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A critique of academic nationalism.

Amie A. Macdonald
University of Massachusetts Amherst

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A CRITIQUE OF ACADEMIC NATIONALISM

A Dissertation Presented

by

AMIE A. MACDONALD

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February 1997

Philosophy

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AMIE A. MACDONALD

Approved as to style and content by:

Robert Ackermann, Chair

Carlin Barton, Member

Ann Ferguson, Member

Robert Paul Wolff, Member

John Robison, Department Head
Philosophy Department

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ABSTRACT
A CRITIQUE OF ACADEMIC NATIONALISM

FEBRUARY 1997

AMIE A. MACDONALD, B.A., HAMILTON COLLEGE
M.A., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
Ph.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Robert Ackermann

The focus of this dissertation is to identify, analyze, and critique what I take to be a fundamental contradiction between the ideal mission of the university to serve as the site for the pursuit of truth and the function of Traditionalist humanities curriculums. I argue that because nationalist education makes it nearly impossible for students to engage in the critique of ideology, nationalist education is antithetical to the university's mission. With anything less than the ability to engage in this critique of ideology, there is no way that students can participate meaningfully in the ideal of the university.

In the opening chapter I argue first, that the development and preservation of national culture stands in a dialectical relation to the preservation and contestation of national identity; second, that post-secondary education in the arts and humanities is largely education in the national culture; and third, that nationalism mediates the dialectical relation between national culture and national identity.

In the second chapter I critique nationalism on the grounds that underlying every nationalist movement (including curricular Traditionalism) is a universalist project which denies the reality of complex personal identity formation.

In the third chapter I show that the Traditionalist position (articulated by Bloom, D'Souza, and Searle) seeks to support through curricular control nationalist versions of culture and identity.

In the fourth chapter I critique Marx's and Mannheim's theories of ideology since they seek to devise methods for evaluating ideology through epistemic standpoints removed from the site of the production of ideology. And thus I conclude this chapter by asserting that in order to be a critic of ideology one must struggle with and acknowledge multiple and complex social identities.

In the final chapter I defend the claim that nationalist education undermines the process of teaching students to be critics of ideology since such an education prevents students from engaging the complexity of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Moreover, I argue that a decidedly non-nationalist multicultural education offers the possibility of developing heterogeneous group identity without the deleterious consequences invariably brought forth by nationalism.

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CHAPTER I

NATIONALISM AND THE ACADEMY

A. Introduction

In this first chapter I am examining what I take to be the general relationship between formal intellectual activity in the academy¹ and nationalism. In her most recent book, *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks claims that “If we examine critically the traditional role of the university in the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge and information, it is painfully clear that biases that uphold and maintain White supremacy, imperialism, sexism, and racism have distorted education so that it is no longer about the practice of freedom”(29). Now, while many argue that the university actually serves functions other than the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge (for example, that the university is the training ground for the professions, or that it prepares individuals to be productive members of a capitalist economy, etc.), and while I am somewhat sympathetic to the sentiments of these different arguments, I am more concerned in the dissertation to discuss some of the philosophical aspects of the relationship between the ideal mission of the university and the real

¹By the “academy” or academia I mean to refer to post-secondary level education. I have restricted my analysis to college and university level curriculum in order to focus on the specifics of recent disputes over post-secondary humanities curriculum and the role of nationalism in these disputes. In no way do I mean to suggest by focusing my inquiry in this fashion that primary and secondary education are not similarly impacted by the forces of nationalism in the United States.

consequences of university education. Therefore, the focus of my dissertation is to identify, analyze, and critique what I take to be a fundamental contradiction between the ideal of the pursuit of truth and the function of Traditionalist humanities curriculums in the modern university. Specifically, I am concerned to launch an ideological critique of the pedagogical practices of Traditionalism, both in curriculum and method, that are antithetical to students' pursuit of truth and knowledge. In this case, I am arguing that because nationalist education makes it nearly impossible for students to engage in the critique of ideology, nationalist education is antithetical to the mission of the university. That is, if we accept the claim that the university is a place to pursue truth, and we acknowledge that there are many different accounts of what truth *is* or might be (not all of which are true), students must be intellectually equipped not only to understand the varied accounts of truth presented to them by their professors and fellow students, but must be able to begin themselves to evaluate and adjudicate among these different, and often competing, accounts of truth. With anything less than the ability to engage in this critique of ideology, there is no way that students can participate meaningfully in the ideal of the university.

Essential to my understanding of ideology is that it is central to the perpetuation and maintenance of coercive power structures. Thus, exposing and analyzing the content of a particular ideology in the process of ideology critique is a way of contesting those power structures. My understanding of ideological critique therefore does not

include the possibility of an unmotivated ideological critique. That is, my undertaking to expose, in the case of my dissertation, the fundamental aspects of the ideological underpinnings of what I am calling academic nationalism, is motivated by my understanding of academic nationalism as ideological. Ideological critique then is useful and valuable in that it exposes the tight theoretical and practical connections between sets of seemingly unconnected (or at best loosely connected) ideas and practices: between, in this case, the ideas and pedagogical practices of nationalist education *and* the failure to teach students to think critically, to be able to critique ideology, and therefore to be able to choose and thus act voluntarily.

It is my aim then in this opening chapter to show first, that the development and preservation of national culture stands in a dialectical relation to the preservation and contestation of national identity; second, that post-secondary education in the arts and humanities is largely (though not exclusively) education in the national culture; and third, that nationalism mediates the dialectical relation between national culture and national identity.

I recognize that these terms that I am working with - nation, nationalism, national culture - are all hopelessly vague. There is a tremendous amount of scholarship devoted to finding definitions for these concepts. However, I wish in this chapter to begin with substantive accounts and instances of nation, nationalism, and national culture rather than to attempt abstract definitions at the outset, definitions that might correspond in advance to the conclusions

I wish to draw. I begin here since it is my belief that clear articulations of these concepts are in the histories and realities of nations, both sovereign and colonized.

B. National Identity and National Culture

Frantz Fanon writes in his *Wretched of the Earth* "For culture is the first expression of a nation, the expression of its preferences, of its taboos, and of its patterns"(244). Fanon is working towards a different end than I in his discussion "On National Culture," however, there are elements in his analysis pivotal to the point that I am trying to make; namely, that the development and preservation of a national culture is a central component of nationalism.

In this section of *Wretched of the Earth* Fanon is critiquing the concept of negritude on the grounds that it fails to express the cultural diversity of distinct African nations. In fact, according to Fanon, the concept of negritude works to obfuscate the reality of national cultural diversity in Africa. The result of African intellectuals focusing on elaborating *African* cultural icons, such as the concept of negritude and a canon of Negro literature, has resulted in a failure to create distinct national cultures. Fanon states: "The native intellectual who has gone far beyond the domains of Western culture and who has got it into his head to proclaim the existence of another culture never does so in the name of Angola or Dahomey. The culture which is affirmed is African culture"(212).

While according to Fanon this perception of a lack of distinct national cultures in the continent of Africa has everything to do with the colonialist empire that worked to eradicate any sense of distinct nationality on that continent, African intellectuals contribute to this situation by organizing their intellectual inquiry and production around concepts that further reinforce this notion of Africa as populated by many people who are all essentially the same. Thus the colonialists in Africa, like their counterpart White slave holders in America, do not see Africans as citizens of any particular nation; they are all simply Negroes (sic). He states: "The whites of America did not mete out to them any different treatment from that of the whites who ruled over the Africans. We have seen that the whites were used to putting all Negroes in the same bag"(215).

Thus Fanon identifies not only the theoretical limitations of negritude as a concept, but the far-reaching social, political, economic, and above all national, ramifications of cultivating a non-national culture. In the case of Algerians (and all other Africans) the absence of a national culture and the conscious effort on the part of Black intellectuals to promote a unified (homogenous) Pan-African cultural sensibility based on skin color further cements the colonialist occupation of African nations. Moreover, the cultivation of a non-national culture is tantamount to the suppression of the national culture, a suppression which works to impede the process of decolonization by forestalling the realization of the nation. Therefore Fanon argues that "[t]o fight for national culture means in the first

place to fight for the liberation of the nation, that material keystone which makes the building of a culture possible”(233).

Amilcar Cabral in “National Liberation and Culture” argues similarly that national culture has the ability to nourish any society, though especially those on the cusp of liberation. Thus, imperialist domination of societies includes the simultaneous denial and occlusion of cultural development in the dominated society. Cabral states that “Whatever may be the ideological or idealistic characteristics of cultural expression, culture is an essential element of the history of a people. Culture is, perhaps, the product of this history just as the flower is the product of a plant”(55). The inability, for whatever reason, of a society to express and develop its national culture is therefore equivalent to a denial of that society’s history. And for Cabral, “the foundation for national liberation rests in the inalienable right of every people to have their own history”(56).

The relationship between nation and (national) culture then is dialectical: the liberation or birth of the nation makes way for the growth of culture, as the development of national culture makes it possible to conceptualize and define the nation. Fanon though is theorizing the negation of this relationship: Algeria, without a distinctive national culture, is unable to achieve the liberation of the nation, and without the liberation of the nation is unable to cultivate a distinctive national culture. Thus the call to native intellectuals to formulate national cultural expressions that are neither reproductions of the structures of colonial domination nor ossified declarations of

Pan-Africanism. Similarly, Cabral engages with the relationship between national culture and nation from the perspective of challenging and dismantling colonialist dominion over South American nations.

For Fanon though, *nationalism*, per se, is not part of this complex. At the conclusion of his discussion on national culture he names and responds to the so-called “pharisees” of national claims. Namely, that the era of the nation is over and that resorting to national claims is a backward form of cultural, economic, and political isolationism. To these objections Fanon replies that philosophic thought teaches us to be self-aware in order to gain knowledge (*Wretched* 247) and in so doing, Fanon gives definition to what he calls national consciousness, a concept to be distinguished from nationalism. For Fanon, national consciousness (suspiciously similar to what most understand as nationalism) is the positive expression of a distinctively national culture, a sure sign of the definition of the nation, and a necessary component of national liberation. However, national consciousness Fanon emphasizes, is not nationalism. For it is national consciousness and national liberation that lead “the nation to play its part on the stage of history” since it is at the “heart of national consciousness that international consciousness lives and grows”(247-48). Fanon is very clearly opposing national consciousness, as a positive and productive international force, to nationalism.

So if we take stock of Fanon’s distinction between these two concepts, we see that national consciousness is characterized by a

distinct sense of the nation imbued with a predisposition to a kind of worldly awareness. Nationalism, however, is sinister in its ability to support national solipsism. It is on the existence of this distinction however that my view diverges from Fanon's. While he does not state it explicitly, to make sense of his position on the connections among national culture, the nation, and national consciousness, it would seem that national consciousness is the mediating concept between national culture and the formation or existence of the nation. It is this description of nation forming and national existence that I will refer to from here on in as national identity. But while Fanon makes a clear definitional distinction between nationalism and national consciousness, he gives no real grounds for asserting that national consciousness is capable of engendering sentiments of nationally self-aware worldly humanism expressed in national culture that do not have to devolve into the territorial and ideological solipsism of nationalism.

Fanon's account here of national consciousness is more representative of a hope or a vision than any actual reality. Of course it isn't altogether fair to hold Fanon's theory up against historical events that have occurred since the publication of *Wretched of the Earth*. However I think it important to my argument to recognize that restrictions on national culture in Algeria today are characterized by anything but a self-aware but worldly humanism. Algerian women violating any aspect of Muslim dress code are subject to public humiliation, torture, rape, and murder. Secular and religious Algerian

journalists, writers, artists, teachers, lawyers, and politicians have been kidnapped, tortured and murdered for failing, in their cultural expressions, to adhere to Fundamentalist imaginings of the national community and national identity. While Fanon's notion of national consciousness is certainly what many individual citizens of all nations hope for, I assert instead that at the dialectical crossroads between national identity and national culture is the phenomenon of nationalism. Nationalism is the sentiment that permits movement between national identity and the definition of national culture; nationalism constructs national culture according to the current conception of the national identity and nationalism fortifies and refines the borders of the nation, and so defines national identity, with the cultivation of a particular national culture.

This assertion is borne out in examples from radically different national communities. In the United States, for example, the English Only Movement² gains momentum on a daily basis. The political organization U.S. English, at its inception headed ironically by a Japanese-American immigrant, and then by Linda Chavez (a Latina and former Staff Director of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission) works autonomously and in conjunction with other conservative

²The movement to establish English as the official language in the United States is currently spearheaded by two major organizations, U.S. English and English First. In addition, there are many minor - and often more reactionary - organizations promoting the establishment of English as the official national language. The general term I use however to describe all of the political organizations and structures aiming at establishing English as the official language of the United States is the English Only Movement. Thus, in reference to the activities of a specific organization, such as U.S. English, I will use the title of the organization. In reference to the political movement in general I will use 'English Only Movement.'

organizations to prevent the United States from becoming multilingual. Among the goals of U.S. English and other English Only Movement supporters are: to make it illegal to print election ballots and voting instructions in any language other than English or to provide at the State's expense courtroom translators; to outlaw bilingual public education; to criminalize the act of speaking any language other than English in the workplace. This is an unabashed attempt to shape national culture in response to a particular conception of the United States' national identity.

Nationalism in this case, as a sentiment, mediates between the Movement's concept of the nation's identity and the Movement's attempts to restructure national culture. I say the *concept of national identity* since the English Only Movement is geared towards actively retooling the composition of the nation, though it simultaneously asserts that it is merely preserving the nation as it has always been. That is, the English Only Movement makes it *seem* as though the United States is an English speaking country, has always been an English speaking country, and thus should continue to be an English speaking country. The English Only Movement thus asserts that to secure English as the official language of the United States is to maintain a fundamental aspect of American national culture and thus of American national identity. English Only Movement supporters take their theoretical lead from the claim that the United States was initially colonized and established as a nation by English speakers. Proponents of this initiative towards official monolingualism will

grant that the United States is a nation of immigrants - many of them originating from non-English speaking countries, but claim that the immigrant experience has always been (and thus should continue to be) one of assimilation to American culture, especially with regard to language. Thus, the different players in the English Only Movement attempt to make their legislative goals appear innocuous when actually they are undertaking to alter significantly the national culture (from multilingual to monolingual) according to a particular national conception of the United States as fundamentally English speaking.

That the territory governed by the United States of America has always been multilingual is confirmed by a cursory examination of U.S. history. For example, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848 annexed by military and economic force enormous tracts of land (extending as far north as to what is today called the state of Colorado) from Mexico to the United States. This land was populated nearly exclusively by Spanish speakers. In fact, the Treaty insured Spanish speakers the right to keep their language. In this respect, it is valid to claim that Spanish is a native language of the United States. In 1898 the final annexation of Hawai'i was achieved by congressional resolution, effectively annexing to the United States a population of Hawaiian and Japanese speakers³ (Trask 4-28). Between 1940 and 1960 the United States government orchestrated a campaign of economic "incentives," forced

³In 1896 the U.S. government banned the use of the Hawaiian language in Hawaii. After Hawai'i officially became a territory in 1900, all education and government was conducted in English; this despite the fact that natives and non-natives alike all spoke Hawaiian. See Haunani Kay-Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*.

sterilization, and misinformation, effectively resulting in a massive outmigration of Spanish speakers from the island of Puerto Rico to New York City.⁴ These are only three of many examples one could cite to support the contention that the United States has a distinctively national history of multilingualism. Nationalist desires for purity and homogeneity in language and thus in citizenry, for resistance to foreign intervention (let alone foreign domination), and for an identifiable collective identity, inform the English Only Movement's nationalist legislative initiatives. National consciousness of a national history and contemporary reality of English linguistic purity have little to do with the English Only Movement's attempts to establish official monolingualism.

These qualities of the English Only Movement characterize that movement as inherently nationalist. Nationalism decisively presupposes the homogeneity of national history, and thereby prefigures national culture and identity as pure and fixed. In the case of the English Only Movement, assertions of homogeneous identity over time in national culture and identity are focused on language. The claim to past national linguistic purity is false though nationalism constructs it as true. This false nationalist claim mediates between culture and identity to produce the desired nationalist homogeneity in current national culture and identity.

There is a similar linguistic purity initiative in the Province of Quebec that shares many of the features of the English Only Movement

⁴See the film *La Operacion* for documentation of this mass exodus of Puerto Ricans to New York City.

in the United States. In Quebec the French Only language laws were instituted in 1983. Enforcement of these laws focused for a time on shops and restaurants who are barred from printing any bilingual menus, signs, etc. Restaurants may furnish English speakers with a menu written in English at the request of the customer. The occasional absurdity of enforcement, for example an early morning raid on a Donut shop in Montreal that yielded a citation and seizure of several cases of napkins bearing the greeting 'Good Morning!', has not diminished the Quebec nationalists' attempts to achieve linguistic purity. Again, in this case, Quebec nationalism mediates between a particular concept of Quebec's national identity as uniformly French (and thereby distinct from other provinces in Canada) and the construction of national culture by curtailing the use and appearance of any language other than French.

Now, while the national status of both the United States and the Province of Quebec is fundamentally different from that of Algeria and other colonized or post-colonial Third World nations, the complex of national identity-nationalism-national culture is similar in relevant respects. What is the relationship between national identity and national culture in these cases? On what grounds can it be said that it is nationalism, and not national consciousness, that informs social/political thought and action on national culture and national identity? Nationalists in both Quebec and the United States recognize the value of culture in defining and preserving national identity (as do Islamic fundamentalists in Algeria). That Quebec has achieved many

of its linguistic purity initiatives and that the English Only Movement has achieved national notoriety is reflected in the fact that both nationalist movements have had significant impact on the topography of their respective national cultures. In the October 1995 vote on Quebec independence, residents of Quebec narrowly rejected the referendum. Over 92 percent of Quebec's five million eligible voters cast ballots - a record turnout for any vote in the province's history. The referendum was defeated by an exceptionally narrow margin (50.6 percent against and 49.4 percent for); this even though only in March of 1995 "recent polls have indicated that a majority of Quebecers are opposed to totally severing ties with Canada" ("Quebecer Offers Case for His Cause" 2). In the United States, U.S. English has claimed responsibility for the declaration of English as the official state language in thirteen states, including California (May 1).

What makes these movements nationalist is the intention to produce a collective and homogeneous national identity grounded in national cultural purity; in the case of the English Only Movement and the Quebec nationalists, linguistic purity. Now Fanon claims that the cultivation of a distinctively national culture is, or perhaps can be, emblematic of national consciousness and not nationalism. Thus Fanon seems to be arguing that while nationalism is destructive in that it imagines and thus produces cultural purity where there was none, national consciousness is instead the exploration and cultivation of existing aspects of national culture. But these movements to shape national culture through monolingualism cannot be understood as

expressions of national consciousness according to Fanon's conception of national consciousness. The English Only Movement is about anything but national self-knowledge. As I have argued above, the English Only Movement actually serves to conceal and erase fundamental realities of our national linguistic (and thus ethnic and racial) history and composition. Fanon claims that "[t]he consciousness of self is not the closing of a door to communication. Philosophic thought teaches us, on the contrary, that it is its guarantee"(247). While if the English Only Movement ever achieved their major objectives, this would surely impact the ability of the United States to "play its part on the stage of history"(Fanon 247), this turn of events would in no way be a sign of the international consciousness Fanon claims arises from national consciousness. To seek linguistic (and thereby racial and ethnic) national purity is a clear manifestation of nationalism since underlying these goals is a vision of collective national identity, achievable only through purification and homogenization of the nation's ultimately diverse citizenry.

What makes these movements interesting to me is that they provide concrete evidence for the claim that there is a conclusive relationship between national culture and nationalism. Nationalist movements seek to control national culture because nationalists recognize the power of culture to protect an existing nation from challenges to national sovereignty. Matthew Arnold noted this in his *Culture and Anarchy*. In reference to his new conception of culture, a culture that would in place of religion sustain England as a major

European imperial power, he states clearly that “[t]hrough culture seems to lie our way, not only to perfection, but even to safety”(West 22). Likewise, the intellectual leadership of colonized or occupied nations often recognizes the impact of culture on the fortification of a fledgling nation’s liberation struggle. Writing about the revival of Hawaiian culture and language since 1970, Haunani Kay-Trask concludes that “the cultural revitalization that Hawaiians are now experiencing and transmitting to their children is as much a *repudiation* of colonization by so-called Western civilization as it is a *reclamation* of our own past and our own ways of life. This is why cultural revitalization is often resisted and disparaged by anthropologists and others: they see very clearly that its political effect is de-colonization of the mind”(188). National culture provides an arena for the contestation, preservation, and construction of national identity; this is one reason why nationalist movements are often focused on shaping national culture.

Gottlieb Fichte’s *Addresses to the German Nation* give further evidence to this claim. In the *Addresses*, Fichte argues that education is the basis of national security and self-determination. He states in the introduction: “In a word, it is a total change of the existing system of education that I propose as the sole means of preserving the existence of the German nation”(13). He goes on to outline a program for national education based in the assertion of linguistic unity and purity among Germans. At any rate, his program for education is pedagogically interesting in that it is not based in reading specific texts

or reciting national literature, poems, songs, or the like. Fichte's "new education" is instead designed to mold the will of all Germans so that ambivalence in the face of moral decision making will be impossible. Essentially, Fichte is claiming that with a nation of Germans who all speak German (an uncorrupted language), and who have been educated according to this new program, it will be impossible for anyone to challenge the strength of the German nation. In fact, Fichte even goes so far as to claim in his *Patriotism and its Opposite* that "a state which adopted his educational policy could dispense with an army, for then it 'would have a nation to put in arms, which simply could not be defeated by any mortal power'" (Kedourie 84).

In other words, Fichte argues that his program for national education (which did in fact have significant impact on the development of education in Germany⁵) is not only an important component in the process of national fortification of Germany; Fichte claims that it is only through institution of a national education that the nation's sovereignty can be maintained. The implementation of Fichte's plan would make it possible to exert unparalleled control over the definition and construction of national identity precisely by controlling the development of national culture. All German children would be taught that the German language is superior to other Teutonic languages, that the German language provides the basis for national cultural (and intellectual unity), and most importantly, that

⁵See the translators' introduction to *Addresses to the German Nation* where they assert that Fichte's educational philosophy had significant influence on Wilhelm von Humboldt, "whose ideas and plans for German education were carried into effect in 1809 and 1810 . . . Humboldt's work laid the real foundations of modern education. . ." (xxi).

all Germans share, in a fundamental sense, a national identity grounded in linguistic purity. By virtue of cultural unification, Germany can secure its national borders against any foreign invasion or intervention.

But this is precisely why the difficulty arises in forming a distinctively national culture (regardless of the nation in question) that is emblematic of Fanon's notion of worldly national consciousness rather than of nationalism. Fanon's attempt to theorize national culture based on national consciousness (as opposed to nationalism) is laudable in the visionary sense. Recognizing the importance of cultural production to national liberation and responding to the urgency created by French colonialist violence against Algerians as citizens and Muslims as a religious order, Fanon reaches for a non-nationalistic but still distinctively national conception of culture.

Interestingly, Fanon's call for the development of national culture is decisively in response to colonialist assertions of the cultural homogeneity of Africans. This is intriguing to me since while Fanon aims to denounce the ideological assertion that all Africans are the same by asserting the legitimacy of distinct national cultures, the attempt to develop a distinct national culture results in a falsely unified and homogeneous conception of national identity and culture. This seems to be an expression of an internal contradiction fundamental to nationalism: Fanon turns to the development of national culture and identity in order to combat colonialist denial of difference among Africans and this same denial of difference among

Algerians is the result of cultivating national identity and culture. In other words, nationalism is often seen as the most viable route for resistance to and liberation from dominating foreign powers (for viable nations, nationalism is seen as a program for maintaining independence) who often achieve hegemony by falsely homogenizing the identity of the colonized. Nationalism however is untenable without a firm conception of national identity, one that requires false unification and homogenization of the national citizenry.

Moreover, it is exceedingly difficult to develop a national culture that is not informed by nationalism since the notion of a national culture is itself untenable without a clear and definable conception of national identity. Any attempt to define national identity is bound to result in some fundamental falsification of the realities of national identity (understood simply as the actual identities of all citizens of the nation) since the project of defining national identity necessarily involves attempting to articulate an ultimately diverse reality in a unified conception. Therein nationalism recreates the very political conditions it sets out to transform.

To summarize, I have tried to develop two central points in this section. First, that control over the definition and development of national identity, and thus of the conception of the nation, is inextricably bound up with control over the cultural expression of a nation. And second, that attempts to shape national culture are all too often grounded in nationalism; the attempt to shape national culture is based upon a falsely homogeneous conception of national identity.

C. National Culture and Education

What is national culture? Fanon's discussion of national culture was originally delivered as a speech at the Second Congress of Black Artists and Writers, Rome, 1959. His comments are direct responses to theoretical and creative trends among Black intellectuals of all nationalities, theoretical and creative trends in literature, the arts, and social criticism. Amilcar Cabral's definition of national culture is broad enough so as to include any act of armed resistance to colonization for the sake of national liberation. The English Only Movement in the United States and the Quebec nationalist linguistic purity initiatives are focused ostensibly on the structures of communication, though the effects of enforced linguistic purity reach far beyond a simple exchange of linguistic codes. Obviously, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship would be difficult to exercise in an unfamiliar language - the right to vote, the right to legal defense counsel, the obligation to pay taxes, etc. The increasing economic pressure on bilingual education programs in the United States due to declining public support for them will make it exceptionally difficult for the children of non-English speaking immigrants and U.S. citizens without financial means to procure an education equal to that of their native English speaking counterparts. Fichte's *Addresses* also focus on the power of linguistic purity in defining the nation, though the program for national education as the sole means to reconstitute a

powerful and sovereign German nation introduces education as a significant element of national culture.

Thus it would seem that the concept of culture embraces all production in the realm of thought of a designated group of people. National culture then would simply be the conglomeration of all production in the realm of thought of a given nationally defined community. In the examples I have cited so far, language, religion, intellectual work, creative expression (literary, visual, performing, and musical arts), political/social/economic history and analysis, and education have all emerged as central locations for nationalist struggle over the definition of national culture and thus national identity. In the case of each broad category we can identify specific consequences for national identity of shaping cultural manifestations in any given way.

The French Only movement in Quebec has had the effect of significantly increasing separatist sentiment in Quebec by virtue of highlighting a Quebecois national identity distinct from and, in fact as far as some are concerned, inconsistent with (English) Canadian identity.⁶ Moreover, Law 101 (the French language law) does much to ensure that there will be a continual community of French speakers who will presumably be Quebec identified - in opposition to English Canada. The provisions of Law 101 ensure this reality by forbidding Francophone or immigrant parents from sending their children to English language schools while permitting English Canadians to send

⁶See Charles Taylor "The Politics of Recognition" in *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader*, 89-95. Taylor outlines here the basic history of Law 101 which forbids commercial signage in English, and forbids Francophones and immigrants from sending their children to English-language schools.

their children to English language schools. Thus by explicit control over the language in which children are educated, and ensuring through immigration law that the children of any new citizens of Quebec who are not Anglo-Canadian will be educated in French, the Quebec government is able to exert a significant measure of control over the national identity of Quebec.

The colonization and annexation of Hawai'i led to a dramatic decrease in the native Hawaiian population in Hawai'i; today only twenty percent of residents are Native⁷ (Trask 22), a fact resulting from death (due to disease) and immigration of large numbers of Japanese and American nationals. Hawai'i's national identity has clearly been radically altered by U.S. colonization of Hawaiian culture; the imposition of Christianity (to the exclusion of Native religion), the institution of English as the official language (a process fortified by the forced closure of all Hawaiian language schools), and the introduction of U.S. military and tourist industries have all worked to create a damaging national image of Hawai'i as a land of palm trees, tropical drinks, and hula hula girls.

The English Only Movement has influenced recent national trends in politics, trends that have resulted in the introduction of all manner of legislative initiatives hostile to immigrants (legal and illegal) and non-English speaking or multilingual U.S. citizens. If these legislative initiatives are ever enacted, their enforcement will significantly change the demography, the distribution of education,

⁷United States Census records indicate that only thirteen percent of resident Hawaiians are Native.

capital, and employment among United States citizens, and thus the national culture and consequently the national identity, of the United States.⁸

The Algerian Armed Islamic Group and similar organizations in Algeria have, through violence and propaganda, essentially purged all Westerners from the country and silenced, by murder or kidnapping, many prominent Algerian thinkers (journalists, intellectuals, teachers, writers, lawyers) critical of the Islamic Fundamentalist movement in Algeria. Through violent intimidation, the Islamic fundamentalists are able to alter and shape the cultural practices in which citizens can safely engage (dress, religion, politics, education, etc.), and in so doing

⁸Both the House and Senate have recently passed legislation (July 1996) on immigration reform that will add 5600 new border patrol and immigration investigators and streamline the deportation process. This despite the fact that a recent investigation by the INS of the United States Border Patrol operations in San Diego has yielded allegations that San Diego supervisors falsified reports to make it appear as though the recent crackdown measure that included a significant buildup of San Diego Border Patrol, known as Operation Gatekeeper, was successful in reducing illegal border crossings from Mexico. See "Union Alleges Border Patrol Faked Results in Crackdown" in the *New York Times* 14 July 1996: A21. See also Kenneth Noble's article in the *New York Times* 3 April 1996: A10, for a story describing how "a videotape of two white deputies clubbing Mexicans has jarred the Los Angeles area and revived charges that law enforcement officials have failed to confront a pattern of brutality"(Noble 10).

Moreover, California voters narrowly defeated Proposition 187, a state initiative that would have withheld basic health, education, and food benefits from the U.S. citizen children of illegal immigrants (Ayres "California Immigration Law is Ruled to be Partly Illegal"). However, federal legislation currently under consideration includes provisions to withhold education from the U.S. citizen children of illegal immigrants. Bilingual education has become the target of anti-immigration groups and others eager to have English declared as the nation's official language (Celis "Bilingual Questions: The Answer is 'Si' or 'No Way'"). This despite the fact that a "study finds many foreign born residents in the southern part of California are rapidly acclimating to life there, generally learning English and escaping poverty at a quick pace . . . this study comes against the backdrop of California's immigration debate, with many Californians calling for stricter immigration laws and measures that would require use of English in state business"("California Immigrants Make Fast Economic Gains, Study Finds" 40).

can effectively modify Algeria's national culture and thereby Algerian national identity. With or without the will of its people, Algeria is undergoing a transformation from a post-colonial nation state into a Fundamentalist Islamic nation.

Thus in each of these examples, changes in different manifestations of national culture, whether these changes are the will of the majority or not, lead to changes in national identity. Definition of national culture - national language, religion, ideology, history, political philosophy, artistic form, economy, education, etc. - is reflected in national identity. I want to focus here on just one of these broad categories: education. Education stands out as a central mechanism for constructing, altering, and especially maintaining national identity. Let me suggest then that this is the reason for the current storm over educational policy. Education is, above all, intellectual training in language, religion, ideology, politics, economics, the arts and humanities, history, etc. The goal of education is (in general) to teach to students both historical and current achievements in these different manifestations of culture with the hope that they will make their own contributions to culture or, at the least, learn to appreciate and understand it. Thus while the other categories of human intellectual and artistic production are central to the topography of any given culture, education is unique in its capacity to shape national culture since education is instruction in all the varied manifestations of culture; that is, education is instruction in language, religion, ideology, history, political economy, etc.

Education in communities that understand themselves in national terms is thereby training not merely in culture, but in the national culture; in this way, education becomes a likely arena for nationalist battles. But I am getting ahead of the story here; below I will turn to the question of what exactly makes these contests over the definition of national culture specifically nationalist. For now, I want to continue with this line of reasoning: having argued that national culture exists in a dialectical relation with national identity and is therefore a significant determinant of national identity, I now want to assert that education is a special case for the analysis of national culture. As I have suggested above, education occupies a unique position in its impact on the formation of national culture. Formal education, as Fichte realized, has the potential to determine significantly the course of national culture. While Fichte was concerned with all levels of national education, I am restricting my analysis to post-secondary education in the humanities. While the academy is certainly not solely responsible for all manifestations of national culture, major contributions to and contestations of national culture are determined by what happens in the academic world. The colleges and universities in the United States are the location of intellectual training for the vast majority of writers, artists, politicians, scientists, doctors, teachers, judges, etc.⁹ Moreover, nearly every

⁹This is not to say at all that the colleges and universities are the only institutions where intellectual training takes place. Obviously, many other institutions and industries participate in this process. A partial listing would include museums, primary and secondary schools, television broadcasting, major motion pictures, popular music, print journalism, etc.

individual occupying a position of economic, social, or political power in the United States has undertaken formal education in a college or university in the United States.¹⁰ The impact of this training on the topography of national culture is thereby significant.

There are strong arguments however against this position that there can be such a conclusive relationship between the form and content of education on the one hand and national identity or national culture on the other. In her essay "Why Do We Read?" Katha Pollit clearly articulates the objections to this position. After a brief treatise on the inappropriateness of teaching popular literature in college courses, Pollit concludes that the curriculum debate between liberals (or Multiculturalists) and conservatives (or Traditionalists) is not based on a dispute over *what* we read, but rather grows out of a fundamental confusion regarding the purpose of reading. According to Pollit, we should read for aesthetic pleasures of language, form and image (208) and not for what she calls medicinal purposes. The participants in the controversy over multiculturalism, Pollit argues, have made a fundamental error regarding the relationship between books and behavior. She states: "The culture debaters turn out to share a secret suspicion of culture itself, as well as the anti-pornographer's belief that there is a simple, one-to-one correlation between books and behavior. Read the conservatives' list and produce a nation of sexists and racists- or a nation of philosopher kings. Read the liberals' list and produce a

¹⁰It would be interesting to consider the impact on nationalism in other countries, and on relations between nations, of the fact that significant numbers of politicians, scientists, intellectuals, and artists from all over the world are educated in the United States academy.

nation of spineless relativists-or a nation of open-minded world citizens. Read the radicals' list, and produce a nation of psychobabblers and ancestor worshippers-or a nation of proud-to-be-me pluralists. . . Books do not shape character in any simple way. . . Books cannot mold a common national purpose when, in fact, people are honestly divided about what kind of country they want. . ."(210).

Pollit makes an excellent point here. She claims that reading certain books cannot have a universalizing effect on national identity in terms of molding a common national purpose. The citizens of this nation have always disagreed (for good reason) about exactly what kind of country it is that they want to live in, and submitting the national citizenry to a required reading list is not going to change the fact of fundamental disagreement in the population over national identity. So, to extend her argument, the point is that even before the movement towards multiculturalism began in the 1960's with the advent of Black Studies programs, there was radical and widespread disagreement among the nation's people about what exactly American national identity or American national culture was, or should be. That is, before any dramatic curricular changes were even considered by institutions, much less introduced, in the American academy, there existed dramatic disagreement among the nation's citizens as to what American national purpose or identity was. The standard college curriculum that existed without controversy into the early 1960's did nothing to curtail dissension among the nation's citizens regarding the shape of American national identity. Therefore, it is foolish for

Traditionalists to think that returning to (or maintaining) a traditional curriculum would successfully obliterate all such national controversy. Likewise, it is foolish of the Multiculturalists to contend that a diversification of the curriculum will lead to a common pluralist national purpose.

While I agree fully with the point that Pollit makes here, her focus on the more simple-minded arguments of the Traditionalists and the Multiculturalists effectively truncates her analysis. While the arguments in, for example, Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals*, suggest his adherence to such a view of a one-to-one correlation between books and behavior, certainly there are much more sophisticated arguments on all sides of this question that do not fall prey to such criticism.

I wish to make two related points here. First, it is no trivial matter that a fundamental part of the debate over multiculturalism grows out of a concern for molding what Pollit calls national purpose, and what I would call national identity and national culture. I believe that exposing this kind of nationalist motivation behind the debate over curriculum is productive in that critiquing the ideological foundations of the debate, rather than the superficial assumptions of the respective participants, permits consideration of the logic behind teaching this particular curriculum. Moreover, to a large degree, it does not matter whether books do actually influence behavior, or make it possible to mold a particular national purpose. What does matter is that Traditionalists and some Multiculturalists believe that this is so; they perceive a relationship between books and behavior and thereby

work tirelessly to institute a curricular program that corresponds to their own vision of national identity and culture. While Pollit may contend that such a belief is fundamentally flawed, individuals from all camps - liberal, conservative, radical, and anarchic - speak, write, and act as if the opposite were true. And they are getting results. Diane Ravitch, the former Assistant United States Secretary of Education, is a major contributor to the national conversation regarding curricular reform. Her presence and impact as a representative of the Federal government suggests the import of the relationship between education and national culture. The University of California, San Diego 1989 proposal for a Department of Ethnic Studies was approved in 1990 (Gutierrez 164) and many other major research institutions are reconstructing their programs in Area Studies, as well as interdisciplinary programs, into full fledged academic departments¹¹.

Clearly many individuals participating in the national debate over curricular reform believe that there is a substantive relation between curriculum and national purpose. Thus, even if it were the case that books had no significant impact on human behavior, the perception that books do impact behavior is significant enough to warrant our attention and analysis. It is this belief that leads them to work vociferously for their particular preferred outcome. And it is this vociferating that I am most interested in, since it is from this perspective that I can argue against the Traditionalist position - not

¹¹For a concise account of the history of Ethnic Studies in U.S. colleges and universities see Ramon A. Gutierrez "Ethnic Studies: Its Evolution in American Colleges and Universities."

because I have a different national plan than they do, but because attempting to construct curriculum and pedagogy according to nationalist understandings of culture and identity ultimately impairs the university's ability to achieve its stated mission of teaching students to think critically.

Second, the impact of books, of intellectual activity, of thought, on human behavior is not insignificant. It simply is not the case that there is no relationship between books and behavior, as Pollit asserts. It is true though that the relationship is complex. Pollit reacts to a glaring absence of argument in the assertion that there is some central relationship between books and behavior and she is right to focus on this. Moreover, Pollit identifies the simple-minded assumption in the likes of former Secretary of Education William F. Bennett and the multitudes of politically correct curricular reformers who seek to change merely the required reading lists simply for the sake of representativeness. For example, those who claim that if only X reading list would be instituted as the standard college and university humanities curriculum, then radical disagreement about what it means to be an American would simply evaporate.

However, Pollit is not right to conclude from these observations that there is no relationship between books and behavior. As I have argued above, while I certainly would agree with her that a nation-wide program of the Great Books curriculum would not produce a nation of philosopher kings, I do think it would have significant impact on intellectual culture, and thereby on national culture, if such

a curriculum were instituted. The recent outpouring of scholarship and inquiry in Area Studies, Women's Studies, Queer Theory, and other so-called insurgent academic disciplines is certainly the result of fundamental changes in the courses and academic majors available to students today as compared even to what was available fifteen years ago.

Pollit's reduction of the arguments over the curriculum to the critique that they all rest on a simple-minded assertion regarding the relationship between books and behavior has the effect of obscuring what is fundamentally at issue in these debates: struggles over national identity. Surely, anyone who claims that reading the Great Books will automatically produce a nation of Philosopher Kings, or alternatively a nation of sexists and racists, is flat out incorrect. Alternatively, the position that any particular curriculum has no particular effect on the composition of the nation is equally incorrect.¹² So we need to look more closely then at what these different constituencies are claiming as the result of their particular curricular programs.

I want to be careful here though to point out that it is not my aim to show that we need yet another list of books, another curriculum, in order to achieve the ideal national community. To argue at this point for any one list of books over any other list of books would be to fall right into the trap laid by Pollit, and to miss entirely the ideological underpinnings of the current battles over curriculum.

¹² It is of no small significance that this argument stretches back at least as far as Plato's *Republic*. For Plato, the rulers of the state can be properly and completely trained only through a detailed and comprehensive program of education, including intellectual, ethical, and physical training.

It is not my intention to argue for any one list of books over any other list of books; instead, my aim is to understand why different constituencies are working tirelessly to implement their respective curricular programs and to consider the impact of these programs on the overall mission of the university.

As a matter of fact, I do believe that there are national consequences of, for example, training students to believe in objectivity or in the indeterminacy of interpretation, or to believe that insurgent disciplines (like Women's Studies or Area Studies) are merely political and represent alternative, not integral, methods of inquiry. Thus, I do believe that there is a relationship between books and behavior. That relationship is not a simple one-to-one correlation, as Pollit would have us believe is the only option for the relation between books and behavior. Pollit has made a logical error in assuming that because any one curricular program cannot generate a determinate and guaranteed outcome, that therefore no curricular program has any bearing on the intellectual development, and thus the behavior, of people.

I would suggest instead that while many exaggerate the impact of books on intellectual and thus political development, there is an integral connection between intellectual and political development. For example, the fact that there are very few colleges and universities (let alone high schools) who offer courses in Gay and Lesbian History (that there are very few books read in courses discussing and analyzing the history of Gays and Lesbians in the United States) has a direct impact on the general public's mystification about Gay and Lesbian

lives in the United States. This mystification is apparent in many spheres of public and national life. The House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly (342-67) in July 1996 to ban federal recognition of same-sex marriages and to permit states to disregard gay marriages performed in states which sanction them. While the White House spokesman has criticized the legislation, President Clinton intends to sign the measure if it is approved in the Senate. The effect of such legislation is to recreate an aspect of national culture in conformity with notions of family and domesticity central to national identity. This attempt however is, once again, normative. While legislators and political figures argue that legislation outlawing gay marriage simply confirms what has always been the case, inquiry into Gay/Lesbian/Transgender history in the United States corroborates the fact that many individuals have found home and family in long-term same-sex domestic relationships.

Another example is found in the current national debate over whether Gay and Lesbian people should be permitted to serve in the Armed Forces. One of the presuppositions of this argument is of course that, in general, Gays and Lesbians have never served in the Armed Forces. It is this kind of mystification regarding the realities of Gay and Lesbian lives in the U.S. Armed Forces that permits the continued imagining of the Armed Forces as free from homosexuality. Now certainly, the absence of documentation and education in Gay and Lesbian history is not entirely responsible for the image of the Armed Forces as aggressively heterosexual. However, the perpetuation of this

mythology by a failure to educate to the contrary contributes to this imagining of the U.S. Armed Forces. Moreover, this *construction* of national defense, as a component of national culture, informs our every day notions of national identity.

There are equally compelling examples drawn from “alternative” U.S. historical scholarship. In her essay “The Myth of Black Matriarchy” bell hooks argues that the assertion of the existence of a Black matriarchy is fundamentally racist and sexist. Hooks claims that the myth of Black matriarchy originated during slavery since “black women posed so great a threat to the existing patriarchy that white men perpetuated the notion that black women possessed unusual masculine-like characteristics not common to the female species”(“Myth” 369). According to hooks, this myth continues to be perpetuated by today’s scholars (Black and White) who argue that “the black woman’s performance of an active role in family life both as mothers and providers had deprived black men of their patriarchal status in the home”(372). hooks points out that the existence of a matriarchy suggests that it is women who are economically secure, the owners of property, and the central decision makers in both public and private social spheres. However, hooks argues, very few Black women who are heads of households in the United States own property, have economic security, or occupy leadership positions in government, business, or industry. The myth of the Black matriarchy permits the continued existence of a complex and vicious mythology concerning the lives of Black women in the United States. In general, Black

women are often held accountable for the high rate of unemployment among Black men and youth, the incidence of teen-age pregnancy and single motherhood among young Black women, gang violence and criminalization of young Black men, and, best of all, the existence of rampant welfare fraud. These mythologies are perpetuated at all levels of public life: radio talk shows, television sit-coms, newspapers, academic anthropological and sociological studies, state and federal legislative initiatives. Moreover, these mythologies constitute a fundamental aspect of American national identity: racist misogynist bootstrap capitalism. That is, the argument goes, if Black women would work for a living and behave like good (White, submissive) women, then none of the social pathologies plaguing many Black families in this nation would exist. The social and economic status of many Black Americans is then employed to reinforce the idea that America is the land of opportunity, that those who do not succeed fail to do so by their own choosing. Moreover, Black women are dehumanized by the racist and sexist presumption that many Black men are “unable” to provide economic security for their families because of the domineering, castrating order of Black matriarchs.

This is a fundamental aspect of American national identity, an ideal that is reinforced in a multitude of ways by particular constructions of national culture. The failure to teach complex race/class/gender analyses of, in this case, Ante-bellum relations among African slave men, women and their White slave masters and their wives, and among Black and White men and women post

Reconstruction, is partially responsible for the perpetuation of specific myths about Black women and for the maintenance of a particular aspect of American national identity. Again, it would be simple-minded to conclude that if bell hooks' historical scholarship was installed on the mythical required reading list that the myth of the Black matriarchy and the different notions of bootstrap capitalism would predictably fall from American national identity. However, it is the case that the hegemony of the standard historical account of slavery, reconstruction, and current race relations in the United States (of course there are exceptions to this standard account) has much to do with reinforcing central components of American national identity. Moreover, it is arguably the case that the failure to assign books like hooks' on a wide scale, and the protection of the canonical accounts and explanations of these periods in American history, are manipulations of national culture that function to maintain central aspects of American national identity.

To summarize then, I have argued that national culture includes all production in the realm of thought of a given nationally defined community. I have outlined four examples where modifications in national culture have led to dramatic and decisive changes in national identity. I have asserted that education is a special case since education, especially undergraduate education in the United States, is instruction in the history and progress of national culture. In this way, I have attempted to defend my conclusion that education plays a central role in the development, maintenance, and contestation

of national identity. I have considered and responded to the objection that books cannot in any simple way determine behavior, or mold a national identity, and concluded that there are substantive relations between primary aspects of American national identity and canonical accounts of, for example, American history.

D. Nationalist Control Over Culture and Identity

None of this however, has been for the sake of preparing the ground for yet another argument for a required reading list. It is my aim instead to show that the driving force behind most of the very different attempts to preserve the traditional curriculum in the humanities is actually based in nationalism. I intend to show that this kind of nationalist sentiment in the educational arena makes it extremely difficult for the university to reach its stated mission to serve as a site for the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge. In this third section, I will further develop my position regarding the role of nationalism in the relation between national identity and national culture, specifically as concerns post-secondary education.

I have outlined above four examples where definition and delineation of different aspects of national culture have made for a significant change in national identity. The question now though is: what makes these modifications of national culture specifically nationalist? Isn't it possible that these modifications are emblematic of national consciousness instead? Where and how does nationalism

enter the dialectical relation between national identity and national culture?

Where Fanon, Cabral, and others would argue that the cultivation of a distinctively national culture is indicative of national consciousness and not nationalism, I would argue instead that in each of these cases the cultivation of a national culture suggests the existence of nationalism. As I have claimed in the first section of this chapter, the sentiment that mediates between national identity and national culture is, more often than not, nationalism. In each of the examples I have outlined, the development of a distinctively national culture, while it may not originate from national separatist desires, results in the very kind of separatism and national solipsism Fanon so negatively characterizes as nationalism. National consciousness, as Fanon describes it, is a distinct sense of the nation imbued with a predisposition to a worldly awareness. A deeper examination of the cases I have raised will indicate that it is nationalism, rather than national consciousness, that is the framework behind specific attempts to control and construct national culture.

I return to the French Only movement in Quebec. As I have discussed above, Law 101 has played an enormous role in forming the national identity of Quebec. While Quebec has no official national status yet, Quebec is a nationally defined community. The leaders of Quebec's secessionist movement and average Quebec citizens consistently describe Quebec as a nation, a people with a unique cultural, historic, and linguistic tradition. The fact that Quebecers

voted to retain their provincial status within Canada by only a one percent voter margin suggests that Quebec is well on its way to an inevitable separation from Canada.

The effect of Law 101 (and different aspects of the Quebec secessionist movement) has been to highlight and protect the image of Quebec as a distinct society under Canadian rule. Law 101 requires that businesses with more than fifty employees be conducted in French, that children of Francophones and immigrants must attend French language schools, and that commercial signage must be solely in French or in French and another language (it bans unilingual signage in any other language than French). Law 101 constructs specific aspects of national culture (language, education, business, public signage) in a way that focuses on the qualities that distinguish Quebec from other provinces of Canada. The signage regulations, while they seem particularly Orwellian, are actually quite effective at creating the image of Quebec as a distinct land within the bounds of Canada. Traveling from any of the Anglo Canadian provinces into Quebec, one is struck by the near universal presence of French language signs on the streets. This seemingly insignificant change in physical reality is exceedingly effective at highlighting through difference the existence of a distinct national culture. Moreover, Law 101 ensures the continued existence and development of this particular national culture by requiring all immigrants to educate their children in French language schools. In so doing, Law 101 produces a unique national identity through manipulation of national culture.

National identity and national culture in this case inform one another in a dialectical manner. The presence of all commercial signage in French (and the absence of any unilingual English commercial signage), the impact of all corporation sized business being conducted in French, and the growing enrollments at French language schools all serve to demonstrate the distinct character, and thus national identity, of Quebec. In turn, the sense of burgeoning Quebecois national identity impacts public opinion, both inside and outside of Quebec, regarding the construction of national identity. While the Supreme Court of Canada did strike down as unconstitutional the commercial signage provisions of Law 101, the high court agreed that it was reasonable for Quebec to outlaw unilingual English signs; nevertheless, the original signage provisions of Law 101 remain in effect by virtue of a legislative override of the Supreme Court's judgment (Taylor 105, note 30). Thus while the English Canadian law deems Law 101 unconstitutional, within Quebec there is sufficient support to reject outright the decision of the national Supreme Court.

It is indisputable that Quebec has been engaged over the last fifteen years in cultivating a distinctively national culture. The question remains whether this cultivation is emblematic of national consciousness, nationalism, or something else entirely. I maintain that the cumulative effect of this cultivation has been to construct the image of an increasingly homogeneous citizenry built around French and things Francophone, and to diminish in reality tolerance for and

existence of alternative cultural manifestations¹³. Pierre-Etienne Laporte, the president of Quebec's French Language Commission, reported that "Quebec's government needs to face and rectify the perception among the English-speaking minority that they encounter discrimination in the workplace and particularly in hiring, where an Anglo accent or name is suspected of being a liability"(Trueheart 20). Moreover, Charles Trueheart of the *Washington Post* reports: "With or without any referendum on independence, however, Quebec is destined to become an increasingly French-speaking place"(Trueheart 20). This is so since many bilingual Anglophones see that their Anglofied French is a liability to them in Quebec but a clear asset in English speaking places. So, they retreat to Toronto, Ottawa, Seattle, Vancouver, etc. It is this tendency towards and demand for compliance with homogeneity that makes the manipulation of national culture nationalist. Finally, Jacques Parizeau¹⁴, Quebec's Premier, blamed the most recent failure (October 1995) to pass the referendum for secession on the "ethnic vote" and on the population of Montreal, suggesting again the presence of a deep seated xenophobia informing the Quebec separatist agenda. Parizeau's claim demonstrates his nationalist understanding of Quebec national identity; for Parizeau, it is not possible that any French Quebecer could have voted against the

¹³The 1980's saw a sudden rise in violence against Vietnamese students in Quebec public high schools. Vietnamese students fluent in French but speaking Vietnamese between classes or at lunch were beaten by Quebecois students.

¹⁴Lucien Bouchard, a popular political leader, expressed similar sentiments following the election.

referendum since all French Quebecers are possessed of the same homogenized national identity.

The introduction of Law 101 and other legislative measures thus makes it appear as though Quebec is a national community of Francophones, when actually this is not the case. While outside of Montreal French is spoken in 94% of Quebec homes, in Montreal the figure is 69%; 19% of Montrealers are Anglophone and 12%, mostly recent immigrants, speak other languages (Trueheart 20). So nationalist control over culture has the consequence of creating homogeneity in the population by positing the existence of a non-existent homogeneity. Ironically, the non-existent homogeneity is eventually made real by the policies of the allegedly real homogeneity. The mass exodus of Anglophones from Quebec in the late 1970's is now being repeated by the bilingual children of Anglophones who remained in Quebec after the French majority took control of the provincial government. Interestingly, while leading Quebec nationalists come off sounding very much like Fanon in their estimation of the potential of independence to permit Quebec to play its role as a nation upon the world stage, a nationalist subtext remains central to the secessionist movement. Bernard Landry, Deputy Premier of Quebec and active member of the Parti Quebecois claims that "The Quebec adventure is not based on ethnicity - it is a nation building process. [Canada] cannot be reformed to take our needs, our social aspirations and our economic, cultural, and social potential into account . . . Sovereignty will allow us to become full citizens of the

world, without intermediaries, without lame compromise, without animosity” (“Quebecer Offers Case for His Cause” 2). Landry here appears to be theorizing the very kind of national consciousness defined by Fanon, carefully attempting to distinguish Quebec secessionism from any kind of ethnic separatism. However, in the same public address at Harvard University’s Center for International Studies, in reference to Quebec’s French heritage Landry stated: “By any standards, Quebec is a nation” (“Quebecer Offers Case for His Cause” 2).

The same kind of attempt to create homogeneity from the supposition of a non-existent homogeneity is exemplified by the English Only Movement in the United States. As I have argued above, U.S. English (and related organizations) make it appear as though the United States has always been English speaking and that in order to save the nation, we must ensure that the United States continues to be universally English speaking. Modifications to and justifications of national culture are made in accordance with particular notions of American national identity. National culture and national identity thus exist in a dialectical relationship; while neither is fixed, composed incarnations of national identity fortify the English Only position that English is the universal language, and therefore should be the official language, of the United States. Likewise, increasing manipulation of national culture gives credence to the English Only Movement’s assertion that fundamental to U.S. national identity is the process of assimilation to American (read: English/Anglo) ways.

I contend again that the sentiment mediating between national culture and national identity in this case is not anything like what Fanon calls national consciousness. U.S. English, and other groups and organizations working for the same ends, are attempting to develop a distinctively national culture. I choose the word *develop* consciously, to highlight the fact that many in the English Only Movement would claim they are not developing a national identity, but instead are preserving a national identity. This particular feature of the English Only Movement however is partially what defines its attempts to designate English as the official language of the United States as decisively nationalist, and not as a consequence of national consciousness. This control over and construction of a distinctively national culture is not informed by national consciousness, by a worldly self-awareness. Self-awareness in regards to national language would generate a recognition of the polylinguistic origins of the United States, and of the diversity of language currently in use here. On the contrary, U.S. English stands defiantly against bilingual education, even in the face of educational research demonstrating that children of non-English speaking immigrants learn English *and* all other academic subjects more successfully when educated in bilingual classrooms. If language is a central component of culture and if immigrant children are prevented from learning even their native language (let alone studying literature, history, etc. in their native language), then non-English speaking immigrant children and U.S. citizens are deprived of knowledge of their culture. Moreover, the institution of English

linguistic homogeneity deprives all U.S. citizens of knowledge of our national culture. When bilingual English citizens are afraid to speak Spanish to their children in their own homes for fear of losing custody of them¹⁵, when speaking any language other than English in the workplace is just cause for termination¹⁶, when bilingual education is increasingly difficult to secure in the public schools, the cultivation of this particularly national culture of English monolingualism is not preparing U.S. citizens to take their place on the world stage among other nations.

Again, in this case, U.S. English's attempts to control national culture are nationalist and not the result of national consciousness since they are aimed towards (and succeed at) creating a false, yet parasitic, national image of the United States as unified and linguistically/culturally homogeneous. Moreover, on a practical level (as is the case with the provisions of Law 101 in Quebec as well as the immigration laws Parti Quebecois has managed to implement), the fantasy of a homogeneous national population becomes increasingly

¹⁵See "Mother Scolded by Judge for Speaking in Spanish." *New York Times* 30 August 1995: A12. Texas State District Judge Samuel C. Kiser stated in a custody hearing to the custodial parent: "Now get this straight. You start speaking English to this child because if she doesn't do good in school, then I can remove her [from the mother's custody] because it is not in her interest to be ignorant. The child will only hear English."

¹⁶See Donald J. Petersen's "English Only Rules: Valid Business Policy or Discrimination?" in the *Labor Law Journal* June 1994. Petersen documents here the fact that the Ninth and Fifth Circuit U.S. District Courts have ratified English-only rules. He concludes "The courts have rejected the EEOC Guidelines that have held that English-only rules are automatically coercive, intimidating, or demeaning. . . The courts have held, contrary to the EEOC's position, that English-only rules are not, *per se*, discriminatory. Indeed, the Ninth Circuit has properly placed the burden on the plaintiff to show discriminatory intent underlying such rules on the employer's part"(373).

more real and less fantasy as the formal and informal initiatives designed to promote cultural homogeneity succeed at drumming out any evidence of cultural diversity.

The analysis of control over national culture in Hawai'i and in Algeria is necessarily more complex since these are national communities under siege from powerful, wealthy, and established nations. Both Hawai'i and Algeria experienced cultural genocide at the hands of the Americans and the French, respectively. I want to focus here though on the logic behind the annihilation of Hawaiian national culture and behind the reconstruction of Algerian national culture. It is my aim in doing so to highlight the features of nationalist control over national culture.

The United States has controlled national culture in Hawai'i since forced annexation in 1893. The history of U.S. colonization in Hawai'i provides an instructive example of the steady movement from nationalist fantasy of a unified and homogeneous national citizenry, to nationalist reality of such unification through annihilation of diversity. From the moment of annexation, the United States made sure to outlaw indigenous language and religion and to decrease the overall percentage of Natives by encouraging Japanese and mainland Americans to become settlers. In the last forty years the United States has been successful in further dilution of the political and cultural presence of native Hawaiians by aggressively establishing the tourist-military complex on the islands of Hawai'i. A prime example of this calculated effort to marginalize the political and cultural impact of

Native Hawaiians is the statehood vote taken in 1959 - a time when settlers outnumbered Hawaiians, effectively making Native Hawaiians a minority in their own country. Haunani Kay Trask confirms: "Settlers voted overwhelmingly for statehood, while Hawaiians did not, a fact conveniently overlooked by statehood promoters"(38).

This deliberate control and manipulation of Hawaiian national culture has resulted in concrete and damaging changes to Hawaiian national identity. The national image that many Americans are left with - Hawai'i as a paradisiacal land occupied by friendly, satisfied, (and sultry) natives waiting to display the beauty of their land to each of six and one half million tourists descending upon the islands annually - is the result of the United States deliberately annihilating the existing national identity of Hawai'i and replacing it with a homogenized version of national culture compatible with U.S. interests in economic, military, and territorial occupation. This homogenization has been effected by the control over national culture, a control marked by the calculated desire and effort to annihilate all indications of cultural diversity and specificity: that is, any cultural expressions that would indicate the presence of diversity in language, religion, political perspective, etc. of resident Hawaiians and, any cultural expressions that would demarcate the cultural specificity of Hawai'i thereby marking it off as distinct from the United States.

What is more, the hula-hula girl/tropical paradise Hawaiian identity created by the U.S. government's deliberate attempts to annihilate indigenous culture masks the lived reality of poverty,

homelessness, and environmental destruction experienced by native Hawaiians¹⁷. Nationalist control of culture in Hawai'i has made it appear as though Hawai'i is populated by docile, pliant natives happy to be U.S. citizens in the land of plenty when in fact U.S. control over Hawaiian national culture has decimated indigenous culture, economics, and public life. The national identity that remains obviates the two-thousand year history of Hawaiian indigenous self-governance and cultural expression.

Hawai'i is a special case then in this analysis since U.S. colonization worked to create a distinctively national culture to supplant the indigenous national culture on the islands. Nationalist control over national culture in Hawai'i results not only in the annihilation of indigenous culture, but also in the creation of an image of false national unity, an insipid homogeneity that conceals the violence committed against Native Hawaiian people. It is for these reasons that I identify the manipulation of Hawaiian culture as nationalist: the manipulation is designed to produce and promote not simply cultural homogeneity at the expense of existing cultural diversity, but a particular version of cultural homogeneity - one that

¹⁷See Trask, especially 22 and 182-183. Nearly one-fifth of Hawai'i's resident population is classified as *near-homeless*, resident families spend an average of 52% of gross income on housing; ground water supplies are dangerously low; air, land, and sea pollution from hotels, golf courses, commercial and military planes threaten the health and safety of residents; tourists outnumber residents by a ratio of six to one and outnumber Native Hawaiians by thirty to one. Native Hawaiians experience "high unemployment, catastrophic health problems, low educational attainment, . . . , occupational ghettoization in poorly paid jobs, and increasing outmigration that amounts to diaspora"(Trask 22).

makes it appear as though Hawai'i has no characteristics that could logically distinguish it from the United States.

Now, certainly Fanon did not intend his views on the relationship between national culture and national consciousness to apply to a colonizing power, and it would be intellectually irresponsible to critique his position on national consciousness by using U.S. colonization and nationalist destruction of Hawai'i as a simple-minded counter example. Still, I include this example in my analysis since it shows the powerful consequences of nationalist manipulation of national culture, *from the perspective of a colonizing nation*. This only brings my assertion regarding the dialectical relation of national culture to national identity, and the centrality of nationalism in this relation, further into focus. Fanon, and others, recognize this centrality and thus focus on it as a means to colonial resistance. What Fanon's analysis misses though is the realization that any kind of national control over culture (not to be confused with any expressions of national culture) invariably becomes nationalist as the controlling body attempts to delineate the characteristics of national culture, and thus of national identity. These attempts to articulate an ultimately diverse reality in a unified conception of national culture are bound to produce a stultifying homogeneity that doesn't come close to representing the realities of national cultural production and expression.

The current situation in Algeria elucidates this assertion. Facing the ravages of colonialism, of decades of violent foreign occupation, and of a world community increasingly hostile to Islam, prominent

Algerian politicians, religious leaders, and intellectuals have resorted to nationalist control over Algerian culture in an attempt to secure the national future of Algeria. Again, this control is not emblematic of national consciousness, of attempting to cultivate through national culture a distinct sense of the nation as a member of the world community of nations. Algeria's recent expulsion of all tourists and foreigners, sustained violence against journalists and other cultural critics, and increasingly restrictive interpretations of Islamic fundamentalist law have made authentic expressions of Algerian culture nearly non-existent.

Thus somewhere in the attempt to reconstruct Algerian culture along national lines as a rejection of colonial occupation, the project became nationalist - a project aimed to universalize Algerian culture, to distill Algerian national identity into a manageable entity. It is this drive towards stultifying cultural homogeneity, the desire for a kind of cultural purity that corresponds to the religious purity sought after by the nation, that makes control over national culture in Algeria nationalist. The same can be said for cultural control in Quebec, the United States, and Hawai'i. While each case presents specific differences in the articulations of nationalist control over culture, in each case nationalists reach for a cultural purity that can work in tandem with the religious, linguistic, ethnic, or political purity they desire to be reflected in the national population and thus in the national identity.

CHAPTER II

NATIONALIST CONSCIOUSNESS, IDENTITY, AND NATIONALISM

A. Introduction

In the second chapter I will focus on developing my central critique of nationalism in preparation for applying that critique to the Traditionalist position on curricular reform and the manner in which the arguments in favor of that position and opposed to multiculturalism all betray the covert impact of nationalism. I will critique nationalism on the grounds that underlying every nationalist movement is a universalist project which denies the reality of complex personal identity formation. That is, the foundation of all nationalist campaigns (including the campaign to preserve the traditional university level curriculum in the humanities) is the falsification of lived identity by indoctrination into the role of a homogeneous nationalist subject. In support of this claim I will discuss the problematic identity of Nationals¹⁸, the relationship between racism and nationalism, and the relationship between social liberation and nationalism. I will argue that the nationalism necessary to the typical formation of national identity is based on an impoverished politics of identity that perpetuates the very conditions of social domination and oppression it purports to transform.

¹⁸By nationals I mean individuals defined as citizens of a particular nation. I capitalize Nationals to highlight its status as a name for a specific group of people.

Similarly, I will argue in Chapter Three that the central difficulty with what I identify as the nationalist ideology informing the Traditionalist position on curricular reform is the underlying goal of universalizing that results in: first, denying the legitimacy of any intellectual tradition other than the European Intellectual tradition; and second, making it difficult to nearly impossible for students to develop authentic critical consciousness, the ability to critique ideology. Specifically, I will argue that each of these ramifications of nationalist pedagogy originates in the drive to construct students as Nationals, to enlist students in the process of nation building in the academy by cultivating a pure nationalist identity that can work in tandem with the corresponding pure nationalist version of national culture.

What is important in my comparison is that nationalism is at times so closely associated with horrific practices (most pointedly, ethnic cleansing tantamount to full scale genocide) that those involved in the construction and maintenance of the Traditionalist position do not typically identify their practices as nationalist. My purpose is to force this connection. Many nationalist movements have come under great criticism for their religious fundamentalism (e.g. Algerian Armed Islamic Group), their militarism (e.g. Hamas), and their acceptance of violence (e.g. The Black Panthers). Part of my interest in identifying the curricular Traditionalists in the academy as nationalist and in identifying the academy as a center of nationalist activity in general, is to establish that rigorous analysis of the academy yields central theoretical connections between academic traditionalism and

nationalist violence. Thus while many nationalist movements have been criticized for their violence, militancy, and denial of basic individual rights and freedoms, those nationalisms are nationalisms of the dominated. Nationalist movements of dominant groups, such as curricular Traditionalists in the academy, are less often recognized as nationalist, and are therefore protected from being criticized for the prejudicial and violent practices endemic to nationalist movements. I am thinking here of such examples as the English Only Movement in the United States¹⁹ or the militant Jewish “settlers” occupying the West Bank of Palestine. So while we are often willing to identify, and thus to critique, some nationalist movements of the dominated, we are less willing (perhaps less able) to identify, and thus to critique, the nationalisms of the dominant. This is precisely where previous analysis has prematurely stopped short of its full implications.

Too often, once we recognize the disparity in our treatment of nationalist movements of the dominated versus nationalist movements of the dominant, we retreat from further critique altogether. We say, as Balibar and Wallerstein say, “We have no right . . . to equate the nationalism of the dominant with the nationalism of the dominated. . .”(*Race, Nation, and Class* 45), and we conclude that we can take no critical perspective towards nationalism of the dominated. More specifically, we conclude that to condemn nationalism is to forgo the possibilities for *nationalist* liberation of any

¹⁹The most recent victory for this political faction is the introduction in Congress of legislation that would make it illegal to speak any language other than English in the workplace.

oppressed group, and therefore to forgo any possibility for liberation; therefore, we conclude, we should not condemn nationalism.

In *The Colonizer and the Colonized* Albert Memmi refers to this phenomenon as the typical Left response to nationalism. According to Memmi, no one in the Left knows how to respond to nationalism. He states: “they do not dare to condemn or approve”(29). Or alternatively, I will argue, we generate flawed and incongruous critiques of nationalisms of the dominated²⁰ as we fail to recognize the nationalisms of the dominant²¹.

So we begin to see the contradictory nature of any full critique of nationalism. Any critique of nationalism risks being (or being counted as) a racist, ethnocentric, or prejudicial treatment of a dominated group. However, failure to critique the prejudicial policies of the nationalism of the dominant is also indicative of racist, ethnocentric, or prejudicial practices. Critiques of nationalism are therefore theoretically tricky for several reasons. First, nationalism of the dominated is often recognized and demonized before, in spite of, or instead of, nationalism of the dominant. Second, as Memmi suggests, individuals on the Left often do not critique nationalism of the

²⁰Consider Reverend Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam. The *New York Times* and other mainstream media are constantly reporting on the widespread acceptance of Farrakhan in African-American communities when, in reality, very few African-Americans embrace Farrakhan’s principles and many openly condemn his anti-Semitic, homophobic, and misogynist ideology.

²¹This is very much the case in the academy. While disciplines such as English and History are subject to strict scrutiny and critique on the grounds that many of their courses focus on the writing of DWEMs (dead White European Males), as disciplines, History and English are never accused of being anti-intellectual, overly political, ideological, suffering from a lack of academic rigor, etc. These are all accusations fielded by departments of Women’s Studies, African-American Studies, Asian Studies, Queer Theory, etc.

dominated because of the belief that to do so is to forgo the possibility of the liberation, national or other, of oppressed groups of people. Balibar and Wallerstein give evidence to this claim when they dutifully assert that of course we have no right to equate the nationalism of the dominated with the nationalism of the dominant. Third, there is a tendency on the Left to transpose our impaired critical capacity regarding the nationalism of the dominated into a failure to critique nationalism of the dominant.

While I will be arguing in Chapter Three that the nationalism endemic to the Traditionalist position on curricular reform is undeniably a nationalism of the dominant, I will however in this chapter appeal to critiques of nationalisms of the dominant and the dominated in order to justify my assertion that the subversion of the diversity and complexity of personal identity is an unavoidable feature of all nationalist movements. Because this subversion is a characteristic of both nationalisms of the dominant and nationalisms of the dominated, critiques of both forms of nationalism are equally instructive in the development and defense of my critique of the Traditionalist position on curricular reform.

While it seems clear then that nationalism in general is internally contradictory, the source of the contradiction is not yet apparent. I understand this contradiction in terms of the development, maintenance, and function of national identity. In order to articulate fully the inherently contradictory nature of academic nationalism, I argue that it is the function and definition of national identity,

regardless of the nationalism under study, that makes for the prejudicial policies endemic to nationalist movements. Theorizing the problematic construction of national identity generates a topology onto which the racism of nationalist movements and both the potential and pitfalls of nationalist liberation can be mapped.

I begin then by discussing the contradiction inherent in nationalist identity construction. How can one define a nationalist struggle without first arriving at a firm conception of the identity of the citizens of the nation, the Nationals? Nationalist struggle relies on creating and amassing citizens of the nation, thus, there must be some criteria for citizenship. These criteria can be understood as being described by national identity. I maintain that the most fundamental limitations and contradictions in identity politics are continually manifested in nationalist struggle. Drawing primarily on the work of Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi, I will construct a position that questions and critiques the foundation of nationalist struggle: the monolithic construction of national identity.

I therefore contend that the foundation of all nationalist campaigns is the falsification of personal identity implicit in the indoctrination of the homogeneous national subject. This falsification of identity makes for a fundamental contradiction between nationalist identity politics in particular and social liberation in general. By “social liberation” I mean to refer to liberation from both broad classes of social oppressions such as racism and, the corresponding epistemological deprivation that attends these broad classes of social oppressions.

B. The Definition and Function of National Identity

In *Wretched of the Earth* Frantz Fanon discusses the difficult project of defining a national identity. In thinking about the process of transforming nationalist consciousness into a wider social consciousness, Fanon argues that political educators must prompt people to understand that “certain fractions of the population have particular interests and that these do not always coincide with the national interest”(144). Such a realization makes it possible for the “people to pass from total, indiscriminating nationalism to social and economic awareness”(144). Moreover, this enables people to realize that “it sometimes happens that you get Blacks who are whiter than the Whites and that the fact of having a national flag and the hope of an independent nation does not always tempt certain strata of the population to give up their interests or privileges”(144).

What is intriguing here to me is that Fanon is offering an example of the limitations of identity politics; he claims that the expectation that anyone Black and colonized will automatically be a nationalist supporter is naive. However, what begins as an apparent critique of the identity politics upon which nationalist struggles are predicated, concludes in an assignment of responsibility for such betrayals to social and economic treason. Fanon claims that when these “White Blacks” betray the nation, the opposition calls their action treason. According to Fanon though, this naming is not accurate since

"[t]he treason is not national, it is social"(145). According to Fanon, it is not a weakness in the organization of the nation, in the construction of national identity, that accounts for the existence of such "White Blacks," but rather, the aberration is due to a weakness in the organization of the society.

What then could Fanon possibly be saying here? The betrayal of national goals by White Blacks is not treason since their crime is not against the nation but is rather against the society? How is this feasible? This is especially confusing since much of what is implicitly described in the identity "Black" is based on national identity. Indeed, the possibility of "White Black" being a coherent concept is itself conceptually dependent upon nationalist constructions of Black identity; clearly, "Black" and "White" describe characteristics more significant (and less tangible) than skin color. When Fanon claims that there are Blacks who are whiter than the Whites, then we know that his understanding of Black (or Arab or White) includes characteristics far more crucial than skin color and national origin. Black identity, as far as Fanon is concerned, is not consistent with the tendency of economically advantaged Black Algerians, the native bourgeoisie, to make alliances with the colonizer or western bourgeoisie. In discussing the national treason of the Black bourgeois, Fanon asserts that the national consciousness of the Black bourgeoisie is actually an allegiance to the Western bourgeoisie. When the Black bourgeoisie call for an all Black or an all Arab ruling class they are not doing so because of an "authentic movement of nationalization"(*Wretched* 157); they do

so, Fanon says, out of a desire simply to transfer economic power from the colonizing bourgeoisie to the native bourgeoisie. This is not nationalism for Fanon, it is chauvinism, racism, territorialism, and regionalism.

In so arguing, Fanon attempts to distinguish the reductive analysis of identity endemic to racism, territorialism, or regionalism from what he calls nationalism and national consciousness. He is trying to show that certain kinds of pronouncements that are often deemed nationalist are actually indications of prejudicial systems not associated with authentic nationalism. So when the bourgeoisie of the newly liberated Black or Arab nation calls for the forced and violent repatriation of all foreigners, and the masses of workers respond by defining "foreigner" in an increasingly narrow fashion, Fanon attributes these prejudicial reactions as evidence of class privilege on the part of the economically advantaged and mystification on the part of the poor. In the case of the native bourgeoisie, the alleged nationalist sentiment is indicative of class privilege: the desire to appropriate for themselves the imperialist economic infrastructure organized by the colonizers. In the case of the "small people" of the nation, the alleged nationalist sentiment results from the failure of the native bourgeoisie to respond to liberation with authentic nationalism: as the native bourgeoisie assumes control of the exploitative economic infrastructure and conceals their motivation with false nationalism, the "small people" are again left to struggle with one another over an inadequate supply of employment and income. Faced again with

economic desperation, the “small people” direct their resistance against the workers of other nations, resulting in racism, territorialism, and regionalism. As Fanon says, “the ‘small people’ of the nation - taxi drivers, cake sellers, and bootblacks - will be equally quick to insist that the Dahomans go home to their own country, or will even go further and demand that the Foulbis and the Peuhls return to their jungle or their mountains”(158). What then are the ramifications for the composition of the nation; that is, what does this mean for the identity of the Nationals?

In so arguing, Fanon explains away the prevalence of what are often taken to be vicious nationalist claims and locates their source in economic disparity and the power inequities resulting from such an inequality. He does not try to downplay the force or the violence of such claims; he employs a different strategy when he assigns responsibility for these sentiments to economic interest and inequality. This is all for the sake of responding to the critique that nationalism is marked by prejudice and xenophobia. Moreover, it is for the sake of carving out a nationalist analysis of identity that does not fall prey to the critiques of, for example, racist analyses of identity. However, what comes out in Fanon’s exploration of these prejudicial claims is that the concept of national identity essential to his argument is rife with the very prejudices, false equivalences, and misconceptions for which he faults racist, tribalist, or territorialist analyses of identity.

Thus, as Fanon presents an argument against the *expectation* of a monolithic national identity, he grounds that argument in the

identification of the social structure as problematic, and not in the expectation of a pure national identity as problematic. So, rather than recognizing the limitations of a monolithic structure of national identity, he foists responsibility for the lack of necessary conditions for the development of a pure national identity onto the social and economic structure. One could look at the fact that Fanon is discussing (that some Blacks are whiter than Whites) and conclude that therefore the idea of nationalist liberation based on Blackness versus Whiteness doesn't make sense, or at the very least is not stable or complete. Fanon however takes this fact and carefully attributes the contradiction in identity to socioeconomic organization rather than to national organization. What his analysis misses is that for any understanding of national identity to be coherent, it is impossible for that conception to account for the diversity of the national population; thus any formulation of national identity is a nationalist understanding of identity. That is, any formulation of national identity that denies the national existence of a significant portion of the population and instead imagines national identity as pure and homogeneous, is undeniably nationalist. When Fanon confronts the reality of the native bourgeoisie and their attempt to exploit the native workers through an economic system with no appreciable differences from the colonialist system, and concludes from this that the native bourgeoisie are acting out of economic interest and not out of nationalism, he betrays his nationalist understanding of identity. The native bourgeoisie represent a central component of Algerian national identity, whether

Fanon would like to admit it or not. Their attempts to commandeer the exploitative economic machinery of colonialism and in so doing to appropriate coercive power for themselves is as much a feature of Algerian national identity as are socialist national initiatives to secure economic equality in the newly liberated nation.

In claiming that such behavior by “White Blacks” is economic and social treason, and not national treason, Fanon unwittingly reveals his conception of national identity. For Fanon, Algerian national identity includes a fundamental belief in the rights of all Algerians to economic power, freedom from extreme economic hardship, and freedom from marked disparity in economic status. Algerian national identity includes the notion that an Algerian would never exploit another Algerian. A rich man may exploit a poor man, but an Algerian would never exploit another Algerian; if he did so, it would be because of economic treason and not national treason. Now while we may find Fanon’s construction of national identity quite admirable, enviable, and desirable, we can see immediately that it requires denying the realities of complex identity formation. To presume that all Algerians are going to have the same class interests and necessarily, in virtue of their nationality, are going to understand the primacy of national claims over all other features of personal identity, is to carve out a version of national identity that denies the reality of individual complexity. The attempts of bourgeois Algerians to presume coercive economic power over poor Algerians is a cardinal feature of Algerian national identity. This ‘ugly’ truth revealing the bitter conflicts among

Algerians is as much a characteristic of Algerian national identity as is the near universal Algerian resistance to French colonization.

It is my position then, that rather than providing an explanation for the failure of identity politics rightfully to take hold, instead this example works as a strong argument against the very kind of separatist and identity politics upon which nationalist struggles/liberation movements are based. Fanon laments the non-existence of a materialized monolithic national identity but grounds the explanation for that non-existence in a problematic social structure. The problematic social structure he refers to is actually the class conflict among Algerians and what Fanon sees as the tendency of the Arab bourgeoisie to make easy alliances with the Western colonizer bourgeoisie. What actually is the case is that Fanon has run up against one of the major contradictions in the definition of national identity: class conflict. He attempts to preserve the possibility of a nationally defined identity by relegating this contradiction to the realm of economics, as if economic issues were somehow entirely separable from questions regarding the definition of national identity. What I conclude from this example however is something quite different from Fanon. Fanon's analysis is actually instructive in terms of exposing the limitations and falsifications intrinsic to definitions of national identity. In order to define national identity in a way any more specific than "the identities of the occupants of a given nation," one must undertake to reject, conceal, and homogenize the actual characteristics of identity. This is so since any attempt to define national identity

requires the articulation of a diverse reality in a unified conception. The articulation of national identity is therefore invariably the result of falsifying any divergent features of personal identity and generates a version of nationalist national identity that is inconsistent with liberation - personal, social, or national. Such a subversion of diversity in identity is thereby an unavoidable and destructive feature of nationalism.

C. Racism and Nationalism

Having argued that the foundation of nationalist campaigns invariably results in the falsification of personal identity, I now wish to turn to a discussion of Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, and Balibar and Wallerstein's *Race, Nation, and Class*, in order to defend my assertion that there is a fundamental incommensurability between nationalist identity politics and the project of social liberation. My aim is, now that I have provisionally shown the falsification of personal identity endemic to nationalism, to show why such a falsification of identity has such a negative impact on the ability of individuals to practice freedom and autonomy.

As an example of the failure of monolithic nationalist identity constructions to provide a secure foundation for the transformation of reality, I will discuss a particular ramification of nationalist identity politics: racism. In support of my assertion that the very idea of

nationalist liberation is inherently contradictory, I will argue that the overlaying monological structure of the nation, particularly demonstrated in monolithic national identity, reproduces the very conditions it is designed to contest.

In support of my claims I will first discuss and critique in detail what I take to be the central theoretical difficulty with Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. In this very important book Memmi clearly illuminates the benefits of nationalist separatist politics; however, his analysis is weakened by his flat, essentialist conceptions of the colonizer and the colonized. Memmi draws compelling portraits of the colonizer and the colonized in the process of defending his thesis that the colonial relationship, which invariably results from the colonial situation, is bound to result in the ultimate and violent destruction of both the colonizer and the colonized, and thus also the destruction of the colonial situation.

Memmi argues convincingly that there are no distinctions to be made within the identity of the colonizer. While some would maintain that there are not simply colonizers, there are colonials, colonizers, and colonialists, Memmi rejects all of these subtle distinctions of identity. If the term colonial is meant to describe a European living in a colony but without any more privileges than the colonized, then the colonial does not exist. Even the small or subjugated colonizer, he argues, defends the colonial system because he benefits from it in some way. Likewise, the colonizer who believes he is able to avoid becoming a colonialist is also engaging in psychological

denial. The colonizer who continues to reside in the colony for the sake of changing the colonial conditions for the benefit of the colonized is doing no more than continuing to benefit from the colonial system of exploitation. Memmi describes this condition when he states that "it is certainly admitted today that one can be, while awaiting the revolution, both a revolutionary and an exploiter . . . He vaguely forsees the day of their liberation and the reconquest of their rights, but does not seriously plan to share their existence, even if they are freed"(23). That is, the Leftist colonizer may tell himself that he is engaging constructively with the colonial system for the sake of eliminating the injustices of that system; however, the colonizer does not really intend to transform the colonial system since to do so would include the elimination of any role for the colonizer within the colony. Transformation of the colonial system would mean the elimination of the colony and thus the elimination of the colonizer.

Similarly, the colonized comes to the conclusion that "the colonial situation cannot be changed except by doing away with the colonial relationship"(126). Realizing that assimilation to the standards and identity of the colonized is impossible, and that the elimination of the colonized by the colonizer is the only other alternative, the colonized concludes that the only solution is total revolution of the colonial system. And it is up to this point that Memmi's analysis seems compelling to me. The presentation of the portraits of the colonizer and the colonized appear at some times to be

overgeneralized or overemphasized, however, the overall analysis presented by Memmi is illuminating in its uncompromising strength.

Now, however, Memmi argues that once the colonized realizes the inevitability of total revolution, "it is in this context that the colonized's xenophobia and even a certain racism, must make their return"(130). And it is at this point that the limitations of Memmi's essentialized conceptions of colonized and colonizer identity become apparent. Thus, while I agree with Memmi that there is a stark division between the experience of the colonizer and the colonized, so stark that it is absurd to assume that the colonizer can comprehend the lives of the colonized, at the same time I assert that Memmi's monolithic conceptions of these identities are decidedly nationalist. That is, Memmi's understanding of the identity of the colonizer and the colonized is indicative of a failure to acknowledge the complexity and diversity of identity within the national community. Moreover, the absence of an accurate description of identity makes it impossible to describe the complexities of domination and resistance, and thereby to provide an adequate theory for liberation from such domination²².

In contextualizing the racism and xenophobia of the colonized Memmi argues that the racism of the colonized is a racism of defense: it has a social and historical (as opposed to a biological or metaphysical) basis. And thus, the racism and xenophobia of the colonized can be positive in terms of galvanizing resistance to colonial domination(132).

²²For example, Memmi's reproduction of misogynist generalizations about the wives of colonizers (22) is indicative of his positionality in a complex web of domination and subordination. His failure to recognize the multi-dimensionality of oppression translates into a limited theoretical and practical response to oppression.

Moreover, Memmi argues, “. . .he [the colonized] will be nationalistic but not, of course, internationalistic. Naturally, by so doing, he runs the risk of falling into exclusionism and chauvinism, of sticking to the most narrow principles, and of setting national solidarity against human solidarity - and even ethnic solidarity against national solidarity. But to expect the colonized to open his mind to the world and be a humanist would seem to be ludicrous thoughtlessness. He is still regaining possession of himself, still examining himself with astonishment, passionately demanding the return of his language”(135).

I want to focus on this passage and the description here of the development of national consciousness in the colonized. Memmi's position appears to be that the colonized, on the cusp of liberation from colonialism, will necessarily adopt a racist, xenophobic nationalism. What is curious however, is Memmi's insistence first, that this kind of sentiment is advantageous in that it provides a rallying point for the unification of the colonized; and second, that to expect anything different from the colonized is to deny completely the realities of the colonized's psychological state. Each of these assertions follows directly from Memmi's monolithic understanding of both the colonizer and the colonized, but more importantly in this case, the identity of the colonized. Moreover, both of these assertions are indicative of the nationalist understanding of identity Memmi is appealing to in his analysis of the colonial situation. As I have argued, subversion of the diversity of identity of the national citizenry, in the name of

constructing a unified and universal national identity is emblematic of nationalism.

To assert that the colonized can not do other than to become a racist, xenophobic, nationalist one must believe that the colonized has become completely deformed in the colonial system. One must believe that all individuals living under colonialism have been deformed in essentially the same way. That is, one must believe, as Memmi asserts over and over again, that the colonized cannot understand himself except as the negation of the colonizer, that the identity of the colonized is so completely intertwined with the identity of the colonizer that destruction of the colonial system leaves the colonized entirely unable to relate to anyone falling outside the bounds of his race, nationality, or ethnicity²³. It is as if, according to Memmi, the identity of the colonized is not merely monolithic and homogeneous; it is, in its homogeneity, the absence of any appreciable identity. If we were to believe in Memmi's description of the identity of the colonized we would maintain that given the gaping absence of identity in the colonized, it is perfectly understandable that the colonized is unable to relate to anyone not totally like the colonized: that is, to anyone of a different race, ethnicity, or nationality. The colonized is allegedly so completely annihilated by the colonial experience that he is incapable

²³This description of the colonized is strikingly similar to Aristotle's account of the natural slave. The natural slave, without the master, has no agency, no intellect, no logic, no telos. Only through the master can the slave act. And it is precisely this extreme account of the natural slave's subjugation that gives one pause: is it possible that such a state can be cultivated in an entire population? Aristotle himself recognized the potential of slaves to revolt and in so doing calls into question the notion that the slave exists in total subjugation to the master. See especially the account of revolution (*Politics* Books IV - VI, in Barnes).

of relating to anyone who differs from him without endangering the process of developing a substantial and autonomous identity of his own.

Now, if this is all actually the case, of course we must accept the ensuing racist, xenophobic nationalism that germinates in the colonized after the destruction of the colonial system. For the colonized has no choice. Given that the colonized is essentially without any identity, the colonized has no other alternative than to isolate himself from everyone who differs from him. Memmi would have us believe that the onset of racist xenophobic nationalism in the colonizer is not merely the result of the collapse of the colonial system, but that the development of this prejudicial nationalism is a necessary step in the reconstruction of the colonized, in the colonized's process of shedding the alienated identity of negation and constructing an identity grounded outside of the colonial framework. That is, for Memmi, it is impossible for the colonized to transform his metaphysical condition of alienation without forming his identity in the context of racist xenophobic nationalism.

I contest this analysis though and suggest that the inevitability of it all, the portrait of inescapable development of nationalism painted by Memmi, is largely the result of his monolithic conceptions of the colonizer and the colonized, under the colonial system. That is, Memmi's failure to describe accurately the identity of the colonized makes it impossible to describe the complexities of domination and resistance, and thus makes it impossible on this theory to develop an

adequate theory for liberation from this domination. Xenophobic racist nationalism is not a substantially improved alternative to the violence of colonial occupation. But Memmi's campaign of nationalist liberation from colonialism, based upon his flattened, purified, and simple identity classes, is leading back to the reconstruction of prejudicial systems analogous to the colonial systems of separatism and exploitation. On the national consciousness of the colonized Memmi states that "It is not a coincidence that the colonial peoples are the last to awaken to national consciousness. . . As a result of colonization, the colonized almost never experiences nationality and citizenship, except privately. Nationally and civically he is only what the colonizer is not"(96).

So let's first examine the veracity of such claims before attempting to understand their function in Memmi's analysis. These statements on the national and civic identity of the colonized demonstrate the degree to which Memmi's constructions of personal identity under colonialism are essentialized and falsely homogeneous. As far as the colonized's experience of nationality is concerned, Memmi would have us believe that the colonized does not have any understanding of what it would be to have a nationality and a national identity. Any understanding of nationality is, for the colonized, only in terms of a negation. Importantly however, this negation of national identity, on Memmi's analysis, generates nothing serviceable for the colonized's conception of nationality.

While it seems reasonable to assert that the colonized experiences nationality as a negation, to infer from that fact that the colonized knows nothing of nationality, experiences no positive national identity, and must therefore isolate himself from all other nationalities at the moment of the collapse of the colonial situation, is a drastic reduction and simplification of the epistemological experience of the colonized. Surely, while the experience of nationality as negation is not equal to the positive experience of nationality, the colonized's lack of a recognized national status and his experience of living under a hostile occupation teaches him much about the conditions of nationhood. What the colonized comes to understand about nationhood certainly varies from individual to individual, but Memmi's assertion that the colonized has no experience whatsoever of nationality and his conclusion from this that all colonized individuals are therefore epistemologically bereft, and consequently, *the same* in their epistemological deprivation, informs his portrait of the colonized as essentially and falsely homogeneous in personal identity.

The Palestinians living under Israeli occupation make for an instructive example of this assertion. While the Israelis have occupied Palestine for nearly fifty years, restricting the movement of Palestinians in Israel, preventing Palestinians from seeking education, government and military posts, decent employment, etc., the Palestinians have arguably experienced a negation of nationality. After having been demonized by the world community and prevented from participating in world diplomacy, it is only since the first peace accords signed

between Palestinians and Israelis in 1993 that Yasir Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization have emerged, albeit partially, into the international political arena. In 1996, under the newly elected conservative Likud leadership in Israel, it is now questionable whether Israel will honor even signed agreements providing for Palestinian self-rule. Arafat and the Palestinian Authority have so far been summarily ignored by the new Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, generating considerable fear that the Israeli government intends to revert to policies that resulted in the Intifada. Palestinians living under occupation experience extreme poverty, violence (both physical and ideological), and assaults on their human dignity. These abhorrent conditions, however, have done anything but prevent the Palestinians from awakening to national consciousness. Indeed, the Palestinians have waged an ongoing resistance to the occupation based on their claims to national sovereignty. Similar examples could be constructed for the national resistance to colonial occupation in Hawai'i, South Africa, Mexico, etc. Thus, it seems inaccurate to assert that individuals living under colonial occupation are fundamentally and wholly incapable of having a developed sense of national identity.

I wish to turn now to an examination of the function of Memmi's claims regarding the inevitability of post-colonial racist xenophobic nationalism. Memmi's subversion of the diversity of identity in the colonizer and the colonized is a simplified and reductive analysis that conclusively carves out the future of the colonized as racist, xenophobic nationalists. On Memmi's nationalist

conception of the identity of the colonized, it is impossible for the colonized in the post-colonial era to do anything *but* become nationalist. The former colonized must retreat to a defensive stance against anyone who is foreign to him. As Fanon's analysis suggests, the definition of "foreign" in this case becomes increasingly narrow. A foreigner becomes anyone who does not perfectly match the racial, ethnic, national, and religious identity of the colonized.

Thus Memmi provides a theoretical justification for the continued impoverishment and subversion of the identity of the colonized, for the perpetuation of reductive nationalist identity politics in the post-colonial era. And it is this perpetuation of nationalist identity politics that makes real social liberation exceptionally difficult to achieve under nationalism. In the post-colonial process of burgeoning nationalism the identity of the colonized undergoes an increasingly restrictive definition as the colonized resists contact with everyone deemed different. In determining all of the aspects of personal identity that the colonized *is not*, the options for what the colonized *is* are few. While clarity is one obvious advantage in this situation, it is clarity at the expense of the subversion of diversity. This subversion of diversity is then perpetuated within the fledgling nation, recreating the very structures of domination and oppression nationalist liberation was intended to destroy. Now the threat to personal freedom is not from a hostile foreign occupation but is instead institutionalized in the restrictive nationalist identity politics of the post-colonial era.

The current condition of women in Algeria illustrates this process. Algerian women are increasingly the targets of Islamic fundamentalist violence. Citing infractions of Koranic law, both real and fabricated, religious and secular Algerian women are kidnapped, raped, and murdered by fundamentalist Algerian men. Conservatives estimate the number of women assassinated since 1992 at approximately five hundred (Camhi 34). Feminists, teachers, hairdressers, and women who wear make-up or eschew the veil are all labeled as blasphemous and thus as legitimate targets for fundamentalist retribution. This Koranic retribution may include abduction, imprisonment, and rape according to a Shiite interpretation of the Koran permitting "temporary marriages of pleasure." One hundred young Algerian women were liberated from such a fundamentalist military rape camp in January 1995 (Camhi 34).

The real threat to the personal safety and freedom of Algerian women is a direct result of the institutionalized nationalist identity politics of post-colonial Algeria. The nationalist construction of Algerian national identity cannot permit the diversity and complexity of the identity of Algerian women. Algerian women span the political spectrum on questions of feminism, Islam, the veil, arranged marriage and confinement, education, and occupational options for women. But the nationalist construction of national identity does not consent to the expression of any diversity in identity. The secular government locked in civil war with the Islamic fundamentalists is also accused of pandering to nationalist identity constructions for its "propagandistic

use of fundamentalist violence against women in order to demonize religious sectors of the population and to improve its own standing in the eyes of the West”(Camhi 36).

The situation for women in Algeria thereby illustrates the mechanism whereby the nationalist subversion of personal identity and the consequent attempt to institute a pure and homogeneous national identity creates social and political conditions that mimic the social and political conditions under colonialism. These are conditions under which it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve some measure of social liberation. Ironically, Memmi appears to recognize the violation of individual autonomy under colonialism but fails to detect the analogous violation under xenophobic nationalism. He states that “[a]nother sign of the colonized’s depersonalization is what one might call the mark of the plural. The colonized is never characterized in an individual manner; he is entitled only to drown in an anonymous collectivity”(85). The anonymous collectivity of the post-colonial situation enforced by nationalist constructions of personal identity is equally damaging and depersonalizing.

The institution of national identity is supposed to create strength and unity; Memmi asserts this when he claims that the resurgence of racism and xenophobia among the colonized is effective in galvanizing resistance to the colonial situation. When individuals are systematically forced to adhere to tightly measured and defined notions of national identity, and when any deviation from the ideal of purity is punished by the threat of violence or actual violence, it is impossible to

characterize these individuals as free, liberated, or even in the process of achieving liberation. The enforcement of a national identity thereby does create strength, in terms of the strength of terror campaigns to silence opposition to the standard of purity. However, while the enforcement of national identity is allegedly for the sake of creating a unified front against external assailants, it results in nothing but an increase of division and aggression among competing groups in the national population.

The explication of the relationship between racism and nationalism makes for an interesting defense of this claim. In Balibar and Wallerstein's *Race, Nation, and Class*, Etienne Balibar argues in the essay "Racism and Nationalism" that the connection between racism and nationalism cannot be understood in simple causal terms (*Race, Nation, and Class* 50). Balibar considers alternative theses on the relationship between racism and nationalism, including the idea that racism is a component of nationalism, that nationalism is the cause of racism, that racism underlies nationalism, and that racism is the cause of nationalism. In somewhat rarefied language, Balibar concludes that the connection between racism and nationalism cannot be expressed by "classical schemes of causality" since it is more accurately understood as "a dialectics of the unity of opposites"(50). He goes on to explain that there is a reciprocity of determination between racism and nationalism and that "[r]acism is always constantly emerging out of nationalism, not only towards the exterior but towards the interior"(53).

With this in mind I want to turn to consider and critique Fanon's analysis of the relationship between racism and nationalism in *Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon argues here that racist nationalism is due to the bourgeois "nationalists" who desire simply to transfer power, and thus the structures of domination, from the foreigners to themselves (157). Thus, I take it, Fanon is claiming that this kind of "nationalist expression" isn't really nationalism at all. Fanon's argument here is very similar to his defense of the assertion that the Algerian bourgeoisie who appear to be whiter than the White colonialists are not committing national treason but are instead acting solely according to their class interests. Thus it appears again that Fanon is attempting to defend nationalism against yet another potentially devastating objection: that nationalism and racism are somehow intimately connected and thus that critiques of racism will apply with equal force to defenses of nationalisms.

It is my position however that Fanon is again mistaken in this case when he attributes responsibility for prejudicial behavior to a social or economic structure allegedly not under the control of the nationalists. Contra Fanon, I am asserting here that it is not the failure of the bourgeoisie nationalists to *think the nation properly* that results in their racist nationalism (whether it is a racism of contempt or a racism of defense); indeed, racist nationalism is encoded in the monological form of the nation itself, and, all critiques of capitalism aside, the internal contradictions in national identity are exposed in the racist nationalist directive for (in this case) an all Black or an all Arab

ruling class. In other words, Fanon sidesteps the critique of nationalism by asserting that the call for an all Arab ruling class is evidence of the class privilege of the Arab ruling class, and not evidence of the covert or overt operation of nationalism. While I agree with Fanon that the Arab bourgeoisie's attempt to amass coercive power from the exiting colonial regime is indicative of the class privilege of the bourgeoisie, I disagree with Fanon that this expression is due only to economic structures and not also to national identity.

Fanon's claim that the bourgeoisie are acting out of class interest again betrays his nationalist monolithic understanding of national identity. The bourgeoisie are expressing what Fanon takes to be a political position which is squarely at odds with the program for national liberation of Algeria; thus, the bourgeoisie's betrayal of its fellow citizens is labeled as class privilege when actually the conflicts in identity between the bourgeoisie nationalists and the socialist nationalists should point Fanon to acknowledge the falsification of identity that *is* the nationalist understanding of national identity. Any expression of deviation from the nationalist defined national identity is attributed to factors *other than* the subversion of identity implicit in the definition of national identity.

The analysis of these conflicts between the "bourgeois nationalists" and the nationalists, between the "White Blacks" and the Blacks, between the Dahomans and the real Algerians, demonstrates the multiple ways in which the nationalist definition of national identity fails to describe accurately the population of the nation. As I

have argued earlier, the falsification and purification of personal identity in the definition of national identity is nearly inevitable since the attempt to construct a national identity requires the articulation of an ultimately diverse constituency in a unified and uniform declaration.

Therefore, racism, chauvinism, classism, religious fundamentalism, sexism, territorialism, etc., are bound to accompany nationalism. It is simplistic to claim that any of these sociopolitical phenomena are either the cause of nationalism or that they are caused by nationalism. What I am interested in here is the construction and function of national identity. It so happens that the function of national identity within the framework of nationalism is unceasingly to define, refine, and narrow the criteria for determining who counts as a National. After all, how can one conceptualize a nationalist liberation without definitive criteria for citizenship, namely, national identity? Eventually, all identity classes will be appealed to in the perpetual search for the archetypal National, an individual, by the way, who does not exist. The indoctrination of the homogeneous national subject is an ongoing process; it does not end because there is no defined ending point at which one can conclusively say that an individual has finally emerged as the embodiment of nationalist imagining.

Therefore, Fanon's attempt to shift responsibility for racist nationalism away from the construction and function of national identity and onto the structures of international capitalism is, at best, a

drastic oversimplification of the situation, and at worst, a covert effort to conceal the real function of national identity. As Balibar states in his analysis of the relationship between racism and nationalism, racism emerges out of nationalism not only to the exterior but also to the interior. That is, the racism encoded in nationalist identity politics is not reserved only for those who fall outside of the national boundaries. Eventually and decisively, the racism in nationalism is directed with equal force at the citizens of the nation in question. The same is the case for the xenophobia, the sexism, the religious fundamentalism, the territorialism, the classism, that are all encoded in the monologic of national identity. This eventuality is demonstrated in the current politics of many nations or proto-nations in the midst of nationalist definition and liberation. The condition of women in Algeria is a primary example. The recent accusations against “foreigners,” “the ethnic vote,” and the rich in Quebec, leveled by Premier Jacques Parizeau, holding them responsible for the October 1995 failure of the independence referendum, is another. The increasing incidence of rape and sexual violence against light skinned women in Hawai’i (presumed to be non-Hawaiian) by Native Hawaiian men who justify their crimes by appealing to necessary resistance to colonialism is another.²⁴ Haunani Kay-Trask’s description of this recent trend in Hawai’i is disturbingly complicit with the misogyny underlying the violence. She argued that such violence is just retribution for the crimes of colonial, military, and economic occupation endured by

²⁴Haunani-Kay Trask, public lecture, 2 April 1995, Hamilton College, Clinton, NY.

Native Hawaiians. While I grant her assertions regarding the violence endured by Native Hawaiians, her claim that sexual violence against women is therefore somehow permissible does not follow. Moreover, her complicity with this trend points again to the falsification of identity inherent to nationalist identity constructions. Given the fact that Native Hawaiians are defined as those with fifty percent or more Native blood (Trask 71), many Native Hawaiian women are likely to be light skinned, and thus targets of the "retribution." In each of these cases, the particular prejudicial and oppressive conditions are justified and encouraged by appeal to a non-existent, but forever sought after, pure homogeneous national identity.

This analysis invariably leads to a further question: if we cannot seek our liberation according to the categories of group identity, then on what grounds can we seek the transformation of reality? In other words, if it really is the case that nationalist liberation requires the definition of national identity, and that the definition of that national identity invariably results in the destructive subversion of the complexity of personal identity, and that such a monological and purified formulation of identity permits and encourages analogous prejudicial practices, how can individuals organize themselves for liberation? Especially when it is arguably the case that it is in virtue of these identity classes (gender, race, nation, class, religion, ethnicity, sexuality) that individuals are oppressed.

D. Nationalism and Social Liberation

Fanon, Memmi, and many other theorists²⁵ argue that because individuals are oppressed as members of groups, it is only through organization of those groups that liberation is possible. For Fanon and Memmi, the native Algerians and Tunisians have been systematically denied the right to nationality. While the denial of nationality has brought with it a collection of ghastly oppressions, it is the prohibition of national sovereignty and citizenship that is at the root of the oppression of Algerians and Tunisians. This leads Memmi to state: "Being oppressed as a group, the colonized must necessarily adopt a national and ethnic form of liberation from which he [the colonizer] cannot but be excluded"(39). Fanon argues from a similar motivation when he works to explain away the most severe conflicts among Algerians, conflicts that appear to be leading directly to the decomposition of a clear national identity, and thus to the disintegration of a clear program for liberation.

It is my position that while what Memmi offers here is also a partial explanation of the origin of nationalist, separatist opposition, it is his reliance on the unattainable nationalist identity of the colonized that demonstrates the fundamental contradiction between nationalist identity politics and social liberation. I am concerned primarily with his analysis of oppression, and the ways in which his distillation of identity functions in this analysis. Memmi clearly states that

²⁵See especially Iris Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* and Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality*.

individuals are oppressed *in virtue of their membership in some group* and he concludes from this that because one is oppressed in virtue of group membership, then one can only transform those oppressive conditions through organization according to group membership.

But it is my interest to contest this analysis of oppression, again on the grounds of the inherent contradictions in nationalist identity formation. Memmi and Fanon are certainly not alone in proposing that because individuals are oppressed according to identity classes of, in their case, nationality, it is along the axis of nationalism that the oppressed can transform their social and political conditions. Contemporary feminist theorists such as Iris Marion Young (*Justice and the Politics of Difference*) and Marilyn Frye (*The Politics of Reality*) also maintain that the categories of group identity (especially social constructions of race, gender, nation, and class) are compelling categories since it is in virtue of membership in particular groups that individuals experience oppression. That is, they hold that it is as individual members of the category woman that individual women experience oppression; for example, individual women are the victims of and oppressed by sexual predators in virtue of their membership in the category *woman*.

Marilyn Frye's explanation of the subjects of oppression is again consistent with her overall analysis of oppression as systematic. According to Frye, the explanation for the oppression of individuals lies not in some individual talent, merit, or failure; the explanation

lies in membership in a category. Frye's analysis of sexism further develops the idea that this kind of oppression is systematic. On the incidence of sexism she states that "the locus of sexism is primarily in the system or framework, not in the particular act" (*Politics* 19).

Therefore, recognition of an individual as oppressed requires recognition of that individual as being a member of a particular group.

Similarly, Iris Young in *Justice and the Politics of Difference* argues that individuals are oppressed in virtue of their membership in particular groups. However, it is at this point that Young's analysis diverges from Frye's. While Frye, Fanon, and Memmi latch on to the idea that because individuals are oppressed in virtue of membership in various identity classes (whether it is nationality, race, gender, class) they therefore must seek liberation according to their continued identification with those categories, Young argues for a heterogeneous public in which the equality of social groups is achieved by mandatory group representation of disadvantaged groups. According to Young, advantaged groups do not need guarantee of representation since much of what makes these groups advantaged is the fact that their voices are already heard - they are advantaged precisely because they are represented in a community where not all are represented (187).

My own position on this question falls somewhere between the identity politicians (Frye, Fanon, Memmi) and the democratic pluralists (Young). I will begin with my critique of the identity politicians. As I have argued throughout the dissertation, the subversion of the diversity and complexity of national identity is a

necessary and destructive component of nationalism. It is inevitable that such a subversion will be part of nationalist struggle since the idea of launching any nationalist project is untenable without the ability to distinguish between citizens of the nation and foreigners to it. The process of constructing a national identity will invariably require the homogenization of personal identity since a national identity must encompass an ultimate diversity in a unified articulation.

But why, one may object, is the public subversion of diversity such an intolerable consequence of nationalism - especially in the case of liberation struggles when nationalist organization is the most likely to succeed in transforming oppressive and violent social conditions? Why is it self-destructive for Algerians, for example, to "lay down their differences" and present a unified opposition to French occupation *as Algerians*? Isn't it possible for Algerians to maintain their particularities of identity in private sectors as they wage a nationalist public battle against foreign occupation? We have seen in the case of Algeria that public subversion of diversity in identity for the sake of forming a unified national resistance to colonialist occupation has failed to permit private expressions of difference. In fact, the cultivation of a unified public national identity, a public nationalism, has had the consequence of violating citizens' rights to private expressions of diversity in identity. Of course, this kind of demarcation between the public and private spheres is erroneous. For example, how does a secular Muslim woman subvert her difference from

Algerian Islamic national identity in public and at the same time enact that difference in her daily private life?

It is the same logic of essentialism that provided the foundation for contemporary feminist struggle and now stands to destroy the possibility of future feminist political action. Currently, the underlying logic of feminist struggle - the category *woman* - is being contested, rejected, and reconstructed. Many theorists have argued that the category *woman* is inherently prejudicial since it has been employed since its inception in feminist action not solely as a category of unification, but as importantly, as a category of exclusion. Feminist theorists have argued convincingly that the category *woman* does not and has not included lesbians, women of color, poor women, women without formal education, etc. In practice, the initial (and often persistent) response of the majority of students in Women's Studies courses to the presentation of course material on women of color, lesbians, Third World women, working class women, Jewish women, etc., is to assert that this is not material appropriate to a *Women's Studies* course since this is material about sexuality, race, nationality, and religion - not about women. At this point, students are often perplexed at the question: what then is a woman? Student responses indicate overwhelmingly that their conception of *woman*, and thus of *Women's Studies*, is the evaluation and analysis of the particular social, political, economic, and historical conditions not of women in general, but of White, economically privileged, Christian, Western women.

As significant however, is the fact that the category *woman* does not and can not countenance the existence of multiple identities within any one individual. That is, the category *woman* forces particular women - women who are not White and privileged - to partition, subdue, and valorize different aspects of their personal identity. Thus, African-American women for example often critique this categorization for attempting to force them to choose between their racial and their gender identities and loyalties. The issue becomes increasingly complex when women who occupy more than one or two identity classes not included in the original category *woman* attempt to find their place within the category²⁶. As all kinds of women involved in feminist struggle have discovered and are discovering, there is no way comfortably to subvert the ultimate complexity and diversity of personal identity, publicly or privately. Doing so does not promote unity or strength.

It is my position that the attempt to defend nationalist constructions of identity falls prey to an analogous critique. I have argued that the nationalist subversion of the diversity of identity results in the replication of the very social and political conditions nationalist action was meant to transform or prevent. Thus, Memmi and Fanon move from the fact that since Algerians, or Tunisians, or other colonized peoples are oppressed in virtue of their membership in a group that is being systematically denied nationality, to the conclusion that therefore the route to liberation is along the axis of an

²⁶See especially Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*.

insurgent nationality. What Fanon and Memmi seem to miss however is the full significance of the fact that the definition of Algerians or Tunisians, or Colonized, is one imposed by the occupying power. Importantly, this imposed categorization is one which undeniably eradicates the diversity of the individuals marshaled underneath the category. If this is the case, it is no longer clear why liberation should necessarily proceed along the axis of a category imposing collective anonymity on the colonized, or the occupied, or the oppressed. It is the external imposition of a collective anonymity that permits violent foreign occupation of sovereign peoples. This is clearly demonstrated in the history of colonization in many places, including in Hawai'i, Algeria, Mexico (modern day western United States), and of Native North Americans. While nationalist resistance to foreign occupation often is successful in ridding the sovereign people of the colonizers, and while many have theorized the possibility and desirability of at the point of liberation transforming that nationalist consciousness into a worldly consciousness²⁷ untainted by the prejudicial policies endemic to nationalist politics, nationalist liberation has not been successfully transformed into a post-liberation, non-nationalist political system. As feminists have learned that the category *woman* has been employed as much as a tool of exclusion as a tool of inclusion, nationalist action and liberation has shown that post-liberation, the pernicious process of hyper-definition of national

²⁷See Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* and Edward Said's "The Politics of Knowledge."

identity persists and is turned inward on the citizens of the nation²⁸ often resulting in the creation of the very challenges to individual autonomy against which national liberation or organization was designed to protect.

Thus it is my position that a continued identification with the socially constructed sense of nationality and national identity leads nowhere but to a continuation of the social and political conditions such an identity is designed to transform. While I agree with Memmi, Fanon, Frye, and Young that individuals experience oppression in virtue of socially constructed groups and categories, I do not conclude from this that the axis of liberation for individuals oppressed in virtue of group identity is necessarily according to categories of group identification.

Young's analysis of the liberation from identity-based oppression is a welcome departure from the traditional stance of the identity politicians. She develops her analysis from complex assertions regarding first, the composition of social groups - that social groups or categories are not made or founded, individuals instead find themselves in certain groups, and that individuals are not defined solely by the groups in which they find themselves; and second, the structure of personal identity - that individuals constituted by their

²⁸It is arguably the case that this nationalist hyper-definition of national identity persists today in the United States as a holdover from the war for independence between the colonists and the British. As the United States has become the world economic and military superpower with no legitimate fear of foreign occupation, private and public institutions continue to impose and restrict *from within the nation* an increasingly prohibitive national identity. This would seem to suggest that even two centuries is not a sufficient amount of time to transform nationalist consciousness into worldly consciousness.

social groupings and private relations are not ontologically unified and coherent (43-48). From this Young concludes that it is not necessary for the end of oppression to end the significance of group identification. And in so arguing, she exposes the latent prejudicial policies underlying different versions of assimilationist arguments. To end oppression it is necessary, on her account, to end the privileging of particular social groups in governing bodies. Disadvantaged social groups would be recognized and given mandatory representation in governing bodies thereby displacing privileged social groups who have maintained a monopoly on public, political, and social power. The resulting equality of social groups in virtue of equality in representation in governing bodies would result in the "mutual recognition and affirmation of group differences"(191) and thus an end of oppression.

While I agree with Young on her understanding of the subtleties and complexities of both the formation of social groups and the construction of personal identity, as well as her analysis of the constituents of privilege and oppression for given social groups, I am not convinced that such an equality of social groups would be the result of mandating representation for oppressed social groups in governing bodies. My concern with Young's account of liberation from oppression stems from her reliance on a continued identification with the socially constructed categories of identity. While her analysis avoids the pitfalls of the standard identity politics route by relying on a

more complex analysis of oppression²⁹ than simple membership in historically marginalized identity classes, the notion that mandatory representation will be according to membership in those historically marginalized identity classes actually reintroduces an inaccurately monolithic sense of personal identity.

As working examples of her program for group representation Young cites the policies of the National Democratic Party, many non-profit agencies, and some corporations (189). In each of these examples, the governing bodies in question have instituted policies mandating the representation of specific groups on their steering committees, boards of directors, etc. These specific groups are: women, people of color, Blacks, Hispanics, gay men and lesbians, disabled people, etc. Now, while I am certainly not contesting that there are such people as women, Asians, Latinos, lesbians, workers, etc., I am contesting the fact that these identity classes are capable of countenancing the actual identities of many real people. In other words, while I find Young's program radical and visionary, it still relies on the very categories of identity that have become the occasion for the dramatic reenactment of coercive power relations. For this reason, I am skeptical about the ability of equality of group representation successfully to transform coercive conditions of oppression.

What actually happens in practice when a governing body goes about the task of filling a designated position for a woman, a person of color, a lesbian, a disabled person, etc.? Unfortunately, these "reserved

²⁹See Chapter 2 of *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, "Five Faces of Oppression."

positions" often become the site for the reproduction of coercive power relations. Susan Sánchez-Casal refers to this phenomenon as "multicultural distress"(Sánchez-Casal "In A Neighborhood of Another Color"). That is, the board or committee is more often than not stacked with individuals unwilling to consider the position of the "multicultural" member and therein give merely lip service to equality of representation. Moreover, the notion of reserving representative space for women, for Black people, for gays and lesbians, again raises the problem of the reductive notion of identity inherent in each of these categories. What is the Black perspective, the women's perspective, etc.? And where does this leave individuals who do not succumb to the privileging of one facet of their identity over any other?

A brief account of the history and function of the category *woman* will illustrate my point. What are we to conclude from the fact that the category *woman* has developed to exclude lesbians, women of color, poor and working women, etc.? It is my position that the excessive exclusion inherent in the category betrays the complexity of the conditions under which women experience oppression. That is, the excessive exclusion in the category demonstrates the impact of racism, nationalism, homophobia, classism, etc., on sexism and misogyny. The exclusion in the category provides a topology of social and political power from which we can begin to complicate our understanding of sexist oppression through the analysis of the different ways in which both men and women have participated in the construction of the category *woman*. With this newly complicated

analysis, political organization and liberation according to that category no longer makes sense. This is not to say that organizing according to feminist principles makes no sense. It is to say, however, that our received notions of feminism (primarily the legacy of gender as the fundamental subject of feminism) require reconsideration by diverse groups of feminists engaged in ideology critique.

The same is true for categories of national identity. While it is certainly the case that individuals experience power or oppression in virtue of the nationality into which they fall, it is also the case that categories of national identity are excessively and increasingly exclusionary - regardless of whether they are national identities of powerful or oppressed peoples. As I have argued in Chapter One, there is a considerable amount of nationalist activity geared towards the increasingly exclusionary redefinition of national identity here in the United States, a nation certainly not existing under any serious threat to its sovereignty. I have presented numerous examples of the rigidity of national identity in nationally defined communities seeking sovereignty - religious fundamentalism in Algeria, resistance strategies in Hawai'i, linguistic control in Quebec and the United States, etc. In all of these cases, it is the enforcement of national identity - the alleged category of liberation itself - that becomes yet another occasion for the dramatic reinforcement of coercive power relations.

Therefore, it is my position that while individuals are oppressed according to the ways in which both they and their communities define their membership in discrete social categories, and thus that in the case

of national identity individuals experience power or oppression depending upon their nationality, there is a fundamental contradiction between nationalist identity politics and social liberation which makes nationalist liberation something of a contradiction in terms. I have argued that this contradiction is a function of the ways in which the definition and enforcement of national identity subvert the expression of the complexity of individual identity, and that it is this suppression of the complexity of identity that reproduces oppressive conditions of dominance and subordination. The politics of identity necessary to the functioning of a nationalist movement thereby perpetuate the very conditions such a politics purports to transform.

CHAPTER III

THE NATIONALIST UNDERPINNINGS OF TRADITIONALIST CURRICULUM

A. Introduction

Having established the parameters of what constitutes nationalist control over culture, I now wish to turn to a discussion and analysis of the major arguments of the so-called Traditionalist position on educational and curricular reform. I will attempt to show that the Traditionalist position, in its several major incarnations, is attempting a kind of control over national culture that is decidedly nationalist. The Traditionalist position, I will argue, seeks to support through curricular control a particular version of national culture, one that is identifiably pure and free from foreign invasion. By controlling national culture in this way, the Traditionalists are actually fortifying their notion of national identity. And mediating between this ideal of national identity and this manipulation of national culture is the sentiment of nationalism, a sentiment completely antithetical to the mission of the university.

I will discuss three different proponents of the Traditionalist position, Allan Bloom, Dinesh D'Souza, and John Searle. In each case, I will attempt to demonstrate the consequences of the argument at hand for the modification of national culture, and in so doing I will

show how each argument appeals to a particular definition of American national identity; moreover, I will contend that the definition of national identity appealed to in each case is identifiably nationalist. Thus I contend that the arguments to preserve the traditional canons in the teaching of the humanities are based in nationalism. The major arguments of the Traditionalists are aimed at preserving a specific construction of national culture, one that is identifiably homogeneous, pure, and free from foreign invasion.

B. Allan Bloom's Curricular Nationalism

According to Allan Bloom in *The Closing of the American Mind*, the intellectual machinery of the twentieth century has had the following two major consequences: first, education based on natural rights has been supplanted by education based on "openness"; and, second, a fundamental facet of our political heritage - "majoritarianism" - has been rejected "in favor of a nation of minorities and groups each following its own beliefs and inclinations"(31). According to Bloom the new education (of the last 50 years) is the "education of openness"(27); the change from an education based on "natural rights" that, among other principles, held absolute truth as primary, to this relativist moralizing education, was caused by "the presence in the United States of men and women of a great variety of nations, religions, and races and the fact that many of them were badly treated because they belonged to these groups"(30). Bloom claims

that the Founders of the nation believed that minorities were, in general, a negative national presence. However, rather than working towards “suppressing factions and educating a united or homogeneous citizenry”(31), the Founders worked to create a system whereby factions would cancel one another out “and allow for the pursuit of the common good”(31). Since the Founders’ plan called for the subjection of all citizens to the theory of natural rights, a “national majority” based on natural rights, and not any particularities of identity, was allegedly constructed.

According to Bloom, the negative intention of the Founding Fathers towards minorities has been reversed so that the idea of a majority is taken now to be based in prejudicial self-interest(31). Likewise, the celebration of ethnic, religious, national, or gender particularity (minority status) has become the referent for articulating the legitimacy of one’s claims to social protection. Factions now claim their rights based not on their individual participation in humanity and thus their protection under the broad jurisdiction of natural rights, but rather on their minority or special status as members of particular ethnic, religious, racial, national, or gender classes. For example, the Martin Luther King branch of the Civil Rights Movement, Bloom claims, was based on the fundamental claims of natural rights: Black people deserved equal protection under the laws as human beings. The Black Panthers however, “insisted on respect for blacks as blacks, not as human beings simply”(Closing 33).

In so arguing, Bloom does his best to implode the arguments of the Multiculturalists. The anti-traditionalist (the Multiculturalist) position holds that all cultures are equally good and thus intrinsically deserving of celebration and respect; it is for this reason that ethnocentrism (the belief that one's culture is superior to all other cultures) is necessarily indicative of intellectual and moral turpitude. This anti-ethnocentric position of multiculturalism, Bloom contends, is actually internally contradictory. A close study of any non-Western culture, Bloom asserts, will reveal "that each and every one of these cultures is ethnocentric"(36); therefore, the Multiculturalist proponents of "openness" are actually *imposing* a value of Western culture - anti-ethnocentrism - on non-Western cultures. The retreat from the universalist position of natural rights to the particularist position of multiculturalism will necessarily lead to conflict since the Multiculturalists are simultaneously asserting that all cultures are equally good and must be celebrated in their own rights, as they are asserting that ethnocentrism, a value of most cultures, is tantamount to moral depravity.

For Bloom, the obvious way out of this antinomy is to recognize the wisdom of the Founders of this nation and maintain the basic principles of natural rights. Individuals do not deserve protection as members of any particular identity class, they deserve equal protection under the Constitution as members of the human race. While the Constitution and natural rights understood as such cannot guarantee equal respect for women as women, for Jews as Jews, etc., this political

philosophy can guarantee equal protection for all individual human beings under the laws.

For Bloom, the impact of adherence to natural rights is no less significant in regards to university level curriculum than it is in regards to various minority struggles for basic human rights and protections under the law. Applying the fundamental principles of natural rights to the theory of education results in the demand that all beliefs from the “Old World” (i.e. ethnocentric beliefs about the superiority of one’s mother country) be abandoned in favor of the natural beliefs. To suppose that, for example, Jane Austen has more to teach women students of literature than Shakespeare does, or that it is more important *intellectually* for Black men students to read Eldridge Cleaver and Ralph Ellison than for them to read Hemmingway and Tolstoy, is to reject the fundamental principle of natural rights.

What then is the fundamental principle of natural rights in regards to intellectual inquiry? That “class, race, religion, national origin or culture, all disappear or become dim when bathed in the light of natural rights”(27). Thus, in regards to controversy over curriculum, any modifications of curriculum in established disciplines (for example, adding a unit on African philosophy to an Introductory philosophy course), and any proposed additions of new disciplines based on class, religion, race, national origin or culture, are all suspect. They are suspect because rather than determining curriculum or categories of inquiry according to the standards of intellectual quality established by natural rights (of course we have no idea what these

standards of quality are), they represent intellectual inquiry based on the simple-minded celebration of minority factions.

This multicultural education has, according to Bloom, several devastating consequences for intellectual training. First, rather than freeing students from the bounds of their identity, multicultural education forces students to be forever subjected to the accidents of their birth (women can be intellectually enriched only by feminism, African-American students by Black and Africana Studies, etc.). Second, under the principles of multicultural education the disinterested pursuit of truth and objective knowledge is supplanted by the relativized equation of all cultures, ideas, and thus intellectual production. Third, in more specific terms, the attendant relativism of multicultural education makes the end of classical intellectual inquiry - the search for the good life - impossible to achieve. If all cultures are equally complex, advanced, and accomplished, then there is no need to search for *the* cultural account of the good life.

Essentially Bloom is claiming that the new education and its attendant "multicultural curriculum" are focused on and organized according to loose, intellectually uninteresting, and indefensible principles of relativism, diversity, and open-mindedness. This misdirection in educational policy has serious consequences for objectivity, truth, and aesthetic beauty, let alone the *polis*. I however contend that Bloom's impassioned defense of the Western canon, objectivity, and cultured judgment, is actually an ideologically infused defense of a particular version of national culture; that is, a version of

national culture that works in tandem with an image of national identity that Bloom (and many others) would like to protect and cultivate. A close examination of the ramifications, assumptions, and presumptions of Bloom's argument reveals the nationalist ideology informing his argument. It is precisely through such nationalist treatises, as *The Closing of the American Mind* is, that nationalist images of national identity and national culture materialize.

Since it is the foundation of his argument, let me begin with Bloom's account of the relationship between natural rights and intellectual training. According to Bloom's analysis, the principle of natural rights, when applied to questions regarding the appropriate content and direction of a liberal education, will consistently and decisively determine both disciplinary structure and curricular content. Now, more importantly, while Bloom doesn't say so explicitly, he presumes that the light of reason will generate (roughly) the Great Books curriculum. The determinations of natural rights, the light of reason, are in a way then self-evident, and thus self-justifying. Who can dispute the dictums of the light of reason? Who can quarrel with the notions of quality illuminated by the light of reason? Clearly, this is the first major weakness in Bloom's argument. The assertion that the principle of natural rights necessarily sifts through the catalogue of intellectual production of all time and arrives at the contents of what has (since the early part of this century) been taken to be the Canon of Great Books, is merely that, an assertion. Bloom claims that intellectual quality and aesthetic beauty are readily discernible under

the light of reason, but he gives no theoretical account of the way in which the light of reason determines quality. The transparency of this claim requires that we examine it more closely.

One common defense of this claim comes in the form of evidence from the “other” that the texts in the Western Canon are actually the most intellectually compelling, artfully written, timeless, and aesthetically beautiful books in the world. Irving Howe, another academic who takes a very similar position to Bloom’s, makes this very defense when he asserts that Richard Wright and other African-American authors claimed to take their intellectual heritage from the classics of Western (read: White) literature. In so doing, Howe is essentially saying that Richard Wright’s (a successful Black American author) claim that his literary roots are in the classics of Western White literature is somehow *prima facie* evidence of the unmitigated *quality* of the Western intellectual tradition. If *even* Black authors are claiming the superiority of the Western intellectual tradition, authors who allegedly have a vested interest in tracing their success to their own respective minority communities, then all the White folks can certainly rest assured in the third party native certification of the ultimate superiority of this intellectual tradition.

It is a shame however that Howe has not studied any of the correspondence between Richard Wright and Zora Neale Hurston, or any of the scholarship on this correspondence, particularly Henry Louis Gates’ *The Signifying Monkey*. Gates argues convincingly in this book that Wright’s denial of African or African-American literary

antecedents is emblematic of *signifyin(g)*, a highly complex and definitively African-American rhetorical device of semantic play whereby the player focuses on the instability of the relationship between the signifier and the signified. Deliberate manipulation of the instability in this relationship leads to a multiplication of meaning and consequently, indeterminacy of interpretation, principles grounded in the Fon and Yoruba discursive universes. In fact, Gates' theory suggests that Wright's (and other's) claims to White and western literary antecedents are actually evidence of Wright's position in a decidedly Black signifying chain of literary meaning, stretching back through some of the first slave narratives to Yoruba traditions of religion and divination. On Gates' theory, Wright's denial of African-American literary antecedents is another way of saying to White intellectuals searching for the "origin" of great African-American literature: Yo Mama! The irony is only heightened by the fact that Howe is the signified lion in this case, interpreting only the literal meaning of Wright's statements and completely missing the figurative dimension of his claims.

Now, while there are certainly many legitimate criticisms to be made of Gates' position in *The Signifying Monkey*, the theory articulated there is complex and powerful; it provides a counterpoint to the position that any adulation for the Western canon is necessarily evidence of the canon's intellectual and aesthetic superiority. In regards to the broader point however, Bloom's assertion that under the light of reason any thinking person will recognize the inherent and

superior aesthetic and intellectual quality of the texts traditionally included in the Western canon is clearly false. This is not to say that the texts in the Western canon are second-rate, irrelevant, or politically unsavory and therefore not ideal for undergraduate curriculum. It is to say that the claim that these texts are necessarily and objectively superior to all other intellectual production in the world is preposterous, let alone indefensible.

Perhaps recognizing the unmanageable scope of the claim he is trying to show, Bloom moves to a more pragmatic discussion of the consequences for higher education of denying the right of the light of reason to shine. It is in the articulation of these consequences that the definition of national identity Bloom is aiming to cultivate and preserve becomes clear. First he claims that the denial of the ability of the light of reason to generate the appropriate texts for study causes students to be forever subjected to the accidents of their birth. Allegedly, multicultural education teaches students that the appropriate texts for study are determined by their own particular identity (especially if they possess some minority status) rather than by the light of reason. This, according to Bloom, undermines the ability of education to free students from the accidents of their existence.

But let's pause for a moment and ask: why would anyone want to be freed from their identity? What kinds of social and political conditions would make it desirable for one to be liberated from one's identity? And, once liberated from one's original identity, what kind of identity would one possess? If one possesses a minority identity of any

kind then, in Bloom's political community, one would want to be relieved of this identity since individuals deserve equal protection under the constitution and the theory of natural rights only as human beings and not as human beings of any particular kind. While this equal protection seems to be sufficient, as Bloom admits, natural rights and the constitution do not guarantee equal respect for individuals, only equal rights.

Now it is clear why one would seek to be liberated from one's identity. What Bloom doesn't say here though is that this liberation from identity is actually for the purpose of achieving another identity. In Bloom's political community one does not relinquish identity for the sake of becoming free of all and any identity. One considers relinquishing only minority and subaltern identities since it is these identities that prevent one from receiving social respect and concern, as opposed to contempt and hatred. Under the pure light of reason one may in fact realize not that all races, classes, religions, genders, sexualities, nationalities, etc., are of no consequence, but instead that one must be possessed of a particular race, class, gender, nationality and sexuality in order for one's identity to be of no consequence. One would seek liberation from an identity if and only if the identity caused negative consequences for the individual. And Bloom readily admits the existence of these negative consequences as he argues that the recent advent of multicultural education is due largely to "the presence in the United States of men and women of a great variety of nations,

religions, and races and the fact that many of them were treated badly because they belonged to these groups”(30).

Thus, when Bloom claims that one of the central goals of education is to free students from the accidents of their existence, what he actually means is that one of the goals of education is to free students from the accidents of their minority or subaltern status, status that is well named as accidental given the negative consequences for those in this nation with minority or subaltern identities.

Multicultural education is therefore a formidable obstacle to his mission of liberation since intellectually rigorous multicultural education (as opposed to co-opted versions of diversity celebrations) teaches students (among many other things) not that the appropriate and relevant texts for study are determined by their own particular identities, but rather that there are rich intellectual and aesthetic traditions that exist alongside of and intermixed with what we understand to be the canonical western texts.

In so seeking to produce, through education, a massive relinquishment of minority and subaltern identities Bloom reveals the nationalist subtext of his argument. As I argued earlier in reference to nationalist manipulations of culture in Algeria, Quebec, Hawai’i, and the United States, Bloom seeks a similar purity of national identity through careful orchestration of national culture.³⁰ His claim that education serves, ideally, to free students from the accidents of their

³⁰Whether such a purity of national identity could possibly be achieved by such a manipulation of national culture is not what I am trying here to establish. What I am trying to show is instead that Bloom aims to achieve such national purity through educational policy.

identities is actually a call for students to assimilate to a particular category of identity: majority or dominant identity. It is not Bloom's position that education should free White capitalist Christian heterosexual American identified individuals from the "accidents" of their birth. These are the identity classes in fact that make all other identities accidental. Latino is an accidental racial category in virtue of its relationship to Whiteness; third world origin is an accidental national category in relation to Americanness; bilingualism or speakers for whom English is a second language is accidental in relation to native English monolingualism. No one is ever liberated from their White racial identity in the United States. Liberation from identity can only refer to liberation from minority and subaltern identities. The result of such a broad scale liberation is obvious and horrifying: the hegemony of a tyrannical majority mad for universal compliance with its will to purify the complexion of the national population.³¹ And it is this attempt to achieve purity and homogeneity in national identity through purity of curriculum that makes Bloom's project nationalist.

The second and third consequences of multicultural education for intellectual training cited by Bloom also reveal the latent

³¹There are countless examples of such tyranny. Currently, the Bosnian crisis provides the most compelling example of the horrific consequences of the attempt to homogenize national identity by "liberating" geographic regions of individuals with undesirable identities, in this case, of Muslims. I do not mean at all to suggest that Bloom's position on the canon is comparable to the Bosnian Serb position on Muslims; I mean only to assert that Bloom's position on the "accidents" of identity and his attendant argument in favor of preserving the canonical tradition in tact, are analogous examples of the nationalist desire for purity, in this case, of national culture. The United States has participated in similar initiatives to "liberate" individuals of their national origin and linguistic specificity, especially in regards to Native Americans, Chicana/os, and Latina/os.

nationalist project in his attempt to preserve the western canon. Bloom asserts that multicultural education has the epistemological consequence of supplanting the objective pursuit of absolute truth with the relativized equation of all ideas. His specific concern is that under this epistemological relativism it is impossible to achieve the classical end of intellectual inquiry: the search for the good life. Now we need to ask: how on earth does any of this constitute nationalism, or the attempt to control national culture in a way that purifies national identity? Finding an answer to this question requires that we return to Bloom's discussion of the relationship between natural rights and intellectual activity, for it is from this discussion that I will attempt to show that Bloom's defense of objectivity is actually an impassioned plea for bolstering American nationalist identity through national culture.

Bloom contends that there is no American national literature in the way that the French, the Germans, the Italians, the English, all have books that furnish their respective national consciousness. America, Bloom says, begins with nothing but "uncultivated nature"(54). However, Bloom says, the United States has "one of the longest uninterrupted political traditions of any nation in the world. . . that tradition is unambiguous. . . America tells one story: the unbroken, ineluctable progress of freedom and equality"(55). This glorious political history is documented in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, what Bloom calls the "founding heritage"(55). Without a national literature, these items form the basis

of national pride, adding significance and meaning to our humdrum lives.

But unfortunately, the founding heritage has been desecrated; for Bloom, there is nothing left to tell the national story. In the face of what Bloom takes to be a national intellectual vacuum, he proposes that we base liberal education on the doctrine of natural rights. Essentially, Bloom wants to ground liberal education in the doctrine of natural rights (as he understands the application of natural rights to curriculum and disciplinary structure) since it is the doctrine of natural rights that forms the cornerstone of the founding heritage. The founding heritage provides a contact point between education and national identity. Bloom's pedagogy is thus based on an impoverished nationalist notion of pure identity, one that drums out our diversity and, eventually, our ability to think critically.

It is as if Bloom is saying that we, as a national community are without a national story unless we take up the founding heritage with seriousness and respect. We are not like the French who can choose for their intellectual orientation between Descartes and Pascal. We have one option and that is the founding heritage. Conveniently, it is in the "founding heritage" that the epistemological position claiming the existence of objectivity and the possibility of the disinterested pursuit of truth rests. In regards to intellectual training, therefore, the founding heritage requires that we apply ourselves to intellectual activity according to the principle of natural rights. Applying ourselves to intellectual activity according to the principle of natural rights

means that we have to forget about identity - we cannot engage with texts and ideas because of the identity of the authors. We should engage with them only for the sake of our search for quality, form, beauty, and truth. Moreover, applying ourselves to intellectual activity according to the principle of natural rights, and thus the light of reason, requires that we forsake all intellectual traditions other than the Western canonical tradition as intellectually inferior and, just as devastating, as nationally inappropriate to us as Americans.

But I am arguing that in Bloom's case these claims to protecting the pursuit of objective knowledge are actually nationalist claims in disguise. He essentially gives no justification for the position that we should adopt the founding heritage as the foundation for intellectual inquiry *except* that the founding heritage is the national "book" for America. He bemoans the fact that unlike the French, the Germans, the Italians, and the English, America is without a national literature. However, says Bloom, while we do not have a national literature, we have a long (perhaps the longest!) uninterrupted political history in the world - a political history based on the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the two documents that form the founding heritage. And so, we must fall in with the intellectual heritage that logically follows from the founding tradition: natural rights. However, here we need to ask: why is it that we must adopt this intellectual stance? What is the justification Bloom offers for castigating the public's refusal to follow this position? Unfortunately for Bloom, the only justification is a nationalist one; since without a national story we,

as Americans, would be nothing more than untamed nature, and since the founding heritage is the national story we are in possession of, we must adopt the founding heritage as the basis for our intellectual activity.

But this sounds like nationalist pandering to me. The theoretical justification is drawn squarely from the national origin of the texts; the explanation stops there. The tacit assumption is: this is our national heritage, therefore it is our destiny as American nationals to carry out our intellectual activity in accordance with our destiny. Conveniently, the unquestionable grounds of our intellectual heritage also lead us to an uncritical adoption of the principle of natural rights and an unexamined acceptance of the ultimate superiority of the Western canonical tradition. Moreover, such a plan has the feature of rejecting any diversity of identity among individuals who subject themselves to an intellectual training that cannot be described as anything but national and nationalist.

Thus I am concluding that those, like Bloom and Howe, who resist multiculturalism, do so on the grounds that changing from a traditional curriculum (in whatever existing humanist discipline) to a multicultural curriculum (diversifying the curriculum) or adding a new discipline in the humanities (diversifying the categories of inquiry) threatens the national culture of this nation with impurity and diversification. In so doing, this threat to national culture is also always a threat to the definition of national identity; and nationalism as the motivated attempt to unify, purify, and homogenize national

culture and national identity is the only sentiment capable of stabilizing and preserving Bloom's desired images of national culture and national identity. Any kind of real multicultural education has the potential to do exactly what Bloom fears it will do: prepare students to be citizens respectful of a diverse and complex national community, a community characterized by the inability to articulate its diversity in a unified nationalist conception.

Essentially, Bloom and others claim to worry that multicultural education leads to an inability to think critically. The objection to multicultural education on the grounds that it prepares students to be respectful of a diverse and complex world community at the cost of their forever renouncing the ability to judge, to adjudicate among competing accounts of the good, is actually then an objection with a nationalist ideological subtext. On the contrary, I contend that it is nationalist education itself that leads to this very inability to think critically, that assimilationist multicultural education also leads to such toothlessness, and that real multicultural education is precisely what does lead to the ability to think critically, to be an ideology critic.

C. Dinesh D'Souza's Curricular Nationalism

Dinesh D'Souza in his book *Illiberal Education*, articulates a related epistemological objection to recent developments in multicultural education at the undergraduate level. D'Souza ranges over a number of issues raised by multiculturalism in the university -

including affirmative action in hiring and admission, regulations on inflammatory speech, curricular reform, and academic standards. I wish however to focus on D'Souza's objections to multicultural curriculum on the grounds that multicultural invasion of the traditional curriculum stands to prevent the university from achieving its mission of pursuing the truth. It is in this class of D'Souza's objections that I will attempt to locate the nationalist subtext of his position.

While D'Souza devotes extensive passages to the description and critique of recent academic theories in deconstruction, Marxism, and feminism, D'Souza's position is not that the theories of deconstruction or reader-response criticism are at fault or are even inherently dangerous. D'Souza is arguing instead that these kinds of academic theories are aiding and abetting what he terms "the victim's revolution," the real culprit in the conspiracy to change liberal education into its diametrical opposite: illiberal education. While D'Souza maintains throughout *Illiberal Education* that it is the victim's revolution and its attendant pedagogical, political, and epistemological consequences he is concerned with, I instead maintain that D'Souza's position, particularly his claims to protecting the mission of the university, is aimed at preserving a particular construction of national culture, one that is identifiably nationalist.

In a more pointed criticism than Bloom, D'Souza argues that the very mission of the university - the pursuit of truth - is under attack from the Multiculturalists. He states: "It is the pursuit of truth itself

that the modern critics spurn; more precisely, by reducing all truth to the level of opinion, they deny the legitimacy of distinctions between truth and error. Yet what is the goal of liberal education if not the ongoing search for truth? If education cannot help to separate truth from falsehood, beauty from vulgarity, right from wrong, then what can it teach us"(D'Souza "Current Controversies" 74)?

D'Souza thereby claims that in denouncing current theoretical (and attendant political) trends in academia he is protecting the mission of undergraduate liberal education: the unfettered pursuit of truth. Actually however, D'Souza's appeals to protect the mission of liberal education are ill-concealed efforts to discredit falsely the recent achievements of resistance scholarship and insurgent academic disciplines, and to celebrate uncritically the so-called western intellectual tradition. Many of the achievements in insurgent scholarship appear as formidable challenges to the authenticity, the plausibility, the completeness, and the truth of received knowledges - knowledges that reinforce, recreate, or formulate a nationalist image of American national identity and culture.

The nationalist content of D'Souza's argument is thus glaringly present when he asserts that he is trying to highlight the assault on truth and objectivity, as he denounces the achievements of insurgent scholarship, particularly the contributions of insurgent scholarship to the pursuit of truth. He denounces contributions of insurgent scholarship that challenge the nationalist image of the United States - the image of the United States as peerless among other nations for its

adherence to and protection of the democratic ideals of justice, equality, and economic opportunity. Moreover, he denounces as pure demagoguery scholarship that challenges through radical critique the unexamined adherence to the presuppositions of capitalism, patriarchy, and democracy. This is a nationalist project aimed at maintaining a particularly homogeneous and pure version of American national culture; homogeneous in the sense that D'Souza wants to protect the in-tact transmission of books and knowledges that describe the glorious intellectual history of the United States marching itself towards increasingly pure formulations of democracy; pure in the sense that the pedagogical and epistemological consequences of adhering to the Traditionalist position (the position D'Souza defends) are such that formulation of radical critique of this glorious history is exceedingly difficult. D'Souza's core curriculum is a false celebration of a non-existent national legacy.

It is this version of national culture that exists in a dialectical relationship with the national identity of the United States D'Souza aims to protect. The development and preservation of a national culture in general describe and reflect national identity; national identity in turn determines the course of national culture. Nationalist consciousness and nationalist educational policy inform both national culture and national identity. In this case, D'Souza's version of the Traditionalist position on curricular reform is decidedly nationalist in its allegations that diversification of the curriculum and of the categories of inquiry has the cumulative effect of preventing colleges

and universities from achieving their mission: the pursuit of truth. D'Souza takes aim at the recent developments in so-called insurgent disciplines that contribute significantly to the pursuit of truth, as they complicate seriously the unexamined adherence to the ideals of American national identity. He alleges that insurgent scholarship is unsuitable for liberal education since it has no inherent intellectual, aesthetic, or historic substance that would justify displacing one of the classic texts. However, nowhere does D'Souza present a coherent or sustained argument to demonstrate the inherent superior quality of the so-called classic texts. He commits a naturalistic fallacy when he asserts that the received canon is necessarily the best intellectual work in the world; the ideology that defines the received canon contains the assertion that the books in the canon have withstood the grueling test of time thereby establishing themselves as of inherent superior intellectual quality. This is a self-fulfilling prophecy however: membership in the canon is determined allegedly according to whether a text has withstood the "test of time," but the "test of time" appears to be membership in the canon.

Moreover, D'Souza's critique of the inclusion of *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* in one track of the Stanford University required course in Cultures, Ideas, Values³² is an instructive example of D'Souza's tendency to discredit disingenuously

³²Cultures, Ideas, Values (CIV) is the result of recent curricular modification of the former required course in Western Civilization. In *Illiberal Education* D'Souza misrepresents the Stanford curriculum; out of eight available tracks of CIV, in only one is there a multicultural curriculum that sometimes includes the book *I, Rigoberta Menchú*.

the contributions to the pursuit of truth that challenge fundamental aspects of American national identity. According to D'Souza *I, Rigoberta Menchú* is the text which "best reveals the premises underlying the new Stanford curriculum" (*Illiberal Education* 71). He goes on to challenge the intellectual merits of the text based on first, the fact that Menchú's history is oral ("As a representative of an oral tradition Rigoberta³³ does not write: rather her views are transcribed by the French feminist writer Elisabeth Burgos-Debray"(71)); second, the assertion that the book details mere mundane details of Menchú's peasant existence, a claim D'Souza substantiates by referring to the chapter titles in the text (e.g. "Rigoberta's Tenth Birthday"); and third, that the book is hard to understand since it is "lavishly sprinkled with Latino and Indian phrases"(71). From this account of the text it almost appears as if D'Souza has not even read the book; he neglects to mention the inclusion in the text of a glossary of Spanish and Indian phrases, nor does he describe the content of any of the "mundane" chapters where, for example, Menchú details the Indian customs surrounding the tenth birthday of a child, the symbolic entrance into the adult world, and the dynamic tension between the isolationist politics of the Indian community and Menchú's increasing awareness of the racial, economic, and political diversity in Guatemala.

D'Souza goes on to ask: since there is no clear intellectual merit to this text, what purpose could there be for including it in a required

³³Why does D'Souza refer to Menchú as 'Rigoberta'? Certainly, it is a violation of conventional rhetorical practice to refer to authors and subjects of history books by their first names.

course at Stanford University? He states: "Rigoberta's claim to eminence is . . . as a consummate victim . . . Undergraduates do not read about her because she has written a great and immortal book, or performed a great deed, or invented something useful"(72). As the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992, Menchú has certainly performed a great deed. More important however is the contributions to the pursuit of truth made by such a text. The fact that Menchú does not write, that her history is oral, should not on its own make the text intellectually suspect. In fact, given that the mission of liberal education is to proceed with the unfettered pursuit of truth, and given that repositories of the truth are not always proficient in our respective language (whatever that may be), *translation* of historical accounts is a common tool of solid historical scholarship.

Menchú's text advances the pursuit of truth since it offers an indigenous perspective on the political economy of relations between Indians and Latinos in Guatemala, and between Guatemala and the international community. At the same time, Menchú's text challenges the universality of principles fundamental to American national identity: the naturalness of patriarchy, the economic justice of capitalism, the equality of democracy. D'Souza marks out these elements of the book for criticism when he states: "But integrated into the story, and impossible to miss, is the development of Rigoberta's political consciousness . . . She becomes first a feminist, then a socialist, then a Marxist"(71).

D'Souza argues that the lack of intellectual merit and the presence of political theory hostile to the "West and Western Institutions" are the qualities that make *I, Rigoberta Menchú* an inappropriate book for liberal education. The text allegedly lacks aesthetic merit and simultaneously falsely celebrates the victim status of Rigoberta Menchú. While I would agree with D'Souza that the book is not written in a compelling style, it is representative of a historically important genre: testimonial literature. Moreover, the text relates a first-hand account of the history, beliefs, religion, and political economy of an indigenous group of people whose history is not common knowledge but whose presence is felt in the international economic and political community primarily as coffee harvesters.

Thus we see that while D'Souza denounces so-called illiberal education, or the intellectual poverty of multiculturalism, for its alleged assault on truth and objectivity, many of the texts that D'Souza decries as obstructers of the pursuit of truth actually present knowledge bases that do contribute to the pursuit of truth. And, what is more, the very construction of "truth" protected by D'Souza's core curriculum is a nationalist truth. It is a truth that doesn't begin to account for the intellectual richness and diversity of national human experience. Nor does D'Souza's "truth" embodied in the canons of Western literature and philosophy admit the possibility of fallibility. Thus, the perpetuation of the traditional canon relies on the ideological logic of the canon which does not permit submission of any of the member

texts to scrutiny as it categorically relegates all non-member texts to sub-canon status.

D'Souza thus delegitimizes the possibility of teaching any multicultural (read: non-canonical) texts on the grounds that they are all allegedly about the victim's revolution, and thus can only represent the groundwork for the indoctrination of unwitting undergraduates. However, this seems to be mistaken on two counts. First, it underestimates the capacity of intelligent college students to adopt some sort of critical perspective on the books that they study and to resist wholesale indoctrination. But second, and more insidious, it seems to suggest that these books (*I, Rigoberta*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, *The Wretched of the Earth*, etc.) cannot but be taught as treatises of political indoctrination. If this were the case, it would mean that these texts had no remarkable aesthetic, historical, or intellectual value. Now, this is a difficult claim to defend. In fact, it seems to be patently false.

D. John Searle's Curricular Nationalism

Though patently false it may be, another well known philosopher, John Searle, defends essentially the same claims as D'Souza, albeit in a much more eloquent and elegant fashion. In a series of critical essays, Searle defines and develops the notion of the Western Rationalistic Tradition, what Searle takes to be the foundation of all modern intellectual inquiry and the set of principles that makes

possible the existence of the university. In his essay "Rationality and Realism, What is at Stake?" Searle considers the nature of the relationships between the Western Rationalistic Tradition and the ideal of the university, and between the Western Rationalistic Tradition and the insurgent Multiculturalists. Thus Searle begins by claiming that while there is an ostensible battle between the Traditionalists and the Multiculturalists, there is really a more fundamental battle based on a philosophical dispute. Searle states that the philosophical dispute at the core of this debate is in response to postmodernist and multicultural challenges to "certain traditional assumptions about the nature of truth, objectivity, rationality, reality, and intellectual quality" ("Rationality and Realism" 56).

After a long introductory discussion regarding different philosophical positions on the nature of truth, Searle concludes that knowledge is objective, that truth is a feature of statements that "accurately represent some feature of reality that exists independently of the statement" (65), and that the objective truth or falsity of any given knowledge claim is entirely independent of the motives, political agenda, or identity of the speaker. Thus Searle states: "Because the content of what is known is always a true proposition, and because truth is in general a matter of accurate representation of an independently existing reality, knowledge does not depend on nor derive from the subjective attitudes and feelings of particular people" (66).

First, this position on truth needs to be identified as fairly uncontroversial. To say that the content of what is known is always a true proposition is to sidestep the difficult question concerning what constitutes knowledge. In other words, when I say that what I *know* is necessarily true, I am essentially making a tautological statement. If knowledge is justified true belief then what is known is always true; however, we can quite easily take ourselves to “know” propositions that actually turn out not to be true. Thus, we cannot conclude that truth is definitionally part of knowledge. In this discussion of the relationship between truth and knowledge, Searle seems to presume that truth is a definitional quality of knowledge such that what is known is necessarily true. Now if this were the case, then it would also be the case that the subjective attitudes, feelings, political positions, and personal identity of any given speaker would have nothing whatsoever to do with the fact that what that speaker *knew* would necessarily be true. However, Searle’s position seems to be that truth is part of the definitional complex of knowledge and therefore, when he makes the claim that what is known is necessarily true, regardless of the political or other accidental qualities of the speaker, he is merely stating a tautology.

Now, Searle moves from this seemingly uncontroversial conclusion to the position that all of the varied and often contradictory attempts at curricular reform (postmodernism, antirealism, multiculturalism, etc.) are aimed at challenging these notions of truth, objective knowledge, and an independently existing reality - notions so

central not merely to the Western Rationalistic Tradition, but to the possibility of intellectual inquiry itself. Moreover, according to Searle, the motivating force behind all of these various and varied challenges to the Western Rationalistic Tradition's most fundamental philosophical presuppositions is an "explicitly leftist political agenda"(55) aimed at achieving "explicit political goals"(55). For Searle, the curricular reformers see the Western Rationalistic Tradition in general, and its attendant theory of objective truth and knowledge in particular, as a roadblock to their attempted leftist political transformation of the university.

This truncated analysis leads Searle to assert that all challenges to the basic tenets of the Western Rationalistic Tradition are grounded in the simple-minded attempt to use the University as the site for radical leftist political and social transformation. In so asserting, Searle trivializes the positions of various curricular reformers and misses the opportunity to set his critical sites on the actual positions of the would be curricular reformers. For example, after a long (and somewhat tedious) account of the relationship between the correspondence and disquotational theories of truth and the Western Rationalistic Tradition, Searle concludes that the Multiculturalists are not involved in any meaningful critique of the philosophical presuppositions of these systems of thought. Instead, he claims, "those who want to use the universities, especially the humanities, for leftist political transformation correctly perceive that the Western Rationalistic Tradition is an obstacle in their path"(70). Moreover, he suggests, in

regard to the motivation of the Multiculturalists, "if you think that the purpose of teaching the history of the past is to achieve social and political transformation of the present, then the traditional canons of historical scholarship - the canons of objectivity, evidence, close attention to the facts, and above all, truth - can sometimes seem an unnecessary and oppressive regime that stands in the way of achieving more important social objectives"(70). In other words, multicultural challenges to the traditional curriculum have nothing meaningful to add to discussions about the nature of truth and objectivity; multicultural challenges to the curriculum are merely poorly disguised attempts at mobilizing the large and conveniently assembled student population into the rank and file of leftist political action.

Thus Searle concludes that the rejection of the Western Rationalistic Tradition is enabling radicals in the academy to implement a large scale pedagogical revolution effectively transforming the structure of intellectual training. Important to my critique of this position however is what Searle identifies as the underlying logic of this transformation. According to Searle, one of the most deplorable consequences of this transformation is the ascent of identity politics. In order to launch an assault on the most fundamental elements of the Western Rationalistic Tradition - truth and objectivity - the Multiculturalists have made individual identity and identity politics the organizing structures for intellectual training. Searle states: "it is now widely accepted that the race, gender, class, and ethnicity of the student defines his or her identity. On this view it is

no longer one of the purposes of education, as it previously had been, to enable the student to develop an identity as a member of a larger universal human intellectual culture”(72).

This is confusing here since on the face of it Searle appears to be arguing in support of a pluralistic notion of intellectual training: students should be exposed to an intellectual training that reinforces their individual participation in human intellectual culture and not in, for example, African-American intellectual culture or in Queer Theory. Thus, this would seem to contradict my assertion that Searle’s position is actually fundamentally nationalist since he appears to be advocating a kind of intellectual pluralism; ideally students will avoid a narrow kind of intellectual particularism based on race, gender, class, or national origin and will instead occupy themselves with the contemplation of the central intellectual problems of humanity. Thus it seems that the current threat of transformation in the American academy is for Searle a threat precisely because of its alleged adherence to the restrictive and anti-intellectual tenets of identity politics.

So to summarize Searle’s position, the Multiculturalists are mounting an assault on the university at the most fundamental level - the very presuppositions of intellectual inquiry, that knowledge is objective and truth a relation between knowledge and the externally existing world. However, the Multiculturalists are not engaging in this attack from the position of an intellectual challenge to the philosophical presuppositions of intellectual inquiry. Instead, the Multiculturalists are proceeding according to the logic of a narrow and

partisan politics of identity, advocating an educational policy that seeks merely representation of authors of formerly excluded identities. In order to achieve their goals of representation, the Multiculturalists must (and allegedly do) attack the presuppositions of intellectual inquiry according to the logic of identity politics. For example, a standard introductory course in Philosophy may be modified to include readings from feminist philosophy and African philosophy but as far as Searle is concerned, these curricular modifications are motivated not by meaningful critique of the presuppositions of the Western Rationalistic Tradition, but are instead the result of blind adherence to the logic of identity politics: representativeness for the sake of representativeness.

Now, I have an entirely different reading of the inner workings of this kind of curricular transformation. I want to explain here why I see Searle's position on curricular reform as nationalist and begin to explain why, in this case, nationalist pedagogy stunts the process of critical thinking. Searle claims that much of his opposition to the new recommendations for multicultural curricular modification arises from the contradictions he sees between the goals of a liberal education and the results of a multicultural education. Searle claims, as I stated above, that one of the central goals of a liberal education is to enable students to find their place within a universal human intellectual culture. Good enough. However, to understand completely Searle's position we must consider what, specifically, he takes the basis of this "universal human intellectual culture" to be. In an earlier essay

entitled "The Storm Over the University" Searle claims that there is "a certain Western intellectual tradition that goes from, say, Socrates to Wittgenstein in philosophy, and from Homer to Joyce in literature. . . . It is essential to the liberal education of young men and women in the United States that they should receive some exposure to at least some of the great works of this intellectual tradition"("Storm" 34).

Moreover, he laments, it used to be the case that no argument was necessary to justify the educational and intellectual value of such a position.

What Searle does not justify, though he asserts it, is that while there are compelling intellectual and educational arguments to be made in favor of such a curriculum, the groundwork for these arguments is both national and nationalist. The groundwork is national since the reason we can formulate compelling arguments on educational and intellectual grounds is because of the alleged national import of such a curriculum. Searle states that "knowledge of the tradition was essential to the self-understanding of educated Americans since the country, *in an important sense, is the product of that tradition. . .*"("Storm" 34, emphasis added). It is important to national survival and coherence that educated Americans understand the alleged origins of their country; in this manner, preservation of the traditional canon becomes both educationally and intellectually sound.

What is more, however, is that the groundwork for Searle's position is nationalist. The nationalism of this position surfaces in the conclusion to "The Storm Over the University" when he writes "For

the United States, the dominant tradition is, and for the foreseeable future, will remain the European tradition. The United States is, after all, a product of the European Enlightenment”(42). Now, to give Searle his due, he does make reference throughout that essay to the importance of seeing one’s own way of life in relation to others; thus he adds that “Works from other cultural traditions need to be studied as well”(42). However, the important point here is the way in which Searle understands the intellectual account of the American tradition. While he allows that women of all ethnic and racial origins and minority men have been excluded from the canonical tradition, and while he allows that some of these exclusions have been based on national origin (for example, the exclusion of Confucius and all Chinese religion and philosophy from standard introductory course in philosophy and religion) he does not see these exclusions as exclusions of select segments of the American national tradition. When Searle claims that the intellectual tradition of the United States was, is, and will continue to be, the European tradition he betrays his understanding of the national composition of the United States; and it is this understanding of the national composition of the United States that is unabashedly nationalist.

The human intellectual culture Searle wants students exposed to is, as far as he is concerned, universally applicable to all students, regardless of their communities of origin. That is, the European tradition is the human tradition; the European tradition is the progenitor of the American tradition, and therefore for Americans to

be educated in our tradition, we must be educated in the European tradition. Leaving aside for the moment the question concerning why we must be educated in our national tradition, we need to examine more closely what Searle is defining as the American tradition, and the ways in which his understanding of the American tradition correspond to his understanding of the national citizenry. To say that for Americans to be educated we must be educated in the European tradition is to presuppose that "our" tradition is one solely, or at least most decisively, determined by the European tradition. Of course, to claim that the European tradition had or has nothing pivotal to do with the United States would be absurd. However, to claim that it is the European tradition that most significantly determines our national history is equally absurd as it belies one of the most fundamental facts of our national history: that this is a nation composed of many different peoples, some of European origin and others not.

While to say that for Americans to be educated we must be educated in our national tradition is merely the expression of a national interest, to say that for Americans to be educated we must all be educated in the European tradition is decisively nationalist. To make such a claim is to make serious assumptions and presumptions regarding national identity and composition. It is to assume, in the face of overwhelming amounts of scholarship and evidence to the contrary, that the United States was, is, and will continue to be a product of the European Enlightenment. It is to presume that all citizens of the United States see their intellectual heritage stretching

forth from the European Enlightenment. And it is to assume that all other intellectual traditions pale in comparison to the European tradition - not because of the claim that knowledge of our national tradition is essential, but because the argument includes not merely the admonition that we must be educated in the European tradition (a decidedly great history), but that we must be educated in the European tradition *to the exclusion of all other intellectual traditions*. This is of central importance since Searle allows that it is important for students to be educated in other cultural traditions, but solely for the purpose of comparing those traditions to "our own." However, the fundamental mistake Searle makes is in failing to see that those other cultural traditions are, to a large extent, also "our own." The notion that we can point to a unified intellectual tradition and name it as the intellectual grounding of our country, past, present, and future, belies a nationalist understanding of our national identity. To be able to point to such a unified intellectual tradition and actually be able to say with some degree of certainty that such an intellectual tradition corresponds accurately to an overwhelming majority of our citizenry, would require that the citizenry of the United States was overwhelmingly homogenous and unified in terms of personal identity, in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, etc.

The result of such a universalizing program of education is both to reinforce and recreate an imagined nationalist community of citizens. In other words, there is in fact no such nationalist community of citizens - an overwhelming majority of individuals who see their

political, cultural, and intellectual heritage as directly descendant from the European tradition. Despite this reality, the continued valorization of the canonical tradition and its assertions of Anglo-European hegemony in the culture, politics, and intellectual production of the United States reinforces and reifies the notion that the United States actually is populated only by individuals who see the European tradition as their cultural legacy. In like manner, such a universalizing program of education serves to move the national citizenry towards the creation of an imagined nationalist community of citizens.

For example, the United States' violent suppression of Native American language, culture, religion, and philosophy, has effectively reduced a thriving cultural tradition to a diaspora existence. One of the primary suppression methods employed by the United States government was and is to fail to provide public money for the local education of Native children. Consequently, Native children are routinely bussed to White communities where they live in dormitories and attend the local public schools, traveling home occasionally on weekends. Understandably, these conditions make it exceptionally difficult for Native Americans to educate their children in Native American cultural traditions. Native children thereby become Searle's American children, taught to see their intellectual and cultural legacy firmly grounded in the European tradition. On a grand scale, the suppression of education in all cultural traditions other than the European tradition, and the presentation of the European Tradition as the unified progenitor of the American tradition, creates a young

citizenry modeled after the imagined nationalist notion of a unified and homogenous national citizenry.

My final point in this discussion of Searle is in regards to his position that in the Multiculturalist critique of the traditional program for education there is no meaningful critique of the philosophical presuppositions of what Searle calls the Western Rationalistic Tradition. As I have discussed above, Searle asserts that multicultural transformations of curriculum are merely politically motivated leftist indoctrination techniques. However, it is my position that in the multicultural critique of Traditionalism there is a philosophical critique of the Traditionalist conception of the relationship between truth and knowledge.

Now Searle claims that because knowledge is objective, then it is absurd to claim that the objective truth or falsehood of any particular knowledge claim is at all dependent upon the identity, motivation, or political position of the speaker. As I have discussed above, this is an uncontroversial claim that Searle seems to think can lay all multicultural challenges to rest. This claim however is only uncontroversial if we have an objective procedure for *evaluating* knowledge claims. For if knowledge is objective and true, and we want to know the truth, all we need do is ascertain which claims constitute knowledge and which claims do not. But to retain objectivity here then we must have some objective method for evaluating knowledge claims.

Searle thus appears to sidestep the question of evaluation entirely; and it is the evaluation of knowledge claims that is fundamentally at issue in the recent disputes over the definition of university level curriculum. As in the case of Dinesh D'Souza's critique of the Stanford University course in Cultures, Ideas, and Values, at issue in the educational presentation of texts written by Rigoberta Menchú, Frantz Fanon, or Rosario Ferré is not the objective truth or falsity of the analysis in these treatises, but the evaluation of the knowledges presented by Menchú, Fanon, and Ferré. And what we do not have to present to students is an objective method for evaluating the knowledge bases represented by different authors. This presents a considerable obstacle to what many take to be effective teaching since, as educators, we are therefore faced with the fact that we ourselves cannot provide our students with an objective method for adjudicating among the many and often conflicting accounts of what the truth is.

One way to solve this pedagogical problem is of course to present to students a unified intellectual tradition, an intellectual tradition that is not rife with contradictions and controversies. Now certainly, what Searle, D'Souza, Bloom, and Howe would define as the European Intellectual tradition is full of contradictions and controversies. In Philosophy these come in the form of disputes over the definition of knowledge, the notion of the good, the structure of political communities, etc. But for the Traditionalists, there is no controversy in regards to the objectivity of the knowledges set forth in these

conflicting accounts of epistemology, ethics, metaphysics, and political philosophy. Searle himself states that it is the postmodernist and multicultural reformers who are attacking the ideal of the university, an ideal he defines as "the claim of the universities to impart to their students a set of objective truths about an independently existing reality" ("Rationality and Realism" 72). And while the European Intellectual tradition presents a number of conflicts and controversies at the level of particular content, when taken together - as a tradition - the tradition presents a seamless truth. It is this seamless truth that makes it possible for Searle himself to outline the basic tenets of the Western Rationalistic Tradition. As Searle argues in "Rationality and Realism, What is at Stake?," the Western Rationalistic Tradition permits robust criticism and analysis at the level of the particular contents of the tradition. Thus, under the Western Rationalistic Tradition it is perfectly possible and permissible to consider the relative merits and faults of, for example, the political community advocated by Karl Marx versus the political community articulated by Aristotle. So it is not the case that there are not widely divergent truths presented by the texts commonly taken to be part of the Western Rationalistic Tradition.

However, what is not possible within the Western Rationalistic Tradition is what could be called meta-critique. It is not possible from within the Western Rationalistic Tradition to engage in criticism and analysis of the fundamental presuppositions of the tradition. For Searle, this is an impossibility not because of the impossibility of radical

critique from within any system of thought, but because the presuppositions of the Western Rationalistic Tradition are not merely the presuppositions of that intellectual tradition. The presuppositions of the Western Rationalistic Tradition are, for Searle and other Traditionalists, the presuppositions of intellectual inquiry itself. Thus, it is not possible from within the bounds of the Western Rationalistic Tradition to consider why the “objective” standards of intellectual excellence have yielded such a ubiquitously uniform set of authors in terms of racial, gender, ethnic, religious, political, and national identity. To pose such a question is, from within the Western Rationalistic Tradition, to threaten the possibility of intellectual inquiry itself. For to pose such a question is to suggest that the “objective” criteria for determining intellectual excellence may not be as objective as originally thought; and since the worth of the texts in this tradition is understood to be a function of their measuring up to the objectively determined standards of intellectual excellence, then calling into question the objectivity of the standards calls into question the merits of the texts. From within the Western Rationalistic Tradition, if there is no objective method for determining the worth of texts, then there is no pattern or system for participation in the intellectual process. In this way, the presentation to students of the Western Rationalistic Tradition is the presentation of a unified intellectual tradition, one that does not require educators to confront our inability to provide students with an objective method for adjudicating among conflicting accounts of the truth, among conflicting knowledge bases.

Notice that it is not the presentation to students of the European Intellectual tradition, as a unified tradition taking its logic from the Western Rationalistic Tradition, that is a problem. It is the presentation of the European Intellectual tradition and the Western Rationalistic Tradition *to the exclusion* of all other seamless intellectual traditions, intellectual traditions that are distinguished perhaps by an underlying logic that differs markedly from the fundamentals of the Western Rationalistic Tradition, that I am identifying as both nationalist and ideological. The fundamental logic of the Western Rationalistic Tradition makes it impossible to do anything but present it to the exclusion of all other intellectual traditions: the Western Rationalistic Tradition is the compilation of the objectively determined intellectual masterpieces of all humanity. As Searle claims in "Rationality and Realism," "[t]raditionally, the humanities thought of themselves as conserving, transmitting, and interpreting the highest achievements of human civilization in general and Western civilization in particular"(76). So, where the Western Rationalistic Tradition claims to be for the sake of transmitting to students objective truths about an independently existing external world, training students to engage in the disinterested pursuit of knowledge with universal application, etc., its presuppositions require us to forgo prematurely the engaged and ethical study of other intellectual traditions, intellectual traditions that are grounded in a fundamentally different logic from the Western Rationalistic and European Intellectual Traditions. Critiquing the

nationalist underpinnings of the Traditionalist position on curricular reform thereby exposes the ideology endemic to the Traditionalist position. Critique reveals the tight theoretical and practical connections and between seemingly unrelated practices: between the Traditionalist curriculum and the perpetuation of nationalism, and between the perpetuation of nationalism and the failure to teach students to be critical thinkers. Moreover, this critique of the underlying nationalist ideology of the Traditionalist position lays bare the contradictions implicit in Traditionalism. The Traditionalists claim to be engaged in the preservation of the highest human intellectual achievement for the sake of transmitting it to future generations, when in fact Traditionalist education prevents students from becoming aware of the diversity of human intellectual endeavors; such an education thereby generates a false appreciation of only one strand of intellectual history.

In my analysis of Searle I have argued that his Traditionalist position on curricular reform is decisively nationalist. So to conclude my discussion of Searle and my analysis of the Traditionalist position on curricular reform I want to summarize what I have said about Bloom, D'Souza, and Searle and clarify what I take to be the nationalist ideology informing the Traditionalist position on curricular reform. As I see it, there are two interdependent qualities of the Traditionalist position that make it identifiable as nationalist ideology. These are: first, the presentation of the Western Rationalistic Tradition and the European Intellectual Tradition as "our" national intellectual heritage;

and second, the presentation of the Western Rationalistic Tradition and the European Intellectual Tradition as the repositories of the unqualifiedly and objectively best human intellectual achievement.

The presentation of the Western Rationalistic and European Intellectual traditions as “our” national intellectual heritage is deceptive since such a presentation conceals important historical and current demographic information regarding the national citizenry of the United States. As I have argued in this chapter, this presentation of “our” national culture not simply as glorious and wonderful, but more importantly the presentation of “our” national culture as uniform in regards to language, religion, ethnicity, ideology, etc., bespeaks of a subversion of the diversity of our national citizenry. And as I have argued in Chapter Two, it is this kind of subversion of diversity in national identity, in the name of constructing a unified and continuous national culture and national identity, that is emblematic of nationalism.

So to begin with, the Traditionalist position on curriculum creates and reinforces a particular version of national culture that belies the realities of national identity. This constructed nationalist version of national culture and identity is further cemented in place by the presentation of the Western Rationalistic Tradition and the European Intellectual Tradition not simply as the repositories of the best human intellectual achievement of all time, but with the justification for this assertion being the alleged objectivity of the intellectual standards applied to each member of the canon. This

notion of objectivity creates the Western Rationalistic Tradition and the European Intellectual Tradition as seamless, unified, and thereby impervious to critique. And it is this quality of the nationalist presentation of intellectual history that marks the Traditionalist curriculum as ideological. Critique of the Traditionalist curriculum makes it possible to identify such a curriculum as ideological since critique exposes central theoretical affiliations heretofore unrecognized: affiliations between nationalism and the failure of the university to achieve its stated mission. The Traditionalist curriculum is identifiable as ideology since it attempts to tell a unified and seamless story of intellectual history and production that is impervious to critique, when in fact, this seamless story of intellectual history fails to withstand the scrutiny of its own presuppositions. In fact, rigorous critique of the Traditionalist curriculum exposes not only its inconsistency with the stated mission of the university, but additionally demonstrates the commensality of Traditionalism and nationalism in the United States. Thus the Traditionalist curriculum functions as nationalist ideology.

In this manner, those students educated in the European Intellectual tradition - according to the precepts of the Western Rationalistic Tradition - are appreciably impaired in terms of their ability to engage other intellectual traditions with different presuppositions. The fact of an intellectual tradition having presuppositions is not the problematic feature at issue here; it would be impossible for any collection of texts, ideas, or artistic works to be called

a tradition without there being some organizing logic to explain such a designation. However, in the case of the Traditionalist position, the presupposition that the contents of the European Intellectual tradition have been objectively determined to be of superior intellectual quality, superior to all other human intellectual production over time and through space, prejudices individuals trained in this tradition with respect to all other intellectual traditions.

Working in tandem with the first feature of the Traditionalist position, namely that the Traditions are disingenuously presented as “our” national intellectual heritage, the appeals to objectivity and intellectual standards further cement the hegemony of “our” intellectual heritage, this nationalist version of national culture, by constructing “our” intellectual heritage in such a way that it is impossible to critique its contents, structure, or logic. Our intellectual tradition simply *is* the repository of the finest intellectual achievement. Merely questioning the presumptions behind that assertion makes it impossible, according to the Western Rationalistic Tradition, to engage in any intellectual activity whatsoever. Conveniently therefore, all other intellectual traditions are predetermined to be inferior to the European intellectual tradition in virtue of the impossibility of subjecting the European intellectual tradition and the Western Rationalistic Tradition to rigorous critique.

In this manner, “our” intellectual tradition is preserved as it functions to reinforce and recreate nationalist constructions of national identity and national culture. While I will return to a discussion of the

pedagogical ramifications of such a nationalist presentation of intellectual history in Chapter Five, I wish to suggest here that it is the nationalist ideology ever-present in the Traditionalist position that makes it exceptionally difficult for students to become critical thinkers, critics of ideology. My position is that when one undertakes a truly multicultural education, it becomes clear that there are many conflicting accounts of what reality is, and of what constitutes knowledge. While it may be tempting to direct students to what we as educators take to be the account of knowledge, acting to prevent students from coming to consciousness about the proliferation of knowledge bases is coercive. Faced with this proliferation of knowledge bases, it is my position that it is equally coercive to teach that all of these accounts are true as it is to fail to teach students how to adjudicate among these different accounts. Instead, as I will argue in the next chapter, it is essential to teach students to confront the proliferation of knowledges that results from the complexity of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. It is an antinomy to claim that in the face of multiple accounts of the truth one must either reject the idea that there can be such multiple accounts or one must become a toothless relativist. This is the discussion I will continue in Chapters Four and Five.

CHAPTER IV

IDEOLOGY AND IDEOLOGY CRITIQUE

A. Introduction

It has been my aim in the dissertation to develop and defend two broadly defined and related claims regarding the general relationship between formal intellectual activity in the academy and nationalism. These are: first, that the Traditionalist position on curricular reform and multiculturalism is decidedly nationalist; and second, that this nationalist ideology is antithetical to the stated mission of the university.

At this point in the dissertation I have argued that the preservation and development of national culture stands in a dialectical relation to the preservation and contestation of national identity, and that nationalism is the sentiment that mediates this dialectical relation. I have argued further that underlying every nationalist movement is a universalist project that denies the realities of complex personal identity formation and leads to the most vicious and intellectually impoverished manifestations of identity politics. Moreover, I have presented a sustained argument to show that education in the arts and humanities is education in the national culture and that the major Traditionalist arguments in opposition to

multicultural curricular reform are aimed at preserving a nationalist construction of national culture.

At this juncture then, I wish to return my focus to a discussion of the second general claim I set out to defend: that the nationalist ideology inherent in the opposition to multicultural curricular reform is antithetical to the stated mission of the university. I have suggested throughout the prior three chapters that the fundamental contradiction between nationalist positions on curricular reform and the stated mission of the university to serve as a site for free inquiry is inextricably bound up with nationalist constructions of identity, specifically with the underlying universalist project of every nationalist movement that denies the realities of complex personal identity formation. While I have explained in a preliminary fashion that one of the ramifications of this denial in the academic arena is to obstruct the process of teaching students to think critically, I turn now to define and defend that claim comprehensively.

I have asserted that it is this process of becoming a critical thinker that I take to be equivalent to the practice of ideology critique. Moreover, I have argued that it is the evaluation of knowledge claims, the identification and critique of ideology, that is fundamentally at issue in recent disputes over university level curriculum. Thus in my critique of Traditionalist positions on multiculturalism I assert that Bloom, D'Souza, and Searle sidestep entirely the question of evaluation. Searle for example presumes that he need not contend with the issue of evaluation since, in his mind, knowledge is objective.

But, as I have argued in the previous chapter, the claim that all knowledge is objective is only uncontroversial if we have an objective method for determining which claims constitute knowledge and which do not; without such a method, the notion that knowledge is objective offers no conclusive determinations in our attempts to adjudicate among competing knowledge bases.

And so, in this chapter I delve into an in-depth analysis of the concept of ideology. I am critiquing various metatheories of ideology and working towards developing a conception of ideology that is grounded in practical political awareness and struggle. My aim is to reconsider the problem of ideology raised by Kant in *The Critique of Pure Reason*. I want to begin with Kant's declaration that the mind is the lawgiver to nature since I take it that his subsequent failure to establish a universal psychology leads to the problem of ideology. I will argue that Kant raises the notion of ideology by failing to seal shut the epistemic space between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Following Kant's unintentional introduction of the concept, I claim that both Marx and Mannheim generate theories of ideology centrally concerned with ineffective endeavors to transcend the complexity of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Moreover, I will argue that both Marx and Mannheim define ideology in such a way that it is impossible for individuals to identify and to critique the ideological. Therefore, I will conclude that each presents a paradoxical account of ideology since it

describes, in general, falsified constructions of social reality that no one can successfully articulate.

My focus on this aspect of the development of the theory of ideology is central to the argument of the dissertation for the following reasons. In the forthcoming exposition and critique of Marx and Mannheim, I argue that each fails to offer a philosophically defensible account of ideology since it is impossible, on each account, for individuals to engage in ideology critique. In the case of Marx and Mannheim, I see this failure largely as a result of their respective attempts to undertake evaluation through transcending the complexity of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. This fact makes both Marx's and Mannheim's theories of ideology and evaluation indefensible.

Marx and Mannheim thereby seek to devise methods for identifying and evaluating ideology through epistemic standpoints removed from the site of the production of ideology. By demonstrating the shortcomings of Marx's and Mannheim's theories of ideology, I intend to clear the theoretical space necessary for reconceptualizing our notions of ideology and ideology critique. It is my aim to refocus notions of ideology and ideology critique on engaging the contingency of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge.

And thus I will conclude this chapter by asserting that in order to be a critic of ideology one must struggle with the obscurity inherent in the convergence of the knowing subject and object of knowledge. This

discussion will set the stage for the final chapter where I reconsider the mechanism I outlined in Chapter Three whereby curricular Traditionalists seek to train students to undertake intellectual activity from the standpoint of neutral observer. I will argue that this Traditionalist neutrality is achieved through the careful cultivation of a purified nationalist identity aimed at rejecting the relevance of the epistemic space between the knower and the known. Thus Marx's and Mannheim's attempts to transcend the complexity of this epistemic space between the knower and the known share central qualities with the Traditionalist position on curricular preservation and reform. It is my intention to focus on this correspondence.

In the final chapter of the dissertation I work to move beyond the foregoing critique of the theory of ideology. Resisting the tendency to present yet another theory of ideology I go at the concept from another direction: the practice of ideology critique. I argue, in direct opposition to Mannheim, that the only way to become a critic of ideology is to acknowledge one's situatedness, and perhaps to expand the scope and number of realms in which one is situated. In this manner, I hope to make a convincing case for my contention that curriculum based on nationalist understandings of national culture (specifically, Traditionalist positions on curriculum) is ideological and stands in direct opposition to the stated mission of the university to serve as a site for the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge. My position that in order to become a critic of ideology one must acknowledge and embrace one's multiple and complex social identities

will necessarily oppose the position that knowledge is objective. However, it is my intention not to advocate a position whereby the only two possible alternatives are universalism or relativism. And thus, I am aiming to outline the conditions under which we can engage in ideology critique with intellectual integrity and epistemological significance.

B. The Concept of Ideology in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*

I begin with a careful evaluation of the genesis of ideology as a concept in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. I am focusing on the relationship between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, for I will attempt to show that it is Kant's rearticulation of this relationship that clears a theoretical space for the concept of ideology. Moreover, I will argue that the discussion of ideology that follows Kant, specifically in the work of Karl Marx and Karl Mannheim, continues to be framed in the terms set out by Kant, and, more importantly, that this fact results in the failure of both Marx and Mannheim to develop accounts of ideology whereby individuals can productively identify and critique what is ideological.

Working toward the conclusion that the mind is the lawgiver to nature, Kant begins the *Critique* with the dual assertion that understanding is necessary for experience and that understanding is governed by rules that exist prior to exposure to objects (Bxvii). Thus for Kant, what we perceive in the world is a function not primarily of

what is in the world (objects), but is instead a function of the structure of our minds (understanding). In fact, according to Kant, the possibility of experience itself is subject to the existence of understanding. While the ostensible aim of Kant's analysis is proof of the possibility and actuality of synthetic knowledge claims asserted *a priori* (that is, philosophically and metaphysically defensible knowledge of the world that extends beyond analytic truths), fundamental to his argument is the notion that our experience and thus our knowledge of the world are not contingent upon an objectively real world that exists independently of our minds, but rather are a function of the structure of our understanding.

Thus, when Kant claims that the mind is the lawgiver to nature, he is essentially claiming that we impute reality to the world. In so doing Kant has reversed the order of determination between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Rather than the object determining the knowledge of the subject, it is now the knowing subject that determines the object of knowledge. Yet, this language is not precise enough to convey Kant's meaning. To show that synthetic judgments known *a priori* are both possible and actual, to show that these judgments can be known with both universality and necessity, and then to claim that this is all true since the mind creates reality, would be epistemologically insignificant. For it would be trivial to claim that synthetic judgments are known *a priori* with universality and necessity if the justification for that assertion was simply that human minds actually construct reality and therefore, the judgments

of the creating mind are necessary and universal. Such an argument would be merely a complicated restatement of a tautology. What I assert about the world is necessarily and universally true, and known *a priori*, since the *world* is composed of nothing more than what I assert.

Kant, however, does not claim either that the observing subject creates the world, or that without observing subjects there is no reality. He sets up the problem by comparing metaphysics with mathematics and physics in particular, and the sciences in general. The sciences, Kant claims, have been able to achieve necessity and universality in their claims since they have worked from the presumption that objects conform to our knowledge of them. He states: "They [Galileo, etc.] learned that reason has insight only into that which it produces after a plan of its own, and that it must not allow itself to be kept, as it were, in nature's leading-strings, but must itself show the way with principles of judgment based upon fixed laws, constraining nature to give answer to questions of reason's own determining"(Bxiii). Thus, Kant contends, reason must bring something *to nature* (Bxiv). The fundamental existence of nature is not dependent upon the existence of the perceiving subject.

However, Kant also states that the insistence upon the assertion of an independently existing reality will make it impossible ever to have knowledge of the unconditioned, that is, knowledge not based on experience. He states: "Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects"(Bxvi). But, he claims, if we assumed that objects conform to our knowledge, then it would be

possible to have knowledge of those objects *a priori*, as things in themselves. Only by rejecting the idea that knowledge conforms to objects, and proceeding with the idea that objects instead conform to our knowledge of them, to our concepts, can we ever assert synthetic knowledge claims *a priori* with necessity and universality.

The problem here is in understanding how Kant can conclude that we must give up on the idea that there is such a thing as an independently existing reality, as he maintains the significance of his method for generating synthetic judgments asserted *a priori* with universality and necessity. Granted, if one rejects the existence of an independent reality, one avoids the inevitable logical contradiction between holding that claim and attempting to generate knowledge claims asserted *a priori*. If one retains the idea that objects determine concepts or knowledge, then one needs experience to generate knowledge; therein the possibility of knowledge claims asserted *a priori* is impossible. If one asserts instead that objects conform to our knowledge of them, we can then assert knowledge claims with universality and necessity *without* having experience of those objects.

According to Kant, the objective unity of nature is nothing more than the objective reflection of the subjective unity of consciousness. So, from the mere fact of the subjective unity of consciousness, we can deduce the objective causal necessity of all things in nature. Without the subjective unity of consciousness, the teaching of the *Critique* is either epistemologically trivial, or leads us to epistemological

skepticism. The objective reflection of the subjective unity of consciousness gives our knowledge necessity and universality.

However, is there any epistemological significance to these knowledge claims asserted *a priori* as a result of the mind being the lawgiver to nature? This is certainly an important and interesting question: has Kant done more than to restate a complicated tautology? While the answer to this question is not central to my project, what is important to my argument is the theoretical apparatus framing the question. I am interested in two related problems raised by this assertion. In claiming that the mind is the lawgiver to nature, Kant has essentially rearticulated the relationship between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. First, I am concerned here with how, theoretically, this rearticulation clears a space for constructing the beginning of an account of ideology. And second, I am concerned with Kant's resolution of the significant theoretical difficulties raised by the assertion of reason imputing law to nature; specifically, I am referring here to Kant's assertion (but ominous omission) of a universal theory of mental activity.

I am going to take up these questions in inverse order since I am arguing that once Kant changes the order of determination between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, it is his failure to demonstrate the existence of a universal psychology that makes it possible to begin to construct a theory of ideology.

In the "Preface to the First Edition" of *The Critique of Pure Reason* Kant discusses the two parts of the "Deduction of the Pure

Concepts of the Understanding”(Axvi). The first concerns the objects themselves of the pure understanding and is designed to explicate the objective validity of the *a priori* concepts of the pure understanding; the second concerns the subjective aspect of the pure understanding itself, a theory of mental activity. Kant, in distinguishing between the objective and subjective deductions claims that while the former is essential to his argument, the latter is important though not essential. However, the subjective deduction is essential to the argument in the *Critique* since the theory of mental activity which explicates the cognitive faculties of the pure understanding is the cause of the objective validity of the *a priori* concepts of the pure understanding. That is, the only way for Kant to explain the synthetic unity of the manifold is by relying on a psychological description of what the mind actually does. Kant realizes that the subjective deduction is central to his argument, though he attempts to conceal that fact since he knows that the centrality of such a theory of mental activity detracts from the significance of the objective deduction.

So, for Kant to assert that the mind is the lawgiver to nature, without an accompanying universal theory of mental activity, would be an exceptionally radical and chaotic claim. However, that claim is nowhere near as radical as it seems to be since in no way does Kant acknowledge that there is even a possibility that all minds do not work in the same way. That Kant accounts for the possibility and the actuality of knowledge claims asserted *a priori* with universality and necessity, is fully dependent on the unstated claims to a universal

psychology, or theory of mental activity. Without the universal psychology, the claim that the mind is the lawgiver to nature generates anything but knowledge claims asserted *a priori*. However, it is this very claim that I am interested in, for it is this aspect of Kant's rearticulation of the relationship between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge that begins to clear a space for conceiving of ideology.

Refusing to presume either that the subject and object do not come into contact, or that the object exists only through the perception of the subject, Kant instead asserts that it is the subject's faculty of judgment that organizes the world. He is trying to develop an account of the nature of the contact between the subject and the object. And it is precisely his framing of the epistemological problem in this way that makes it possible, in fact necessary, to conceive of ideology. That is, once we accept Kant's assertion that it is a knowing subject, with its faculty of judgment, that organizes the material world, then it is no longer possible to conceive of value-neutral representation of that world. Now, Kant attempts to circumvent this multiplication of meaning by asserting not only that the mind is the lawgiver to nature, but that all minds govern reality in the same way. That is, he claims that each knowing subject's consciousness is constructed identically to every other knowing subject's consciousness, so that the objective reflection of the subjective unity of consciousness truly does generate the objective necessity of knowledge claims asserted *a priori*.

However, it is also Kant's framing of the problem in this way that leaves subsequent discussions of ideology, based on an exploration of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, functionally defective. What I want to argue here is that the discussion of ideology, specifically in Marx and Mannheim, is stalled in the terminology set out by Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The problem of ideology begins in its depoliticized form in the *Critique* and while both Marx and Mannheim shift the focus away from the purely epistemological to the politicized epistemology inherent in any theory of ideology, Marx and Mannheim retain the terminology of the paradox set out by Kant. In this assertion, Kant has focused on the knowing subject's encounter with the object of knowledge in a way that foregrounds the subject's structure of consciousness in the creation of knowledge claims. Without rejecting the existence of reality, and without claiming that the perception of the subject is what makes objects real, Kant has prioritized the knowing subject over the object of knowledge; rather than the object being the most real thing against which we measure our various knowledge claims, the source of knowledge claims (and the objective necessity of those knowledge claims) now rests in the mind of the knowing subject. This is central to an understanding of ideology since, in a sense, once one accepts the implications of the mind imputing law to nature, one can no longer conceive of value-neutral representation, of knowledge claims that are not dependent upon the structure of the perceiving mind.

However, this formulation of ideology is paradoxical in that it leaves no room for evaluation, no methodology for determining which representations, which knowledge claims, are accurate and which are ideological. Of course, Kant avoids this paradox entirely by claiming that there is a universal psychology, thereby guaranteeing an epistemological climate free from competing claims about nature, about social reality. In this sense, the analysis of ideology in the *Critique* is purely epistemological. It describes the way in which knowledge claims possess universality and necessity and resolves any potential tension in discriminating among competing knowledge claims by appealing to the universal structures of human judgment. In this regard, Kant's account then has nothing to do with ideology. He does not claim to be discussing the social determination of thought. In fact, much of Kant's analysis seems designed to resolve the very epistemological problem I contend it raises. If we accept Kant's analysis, complete with the assertion of a universal psychology, we no longer are forced to contend with the problem of ideology. Not only does the problem of evaluation disappear, on this account there actually is no such thing as ideology. There is no distinction between thought which is socially conditioned and thought which is a real account of reality.

However, Kant's analysis does in fact raise the problem of ideology, whether he intended it to do so or not. While the *Critique* is certainly a tremendously significant and interesting piece of work, it would be naive to accept the teaching of the *Critique* without some

critical response. While the assertion that we can assert knowledge claims *a priori* with universality and necessity, and the argument designed to show this assertion, are both intensely complex and interesting, there are significant theoretical problems in Kant's analysis. As I have discussed above, the fact that Kant's analysis relies on a universal psychology raises serious theoretical difficulties for the entirety of his argument. The fact that Kant does not begin to discuss a theory of mental activity³⁴, and the fact that the assertion of such a universal psychology is patently false³⁵, leaves the epistemological problem unresolved.

Kant has at this point, in a sense, proved too much. He begins with nothing other than the premise 'I am conscious' and shows how, by appeal to universal categories, we can produce one consistent and philosophically defensible world-view. However, what he does not show is that *that* world-view is the only consistent world-view. Thus the Kantian conception of knowledge and its justification leads precisely to the problem I am raising. Kant's analysis is thus central to the argument here since Kant answers the question: how can I justify knowledge?, but ignores the fact that the methodology he describes to produce and justify knowledge can and will lead to logically consistent, but different and competing world-views. That Kant has attempted to

³⁴See Robert Paul Wolff's *Kant's Theory of Mental Activity* for a defense of the claim that there is a theory of universal psychology implicit in the argument of *The Critique of Pure Reason*.

³⁵We know simply from an examination of human accounts of reality that there is no operational universal structure of human judgment. The range of conflicting yet internally consistent reports emerging from war zones is one of the most compelling examples of this fact.

solve the epistemological problem by rearticulating the relationship between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, that he has essentially reversed the order of determination in that relationship, and then, that he attempts, but fails, to complete the deduction leaves the relationship between the subject and object up for consideration. It is here that we can begin to see the possibilities for developing an account of ideology. In Kant's failure to solve the old epistemological problem of justification of knowledge claims, he has articulated another interesting epistemological problem: the problem of ideology. Moreover, regardless of intention, in his attempts to solve the initial problem by rearticulating the relationship between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, his analysis leaves us with the problem of ideology understood in terms of this rearticulation.

Thus, the doctrine in the *Critique* does not include an evaluative position on ideology; that is, Kant only goes so far as to say that while what we experience is governed by our understanding, each individual governs experience according to the same laws - there is a universal psychology governing the synthesis of the manifold. However, Kant does reject implicitly the idea that we are objective, neutral observers describing our experience of the world; he substitutes for this idea the assertion that our understanding imposes an order onto the world, that our consciousness determines our experience. In so doing Kant's analysis makes it impossible to consider any description of the world value-free, or independent of the mind of the observer. Once Kant makes this move, we are positioned to consider

the possibility that there is more than one structure of consciousness, that there are, in Kant's language, alternative laws given to nature that vary according to the mind that is ordering nature. Clearly Kant does not entertain the idea that there are such multiple laws imputed to and thereby governing nature in competing, or at least different, ways.

So, while Kant's *Critique* provides the conceptual framework for the understanding of ideology as an order that we (reason) impute to the world, it does not provide the conceptual terminology necessary to judge some ways of ordering as false, fundamentally duplicitous, and instrumental in oppression (i.e. as ideological) and other ways of ordering as true, essentially correct, and necessary to the task of identifying repressive authoritarian structures of domination. That is, Kant's introduction of the possibility of recognizing thought as socially determined does not include anything that would allow us to engage in evaluation of socially determined thought.

C. The Concept of Ideology in Marx's *The German Ideology*

But the tendency of German Idealism after Kant was to get swept up into articulating the different systems of ideas. This kind of inquiry completely sidesteps the problem of evaluation I contend is raised by Kant's conclusions. Marx's theory of ideology, as critique of the Young Hegelians, sets out from this point. As there is much scholarly debate over what exactly is the definitive formulation of Marx's conception of ideology, I will here discuss what are recognized as two distinctly

different Marxist conceptions of ideology, the first most clearly articulated in *The German Ideology* and the second extracted from the theory of commodity fetishism in *Capital* Book One. Again, I am concerned to show that each of Marx's formulations of ideology is unsatisfactory since each fails to provide a method for engaging in ideology critique; furthermore, I will argue that it is largely because each formulation of ideology is framed in terms of the Kantian reversal of the relationship between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, that each formulation excludes the possibility of ideology critique.

In *The German Ideology* Marx states: "Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life process. If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life process"(Tucker 154). This is perhaps the most famous passage on ideology in *The German Ideology* and in it are contained all of the elements of Marx's early version of ideology. At the most general level, one can explicate this text to mean that according to Marx, all consciousness is socially determined. Marx states: "Consciousness is, therefore, from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all"(Tucker 158). That is, our thought, the contents of our consciousness, is conditioned by social reality. However, Marx's articulation of the theory of ideology in *The German Ideology* is much

more specifically a critique of idealism and a theory of materialism. Therefore, to construct the theory of ideology it is necessary to explicate both the critique of idealism and the premises of the materialist method.

In constructing his account of dialectical or historical materialism in opposition to idealism, Marx contends that in the satisfaction of the first material need is the first historical act. From the satisfaction of this need follows the production of new needs, the satisfaction of which is the beginning of history (Tucker 155-58). Thus, the materialist conception of history traces all forms of consciousness to the basis of all history: production and its various modes. Marx states: "Men have history because they must *produce* their life, and because they must produce it moreover in a *certain* way: this is determined by their physical organisation; their consciousness is determined in just the same way"(Tucker 158). In this respect, the materialist conception of history and consciousness is diametrically opposed to the idealist conception of history and consciousness. History is the activity of people determined by material production; consciousness is the result of people actively engaged in the reproduction of their material life. For the materialist, the foundation of thought is the activity, the modes of production, of actual people. The premises of the materialist method are thus clear and, more importantly, tangible. That the premises of the materialist method are tangible and identifiable further distinguishes materialism from idealism, and thus from ideology.

According to Marx, the Young Hegelian idealists are therefore the prototypical ideologists since they have failed to grasp the true relationship between German philosophy and German reality. That is, the Young Hegelians do not correctly understand the connection between their thought and their material conditions. Actually, they do understand what they believe to be the relationship between consciousness and material existence, though according to Marx, their understanding is upside-down. For the Young Hegelians, ideas, as opposed to real men and their activities, are the most real things. Ideas are the foundation of material reality. The German idealists are ideologists because their understanding of the world is upside down; ideology is an upside down understanding of the world. Idealism is now, on Marx's view, tantamount to ideology.

The idealist conception of history and consciousness is therefore allegedly ideological since it stands the real (materialist) relationship between consciousness and material existence on its head. Rather than philosophy ascending from earth to heaven, the idealist philosophy descends from heaven to earth. Thus, the idealists have no real material basis for any of their ideas. There are no clear and tangible premises from which to proceed with the idealist method. All idealist concepts are, according to a materialist conception of history, essentially empty. There is no concrete backing for anything expounded by the Young Hegelians; their thought is the epitome of vulgar idealism. For this reason, Marx identifies the Young Hegelians, and other mainstream German philosophers, as ideologists. Their thought is

ideological since it is upside down, as in the *camera obscura*: rather than recognizing the dependence of consciousness on material conditions, the German ideologists contend that it is consciousness that determines material conditions.

However, I am interested in this analysis to explore the ways that political conditions of choice and agency turn on different theories of ideology, as epistemological theories. In this sense I am following Marx's appropriation of the term from Destutt de Tracy. Where Destutt de Tracy at the close of the eighteenth century used the term *ideology* to mean a science of ideas, Marx participated in the transformation of that meaning to one with pejorative connotations. For Marx, *ideology* now described "a collection of representations characteristic of a given epoch and society" (LeFebvre 60). Thus, Marx identifies idealism with ideology because of the socially and politically coercive aspects of idealist thought. Idealism is itself ideological because it represents empty, meaningless concepts as the most real things. In so representing empty concepts, idealist philosophy successfully obscures the real (oppressive) conditions of material existence, and thus conceals the real basis for liberation (communist revolution) with false philosophic liberation.

Ideology then is false consciousness which in reversing the real order of reality presents what is false and unverifiable (the ideal) as the most real; in so doing, ideology obstructs access to truth. What is worse, since ideological conceptions of the world are idealist, and by definition the idealists lack a concrete method for verifying the veracity

of claims, there is no clear method for recognizing the ideological as ideological. If idealism is ideological because it stands the real relationship between consciousness and material conditions on its head, then materialism is the antithesis of ideology since it correctly represents the relationship between consciousness and material conditions. Materialism however is not simply an alternative to idealism, it is also an antidote to the ideological. Because a materialist conception of the world takes as its premises the concrete activity of actual people engaged in production in its various modes, where the idealist can rely on nothing but idle speculation, the materialist has an advantage over the idealist since the materialist always can appeal to the concrete to justify his claims. For Marx, the scientific method of dialectical materialism is therefore not only *not ideological*, materialism is also itself a method for demystification.

However, while Marx asserts that the ideological is the ideal, and that dialectical materialism is the method for recognizing and critiquing the ideological, nowhere is there a sustained analysis to explain why materialism is not simply another kind of ideology. In representing idealism as a simple inversion of dialectical materialism, and in equating idealism with ideology, Marx has defined ideology as an inversion of the Truth articulated by dialectical materialism. However, Marx has not begun to explain why materialism has the exclusive reading of Reality. The theory therefore undercuts itself since on this account no one who holds ideological positions can recognize the content of their thought as ideological. Marx's theory of

ideology therefore reproduces the “I’m right, you’re wrong” conception of ideology.

Thus this formulation of ideology fails to leave any theoretical space for individuals to critique their own ideological positions. We are mystified and must wait for the vanguard of materialist intellectuals to deconstruct the ideological content of our thought. Lukács’ theory of imputed class consciousness is the most clear - and offensive - articulation of this argument. Certainly Marx did not intend such a failure. Marx identifies idealism with ideology because of what he takes to be the socially and politically coercive aspects of idealist thought. Ideology as idealism, in so representing empty concepts as the most real things, successfully conceals the real basis for liberation with false philosophic liberation. For Marx then the ability to identify and critique ideology is of central import to the concept. For, what possible sense could it make to maintain on the one hand that there is a distinction between thought that is ideological and thought that is not, whereby the ideological is false, perverse, and coercive; and to state on the other hand that there is no way for individuals to recognize or articulate the ideological structure of our thought?

But this is what Marx does in his analysis and critique of the German Idealists. According to Marx, the only way to explain the idealism of the Young Hegelians is by appeal to their material conditions. The Young Hegelians are idealists because of their material conditions; and therefore idealists are unable to avoid being idealists (and ideologists). Marx has created a theory of ideology whereby the

production of ideology is automatic, it is as automatic as the physical reality where images are inverted on the retina of the eye. Clearly, this presents a major problem for any theory of ideology critique since the representation of the world as upside down, the production of consciousness that is ideological, is inherent in the material conditions of the world. The materialist doctrine tells us that ideology is a false representation of the real conditions of active men and production. However, the materialist doctrine also tells us that because of the material conditions in which we live, we will always produce consciousness that is ideological. There is no escape unless we adopt the antidote to the ideological: dialectical materialism.

In so developing his account of ideology, Marx has made it definitionally impossible for dialectical materialism to be ideological. Since ideology is anything that denies the assertion that material conditions determine consciousness or denies the corollaries of that assertion, then dialectical materialism is automatically protected from the accusation that it is itself ideological. Essentially, Marx's early conception of ideology describes the reasons for why idealism is ideology based on the assertion of yet another real reality - the one articulated by dialectical materialism. However, Marx does not generate any adequate explanation of why his materialist account of reality is more true than idealist accounts. Marx's argument that ideology is idealist or false consciousness is doomed to fail since it situates one in the precarious position of standing on the alleged truth and calling down to the mystified that they will continue to be

mystified until they recognize the truth generated by dialectical materialism.

For this reason, this particular definition of ideology is unsuccessful in providing a method for ideology critique that can be carried out with epistemological significance and intellectual integrity. On this understanding of ideology, critique is leveled only at thought that is idealist. Thus, Marx's early conception of ideology does little to advance meaningfully the solution to the epistemological problem of evaluation. While Marx offers an intricate theoretical justification for the identity of idealism and ideology³⁶, there is no complex or interesting meta-account of the evaluation of thought that would, apart from the characteristics of idealism, define idealism as ideology and materialism as an antidote to ideology. Marx, in an exceptionally complicated manner, begs the question: what is ideology? ³⁷

Furthermore, Marx's assertion that dialectical materialism generates the truth about social reality reproduces the problem raised by Kant's analysis. Marx, in showing that dialectical materialism yields a coherent view of bourgeois capitalist society does not show that the critique of capitalism is the only coherent world-view articulated by materialist analysis. Case in point: Patricia Hill-Collins in her essay

³⁶Much of that account is contained in Marx's later works, particularly *Capital*, though there is scholarly dispute as to whether the account of ideology in *Capital* is sufficiently different from the account in *The German Ideology*. In what follows below, I will take up these questions in detail.

³⁷In all fairness to Marx, it is not clear that he was setting out in *The German Ideology* to define a complex general theory of ideology. However, since this idea of ideology as false consciousness informs much contemporary theory of ideology it is essential to address the early version of ideology *as a theory* of ideology, whether Marx intended it to be so or not.

"Toward An Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology" and Nancy Hartsock in "The Feminist Standpoint" both generate coherent world-views by employing a materialist analysis of social reality. However, these world-views are inconsistent both with Marxist accounts of social reality, and with one another. Hartsock and Collins each begin with the assertion that material conditions determine consciousness. Hartsock claims that all women living in Western class societies have a common experience that yields a unique perspective on social relations between men and women, a perspective that, by definition, men do not have access to. Collins goes one step further than Hartsock and argues that Black women living in the United States have a unique set of experiences, and thus an epistemic vantage point, on social relations between Black women and people of all races that is again not available to anyone but Black women. Thus while Hartsock's and Collins' analyses are both decidedly materialist, they yield different accounts of social reality. We see Marx here shying away from the logical extension of his own argument: that if experience is fundamental to knowledge and subjectivity in any way, then different experience must lead to significant differences in knowledge and subjectivity.

In this account of ideology Marx has taken a clear position on the relationship between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge: the object conditions the consciousness of the subject, material conditions determine consciousness and not the reverse. In this regard then Marx has reversed the Kantian order of determination between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Where Kant argues

that the mind, the faculty of judgment conditions the object of knowledge, Marx contends that it is material conditions themselves that determine the consciousness of individuals. Thus, Marx's theory of ideology is a response to the shortcomings of the idealist position on consciousness. Marx reversed principles fundamental to idealists, such as, that "the spirit or consciousness is conceptually, and for some, even temporally prior to matter"(Parekh, "Marx's Theory of Ideology" 3)³⁸. However, even given this reversal of Kant's reversal, Marx's theory of ideology still fails to provide a successful method for ideology critique.

D. The Concept of Ideology in Marx's *Capital*

According to many Marxist theorists (among them John Mepham, Terry Eagleton, Henri LeFebvre, Norman Geras, Nicholas Abercrombie), there is contained in *Capital* a later, more comprehensive, more theoretically sophisticated concept of ideology. Eagleton states: "Note that whereas in the *German Ideology* ideology was a matter of not seeing things as they really were, it is a question in *Capital* of reality itself being duplicitous and deceitful"(*Ideology* 87). Eagleton continues by contending that this new theory of ideology in *Capital* is superior since whereas before (in the *German Ideology*) ideology was equivalent to "idealist speculation, it is now given a secure grounding in the material practices of bourgeois society"(87). Furthermore, this new theory of ideology avoids the theoretical

³⁸"They [idealists] deny matter not only ontological primacy, but also any form of ontological reality or 'being'"(Parekh, "Marx's Theory of Ideology" 3).

problems encountered in the account of ideology in *The German Ideology* since in *Capital* ideology “is no longer wholly reducible to false consciousness”(87). According to the account of ideology in *Capital*, falsehood is due to the structural effects of capitalism.

While there is some disagreement as to whether there actually is an account of ideology contained in the critique of commodity fetishism in Book One of *Capital*, I will begin by explicating the theory that allegedly is there. While most scholars agree on the fundamentals of the theory of commodity fetishism, there is disagreement as to whether within that theory there is actually a full blown account of ideology. Commodity fetishism refers to the systematic mystification of social relations. Marx states: “exchange-value [of a given commodity], generally, is only the mode of expression, the phenomenal form, of something contained in it, yet distinguishable from it”(Tucker 304). Thus, the social nature of the exchange of commodities (the phenomenal form) obscures the material nature of the relations between workers (the real relations).

According to John Mepham in his essay “The Theory of Ideology in *Capital*,” because of socioeconomic realities that make for a distinction between real relations and phenomenal forms, it is nearly impossible to recognize the true character of these relations. For example, the real relation of exchange of labour power is obscured by the phenomenal form of the wage. In this case, commodity fetishism is a systemic source of ideological consciousness since what is most real, the conditions of labour, is obscured by the socioeconomic form of

capitalism. So now the explanation for the existence of ideology is not in the intention or design of the bourgeois class, but is in the structure of bourgeois capitalist society itself.

The immediate question however is whether the theory of commodity fetishism, worked out from the distinction between appearance and reality, can give us a theory of ideology. Nicholas Abercrombie in his *Class, Structure, and Knowledge* remarks that if it were possible to construct a theory of ideology out of the theory of commodity fetishism then this later theory would be superior since “[i]nstead of a relatively crude image of a class imposing its beliefs on another class to suit its class interests, the theory of commodity fetishism points to a way in which ideological categories arise out of the capitalist mode of production itself”(89). However, Abercrombie remains skeptical as to whether there actually is a fully developed theory of ideology in the theory of commodity fetishism. He states: “[n]onetheless, so far I am arguing only that the theory of reification is incomplete. Either it is in need of further theoretical elements, or it is limited in its scope in that it applies most particularly to the social relations of production of capitalism very strictly conceived”(87).

Unlike Abercrombie who argues that the theory of commodity fetishism is incomplete as a theory of ideology, I would argue instead that the theory of commodity fetishism is an instantiation of a theory of ideology, but is not a theory of ideology in itself. Commodity fetishism is an example of a systemic force that produces a specific kind of ideological thought that functions in a specific way; it obscures the

social character of individual labour and results in alienation of workers, further preventing the possibility of workers recognizing themselves as a class, particularly in opposition to the recognition of the ruling class as a class. However, beyond its most general application in terms of conceiving of a distinction between appearances and reality, it is not itself a theory of ideology. Indeed, the formulation of the theory without the particular context of the commodity, that is, the formulation of the theory as a distinction between appearance and reality brings us no closer to a viable theory of ideology than the *German Ideology* version of ideology where ideology is simply idealism.

In order to assert that the *Capital* version of ideology actually exists one must answer the question: how does the theory of commodity fetishism explain ideological thinking that is not fetishistic? While Abercrombie is more willing to consider the limitations in application of the theory of commodity fetishism, Mepham is careful on several occasions to state that the theory of commodity fetishism is a general theory of ideology, with application beyond and outside of the socioeconomic categories in which it is framed.

However, this wider application is not at all apparent to me. For example, how does this theory of ideology explain the existence and mystificatory power of a certain bit of racist ideology, such as the assumption that every Black man in an expensive automobile is a drug dealer? The real relations and phenomenal forms of capitalism alone

cannot fully explain why we view some prosperous citizens as legitimately prosperous and hard working (White men in nice cars), whereas we presume that other prosperous citizens are criminals (Black men in nice cars).

There is a very general correspondence here between Mepham's reading of Marx's theory and the operation of racist capitalist ideology. There is a distortion of a *real relation* between individuals of different races that is expressed in what could be called a *phenomenal form*, the racist internal representation of Black men as gangster drug dealers. But if this is the upshot of the theory of ideology derived from the theory of commodity fetishism, then how is this significantly different from saying that *ideology* is a distorted view of what are the real social conditions? How is this any different from saying that ideology is an appeal to idealist conceptions that have no basis in material reality? This later Marxist theory still does not respond to many important questions. For example, who, on this account, is able to distinguish between the real and the phenomenal, between the accurate and the ideological? Moreover, how do we proceed to evaluate some views as ideological and others as non-ideological? What is the methodology for doing so?

Furthermore, it is unclear to me how it is, if we take Mepham's reading of the account of ideology in *Capital* to be a theory of ideology, that we are not falling into a kind of Marxist reductionism whereby the exploitation of capital is the explanation for all other forms of domination. The position Norman Geras takes in his essay "Marx and

the Critique of Political Economy" demonstrates this very kind of economic or materialist reductionism in this theory of ideology. Geras asserts (contra Althusser) that in a true socialist society there would be no ideology present since social relations would not be concealed by ideologies. Thus, the essence/appearance distinction which is fundamental to the critique of capitalism would, according to Geras, seem to be unnecessary to the "science of that [socialist] society"(301).

This assertion has got to be the most prototypical example of vulgar materialism going. To assert that ideology would not exist in a socialist society since social relations would not be concealed by any ideologies is to assert that the only social relations that can be concealed by ideologies are those that are concerned with material relations. Obviously this is erroneous. That commodity fetishism is a systemic source of ideological consciousness is true enough; however, there are all kinds of categories of ideological consciousness whose production cannot be explained by appealing to the appearance/reality distinction inherent in capitalist society. Recall the example I outlined above regarding the two rich men, one White and one Black, in fancy automobiles. It is impossible to explain the complexity of the assumption that the White man is a lawyer and the Black man is a criminal by appealing to the reality obscured by the appearance in the theory of commodity fetishism. How can the mystificatory power of the wage form explain the fact that White women walking alone at night are more likely to presume that a Black male passerby is dangerous whereas a White male passerby is not? Can the theoretical

machinery of commodity fetishism alone explain why a Black man in New York City cannot get a cab and a Chinese man can? All of these assumptions are characterized by a complex interaction of ideas and experiences of race, class, gender, and nation.

My point is clear. Commodity fetishism cannot possibly account for the myriad ways in which ideologies, theories that conceal real relations, are produced and employed. It seems indefensible to presume that first, the exploitation of capital is the explanation for all other forms of domination, and second, that ideology would not exist in a socialist society. Each of these conclusions relies on the distorted assumption that the only social relations that can be concealed by ideology are those that are concerned with labour and economics.

The theory of ideology derived from the account of commodity fetishism is however an advance from Marx's first formulation of ideology. Commodity fetishism is an example of a systemic force that produces ideological thought that functions in a specific way; it obscures the social character of individual labour and results in the alienation of workers, further preventing the possibility of workers recognizing themselves as a class in opposition to the ruling class. The account of ideology in *Capital* thereby responds to at least one of the major objections raised to the first formulation: namely, that it simply asserts the truth of one world-view by opposing it to an allegedly false world-view. Consequently, this later theory of ideology also avoids the ethically offensive and epistemologically indefensible position that

some people in the world can *see* ideology while the rest of us need to be demystified by vanguard intellectuals.

However, Marx has only compounded the problem of evaluation in this second formulation. While in the first formulation the production of ideology is automatic given the standpoint of the individual (all but revolutionary intellectuals), in this second formulation any knowing subject living under bourgeois capitalism will produce thought that is ideological. In some ways, Marx has returned the problem of evaluation to where Kant left it. Everyone in bourgeois capitalist society will think ideologically. Moreover, no one from bourgeois capitalist society will be able to recognize the *unreality* of this ideological consciousness. The notion of evaluation or ideology critique is now entirely paradoxical.

Moreover, in both formulations of ideology, Marx has attempted to disregard the complexity of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. The epistemic thickness of the encounter is lost when one accepts Marx's conclusion that the coercive conditions of capitalism pre-determine the ideological character of the knowledge claims produced by individuals living under capitalism.

E. The Concept of Ideology in Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*

I now turn to explore the development of the evaluative conception of ideology. I am particularly interested in the analysis of this development in Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*. I am

interested in Mannheim since, in his search for a theoretically sound evaluative conception of ideology, he appeals to the position of neutral observation - the ideology free sociologists of knowledge. I am interested in this move by Mannheim since it is representative of yet another strategy for responding to the ambiguity of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Rather than positing that the subject organizes the object, as Kant did, or that the object organizes the subject, as Marx did, Mannheim contends that *some* subjects can retreat to a safe distance from the whole encounter and observe the contact between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. From this position of alleged disengagement, the ideology free sociologists of knowledge can examine the contact and thereby evaluate the relative, or rather relational, truth of particular knowledge claims. After briefly explicating Mannheim's account of the development of the evaluative conception of ideology I will raise and respond to the theoretical difficulties in Mannheim's thought.

Mannheim contends that the current evaluative conception of ideology resulted from a progressively broader understanding of the concept viewed through several definitive stages and distinctions: the total versus the particular, the special versus the general, and finally, the non-evaluative versus the evaluative. Working towards the final distinction between the non-evaluative total general conception of ideology versus the evaluative total general conception of ideology, Mannheim traces the development of the concept.

The first distinction discussed by Mannheim is that between the particular and total conception of ideology. To subject only single and isolated ideas of one's opponent to ideological critique is to employ the particular conception of ideology, whereas to subject one's opponent's entire system of concepts to analysis is to employ the total conception of ideology. While Mannheim stresses throughout *Ideology and Utopia* the combative and destructive nature of ideology critique, it is the merging of the total and particular conceptions of ideology that makes ideology critique all the more devastating. Thus, while at the level of the particular, the analyst searches for mistakes in the thought process of the individual, employing the total conception of ideology suggests that the enemy's entire structure of consciousness is flawed, that everything the opponent thinks is infused with ideological content. Essentially, analysis with the total conception of ideology, is designed to show that the opponent's theories are invalid since they are "merely a function of the generally prevailing social situation"(Mannheim 69).

According to Mannheim, this total conception of ideology was first adopted by Marxist theory. Whereas Kant's analysis leaves us with the idea of consciousness in itself, with the subjective unity of apperception, and Hegel revises this idea by adding the notion of a historically changing subject (folk spirit or world consciousness), it is Marx who asserts that "the structure of society and its corresponding intellectual forms vary with the relations between social classes"(Mannheim 68).

Mannheim then makes a second distinction between the special total conception of ideology and the general total conception of ideology. In this case, acting in accordance with the special total conception of ideology requires only subjecting one's opponent's consciousness to critique. The general formulation on the other hand necessarily includes the subjection of one's own views to ideological critique. It is from the general formulation that the sociology of knowledge develops.

The final distinction Mannheim makes is between the evaluative general total conception of ideology and the non-evaluative general total conception of ideology. He contrasts this evaluative notion of ideology with what he calls non-evaluative models of ideology whereby "no judgments are pronounced as to the correctness of the ideas to be treated. This approach confines itself to discovering the relations between certain mental structures and the life-situations in which they exist"(80). According to Mannheim, it is only because of our uncertainty in the truth, and because of a socially disorganized intellectual situation, that it becomes clear that every point of view is particular to a given situation (84-85). Such an understanding of thought as entirely socially determined requires that we give up on the idea of absolute truth. It is as if the non-evaluative model is both a response to our inability to assert absolute truth, and an assertion of the impossibility of that task. The non-evaluative model then is actually indicative of another failure to respond effectively to what is fundamentally at issue in ideological conflict: the ability to judge, to

engage in ideology critique with intellectual integrity and epistemological significance. The non-evaluative model seems to say: we cannot find a way to say more than every view point is socially determined, we cannot find a way to say that one conception of the world is more or less correct than another; therefore, there is no way to make such evaluations. According to Mannheim (77-79), in order to get ourselves loose from this extreme relativism we must both separate ourselves from any particular social group and acknowledge the relational character of knowledge; that is, we must recognize that epistemology itself is enmeshed in a certain historical moment and that all knowledge is historical knowledge and can only be formulated with respect to the position of the observer.

Mannheim makes a curious move from here however. He argues that: "The transition to an evaluative point of view is necessitated from the very beginning by the fact that history as history is unintelligible unless certain of its aspects are emphasized in contrast to others"(94). Thus, there is no way to maintain a non-evaluative conception of ideology since once one sets out to study ideas, one realizes that such a study is incoherent unless that study includes evaluation, or judgment.

But as quickly as Mannheim addresses this transition from the non-evaluative to the evaluative formulation however, he retreats from the issue. Following his explanation of the genesis of the evaluative conception of ideology, he claims to have returned to a non-evaluative ideological analysis, asserting that "this, of course, is

due to [his] intention to discover an evaluative solution”(98). This maneuvering by Mannheim reveals fundamental contradictions in his argument as it (albeit unintentionally) reinforces the necessity of constructing a viable evaluative account of ideology.

Given Mannheim’s own reasoning that we move, nearly imperceptibly, from the non-evaluative to the evaluative formulations, it is unclear how, on his account, once we are situated in an evaluative position we can revert to a non-evaluative position. If the move to evaluation is actually automatic because of the unintelligibility of intellectual practice in the absence of a mechanism for evaluation, it seems impossible to shift back to the non-evaluative conception of ideology once the definitive step towards evaluation has been taken. Again, like Marx, Mannheim has undercut his own theory of ideology. Indeed, Mannheim’s assertion of the possibility of such a return to neutrality is essential to the possibility of the existence of the ideology free sociologists of knowledge. Without these neutral intellectuals, existing outside of any particular world view, Mannheim’s solution to extreme relativism - the relational study of ideas - is utterly untenable³⁹. If one rejects the possibility of the existence of such ideology-free intellectuals, and one accepts the total conception of ideology, then there would be no way to launch ideology critique since to do so would only confirm one’s ignorance and naiveté regarding the ideological structure of one’s own position.

³⁹He claims it is the dialectical process of history that caused the final transition to the evaluative conception of ideology. Mannheim repeatedly cites his own formulation of Kant’s conclusion that the mind is the lawgiver to nature (cf. *Ideology and Utopia* 65-67).

Consequently, rejection of the possibility of ideology free intellectuals is tantamount to the admission that one cannot meaningfully critique another's position.

What Mannheim is trying to do is to reject the idea that there is an absolute truth to measure all assertions against as a test for their ideological content, and yet, still maintain the theoretical space necessary to judge some views as ideological and others as not ideological. In other words, he is aiming to avoid extreme relativism by undertaking an evaluation of thought based not on absolute truth but on its relational truth. Where Mannheim goes wrong though is in asserting that this kind of relational evaluation can be executed by individuals who have returned to a position of neutrality - a position that Mannheim himself earlier asserts is impossible to maintain. Mannheim's argument is made more suspect by his cryptic assertions that it is possible only for some people (I'll leave aside that this must include Mannheim himself) - not all people - to achieve the standpoint of the sociologist of knowledge. Mannheim's analysis is therefore quite interesting in the question it sets out to answer; but the actual argument falls far short of offering a satisfactory or even coherent account of how such a relational evaluation of knowledge is possible.

One useful conclusion we can extract from Mannheim though is that it does us no good to assert that every viewpoint is ideological. That is, any non-evaluative conception of ideology is entirely unhelpful, and perhaps entirely uninteresting, to us. The claim that every viewpoint is ideological is epistemologically insignificant for it

leaves us no opportunity to judge any given theory or opinion as more or less ideological than any other theory or opinion. Mannheim I think is right to assert the intellectual incoherence of attempting to study ideas without any method for evaluation. But even Mannheim's ideology free sociologists of knowledge are unable to escape from the extreme relativism into which he has led himself.

This raises again what I take to be the central difficulty in Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*: once one acknowledges the total conception of ideology - that is, that the intellectual orientation one has toward the world is not disinterested, it is rather, value laden - then the concept of ideology loses its critical power. From this standpoint, the notion of critiquing ideology is epistemologically insignificant since there is no position from which to stand on one's principles and to call another set of principles ideological. Essentially, at this point everything is ideological. Mannheim's attempt to circumvent this conclusion by claiming that certain intellectuals (himself included) can set themselves free of any particular group (258-9) and undertake the activity of new sociologists of knowledge (non-ideological epistemologists actively engaged in the process of the "continuous expansion of knowledge"(106)) is incoherent given his own assertion of the necessity of evaluation to the intellectual process.

Moreover, even given any particular individual's will and desire to achieve a neutral standpoint, there are social and historical conditions that make it nearly impossible, even for aspiring ideology-free intellectuals, to reach non-ideological truth. Surely Mannheim

himself would have to acknowledge that there are social and historical conditions (to which truth is bound) that make it nearly impossible, even for the so called ideology-free intellectuals, to generate any meaningful, non-ideological truth. For example, Noam Chomsky has argued extensively, and most recently in his *Manufacturing Consent*, that capitalist control of media in the United States makes it nearly impossible to produce an ideology-free understanding (or any understanding whatsoever) of the current situation in East Timor. In his *Covering Islam* Edward Said similarly concludes that Western journalism consistently misrepresents everything Islamic resulting in an American fiction called "Islam" which is differently employed by Western and Islamic governments, typically to the continued misrepresentation and exploitation of individual Muslims. Thus we can see that fundamentally, Mannheim's assertions of the possibility of neutrality are unreachable, notwithstanding the fact that there is more at issue in the process of reaching for neutrality than Mannheim acknowledges.

F. The Possibility of Ideology Critique

In the consideration of these various theories, what I would call metatheories, of ideology, I am struck by the theoretical impossibility of ever successfully engaging in ideology critique, especially given that the ability to recognize what is ideological is central to the coherence of ideology as a concept. In this concluding section then I want to address

two questions: first, what is it about these theories of ideology that makes it impossible ever to engage in ideology critique?; and second, what is ideology, and how can we understand and employ the concept in a way that makes ideology critique possible?

In the *Critique*, the mind of the subject is the lawgiver to nature. That is, reason imputes an order to nature. Now, while Kant subverts the problem of ideology by asserting that there is a universal psychology, a universal theory of human mental activity, governing the imputation of order to reality, I have argued that the proof of such a universal psychology relies on an unprovable empirical assumption. What is more, by empirical verification we can see that there is no such universal psychology, no universal structure of human judgment. Because such a universal psychology is unverifiable, we are left only with Kant's idea that minds are responsible for the structuring of reality. If minds are responsible for structuring reality and it is not the case that all minds work alike, then different minds can and will structure reality in different ways. If different minds structure reality in different ways then there will be different, and potentially competing, accounts of what really constitutes reality. Enter the concept of ideology. To review however, on Kant's theory there is no methodology for discovering which reality is more real or accurate than any other. Kant does not even address this difficulty since his assertion of the universal psychology negates the possibility of there being in the first place multiple accounts of reality.

In reflecting on Kant's overall project in the *Critique*, we can see how he was trying to close the epistemic space between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. It is on the ambiguity of this space that I wish to focus however since it is here that the possibility of ideology critique lies. In place of the obscurity in this encounter, Kant has inserted an explicit claim that the mind organizes matter and an implicit claim that all minds organize matter in the same fashion. So, essentially, as soon as Kant raises the problem of ideology he explains it away by his appeal to a universal psychology.

Now Marx's critique of ideology begins as a critique of idealism and as such swings fully to the doctrine of dialectical materialism. Ironically, it is Marx's failure to take into account the complexity of the dialectical relationship between the knower and the known that results in his failure to develop a useful theory of ideology. In the end, Marx fails to give those of us who are mystified, who do not recognize the false ideological nature of our consciousness, who are unable to distinguish between the real relations and the phenomenal forms, the conceptual terminology to identify and critique and revolutionize that consciousness.

What is worse is that according to both the early and later Marxist conceptions of ideology, individuals living under capitalism will automatically produce thought that is ideological. The only people who can identify that thought as ideological are those who have sufficiently distanced themselves from bourgeois capitalism through the study and practice of dialectical materialism. Even the proletariat,

who stand to gain most from the apprehension of Marx's critique of capitalism, can develop class consciousness only through the assistance of a Marxist intellectual. On the later formulation of ideology, it is not clear that anyone living under the conditions of class society responsible for the production of ideology is capable of evaluating that knowledge. The systemic sources of ideological consciousness are built into the very structures of capitalism, and thus there is no work to be done in examining the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. That work is finished before it is begun since according to Marx's theories of ideology, all thought produced under capitalism is ideological.

Mannheim, after surveying the history of the concept of ideology concludes that we behave as if we had a viable evaluative conception of ideology. In fact, Mannheim concludes that it is impossible for us to study the history of ideas and that it is impossible for us to consider the multiplicity of ideas around us without evaluating those ideas. Thus, his so-called retreat from evaluation is, on his theory, impossible to undertake. This impossibility alone clues us into the significant theoretical difficulty of the assertion of the ideology-free intellectuals. Such a position is clearly impossible to adopt.

However, Mannheim proceeds with his analysis, arguing that although ideas have a relational quality, that ideas are shaped by the social and historical conditions in which they are produced, this fact alone does not have to lead to extreme relativism. Mannheim argues

that ideology-free sociologists of knowledge can choose to assume a position of observation outside of a particular social/historical epoch. And from this vantage point of neutrality, the sociologists of knowledge can survey the relational specificities of ideas and their social origins, and then can proceed to evaluate the relative ideological content of any particular idea or set of ideas. For Mannheim, only the ideology-free sociologist of knowledge has the capacity to generate critiques of ideology. The sociologists of knowledge gain this ability by recognizing the relational character of all knowledge claims and preventing themselves from becoming enmeshed in any social realm.

We can see however that Mannheim's analysis is still arrested in the attempt to transcend the disorder of the interaction between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Mannheim, in his assertion of the existence of ideology-free sociologists of knowledge, is trying to get a grip on that encounter that both Kant and Marx failed to achieve. And here we have the beginnings of an answer to the first question I posed. While Kant opens the discussion of ideology by challenging the nature of the epistemic space between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, both Marx and Mannheim attempt to resolve the tension and ambiguity inherent in that epistemic space.

And thus it is my conclusion that any understanding of ideology based in the attempt to surpass the dialectical relationship between the subject and the object of knowledge is doomed to fail since any understanding based on controlling the epistemic space here leaves little or no room for meaningful ideology critique. Marx and

Mannheim each construct theories of ideology critique whereby the critique of ideology originates from a remote standpoint; the site of ideology production has no bearing on the formulation of the critique. These kinds of metatheories of ideology are inherently paradoxical then since they all point to a failure to recognize the real, but leave no theoretical mechanism for distinguishing the real from the ideological; they thus leave no mechanism for critiquing ideology.

Nevertheless, their failures are instructive. I would hope that my critique here will direct us to confront the complexity and the accompanying ambiguity of the epistemic space between any knowing subject and object of knowledge. It is from this encounter that curricular Traditionalists attempt to evacuate. The critique of ideology takes place from within the complexity of that interaction between the knower and the known. Any attempt to side with one half of the dialectic or to transcend the dialectic altogether destroys the contradictory dynamism of what seems to be a much more accurate description of the nature of our knowledge claims. We are, as knowing subjects, constantly in a state of affecting and being effected by the objects of our knowledge. Therefore, it is essential for us to undertake the evaluation of all knowledge claims (both ideological and non-ideological) from the position of engaged observer within the dialectical relation between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. As I will argue in the next chapter, if we accept that experience is fundamental to the production of our knowledge, then

we must also accept that experience is fundamental to the evaluation of that knowledge.

Where does this leave us regarding an account of ideology that makes it possible to engage in ideology critique with intellectual integrity and epistemological significance? It does no good to develop a logically coherent concept of ideology whereby ideology critique is possible but intellectually vacuous. I take it that the critique of Mannheim's appeal to becoming an ideology-free subject is the only potential starting point for developing a coherent theory of ideology. Mannheim reaches for the position of neutrality from the cusp of a bold assertion: that the fact that ideas seem to be shaped by the social and historical conditions in which they are produced does *not necessarily* have to lead us to a position of extreme relativism. It is here that Mannheim makes the wrong move though. In order to remain in dynamic contact with the dialectical relationship between the objective contingency of knowledge and the construction of our consciousness, we must remain positioned. In absolute opposition to Mannheim, I assert then that the full awareness of oneself as positioned towards a set of ideas as a gendered, classed, raced, nationalized and highly intellectual being is where the only hope lies for meaningful ideology critique.

From within that epistemic space between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge lies the possibility of the meaningful evaluation of ideas and sets of ideas, of the critique of ideology. For only from within this epistemic space is it possible to begin to see

ideology, to see the tight theoretical or practical connections between seemingly unrelated ideas, claims, or practices. This is a notion of ideology and ideology critique grounded in practical political awareness and struggle. Political awareness and struggle give us the occasion to consider the ways in which we are positioned towards various ideas and practices; rigorous multicultural education encourages students to confront the epistemic complexity of intellectual history. In the following chapter I will argue further that rigorous multicultural education provides additional opportunities for students to develop, in opposition to nationalist education, the different aspects of their own identities. Thus rigorous multicultural education does not seek to help students to transcend the accidents of their existence, but instead to delve into that contingency; this process however is expressly not for the sake of forming students according to stagnant nationalist (or racist, misogynist, homophobic, etc.) identity classes, but is instead aimed at cultivating the complexity of individual identity for the sake of enabling students to share in the ideal of the university, to become critics of ideology.

My conclusion is thus diametrically opposed to the position of the curricular Traditionalists, who argue that once firmly situated in the neutral standpoint achieved by proper instruction, students can properly study the disciplines in the humanities. From this standpoint of neutrality it is impossible to engage the complexity or ambiguity of the epistemic space between the knower and the known; and it is the apprehension of this complexity that makes it possible to adjudicate

among competing accounts of reality by assessing the status of relations between apparently disparate claims and practices. The Traditionalist curriculum is thereby responsible for sustaining the perpetuation of ideology since it teaches students to evacuate their subjectivity and address the objects of knowledge (be they the history of ideas or events, creative expression, theories of social or political relations, assessments of aesthetic quality, etc.) from a neutral or objective standpoint. And it is because the Traditionalist position on curricular reform is embedded in nationalist ideology that it seeks to force students out of the particularities of their subjectivity and to force texts out of the subjective particularities of their production (in Bloom's language: out of the accidents of their existence) and into the standpoint of alleged neutrality.

Contradictions seem to provide the occasion for recognizing that neither the ideal nor the material can be privileged or escaped in our analysis of ideology. In this way I hope to reset the conditions for real debate in the academy. Both universalism and relativism are unacceptable positions in an institution that is supposed to be the site for the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge.

CHAPTER V

BECOMING A CRITIC OF IDEOLOGY

A. Introduction

Having concluded that any theory of ideology according to which it is impossible to engage in ideology critique is epistemologically unsatisfactory, I now wish to consider the possibilities for ideology critique. While it is certainly beyond the scope of the dissertation to formulate, argue for, and defend yet another metatheory of ideology, it is nevertheless essential that I invoke the concept in my analysis of academic nationalism. Moreover, the critique of Kant, Marx, and Mannheim necessarily points to an alternative notion of ideology critique, and therefore, to an alternative notion of ideology. My aim in highlighting a theory of ideology critique focused on an exploration of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge is to reconfigure our received notions of both ideology and ideology critique. Thus, I use the term ideology critique to refer to the process whereby the theoretical or practical connections between seemingly unrelated claims or practices are made explicit through rigorous analysis. Furthermore, as I have explained in Chapter One, essential to my understanding of ideology is that it is central to the maintenance of coercive power structures. And therefore I use the term ideology in reference to claims or practices that

support coercive power structures as they purport to be for the sake of some neutral or noble cause. This is the notion of ideology I have invoked in Chapters Three and Four to identify the Traditionalist curriculum as ideological. This is also the notion of ideology I am working from as I conclude the argument of the dissertation in this chapter with my final explanation and defense of the claim that nationalist education is antithetical to the stated mission of the university.

I have claimed that teaching students to be sharp critics of ideology is central to the stated mission of the university to serve as a site for the pursuit of truth and sharing of knowledge. While Mannheim is right to conclude that inquiry without evaluation results in intellectual incoherence, his proposal that evaluation should take place from a neutral standpoint is fundamentally mistaken. The following discussion of ideology critique, and the relation between ideology critique and nationalist education, is an attempt to reject Mannheim's calls for neutrality and to consider at least one aspect of the epistemic space between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. It is my aim then in this final chapter to defend the claim that nationalist education in the humanities undermines the process of teaching students to be critics of ideology. Furthermore, I will argue that a decidedly non-nationalist multicultural education offers the possibility of developing heterogeneous group identity without the deleterious consequences invariably brought forth by nationalism.

B. The Evaluation of Socially Situated Knowledge

My first task then is to answer the question: under what conditions is it possible to become a critic of ideology? Mannheim, as I have discussed, argues that in order to become critics of ideology we should strive to be ideology free sociologists of knowledge, unsituated observers. It is my position however that this cannot be the route to becoming a critic of ideology because of the underlying contradiction implicit in this notion. To accept that knowledge is dependent upon the social/historical conditions under which it appears, to accept essentially that knowledge is dependent upon experience, and to claim that experience obstructs the evaluation of that knowledge is contradictory. If it really is the case that knowledge is dependent upon the social and historical conditions under which it is produced, then it is impossible to excise from the process of evaluation the impact or contribution of social and historical conditions. That is, the relevance of the conditions under which knowledge claims are produced must also impact the relevance of the conditions under which knowledge is evaluated. In this sense, once one accepts the role of experience in the production of knowledge, the notion of objective observation or evaluation is untenable.

However, the construction of the terms in this analysis of evaluation is deceptive since objectivity (or neutrality) is imagined as the only standpoint from which to evaluate ideology. But in this regard, the very notion of objectivity is incomprehensible since it refers

to the evaluation of knowledge claims, which are dependent in important ways upon experience, without any impact of experience. This is an incoherent notion since the claims of evaluation are also knowledge claims produced under, and thus somewhat dependent upon, the prevailing social and historical conditions. Therefore, it is contradictory to assert, as Mannheim does, both of the following claims: first, that knowledge claims are dependent upon the prevailing social and historical conditions; and second, that proper evaluation of those claims can be undertaken only from an "ideology free" standpoint, the standpoint of one not influenced by any prevailing social and historical conditions. One may not consistently hold both claims.

It seems to me then that Mannheim goes wrong not when he recognizes and acknowledges the relational quality of knowledge - that the truth of all knowledge claims is relative to the social and historical conditions under which they are created. Once we acknowledge this quality of knowledge claims we are relieved of having to engage in stale scripted debates about objective reality and who has access to it. Mannheim thus retains the most useful component of Kant's legacy: the notion that knowledge is, in an important sense, socially constructed. Mannheim also preserves the central elements of Marx's theory of knowledge, not merely that knowledge claims are dependent upon the prevailing social and historical conditions, but also that different individuals (depending upon their standpoint) have differential access to the evaluation of those claims.

I also think Mannheim is right to assert that the critic of ideology must be able to examine the relational veracity of knowledge claims relative to the social and historical conditions under which they are produced. But, this is where my thought departs from his. Mannheim aims to accentuate the relational quality of ideas without descending into relativism; his method for doing so is to posit the existence of the ideology-free sociologist of knowledge. This person travels freely among the many different social and historical conditions that produce knowledge claims and sets of knowledge claims (ideologies); the sociologist of knowledge, because he is tied to no social and historical conditions, can evaluate the relational veracity (the best kind of evaluation possible) of any knowledge claims.

Mannheim is wrong though to claim that to evaluate successfully one must undertake evaluation from the standpoint of disinterested observer. It is my contention instead that in order to examine the relational veracity of knowledge claims one must do so from within the social/historical conditions under which the knowledge is created. That is, it is my position that in order to become a critic of ideology one must become an engaged and situated analyst.

I believe this position is superior to Mannheim's since it countenances more accurately the relationship between the production of knowledge and the evaluation of knowledge claims. Once one accepts the upshot of Kant's and Marx's theories of consciousness and the production of knowledge, it is no longer possible to assert that knowledge is produced without significant impact of consciousness

and of social/historical/economic conditions. Once this claim is established, then it would be contradictory to assert that the evaluation of knowledge claims should be (let alone whether it could be) undertaken from a neutral standpoint, a standpoint untainted by the influence of human consciousness or prevailing social and historical conditions. This assertion is tantamount to requiring, for the purposes of evaluation, the exclusion of the experience central to the production of knowledge. This is not merely an absurd proposition, it is also intellectually incoherent to claim both that the production of knowledge is dependent in important ways on the experience of the subject *and* that the claims asserted by that subject must be evaluated by an individual who has successfully purged himself of all the particularities of human experience.

In this way then the position that evaluation of knowledge claims must originate from a situated and engaged observer successfully avoids the standard criticisms of epistemologies that require neutral or dispassionate observation. For example, many feminist theorists, among them Uma Narayan and Patricia Hill Collins, have taken to task arguments in favor of objective evaluation. In her essay "The Project of Feminist Epistemology: Perspectives From a Nonwestern Feminist" Narayan rejects positions favoring neutrality since these positions often encode arguments that obscure and are complicit with misogynist ideology. In "Toward An Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology" Patricia Hill Collins generates a more sustained critique of positivist epistemologies that result in arrogant

perception of the experience and ideas of Black women in particular and Black people in general. Collins argues for an alternative epistemic position, one that can successfully countenance the experience of Black women. Setting out from the assertion that all knowledge claims exist within a knowledge validating process, Collins claims that positivist methodologies for evaluation are characterized by the absence of emotions, the assumption that ethics and values are inappropriate in any evaluation process, and the position that the evaluator should maintain clear distance between himself and the object of evaluation (*Toward* 95). Collins proceeds to explain why such tenets could not possibly be part of the groundwork of an Afrocentric Feminist epistemology, primarily because Afrocentric and Feminist traditions take as fundamental that concrete experience is the criterion of meaning. Adopting concrete experience as the criterion of meaning permits subjectivity between the knower and the known, allows for the use of dialogue (central to both Afrocentric and feminist traditions) in assessing the veracity of knowledge claims, and is consistent with ethics of caring and personal responsibility (*Toward* 96-102).

Collins' and Narayan's critiques of neutrality and objectivity in evaluation are grounded in intellectual and political histories of resistance to and liberation from coercive regimes of power and domination. As such, these critiques are essential to my own attempts to formulate an analysis that exposes a fundamental contradiction between the stated mission of the university and prevailing pedagogical structures within the university. Ultimately, it is my

position that the nationalist underpinnings of the traditional curriculum significantly vitiate the effort to teach students to think critically, to be critics of ideology. In this sense then, my attempt to expose this contradiction is motivated by my belief that the perpetual failure to teach students to be critics of ideology is closely associated with the concomitant experience of many individuals and groups of social, political, and economic disenfranchisement. Therefore, these critiques of neutrality and objectivity are relevant to my own attempts to present an account of evaluation grounded in practical political awareness and struggle, an account that corresponds to the experience of individuals and groups resisting oppressive domination and engaged in active transformation of their social conditions. It is my aim to distinguish this account of evaluation grounded in practical political awareness from theories of ideology geared towards transcending the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge; to do so, I will be focusing on the complexity of that epistemic space rather than attempting to close it altogether.

Central to both Narayan's critique of neutrality and Collins' Afrocentric Feminist epistemology are a variety of factors relating to the specificities of the encounter between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge. Narayan, for example, critiques the notion of neutrality as she problematizes the concept of epistemic privilege. Narayan argues that while she is sympathetic to many of the claims made by standpoint epistemologists, she wants to avoid two correlative claims. These are first, that those who are differently located socially

can never attain some understanding of or sympathy with others unlike them; and second, that just because ontologically plural subjects are compelled to occupy different contexts does not imply that they can or will use that potential in a positive or liberatory manner (Narayan 264). In so arguing, Narayan exposes important qualities of the epistemic space between the knower and the known - qualities fundamental to the task of evaluation and critique. Rather than retreating from the complexity of the encounter, Narayan balances the necessity of taking experience into consideration in the process of evaluation against resisting the tendency to think about only the perspective of individuals who actually share in the specific experience under consideration.

Collins also situates the theory of an Afrocentric Feminist epistemology within the encounter between the knower and the known. Collins argues that an Afrocentric Feminist Standpoint is suppressed by the twin anomalies of Black and female inequality. Establishing an Afrocentric Feminist Standpoint requires concrete knowledge of Black women's realities. But because women of all races and Black men are faced with social, political, and economic inequality in comparison to White men, the experiences of Black women are more often than not obscured by racist sexist ideologies and practices. The discourse of the "Welfare Queen" is a prime example of such an ideology and practice that distorts the experience of Black women⁴⁰. Therefore, Collins argues, it is essential to the process of evaluation, of

⁴⁰See Wahneema Lubiano, "Black Ladies, Welfare Queens, and State Minstrels: Ideological War by Narrative Means."

ideology critique, that we adopt the tenets of an Afrocentric Feminist Standpoint. That is, we must take concrete experience to be the criterion of meaning. Doing so distinguishes Afrocentric Feminist epistemology from positivist approaches that are based upon alleged objectivity. The so-called objectivity of positivism however is illusory, Collins asserts, since all knowledge claims exist within a knowledge validating process and thus the claims of positivists are evaluated by “neutral” experts who occupy the same standpoint of the positivists. In so arguing, Collins establishes the role of experience in the designation of knowledge claims as true or false, and she offers a complex method for beginning to critique with integrity the knowledge claims arising within communities that are systematically marginalized by dominant social, political, and economic systems. Collins’ theory stands firmly within the ambiguity of the epistemic space between the knower and the known.

However, the epistemic position Collins advocates is not impervious to critique. Collins’ work is representative of a significant theoretical advance over early standpoint epistemology of the type articulated by Nancy Hartsock in “The Feminist Standpoint.” In that groundbreaking essay Hartsock outlines the contours of feminist epistemology, based upon the notion that a feminist standpoint is a theoretical tool for opposing all forms of domination. Hartsock claims that women have epistemic privilege as a result of being exposed to male domination, and therefore that women can occupy a feminist standpoint, a unique epistemic position that provides a correct vision

of phallocratic domination from a standpoint unavailable to men.

The notion of a feminist standpoint however has been subject to critique on the grounds that, in general, it leads to the conclusion that knowledge claims can be evaluated only by those who are similarly socially situated. More specifically, Hartsock's assertion of a feminist standpoint has been subject to scrutiny since she lays aside differences among women (differences in race, class, sexuality, religion, etc.) to conclude that there are some aspects in common to all women's lives in Western class societies (Hartsock 163-64). For example, in her essay "The Theoretical Subjects of *This Bridge Called My Back*," Norma Alarcón argues that feminist standpoint epistemologists "have substituted, ironically, woman for man" (358) and that this has resulted in the tendency to deny differences among women if those differences threaten the "common denominator" category *woman* (359). In other words, Alarcón exposes the ways in which feminist standpoint theory is as exclusive in the construction of the category *woman* as standard androcentric epistemologies are in the construction of the category *man*. *Woman* is as unsuccessful in its exclusion of many women as is *man* in its exclusion of some men and all women. Thus Collins' contention that there is an Afrocentric feminist standpoint is a definitive advance over Hartsock's myopic apprehension of women's experience; Collins' theory includes as central to the feminist standpoint that systems of racial domination have produced a common experience and thus a common epistemic standpoint among Black people (Collins 95). Thus Collins' theory does more to account

for differences among women that are relevant to the production and evaluation of knowledge.

However, the pitfalls of standpoint epistemology are equally problematic for Collins as they are for Hartsock. Hartsock claims that there is a central and undeniable experience of women (regardless of race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.) that places all women in a standpoint, a unique epistemological and ontological relationship with the rest of the social world. This standpoint is inherently liberatory since women (and only women) can see the ways in which standard accounts of reality are really only descriptions of appearances that actually function to distort perception of the real nature of reality.

Collins complicates this account by including the impact of experience specific to Black people, thereby responding to what can be seen as the White feminist solipsism of Hartsock's theory. However, the basic theory of standpoint epistemology remains unchanged in Collins' account. It is still the case according to Collins' epistemology that a certain group of people, simply on the basis of identity, are afforded differential, or special, access to social reality. And therefore, Collins' theory also leaves us in the predicament where only those who are similarly located socially can evaluate the knowledge claims we produce. This critique of standpoint epistemology only becomes more devastating once we accept a complex view of social identity. Once we recognize that the category *woman* grossly overgeneralizes the experiences of females, we are pressed towards increasingly specific designations of social identity and thus of epistemic similarity. The

consequence is the increased production of special knowledges accessible and intelligible only to those who experience the social world in precisely the same way.

Thus feminist standpoint theory tends either to deny difference in order to capitalize on the notion of a common women's oppression, or to elevate the impact of identity on the production of knowledge to the point where only an individual with identical experience can with integrity evaluate the knowledge claims produced by any given person. While standpoint epistemology offers an alternative to Mannheim's problematic insistence on neutrality and denial of the impact of experience in the production of knowledge, criticisms of the theory still stand. I am claiming however that my contention that evaluation must originate with an engaged and situated observer can as successfully avoid the pitfalls of arguments for neutrality as it can avoid these serious criticisms of standpoint epistemology. To avoid the standpoint epistemologist's descent into impoverished identity politics and still retain in evaluation the emphasis on the experience under which knowledge claims are produced, requires that I complicate the notion that knowledge claims should be evaluated from within the social and historical conditions under which they are created.

C. Nationalist Definitions of Social Worlds

The idea that social worlds are complex and discontinuous has enjoyed a certain popularity in contemporary feminist theory.

However, this notion was expressed prior to the recent advent of “world” talk in feminist theory by W.E.B. DuBois in his famous work *The Souls of Black Folk*. Here DuBois claims that the experience of Black people in America is one of duality, of being caught between two different worlds, one Black and one White. The consciousness of the Negro (sic.), argues DuBois, is characterized by a corresponding split between being at home or at ease in a Black world and violently oppressed in a White world. DuBois viewed this phenomenon of double consciousness as exceptionally painful and destructive for Black people, as it was indicative of the state of race relations in the United States at the time of writing.

In recent feminist theory however, particularly in the work of Gloria Anzaldúa and María Lugones, the related notions of ontological plurality, mestiza consciousness, the plural self, and the overlapping existence of social “worlds,” are understood as potentially liberatory facts of existence for Latinas, Chicanas, Lesbians, and other individuals confronted with the necessity of traveling among and between disparate social realities. Lugones begins the development of her theory of “worlds” in the essay “Hispaneando y Lesbiando: On Sarah Hoagland’s *Lesbian Ethics*.” Here she argues against simple lesbian separatism for the sake of rendering meaningless heterosexist reality, since this act would entail rendering meaningless communities that are central to her existence as a U.S. Latina lesbian. In so arguing, Lugones theorizes that she embodies a plural self, a self which cannot be fully animated in either of the two communities (or “worlds”) in

which she finds herself: la cultura Hispana Nuevomejicana and the predominantly White realm of lesbian separatists.

Lugones further develops the idea in her “Structure/Antistructure and Agency Under Oppression” where she argues that liberatory oppression theory must take into account the fact that many oppressed people occupy several cultures, worlds, or realities. Drawing on Victor Turner’s distinction between structure and antistructure, Lugones argues that dominant cultural ideology tries to tell us that structures of existence are complete and coherent, and that therefore, our selves should be complete and unitary. But for Lugones it is not the case that structures of existence are complete and closed; this is why Lugones chooses the term *antistructure* to describe our conditions of existence. For Turner, antistructure is characterized by liminality, by “the phase between separation and reaggregation”(Lugones “Structure” 506), and while Lugones retains some of his terminology she is more interested to conclude that “liminal states are social states, just as much as structural states are”(507). Thus, Lugones asserts that the experience of oppressed people (in this case, victims of ethnocentric racism) is one of moving between and among social states, structures, antistructures, and limens.

One consequence of this metaphysical multiplicity is a corresponding plurality of selfhood, an ontological plurality that permits individuals so situated to travel (sometimes joyfully, sometimes painfully) between worlds. Thus Lugones claims in her essay “Playfulness, ‘World’-traveling, and Loving Perception” that “[a]

'world' need not be a construction of a whole society. It may be a construction of a tiny portion of a particular society. It may be inhabited by just a few people. . . a 'world' may be an incomplete visionary non-utopian construction of life or it may be a traditional conception of life"(395). In so arguing Lugones is attempting to stretch our received notions of what a culture or a society is composed of. In place of the idea that the social world is constructed by clearly distinguishable entities (for example, by geographical designation - continent, nation, state, city, borough, neighborhood, etc.), Lugones produces an image of ultimate complexity and multiplicity of social contexts. It is upon this rubric of ontological plurality and metaphysical complexity that Lugones builds her accounts of oppression, resistance, and liberation.

Similarly, as I work to define and defend the claim that only from the standpoint of engaged and situated observation can an individual successfully undertake the evaluation of knowledge claims, the critique of ideology, I also have to complicate the notion I draw upon - historical and social conditions - to explain my position. I have argued, like Mannheim, that knowledge claims should be evaluated from within the social and historical conditions under which they are produced. I have distinguished my position from Mannheim's however by asserting that such evaluation must be engaged in by a situated - not neutral or detached - observer. And thus I am left with the notion that the critique of ideology is only possible for individuals somehow situated in the social and historical conditions under which

the ideology in question is (or was) produced. Thus, I have to complicate the idea that knowledge claims should be evaluated from within the social and historical conditions under which they are created. Drawing on the work of Lugones and Anzaldúa, I want to say that historical and social conditions are continually overlapping. Therefore it is false to say that there are distinct or purely defined social and historical conditions. Thus the description of social and historical conditions I am appealing to is somewhat analogous to Lugones' notion of "worlds" and the ways in which "worlds" exist both in isolation from one another and in contact with one another.

The social and historical conditions under which knowledge claims are produced are ultimately complex and multiplicitous. This is a fact that nationalism attempts to conceal. Through careful manipulation of national cultural icons, media, official history, the political process, and national identity, nationalism tells the story of a nation's ineluctable progress towards definition, sovereignty, or dominance. Central to the coherence of these stories is the eradication of any idea, event, individual, or group inconsistent with the process of what nationalism takes to be the nation's destiny. And so we see in the United States, Quebec, Algeria, and Hawai'i the attempts to sanitize and homogenize various manifestations of culture and identity. Thus nationalism functions to conceal the ultimate complexity and overlap of social and historical conditions.

For example, nationalist ideology in Hawai'i rejects the task of analyzing sexually violent hate crimes perpetrated by Native Hawaiian

men against light-skinned women. To begin to understand these crimes requires that one engage both histories of colonial domination and histories of male violence against women. Nationalist ideology then, in cases such as these, fails to permit sustained analysis of the situation. Moreover, nationalist ideology perpetuates the perception of social and historical reality as falsely divided into discrete social worlds sharing nothing but borders. That is, nationalist ideology in Hawai'i and the United States makes it impossible to consider both the operation of sexist misogyny in the Hawaiian sovereignty movement and the impact of colonialism on social relations between men and women in the United States. This is only one example of the mechanism whereby nationalism constructs the social world as divided into discrete realms. Linguistic purity initiatives in the United States and Quebec undertake to erase the complexity of linguistic identity, and thus of racial or ethnic identity, present within the national borders. Here again nationalism falsely constructs the social world. Despite nationalist efforts to suppress the myriad ways in which different social realms encroach upon one another, the social (and thus historical) worlds in which people live and create knowledge claims are ultimately complex and heterogeneous.

If this is the case, then it is fundamental for individuals to be critics of ideology that they have a sense of overlap in "worlds," in social and historical conditions, and thus in intellectual traditions and ideologies. To evaluate successfully the claims coming from any social and historical conditions one must comprehend those systems. The

conception of social reality I am working from therefore has serious consequences for knowledge, and thus has political consequences for the theory and practice of education.

D. Multicultural Representations of Intellectual History

How is it possible though to apprehend the complexity of social and historical conditions under which knowledge claims are produced, especially when many individuals, because they do not occupy positions of subordination in the social world, are unaware of the multiplicity of “worlds”? On Lugones’ and Anzaldúa’s theories, people who are forced to animate plural selves - people who experience at least one form of social oppression in their lives - are also forced to experience the social world as multiple and complex. But what of individuals so situated as not to be confronted with the complexity of social contexts? This is an especially relevant question for my thesis since I am directing my analysis specifically at university level humanities curriculums in the United States, and the majority of students in these degree programs possess some sort of social power (be it drawn from class, race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, etc.).

There are many ways of getting within the social and historical conditions under which knowledge is created, the most obvious being to live the social and historical conditions under question. However, this is not the only way to apprehend social and historical conditions. If one were to hold this position then one would have to concede that

no one could ever judge knowledge claims created in social or historical conditions that were not one's own. This is obviously an absurd position that becomes incomprehensible once one recognizes the complexity of social and historical conditions. The primacy of apprehending social and historical conditions through lived experience notwithstanding, I am concerned here to consider the relationship between the apprehension of social and historical conditions and intellectual training in the university. While there are obviously other ways of apprehending these conditions, I am focusing on the ways in which intellectual training can impede or expedite such apprehension. If it is the case that study without evaluation generates intellectual incoherence, and it is also the case that claims must be evaluated within the social and historical conditions under which they exist and are created, it is essential to establish which pedagogical conditions make possible this apprehension.

To apprehend those systems through intellectual training requires that the intellectual training correspond to the complexities of social and historical conditions. Thus rigorous multicultural education is the only kind of institutionalized education - other than having the experience of social and historical conditions other than one's own - that makes it possible for individuals to apprehend unfamiliar social and historical conditions. Moreover, rigorous multicultural education may be the most effective way for ontologically unified individuals to become familiar with the complexity of social reality, and thus intellectual reality. It is this

apprehension that is fundamental to the evaluation of knowledge claims produced outside of one's social and historical conditions. Therefore it is central to the intellectual development of individuals that, for example, they be given the opportunity to apprehend social and historical conditions other than their own so that they will be able to evaluate knowledge claims with intellectual and ethical integrity.

I want to be clear though that this is not simply a call for students to be exposed to social and historical conditions other than their own. Of course, this is exactly what I am arguing for. However, I am arguing not for a simple "taste of the world" attitude whereby students are exposed to, for example, "African-American cultural traditions" or "Asian-American literature." These are the very exercises in "diversity training" that reproduce homogenized (and often nationalist, racist, homophobic, or anti-Semitic) versions of cultural and intellectual manifestations. What I am arguing for is a fundamental transformation in the way that we, as educators, represent intellectual history to our students. The continued representation of intellectual history according to nationalist understandings of intellectual production impedes the process of students becoming critics of ideology. It forces students to become situated in one intellectual tradition without a sense of the relationship between that tradition and others. In so doing, such a presentation of intellectual history undermines the process whereby students become conscious of the ultimate complexity of social and

historical conditions, of the existence of a complex of overlapping “worlds” that constitute reality.

For example, to teach about the process whereby Hawai‘i became first a territory and then a state within the national purview of the United States, and to expect that students will be able to adjudicate successfully among the diverse accounts of that period in United States’ history (as well as contested contemporary narratives of Hawai‘i’s history of statehood), requires that the curriculum be responsive to the complexity of social and historical conditions under which ideas were produced and are produced about those events in history. So, on my theory, it is not the case that we should not teach the so-called DWEM’s (dead White European males) since theirs is the intellectual justification of colonization, annexation, and oppression. In fact, on the theory that I advocate it is essential to teach, for example, colonialist literature on Cook’s adventures and triumphs in the strange tropical land known as Hawai‘i. Alongside of the colonialist literature it is necessary to teach, for example, Haunani Kay-Trask’s *From a Native Daughter*, and to include explanations of the 1993 Congressional resolution apologizing to Hawaiians for the United States’ role in overthrowing the Native Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. It is essential to do so since to evaluate the disparate set of knowledge claims about Hawai‘i one must have an opportunity to apprehend the social and historical conditions under which those ideas were and are produced. To most non-Hawaiians or non-Pacific Island specialists, these social and historical conditions are unknown. Inquiry into

contemporary Hawaiian politics will certainly yield conflicting explanations of poverty, development, and tourism. However, it is the apprehension of the conflict that is essential to evaluation. As I have argued earlier, preventing students from engaging the complexity of social and political reality only reinforces falsely purified nationalist conceptions of personal and group identity, social reality, and national culture. Again, apprehension of this contradiction is not for the sake of achieving objectivity. This is for the sake of providing students the necessary means to becoming situated and engaged analysts, critics of ideology.

E. Ideology Critique and The Practice of Freedom

I can now return to the question I set out to answer at the outset of this chapter: why does nationalist education undermine the process of teaching students to become situated, engaged observers and agents, critics of ideology? As I have argued in Chapter Three, students educated in seamless intellectual traditions impervious to critique (for example, the Western Rationalistic Tradition and the European Tradition taught to the exclusion of all other intellectual traditions) are intellectually impaired as concerns the necessary resources to draw upon in the process of critiquing ideology. Students so educated lack instruction in the methodology of meta-critique - the critique of the theory behind the intellectual system in which one is engaged. Additionally however, students educated in seamless and nationalist

intellectual traditions lack the necessary material to draw upon to adopt a critical standpoint. Nationalist education prevents students from becoming multiply situated and therefore prevents students from becoming critics of ideology. The failure to push students towards becoming multiply situated diminishes the possibility of their being able to recognize the theoretical and practical connections between seemingly unrelated claims or practices. This is so since the production and evaluation of knowledge claims is contingent upon engaging the complexity of the epistemic space between the knower and the known. Individuals with broader access to these many and diverse epistemic spaces will therefore be better prepared to bring their knowledge and experience to bear on the task of ideology critique.

The idea I am defending is that to permit the development of critical consciousness pedagogy must stand definitively against nationalism. I mean by this that the epistemology underlying the pedagogy must correspond to the complexities of social and historical reality. Thus the pedagogical approach must take into account the connection between the complexities of identity, the complexities of social and historical conditions, and the oppressiveness of nationalism as a political and ideological movement that attempts to subvert the complexities of identity and of social and political conditions. The epistemology that follows from nationalist theories of political reality is necessarily impoverished, thin, and brittle. Nationalist ideology tells a story about the universal identity of the citizens of the nation, about invasions or threats of invasion by foreigners, individuals who do not

meet the imagined criteria for citizenship. In so doing, nationalist ideology constructs distinct “worlds” of social, historical, and political reality and history. These “worlds” are the nationally defined communities, the nations. The politics of nationalism require that all aspects of social reality correspond to the purity and homogeneity of the imagined national community. And thus, the “worlds” imagined by nationalist ideology and policy are distinct, pure, autonomous, etc. Nationalist “worlds” refuse to admit the reality of ontological plurality, of mestizaje consciousness, of the border dweller. And therefore, the kind of intellectual training that treats social and historical conditions as if they too are distinct, pure, and autonomous is indicative of nationalist imaginings of the “world.”

I am thinking here of Edward Said’s term “worldly,” of Gloria Anzaldúa’s conception of the Borderlands, of María Lugones’ “worlds,” W.E.B. DuBois’ color line, etc. In this way then the conception of a social world that I am working from is fundamentally different from nationalist imaginings of the “world.” I have discussed concrete examples of some of these differences in my explanation of the dialectical relationship between national identity and national culture. Nationalism, as the sentiment mediating between identity and culture, creates as its by-product the nationalist conception of the “world.” For example, the conception of Hawai’i as a tropical paradise filled with lovely hula hands is fundamentally distinct from, but just as inaccurate in its description of Hawai’i as is the notion perpetuated by some Hawaiian nationalists that all White people (the haole) are responsible

for the destruction of the island and are therefore rightfully subject to violence from native Hawaiians⁴¹. The case of language use in Quebec is another instructive example. In this situation, the “world” of Quebec constructed by the Parti Quebecois (and others) is defined in stark contrast to the rest of Quebec. Any deviation from this nationalist imagining is attributed to the work of foreigners or deviants, illegitimate occupants of the “world” so conceived by nationalist intention. Nationalist constructions of the linguistic “world” in Quebec refuse to admit the presence of Vietnamese people, Sudanese people, etc. and their respective linguistic codes. The ramifications of these nationalist refusals can be devastating for individuals who do not possess the proper traits for national citizenship.

So when I claim to be operating under a different set of assumptions about the characteristics of social, historical, and political conditions, about the characteristics of “worlds,” I am not appealing to fanciful metaphysical notions without any corresponding examples in the observable world. I am referring to concrete realities. I am referring to the fact that despite all news reports to the contrary, Algeria is not fully populated by Muslim fundamentalists. There are secular Muslims in Algeria. Moreover, at the time Fanon wrote *The*

⁴¹ This claim stands in the discourse of Hawaiian sovereignty even though Native Hawaiians are classified as such by the Federal Government as those individuals with fifty percent or greater blood quantum and by various Native Hawaiian groups as those who self-identify as Native (Trask 70-71). Thus, individuals with fifty percent or greater white blood quantum could be both the individuals seeking Native rule and the individuals responsible for the colonization and destruction of Hawai'i's Native culture.

Wretched of the Earth there were bourgeois Algerians who operated according to significant alliances to and allegiances with the retreating French colonizers.

In asserting an alternative conception of a “world” in opposition to nationalist fantasies I am responding to the realities of multilingualism and multiculturalism in the United States. These facts of diversity in language and culture are not descriptive merely of the combination of different people and social structures in the United states; bilingualism and multiculturalism are descriptive also of individuals themselves. That is, the kind of diversity, pluralism, and multiplicity that I am referring to is not merely the result of mixing together a variety of people monolingual, monocultural, and different from one another. This diversity is also the result of diversity within individuals: cultural, linguistic, ethnic, racial, religious diversity within individuals. And it is this specific diversity that nationalist campaigns such as the English Only Movement attempt to suppress.

I am confident that the alternative conception of social reality I am arguing for corresponds to the experience many people do have of social reality. Many have argued however that the experience of “double-vision” brought forth by ontological plurality is not necessarily liberatory. For example, Uma Narayan in her essay “The Project of Feminist Epistemology: Perspectives From a Nonwestern Feminist” asserts that just because ontologically plural subjects are compelled to occupy different contexts does not imply that they can or will use that potential in a positive or liberatory manner; thus, she claims, neither is

ontological plurality necessarily a positive condition. I do not mean to discount the claims of Narayan or others like her who find the characterization of ontological plurality as “playful” (Lugones) or revolutionary (Anzaldúa) to be crude and offensive to the many individuals who report as painful the experience of being forced to occupy the social world as border-dwellers and “world”-travelers. It is not my intention to contribute to further romanticization of the experience of individuals compelled to negotiate complex identities and complex arrangements of social worlds, especially when ontologically plural individuals are subjected to arrogant perception and a corresponding lack of agency in some of those “worlds.” It is instead my intention to respond to the ontological realities with which we are confronted and to attempt to understand the epistemological consequences of those ontological realities. Specifically, I am concerned with the ways in which the realization of the stated mission of the university is contingent upon the recognition of and response to the complexities of identity and social reality. And thus while I am well aware of the pitfalls of “double-vision,” it is clear that in that experience there is much to be gained as far as insight into the epistemic space between any knowing subject and object of knowledge.

Finally, while the ability to critique ideology seems to me necessary for the university to achieve its announced mission of serving as a site for the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge, the ability to practice ideology critique has consequences far beyond the reach of the university. The ability to critique ideology is a necessary

condition for action which can meaningfully be said to be chosen, a necessary condition for freedom. This kind of freedom can be characterized as an ability to act without compulsion, without ignorance, and without coercion. I am concerned here with what Aristotle describes as voluntary action. Aristotle states: "the voluntary would seem to be that of which the moving principle is in the agent himself, he being aware of the particular circumstances of the action"(Barnes, *Nicomachean Ethics*, III:1, 1111a24). I am interested in Aristotle's account of action since he suggests that freedom and self-determination are not the result of objective detachment from political community (Mannheim's thesis), nor are they the result of submission to a predetermined set of political principles (nationalist formulation). Freedom and self-determination are rather the result of the capacity for choice, for meaningful decision. This account of voluntary action is strikingly similar to Marilyn Frye's position on coercion in her *Politics of Reality*. She states: "The structure of coercion, then, is this: to coerce someone into doing something, one has to manipulate the situation so that the world as perceived by the victim presents the victim with a range of options the least unattractive of which (or the most attractive of which) in the judgment of the victim is that act one wants the victim to do"(*Politics of Reality* 56). Therein Frye presents another description of the conditions necessary for meaningful choice: the ability to see manipulation. One cannot see either manipulation or liberation from a nationalist perspective, from a perspective that

refuses to recognize the complexities of social reality, the multiplicity and impurity of social worlds.

Moreover, non-nationalist multicultural education opens the possibility of developing heterogeneous group identity that avoids the pernicious tendency to purify brought forth by nationalism.

Nationalist versions of culture and identity project themselves forward in time to precast the contours of the nation. In so doing, nationalism falsely prefigures the characteristics of national culture and identity. One consequence of this predetermination is the cultivation of falsely pure and homogeneous constructions of national identity and culture. Two examples are the fictitious accounts of national linguistic history outlined by the English Only Movement and the spurious national intellectual past valorized by experts such as Bloom, D'Souza, and Searle.

The advent of perpetual evaluation, persistent critique of ideology, stands in direct opposition to the nationalist tendency to predetermine falsely homogeneous constructions of national culture and identity. Therefore, the implementation of non-nationalist multicultural education offers more than the opportunity for individuals to share meaningfully in the ideal of the university. Tenacious and prevalent ideology critique stands to make possible the continual contestation and creation of national identity and culture, offering perhaps the possibility of developing heterogeneous group identity that does not devolve into nationalist, racist, sexist, etc., definitions and proscriptions.

Such a process appears to be at work in the Native Hawaiian Plebiscite, a mail-in vote that began on 15 July 1996 and continues through 15 August 1996. In this case, the ballot asks only one vague question of the 85,000 Native Hawaiians: "Shall the Hawaiian People elect delegates to propose a Native Hawaiian government?" The composition, political platform, and jurisdiction of such a Native Hawaiian government have intentionally been left undecided and undefined by the various groups supporting different conceptions of Native Hawaiian sovereignty⁴². If the coalition of organizations supporting different versions of Native sovereignty is able to maintain through persistent ideology critique the clash of different values and conceptions of Native identity, there is a chance that Native Hawaiians can create a sovereign heterogeneous national community grounded in the continual struggle over conceptions of national identity and culture. That is, there is a chance of avoiding the pernicious reification process put in motion by nationalism through the practice of widespread ideology critique.

One of my primary intentions has been to explore the ways in which political conditions of choice and agency turn on different theories of ideology, as epistemological theories. The ability to engage in ideology critique is a necessary condition for voluntary action, it is a necessary condition for action that is not informed by coercion, it is a necessary condition for choice. It is essential, for individual and collective liberation, to make possible choice and voluntary action

⁴²See Carey Goldberg, "Native Hawaiians Vote in Referendum on Creating an Ethnic Government." *New York Times* 23 July 1996: A10.

characterized by an absence of compulsion and ignorance; when action comes from knowledge it can then be said to be voluntary.

Interrupting the process of automatic identification with the socially constructed categories of identity through multicultural education presents the possibility of reconstructing historically marginalized categories of identity. For this reason, the practice of ideology critique is not only central to the effective fulfillment of the mission of the university, it is essential to the human practice of freedom.

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