### 1NC

#### The battle for the public sphere is over—we lost. Conservatives and Liberals are now two sides of the same coin, and any movement that actually promises radical change will be destroyed as soon as it becomes visible. An invisible movement has the most subversive potential—voting neg to reject politics is the only political act

**The Invisible Committee, ‘7** [an anonymous group of French professors, phd candidates, and intellectuals, in the book “The Coming Insurrection” published by Semiotext(e) (attributed to the [Tarnac Nine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarnac_Nine) by the French police), <http://tarnac9.noblogs.org/gallery/5188/insurrection_english.pdf>]

Whatever angle you look at it from, **there's no escape from the present. That's** not the least of its virtues. For those who want absolutely to have hope, it knocks down every support. Those who claim to have solutions are proven wrong almost immediately. It's understood that now everything can only go from bad to worse. "There's no future for the future" is the wisdom behind an era that for all its appearances of extreme normalcy has come to have about the consciousness level of the first punks. The sphere of political representation is closed. From left to right, it's the same nothingness acting by turns either as the big shots or the virgins, the same sales shelf heads, changing up their discourse according to the latest dispatches from the information service. Those who still vote give one the impression that their only intention is to knock out the polling booths by voting as a pure act of protest. And we've started to understand that in fact it’s only against the vote itself that people go on voting. Nothing we've seen can come up to the heights of the present situation; not by far. By its very silence, the populace seems infinitely more 'grown up' than all those squabbling amongst themselves to govern it do. Any Belleville chibani 1 is wiser in his chats than in all of those puppets’ grand declarations put together. The lid of the social kettle is triple-tight, and the pressure inside won’t stop building. The ghost of Argentina’s Que Se Vayan Todos 2 is seriously starting to haunt the ruling heads. The fires of November 2005 will never cease to cast their shadow on all consciences. Those first joyous fires were the baptism of a whole decade full of promises. The media’s “suburbs vs. the Republic” myth, if it’s not inefficient, is certainly not true. The fatherland was ablaze all the way to downtown everywhere, with fires that were methodically snuffed out. Whole streets went up in flames of solidarity in Barcelona and no one but the people who lived there even found out about it. And the country hasn’t stopped burning since. Among the accused we find diverse profiles, without much in common besides a hatred for existing society; not united by class, race, or even by neighborhood. What was new wasn’t the “suburban revolt,” since that was already happening in the 80s, but the rupture with its established forms. The assailants weren’t listening to anybody at all anymore, not their big brothers, not the local associations assigned to help return things to normal. No “SOS Racism which only fatigue, falsification, and media omertà 4 could feign putting an end. The whole series of nocturnal strikes, anonymous attacks, wordless destruction, had the merit of busting wide open the split between politics and the political. No one can honestly deny the obvious weight of this assault which **made no demands**, and had no message other than a threat which had nothing to do with politics. But you’d have to be blind not to see what is **purely political** about this **resolute negation of politics,** and you’d certainly have to know absolutely nothing about the autonomous youth movements of the last 30 years. Like abandoned children we burned the first baby toys of a society that deserves no more respect than the monuments of Paris did at the end of Bloody Week 5 -- and knows it. There’s **no social solution** to the present situation. First off because the vague aggregate of social groupings, institutions, and individual bubbles that we designate by the anti-phrase “society” has no substance, because there’s no language left to express common experiences with. It took a half-century of fighting by the Lumières to thaw out the possibility of a French Revolution, and a century of fighting by work to give birth to the fearful “Welfare State.” Struggles creating the language in which the new order expresses itself. Nothing like today. Europe is now a de-monied continent that sneaks off to make a run to the Lidl 6 and has to fly with the low-cost airlines to be able to keep on flying. **None of the “problems” formulated in the social language are resolvable**. The “retirement pensions issue,” the issues of “precariousness,” the “youth” and their “violence” can only be kept in suspense as long as the ever more surprising “acting out” they thinly cover gets managed away police-like. No one’s going to be happy to see old people being wiped out at a knockdown price, abandoned by their own and with nothing to say. And those who’ve found less humiliation and more benefit in a life of crime than in sweeping floors will not give up their weapons, and prison won’t make them love society. The rage to enjoy of the hordes of the retired will not take the somber cuts to their monthly income on an empty stomach, and will get only too excited about the refusal to work among a large sector of the youth. And to conclude, no guaranteed income granted the day after a quasi-uprising will lay the foundations for a new New Deal, a new pact, and a new peace. The social sentiment is rather **too evaporated** for all that. As their solution, they’ll just never stop putting on the pressure, to make sure nothing happens, and with it we’ll have more and more police chases all over the neighborhood. The drone that even according to the police indeed did fly over Seine-Saint-Denis 7 last July 14 th is a picture of the future in much more straightforward colors than all the hazy images we get from the humanists. That they took the time to clarify that it was not armed shows pretty clearly the kind of road we’re headed down. The country is going to be cut up into ever more air-tight zones. Highways built along the border of the “sensitive neighborhoods” already form walls that are invisible and yet able to cut them off from the private subdivisions. Whatever good patriotic souls may think about it, the management of neighborhoods “by community” is most effective just by its notoriety. The purely metropolitan portions of the country, the main downtowns, lead their luxurious lives in an ever more calculating, ever more sophisticated, ever more shimmering deconstruction. They light up the whole planet with their whorehouse red lights, while the BAC 8 and the private security companies’ -- read: militias’ -- patrols multiply infinitely, all the while benefiting from being able to hide behind an ever more disrespectful judicial front. The catch-22 of the present, though perceptible everywhere, is denied everywhere. Never have so many psychologists, sociologists, and literary people devoted themselves to it, each with their own special jargon, and each with their own specially missing solution. It’s enough just to listen to the songs that come out these days, the trifling “new French music,” where the petty-bourgeoisie dissects the states of its soul and the K’1Fry mafia 9 makes its declarations of war, to know that this coexistence will come to an end soon and that a decision is about to be made. This book is signed in the name of an imaginary collective. Its editors are not its authors. They are merely content to do a little clean-up of what’s scattered around the era’s common areas, around the murmurings at bar-tables, behind closed bedroom doors. They’ve only determined a few necessary truths, whose universal repression fills up the psychiatric hospitals and the painful gazes. They’ve made themselves scribes of the situation. It’s the privilege of radical circumstances that justice leads them quite logically to revolution. It’s enough just to say what we can see and not avoid the conclusions to be drawn from it.

#### To make micropolitics visible is to coopt it by giving resistance an object – this understanding allows resistance to be framed, to be declared a failure and prevents the immanence of imperceptible politics from coalescing around mundane practices and habitudes of existence

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In this sense imperceptible politics does not necessarily differ from or oppose other prevalent forms of politics, such as state-oriented politics, micropolitics, identity politics, cultural and gender politics, civil rights movements, etc. And indeed imperceptible politics connects with all these various forms of political engagement and intervention in an opportunistic way: it deploys them to the extent that they allow the establishment of spaces outside representation; that is, spaces which do not primarily focus on the transformation of the conditions of the double-R axiom (rights and representation) but on the insertion of new social forces into a given political terrain. In the previous chapter we called this form of politics outside politics: the politics which opposes the representational regime of policing. Imperceptibility is the everyday strategy which allows us to move and to act below the overcoding regime of representation. This everyday strategy is inherently anti-theoretical; that is, it resists any ultimate theorisation, it cannot be reduced to one successful and necessary form of politics (such as state-oriented politics or micropolitics, for example). Rather, imperceptible politics is genuinely empiricist, that is it is always enacted as ad hoc practices which allow the decomposition of the representational strategies in a particular field and the composition of events which cannot be left unanswered by the existing regime of control. If imperceptible politics resists theorisation and is ultimately empiricist, what then are the criteria for doing imperceptible politics? There are three dimensions which characterise imperceptible politics: objectlessness, totality, trust. Firstly, imperceptible politics is objectless, that is it performs political transformation without primarily targeting a specific political aim (such as transformation of a law or institution, or a particular claim for inclusion, etc). Instead imperceptible politics proceeds by materialising its own political actions through contagious and affective transformations. The object of its political practice is its own practices. In this sense, imperceptible politics is non-intentional - and therein lies its difference from state-oriented politics or the politics of civil rights movements, for example - it instigates change through a series of everyday transformations which can only be codified as having a central political aim or function in retrospect. Secondly, imperceptible politics addresses the totality of an existing field of power. This seems to be the difference between imperceptible politics and micropolitics or other alternative social movements: imperceptible politics is not concerned with containing itself to a molecular level of action; it addresses the totality of power through the social changes which it puts to work in a particular field of action. The distinction between molar and molecular (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 275) has only analytical significance from the perspective of imperceptible politics. In fact imperceptible politics is both molar and molecular, because by being local situated action it addresses the whole order of control in a certain field. Imperceptible politics is located at the heart of a field of power and at the same time it opens a way to move outside this field by forcing the transformation of all these elements which are constitutive of this field. In this sense, imperceptible politics is a driving force which is simul­taneously both present and absent. We described this in the previous chapter by exploring the importance of speculative figurations for the practice of escape. On the everyday level of escape (a level we called in this chapter imperceptible politics) speculative figuration can be translated into trust. This is the third characteristic of imperceptible politics; it is driven by a firm belief in the importance and truthfulness of its actions, without seeking any evidence for, or conducting any investigation into its practices. This is trust. Imperceptible politics is driven by trust in something which seems to be absent from a particular situation. Imperceptible politics operates around a void, and it is exactly the conversion of this void into everyday politics that becomes the vital force for imperceptible politics.

#### Their arguments about personal agency are ultimately conservative and de-politicizing – arguments for localizing activism within the purview of social location are the equivalent of privatizing social change, creating us as dependent on the necessity of their advocacy. The more successful their strategy is the more damage it does by making institutions necessary to our understanding of social change

**Hershock '99**, East-West Center, 1999.  [“Changing the way society changes”, *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 6, 154; <http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/6/hershock991.html>]

The trouble is that, like other technologies biased toward control, the more successful legislation becomes, the more it renders itself necessary. Because it aims at rigorous definition -- at establishing hard boundaries or limits -- crossing the threshold of legislative utility means creating conditions under which the definition of freedom becomes so complex as to be self-defeating. Taken to its logical end, legally-biased social activism is thus liable to effect an infinite density of protocols for maintaining autonomy, generating a matrix of limits on discrimination that would finally be conducive to what might be called "axiological entropy" -- a state in which movement in any direction is equally unobstructed *and* empty of dramatic potential. Contrary to expectations, complete "freedom of choice" would not mean the elimination of all impediments to meaningful improvisation, but rather an erasure of the latter's conditions of possibility. The effectiveness and efficiency of "hard," control-biased technologies depend on our using natural laws -- horizons of possibility -- as fulcrums for leveraging or dictating changes in the structure of our circumstances. Unlike improvised contributions to changes taking place in our situation, dictating the terms of change effectively silences our situational partners. Technological authority thus renders our circumstances mute and justifies ignoring the contributions that might be made by the seasons or the spiritual force of the mountains to the meaning -- the direction of movement -- of our ongoing patterns of interdependence. With the "perfection" of technically-mediated control, our wills would know no limit. We would be as gods, existing with no imperatives, no external compulsions, and no priorities. We would have no reason to do one thing first or hold one thing, and not another, as most sacred or dear. Such "perfection" is, perhaps, as fabulous and unattainable as it is finally depressing. Yet the vast energies of global capital are committed to moving in its direction, for the most part quite uncritically. The consequences -- as revealed in the desecration and impoverishing of both 'external' and 'internal' wilderness (for instance, the rainforests and our imaginations) -- are every day more evident. The critical question we must answer is whether the "soft" technologies of legally-biased and controlled social change commit us to an equivalent impoverishment and desecration. The analogy between the dependence of technological progress on natural laws and that of social activism on societal laws is by no means perfect. Except among a scattering of philosophers and historians of science, for example, the laws of nature are not viewed as changeable artifacts of human culture. But for present purposes, the analogy need only focus our attention on the way legal institutions -- like natural laws -- do not prescriptively determine the shape of all things to come, but rather establish generic limits for what relationships or states of affairs are factually admissible. Laws that guarantee certain "freedoms" necessarily also prohibit others. Without the fulcrums of *unallowable* acts, the work of changing a society would remain as purely idealistic as using wishful thinking to move mountains. Changing legal institutions at once forces and enforces societal reform. By affirming and safeguarding those freedoms or modes of autonomy that have come to be seen as generically essential to 'being human', a legally-biased social activism cannot avoid selectively limiting the ways we engage with one another. The absence of coercion may be a basic aim of social activism, but if our autonomy is to be guaranteed both fair and just, its basic strategy must be one of establishing non-negotiable constraints on how we co-exist. Social activism is thus in the business of striking structural compromises between its ends and its means -- between particular freedoms and general equality, and between practical autonomy and legal anonymity. By shifting the locus of freedoms from unique persons to generic citizens -- and in substantial sympathy with both the Platonic renunciation of particularity and the scientific discounting of the exceptional and extraordinary -- social activist methodology promotes dramatic anonymity in order to universally realize the operation of 'blind justice'. Much as hard technologies of control silence the contributions of wilderness and turn us away from the rewards of a truly joint improvisation of order, the process of social activism reduces the relevance of the always unique and unprecedented terrain of our interdependence. This is no small loss. The institutions that guarantee our generic independence effectively pave over those vernacular relationships through which our own contributory virtuosity might be developed and shared -- relationships out of which the exceptional meaning of our immediate situation might be continuously realized. In contrast with Buddhist emptiness -- a practice that entails attending to the mutual relevance of all things -- both the aims and strategies of social activism are conducive to an evacuation of the conditions of dramatic virtuosity, a societal depletion of our resources for meaningfully improvised and liberating intimacy with all things.

### Opacity 1nc

#### Academia and debate have already been infiltrated by the military – the affirmative’s radical strategy of visibility and calls for dialogue will be co-opted for sovereign violence

Forte 2009 Maximilian C., Professor of Anthropology Montreal, May 22, “Useless Anthropology”: Strategies for Dealing with the Militarization of the Academy « ZERO ANTHROPOLOGY, http://zeroanthropology.net/2009/05/22/%e2%80%9cuseless-anthropology%e2%80%9d-strategies-for-dealing-with-the-militarization-of-the-academy/#print

One does not need to seek employment with the Pentagon, take part in counterinsurgency, or work for the Human Terrain System in order to provide useful, even if involuntary, support for the national security, intelligence and military goals of the U.S., or any NATO state for that matter. In fact, one does not even need to be an American anthropologist in order to provide the U.S. military and intelligence with the information they seek. One needs to simply produce useful anthropology and not be mindful of the consequences of how it can be used by unintended audiences, now or in the future, to support agendas of which one may have limited awareness and even less desire to support. With this and much more in mind, my ambition is to seek the creation of a useless anthropology, and while some would say I was always on the right track for achieving that, I think more of us need to share a goal of producing useless research, to make worthless contributions, and by useless I mean useless to power, to empire, to domination, to regimes of scrutiny and inspection of the periphery. And not just useless, but even toxic and repulsive to the scientists of conquest – an anthropology of both withdrawal and resistance, free of false dilemmas that work to support business as usual, willing to set fire to the crops we planted if it stops them from being harvested by the tyrant, liberating ourselves from being our own best hostages. The idea is to refuse further engagement with the international traffic in information and knowledge that supports the workings of empire, capital, and the state.¶ In this presentation I seek to make three main points. First, to indicate some of the ways that all of us can be even unwillingly useful in supporting U.S. military and intelligence interests. Second, to reflect on the meaning of useful anthropology. Third, to point the way to possible alternatives, that could entail unthinking anthropology as we know it.¶ With reference to the first point, Gerald Sider made the point that at this moment in history “there is no such thing as an innocent anthropology” (p. 43). We know now that the U.S. military and intelligence are looking for ways of incorporating scholars in producing a global surveillance net. One way is to bring social scientists on counterinsurgency and pacification missions. Another is to have them conduct analysis of stolen Iraqi documents (see here and here), or to conduct fieldwork in areas of emerging or potential threat and describe the radicalization process and ways of counteracting it, as part of the Pentagon’s Minerva Research Initiative, managed in partnership with the National Science Foundation. Another is to comb through open access electronic resources. And yet another is just to get everything for free, by scanning, copying, seizing any or all electronic devices or written records from researchers as they enter the United States whether returning home to the U.S., or just traveling through, U.S. Border Patrol and Customs agents can: scan and hold laptops indefinitely; they can make electronic copies of hard drives, flash drives, cellphones, iPods, pagers, beepers, video and audio tapes; and, they can seize papers, documents, books, pamphlets, or even litter. This is also true of Canada and the UK.¶ Open access publishing, and publishing in electronic formats that are thus amenable to automated harvesting, is a critically important way that ethnographic data can be used by the national security state without the willing participation of researchers. “Intelligence does not have to be secret to be valuable!” says the website of the University of Military Intelligence, regarding open access resources, which takes us to Intelink-U, part of the U.S. Army’s Foreign Military Studies Office, emerging from the Open Source Information System which serves the US intelligence community with open source intelligence. Among Intelink-U’s subscriptions is the University of New Mexico’s Latin America Database, as well as EbscoHost Databases. The Foreign Military Studies office is also in the process of creating the World Basic Information Library (WBIL), which promotes the concept of “distance drilling” telling us that: “About 85% of requirements in the intelligence business can be met with open source, unclassified sources, and can be exploited by qualified military reservists working by telecommuting. The WBIL has remotely located reservists from all four branches of the service doing ‘virtual’ collection and production utilizing their home Personal Computers.” Also, the Information Operations Advisory Task Force states that it has a “requirement to provide US Forces [in] Afghanistan…with the capability to collect, analyze, and disseminate open source (i.e. sociological or anthropological) information.”¶ With reference to the second point of this presentation, the bases for a useful anthropology, let us note that useful, objective, neutral, and scientific, are once again the buzzwords for an anthropology aligned with power, in the service of the national security state, while rhetorically attempting to move the militarization of the academy beyond the sphere of “politics”. Criticism is political; support is scientific. If you oppose military objectives, you are biased; if you provide practical knowledge, you are objective, and objective is good, just like machines are good. On the other hand, military interest in anthropology is to a significant extent the perhaps unintended outcome of anthropology’s success in marketing itself. The compulsion in this discipline, from the time before its institutionalization in universities, has been to market itself to power as a useful science, with valuable contributions to make, later boasting of the vital importance of ethnography as anthropology’s unique contribution, so much so that anthropology and ethnography are wrongly equated. We wanted the attention of elites, and now we’ve got it. The military is interested in both culture and ethnography. In an article in National Defense Magazine, we are told that “A deeper understanding of culture has become an official part of Marine Corps strategy.” Meanwhile, General William “KIP” Ward, Commander, United States Africa Command, said this about the Pentagon’s work in Africa:¶ “A lot of activity goes on in the continent through our non-government organizations. Academia is involved. When I was in previous assignments, someone came to me and would talk about, well, ‘Ward, you need to get a cultural anthropologist on your team.’ I said, what! A cultural what? Anthropologist? To do what? Get out of here. Or, ‘Ward, you need to have someone to help you understand the human dimension. You need some human terrain analysis.’ I said, ‘what? Get out of here.’ But it’s important, and where do those skills, talents reside — academia.”¶ But for more academics to be more useful, they need to get over certain twinges of moral compunction. In the minds of the state and military some of us have already reverted to being a tool of imperialism, assuming we were ever anything else. Not serving imperialism is routinely called “retreating from the world” by some. Montgomery McFate, the anthropology PhD who has been the most prominent spokesperson for the Human Terrain System, wrote in a military journal that,¶ “Over the past 30 years, as a result of anthropologists’ individual career choices and the tendency toward reflexive self-criticism contained within the discipline itself, the discipline has become hermetically sealed within its Ivory Tower….anthropologists still prefer to study the ‘exotic and useless,’ in the words of A.L. Kroeber….The retreat to the Ivory Tower is also a product of the deep isolationist tendencies within the discipline.” (p. 28)¶ She doesn’t stop there, unfortunately, she notes that,¶ “frequently backed up by self-reflexive neo-Marxism, anthropology began a brutal process of self-flagellation, to a degree almost unimaginable to anyone outside the discipline….The turn toward postmodernism within anthropology exacerbated the tendency toward self-flagellation….(also) This movement away from descriptive ethnography has produced some of the worst writing imaginable.” (p. 28)¶ In this regard, she merely echoes some of the conservative and often overwrought backlash within the discipline over this trend that it imagined to be postmodern, whatever that is, apparently being self-critical is evil.¶ With reference to the third and final point of this presentation, looking for alternatives and options to cooptation, for less useful anthropologies, I was inspired by Sider’s ideas about how a partisan anthropology, done “to help the victims of currently intensifying inequalities,” might begin, and it would begin in “the design of fieldwork and in the context of understanding struggle” (p. 44). He advocates against interviews, against asking questions of so-called informants, and against any form of recording data. Asking questions, he notes, is a seemingly simple act that opens our work to use by those who seek to dominate and control the people we study (p. 45). There are other ways we can work, he says, less open, but not impervious, to subsequent manipulation. Other options include choosing research projects that, in the eyes of the national security state, are entirely useless, and to write up the results in very esoteric language, with ample self-criticism. Another option is do to more “research at home” either collaborating with persons who are not the subject of either a moral panic or some hyperbolic national security hysteria, or, producing critiques of the way elites exercise power and enforce inequalities and injustices. Another option is open source ethnography done online, to collaborate with the producers of online information of ethnographic value, remixing it so that it becomes problematic to military examination. Not publishing in open access formats is another option, especially once the work is not funded by a public agency, the argument that “the public has a right to the research it funded” vanishes into irrelevance. We can also imagine experimenting with forms of research communication that defy easy understanding and conventional requirements of the military planner’s database, such as fictionalized ethnographies; ethnographic poetry; open source cinema (see here also); theatrical coproductions, and so forth.¶ What we cannot do, however, and pretend to be innocent about it, is simply to leave here today and continue to conduct business as usual.

#### Thus, we advocate a politics of opacity. Rather than trying to make the Other intelligible, we get off the grid, re

#### The affirmative’s attempt to “understand the other” as a starting point for their ROTB is a colonial tactic of making the other transparent. Only opacity solves

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More controversially, opacity is also a defense against understanding, at least in the hierarchical, objectifying way in¶ which this usually operates between the West and the Third World illustrated, for instance, in Benítez-Rojo's sardonic¶ description of the mechanism whereby Western readings of the Caribbean project onto it "dogmas and methods" that¶ are relevant only to Western societies, and so "they get into the habit of defining the Caribbean in terms of its resistance¶ to the different methodologies summoned to investigate it."20 The right to opacity, which Glissant claims is more¶ fundamental than the right to difference (PR, 204-5), is a right not to be understood. In this section (entitled "Pour¶ l'opacité" [For opacity]) of Poétique de la relation, he writes: "If we look at the process of `understanding' beings and¶ ideas as it operates in western society, we find that it is founded on an insistence on this kind of transparency. In order¶ to `understand' and therefore accept you, I must reduce your density to this scale of conceptual measurement which¶ gives me a basis for comparisons and perhaps for judgements" (204). In other words, understanding appears as an act¶ of aggression because it constructs the Other as an object of knowledge. In the etymology of the verb "comprendre" [to¶ understand; the root of which, prendre, means to take], Glissant discerns a gesture of "taking" the world and bringing it back to oneself: "A gesture of enclosure if not of¶ appropriation" (206). 21¶ Spivak's term for this is "epistemic violence." She argues that it not only characterizes the imperialist project but also¶ continues to operate in postcolonial societies to exclude and silence subaltern groups, that is, those outside the new¶ bourgeois nationalist ruling class. Her question "on the other side of the international division of labour from socialized¶ capital, inside and outside the circuits of the epistemic violence of imperialist law and education supplementing an¶ earlier economic text, can the subaltern speak?" receives a largely negative answer: the subaltern cannot "speak'' in the¶ sense of directly and unproblematically making his or her voice heard within the dominant social discourse.22 Thus, for¶ Spivak as for Glissant, subaltern consciousness is opaque in that it cannot be "read" by the ruling groups. But whereas¶ Glissant interprets this as a form of resistance, for Spivak it is merely a form of disempowerment. However, this¶ contrast is in turn complicated by Glissant's equally strong sense of the difficult relationship the subaltern has with¶ language per se the ''lack" of language considered in my next chapter which can be seen as another formulation of the¶ subaltern's inability to speak and one that is closer, although not identical, to Spivak's. But he also posits a dynamic¶ relationship between the lack of language, as a passively determined condition, and opacity as an active strategy of¶ resistance a strategy that assumes lack and transforms it into a positive force (in ways that are discussed in chapter 2).¶ This can be translated into Spivak's terms as follows: the subaltern's exclusion does not cause any problems for the¶ dominant discourse as long as it remains invisible to that discourse, but if it can be made visible as exclusion, it will¶ constitute a locus of resistance to the discourse's appropriation of it; it will become opaque, in Glissant's sense. Indeed,¶ some of Spivak's own analyses of particular cases show this process in operation and thus counteract the impression of¶ total powerlessness that her general formulations sometimes give.23 Even so, Glissant's opacity is still a far more¶ active, positive form of resistance than Spivak's theorization allows for. To sum up the difference simply, Spivak¶ focuses more on the subaltern's inability to "speak" the dominant discourse whereas Glissant focuses more on the¶ dominant discourse's inability to "understand" the subaltern.¶ Thus, Glissant's initially surprising idea that a relationship of not only respect, but also solidarity and affection, is¶ possible and better without "understanding" the other (PR, 207) has wide implications for literature as well as for social¶ existence. In his reading of the novels of William Faulkner, for instance, he notes that the black characters are only ever represented from the outside; they are given no¶ interior monologue, and their actions do not even seem coherent (IP, 169-70). But this, he argues, is precisely why the¶ portrayals are valuable. In the first place, they are evidence of the author's honesty in recognizing the limits of his own¶ understanding and "dramatically taking on board the Other's opacity to oneself" (169). More importantly, Faulkner's¶ blind spot locates and reveals the "real density" (170) of the black Other's presence as it resists assimilation and¶ confronts him with a barrier that he will never cross: "In other words, Faulkner's inability to delineate this character is¶ positive'' (170). This accords with Spivak's idea that one cannot retrieve the lost consciousness of the subaltern and also¶ with her use of Pierre Macherey's claim that "what the work cannot say" its blind spots, in other words may be more¶ significant than what it does say. 24¶ Glissant even applies this principle of nonunderstanding to understanding of oneself with further repercussions on the¶ reworking of the notion of identity discussed above. Opacity means also that parts of myself are obscure and¶ incomprehensible to me; accepting this fact means that I can give up the insistence on the transparent unity of the whole¶ self this, Glissant argues, is a liberating experience.25¶ As a strategy of protection, opacity sometimes takes the form of simple concealment: hiding from the oppressive Other.¶ Thus, one image for it is the forest into which the slaves escaped and where the maroon communities lived, and which¶ was "the first obstacle the slave opposed to the transparency of the planter" (CD, 83). But the forest is disappearing,¶ and its loss is symbolically as well as literally destructive. In Malemort Glissant writes of "the vast leprosy of erosion of¶ deforestation eating away at the great mountain wringing your heart with all the present woes and all the woes that are¶ still to come" (179). The forest provided invisibility, in other words, but is no longer an adequate metaphor for opacity;¶ the concept of opacity in general is part of a far more complex structure of seen and unseen, seeing and not seeing, that¶ determines the relations between "discoverer" and "discovered."

#### ONLY an ethics of opacity solves their arguments –

Walker 2011 [Corey Walker, Brown University, “How Does It Feel to be a Problem?”: (Local) Knowledge, Human Interests, and The Ethics of¶ Opacity” TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World,¶ School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts, UC Merced <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/0xj5402h>]

Inspired by the work of Charles Long, the ethics of opacity establishes the critical principle¶ that those hegemonic knowledge systems unleashed by coloniality/modernity necessarily introduce¶ what Long calls “that ‘thing’ [which] must be suppressed, but the very act of suppression introduces¶ the thing suppressed into the symbolic universe that it stakes out.”20 Long continues with recourse¶ to the work of Paul Ricoeur who writes, “Now defilement enters into the universe of man through¶ speech, or the word; its anguish is communicated through speech . . . the opposition of the pure and¶ the impure is spoken. . . a stain is a stain because it is there, mute; the impure taught in the words¶ that institute the taboo” (204).¶ Within this nexus, the ethics of opacity suggest a critical site for the production and¶ reproduction of the knowledges of those on the underside of modernity. Long writes,¶ Black, the colored races, caught up into this net of the imaginary and symbolic¶ consciousness of the West, rendered mute through the words of military, economic,¶ and intellectual power, assimilated as if by osmosis structures of this consciousness¶ of oppression. This is the source of the doubleness of consciousness made famous¶ by W.E.B. Du Bois. But even in these symbolic structures there remained the¶ inexhaustibility of the opaqueness of this symbol for those who constituted the¶ "things" upon which the significations of the West deployed its meanings. (204)¶ Thus, the ethics of opacity establishes a critical movement, indeed produces an ethical demand, that¶ speaks to and is founded upon a responsibility to interrogate hegemonic epistemological production,¶ which is “the context for the communities of color, the opaque ones of the modern world” (Long¶ 204). Such an ethics calls into question traditional formulations and rehearsal of ethics proper and¶ radically calls into account those “radical” formulations of emancipatory theoretical projects, i.e.¶ scientific Marxism, dogmatic theology, Western democracy, and the host of “post-” prefixed¶ theoretical formulations.¶ Such an ethics of opacity also entails, or rather prescribes a critical intellectual practice that¶ affirms the worth, value, and dignity of the “human.” Long writes, “Octavio Paz tells us that they¶ were filled with poets, proletarians, colonized peoples, the colored races. ‘All these purgatories and¶ hells lived in a state of clandestine ferment. One day in the twentieth century, the subterranean¶ world blew up. The explosion hasn’t yet ended and its splendor has illumined the agony of the age”¶ (204).21 The ethics of opacity is animated by this vision in seeking to articulate the depth of meaning¶ that is announced that these continuing events. In this sense, the ethics of opacity pushes the¶ discourse of ethics to the limit. Accordingly, recourse to Levinas is quite appropriate when he¶ suggests, “My task does not consist in constructing ethics, I only try to seek its meaning.”22¶ The ethics of opacity presents “more than an accusation regarding the actions and behavior¶ of the oppressive cultures; it goes to the heart of the issue. It is an accusation regarding the world¶ view, thought structures, theory of knowledge, and so on, of the oppressors. The accusation is not¶ simply of bad acts but, more importantly, of bad faith and bad knowledge.”23 An ethics of opacity is¶ thus defined by its critical orientation to liberation as articulated by and with the opaque ones. It is a¶ critical intellectual posture that disrupts the dominant logic of coloniality/modernity in exploring the hidden and unknown, the repressed and submerged narratives, histories, and epistemologies – the¶ sites of opacity that are the conditions of im/possibility of the contemporary world. Such an ethic is¶ available because, as Long writes, “the strategies of obscuring these peoples and cultures within the¶ taxonomies of the disciplines of anthropology as primitives or the classification of them as¶ sociological pathologies is no longer possible” (211).¶ The ethics of opacity helps to structure our ability “to effect the deconstruction of the¶ mechanisms by means of which we continue to make opaque to ourselves, attributing the origin of¶ our societies to imaginary beings, whether the ancestors, the gods, God, or evolution, and natural¶ selection, the reality of our own agency with respect to the programming and reprogramming of our¶ desires, our behaviors, our minds, ourselves, the I and the we.”24 Such a move has significant¶ implications for “reimagining our forms of life” and opens up potentially emancipatory possibilities¶ for a critical theory of knowledge in the interests of those on the underside of modernity (204). In a crucial sense, it is the emergence and existence of the opaque ones that conditions the¶ im/possibility of the project of Enlightenment rationality. Long states, “As stepchildren of Western¶ culture, the oppressed have affirmed and opposed the ideal of the Enlightenment and post-¶ Enlightenment worlds. But in the midst of this ambiguity, for better or for worse, their experiences¶ were rooted in the absurd meaning of their bodies, and it was for these bodies that they were¶ regarded not only as valuable works but also as the locus of the ideologies that justified their¶ enslavement . . . . The totalization of all the great ideals of Western universalization met with the¶ factual symbol of these oppressed ones.”25 The infinite meaning and depth of the “factual symbol of¶ these oppressed ones” is the location of ethics of opacity and in turn structures the relation to¶ epistemology. Indeed, highlighting the relation of ethics and epistemology thus becomes a critical¶ process that cannot be evaded. The disruption produced by the ethics of opacity suggests the¶ primacy of method of procedure as opposed to the fundamental question of ontology for the¶ project of critical theory in the interests of humanity.26¶ To this end, such an ethical imperative interrupts the imperial/colonial economy of¶ knowledge that privileges a conceptualization of knowledge that conquers through a commitment to¶ clarity of content and transparency of method. The will to clarity and transparency within this¶ theoretical enterprise rests on a fundamental violence that denies difference and negates alternative¶ possibilities of thought as well as of action. The character of this will to know is marked by a process¶ that necessarily seeks to conquer epistemologically and otherwise. Instead, an ethic of opacity¶ develops a critical posture that welcomes the “opaque ones” as fundamental partners in the quest¶ for knowledge. It is a reflexive injunction that reminds us that we always already think in and against¶ particular epistemic traditions and conditions that in/form us. The challenge thus becomes how do¶ we develop a theory of knowledge in critical relation with an ethics of opacity?

# CP

#### Plan Text: The United States federal government should create a bilateral partnership with Mexico against the prohibition on illegal narcotics, including a joint withdrawal from the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs.

#### Every person has the right to do drugs – the government does not have the right to regulate choices, even poor ones

Fish 06(Shlomi Fish, 2006, <http://www.shlomifish.org/philosophy/politics/drug-legalisation/#morality) [gender>-edited]

A person has a basic right to harm ~~him~~[them]self, as long as he[or she] does not harm others in the process. That’s because everyone of us is the owner of his [or her] mind, body and property, and is solely responsible for their use and abuse.¶ All arguments that do not favour that, like that a person thus contributes less to society, and becomes a burden on it are pretty silly. That’s because a person is never obliged to contribute to society (“First, do not harm”), and the society at large is not obliged to support its members. (It would be Socialistic to claim otherwise.)¶ Thus, a person must be allowed by law to consume drugs. I’m not saying it is desirable if a person exercises this right. I’m just saying that a person should be allowed to do so, just as he is allowed to smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, deteriorate in personal hygiene, give away money for no good reason, act stupidly, etc. These are all harmful activities, yet perfectly legitimate.

#### We must fully resist every violation of our liberal rights

Petro 74, Toledo Law Review, 1974 (Sylvester, Spring, page 480)

However, one may still insist, echoing Ernest Hemingway - "I believe in only one thing: liberty." And it is always well to bear in mind David Hume's observation: "It is seldom that liberty of any kind is lost all at once." Thus, it is unacceptable to say that the invasion of one aspect of freedom is of no import because there have been invasions of so many other aspects. That road leads to chaos, tyranny, despotism, and the end of all human aspiration. Ask Solzhenitsyn. Ask Milovan Dijas. In sum, if one believed in freedom as a supreme value and the proper ordering principle for any society aiming to maximize spiritual and material welfare, then every invasion of freedom must be emphatically identified and resisted with undying spirit.

#### The Prohibition on Drugs Causes Proliferation of Drugs’ Use

Fish 06(Shlomi Fish, 2006, http://www.shlomifish.org/philosophy/politics/drug-legalisation/#morality)

People who become heavy drug users often need to find a way to finance their habit. As a result, they often become drug dealers themselves, and try to push drugs onto other people, including children. Furthermore, once they become dealers they become exposed to an even wider variety of drugs than before, and they are likely to try drugs that they never would have before because drugs are essentially free to them. And a great way to push drugs on people is to consume drugs with them. So, to make more money, they end up consuming more drugs. Making drugs legal will stop this vicious cycle. The price of drugs will drop to free market levels, and people will not need to become drug dealers themselves to finance their habit.

#### Adjustment of international policy is a key step for ending prohibition in both US and Mexico

Silva 13(Gina Silva, investigative reporter, Posted by: Jeffrey Thomas DeSocio, Digital News Editor/Producer August 30, 2013 www.myfoxla.com/story/23299391/a-step-towards-marijuana-legalization-feds-back-off-busts)

Last week, the Department of Justice announced that the federal government will not prosecute marijuana-based offenses in states that have already legalized marijuana. This is a victory for the marijuana legalization movement, but it does not go far enough.¶ While this document implies that federal prosecutors will not interfere with state law enforcement in the 20 (and counting) states where marijuana is legalized, it does not allude to the possibility of legalization on the federal level or the national-international law enforcement conflicts that the U.S. could face in the future.¶ A prudent next step for the Obama administration would be to address the potential future conflicts with international drug conventions, specifically, the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, sponsored by the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board. Parties to the convention (the United States and 183 other member countries) agree to a worldwide prohibitory state of narcotic drugs and have agreed to criminalize individuals, groups, and businesses within their respective countries that use these narcotic drugs illegally.¶ As the U.S. moves closer to federal legalization and regulation of marijuana markets, their practices will drift farther and farther away from the current guidelines in the convention. However, there is an option that the Obama administration should explore that a) would allow the United States to move towards having a legalized and regulated marijuana market, and b) would not conflict with the international controls set by the convention.¶ Firstly, the U.S. should withdraw from the convention. Withdrawing from the convention is an action recognized by international law, and means that the country no longer wishes to abide by the international guidelines set forth, such as criminalizing the sale or production of marijuana.¶ Has this ever been done before? Yes! Actually, Bolivia withdrew from the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 2012 to do something similar. They withdrew from the convention entirely, and re-acceded in January 2013. The difference between their previous status and their current status is two short sentences: legalization of the cultivation of coca leaf and consumption (chewing) of coca leaf, a practice traditional to many Bolivian indigenous people. While I typically wouldn’t recommend that the U.S. follow in Bolivia’s footsteps, this action is an exception.¶ Secondly, the United States should select which clauses they wish to opt out of. A forward-thinking president, knowing that legalization of marijuana is imminent, might consider opting out of not only the clauses that prohibit the production, sale, and consumption of marijuana, but also opting out of the clauses that require marijuana possession to be punished. Opting out of all clauses that require marijuana possession to be punished means that the United States wouldn’t have to substitute a criminal penalty (i.e. time in jail, on a criminal record) for a civil penalty (i.e. a ticket or civil fine, which is what most individuals receive when caught using marijuana in states that have decriminalized weed). Other countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and the Czech Republic have decriminalized marijuana but, in order to comply with the UN convention, have replaced criminal punishment with the punishment of civil fines. By opting out of any clauses that require some sort of punishment for marijuana possession, the U.S. could leav

# CASE

**The heroism narrative of having to give a voice to those who cant speak out comes from a western male elite point of view and leads to otherization**

**Crowe 7**-PhD and Researcher @ the York Center for International and Security Studies in the Department of Political Science of York University [Lori, PhD and Researcher, “The “Fuzzy Dream”: Discourse, Historical myths, and Militarized (in)Security - Interrogating dangerous myths of Afghanistan and the ‘West,’” <http://turin.sgir.eu/uploads/Crowe-loricrowe.pdf>, DKP]

The ‘heroism’ narrative can be called by several names: the ‘saviour syndrome’, “mediatically generated” or “hybrid techno-medical” humanitarianism58, “foreign aid”, “humanitarian intervention”, etc. This narrative constructs foreign engagement in a region as spectacle and as prized commodities to be admired and ‘sold’ to the public; it constructs the West as ‘saviours’ and the ‘Other’, in this case Afghanistan, as the victim in need of saving, accomplished through images and tales of passion and fervour that often pathologize the other and valorize the Western interveener. When the US, with the support of the UN, bombed Afghanistan in 2001in response to the events of September 11th, the mission was entitled “Operation Enduring Freedom”. Today, as reconstruction and ‘peace-building’ efforts are underway in Afghanistan in tandem with military operations, political conversations and media productions are saturated with calls to “win the hearts and minds” of the people of Afghanistan and of the necessary and benevolent role the West must play in instilling ‘freedom’, ‘justice’ and ‘democracy’ in the war-torn and poverty stricken region. Debrix, offers an analysis of what he calls “the global humanitarian spectacle” to demonstrate how medical and humanitarian NGO’s simulate “heroism, sentiment, and compassion”; medical catastrophes and civil conflicts, he explains, have indeed become prized commodities for globalizing neoliberal policies of Western states and international organizations to sell to ‘myth readers’: “They give Western states and the UN the opportunity to put their liberal humanistic policies into practice, while, for Western media, humanitarianism simply sells”.59 There are several repercusions of this myth, explains Debrix. First, this has resulted in real humanitarian and moral issues being overlooked; Second, images are being purged of their content. Myth has thus becoming the very real enemy of true humanitarianism; that is, we’ve become so inundate[d]s with superhero mythologization of real world events that the embedded paternalism and unrealistic goals go unnoticed.60 Additionally, this narrative reinforces a victimology of the ‘Other’ and in fact capitalises on it, while simultaneously hiding the paternalistic and neo-colonialist ideologies in humanitarian garb. The role of the media and consciously generated and disseminated images is particularly pronounced here, as passion and spectacle are valued in the commodification of images over content and history. Jean Baudrillard states “There is no possible distinction, at the level of images and information, between the spectacular and the symbolic, no possible distinction between the ‘crime’ and the crackdown”.61 The militarization narrative, in contrast to the ‘objective benevolence’ of the heroism myth, utilizes constructed and one-dimensional conceptions of militaries, security, and defense. This narrative relies on the myth that militarization is always a useful tool in securitization. For example: Following the NATO air strikes in October of this year that killed at least 50 civilians and an augmentation of Taliban suicide attacks, Afghanistan’s President Hamid Karzai called on the need for more military operations, an international air force, and an increase in Afghan soldiers and police as mechanisms necessary to “tackle the root causes of terrorism”.62 Words such as ‘freedom’, ‘democracy’, ‘justice’, and ‘women’s rights’ have become permanent variables in the mantra that has been used liberally and repeatedly as part of the common and often un-stated, assumptions that intervention by NATO, American, Canadian, and British forces will improve the lives of Afghanistan people over ‘there’ and increase security for us over ‘here’. Thus, as the military continues to occupy the region, we in the West are continually told that Afghan women and men have now been “liberated” from an oppressive regime by the West. This is bolstered by the assumption that the Afghan people support the US-backed government and want the military there for security (That is, that they are better off now than before). There is a dominant assumption that the West can “win” the “war on terror” and that military measures in the Middle East are necessary to prevent future terrorist attacks. If prospects look dim in the region, this narrative implies the appropriate response is to increase combat troops and artillery. Finally, embedded in these images is the assumption that reconstruction, delivery of humanitarian aid and development can coesist alongside military efforts to fight off insurgents/terrorists and “pacify” the opposition. Thus, reports on the increasing numbers of casualties of the war does not appear incongruous with claims of ‘peace-making’ and ‘development’ - therefore we must protect it the puppet government and fight the insurgents.63 This type of narrative serves several purposes, including the reinforcement in the public of the legitimacy of military response to crises and the re-construction of power and dominance through the image of military superiority, fighting capacity, and mechanisms of control. The result of such myths is the reaffirmation of the importance of state-led military missions (which contribute to the maintenance of armed forces by attracting future recruits) and their necessity for resolving multiple types of international crises. Enloe defines militarization as a sociopolitical process by which militarism as an ideology is “driven deep down into the soil of a society”.64 Militarism, in turn, encompasses beliefs, values, and assumptions including the use of armed force to resolve tensions, the effectiveness and naturalness of hierarchy, the need for a state to have a military in order to be perceived as legitimate, and that the feminine require armed protection while the masculine is only a “manly man” if he participates in the culture of armed conflict.65 The process of militarization involves cultural, institutional, ideological, and economic transformations through which militaristic needs, presumptions, and ideas gradually come to control or determine a person or thing.66 In her work on the study of gender and militarization, Enloe has revealed how gendered notions of masculinity and femininity are fundamental to the very establishment and maintenance of military structures: “None of these institutions – multilateral alliances, bilateral alliances, foreign military assistance programs – can achieve their militarizing objectives without controlling women for the sake of militarizing men.”67 Additionally then, governmental policies and actions in the international arena (an arena deemed untouchable and irrelevant to women in orthodox studies of international relations) “directly produce changes in women’s lives”.(My italics)68 Enloe’s work is particularly relevant in this project which seeks to complicate, interrogate, and historicize particular mythic representations and narratives because it denaturalizes militarizing, war, and soldiering (so often presented as conventional and innate responses to conflict) and reveals them as deliberate actions of intentional policies and warmaking strategies (“Militarization and the privileging of masculinity are both products not only of amorphous cultural beliefs but also of deliberate decisions”)69. It also helps demonstrate that by ‘erasing’ history the structures that enabled it are legitimized and thus perpetuated; that is, militarization, hegemonic masculinity, and the absence of women is represented as natural, normal and thus are potentially destructive mechanisms.

1. Images of suffering only create pity – which foregoes all opportunities to have any true relationship with the victims – this means their moral obligation arguments are functionally co-opted since we cant establish a relationship and this pity creates a sense of moral absolutism which allows for the worst sort of violence towards the other

Delgado 96 (Charles Inglis Thomson Professor of Law, University of Colorado, 1996

84 Calif. L. Rev. 61)

"My point exactly," Rodrigo continued. "Empathy is least useful where we need it most. When inequality is deep and structural, empathy declines. It's a downward spiral. Empathy would work in a just world, one in which everyone's experience or access to resources was roughly the same. But we don't live in a world like that." "Is there any solution, any hope?" I asked. "The only one I see is to show that our people have something to offer whites. We were talking about this the first time we met. n66 If one can convince white folks in elite positions that blacks are necessary to them, have something to offer, our treatment will shift overnight, as it did in wartime. n67 The prevailing narratives and myths will change magically to facilitate the trades and exchanges, services, and so on that the dominant group needs. None of this will take place on a conscious level." "The trouble is that many of them seem ready to write us off. The Republicans now realize they don't need our votes. They can count on backlash voters, angry white males, n68 while the Democrats seem not to want us, either. n69 And, if I understand your argument, our few remaining [\*78] liberal friends can't be counted on because their empathy is shallow. They think they know what we need, but don't. They visualize themselves in our places, and ask what they, themselves, would want." n70"False empathy is worse than indifference, Professor. It encourages the possessor to believe he is beyond reproach. It's like a certain type of religiosity. If you believe you are saved, you can easily come to believe that you can do no wrong. n71 Because you believe in God, you will believe you are God, or at least that you're in tight with Him. He's on your side; you understand each other. Once you reach this point, you can do no evil, as you are God - or at least His messenger." "You will then think you are being extremely empathic, as the Spanish conquistadores did, because you are acting on behalf of God in the other person. n72 Not what that other person is, but what he or she might be. The other person may not believe he or she has that God in him or her. But you will know better. Is that your general idea?" I asked.

1. The act of pity takes out solvency

Bruckner 86 [Pascal, Tears of the White Man, p. 49-50]

The result is a terrible paradox. The more widespread hunger is, the greater is our indifference to its ravages. Pathetic appeals to our conscience and manipulation by shock are reiterated by the tireless television. The phrase "You are all murderers" does not mobilize people, it makes them yawn. What remains is a guilty conscience that has no strength and no will. We have passed from being tragically ignorant of the Third World to being tragically inured to it. When it was not normally mentioned, famine was deeply touching whenever it was. What is remarkable today is that it is too well known, too much a part of the norm. Rather than a blackout there is a welter of studies, statistics, and calls to alarm on these burning topics. Our emotional appetites are beset from all sides, and rather than being misled by propaganda, we are being told far too much. When catastrophe becomes an everyday thing, it ceases to be catastrophe.

And the affirmative’s invocation of the necessity of acting to save the helpless victims of their criticism results in a hyperreality where a savior/victim dichotomy is establish to replenish moral superiority of western society – this form of self-pity is used to mask the creation of such instances of atrocity that are perpetuated to justify their performance- this is the fundamental root cause of their criticism

Baudrillard 94(jean, prof of philosophy @ european graduate school, liberation, no reprieve for sarajevo, online: uta.edu)

The problem lies indeed in the nature of our reality. We have got only one, and it must be preserved. Even if it is by the use of the most heinous of all paroles: "One must do something. One cannot remain idle." Yet, to do something for the sole reason that one cannot do nothing never has been a valid principle for action, nor for liberty. At the most it is an excuse for one's own powerlessness and a token of self-pity. The people of Sarajevo are not bothered by such questions. Being where they are, they are in the absolute need to do what they do, to do the right thing. They harbour no illusion about the outcome and do not indulge in self-pity. This is what it means to be really existing, to exist within reality. And this reality has nothing to do with the so-called objective reality of their plight, which should not exist, and which we do so much deplore. This reality exits as such - it is the stark reality of action and destiny. This is why they are alive, while we are dead. This is why we feel the need to salvage the reality of war in our own eyes and to impose this reality (to be pitiable) upon those who suffer from it, but do not really believe in it, despite the fact they are in the midst of war and utter distress. Susan Sontag herself confesses in her diaries that the Bosnians do not really believe in the suffering which surrounds them. They end up finding the whole situation unreal, senseless, and unexplainable. It is hell, but hell of what may be termed a hyperreal kind, made even more hyperreal by the harassment of the media and the humanitarian agencies, because it renders the attitude of the world towards them even less unfathomable. Thus, they live in a kind of ghost-like war - which is fortunate, because otherwise, they would never have been able to stand up to it. These are not my words, by the way: they say it so. But then Susan Sontag, hailing herself from New York, must know better than them what reality is, since she has chosen them to incarnate it. Or maybe it is simply because reality is what she, and with her all the Western world, is lacking the most. To reconstitute reality, one needs to head to where blood flows. All these "corridors", opened by us to funnel our foodstuffs and our "culture" are in fact our lifelines along which we suck their moral strength and the energy of their distress. Yet another unequal exchange. And to those who have found in a radical delusion of reality (and this includes the belief in political rationality, which supposedly rules us, and which very much constitutes the principle of European reality) a kind of alternative courage, that is to survive a senseless situation, to these people Susan Sontag comes to convince them of the "reality" of their suffering, by making something cultural and something theatrical out of it, so that it can be useful as a referent within the theatre of western values, including "solidarity". But Susan Sontag herself is not the issue. She is merely a societal instance of what has become the general situation whereby toothless intellectuals swap their distress with the misery of the poor, both of them sustaining each other, both of them locked in a perverse agreement. This parallels the way the political class and civil society are swapping their respective misery: one throwing up corruption and scandals, the other its purposeless convulsions and its inertia. Thus, not so long ago, one could witness Bourdieu and Abbe Pierre offering themselves as televisual slaughtering lambs trading with each other pathetic language and sociological garble about poverty. Our whole society is thus on its way towards "commiseration" in the most literal sense of the word (under the cloak of ecumenical bathos). It looks like as if we are in the midst of an immense feeling of guilt, shared by intellectuals and politicians alike, and which is linked to the end of history and the downfall of values. Then, it has become necessary to replenish the pond of values, the pond of references, and to do so by using that smallest common denominator which is the suffering of the world, and in doing so, replenishing our game reserves with artificial fowls. "At the moment, it has become impossible to show anything else than suffering in the news broadcasts on television", reports David Schneidermann. Ours is a victim-society. I gather that society is merely expressing its own disappointment and longing for an impossible violence against itself. Everywhere, a New Intellectual Order is following on the heels of the New World Order. Everywhere, we see distress, misery and suffering becoming the basic stuff of the primitive scene. The status of victimhood, paired with human rights is the sole funeral ideology. Those who do not directly exploit it do it by proxy - there is no dearth of mediators who take some surplus value of financial or symbolic nature along the way. Loss and suffering, just like the global debt, are negotiable and for sale on the speculative market, that is, the intellectual-political market - which is in no way undermining the military-industrial complex of old & sinister days. Every commiseration is grounded within the logic of suffering. To refer to suffering, even if it is to fight it, lends it an unending base of objective reproduction. It is clear that in order to fight whatever, one must start from the evil, not from the suffering. It is absolutely obvious that in Sarajevo we may witness the scene of the transparency of Evil. The concealed cancer-cell which causes everything else to rot, the virus whose blatant symptom the Europeans' paralysis has become. One seems to salvage the European inventory in the GATT negotiations, but in the meanwhile it is thrown in the flames at Sarajevo. In a certain sense, it is a good thing. Bogus Europe, vanishing Europe, Europe that has been squandered in the most hypocritical of dealings, this Europe is exposed in Sarajevo. In that sense, the Serbs could almost be hailed as the demystifying instrument, the savage analyst of that ghostly Europe, creature of those techno-democratic politicians who are as triumphant in their discourses as they are ineffective in their deeds. One sees how Europe is disintegrating just as the discourse of united Europe flowers (exactly as the situation of human rights is worsening just as the discourse on human rights is proliferating). But this is not even the fine point of the story. The fine point is that the Serbs, as carriers of the ethnic cleansing, are at the apex of the kind of Europe in the making; because the "real" Europe that is being made, is a white Europe, a Europe 'made' white, integrated and cleansed, in the moral sense, in the economic sense, and in the ethnic sense. This Europe is being made victoriously in, and in that sense, what happens there is not an untimely occurrence on the way towards a pious and democratic Europe, which does not exist, but a logical and ascending step towards the New European Order, itself a branch of the New World Order, whose distinctive features everywhere are white fundamentalism, protectionism, discrimination and control. Some say: if we let this happen in Sarajevo, it will happen to us later on. What nonsense! It has befallen us already. All European countries are on the road to ethnic cleansing. This is the real Europe that is being slowly put together in the shadow of national parliaments. And Serbia is in forward position. There is no need to invoke some kind of passivity, some inability to react, since we are dealing with a programme being logically implemented, of which Bosnia is merely the actual frontier. Why do you think that Le Pen has all but vanished from the (French) political scene? He has vanished because the essence of his ideas has completely infiltrated the political class, taking the garb of "the French particularity", the holy union, the euronationalist impulse, or plain protectionism. No use any longer for Le Pen. He won, not as a political person, but as a virus, having taken over the minds. Why would you believe that things will remain limited in Sarajevo. It is the same thing that is at stake everywhere. No display of solidarity is going to change anything about that. It will stop only the day that the killing will end, that is when the borders of "white" Europe will have been redrawn. It is as if Europe, all nationalities, all political movements, no matter which, had "taken a contract", a killer's contract with the Serbs, who have become the agents of the dirty jobs for the West. Just as the West had taken a contract with Saddam Hussein against Iran. The problem is that if the killer overdoes it, he must be eliminated too. But if the operations against Iraq and in Somalia look like failures within the establishment of the New World Order, then the Bosnian case looks promising within the New European one. The Bosnians know that much. They know they have been forfeited, not by some fascistic remnant or revival, but by the international "democratic" order. They know they are bound to be exterminated or exiled or excluded like all heterogeneous and unassimalable elements the world over. There is no reprieve, because, however distasteful this may sound to the false guilty consciousness of Western democrats and humanitarians, this is the unswerving way of development. Modern Europe will be built on the bones of its Muslims and Arabs, as we can see all over. Unless they survive as immigrant slaves. And the strongest objection against this offensive of the guilty conscience such as is displayed in happenings like the Strasbourg one, is that by fuelling the image of the alleged lack of resolve of the European policies, together with that of a European conscience torn by its own powerlessness, it covers up the whole of the really on-going operation by granting it the benefit of spiritual doubt. The people of Sarajevo who appeared on the screen during the Art broadcast were surely harbouring no illusion nor hope. But they did not look like potential martyrs either. They had objective plight, real suffering on their side. The true misery, that of the false apostles and voluntary martyrs, was on the other side. But then, is it not written that "to the voluntary martyr no recompense shall be given in the after-world."

Politics based on pity means we quickly forget and look away from those we were trying to “save”

Bruckner 86 [Pascal, Tears of the White Man, p. 153-155]

Why must our sympathy always be directed toward suffering people, only to forget them once they are no longer stricken with misfortune? Why is our attention focused only on countries where freedom is menaced, children starving, and dissidents tortured? We should remember that no lasting relationship is based on pity. It is no more possible to fall in love with a beggar than with an economic growth curve. Philanthropy is worthless if it does not start with a passionate attraction toward one nation or another. Moral universalism must always be sustained by an emotional particularism. The ethical level is not above or below the esthetic level; rather, they reinforce one another and coexist in the mystery of differentness. My sense of moral responsibility can be sustained only by an admiring fascination for the other. Beyond pathos there is still love, and there is no moral relationship that is not first emotional. Neither generosity nor duty is enough to establish strong ties, and the dictates of conscience are not what usually motivate people. That is the danger of any overly exclusive human-rights policy, of a sense of justice that is disinterested and dispensed dispassionately. It cannot value one culture more than another, and is satisfied with being applied wherever there is pain, nightmare, and blood. The impersonal character of this sad, unspontaneous and unsympathetic virtue risks giving countries of the Southern hemisphere a false image of misery. The conviction necessary for the achievement of a great cause certainly cannot stem from self-deception and egotism, but it cannot stem from charity alone, either. Nothing could push us outside the gates of the Old World if there were not some aspect of the human race out there that excites and intrigues us. Nobody would leave his borders if the far-off other were not, above all, seductive; if he were not, in and of himself, enough reason for me to seek him out. I am not sufficient unto myself, and enchantment comes to me only from the outside. A foreigner inspires me before he fills me with pity or astonishment; my obligation toward him springs from an irresistible magnetism. He inspires me because he is the avenue by which I will escape from myself and the terrible self-absorption that is our lot. How can we not seek sustenance, dreams, and hope from beyond the seas? We do not admire China, Morocco, India, or Japan through condescendingly good will or purely archeological curiosity, but because the respective cultures of these countries are works of art so beautiful that they bring tears to our eyes. Overseas, we are side by side with people whose intelligence, refinement, and grace are dazzling. The tropics are not simply an object of study, but the dreamed-of place of another possible destiny. What other criticism can be used to gauge the legitimacy of a choice, other than the possibility of a new life? They could be called countries that are becoming developed, but could just as well be called countries by which we are enveloped. We have discerned the outside world through decolonization. How can we make sure that the taste for discovery will survive the end of colonialism? For Europe, mourning its empire does not mean getting rid of its possessions and retiring into its northern fortress, aggrieved and afflicted. It means forming ties of friendship with its former subordinates; it means substituting emotion for domination. Rather than penitence, melancholy, or self-hatred, a new sort of contact is needed for a better relationship between cultures. Friendship toward other peoples is more than simply tolerance of one state for its neighbors; it is a certain will on the part of a people to construct concrete ties with others. In a field opened up by good will, politics and polemics wither, while understanding and love take root.

Your focus on negativity is bad

hooks, 2003 (bell, *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self-Esteem* [kindle edition])

The fact that racism continues to impact negatively on our lives as African Americans has led many of us to feel that we can never be free of suffering. That is a slave mentality, because it denies both our history and our own agency. We have to drop our addiction to suffering, to our complaint, whether it’s about what white folks have done, or what your mama and daddy did, or what your man has done, or these children have done done. We have to let the suffering go. And that’s particularly difficult for those of us who have created life dramas out of suffering.

We must focus on positives not negatives

hooks, 2003 (bell, *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self-Esteem* [kindle edition])

Without a core foundation of healthy self-esteem we cannot practice self-love. In Salvation I did not emphasize enough the importance of creating healthy self-esteem. Folks with positive self-esteem know that there are a number of factors that shape and inform our emotional well-being. We know that while race and racism may overdetermine many aspects of our lives, we are still free to be self-determining. Many young black folks who are full of self-doubt and lacking in self-esteem fixate on race in a way that is demoralizing and dehumanizing. To a grave extent they project all their problems onto the landscape of racism because it is the easy target. Though race is a vital aspect of our identity as African Americans, we cannot know ourselves fully if we look only at race. Looking at ourselves holistically, seeing our emotional well-being as rooted both in the politics of race and racism as well as in our capacity to be self-defining, we can create the self-esteem that is needed for us to care for our souls. In the black church of my youth we would sing the lyrics “is it well with your soul, are you free and made whole.” Our continued survival as African-American people, in solidarity with nonblack allies in struggle, demands that we care for our souls so that we can be whole and complete. If we begin with self-esteem our success is assured. Well-being will be our destiny.