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## *Inside the Romanticist Episteme*

The post-structuralist turn has subverted both theoretical languages and the production of objects of knowledge within the social sciences. This has led to an important and valuable re-cognition of the always-already historical situatedness of both the observing gaze and of the constructed character of objects and categories. This has, however, often incurred a certain cost: the eloquence of post-structuralist critiques of teleology, universalism and essentialist reasoning have often been obtained by simplifying a 'theoretical Other' into caricatures written in capital letters : Reason, Enlightenment, Modernity, the West, etc. The eagerly projected *ambience* of a radical rupture with the past that pervades this wave has thus been obtained by partially obscuring the philosophical antecedents and 'conceptual grammar' upon which a major part of the unquestionable post-structuralist insights are built. To put it polemically, post-structuralist practice in e.g., anthropology, development studies and sociology often bears the marks of ideological intervention: construction of an Other, reduction of complexity, dissimulation of historical plurality, flawed reflexivity vis-a-vis its own origins, etc.

Foucault remains for many a good reason the paramount figure on the post-structuralist firmament. Foucault's project was always polemic. He never aimed at a full account of western intellectual history, but ventured to subvert the dominant epistemology and recuperate the suppressed margins of history. He wanted to historicise History, to dissolve an ordered meta-history into the myriad of smaller, unruly histories of dissent and heterogeneity which constituted the boundaries of bourgeois societies and the objects of their normalising strategies. Out of this venture grew an implicit equation of Enlightenment rationality with modernity as such which rendered an image of modernity as a relatively coherent project: an emerging and irresistible will to order, an emerging episteme bent on explanation and taxonomisation, and a drive to discipline bodies and social agency

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through scientific discourses and state institutions. However, in the last phase of this life Foucault turned towards an explicit appreciation of the 'ethos of Enlightenment' which he saw as a construction of a 'critical ontology of ourselves as a historico-practical test of the limits that we may go beyond, and thus as work carried out by ourselves upon ourselves as free beings'. To Foucault, this practical-ethical dimension of a critical philosophical life entailed 'faith in Enlightenment' as well as faith in the possibility of creating ourselves as autonomous beings.<sup>1</sup> Thus paying homage to the possibility of historicising ethical critiques of a post-Kantian variety while also invoking the romantic belief in autonomy as an ideal, Foucault prudently recognises his own location *within* the edifice of modernity as a philosophical horizon that enables both critiques and improvements—however local and specific.

In spite of these qualifications from the late Foucault, the tendency towards construction of modernity as a somewhat caricatured theoretical Other has become something of a trademark among many subsequent users of Foucault's theoretical language. This can be observed e.g., in the frequent combination of the otherwise disparate, though not unrelated, theoretical languages of hermeneutics, positing a historicist time space bound character of categories and intellectual horizons, and post-structuralism positing a 'higher order', often quasi-transcendental, reasoning on language, power and subjectivity. This combination is often held together only by an ostensibly common denominator, namely the critique of 'modernity-as-universalist reason'.

The argument I wish to make here is that critiques of 'modernity-as-universalist reason' inadvertently tend to move upon an already densely structured field of historical discourses and philosophical traditions, notably romanticist philosophies of language and culture, which opposed and in many ways constructed the notion of 'modernity-as-universalist reason' already from the latter half of the eighteenth century. One may argue that if western intellectual history is marked by an emergent episteme bent on universalist reason, the same history is also marked, and enriched, by the existence of another, though weaker, romanticist episteme. This latter episteme posits knowledge and meaning as being culturally differentiated, as always mediated by a specific language, as always situated in unique historical settings. It presupposes a fundamental culturalist ontology, positing human beings and human subjectivity as, first and foremost, being produced within discrete and distinct cultural horizons of meaning. The romanticist episteme marks in a certain way the final breakthrough of modernity as a cultural system as it for the first time posits *originality* and notions of *autonomy* and *self grounding* of human beings, cultures and social forms as marks of the highest cultural and political value. If modernity as a cultural system of secularised thought fundamentally is

characterised by its anthropocentrism and celebration of a break with the past, the romanticist celebration of human will, autonomy, of an emerging human spirit, the mystique of the artistic self-creation and individual genius etc., marks the consummation of that cultural system. The romanticist celebrations of the self grounded and irreducible expression of human creativity have in innumerable guises been the constant critical companion of positivist, materialist, teleological and other universalist schemes.<sup>2</sup> Hence, I venture that current debates always-already are posited upon the tension between these two epistemes, or, rather, mutually reproducing discursive fields whose recurrent intermixtures and re-differentiations remain a crucial intellectual deep structure of modern western thought.

#### THE CONCEPTUAL GRAMMAR OF ROMANTICISM

In his admirable work *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* Hans Blumenberg proposes to see the ostensible continuities in intellectual history across otherwise radical ruptures in the socio-historical fabric as the effect of the inheritance of problematics already structured by intellectual labour of an earlier age. Every epoch in vents a set of dominant discourses and intellectual problematics which, Blumenberg argues, do not simply evaporate as the socio-historical world changes. They remain in intellectual history as traces, as problematics, as intellectual positions—maybe left vacant as older beliefs or ideologies loose validity—but still present as 'a mortgage of prescribed questions that cannot simply be set aside or left unoccupied . . . The modern age's readiness to accept as its own obligation to pay off goes a long way towards explaining its intellectual history'.<sup>3</sup> Blumenberg terms this movement towards answering the questions posited by a previous generation or age as 'reoccupations' of the vacant positions in the intellectual landscape. Although Blumenberg's main concern is to explain more precisely how modern ideological discourses break off from and yet are deeply structured by Christian eschatology and cosmology, I believe the logic he outlines between 'positions' and incessant 'reoccupations' also can be applied to the intellectual trajectory of modern philosophy and epistemology in the social sciences.

Modernity was a never coherent project, and Enlightenment rationalism was neither unified nor uncontested. Modernity, which is the name we *ex post* give to the effects of contingent historical combinations of disjunctive economic, social and cultural processes in Europe from the seventeenth century onwards, was almost from the outset marked by a split intellectual horizon. Rationalist classicism and romantic historicism emerged as competing epistemological fields, *partially overlapping, feeding upon each other, while simultaneously hardening each others stances.* The field of oppositions developing

between the rationalist, universalist Enlightenment episteme determined to explain the world (*Erklären*), and the historicising romanticist episteme looking for deeper meanings and cultural configurations while striving to understand the world (*Verstehen*), became the fertile field upon which most substantial contributions to the social sciences have been premised. This does *not* mean that the same essential epistemological differences have been reproduced again and again in identical forms or essences, forming two grand, parallel and closed traditions, and that intellectual history can be elucidated through the grand swings of the pendulum of knowledge production between these traditions. On the contrary, the boundaries between these two epistemes have always been fuzzy and permeable in practice. What has been reproduced again and again in new forms over the last couple of centuries is an intellectual *structure of opposition and difference* between mutually conditioned *epistemological poles* stressing either the historical and contextual, or identifying larger patterns and universal logics. However, this recurrent structure of opposition and difference has bestowed a certain measure of continuity within each of the emerging competing epistemes, and has made possible a certain transference of *conceptual grammars* from one period to the next. To speak with Blumenberg, earlier romanticist critiques of capitalism, technology and universalist reason, for instance, have left certain problematics, as sets of positions that have begged re-occupation at a later stage, in new epochs. Alvin Gouldner has traced how major contributions to the social sciences from Marx to G.H. Mead draw on both sides of this split philosophical heritage. Gouldner argues that romanticism constitutes a constant source of opposition to the pressure for objectivation and systematisation of the social world launched by the dominant rationalist episteme along the Cartesian separation of the subject and the object. Romanticism was, Gouldner argues, both emancipatory, non-conformist and individualist while, one must add, its inherent essentialism also contained grains that through later political mediations lend themselves as inspirations to xenophobic nationalism, racism and totalitarian thought.<sup>4</sup>

The Romantics lived in a twilight world of transition between an unsatisfactory present and an unworkable past . . . Living in a world in which the conventional social maps had lost their effectiveness, but in which acceptable new ones had not yet been formulated, it was to the individual self as the maker of meanings that they turned rather than to the traditional rules. Living in a world where received cultural categories and conventional social identities no longer made social reality meaningful, they came to see social reality as possessed of intrinsic vagueness . . . they saw objects blending into one another rather than as well demarcated boundaries. (Romanticism's)

basic problematic revolves on the relationship between a knowing 'Subject' and a known 'Object', and it regarded this very distinction as false consciousness of the Subject, since the Object, rather than being that which was *not* the Subject, was actually unconsciously created by it.<sup>5</sup>

Romantic poetry was fascinated by twilight, boundary dissolving mystery (*Schwärmerei*), the grotesque, the sublime, the inward-looking and unique individual experience; Idealist philosophy was trying to 're-enchante' the human world by insisting on the centrality of agency (e.g. Fichte's and Schopenhauer's emphasis on 'Wille' in the face of the collapse of a divine authority), of the centrality of human search for individual and cultural originality<sup>6</sup>, of imagination and spirit (*geist*) in the self-grounded creation and reception of the social world; and the inheritors of Herder's theory of natural languages and organic culture strove to install language, culture and history as central categories in the study of human societies, notably in the powerful German tradition of *Kulturwissenschaft*. Needless to say, the contemporary prominence of ethnography, history and anthropology—in their subject and main intellectual debts always heavily indebted to the romanticist notions of cultural autonomy and self-groundedness—testifies to their historical success.

Romanticism philosophy had profound effects in the field of epistemology and methodology. The romanticist philosopher and linguist Schleiermacher founded modern hermeneutics as he reworked the notion of the uniqueness and individuality of inner spiritual experiences (*Innerlichkeit*) he had inherited from Protestant theology. Along with the development of hermeneutics in the nineteenth and twentieth century<sup>7</sup> evolved a still more systematic methodology: the importance of first hand understanding, of letting oneself be immersed in mysterious, popular and exotic, of deep and differentiated meanings, of psychological factors in reception of discourses, etc. The entire inventory of present-day fashionable methodological tool kits—the case study, context, unstructured interviews, qualitative method, discourse analysis—thus all have important, though far from exclusive, roots in the romanticist episteme. At the same time, the rigour and systematic fashion in which they often are applied pay obvious homages to more objectivist and rationalist epistememes.

Another example is the question of language. While the linguistic turn in philosophy often is ascribed to not least Wittgenstein's powerful interventions, the fact remains that already Herder and later Schlegel developed a philosophy of the link between language, culture and social being which Charles Taylor aptly has characterised as 'expressivism' and Louis Dumont has called 'individualist holism'.<sup>8</sup> The romanticist theories of language were framed as critiques of objectivist and empiricist epistemologies in the Cartesian mould

which in a sense separated the observer from the gaze and postulated the transparency of objects in so far as they lent themselves to observation, thus rendering language as an ostensibly transparent vehicle of representation. The objective world, the German idealists argued by contrast, only existed as a social fact through its expression by human beings in spirit and language. Languages did not merely represent the world, they expressed the world. The romanticists also argued that any linguistically mediated action, meaning or social phenomenon could be properly understood only if it was seen as an expression of the cultural and social totality at a given time.<sup>9</sup> Herder argued that the structures of meaning endowing a totality with a determinate meaning was to be found in language. A language determines what can be thought, and in which style it can be thought. Hence, language endows humans with consciousness, and since there are multiple languages, there exist multiple culturally determined forms of consciousness, that is multiple culturally specific epistemologies.<sup>10</sup>

Also, here the romanticist discomfort with mimesis and mixture of cultural elements was central. There were, argued Schlegel, basically two types of languages and cultures, the dynamic and the non-dynamic: the dynamic languages were the original and self-grounded (Sanskrit, German, Celtic) and possessed qua this self-grounding supreme capacities for cultural creativity; while the non-dynamic languages born out of cultural mixtures (Latin languages, English, etc.) were 'dead' and mechanical.<sup>11</sup> The deep interconnectedness between romanticism and cultural nationalism were, and remains, unmistakable.

The contemporary axiom of the discursive construction of the social world gaining a foothold in the social sciences after the 'linguistic turn' in philosophy, and the primacy of epistemology in determining ontological presuppositions that Gaston Bachelard's historical epistemology<sup>12</sup> imprinted on a generation of French intellectuals from Althusser to Foucault, are, in other words, not altogether new. Contemporary post structuralism and historicism is among many other things premised upon the conceptual grammar inherited from nineteenth century romanticism, but has advanced in several ways, abandoning essentialist notions of 'Man', of 'spirit' and of historical teleology. What we see today is not a restaging of the classical 'grand divide' but a restaging of a structure of opposition and difference between the often overlapping discursive fields and epistemes emerging from the late eighteenth century onwards.

#### THE RETURN OF ROMANTICIST PROBLEMATICS?

Where does this 'deconstruction of deconstruction' and 'historicisation of historicism' lead? First and foremost towards a sharpened awareness of the intellectual corollaries and historical predicaments

of any epistemological and methodological choice. Intellectual labour takes place on a historically structured terrain in which 'new ideas, critiques and attempts to create new ground always are premised on a discursive terrain of 'positions' not of one's own choice. To speak with Blumenberg, while breaking with the past one may very well, and maybe unconsciously, perform the task of re-occupying earlier positions.

Post-structuralism tends, in other words, to be structured in some of its themes and polemic positionings by earlier romanticist critiques of 'modernity-as-universalist reason', the theoretical Other created by the German idealists. This is even clearer in the case of contemporary hermeneutics, not least as it is practised in anthropology and development studies, where the themes of eroding authenticity of communities, the originality and self-groundedness of cultures, of 'deep' meanings, and of the unbridgeable gulf of understanding between the observer and the observed, often invokes and reactivates the entire conceptual grammar and epistemological inventory of romanticism.

I will in the following try to show the predicament and compulsions of the pre-structured intellectual field of opposition to Enlightenment rationalism, and the contradictions and ambiguities which political problematics of identity, cultural meanings and emancipation can engender when employing the historically loaded and structured conceptual grammars of currently progressive theoretical languages in a given field of study, *in casu* post-colonial studies of South Asia.

#### DIFFERENCE AS AUTHENTICITY

The notion of authenticity seems to prevail in the current debates on recuperation of popular cultural identities from the combined hegemony of colonial history and institutionalised nationalist historiography in South Asia. In much of the fertile and innovative literature coming out of e.g., the Subaltern Studies attempts to create a historiography 'from below', these localised and marginal identities are defined as dispersed, fragmented and popular. Yet, they are also, mostly by implication, claimed to be somewhat more authentic than the identities constructed by official nationalism or Orientalist knowledge, exactly because they are indigenous and popular and thus belonging to a sphere less penetrated and organised by colonial and western discourse. The posited authenticity of such marginal/suppressed identities as a 'radical difference', as an epistemological device producing an original history, and as an ontological position, revealing a radically different type of reality subverting the dominant images of the West with modernity and Enlightenment: as the western Other articulated through the colonial and postcolonial state is alien, non-authentic and outside, the inside, that is the popular and subordinated, becomes, by implication, both

authentic and original. What moreover is at stake in this discursive operation is the delicate 'extraction' of the popular, i.e. that which bears the marks of the true people, from within the empirical people—i.e. the mass of subordinated and the silent. The criterion for this extraction becomes in the Subaltern Studies precisely articulations of resistance, defiance or negativity vis-a-vis the colonial state. Only when the people articulate negativity vis-a-vis the powers that be, does it become truly popular.

This discursive operation is particularly evident in Partha Chatterjee's recent work on the construction of the Indian nation which posits a fundamental antagonism between, on the one hand, the colonial and postcolonial discourses and, on the other hand, subaltern consciousness and communities.

The notion of community and *Gemeinschaft* has historically been reproduced over and over again in widely different political and social environments, as a constant romanticist critique and companion to the dominant belief in the superiority of reason.<sup>13</sup> This persistent notion of community as the basis for social action and a model for larger solidarities presupposes that communities are spontaneous, preconscious entities persisting through emotional ties. This sense of community donates, true to its romanticist genealogy, a mode of social organisation and interaction which is 'deeper', self grounded and more *authentic* than the elective association of individuals depicted by the liberal-individualist paradigm. The authenticity derives from the emotional investment, the almost pre-linguistic affinities, the unspoken, in brief, from the effects of human love that communitarians see as antinomial to *Gesellschaft* and the project of control and discipline of the modern state.

Partha Chatterjee, developing this view from Gramsci and Ranajit Guha's interpretation of peasant insurgency in India, traces in Hegel a 'suppressed narrative of community, flowing through the substratum of liberal capitalist society, which those who celebrate the absolute and natural sovereignty of the individual will refuse to recognise'.<sup>14</sup> Liberal individualism, the argument goes, seeks to conceal the fundamentally social and socialised nature of human life, and seeks to discipline the basic impulse of love and affection among human beings which continues to unfold to this day *against the grain* of that other narrative of bourgeois individualism'.<sup>15</sup> The constant articulation of community amounts in this reading to a 'return of the suppressed' *Gemeinschaft*; as a persistent human urge to form communities, which in effect emerges as a constant immanent critique of modernity and capitalism. Community is here the 'radical outside'—a human element that defies and limits hegemonisation. Historically, the colonial world constituted this 'outside' vis-a-vis the West. In the postcolonial states, it is argued, the persistence of community and more or less spontaneous protests and defiances emanating from subaltern

consciousness constitutes a major problem in the implementation of developmental schemes, disciplinary institutions and the grid of the nation-state designed to erase and subsume smaller communities into a corporate, unified nation.<sup>16</sup> However, the notion of community as an immanent critique of modernity has been impoverished by its origin in Europe where older communities effectively have been demolished by capitalism and modernity, argues Chatterjee. Only when the full complexity and stubborn resistance of community-forms in India is explored will we (re)discover the subversive power of community also in the universe of social sciences:

If the day comes when the vast storehouse of Indian social history will become comprehensible to the scientific consciousness, we will have achieved along the way a fundamental restructuring of the edifice of European social philosophy as it exists today.<sup>17</sup>

This is a tall claim which somewhat conveniently 'flattens' European history to utilitarian/rational Enlightenment, conceals the genealogy of the communitarian discourse in western romanticism and populism, and instead renders the heroic task of subverting the foundations of western social science to those researching the suppressed popular dimensions of Indian social history, as for example the Subaltern Studies. This claim must be understood against the backdrop of the overall project of the subaltern studies group that in crucial ways informs Chatterjee's work. Ranajit Guha, the nestor of the subaltern perspective, has in various works explored the modalities of community and peasant insurgency in colonial India and the structure of colonial domination.<sup>18</sup> Guha's thesis is that colonialism was 'domination without hegemony': colonial rule revealed the limits and double standards of western universalism and colonialism and the post-colonial state has never fully hegemonised indigenous popular perceptions and communities. Colonialism was always dominant but never hegemonic. The historiography of colonial India must, therefore, be re-shaped towards an 'autonomous historiography . . . (depicting) the originality of Indian culture of the colonial era and why it defies understanding either as a replication of liberal bourgeois culture of nineteenth century Britain or as the mere survival of an antecedent pre-capitalist culture'.<sup>19</sup>

Guha's and Chatterjee's invocation of the 'popular' and communities is thus directed against both the dominant nationalist historiography of India, and against the colonial depictions of the British Raj saving India from her own anarchic implosion, re-integrating her into world history. This endeavour has produced a range of very interesting detailed studies of hitherto unknown historical material, and has excavated a long history of peasant disobedience, protest and local conflict far beyond the knowledge and horizon of the urban, nationalist

middle class. Yet I believe, this programme of generation of an indigenous social science tends to overestimate the coherence of western universalism and to conceal its own indebtedness to a romanticist communitarian discourse born in the West. It is my contention, that this happens as the subalternist positions seek to construct a credible claim of a persistent 'popular' authenticity which is constitutively *different* i.e. negating colonialism and 'western categories'. Hence the need to reduce historical complexity and produce images of a simplified rational West, an external colonial power seen as a 'pure' intruder conceptually extricated from the local institutional complexities and complicities of actual colonial governmentality, and a constitutive opposition between foreign bureaucracy and capital bent on 'universal reason', versus indigenous, self-grounded authentic communities.

Marx argued within a Hegelian figure of the synthetic *Aufhebung* of essences to self-consciousness, that classes existing *an sich* only could acquire self-consciousness regarding their true being-as-classes *fur sich* through negation and conflict. An identical 'expressivist' Hegelian figure is employed in the subalternist view regarding the movement in peasant consciousness in periods of insurgency of pure negativity to a notion of community, the principle which, according to Chatterjee, 'gives to all these specific aspects their fundamental constitutive character as the purposive acts of a collective consciousness'.<sup>20</sup> This consciousness of community arising out of insurgency, Guha and Chatterjee maintain, is merely the expression of an immanent essence: the derivation of social identities from the community, that is the constitutive primacy of community as it is lived through the structured subordination, division of labour, endogamy, maintenance of caste-boundaries. Hence, 'peasant consciousness has its 'own paradigmatic form' which is no less than 'the other of bourgeois consciousness', which, however, cannot be concretely identified in the melange of everyday interactions. The consciousness of the immanent and emerging 'peasant community' lies in the 'cultural apparatus—languages in the broadest sense' which enable this consciousness both 'to understand', 'to act' etc.<sup>21</sup> Peasant consciousness is in this rendition a truly Hegelian essence moving through history, manifesting itself at various points and being a constant negation of bourgeois free wills, rationality or social structures of domination. This communitarian consciousness resides in the never fully colonised minds of the peasants. But it only manifests itself as truly 'popular'—as communities—in moments of negativity, defiance and insurgency. Chatterjee even identifies in the rapidly fluctuating votes at elections in postcolonial India, a contemporary manifestation of this subaltern, peasant consciousness. Somewhat unsurprisingly, Chatterjee suggests that this 'community spirit' sets India apart from other societies and render standard methods of political analysis as important here. Only those in

possession of the magical key to peasant consciousness may, it seems, get access to the social world of India.<sup>22</sup>

It may, however, be helpful to see this subalternist approach as a part of the ongoing contested production of the Indian people. As nationalist imagination evolved in late nineteenth century India the production of the people became a paramount concern. The inversion of colonial and Orientalist depictions of India as a melange of cultural communities became crucial in the dominant nationalist production and representation of the 'Indian people' in corporate community terms. The Indian people thus came to know itself, and be known among educated strata, through a dual discourse and a dual structure of representation : on the one hand as caste-communities, religious communities, villages, linguistic groups, etc., represented through associations, religious reform societies, educational institutions and patron-client structures, and, on the other hand, as a larger abstract entity 'the Indian people' opposed to the British Raj, represented by the political parties, first and foremost Indian National Congress.

In India as elsewhere, communities came to know themselves in a modern sense as communities *fur sich* only as the democratic revolution in a vernacularised version laid bare domination as illegitimate, and as the discourse of cultural nationalism constructed objectified notions of 'our culture', the 'people', 'our history' 'our religion'. This enabled Indians to know and construct themselves as discrete, essential, but also abstract and supra local communities of Hindus, Muslims, castes, language groups, etc. The communitarian discourse and the production of communities are in India, as old as colonial objectivation of communities, and the inversion of this colonial discourse on communities in cultural nationalism, is thus inseparable from the historical production and nationalisation of 'the people'. Seen in its polemical and political context, the subalternist communitarianism seems at least partially to fit into Bourdieu's depiction of populism as a compensatory strategy on part of dominated sectors in an intellectual field, *in casu* conflicting forces of global intellectual politics. To those invoking the people, their invocations are 'inseparable from the desire for their own ennoblement'.<sup>23</sup> The subaltern variety of communitarianism and many other related theoretical objects emanating in these years from the postcolonial world are also inseparable from the continuation of an older cultural nationalist agenda of producing a real people—an authentic people—nation—and inseparable from the quest for a genuine recognition of this nation from its significant others.

#### HYBRIDITY AND AUTHENTICITY

In a paper on the construction of Punjabi identity, Arvind-pal Singh has recently argued in Derrida'ean mould that pre-colonial Punjab, due

to its turbulent history of successive invasions and settlements, was an area marked by an extraordinary multiplicity of cultural markers and codes—mostly oral—engaged in a multilayered and fluid exchange of meanings.<sup>24</sup> With colonialism came the western rationalist episteme which a priori posited *religion* and scripturally authorised language as the central categories around which this sea of difference could be ordered. Through an army of indigenous western educated bureaucrats and 'mimick-men', this 'panoptic vision' became dispersed and naturalised in Punjabi society, creating by the end of the nineteenth century three distinct and competing public spheres, each centred around a religion (Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism) each with a script-language (Hindi, Urdu and Gurumukhi), thus thoroughly communalising Punjab. In other words, the advent of the rationalist episteme privileging script, God and a Holy Book, simplified and reified cultural communities and 'naturalised' and rationalised cultural differences into larger antagonistic entities. This intellectual and cultural mimicry, Singh argues, has to this day involved a wholesale adoption of the essentialism and objectivation inherent in 'western metaphysics', bent on the desire to be recognised 'as almost equal', yet inevitably subjected to *meconnaisance* by the imperial/western Other:

For each of them (postcolonial notions and diaspora communities, TBH), the post-colonial desire, as the desire for an identity, is articulated through a particular languages that can do no other than both mimic and misrecognise, and thus be seen as a shadow of the imperial tongue.<sup>25</sup>

This ongoing mimicry—'authenticated by academia and mass produced by media networks'—has rendered religious identity widely accepted as *the* primary cultural marker, and organiser, of difference in postcolonial societies. Thus, contemporary cultural struggles over the meaning and significance of religion in postcolonial societies—especially in South Asia—is fought in the idioms, categories and historical narratives inherited from the West. Singh argues that the official ideology of secularism in for example, India is nothing but an articulation of western hegemony:

... it is itself a culture in its own right—one that is also based on essentialist metaphysical principles such as Man, Human culture, Universality, and ultimately, therefore, the culture of capitalist techno economics.<sup>26</sup>

Singh argues that all this boils down to one thing: the problem of translation understood as the process of cultural encounter inevitably rendering disparities between e.g. the traditional languages of Indian religions (in so far they have not been hijacked by the 'mimick-men') and western rationalist discourses.

The main problem, Singh argues in an unmistakable romanticist vein, lies in the alienness of the language employed to describe tradition, religion and contemporary conflicts: not only is it primarily discussed in academic English (an alien and thus distorting language, according to Singh), but also in the conceptual language of 'western metaphysics' whose categories of purity, boundaries and core definitions are bound to distort the essentially, hybridised culture of South Asia. The problem is fundamentally Singh argues with Derrida, that the very character of 'Western discourse'—it objectifying 'meta language' is so dominant that even subjects in the periphery have no other option but to understand themselves through the structures of this language, and the *descriptions* offered by this meta-language bent on the Jew/Greek/European culture in which cultural differences in the periphery always will appear as 'more of the same'—the peripheral Other.

The double bind for the Third World writer is that he can write, but what he writes is always through translation of his culture into European. He writes his identity in the hope of retaining purity and originality. . . . By the very process of *cultural translation*, the radical alterity of the other is homogenised, made palatable, digestible. It is no different from the process of colonisation.<sup>27</sup>

Singh's paper ends with a very elegant section on cultural hybridity and hybrid politics in which he, clearly speaking from the Punjabi diaspora community in Britain, argues—again wholly consistent with Derrida—that cultural differences are alterable, always in a state of flux ad never closed systems of signification kept together by privileged markers such as religion or nationality. The whole problem therefore boils down to invent a conceptual language which permits hybridity—and not just the identity allowed by modernist, multiculturalist or traditionalist discourses bent on fixing differences in stable patterns—thus permitting translation without conceptual violence.

The most interesting thing about Singh's paper is the technique of its arguments: while the paper at one level basically draws on Derrida's insights regarding the essentialist, reductionist and a-historical onto-theological deep structures in modern western thought, and on Derrida's early insights into the displacement of meaning inherent in the process of writing, it also continuously engages in exactly these conceptual activities in order to present the case of Punjabi and post-colonial identities. In Singh's usage, the West remains an ahistorical, and entirely metaphysical construct. He is essentialising the entire western history to structures inherent in western languages and metaphysics, while claiming an authentic Punjabi hybridity, an original hybridity beneath layers of 'mimicry'.

To speak with Blumenberg, while denouncing the colonial and postcolonial regimes as incarnations of an essentialised West, Singh inadvertently comes to re-occupy the position of self-grounded 'authenticity'. He remains trapped in the writing and metalanguage he criticises: while trying to argue a case for hybridity and for 'civilised' translation, he is himself translating Derrida (western, one must admit) to a Punjabi context, thus in a strict sense inauthenticating both himself and his language. Singh thus posits himself within a romanticist problematic denouncing mimesis and colonial hybridity, which leads him straight into a celebration of a somewhat paradoxical 'original hybridity'.

THE PERIPHERY STRIKES BACK: POSTCOLONIALS AGAINST UNIVERSALISM.

Similar paradoxes are at work in certain versions of the notion of postcoloniality, a term which has gained much currency especially in western academic debate in recent years. The term postcoloniality is today widely used in a variety of ways in literary studies, feminism, cultural studies and a range of other fields. The term today covers anything from literary genres, or critical 'points of view', to mere spatio-temporal locations. I wish here only to take issue with the more overarching *ideological* connotations of the term which have been inscribed in it, when deployed to displace the idea of a unified Third World as a geographical and/or cultural periphery. Postcoloniality in this more ideological sense refers to an analysis of the current global structures of knowledge and culture as marked by the assertion of the periphery as a subversive and productive site whose peripheral and 'incommensurable' voices and articulations undermine the erstwhile firm foundations of western epistemology—even in the heartlands of the West—through representations of heterogeneity, marginality, race, gender, etc. In the words of one of the leading proponents of the notion of postcoloniality in this very broad sense, Gyan Prakash

. . . (nowadays) the third world, far from being confined to its assigned space, has penetrated the inner sanctum of the first world in the process of being 'third worlded'—arousing, inciting, and affiliating with the subordinated others in the first world. It has reached across boundaries and barriers to connect with the minority voices in the first world: socialists, radicals, feminists, minorities, etc.<sup>28</sup>

While it certainly is true that migration and globalisation have brought large numbers of erstwhile citizens in non-western states to the cities and labour markets in Europe and North America, their 'arousing' and 'affiliating' with the 'subordinated others in the first world' seems primarily to have been of a rather hostile, even xenophobic nature. However, what Prakash refers to is of course not actual politics

at the street or neighbourhood level, but the intellectual politics of difference and the unquestionable energies and creativities coming out of postcolonial fiction, cultural studies and feminist scholarship. The question is, therefore, if at all, can one extrapolate from intellectual mobilisation to identification of any global political project worth its name? Or are we merely experiencing a rebirth of the good old Third Worldism dressed up as hybridity in the rather western and universalist idiom of post structuralism? I have, for one thing, difficulties in identifying any actual political project of this type arising—except at the campuses of western universities. One can also question the real intellectual advance of this particular political-intellectual construction of postcoloniality, being made in the name of historicisation, which in Prakash's article ultimately ends up as a highly generalising and sweeping statement about the state of the global intellectual-political struggle as structured along clear front lines: the stubborn, Cartesian modernising elites of the West versus an emancipatory rainbow coalition of hybridised Third World people along with all kinds of metropolitan minorities. It seems clear that the validity of this type of conceptualisation of postcoloniality as a global cultural state in the making presupposes and depends vitally on a certain essentialisation of the West. It also presupposes a concealment of the romanticist pre-structuring of its critique of the West as modernity-as-universalist reason. Not only does this notion entail a simplification, it also seems to generalise the discourse of diasporic intellectuals into a projection of a common hybridised future on behalf of a coalition of peoples in the postcolonial world. If nothing else, the universalist pretension of Prakash's argument certainly militates against the quest for difference upon which it claims to be built. It is maybe worth recalling Foucault's warning that

the claim to escape from the systems of contemporary reality so as to produce the overall programs of another society, of another way of thinking, another culture, another vision of the world, has led only to the return of the most dangerous traditions.<sup>29</sup>

In what comes close to a collective *ad hominem* argument, Arif Dirkin has suggested that the group of diasporic intellectuals promoting post-coloniality cares little about the people of their former countries, still predominantly bogged down in what to the postcolonial intellectual may seem naive imaginations of a bright modern—i.e. mimicking future for themselves in their respective states, with all the promotion of industrialisation, education, secularism and other classical Cartesian-modern values this necessarily entails, according to a postcolonial line of thinking. According to Dirkin, the notion of postcoloniality denotes nothing but the exhilaration on the part of a handful of South Asian intellectuals, of their new-found power and respectability in the heart of western academia—US Ivy League

universities—extrapolating their own experience of hybridity to the rest of the world.<sup>30</sup> Though Dirkin's analysis may bring out the social base from where the notion of post-coloniality has emerged, it remains unclear why this group has been so successful in setting political and intellectual agendas. I suggest that the appeal of the loud and energetic claims that post-coloniality is a new emergent global mental state must be seen as one of several ambiguous moments in an emerging global intellectual politics of recognition: the colonial and postcolonial world has for a century been the metaphorical stranger, the third party, standing outside the important antagonisms between dominant powers, lately between communism and western democracies in the cold war, where the Soviet Union played the part of the Other of the West. The Other is feared, but also recognised and taken seriously, while the stranger is either neglected or brutally exterminated, as Zygmunt Baumann has taught us.<sup>31</sup> Now, in the post cold war scenario the concept of post-coloniality seeks in part to fill the vacant position of the Other and to install the post-colonial world as the true Other of the West. But this is obviously not the full story. Some advocates of post-coloniality in this ideological and philosophical sense maintain at the same time, with reference to the (foundational?) colonial experience, the fundamental difference between the West and the rest. Hence, they insist on postcolonial subjects as constituted a priori as 'incommensurable others' beyond the reach of western universalised categories. This entails an attempt to develop the position of this incommensurable 'stranger' into a subversive but also constructive epistemic position.<sup>32</sup> Even this latter more radical position seems, however, to amount to a politics of recognition in that it both paradoxically confirms the globalised hegemony, and presupposes the produced universality, of categories, problematics and modes of thought originating in the West.<sup>33</sup> These remain crucial and instrumental to the entire project of construction of the 'incommensurable other'—both as an epistemic project and as a project of constructing sovereign non-western modernities.

#### THE INAUTHENTICITY OF MODERNITY

The discourses of community, hybridity and post-colonialism may thus, according to the logic I have outlined here, be seen as moments in the process of deterritorialisation of generically western concepts and theories—in *casu* romanticism and later post-structuralism—and their repatriation and effective vernacularisation in new contexts. They may also be seen as examples of how ostensible new discourses, new ways of positing a problematic, inadvertently are caught—though not necessarily irredeemably trapped—in the conceptual grammars of a hegemonic and universalised intellectual tradition. Critiques of the intellectual hegemony of generically western categories seem to be

caught in the categories of the romanticist episteme because of their essentialisation of 'modernity-as-universal-reason'.<sup>34</sup> It seems that as long as post-colonial critique posits the 'West' as somewhat flat and historically undifferentiated and 'Modernity' as a simplified essentialised other, it becomes, inevitably, posited within a problematic of self-grounding and recuperation of authenticity which the romanticist episteme already defined.

Certain forms of post-colonial critique adopts from post-structuralism the notion of hybridity, but claims hybridity to be an essential feature of post-colonial subjects. This amounts, to my mind, to a misreading of the post-structuralist critique of modernity, a misreading which paradoxically installs hybridity as an essence. In my understanding, post structuralism posits hybridisation, difference and indeterminacy as intrinsic to the modern worlds; as a part of what modernity always both created and fought—but never recognised in its dominant self-descriptions. As David Kolb notes in the end of his study of Hegel and Heidegger, modernity was never as coherent or radically self-grounded as both its spokesmen (such as Hegel) and its critics (such as Heidegger) claimed. Critiques of modernity do not have to be, and probably cannot be, posited outside modernity, argues Kolb: 'If our multiple inhabitations of modernity (TBH) are themselves internally multiple and tense, then there is room for freedom and creativity without the need to always be out and ahead'.<sup>35</sup>

Our predicament is to recognise that 'we', despite discrete localised differentiality within an uneven global structure, all are forced to come to know ourselves, and explore our limits and autonomy—as Foucault would have it—within certain modern intellectual deep structures. This means that claims of authenticity on the part of the periphery—or anywhere else—may stand forth, at least partially, as internal moments in the romanticist episteme, and as inescapable effects of simplistic critiques of 'modernity-as-universalist-reason'. Inauthenticity, displacement and non-identity with oneself are fundamental and universal conditions of global modernity, or rather the multiple modernities proliferating on the globe. No one can escape this condition that everybody—post-colonials as well as 'metropolitans'—have to live with. To reduce modernity to a 'provincial' western condition, and to 'ethnicise' modernity into only a peculiar outgrowth of Greek-Roman-Christian culture, such as both progressive post-colonials and western conservative advocates for rather different reasons, seem to conceal this problem instead of facing it. This does not mean that modernity should not or cannot be criticised, but that this, in the spirit of the late Foucault, should take place as critiques of modern practices and of the varied and historically specific institutions of modernity. We should avoid the totalising, moralistic and therefore ultimately detached and paternalistic modes of critique of epistemic or ideological systems in their entirety.<sup>36</sup> Such

totalising and simplified critiques of 'modernity-as-universalist-reason' inadvertently end up recycling older problematics produced by the romanticist episteme.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. M. Foucault, 'What Is Enlightenment', in P. Rabinow, (ed.): *The Foucault Reader*, New York, penguin. In this remarkable text Foucault discuss Kant's classical intervention in *Berlinische Monatschrift* in 1784 concerning the question: *Was ist Aufklärung?*. Kant's answer was that Enlightenment was a break with past 'immaturity' and a move towards human maturity in so far as it entailed a new attitude to knowledge and critique, namely that men now had the courage and audacity to know their own condition for themselves. Foucault endorses this philosophical ethos which he sees as a 'permanent critique of our historical era' (p. 42). As an interesting antidote to the rhetoric of radical attacks on 'Western modernity' that proliferate among many a Foucauldian, this labour of critique means to Foucault a pragmatic-practical attitude to societal change: '... this work must (...) put itself to the test of reality (and) must turn away from all projects that claim to be global and radical (...) I prefer these partial transformations ... to the programs for a new man ...' (pp. 46-47).
2. The continuity between e.g. Foucault and earlier critiques of Enlightenment is both obvious and explicit qua Foucault's indebtedness to Nietzsche, whose indebtedness to the romanticist philosopher Schopenhauer's concept of Will as a driving force in human history is well-known. Nietzsche was also influenced by the broader fascination in nineteenth century Germany of the heroic originality and vitality (*Urkraft*) of the pre-Christian pagan Germanic culture whose dissolution at the hands of the institutionalised churches Nietzsche bemoaned. Peter Murphy has recently noted that the construction of 'radical otherness' is the main contribution of romanticism to modern culture: 'The age of modernity has been, in equal parts, fearful of the other, because the other always represents another kind of law, heteronomy; and desirous of being radically other, because that is testament to one's autonomy'—Peter Murphy; 'Romantic Modernism and the Greek Polis', *Thesis Eleven*, no. 34. Boston, MIT, 1993, p. 42. Romanticism's quest for origins and roots was posited as a critique of the preceding classicist and baroque epoch of mimesis, searching for similarities, order and taxonomies. While the eighteenth century was marked by a fascination of the mimetic and eclectic roman culture, the nineteenth century romanticism, by contrast, celebrated the Greek culture as auctobonous, self-born, and self-grounded (*Ibid.*, pp. 43-45). It is noteworthy that Foucault in the second volume of the *History of Sexuality* explores sexual habits and personal ethics in ancient Greece, and here unequivocally celebrates the self-groundedness and autonomy of the Greek polis, as opposed to the obedient conformism and mimetic practice of modern disciplined individuals—Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1986, pp. 26-91.
3. Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 1983, p. 65.
4. Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, London, Hutchinson, 1960 traces the genesis of cultural nationalism in German romanticism. The same genealogy is described in great detail by Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism A Study of its Origins and Background*, Macmillan, New York, 1994, and more recently by Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Harvard University Press, Boston, 1992.
5. Alvin Gouldner, *For Sociology: Renewal and Critique in Sociology Today*, Allen Lane, London, 1973 p. 328.

6. As Charles Taylor has recently argued, the philosophical articulating of the notion of authenticity came from Herder's reformulation of Rousseau's idea of the innate capacity of individuals for making their own moral judgements, to an idea of the uniqueness and inner original essence of individuals and cultures: 'Being true to myself means being true to my own originality, which is something only I can articulate and discover. In articulating it, I am also defining myself. I am realising a potentiality that is properly my own. This is the background understanding to the modern ideal of authenticity (. . .) Herder applied this conception of originality not only to the individual person among other persons, but also to the culture-bearing people among other peoples. Just like individuals, a *Volk* should be true to itself, that is, its own culture. Germans should not try to be derivative and (inevitably) second-rate Frenchmen (. . .) Slavic peoples had to find their own path. And European colonialism ought to be rolled back to give the people we now call the Third World their chance to be themselves unimpeded. We can recognise here the seminal ideal of modern nationalism, in both benign and malign forms—Charles Taylor, 'The Politics Recognition' in Gondberg (ed.), *Multiculturalism. A Critical Reader*, Blackwell, Oxford and Cambridge, 1994, pp. 75–106, p. 78. Taylor has developed the idea that the quest for authenticity is intrinsic to modern thought, modern knowledge and modern identities in a series of lectures, published as *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard Univ. Press. (especially pp. 1–55).
7. See e.f. Hendrik Birus (ed.) *Hermeneutische Positionen: Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, Gadamer*, Gottingen, Vanneback & Ruprecht, 1982.
8. Charles Taylor, *Hegel*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1975 pp. 11–12 and Louis Dumont, *Essays on Individualism*, Chicago University Press, 1983, pp. 116–18. See also J.G. Herder *Über der Ursprung der Sprachen*, Freies Geist Leben, Berlin, 1965, And J.G. Herder: *Zur Philosophie der Geschichte. Eine Auswahl*, (Fragmenten and Notizen 1764–1803), Aufbau-Verlag, Berlin, 1952.
9. German Romanticism grew out of the philosophical currents and debates in the *Sturm und Drang* period in late eighteenth century Germany where especially Herder, and later his student Fichte, towered as important figures. While Herder remained within a discourse of organicism and cultural determinism, the notion of will and human creativity in moulding the human spirit plays a key role in Fichte's idealism. To Fichte, the central notion was that moulding the human mind and will could wrestle the human spirit out of its mute historical contingency and create a sublime 'synthetic spirit'. (J.G. Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, Open Court Publications, Chicago, 1922.) This figure received its most universal and sophisticated formulation in Hegel's notion of negativity and *Aufhebung*.
10. Some of the best discussions of Herder's work in English can be found in Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas*, London, 1976 and in Reinhold Ergang, *Herder and German Nationalism*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1931. See also F.M. Barnard (ed.), *J.G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1969.
11. Friedrich Schlegel (1966): *Studien zur Geschichte und Politik*, (eingl. und hrsg. von Ernest Behler), Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe, (Vol. 7), 1966.
12. See specially Gaston Bachelard, *Le nouvel esprit scientifique*, (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1934) translated to English by Arthur Goldhammer, *The New Scientific Spirit* Boston, Beacon Press, Berlin, 1984.
13. communitarianism has, like romanticism generally, always been somewhat undecidable in relation to the Left-Right dichotomy, though in Europe predominantly articulated by conservatives and right-wing populists as *Gemeinschaft* in conjunction with cultural nationalism, celebration of nature, historical authenticity, family, cultural values, etc.—always in opposition to 'immoral' liberalism, or the radical modernism and constructionism articulated

by the Left. There was always on the Left a celebration of the spontaneous solidarity-community among workers, labourers and the wretched, but this was seen as emerging out of a common subordination and nakedness, a common deprivation and liberation from older ties, and not out of an organic, presupposed *Gemeinschaft*. Nevertheless the multiple celebrations of the 'purity of the people' on the Left testifies to that the rationalism-romanticism opposition transcends any Left-Right dichotomy. This distribution of stances was blurred by the co-articulation of the natural, authentic with the vitalist and dynamic in Fascism. In the last few decades the reversal of poles is quite clear: the Left defends community, culture, history and the popular, while the liberal-conservative stance today predominantly is marked by free market optimism, and the rationalist universalism which the old left used to represent. Goran Dahl has recently shown that a new intellectual conservatism and postmodernism and post-structuralism especially in Germany and France tend to converge around celebrations of concepts like 'the political' created by Carl Schmitt and elements of the *Lebensphilosophie*, but also in the community-debate in journals like *Telos*. Goran Dahl, 'Vil 'Den Anden Gud' tabe igen? (Danish), in *Kritik*, no. 1, 1995 (Copenhagen).

14. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1993, p. 231.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 234-239.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
18. Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi and Oxford, 1983 and Ranajit Guha, 'Dominance Without Hegemony and its Historiographies' in *Subaltern Studies IV*, Delhi, Oxford, Oxford University Press, New York, 1989.
19. Guha, 1989, *Ibid.*, p. 308.
20. Chatterjee, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 163.
21. *Ibid.*, 164.
22. 'The Indian history of peasant struggle is a history that will educate those of us who claim to be their educators. Indeed, an Indian history of peasant struggle is a fundamental part of the real history of our people, the task is for the Indian historian to perceive in this a consciousness of his or her own self. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
23. Pierre Bourdieu, *In Other Words*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1990, p. 151.
24. Arvind-pal Singh, 'Interrogating Identity: Cultural Translation, Writing and Subaltern Politics', (paper presented at the 13th European conference on South Asian Studies, University of Toulouse, August 30th-Sept. 3rd, 1993).
25. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
28. Gyan Prakash, 'Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, New York, no. 32, April 1990, p. 403.
29. M. Foucault (1984), *op. cit.*, p. 46.
30. Arif Dirkin, 'The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism', *Critical Inquiry*, Chicago, Vol. 20, Winter, 1994, pp. 328-56.
31. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1991, pp. 53-75.
32. To my mind, Vivek Dhareshwar's recent essays 'Our Time: History, Sovereignty and Politics', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 30, No. 6, February 11, 1995, pp. 317-24. and 'Postcolonial in the Postmodern', in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 30, No. 30, July 29, 1995, PE 104112, on postcolonial sovereignty and modernity mark some of the more ambitious and theoretically interesting attempts in this direction. The idea of the 'incommensurable other' as an

- epistemic project emerged in discussions with V. Dhahreshwar, Partha Chatterjee, Susie Tharu and many others in the course of seminar on 'Cultures of Modernity'. I had the privilege to participate in Mysore a 18–23rd November, 1995.
33. It is interesting to note the virtual competition in current debates regarding which of the major Asian cultures really constitutes the other of the West. The writings of Said on Orientalism and the general 'post-orientalist' focus on historical productions of knowledge and subjects rather than contemporary institutional dynamics in non-western societies, seems to make its interpretive strategy almost self-propelling. The problem in the notion of non-western incommensurability as an epistemic project is that it ends up in a sort of comparative civilisational-religious history, where the West is (essentially) Christian, and the East a in paradoxical neo-Orientalist move becomes essentially Hindu, Buddhist, etc. Not only is this sort of comparative civilisational history traversed by essentialist concepts and antecedents from the German *Kulturwissenschaft*, it also acquires certain affinities with the narrative of civilisational contest and clash forecasted by Samuel Huntington.
  34. I believe that Roy Boyne has a point when he suggests that deconstruction and post-structuralism as a theoretical project has reached its limits and eclipsed as a philosophical line of inquiry, though it far from has exhausted its potentials within the human and social sciences. Many areas still await the whirlwinds of deconstruction. Boyne argues, that the strength of deconstruction lies in its critique of power and taxonomisation, whereas it is vulnerable in its celebration of difference. Boyne quotes Derrida's unequivocal critique of apartheid and defence of equality as a supreme value in Jacques Derrida, the laws reflection: Nelson Mandela, in 'Admiration' in Jacques Derrida and Mustapha Tilli (eds.), *For Nelson Mandela*, Seaver, New York, 1987 and Foucault's 'Kantian turn' towards personal autonomy and ethics in his late works, as proofs of the recognition by both Foucault and Derrida of the inevitability of ethical foundations in notions of individual sovereignty, equality or other of the both universalist and foundational values they both have criticised so severely'. Roy Boyne, *Foucault and Derrida: The Other Side of Reason*, Unwin Hyman, London, 1990, pp. 157–60.
  35. David Kolb, *The Critique of Pure Modernity: Heidegger and After*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1986, p. 259.
  36. I am here indebted to Manas Ray's thoughtful and inspiring call for research and critiques that explore historically specific and complex institutions and structures of governmentality, to replace the totalising perspective in much critique cast in the deconstructionist mould. Manas Ray: 'Ethics and Government: Setting Limits to Critique', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XXVII, Sept. 26. 1996, pp. 2119–24.