



Methodology of the Oppressed

Chela
Sandoval

T OF BOUNDS

Methodology of the Oppressed

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Oppressed**

Chela Sandoval

Foreword by Angela Y. Davis

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Subcommander Marcos
Zapatista Army of Liberation (EZLN), Mexico

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U.S. Third World Feminism: **Differential Social Movement I**

Caminante no hay puentes, se hace puentes al andar (Voyager there are no bridges, one makes them as one walks).

Gloria Anzaldúa

What “feminism” means to women of color is different from what it means to white women. Because of our collective histories, we identify more closely with international Third World sisters than with white feminist women. . . . A global feminism, one that reaches beyond patriarchal political divisions and national ethnic boundaries, can be formulated from a new political perspective.

Alice Chai

The vision of radical Third World feminism necessitates our willingness to work with people—the colored, the queer, the poor, the female, the physically challenged. From our connections with these groups, we women on the bottom throughout the world can form an international feminism. We recognize the right and necessity of colonized peoples throughout the world, including Third World women in the United States, to form

independent movements toward self-government. But ultimately, we must struggle together. Together we form a new vision which spans self-love of our colored skins to the respect of our foremothers who kept the embers of revolution burning.

Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa

Definition of Womanism: "... Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health."

Alice Walker

Feminists of Color and Postmodern Resistance

THE SOCIAL movement that was "U.S. third world feminism" has yet to be fully understood by social theorists. This social movement developed an original form of historical consciousness, the very structure of which lay outside the conditions of possibility that regulated the praxes of 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s U.S. social movements. In enacting this new form of historical consciousness, U.S. third world feminism provided access to a different way of conceptualizing not just feminist consciousness but oppositional activity in general: it comprised a formulation capable of aligning U.S. movements for social justice not only with each other, but with global movements toward decolonization.

Both in spite of and because they represented varying internally colonized communities, U.S. third world feminists generated a common speech, a theoretical structure that remained just outside the purview of 1970s feminist theory, functioning within it—but only as the unimaginable.¹ Even though this unimaginable presence arose to reinvigorate and refocus the politics and priorities of feminist theory during the eighties, an uneasy alliance remained between what appeared to be two different understandings of domination, subordination, and the nature of effective resistance—a shotgun arrangement at best between what literary critic Gayatri Spivak characterized in 1985 as a "hegemonic feminist theory"² on the one side, and what I call "U.S. third world feminist theory" on the other.³ I do not mean to suggest that this perplexing situation can be understood in merely binary terms. On the contrary, what this investigation reveals is the way in which the theory and method of oppositional consciousness and social movement documented here—and enacted by an original, eccentric, and coalitional cohort of U.S. feminists of color—was contained and made invisible through the means of its perception and appro-

priation in the terms of what became during the 1970–80 period a hegemonic feminist theory and practice.

U.S. third world feminism rose out of the matrix of the very discourses denying, permitting, and producing difference. Out of the imperatives born of necessity arose a mobility of identity that generated the activities of a new citizen-subject, and that revealed yet another model for the self-conscious production of resistance.⁴ This chapter lays out U.S. third world feminism as a model for oppositional political activity and consciousness in the postmodern world. In mapping this model, a design is revealed by which social actors can chart the points through which differing oppositional ideologies can meet, in spite of their varying trajectories. This knowledge becomes important when one begins to wonder, along with late-twentieth-century cultural critics such as Jameson, how organized oppositional activity and consciousness are possible under the co-opting nature of so-called post-modern cultural conditions.⁵

The model put forth in this chapter transcodes the great oppositional social movement practices of the latter half of the twentieth century, especially in the United States—those of the civil rights movement, the women’s movement, and ethnic, race, sex, gender, class, and human liberation movements. During this period of great social activity, it became clear that oppositional social movements, which were weakening from internal divisions over strategies, tactics, and aims, would benefit by examining philosopher Louis Althusser’s theory of “ideology and the ideological state apparatuses.”⁶ In this fundamental essay, Althusser lays out the principles by which humans are called into being as citizen-subjects who act—even when in resistance—in order to sustain and reinforce the current dominant social order. In this sense, for Althusser, all citizens endure ideological subjection. Althusser’s postulations, however, suggest that “means and occasions”⁷ do become generated whereby individuals and groups in opposition are able to effectively challenge and transform oppressive aspects of identity and social order, but he does not specify how or on what terms such challenges might be mounted.

In supplementing Althusser’s propositions, I apply his theory of ideology to the particular concerns raised within North American liberation movements of the 1968–90 period, in order to develop a theory of ideology that considers consciousness not only in its subordinated and resistant yet appropriated versions—the subject of Althusser’s theory of ideology—⁸ but in its more effective, persistent, and self-conscious oppositional manifestations. In practical terms, this extended theory focuses on identifying forms of ideology in opposition that can be generated and coordinated by those classes self-consciously seeking affective libera-

tory stances in relation to the dominant social order. The idea here, that the citizen-subject can learn to identify, develop, and control the means of ideology, that is, marshal the knowledge necessary to “break with ideology” while at the same time *also* speaking in, and from within, ideology, is an idea that lays the philosophical foundations enabling us to make the vital connections between the seemingly disparate social and political aims that drive, yet ultimately divide, social movements from within. In Althusser’s terms, the model I propose would be considered a “science” of oppositional ideology, one that apprehends an effective oppositional consciousness igniting in dialectical engagement between varying ideological formations.

This study identifies five principal categories around which oppositional consciousness is organized, and which are politically effective means for transforming dominant power relations. I characterize these as the “equal rights,” “revolutionary,” “supremacist,” “separatist,” and “differential” forms of oppositional consciousness. These ideological positions are kaleidoscoped into an original, eccentric, and queer sight when the fifth, differential mode is utilized as a theoretical and methodological device for retroactively clarifying and giving new meaning to any other. Differential consciousness represents a strategy of oppositional ideology that functions on an altogether different register. Its powers can be thought of as mobile—not nomadic, but rather cinematographic: a kinetic motion that maneuvers, poetically transfigures, and orchestrates while demanding alienation, perversion, and reformation in both spectators and practitioners. Differential consciousness is the expression of the new subject position called for by Althusser—it permits functioning within, yet beyond, the demands of dominant ideology. This form of oppositional consciousness was enacted during the 1968–90 period by a particular and eccentric cohort of U.S. feminists of color who were active across diverse social movements. This cohort enacted the differential mode of social movement, which was subsequently developed under the aegis of “U.S. third world feminism.”

This chapter identifies and investigates the primary modes of oppositional consciousness that were generated within one of the great oppositional movements of the late twentieth century, the second wave of the women’s movement. What emerges in this discussion are the dominant ideological forms that worked against one another to ultimately divide the movement from within. I trace these ideological forms as they were manifested in the critical writings of some of the most prominent feminist theorists of the 1980s. In their attempts to identify a feminist history of consciousness, many of these thinkers detected four fundamentally distinct evolutionary phases through which activists pass in their quest to end the subordination of women. But, viewed in terms of another paradigm, “differential con-

sciousness,” here made available for study through the activity of U.S. third world feminism, these four historical phases are revealed as only other versions of the very forms of consciousness in opposition also conceived and enacted within every post-1950s U.S. liberation movement.

These diverse social movements were simultaneously seeking affective forms of resistance outside of those determined by the social order itself. My contention is that the feminist forms of resistance outlined in what follows are homologous to five fundamental forms of oppositional consciousness that were expressed within *all* U.S. liberation movements active during the latter half of the twentieth century. This chapter systematizes a political unconscious whose presence structured U.S. feminist theoretical tracts, in order to make manifest a generally applicable theory and method of oppositional consciousness in the postmodern world.

The recognition of the fifth form, differential consciousness and social movement, is crucial for shaping effective and ongoing oppositional struggle.⁹ The application of differential consciousness generates grounds for making coalitions with decolonizing movements for emancipation in global affinities and associations. It retroactively provides a structure, a theory, and a method for reading and constructing identity, aesthetics, and coalition politics that are vital to a decolonizing postmodern politics and aesthetics, and to hailing a “third-wave,” twenty-first-century feminism. My answer to the perennial question asked by hegemonic feminist theorists throughout the 1980s is that yes, there *is* a particular U.S. third world feminist criticism: it is that which provides the theoretical and methodological approach, the “standpoint,” if you will, from which this evocation of a theory and method of oppositional consciousness has been summoned.

Situating History

From the beginning of what was known as the second wave of the women’s movement, U.S. feminists of color have claimed feminisms at odds with those developed by U.S. white women. Already in 1970 with the publication of *Sisterhood Is Powerful*, black feminist Frances Beale was determined to name the second wave of U.S. feminism a “*white* women’s movement” because it insisted on organizing along the binary gender division male/female alone.¹⁰ U.S. women of color have long understood, however, that especially race, but also one’s culture, sex, or class, can deny comfortable or easy access to any legitimized gender category, that the interactions between such social classifications produce other, unnamed gender forms within the social hierarchy. As far back as the middle of the nineteenth century, Sojourner

Truth found it necessary to remind a convention of white suffragettes of her “female” gender with the rhetorical question “Ain’t I a woman?”¹¹ American Indian Paula Gunn Allen has written of Native women that “the place we live now is an idea, because whiteman took all the rest.”¹² In 1971, Toni Morrison went so far as to write of U.S. women of color that “there is something inside us that makes us different from other people. It is not like men and it is not like white women.”¹³ That same year, Chicana Velia Hancock concluded: “Unfortunately, many white women focus on the male-ness of our present social system as though, by implication, a female-dominated white America would have taken a more reasonable course” for people of color of *either* gender.¹⁴

These signs of a lived experience of difference from white female experience in the United States appear repeatedly throughout 1980s U.S. third world feminist writings. Such expressions imply the existence of at least one other category of gender, reflected in the very titles of books written by U.S. feminists of color during that period. *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave* (1982); and *This Bridge Called My Back* (1981) indicate that feminists of color exist in the interstices between normalized social categories.¹⁵ Moreover, in the title of bell hooks’s first book, the question “Ain’t I a Woman” becomes transformed into a defiant statement, while Amy Ling’s feminist analysis of Asian American writings, *Between Worlds* or the title of the journal for U.S. third world feminist writings, *The Third Woman*, also insist on the recognition of a third, divergent, and supplementary category for social identity.¹⁶ This in-between space, this third gender category, is also recognized in the early writings of such well-known authors as Maxine Hong Kingston, Gloria Anzaldúa, Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, and Cherríe Moraga, all of whom argued that an eccentric coalition of U.S. third world feminists is composed of “different kinds of humans,” new “*mestizas*,” “Woman Warriors” who live and are gendered, sexed, raced, and classed “between and among” the lines.¹⁷ These “sister outsiders” (1984), it was argued, inhabit an uncharted psychic terrain that Anzaldúa in 1987 named “the Borderlands,” “*la nueva Frontera*.” In 1980, Audre Lorde summarized the U.S. white women’s movement by saying that “today, there is a pretense to a homogeneity of experience covered by the word *SISTERHOOD* in the white women’s movement. When white feminists call for ‘unity,’ they are misnaming a deeper and real need for homogeneity.” We begin the 1980s, she writes, with “white women” agreeing “to focus upon their oppression as women” while continuing “to ignore the differences” that exist among us as women.¹⁸ Chicana sociologist Maxine Baca Zinn rearticulated this position in a 1986 essay in *Signs*, saying that though “there now exists in women’s studies an increased awareness of the variabil-

ity of womanhood,” in the view of U.S. third world feminist criticism, “such work is often tacked on, its significance for feminist knowledge still unrecognized and unregarded.”¹⁹

How did the hegemonic feminism of the 1980s respond to this other kind of feminist theoretical challenge? The publication of *This Bridge Called My Back* in 1981 made the singular presence of U.S. third world feminism impossible to ignore on the same terms as it had been throughout the 1970s. But soon the writings and theoretical challenges by such feminists of color were marginalized into the category of what Allison Jaggar characterized in 1983 as mere “description,”²⁰ and their essays deferred to what Hester Eisenstein in 1985 called “the special force of poetry,”²¹ while the shift in paradigm referred to here as “differential consciousness,” and which is represented in the praxis of U.S. third world feminism, was bypassed and ignored. If, during the 1980s, U.S. third world feminism had become a theoretical problem, an inescapable mystery to be solved for hegemonic feminism and social theorists across disciplines, then perhaps a theory of difference—but imported from Europe in the conceptual forms of “*différance*” or “French feminism”—could subsume if not solve it.²² How did this systematic repression occur within an academic system that is aimed at recognizing new forms of knowledge?

Feminism’s Great Hegemonic Model

1980s hegemonic feminist scholars produced the histories of feminist consciousness that they believed typified the modes of exchange operating within the oppositional spaces of the women’s movement. These efforts resulted in systematic studies that sought to classify all forms of feminist political and aesthetic praxis. These constructed typologies fast became the official stories by which the women’s movement understood itself and its interventions in history. In what follows, I decode these stories and their relations to one another from the perspective of U.S. third world feminism: from this critical perspective they are revealed as sets of imaginary spaces, socially constructed to severely delimit what is possible within the boundaries of each narrative. Taken together, these narratives legitimate certain modes of culture, consciousness, and practice, only to systematically curtail the forms of experiential and theoretical articulations expressed by an eccentric cohort of oppositional activists. In what follows, I demonstrate how manifestly different types of hegemonic feminist theory and practice are, in fact, unified at a deeper level into a great structure that sets up and organizes the logic of an exclusionary U.S. hegemonic feminism.

This logic of hegemonic feminism is organized around a common code that shaped the work of a diverse group of feminist scholars, including

Julia Kristeva, Toril Moi, Gerda Lerna, Cora Kaplan, Alice Jardine, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Gayle Greene, Coppélia Kahn, and Lydia Sargent. Its influence encrypts some of the key texts of the 1980s, including the influential essay by literary critic Elaine Showalter, “Toward a Feminist Poetics,”²³ the introduction to the now-classic set of essays on the “future of difference” edited by theorists Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine; the historicist essay by Gayle Greene and Coppélia Kahn on “the social construction of woman”;²⁴ and political scientist Allison Jaggar’s *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, a foundational dictionary of feminist consciousness and social movement. In what follows, we can watch scholarly consciousness as it transcodes political practice to reproduce exclusionary forms of knowledge.

Showalter’s work identifies a three-phase “taxonomy, if not a poetics, of feminist criticism.”²⁵ This three-stage structure is reiterated throughout the 1980s text of hegemonic feminist theory and criticism, and it is always conceptualized as proceeding temporally. For Showalter, these three stages represent succeeding higher levels of historical, moral, political, and aesthetic development. For example, Showalter’s schema advises literary scholars to recognize a first-phase “feminine” consciousness when they identify in their readings women who write “in an effort to equal the cultural achievement of the male culture.” In another place, theorist Hester Eisenstein concurs when she similarly identifies the movement’s first stage as characterized by feminist activists organizing to prove that “differences between women and men are exaggerated,” and should be “reduced” to a common denominator of sameness.²⁶ So too do Gayle Greene and Coppélia Kahn identify this same first-phase feminism in their historicist essay “Feminist Scholarship and the Social Construction of Woman.” In its first stage, they write, feminist history and theory were organized “according to the standards of the male public world and, appending women to history” as it has already been defined, scholars left “unchallenged the existing paradigm.”²⁷ This first stage is similarly replicated in Jaggar’s monumental *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. Within her construction of what she identifies as four “genera” of feminist consciousness (which, she asserts, are “fundamentally incompatible with each other”), first-phase “liberal feminism” is fundamentally concerned with “demonstrating that women are as fully human as men.”²⁸

In the second phase of what can be recognized as a feminist history of consciousness, the literary critic Showalter argues that women stopped trying to equal the achievement of men. Under second phase feminism, women “reject the accommodating postures” of the first “feminine” phase, and instead engage, criticize, and write “literature” in order to “dramatize wronged womanhood.”²⁹ Eisenstein puts it this way: a second “assumption about difference evolved” out of the

first, “specifically that women’s lives WERE different from men’s,” and that “it was precisely this difference that required illumination.”³⁰ So too, in Greene and Kahn’s view, did feminist scholars turn away from first-phase feminism’s “traditional paradigm.” Second-phase feminism, they believed, encourages scholars to extend “their inquiries to the majority of women unaccounted for by traditional historiography.” In search of “the actual *experiences* of women in the past,” second-phase scholars ask questions about the specifics of women’s daily lives, about its “quality,” about “the conditions in which they lived and worked, the ages at which they married and bore children; about their work, their role in the family, their class and relations to other women; their perception of their place in the world; their relation to wars and revolutions.”³¹ It was in such specificities, Greene and Kahn assert, that the realities comprising women’s lives, and not men’s, would be revealed. Jaggard too argues for the recognition of second-phase feminism, describing it as the moment when feminists turn to Marxism as the way to undermine the feminism of the liberal first phase. Rather than integration or assimilation, second-phase feminists want to restructure the old society, she writes, so that it becomes incapable of subordinating the differences that the class of women represent.³²

In the third, “female,” and final phase for Showalter, “the movement rejected both earlier stages as forms of dependency” on masculinist culture, and instead turned “toward female experience as a source of a new, autonomous art.”³³ According to Eisenstein, it is in this third phase that women seek to uncover the unique expression of the essence of woman that lies beneath the multiplicity of all her experiences. Eisenstein asserts that “female differences originally seen as a source of *oppression* appear as a source of enrichment.” Third-phase feminism is thus “woman-centered,” a phase within which maleness — not femaleness — becomes “the difference” that matters.³⁴ In this phase, she concludes, it is men, not women, who become “the Other.” Greene and Kahn argue for a comparable third-phase feminism within which “some historians of women posit the existence of a separate woman’s culture, even going so far as to suggest that women and men within the same society may have different experiences of the universe.”³⁵ Jaggard’s typology characterizes her third-phase feminism as an “unmistakably twentieth-century phenomenon”: it is the first approach to conceptualizing human nature, social reality, and politics “to take the subordination of women as its central concern.” Her version of third-phase feminism contends that “women naturally know much of which men are ignorant,” and takes as “one of its main tasks . . . to explain why this is so.” In the women’s movement, Jaggard points out, third-phase feminism was actualized under the names of either “cultural” or “radical” feminisms.³⁶

These three different forms of feminist practice, the “liberal,” the “Marxist,” and the “cultural” forms, construct different modes of oppositional aesthetics, identity, and politics. But are these forms of oppositional consciousness and praxis “fundamentally incompatible with one another,” as Jaggar asserts? And what makes these forms of consciousness necessarily “feminist” in nature? Can they not also be understood as the forms of oppositional consciousness that come into operation whenever any social movement begins to coalesce? The answers that the differential praxis of 1970s–1980s U.S. third world feminism provided to these questions fundamentally transformed not just our understandings of feminist theory and practice, but our understandings of social movements and consciousness in resistance under neocolonizing postmodern global conditions.

Throughout what can now be clearly viewed as a three-phase feminist history of consciousness, as white feminist Lydia Sargent comments in her 1981 collection of essays *Women and Revolution*, “racism, while part of the discussion, was never successfully integrated into feminist theory and practice.” This resulted in powerful protests by feminists of color at each phase of what became exclusionary, yet oppositional, feminist practices. U.S. feminists of color, writes Sargent, stood against what they understood to be “the racism (and classism) implicit in a white feminist movement, theory and practice.”³⁷ But the movement’s inability to reconcile in any meaningful way the challenges lodged by U.S. feminists of color indicated a structural deficiency within feminist praxis, and this prompted activists and scholars to agitate for a fourth, final, and “antiracist” phase they defined as “socialist feminism.”

Socialist feminism became the added-on phase of a hegemonically constructed four-category taxonomy of feminist consciousness, the unachieved category of possibility wherein the differences represented by race and class could be (simply) accounted for. In Eisenstein’s typology, because it is above all a chronology, the differences represented by U.S. feminists of color become visible only at this last stage. In the eighties, as the women’s movement “grew more diverse,” it “became ‘forced’ (presumably by U.S. feminists of color, though she does not say) “to confront and to debate issues of difference—most notably those of race and class.”³⁸ In this regard, Jaggar’s book has much to say. She typifies first-phase “liberal feminism” as “tending to ignore or minimize” racial and other “difficult” differences, second-phase “Marxist feminism” as tending to recognize only differences of class, and third-phase “radical feminism” as tending to “recognize only differences of age and sex, to understand these in universal terms, and often to view them as biologically determined.” But fourth-phase “socialist feminism,” she hopes, will be

capable of recognizing differences among women “as constituent parts of contemporary human nature.” For Jaggar, this means that the “central project of socialist feminism” must be “the development of a political theory and practice that will synthesize the best insights” of second- and third-phase feminisms, those of the “Marxist and radical traditions,” while escaping the “problems associated with each.”³⁹

Socialist-feminist theorist Cora Kaplan agrees with Jaggar, indicting the earlier three forms of feminism (the liberal, Marxist, and cultural forms) for failing to incorporate an analysis of power beyond gender relations in their rationality. Such limited comprehensions of gender, insofar as they seek a unified female subject, she argues, construct a “fictional landscape.” Whether this landscape is then examined from liberal, Marxist, cultural, psychoanalytic, semiotic, or some other feminist perspective, “the other structuring relations of society fade and disappear,” leaving us with the “naked drama of sexual difference as the only scenario that matters.” According to Kaplan, socialist feminism will become transformative and liberatory when it “comes to grips with the relationship between female subjectivity and class identity.”⁴⁰ Socialist feminism has not yet developed a theory and method capable of achieving this goal, however, or of coming to terms with race, culture, nation, class, or even sex or gender differences between female subjects. Although Jaggar continues to claim socialist feminism as “the most comprehensive” of feminist theories, she allows that socialist feminism has made only “limited progress” toward these goals. For her, socialist feminism remains only the “*commitment* to the development” of such “an analysis and political practice,” rather than a theory and practice “which already exists.”⁴¹ She admits that insofar as socialist feminism stubbornly “fails to theorize the experiences of women of color, it cannot be accepted as complete” (11). Yet she asserts that “socialist feminism” remains the “ultimate” and “most appropriate interpretation of what it is for a theory to be impartial, objective, comprehensive, verifiable and useful” (9).

We have just charted our way through a ubiquitously cited four-phase feminist history of consciousness, a cognitive map consisting of “liberal,” “Marxist,” “radical/cultural,” and “socialist” feminisms. We can schematize these phases as “women are the same as men,” “women are different from men,” “women are superior,” and the fourth catchall category, “women are a racially divided class.” The presumption of theorists throughout their analyses was that each of these political positions contradict one another. We shall see that this shared comprehension of feminist consciousness is unified, framed, and buttressed with the result that the expression of a unique form of U.S. third world feminism became invisible outside its all-knowing logic. Jaggar’s contribution illustrates the problematic effect

brought about by this hegemonic structure when she claims that a specific U.S. third world feminist theory, method, and criticism “does not exist.” This dismissal is based on her understanding of the written works produced by feminists of color during the 1970s and 1980s (authors such as Paula Gunn Allen, Audre Lorde, Nellie Wong, Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, Toni Morrison, Mitsuye Yamada, bell hooks, the third world contributors to *Sisterhood Is Powerful*, or the contributors to *This Bridge Called My Back*), which, she claims, operate “mainly at the level of description.” Those that *are* theoretical, she continues, have yet to contribute to any “unique or distinctive and comprehensive theory of women’s liberation” (ibid.). Jaggar’s four categories subsume the expressions of U.S. third world feminism into either the “liberal,” “Marxist,” cultural,” or “socialist”-feminist categories. She warns her readers not to assume that U.S. third world feminism has been “omitted” from her book—it has only been included within one of the dominant “four genera” of feminist consciousness outlined above. The differential form of U.S. third world feminism, however, functioned just outside the rationality of Jaggar’s four-phase hegemonic structure. But to recognize the differential would require of Jaggar, and of hegemonic feminism, a distinctive shift in paradigm.⁴²

Throughout the 1980s, U.S. third world feminism was sublimated, both denied and spoken about incessantly. Or, as African-American literary critic Sheila Radford-Hill put it in 1986, the fifth, outsider form of U.S. third world feminism was “used” within hegemonic feminism as a “rhetorical platform” from which “white feminist scholars” could “launch arguments for or against” the same four basic configurations of hegemonic feminism.⁴³ It is thus not surprising to find that the activist writings produced by women of color theorists between 1968 and 1990 are laced with bitterness; for, according to bell hooks in 1984, the stubborn sublimation of U.S. third world feminist thought was understood as linked to “racist exclusionary practices” that made it “practically impossible” for new feminist paradigms to emerge. Although, she wrote, “feminist theory is the guiding set of beliefs and principles that become the basis for action,” the development of feminist theory has become a task permitted only within the “hegemonic dominance” and approval “of white academic women.”⁴⁴ One year later, Gayatri Spivak stated that “the emergent perspective” of “hegemonic feminist criticism” tenaciously reproduces “the axioms of imperialism.” Although hegemonic feminism has produced enlightening and liberating spaces, these spaces coalesce into what Spivak characterized as a “high feminist norm.” This norm reinforces the “basically isolationist” and narcissistic “admiration” of hegemonic critical thinkers “for the literature of the female subject

in Europe and Anglo America,” as if such fascination can lead to liberation.⁴⁵ Under the strain of these kinds of ideological divisions, the 1980s women’s movement buckled from within.

During the 1968–90 period, the four-phase hegemonic typology just outlined was commonly utilized and cited (self-consciously or not) by social theorists across disciplines as the way to understand oppositional praxis. But this conceptual model, this typology for organizing history, identity, criticism, and theory, is useful for oppositional actors only insofar as it is understood as the mental map of a given time and place, in this case, the cultural territory that U.S. feminists of color ironically renamed the “white women’s movement.” From the perspective of a differential U.S. third world feminist criticism, this four-category structure of consciousness interlocked into a symbolic container that had its own political purposes—both hoped for and achieved—but that also set limits on how feminist consciousness could be conceptualized and enacted. Its four-phase structure obstructed what could be perceived and even imagined by agents thinking within its constraints. What must be remembered is that each position in this typology is an imaginary space that, when understood and enacted as if self-contained and oppositional to one another, rigidly circumscribes what is possible for social activists who want to work across their boundaries. Movement activists became trapped within the rationality of its structure, which sublimated and dispersed the specificity of a differential U.S. third world feminist theory, method, and practice.

Despite the fundamental shift in political objectives and critical methods represented by feminist and other social movements, there remained in their articulations a traditional reliance on what can be recognized as previous and *modernist* modes of understanding and enacting oppositional forms of consciousness. But the recognition of U.S. third world feminism demanded that activists and scholars extend their critical and political objectives further. During the 1970s, U.S. feminists of color identified common grounds on which to make coalitions across their own profound cultural, racial, class, sex, gender, and power differences. The insights gained during this period reinforced a common culture across difference comprised of the skills, values, and ethics generated by a subordinated citizenry compelled to live within similar realms of marginality. This common border culture was reidentified and claimed by a particular cohort of U.S. feminists of color who came to recognize one another as countrywomen—and men—of the same psychic terrain. The theory and method of differential U.S. third world feminism they de-

veloped is what permitted the reengagement with hegemonic feminism that follows—on its own terms—and beyond them.

The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World

The following alternative typology was generated from the insights born of oppositional activity that occurred beyond the inclusive scope of the 1970s–80s women’s movement. The form of U.S. third world feminism it represents and describes was influenced not only by struggles against gender domination, but by the struggles against race, sex, national, economic, cultural, and social hierarchies that marked the twentieth century. It is a mapping of consciousness organized in opposition to the dominant social order that charts the feminist histories of consciousness I have just surveyed, while also making visible the different grounds from which a specific U.S. third world feminism advanced. This new typology is not necessarily “feminist” in nature. Rather, it comprises a *history of oppositional consciousness*.

This new cartography is best thought of not as a *typology*, but as a *topography* of consciousness in opposition, from the Greek word *topos* or place, for it represents the charting of psychic and material realities that occupy a particular cultural region. This *cultural topography* delineates a set of critical points within which individuals and groups seeking to transform dominant and oppressive powers can constitute themselves as resistant and oppositional citizen-subjects. These points are orientations deployed by those subordinated classes who seek subjective forms of resistance other than those determined by the social order itself. These orientations can be thought of as repositories within which subjugated citizens can either occupy or throw off subjectivities in a process that at once enacts and decolonizes their various relations to their real conditions of existence. This kind of kinetic and self-conscious mobility of consciousness was utilized by U.S. third world feminists when they identified oppositional subject positions and enacted them *differentially*.

What hegemonic feminist theory was identifying over and over again, and from across disciplines, were only feminist versions of four forms of consciousness that appear to have been most effective in opposition to modernist modes of capitalist production insofar as these same four responses appear again and again across social movement theory and action of every type. But, as Jameson points out, under postmodern transnationalization new forms of resistance and opposition must be recognized. Hegemonic feminist scholarship was unable to identify the connections between its own understandings and translations of resistance, and the expressions of consciousness in opposition enacted among other racial, ethnic, sex, cul-

tural, or national liberation movements. Doing so would have required a paradigm shift capable of transforming all notions of resistance and opposition, and not only within feminist social movements, but across all social movement boundaries.

All social orders hierarchically organized into relations of domination and subordination create particular subject positions within which the subordinated can legitimately function. These subject positions, once self-consciously recognized by their inhabitants, can become transfigured into effective sites of resistance to an oppressive ordering of power relations. From the perspective of a differential U.S. third world feminism, the modes of consciousness identified by U.S. hegemonic feminist theorists were viewed as examples of subordinated consciousness in opposition, but they were not viewed as particularly *feminist* in function. In order to transfigure subordination into resistance, and to make the differential visible as a critical apparatus not only within U.S. feminist theory but within the fields of critical and cultural studies in general, a new topography was necessary that would be capable of mapping the ideological spaces wherein oppositional activity in the United States has taken place (a cognitive mapping, if you will). The mapping that follows identifies the modes that the subordinated of the United States (of any sex, gender, race, or class constituency) have claimed as the positions that resist domination. Unlike its previous and modernist hegemonic version, however, this alternative topography of consciousness and action is not historically or teleologically organized; no enactment is privileged over any other; and the recognition that each site is as potentially effective in opposition as any other makes visible the differential mode of consciousness-in-resistance that was developed within a particular school of U.S. third world feminism since the 1960s and that is a particularly effective form of resistance under global late-capitalist and postmodern cultural conditions.

The following five-location topography of consciousness demonstrates hegemonic feminist political strategies to be expressions of the forms of oppositional consciousness that were utilized also by profoundly varying subordinated constituencies under earlier modes of capitalist production. The addition of the fifth and differential mode of oppositional consciousness to these has a mobile, retroactive, and transformative effect on the previous four, setting them all into diverse processual relationships. The cultural topography that follows thus compasses the perimeters for a theory and method of consciousness-in-opposition that can gather up the modes of ideology-praxis represented within previous liberation movements into a fifth, differential, and postmodern paradigm. This paradigm makes clear the vital connections that exist between feminist theory in general and other theoretical and practical modes concerned with issues of social hierarchy, marginality, and dis-

sident globalization. Because this is a topography, it is perhaps best represented if visually demonstrated, for it maps transiting relationships set in motion by the fifth, differential form. For analytic purposes, I describe its locations categorically here as the “equal rights,” “revolutionary,” “supremacist,” “separatist,” and “differential” forms of consciousness-in-opposition. U.S. third world feminism, considered as an enabling theory and method of differential consciousness, thus brings the following five ideological forms into view:

The Equal-Rights Form

Within the first equal-rights enactment of consciousness-in-opposition, the members of the subordinated group argue that the differences for which they have been assigned inferior status lay in appearance only, not in “reality.” Behind what they maintain are only *exterior* physical differences from the most legitimated form of the human-in-society is a content, an essence that is the same as the essence of the human-in-power. These oppositional actors argue for civil rights based on the philosophy that all humans are created equally. Practitioners of this particular ideological tactic demand that their humanity be legitimated, recognized as the same under the law, and assimilated into the most favored form of the human-in-power. Aesthetically, the equal-rights mode of consciousness seeks duplication; politically, it seeks integration; psychically, it seeks assimilation. Its expression can be traced throughout U.S. liberation movements of the post–World War II era as manifest in the early National Organization for Women (NOW), the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), or the praxis of the civil rights movement as articulated by the young Martin Luther King. Hegemonic feminist theorists claimed this form of oppositional consciousness as “liberal feminism.”

The Revolutionary Form

If the previous ideology-as-tactic insists on a profound resemblance between social, cultural, racial, sexual, or gender identities across their (only) external differences, then this second ideology identifies, legitimizes, claims, and intensifies its differences—in both form *and* content—from the category of the most human. Practitioners of the revolutionary form believe that the assimilation of such myriad and acute differences is not possible within the confines of the present social order. Instead, they reason, the only way that society can affirm, value, and legitimate these differences will be if the categories by which the dominant is ordered are fundamentally restructured. The aim of such radical transformation is to lead society toward the goal of functioning beyond all domination/subordination power

axes. This revolutionary mode of oppositional consciousness was enacted within social movement groups across every difference, including the Black Panther Party, the American Indian Movement, the Brown Berets, as well as in the theories and practices of U.S. Marxist and socialist feminisms.

The Supremacist Form

Under “supremacism” the oppressed not only *claim* their differences, but they also assert that their differences have provided them access to a higher evolutionary level than that attained by those who hold social power. Whether practitioners understand their superior differences to have biological origin, or to have developed through a history of social conditioning, is of little practical concern. What matters is the consequence: the subordinated group understands itself to function at a higher state of psychic and social evolution than does its counterpart. The mission of supremacist practitioners of oppositional consciousness is to provide the social order a higher ethical and moral vision, and consequently more effective leadership. The precepts above guide any subordinated group that argues for its superiority over the dominant—from cultural and radical forms of feminism to “nationalisms” of every racial, ethnic, gender, sex, class, religious, or loyalist type.

The Separatist Form

This is the final tactic of resistance of the four most commonly mobilized under previous modes of capitalist production. As in the previous three forms, practitioners of separatism recognize that their differences are branded as inferior with respect to the category of the most human. Under this fourth mode of agency, however, the subordinated do not desire an “equal-rights” type of integration with the dominant order. Neither do they seek its “revolutionary” transformation, nor do they stake a supremacist position in relation to any other group. This form of political resistance is organized, rather, to protect and nurture the differences that define its practitioners through their complete separation from the dominant social order. The separatist mode of oppositional consciousness is beckoned by a utopian landscape that stretches from Aztlán to the Amazon Nation.

The maturation of a resistance movement means that these four ideological positions emerge in response to dominating powers. Such ideological positions become more and more clearly articulated, to eventually divide the movement of resistance from within; for each of these four sites generates its own sets of tactics, strategies, and identity politics that have appeared, as Jaggar asserts in the example of hegemonic feminism, as “mutually exclusive” under previous and mod-

ernist understandings of resistance. The differential practice of U.S. third world feminism undermines this appearance of the mutual exclusivity of oppositional practices of consciousness and social movement, however, and allows their re-cognition on new terms.

The Differential Form of Consciousness and Social Movement

U.S. feminists of color, insofar as they involved themselves with the 1970s white women's liberation movement, also enacted one or more of the four ideological positionings just outlined—but rarely for long, and rarely adopting the kind of fervid belief systems and identity politics that tend to accompany their construction. This unusual affiliation with the women's movement was variously interpreted as disloyalty, betrayal, absence, or lack: “When they *were* there, they were rarely there for long” went the usual complaint. Or, “they seem to shift from one type of women's group to another, and another.” They were the mobile (yet ever-present in their “absence”) members of this, as well as of other race, class, and sex liberation movements. It is precisely the significance of this mobility that most inventories of oppositional ideology and agency do not register.⁴⁶

It is in the activity of what Anzaldúa calls weaving “between and among” oppositional ideologies as conceived in this new topographical space, where another and the fifth mode of oppositional consciousness and activity is found.⁴⁷ I think of this activity of consciousness as the “differential,” insofar as it enables movement “between and among” ideological positionings (the equal-rights, revolutionary, supremacist, and separatist modes of oppositional consciousness) considered as variables, in order to disclose the distinctions among them. In this sense, the differential mode of consciousness functions like the clutch of an automobile, the mechanism that permits the driver to select, engage, and disengage gears in a system for the transmission of power. The differential represents the variant; its presence emerges out of correlations, intensities, junctures, crises. Yet the differential depends on a form of agency that is self-consciously mobilized in order to enlist and secure influence; the differential is thus performative. For analytic purposes, I place differential consciousness in the fifth position, even though it functions as the medium through which the equal-rights, revolutionary, supremacist, and separatist modes of oppositional consciousness became effectively converted, lifted out of their earlier, modernist, and hegemonic activity. When enacted in dialectical relation to one another and not as separated ideologies, each oppositional mode of consciousness, each ideology-praxis, is transformed into tactical weaponry for intervening in shifting currents of power.

These differences between a processual and differential five-location *topography* of consciousness-in-opposition and the previous four-category *typology* of hegemonic feminism became available for analysis through U.S. third world feminist theory and practice. The 1970s–80s social movement called U.S. third world feminism functioned as a central locus of possibility, an insurgent social movement that shattered the construction of any one ideology as the single most correct site where truth can be represented. Indeed, without making this kind of metamove, any “liberation” or social movement eventually becomes destined to repeat the oppressive authoritarianism from which it is attempting to free itself, and become trapped inside a drive for truth that ends only in producing its own brand of dominations. What U.S. third world feminism thus demanded was a new subjectivity, a political revision that denied any one ideology as the final answer, while instead positing a *tactical subjectivity* with the capacity to de- and recenter, given the forms of power to be moved. These dynamics are what were required in the shift from enacting a hegemonic oppositional theory and practice to engaging in the differential form of social movement, as performed by U.S. feminists of color during the post–World War II period of great social transformation.

In 1985, Chicana theorist Aida Hurtado identified U.S. third world feminism as a differential form of social movement in these terms: “by the time women of color reach adulthood, we have developed informal political skills to deal with State intervention. The political skills required by women of color are neither the political skills of the White power structure that White liberal feminists have adopted nor the free-spirited experimentation followed by the radical feminists.” Rather, she continues, “women of color are more like urban guerrillas trained through everyday battle with the state apparatus.” As such, Hurtado asserts, “women of color’s fighting capabilities are often neither understood by white middle-class feminists” nor leftist activists and at the time of her writing, “these fighting capabilities are not codified anywhere for them to learn.”⁴⁸ In 1981 Cherríe Moraga defined U.S. third world feminist “guerrilla warfare” as a “way of life,” a means and method for survival. “Our strategy is how we cope” on an everyday basis, she wrote, “how we measure and weigh what is to be said and when, what is to be done and how, and to whom . . . daily deciding/risking who it is we can call an ally, call a friend (whatever that person’s skin, sex, or sexuality).” Moraga defines feminists of color as “women without a line. We are women who contradict each other.” This radical form of U.S. third world feminism functions “between the seemingly irreconcilable lines — class lines, politically correct lines, the daily lines we run to each other to keep difference and

desire at a distance.” She interpellates a constituency of “U.S. third world feminists and their allies” when she writes that it is *between* such lines that “the truth of our connection lies.”⁴⁹

That same year, Anzaldúa described the “truth of this connection” as one linking women who do not share the same culture, language, race, sexual orientation, or ideology, “nor do we derive similar solutions” to the problems of oppression. But when the differential form of U.S. third world feminism is deployed, these “differences do not become opposed to each other.”⁵⁰ Instead, says Audre Lorde, each and every difference, all tactical positionings are recognized as “a fund of necessary polarities between which our creativities spark like a dialectic. Only within that interdependency,” each ideological position “acknowledged and equal, can the power to seek new ways of being in the world generate,” along with “the courage and sustenance to act where there are no charters.”⁵¹ The “truth” of differential social movement is composed of manifold positions for truth: these positions are ideological stands that are viewed as potential tactics drawn from a never-ending interventional fund, the contents of which remobilizes power. Differential consciousness and social movement thus are linked to the necessity to stake out and hold solid identity and political positions in the social world.

The differential mode of social movement and consciousness depends on the practitioner’s ability to read the current situation of power and self-consciously choosing and adopting the ideological stand best suited to push against its configurations, a survival skill well known to oppressed peoples.⁵² Differential consciousness requires grace, flexibility, and strength: enough strength to confidently commit to a well-defined structure of identity for one hour, day, week, month, year; enough flexibility to self-consciously transform that identity according to the requisites of another oppositional ideological tactic if readings of power’s formation require it; enough grace to recognize alliance with others committed to egalitarian social relations and race, gender, sex, class, and social justice, when these other readings of power call for alternative oppositional stands. Within the realm of differential social movement, ideological differences and their oppositional forms of consciousness, unlike their incarnations under hegemonic feminist comprehension, are understood as tactics — not as strategies.

This theoretical and methodological design was developed, utilized, and represented by U.S. feminists of color because, as Native American theorist Paula Gunn Allen put it in 1981, so much was taken away that “the place we live now is an idea” — and in this place new forms of identity, theory, practice, and community became imaginable. In 1987, Gloria Anzaldúa specified that the prac-

tice of a radical U.S. third world feminism requires the development of a differential consciousness that can be both applied and generalized: “*la conciencia de la mestiza*.” This is the consciousness of the “mixed blood,” she writes, born of life lived in the “crossroads” between races, nations, languages, genders, sexualities, and cultures, an acquired subjectivity formed out of transformation and relocation, movement guided by *la facultad*, the learned capacity to read, renovate, and make signs on behalf of the dispossessed. So too the philosopher Maria Lugones claims that the theory and method of U.S. third world feminism requires of its practitioners nomadic and determined “travel” across “worlds of meaning.” African-American feminist theorist Patricia Hill Collins describes the skills developed by U.S. feminists of color who, through exclusion from male-controlled race liberation movements and from white-controlled female liberation movements, were forced to internalize an “outsider/within” identity that guides movement of being *according to an ethical commitment* to equalize power between social constituencies. And Gayatri Spivak suggests “shuttling” between meaning systems in order to enact a “strategic essentialism” necessary for intervening in power on behalf of the marginalized. This, in order to practice the political method Alice Walker names “womanism”:⁵³ the political hermeneutic for constructing “love” in the postmodern world.⁵⁴

It is now easier to comprehend the utopian element insinuated throughout 1970s and 1980s writings by U.S. feminists of color, as in this address by African-American literary critic Barbara Christian: “The struggle is not won. Our vision is still seen, even by many progressives, as secondary, our words trivialized as minority issues,” our oppositional stances “characterized by others as divisive. But there is a deep *philosophical* reordering that is occurring” among us “that is already having its effects on so many of us whose lives and expressions are an increasing revelation of the INTIMATE face of universal struggle.”⁵⁵ This “philosophical reordering,” referred to by Christian, the “different strategy, a different foundation” identified by hooks, can be recognized as, in the words of Audre Lorde, a “whole *other* structure of opposition that touches every aspect of our existence at the same time that we are resisting.” Recognizing this fundamentally different paradigm for engaging in social movement would, according to Barbara Smith, “alter life as we know it.”⁵⁶ In 1981, Merle Woo asserted U.S. third world feminism as a new paradigm. She described it as an edifice of resistance that does not “support repression, hatred, exploitation and isolation,” but which is a “human and beautiful framework,” “created in a community, bonded not by color, sex or class, but by love and the common goal for the liberation of mind, heart, and spirit.”⁵⁷ It was the differential mode of oppositional consciousness that inspired and enabled this utopian

language throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s among U.S. feminists of color across their own boundaries of race, culture, ethnicity, class, and sexual differences.

Differential Coalitional Consciousness: The End of Domination

In 1991, East Indian feminist theorist Chandra Talpade Mohanty reminded feminists of color that it is not enough to be “a woman,” “poor,” “Black or Latino” to “assume a politicized oppositional identity.” What is required, as Fredric Jameson has insisted, is a specific methodology that can be used as a compass for self-consciously organizing resistance, identity, praxis, and coalition under contemporary U.S., late-capitalist cultural conditions.⁵⁸ Differential consciousness and social movement comprise the radical form of cognitive mapping that Jameson seeks. This theory and method understands oppositional forms of consciousness, aesthetics, and politics as organized around the following five points of resistance to U.S. social hierarchy: (1) the equal-rights (“liberal,” and/or “integrationist”) mode; (2) the revolutionary (“socialist” and/or “insurgent”) mode; (3) the supremacist (or “cultural-nationalist”) mode; (4) the separatist mode; and (5) the differential (or “womanist,” “*mestiza*,” “Sister Outsider,” “third force,” U.S. third world feminist...it has generated many names) mode of oppositional consciousness and social movement. It was this last, differential mode that enabled a specific cohort of U.S. feminists of color to understand and utilize the previous four, not as overriding strategies, but as *tactics* for intervening in and transforming social relations.⁵⁹ Viewed under the auspices of U.S. third world feminism understood as a differential practice, the first four modes are performed, however seriously, only as forms of “tactical essentialism.” The differential praxis understands, wields, and deploys each mode of resistant ideology as if it represents only another potential *technology of power*. The cruising mobilities required in this effort demand of the differential practitioner commitment to the process of metamorphosis itself: this is the activity of the trickster who practices subjectivity as masquerade, the oppositional agent who accesses differing identity, ideological, aesthetic, and political positions. This nomadic “morphing” is not performed only for survival’s sake, as in earlier, modernist times. It is a set of *principled conversions* that requires (guided) movement, a directed but also a diasporic migration in both consciousness and politics, performed to ensure that ethical commitment to egalitarian social relations be enacted in the everyday, political sphere of culture. As we shall see in the chapters to follow, this ethical principle guides the deployment of all technologies of power that are utilized by the differential practitioner of a theory and method of oppositional consciousness.

Early in this chapter I suggested that Althusser's 1969 notes toward a "science" of ideology could fruitfully be extended into a theory and method of oppositional consciousness in the postmodern world. Such a theory and method are composed of recognizing the structures around which consciousness disperses and gathers in its attempts to challenge social powers. The equal-rights, revolutionary, supremacist, and separatist forms of consciousness in opposition are made visible and more useful under the kaleidoscopic activity of the differential mode of consciousness in opposition. Differential consciousness recognizes and works upon other modes of consciousness in opposition to transfigure their meanings: they convert into repositories within which subjugated citizens either occupy or throw off subjectivity, a process that simultaneously enacts yet decolonizes their various relations to their real conditions of existence. This dialectical modulation between forms of consciousness permits functioning within, yet beyond, the demands of dominant ideology: the practitioner breaks with ideology while also speaking in and from within ideology. The differential form of oppositional consciousness thus is composed of narrative worked self-consciously. Its processes generate the other story—the counterpoise. Its true mode is nonnarrative: narrative is viewed as only a means to an end—the end of domination.

A differential oppositional consciousness recognizes and identifies oppositional expressions of power as consensual illusions. When resistance is organized as equal-rights, revolutionary, supremacist, or separatist in function, a differential form of criticism would understand such mechanisms for power as transformable social narratives that are designed to intervene in reality for the sake of social justice. The differential maneuvering required here is a sleight of consciousness that activates a new space: a *cyberspace*, where the transcultural, transgendered, transsexual, transnational leaps necessary to the play of effective stratagems of oppositional praxis can begin.⁶⁰ I have stated that the differential mode of resistance represents a new form of historical consciousness, and this is the case on both diachronic and synchronic levels. It is itself the product of recent decolonizing historical events and produces an ever-new historical moment out of the materials of ideology at hand.⁶¹

Differential praxis was utilized by an irreverent cadre of feminists of color within seventies and eighties U.S. women's movements.⁶² In acknowledging this praxis, a space was carved for hegemonic feminism to become aligned with other spheres of theoretical and practical activity that are also concerned with issues of marginality. Adjustments thus have occurred within feminist theory that

have recalibrated its dimensions and gauge. Donna Haraway's manifestos and manuals for a "situated subjectivity" and a "cyborg feminism" wherein the category of women "disappears," Teresa de Lauretis's contributions that extend fundamental feminist tenets into "eccentric" and differential forms, and Judith Butler's theorization of "performativity" all transcode and extend the bases and principles of 1968–90 U.S. third world feminist praxis. Today, the differential remains an extreme juncture. It is a location wherein the aims of feminism, race, ethnicity, sex, and marginality studies, and historical, aesthetic, and global studies can crosscut and join together in new relations through the recognition of a shared theory and method of oppositional consciousness. The differential occurs when the affinities inside of difference attract, combine, and relate new constituencies into coalitions of resistance. The possibilities of this coalitional consciousness were once bypassed when they were perceived as already staked and claimed by differing race, gender, sex, class, or cultural subgroups. But global transcultural coalitions for egalitarian social justice can only take place through the recognition and practice of this form of resistance that renegotiates technologies of power through an ethically guided, skilled, and differential deployment.

are allocated via diverse structures, practices and discourses, and that every human body is subject to these new power relations. See Santiago Colas, "The Third World in Jameson's *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*," *Social Text* 31/32 (1989): 258–70; and Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico*, trans. Lysander Kemp (New York: Grove Press, 1962).

2. U.S. Third World Feminism

1. The phrases "third world" and "first world" are not capitalized in my writings as in older uses of such designations. This is because these terms are so frayed around the edges that they can no longer "mean" in the geographic and economic ways they were used in previous academic thinking. In this chapter, "U.S. third world feminism" refers to a deliberate politics organized to point out the so-called third world *in* the first world. The very effort of this 1970s naming by U.S. feminists of color was meant to signal a *conflagration* of geographic, economic, and cultural borders in the interests of creating a new feminist and internationalist consciousness and *location*: not just the third world *in* the first world, but a new global consciousness and terrain that challenges the distinctions of nation-state. This usage also prepared the way for the contemporary phase of U.S. feminist of color politics that is called "third *space* feminism." For other examples of similar uncanceled usages of "first," "second," and "third" worlds, see the essays in Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi, eds., *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1998). For the most recent example of third space feminism, see Emma Pérez, *The De-Colonial Imaginary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

The theory and method of oppositional consciousness outlined in this chapter became visible in the activities of a political unity variously named "U.S. third world feminism," "womanism," or "the practices of U.S. feminist women of color." In this chapter, U.S. third world feminism represents the political alliance made during the 1960s and 1970s between a generation of feminists of color who were separated by culture, race, class, sex, or gender identifications but who became allied through their similar positionings in relation to race, gender, sex, and culture subordinations. Their newfound unity coalesced across these and other differences. These differences nevertheless were painfully manifest in any of their gatherings: materially marked physiologically or in language, socially value-laden, and shot through with power. Such differences confronted feminists of color at every gathering, constant reminders of their undeniability. These constantly speaking differences became the crux of another, mutant unity. This unity did not occur in the name of all "women," nor in the name of race, class, sex, culture, or "humanity" in general, but in a location heretofore unrecognized. As

Cherríe Moraga put it in 1981, alliances between U.S. feminists of color occurred "between the seemingly irreconcilable lines—class lines, politically correct lines, the daily lines we run to each other to keep difference and desire at a distance"; it is *between* such lines, she wrote, "that the truth of our connection lies." This political connection constantly weaves and reweaves an interaction of differences into coalition. This chapter demonstrates how differences within this coalition became understood and utilized as political tactics constructed in response to dominating powers. See Cherríe Moraga, "Between the Lines: On Culture, Class and Homophobia," in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, ed. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1981), p. 106. For excellent histories of U.S. women of color in struggle, see Antonia I. Casteñeda's prizewinning essay "Women of Color and the Rewriting of Western History: The Discourse, Politics, and Decolonization of History," *Pacific Historical Review* 61 (November 1992); Asian Women United of California, ed., *Making Waves: An Anthology of Writings by and about Asian Women* (Boston, 1989); Paula Giddings, *Where and When I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (Toronto, 1984); Ellen Dubois and Vicki Ruiz, eds., *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History* (New York, 1990); Gretchen Bataile and Kathleen Mullen Sands, eds., *American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1984); Rayna Green, ed., *Native American Women* (New York, 1985); Paula Gunn Allen, ed., *Spider Woman's Granddaughters* (New York, 1989); Albert Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New York 1989); Tsuchida, ed., *Asian and Pacific American Experiences* (San Francisco, 1989); Toni Cade Bambara, "Preface," in *This Bridge Called My Back*; Angela Davis, *Women, Race and Class* (New York: Random House, 1983 [1st ed.]); and Bettina Aptheker, *Tapestries of Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989). Other foundational U.S. third world feminist writings include Toni Cade Bambara, ed., *The Black Woman: An Anthology* (1970); Velia Hancock, *Chicano Studies Newsletter* (1971); Frances Beale, *Third World Women* (1971); Toni Morrison, *Sula* (1975); Janice Mirikitani, ed., *Third World Women* (1973); Shirley Hill Witt, "Native Women Today: Sexism and the Indian Woman," *Civil Rights Digest* 6 (spring 1974); Janice Mirikitani, *Time to Greez! Incantations from the Third World* (1975); Anna Nieto-Gomez, "Sexism in the *Movimiento*," *La Gente* 6:4 (1976); Jane Katz, *I Am the Fire of Time—Voices of Native American Women* (1977); Dexter Fisher, ed., *The Third Woman: Minority Women Writers of the United States* (1980); Norma Alarcón, ed., *Journal of the Third Woman* (1980–); Moraga and Anzaldúa, eds., *This Bridge Called My Back* (1981); Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider* (1984); bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman* (1981); Cherríe Moraga and Amber Hollibaugh, "What

We're Rollin' around in Bed With," *Heresies* (1981); Paula Gunn Allen, "Beloved Women: The Lesbian in American Indian Culture," *Conditions* 7 (1981); Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, eds., *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies* (1982); Audre Lorde, *Zami* (1982); Cherríe Moraga, *Loving in the War Years* (1983); Bernice Johnson Reagon, "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century," in Barbara Smith, ed., *Home Girls* (1983); Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987); Beth Brant, ed., *A Gathering of Spirit: A Collection by North American Indian Women* (1988); Aida Hurtado, "Reflections on White Feminism: A Perspective from a Woman of Color," unpublished manuscript (1985); Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman/Native/Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (1989); Gloria Anzaldúa, ed., *Making Face, Making Soul/Haciendo Caras* (1990).

The definition of "U.S. third world feminism" appears in the *Oxford Companion to Women's Writing in the United States*, ed. Cathy Davidson and Linda Wagner-Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 880–82. For an excellent discussion and analysis of this definition, see Katie King, *Theory in Its Feminist Travels: Conversations in U.S. Women's Movements* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). The most cited examples of U.S. feminists of color arguing for a specific method called "U.S. third world feminism" can be found in Moraga and Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back*. See also Chandra Talpade Mohanty's renowned collection and her essay "Cartographies of Struggle: Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism," in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, ed. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Anne Russo and Lourdes Torres (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991). See also Chela Sandoval, "Comment on Susan Krieger's 'Lesbian Identity and Community,'" *Signs* (spring 1983): 324.

During the infamous conference of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) in 1981, three hundred feminists of color agreed that: "1) It is white men who have access to the greatest amount of freedom from necessity in this culture, 2) white women who serve as their 'helpmates' and chattel, with people of color as their women's servants. 3) People of color form a striated social formation that allows men of color to call upon the circuits of power which charge the category of (white) 'male' with its privileges 4) which leaves women of color as the final chattel, the ultimate servant in a racist and sexist class hierarchy. U.S. third world feminism seeks to undo this hierarchy first by reconceptualizing the first category (of 'freedom') and who can inhabit its realm." See Chela Sandoval, "The Struggle Within: A Report on the 1981 N.W.S.A. Conference," published by the Center for Third World Organizing, 1982; reprinted by Gloria Anzaldúa, ed., in *Making Face, Making Soul/Haciendo Caras* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1990), pp. 55–71.

2. Gayatri Spivak, "The Rani of Sirmur," in *Europe and Its Others*, ed. F. Barker, vol. 1 (Essex: University of Essex Press, 1985), p. 147.

3. The most well circulated example of the writings of U.S. third world feminists is found in the 1981 collection *This Bridge Called My Back*, but many other articles were published during the previous decade. See note 1 and the bibliography.

4. The factors that permit this subjectivity and political practice to be called into being and the explanations for how one lives out its imperatives are laid out in Part III of this book.

5. Fredric Jameson's "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review* 146 (July–August 1984): 53–92, defines and positions postmodernism as neocolonial (imperialist) in function, as I argued in chapter 1.

6. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London: New Left Books, 1970), pp. 123–73.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

8. In the essay "Uneffective Resistance," I identify the forms of consciousness encouraged within subordinated classes that are resistant (but not self-consciously in *political* opposition to the dominant order). "Resistant" forms of consciousness can be understood in Althusser's terms, that is, the repressive state apparatus and the ideological state apparatus create subordinated forms of *resistant* consciousness, as opposed to the politicized and self-conscious forms of *oppositional* consciousness described in this chapter. Resistant forms of consciousness developed by subordinated citizen-subjects seem to coalesce around the following four subject positions: (1) the "human," (2) the "pet," (3) the "game," and (4) the "wild." The value of each of these subject positions is measured by its proximity to the category of the most human: each position delimits its own kinds of freedoms, privileges, and resistances. Their final outcome, however, only supports the social order as it already functions. The rationality of this four-category schema depends on the work of the anthropologist Edmund Leach, who demonstrates through his examples of English and Tibeto-Burman language categories that human societies tend to organize individual identity according to perceived distance from the "most human" and male self and then into relations of exchange that Leach characterizes as those of the "sister," "cousin," or "stranger." He suggests that these relationships of value and distance are replicated throughout myriad cultures and serve to support and further the beliefs, aims, and traditions of whatever social order is dominant. See Edmund Leach, "Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse," in *New Directions in the Study of Language*,

ed. Eric Lenneberg (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1964), p. 62.

9. Differential consciousness is becoming recognized and theorized across academic disciplines, and under many rubrics. See, for example, *Living Chicana Theory*, ed. Carla Trujillo (Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1998), and Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipations* (London: Verso, 1996). For other examples, see note 61 in this chapter and note 10 in chapter 1.

10. Frances Beale, “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female,” in *Sisterhood Is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from the Women’s Liberation Movement*, ed. Robin Morgan (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 136; my emphasis.

11. Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman?” in *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*, ed. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar (New York: Norton, 1985), p. 252.

12. Paula Gunn Allen, “Some like Indians Endure,” in *Living the Spirit* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), p. 9.

13. Toni Morrison, in Bettye J. Parker, “Complexity: Toni Morrison’s Women—An Interview Essay,” in *Sturdy Black Bridges: Visions of Black Women in Literature*, ed. Roseanne Bell, Bettye Parker, and Beverly Guy-Sheftall (New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1979), pp. 32–43.

14. Velia Hancock, “La Chicana, Chicano Movement and Women’s Liberation,” *Chicano Studies Newsletter*, University of California, Berkeley (February–March 1971): 3–4.

15. Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, eds., *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women’s Studies* (New York: Feminist Press, 1982). The sense that people of color occupy an “in-between/outside” status is a frequent theme among third world liberationists writing both inside and outside the United States. Reverend Desmond Mpilo Tutu, on receiving the Nobel Prize, for example, said he faced a “rough passage” as intermediary between ideological factions, because he has chosen to become “detrIALIZED.” He is thus difficult to racially or culturally “locate,” he says. Rosa Maria Villafane-Sisolak, a West Indian from the Island of Saint Croix, expands on this theme: “I am from an island whose history is steeped in the abuses of Western imperialism, whose people still suffer the deformities caused by Euro-American colonialism, old and new. Unlike many third world liberationists, however, I cannot claim to be descendent of any particular strain, noble or ignoble. I am, however, ‘purely bred’—descendent of all the parties involved in that cataclysmic epoch. I . . . despair, for the various parts of me cry out for retribution at having been brutally uprooted and transplanted to fulfill the profit-cy of

‘white’ righteousness and dominance. My soul moans that part of me that was destroyed by that callous righteousness. My heart weeps for that part of me that was the instrument—the gun, the whip, the book. My mind echos with the screams of disruption, desecration, destruction.” Alice Walker, in a controversial letter to an African-American friend, told him she believes that “we are the African and the trader. We are the Indian and the Settler. We are oppressor and oppressed. . . . we are the mestizos of North America. We are black, yes, but we are ‘white,’ too, and we are red. To attempt to function as only one, when you are really two or three, leads, I believe, to psychic illness: ‘white’ people have shown us the madness of that.” Gloria Anzaldúa continues this theme: “You say my name is Ambivalence: Not so. Only your labels split me.” Desmond Tutu as reported by Richard N. Osting, “Searching for New Worlds,” *Time*, October 29, 1984; Rosa Maria Villafane-Sisolak, from a 1983 journal entry cited in *Making Face, Making Soul*, p. xviii; Alice Walker, “In the Closet of the Soul: A Letter to an African-American Friend,” *Ms.*, 15 (November 1986): 33; Gloria Anzaldúa, “La Prieta,” in *This Bridge Called My Back*, p. 201.

16. bell hooks, *Ain’t I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981); Amy Ling, *Between Worlds* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1990); Norma Alarcón, ed., *The Third Woman* (Bloomington, Ind.: Third Woman Press, 1980).

17. See Walker, “Letter to an African-American Friend,” Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*; Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977); and Moraga and Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back*.

18. Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider* (New York: Crossing Press, 1984).

19. Maxine Baca Zinn, Lynn Weber Cannon, Elizabeth Higginbotham, and Bonnie Thornton Dill, “The Costs of Exclusionary Practices in Women’s Studies,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 11:2 (winter 1986): 296. Note here already the implication of another “third space” gender, which in the 1990s was theorized as the category of the decolonizing “queer” as conceived by scholars of color. See the works of Cherríe Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa, Emma Pérez, Audre Lorde, Kitty Tsui, Makeda Livera, Paula Gunn Allen, Jacqueline Martinez, and Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano for examples: Moraga, *The Last Generation* (Boston: South End Press, 1995); Pérez, “Sexuality and Discourse: Notes From a Chicana Survivor,” in *Chicana Lesbians*, ed. Carla Trujillo (Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1991); Lorde, *Sister Outsider*; Kitty Tsui, Nellie Wong, and Barbara Noda, “Coming Out, We Are Here in the Asian Community: A Dialogue with Three Asian Women,” *Bridge* (spring 1979): 34–38; Asian Women United of California, *Making Waves*; Makeda Livera, ed., *A Lesbian of Color*

Anthology: Piece of My Heart (Toronto, Ontario: Sister Vision Press, 1991); Allen, "Beloved Women"; Deena González, *Chicana Identity Matters*, forthcoming; Sandoval, "Comment on Susan Krieger's 'Lesbian Identity and Community.'" Here we can see how Judith Butler's work on the performative developed parallel structures to those of U.S. third world feminism (and its differential *mestiza* consciousness).

20. Alison Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (New York: Rowman and Allenheld, 1983), p. 11.

21. Hester Eisenstein, *The Future of Difference* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1985), p. xxi.

22. The mystery of the academic erasure of U.S. third world feminism is a disappearing trick. Its exemption from academic canon short-circuits knowledge but secures the acquittal of a "third," feminist "force" about which Derrida suggested "it should not be named." Not named, he hoped, in order that what is performative and mobile never be set into any place: freedom resides, thus, everywhere. It is out of this terrain that U.S. third world feminism calls up new kinds of people, those with skills to rise out of citizenship to agency: countrypeople of a new territory. For these countrypeople-warriors who are no longer "U.S. third world feminist," the game is beginning again, new names, new players.

23. Elaine Showalter, ed., *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985). See especially the following essays: "Introduction: The Feminist Critical Revolution," "Toward a Feminist Poetics," and "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness," pp. 3–18, 125–43, and 243–70.

24. Gayle Greene and Coppélia Kahn, eds., *Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism* (New York: Methuen, 1985). See the chapter "Feminist Scholarship and the Social Construction of Woman," pp. 1–36.

25. Showalter, *The New Feminist Criticism*, p. 128.

26. Eisenstein, *The Future of Difference*, p. xvi.

27. Greene and Kahn, *Making a Difference*, p. 13.

28. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics*, p. 37.

29. Showalter, *The New Feminist Criticism*, p. 138.

30. Eisenstein, *The Future of Difference*, p. xviii.

31. Greene and Kahn, *Making a Difference*, p. 13.

32. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics*, p. 52.

33. Showalter, *The New Feminist Criticism*, p. 139.

34. Eisenstein, *The Future of Difference*, p. xviii.

35. Greene and Kahn, *Making a Difference*, p. 14.

36. Jaggar, *Feminist Politics*, p. 88. Like U.S. hegemonic feminism, European feminist theory replicates this same basic structure. For example, Toril Moi and Julia

Kristeva argue that feminism has produced "three main strategies" for constructing identity and oppositional politics. They represent feminist consciousness as a hierarchically organized historical and political struggle, which they schematically summarize as follows:

1. Women demand equal access to the symbolic order. Liberal feminism. Equality.
2. Women reject the male symbolic order in the name of difference. Radical feminism. Femininity extolled.
3. (This is Kristeva's own position.) Women reject the dichotomy between masculine and feminine as metaphysical. (Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* [New York: Methuen, 1985], p. 12.

Note that the second category combines both the second and third categories of U.S. feminism, and the third category dissolves "the dichotomy between masculine and feminine" altogether. Luce Irigaray is considered a "radical feminist," according to this schema.

37. Lydia Sargent, *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981), p. xx. The hegemonic typology of feminist consciousness we have just analyzed—(1) that women are the same as men, (2) that women are different from men, and (3) that women are superior—was challenged at its every phase by feminists of color. If women were seen as "the same as men"—differing only in form, not in content—then feminists of color challenged white women for striving to represent themselves as only other versions of the dominant white male. When women's liberationists were thus forced to recognize and claim their differences from "men," then, feminists of color pointed out that the most valued differences were recognized and ranked according to the codes and values of the dominant class, race, culture, and sex. In attempting to ethically respond to this new challenge to a unified women's movement for liberation, the movement constructed its third phase, which saw any feminist expression as being as valid as any other as long as it expressed a higher moral and spiritual position: that of "woman." But U.S. feminists of color did not feel comfortable with the "essence" (of woman) being formulated. If ethical and political leadership should arise only from that particular location, then for U.S. feminists of color, who did not see themselves easily inhabiting any form of female subjectivity identified so far, Sojourner Truth's lingering question "Ain't I a woman?" sounded even more loudly. This schema of three phases does not provide the opportunity to recognize the existence of another kind of woman—to imagine another, aberrant form of subjectivity, aesthetics, politics, feminism. That is why U.S. feminists of color argued that each hegemonic feminist phase tended to generate its own equivalent forms of racist ideology.

- 38.** Eisenstein, *The Future of Difference*, p. xix; my emphasis.
- 39.** Jaggar, *Feminist Politics*, p. 123.
- 40.** Cora Kaplan, "Pandora's Box: Subjectivity, Class and Sexuality in Socialist Feminist Criticism," in Greene and Kahn, *Making a Difference*, pp. 148–51.
- 41.** Jaggar, *Feminist Politics*, p. 123; my emphasis.
- 42.** This shift in paradigm requires a fresh mapping, the creation of another kind of typology that would prepare the ground for a new theory and method of feminist consciousness in resistance. This other typology brings into view new sets of alterities and another way of understanding "otherness." It demands that oppositional actors claim alternative grounds for generating identity, ethics, and political activity across lines of gender, race, sex, class, psychic, or cultural differences; it makes visible another method for understanding oppositional consciousness in a transnational world.
- 43.** Sheila Radford-Hill, "Considering Feminism as a Model for Social Change," in *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*, ed. Teresa de Lauretis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 160.
- 44.** bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), p. 9.
- 45.** Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (autumn 1985): 245.
- 46.** As Katie King points out in her analysis of social movement histories in *Theory in Its Feminist Travels*.
- 47.** Anzaldúa writes that she lives "between and among" cultures in "La Prieta," p. 209.
- 48.** Aida Hurtado, "Reflections on White Feminism: A Perspective from a Woman of Color" (1985), from an unpublished manuscript, p. 25. Another version of this quotation appears in Hurtado's essay "Relating to Privilege: Seduction and Rejection in the Subordination of White Women and Women of Color," *Signs* (summer 1989): 833–55.
- 49.** In Moraga and Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back*, pp. xix, 106. See also the beautiful passage from Margaret Walker's *Jubilee* that similarly outlines and enacts this mobile mode of consciousness from the viewpoint of the female protagonist (New York, Bantam Books, 1985), pp. 404–7.
- 50.** Anzaldúa, "La Prieta," p. 209.
- 51.** Audre Lorde, "Comments at 'The Personal and Political Panel,'" Second Sex Conference, New York, September 1979. Published in *This Bridge Called My Back*, p. 98. See also Audre Lorde, "The Uses of the Erotic," in *Sister Outsider*, pp. 58–63, which calls for challenging and

undoing authority in order to enter a utopian realm only accessible through a processual form of consciousness that Lorde names the "erotic."

52. Anzaldúa refers to this survival skill as "*la facultad*, the capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities" (*Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987), p. 38). The consciousness that typifies *la facultad* is not naive to the moves of power: it is constantly surveying and negotiating its moves. Often dismissed as "intuition," this kind of "perceptiveness," "sensitivity," consciousness, if you will, is not determined by race, sex, or any other genetic status; neither does its activity belong solely to the "proletariat," the "feminist," or the oppressed, if the oppressed is considered a unitary category, but it is a learned emotional and intellectual skill that is developed amid hegemonic powers. It is the recognition of *la facultad* that moves Lorde to say that it is marginality, "whatever its nature . . . which is also the source of our greatest strength" (*Sister Outsider*, p. 53), for the cultivation of *la facultad* creates the opportunity for a particularly effective form of opposition to the dominant order within which it is formed. The skills required by *la facultad* are capable of disrupting the dominations and subordinations that scar U.S. culture. But it is not enough to utilize them on an individual and situational basis. Through an ethical and political commitment, U.S. third world feminism requires the technical development of *la facultad* to a methodological level capable of generating a political strategy and identity politics from which a new citizenry arises. In Part III, we examine this technique in greater detail under a rubric I call the "methodology of the oppressed."

Movements of resistance have always relied on the ability to read below the surfaces—a way of mobilizing—to re-vision reality and call it by different names. This form of *la facultad* inspires new visions and strategies for action. But there is always the danger that even the most revolutionary of readings can become bankrupt as a form of resistance when it becomes reified, unchanging. The tendency of *la facultad* to end in frozen, privileged "readings" is the most divisive dynamic inside any liberation movement. In order for this survival skill to provide the basis for a differential and coalitional methodology, it must be remembered that *la facultad* is a process. Answers located may be only temporarily effective, so that wedded to the process of *la facultad* is a flexibility that continually woos change.

53. Alice Walker coined the neologism "womanism" as one of many attempts by feminists of color to find a name that would signal their commitment to egalitarian social relations, a commitment that the women's movement and the name "feminism" had, by 1980, betrayed. See Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens: Womanist Prose* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), pp. xi–xiii.

54. Allen, "Some like Indians Endure"; in Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*; Maria Lugones, "Playfulness, 'World'-Traveling, and Loving Perception," *Hypatia* 2 (1987): 123–50; Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Criticism, Feminism and the Institution," *Thesis Eleven* 10/11 (1984–85): 19–32, and "Explanations of Culture," in *The Post-Colonial Critic* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 156; and Walker, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*. Analysis of these writings reveals that each posits the following technologies:

(1) sign reading-constructing-deconstructing; (2) commitment to differential movement and location, and (3) ethical commitment to social justice and democratic egalitarianism. Together, these technologies enable the differential form of social movement introduced in chapters 1 and 2. The content and form of these self-consciously produced modes of counterknowledge are examined in Part III of this book.

55. Barbara Christian, "Creating a Universal Literature: Afro-American Women Writers," *KPFA Folio*, special African History Month edition, February 1983, front page; reissued in *Black Feminist Criticism: Perspectives on Black Women Writers* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1985), p. 163.

56. Hooks, *Feminist Theory*, p. 9; Audre Lorde, "An Interview: Audre Lorde and Adrienne Rich," held in August 1979, *Signs* 6:4 (summer 1981): 323–40; and Barbara Smith, ed., *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology* (New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983), p. xxv.

57. Merle Woo, "Letter to Ma," in *This Bridge Called My Back*, p. 147.

58. Chandra Talpade Mohanty "Cartographies of Struggle," in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, ed. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

59. These strategies were understood and utilized as tactics for intervention by U.S. women of color in 1960s–70s ethnic liberation movements as well as in women's liberation movements. For explication of these usages, see Adaljiza Sosa Riddell, "Chicanas en el Movimiento," *Aztlán* 5 (1974): Moraga and Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back*; Barbara Smith, "Racism in Women's Studies," in Hull, Scott, and Smith, *All the Women Are White*; Bonnie Thornton Dill, "Race, Class and Gender: Perspectives for an All-Inclusive Sisterhood," *Feminist Studies* 9 (1983): 19–26; Mujeres en Marcha, ed., "Chicanas in the '80's: Unsettled Issues" (Berkeley: 1983) pp. 3–4; hooks, *Feminist Theory*; Alice Chai, "Toward a Holistic Paradigm for Asian American Women's Studies: A Synthesis of Feminist Scholarship

and Women of Color's Feminist Politics," *Women's Studies International Forum* 8 (1985): 26–48; Cynthia Orozco, "Sexism in Chicano Studies and the Community," in Teresa Córdova, Norma Cantú, Gilberto Cardenas, Juan Garcia, and Christine Sierra, eds., *Chicano Voices: Intersections of Class, Race, and Gender* (Austin: CMAS Publications, (1986), pp. 29–41; Chela Sandoval, "Feminist Agency and U.S. Third World Feminism," in *Provoking Agents: Theorizing Gender and Agency*, ed. Judith Kegan Gardiner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

60. Such stratagems generate aesthetic works marked by disruption *and* by taking place, by immigrations, diasporas, and border crossings; by traveling style, politics, poetics, and procedures; by tactics, strategies, movement, and position—all produced with the aim of, as U.S. third world feminist Merle Woo put it in "Letter to Ma," equalizing power on behalf of the colonized, the nation-, class-, race-, gender-, and sexually subordinated.

61. Differential consciousness is composed of difference and contradictions, which then serve as tactical interventions in the other mobility that is power. Entrance into the realm "between and among" the others demands a mode of consciousness once relegated to the province of intuition and psychic phenomena, but which now must be recognized as a specific practice. I define differential consciousness as a kind of anarchic activity (but with method), a form of ideological guerrilla warfare, and a new kind of ethical activity that is discussed here as the way in which opposition to oppressive authorities is achieved in a highly technologized and disciplined society. Inside this realm resides the only possible grounds for alliance across differences. Entrance into this new order requires an emotional commitment within which one experiences the violent shattering of the unitary sense of self as the skill that allows a mobile identity to form takes hold. As Bernice Reagon has written, "most of the time you feel threatened to the core and if you don't, you're not really doing no coalescing" ("Coalition Politics: Turning the Century"). Within the realm of differential consciousness there are no ultimate answers, no terminal utopia (though the imagination of utopias can motivate its tactics), no predictable final outcomes. Its practice is not biologically determined, restricted to any class or group, nor must it become static. Although it is a process capable of freeing into a repressive order, or of disintegrating into relativism, these dangers should not shadow its radical activity.

To name the theory and method made possible by the recognition of differential consciousness "oppositional" refers only to the ideological effects its activity can have. It is a naming that signifies a realm with constantly shifting boundaries that serve to delimit. Indeed, like Derrida's "*différance*," this form of oppositional consciousness participates in its own dissolution as it comes into action. Differential consciousness under

postmodern conditions is not possible without the creation of another ethics, a new morality, and these will bring about a new subject of history. Movement into this realm was heralded by the claims of U.S. third world feminists. This movement made manifest the possibility of ideological warfare in the form of a theory and method, a praxis of oppositional consciousness. But to think of the activities of U.S. third world feminism thus is only a metaphorical avenue that allows one conceptual access to the threshold of this other realm, a realm accessible to *all* people.

62. Today, debates among U.S. feminists of color continue over how effective forms of resistance should be identified, valued, distinguished, translated, enacted, and/or named. Contending possibilities include “transnational” or “transcultural” feminisms, where issues of race and ethnicity are sublimated; to approaches that include “the differential,” “*la conciencia de la mestiza*” (which deploys the technologies of *la facultad*, *coatlicue*, and *nepantla*), “womanism,” and/or “third-space feminism,” which together signify the activities of the specific 1980s form of “U.S. third world feminism” identified here; to “U.S. women-of-color feminism,” which emphasizes the exclusion of its population from legitimate state powers by virtue of color, physiognomy, and/or social class. U.S. women-of-color feminism tends to commit to one or more of the five technologies of power outlined earlier: the equal-rights, revolutionary, supremacist, or separatist forms are means of increasing and reinforcing racial and tribal loyalties and self-determination. This focus is more specific than that of the differential, third space, or “U.S. third world” form of feminism, however, which, when understood as a technical and critical term, is focused, above all else, on the poetic deployment of each of these mechanisms for mobilizing power. As such, the U.S. third world form of feminism identified here is not inexorably gender-, nation-, race-, sex-, or class-linked. It represents, rather, *a theory and method of oppositional consciousness* that rose out of a specific deployment, that is, out of a particular tactical expression of 1980s U.S. third world feminist politics. This tactic that became an overriding strategy is guided, above all else, by imperatives of social justice that can engage a hermeneutics of love in the postmodern world, as we shall see in Parts III and IV.

3. On Cultural Studies

1. See Rosa Linda Fregoso’s excellent chapter on differential consciousness as expressed in film in *The Bronze Screen: Chicano and Chicana Film Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). The comic book series the *X-Men* first appeared in September 1963. In December 1970, the title was revived in reprint form. See the *World Encyclopedia of Comics*, 1976.

2. See, for example, Homi K. Bhabha, “DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern

Nation,” in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 291–320; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), and *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Gayatri Spivak, “Explanation and Culture: Marginalia,” in *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Methuen, 1987), pp. 103–18, and “In a Word, Interview,” *differences, essentialism issue* (summer 1989): 124–56; Gloria Anzaldúa, “*La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness*,” in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987), pp. 77–102; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 183–203, and “The Actors Are Cyborg, Nature Is Coyote, and the Geography Is Elsewhere: Postscript to “Cyborgs at Large,”” in *Technoculture*, ed. Constance Penley and Andrew Ross (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 21–27; Henry Louis Gates Jr., “The Blackness of Blackness: A Critique of the Sign and the Signifying Monkey,” in *Black Literature and Literary Theory* (New York: Methuen, 1984), pp. 286–323; Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990); Teresa de Lauretis, “Eccentric Subjects: Feminist Theory and Historical Consciousness,” *Feminist Studies* (spring 1990): 115–49; Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); Hayden White, “Writing in the Middle Voice,” *Stanford Literature Review* 9:2 (1992): 179–87; Trinh T. Minh-ha, ed., “She the Inappropriate/d Other,” *Discourse* 8 (special issue) (winter 1986–87): 32–50; see also her *Woman/Native/Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); and Gerald Vizenor, *Crossbloods: Bone Courts, Bingo, and Other Reports* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990).

3. This inability to recognize common ground for coalition between scholarly communities is especially surprising in the developing field of cultural studies (including poststructuralism, feminist theory, queer theory, postcolonial criticism, third world feminism, and the concomitant histories, sociologies, philosophies, anthropologies, and political sciences associated with each). The problem is the inability to recognize and name the shared methodology (outlined in the next chapter) that links each of these endeavors.

4. Barthes, Derrida, and Foucault are the usual examples of poststructuralist theorists. Influential white