their nine years working in the tourism industry “It is always the same guests, the same work, nothing is changing. Well, one thing changed. Before a Slovenian owned my hotel, but now another greedy man owns the hotel.” As they laughed at this phenomenon, I found it striking how this gendered hierarchy operated in all their explanations and experiences of tourism. For instance, like the title on the landed property names foreign men as owners, Montenegrin men are often listed as the owners of family hotels but women to manage and run the spaces. Or, the manager will be a Montenegrin man and the employees will be women. This hierarchy keeps the feminine in check and at attention for service. The

proliferation of the sexual division of labor in these spaces is maintained through male ownership and female and feminine service labor.

Many participants justified the gendered hierarchal structure by explaining that women were naturally suited to serve others. Paralleling the Montenegrin saying, “A man is the house and a woman is the pillars that keep the roof and walls intact,” many tourist businesses remain legally registered to men and maintained by women’s labor. The director of the tourism faculty at the University, explained that tourism in Montenegro began as family businesses. He explains;

It was all family business. Now women in the faculty are trying to be entrepreneurs and to own their own hotels. Lots of women run houses and now and more than five percent of women own property. Previously in tourism women didn’t need to own property. In the land evidence, the male is the property owner but the women are the ones who do everything.

His male student of tourism elaborated,

In Budva, private houses renting rooms and apartments are run by women. There are currently 100 hotels in Budva and I own one of them I employ all women. Also, more than 50 % of women already have experience in this [hospitality and service].

In these examples, and especially when rooms are rented out of private homes, the veil separating private and public domestic service falls away and we are left with the explicit sexual division of labor. Payment for domestic labor, or the reproduction of the tourist, is integral (if not the most important component) to the Montenegrin practice of tourism.

Exposure of this hidden abode of labor again calls into question women’s relationship to property ownership as well as their ownership over their own corporeal labor (property).

The implications from the above quotes reiterates that women are naturally inclined to be self-sacrificially at the service of others and especially in service of patriarchy. Perhaps, if women inherited and owned property, this would significantly change the landscape of

their relationship to labor in tourism. If women could inherit and own property they may enact their ownership in different ways from men, ways that may not require cheap feminine labor.

During one of my check-ins with three women that worked in the tourism office in Montenegro, I asked what it meant to be a good woman in Montenegro and why most of the women I knew still lived with their families until marriage. They explained that the precarious economic situation makes it hard for many to live on their own, but makes it impossible for women to live alone. Here are their responses after I asked, “what is a good woman?”

Sonja: A slave!

Ivona: A self-sufficient woman, etcetera.

Anica: No, a woman must cook and clean. Men want to be served. Don’t ask for much of their time because you will be selfish if you do. You know this is what it means, Ivona.

Sonja: Montenegrin men are spoiled in the nuclear family, and that tradition remains because there are no solutions to the economic circumstances that maintain the family unit. It is rare to be able to buy a house.

Anica: No, and there is no legacy from the mother’s family. The mother passes nothing on to the family.

Ivona: And, the material things are not worth the fight. Her family won’t allow her to inherit a piece of the estate or furniture and it is unfair but I don’t care. What do I want a house for? What will I do if there is a flood or something is needing to be fixed? This is why men should be in charge.

Anica: I don’t think it’s fair and I don’t understand and it is not okay.

Ivona: Yeah, but what’s the point of being upset over it? We can’t change it so why waste our time being upset?

This exchange between these women exemplifies the ways that women’s relationship to property ownership at home affects their relationship to property ownership at work. I have written elsewhere that the patrilineal inheritance system in Montenegro structures society and genders people in their relationship to property (Zenovich, 2016). However, this dominant discourse that good women serve their families at their expense regenerates

gendered property relations which maintain male dominance, female dispossession, and feminine precarity.

Building on the larger context of foreign male ownership, the next section analyzes the justification of women's position in tourism that naturalizes their role as reproducers of the nation. As explained above, the socialists provided accommodations for women to perform labor that maintained national feminine essence. The transition eliminates many of these provisions, but the of legacy women's role as reproducer remains. In turn, women are fired and hired based on the possibilities of their bodies (as property or as producers of national property).

F. Women's Bodies for Patriarchal Property

Four Montenegrin women and I sit at a cafe on a promenade dotted with expensive clothing and tourist shops. I tell a story about a friend who was interviewing to be a professor at the local university and how the interviewer asked if she was married, if she would get pregnant, or if she had any kids already. Jelena interjected, "You have to understand, we are the oldest type of patriarchy, not even brotherly patriarchy, but father to father. A co-worker of mine, a hotel owner in Budva, asked a woman he was interviewing if she was planning on having a baby soon or if she had babies at home. And the woman was like, 'I don't think that this is an appropriate question.' And the guy may have started to think that she was a feminist but he said, 'Calm down. Please, I am only asking because I want you to have babies. We need Montenegrin babies.' And all the locals and babas [grandmothers] probably know the family so he hired her because it is a danger to mistreat local Montenegrins. It is a real danger. If someone is rude and it circulates through town the father has every right to come to his hotel and bloody his nose."

Everyone I interviewed explained to me that women were better suited than men to work in hospitality. These claims were always justified though women's bodies and their national responsibility to reproduce. One participant found it pertinent to point out that wherein other countries birth rates and marriage rates decline, in Montenegro they are steady and on the rise. The importance of the nuclear heteronormative family to Montenegrin national identity cannot be overstated. It is through these gendered roles at

home that people find themselves performing gender in the world and at work. According to Petchesky (1979), women's lives at work and at home in capitalist societies are determined by "Kin-oriented rituals by patrilocal residential patterns; by, above all, motherhood and mothering functions" (p. 380). In Montenegro, motherhood structured the possibilities of identity, provided social value, and conditioned employment for the women I interviewed. In our conversations, there was no consideration of sexuality that was not heteronormative, which reiterated the signification of women's bodies as always already in relation to men. Thinking sexuality through a queer lens, for the participants, would require that female bodies could signify meaning outside of procreation and potential reproduction. The character traits associated with motherhood are immediately mapped onto female bodies and these discursive mappings then enable women's labor through performative motherhood and affective labor. Reiterated several different ways was, "The industry accommodates toward women's nature" was the most common refrain to explain why so many women worked in tourism.

Since the tourism industry operates in seasons, male employers explain that this is the perfect situation for women because they can raise their children in the off-season. However, conflation of national biological duty with hiring and firing processes puts women in a particularly gendered and particularly vulnerable position. Another woman participant explains,

Tourism in general employs more women than men. Women and youth are more hireable because the industry cannot offer full work. It can only do seasonal work because, you know, the women will have babies or they have already had a baby and they have a strong hospitality spirit.

On its face, this stratification of work does not seem harmful, but like the women-focused socialist policy of the past, these provisions operate in service of male dominance

by keeping ownership in the hands of men. These words echo the socialist division of labor, but they are empty of accommodations for women's precarious situation. Another participant explains that the seasonal work is a positive for women. She explains, "The season starts and seasonal work is better for women. It is better because they fire you as soon as you get pregnant anyways." Here, Sandra explains that compared to other businesses that work year-round and possibly fire women if they become pregnant, tourism guarantees seasonal firings and pregnancy firings. Plus, as another participant explained, women can apply for government assistance of 300 Euros (which she explained was not enough to exist, as it was practically nothing) if their employers do not offer maternity leave. Capitalism works fantastically for male owner/employers because they are not required to provide health benefits and can maximize profits from cheap female labor. Where socialist domestic safety nets used to exist, privatization replaces these provisions with dehumanization. Jovana explains,

Tourism since socialism is worse for women because all hotels are private and workers are not protected and they work for three months and that's it. It changed roles within the family, there is less time for family. The transition made living conditions worse. We work more for less and private companies depend on the attitude of the owner to offer maternity leave.

Another participant elaborates,

The position of women sucks here. They [employers] always ask if you are going to have a baby before hiring you. If they don't ask you if you will become pregnant, they ask if you already have children. Your response to these questions determines if you will get the job and everyone assumes that a woman has stomach aches from menses and that you will get one every month and that this will make you miss work. But, if you don't have kids that makes you a shit woman— so there is this too. The transition forces you to work, but my sister-in-law couldn't find work for two years because she had three kids.

The above responses show that women are never free from their bodies or the representational meanings attached to their bodies. The female body is regulated by

discourses of property that render her incapable of ownership of the property of her person. One wonders if an autonomous feminist movement were to take root here if women practicing feminist politics could become property owners and transform the current dynamic in tourism. However, simply because one recognizes patriarchy exists does not make one a feminist (Rich, 1976) just as the recognition that private property structures class does not make one a Marxist. The language of ownership enables and restricts power relations in these interactions. In an interview with an intern at the official Budva Tourism office, the 33-year-old explained that there are not any studies or statistics on women in tourism in Montenegro, but she was sure that women made up most the workforce. She explains,

I used to work in a hotel and my boss was a Spanish man who preferred to hire women because they are nicer and more polished. I don't know if you are a big feminist or something, but there are natural biological differences between men and women. And, women are just better at hospitality than men.

In the above response, the participant explicitly links the female body to mothering and the affective labor of this mothering. These family roles bleed into the expectation of feminine labor in tourism. Another participant explained, "Women can work more than men and women have better communication skills. It is in a woman's nature to be at the service of those around you." Self-sacrifice is integral to the performance of feminine gender in the tourism industry and at home. Part of that sacrifice is the lack of ownership inscribed corporeally on women's bodies.

As the Sex/Gender system (Rubin, 1997) marks women's bodies as reproducers, it also objectifies women as existing for the male gaze and male sexual service. Every woman I spoke to had a story about a male tourist or a local man expecting sexual access to her body when she was at work. In these instances, woman as male property is

embodied in women's relation to the male gaze. The next section analyzes a few participant's experiences as sexual property.

G. Women's Bodies as Men's Sexual Property

In addition to conditional gendered employment based on the ability of a woman's body to become pregnant, and thereby reproduce property for the nation, most of the women I spoke to described a time that their jobs in tourism were accompanied by an expectation of sex or sexual service. If women were not okay with being sexualized, they were talked to as inferior and incompetent. For example, most of the waiters in Montenegro are men because waitresses are thought of as prostitutes. A participant explains,

A waiter is not a nice job for a woman. She is serving and there are lots of different people that she has to serve. And women cannot carry a tray of plates, it is way too heavy. Waitresses are your favorite bar girl they have friends that come to the bar that are regulars and stuff like that, but a hostess is different.

Initially I did not understand the implication of this statement, but later, another woman explained to me that that waitress and hostess jobs denote sexual activity. Hostesses are supposed to be open to the possibility of sex with their patrons. For instance, a friend decided that she would work in Budva over the summer to make and save money for when she returned to college after the season. She got a job as a Hostess at one of the luxury hotel restaurants known to be run by the mafia. Later she quit without explanation, but her mother told me that the owners expected her to welcome the sexual advances of old men who came there to eat. While Montenegro has a sordid history of sex trafficking, the more mundane experiences of the women I interviewed makes clear that the sexual division of labor at home and at work privilege male ownership and access to women's bodies and labor.

A hotel receptionist explained that she was working the front desk alone at night and “A very drunk man walked towards her and began to undress himself.” I asked her if she was scared and she said, “He was very drunk. But, that is another reason that you don’t see women working as waitresses.” The implication here is that if a woman is a waiter and serves men drinks and they get drunk and try to sleep with (or rape) her then that is *her* fault. Another woman who managed the spa at a hotel in Budva informed me that,

The problem with the massage therapy parlor is that some men want or even expect a happy ending. But, when a massage therapist thinks she is in trouble, we have a system for that. There is a button in each room and they are supposed to call security and then just excuse themselves and leave.

It is hard to imagine that these reactionary measures protect or prevent women in tourism from sexual assault. Both examples highlight the expectation of women’s bodies as exclusively for male use. It is unclear how far the materialization of access to women’s bodies goes before it can be stopped, especially by the woman who is objectified. Furthermore, participants explained sexual refusal or not playing along also receives punishment. Access to women’s bodies is normalized thusly; if the woman is visible her body can be claimed and owned by the man who sees her— when her job is to be at his service. Like the expectation of sex in marriage (Pateman, 1988), resulting from the transactional exchange of women between men (Levi-Strauss, 1969), tourism replicates this access to women’s bodies through women’s relation to/as property of men. Marija explains,

I think doing laundry in a hotel or something is a good place to work because you don’t have to deal with this stuff, but it is physically harder, but again, nobody sees you so it is better for a woman.

While not explicitly stated, it is implied that the best way for women working in tourism to avoid sexual harassment or assault is to be invisible. Another participant explained, “Men should protect women. Women shouldn’t even work night shifts.” Just as women’s bodies in tourism can be sexually threatened by men at any time (Tong, 2009), women are also vulnerable to men who do not want to do business with women. Two participants explained that men have refused to work with them because they were women,

I had a bad experience with a man in from the North. It was with a man in a private complex [hotel] and he had a problem with a girl working there. He said, “I don’t want to talk to you because you are a woman” and this was a man from Nikšić [Montenegro].

The only woman bartender in Budva’s old town explained that her patrons were happy to be served by her, Montenegrin or foreign, but when it came to filling stock orders for the bar the male distributors refused to do service with her. The distributors demanded do business with the man who owned the bar instead of her even though she told the owner what the bar needed in the first place. These experiences highlight the ways in which gendered domestic service labor should be seen, not heard, both in tourism and at home. Marking the hidden abode of labor that structures gendered ownership in transition in Montenegro, these women’s experiences tie the female body, feminized service labor and motherhood to tourism through their lack of property ownership. Women reproduce tourism and the tourist with no claim to ownership over the products of their own bodies, their own labor, or any property.

H. Global Postsocialist Implications

Drawing on postsocialist women’s words, this chapter sought to critique the ways in which private property ownership in transition structures the gendered relationship of women to labor. Property enacts identity through ownership and dispossession in global

capitalism. Private property ownership is more than an economic relation, it is a discourse of power that determines the performative possibilities of gender, nation, and labor. The transition from socialism to capitalism requires a reflexive consideration of the US' relationship to postsocialist capitalism. Doing research on and in Montenegro's postsocialist transition holds a mirror to the ways in which capitalism produces gendered vulnerability to capital. In the former Yugoslavia, the development of capitalism happens on the backs of dispossessed women and women's labor. Gendered dispossession and precarity is not only integral to postsocialist capitalism, but, informs the practice of capitalism at home in the US. Capitalism depends on the violent use of precarious labor in ways that are always already racialized and gendered. While the global condition of postsocialism makes room to critique the ways that socialism failed, it also requires renewed diligence to the critique of capitalism as it emerges in postsocialist spaces. I offer property as a lynchpin of capitalist and patriarchal oppression. Tracing property ownership points to interstitial moments where property can be reclaimed and redeployed to resist male dominance and dispossession.

The power of capitalism and capitalist development is the ability to transform people, social relations, and land into "property." My analysis asks how the trope of property manifests symbolically and materially to oppress women globally and particularly in Montenegro. The relational aspect of property and property ownership is a rallying point for feminist politics and coalition across borders. In the wake of the Cold War, understanding geopolitical ideologies as co-constitutive performances of nation in metacartographies of first, second, and third worlds (Suchland, 2015) helps to understand the implications of transition on identity in postsocialist Montenegro as well as the

implications for postsocialist global capitalism. Ultimately, ideologies of socialism and capitalism rest upon each other to produce the subject/citizen of transition and more broadly, the neoliberal global subject. This co-constitutive process became clear in my fieldwork as my body performatively substituted as a representative of US capitalism and the participants bodies stood in for transitioning capitalism. The question is, how to talk across these postsocialist/post-Cold War positionalities to mobilize feminist agendas that resist gendering, racializing, nationalistic concepts of property that enforce precarity. The global condition of postsocialism amasses new relational and performative power to property ownership. Analyzing property discourses and how they are embodied in relations of capital illuminates how property in the body (reproduction), property of the body (labor), and property of the state (nation, law, ownership) are performatively accomplished in gender through capitalism and patriarchy. Studying gender through the lens of property in systems of capitalism offers ways to performatively resist the power of property to oppress or enslave bodies.

Our condition of global postsocialism requires us to think through the ways in which the practice of capitalism depends on the relative dispossession of certain bodies and their precarious labor. Property ownership, as a gendered relationship animates and structures all relational hierarchies of value and worth. Postsocialism calls attention to how property ownership gathers new relational and performative power. Corporeal ownership over one's body, over one's bodily labor, and ownership of material property are spaces to start feminist coalition guided by the heuristic of socialist feminism to disarticulate ownership from masculinity and male bodies.

Laying on the beach in a chair, a male beach attendant approached me and demanded that I pay ten Euros to use the chair. Having sat there a month for free, I was

convinced I was being hustled and I indignantly argued with him before he caught my US accent. He stopped arguing and insisted in English, "pay or leave." So, I left and went talk to women working in Budva's walled city. At the official tourism information office, I encounter a woman, explain my research, and ask her if she has any information about tourism in Montenegro. She nods and says "Of course." Making small talk, I said, "Lots of women work in tourism, right?" She became reserved and replied, "Yes, but I don't know anything about this." I countered, "But you work in tourism." She laughed and explained that she was not the right person to ask, handed me a Russian pamphlet, and told me to visit the Tourism museum. I thanked her, folded the pamphlet under my arm, and walked to the museum. The one-room museum had pictures of Tito flanking the walls and a pot-bellied man sitting in the center at a wooden desk. As I began to explain my project, a woman drying dishes in an offshoot kitchenette intercepted me, dishtowel in hand, to explain that they did not know anything about women in tourism.

CHAPTER V

PROPERTIES OF POSTSOCIALIST SEXUAL VIOLENCE: A FEMINIST AUTOETHNOGRAPHY OF RAPE, RESISTANCE AND COALITION

On April 8, 1992, Serbian paramilitary and military soldiers began to ethnically cleanse the Muslim population in the Bosnian town of Foča on the border of Montenegro. According to the over 6,000 page transcript from International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for war crimes committed in Foča, ethnically Serbian neighbors turned against Muslim neighbors to systematically slaughter and rape unsuspecting and unarmed civilians. Families were separated first by ethnicity and then as men, women and children. The men were either killed outright or brutally tortured and then killed. Women were publicly raped, tortured and raped, held captive and raped, raped to produce pregnancy, or raped and then killed. The ICTY in the Foča trial against Kunarac, for the first time in history, declared rape a war crime and a crime against humanity.

On June 26, 2016, I sit at the edge of the Adriatic in Montenegro.

The men skip rocks into the water.
Their grandmothers 100 yards away
Could you imagine a flat
Rock skipping one two
Three into your teeth?
Into your grandmother's teeth?
Reckless honor
A woman leaves her child
In the waves
And asks me in Serbian to
Watch her things.
Do I look like a woman
Destined to await the
Random
Precision of a skipping
Stone?

On July 22, 2014, I was raped by the side of a dirt road in Montenegro by a cab driver. After participating in a language emersion program for three weeks, I dropped out and booked a flight home to the US the day after I was raped. I didn't file a police report.

I told the coordinators of the program what had happened, using the word "attacked" since I was unable to utter the word "rape." They cried, told me I had been different since I came to Montenegro, and told me to try to forget what happened. I broke apart into a million pieces and saw myself from above for the next three years, unable to forget.

This chapter analyzes the possibilities for feminist coalition via women's disparate experiences of the trauma of rape. I analyze testimony of rape survivors from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in tandem with autoethnographic vignettes about my rape in the former Yugoslavia to tease out the relationship of sexual violence, trauma, and gendered property ownership. Focusing on the gendered relationships of property, land, sex, and ethnicity that are enacted on and in women's bodies, I tend to the ways in which nationality as corporeal property mete out trauma and become matters of life and death for some women. I offer trauma in general, and rape in particular, as the embodied experience of our ontological and epistemological relation to the other. I claim that this relation is fraught with the language of property and material property ownership.

Property makes up the backbone of my analysis because of its centrifugal relation to subject formation in liberal capitalist society. Discourses of/on personhood in liberalism have a long history of tying the body to property, reading ownership of one's body as power, and discounting living bodies as mere property to be owned (Spillers, 1987; Pateman, 1988; Harris, 1993), in addition to the more widely recognized connections between bodies that own property and citizenship. Within the context of the former Yugoslavia, the relationship of imagined subject to property comes into focus during the transition from socialism to capitalism. Within the transition, the subject/citizen's relationship to/as property becomes explicit in the corporeal, institutional, and ideological reworking of socioeconomic systems. Property, with the fall of socialism in Eastern Europe, is reimagined and redeployed— no longer as something

in common, but rather as a measure of individual worth accompanied by power and voice.

The transition from socialism in the former Yugoslavia restructures property ownership by shifting it from the state to individuals and by changing the value of people (workers) within the nation. In many ways, the transition acts as a national movement into a spiritual and physical transition, or a state of *Nepantla*. According to Anzaldúa (2012) *Nepantla* is the Nahuatl word for “in-between,” the liminal space before something or something changed emerges, which rearranges relationships to the world by rearranging bodies of knowledge. Yugoslavia’s vulnerable national status, intensified by ethnic provocation and then conflict, hyper-unemployment that fell along gendered lines, the retraditionalization of gender roles (Corrin, 1999; 1999a) the disappearance of social provisions for working women, and the precarity² of the transition produced the conditions for ethnic genocide. The conditions of war, the history of women’s tribal role in pre-socialist Yugoslavia, the meaning of blood and blood-feud, new meanings of borders and sovereignty, struggles to claim property/land were just some of the precarious conditions which enabled women to be systematically raped, treated as corpses to be raped, to transform women into nations, to transform her body into

² I follow Butler (2004) and understand precariousness, precarity, and precarious labor as a condition of living wherein certain bodies are more vulnerable to exploitation and lack the material conditions needed to live a “liveable life.” She explains, “One reason I am interested in precarity, which would include a consideration of ‘precaritization,’ is that it describes that process of acclimatizing a population to insecurity. It operates to expose a targeted demographic to unemployment or to radically unpredictable swings between employment and unemployment, producing poverty and insecurity about an economic future, but also interpellating that population as expendable, if not fully abandoned. These affective registers of precaritization include the lived feeling of precariousness, which can be articulated with a damaged sense of future and a heightened sense of anxiety about issues like illness and mortality” (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013, p. 43).

something that produces property of the rapist. The transition and the mass rapes are, of course, experienced as individual trauma but they are also collective trauma (Code, 2009).

Traumas dislodge our sensuous bodies from the discourses that render our experiences intelligible, visible, or heard by jettisoning us into the liminal space of *Nepantla* (Anzaldúa, 2012) and rearranging our relationship to our skin and our worlds. This painful space of physical and spiritual transition affects our bodies and minds as we live our lives. As Scarry (1985) explains, “Physical pain— to invoke what is at this moment its single most familiar [human] attribute— is language-destroying” (p.19). Movement in/out of these liminal spaces fundamentally changes our bodies and our relationships to language, experience, and the other. Traumas shape, blur, and erase our visions of the world. Although we may perceive others as “having” pain, Ahmed (2015) argues against employing tropes of ownership or property in describing pain because these metaphors isolate us from the contextual specificity of pain and the intelligibility of pain in relation to others. Scarry (1985) explains, “To have great pain is to have certainty; to hear that another has pain is to have doubt. (The doubt of other persons, here as elsewhere, amplifies the suffering of those already in pain)” (p. 7). Whereas Ahmed (2015) and Butler (2010; 2004) ask whose pain and whose grief is intelligible, my argument is that there is no escape from the frame of ownership (as intelligibility) which already interpellates the subject through these discourses of property. Pain and grief are only intelligible through the relational language of property ownership. This chapter aims to delve into the meanings at the intersection of trauma and property to find the body (Weheliye, 2014), which is always and only a body in relation to the other.

Engaging the work of Anzaldúa and Butler, my argument for coalition through trauma is based on the undoing of the unitary subject by moving toward the radically relational subject. I put this poststructural scholar and this postcolonial scholar in conversation to analyze how relationality is interpellated through trauma and how our collective ownership of traumas can build material bridges of feminist coalition. My goal is to delineate an approach to feminist coalition that recognizes the possibility for coalition through similar experience but resists the notion and possibility of understanding the other. To do this, I first provide a brief historical contextualization of war in the former Yugoslavia by introducing the importance of property in the space. I then offer a feminist literature review of mass rape in the former Yugoslavia. Next, I provide a brief overview of radical relationality through Anzaldúa and Butler's separate undoings of the unitary ontological and epistemological subject. Then, I describe my method, Autoethnography, to better situate my body within the context of my analysis. My analysis focuses on three conceptual frames: the body as property, nation as property, trauma as property. All of these relationships are gendered, racialized, classed, sexualized, but due to the scope of this chapter, I will primarily focus on the gendered relationships of property in sexual violence.

Throughout the essay, I employ extended vignettes to create a performative relation between the text, my experience, the reader, and women's voices from the ICTY transcripts. While I remain reflexive of my inability to speak for the other (Alcoff, 1992), or to understand the other's experience of trauma, voicing trauma can build community (Calafell, 2007) through coalition with others who have experienced similar corporeal evacuations; this community can, in turn, create spaces for feminist solidarities. I aim to

draw together the normative and the exceptional moments of sexual violence to think through and transform our disciplined relationships to both forms of trauma. The next section explains the conflict and genocide in the former Yugoslavia through the lens of property and gender by explaining the transition from socialism to capitalism.

In preparation to return to Montenegro two years after being raped, I was anxious about facing friends and family who knew why I left without saying goodbye. Knowing my best friend would directly ask for answers I had not provided to anyone but myself, I reminded myself that she asked because she cared. I met up with my friend in Montenegro and we drank an espresso slowly in Podgorica while I rehearsed my speech about my rape— Careful not to give too many details, careful not to “embarrass” myself, careful not to make space for judgement to enter. She listened, smoked her slim cigarettes, puffing out smoke between my hurried sentences. After I was done with my story, she took a long drag, and padded the coming blow with a complement, “Jennifer, you are a smart woman. You are a feminist. You are a teacher. If a student came to you and told your story, wouldn’t you tell her to report it? Wouldn’t you tell her to go to the police? Don’t you want to protect another woman from what you went through? Why didn’t you stay here to report it? I could have helped you. Montenegro is small and we could have found him. You shouldn’t have left that way.” I told her I did not feel safe and had to go home. I did not tell her: I couldn’t think. I couldn’t see. My body left me. Of course, I wanted to protect other women but I couldn’t have the police to swab my vagina and relive the rape while being told it was my fault in a language where I caught every second word.

A. Historical Context

The end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall marked the beginning of the transition from socialism to capitalism and subsequently initiated the postsocialist condition of global capitalism. The death of Yugoslav socialist leader, Joseph Broz Tito (1980), symbolized the end of Yugoslav socialism, a turn to nationalistic fascism, and the re-traditionalization of gender roles. As the nation transitioned from socialism to capitalism, so too transitioned the citizens of the former Yugoslavia (Ghodsee, 2004, 2004a, 2012; Todorova & Gille, 2010). This shift was not simply material and

institutional but required a reconfiguration of the ways in which citizens saw themselves as subject to a discourse. The very ideology through which one's identity was formed was thrown into contradiction and postsocialist subjects were expected to fall in-line with liberalism's individualist tautology of self.

In addition to the fundamental upset and shift of the meaning imbued in the relationships between comrades, relationships to oneself, relationships to the nation and national borders, ethnicity, institutions, and the state apparatus, the primary ideological and material relationship to property was undone and said to only exist in the opposite direction. Namely, no longer was one to understand themselves in community with fellow Yugoslav citizens or to share their property with their comrades. Now, each citizen of each new nation must *own* their *own* property individually and subsequently terminate shared ownership of material property (and even socialized government programs). Additionally, the transition was fraught with mafia and foreign venture capitalist acquisition of cheap landed property which left many already precarious citizens in further economic disrepair (as explained in Chapter four and by Atanasoski, 2013; Ghodsee, 2005). This contextualized lens of property within the transition must be considered in the analysis of the mass rapes in the former Yugoslavia.

In the transition to capitalism women's bodies were ideologically mobilized to reconstruct nationalism, to redraw geographic boundaries, to embody the state, and, finally, to engender new forms of ownership through reproduction of the nation. As Papić (1999) notes, "Ethnic nationalism is based on a politics of specific gender identity/difference in which women are simultaneously mythologized as the Nation's deepest 'essence' and instrumentalized as its *producer*" (p. 155). During this time, virility

was inscribed on male and masculine bodies whereas vulnerability was projected on the female and feminine bodies (Hromadzic, 2007; Nikolić-Ristanovic, 2004c). The transition and the militarization of these identities accelerated the ethnic nationalism that further materialized on female bodies (Milić, 1993).

The Bosnian Conflict of the 1990s exemplifies how sexual violence against women enforces and disrupts national boundaries. Feminist researchers looking for language to name the how and why of such violence point to ancient tribal hatreds, religious divides, ethnic antagonisms, militarized hyper-masculinity, and the naturalization of women as reproducers of nation for the rape and massacre of an estimated 20,000 to 60,000 women (Stiglmayer, 1994). While the former Yugoslavia has a history of engaging in blood-feud and of using women as barter chips of real and symbolic property (Zenovich, 2016), to claim that the war in Bosnia was a reiteration of these tribal wars only addresses one part of the problem. Specifically, the goal of mass rape during the war was to produce genocide by inflicting trauma on/through women's bodies.

While the explicit violence integral to capitalist systems of private property ownership is often obscured in everyday global capitalist relations (Atansoki, 2013; Suchland, 2015; Reddy, 2011), mass rape in the former Yugoslavia laid bare the relationship women have to nation and to men within masculine capitalist discourses. Raping women has always been, as postcolonial and indigenous scholars note, integral to nation building (Anzaldúa 2012; Calafell, 2007; Deer, 2015; Yuval-Davis, 1997). Women often represent the national property and the reproductive property which men struggle over. I am not arguing that women are without agency or situated means to resist

their overdetermined object positions but, given this long history of rape as foundational to nation building, perhaps working from the intersection of women as property/nation is an important space to foster coalition through relational critical analysis. The postsocialist context of the former Yugoslavia and the ICTY clarifies women's relational positionality as property in capitalist societies and how that positionality is relationally interpellated.

1. The ICTY and Women's Bodies

Although the ICTY ruling was groundbreaking for international law and for some feminists, it is important to stay critical of the reasoning by which we declare this a victory. Unlike Bergoffen (2003; 2006; 2009), I do not read the ruling in the Kunarac case as a feminist victory that elevates women's ontological status to human. Rather, I read the transcript as a ritual process whereby women as witnesses, as victims, as legal participants, are granted this ruling only because of their relationship as property to men/nation (Zenovich & Cooks, forthcoming). Code (2009) explains that the Rwandan and Yugoslavian cases at the UN International Tribunal are important feminist landmarks because of how they deal with rape. The judgements "underscore the fact that the harms raped women suffer are *relational*, whether they are cast as the harms humanity suffers (in Kunarac, Kovac & Vukovic) or (in Akayesu) as harms against people, where acknowledging their *genocidal* implications casts them as the ultimate harm a human community can suffer" (Code, 2009, p. 335). The wound in the Bosnian conflict and reported in the ICTY transcript is between men who use women's bodies to communicate to other men about the destruction of their property (women/nation) ownership, it is not the wound of the women's experience³.

³ In their closing statements, the prosecution explains, "The Defense has argued that

If the woman did not effectively become and represent property of nation and of men, her rape would not mean anything. Sexual violence is traumatic precisely because of the performative and discursive meanings it carries within communities. In liberal capitalist discourses, the intelligible violence at the center of sexual violence is the *destruction of one's (men's) property by an other (man)*. Specifically, in spaces where women are treated as reproductive property that produce heirs (embodied male property), the violence done to the woman (male property producer) is always violence done to men's property and potential property ownership (heirs). Women as such are subject-adjacent male accessories in these meanings of rape and their objectified position is worsened in liberal capitalist discourses wherein women do not count as human subjects.

To be human in liberal capitalist (specifically European and Western) discourse is measured by one's ability to claim ownership over one's own body and inanimate objects. The conditions which enable the intelligible relationship of subject/human/citizen are, then, conditioned by one's relationship to property/ownership. This property relationship (as locus for subject/object positions) is not only about the things one possesses (one's own body, physical objects), but it also depends on histories of power (imperialism, colonialism) that demarcate what counts as human (i.e.; future owner). As Spillers (1987) argues, the only bodies with the potential to possess themselves and others (inanimate and animate) have historically been White men (i.e., subject/citizens in capitalist liberal discourse). Since women and people of color could not own property or

Article 3 protects only property and not persons. This is nonsense. The very foundation of this provision against war crimes is the protection of persons, persons who are not involved in the hostilities but are nevertheless caught up in the middle of it" (Kunarac, p. 6289).

themselves, their performative and violent relation to/as property reiterates itself. Speaking about the historical trajectory of the law under liberalism, MacKinnon (1993) explains, “Humans own property; women mostly cannot; more often they are property... In these theories, abuses of women were tacitly if not explicitly condoned in individual rights” (p. 72/3). Specifically, male embodiment, relationship to property as owners and citizens, and command of androcentric language are the conditions upon which one can become a (male) subject/citizen entitled to ownership over their own body (which ultimately extends to other bodies and properties) and which women are excluded from qualification as human/subject and thusly remain dispossessed.

Woman’s position as property/object of masculine discourse is made more evident when she tries to locate and name trauma (especially the trauma of rape)—the reason she is distressed, depressed, defiled, disgusted—because her relationship to her community and to her world is conditioned by her particularly and socially gendered inability to speak her embodiment. Embodying property and her ability to remain undamaged property are the conditions by which she enters into discourse relationally with men, but also the conditions by which she relates to herself. The trauma of rape is without meaning absent these structures which always already destroy the possibility of her subject formation (Wittig, 1992) because the condition of her interpellation as a subject who can claim harm (or even ask for justice) is always already a condition in relation to her object position as (men’s) property.

In this context, the ICTY renders women and their experiences meaningful only in a system (the liberal, judicial, and European UN) that has the power to name and interpret trauma. The court interprets the trauma in direct relation to and as evidence of

national (property) destruction. Couching trauma in the language of ownership, specifically as belonging to the nation, are the conditions which rape can be tried as a crime against humanity. More specifically, the court can only try individuals for crimes against humanity when there is an international conflict *not* in rapes that happens everywhere everyday.⁴ In so doing, the Tribunal attempts to punish the aberrant (read: Balkan other) behavior (rape, torture, slavery, murder) as that of individuals⁵ and individual nations who (through this judicial approach) will be apprehended. The court actively works to delineate the rapes in Bosnia as extraordinary by relying on liberalism which ultimately (and falsely) separates these individuals from the structures of their making—namely the conditions of capital that enable such precarity and violence. Thus, in a liberal effort to make nations whole again after postsocialist transition and genocide, the court positions itself as the apparatus by which justice and wholeness can be restored to postsocialist Yugoslavia— by returning property (women as national trauma) to its rightful owner/to the correct body/back to the nation, and not by vindicating, hearing, or empowering the actual women who suffered. Women’s relation to men as/of property is

⁴ According to the Prosecution “Although during the course of this trial, among other things, you will be hearing evidence about rapes and torture, sexual assaults and enslavement of a number of girls and women, this is not just a rape case like those in national jurisdictions. It must be remembered that this is a trial about the crimes of a policy of ethnic cleansing unleashed by the Bosnian Serb leadership on the non-Serb civilian population. These crimes were committed during an armed conflict and were widespread and systematic” (Kunarac, p. 303).

⁵ For example, “Before I move on to our theories of liability, allow me to comment on two final points regarding the testimony of the victims. First, pursuant to Rule 96, no corroboration is necessary for the testimony of victims of sexual assault; and, second, unlike many domestic rapes, the offences committed in this case were often done in the full view of others, or in rooms where several women were being raped simultaneously. Thus, many of the victims will testify not only about what happened to them, but also as to what happened to others at the same time” (Kunarac p. 326).

exploited first for war and genocide and secondly, in the Tribunal by accepting the rapists' meaning of rape to punish the rapists' mishandling of women/property. As the prosecution explains, "It will become clear that what happened to the Muslim women of Foča and surrounding area occurred purely because of their ethnicity or religion and because they were women" (Kunarac, p.303).

It remains true that rape happens every moment of every day all over the world, not just in international conflicts. Women are vulnerable to rape for numerous reasons, but particularly because global capitalism makes women precarious which in turn makes them susceptible to violence. According to the World Health Organization (2013), the statistics are shocking, "Worldwide, almost one third (30%) of all women who have been in a relationship have experiences physical and/or sexual violence...globally, 7% of women have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner." Late capitalism in the US structurally produces precarity across race, class, gender that makes certain bodies more vulnerable to sexual violence, assault, and rape. Even though precarity (and sometimes rape and violence) is a structural effect of the postsocialist global condition, understandings of and punishments for rape are still located at an individual level. These approaches to understanding sexual violence serve to reinforce a global liberal individualism by reaffirming belief in individually punitive justice systems instead of fundamentally changing the structural conditions which enable it. The next section describes my ontological approach, which, in conjunction with the postsocialist context and my analysis of the discursive and material positioning of women as property, offers a way to think embodiment, subjectivity, and identity in radical relation for transnational feminist coalition.

As I walk to the Adriatic, the legacy of rape in Bosnia and the sensory memory of my rape surfaces on my skin and contours my walking body, directs my eyes, monitors where I go, and polices me with fear and hate. I know what the war rape strategy was. I know they intended to make sure women that were raped never wanted to return to their homes. I return defiantly, scared, and angry. Many were not as lucky. Many never get to leave in the first place. Any man forty years old and above could have raped in the war, statistically, and by definition. I wonder just how many rapists walk among us?

7/20/2016

I mentally gather
My raped friends
Around me and
We sit imagined
At imagined tables in triangles
The one who needs the most
sits at the front
glows
gold aura
we glimmer
behind her
the strength and love
I send out
They send out
Helps me to survive.
Our council
Unfortunate
The spiritual knowledge
Derived from corporeal
Defeat
Makes them people
I will love forever.

But, if our bond could be demolished by
The impossibility of our devastation
I would instantly forfeit our love.

For two years after my rape, I awaited the thunderous clap of emotion I anticipated to endure upon my return to my ancestral homeland, Montenegro. Every so often I woke up unable to breathe— working through trauma in my dreams, unconscious, my body. I write this seven days since my cheeks have been soaked with tears and seven days before I return to Montenegro to do research. It is fifteen days since my waking anxiety attack. My mother had put a cold towel on my forehead for me to stop my

shaking. It has been a year and a half since I was able to get out of bed. A year and three months since I have learned to stop doubting that I am alive. This story is not just mine. Many vibrate the aftershock of a near death rattle.

B. Undoing the Unitary Individual Subject

This section briefly traces a re-thinking of ontological assumptions produced through enlightenment style individualism and liberal rationality that presume a unified pre-gendered (androcentric and neo-Cartesian) human subject and categorizes all else as the feminized, racialized, colonized object and objectified body. Specifically, because the Kunarac case was the first time that rape was declared a crime against humanity, it “requires an analysis of how ‘the human’ as such, so to speak, figures in the analysis” (Code, 2009, p. 339). In order to situate my understanding of the way the human figures in this analysis, first, I discuss subject formation and subjectification into discourse through difference by specifically tending to the imagination of and (mis)recognition of the self/other. Taking the subject/soul as the main trope, I trace how the re-thinking of the unitary subject as theorized by Butler (1988, 1997, 1999, 1988, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2010, 2011, 2015) and Anzaldúa (1999a, 1999b, 2000, 2009, 2012, 2015) sets the ontological and epistemological foundation for the radical relationality needed in feminist alliance across borders and trauma.⁶

I conceptualize the form of the subject to be the imaginary positionality of a person/body as it is named by/in a discourse. As Althusser (1970) explains, “The

⁶ Throughout this section I refer to Anzaldúa and Butler’s trajectory of theoretical development as well as the ways that their ideas speak to each other. The concepts I analyze are developed throughout both of these scholars’ careers through their numerous publications. In order to ease the reading process, I have opted to simply note which author developed the idea and leave most of the dates in the reference page. When a concept is specifically attributed to one book, I note that in the text.

existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one in the same thing” (p. 49). People in the contextual reach of discursive power communicate themselves into being through their relationship with power, discourse, and ideology. For Althusser, identity exists through subordination to or the process of subjecting oneself to a discourse, which in-turn hails the phenomenological object of our enfolded bodies toward the particular identifications available to make meaning from experience, hence, to become subjects of a discourse. Althusser (1970) continues, “The category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology, but at the same time and immediately I add that the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of constituting concrete individuals as subjects” (p. 45). If Althusser is correct, then our theorization of the subject/individual co-constitutes the available forms of resistance to overdetermined identities. Althusser (1970) explains, “To understand yourself as an individual is to see yourself as subject to a discourse which is always already conditioned by ideology” (p. 48). Subject formation theorized in and as a product of liberalism produces a unified individual subject of discourse.

The point of undoing the unified subject and offering a more relational subject is two-fold. First, it impels a responsibility to the other not only as the projection or representation of the self and the self’s infinite desire, but as the necessary counterpart to the self’s existence. Secondly, it opens the field of possibilities to mobilize collaborative resistance theoretically and materially to precarity, marginalization, and oppression. My analysis starts from Butler and Anzaldúa’s distinct yet similarly informed notions of the subject, and then extends this theoretical convergence to postsocialist subject formation within the context of the ICTY.

At the heart of both authors' argument is that the human condition is radically relational, and ontology and epistemology must shift away from the notion of individually bound subjects in order to foster feminist coalition. Although these authors are positioned differently, and perhaps seem at odds, their ideas speak to each other in productive ways. Starting at the theorization of the subject as an imagined discursive construct but using different terms for it; Butler (1987) uses the term "subject" and Anzaldúa (2000) (earlier with Moraga (1983)) uses the idea of the soul. Both authors claim that the subject/soul only comes into being by retroactive narration from a speaking body that recognizes itself (through the mirrored and desired recognition of/by others). The emergence of the subject/soul occurs in a discourse that precedes the subject/soul and limits its expression. This, of course, is all an imagined construction and the moment one tries to name it (this prediscursive spiritual site from which the subject/soul emerges) the very *nameability* of the thing slips away. A similar phenomenon occurs in trauma.

For instance, use/access of language to narrate experiences of trauma often fails those who attempt. Additionally, once raped, the subject/soul is immediately interpellated into a discourse which precedes them and again is not of one's own choosing; that of the victim.⁷ The performative discourses that surround and give particular meaning to rape are riddled with themes of isolation, shame, and irreparable physical/psychic damage which serve to isolate the survivor in their trauma as an individual sufferer. Yet, the

⁷ This is not the only possible interpellation. Discourses surrounding the rape women's body operate on scales. For instance, she can become interpellated as a statistic, she can be interpellated and imagined as volatile and unable to control her emotions, she can become interpellated a ruined woman, she can be seen as a liar, she can become someone who was asking for it, it can become her fault because she was drunk... the list of possible associations goes on. Most of these derogatory associations find meaning in rape culture which operates through victim-blaming discourses.

“victim’s” isolation is only possible and intelligible in relation to the discourses (and structures and cultures) that attach those affective meanings to this particular subject position (the emergent victim subject to/in rape discourse). Martin Alcoff (2009) explains, “Rape, then, needs to be understood as an event that alters subjectivity or selfhood” (p. 128). Thus, like the soul and the subject, the victim too is only possible in radical relation to others.

The soul and the subject are fused out of the materiality of historical conditions they are born into. For instance, those born into capitalist discourses always already have particular relationships to property, ownership, and the property of one’s body. These relationships situate one in a complex network of predetermined relations to other humans, animate, and inanimate objects that are “produced, maintained, repaired, or transformed” (Carey, 1989) by and through the community and culture of one’s birth. The soul and the subject are products of past imaginings and both take parts of the past and implant these ghostly pasts (though language and performative embodiment) into their theorization. We can only grasp the soul/subject retroactively and fictively. More materially, Butler (1997; 2005) argues that no human remembers the childhood moment they began to think themselves as an individual “I” separate from the conditions which enable their life. Our attempts at naming this unnamable process of subjectification or soul(ness) simultaneously inscribe ideological claims on the figure of the subject without nailing down that which we sought to explain. The more one attempts to describe the subject/soul’s instantiation or coming into being, the more relational and obscure it becomes; a phantom or ghost haunting all future iterations and conceptualizations.

Attempting to explain this relationship or state of being confounds liberal individualism by exposing the radical relationality that enables this fiction.

Butler's argument is that the origin of the subject, as a speaking "I" is itself unspeakable, unknowable, a prelinguistic unthinkable moment and event. The subject, for Butler, can only be articulated through the necessary other, the constitutive outside of the philosopher writing about the very fiction of subject formation— or through the ideological negation of the other (not me, not *not* me) (Burke, 1989; Trinh, 1989). Like the idea of the subject, the idea of a soul as/is a discursive event passed down through narratives about one's culture, it exists before the body exists, and situates the body within a discourse. For Anzaldúa, the soul takes on parts of other people's souls as it manifests in new bodies. Therefore, all attempts to explain the origin of the emergence of an "I" as an individual in history and in discourse are in themselves left with the indelible mark of the other who theorizes this event. As Trinh (1989) explains,

'I' is, therefore, not a unified subject, a fixed identity, or that solid mass covered with layers of superficialities one has gradually to peel off before one can see its true face. 'I' is, itself, infinite layers... Whether I accept it or not, the natures of I, I, you, s/he, We, we, they and wo/man constantly overlap. They all display a necessary ambivalence, for the line dividing I and not-I, us and them, or him and her is not (cannot) always (be) as clear as we would like it to be...categories always leak (p. 94).

These leaky subject positions and identity categories offer a chance to detour from liberal theorization of the unified or bounded subject/soul by claiming that no individual comes into being without absorbing parts of the culture which always already exist in relation to and outside of the "individual." Butler asks, then, why has this subject been teleologically and tautologically imagined as a unitary thing if it necessitates explanation from the outside? Anzaldúa and Butler argue that the multiple effects of the physical

environment, the ritual process of communication and the power-laden historical meanings these relations produce, the acts of care which enable the human to survive (not always thrive, but live [Butler, 2010]), the practice of language— these are all things that fuse onto the subject (symbolically and materially) in a way that blurs these imagined lines of self/other that Cartesian logic seeks to maintain. The historical process of theorizing the individual subject reverberates to structure the individual subject under the gaze of and mirrored in the image of the white European male colonizer. The process of the theorization of the subject or the soul is always already tautological—confined to the available systems of representation and intelligibility. Speaking is an act that in itself already marks one as a subject to a discourse, unable to grasp this process but through the ideological and discursive terms of the power-laden historical discourse of one’s context of subjectification. Althusser (1970) reminds us that, “Individuals are always already subjects” (p. 50). However, Butler and Anzaldúa disrupt the individual, and suggest that we supplant the Cartesian colonizing logic with the equally fictitious argument that there is no such thing as the individual because humans endlessly rely, hail each other, and impress upon each other a politic of relation. My point here, however, is to recognize that women can only speak through their (intelligible) “subject” position as male property. As Butler (1990) notes,

The question of ‘the subject’ is crucial for politics, and for feminist politics in particular, because juridical subjects are invariably produced through certain exclusionary practices that do not ‘show once the juridical structure of politics has been established. In other words, the political construction of the subject proceeds with certain legitimating and exclusionary aims, and these political operations are effectively concealed and naturalized by a political analysis that takes juridical structures as their foundation (p. 5).

Like women's object position within patriarchal societies, the dispossession of women as owners in global capitalism excludes them from the political sphere, from advocating for themselves, and from power within politics.

Anzaldúa and Butler explain that subject/soul is unthinkable as unitary (even in our imaginings) because of the subject/soul's relation to language, body, history, and the other. When one begins from the perspective that the subject/soul is pre-determined, unified, insular and individual, this locks us into the theorization of identity as also individual sine qua non, liberal rationalist logic to reinforce a specific individualized subject without the capacity to foster empathy for others nor to hold the institution accountable to precarity. This liberal individualism is the motor of capitalist formation, women's subordinate subjugation, and is integral to the development of the postcolonial context. As Butler and Anzaldúa explain, holding onto the notion of the unified liberal subject weakens critical feminist theory. Capitalist individualism rooted in this liberalism isolates humans from one another, halts collaborative political resistances, and keeps power in the hands of the already powerful.

Thinking the subject/soul (individual) as relational enables us to find community with others in the mobilization of resistance (Carillo-Rowe, 2008). Martín Alcoff (2009) asks us to consider whether the "concept of consent and the difficulty we have with the concept of victim is peculiar to these liberal traditions.... Do these concepts harbor individualist metaphysical conceptions of selfhood and agency? If so, what would formulations of sexual violence look like without individualist concepts of the self?" (p. 126) My argument is that our radical relation to the other becomes explicit in trauma: the infliction of pain by an other, or an inanimate object, our use/dependence upon our

language to describe experience, and in the case of the ICTY, the relative meaning of rape within the community. I agree with Butler and Anzaldúa that starting from the ontological position that we are radically bound and responsible for each other provides the conditions to imagine alternative worlds critical of capitalist and colonial logic. This shift has the potential to challenge and disrupt neocolonial and neoliberal global capitalist formations that rely on the notion of the individual to shift accountability for livable lives from the structure to the individual. In my analysis of the ICTY, this sort of shift supports critical analyses of the means by which the court “delivers justice” in punishing individuals for crimes that are enabled by structural conditions of relation and capital. In order to consider radical critique of structural and relational conditions of capital, the next section speaks to liminality and Neplanta as a pre-discursive threshold and space of unlimited potential for subjectivity and explains how Neplanta relates to transition in postsocialist Yugoslavia.

June 4, 2016—On the train leaving Rome toward Montenegro, it clicked. I am feeling more like my new/old self than I had since my rape. Feeling my body jettison through the land—lingering in my thoughts—the beauty of a rusting sienna building against the speed of the train, a splash of graffiti, a swish of green weeds elongate beside me—and for the first time in a long time my mind CAN hold the image. I understand in a moment—I know it in my bones that I have come to retrieve the missing parts of my body and soul that left me in the explosion of the rape. Finally, ready to exit Nepantla, I am ready to suture my missing parts back together. Strewn like limbs across this landscape—the mountains of Montenegro do not know—I have come back for myself.

1.Nepantla as Experiential Frame for Trauma and Transition

The trope of Nepantla as a necessary transitory phase of identity and subject formation that maps onto the liminal postsocialist experience of transition. Nepantla is a liminal state of becoming (Anzaldúa, 2000; 2009; 2012; 2015). The liminal space of

national transition from socialism to capitalism forms the geopolitical backdrop for postsocialist Yugoslav subject formation. It could be argued that the entire former Yugoslavia entered *Nepantla* when Tito died and the socioeconomic processes of privatization began. Anzaldúa claims that one enters *Nepantla* with a particular set of identifications, which are physically and spiritually transformed through the process of exiting liminality or *Nepantla*. Like subject formation, one cannot narrate the experience of *Nepantla*, but only know that they have experienced it after they come out of it.

Trauma also brings bodies into, through, and out of *Nepantla*. As one experiences pain and trauma, their bodies and selves are fundamentally changed, and this unspeakable human transition is *Nepantla*. Anzaldúa claims that this in-between state can be likened to the experience that one undergoes before coming out as gay or the movement one takes when transforming from working-class to middle-class. For Butler, the idea of *Nepantla* would be similar to a structural fissure wherein conventions of identity or norms are thrown into disarray and a changed subject emerges.

Nepantla is the inexplicable space of the subject before interpellation. The moment of fissure, of no means of adherence to identification is the moment of *Nepantla*. The reason that interpellation is important to subject formation is because interpellation is a dialectical process. One must be interpellated from this fissure and then be recognized (by a person or structure or discourse) with the interpellated identity performance at the end of the process. This is the same with *Nepantla*, one goes into a state of being as one thing (recognizable) enters *Nepantla* as unrecognizable until one is propelled (interpellated) into another recognizable state of being. *Nepantla* provides a metaphor to grasp the possibilities of an unstable subject and dynamic identity wherein one's own

ability to be recognized it conditioned by its relation to an other and the structural other. In the context of the ICTY, many interpellations take place simultaneously. The court interpellates the postsocialist Yugoslavia into the global capitalist order by judicial means, individual people become war criminals and rape victims, etc. For the women in particular, they enter the court as Muslim, female, Bosnian, and through the proceedings become witnesses, victims, raped women. The court, however, only recognizes these Balkan others on the premise that they accept the court's discursive framing of their experiences of trauma (and ultimately the women's subject positions).

The moment of *Nepantla* as a result of the trauma of rape, of expulsion from language and body, locates the unique despair in the elusively of androcentric language to speak the bodies of women (Wittig, 1992; Irigaray & Burke, 1980). One's relationship to reality, a tear in former understandings, can be re-entered if one accepts proper conventions of language that delegitimize that body and that corporeal knowledge. This policing of subject formation becomes clear in the transcript of the ICTY. By submitting to the judge's ruling "inhabitants of those regions [former Yugoslavia] marked by atrocity [must] declare their belief in its principles and procedures if they are to regain the world's recognition as properly human once again" (Atanasoski, 2013, p. 186). The women in this case (and typically) must disassociate to see themselves as subjects in a discourse which actively puts women under erasure and actively mischaracterizes their experiences (as male property) to feel some sort of agency.

Reading the transcripts produces fits of rage and despair. I took up smoking again to place the redistributive and reiterative trauma somewhere outside of myself—in the plumes that rise above my head. I smoke half a pack a day. Everyone I know is sick of hearing about rape. They are sick of hearing about the atrocities. They are sick of hearing about my nightmares. Every time I tell someone about my research they wish they hadn't

asked. Every time I tell someone that I too was raped, my words take on a performative affect in which I wound those who now know this about me. They physically recoil. I apologize for wounding them and reassure them that I am fine they don't need to worry (this is the emotional work women are expected to do on behalf of their bodies and the harm that men inflict upon their subjectivity). But, I lie. I want everyone to feel the relational and injurious pang of trauma.

2. Autoethnographic Positionality

Vignettes of my rape provide an entry point to critique the ethnic experiences of women in the former Yugoslavia while acknowledging that no two experiences of sexual violence are the same, nor can the experience of another be completely understood. I was raped in Montenegro in 2014 and returned in 2016 to research my ancestral relationship to Montenegro and my experience and memory of rape. I use my corporeal experience, while geographically similar to women in the former Yugoslavia, to critique the regimes of power that silence the raped female body, and use her body as the instantiation of ethnic and national property claims. By textualizing my experience alongside ICTY witness testimony I do not intend to equate the two, but rather, to performatively put our trauma in relation as that which connects us to the other while differentiating us from each other. In analyzing rape, I intend to advance transnational feminist theory by advocating a radically relational perspective that decolonizes the raped female body as it moves across borders. My goal is to recognize possible sites for coalition over similar experiences of dispossession of one's own body.

Although this chapter claims to employ autoethnography, it does not significantly analyze the meaning of my rape. I have decided against this because I am in no way trying to imply a comparative reading or to performatively appropriate these women's experiences of violence. My goal is not to invoke a suggestion of the equation of one rape

to another (in any circumstance), but to think about how these violences can put disparate bodies into relation through trauma. As I began this project, I theorized my rape alongside the testimony, but the more I did, the more it seemed to textually perform an epistemic violence. In my lived experience of thinking and talking to people about rape and trauma I never said, “yeah, my rape was like that too” because if someone said that to me that would be a deeply painful sort of violence to my story/body and I do not want to re-victimize and abuse the stories of the women I represent here. Thus, in an attempt to fuse the gaps between fostering relational coalition and resisting appropriation through comparison or equation, I have use personal vignettes and poetry that figure in a relational and reflexive manner to the experience of trauma as the main object of my analysis. Placing my experience into this chapter is my act of vulnerability in hopes of textualizing the relational and performative aspects of understandings and relationships to trauma. My vignettes and poetry are visually separate and bracketed from the text that I analyze in this chapter. I separate them to mark the irreducible differences of each of our experiences, but I have written them together to show how our experiences are related in this space through our bodies, geography, and trauma.

While I am using trauma as a space to theorize ontology in hopes of affecting a methodology of coalition, I am not suggesting the adoption of victim status or victimhood as an essential identity. Like Ahmed (2015) makes clear, we cannot “ontologize women’s pain as the automatic ground of politics.” As mentioned earlier, there is no way to understand the pain or trauma of another’s embodied experience. However, scales of pain and trauma are central to the human experience, and sexual violence most often manifests on women and feminine bodies. Corporeal knowledge, trauma, and pain, though Ahmed

(2015) works to undo their status as properties we own, come into being through speaking acts and the language of ownership. I cannot pull apart the property from the experience. I do, however, believe that property itself is a discourse of relation that enables and restricts particular co-performative experience. It is because sexual violence rearranged my relationship to the world and to myself that I theorize through my particular wound (Lorde, 2007; hooks, 1984;1990; Hill Collins, 2008; Moraga & Anzaldúa,1983). My corporeal knowledge may speak a truth that others cannot identify with, however, pain and trauma are parts of our shared pasts; the conditions which we were born into but did not choose. Coalition does not necessarily mean that you have suffered as I have or vice versa, but coalition does require constantly struggling for a relation of dialogic listening that acknowledges the radical relationality of the speaking subject and the other. Autoethnography, as method, takes seriously our enfolded relationalities to enact transformative social justice politics.

In autoethnography, the body of the researcher becomes a source of knowledge by challenging the traditional research roles of privileged researcher and colonized researched. Autoethnography is the interpretive practice of analyzing cultural relationships by explicitly centering the body of the researcher as a co-producer of knowledge. The object of inquiry is not simply culture, but specifically, how the researcher is implicated in their representation of culture. Autoethnography methodologically and theoretically operates from a social justice perspective to decolonize the academic gaze and the production of ethnographic knowledge (Denzin, 2003; 2005; Moreria & Diversi, 2011). Inspired by the daily negotiations of power as realized through the body in the performative and intersectional embodiment of identity,

the goal is to come to terms with the ways in which identity bears itself out in relationship to the “other.” This methodology balances academic theory with activism by aiming to produce social and political transformation and to mobilize social justice agendas (Holman Jones, 2005). In its very praxis, by way of turning the gaze back upon itself, autoethnography grasps at the project of decolonization both in the academy and in the representations it produces.

I analyzed and coded the 3-year transcript from the proceedings of the ICTY case against Kunarac, Kovac, and Vukovic. I focused my analysis on the 16 Muslim women witnesses and rape survivors that testified against the accused and the judges’ final ruling. Reading their testimony in a performative manner, I offer an interpretation of their coming to voice as speaking subjects, and argue that the space of the court simultaneously restricts and enables the witnesses to speak themselves into being and to speak their trauma into relation. Many of the witnesses chose to have their names hidden from the official record of the court, to use voice alteration, and image scrambling on the TV monitors of the court. The problems of slow/lagged interpretation, constant technical difficulties, and human error (both intentional and unintentional) that resulted in revealing witness’ identities are examples of the physical, visual, and embodied representation of *Nepantla* for the women who survived mass rape and speak the unspeakable. The text of the transcript is sanitized of emotion, inflection, and women’s bodies are quite literally scrambled or erased. In reading this text through a performative lens, I ask what discourses enable the juridicial process to function as that which will hear and heal trauma? How does the court constrain women’s voices and reify the relations of women’s bodies, social roles, and words as the property of men? The next section begins

analysis of the ICTY transcripts by interpreting the ways in which the trope of women's bodies as property was deployed.

I return to the US in 2016 and receive a message from a friend in Montenegro. She sends me a Montenegrin news clipping about another woman, this time from New Zealand, who had escaped attempted rape by a cab driver in the same area I was raped. My whole body conversed with tremors. I read the article which listed information about the woman but nothing about the male cab driver. I had to get out of my house. I messaged her back frantically asking for a description of the cab driver. Asking if I could provide information about what happened to me. Holding back vomit and crying, I coaxed myself out of a panic by reminding myself that I survived and that woman got away.

C. Body as Property

This section analyses three instances wherein women's bodies embody and signify the property of men in the ICTY transcript. The first part describes sexual violence, the second example recounts how women were sold between men as sex slaves (property), and the last excerpt describes how women in the rape camps in Foča were made to gather dead bodies and then exchanged for the dead bodies of Serbian men. Each excerpt exemplifies the ways in which women's bodies manifested as property and the instrument for the destruction of property. The first witness recounts a specific time when she was made to act as a body for male pleasure. In this scenario, her body is her whole being, it exists only for men, men own that body, and there are no possible resistances to her embodiment as property:

PROSECUTION (Q): You mentioned one other incident when Kovac alone forced you to take your clothes off. Can you describe for the Court what happened at that time?

WITNESS (A). Yes. I was alone at the time in the room. He forced me to take my clothes off, to climb on the table, and to dance to music. He was sitting on the bed with a pistol pointed at me...

Q. When you were forced to do this, how did you feel?

A. It is again difficult to describe. I was frightened. I was ashamed. I don't know what to say.

Q. Did you feel like you could control what was happening to you in any way?

A. No.

Q. Did you feel like Kovac owned you?

A. Yes. (Kunarac, p. 1717).

Q. Can you describe why you felt that way?

A. That too is rather difficult to explain, since in the apartment there were only Kovac and Kostic and only me and AS [pseudonym for another witness]. We couldn't go out anywhere; the doors were locked. We knew that Kovac would take me to one room [to be raped] and Kostic would take AS to the other room [to rape her]. That was how it was until the very end (Kunarac, p. 1494).

Q. Did you feel like you were the property of Klanfa [nickname for Kunarac] and Kosic?

A. Yes.

Q. Are you able to describe why you felt that way?

A. Whatever they said, we had to do. (Kunarac, p. 2023).

Here, through forced dancing, it is clear that the women are explicitly manipulated in their relationship to men, with no say about how their own bodies are mobilized, abused, or gazed upon. The prosecution, invoking the trope of property, does so in order to prove that not only was this form of dehumanization about women, but women's particular transference to/as property as the very evidence of the destruction of men's (specifically Bosnian Muslim) property. Moreover, this is crucial to the conviction of Kunarac as war criminal because the ICTY is trying him for destruction of property or "Count 13, a violation of the laws or customs of war, punishable under Article 3(e) (plunder of private property) of the Statute" (Judge Mumba in Kunarac, p. 82). In this example, the

possibilities for agency are literally removed through a gun to the head, and the witness moves as an object through force of an outside actor.

The second example of the manifestation of women's bodies as property occurs through the literal commodification of women's bodies as property to be exchanged by owners/men. While it is probably true that many women in the Bosnian War were sold and killed for the purpose of rape and enslavement, one witness' experience was characterized by the prosecution as such:

Throughout this period of nearly four months, they were also forced to cook and clean for Kovac and one of his associates. On the 25th of February 1993, Kovac and his associate sold Witness 87 and A.S. to two Montenegrins for 500 Deutschmarks each. The victims were then transported to Montenegro where they were subjected to more sexual violence and where they were forced to work as barmaids until their escape on the 5th of April 1993 (Kunarac, p. 321).

Recounted various times over the course of the trial, variations to this narrative include that the girls (aged 12 and 17) were sold for a sum⁸ of 500 Deutschmarks and some soap.⁹ Perhaps the brutal conditions of war enable humans to be bought in exchange for soap, however, any conditions that enable humans to be bought and sold for objects is one in which the humans being exchanged are no longer humans but mere bodies with minimal property value.

In addition to their treatment as subhuman property, the women were forced to complete domestic tasks for their captors. The enslavement of women in the Bosnian War

⁸ "Q. Now, you mentioned that you knew AS was sold for 500 German marks. Do you know if you were sold as well? A. Yes. Both of us were sold for that sum." (Kunarac p. 1722).

⁹ "And in connection with the sale, she said they had been sold for 500 Deutschmarks and that they, the Montenegrins, laughed and said, 'You see how much you're worth. You're worth 500 Deutschmarks and the truckload of detergent'" (Kunarac, p. 6478).

as domestics and as bodies to be raped exposes the hidden abode of labor within the house and specifically the sexual division of labor wherein women labor for and below men. The material relationship of women's bodies and labor (productive and reproductive) as men's property, as theorized by Engels (2010), is the operation of power at play in the above examples where the women must perform for the men, cook and clean for the men, and be raped by the men. As Pateman (1988) and Halley (2016) explain, the sexual contract (in "consensual" heteronormative relationships) is, in fact, never consensual when one consenting party is considered human and the other is not.

Further exemplifying the ways in which women's bodies become property, is the handling of dead bodies in the Bosnian War. In the former Yugoslavia, dead bodies took on a lot of meaning. In the Serbian Orthodox tradition, as Verdery (1999) explains, "Serbia is wherever there are Serbian graves" (p. 98). It is important to remember, however, that this saying is about the graves of Serbian men. Considering this cultural backdrop, the burial practices of men's dead bodies takes on great significance—especially in war where bodies go missing in action. As the War progressed there were deaths on all sides, but important to the following witness' account, is that there was an explosion involving Kunarac and some of his men. They suffered injury ranging from shrapnel wounds to death. Kunarac demanded that the bodies of his men receive proper burials¹⁰ (both to claim property as Serbian and to lay the bodies to rest).

¹⁰ A witness who was a member of Kunarac's military unit explains, "I was in the presence of Kunarac. And if a body was found, they would call for Kunarac to approach the body first. Q. And you did not go with him, because you are not a specialist on mines; right? A. I'm not a mine specialist, but I was in his immediate vicinity, because we didn't know where we would find bodies and who would find them. Q. Can you give me just a direct answer: When Mr. Kunarac moved to another group of people searching, you did not go with him, right; you stayed in your search group? A. No. We would go over there

Sometimes Kunarac would order his soldiers to gather the dead bodies, and sometimes he would order Bosnian women to search for and collect the dead bodies for burial. One witness¹¹ was made to cross from the Serb front to the Bosnian Muslim side to deliver a letter requesting dead Serb bodies in exchange for herself and (presumably raped) Muslim women. There was another instance in which, as a Serbian propaganda stunt for Serbian media, dead Serb bodies were exchanged for living Muslim ones.¹² This unequal exchange rate again makes explicit the value of women: two living women are not even worth one dead male body.¹³ This exchange fell through many times before the women were actually released to their side's men. However, one witness recounts how she was treated during this process:

His name was Kornjaca; he was a doctor. He greeted us. He climbed up on

because of the burial, because we had to bury a body. We had to dig and bury the body as fast as possible, so we would all go there together" (Kunarac, p. 5543).

¹¹ "A. They sent me to the negotiations so that the two of them could be exchanged. Q. Did you have a letter or something with you? A. Yes. When he had driven me to the station, he gave me a sealed letter. (p. 2253) Q. When you say "he," whom do you mean? A. Bojat. I don't know how to put – his uncle's son. His cousin. Q. This Bojat, is this a Serb soldier, or was this a Serb soldier? A. He was in uniform. Q. And you said he took you to the station. What kind of station do you mean? You mean the police station? A. The station. No. He drove me to -- by car to Osanice. Not Stanica. Osanice. And in the meantime he dropped by somewhere, whether it was the police station or somewhere. Whether he picked up the letter there, I don't know, but he drove me to Osanice by car. Q. Osanice, was there the front line at that time between the Serbs and the Muslim army? A. Yes. Q. When you arrived at Osanice, what happened? What did you have to do? A. They gave me a very small rag and a stick and this letter, and they told me that I could go. But I covered a very short distance, and the Serbs started shooting from the sides. Then they told me to come back slowly, and I did. And then they probably reported that I was going there, and after a short time they told me, "You can go now. Our people will not kill you if the Muslims don't kill you" (Kunarac, p. 2254)

¹² "On 4th April 1992, approximately 250 of them [Muslims] were captured before crossing into Konjic municipality. The captured Muslims, among them several of the witnesses, were detained in Kalinovik Primary School until the 1st September 1992 when they were exchanged for bodies of killed Serb soldiers" (Kunarac, p. 6221).

¹³ Q. And who was being taken for exchange? A. Before me, they took 16 men from the KP Dom and 38 women" (Kunarac, p. 2538).

a bench and he said, 'I had brought you here to exchange you and to send you to your own territory but your Muslims don't want you. They say they don't need you.' He said, 'You have to go back to Foča again,' and that's what happened (Kunarac, p. 2540).

While not all Muslim women who survived the rape camp were shunned by the Muslim men (their fathers, brother, sons), but it is important to analyze how women's bodies maintain their status as property as they traverse borders. Yugoslavia as nation, as geography of ownership, provides a frame for the nations that are erected upon the bodies of women and how their (nations and women) positionality is maintained through liberal juridical means at the ICTY. The next section analyses how women's bodies as men's property signify the nation.

In 2014, I drove through the night from Montenegro, through Foča, to Sarajevo. At the time, I had not yet read the ICTY transcripts. However, my stomach sank when the single road switched between pebbled pavement to dirt and back again on the pitch-black edges of the Tara River Canyon. When I arrived at the Bosnian border, I felt even more nauseous. I remembered after the war, when I was nine, my grandpa and father would bribe the guards to drive across borders. This time, the guards pick out the car in front of me for inspection and each passenger is ordered outside of the vehicle. The men who exit sway in front of the guards, perhaps from too much rakija. At my turn, the guards stamp my passport and say "Zenovich?" and I say yes and they let me go. Directly to the left of the checkpoint, was a bridge made from wood with a sign on one side reading, "Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina" and on the other side of the bridge was a sign: "Republica Srpska" and written underneath: Srbinje (the place of Serbs).

D. Nation as Property

In the former Yugoslavia, during the War women were representative of nation (national property) in such a way that their bodies became the borders of states: their sex preceded their ethnicity and babies were effects of military penetration (Hromadzic, 2007). If successful in impregnating their victims, Serbian soldiers constructed new Serbian nations within the Bosnian woman's body. Her raped body, signifying the space before the rape (Bosnia) is transformed by this violation, so the properties of her body

now signify a new (Serbian) nation. This means, women became “homeless in her own body,” producing male property (children) to construct national borders without claim to her own selfhood or body (i.e.; dispossession) (Copelon, 1994, p. 202). Extreme privileging of masculinity and patrilineal bloodlines are rendered visible across the borders of the female body. The act of rape is intended to erase the woman’s history (Bosnia), but not her entire self, as she is the vessel needed to reproduce the (now capitalist) Serb nation. In the former Yugoslavia, the geopolitical meanings enacted through women’s bodies are particular to each of the six former republics.

For example, Montenegro’s positionality in the former Yugoslavia and in the Bosnian War is, of course, troubled. Although not implicated as warring nation or indicted to the ICTY,¹⁴ Montenegro remained in the rump of Yugoslavia with Serbia (Ramet, 2004) and many Montenegrins still see themselves as ethnic Serbs (Djilas, 1958). Dragoljub Kunarac,¹⁵ the commander accused of war crimes and charged with rape as a crime against humanity at the ICTY hailed from Montenegro and his father lived in a seaside Montenegrin town (Kotor) while Kunarac slaughtered men and women in Bosnia. During the war, Montenegro was a safe zone for Serbs fleeing Bosnia and for Muslims who could pass as Serb. At the same time, Serb-identified Montenegrin soldiers

¹⁴ Individuals such as Kunarac may have Montenegrin roots, or have previously lived in Montenegro, but individuals are indicted to the ICTY as Serbs, Croats, or Bosnian Muslims, not as Montenegrins. This has to do with the UN understanding of who remained culpable for the war and specifically who was the primary aggressor. See Mackinnon (1993; 1994) and Atanasoki (2013) for critical analysis of the UN position on indictments for the ICTY.

¹⁵ “Dragoljub Kunarac, also known as Zaga or Dragan, was born in Foča on the 15th of May, 1960. Immediately prior to the war, he lived in Tivat, Montenegro” (Kunarac, p. 304).

were the ones responsible for purchasing the two women mentioned in the previous section. In the aftermath of the war, Montenegro was a safe haven for both war criminals and refugees¹⁶ (Fraser, 2003; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2004c). Additionally, many of the witnesses explained that their rapists¹⁷ spoke in a Montenegrin¹⁸ dialect.¹⁹ In the transcript, Kunarac²⁰ himself explains that some of his soldiers were, in fact, Montenegrin. Furthering Montenegrin culpability; the charges against Kunarac for rape, torture, and enslavement occurred at Bosnian/Montenegrin border town of Foča (renamed Srbinje— little Serbia). Montenegro’s “formal” ability to remain out of what counted as war when in a loose confederation with Serbia was remarkable, (Bieber, 2003) especially given that Montenegrins committed some of the most egregious acts of war, rape, torture, and murder. Although performative, this imagined shared ethnic origin is important to how violence proceeded in the Bosnian War.

¹⁶“I saw them beat up an old man with their boots. They beat him with their boots. Then they took a knife and cut his face from the hairline down across the face, right down. That man was there. And then he went to Montenegro later on when we left. He survived.” (Kunarac, p. 991).

¹⁷ “They would just come, kill whom they killed, raped whom they raped, torched houses, took away valuables. With my very own eyes, I saw my own burnt house... Some of them came from Nikšić, from Montenegro. They said so themselves” (Kunarac, p.1276).

¹⁸ “I think they were from Montenegro. They had a different accent from ours, though they also said where they came from. I think most of them were from Nikšić, yes” (Kunarac, p. 1694).

¹⁹ Part of the soldiers were locals from Foča, and partly they came from elsewhere. They had camouflage uniforms and also some special insignia with a white band over the shoulder. At first I did not know who they were... Later I learned that these were paramilitary units from Serbia, the White Eagles, the Arkan people, and partly they came from Montenegro as well... They were exclusively Serbs, ethnic Serbs” (Kunarac, p. 659).

²⁰ "A man described as Zaga was also a prominent figure. He is said to be the leader of the group from Montenegro" (Kunarac, p. 2350).

This section analyses three excerpts from the transcript within this ethnic cultural context. The first example describes the beginning of the genocide; where Muslim men were murdered in front of their wives, daughters, grandmothers, friends, and where women were carted off to rape camps. The second brief and gruesome excerpt describes how Serbs used sexual violence to inscribe the Serbian nation and Serbian borders on women's bodies. The last example describes the brutal gang rape of one witness and exemplifies how her body was made to reproduce the Serbian nation. The excerpt below sets the scene of the genocide and mass rape by explaining how property was sequestered from all Bosnian Muslims in Foča and how women were corralled to be raped.

Describing her desperate attempt to flee Foča one witness explains:

And everything was a long distance away and the Muslim positions were far off. So we had no choice. We couldn't go anywhere or reach any point, because all around us was the Serbian population and Serb soldiers (Kunarac, p. 2431).

A second witness explains that when she and her family were captured by Serb soldiers:

They separated the men, seven of them. They lined them up. I didn't know the name of the Vojvoda, but I know that's how they referred to him. He tried swearing at them. He took the cross from his neck and made them kiss the cross... Then they told the women and children to go on downwards, and we went off, about 100 meters. We heard a shot from the direction of where the men had stayed. They told us to lie down and that it was the balijas [derogatory word for Muslim] that were shooting, and they cursed our balija mothers (Kunarac p. 2511)

This witness' testimony continue to describe that the Muslim men were killed and the remaining women were taken off to the rape camps after the above described event.

Another witness describes what happened after she was captured:

A. We got certificates from the police station in charge that we could leave Foča. Every member of my family got an individual certificate, and we also had to sign documents saying that we left all our property to the Serb republic.

Q. Were you not allowed to take any of your possessions with you?

A. We didn't have anything. We left wearing other people's clothes, with borrowed money, because our apartment was burned. When we went to the camp. I already mentioned that. We didn't have a thing.

Q. Nevertheless, you had to sign a certificate or some document indicating that you were leaving, and leaving all your possessions, whatever those may be, behind, and leaving them to the Serb republic? Do I understand that correctly?

A. Yes (Kunarac, p. 495).

As is evident from these excerpts, the nation begins to materialize through violence. Trapped, with no choice to surrender or be killed, these witnesses bring the violence of the soldiers (acting through the nation) upon their bodies into focus. When one of the Serb soldiers made the Muslim men kiss the cross, that soldier interpellated the Muslim men's submission to the nation through the possible (and already experienced) violence of the Serb nation. Refusal to submit to this subjection means death. The act of killing the men in front of the women removes women's previous (understood) relationship as property of/to those particular men (slain Bosnian Muslims). Murdering the Bosnian Muslims instantiates a reclamation process whereby the leftover property of the dead men is now up for grabs by whichever men take it. In this way, women become the corporeal, property, sexual, and geographic spoils of war— wherein the spoils go to the victor. In the last quoted excerpt above, a witness explains the conditions upon which they "surrendered" to Serb forces. The first condition of surrender is that all the property is now under Serbian ownership, and thus, belongs to the Serb Nation. Unfortunately, this conditional surrender ended up being a trap because the witness was relocated to a rape camp run by Serbs.

Following this timeline, after their male relatives are murdered in front of them,

the women and their nationally representative and nationally reproductive bodies are relocated in the rape camp in Foča. There are no words to describe the severity of the horror that occurred in these spaces or the abject violence that these women endured. The next excerpt explains how one witness experienced one form of nationalist sexual violence:

He was old. He was awful. He had a knife. He said to me, "You will see, you Muslim. I am going to draw a cross on your back. I'm going to baptize all of you. You're now going to be Serbs" (Kunarac, p. 1278).

In this example, the soldier repeatedly rapes his Serbian Nation onto and into her body, first physically with his own body, secondly with his performative speech, and thirdly with the knife (scarring her body from this moment forward to bare the mark of his nation). While this, perhaps is as explicit as the woman's body can become in the signification of men's property/nation (and in men's colonization of woman's body for/in the name of the nation), this explicit signification is taken to its extreme in the possibility of the reproduction of the Serbian nation through the woman's body. The possibility of her reproductive body further iterates her relationship to/as male property. The next excerpt is a paraphrased account by the prosecution of one witness' violent gang rape. While gang raped, she was told that she would never know which Serb was the father but she would know that the child was Serbian. They explain:

The accused, who raped the witness, first humiliated the trembling woman by saying that she had to enjoy what he was doing. And when the witness put her hands on her eyes, he told her that she had to look a Serb in his eyes while he was raping her. The victim was then also raped by the other two soldiers. While this happened, the accused Kunarac taunted the witness by telling her that she would have a son not knowing who the father was, but most important, that it would be a Serb child (Kunarac p. 6243).

Here, the raped woman's body is property of those that rape her— as the rape instantiated

her Serb belonging/nationality— and if she becomes pregnant, the baby she produces is the property of the Serb nation already owning Serb citizenship (belonging to the Serb nation) because it possesses the father’s Serb blood. As Mackinnon (1993) explains, “It is rape for reproduction *as* ethnic liquidation: Croatian and Muslim women are raped to help make a Serbian state by making Serbian babies” (p. 67). The Tribunal accepts this premise, as flawed as it is, in order to bring charges against Kunarac and declare rape a crime against humanity. The next section looks more deeply at the experience of rape and testifying about that trauma in the ICTY.

When I was raped, my rapist pushed me down and hit my head on the arch of the window in the backseat of his cab. He took me out of the cab and raped me in the dirt beside it. There were shards of glass on the ground, which cut my feet, and Roma children watching and laughing from behind a trash bin about thirty yards away. I have never uttered these words, and there are many other parts of my trauma that are too painful to name, speak, or transcribe. I am not alone in my fragmented silences about unspeakable violence and unspeakable trauma. What does it mean to experience this particular form of violence? Does this trauma hail relational subject formation in real time?

When language fails us to our core—
when we become dislodged, disconnected, incapable of turning
to the very words which used to bend under our tongues
to imply the ideas we hoped to convey
—what moment of fragment—unreality— the utter fraud
of a patriarchal racist language to ever name me or you—
when and where do we enter the dream?
Outside the realm of victimhood
the barometer for emotional response
the vicious act of rape perpetrated on the only property
I sought to contain.
I don’t necessarily feel dead
—but certainly—
there is something about being in Montenegro.

In 2016, for my last night in Montenegro, we had drinks on the terrace of Milica’s new apartment overlooking an empty dirt lot. Dogs howled and ran in packs away from the street lamp of her parking lot. The lot was well known as a place where many cars

went—> couples went—>prostitutes went—> to fuck and be fucked. I only half-listened to the conversations, focusing more on the familiar lot. Loud screams emanated from the unlit dirt and I lost my breath. They both, Jovana and Milica, told me to, “Lighten up! It was probably just sex sounds. That’s natural and normal. Come on, Jennifer! Haven’t you ever had sex?!” I laughed it off, pretending like I wasn’t raped in that very field. More screams. My belly was warm from rakija, but the wind shifted and my skin was cold.

Jovana smiled and said, “Maybe she is raping HIM! Could you imagine that?!” they laughed for two minutes. Watching myself watch from above— watching the lot from above—exiting Nepantla—yet out of my body— my trip ended with the universal kismet of remembering and replaying rape from above—on a friend’s balcony.

E. Trauma as Property

This section describes some of the witness’ responses to the violence, terror, and trauma of the war. Most of the witnesses express that they felt dead after such violence, isolated in their individual yet communal experiences. The excerpts point to liminal moments of Nepantla, where the witnesses cannot quite grasp their experience, self, or subjectivity in language or their prior relationship to reality. Many witnesses explain that in addition to feeling dead, they tried their best to forget what happened, or struggled to find words that captured a sliver of the horror they suffered. Their testimony at the Tribunal, in this regard, speaks trauma in relation on the possibility of recognition. But, furthermore, testimony as a speech act situates the witnesses as both postsocialist liberal subjects of the court *and* as Bosnian Muslim women victims while speaking their movement through Nepantla. Every instance of the speaking subject/witness/woman/victim’s body in this context is relational. Trauma lays bare her relationship to the other, both through her experience of trauma outside the court (to nation, men, and herself) and in her narration of trauma (making it intelligible in the frame of the trial) within the court. Her narration of her experience through the language of ownership imagines the trauma of her experience as not only hers, but as property of the nation to which she belongs.

The constitutive outside (other/rapist) to trauma causes an existential confrontation with one's own relational corporeal vulnerability at the hands of an other. This necessary relationship to the other is mirrored in trauma (and life in general) and in the human dependency upon language, human others (doctors, family), and inanimate others (water, food) to survive. Even as I attempt to trace the infinite relationality in subjectification, to/through discourses of trauma and sexual violence, I fall prey to the trap of androcentric language which assumes/imbues property relations of ownership to every word and body invoked. Through this process of subject formation in discourses of trauma, our bodies are interpellated again to be named by power for recognition (within these discourses). Even as trauma, pain and grief expose our vulnerable bodies to governmentality (Edkins, 2008), it also exposes the endless relationality of the human experience (Ahmed, 2015).

The below excerpts talk of isolation, grief, and pain resulting from the trauma of systematic rape. My goal in sharing these vulnerable and devastating narratives is not to re-traumatize, re-victimize, or even trigger. Much of the transcript is evidence of complete inability to come to terms with the experiences of the witnesses. The prosecution's line of questions, for instance, first ask the witnesses how they feel about their trauma/rape and then after asking witnesses to dive into their wounds, they ask questions necessary for conviction that read as insensitive and re-victimizing: comments such as "by rape do you mean he put his penis in your vagina?" Given this context, my goal is to analyze the ways in which the trauma is performed relationally and to critique the ways in which the nation figures in trauma to claim the witness' trauma as property of the nation. The first series of excerpts are response to versions of the question, "how did

your rape make you feel?” The second set of excerpts talk about how the witnesses attempted to help each other after rape and how they recognized that rape had occurred. The third set of excerpts discusses how the trauma of the women is imagined to belong to the nation. Below are responses to the question, “how did this make you feel?”:

Q. As a result of all the rapes that you suffered during these many months, did you continue to suffer?

A. In a way, yes. I think that I'm once again at a point where I find it difficult to explain. I think that I have decided to try and leave many of those things behind me somewhere, although within me, I still have and there will always be traces of everything that happened to me. I think that for the whole of my life, all my life I will have thoughts of that and feel the pain that I felt then and still feel. That will never go away (Kunarac, p. 1728).

This witness' response is emblematic of many witness responses because it marks trauma as something that one owns and carries on their bodies for the rest of their lives. It is difficult to think trauma outside the language of ownership. In particular, how this language for trauma situates ownership of pain and grief as an individual infliction even as it is communally performed. Like Hengehold (2000) explains, “Traumatic events by their nature involve a violation of psychological and physical integrity, a painful disruption of self-control and control over the individual's environment that shakes his or her confidence and self-possession” (p. 196). The next witness' answer embodies the failure of language to express how she felt about her rape. She explains, “How could I feel? The worst possible ever” (Kunarac, p. 2513). Later, when asked again how she felt after the rape she responded “I don't know how to describe it, how I felt. It can't be described, how I felt” (Kunarac, p. 2528). Another witness explains her experience of narrating her trauma:

When I was giving these[statements], I was in pain. I was sad. I was shattered psychologically... After all of this, I had a stroke, and then I

tried to kill myself. I had a nervous condition, and then after all of that, I had a stroke (p. 2821)

In the expulsion from a language which never actually named her as a subject, her body is also catapulted from material reality (and her relationship to her own materiality) in the violence of trauma. This violent removal from language and one's body is *Nepantla* or the liminal space before interpellation or the prediscursive space before subject formation. The next witness attempts to narrate this space and her experience by explaining to the Tribunal how she makes sense of the violence:

Q. What happened to you while you were in Karaman's House?

A. Rape happened, humiliation, mistreatment.

Q. When you say "rape", what exactly do you mean?

A. In the Yugoslav language in those days, which is now Bosnian, there is a word, "silo", which means power, strength. To me, that very word, "silovanje", because I was a child of 15. So they used force, power, strength to bring me there, and that means everything. Everything I went through, as well as the other girls, occurred not through my will or my acquiescence but by the use of force, power and strength.

Q. But for what did they use the power and strength and force, for what?

A. To bring us there and to do everything they did.

Q. Does that mean to put their penises into your mouth, or vagina, or anus?

A. Yes (Kunarac, p. 2423/4).

While this witness attempted to narrate otherwise, she is still made to conform to the discourse of the Tribunal that only recognize certain testimony as useful in conviction of war crimes. The witness' recognition of the inability of language to name her experience is a possible explanation of her use of the trope of power to describe her trauma.

However, ultimately, her subject position in the court is reasserted as property when she is asked to objectify her own experience of rape. Even though the witness is correct, and her understanding of her rape empowers/enables her to survive, it reminds the reader why she is testifying at the ICTY in the first place: rape was utilized as a technique of genocide against/on women and their bodies to hurt Bosnian men. Serbs used their power to physically rape Bosnian women (Bosnian men's property) to eliminate (psychically and geographically) the Bosnian nation and to inflict so much pain and trauma on their bodies that no Bosnians would return to (what ended up becoming) the greater Serbia. While this context is important to this analysis, it is also critical to this chapter to acknowledge that even in moments of violence where pain and trauma are most isolating— these moments are always already moments of radical relation.

The examples below are witnesses' accounts of individual coping through relational means. While some explain how alone they felt as a result of the trauma, the relational recognitions of the other women (that a violence had taken place) was a relational tool in survival. Some of the witnesses even describe trying to comfort those who were raped. Many of the women were raped in public and in the company of other women. Although these instances of violence are shared, they are differentially experienced and the women's shared proximity to each other's violence initiates recognition, which in turn, makes the violence more felt. This proximity to violence and the relational intelligibility of violence extends from the moments of violence into the retelling and narration of the violence in the court. The following are examples wherein the witness' experience is more clearly articulated as relational:

Q. Do you know what happened to the other women in that same room? Were they also raped?

A. Well, probably they were, but I couldn't expect that anything like that would happen to me, so I just withdrew into myself (Kunarac, p. 2217).

Here an older witness describes how the women would return after being taken out of the camp to be raped:

They were all sorrowful, tearful, though they didn't dare cry, but they looked awful (Kunarac, p. 2210)... They would come back with their heads bowed down, very sad looking. And 87, when she came back, wasn't able to walk. She was only 15 years old at the time. Her mother screamed when she saw what her daughter looked like. We helped to get her into the bus when they took us off to Foča because she couldn't get on herself. Number 75, the same thing happened—she looked the same way, her appearance was the same. They were crying a lot. And we helped as far as we were able to (p. 2516)... They looked sad. Some of them were crying, some of them, I don't know, they went all sort of rigid and stony (p. 2525).

Corporeal interpellations into trauma discourses, specifically in rape as explained by the witness, are dialectical processes of recognition of ownership (i.e.; one “has it” [the property of trauma, rape, pain, etc.]). This recognition is subject formation, which in turn, is the ontological moment—Nepantla— and it is relational. Another witness recounts trying to relay her experience of trauma to her husband:

Q. After all the painful experiences that you had in the period before you gave statements or not, did you talk to anybody close to you, people who had experienced similar things?

A. No. No, because I didn't have an opportunity to talk to anybody, particularly my own relations. Nobody wanted to hear my story because they knew. They knew what had happened. They knew what was going on. My first husband did not want to hear me tell what had happened to me, because he knew from day one what had happened to me as soon as the Serbian army had took us off [to the camp to rape us] (Kunarac, p. 2807).

Another witness attempts describes how the act of rape was relational, and the defense

appears to read her body as angry:

A. Number 48, woman 48, and woman 89 were taken out with me, and that is 100 percent sure. They were -- we were taken out -- all taken out together, all three of us and we were all raped. What else do you want me to say? Is that enough.

Q. Well, please don't be angry. You have no reason to be angry?

A. What do you mean I have no reason? Did I have a reason to be raped? Did I want to be raped? (p. 1223).

Amplified in moments of life or death trauma, the human relation to the other is again

made explicit through the witness' testimony. Yet, this subject formation is immediately

located within the context and location of the body (as it is placed within the nation).

Recalling again that systematic rape was a technique of ethnic/national genocide, the next

witness' testimony invokes her nationality as integral to her survival. Here a witness

recounts how, even though she was treated so poorly, she was able to survive on the hope

that she, as a Bosnian Muslim was not deserving of the trauma inflicted upon her. It is

unclear from the transcript what implores the prosecution to ask if the witness needs a

break, but I assume that she is crying or visibly shaking. This last example articulates the

women's trauma to the nation by entrenching nationalism as key to survival. Here is the

exchange:

Q. Do you need a little break or can we—

A. No. No. I have to be strong.

Q. How did this make you feel while you were in Karaman's House?

A. Awful, dreadful, helpless. But at the same time I felt dignified and proud.

Q. Of what?

A. I didn't understand the question.

Q. You said dignified and proud, and what do you mean? What made you feel dignified and proud?

A. Yes. We girls, children, were hopeless. They were men under arms and they used force. But simply I did not want to be subdued. They would often describe us as slaves, but I wouldn't accept that, though I couldn't say it often. But intimately I would refuse to accept it, though it was the truth.

Q. Given the time you survived in Karaman's House, what effect did that have on your physical and mental health, if any?

A. As I have said, we were very young and were hardly conscious of some things. And we Muslims, Bosniaks, would like to thank dear God, dear Allah, for surviving. We didn't have any physical consequences, but I, as a member of an old Bosniak family, I think that no major traces have been left on our mental state, but the wounds and scars remain and I'm trying to overcome them. And in spite of everything, I have managed to remain proud and dignified; and proud, in the first place, of my name, my belonging to that ethnic group (Kunarac, p. 2424).

In addition to this witness' articulation to the nation through her trauma, the court itself reinforces the specter of her trauma as belonging to the nation by offering justice through the prism of apprehending national trauma. It becomes clear that trauma and violence inflicted upon women becomes abstract in the Tribunal, functioning more as national ownership of trauma as property of the nation. This performative maneuver re-articulates women as property of men and the nation. Thus, the justice served is served on behalf of men who, through the validation of the court, are vindicated from the trauma inflicted on their property (women/the nation).

She said she didn't/doesn't know anyone that this has happened to
Until me.

Am I so mad that my fury manifests in the images of violence I can't make disappear?

A claw-like fist of acrylic nails to
Her cheek— to scratch
Her throat— expose the
Lie
Mark some blood.

Do something—anything that
Verifies my living existence
Is that— the sort of
Violence that moves beneath
The surface here?
If we could get away with it?
Doesn't death always
Reaffirm life?

Over the course of my life, friends and family members have exposed their traumatic wounds to me. Our national statistics of rape and sexual violence manifest on the flesh of my friends and myself. All women and one man have told me about their experiences and cried in front of me. Does everyone know that rape and sexual violence happen across all classes, races, sexualities, ages? Some women hold onto it (the unnamable trauma) like menstruation, a secret we all know happens but are shamed to keep quiet about. I am working on freely talking about my assault. Things have changed since I have returned from Montenegro and share my rape with my family and friends. They ramble off therapists, tell me they are “so sorry,” try to relate by explaining how they deal with their trauma. The ones who have had similar experiences don't ask me why I couldn't fight him off or how this could have happened. They recognize me without those words. The exchanges are typically one sided. The worst exchanges occur when the person I tell cries and needs me to comfort them for my own injury. At a dinner table with a professor and her husband, we discuss recent news about a Colombia University student who was raped and carried her mattress around as protest and a performative act to create visibility for the shame and trauma. Still not in control of my rape narrative, I became enraged over the University's handling of the student's rape. The professor looked at me and in an instant, she knew what happened to me and I knew that she knew. I think about all the people that I told whose recognition formed in their eyes and drew lines to the corners of their lips. Not all of them share my experiences or understand my experiences, but their recognitions sustained me during that time. I imagine that most need similar recognitions to survive.

F. Trauma in Radical Relation and Coalition

This chapter focused on how experiences of trauma escape language, impel our vulnerable bodies to the other for survival, and how the ICTY used women's experience of trauma as property representative of national violence to be owned by the nation so that their (the witnesses) experience becomes fodder to restore the wounded nation within the space of the Tribunal. The pain/violence specific to women's bodies is

obscured/erased through the court's and the nation's claiming of the pain/violence as it's own (property). This claim to ownership of trauma as property are the conditions which enable the prosecution of rape as a war crime and as a crime against humanity.

This analysis has attempted to articulate the communicative and performative effects of speaking one's trauma and thereby oneself into being. It is in this specific act of communication that the weight of or relational existence can be realized and cultivated toward resistance of individualistic narrations of the self. Trauma and the communication of it, like the declaration of the subject into an autonomous self (an "I"), reiterates the relationality of our ontological and epistemic condition. Recognition of the relational "I," fractured in *Nepantla*, requires the other to recognize "I" as changed— bearing or owning relational trauma. The relational recognition of the other was required for the judgement in the ICTY. It is the speaking subject that relationally declares their positionality within the discourse and offers this speaking declaration of subjectivity to be relationally affirmed, recognized, misrecognized, or ignored by other co-performing subjects of the community.

It is also important to be critical of what community these interpellations create. International law and the Tribunal may be well intentioned, but often the ICTY replicates and reinforces the understanding that a man defines the individual who is subject to the protections of such androcentric law. As argued above, in relation to the human rights afforded to raped women, she is only seen as property under the law. Her ability to enter the court and request such protections under human rights is conditioned by her subject position which can only be articulated in her relation to the men of her community. This does not make the ICTY's judgement that rape was a crime against humanity a

unanimous win for women like Bergoffen (2006) explains. Rather, the judgement reinforces and recognizes, 1. Liberalism's individual male subject as the human 2. Women as property of the nation and specifically of men 3. Only value propertied men (those with claims to women that represent nation and culture) and the damage to their property as the only beings intelligible to purport claims of crimes against humanity.

Regimes of private property and ownership are always instantiated through violence. Specifically, the capitalist state necessitates gendered acts of violence which produce precarity and these cannot be thought separately from capitalist development in postsocialist nations. Suchland (2015) argues that the economic conditions of precarity enable sexual violence and sex trafficking in postsocialist Russia. Atanasoski (2013), argues that violence and precariousness are embedded in structures and apparatuses of postsocialist transition to capitalism. However, beyond these broad and important critiques, it is also through one's relationship to/as property (that comes into crisis in the transition) that enables the precarious conditions which produce mass sexual violence. Within global capitalism, it is worth arguing that our bodies are vulnerable and that this vulnerability is a shared condition of our humanity which should impel us to love and even be responsible to the other. It does seem that undoing the unitary subject is a starting point toward critically moving toward differently imagined communities with less precarity and dispossession, but operationalizing this social justice agenda through vulnerability will not hold universal appeal nor produce the radical changes of undoing the liberal subject.

Using the trope of property to access our base relations to the other within global capitalism helps to illuminate the material and symbolic manifestations of oppressions as

they are embodied. Critical analysis of our relationships to property locates contexts for embodied resistance to discourses of property. From critique of property relations, we can also locate the trauma these relations cause. Coming to relational and communal terms with trauma can begin to hold institutions accountable for the violence they enable. The precarious conditions of the postsocialist world are made possible through relationships to/of property. It is necessary and worthwhile to deeply historicize and contextualize the spaces which enable acts of violence by specific bodies and on specific bodies in the name of property (nation). Since the condition of the world is postsocialist, and since the world is decidedly capitalist, discourses of property ownership continue to interpellate humans as individuals (men) with the potential to own property and others as property (women, people of color). This ontological relationship is foundational to the capitalist nation.

Rape, in particular, is a form of trauma and pain that destroys language, lays bare the explicit way in which women (imagined and embodied) as property, women (imagined and embodied) as producers of property are the cog in the machine of social performative ritual that propels male dominance in global capitalism. “Crimes against individual women are always and also crimes against the others that they are in relation with, perhaps their families, children, communities” (Martín Alcoff, 2009, p. 131). The scope of this chapter has not allowed me to go into other wartime rape, torture or slavery (for example: colonization, U.S. slavery, WWII, Rwanda, South Africa, Vietnam, Darfur, ISIS, and more) but I mention them because these are spaces where analysis of the relationship of women as property to trauma and nation can foster transnational feminist coalition against discourses that situate women as property. None of these traumas can be

reduced to each other because each context intends and implicates different projects of power inflected through women's bodies. However, these traumas need to continue to be mobilized, not for nationalist political gain, but for feminist activism, theory, and coalition across borders.

It perhaps is a trite metaphor, but I would like to think about an ambulance driving down the road with lights flashing and siren blaring. The ambulance is a symbol of trauma moving through the shared streets of our various communities. It is law in the US to move to the side of the road to allow the ambulance to pass. That relational action enables the conditions to be such that the medics inside the ambulance can help someone survive. It is a law, yes, but it holds us in moral, symbolic, and material relation to the other. The recognition of trauma of another in the form of the racing ambulance compels us to move to the side of the road. Without this cooperation, some of the people that ambulances save, would not be saved. The ambulance in a way, holds our collective potential to suffer violence or experience trauma, and through our recognition of ourselves in the other (inside the ambulance)— we help. Rape, as a specific form of trauma happens every single day in every place in the world. The trauma of rape is a social drama and ritual that maintains male dominance and secures women's bodies as property for masculine communication and trade.

The trauma of my rape in the former Yugoslav nation of Montenegro in 2014 broke apart my body into Coatlicue (Anzaldúa, 2012), my limbs/bones and sanity strewn across the mountainous Montenegro landscape until my return and exit of Nepantla in 2016. My experience left me constantly struggling to resist a discourse of victimhood that named me as such but did not care to listen to me speak. What was immediately clear,

however, was that trauma of rape cannot be properly named and that experience can never fully be transferred or translated. By placing my story of rape within the space of this analysis, I put my experience in relational conversation with the testimony of women who were raped in the Bosnian Genocide. Our shared ties to the land (the former Yugoslavia) and to our families is part of what puts our experiences in relation. Marking these moments of shared vulnerability evokes a visceral relation that resonates across experience and borders and impels us toward each other. Placing my experience in conversation with these women is a subversive political act to demystify the relational performances of trauma that dehumanize survivors of rape. My goal has been to mark how our different experiences of rape are performatively related by emplacing our bodies in space together, textually, geographically, and theoretically. This performative relation, I argue, is the space where our now related bodies can collaborate in coalition against the precarity that wrought our trauma. As I worked and lived in Nepantla for two years, I grasped theoretically for my missing body parts, a way to negotiate my body with its experience. I offer this analysis as a way to grasp our collective dispossession of our bodies in the everyday trauma of our lives in order to rethink our radical relation to the other.

6/14/ 2016—I ran to the beach to the crush of the water. I ran my hands through the rocks that eroded from the large mountains behind me into tiny pebbles—all together now. Every rock specific and different. I rub my hands in the sand, digging deeper, swirling, and smiling picking the best rocks to assemble in a pile. A haunting of my former self. A flashback of childhood. Showing beauty to the adults who forgot or never really cared. A tear forms in the corner of my eye, but I refuse to release it. I look to see another child, naked, picking up rocks that inspire beauty. Pair. A moment of recognition. I am in my skin at nine— holding the same rock I found before—to show my Grandfather. Something incomprehensible about this life force called erosion. I guess I would call it ritual. The movement of material to the ocean, to dispersal. The movement of material to the ocean. Time takes mountains and turns them into the pebbles then sand— ocean—

these miniscule rocks used to be boulders attached to mountains. Now they are ground down by salt water. The water, life force. Desire for the other, life force. Something grasped in my hand.

And so, the last night
I had in Montenegro
Was shared with friends
On a terrace
Drinking
Wine and rakija and
Smoking
Cigarettes
With my new family
While they shamed me for not visiting
My old family
And they begged me for the stories about my grandfather
Exclaiming that he was
A great man—
Even though
He wasn't—
And they laughed at all
My stories
I
Performed for them
In a way, I know,
Brings them closer
Allows them to see me
As their own
Mali naša
A story of my childhood
Where my grandfather offers me a cigar
Some rakija
While I bounce on his best friend's knee
In a field on the Backside
of my ancestral homeland in Petrovac
Where they bring out a
Lamb
And cut off its head.

CHAPTER VI

EMBODIED EX-YUGOSLAV BORDERS AND PROPERTY: THEORIZING THE NATION IN MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ PERFORMANCE ART

Pushing the boundaries of performance with her body, but refusing the feminist label, Yugoslav performance artist Marina Abramović and those that write about her go so far as to call her the “godmother of performance art” (Brockes, 2014; Phelan, 2004, Richards, 2010; Abramović, 2016). Abramović’s career has been dedicated to shifting energies, changing artist/spectator relations, providing space for audiences to face themselves, and to legitimizing performance art within the canon. Perhaps most famous for her piece “Rhythm 0” (1974) where she laid 72 objects out on a table and invited the audience to use the objects, some intended for pain (gun, knife) some for pleasure (feather, rose), on her. Her embodiment of the object in this performance enflashed the conditions which enabled the audience’s violence, and this explicit and volatile relationality would become the core element of all her future work. “Rhythm 0” spoke to the shared vulnerability and radical interdependence of our physical human condition when it turned deadly as the audience striped her naked, cut her neck and drank her blood, stuck the thorns of the rose into her skin, photographed her, placed the loaded gun to her head, and put her finger on the trigger while tears streamed down her face. Embodying the liminal space before death Abramović later remarked that she was so committed to her performance because she accepted she could die (Abramović, 2016, p. 68). Fortunately, like in many of Abramović’s performances, the audience/participants were compelled to intervene to save her from her own demise.

Abramović is also well known for the time she spent doing relational work with her then lover, Ulay (Frank Uwe Laysiepen). Their time together was spent creating joint performances that explored the relationship between feminine and masculine energy. Most remember their epic breakup, a performance piece titled “Great Wall Walk” (1988): they began at opposite sides of the Great Wall of China, walked for three months, met in the middle to say their final goodbyes, and kept walking. Abramović’s solo reputation as an artist was cemented for US audiences by her response to September 11th, in the piece “A Room With a View” which was satirically reenacted on an episode of the TV show “Sex and The City.” In “A Room With a View”, she lived suspended in three boxes, each serving different functions (toilet/shower, chair, bed) in a New York gallery for 12 days while fasting and attempting to change the energy of the space as well as the energy of people who entered, with her own energy/body. Then, in 2010, Abramović was invited to curate a retrospective of her art in the New York Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). The exhibit was titled “The Artist is Present” and in addition to the retrospective, Abramović performed a new piece where she stoically sat for three months (eight hours a day) and met the gazes of museum patrons from all over the world without moving. A (2012) documentary about the process of the retrospective, “The Artist is Present” directed by Mathew Akers, further catapulted her status as an international artist-celebrity.

Unique to Abramović’s work is her interpellation of the audience into a co-performative relationship through the necessary presence of the audience for Abramović’s performances to exist. It is critically important to acknowledge that Abramović’s work hinges on the ontological assumption of radical relationality which creates the conditions for interpellation into co-performance. Namely, the interpellation is

based on the ontological assumption that one (I/you) has the ability to affect the other (I/you), which is simultaneously an epistemological claim that I cannot exist without you (Butler, 2016). These above mentioned pieces and analysis of them importantly and reflexively mediate on this relationality (See: Brunton, 2017; Phelan 2004), but often absent from the theorization of Abramović's work is how ontological relationality and epistemology is always already shot through nation/national origin. Performance, and Abramović's work in particular, call into question the epistemic function of identity as property and product of nation. Her performances suggest that we can epistemologically question and undo, through performative affect made real in performance, histories of trauma that articulate to nation, nationality, and national borders. As a relational process, performance offers up symbolic, material, and corporeal possibilities at the liminal space of borders to rethink, redo, and reframe the ways in which national borders function in our daily lives. This chapter traces the specter of the postsocialist Yugoslav nation in Abramović's work to analyze how the nation is invoked upon/through her body and performed relationally in order to critique identity as self-contained property of the nation/al.

Abramović uses her body to challenge the fixity of her and the audience's intertwined yet different identities. Through performative diasporic reworkings of her subject status, and by interpellating audiences as co-performers, her work poses troubling questions around our relationships with subjectivity and the nation. While her oeuvre does not essentialize the Yugoslav nation or her place within the nation, it does evoke postmodern, postcolonial, and postsocialist ways of being which are performed in constant reference to the process of becoming in relation to and with the nation as it

figures in relation globally. Using property to analyze relationships of identity, nation, and nationality, I claim that the nation marks its citizens as property, identity functions as property of the body, and nationality is a performative claim to ownership of national property. To theorize the ways in which the nation figures in Abramović's work, I will discuss works from her early, mid, and later career. Specifically, I will analyze: (1) "The Lips of Thomas (1975; 2005)— a durational performance piece in which she drinks a liter of wine, eats honey, cuts a Yugoslav star into her stomach, whips herself then lays on a cross made of ice (2) "Balkan Baroque" (1997)— a series of installations, a book, several performances, videos, and a culminating 8 day performance of scrubbing bones to critique the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, and (3) "Balkan Erotic Epic" (2007)— a performance film and of Montenegrin/Serbian pagan rituals and sexuality.

First, I briefly discuss Abramović's upbringing in and departure from the former Yugoslavia to provide context for the trajectory of her art in relation to and in dialogue with the nation. Secondly, following Hall (2000) I describe how identity (nationality, gender, race, class) articulates to bodies through language, culture, hybridity, and diaspora. Then, I explain how I gathered and analyzed her art through a performance studies lens. Next, I analyze Abramović's work chronologically to theorize how her relationship to the nation figures in her work in light of the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia in the transition socialism to capitalism, the Bosnian War, and her life outside the nation. This analysis will highlight the ways that ownership of the property of nation/ality (citizenship) haunts not only Abramović's work and performance, but more largely, possibilities of relational subject positions and embodiments. Coming to terms with the relational and embodied nation/ality in our enactments of identity can provide

strategies for resisting the isolating, violent, and precarious effects of property ownership/dispossession in postsocialist global capitalism. The next section discusses the history of Yugoslavia alongside Abramović's personal history to provide context for Abramović's art.

A. Abramović in and out of Yugoslavia

I come from a dark place. Postwar Yugoslavia, the mid-1940s to the mid-70s. A Communist dictatorship, Marshal Tito in charge. Perpetual shortages of everything, drabness everywhere. There is something about Communism and socialism— it's a kind of aesthetic based on pure ugliness (Abramović, 2016, p. 2).

Marina Abramović was born in "Montenegro in November 1946, [and spent] her childhood in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" (Richards, 2010, p. 1).

Ethnically, Abramović identifies as both Serbian and Montenegrin by way of seeing Serbs and Montenegrins as sharing national and ethnic origins and because her parents and grandparents were both Serbs and Montenegrins. According to Pejić, (2002), "Marina's maternal grandfather, who was also born in Montenegro, was a priest and in 1930 he became the patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church" (p. 330). These points of identity are important because heritage and national origin were and still are important to how identity recognition of us/them operates in the former Yugoslavia. Importantly, anyone can identify your patrilineal tribe and the land which your family hails from with the simple mention of a surname. Abramović's Serbian/Montenegrin heritage conditioned how she saw herself and the ways in which her community viewed and identified her. Her grandfather's position as the patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church is an equally important identity marker which implies higher social status and real cultural and geopolitical power. The church in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (pre-WWII) was integral

to developing the nation, to advising political elites, and influencing international Yugoslav agendas. The church, always somehow tied to the state, was demonized under socialism only to reappear in the transition from socialism to capitalism as a crucial component of national identity and nationalism. Aside from this patrilineal positionality, the church was also an important component of Abramović's identity because until the age of six she lived with her grandmother, a faithful devotee of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Abramović's early work deals with symbols of the Serbian Orthodox Church and feature prominently in her critical performances about nation and ideological dogma.

In addition to her grandparents, Abramović's parents heavily influenced her art and her development as an artist. Both her father and mother fought against the Nazis, against fascism, during WWII. Her father was Montenegrin and her mother was Serbian and, according to Abramović (2016), they met on the battlefield. Her parents helped to usher in socialism partly by rejecting the religious orthodoxy of their own parents, and partly by fighting for antifascist Yugoslav socialism. After WWII, Abramović's father remained in the military as a commander and her mother took up a post as the director of the Museum of Art and Revolution in Belgrade, Serbia. Her parents' physical and intellectual investments into socialism paid off and they were well taken care of in Tito's socialism. Abramović (2016), seemingly aware of how the nation impacted every part of life, remarks in her memoir, "We had many privileges... Looking back, I think—for these and other reasons—our home was really a horrible place" (p. 3). Ironically, the heroism of her parents' war efforts that resulted in Yugoslavia provided the conditions which enabled Abramović to later rebel against both.

Abramović often remarks that her strained and loveless relationship with her mother while growing up in Serbia shaped her need for rebellion. Her father left her mother when Abramović was eighteen, and this changed the rules of the house (Richards, 2010, p. 9). Living only with her mother, Abramović was subject to a strict 10pm curfew into her early adulthood and even when she was attending art school and married to her first husband (Abramović, 2016). She lived with her mother until she was twenty-nine years old (1976), when she ran away with artist and lover Ulay and lived “in a perpetual state of transit” (Krzyszowiec Malmsten, 2017, p. 263). Abramović’s parents, who symbolically embodied the repressive Yugoslav nation, became central to Abramović’s art and she began to reference this metaphysical relationship in her performances by invoking the nation/al on and in relation to her body.

In the former Yugoslavia, Abramović’s student-art career began at the University of Belgrade in the Academy of Fine Arts as a painter, where she was the only woman in a group of all male artists. While she was in school (late 1960s-1970s), there were various student protests against the perceived authoritarian leadership of the socialist state and general frustration with the state-run economy. She and her group of male comrades began to use the social and political climate surrounding the expectations and limitations of state-sponsored art to challenge regimes of authority in the former Yugoslavia. According to Richards (2010) “Art under socialism had an obligation to benefit society while at the same time it felt it should be questioning basic artistic principles” (p. 6). The regime of obligatory state-sponsored and state-owned art in service of nationalism was where Abramović began to see how she could challenge this socialist logic by transgressing the boundaries of what art for the greater good should do. By employing the

body, Abramović took everything with her when the performance ended. Performance's ephemerality offered Abramović a method for resistance to both the (nation and art) establishment and its lasting ownership of tangible art (as national property).

It was during this time (1960s-1970s) that feminist performance art in the US began to take off (Schneider, 1997), however, there was little access to view these performances in the former Yugoslavia due to the Cold War. Although Yugoslavia was a founding member of the non-aligned movement, which increased the flow of goods from capitalist countries to Yugoslavia and allowed Yugoslav citizens to travel more freely than Soviet Bloc citizens, the mobility of performance art was restricted to the ephemeral context of its performance. However, since Abramović came from an affluent and politically connected family, she did on several occasions, travel to Western Europe where she met other performance artists and “yearned to make [her] own art more visceral” (Abramović, 2016, p. 64). Abramović contemporaneously developed her craft as a performance artist and Yugoslav outsider to the conversations in US and Western European feminist performance art communities. However, like US and Western European feminist performance artists of the time, Abramović used her body (often naked) to resist oppressive discourses that attached to hers and others across national, sexual, racial, religious lines of embodiment. Regarding this time, Abramović (Carotti & Lutz, 1998) later explained, “All my work in Yugoslavia was very much about rebellion” (p. 16).

The context of Abramović's upbringing made for alchemy in performance. The corporeal restraints imposed by her mother coupled with her experience of former Yugoslavia enabled her corporeal performances to critique systems of power through her

embodied rebellion. She would continue this rebellion when she left the former Yugoslavia at twenty-nine to pursue her art and her love affair with Ulay. Abramović claims she lived as a “nomad” (Abramović, 2016) spending long stints of time in the Amsterdam, Paris, and in New York before ultimately moving to New York in 2002. Since she left the former Yugoslavia before the collapse of socialism, a time that some find themselves nostalgic for (Todovora & Gille, 2010), Abramović might be expected to be nostalgic, but Abramović vehemently harbors no fond memories of her homeland (Abramović, 2016). Leaving before the trauma of the break-up, her diasporic relationship to the former Yugoslavia is not marked by refugee status, but in the tension of living in the ex-Yugoslavia for twenty-nine years before living most of her life outside of the former Yugoslavia. Now calling New York home, Abramović explains, “I always say I came from a country that no longer exists” (quoted in Pejić, 2017, p. 243). Her post-Yugoslav experience, as described above, finds its shape in the language of diaspora.

These performative layers of her diasporic identity, while thematic to all her work, are addressed head-on in her mid-career (1995) piece “The Onion.” In this performance, she eats through a raw onion and recites a free-association monologue about travel and her enduring sadness (mourning her home) while revealing the onion’s absence of a solid core (Richards, 2010). Given Abramović’s claims that she is without a national home, the layers of the onion become representative of nation in relation to her diasporic experience. Her identity in relation to an essentialized Balkan Yugoslav core, an imagined community (Anderson, 2006) devastated by national identity in the Bosnian Genocide, marks her now as a subject of diaspora forever in relation *to* and absent *from* the previously experienced (if oppressively so) nation/al core. The layers of the onion

take on polysemic interpretations as she speaks over the video. The ten sentences she utters on a soundtrack over a video of her performance echo the out-of-place and never arriving home hallmarks of diaspora. She says, “I am tired of changing from planes so often, waiting in the waiting rooms, bus stations, train stations, airports. I am tired of waiting for endless passport controls.” The soundtrack loops as she chomps into the onion and cries, “[I am] ashamed about the war in Yugoslavia” (Essling, 2017, p. 158). Her performance brings diaspora to the center of the frame by asking what layers of meaning and culture she must bite and cry through to feel at home or satisfied with this life/onion outside of the Balkans but eternally marked as Balkan? And how, in this instance, is Balkan identity and life in relation to the bitterly sharp sensation of eating a raw onion representative of Abramović’s subjectivity in postsocialist global capitalism? To provide a theoretical frame with which to answer these questions and similar ones posed in the performances I analyze in this chapter, the next section explains how a performance studies perspective might help us understand how diaspora, (relational) identity, and hybridity affect embodied subjectivities and articulate to capital.

B. Performance and Relationality

The essence of performance is that the audience and the performer make the piece together (Abramović, 2016, p. 71).

As its starting point, performance studies contend with the fragmented, multiple, and contested meanings that postmodernity breaks open in order to interrogate binary logic and unhinge the fixity of dominant meanings (Phelan, 1993; Denzin, 2003). Resisting foreclosure of meaning and focusing on the reflexive processes of research are integral to performance studies’ struggle “to open the space between analysis and action, and to pull the pin on the binary opposition between theory and practice” (Conquergood,

2002, p. 145). Performance theory enables researchers to interpret the ways in which the effects of discourse are made real and/or accomplished through the body. In attending to the body, performance allows for researchers to refute claims that identity is essential, innate, or transcendent and instead argue that identity is co-performative, relational, and context based. Feminist scholars, critical race scholars and queer theorists lean on performance to make this claim (Butler, 1988; hooks, 1984, 1990; Muñoz, 1999; Halualani, 2008; Johnson, 2001; Sandoval, 2000; Moreman & McIntosh, 2010).

Their claim, although expressed differently in their work, is that identity cannot be accomplished without another person or apart from contexts which articulate identification with corporeal embodiment (through discourses of race, class, gender, sexuality) because identity is a relational performance dependent on recognition. While Trinh's (1989) claim that "we do not have bodies, we are our bodies," remains useful for thinking the body in relation to structural discourses of power and violence, there is still performative space in the liminal moments before recognition wherein habits of recognition and vision (of the other) can be upended, broken, and reframed to shift or transform oppressive articulations of identity (p. 36). Drawing on the knowledge of the marked body as it is made precarious within systems of oppression, namely postcolonial and postsocialist global capitalism, performance studies heeds lessons of critical queer scholars of color to use embodied liminal space (before the body acquires the property of meaning) as a heuristic for possibilities of identity, subjectivity, resistance, and meaning.

Liminal spaces are made materially meaningful (when they are no longer liminal) through a convergence of performance/performativity, recognition, and power (as history, as context). This liminality of meaning and the performative process of meaning making,

as performance studies argues, is a flexible reality that is in itself— a forever in-process product of reiterative maintenance and transformation of the recognizable norms of meaning and interpretation. Thus, a performance studies approach sees reality and identity as similar effects of performativity in relation instead of as individual stand-alone facts. As Conquergood (1991) explains, “Identity is more like a performance in process than a postulate, premise, or originary principle” (p. 185). Conquergood’s premise is that identity is in process is an ontological and epistemological claim that the subject is radically relational.

This relational core of the subject’s ontological status, however, often does not inform embodied politics in the real world. Butler (2005) explains that recognition of the ontological relationality between the self and the other is integral to deconstructing possessive and hegemonic individualism that is integral to the maintenance of oppressive systems like capitalism or imperialism. Bhabha (1994) explains, “It is always in relation to the place of the Other that colonial desire is articulated: the phantasmic space of possession that no one subject can occupy” (p. 44). The phantasmic interplay of desire between the self and other is a relation of power which marks certain bodies with the power to own/see/name and other bodies as property to be owned/seen/named. The unnatural relationship of (possession/dispossession) self/other is the primary condition for systems of violence such as colonization or capitalism. While the recognition of the necessary fiction of the other is integral to concepts of the self, Bhabha and Butler remind us that this relationship is a relation of power and specifically ownership (corporeally, discursively, linguistically, historically). Butler (2005) argues that we must “vacate the self sufficient ‘I’ as a kind of possession” since we know it depends on the relational

possibilities of recognition of that self-contained property as they are embedded in structures of capital (p. 136). Thus, an undoing of the self (Butler, 2004) or the fiction of the self-possessed individual, in systems of capitalism resists histories that divide and conquer humanity by nation, race, gender. Yet, more than the undoing of the perception of oneself (as individual), this radical undoing is critically about undoing the epistemic and ontological habituation of the self/other power dynamic that invests the possibilities for ownership of the other. Through this relational lens, the self is conditioned by the possibilities to/for dispossession in/of the other. The self and the other cannot escape their dependent ontology and epistemic history, although systems of domination operate as though self and other are individual and independent.

Globally, violent histories of imperialism and colonization divide (individualize) people for the benefit of increasing the properties of the colonizer's nation and to maintain the dominance of white European male power. Important to these histories are the ways in which division operates violently and visually to optically differentiate the possibilities of self (white propertied male) and the possibilities of other (everyone not white propertied or male). Seeing, looking, gazing are performances which put epistemology to use by inhabiting histories of power which demarcate the meaning of what is seen. For instance, one's positionality structures the possibilities of meaning and interpretation for what one views. Many of the possibilities of (re)signification and recognition are caught up in the representational economy of vision. As Phelan (1993) explains, "The relationship between the real and the representational, between the looker and the given to be seen, is a version of the relationship between the self and the other" (p. 3). This relationship, of course, is dependent on the historical and contextual

discourses of dominance that operate within the field of vision to mark things as seen/scene or absent/invisible. While legacies of imperialism and colonization have normalized and idealized the power of vision as solely a White, straight, property owning male enterprise, performance aims to disrupt the violent determining power of habituated imperial gazes.

Elaborating on the power invested the production of the unmarked body and unmarked systems of power, Phelan (1993) argues that there is no looking that does not at once implicate the looker in what is seen. The visual logic of this description of seeing is explicitly relational and, at the same time, it remains unmarked as the integral function in the perpetuation of otherness. This production of otherness is dispossession that intersects with socioeconomic systems (such as capital) to enable conditions where violence is possible. The critique at the heart of performance is to make strange the ways in which reverberations of power are deployed (often violently and epistemically). The goal is to critically analyze how dominant discourse produces the other and marks bodies as other to produce the self (Diversi & Moreira, 2009).

The production of the other operates scopically by making cultural modes of interpretation visible in identifiable recognition of physical and symbolic borders as substantive to tautological theories of self. Given the necessary relationship of the self to the other, Anzaldúa (2012) asks of identity— what do I *not* identify with that shapes who I am? In other words, to what extent is my identity based on and a product of, what Žižek would call, a “constitutive outside” (Žižek & Horvat, 2015). The constitutive outside is the space after liminality is where performative identification produces and recognizes identity as belonging on one side or the other of the binary border. However, this

production is always already in relational processes of cultural definitional power imbued with histories of recognition—power in the possibilities of recognition of self/other in particularly embodied performances of identity. The border in this formation of identity operates as a function of discursive power to mark out those that *are us* and those that are *not us*. Borders separate bodies as such (us/not us)—before normalizing these performative differences. Border crossings open these performative differences up for resignification.

Performance in the liminal space before the border or border crossing offers a praxis for opening representation to embody possibilities for new (re)significations of power and coalitions across difference. Hall (1996; 2000; 2010), Anzaldúa (2012), Butler (2016), and hooks (1984) reiterate this relational perspective by explaining that cultural identities are always caught up with the representation of the other. Performance studies recognizes this radical interdependence of identity as a constant process of (re)iterating, (re)positioning, (re)performing, and (re)behaving (Schechner, 2002) that has real consequences and affects material bodies. The body, both in Abramović's work and as everyday embodiment is open to reiterative representation and therefore performative resistance to oppression because of this necessary relation to the other for contextual recognition (as self/other). Abramović's use of the body exhibits the co-constructed and performative relation our bodies have to each other and to the institutions that hail us into being. The next section takes this ontological standpoint of radical relationality of self/other and puts it into conversation with identity, hybridity and diaspora as a frame with which to interpret Abramović's diasporic body and art.

1. Identity as Articulation

For Stuart Hall, identities are articulations. By articulation, Hall (2000) intends to claim that identities are formed at the connection between structures of meaning. He explains,

I use 'identity' to refer to the meeting point, the point of suture, between, on one hand, the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpellate,' speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken' (p. 19).

Identity, for Hall, is the temporal fixing of meaning onto bodies through articulation. Since identity is how one is positioned within a system of meaning, identity is always strategic, relational, and contextual. As an articulation, identity is always part of historically and contextually situated processes and, as such, there can be no necessary correspondence between the points of articulation that create identities. Behavior or identification is not pre-determined or secured in a way that always reproduces the same effect. So, although it may be widely understood that nationality (Serb or Bosnian) secures a specific set of identity characteristics and markers, these assumptions are not guaranteed, but only possible in opposition set forth through historical context. Hall (1995) elaborates, "[Identities] are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power... Identities are the names we give to the different ways in which we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, narratives of the past" (p. 435). Thus, the articulations or embodiment of identity is a performative act by which bodies are hailed into discourses and by which they refer to a history of cultural and contextual meanings. For instance, a masculine Serbian body will be read differently in Bosnia than it will be read in Montenegro, and differently so in Italy or the US. In a sense, the body is a

container for identities that are realized in their articulations (relations within and recognitions of) to systems of knowledge.

While it is also true that no-body can escape the discourses that materialize around meanings for their physicality, it may also be true that play within and off the possibilities of identity at these categorical borders (of cultural knowledge) is a path to resisting harmful discursive interpellations (Muñoz, 1999). Specifically, the possibilities of representation are constrained and enabled by subjectification in particular discourses. For example, subject formation occurs differently in national socioeconomic formations of capitalism and socialism and differently between the borders of nations for citizens with particular histories. These possibilities of representation and recognition, again, are invested in, and products of, discourses of power. The next section distinguishes hybridity from identity to contextualize the ways identity changes in diasporic crossings of national borders to frame Abramović's work within her experience of diaspora.

2. Hybridity as Performative Resistance

In diaspora and for subjects of diaspora, experiences of hybridity can make more explicit ontological relationality. Hybridity is an articulation that holds two contradictory subject positions at once and resists the foreclosure of signification. At times in conflict, hybrid identity and identifications are multiple, embodied in one body, but secured (through co-performative recognition) in different contexts. Hybridity has been taken up by many critical scholars of color; Anzaldúa (2012) uses the *Mestiza*, Hill Collins (2000; 2008) uses the *Insider/Outsider*, Hall (2010) uses the *Creole*, Sandoval (2000) uses *differential consciousness*, Lorde (2007) uses the *critique of the Master's Tools*, Trinh (1989) uses *I/i*, Crenshaw (1993) uses the *theory of intersectionality*. Theorizing their

lived experiences of oppression and marginalization, these scholars' shared experiences as the other (although differently contextualized and experientially felt) inform their hybrid theories for identity play, resistance, and survival. Theorizing identity through the trope of hybridity understands identity/identification as a process in constant flux and relation to the context of the production of otherness. A theory of hybridity understands identity as multiple and overlapping relations within multiple and overlapping structures of power and discourse. Hybridity is slightly different from identity as articulation in that it is two or more articulations/identities that occur at once.

The necessity of embodying hybridity (national, racial, ethnic, gender) is a matter of survival for vulnerable bodies traversing hostile borders. Hybridity can become a political advantage or disadvantage depending on how it is performatively used within and through difference and by which possibilities of signification are available within a specific context (Hall, 2007). Hall (1990) names hybridity as the hallmark of diaspora and the diasporic. He explains, "The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite difference; by hybridity" (p. 402). Subjects of diaspora are differently mobile bodies moving across borders, dispossessed for a range of reasons but primarily in relation to a national dispossession. For example, what does it mean to be a Yugoslav refugee living in the US, and, from within the shifting meanings of this context, what sorts of identifications and resistances are available for survival?

In the postsocialist Yugoslav diaspora, hybridity is a useful lens to understand the movement of bodies across borders, space, and time and how this movement informs

articulations of national identity present in Abramović's work. While hybridity is the hallmark of diaspora, Hall (1997, 2010) notes that it can be thought of as essential to every human since, in some sense everyone originates from somewhere with a relationship to that origin which is constructed through the power-laden and unnatural interplay of identification and negation, sameness and difference—the constitutive outside of identity. Identity itself is a hybrid form (performative and performing) made possible through these multiple articulations of identity that both inform and deform each other. Hybridity is like the radical relationality of the subject, but it is an embodied and experiential form of relational resistance to dominant discourses of individualism. Both hybridity and the ontological re-thinking of the subject resist colonizing epistemology in favor of decolonization. Hybridity helps to understand how nationality is articulated onto bodies as identity and how this national property and the nation itself are redeployed in Abramović's explicitly relational performances. To further contextualize my theoretical purpose, I briefly discuss diaspora and the Balkans.

3. Diaspora

I returned to Belgrade—because, in a certain sense, I'm always returning to Belgrade (Abramović, 2016, p. 269).

Diasporic identities, engaged in transnational movements, are open to the resignification and redeployment of articulations in specific contexts because the experience of diaspora is marked by migration. Bodies traverse borders leaving “home” behind in order to forge new articulations of identity within new borders which often have little reference to the context of home. Migrations across national borders force hybridity as cultures come into contact through border crossing. Hall (2002) explains that the diasporic experience is characterized by the ever-present feeling of being out-of-place

or being decentered. This out-of-place-ness transforms subjects of diaspora as well as the possible articulations of identities by making identity hybrid—or attached to more than one place. Hall (1992, 2002, 2004) explains that crucial to this transformation are the cultural flows of migration that foreclose the ability of the subject to return to a previously imagined or experienced home(land). While the image of home or nation sometimes is a life sustaining fantasy, it too is implicated in relationships of power. Hall refutes the notion that diaspora is experienced as continual process of longing to return home— and argues instead that it is experienced as hybridity. Using Anderson's (2006) *Imagined Communities*, Hall explains that there is no home (nation) for which one can return—the only home is a figment of a nationalist imagination. Just as there is no really existing home for subjects of diaspora to return to, there is no really existing essential homeland identity. From this perspective, there is no guaranteed or essential identity of a person born within a certain nation, even as this fiction becomes iterated from abroad.

Yugoslav diaspora and Yugoslav refugees within the US may be articulated to a polemic of Cold War rhetoric, but this performative articulation operates in favor of demarcating the borders in the production of the self/other. Thus, when Balkan Yugoslav bodies come to the US or travel to Western Europe they are read through the nation in a particular way. Part of this peculiarity is derivative of global flows and discourses of the Cold War, but another part is due to the long history of sexualization of Eastern European bodies and their labor (Atanoski, 2013, Ghodsee, 2005; Parvalescu, 2014). Generally, and globally, the Balkans invoke a set of negative stereotypes that are relationally employed to affirm forms of nationalized Whiteness (both Europe and the US). For instance, the meaning of the Balkans as defined by Merriam Webster (2017), is “To break up (a

region, a group, etc.) into smaller and often hostile units.” This definition carries prejudicial weight when Balkan bodies leave the Balkans and enter spaces where this definition marks the place from whence they came. Even Marx and Engels considered Southern Slavs and the Balkans “ethnic trash” (C. L. Sulzberger cited in Kaplan, 1993). Defined as primitive warmongering people, the Balkans are the necessary other to the civilized European fantasy of self that are in but not *of* Europe.

The co-performative relations of self/other made explicit in hybridity and diaspora are articulated geopolitically onto the Balkan identity as it moves across borders. As a European other within Europe, the Balkans inform European conceptions of self and nation. Boyadijev (2002) notes, “same in their geographical location/relation, the Balkans appear to be both the Same and the Other of both Europe and Asia” (p. 304). The Balkan location, Balkan people, and the Balkans as European “other” comes into focus in Abramović’s work because she cannot escape the corporeal articulations of her nation or the national claims on her body.

Boyadijev (2002) explains that the Balkan perspective, “is necessarily and naturally a schizoid one—in order to perceive of its own wholeness it has to think in at least two different cultural/historical coordinate systems... the relevant fact is the ever-present Same’-Other dichotomy in the Balkan sense of identity” (p. 306). The Balkans, thus, are a place where hybridity can articulate onto a dislocated space in-between Europe, or even, as the constitutive outside to Europe’s sense of self. As Bhabha (1990) explains, “Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind’s eye” (p. 1). While diaspora studies claim that everyone comes from somewhere else, it also holds that neither behavior nor identity is

necessarily guaranteed by these “national” origins. The imaginative otherness that is articulated to the geographic space of the Balkans is maintained through myths about violent and primitive Balkan people, which, is integral to maintaining the similar myth of rational or civilized Europeans. Moreover, the postsocialist conditions of global capital and the migration of bodies across national borders hybridize the notion of us/them that sustains these fantasies of self-contained nationality.

Diaspora, as a process of globalization, migration, history, disrupts and troubles the notion of a pure identity (for any body), and makes clear how narratives of negation are often deeply intertwined and dependent on that which they negate. Mythologizing, in this way, is a discursive fixing of identity to secure essential characteristics and traits of nationality (marking bodies with the property of nation and national origin as behavior determinant) and is a form of imperialist epistemic violence. Disruptions of pre-determined national essence resist power that overdetermines otherness to normalize destruction of the other in the name of the self (nation/national property). Resistance to the fixing of national identity is imperative in critiquing the production and performance of self as it is structured through and in relation to nation of origin. Like Hall’s theory of hybridity in diaspora, Abramović’s performances call into question the ways in which identification is a process and dependent upon discourses of power that determine material and symbolic borders of identity. The next section briefly describes my method to situate my analysis of three of Abramović’s performances.

C. Abramović Method

I analyzed the cultural meanings activated and transformed by Abramović’s performances by focusing on three Abramović performances. Although I have never seen

Abramović perform in person, I have read about, seen pictures, and watched videos of every performance she has staged. For most who are unable to attend performances in New York, Italy, or Montenegro, the fragments of her ephemeral performances are all that we have access to, and this is how her work continues to impact viewers. I critically analyze the images (or stills) from the performances, the context surrounding the performances and statements Abramović has made regarding the performance or concept. Additionally, I watched over 8 hours of online Abramović lectures, short video clips of her performances, and documentaries about her to familiarize myself with her opus. Importantly, Abramović (2016) published an autobiography that I use to guide the context of my analysis. Overall, the memoir was narcissistic self-aggrandizing but it was especially terrible in its colonizing representations of indigenous people.²¹ However, I used words from her book to frame her perspective on her own work and with the former Yugoslavia. I remain aware that performance is malleable and invites countless interpretation, but offer my analysis of nation to consider its integral and lasting relationship to the body to theorize how Abramović's performances lay bare the relational performativity of nation/nationality/identity.

²¹ While outside the scope of this chapter, Abramović's relationship with indigenous people in Brazil and Australia is particularly fraught and in need of unpacking. Her appropriative use of their cultural rituals in for her art is colonizing, fetishizing, and non-reflexive. Although Balkan, Abramović is still European, and her Whiteness and her poaching of indigenous rituals performatively re-enacts colonial violence. Thinking through Abramović's relationship to indigenous people in postsocialist global capital highlights how Whiteness operates transnationally as a discourse of power, possession, and property.

Abramović uses her body to demarcate the discursive, cultural, ritualized, Balkanized meanings as she performs meaning in different national contexts. At times, her performances recall the socialist nation and the destruction inflicted upon it through dogma, war, or global capitalism. Sometimes Abramović interrogates the audience's gaze by questioning what national body they desire to see and what representations they expect or can be possible from a Balkan person. My analysis of nation asks how the corporeal interaction with borders (national, sexual, or racial) limits or enhances identity performance and recognition? In postsocialist global capitalism, what does the postsocialist body signify? Lastly, what sorts of new worlds and resistances can be imagined across these borders? Using her performances as my guide, I theorize how the dispossession is imprinted with the relational memory of national identity. In what follows, I provide Abramović's descriptions of her performances alongside photos from her performances and analyze them chronologically in tandem with national permutations of the former Yugoslavia.

D. Early Career in Yugoslavia— Lips of Thomas (1975)

This section analyzes Abramović's piece, "The Lips of Thomas," a durational performance staged in Austria. Below is the artist's description of the piece:

I slowly eat 1 kilo of honey with a silver spoon.
I slowly drink 1 liter of red wine out of a crystal glass.
I break the glass with my right hand.
I cut a five-pointed star on my stomach with a razor blade.
I violently whip myself until I no longer feel any pain.
I lay down on a cross made of ice blocks.
The heat of a suspended heater pointed at my stomach causes the cut star

to bleed.

The rest of my body begins to freeze.
I remain on the ice cross for thirty
minutes until the public interrupts
the piece by removing the ice blocks
from underneath me

Performance

Duration: 2 hours

Krinzinger Gallery, Innsbruck, 1975 (Reprinted in Essling, 2017, p. 92).

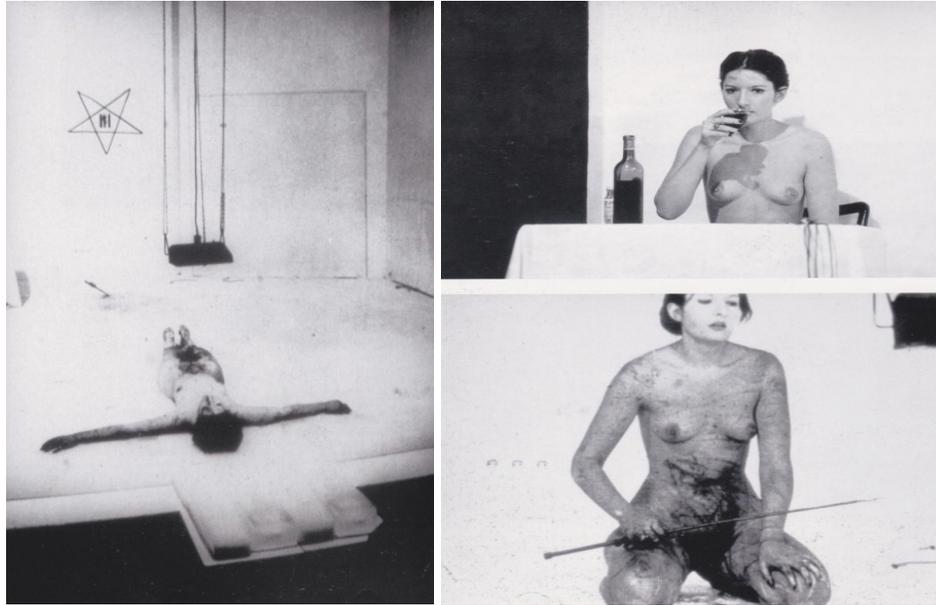


Figure 1. Images from “Lips of Thomas.”

Why a star? It was the symbol of Communism, the repressive force under which I had grown up, the thing I was trying to escape— but it was so many other things, too: a pentagram, an icon worshiped and mystified by ancient religions and cults, a shape possessing enormous symbolic power (Abramović, 2016, p. 65).

“Lips of Thomas” is rife with symbolism and interpretive possibility. With the symbolism of the socialist nation of Yugoslavia explicit on her skin, we see the ways in which the state, gender, and property contort Abramović’s body and subjectivity. The first thing that one notices is that she is naked and seemingly marked female. The body, and especially the naked body in public is always political and positioned by the available cultural frames of intelligibility. As Schneider (1997) explains, “Arguably, any body

bearing female markings is automatically shadowed by the history of that bodies' signification, its delimitation as a signifier of sexuality" (p. 17). The performance, requiring the audience to visually confront Abramović's nakedness, begins with optic recognition of the corporeal form before them. Viewing Abramović is a process of historical precedent, which is constrained by gendered, racialized, and classed histories of the power of who gets to see (self) and who gets to be seen (other). This co-performative process of seeing implicates structural relationships of recognition of the body within the systems of intelligibility for Abramović's corporeality and the cultural context of her performance. Just as socialism as an institution needs bodies to take up its discourse, just as nations need borders and citizens to enforce the nation, performance needs audiences to willingly participate to exist. All of these relations enact hierarchies of power that produce meanings for the bodies that do ideological and discursive work. Enacting a performance that needs an audience to occur, she cannot escape the necessary invocation of the meanings that attach to the female form as this viewing is constrained by discourses of power that epistemologically habituate ways of seeing.

Whether Abramović admits or intends this function of her physicality in relation to her audience, the marked presence of a naked female puts into motion sets of possible interpretations that result from nudity and its performative relation with the audience. Either way, it is important to consider how her rejection of feminism plays out on her body in this performance. Perhaps a benefit of her socialist Yugoslav nationality, where the goals of feminism were said to have already been met by the socialist state (Ghodsee, 2011), or perhaps because disavowing feminism provided her more acceptance as an artist, her rejection of the label in conjunction with the use of her marked female body as

medium does not escape cultural signification. Abramović's vulnerable female embodiment calls forth sets of historical relationships of meaning about how one is to consume the female and specifically how the female body is consumed by global cultural flows such as patriarchy, capital, and colonization. That Abramović's own hands materially and symbolically manifest the violence of discourses of power (that are simultaneously outside of her but integral to her) on herself opens the performance up to the possibilities of feminist interpretation.

Abramović's injured and injuring performance calls out to the viewer by implicating them as witness to violence. The implication of the audience in the harm inflicted on Abramović's body is a larger statement about how we are compelled (or not) to the assistance of the other, in our conditional relation to the violence of bodies separate from our own. Abramović probes the question, how much can one endure and how much can one witness before it becomes intelligible? In service of what systems of dominance do we witness (or not), intervene (or not), or participate in the violence by relational proxy? Perhaps this relation to the other is experientially felt only through the embodied witnessing of pain that initiates a sympathetic pang in the audience's visual recognition of the production of the other as similar to the self's pain. It may be that Abramović's version of self-infliction or self-wounding is only bearable until the audience finds itself culpable. That culpability is only ever meaningful in so far as— to let Abramović really hurt herself— would say something more largely about the self (gazing) as culpable (legally, morally) for the relation of power performed by viewing her performance. That the audience's presence is the condition which enables Abramović's violence is how Abramović's performance clarifies the ontological relation of self/other.

Obviously, without the audience Abramović's self-harm would be possible, however, the fact that the audience performs witnessing interpellates their reflexive consideration of their implication in the scene. Abramović (2016) notes that the performance only ended when,

Valie Export, an Austrian performance artist in the audience, jumped up and, with a couple of other onlookers covered me with coats and pulled me off the ice. I had to be taken to the hospital—not for the wounds on my belly, but for a deep cut on my hand I'd suffered when I broke the wineglass (p. 75).

One might ask, how and when does one feel compelled to intervene in the conditions which enable violence and how does one begin to see themselves as complicit in precarity that enables it? Abramović's naked female body on display, her consumption of a liter of wine, honey, the broken glass, the star carving on her stomach, the whipping, the ice blocks, all the components of the performance are the precarious conditions in which the audience sees and recognizes cause pain but they remain watching her vulnerability. That life and death potentially hang in the balance reiterates the radical relationality and shared precarity on display within Abramović's work, and the symbols that she uses to animate that violence bring the nation into the frame of the performance.

This explicit display of the power of the nation to shape bodies and name them as such— through their blind ideological interpellation as subjects to/of the nation— literally is bled out through Abramović's stomach. The blood recalls not only the red color of socialism, but being blood, it recalls the lives spent in name of the socialist Yugoslav star, blood-feud, and her own patrilineal genealogy tied to national Yugoslav formations. Nationalist discourses of power materialize on the female Yugoslav body as that which reproduces the nation and bears the violence of the nation. At the same time,

the performance recalls the mysticism of the biblical story of Thomas who traveled to India to in the nation-building project of Catholicism only to be martyred by a spear that flew through his stomach. One could see the parallel to Thomas in the wounds Abramović inflicts on herself, both dying for causes outside yet constitutive of themselves. However, unlike Thomas, her wounds render themselves visible on a female body that cannot escape the its representation as female. Like so many women before her transnationally and in the former Yugoslavia, Abramović sacrifices her body to/for the nation.

Abramović's stomach bleeds in relation to the symbol of nation, inscribed on women's bellies, around the reproductive symbol of the belly-button. The belly, as the performative location of life and death, as the umbilical cord to our shared pasts and relations to each other and the material condition of reproduction, when cut through with the lacerations of linear borders, enacts the space of liminality before the nation is born. Quite literally, Abramović's performance of this razor bordering around her stomach enacts a tying of that which comes from it (children/life) as completely marked by the socialist star (or boundaries of national borders inscribed onto identity before one is born). This performance explicitly enacts a national claiming of the body as property— Abramović's body as reproducer of the nation in the imagined property of a possibly pregnancy. In the end, when Abramović has completed the star, or drawn the borders of her nation by representing its most recognizable image and embodying them, she lays down on a cross made from ice with a heater suspended over herself. The heat, signifying the discursive power from above (Patriarchy, government, socialism, Serbian Orthodox Church) is what literally keeps the blood running, festering, promoting the

borders to become clearer or more Balkanized, while the ice dries, sediments, and entrenches the blood on her stomach in sacrifice to these discourses of power in support of the nation. Renan (1990) explains, “nation, like the individual is the culmination of a long past of endeavors, sacrifice, and devotion. Of all the cults, that of the ancestors is the most legitimate, for the ancestors have made us what we are” (p. 19). In light of this definition of nation, Abramović pulls back the layers of signification in the nation that surround her body and use it as a pawn in the larger discourse of power that extend before her and historically inform the possibilities of her corporeal representation.

Abramović’s infliction the symbols of nation onto herself demonstrates how the nation claims citizens as property of the nation. “Thomas’ Lips” asks which bodies are mutilated and marked in service of the nation and national dogma to isolate individuals from each other. Most explicitly, her first performance of “Thomas’ Lips” in 1975 is a critique of the blind acceptance of communist ideology and the ways in which bodies have been harmed in favor of the communist agenda. Later, when she re-performs the piece, after the former Yugoslavia has broken up, the performance takes on a more nostalgic timber— she wears old hiking boots, her mother’s partisan hat from the war, and carries a walking stick showing how not only has the nation changed, but so has her relationship to it as its property. A performance that she has re-performed, it takes on new meanings not only as her body ages but also as she performs it in different contexts. While the old wounds from her relation to the nation may have healed, the scars remind her and viewers of how deeply marked we are by the nation’s claims to our bodies.

At the same time, it could be argued that she is working to remind us that the depth of the markings is only skin deep, and they require performative recognition for

meaning to be made, which means that they can be undone in relation by reframing the terms of recognition. The re-opening of her national scars, in performance—in relation to the other, claims national identity as a malleable performative process open to resignification. Abramović's performance points to possibilities to embody nationality differently, implying that perhaps we are not destined to become the historical marks of our national origins nor embody the physical contours of discourses that mark (attempt to own) us as such.

Shortly after this performance, Abramović left the former Yugoslavia for good. While abroad Yugoslavia began its tumultuous transition from socialism to capitalism. In the transition, the borders of the nation were (re)drawn and debated to declare who belonged to the nation and who did not. The postsocialist condition of global capitalism ushered in a new phase of precarity in former Yugoslavia wherein the conditions of capital articulated new experiences of vulnerability onto bodies dispossessed of property. Dispossession and precarity worked through each other to enable conditions of violence which became evident in the genocide and mass rape of the Bosnian War. The next section picks up at this geopolitical juncture when Abramović performed at an international exhibition as a representative of Yugoslavia—the former Yugoslavia had disintegrated, the Bosnian Genocide had just occurred, only Serbia and Montenegro remained in “Yugoslavia,” and Abramović had been living abroad for quite some time.

E. Mid-Career in Italy—Balkan Baroque (1997)

In preparation for the annual Venice art exhibition, “As commissioner, Čuković [art historian from Montenegro appointed to represent Yugoslavia] invited Marina to represent Yugoslavia in the Biennale and exhibit her work in the Yugoslav Pavilion”

(Pejić, 2002, p. 327). While Abramović prepared her performance and managed the logistics of getting all the necessary materials to Venice, there was national backlash over her as the choice to represent Serbia and Montenegro. Politicians in Montenegro publicly wrote letters to national newspapers questioning Abramović's Yugoslav authenticity, and her ability to represent the now post-war ex-Yugoslav nations of Serbia and Montenegro. In her memoir, she describes her response to this controversy, "In other words, socialist realist or abstract hack painters [were proper representations of Yugoslavia]. Rakocevic was saying not only that I wasn't a real artist, but I wasn't a real Yugoslav. I saw red" (Abramović, 2016, p. 234). In retaliation, Abramović also took to media to release a letter of resignation to the project. The Montenegrin commissioners replaced Abramović with a male landscape painter. The day after Abramović posted her resignation, the minister of the biennale, a Western European, invited her to participate anyway as an unofficial Yugoslav representative. Although she would not directly represent Serbia and Montenegro, she would still be given a space to perform in a basement.

Paradoxically, the conditions which enabled Abramović to enact a critical performance of Balkan identity were mediated by her performance of the diasporic constitutive outside. This whole conundrum reiterated the Balkans as a space from which antagonistic identity politics form the base of all social interaction. The squabble helped to reinforce dominant European views of hostile Balkans. National disavowal of Abramović as nationally representative, an explicit exchange between representatives of the state and a citizen, calls into question the ways in which nationality can be embodied and performed and how the nation regulates these possibilities. Which bodies are animated by the nation for political gain, and which bodies are subject to violence for

political gain, and which bodies are made authentic for political gain? Abramović, in this instance, is the diasporic, hybrid, and the constitutive outside to Balkan identity. Her conditional invitation to perform authentic Balkan subject operates in both Yugoslavia's invite and the Biennale's invite. Their invitations are conditioned upon the requirement for her to present the Balkans, the former Yugoslavia, in a way that satisfies both of their national imaginaries. Both imagined authenticities or nationalities function to reaffirm the nationality of the invitee. Abramović, straddling the borders of each interpellation enters representation specifically as hybrid subject of diaspora.

At the end of the exhibition, Abramović's performance was chosen to win the Golden Lion for best artist, and she encountered representatives from Serbia and Montenegro. Abramović (2016) describes the award ceremony and how she reasserted her claims to the nation in the face of her dispossession:

The Montenegro minister of culture was sitting two rows behind me and never got up to congratulate me. Afterward, the new curator from the Yugoslav pavilion (where they'd replace me with a landscape painter) came up to me and invited me to their reception. 'You have a very big heart and you will forgive,' he said. 'My heart is big but I am Montenegrin,' I told him. 'And you don't hurt Montenegrin pride'(p. 240).

Abramović's retelling of her story of national identity above is performed through hybridity, she performs diasporic artist to resist the Minister's claim to her success while reminding him of her 'authentic' Balkan side to chide him for his policing of the borders of her identity.

As Pejić (2002) reminds us, it is important to ask how Abramović, who had been living outside the former Yugoslavia became the person to represent the former Yugoslavia. While Pejić (2002) explains that Abramović was an ideal choice to represent the nation to represent the nation due to the cache of her family heritage, the nation's

ability to produce Abramović as other are the means by which she becomes disinvented from representation and the same means by which she can critique the nation. Her hybridity allows her to pivot to resist their dismissal (which was an attempt to dispossess her). As Hall (1992) explains, “The practices of representation always implicate the positions from which we speak or write” (p. 220). In this way, the Montenegrin commissioner and Abramović’s positionalities co-perform Yugoslavia through their conditional relations to the nation. Her claim to property of the nation by strategically stating that one does not hurt Montenegrin pride (evidence of her identity) reiterates her enduring relation to the nation through strategic essentialism. The controversy surrounding her as a representative artist for the former Yugoslavia (which at the time was only Montenegro and Serbia) rooted in her inauthentic representation of a real Montenegrin artist calls into question the obsession over how the figure of the nation haunts Balkan bodies and instantiates their being through this tension over inside/outside possibilities of representation. How does the European invitation to perform Balkan identity or to critique the violence of Yugoslavia function to secure the Balkans as primitive within the space of the Biennale? Moving to the physical performance and the meanings evoked in “Balkan Baroque,” I analyze how the above context which enabled her performance is represented in her relation to nation within the work. Below is the artist’s description of the piece:

The installation
images are projected onto the three walls
of the space.
My mother, my father, and myself.
On the floor are two copper sinks and
one copper bathtub filled with water.
Performance
In the middle of the space I wash 1,000

Fresh beef bones, continuously singing
folksongs from my childhood.

Excerpts from the folksongs that I sing
in *Balkan Baroque*:

First Day

‘when we stopped next to our Russian
tree the snow had already covered
everything...’

Second Day

‘you sing beautifully, you sing beautifully,
blackbird, blackbird... what else can
I do, what else can I do when my feet are bare...’

Third Day

‘Hey, Kato, hey my treasure, come with
me to pick sage...I can’t, master, I can’t.
There is no bright moon...’

Fourth Day

‘All the birds from the forest, all the birds
from the forest, come down to the sea.
Only one stays, only one stays, to sing to
Me about unhappy love.’

I sing these lines continuously over a
period of six hours every day.

Performance

Duration: 4 days, 6 hours

47th Venice Biennale, June 1997 (reprinted in Essling, 2017, p. 164).



Figure 2. Images from “Balkan Baroque.”

The title of my piece, *Balkan Baroque*, didn’t refer to the baroque art movement, but rather the baroqueness of the Balkan mind.

Really you can only understand the Balkan mentality if you're from there, or spend a lot of time there. To comprehend it is intellectually impossible—these turbulent emotions are volcanic, insane. There is always a war somewhere on this planet, and I wanted to create a universal image that could stand for war anywhere. (Abramović, 2016, p. 237)

Abramović's above quote about the reason for naming the performance "Balkan Baroque" provides a gateway to think about her framing of her personal relationship to the nation which she represents internationally. Her strange decision to articulate Balkanness within the frame of the primitive and violent feels like a betrayal of the necessity of the constitutive outside to conceptions and performances of self. Perhaps due to the circumstances surrounding her invitation to Biennale, she felt compelled to essentialize the mark of Balkan nationality as a body with a propensity to violence to give the predominantly Western European audience what they wanted. Thus, if the Balkans are a warmongering primitive people, then to perform "Balkan Baroque"—an explicit and grotesque commentary on the recent war—for a Western European audience reaffirms dominant modes of viewing that confirm their perspective of the Balkans as violent, primitive, non-European. While I (and other Balkan identified people) may be offended by the beginning of her quote, wondering what an affirmation of essentialist Balkan stereotypes does and for whom, the last sentence is important because she extends Balkan violence as characteristic of the world; there is always a war somewhere. Performance in general restricts one reading, and in the re-reading of Abramović's performance, the play between nationality, history, and representation re-stage the Bosnian Conflict as internationally co-performative. The performance, under the pretense of particularity to the Balkans and the former Yugoslavia, speaks more largely about global violence.

Removing the specific Yugoslav context from the photos which capture some of the aesthetic of the performance, Abramović's performative ethnic cleansing abstracts the localized atrocity to offer a critical perspective of our shared horror at this type of cruelty anywhere. While perhaps, from a Western European or US viewpoint, the Balkans are destined to continued war for as long as the future is possible, Abramović makes the point that viciousness is not necessarily predetermined by nationality. The photos above reiterate this point by stripping the performance of much of its Balkan context, the images of barbarity that Abramović enacts in the cleansing of the beef bones performatively translate their critique of violence in their diasporic dissemination outside Balkan borders. In many ways, the history that precedes our embodied existence restricts the possibilities of resistance to those histories. For instance, Abramović's entry point to transnational themes of violence is through her relation to the Yugoslav nation. As Renan (1990) explains, "A nation is a soul, a spirit principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute [it]...one lies in the past, one in the present" (p. 19). Abramović's use of her family on video installation coupled with her singing Yugoslav folk songs from her childhood hail the nation into performance to make a spectacle of the convergence of the personal and structural discourses that attach to her memory of the nation and to the possibility of committing murderous acts against family.

Abramović's father and her mother are necessary to the installation. They float above her in a slow-motion reel as she scrubs the bones, her parents' images are textured and grainy as if they were filmed through water. Invoking their bodies as those that fought for socialism and perhaps a more egalitarian Yugoslavia, her father holds up a gun and her mother puts up her hands. This violent and gendered act plays behind her,

providing the perspective of historical influence as two large columns, pillars to her identity. Her parents' images provide a verified and validated reason for Abramović to be in the space, a legitimate claim to critique the violence as a subject to/of the nation since she is a product of these national figures. Since she embodies a property of the nation, she can critique it. Through the play of national history, present, and future, the bones Abramović scrubs take on multiple meanings.

“Balkan Baroque” was performed in a damp warm basement in Venice filled with two tons of large, rotting cow bones. Visitors were hit with an olfactory wall of rot and death when they entered the performance. In many ways, Abramović's performance sought to overwhelm the audience's senses with spiritual, emotional, and physical revulsion to the representations of war and nation that they encountered. In the performance the rotting bloody bones embody the bones of Abramović's ancestors, the literal bones of those massacred in the Bosnian Genocide, and the possible future of the nation sprung from this violent past. The pile of bones that she sits atop, represents the ex-Yugoslavia and her effort to clean the bones with a steel brush is an obvious metaphor for the ethnic genocide. Her vigorous scrubbing while singing does two things: it recalls the Montenegrin and Slavic tradition of women who wail for the dead by screaming and scratching their eyes and making themselves bleed while they follow the dead body, and her scrubbing of the meat reveals the uniformity and sameness of differently fleshed bones. The copper bath of water nearby signifies the potential to be cleansed of the horror of the violence, to wash the bones again, after Abramović has scrubbed them of the skin that differentiated the en fleshed bones from each other. The superficiality of the skin as difference is a crucial point in the performance. With shared histories, with previously

shared national borders, Abramović asks what propels our own “kin” to destroy each other?

Offering an explanation to this question, an audiovisual loop of Abramović dressed as a doctor in a white lab coat (see above photo) plays while she continues to sing folk songs. In the video Abramović speaks slowly and authoritatively in English with her distinct Slavic accent:

I'd like to tell you a story of how we in the Balkans kill rats. We have a method of transforming the rat into a wolf; we make a wolf rat—To catch the rats you have to fill all their holes with water, leaving only one open. In this way you can catch 35-45 rats. You have to make sure you choose only the males. You put them in a cage and give them only water to drink. After a while they start to get hungry, their front teeth start growing and even though, normally, they would not kill members of their own tribe, since they risk suffocation [sic] they are forced to kill the weak one in the cage. And then another weak one, another weak one, and the another weak one.

They go on until only the strongest and most superior rat of them all is left in the cage. Now the rat catcher continues to give the rat water. At this point timing is extremely important. The rat's teeth are growing. When the rat catcher sees that there is only half an hour left before the rat will suffocate [sic] he opens the cage, takes a knife, removes the rat's eyes and lets it go. Now the rat is nervous, outraged and in a panic. He faces his own death and runs into the rat hole and kills every rat that comes his way. Until he comes across the rat who is stronger and superior than him. That rat kills him. This is how we make wolf rat in the Balkans” (Abramović 1998 cited by Richards, 2010).

Abramović's “scientific” description of the making of the wolf rat and the killing of the other rats operates as a thinly veiled allegory for the transition from socialism to capitalism in the former Yugoslavia. Weak rats can be interpreted as those dispossessed from property in transition, and the strong are the capitalists who gobble up all the land and property possible in order to survive in the new capitalist market. Integral to survival in these new capitalist markets is the rat-eat-rat mentality of greed that rests on the necessary precarity of others and the various forms of violence needed for capitalism to

operate and for people to survive in capitalism. Although the rats of capital and their performance as antagonists are integral to capitalism, the underlying critique that Abramović articulates is that rats and rat-wolfs are necessary counterparts to each other. The next section expands on the spread of capitalism in the former Yugoslavia by analyzing how the Balkans figure in European imaginary, and how the preservation of the imaginary Balkan primitive enables capitalist dispossession to unfold by marking the self as distinct from the other.

F. Later Career in US/Montenegro—Balkan Erotic Epic (2005)

This final section analyzes Abramović's performance film "Balkan Erotic Epic" which was filmed in Montenegro with Montenegrin actors. The film came as a result of being approached by "The Destricted film company to make a film using porn stars" (Richards, 2010, p. 33). While the film is indeed a meditation and exploration of sexuality, the context of its filming and the fact that the actors are dressed in traditional Montenegrin costume makes it also a commentary on Balkan Yugoslav identity. This section will continue to unpack how nation figures within the sexual imaginary of the Balkan other within the context of global postsocialist capitalism. Below is Abramović's description of the film accompanied by a few stills from it:

Balkan Erotic Epic is based on my research into Balkan folk culture and its use of the erotic. Through eroticism, the human tries to make himself equal with the gods. In folklore, the woman marrying the sun or the man marrying the moon is to preserve the secret creative energy and get it in touch through eroticism with indestructible cosmic forces. People believed that in the erotic there was something superhuman that doesn't come from us but from the gods.

Obscene objects and male and female genitals have very important function in the fertility and agricultural rites of Balkan peasants. They were used very explicitly for a variety of purposes.

Women would show openly their vaginas, bottoms, breasts, and menstrual blood in the rituals. Men would openly show their bottoms and penises in the ritual acts of masturbation and ejaculation.

Balkan Erotic Epic, 2005

Multichannel video installation (color, sound) duration variable (reprinted in Essling, 2017, p. 198).



Figure 3. Images from “Balkan Erotic Epic.”

Sex and death are always very close in the Balkans (Abramović, 2016, p. 277).

Abramović created “Balkan Erotic Epic” one year before Montenegro declared independence from Serbia and was recognized globally as a sovereign independent

nation. Another return to her homeland in the liminal space of significant geopolitical change, the context of the performance film, “Balkan Erotic Epic” was Montenegro and Montenegrin peasant rituals and traditions. Within the former Yugoslavia, national lore about Montenegrins is that they are heroic fighters and lovers. Exploiting this stereotype, Abramović’s film asks how such primitive peasants will be incorporated into the global structure of modernity in the anticipated Montenegrin independence and continued transition to capitalism. Seemingly a response to global geopolitical changes of Montenegro’s incorporation into a larger global capitalist world order, Abramović’s reaction to capitalism is to return to tradition and ritual as a form of resistance to global capital. In some ways, the film reads as a pre-emptive performance of grieving for the anticipated loss of culture that independence and late capitalism will bring. After the somber tone of “Balkan Baroque,” “Balkan Erotic Epic” pokes fun at nationality, asking audiences to consider what representations of the other it is that they are *actually* seeing and how they are implicated in the meaning of these representations.

The form of Abramović’s film seems to be mock-umentary. Are we to take seriously her representation of “peasant” rituals? Or, are we to read this as tongue in cheek and see this play as a challenge to Western audiences to rethink their prejudice toward the “savage” and “primitive Balkans?” In describing the feminist performance group “Spiderwoman” and their exposure of colonizing white nostalgia for native American mysticism, Schneider (1997) explains, “The banality of the recipe is obvious, but nonetheless the presentation is somehow ambiguous, leaving unclear the fine line between the sacred and the profane and making the audience suddenly unsure of the appropriateness of laughter” (p. 160). Like the reactions to “Spiderwoman,” some may

laugh a sly knowing laugh resonating in the representations of the superstitions of Balkan culture, while others may laugh snidely about how the representations reveal a deeper truth of the Balkan primitive. The necessity of the primitive other calls into question just who the figure of the primitive serves and how it circulates as the constitutive outside to oneself.

It is, indeed, a repositioning of the Balkans within the larger European logic that allows the film to present the Balkans and Montenegrins as savage and primitive. The film exposes the bizarre way in which the Balkan body, both participates in and is excluded from the production of its otherness in a Western European imaginary. Further playing on the constitutive outside of identity and nation, Abramović's "Balkan Erotic Epic" interrogates Balkan representation in the European mind by simultaneously normalizing and making absurd Montenegrin peasant rituals. The short film was shot in Montenegro and she employed locals to perform the different parts of the film. Perhaps it is the nudity or the seriousness with which Abramović addresses the seemingly odd nude rituals that makes the film itself read as a dark comedy. Dressed again in a scientist's lab coat to describe the "Balkans" as she did in "Balkan Baroque" she employs her position as subject of diaspora to perform objective observer of primitive pagan Balkan ritual and to explain it to an audience we can only assume to be an outsider: a western European or US viewer. Her omnipresent voice, laid over scenes of men copulating with the land, women rubbing their breasts in the rain and exposing their vaginas to the earth is anthropological but her accent betrays relation. While viewing the film and listening to Abramović normalize the rituals, the viewer is confronted with a dilemma: do they take this seriously or dismiss these representations of Balkan sexuality and Yugoslav

peasantry? Again, turning to the body to understand how discourses are made real through and on it, Abramović puts into disarray the modes of recognition and meaning to epistemically challenge that which can be seen as primitive. She crucially asks which cultural or national imaginary does this image of Balkan-ness benefit? And, who (citizens of which nations) need this image (border) to sure up their own images (national borders) of themselves?

In her attempt to make normal the strange and vice-versa the performance challenges dominant colonizing logic that marks non-European bodies as other. In conversation with postcolonial and postsocialist discourses of global power, the piece confronts some viewers with a moment of reflexivity. Although it can also be argued that Abramović's almost comedic presentation of Montenegrin bodies for consumption by non-Montenegrin/Balkan audiences may reinforce the cultural stereotypes previously held about the primitive nature of people from these nations. Additionally, Abramović's choice to only use local actors complicates her relationship to the representations she cultivates because while she is Montenegrin she also is not, leaving one to wonder if the power of authorship over these performing bodies and the story the film tells is abusive, exploitative, or neocolonial on Abramović's behalf.

Ultimately, the piece questions authenticity, authority, authorship, and the epistemological hierarchies that maintain the primitive/civilized divide in global imaginaries of the other. These imaginaries are maintained through fictions that are (inter)nationally relational. More importantly they are maintained as anthropological and scientific evidence (also techniques of imperialism) for dispossession in postsocialist global capitalism. Never far from power, representations of the other as the savage sexual

primitives reaffirm notions of the self to further distance the realization of how these primitive representations are integral to maintaining the boundaries of the self/individual that capitalism depends upon. Images of otherness rationalize the violence of capitalism and mark out those that are successful in capitalism as historically destined (via their scaled relation to primitive behavior) to do so. Rationalizing the violence of the logic of capital is not unique to the former Yugoslavia, it is integral to global capitalism. This logic operates within the transitioning former Yugoslavia in discourses that articulate those who cling to tradition as modern failures, out-of-step with the capitalist development of the state and world.

What is made explicit in Abramović's work is the literal way in which colonizing logic takes up the Balkan body and imagines it as laughably sexualized, stupid, and trapped in the past. Even more clearly, we can see the ways in which the savage Balkan is only possible in relation to the non-savage Western European. The European Balkan (both imagined and physical) haunts the possibilities of quintessential liberal Western European *Europeanness*. By extension, the postsocialist Balkan and the primitive tribal peasant that Abramović invokes in "Balkan Erotic Epic" nod to the ways in which this sexual and spiritual body will never be incorporated as a proper subject to a system of global liberal capital and how Balkan dispossession is necessary to postsocialist global capitalism.

G. Performative Implications

This chapter has focused on the ways in which nation/ality is ontologically and epistemologically articulated to identity by analyzing Marina Abramović and her performances as explicitly relational. Theorizing liminal moments where self/other

hinges on performative recognition, I have argued that while the mark of nationality bears itself out to dispossess or possess bodies in the name of the property of nation, that these articulations can be resisted in co-performative signification at the border (of intelligibility, nation, gender). Abramović materializes the ontological radical relationality in her performances to interpellate audiences into reflexive considerations of their relationship to the representations she stages on her body. Her embodied diasporic and hybrid identity confronts audiences with questions about our own relationships to subjectivity, the nation, and otherness. In her meditations on corporeal relation to national borders, she offers a form of subjectivity that resists individualism even as it grapples with the context of geopolitically postmodern, postcolonial, and postsocialist experiences of diaspora in global capitalism. Forcing audiences to confront the nation and her own nationality, Abramović's performances propose the possibility of imagining subjectivity differently—as transnationally relational and dependent.

Read through the lens of nation and national property, Abramović's disruption of the borders of identity is revolutionary performance aimed at transforming the very foundations of society. Undoing the seemingly material borders between us/them is a direct threat to discourses of power that mobilize violence to maintain these borders. Perhaps in the performative undoing of national identity there can be a hybridity of coalition against the precarity of otherness. Disrupting the normalized distinctions between self/other that are imbued in the borders of nation, Abramović's relational performances demonstrate how no "I" can exist without "you" and how, in many ways, this is a call to action.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

When I returned to Montenegro in 2014 for a language immersion summer program, my heart had been giving me trouble. I was born with an irregular heartbeat. It is irregular because it regularly skips a beat every four counts. This was the summer that I would be raped, and nothing sat right in my body. While my use of the language was better than it had ever been, I knew my way around town, and was making appointments to see my family and my friends, I kept feeling my heart bottom out. I kept losing my breath. One day in language class, my chest ached and I passed out in front of the class. The professor called an associate to assist me with my needed hospital visit. I took a taxi with the random male associate to the hospital where ambulance drivers and EMTs sat outside smoking cigarettes and doctors and nurses sat inside smoking cigarettes. He spoke for me, although I understood what was going on. I interjected in Montenegrin occasionally to prove that I was not inept and that I understood their whispers. They asked me my name and when I told them it was Zenovich their hardened demeanor shed a bit and they declared that I was one of theirs from the seaside. They walked me to the backroom where I met another man, also smoking, who told me that he would take care of me because I was Montenegrin. They laid me down on a table took off my shirt and bra and stuck old suction cups all over my chest to do an EKG test. The professor's associate sat nearby observing. A small printer with a needle like a lie detector went up and down as it measured my beating heart. The printer scrolled out my rhythm like a receipt for living. The doctors and nurses tore the paper from the printer and analyzed it while I sat bare chested. Ten minutes passed and the professor's associate came back to translate while the doctor explained that I was fine but they warned that it was a symptom of the draft. The draft is a unique Balkan wind that breezes into houses when you have two windows open. In the Balkans, we are superstitious of these drafts—called *promaja*— because they can make you sick, make you die, take your soul away with them on the wind.

My experiences in Montenegro have operated as the relational and performative frame for this dissertation. My relationship to Montenegro, much like the radical relationality theorized in this dissertation, is a painful one that is structured by property, violence, and trauma. However, my sojourning relationship to the land, my friends, and my family in Montenegro is a loving one that drives me to come to terms with my relationship for myself and others that find commonality in the stories analyzed in this dissertation. It is from this strained and difficult relationality that I argue there is potential

for breaks and changes to discourses of dominance that are both integral and harmful to our survival. From my wound (called Montenegro, Montenegrin ethnicity, the former Yugoslavia, and Balkan-ness) I have articulated performance and property as embodied forms of relationality that, within the deconstruction and play of their symbolic and material power, offers strategies to resist collective dispossession across borders. While radical relationality is not new, my use of the concept through the lens of performance studies to analyze the performative power of property in postsocialist global capitalism is. Therefore, this dissertation has sought to tell the stories of Montenegro through the lens of property in postsocialist global capitalism as they intersect with identity stories of family, gender, labor, trauma, and diaspora.

In order to tell these stories, I provided a chapter on the historical context of gender in Montenegro and the former Yugoslavia from 1800s until today. The next chapter outlined my theoretical and methodological framework to introduce ideas of radical relationality and subject formation in relation to property, gender, trauma, and the nation. The methodological section of this chapter focused on performance studies to frame my use of performance ethnography and autoethnography. The three following analysis chapters analyzed how women in the postsocialist former Yugoslavia perform gender in the transition from socialism to capitalism by considering their material and symbolic relationships to property. These three different but co-constitutive chapters have analyzed how co-performative discourses of property articulate to gender and nation in the tourism industry, in the mass rape of the Bosnian War, and in the performance art of Marina Abramović. Using performance studies to theorize the relational, embodied, and discursive ways in which identity has been mobilized in the former Yugoslavia, the

dissertation has offered insights from the postsocialist world to critique notions of the individual as well as global capital and has pointed to spaces for resistance to these regimes.

Through the prism of postsocialist and postcolonial feminist theory, the dissertation theorizes how symbolic and material property ownership performatively manifests on women's bodies to theorize radical relationality as a means of transnational feminist resistance to capitalist systems of oppression and dispossession. My dissertation has argued that property is the lynchpin of oppression in postsocialist global capital, and that to undo this oppression we must work relationally. The dissertation analyzed how property relations (discursive and embodied) manifest through socioeconomic transition, violence, nation/ality, trauma, and art. Regimes of property and the violence that they enable, are maintained through communication about property, the embodiment of property, and performative relations to property. Discourses of property in postsocialist global capitalism are inescapable and fundamental to the ways in which power operates both globally and locally. This current chapter, by way of conclusion, will first briefly review each of the analysis chapters, thread my theoretical argument, and point to a few spaces for future research.

A. Review of Previous Chapters

The first analysis chapter, titled "Transitioning properties of gender in postsocialist Montenegrin tourism: A feminist performance ethnography" analyzes women's roles in the tourism industry in a seaside town in Montenegro. I draw on postsocialist women's words to critique the ways in which private property ownership in transition structures the gendered relationship of women to labor in tourism. I began from

women's experiences to understand what the transition from socialism to capitalism means for postsocialist women and their relationship to labor. My analysis hinged itself on the trope of property to theorize and rethink socialist feminism of the 1970s. Tending to the ways in which property enacts the frame of transition, I claim that critiquing property can resist the gendered violence of liberal capitalism. Using performance ethnography, I argued that tourism in the former Yugoslav nation of Montenegro depends on gendered and performative property relations of global postsocialism. I analyzed private property ownership as more than an economic relation, explaining that it is a discourse of power that determines the possibilities of gender, nation, and labor. In the former Yugoslavia, the development of capitalism happens on the backs of dispossessed women and women's labor. In Montenegro, gendered dispossession is integral to maintaining the most lucrative industry; tourism.

Gendered dispossession and precarity are not only integral to postsocialist capitalism, but, inform the practice of capitalism as it travels across borders. Since capitalism depends on racialized and gendered precarious labor, capitalist expansion in the context of transition in Montenegro makes these global forms of property violence explicit. The global condition of postsocialism amasses new relational and performative power to property ownership. Analyzing property discourses and how they are embodied in relations of capital illuminates how property in the body (reproduction), property of the body (labor), and property of the state (nation, law, ownership) are performatively accomplished in gender through capitalism and patriarchy. Studying gender through the lens of property in systems of capitalism offers ways to performatively resist the power of property to oppress or enslave bodies. The condition of global postsocialism requires us

to think through the ways in which the practice of capitalism depends on the relative dispossession of certain bodies and their precarious labor. Property ownership, as a gendered relationship animates and structures all relational hierarchies of value and worth. Postsocialism calls attention to how property ownership amasses new relational and performative power. Corporeal ownership over one's body, over one's bodily labor, and ownership of material property are spaces to start feminist coalition guided by the heuristic of socialist feminism to disarticulate ownership from masculinity and male bodies.

The second chapter, "Properties of postsocialist sexual violence: A feminist autoethnography of rape, resistance, and coalition," analyzes mass rape in Bosnia through the trope of property to theorize our relations to the other within global capitalism. From critique of property relations, I locate the trauma that property enacted through claims to land, claims to body, claims to national borders causes. Focusing on rape as the enactment of violent claims to property, I explain how rape is a form of trauma and pain that destroys language, lays bare the explicit way in which treating women *as* property, representative *of* property, and reproducers of property is integral to male dominance and global capitalism. Coming to relational (and communal) terms with (what appears and has been institutionalized as) individually experienced trauma can begin to hold institutions accountable for the violence they enable. I argue that the precarious conditions of the postsocialist world are made possible through relationships to/of property that are accomplished and structured by (gendered and racialized) violence and trauma. In postsocialist global capitalism, discourses of property ownership continue to interpellate humans as individuals (men) with the potential to own property and others as

property (women, people of color). Specifically, property relations depend on dispossession of women which makes them more vulnerable to sexual violence. I argue that this relationship of dispossession is traumatic, violent, foundational to the capitalist nation, and must be resisted.

While the specificity of the Yugoslav context is important to my analysis, it is also critical to this chapter to acknowledge that common experiences of rape and trauma are fundamental to capitalist nation/al formations transnationally and historically and thus ghosted by the language and politics of property (Yuval Davis, 1997; Deer, 2015; Harris, 1997). My argument in this chapter is that moments of violence where pain and trauma are most isolating— are always already moments of radical relation. Corporeal interpellations into trauma discourses, specifically in rape, are dialectical processes of recognition of ownership (i.e.; one “has it” [the property of trauma, rape, pain, etc.]). Trauma and the communication of it, like the declaration of the subject into an autonomous self (an “I”), reiterates the relationality of our ontological and epistemic condition. Recognition of the relational “I,” fractured in *Nepantla*, requires the other to recognize “I” as changed— bearing or owning relational trauma. It is in this specific act of communication that the weight of or relational existence can be realized and cultivated toward resistance of individualistic narrations of the self. Traumatic recognition is subject formation, which in turn, is an ontological moment—*Nepantla*— and it is relational enactment of property ownership. I argue that regimes of private property and ownership (identity, nation, capital) are always instantiated through violence, and so to form coalition over these violences both can resist the violence perpetuated as well as the system of property ownership that marks and exposes bodies to/for violence.

My third chapter, “Embodied ex-Yugoslav borders and property: Theorizing the nation in Marina Abramović’s performance art,” analyzed three of Abramović’s performances to theorize the co-performative relationship of nation/ality and how this identity is a performative process of relational claims to property. Read through the lens of nation and national property, I analyzed Abramović’s performances as disruptions of identity that aim to transform the very foundations of society. I argue that Abramović’s work undoes the seemingly material borders between us/them and is a direct threat to discourses of power that mobilize violence to maintain these borders. In the performative undoing of national identity, I argue that there can be a hybridity of coalition against the precarity of otherness. Disrupting the normalized distinctions between self/other that are imbued in the borders of nation, Abramović’s relational performances demonstrate how no “I” can exist without “you.” I interpret Abramović’s work through the lens of performance and property to articulate how her performances are evidence of ontological relationality and are always already shot through nation/national origin. Performance, and Abramović call into question the epistemic function of identity as property and product of nation. Her performances suggest that we can epistemologically question and undo, through performative affect made real in performance, histories of trauma that articulate to nation and nationality and the maintenance and construction of those embodied borders. As a relational process, performance offers up symbolic, material, and corporeal possibilities at the liminal space of borders to rethink, redo, and reframe the ways in which national borders function in our daily lives.

Analyzing Abramović by using property to analyze relationships of identity, nation, and nationality, I claim that the nation marks its citizens as property, identity

functions as property of the body, and nationality is a performative claim to ownership of national property. Within the chapter, I focus explicitly on the Balkan component and context of Abramović's work. The co-performative relations of self/other made explicit in hybridity and diaspora are doubly articulated geopolitically onto the Balkan identity as it moves across borders. As a European other within Europe, the Balkans inform European conceptions of self and nation. The Balkan location, Balkan people, and the Balkans as European "other," thus, are a place where hybridity can performatively articulate onto a dislocated space in-between Europe, or even, as the constitutive outside to Europe's sense of self. Abramović's performances call into question the ways in which identity is a process and dependent upon discourses of power that determine material and symbolic borders of identity. My analysis of nation considers its integral and lasting relationship to the body to theorize how Abramović's performances lay bare the relational performativity of nation/nationality/identity. Theorizing liminal moments where self/other hinges on performative recognition, I argued that while the mark of nationality bears itself out to dispossess or possess bodies in the name of the property of nation, that these articulations can be resisted in co-performative signification at the border (of intelligibility, nation, gender).

Each of the abovementioned three chapters uses the lens of property to theorize the possibilities of recognition of ontological and epistemological radical relationality. From these three Yugoslav-specific contexts and chapters, the dissertation has added to women's studies, East European Studies, postsocialist studies, post-Yugoslav studies, postcolonial and decolonial work. Specifically, my dissertation contributes to three lines of thought: 1) it centers the political and performative issue of property as a site for

transnational feminist coalition 2) it offers a theoretical analytic from the cohabitation of postcolonial and postsocialist feminist theory 3) it builds on standpoint theory to disrupt the notion of the individual and to move toward structural critique and radically relational social justice. My dissertation started from bodily experiences in the former Yugoslavia to critique the regimes of power that silence the female body, and use her body as the instantiation of ethnic and national property claims. I have argued that property is a material and symbolic performative lynchpin to power in postsocialist global capitalism. Since there is no escape from the ways in which discourses of property in postsocialist global capitalism articulate to our embodiment, we must grapple with the effects of this system of material and symbolic inequality by engaging with our epistemological and ontological radical relationality. I have claimed that a politic of radical relationality can provide space for coalition in collective trauma and dispossession. I theorized feminist strategies for coalition by adding to performative possibilities of resistance at the borders (of identities, nations, genders, bodies) and by insisting that we critically analyze how discourses of property instantiate systems of power that dispossess certain bodies and obscure our radical relation to each other in favor of capitalist serving individualism, ownership, and violence. While it is outside the scope of the dissertation to offer a fully fleshed out method for coalition in resistance to property, I have theorized potential spaces where critical analysis of the operation and performance of property as power can inspire ways to collaborate on this important work and outline them below. The next section expands on radical relationality, the theoretical core of my dissertation, to think some possibilities to develop the frame of property as performative and radical relationality in other contexts.

B. Radical Relationality in Coalition

If feminist theory is grounded in feminist action, this section attempts to draw some possibilities for action by considering how this dissertation contributes to a cohabitation of postsocialist and postcolonial thought. I will explain what radical relationality can offer us academically, politically, and experientially. Radical relationality provides a theory to understand ourselves ontologically and epistemologically in service of imagining better and more just worlds. I believe that the ability to mobilize feminist coalitions—to literally embody relationality in the frame of property—could upend systems of domination. Figuring new ways to resist power is important at this historical juncture because we live in a postsocialist capitalist world where articulations of property and power, property and nationalism, property and precarity threaten our joint existence and survival. Below I expand on the intersection of trauma and property to briefly discuss how critical analysis of property and trauma is a necessary part of our survival in global capital.

The reason I focus on violence, trauma, pain and difficult geopolitical transformation is because performatively reaching toward the other—living in radical relation—is a painful and difficult embodiment. It is much easier and perhaps more profitable to live and labor for more property and think ourselves individually in postsocialist global capitalism. Since property and capital require dispossession and precarity, to ignore our fundamental relation to each other propels and maintains harmful and violent capitalist systems of property. Global capital needs bodies in alienation from each other so that when national violence and precarity exists it can be ignored in hierarchical performativity of proximity to violence (which makes violence invisible or

intelligible). I agree with Ahmed (2017) who argues that feminist and feminism must return to violence in order to make it intelligible. She explains, “As we know: so much violence does not become visible or knowable or tangible. We have to fight to bring that violence to attention” (p. 210). Our responsibility as feminists is to return to the wounds of our relations, to speak our pain to free ourselves from the performative shame and trauma, to make ourselves hear and see these experiences, recognize that we are not alone, and fight to disable the conditions which produced our injuries. This dissertation has sought to unearth and make visible the violence of property that sutures our worlds and to call out to others to do similar work.

Unearthing and making violence visible comes from a space of desperation wherein one yearns for the world to be different and cannot continue to live in it as it is. Ahmed (2017), explains how, often, experiences of violence shock us into wishing the world would be different and can eventually manifest strategic attempts to make them differently. Without moments of trauma that jar us from our lived realities, it would be hard to dream alternatives to violence. Ahmed (2017) explains that women are often brought to feminist consciousness through the gendered violence that historically articulates to our bodies. Describing her own response to the physical violence of her father she explains how she would scream when he attempted to hit her. “By screaming, I announced my father’s violence. I made it audible. And I learned from this too: becoming a feminist was about becoming audible, feminism as screaming in order to be heard; screaming as making violence visible” (Ahmed, 2017, p. 73). It is useful to think about Ahmed’s screams in concert with my dissertation about the possibilities of radical relationality, since even when these screams appear to occur in an empty echo-chamber,

they are always already in performative relation to the other (structurally, corporeally). Screaming, as a performative and communicative act, again requires recognition of the other. While pain and trauma are moments of breakage that isolate us, that they are felt, experienced, and performed relationally is crucially important. The act of screaming does not alleviate the pain of violence that brought the screaming nor does it mean that there will not be more screams or more violence. However, screaming as a form of resistance, as a form of rendering violence visible like Ahmed (2017), is what I have sought to do in this dissertation.

I want to reiterate that feminist consciousness is not guaranteed or the result of violence and trauma. However, I want to also continue to think with and through the pain like Anzaldúa (2015), hooks (1984), Lorde (2007) and more third world feminists, because screaming as a feminist act of voice does not assure coalition or solidarity but one still must scream in hopes of such recognition. The point I am trying to make is that coalition is a process of becoming through pain, never absent of pain, and never resulting in the freedom from pain, and that is why it is easier not to struggle through it. Like my relationship to Montenegro, articulated throughout this dissertation, that which hurts the heard must be tended to because these experiences of pain shape how we live out our political commitments and contours our humanity. It is a constant performative process of revising, rethinking, reworking our relation to each other. The point of feminist coalition is to continually return to and make intelligible the intersection of violence from which corporeal screams emerge, so as to make life more livable.

What I learned from my own experience of trauma was that we can never (ever) understand each other's pain and trauma. It is also important to acknowledge that trauma

is experienced on a sliding scale of pain and therefore, most people can relate to it. Most people have experienced something in their life that they would label as traumatic—losing a loved one, breaking a bone, molestation, abandonment, sexual harassment, drone strikes, presidential elections, absentee parents, rape, car crashes, war. Our shared relations to trauma has been theorized before, but my contribution is to think through trauma with the performative trope of property in order to show how trauma is enacted through relational property discourses of ownership and dispossession.

When I returned to the US after being raped in Montenegro, I threw myself into my work and a routine of teaching and research. I took more classes than were required, overwhelming myself to distract from the deep and volatile depression I was suffering. I was taking a feminist methods course and the class was discussing the possibilities for intersubjectivity or shared feminist consciousness. Perhaps because of their Whiteness, the majority of the women in the class intimated that complete understanding was possible on the condition of being a woman. Their argument, while simplified here, did not sit well with me because to fully draw out this line of thought would be to claim that white women could understand the experiences of women of color, which is an assumption beneficial to feminist white supremacy. I reiterate this story because it was at that moment that I had an out of body experience, with my recent trauma weighing me down I hovered above and watched my body interact with the others in the class, and at that moment I had an epiphany.

The white feminists explained that they thought understanding was possible but they performatively drew the line at black women's experiences. I knew many of them were reciting this deference to black experience because of the one black woman in the

class, while they actually believed they could understand because they were women. To me this moment clarified the smokescreen to the operations of power in the claim that understanding is possible. It dawned on me that just like nobody could ever understand my experience of rape, no matter how well-intentioned, no white feminists are going to understand people of color's lived experiences of race. From that moment on, I realized that intellectual and academic claims that we can understand each other's experience perpetuates the colonizers logic. I also realized that understanding each other's experiences is not necessary in forming coalitions over shared instances of dispossession and trauma. It is precisely in our differential experiences of dispossession that we are performatively related to each other.

Thus, the possibilities of coalition must first, and most importantly recognize, we cannot, will not, and never have understood the each other or each other's embodied experiences. Secondly, this recognition of difference does not mean that our relationships to each other are not important, in fact, these relations are critical to our definitions of self (property/ownership of identity) and integral to how we move in the world. This epistemological shift provides an entry point to coalition that is not based on understanding or identification with the other but on the simple knowledge that we need each other to exist and that our existence is structured by our performative relationship to discourses of property. The possibility of this radical knowledge, I argue, can come from violent disruption in daily life that can be born in relational and performative experiences of trauma. Coming to terms with why trauma harms (relationally performed and recognized as such) us illuminates how thoroughly relational our existences are and it

forces reflexive consideration of the structures that relationally condition the possibilities for our shared lives. As Ahmed (2017) explains:

The desire for recognition is not necessarily about having access to a good life or being included in the institutions that have left you shattered. It is not even necessarily an aspiration for something: rather, it comes from the experience of what is unbearable, what cannot be endured. The desire for a bearable life is a desire for a life where suffering does not mean you lose your bearings when you become unhoused, when the walls come up, when they secure the rights of some to occupy the space of dispossession of others (p. 221)

While trauma can offer ways to reframe our lived racial relationality, the conditions which enable these traumas (trauma of rape and sexual violence) are always already tied to property and property ownership. In the dissertation, I have attempted to argue that an undoing of individual (national, cultural) trauma can occur through the lens of property. Critical assessments of who owns what and why along with analysis of how property performatively structures the possibilities of our language and embodiment is a place to start. I return to the violence of property as it articulates to bodies because of how deeply embedded its power is within bodies and the global socioeconomic structure of capitalism. Thinking through trauma as a performative relation of property and as experiential radical relationality will require work beyond this dissertation to provide analytical clarity on how deeply linked to power the history of the word “trauma” is.

Since language travels, the term trauma could be taken up by various discourses and it could result in the mobilization of trauma in anti-feminist, racist, or colonizing projects. I believe that shifting the frame of analysis of trauma to relational property (as performance, as performativity) provides resistance to the appropriation of the term. When trauma is taken up by the courts and deployed by well-meaning, well-educated, and well-intentioned people to help victims or provide justice, it is necessary to continue

to be vigilant about the ways in which the possibilities for justice are built on the possibilities of ownership and dispossession (specifically in liberal judicial systems under capitalist governments). While I have tried to provide a structural analysis of the ways in which property interacts with the nation and with bodies of the nation in each chapter, some may ask about individual responsibility. In my analysis of rape in the former Yugoslavia, ultimately, there are a few individuals that are sentenced to prison for their crimes against humanity. This performative act helps to heal the wounds of the nation, but it does not excuse the violence that is made possible by the structural conditions of property which are not individual but collective. From a performance-based critique of property relations, we can also locate the trauma these relations cause. Coming to relational terms with trauma and violence can begin to hold institutions accountable for the violence they enable. The precarious conditions of the postsocialist world are made possible through relationships to/of property and we need to continue to scream and make this violence seen and heard. The next section will conclude with a few contexts where theories of property, trauma, and radical relationality can travel.

C. Future Implications

I have argued that property is a useful trope for analyzing power that travels across borders, identities, and history. Property as performative in tandem with and radical relationality provides a theoretical framework that can be employed in different geopolitical and national contexts of capitalism. Violence and rape cannot be disentangled from the development of the capitalist state as it intersects with gender, race, and nationality. The rape of women is and has always been a part of capitalist nation building. To theorize how property performs national violence, I argue that we focus on

this question: what types of gender equality are possible when we center (private) property ownership in feminist analysis of the nation, sexual violence, postcolonialism and postsocialism? Beginning with this question will provides a frame with which to realize the ways in which the borders of nations are often erected on the bodies of women through rape. Focusing on the rape of women as a gendered experience of trauma and ownership, theorizes how rape in different geopolitical and historical contexts can offer insights to ending the economic conditions that make rape possible.

Rape in colonization, US slavery, WWII, Rwanda, South Africa, Vietnam, Japan, and millions of other places are spaces where analysis of the performative relationship of women as property to trauma and nation can foster transnational feminist coalition against discourses that situate women as property. None of these traumas can be reduced to each other because each context intends and implicates different projects of power inflected through women's bodies. However, these traumas need to continue to be mobilized, not for nationalist political gain, but for feminist activism, theory, and coalition across borders. Using the frame of property, as I have articulated it here, can provide innovative analysis and more strategies for resistance to violent manifestations of property across geopolitical borders of space and time. Specifically, tracing and analyzing property ownership in this postsocialist global moment of capitalism directs us to power: more specifically, analysis of property dismantles the power in the trope of property as it manifests on women's bodies, in their representations, in violence, and the conditions that make violent dispossession possible.

The lens of property can be used to analyze how material and symbolic property ownership necessitates and enacts violent hierarchies of dispossession that attach to race,

class, gender, and sexuality as embodied in capitalist contexts. I have argued that in order to resist systems of oppression such as capitalism we should start from a relational understanding of property (ownership/dispossession) to analyze power and trauma. In the postsocialist context, the development of capital is only possible through the socioeconomic seizure of public property to develop new private property markets. This lens of postsocialist property ownership and can be extended to analysis of contexts wherein violence is wielded to claim property for the nation. Using property as trope of analysis will deconstruct women's experiences as male property to envision feminist strategies and resistance to gendered oppression through transnational feminist coalition over the political issue of property.

The argument that property (as discourse, as material, as symbol) enacts the nation through violence can illuminate spaces where resistance to the overdetermined power of property can be resisted. Deconstructing power in/through moments of fissure, performativity and performance, nepantla, trauma, directs us to the ontological position of our shared humanity and impels us toward each other via a politic of radical relationality. The trope of property as a gendered discourse rooted in precarity needs to be understood in relation to the global condition of postsocialism. On one hand, precarity is the vulnerable condition of all humans requiring us to rely on each other for survival and on the other hand, precarity is the gendered deprivation of the material conditions (property ownership, reproductive rights, safety from sexual assault) necessary for women to survive in capitalist markets that make her vulnerable. The trope of property must be expanded to deal with the material and symbolic consequences of property ownership and dispossession as discourses of power realized through women's bodies.

Property is a malleable trope and should be mobilized to analyze many forms of precarity and marginalization because it toggles between the material and the symbolic thereby offering tangible solutions to oppression.

Often, the postsocialist context is overlooked in favor of seeing postsocialist nations already developing toward capitalism. The East-West dialogue between US and socialist feminists significantly decreased when the Cold War ended and the Berlin wall fell. As the conditions of global capitalism continue to close the possibilities of resistance to property (as sole discourse of symbolic and material power), it is integral to put these contexts back into conversation to think otherwise. I argue that the postsocialist conditions of global capitalism provide the conditions wherein sexual violence continues to enforce and disrupt national boundaries. Building on the Yugoslav context, I suggest that we analyze large scale sexual as the enactment of power through male relationships of property ownership.

On my most recent return to Montenegro in the summer of 2016, I slept in a village near the originating land of the Zenovich tribe. My apartment was a five-minute walk from the water of the Adriatic, and my balcony overlooked red-roof cobblestone houses that were nestled in the enormous black mountains of Montenegro's namesake. On one particularly beautiful and warm summer night, I forgot about the *promaja* (draft) and left all the windows open for a cross-breeze. In my sleep, my body became rigid and I began to experience sleep paralysis. I felt something like a spirit lifting my body and trying to drag me down the stairs of the apartment. Alternating and jarring images of the mountains and the water flashed in my minds' eye and were coupled with the physical sensations of being dragging off my bed. I tried to scream but was unable to produce more than an unintelligible whimper. I felt tears fall out of my eyes but could not wake myself up or make the dreaming stop. In my mind, I kept saying "let me go. please put me back." Whatever it was that had been dragging me threw me back to the door of my apartment and I walked back into my body and finally woke up. I woke up knowing my mistake, leaving the windows open for the draft to enter, and immediately closed them all. I was not scared. It was a critical return. An exit of *nepantla*. We must continue to revisit the wounds of our relational souls.

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