CULTURE, SCHOOLING, AND IDENTITY POLITICS IN POSTCOLONIAL SOCIETIES:

An Interpretive Ethnographic Inquiry into Marginalized Individuals' Cultural Experience of Schooling in France and Brazil

A thesis submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in Culture & Values in Education

(Social Anthropology of Education)

Samuel P. L. Veissière

Department of Integrated Studies in Education

Faculty of Education

McGill University

Canada

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 2. Literature Review (I)

CHAPTER 3 Literature Review (II). Methodology

CHAPTER 4. Encounters: A Tale of Two Fields

To all the fantasies that would have become real if they hadn't been crushed by the

identity-production machine...

To my brother Félix, languishing and surviving with strength and intelligence in the grey

production-factory. Hang on brother, you are almost there

A mon frère Félix qui se languit et survit avec force et intelligence dans l'usine de

production grise. Tient le coup mon frère, tu es presque arrivé.

Acknowledgements

Doing justice to all the people who impacted my life and contributed to the shaping of my epistemological, political and methodological convictions without which this inquiry couldn't have taken place is, alas, impossible. Like Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guatari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, I must acknowledge that I, as author, am multiple, and that there are many, many lives, voices, histories and memories that speak through me.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Ratna Ghosh, who, through critical dialogues and thoughtful guidance, was able to help me structure the chaotic labyrinth of my questions into a coherent body of inquiry, and, in Socratic tradition, was able to bring this project out of me. Thank you, Professor Ghosh, for your interest, erudition, and patience, for accepting my studentship on your sabbatical year, and for always responding promptly and thoughtfully to my demanding queries whether you were busy working in Montreal, or conducting and presenting research in Cuba, Japan, Jordan, France or England.

I would also like to acknowledge and praise the effort and courage of the young people who engaged in dialogues with me in France and Brazil, without whom this project would have remained an unexamined fantasy, and without whose critical insights I could never have fully imagined and understood the complex realities I tried to theorize. Thank you to Renato, José, Edmirson, Wilson, Saïd, Kaltar, Fatima, Aïsha and Dzina. I extend my thanks to all the individuals and organizations who helped me establish contacts with these young people in Brazil and France, and most particularly Dr. Agenor Pacheco and Agenor Pacheco Jr. in Penápolis, SP, Brazil, and the cultural workers and volunteers at *la maison des potes* in Narbonne, France.

I would also like to express my endless love and gratitude to my wife Paula, who rescued me in São Paulo all those years ago, introduced me to the works of Paulo Freire and made me *live* the pedagogies of hope and love, return to educational and social praxis, and gave birth to our beautiful son, Johann.

I thank my mother Veronique Buré, for always believing in me and letting me follow my aspirations, for making me political, and for the continual emotional, intellectual, financial and logistical support without which none of this would have been possible. I thank my father, François Veissière for his support, for making me want to emulate his rigorous philosophical inquiry, and for being such a strong influence in the development of my non-dualistic epistemology; Jacques Buré, my stepfather, for being such a strong model of political integrity, and for tapping me into the world-system; my brother Lionel Buré for our critical discussions, and for never letting me get away with a shaky argument; my sister Laure Veissière for all her support at home, for her intellectual and aesthetic curiosity, and for helping me consolidate my philosophical baggage by asking so many questions.

I would also like to show my appreciation to all the students at the Dept. of Integrated Studies in Ed. who became my friends and played an invaluable role in the development of my theoretical and political positioning for this study and beyond. Valerie Kwai-Pun, and her beautiful daughter Biko, who let me hold her when she was 6 hours old on the first day of spring, and also Rebecca Houwer, Ruweida Shakhshir, Amy Stuart, Theresa Dejmek, Carmen Lavoie, and Marna Lew.

The list goes one but I feel I must imperatively express my gratitude toward the Professors and members of staff at McGill who offered their intellectual and logistical

Abstract

In this critical inquiry, I look at how individuals who experience social, cultural and economic exclusion in postcolonial societies construct cultural identities and relationships with what they perceive as the dominant cultures of their countries through the process of schooling. Here, the term 'postcolonial' refers to events, places, and conditions that are situated after periods of colonization, and implicate individuals whose histories are linked to colonizers and colonized peoples.

This thesis discusses theoretical, political, philosophical and methodological issues around the design, implementation, interpretation and report of an ethnographic inquiry carried out in Brazil (São Paulo area) and southern France in 2004-2005. In this project, I organized focus groups of adolescents from marginalized communities in those two locations with the intention to generate critical dialogues about their experience of schooling and the dynamics between what they perceived as their cultural identity, their school's culture, and the culture of their countries. More than a mere survey of the accommodation and representation of 'minority' histories and peoples in France and Brazil, this study strives to explore and compare how the societal apparatuses of those two countries, with a particular emphasis on schooling, *produce* categories of cultural difference and *inscribe* them onto societal subjects. Thus, I carried out my inquiry with the belief that schooling is not simply a site of cultural transmission and reproduction, but also of cultural and identity production: a matrix that recreates, renegotiates, and institutionalizes hierarchical boundaries of difference that become actualized in students' subjectivities (Hall, 1999).

Résume

Dans cette étude critique, j'examine la manière dont les individus qui souffrent d'exclusion sociale, économique et culturelle dans les sociétés postcoloniales construisent leurs identités culturelles et leur relation avec ce qu'ils perçoivent comme étant la culture dominante de leurs pays. Ici, le terme «postcolonial(e) » se rapporte a tout événements, lieus ou conditions qui se situent après une période de colonisation et qui impliquent des individus dont les histoires sont mêlées à celles des colonisateurs et celles des colonisés.

Cette thèse relate les questions théoriques, politiques, philosophiques et méthodologiques autour de la conception, l'implémentation, l'interprétation et le rapport d'une enquête ethnographique effectuée au Brésil (région de São Paulo) et dans le sud de la France en 2004-2005. Au travers de ce projet, j'ai organisé des groupes d'adolescents issus de communautés marginalisées dans ces deux pays dans le but de générer des dialogues critiques á propos de leur expérience de scolarisation et des dynamiques entre ce qu'ils perçoivent comme leur identité culturelle, la culture de l'école, et la culture de leurs pays. Au delà d'une simple inspection de l'accommodation et la représentation des histoires et peuples « minoritaires » de France et du Brésil, cette étude tente d'explorer et comparer comment certains mécanismes et dispositifs sociaux, avec une emphase sur la scolarité, *produisent* certaines catégories de différence culturelle et les *engravent* sur les sujets sociaux. J'ai donc effectué mon enquête avec la conviction que l'école n'est pas seulement un chantier de transmission et reproduction culturelle, mais aussi de production culturelle, et de production d'identité : une matrice qui recrée, renégocie, et institutionnalise des frontières hiérarchiques de différence qui se réalisent dans la subjectivité des élèves (Hall, 1995).

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1 Rationale for research, Purpose of the study

I undertook comparative and ethnographic educational research in postcolonial settings with a desire to look beyond dominant modernist views of education that conceptualize educational institutions as benevolent sites of knowledge transmission aiming to enable all citizens to develop their potentials and become well-adjusted participating members of their societies. Rather, I am adopting the standpoint that Education as an institution (or schooling), as a state apparatus—and increasingly, as a corporate apparatus—tends to act as a very efficient sorting machine that reproduces exclusive social orders and transgenerationally maintains certain social groups in positions of political power and situations of economic and cultural production (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Apple, 1990; 2000). (These conflicting views of education and debates around the politics of schooling are further explored in Chapter 2)

This thesis discusses theoretical, political and philosophical issues around the design and implementation of an ethnographic inquiry carried out in Brazil (São Paulo area) and southern France in 2005. For this project, I organized focus groups of adolescents from marginalized communities in those two locations with the intention to generate dialogues about their experience of schooling and the dynamics between what they perceived as their cultural identity, schooling, their school's culture, and the culture of their countries. More than a mere survey of the accommodation and representation of minority histories and peoples in France and Brazil, this study strives to explore and

compare how the societal apparatuses of those two countries, with a particular emphasis on schooling, *produce* categories of cultural difference and *inscribe* them onto societal subjects. Thus, I carried out my inquiry with the belief that schooling is not simply a site of cultural reproduction, but also of cultural and identity production: a matrix that recreates, renegotiates, and institutionalizes hierarchical boundaries of difference that become actualized in students' subjectivities (Hall, 1999).

1.1 Locating the postcolonial

In the scope of this research project, I joined the two diverse and differing contexts of France and Brazil under the broad label 'postcolonial'. Here, my usage of the term 'postcolonial' digresses from the academic tradition in History, Economics, and Political Science, in which the term "post-colonial state" usually denotes a "post-independence", or "de-colonized" state of the global South (Ashcroft et al, 1998), a category under which Brazil might be "classified", but which is seldom used when referring to France, a country of the so-called First, or Old World. Throughout this study, however, I am using the term "postcolonial", unhyphenated, in accordance with Edward Said's (2001a) notion of the "postcolonial field", which can refer to places, circumstances and/or periods in history that occur after situations of colonization—but do not necessarily imply decolonization—and implicate individuals whose histories are linked with both colonizers, and colonized peoples. In this sense, the countries of France and Brazil and the histories of their citizens are inextricably linked to colonialism, colonizers and colonized, and constitute a postcolonial field of sorts. In other words, while there are significant social and cultural differences between the French and Brazilian groups I

studied in this research project (see section 3, this Chapter), I have chosen to refer to them as 'postcolonial' because of the historical importance of colonialism in shaping their identities in both cases. Thus, the individuals of mixed Euro-Afro-Amerindian ancestry in Brazil, and North-African ancestry in France, who spoke to me about their experience of schooling constitute what I would term 'postcolonial populations'.

Finally, my use of the term postcolonial should not be read as a synecdoche for the ideology of Postcolonialism because I am referring to spatial and temporal *situations*, and not mere *ideas*. However, the term is still grounded in a politics of contestation, which, like Postcolonialism, problematizes key-relationships between center and periphery (Mishra & Hodge, 1994). Accordingly, I am conceptualizing this postcolonial field and its socio-political dynamics in an era of contested modernity with an awareness of a certain deterritorialization between the language conventionally used to describe it, and the complex realities that this languages fails to capture. Thus, in the words of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, I subscribe to the viewpoint that "spatial divisions between the three Worlds (First, Second and Third) have been scrambled so that we continually find the First World in the Third, the Third in the First, and the Second almost nowhere at all" (Hardt & Negri, 2000, xiii) and that modernity is indeed an "unevenly experienced concept" (Appadurai, 1996, p3). For this reason, this study is also an inquiry into the co-constructions of these First and Third worlds, and the modernities and counter-modernities within Brazil and France.

Beyond the investigation of these interdependent and asymmetrical socio-economic realities and the role of schooling in their construction, this study also

endeavoured to keep an ethnographic dimension, that is, room to explore how the realities that are being theorized are being perceived by those who experience them.

2. Objectives

The points that this study tried to elucidate can be broken down into the following questions:

- What is the role and effect of schooling in postcolonial societies?

- How do French and Brazilian schools, as matrices of cultural interaction, transmission and production inscribe and legitimize cultural difference onto societal subjects?

- How do individuals constructed as "minorities" in France and Brazil and who are consequently the most excluded from the spheres of political, economic and cultural participation perceive their cultural identity, that of the "dominant culture", the experience of schooling and the relationship between these three concepts? How do they perceive and feel the symbolic violence of the culture that is imposed on them?

- What are the points of convergence and divergence between the stories gathered from Brazil and France? What conclusions can I draw?

- How can I use the insights gained from this investigation to contribute to the equitable and democratic transformation of schooling practices in the broad context of postcoloniality?

3. Framing the Field

3.1. Brazil

3.1.1 Socio-ethnic Typology

In *The Americas and Civilizations* (1969; 2004) Darcy Ribeiro, the Brazilian anthropologist and statesman, drew a "national ethnic typology" of the people of Brazil, which he classified into three great historicocultural categories: He called these categories Witness Peoples, New Peoples, and Transplanted Peoples (2004, p71):

Witness Peoples, he explained, are modern remnants of the Amerindian and other aboriginal populations colonized by the Europeans. New Peoples were formed by the "fusion and acculturation of indigenous, black and European populations" (p72) as a result of the colonization process. Finally, Transplanted Peoples are the implanted (usually European) populations that have preserved their cultural traditions, which in Brazil, is not limited to the once-dominant Portuguese but includes among other groups, communities of Italians, Germans, Poles, Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews, Japanese, and "Turks" (Syrian and Lebanese Christians who fled the Ottoman Empire and entered the country as Turkish nationals) among others (Bueno, 2002). Despite much publicized claims to hybridity and racial harmony, however, the notion that Brazil is a racial democracy is a misleading one (Gonçalves e Silva, 2004). Indeed, the small elite groups of individuals who enjoy the *de facto* privileges of full citizenship and impose their cultural codes as the norm for 'civilization' are predominantly descendants of Europeans (ibid), or consist of New Peoples of mixed Euro-African ancestry who consider themselves transplanted and are socially accepted as Whites because of their socio-economic status (Freyre, 1959; de Azevedo, 1978; Veissière, 2005). Although it is beyond the scope of this study to present a comprehensive review of perceived racial categories and boundaries in Brazil, it is pertinent to our inquiry to point out the

Eurocentric aspects of Brazil's "socially White" elite-culture. Here, "Eurocentrism" is taken to mean "the conscious or unconscious process by which Europe and dominant European cultural assumptions are constructed or assumed to be the normal, the natural and the universal" (Ashcroft et al, 1998).

3.1.2 Misplaced Ideas: Eurocentrism and Elite Culture

In his *Essays on Brazilian Culture* (1992) Roberto Schwarz, the Brazilian cultural and literary critic investigated the problem of subjective transplantedness and elite identifications with certain ideas of Europe; a cultural dilemma which he labeled "misplaced ideas" (1992, p9). This predicament, he argued, dates back to the early 19th century, after which educated Brazilians have had a sense of living among ideas and institutions copied from abroad that do not reflect their social reality (Schwarz,1992, p9). Schwarz went on to critique facile denunciations of this misplacement problem and nationalist proponents of an "authentic" Brazilian culture based on the problematic essentialist desire for "an organic, reasonably homogenous national culture with popular roots" (p10) (See for example Romero, 1979). However, he also famously opposed the cultural rationalizations formulated by intellectual elites in the 1970s and 1980s, who drew upon the insights of French poststructural theorists such as Foucault and Derrida to validate their so-called "peripheral" identities and ideas as "their own center" without critically examining the multiple centers and peripheries inherent in these old "margins". Simply debunking the idea of "copy" without examining the class structure of Brazil, maintained Schwartz, only led to presenting as a national characteristic "what [was] actually a malaise of the dominant class" (p15). Schwarz concluded that the "cultural

transplantation" argument was misleading on several accounts because: (1) it perpetuated the false notion that imitation was avoidable; and (2) it obfuscated Brazil's internal cultural and social contradictions and the grounding of such "misplaced ideas" in an exploitative economic substructure that has reproduced the exclusion of the poor from the realm of official cultural and economic production since the colonial era.

3.1.3 Doubly Oppressed: Hegemonic School Culture and the Politics of Funding

Despite Schwarz's thorough analysis of Brazil's cultural stratification, the national education system and its "State-defined knowledge" (Torres et al, 1997) continue to reflect the idea that European Brazilians are the bearers of the most "civilized" and "enlightened" culture, values, perspectives, and priorities and that the rest of the nation must be "civilized" through schooling according to such a norm (Gonçalves e Silva, 2004). As a result of this politics of assimilation, Black, Amerindian and poor Brazilians, already at the bottom of the country's socioeconomic ladder and carriers of the intergenerational traumas of slavery, genocide, and five centuries of discrimination, find themselves doubly excluded by economic oppression and the symbolic violence of a Eurocentric curriculum in a hegemonic cultural system that poses as being impartial (Gonçalves e Silva, 2004). The failure of such groups to assimilate "erudite" culture of European origins prevent them from passing the rigorous entrance examinations into universities without which they cannot break away from the cycle of poverty (Torres et al, 1997; Gonçalves e Silva, 2004; Whitaker, 1981). Indeed, Whitaker (1981) argued that such entry exams acted as very successful cultural barriers that screen out the poor from positions of power and cultural participation.

Beyond the cultural and symbolic obstacles to success imposed through the entrance exams, Brazil's poor are further marginalized by educational and funding policies that allocate next to nothing to rural and inner-city primary and secondary schools (Torres et al, 1997) and create differentiated curricula with an early emphasis on vocationalization in schools attended by the working class (Gonçalves e Silva, 2004). At the other end of the spectrum, elite children tend to be educated in private schools that better prepare them for the State University entrance exams (Torres et al, 1997). The doubly-disabling dynamics of this exclusive system is best summed up by Torres et al:

> [...] well-organized and articulate elites in Latin America have been able to shape educational policy to serve their class interests. Their offspring are able to obtain essentially a free higher education, [while] the state often spends fifteen to twenty times as much on a college student as on a primary school child, who may have to sit on a mud floor in a rural classroom without electricity, running water, or books and supplies (Torres et al, 1997, p144)

Worryingly, this oligarchic politics of educational funding does not seem likely to be democratized in the near future, in light of the current neoliberal Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) imposed by international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (Torres et Al, 1997; Arnove et al, 2003). Under such forced economic adjustment programs, education systems and other health and social safety nets are being increasingly decentralized, privatized, and thrown into the "free play of the marketplace" and the laws of competition, supply and demand. Although such policies were designed to reduce Brazil's fiscal deficits and bring inflation under control, they have contributed to increasing poverty and a widening of the gap between rich and poor while benefiting a small elite (ibid). Research from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the

Caribbean (ECLAC/CEPAL) showed that in the 1980s and early 1990s, 25 percent of the poorest households in the metropolitan areas of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo lost 15 percent of their income, while 5 percent of the richest saw theirs increased by approximately 25 percent. Furthermore, the Commission revealed that such losses were not only experienced by the poorest, and that as much as 50 percent of families located in the middle lost between 3 and 10 percent of their income (CEPAL, 1991; Torres et al, 1997)

3.1.4 Subject Population

Thus, marginalized populations in Brazil now find themselves at a risk of further exclusion from economic policies that call for a decrease of funding in schools that were already brutally under-funded and culturally oppressive.

In light of these cultural and economic factors of oppressions, the "marginalized" population targeted in this study consisted of adolescents attending public schools in the greater São Paulo area, that mostly cater to the offspring of economic migrants from the predominantly Black states of the Northeast (Gonçalves e Silva, 2004)

3.2 France

3.2.1 Imagined French Communities: Histories and Counter-Histories

The powerful Republican narratives of cultural homogeneity that permeate every sphere of official French culture and are disseminated through its highly centralized state-apparatuses make it difficult at first to discern France's postcoloniality. However, as I hope to demonstrate, there exist strong—but silenced—counter-narratives to these stories of French culture and modernity, in a country which, after all, only recently became

"modern", "industrialized", "unified" and centralized through the forced labour and the

pillage of resources of the colonized lands whose descendants continue to occupy

subaltern functions under the ambiguous status of "guest-workers" or *de facto* secondary

citizens in the old "Metropolitan" country (Rodney, 2002; Limage, 2003, Cesari, 2002).

Before the revolution of 1789, which began a process of secularization, centralization and

political unification based on Parisian bourgeois cultural codes and values derived from

philosophies of the Enlightenment, France was composed of culturally and linguistically

diverse communities, a national characteristic which is still noticeable today despite over

a century of attempted homogenization through mandatory public schooling (Limage,

2003). Although the French population itself is derived from a long series of "foreign"

invasions (Basques, Celts, Greeks, Romans, Huns, Goths, Franks, Moors, Normans,

Bretons, English, Austro-Hungarians, among many others), the concept of "immigration"

as it is taught in mainstream French history is said to have begun in the 20th century with

the arrival of Russian, Spaniard, and Italian economic and political migrants, and most

particularly after the 1960s and the independence of the former colonies that saw the

influx of many Africans and North-Africans, most notably from the Maghreb countries of

Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Since the arrival of workers, refugees, and professionals

from the former colonies, France developed a heterogeneous "minority" of 4 million

predominantly Muslim citizens and non-citizens who, even after the second and third

generation, find themselves culturally and economically marginalized and still struggle to

find a place in the Republic (Limage, 2003; Cesari, 2002; Tietze, 2001; Amiraux, 2004).

In 2001, unemployment among the Franco-Maghrebi population was officially rated at 42

percent, and as high as 62 percent by those concerned, whereas unemployment for the "French" population was estimated as 12 percent (Limage, 2003).

3.2.2 Subject Population: An Overview

The French marginalized population targeted in this study consisted of adolescents of first, second or third generation with genealogical ties to the Maghreb and problematic national allegiances between a French nation that largely excludes them and Maghrebi countries they have scarcely or never known and in which they are equally deemed foreign (Amiraux, 2004). This Franco-Maghrebi population, although by no means homogenous, is largely perceived as such by the majority of French citizens and by the public education system and its civil servants (Limage, 2003). Notable differences among this group includes the *harkis*, a group of Algerians who chose to remain French after the independence of 1962 and sought refuge in France when dissident independentists took power in Algeria. The children of *harkis* who were born in France have had to bear the double burden of suffering discrimination from being "Arabs" in the eye of the majority of French people, and unsuccessfully trying to overcome their parents' dishonour among the larger Maghrebi group with which they are forcibly associated. Other such differences are the non-Arab Berber populations of Algerian and Morocco, such as the Algerian Kabyles, who similarly have to endure double-discrimination (Limage, 2003)

3.2.3 Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité: Enlightenment Politics and its Discontents

Like Brazil, France's Education politics is one of official, state-defined knowledge, and even one of state-defined truth (Limage, 2003). While Brazil's public education is regulated through a complex system of responsibility between Federal, State and municipal governments however (Gandin & Apple, 2003), French public education

remains highly centralized through its *ministère de l'éducation nationale*. The system's entire ethos is based on the Enlightenment principles of *liberté, egalité* and *fraternité*, and its centralized and universalized curriculum has always been regarded as the best way to promote equality and national unity (Limage, 2003). If such values and principles may seem laudable, their institutionalization has proved immensely problematic and often oppressive (Lessage, 2003; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970; 1990). Indeed, the French system, throughout its whole curriculum, promotes what Ghosh & Abdi (2004) would call a "modern democratic view of the world", which, under a liberal rhetoric that celebrates the equality of all humans and the equality of opportunity for all, legitimates a deeply Eurocentric worldview while depoliticizing the concept of culture (p47). To be sure, France's official idea of "equality" between all human beings is based on the extrapolation of subjective accounts of human nature articulated by bourgeois Enlightenment thinkers that were further developed by positivist science (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1973; Giddens, 1991). This idea of human nature presupposes the existence of a universal norm for humanity, and thus of a universal and commensurable axiological and epistemological framework for understanding, valuing and assessing humankind. Lamentably, such a system doesn't recognize or account for cultural and historical differences and the fact that people who are born with different constraints, modes of being, and ways of knowing—that is, outside the norm—will not "perform" as well as the dominant group in a system where their ontologies and epistemologies are not valued and recognized. French public education also presupposes, after a superficial recognition of difference, that individuals—such as the working class or Franco-Maghrebis—who are not born into the "right kind of equality", that is, who are born outside the norm, can be

"civilized", "equalized", "normalized", or brought to the "appropriate" modes of being and knowing to function in the Republic. The epistemological and ontological violence of this project is, alas, not often perceived by those who unconsciously inflict it upon school subjects. Despite research carried out over 30 years ago by the social anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu (1970; 1990) that demonstrated the system's symbolic violence, its failure to reach its goal of equality, and its imbalanced social-reproduction role (see Chapter 2), the central government has made little efforts to democratize its schooling practices. Moreover, every attempt at implementing reforms has invariably been met with strikes and outright refusal from the teacher's unions who, despite their humanist Enlightenment rhetoric, are often deeply conservative, reactionary and protective of their bureaucratized status of official truth purveyors (Limage, 2003).

3.2.4 Banking Pedagogy

Pedagogically, thus, the French education system mirrors this bureaucratization and compartmentalization of knowledge and responsibilities. Everyone must know his/her place in the system: teachers "instruct", parents "educate", and pupils "receive" knowledge; transgressing these positions is unthinkable (ibid). In a sense, then, the current French system epitomizes nearly all the pedagogical *faux pas* articulated almost forty years ago by the Brazilian educational philosopher Paulo Freire in what he outlined as the "banking model" of education in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1967; Freire & Macedo, 2000). A Banking system of education, such as France's, is usually enacted through the following pedagogical dynamics: (i) The teacher/state/system teaches and the students are taught; (ii) The teacher thinks and the students are thought about; (iii) The teacher/state/system chooses the program content and the students (who are not

consulted) adapt to it, and; (iv) the teacher has the final authority of knowledge over and about the students (Freire & Macedo, 2000).

3.2.5 Headscarves, Secularism, and Official Identity

In France's secular school system, the state/teacher authority also extends over the regulation and prohibition of all religious ideology and iconography in schools. The official policy of *laïcité* (secularism) bans the display all "ostentatious signs" of religiosity, which, in practice, nearly always condones the exhibition of small crosses, but resulted in several internationally publicized scandals over the expulsion of Muslim girls who refused to remove their Islamic headscarves (*hijab*) on school grounds (Wayland, 1997; Amir-Moazami, 2001; Limage, 2003). While reinforcing the "enlightened" aspects of a society liberated from the oppression of religiosity, this aggressive French secularism and its rigid implementation through its cultural apparatuses has in fact manufactured an official French identity that excludes most of its Maghrebi and Muslims citizens and thus further marginalizes the young students who were already struggling with multiple layers of cultural and economic oppression. As Schirin Amir-Moazami argued:

> [The official rhetoric of] *laïcité* generated a common French identity by excluding, almost by default, the Muslim others. The concept remained sufficiently vague to provide references to the imagined French community, but still clear enough to exclude Muslims whenever they show their beliefs publicly and demand a place for Islam in France (2001, p311).

Thus, we have seen that France, despite its rhetoric of Enlightenment humanism, *laïcité*, *liberté, egalité,* and *fraternité* is in fact an exclusive self-regenerating system that only successfully serves the interest of its bourgeois class.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review (I)

Schooling, Hegemony and the Politics of Identity

1. Politics of Schooling

Following the overview of the historical and geographical contexts of this research project presented in the last chapter, this section explores the concept of schooling from more theoretical and epistemological perspectives and draws upon existing literature in the fields of social, cultural and political theory that outlines the role of schools as matrices of cultural and identity production and reproduction.

1.1 Manufacturing Cosmological Consensus: Schooling and Hegemony

The word 'hegemony' in its Gramscian and neo-Gramscian sense can be loosely defined as the exercise of power and the maintenance of a social order through the production, dissemination and legitimation of a particular kind of discourse that manufactures the "consent" of societal subjects, that is, their acceptance of the social, political and cosmological realities presented to them (Gramsci, 1990; Chomsky, 1989). Michel Foucault's (1981) theorizing of knowledge and power and Louis Althusser's (1984) writings on ideology took this idea further by affirming that the cultural codes produced by the dominant classes not only determine how a society sees itself, but also how dominant and subordinate individuals within that society construct identities in relation to the possibilities, codes and functions that are imposed on them. Althusser pointed to the "ideological apparatuses" or institutions, such as religion, justice, the police, and education systems that propagate and enforce dominant ideologies and

"interpellate", or "call forth" individuals into constructing their identities according to the conditions created for their subjectivities (Ashcroft et al, 1998). The works of Michael Apple (1990; 2000) on Ideology and Curriculum, Pierre Bourdieu (1970; 1990) on cultural capital and cultural transmission and Paul Willis (1977) on class culture further highlighted the role of schools in producing and transmitting the cultural capital of the of the politically dominant classes. They showed that culturally hegemonic curricula produce experiences of schooling that weed out working class, "minority" and intellectually, behaviourally, or epistemologically "challenged'" children from future positions of power by driving them into failure while the offspring of dominant classes are comfortably led to their parents' positions. Schools, therefore, operate as sites of sorting and exclusion, as matrices that institutionalize the structural reproduction of poverty and privilege that feeds the Capitalist machine.

1.2 Structure and Agency: The Relative Autonomy of Hegemony

The picture of schooling and society I have depicted above is a bleak one, especially when it is weighted against the popular view of education as a public site that transmits knowledge and skills, and enables all individuals in democratic societies to develop their potential and become well-adjusted participating members of society and the economy. Here, conversely, I have claimed that schooling constructs and reconstructs a specific idea of society based on the subjectivities of those who own the means of cultural and economic production, and that far from developing everyone's potentials, it channels those who can be molded toward a particular kind of potential for a particular kind of participation while producing pathologizing and criminalizing categories of difference for those who resist this enculturation. While I believe this second view to be a

more accurate representation of our social realities than the naïve former rationalization, I would argue that it must nevertheless be approached critically. By this, I mean that tendencies to simplify this schema as a bipolar system characterized by the deliberate production of hegemony from an evil plutocratic elite that generates the carefully orchestrated exploitation of the ignorant masses should be avoided. Rather, after outlining the *modus operandi* of hegemony, I should perhaps try to differentiate between "producers" and "consumers" of hegemony, and note that the subjectivities of dominant groups are themselves constructed from the matrices of cultural transmission which in turn depend on the memories and subjectivities of other. Thus, I have come to think of the words "cosmology" and "hegemony" as almost interchangeable because they seem to refer to a largely unconscious, unchallenged and non-discursive acceptance of the "natural order" of the Universe, along with the compliance to a highly elaborate set of behavioural constraints through which one can conform to, interpret, and perpetuate that order. In consequence, I have moved toward the idea that, to varying extents, we are all "consumers", and, through our acceptance of the "rules", we are thus "reproducers" of hegemony. This view, which perhaps suggests the absolute autonomy of hegemony/cosmology is not meant to exclude the notion that cosmologies tend to reflect the vested interests of particular groups. Rather, after Bourdieu, I understand that, since humans have evolved into cultural-ecological niches, the social and ideological apparatuses of cultural production and transmission—e.g., religious institutions, schools, the media—have always been in the hands of dominant groups who thus—consciously and unconsciously—interpreted the world in ways that suited their social projects. However, it would be a little problematic to believe that hegemony exists by virtue of a

transgenerational oligarchic conspiracy in which every member of every dominant social class in the world at every generation either grows to discover or is ritualistically led into the secret that the whole cosmological organization of life itself is an ingenious construct that enables him or her to enjoy privileges over the rest of the world, which itself must be conned into accepting this "natural order". By the same token, it would be naïve to assume that the privileges enjoyed by members of the affluent classes do not directly contribute to the servitude and exclusion of others, and should not be exposed and challenged. My assumption, then, is that members of all social groups unwittingly and (dis)comfortably assume the positions and identities that are inscribed onto them by intergenerational transfer and exercise agency within the range of constraints and imperatives that correspond to their social group. To a lesser extent, individual variations and exposure to other constraints may sometimes enable degrees of agency that carry a subject beyond an established social boundary and thus enable a migration of sorts between social categories. However, I contend that such instances usually occur when individuals are born into a liminal range of constraints that hosts the so-called boundary, or bring along with them the necessary symbolic, interpersonal, but essentially cultural capital to allow this migration. Thus, I strongly believe that in societies, such as France and Brazil, where the constructed norm for success, well-adjustment, righteousness, etc, is based on (broadly) bourgeois Eurocentric, modernist and logocentric[1] modes of

---

[1] Derrida coined the term Logocentrism as a critique of the Western, usually metaphysical epistemological tradition that tends to ascribe truth to an ultimate point of origin. Logocentrism tends to construct binary oppositions from which all meaning and value are derived (or are thought to be derived). These binaries are constructed by *privileging* a first entity or position, which is often an extrapolation of one's location (i.e., Self, Mind, Culture) and *subordinating* its imagined opposite (i.e., Other, Matter, Nature) (Collins & Mayblin, 2003: Derrida, 1978). The idea of whiteness and racial purity, for example, is a typical construction of a logocentric and metaphysical binary opposition. The white man, who rules over the land—and owns the means of cultural production—proclaims himself virtuous and closest to the ultimate

cultural and economic production, the possibility of social agency will be inversely proportional to one's inherited distance from this hegemonically imposed norm.

So far, I have argued that what is thought by many to be the natural order of the Universe is constructed by humanly manufactured hegemony and that one's propensity for achievement in this world depends almost exclusively on one's inherited position. Although I have problematized that claim and explored the possibility of agency, I have concluded that the crucial factor in this inherited position is not economic capital, but rather *cultural* and *symbolic* capital. Thus, I maintain that our inherited world is incredibly oppressive, though I believe this fact to be caused by an unexamined acceptance of deep cosmological structures rather than the deliberate production of hegemony.

To reiterate my position of the hegemonic nature of cosmology, or the cosmological nature of hegemony, I reject both extreme conceptualizations of hegemony/cosmology as entirely autonomous or exclusively and intentionally manufactured and thus propose to think of hegemony as *relatively* autonomous. Indeed, Bourdieu himself recognized that the function of education systems in relation to the labour market was one of "relative autonomy", and that schools were neither neutral nor directly in service of unequal power relations, but played a complex and circuitous role in renegotiating and reproducing them (Hall, 1999; Swartz, 1997).

1.3 Identity Politics

As an ideological apparatus that contributes to the construction of totalizing cosmological consensuses about the nature and order of the universe, schooling also

---

truth of God, and later to that of science. The Black man, in comparison, is constructed as its binary opposite and equated with Nature, the Body, etc.

inscribes and reinforces certain ideas and feelings about subjects' culture, history and

ethnicity onto their subjectivity and identity. Identity politics, thus, refers to the way in

which individuals define themselves through identification with the versions of

themselves and their cultures presented through them through the apparatuses of official

culture. Similarly, peoples' sense of self can also shaped by the absence of representation,

or the non-recognition of their histories through the windows of official culture, as is the

case with Franco-Maghrebis and many poor Brazilians of African, Amerindian or hybrid

descent. In his *Politics of Recognition* (1994), Charles Taylor explains the concept of

misrecognition:

> [our identity is] partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the
> *mis*recognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer
> real damage , real distortion , if the people or society around them mirror
> back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of
> themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm and can be
> a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and
> reduced mode of being.

The effects of seeing such models of one's identity distorted through the lens of official

culture and re-inscribed onto one's sense of Self can be even more damaging when, as is

the case in France and Brazil, official Eurocentric and neocolonial culture tend to

construct highly stereotyped, exoticized or demonized versions of its Others. As Gayatri

Spivak (1990) famously demonstrated, colonial discourse and historiography, through a

process she called "othering", effectively "constructs" the subaltern identities of

colonized/subordinate peoples, as the imagined versions of their identities legitimated

through colonial discourse become actualized in their subjectivities. Spivak's radical

view of subaltern identities echoes Frantz Fanon's (1968) argument that discursively

constructed ideas of race and difference between races become "real" in colonized peoples' perceptions of themselves through colonial discourse.

1.4 The Politics of Integration: Involuntary minorities and oppositional identities

In spite of so many barriers to integration in hegemonic and Eurocentric societies, however, some cultural groups with "minority" cultural capitals, and who suffered economic and cultural oppression have managed to achieve unprecedented academic and economic success in some postcolonial societies. Why then, have so many South and East Asian, such as many people from India, the Chinese and Koreans, done so well in the United States and Canada (Ogbu, 1992) while Maghrebis in France have not? Why have the Brazilian Japanese largely "succeeded", but not the Afro-Brazilians?

In his cultural-ecological theory of school performance, John Ogbu (1992; 1998) explained this phenomenon by differentiating between what he called "involuntary", or "caste-like" minorities and "voluntary minorities". Ogbu defined "minority" as a "population that occupies some form of subordinate power position in relation to another population within the same country or society" (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p162). Voluntary minorities, he explained, are groups of people who willingly moved to a country different from that of their origin in search of better social and economic opportunities, and who do not interpret their presence in the new country as forced upon them. Conversely, "involuntary" minorities constitute historical groups who have been made part of society against their will, such as the Native Americans or Afro-Brazilians in Brazil. In addition to intergenerational trauma, oppression, and discrimination that affect such minorities' cultural capital and school performance, involuntary minorities, as a result of the stories

of conflict and colonization between their communities and the dominant culture of the countries of which they have been made a part, often tend to develop "oppositional" identities vis-à-vis dominant culture, which renders their potential integration even more problematic (Ogbu, 1992). This explains why, for instance, children of the Buraku caste in Japan tend to experience failure and exclusion in the schools of their own country, but do well in the United States, or that Korean students perform well in China and North America, but do poorly in Japan (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). Ogbu also argued that descendants of voluntary immigrants tended to be well-integrated into the societies of their countries, with the notable exceptions of the offspring of immigrants who sometimes come to be associated with the children of involuntary immigrants and come to identify their presence in their parents' adopted countries are forced upon themselves. Such exceptions include, for example, the children of African or Afro-Caribbean immigrants to the United States who become identified with African-Americans (ibid).

Ogbu's theory has often been criticized for drawing the attention away from structural constraints and shifting the blame for "failure" on the communities themselves (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). However, Ogbu has maintained throughout his prolific career that he never sought to undermine the importance of "community forces" in determining a group's exclusion, but that examining the complex relationships and histories between some minorities and dominant groups led to more insights in understanding the mechanisms of exclusion and recurring incidences of differing school performance for certain minorities in certain countries (ibid).

Although French rhetoric insists that French-Maghrebis are the offspring of voluntary migrants, I would argue that the long history of colonization, subordination and

forced dependency between France and the Maghreb added to the *de facto* and *de jure* marginalization inflicted upon French-Arabs via dominant attitudes toward their presence and the constraints of *laïcité* contributed to constructing them into largely involuntary minorities who have little choice but to develop varying degrees of oppositional identities toward the system that oppresses them.

CHAPTER 3

Literature Review (II). Methodology

Toward a Dialogical Ethnographic Methodology

While previous chapters outlined the historical and theoretical contexts of this study, this section covers ethical, epistemological and political issues around the design of a dialogical ethnographic methodology for investigating the subjectivities of school subjects in France and Brazil. Particular attention is paid to the power dynamics between researcher and participants, and to the problems of representation and the legacy of colonialism in postcolonial ethnography.

1. The Crisis of Representation in Postcolonial Ethnography

By looking at issues of identity and representation in our multicultural realities, I am presupposing that all experience is the experience of meaning (McLaren, 1995), and that what we have come to understand as "meaning" is in fact the discursive constructs of politically and ideologically dominant groups that have traditionally subjugated and silenced other ways of knowing and being (Foucault, 1972; Lyotard, 1979) Issues of power, therefore, are tied to such concepts as truth, knowledge, meaning-making, perception, and representation.

Because I acknowledge the destructive potential of dominant grand narratives that construct otherness and confine it to the margins of official existence, it is important to state that the aim of this research project is precisely *not* to produce such a narrative. In other words, I am asserting that I cannot and will not uncover preexisting "facts" or

undertake measurements through which I can discern and reveal an objective "truth" about a group of people. I cannot and will not produce any kind of generalization or measurements about any context, group or individual. Because I subscribe to holistic notions of knowledge and truth as existing only within perspectival, contextual and interpretive realities, (Schwandt, 2000), I must also acknowledge that I can only write from my own perspective. Thus, if I conceptualize knowledge as understanding and understanding as interpreting, I am forced to admit that my study can only be qualitative and interpretive. In view of this, I must also concede that my postcolonial ethnography can only provide a subjective account of other people's subjectivities (Geertz, 1983).

Before exploring methodologies in greater detail, I will examine the sociopolitical implications of the relationship between researchers and researched peoples and the political nature of ethnography as tool of anthropology and cultural production. As Edward Said (2000a) pointed out, anthropology emerged as a result of an "ethnographic encounter" between European colonizers and colonized native subjects. In its literal sense, we can think of an "ethnographic encounter" as a first acquaintance in which the colonizer "writes" the colonized. The Other is discovered, named, and written about; the Other is written, re-written, constructed. Thus, the dialogue between the researcher/colonizer (I) and the researched/colonized (you) can be rendered as follows: 'I discover you, I name you, I research you, I write you, I write and reinvent your culture, I become an authority on your culture: I have created you. You are my subject, my research topic, my thesis, my discovery, my informant: I own you.' As Said noted, then,

the "ultimate authority of anthropological description" (2000, p310) becomes a tool of political oppression.

Nevertheless, I must acknowledge that the current ethos of social sciences has been profoundly influenced by ideological and political paradigm shifts from modernity to postmodernity (c.f. Cahoone, 2001), which, in countries of the North and elsewhere, have contributed to new theories, praxes and policies that seek to recognize, validate and represent non-dominant cultures. However, many contemporary critics (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004; Giroux & Giroux, 2004) have demonstrated that in spite of such trends, many individuals and cultural groups continue to experience marginalization and stigmatization of their ways of knowing and being/becoming despite dominant rhetorics of inclusivity. If anthropology has undergone a similar revision from quantitative to qualitative, and modern to postmodern in the last century, it can be argued that the dominant/subordinate equation between the researcher and the researched is still prevalent and continues to legitimate discourses and practices of Othering (Assad, 1973; Villenas, 1996; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Fine, 2000).

1.1 Toward a Dialogical Paradigm of Ethnographic Inquiry

In mainstream ethnographies, the questions of choice over the articulation of a research thesis and authority over knowledge of the "findings" largely remains unposed, unanswered and unchallenged. Indeed, it often seems that the very questions driving scientific inquiries are generated by researchers without consulting the researched, and are, for the most part, concerned with *proving an assumption.* As Sofia Villenas (1996) pointed out, social researchers, funding agencies and other stakeholders, which she calls

"powerholders", often enter the field with an intention of verifying and legitimating the "at risk" discourse around the communities they perceive as marginalized, and hence problematic. The idea of the problematic seems central in this model of research that begins with a problem, which, as Michelle Fine (2000) remarked, is always defined by the researcher. Thus, research questions are posed and phrased *by* the researchers, in *their* terms, and *for* the researchers. Edward Said (2000) referred to this "remarkably underanalyzed problem" as "the problematic of the observer". What must be investigated and theorized, argued Said, is not only the complex hermeneutic circle of the researched peoples in their environment, but also the position of the researcher: "Who speaks? For what and to whom?" asked Said. (p300). Said's question is, I believe, of utmost significance in the postcolonial research context. If I have acknowledged that my inquiry is driven by my own epistemological assumptions and perceived from the narrow lens of my own interpretive perspective, is there any space for the voices, assumptions and perspectives of the potential participants of my research? Is the use of the possessive pronoun *my* even appropriate when I speak of research that could never exist without potential participants? Is it possible to unite the active "I" that drives the inquiry and the passive "you" that receives it? Can we think then, in Buberian terms, of restructuring the I-It relationship between researcher and researched into an I-Thou dialogue (c.f. Martin Buber, 1953), or even an I-We dialogue? Is it really feasible to "work the hyphen" between Self and Other, as Michelle Fine suggested? (Fine, 2000); Can we begin to think of ethnographic research as an I-Thou dialogical and dialectical encounter between the researcher and the participants?

I think possible solutions to such dilemmas can be found in Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* According to Freire, the answer to the hierarchical problem of the banking concept of education lies in what he called problem-posing education. In his view, education should be conceptualized as acts of cognition that take place through dialogue. In the problem-posing model, students and teachers become critical co-investigators in dialogue with one another. In Freire's own words: "no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. Men [sic] teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking education are 'owned' by the teacher" (1970, p67)

This dialogical problem-posing model—the idea of "critical co-investigation"—can, I believe, be applied to ethnographic research. Indeed, it seems to me that ethnographic research consists solely of mutual acts of co-investigation and self-investigation. If the researcher must question his/her position and assumptions, then all research is also partly about the researcher. In this sense, we can think of all qualitative research as partially autoethnographic. Autoethnography, in my view, must be conceptualized as a transformative introspection. In Carolyn Ellis' sense of the term Autoethnography is "an autobiographical genre of writing that displays multiple layers of consciousness and that connects the personal to the cultural" (In Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) In Thomas Russsel's (1998) words it is also "a vehicle and a strategy for challenging imposed forms of identity." In other words, autoethnography can enable us to explore our Selves beyond the forms of cultural and sociocultural identities that were artificially imposed on us from without (Hall, 2003; Caws, 1995). Because research participants engage in a dialogue about themselves—that is, about their Selves—they also become

ethnographers and autoethnographers as they probe their identities and explore possibilities. Lastly, the researched subjects/autoethnographers engage in further ethnographic investigation as they inquire about the (co)researcher/(auto)ethnographer. Thus, all dialogical ethnography is necessarily autoethnographic and transethnographic because it generates a matrix of multidirectional co-investigation.

1.2 Who writes, for What, for Whom? The Politics of Location

So far, I have voiced my concern that all ethnographic research is partly about the researcher, and that the researcher's gaze and position in the field cannot be neutral, and must be critically examined. However, I have not examined *my own* sociopolitical position in the contexts of my research. Accordingly, I dedicate this section to an exploration of the politics of my position in this research project, or as bell hooks put it, my "politics of location" (cited in Fine, 2000).

The best way to describe my position is perhaps to begin with the malaise of representation that drove my desire to reconfigure ethnography. This malaise of representation is rooted in a deeper malaise of location, my own malaise of location: an awareness that I am situated on the dominant side of a power equation, and that my very position in this order makes me an active participant in a system of exclusion. It is this very malaise that led me to social inquiry and the desire to alter the oppressive order of the universe that I refuse to accept as natural. This malaise of location is also responsible for my interest in the nebulous concept of cultural identity, perhaps because I have never been able to delineate my own identity within a predefined area of cultural space.

I was born in Paris, France, of middleclass French parents and grew up in mostly expatriate circles in Algeria, different parts of France and the United States. As an adult, I

lived, worked and studied in another half-dozen countries across Europe, Africa and North and South Americas. I am now married to a middle-class Brazilian woman I met at the University of São Paulo in 2000, with whom I have a child who was born in Montreal. Together, we have generated a culturally and linguistically hybridized space in which our transcultural identities are constantly being redefined. It is because I position myself within this framework of transcultural redefinition that I am sensitive to the problem of what Peter Caws (1995) and Stuart Hall (2003) call imposed forms of identity and that I am committed to the exploration of possibilities beyond the static costumes of Selves we are often asked to wear.

In a piece of autoethnographic inquiry in which I examined the politics and poetics of place and epistemology (Veissière, 2005) I wrote about my reflection as a child growing up in a remote village of the Languedoc in southern France where I perceived the identities of the people around me as expansions of concentric circles of geographical allegiances organized around their villages and spreading out into the macro along neatly defined areas of political jurisdiction: village, canton, department, region, the south, France, Europe. My circles of allegiances, on the other hand, were disjointed, blurred and uncertain. These reflections on my problematic sense of place led me become sensitive to the realities of other children around me who seemed to experience their own deterritorializations: they were sons and daughters of North-African immigrants, who carried around them the spatial disjointment of their parent's exodus and seemed condemned to define themselves around a skewed focal point they had never known; sentenced to grow up surrounded by a bubble of exclusion that came with the price of dislodged allegiances; sentenced to live "*à l'interieur de l'exterieur, et inversement*" (inside the outside, and vice-versa, Foucault, 1979)

It is this awareness and experience of the periphery, or rather the extra-phery—outside the circle—that led me to explore the politics of location: the politics of identity.

Dissecting my own identity, the histories, languages and cultural codes that have shaped it, what I have become and what I am becoming by moving transculturally through more codes and histories, I see continuity, process and rupture along an evolutionary continuum. What I do not and cannot see or feel, however, is the one-size-fits-all French identity which people sometimes want me to wear. Though I have spent half of my life *outside* of France, I am still being "identified" by the French passport under which I travel, or by the traces of a French accent noticeable in the other languages I use in my present life.   This phenomenon is particularly problematic with some members of my family who insist that I *am*, after all, French. ("*But you are French, though....I hope you realize that you are not Anglo-Saxon/Latin American, etc*"). By telling me what I *am* or *am not*, through this use of the of the verb *to be* in the present-tense, I am being labeled with a static form of *being*; I am being imposed an identity that is frozen in the fictitious present-tense of what was decided for me at birth; I am being denied the reality of what I have become and what I am becoming.

Yet the privilege of my constructed whiteness, my maleness and the comfort of my family's material assets prevent me from experiencing the full consequences of contested selfhood. The bubble that surrounds me is one of inclusion and access and I am always welcome *à l'interieur de l'interieur.*

Behind my non-local accents, the languages I speak are those of the affluent classes: the aseptic varieties of so-called "standard" language (c.f. Lippi-Green, 2000). Who and what, then, do I represent, to the "potential participants" whom I, myself, have

confined to the margins by my very assumptions? What do I represent to the hungry children of São Paulo with their red eyes from smoking crack, who come swarming around my car with their cupped hands while I nervously double-check that the doors are locked? Who do I represent to the underclass whose backs are crushed under the weight of a system in which I enjoy comfort?

Yet, I refuse to let deterministic class structures imprison me in the interior while the constructed Others languish in the exterior. It is because of my position, and in spite of my position, that I must work the hyphen between Self and Other, between the interior and the exterior. It is because we are different, and because we are humans, that I must attempt to establish a dialogue. And finally, I must make a step toward the Other because of my shame; because of all the times I hid in the silence of my whiteness when French teachers would lament the loss of Algeria and the influx of "troublesome" immigrants in front of a classroom who was too brainwashed to even *feel* for the Arabic students who passively absorbed the teacher's logorrhea.

To reiterate my position and intention, it must be acknowledged that my situation is one of power and privilege, but that the evolution of my transcultural selves has also enabled me to experience otherhood. I have at various times felt an outsider in the inside, an insider in the outside, and insider in the inside and an outsider in the outside. In the current postcolonial, postmodern context of my research, I situate myself as an outsider in my French and Brazilian participants' inside, but also as a potential insider within a framework of co-investigation in which we can attempt to hyphenate our Selves and generate a common voice.

In spite of such hopeful reflections, it should also be acknowledged that the limited scope and essentially textual aspects of this study did not and could allow sufficient space for the participants' "true" voices to stand out. Accordingly, it is important to be reminded of James Clifford's contention that no matter how "de-centered" from its colonial legacy, ethnography essentially remains a form of writing produced from a situated author and open to multiple interpretations (Clifford & Marcuse, 1986; Clifford, 1988). However, although I cannot contest the honesty of Clifford's assertion, I still believe that we must counter the epistemological doubt of such solipsism and, no matter how vain the endeavour might seem, strive toward authentic representation in ethnographic writing, like an asymptotic curve that endlessly tends toward its value without ever meeting it. In the end, I must also acknowledge that if the voice in the chapters that follow is undeniably my own, it resonates with the stories and voices of the Brazilian and French adolescents who engaged in a critical dialogue with me, and without whom I would have had nothing to say.

CHAPTER 4

Encounters: A Tale of Two Fields.

1. Reporting Style

The following chapter is reconstructed from memory, field notes, audio recordings, and video tapes of the two focus groups I organized in Brazil and France in 2004-2005 with marginalized high-school students. It recounts my encounter with the adolescents, the issues that emerged during our dialogues, and some of the events, doubts, and reflections that occurred "in the field" before, during, and after the dialogues and the research process that led to their enactment. I have chosen this reporting style, as opposed to a more traditional positivist model of reporting "findings" as isolated events, entities, or figures that seem divorced from all locality, temporality and politics. In a sense, then, I am adopting a more phenomenological style of reporting "findings"; a style which, drawing upon the works of the Brazilian critical ethnographer Marcelo Diversi, borrows from the short-story genre and employs such techniques as dialogue, unfolding action, flashback (Diversi, 1998; 2003) and inner-monologue in order to render lived experience with more verisimilitude and invite interpretation and meaning-making (Diversi, 2003; Denzin, 1997; Ellis & Bochner, 1996). It is with a similar phenomenological concern that I chose to give the reader a better sense of context by painting deeper and wider pictures of the political, social and economic realities within which the questions of identity and power I am investigating take place.

I also chose to report these events chronologically—though they are written with the situated omniscience of a flashback perspective—with an intention to highlight the learning process, the challenge of my initial assumptions, and the evolution of my attitudes in the field(s).

1.1 Directions for Dialogues

The dialogues in which I engaged with the adolescents were organized in the form of informal focus groups and unstructured interviews (Eder & Fingerson, 2002). I had prepared a list of related topics, or questions, which I would pose to the groups as the discussion evolved. I had meant to approach these topics in a loosely sequential manner, but also decided not to impose a set structure on the discussions and allow participants to go into tangents of their own, precisely because I was hoping that dimensions and issues I hadn't foreseen would emerge.

The tentative dialogue questions/directions, were as follows:

- What is culture? what does it mean to you when I say the word "culture"?

- What is your culture? Your cultural identity?

- What is French/Brazilian culture?

- Who decides what it means to be French/Brazilian?

- How is culture transmitted/constructed?

- What is the culture of schooling?

1.2. A Note on the Rhetoric of Interviewing

In spite of the deliberately open-ended character of the dialogues, I was mindful of

the fundamentally rhetorical aspect of any interviewing situation. I had opted against

using close-ended questions which, in classical positivist fashion, are merely used to

"prove" the researcher's assumptions by directing the interviewees toward certain types

of responses and sticking to set parameters. Yet, I cannot and will not pretend that an

"unstructured" or "open-ended" interview does not, in some way, structure participants'

responses, and constitute an artificial situation that probes artificial responses. This

rhetoric and artificiality of interviewing was best expressed by the late philosopher

Jacques Derrida, in a filmed interview with Amy Ziering Kofman. Asked to clarify the

origin of the idea of "deconstruction", Derrida replied:

> Before responding to your question on deconstruction, I would like to make a
> preliminary remark about the totally artificial character of this situation [...] I would
> like to underline rather than efface...our surrounding technical conditions [referring to
> the filming/interviewing] and not feign a "naturality" which doesn't exist. I've already
> started responding to your question about deconstruction, by the way, because
> deconstruction partly consists in not "naturalizing" what is not natural, not assuming
> that what is conditioned by history, institutions, society, or technicality is
> natural...(Derrida, 2002; Kofman, 2002, my transcription/translation).

In earlier parts of this thesis, I "deconstructed" the historical and political aspects of

my location in the field, but I did not address the issue of "technicality" and its influence

on participants' subjectivity. Accordingly, I feel it is important to stress once more that

my role in the field was not one of a detached observer, but rather of one who instigated a

complex technical and political situation that elicited responses from the participants that

could never have occurred spontaneously in their "natural settings". Why, then, a critic

might ask, persist on calling this study "ethnographic" if I keep insisting on debunking the possibility of an outsider observer?

The simple answer is that I feel the label "ethnographic" is important because of this inquiry's focus on culture, on writing, and on participants' modes of thoughts and subjectivities (Geertz, 1983). In addition, I should reiterate that this investigation was specifically designed to generate autoethnographic probing and epistemological reflection, and could thus not be neutral and occur in all naturality.

2. Brazil, December

City of P., greater São Paulo area, December 2004

I have been staying at my in-laws in P. for about a week, and have attempted to establish contacts for potential research participants in the Santa Felicidade district, which was recently "recognized" by the municipality and is now in a "transitory phase" from *favela* (slum) to newly urbanized zone. Dr. A., my father in law, spends two mornings a week at a local community health center in the area and offers to take me along so I can get to know the neighbourhood and the people who live there.

I spend mornings quietly sitting in a Dr. A's office, being introduced every few minutes to one or more of the tired faces from the endless line of patients. The patients voice their various aches and pains and seem to be addressing me at the same time as Dr. A. Not knowing what to say, I nod.

Listening to the little boy's pneumonia in the stethoscope.

Watching men complain about their backs. The X-ray with a twisted spine: thinking about the reality of the metaphor "the poor whose backs are crushed under the weight of the system".

The grandmothers bringing sick children; parents at work, in the cane fields. 'In the absence of a welfare state', I think, 'it is the weary nuclear family that provides the safety-net.'

The head (male) nurse tells me with a lisp that people of the "lower-classes" are stupid. I ask him why he thinks that is and if he thinks if they are born stupid. 'No one is born stupid' he responds. 'Is it a question of access', I ask? He says 'people here are individualistic, they want to consume and they are not willing to share opportunities'. 'Isn't that capitalism', I ask? He says 'yes, capitalism'. He pauses and continues: 'in the North, in the US, people are willing to share opportunities'. 'I don't know', I reply, 'they have capitalism as well'. He tells me, 'you're a bit of a Marxist, right?' 'I don't know', I reply, 'well, yes, maybe I am a bit of a Marxist'.

Later, Doctor A. takes me to a primary school in the district. The Director proudly shows me the infrastructure, meaning the four classrooms with painted walls and windows, the staff-room and the break room. He asks about my research. I hadn't prepared myself for that question, and I don't want to baffle him with postcolonial jargon, or make him think that I am here to prove assumptions about how pedagogically "backwards" they are. I blurt out something about multiculturalism and curriculum development. He thinks I mean "differentiated curriculum" and tells me about the psychologist who volunteers at the school. I listen politely and ask a few questions but do not press the subject further. In the empty break room where the kids have snacks and

circle time, above the round table, on the shelves, there are a dozen videos, a few books: the vast majority of which are Disney. I think about Henri Giroux (1999) and the Disneyfication of youth culture. How very far reaching. I feel ashamed because I want to criticize, or rather to critique. Later at the daycare, the walls are painted with Disney characters. Snow-white: the housewife-in-the-making; the Lion-king: legitimating caste and hierarchy; Aladdin: Orientalism.....I am ashamed because I am granted so much authority and power for no valid reason. Professionals oblige, take me around, are honoured. They wouldn't even bother to read a memo about my research in the "north". I come as a colonizer, and my head is full of critique, no books, not the right books, middleclass teachers, symbolically oppressive syllabus....Yet there is a free lunch for all children, no one goes hungry. That's what many people would reply to my inner critique, *do you realize how many children starve in this country?* And yet, I want to scream that feeding children is simply not good enough. Isn't that the most effective kind of oppression? Starving people go mad and can rebel, but people kept slightly malnourished on a heavy diet are too tired to do anything after a hard day's work.

Critique: On the way to P., we stop at a gas station and I make a sarcastic comment about the souvenir plastic World Trade Centers on sale in the shop. Paula asks me to stop being critical for a few days so we can just have good time. I tell her it's not something I can just turn on and off, this is how I think, this is who I am, everywhere. 'But', she insists, 'it's hard for me not to take it personally because it seems you have no respect for my culture' I feel like saying 'but what is your culture? What cultural sphere are you talking about? Is your culture the rich histories you are re-claiming through your art, is it the pervasive consumer culture that prescribes tropicalist aesthetics, is it the neo-feudal

class-structure that I was never trained to ignore?' Yet in the car later, she is the one who challenges her mother and dissects the social construction of gender roles (female subordination), racial prejudice and aesthetic standards. 'You forced us to straighten our hair'; 'Why do you need to buy those brands?'; 'I've had to rediscover my African ancestry, my curly hair, my negroid nose and lips and I've learned to value the black in me, because yes, mother, you're gonna have to accept this, we have black ancestors'

At the gas station, Dr. A asks for a car wash and tells me, as he shuts the windows of his SUV and turns on the air-conditioning, that I might not have perceived it, but that 'in Brazil, people with subaltern functions in society do not suffer like poor people in the North. People are happy in their functions here', he says, 'there is not such thing as hating those who possess more than you'. I don't know what to say, because this sounds to me like a religious statement about the natural—god's—order of things. 'But', I reply, 'isn't there frustration about knowing that one can never raise above one's milieu?'

—'No', he retorts, 'I was poor growing up, and I never hated those among my friends who were "daddy's boys"'

—'But you had knowledge', I reply, thinking that his dad was also able to send him to private schools that prepared him for the State University entrance exam that got him into med school. I can see where he is going because his wife probably told him about the argument Paula and I had with her about the 16-year old maid who will be paid $50 for "helping out" with our son Johann and other chores at home (10 hours a day) for the month of December. He does tell me about her. People like her are not frustrated to have subaltern functions, he explains calmly, they are happy to find a good position in a good

family when so many people find nothing. 'I understand', I tell him. I know he treats people well and kindly, and I understand the girl needs the money to support her family. I just wish people could give up some of the privileges of their comfort zone, and find ways to share resources and opportunities a bit more equitably. 'What kills me', I add, 'is the astronomical income disparity between the "middleclass" and those that serve them: the fact that one month of minimum wage, which is more than what the girl is getting, can't even buy the pair of pants his wife is wearing'

Dr. A. doesn't respond.

At home, I speak to the young girl who looks after my son. She tells me about her father who works in the fields, cutting sugar cane. Only one person in her family, her cousin, has ever made it to University. 'Did she pass the entrance exam', I ask. 'No', replies the girl, 'she managed to get a bank loan to go to a private university'. This reply saddens me greatly, and I try not to show my feelings as I ask her if she plans to stay in school to take the entrance exams. 'I'd like to', she says, 'I'd like to study "computers" like my cousin'

Computers, new literacies, the digital-divide, new epistemological exclusions for the 21st Century. I wish I could empty my head of all these critiques, but I can't.

What little money she manages to save after contributing to the nuclear family safety net, it emerges, will go toward English classes at a private language institute. I know those institutes, from having gone through the interview process to become an instructor at a few of them in São Paulo in 2000. In the end, I couldn't bring myself to go along with it; to contribute to that kind of teaching, that kind of pedagogy, that kind of epistemology, that kind of politics. Business English: laid-back, American-style, the

perfect tool for securing a job in the tourist industry or at the reception desk of one of those multinationals, where in due time, she might meet an older executive or a middle-aged gringo divorcee who will take fancy in her and marry her. My own cynicism disgusts me, but the thought that this scenario, however unlikely, sounds like the best alternative for her fills me with despair. I realize that the only change I can contribute to her life now is financial. Yet, I wouldn't dream of telling her that I consider myself "poor" because I too, have had go deeply into debt to be able to go to university. I want to share my ideas with her about the kind of world one is constructing by going along with that type of business education for an asymmetrical corporate world-system. But it dawns on me: am I being ethnocentric, Eurocentric, even? Am I projecting essentialist fantasies onto her "culture" and the way it should be once it is stripped of all this "inauthentic" stuff artificially imposed by the "North", or "West"? My cultural relativism and anti-essentialism are at stakes here, because I can't help projecting my "western-liberal" values and priorities onto this brutally inequitable system, which I refuse to accept as "natural". How can I reconcile my relativism with my deconstructionism? If I refuse to accept and value these inequalities and this rampant corporatization as "authentic" aspects of Brazilian "culture", am I being prejudiced? How can I know what "true" Brazilian culture would be or should be? And why should I, a European, know best? But, who—and this predicament causes me great anguish—who can speak for a "culture", who can be the mouthpiece of Brazilian "culture", its essence, its direction? Not the content oligarch? Not the struggling poor conned into buying a corporate epistemology? Who then? For the first time, I really understand the title of James Clifford's book: *The Predicament of Culture* (1988).

After a long painful reflection and discussions with Paula, I decide not to give the girl money because I don't want to contribute to that kind of English teaching and the neoliberal cosmology that comes along with it. Yet, I find that I can't live with myself simply taking advantage of her inexpensive labour. I am told the usual arguments—I have heard them many times before from the mouths of expats and members of the bourgeoisie in the "third world"—about the non-commensurability of first and third world economic standards; that giving her more money than what she would get elsewhere will simply confuse her, will upset her understanding of the value of labour, and will ultimately disrupt the "natural laws" of the local market economy. As usual, I can't accept those arguments. I don't believe in the "invisible hand" or any of those Econ 101 fallacies that are, somehow, taken for granted by so many otherwise "intelligent" people. The market is entirely constructed and run by humans, and it is up to them to ensure it is run equitably, that is my take on the subject. I take the point about non-commensurability, but I ultimately can't accept it. What should I do, then, stay in "my country" in order to avoid situations where asymmetrical economic cosmologies converge and engender situations of unavoidable exploitation? But what does it mean to "stay in one's country", when the history of humankind is a long series of diasporas, movement and becoming? After so many years of *living* movement and diaspora, I have ceased to identify myself with whatever it means to be "French", and I find myself quite incapable of accepting the "reality" of any country as anything more than a hegemonically manufactured consensus; a fuzzy and necessarily contested collective work of the imagination that inscribes contested borders onto geographical and mental space (See: Bhabha, 1990; Anderson, 1991; Appadurai, 1996). As for asymmetrical

economic realities and the exploitation that results from their convergence, or clashes, I really don't think that strangling one's movement into an artificial locality will stop interdependencies. In fact, I think global interdependencies (that is, an ecology of many interdependent animal, social, economic, environmental and epidemiological spheres) is one of the only "natural" realities of our planet, and that this ultimate reality must direct us toward a common global project in which we should strive for equitable dynamics within and across those interrelated spheres (see: Said, 2000b; Ghosh & Abdi, 2004, p141-164).

The point of this reflection is that besides the fact that my wife and son—intrinsic parts of my life—are official "citizens" of this area of land and people called Brazil, as a human being whose life depends on other human beings and the preservation of our planet, I belong here as much as anywhere else on earth, and my duties toward our life system are the same here as they are in the "north" or "west". In the end, then, I follow Derrida's deconstructive endeavour, and decide that I can't accept the "local" economic reality in which I am not supposed to interfere as natural. I also decide I can't completely impose my standards on the world, or safely decide that what people perceive as their desire is entirely constructed by ideological apparatuses. In the end, thus, I give the girl money.

It is not until after Christmas that we manage to organize a group of adolescents from Santa Felicidade who agree to sit with me and discuss issues of culture and schooling. A., my brother-in-law, who has taught physical education and *capoeira* at public schools and community centers in the neighbourhood has helped me establish contacts with the local

youths. It hasn't been easy, and has in fact taken several days to put together a group of young people. The sports and community centers had been deserted over the Christmas period, and I had kindly turned down A.'s offer to put me in touch with secondary school teachers who, in turn, could help me contact students. The reason behind my refusal was that I did not want to be introduced to young people through someone they were likely to see as a figure of authority, or in an environment such as a school, in which they would constitute a "captive population". I had intended our encounters to be informal and to occur in a place where participants would feel safe and free to voice their concerns or walk out of the discussion if they felt like it. A., I thought, would be an ideal "go-between" because, though it was plain to all that he was from a middleclass family, he had developed friendly relationships with many local youths from volunteering at various community centers, where his *capoeira* lessons had developed into anger-management lessons of sorts. Furthermore, he was also widely respected in Santa Felicidade for having won several Ju-Jitsu tournaments. (At times of considerable political doubt, it would occur to me that all those publicly funded sports centers in "at risk" areas around the world and the emphasis on martial sports, instead of "empowering" marginalized people, have the effect of institutionalizing, controlling and channeling their frustrations into organized events where they fight and vent their anger amongst themselves. What a horribly Machiavellian way to maintain an oppressive status quo at minimal cost and effort. As in the issue of hegemony and teachers' agency, however, I can't decide whether such community centers exist by virtue of a deliberate endeavour to control "at risk" populations, or because of uncritical humanism. As I reflect upon A.'s genuine desire to contribute what he can to the struggle of these young people, I decide that the

"truth", or rather, the Aporia, probably oscillates in a liminal zone between these two scenarios, without ever clearly stopping on one side of the equation)

One sunny Wednesday morning in Santa Felicidade, then, we sit around a graffitied concrete table with matching benches, on the edge of a small open area with long blades of grass, a few gum trees, and patches of red dirt. The dialogue is running smoothly at first, and my initial apprehension—a feeling reminiscent of the chills that would run through my body when I was younger before an exam, a date, a job interview or being summoned in the principal's office—is dissipating. Of the half dozen people that had expressed interest at the community center, only four showed up at the square. Renato, José and Edmirson [pseudonyms], aged 17, whom I would describe as Black or mestizos, and Wilson, aged 19, with light brown skin and straight, jet black hair, who looks Amerindian. I am a little uneasy about mentally cataloguing my interlocutors phenotypically after spending so much time and effort unlearning the arbitrary constructions of race, and other supposed relationships between superficial phenotypical traits and behaviour. But I remind myself that censoring the idea of race just depoliticizes the unequal power dynamics that developed around it. Race, after all, or the construction of racialized identities, is partly what this study is about. As we speak, I am scanning the situation for other visual or auditory clues that differentiate these young people from other middleclass youths who are accepted as "social whites". If, in the local fashion/power language, there is semiotic evidence from the bright clothes, baseball caps, and sunglasses they are wearing that would indicate that they are poor, I cannot discern it. After 5 years of frequent sojourns in Brazil, I still have difficulty reading the local social

stratification, that it, being able to identity at a glance who belongs in which social category. In this culture of imagined whiteness associated with middleclass status (Freyre, 1959; de Azevedo, 1978; Veissière, 2005), I am told clothing is an essential signifier of class standing, but I haven't mastered all the brand language and ability to distinguish counterfeits or other visual semiotic codes that enable most Brazilians to assume a set of criteria about an individual's social, economic, epistemic and spatial restrictions. As for linguistic codes, the articulate language which they have put on for the occasion of addressing me, with its retroflex r's preceding other consonants typical of the region's vernacular, does not sound any different to me than the utterances of the middleclass youth who live on the other side of the train tracks. I turn my visual semiotic inquiry on myself, and A., who assists me holding the big VHS camera on his shoulder, with his shiny black SUV parked in the background. I am dressed from head to toe with colourful clothes with English lettering: Brazilian name-brands and signifiers of power which, in spite of my usual ideological apprehensions, I have grown accustomed to wearing here out of a desire to please the aunts, cousins, and mother-in-laws who acquired them for me. Even the archaic 1980s VHS camera that I thought would be unimpressive in the age of digital miniature media, has an official TV crew look about it that dissatisfies me. When we parked the car on the edge of the square and walked out with the VHS camera, a topless man with a lean body and bloodshot eyes asked us nervously if we were from the police. He had seemed reassured and walked off when I described myself as "a student doing research", trying my best not to sound like a gringo.

At first, then, I am pleased with the way Renato and his friends are engaging in the conversation. Only José has done little but nodding and uh-uhing along his mates'

comments. When I ask them about their definition of "culture", they seem unsure at first ("well, that depends..") but Edmirson quickly ventures that culture could mean one's "mode of thought". I am impressed, because he has just given me an anthropological, Geertzian, definition of the concept. This pleases me immensely, because it refutes the prejudiced argument I've heard on so many occasions when I described my project to friends with university educations. ("All this culture stuff is way too abstract for people like that, you'll just baffle them, they'll have no idea what you are talking about").

—'Yeah, one's mode of thought...one's mode of being?' continues Wilson

—'So, does one's culture depend on the individual or place?', I ask

— 'On the individual, I guess, yeah, actually, maybe it depends on the place', replies Edmirson

—'Yeah, it depends on place doesn't it?' confirms Renato

I follow this thread to inquire about the culture of the city of P., and move on to that of São Paulo and Brazil, but I am not getting the responses I awaited. I expected to hear proper nouns, like "Portuguese", or "Latino", or maybe even "Afro-Brazilian", but they seem a little confused by the question: pinpointing a specific place and describing its culture being, for them, more difficult than handling the abstract concept.

—'Well, I dunno, you know, soccer and stuff', proposes Renato.

—'Yeah, soccer, fun, entertainment, that kind of thing...'

—'...entertainment, work, also?' suggests Edmirson

—'Okay, yeah, entertainment? Work?' I reply, 'so what about your own culture, then, how would you describe it?'

Again, they seem a little perplexed and short for words. I attempt to lead them with a tangent about my own culture, which I portray as "originally French, but having acquired traits from other places, like Canada, where I currently reside". Trying to give them examples from realities with which they are more familiar, I point to A., my brother in law, and explain that his mother was born in São Paulo, and his father in the Northeast; that A. himself spent his childhood in the Northeast and acquired cultural traits from both northern and southern Brazil. From here, we move on to the topic of their parents—none of whom were born in P.—and trace back the movement of their ancestors through generations, states, and economic diasporas.

—'Ok, your father was born in Mato Grosso, and what about his parents?'

— 'I think Bahia, yes, Bahia'

—'Bahia, nice. And before that?'

—'I dunno, I guess a lot of people came from Africa...I think we have a lot of Spanish in our family though'

—'Yeah, I think my family is mostly Spanish too', interjects José, who hadn't said a word so far.

Once more, I am confused by the emphasis on European ancestry voiced by individuals that my own gaze identifies as "other". This thought is immediately followed by a shudder as I realize that the cosmological markers with which I make sense of my world still rely so much on arbitrary categories such as "European" and that I too, contribute to acts of othering by locking people into these discursive categories.

We progress to the topic of schooling, and struggle to define its culture. Having quickly learnt that I seem to be hung up on geographical categories, the youngsters proceed to describe the teaching body of their school as being a "mix of everything".

—'This one teacher is Bahiano'

—'Yeah, and Mr F. is from Minas'

—'Yeah, and Ms C., I dunno where she's from, but she's not from around here'.

I am even more confused now, and I begin to realize that the teachers I'd condemned as "middleclass" from the "Disney" school, mightn't have been so middleclass after all. I keep probing to try and get clues that the broad cross-curricular bourgeois-Eurocentric discursive formation I had imagined really exists. We get to the subject of history and historiography, and I am surprised to find out that they did indeed learn about the African diaspora and other histories. Paula and A., who had gone to private schools, had to wait until university to be introduced to anything remotely related to Latin America or Africa and had gone through syllabi that had spanned nearly exclusively European matters. Edmirson and his friends, conversely, didn't seem mystified by Brazil's multiple histories and seemed to feel "culturally" at ease in schools whose student and teaching body reflected this multiplicity. The word *todos* (all, everything) had come up a lot, sounding like the official rhetoric of inclusivity of the new Labour federal government, *Brasil: um pais de todos* (Brazil: a country of/for all). Renato had voiced on several occasion: *Tem de todos* (there's people of all kinds)

Sensing my puzzlement, A. decides to transcend his cameraman's role, and asks a question which I had initially intended not to pose:

—'But how prejudiced are people around here?'

The response is spontaneous and unanimous. There is "a lot of prejudice" (*muito preconceito*) around here (meaning at school, and in the city of P as a whole).

We move on to the markers of prejudice; the criteria of difference that cause people to suffer prejudice. Yet again, the group is quick to point to many factors: "the way you talk", "the way you look", "what you wear", "what you do"

—'Yeah, you know', says Wilson,' it's really *what you do… how you live* that drives prejudice around here.'

I want to know more about what this means, and it emerges that what matters is where one lives and what one does for a living. Language, they insist, "the way one talks", also seems to be a strong indicator of one's way of life.

We conclude that "what one does", or "how one lives", is related to one's mode of thought, and can be another way of describing culture.

Later, as A. and I drive back to his guarded condominium on the other side of the train tracks, we reflect upon the discussion.

—'If you wanted to know what it was like to experience racial prejudice in a white school, A. tells me, you should have talked to me: I was picked on and bullied because of my Northeastern accent when we moved back here from Alagoas. The kids you talked to went to public schools, every one is mixed there. These kids are excluded *because* they go to public school, not because of their culture'.

—'So', I reply, a bit confused, 'even though these kids are not considered white by people in power, what really decides if you're in or out is not your skin colour, or where your parents were born, but those train tracks?'

—'Exactly, it's all about what side of the tracks you're born on'.

—'But', I insist, still perplexed, 'everyone keeps saying that the way you talk gives clues as to where you were born, but I couldn't hear a difference between those kids' accents and yours. Was I wrong, is there a difference?'

—'No, not with these guys. Accents usually give you away, but a lot of those younger kids who were born here can speak "good" Portuguese' [my quotation marks]

—'But still, you would have known where they are from?'

—'Without a doubt.'

2.1 Shattered Assumptions

This "without a doubt"—the cold determinism of it—shattered my remaining initial assumptions and led me to see that I had been too focused on culture, on ideas. In typical neo-Marxist fashion, I had been too focused on the *superstructure* and had ignored the cold determinism of the base, of the substructure, of economic realities.

The political mechanisms at work in what I had tried to understand were, on the one hand, infinitely more complex than I had envisaged, but also frighteningly simpler: Amid the multiple centers and peripheries of the Brazil class system, there exists a broad simplification, which, however uncritical, is painfully real to the people who experience it: the Two Brazils, as Kenneth Maxwell (2003) calls them; the two Brazils, which, in the words of Tracy Ann Breneman, "live in very different worlds, [...] walk on the same land, speak the same language, but [...] eat at different tables" (Cited in Petrarolha, 1996). The two Brazils epitomized here by the railway track separation.

And yet, there was something to be said about the superstructure after all. All these *todos* that were uttered by Edmirson and his friends ("there's all kinds of people at school") in spite of their brutal subordination in a deterministic system led me to think about the official rhetoric of inclusivity. In the years following the 2002 election of president Lula, the populist left-winger, the country's official rhetoric, including corporate advertising, began to reflect the visual diversity of the country's people. While I can only welcome the democratization of a country's visual and discursive culture, I am very cautious of such superficial celebrations of difference and their potential to deceive oppressed populations into thinking that they are recognized and valued, while their "failure to succeed" is caused by shortcomings of their own. Indeed, despite Lula's efforts—which I believe to be genuine—at democratizing Brazil, his obligations toward the IMF and local oligarchies have forced him to maintain the country's ruggedly capitalistic system, along with its rhetoric. Thus, in a country where "everyone is valued", and "everybody can make it", the deterministic influence of inherited Capital (economic and cultural) is overlooked, or silenced, and the possibility of agency is placed entirely upon the individual and his/her "choices".

The tired child kept slightly malnourished on a heavy diet of rice and manioc flour, the adolescent channeling his anger against his brother at a ju-jitsu tournament, or the Black person who sees a giant Bank of Brazil billboard with a Black banker serving a blond customer, thus, has to work through many layers of "inclusive" discourse in order to identify the patterns that oppress her and stop blaming herself for her "failure". Yet, there are unofficial but frighteningly real spatial and interpersonal constraints in this system, so that an individual that reeks of the wrong codes, who ventures in an affluent

neighborhood or establishes random contact with a member of the whitewashed class will be controlled, asked to leave at best, and often be arrested or worse. This deceiving rhetoric, I will argue, is an infinitely more perverse and ultimately more effective way to exercise control over a socioeconomically asymmetrical population than sheer autocracy because it allows for the production, reproduction and enforcement of imperative social categories without presenting clearly defined and immediately identifiable patterns of oppression against which a population might rebel.

3. France, May 2005

It's been nearly two years since I last set foot on French soil. After a beautiful sunrise over the North Atlantic, I land in Paris, and am greeted with the familiar chimes at Charles de Gaulle airport. The mixture of exasperation and excitement I used to feel upon returning to the metropolis as an expatriate has all but faded and I feel surprisingly *nothing*. I am glad to see my father and brother, and feel apprehensive about the research process that awaits me, but that is all. Last night in Chicago, on my way back from a congress of Qualitative Inquiry, I told a friend over beers and tacos at a local *taqueria* that I was finally ready to call myself *deterritorialized* as opposed to expatriated. I explained to him, after we'd discussed the idea of deterritorialization in *a Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze & Guatari, 1987) and *Empire* (Hardt & Negri, 2000), that the *patria* in "ex-patriated" had ceased to signify anything consistent in my life, and I went on about the dilemma of identification vs. identity:

—'What I find so difficult', I'd told him, 'is that I never know what to say when people ask me where I am from. I mean, I can either tell them about the whole

"deterritorialized" thing, in which case they'll think I am a total snob, or just tell them I am "French", which will automatically "identify" me with a prefabricated identity that doesn't say anything about who I am'.

Driving through the vineyards of the Languedoc, I pass the Gypsy slum, four kilometers before the village where my father settled 18 years ago, remembering that driving past these corrugated iron roofs used to scare me as a teenager. The slum was once labeled *Escouto Can Plaou* in the local Occitan patois and the name stuck, now visible on a rusty signpost. It translates into *j'écoute quand il pleut*: "I can hear the rain", because of the thin corrugated iron roofs. Now, many of the old roofs have been replaced by terracotta tiles, and satellite TV dishes have appeared here and there. Seeing children kicking a football on the side of the road, I am amazed at how Indian-looking they are, remembering that Gypsies originally came from India. Once more, I instantly cringe at the thought of my essentialism, and the fact that I am yet again "othering" people who have been here hundreds, perhaps thousands of years by wrapping them in the label "Indian", a fuzzy term which, itself, fails to signify the complex realities of that vast area now called "India". After all, didn't I come all the way here to problematize such essentialist forms of identities and ask people upon whom they are forced how they feel about it?

In the village, I sit with my maternal uncle, who also relocated here from northern France in the eighties. He teaches flamenco guitar, and is one of the few *gadjos*[2] in the region who has played music with Gypsies. After we exhaust the topic of music, we get to the subject of violence in the Gypsy community and I am surprised to find out that his

---

[2] *Gadjo:* non-Gypsy

views on their socioeconomic exclusion are quite conservative. From the "problem" of Gypsies, we follow the inevitable tangent to the topic of French-Arabs. Once more, I am amazed at how many people like him who still live out slight semiotic and social transgressions (my uncle spent several years backpacking through Africa in the 1970s and proudly recalls his involvement in the student revolution of 1968), are only transgressing social rules at surface level, but really regurgitate dominant ideologies about race, economics, culture, colonization, and scores of other subjects.

—'These people' [Arabs and Gypsies], he bemoans, 'have no reason to still behave the way they do. They take advantage of unemployment money, they can't keep a job, or don't even *want* a job, and they terrorize people who are too scared to say anything to them. They might have suffered discrimination long ago, but the government has done all they could to integrate them, and they just *don't want to be integrated. They* are racist, not us'.

They, us, 'us and them', I am thinking, how sad. It's hard for me not to get emotional about this topic, and, trying to keep calm, I remember the words of Dean Roger Slee in his sociology class: 'The farther you stretch a theory' he would say 'the thinner it gets'. Okay then, let's stretch his theory, I tell myself.

—'Okay, why do you think that is, why are *they* racist? Why don't they want to be *integrated*'? I ask him.

—'I dunno, sometimes I think they have become *degenerate*'. He stresses that last word.

We let the word resonate. .....degenerate...... Pondering the gravity of his statement. He seems a little uneasy with it, perhaps he's gone too far...But he continues.

—'Like, you know...just the other day, these 13-year-old kids burned down a car. They *burned it down...* just for fun. *Thirteen* years old! What kind of people just burn down a car for fun'?

I feel like saying that he too along with others, burned cars and police vans in May 68, and that the rest of the nation thought they were doing it for fun. I don't know why, but I don't voice that last thought. Instead, I feel it is my turn to express my views on the subject. I begin by trying to outline the different opportunities between French-Arabs, Gypsies, and middle class whites, but he interrupts me with stories of unemployment benefits, family allowance, living allowance...

—'You wouldn't believe how much money they really have...look at their houses, they all have satellite dishes...'

—'*Satellite* dishes? Oh for christ's sakes!' This time I am almost losing my temper. 'But these are pre-digested arguments I used to hear ten years ago!' I cry out. 'What does that even *mean?* Satellite dishes cost all of €30 a month, if even that. Look, there *must* be a reason that drives people to act like that. It's either that, or there is something in them that genetically predisposes them to burn cars. Is that what you are saying? Is it something *genetic?*'

He seems genuinely saddened by the fact that I am upset, and tries to ease the atmosphere.

—'Look, I don't know...no, that's not what I am suggesting. I don't know. I am no sociologist...'

I feel like telling him that *I* am a sociologist, but it would be stupidly pompous. First, someone who's known you as child, who's seen you grow up, will never take you

seriously as "a sociologist". And that's not the message I am trying to convey: I am not trying to say that sociologists, or me for that matter, can interpret the world more accurately than others; I just wish everybody *cared* a little more and challenged their own assumptions. I proceed to tell him, as calmly as I can, about the idea of cultural capital, that economic opportunities are not the sole determining factor of one's "integration" (there is something about that word that displeases me, something suggesting forced adaptation *into* a preexisting system, a form of assimilation, a one-way process that doesn't account for the mutual efforts of learning to live together).

—'For many years, all my life really', I go on, 'I used to think that the French education system had oppressed me; that it crushed me. And in a way, pedagogically, it did. But now I realize that all these years, when they made me sit quietly without letting me speak or move, they were speaking *my* language. Not just French, you know, but *my* kind of French…making references to books that were on my parents' shelves, to regions and countries I'd visited…. I'm sure you must know what it's like to sit in a class and listen to a teacher rambling about something you feel you know better than her…you know, *burning* inside to speak out, to show everybody that you know; that you know *best*?'

He nods

—'Well', I continue, 'I realize that this is what "saved" me, what enabled me to go back to University, to travel, and to do something I like doing. Cultural capital. It doesn't matter how many boarding schools I was expelled from. In the end, I got the message that *my kind of knowledge*, the way I viewed the world, was the *right* one, you know? The right one for this kind of social project, that is. So even though I didn't get "recognition"

for many years, I knew I had the "right" kind of knowledge, and that it would be "discovered" some day....I always knew that....I pause...Isn't that horrifying? .I just wish the way people think of *knowing*[3], or being French for that matter, meant a little more than *our* way, whatever that means'.

He politely accepts my point, but seems unconvinced. We change the subject back to music, and things go smoothly again.

Monday morning, 7:00 am, I drive my 16-year-old brother back to his boarding school. He has been having a difficult time with the education system these past years, and he is battling with his own uncertainty about staying on for two more years to take his *baccalauréat*. 'Enduring' two more years, as he puts it. As we drive past vineyards and rocky hills, he tells me about the humiliation from the dorm supervisors, the teachers' totalitarian attitudes, the bullying, and the racism.

—'There's this guy in my class who was born in Madagascar', he goes on; 'the other students smile at him weakly to his face, but you should hear the stuff they say when he's not around. It's atrocious, really'

We then discuss the issues of homogeneity and conformity, and he explains to me that, ironically, both students and teachers are keen on maintaining a status quo, and that any kind of deviation—behavioural, ideological or visual (appearance)—will lead to rejection. He illustrates his point by recounting an anecdote that happened in his English class:

—'So after hearing the teacher tell us all about how he wishes we'd act *normally*, I couldn't stop myself from asking him: "but sir, what exactly do you mean by *normal?*".

---

[3] What I said is *savoir:* In French, *savoir* means both *knowing* and *knowledge.*

And he got real upset, of course. He was all like: "You know *exactly* what I mean by that....Oh, isn't that a typical insolent remark one might expect from you? Look, *normal* means dressing neatly, having short hair, behaving properly...oh, why do I even bother? I hope you are pleased with yourself, Mr. Veissière, you've successfully managed to make us all waste five minutes of class time". So I just shut up, right? What was I gonna do?'

I congratulate him about his critical thinking:

—'You know, I think it's great that you are thinking about these things. I just wish that kind of questioning was encouraged in your class. I mean, the guy could have asked the class to discuss the problems with normality, right? I bet lots of interesting stuff would have come up. You know, next time, you should tell him that the real question is not about normality, but *normativity*. Why do people need to construct norms? How do norms come to be legitimized? Who decides what those norms should be, and why do norms change over time? Ask your teacher that, see what he responds'

—'Yah right....' he retorts scornfully 'that kinda talk would just get me a detention...big time'

I pull over by the school gates, and sadly contemplate the grim picture of the high fences, tarred yard, and endless rows of industrial buildings. I make a comment about the oppressive and structurating aspects of the school's architecture, instantly wishing I hadn't voiced that thought and said something nicer to lighten my brother's morale.

—'I know', he replies, 'it's a factory'.

'Hang in there brother, you're almost through' I think to myself, overwhelmed with desolation as I watch him disappear through the gates, head down, with his sports bag thrown across his shoulders, remembering that I too, not so long ago, went through those

same gates. Literally. Herded through the main gates in September, head down, with the rest of the flock, and out through the backdoor, expelled, one February afternoon. A factory: input, throughput, output; a caricature of modernity; manufacturing cogs for the giant modern machine. Some cogs, though, made of the wrong alloy, can't fit in the machine, and are simply spat out; discarded.

Wednesday, 7:30 pm, at the popular education center, city of N.

I've had my hand up for a while, and I am aching to speak out. That same feeling I experienced continually during all those painful years of French schooling.

The popular education center has changed a lot in the ten years since I moved away from N. It now incorporates French-Arab women's discussion groups, homework help volunteering programs, a cooperation program with NGOs in Burkina Faso, and hosts various cultural events. Tonight, there is a talk given by a French-Algerian Professor from the University of Toulouse on 'the Place of Islam in the Republic'. Before the talk, the center's coordinator introduced me to several young people who expressed interest in speaking to me about issues of identity, and agreed to meet me after the address.

The Professor's talk was an introduction to the philosophy of Islam and its difficult history with the French republic. During the question and answer session, there are two points I am trying to make. The first one is about the history of the Islamic presence in France and Europe, and the second is a response to the aggressively secular comment made by a high-school teacher who claimed that in the "neutral" environment she was

trying to foster, she did not want to see, hear or read any references to any religion or any creator god.

When it is finally my turn to speak, I surprise myself with the way I overcome my timidity and am able to articulate my question fluidly

—'My first comment is for Professor B. about his claim that the Islamo-Arabic presence in France only dates back 40 years. What I don't understand is that, even though there has been a strong Islamo-arabic "presence" all around the Mediterranean since at least the 8th century AD, we were taught that the Arabs were "stopped" at Poitiers by Charles Martel in 732 AD, but we still consider the Arabic presence a new phenomenon. We also learned that Joan of Arc "stopped" the English 700 years *later*, yet, no one would dream of claiming that the English are not Europeans today. So the Arabs, who have been here, in Spain, and all around the Mediterranean for over a thousand years are somehow *not* Europeans? I guess my point is that the way we perceive this presence, and what it means to be French or European reflects the way French and European histories have been told. Surely, this reflects a Christian history told *by* Christians, *for* Christians? My second point is about secularism (*laïcité*) and its aggressive implementation that ends up leaving people feeling that their way of life is somehow wrong and not enlightened enough for the Republic. My question to you all, then, is the following: what would be wrong with having a non-denominational, or multi-denominational school system such as the one they have in the UK, where all religions are taught and tolerated in public schools?'

I end my long question with a tinge of uneasiness about the word "tolerated". The Prof begins by concurring with my questioning of historiography and its ownership by

Christian authorities, but he is a little vague about the place of Arabs in Europe, because my question wandered beyond his topic, which seemed confined to the discursive borders of the French republic. The teacher who'd made the comment about god in her classroom takes the opportunity of a pause in the Professor's speech to interrupt him and blurts out a reply to my critique of secularism:

—'I just want to say that I think the role of schools is to teach *the truth* about history, she says with barely contained anger, and I'd like to clarify that I am *not* a Christian, and that I am equally and impartially opposed to hearing references to the Christian or Muslim faiths in my classroom.'

How dogmatic, I think, how exasperatingly dogmatic. The *truth… impartial….* how do I even begin to respond to that? I try to organize my frustration into a coherent and useful remark: perhaps I could make a reference to Edward Said (2000b) and his observation that the way a civilization defines itself depends on the way its history is written and taught, *by whom*, and *for whom*; something about how perhaps it is time to re-write this history and re-imagine what it means to be French/European in the age of diaspora…actually no, the point is precisely that *any* era is an age of diaspora…there has *always* been diaspora (Mannur & Braziel, 2003)….yeah, the *longue durée*, world-systems, maybe I can say something about Braudel and the *longue durée* (Wallerstein, 1975; 2004), quote a French historian to lighten my attack on orthodox history….diaspora, movement, exchanges….. isn't that precisely why we have to re-imagine the past and debunk the idea that some people *belong here* more than others? Unfortunately, I can't sort through my racing thoughts and emotions quick enough to re-enter the discussion.

The debate soon comes to an end, and the Professor rushes out in the pouring rain, alone, to catch his train back to Toulouse.

The first adolescent to come and join me after the talk is Saïd, a fourteen-year-old accompanied by his veiled mother who had spoken to me earlier today. After chatting with his mother about the Algerian region of Kabylie, where it emerges that we both lived, I congratulate him about his comment to the Professor. Saïd had raised his hand after the address, and made a very eloquent observation about the contradictions between a constitution that guarantees him freedom of speech and creed and a national school system that forbids him to voice them. I had been very impressed by the young man courage's to speak up, thinking about the countless occasions where I, as an adult wearing a laminated ID badge, hadn't had the nerve to ask my questions at the panel sessions of various conferences. Maddeningly, though, Saïd's French teacher, who was present during the talk, had spoken before the Professor's reply and condescendingly told "her" student:

—'You're going to have to speak up, my boy. We can't hear you. Ar-ti-cu-late!'

She had enunciated that last word very slowly.

I feel like sharing my frustration at that situation with Saïd, but decide against it. We exchange small talk as more young people arrive. The discussion begins rapidly, after clarifying the object of my study and seeking parental consent from the mothers who had attended the talk with their children.

In contrast with Brazil, where I hadn't managed to incorporate female perspectives during the dialogues, most of tonight's participants are young women. In fact, all but Saïd are females, four girls altogether. Kaltar, Fatima, Aïsha and Dzina, aged between 15 and 19. All are French citizens who followed their parents to N. from the Maghreb in their early childhood, save for Fatima, who was born in France. All identify themselves as Muslims.

This time, I have decided to reduce the "technicality" to a bare minimum, and did not bother with a video-camera. I asked permission to record our conversation directly into my laptop, and placed a small microphone at the center of the large table around which we all sit at the back of the smoke-filled room.

The dialogue begins smoothly, with nervous giggling from the girls when I invite them to address me with the informal pronoun *tu*.

—'It feels like we're saying *tu* to a teacher, or something', laughs Dzina.

I assure them that I am no teacher, and that I am in fact still a student, realizing that I am getting older, or that I am being granted more authority and power than I had foreseen.

I am both pleased and surprised to hear that Saïd gives me the same definition of culture voiced by Edmirson in Brazil and written by Clifford Geertz: "mode of thought". As we progress toward "ways of life" and the topic of "their" culture, they all volunteer without an ounce of hesitation that their culture is derived from their religion. Unlike the Brazilian youths who had hesitated to define their whole existence with a few adjectives or proper nouns—I am realizing now that their confused silence was in fact a profound insight into the complexity of culture—the French adolescents give their response

unproblematically. Whether this is caused by a tendency to define their existence through an Islamic cosmology, or through a habit of being made to wear their Islamic identity as superordinate to all other identities, I cannot tell. Perhaps both, or neither.

The girls and Saïd proceed to discuss what it means to live the Muslim culture, to be a Muslim in France. Saïd, who never ceases to amaze me, explains that his religion is what enables him to create meaning in life, and to define who he is as a person. Kaltar expresses similar attitudes, but raises the issues of interpretation, authority, and the way to live out one's Muslim identity

—'It's just that some people go way too far into the whole religion thing. Like, in my neighbourhood, this one kid is always going around telling people what *heathens* they are. The kid's calling me a *heathen* because I am chewing a gum, and how there's supposed to be pork jelly in the gum?!! So I'm like, do you really think God cares about the pork-jelly in my gum? What matters is the love you have in your heart, the way you carry yourself, the way you treat others…not what kinda gum you chew…so I tell him, well then, if you're gonna be so *literal* about the whole thing, then you shouldn't be talking to me, we're both unmarried….I tell ya, that shut him up.'

I am very pleased with the way the dialogue is going, because all seem to be passionate about their responses, and genuinely happy to get to talk about themselves. When we move on to the subject of French culture, and the culture of schooling, similar responses arise. What it means to be French, and the culture of schooling, in their view, can be summed up in one word: 'neutrality'. I am perplexed at first, but Kaltar clarifies that statement:

—'Well, the point is that there is *no* culture in school and in public life. School is *neutral*, it's the place where everybody leaves their religion aside and interact together. It's the same outside [public spheres?] you just leave your religion aside so we can all get along'

—'So you're saying that culture, or religion, is something that happens at home?' I ask.

—'...well yeah'

—'But what about other French people, then, do they have a culture?' I probe

—'I guess some of them are Christians, innit?" ventures Dzina, "but really, it's all neutral, outside is supposed to be neutral"

What a problematic concept, I think. This supposed *neutrality*, and the othering of "culture". It's really a normative thing; culture, here, is seen as a *deviation*. It's like the food-and-dance thing (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004), or the way people use the word "ethnic" to refer to anyone who's not the right shade of white (Sollors, 1995; McLaren, 1995). I guess it ties in with all those dominant narratives of homogeneity, but heard from this perspective, it sounds almost like the Canadian mosaic, 'culture is what happens at home'; except it's even more problematic here, because the message is really, 'culture is what happens at home *for some people* but not for the *neutral* majority', so "tolerance", at best, is as far as it goes; tolerating difference like one would tolerate a bad smell or a nagging noise.

This link between home and culture; this micropolitics of culture soon reemerges when we begin to explore the dynamics of cultural production and transmission.

—'Culture begins at home' says Aïcha, who was a little shy at first because she didn't know anyone from the group, but seems to have gained confidence, 'and it's really up to the parents. I mean, it's the parents who tell their kids about the world, and the kids end up believing what their parents tell them, and that's how we all understand the world, really'

I am impressed by the depth of her thinking. I want to follow up on her point by trying to get their views on how all this ties into a wider cosmological consensus. I guess I am also a little perplexed about it myself: what about the fabric of culture that ties us together? How are those webs of meaning woven? How have we managed to maintain a common framework, no matter how fuzzy, that enables us to communicate?

—'Ok, and what about schools? Do they have a role in that?'

—'Well not really, right?' Replies Dzina 'Schools teach math, and all that stuff, not culture'

I want to try and problematize that statement, bring up the issue of language, of history, but Aïsha, who had been cut off earlier when we had defined our cultural identities, jumps in after a small silence:

—'Sorry for changing the topic a bit, but there's something I'd really like to underline about our identity...you know, people always call us Arabs here, but discrimination doesn't only happen here; we also suffer discrimination when we go the Maghreb, and they call us *sale française* [dirty Frenchwoman]

—'Yeah!' interjects Kaltar fervently 'we have no country!, we're sitting between two chairs'

—'I know' says Saïd, it's like we belong nowhere' he pauses 'or in the middle of the Mediterranean sea'

Aïsha takes up the topic again, with what sounds like a tinge of despair in her otherwise passionate tone:

—'We have no nationality you know? Well, I know I am a European citizen, and I have rights and all that, but I have no *real* nationality....'

I am really moved by her comment, and astounded by everyone's eloquence and the intensity of their reflection. Such nebulous matters for so many people...yet, so *real* to those who experience it. A friend of mine with a PhD asked me, not long ago, about the difference between nationality and citizenship. There is nothing abstract about this for Aïsha and her peers: they are granted the paper rights of belonging to a State, a lifeless entity, but are excluded from the collected work of the imagination of the Nation that projected its desire onto the State; they are excluded from the *soul* of the State (See Held & McGrew, 2002, for more on the differences between State and Nation).

We search deeper into the problematic of deciding who belongs to a nation.

—'So can Education do anything to change this problem of exclusive belonging?' I ask the group, accidentally using the term 'Education' as a synonym for schooling.

They respond simultaneously with enthusiasm.

—'yeah, for sure'

—'Absolutely'

—'It goes back to what I was saying about what parents tell their kids', proposes Aïcha. At this point I realize that they have interpreted the question of 'Education' as something that is left to the parents. It reminds me of Leslie Limage's (2003) critique of

the compartmentalized French education system where "parents educate, teachers instruct, and pupils receive knowledge"

—'suppose a kid asks his mom why this guy is Black' continues Aïsha with confident fluency, 'all she has to say is, well, people all look different, but really, we're all the same, and this guy is in his country here, just like everybody else, and the kid will grow up like that'

I attempt to take this lead into the territory of schooling to ask them to reflect on the possibility of repeating this scenario in schools in order to establish a wider consensus. However, we soon find ourselves following a new tangent after Kaltar and Dzina begin enunciated different kinds of prejudice to which they have been subjected in school by their peers:

—'It's always the same thing' Kaltar goes on, 'it's always about terrorism, or about how our fathers beat up our moms and force them to wear the veil. So I always tell them, you don't even have a clue what you're talking about. My mom chooses to wear the veil, okay? And the first time she put it on, my dad wasn't even there, and at first, he didn't even want her to wear it...'

—'Yeah, it's always that, or stuff like, "why don't you go play with your buddy Osama Bin Laden..." interjects Dzina

—'Me too! I get that all the time!' Saïd cries out

—'*Aaalways* the same thing' says Kaltar with exasperation. 'they hear stories somewhere and come back with it like it's the truth and we're all the same'

I want to explore this issue of "stories' and misinformation further, and plan to tie it back to ways to counter it in schools.

—'So where do people hear those stories?' I inquire.

—'The media!' replies Aïsha instantly without any hesitation, 'it's always the media!. You know what? I'll answer your question about what Education can do [she uses the informal pronoun] Change the media.'

Once more Aïsha's critical mind astonishes me. I wonder if this is going to lead to the issue of media-literacy, or the democratization of their politics of representation.

—'first of all', she continues, 'you only see Maghrebis on TV when there is a problem and it has to do with violence...And then, it's always, "an Islamic youth"-this, or "a Maghrebi boy"-that, and when they talk about somebody else, it's always just "a boy", or "this kid", but we're always "the Arab"....I've noticed that, you know? I've really noticed that. ...and it's gotten worse since 9-11, it really has.'

This comment triggers a wave of anecdotes about media portrayal that they have found offensive and demeaning. I want to get a chance to talk about 9-11 and its implication on their sense of place, but for now, I just listen to the terrifying stories.

—'You know one thing, though?' says Kaltar with a glimmer of hope in her eye, 'you know when—it almost never happens—you see a guy on TV, wearing a suit and all, with the caption that says, "Abdel Ben Kader", or something ..."*lawyer*"? That makes me feel so proud, you know?

The group agrees.

—'Just one question, though' I ask after a brief silence, 'you guys have been referring to the media as "they", but who is this "they"?'

Puzzlement.

—'Well…, I guess I can't answer that' responds Aïsha, 'I mean, I guess it's not just the journalists?'

—'Jean-Marie Le Pen?!' [French ultra-right wing presidential candidate] proposes Dzina ironically, which triggers a wave of laughter.

—'Yeah, but think about it, though' says Kaltar in an effort to bring the discussion back to serious, 'if you have people like Le Pen controlling the media, people who watch the news at night end up believing all this crap, and they end up voting for the *Front National* [Le Pen's ultra-nationalist party]

We have hit a critical spot here, and I am hoping to wrap this up by highlighting the connections with parental education, schooling, and wider issues of consensus and hegemony. Alas, the dialogue soon comes to an end as the group of mothers summon their children to go home. We all mutually thank one another and exchange best wishes for the future. Kaltar, introducing herself to Aïsha's mother congratulates the woman for her daughter's critical mind: 'your daughter spoke really well tonight'.

4. Conclusions: Reflection on Substructural and Superstructural Subaltern Constructions

Reflecting on my two encounters with marginalized adolescents in Brazil and France, I attempted to remind myself of the incommensurability and immeasurability of human lived experience, but couldn't help trying to establish comparisons and weighting of the different kinds of subordination to which both groups were subjected.

My initial impulse was to compare, or somehow measure the "types" of exclusion experienced by both groups, and I couldn't help thinking that the Brazilian poor were

oppressed by a more perverse economic system in which they enjoyed next to no social benefits, which stood in brutal contrast with the gargantuan opulence in which the plutocratic middleclass lived. Why then, had the youth who'd spoken to me in P. been less adept at identifying the cultural discourse that legitimized their difference and subordination than the French youth, who, comparatively, enjoy more substructural benefits?

The first problem with my question is that I didn't want to fall into the positivist trap of measuring human suffering and coming up with matching scales and typologies. Secondly, I was cautious of a risk of falling back into dominant discourse about Brazil's supposed racial democracy and non-racialization of poverty, but I also did not want to conclude that, in spite of what "my" informants had told me, *I* knew best about their lived experience. Yet, it was clear that there still existed in Brazil a widespread notion among members of the middleclass who considered themselves transplanted Europeans that their economic success had arisen as a result of the superiority of their "civilization" (Gonçalves e Silva, 2004; Schwarz, 1992). Why, then, had the young men, whom my middleclass brother-in-law could instantly identify as "other", and "poor", not told me about how they perceived this difference themselves? Was there another reason, beside the fact that pride or embarrassment might have dissuaded them from doing so?

After comparing my notes, it became clear to me that my questions had been ill-prepared and that I hadn't read enough or thought enough about the potential effects of Brazil's new postmodern rhetoric of inclusivity and its new historiography. Now, I couldn't help thinking about Ranajit Guha's (1997) classic essay on South Asian Subaltern Studies: *Dominance without Hegemony and its Historiography*. What we have

in the new Brazil, it now seems to me, is an odd mixture of the old 'dominance without hegemony' model with a new hegemony and historiography: a weird hybrid between a rusty modernist-industrialist class-production machine, and a postmodern, postindustrial assault of hyperreal simulacra (Baudrillard, 1983) that legitimate the late-capitalist cosmology with illusions of inclusivity and unlimited agency. In other words, the construction of the poor into subaltern and racialized subjects happens primarily at the substructural level, through the reproduction of a cycle of poverty and privilege as imperative statuses. However, the *legitimation* that is necessary to hold this social order together occurs at superstructural level via the free-floating discourse of pluralism and inclusivity. What is perhaps infinitely more perverse, is that public schools, far from being sites of struggle and liberation, disseminate and legitimize this new rhetoric and add to the confusion of the oppressed youth who receive confirmation that their failure to achieve "appropriate" standards of living is caused by their own shortcomings. Only a critical conscientizing of *both* teachers and pupils, therefore, could help unmask and counter the patterns of oppression inherent beyond this fluffy rhetoric (see Chapter 5).

France, conversely, achieved more egalitarian substructural standards of living through the pursuit of a (also modernist) socialist vision. The problematic of this socialist vision, however, lies precisely at the core of its modernity. As we have seen in Chapter 1, the notion of egalitarianism that animated this socialist project was, and still is, based on old Enlightenment metanarratives that cannot provide a model which speaks to the complexities and diversities of all human lived experience. Despite *comparative* economic benefits as compared with the Brazilian poor (but not with the French middleclass), the young Frenchwomen and Frenchmen who spoke to me about their

cultural experience were very articulate and eager to voice their discontent with the cultural mechanisms that oppressed them. Unlike the Brazilian youth, the French adolescents were able to point out *clearly identifiable discursive patterns of oppression*, and the various apparatuses through which they were disseminated (family, legislation, school, media) and came to permeate all public spheres. The inscription of subalternity onto the societal subjects who recounted their experience to me, thus, occurs primarily at superstructural level.

Because of this tendency to generate consensus and hegemony through Enlightenment Master Narratives disseminated via centralized state apparatuses, accordingly, I will argue that France has yet not experienced a massive transition into the postmodern, which explains why its postcoloniality remains, to this day, contested.

In the next and final chapter, I explore ways in which schooling and teacher education programs can help prepare citizens for some of the challenges of postmodernity and postcoloniality, and enable subjects to become aware of and act upon the historical and discursive forces that oppress them or turn them into oppressors

CHAPTER 5 Conclusion

Reshaping Postcoloniality: Toward a Counter-Hegemonic Teacher-Education

Program

1. Schooling, Neocolonialism, and Unsuspected Teacher's Agency

In the previous chapters of this study, insights gathered from theory and critical

dialogues with adolescents who experience social exclusion in Brazil and France have

shown that the construction of subalternity and the inscription of difference onto people's

subjectivities is a complex and multifaceted process that occurs through contextually

diversified combinations of historical and economic determinism and discursive

mechanisms, or *stories*, that are disseminated and legitimated through societal

apparatuses such as the nuclear family, legislations, the media, orthodox historiography,

and schooling.

In this sense, we have seen that education and schooling are more than sites of

cultural production and transmission, but act as channels of dissemination, legitimation

and institutionalization of neocolonial discourse. In the era of postcoloniality where the

social makeup of postmodern societies is composed of descendants of the colonizer and

the colonized, therefore, there continues to exist, as Altbach (1971) pointed out,

profoundly unequal relations of power between producers of education and peripheral

consumers of education. Thus, we are forced to agree with Bill Ashcroft when he writes

that "education is perhaps the most insidious and in some ways the most cryptic of

colonialist survivals" (Ashcroft, 1995, p 425). We have seen that the power to name,

define, and produce official culture—in other words to colonize—that is being universalized through schools, subtly camouflaged under the rhetoric of official knowledge and official reality, serves the interest of the politically dominant classes in ways that could never be achieved through sheer physical oppression. Indeed, the colonization of the subaltern masses occurs and reoccurs everyday in schools, when the children who are voiceless and powerless to define the world accept the social, spatial and cultural realities that are presented to them along with the identities and possibilities they are made to construct and follow. The role of teachers as the mouthpieces of official culture, thus, is of crucial importance in the process of subaltern identity production.

However, in light of the theory of the *relative autonomy of hegemony* I presented in Chapter 2, one should avoid thinking about teachers as *deliberate* agents of neocolonial discourse legitimation. Rather, I will argue that we should think of teachers as largely *unsuspecting actors* in the transmission and perpetuation of oppressive cosmological paradigms. In my view, most educators do not enter the teaching profession because of a desire to perpetuate an exploitative system, but are more often animated by a genuinely altruistic humanistic desire to facilitate "access" into a structure which they do not perceive as oppressive. Indeed, I will contend that this naïve humanism is simply informed by modernist hegemony and Enlightenment Master Narratives, and could be avoided or altered if student-teachers had been given a chance to deconstruct their cosmologies.

2. Suggestions for a Counter-Hegemonic Teacher Education Program: A Case for Cultural Studies

If many teachers unwittingly contribute to the reproduction of exclusive and neocolonial social orders because of unchallenged modernist-humanism, it follows that teachers who have become aware of the oppressive cultural mechanism of which they are part can perhaps contribute to social projects in more equitable ways. In light of this contention, I propose that teacher education programs be reformed to counter hegemonic forces and their unsuspected transmission. This, I think, can be achieved by giving student teachers what Joe Murphy, the former chancellor of the City University of New York, saw as the ultimate goal of any education program, that is, giving students "sensibility to understand economic, political and historical forces so they're not just victims of these forces, but can *act on them effectively*: (Cited in Giroux, 1997, p238, emphasis original), and thus become aware of the political impact of teaching.

I strongly believe that the conscientization of students to these forces can be reached by adding a transdisciplinary critical approach to teacher education syllabi with a strong emphasis on Cultural Studies. Cultural Studies, in the words of Arjun Appadurai, can be described as an inquiry into "the relationship between the word and the world" (Appadurai, 1996, p51). This inquiry, as Henry Giroux reminds us, is grounded in a concern with the relationship between culture, knowledge and power (Giroux, 1997, p232).

By *transdisciplinary critical approach*, I mean that student teachers should be encouraged to critique and discuss, in a problem-posing manner that draws upon critical pedagogy (Freire, 2000), the foundations of the theories of human nature and behaviour

presented to them and their implication for educational praxis. Courses on the philosophical and pedagogical foundations of education should not only be compulsory, they should encompass a critical reading of literature from the fields of cultural and postcolonial theory, philosophy, cultural anthropology, sociology, and political theory. In addition, I also propose that a compulsory course on *the Politics of Knowledge* be added to syllabi. In such a course, student teachers should explore, critique, and generate questions about the foundations and construction of their own cosmological and epistemological beliefs. This course should incorporate a critical understanding of the politics of knowledge, and the questions of who articulates its foundations and validity, and why. The consequences of unilateral epistemological systems (such a theocracies, positivism, or aggressive *laïcité*) on other epistemologies should be explored. Throughout this course, an autoethnographic approach should be encouraged to allow students to reach an experiential understanding of the cultural and ideological mechanisms that shaped their sense of Self and view of the world. In addition to sensitivity toward the politics of knowledge, students who complete this course should be able to discuss critically such concepts as modernity/modernism (and its discontents: postmodernism), hegemony, and cultural capital.

In addition, a supplementary course on the *Concept of Culture* should be made compulsory. This should integrate an anthropological approach to the problem of cultural production and transmission, and should lead to a critical understanding of the concepts of *culture, nation*, and *civilization*, and the fact that such discursive, abstract categories are necessarily oppressive when they are articulated by authorities who claim to speak for everyone. Following Edward Said's (2000) suggestion, these concepts should be

critiqued, and the canonic authorities that define our civilizations and cultures as unchanging, homogenous discrete entities should be challenged. In light of the exclusion of many groups and individuals from the realms of public culture based on *stories* that do not include them, student-teachers should be sensitive to the concept of historiography and the inclusion of previously silenced voices into collective memory. Instead of being taught to rely exclusively on official syllabi to define public culture, future teachers should learn to generate collective histories and (auto)ethnographies in their classrooms by inviting students to contribute their histories, voices and memories.

Finally, the problem of *rhetoric* should be explored in order to avoid falling into purely abstract representation politics that signify no *real* pluralism or possibility of heterodoxy in the actual public sphere, and, as is the case in Brazil, serves to promote fantasies of pseudo-inclusivity that make it more arduous to discern the otherwise exclusive opportunities of late-capitalist societies. This should begin with an introduction to *semiotics* (Saussure, 1966; Barthes, 1972; Baudrillard, 1983) leading to an appreciation of the various levels of rupture between the signifier and the signified. Thus, texts, visual language and other sign systems should be analyzed to explore the degrees of disconnection between the concepts that are presented (signifier) and the realities they are supposed to describe (signified).

3. Conclusion.

In this brief conclusion, I have argued that the unsuspected hegemonic agency and contribution to the production of subaltern identities exercised by teachers can be countered by reforming teacher education programs and enabling future educators to become aware of and act upon the historical forces that reproduce cycles of exclusion. The broad area of inquiry of Cultural Studies, I have proposed, can help future teachers

reflect on those issues. If I may conclude with a presumptuous note, then, I will put forward that no individual should be granted a teaching license without demonstrating a critical understanding of the concepts of epistemology, hegemony, culture and identity.

References

Albach, P. (1971). Education and neocolonialism. *Teachers College Record, 72(1)*, 543-558.

Althusser, L. (1984). *Essays on ideology*. London: Verso.

Amir-Moazami, S. (2001). Hybridity and anti-hybridity: The Islamic headscarf and its opponents in the French public sphere. In. A. Salvatore *Muslim traditions and modern techniques of power* (pp. 307-327). Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Amiraux, V. (2004). Restructuring political Islam: Transnational belonging in France and Germany. In. A. M. Karam *Transnational political Islam: Religion, ideology, and power* (pp. 28-57). London: Pluto Press.

Anderson, B. R. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (2nd ed.). London: Verso.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Apple, M. W. (1990). *Ideology and curriculum* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Apple, M. W. (2000). *Official knowledge: Democratic education in a conservative age* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Arnove, R., Franz, S., Mollis, M., & Torres, C. A. (2003). Education in Latin America: Dependency, underdevelopment, and inequality. In. R. F. Arnove, & C. A. Torres

Comparative education: The dialectic of the global and the local . Lanham, MA:

Rowman & Littlefield.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (1998). *Key concepts in post-colonial studies.*

London: Routledge.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (1995). *The post-colonial studies reader.* London:

Routledge.

Assad, T. (1973). *Anthropology and the colonial encounter.* London: Ithaca press.

Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies.* London: J. Cape.

Baudrillard, J. (1983). *Simulations.* New York: Semiotext(e) Inc.

Bhabha, H. K. (1990). *Nation and narration.* London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1970). *La reproduction: Eléments pour une théorie du*

système d'enseignement. Paris: Editions de Minuit.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1990). *Reproduction in education, society, and culture.*

London: Sage.

Braziel, J. E., & Mannur, A. (2003). *Theorizing diaspora: A reader.* Malden, MA:

Blackwell.

Buber, M. (1953). *I and thou.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Bueno, E. (2002). *Brasil: Uma história: A incrível saga de um país.* São Paulo: Ática.

Cahoone, L. E. (2000). *From modernism to postmodernism: An anthology.* Cambridge, MA : Blackwell Publishers.

Caws, P. (1995). Identity: Cultural, transcultural, and multicultural. In. Goldberg, D. T. (Ed.), *Multiculturalism: A critical reader* (pp. 371-387). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

CECAL. (1991). *Panorama social de América Latina* . Santiago de Chile: Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe.

Cesari, J. (2002). Islam in France: The shaping of a religious minority. In. Y. Y. Haddad *Muslims in the West: From sojourners to citizens* (pp. 36-51). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chomsky, N. (1989). *Necessary illusions: Thought control in democratic societies.* Montreal, QC: CBC Enterprises.

Clifford, J. (1988). *The predicament of culture: Twentieth century ethnography, literature and art.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Clifford, J., & Marcus, G. E. (1986). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography: A School of American Research advanced seminar.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Collins, J., & Mayblin, B. (2000). *Introducing: Derrida.* Cambridge, UK: Icon Books.

de Azevedo, T. (1978). More on the non-perception of race differences. *Current Anthropology, 4(1),* 117-118.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia.*

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Denzin, N. K. (1997). *Interpretive ethnography: Ethnographic practices for the 21st century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Diversi, M. (2003). Glimpses of street-children through short stories. In. K. J. Gergen, & M. M. Gergen *Social construction: A reader* (pp. 109-119). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Diversi, M. (1998). Street kids in search of humanization: Expanding dominant narratives through critical ethnography and stories of lived experience. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1997) UMI No. 9834668.

Eder, D.& Fingerson, L. (2002). Interviewing children and adolescents. In. Gubrium, J. F. & Holstein, J. A. *Handbook of interview research: Context & method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. P. (1996). *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of qualitative writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Fanon, F. (1968). *Black skin, white masks*. New York: Grove Press.

Fine, M. (2000). Working the hyphen: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In. Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed ed.), pp70-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Foucault, M. (1972). *Histoire de la folie a l'âge classique*. Paris: Gallimard.

Foucault, M., & Gordon, C. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th anniversary ed). New York: Continuum.

Freyre, G. (1959). *New world in the tropics: The culture of modern Brazil.* New York: Knopf.

Gandin, L. A., & Apple, M. (2003). Educating the state, democratizing knowledge: The Citizen school project in Porto Alegre, Brazil. In. M. W. Apple, & P. Aasen. *The state and the politics of knowledge* (pp. 193-219). London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Geertz, C. (1983). *Local knowledge: Further essays in interpretive anthropology.* New York: Basic Books.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Giroux, H. A. (1997). Is there a place for Cultural Studies in Colleges of Education? In. Giroux, H. A. & Shannon, P. *Education and cultural studies: Ttoward a performative practice* (231-248). New York: Routledge.

Giroux, H. A. (1999). *The mouse that roared: Disney and the end of innocence.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Giroux, H. A., & Giroux, S. S. (2004). *Take back higher education: Race, youth, and the crisis of democracy in the post-Civil Rights era.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gonçalves e Silva, P. (2004). Citizenship and education in Brazil: The contribution of

    Indian peoples and Blacks in the struggle for citizenship and recognition. In.

    Banks, J. A. *Diversity and citizenship education: Global perspectives* (pp. 185-

    214). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gramsci, A. (1992). *Prison notebooks.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Guha, R. (1997). *Dominance without hegemony: History and power in colonial India.*

    Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hall, K. (1999). Understanding educational process in an era of globalization: The view

    from anthropology and cultural studies. In. Lagemann, E. C. & Shulman, L. S.

    Issues in education research: Problems and possibilities (pp. 121-156). San

    Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hall, S. (2003). Cultural identity and diaspora. In. Braziel, J. E. & Mannur, A.

    Theorizing diaspora: A reader (pp 233-247). Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2000). *Empire.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Held, D.& McGrew, A. G. (2002). Divided World, Divided Nations. In. Held, D. &

    McGrew, A. G. *Globalization/anti-globalization.* Cambridge, UK: Blackwell

    Publishers.

Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (1982). *Dialectic of enlightenment.* New York:

    Continuum.

Kofman, A. Z. (2002). *Derrida.* New York: Zeitgeist Video

Limage, L. (2003). Education and Muslim identity: The case of France. In. E. R.

Beauchamp *Comparative education reader* (pp. 110-138). New York: Routledge

Falmer.

Lippi-Green, R. (1997). *English with an accent: Language, ideology, and discrimination

in the United States.* London: Routledge.

Lyotard, J. F. (1979). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge.* Manchester:

Manchester University Press.

Maxwell, K. (2003). *Naked tropics: Essays on empire and other rogues.* New York:

Routledge.

McLaren, P. (1995). White terror and oppositional agency: Towards a critical

multiculturalism. In. Sleeter, C. E. & McLaren, P. *Multicultural education,

critical pedagogy, and the politics of difference* (pp. 33-70). Albany: State

University of New York Press.

Mishra, V. & Hodge, B. (1994). What is post(-)colonialism? In. Williams, P. &

Chrisman, L. (Eds), *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory: A reader.* New

York: Columbia University Press.

Ogbu, J. (1992). Understanding cultural diversity and learning. *Educational Researcher,

21(8)*, 5-14.

Ogbu, J. & Simons, H. (1998). Voluntary and involuntary minorities: A cultural-

ecological theory of school performance with some implications for education.

Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 29(2), 155-188.

Petrarolha, F. (1996). Brazil: the meek want the earth now. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* 20-30.

Ribeiro, D. (2004). Excerpts from The Americas and Civilization. In A. Del Sarto, A. Ríos, & A. Trigo (eds.), *The Latin American cultural studies reader* (pp. 59-82). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Rodney, W. (2002). How Europe underdevelopped Africa. In. Broad, R. *Global backlash: Citizen initiatives for a just world economy* (pp 77-80). Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield.

Romero, S. (1979). *Realidades e ilusões no Brasil: Parlamentarismo e presidencialismo e outros ensaios.* Petrópolis, RJ: Editora Vozes.

Russel, T. (1998). *Autoethnography: Journeys of the Self.* Online document, retrieved November 12, 2004 from http://www.haussite.net/haus.0/SCRIPT/txt2001/01/russel.HTML.

Said, E. W. (2000b). The clash of definitions: On Samuel Huntington. In. Said, E. W. *Reflections on exile and other essays.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Said, E. W. (2000a). Representing the colonized: Anthropology's interlocutors. In. Said, E. W. *Reflections on exile and other essays.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Saussure, F. (1966). *Course in general linguistics.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Schwandt, T. A. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry:

Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social-constructionism. In. Denzin, N. K. &

Lincoln, Y. S. *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed ed.,). Thousand

Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Schwarz, R. (1992). *Misplaced ideas: Essays on Brazilian culture*. London: Verso.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples.*

Dunedin, NZ: Zed Books.

Sollors, W. (1995). Who is ethnic? In. B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, & H. Tiffin (eds.) *The*

post-colonial studies reader (pp. 219-222). London: Routledge.

Spivak, G. C., & Harasym, S. (1990). *The post-colonial critic: Interviews, strategies and*

dialogues. New York: Routledge.

Swartz, D. (1997). *Culture and power: The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago:

University of Chicago Press.

Taylor, C. (1994). *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition*. Princeton, NJ:

Princeton University Press.

Tietze, N. (2001). Managing borders: Muslim religiosity among young men in France

and Germany. In. A. Salvatore *Muslim traditions and modern techniques of power*

(pp. 293-306). Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Torres, A., Arnove, R., Franz, S., & Morse, K. (1997). A political sociology of education

and development in Latin America: The conditioned state, neoliberalism, and

educational policy. In. Y. W. Bradshaw *Education in comparative perspective: New lessons from around the world* (pp. 140-158). New York: E.J. Brill.

Veissière, S. (2005). *Circular metaphors of the Self: Toward a transformative epistemology.* Paper presented at the First International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (May 5-7, 2005): available online from http://www.qi2005.org/papers/veissiere.pdf.

Veissière, S. (2005). *Imagined Whites and eroticized Zombies: Misplaced logocentrism and the production of Tropical(ist) identities in postcolonial Brazil.* Paper to be presented at the International Conference on *Worlds in Discourse: Representations of Realities*, National University of Malaysia (UKM), 21- 23 November 2005, Malaysia

Villenas, S. (1996). The Colonizer/Colonized Chicana ethnographer: Identity, marginalization, and co-optation in the field. *Harvard Educational Review, 66(4)*, 711-731.

Wallerstein, I. M. (1975). *World inequality: Origins and perspectives on the world system.* Montreal, QC: Black Rose Books.

Wallerstein, I. M. (2004). *World-systems analysis: An introduction.* Durham NC: Duke University Press.

Wayland, S. V. (1997). Religious expressions in schools: *Kirpans* in Canada, *hijab* in France. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 20(3)*

Whitaker, D. (1981). *A seleção dos privilegiados: Um estudo sobre a educação*

Brasileira*. São Paulo: Semente.

Willis, P. E. (1977). *Learning to labour: How working class kids get working class jobs.*

Farnborough, UK: Saxon House