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Intersectionality, nationalisms, biocoloniality

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Abstract

The early twenty-first century is marked by new postcolonial nationalist ideologies and their indifference to modern histories of colonisation and the urgent need for anti-nationalist theories of racialised subjectification. I discuss the importance of work on 'intersectionality' and consider how some theoretical formations reproduce core elements of 'common sense' nationalisms such as universal, fixed racial categories, the gender binary and the idea of separate cultures. I then argue for a transdisciplinary theory of racialised subjectivity that I call 'biocoloniality'.

Keywords • intersectionality • race • sex • nationalism • postcoloniality • biocoloniality •

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Introduction

'Very few theories have generated the kind of interdisciplinary and global engagement that

marks the intellectual history of intersectionality. . . Rooted in Black feminism and Critical

Race Theory, intersectionality is a method and a disposition, a heuristic and analytic tool.'

Devon W. Carbado, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Vickie M. Mays and Barbara Tomlinson 2013, 303

'The heuristic of intersectionality has produced a tremendous amount of work on women

of colour whilst concomitantly excusing white feminists from this work, re-centering

gender and sexual difference as foundational and primary – indeed this amplification of

knowledge has in some senses been at the cost of women of colour.'

Jasbir Puar 2014, 62

'A system . . . imposed the concept of 'woman' to reorganize gender/sexual relations in the

European colonies.'

Walter Mignolo 2011, 18

'The other of woman is the whore.'

Melissa Gira Grant 2014, 77

The early twenty-first century is marked by new postcolonial nationalist ideologies

and their indifference to modern histories of colonisation and the urgent need for anti-

nationalist theories of racialised subjectification. There were numerous forms of resistance to

colonial occupation, racial subjugation, enslavement and genocide from the beginnings of

early modern European colonial expansion such as the production of anti-colonial historical narratives (Hartman 1997; Mbembe 2012; Mignolo 2011; Prakash 1994; Spivak 1987). These histories resurrected the connections between colonial wealth production, the formation of colonial classes, European and American cities, modern universities and modern disciplinary discourses dissolved by colonial nationalisms. Historical counternarratives and the countercultures to which they are affiliated have proliferated yet as new forms of colonial occupation and warfare and new raciologies have come into being (Bhatt 2012; Mbembe 2012; Said 1993) and as nationalist modes of thought continue to shape our postcolonial 'common sense' forms of understanding (Gramsci 1971; Lawrence 1982; Lubiano 1998; Solomos 1989; Ware 2012). I discuss the importance of theories of 'intersectionality' and the tremendous contributions that they have made to numerous debates. I then consider how some theoretical formations reproduce core elements of common sense nationalisms such as universal, static racial categories, a sexual binary and the idea of separate cultures as I discuss how historical inventions of race, sex, normalcy and nationness were harnessed together in colonial nationalist discourses from the late eighteenth century. I then argue for an anti-nationalist, transdisciplinary, postcolonial theory of racialised subjectivity that I call 'biocoloniality'.

The Importance of 'Intersectionality'

Crenshaw developed the theory of 'intersectionality' (Crenshaw 1989) to reflect the erasure of the multidimensional experiences of black women in the spheres of antidiscrimination law, feminist theory and antiracist politics and to argue for the intersection and interaction of race, gender and class. She further discussed the intersections of racism and sexism in relation to employment, domestic violence and rape, the marginalisation of women of colour within feminist and anti-racist politics, representations of women of colour in

popular culture and the erasure of differences within communities (Crenshaw 1991). She has returned to debates on 'intersectionality' in relation to, for example, radical feminisms and critical race theory and gender violence and mass incarceration (Crenshaw 2010, 2012). These conceptualisations were preceded by a body of work on intersectional subjectivity (Davis 1983; hooks 1984; Lorde 1984; Truth 1851), critiques of white feminisms (Carby 1982), theories of 'simultaneity' (Combahee River Collective 1983) and work on subalternity and gender (Spivak 1987). It has been followed by a proliferation of work on 'intersectionality' across the world that draws from different theoretical resources (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). Lewis notes that this work continues to 'find ever more productive and useable ways of addressing multiple forms of inequality and disadvantage; complex ontologies; the idiosyncrasies of experience; and multidimensional epistemologies' (Lewis 2009b, 204).

Theories of 'intersectionality' informs work that reconnects the global histories of feminist and queer political movements to modern histories of colonisation and racial nationalist political cultures and to anti-colonial, anti-war, anti-fascist and anti-racist political movements at different historical moments (Ahmed 1998; Brah and Phoenix 2004; Mirza and Gunaratnam 2014; Mohanty 1984; Puwar 2007; Spivak 1987; Ware 2015). Debates on 'intersectionality' continue to shape work on race and transgender identities (Koyama 2006; Juang 2006), inventions of abnormal bodies (Davis 1995), debility (Puar 2017), beauty (Weekes 1997) and race, neighbourhood and state violence (Back 1996, Murji and Solomos 2015). They inform work on the dualism between heterosexuality and its defining others and on 'heteronormativity' (Berlant and Warner 1998, 554), 'homonormativity' (Duggan 2002, 175) and 'homonationalism' (Puar 2007, 1). Work on 'intersectionality' has shaped arguments against applying a universal heterosexual/homosexual binarism to the former colonies and against carving out gender and sexuality as distinct areas of inquiry (Massad 2007; Mignolo

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2011; Mikdashi and Puar 2012). Theories of 'intersectionality' have also been applied to the interconnections between different political struggles (Collins and Bilge 2016). Davis has discussed 'the intersectionality of struggles' (Davis 2015, 19) between, Ferguson, Missouri and Palestine. Kaba has used theories of 'intersectionality' in her work on interpersonal violence, transformative justice and community accountability in the U.S (Kaba 2012).

Particular interpretations of 'intersectionality' have also however been employed in representations of the U.S army as 'diverse' and 'inclusive' (Mikdashi and Puar 2012; Puar 2014). They have been utilised by 'carceral feminist' (Bernstein 2010, 1) theorists and organisations in the U.S and the U.K who defend a brutal indifference to the connections between state violence and interpersonal violence and who argue for more police, longer prison sentences for violent crimes against women and against the decriminalisation of sex work. These discussions have redrawn the cartographies of different debates, subject areas, disciplines and departments in different localities (Lewis 2013).

Theories of 'intersectionality' have illuminated how we need to understand the interplay or fusion of different elements of identity such as race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, disability and locality when discussing all subjects and all communities whether predominantly white, upper-middle class academic communities or conscious hip-hop urban cultures in postcolonial London. Davis and Dent however note that we may still not know how to understand the intersection of different elements without essentialising the different categories (Davis and Dent 2013). Theories of intersectionality have been divided into inter-categorical, intra-categorical and anti-categorical theorisations (McCall 2005) to reflect distinctive approaches to the question of how to theorise the different categories or elements of identity. I will follow the path of this work and others (Brah and Phoenix 2004; Davis 2015; McCall 2005; Phoenix 2017; Puar 2014) and discuss specific discursive formations of 'intersectionality' that are composed of particular elements. I am concerned with

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theorisations that reproduce universal, fixed racial categories, the gender binary, ideas of separate cultures and other core elements of both colonial nationalist formations from the late eighteenth century and contemporary raciologies and nationalisms.

Colonial taxonomies, common sense, postcolonial racial categories

Common sense racial formations which align each race with a particular ancestry, a separate culture and specific bodily and facial features stem from taxonomies from the eighteenth century that were built upon early modern inventions (Bulmer and Solomos 1999; Eze 1993; Nelson 2016; Said 1978; Wynter 2003).

Different systems of racial categorisation that became common sense forms of classifying different bodies were further developed during 'the long nineteenth century' (Hobsbawm 1994) across the modern disciplinary discourses of the social sciences and arts and humanities. These typologies shaped imaginations of religious, educational and military 'European traditions' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 2012) and representations of Englishness and other forms of European nationness in aesthetic forms such as novels. Said argues:

> 'The main battle in imperialism is over land, of course; but when it came to who owned the
> land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and
> who now plans its future – these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time
> decided in narrative. . . . Most professional humanists . . . are unable to make the connection
> between the prolonged and sordid cruelty of such practices as slavery, colonialist and
> racist oppression, and racial subjection on the one hand, and the poetry, fiction, and
> philosophy of the society that engages in these practices on the other (Said 1993, xiii – xiv).

Different narratives on race, shared ancestry, separate cultures and national sensibilities produced by modern artists, novelists, historians, political theorists and imperial

administrators bled into one another (Mamdani 2012; McClintock 1995; Said 1978; Spivak 1987) as European and American empires expanded, modern cities developed and common sense modes of understanding were transformed.

The contemporary use of a postcolonial, common sense, universal gallery of different races erases how the borders of racial, ethnic and tribal categories were drawn and redrawn in each colonial locality. Stoler in her discussion of racial taxonomies in the colonies of the Dutch East Indies argues:

> 'The category 'European' also included an ill-defined population of poor whites, subaltern soldiers, minor clerks, abandoned children of European men and Asian women, as well as creole Europeans whose economic and social circumstances made their ties to metropolitan bourgeois civilities often tenuous at best. At later moments, it was to include Japanese, Africans and Chinese. Being 'European' was supposed to be self-evident but was also a quality that only the qualified were equipped to define (Stoler 2000, 93.)'

The use of universal, fixed racial categories displaces and dissolves colonial histories of different systems of racial classification and local taxonomies within and between the different colonies of each imperial power. Hoetnik observes how multiple meanings are ascribed to each racial category in the Caribbean. He states: 'one and the same person may be considered 'white' in the Dominican Republic or Puerto Rico, and 'coloured' in Jamaica, Martinique or Curaçao' (Hoetnik 1967, xii).

The use of an unchanging, universal racial typology further eclipses how ideas of race have been recomposed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries using diverse components such as lineage, moral and aesthetic sensibilities, blood, propriety and inherited natural abilities such as innate intelligence that were each defined in different ways and harnessed to inventions of a national history, national culture and national homeland. These

elements and others such as purity, criminality and beauty were further developed in numerous discursive spaces such as the modern disciplines of Eugenics, Criminology and Sexology in metropolitan universities, the narratives of modern literature and fine art and practices of aesthetic surgery (Gilman 2005; Said 1993). Gilman notes:

> 'In the [nineteenth century] surgeons not only tried to correct the ugliness that results
> from diseases such as syphilis, but they also tried to correct the 'ugliness' of non-white
> races. Medicine's job became correcting the appearance of illness as well as its pathology.
> Racial science used appearance as a means of determining who was fit and who was ill,
> who could reproduce and 'improve' the race and who would be excluded and condemned'
> (Gilman 2005, 16).

These formulations are still developed in specific discursive strands of Psychology and Genetics and contemporary ultranationalisms and continue to shape postcolonial, common sense modes of thought (Mbembe 2012; Rose 1996). Particular theoretical formations of 'intersectionality' reproduce racial categories that are composed of some of these elements. Puar notes:

> 'Many of the cherished categories of the intersectional mantra – originally starting with race,
> class, gender, now including sexuality, nation, religion, age and disability – are the products of
> modernist colonial agendas and regimes of epistemic violence, operative through a Western/
> Euro-American epistemological formation through which the notion of discrete identity has
> emerged' (Puar 2014, 54).

The common sense alignment of race with ancestry, a specific history of colonisation, genocide or exile, a particular form of racialisation and contemporary racism and a separate culture and community does not recover but tears histories of colonisation and histories of

contemporary racial subjugation apart. It may erase, for example, African and Jewish indentured labour in the Caribbean (Mintz 1996), the persistence of slavery in India following abolition in the British Caribbean, Mauritius and the Cape (Hall et al 2014; Major 2012) and colonisation as 'intrinsically genocidal' (Moses 2004, 27). The reproduction of separate racial histories turns away from the connections between different modern colonies. It erases rather than uncovers histories of race, 'colonial labour, transatlantic wealth-generation and metropolitan consumption' (Hall et al 2014, 25).

This formation further dissolves the existence of hybridised ancient, medieval and modern colonial cultural worlds. These erasures have been central to colonial nationalist discourses since the late eighteenth century (Adamson 2016; Bernal 1987; Whitmarsh and Thomson 2013). Whitmarsh argues for a theory of hybridised ancient Greek and Roman worlds that were, in different ways and at different historical moments, intertwined with ancient worlds with shifting centres and borders such as the Indus Valley, Egypt and Mesopotamia. He notes:

> 'We have become so habituated to thinking of Greek culture in eurocentric terms that we
> have by and large ceased to question whether the boundaries really were that clearly
> defined on the ground in antiquity. . . The superimposition onto ancient geopolitical space
> of modern criteria of nationality, which are often (albeit not always) crisper and more
> clearly defined, is as misleading as it is anachronistic' (Whitmarsh in Whitmarsh and
> Thomson 2013, 4-5).

Different racial categories composed of different constellations of different elements and the reiterated erasure of creolised ancient, medieval and modern colonial and postcolonial worlds are reproduced in everyday forms of postcolonial common sense and by contemporary white nationalisms (Bhatt 2012; Valluvan 2017). They are core elements of

other contemporary raciologies and nationalisms that have emerged and re-emerged at different historical conjunctures such as Hindu nationalisms, Zionisms, black nationalisms, Islamic revivalisms (Al-Azmeh 2009; Bhatt 1997, 2012; Butler 2013; Clifford 2000; Gilroy 2000; Rose 2005; Said 1993) and 'homonationalisms' (Puar 2007, 1). Formations of 'intersectionality' which reproduce discursive elements such as universal, immutable racial categories, national cultures and separate histories of suffering mirror and bleed into these nationalisms as they refuse to engage with bodies of work on colonial and postcolonial nationalisms and raciologies. Questions on the ethics of reproducing core elements of nationalist formations are left unaddressed.

Empire, sex, normality

The nineteenth century was marked by the proliferation of disciplinary discourses which divided 'healthy', 'normal' bodies into one of two sexes. This sexual binary was used to normalise and elevate European bourgeois patriarchal formations over all other gendered configurations and played a central role in inventions of Englishness and other forms of European nationness. As Bauer argues:

> 'Matters of 'sex' – understood in terms of sexual behaviour as well as biological difference –
> played an important role in establishing the limits of civilization, both in assessments of
> non-Western cultures following the discovery of the Americas and in the demarcation of
> national cultures within Europe (Bauer 2011, 159).

Ideas of normal men and women were developed further and redefined by notions of normal psychological and sexual development, intelligence and race (Davis 1995). The invention of illnesses such as transsexuality and theories of abnormality and deviance in the

neighbouring disciplines of Anthropology, Biology, Criminology, Sexology, Statistics and Eugenics rested upon the sexual binary (Gilman 2005; Spade 2010). Davis recalls how all the early statisticians were eugenicists as he discusses the work of the statistician Quetelet in relation to concepts of the norm and progress. Quetelet states:

> 'One of the principal acts of civilization is to compress more and more the limits within which the different elements relative to man oscillate. The more that enlightenment is propagated, the more will deviations from the mean diminish. . . The perfectibility of the human species is derived as a necessary consequence of all our investigations. Defects and monstrosities disappear more and more from the body (Quetelet as quoted in Davis 1995, 28)'.

An immutable formulation of sexual difference was harnessed to a rigid binary between an invisible, unnamed heterosexuality aligned with health and normality and a visible homosexuality aligned with illness, abnormality and arrested development (Katz 2006; McWhorter 2004). This discourse on healthy sexual practice deemed all gendered formations which did not reproduce clear, immaculate binaries between men and women and heterosexual and homosexual unrespectable, uncivilised and decadent (Massad 2007; Mosse 1985). Fuss asks:

> 'Is it really possible to speak of 'homosexuality', or for that matter 'heterosexuality' or 'bisexuality', as universal, global formations? Can one generalize from the particular forms sexuality takes under Western capitalism to sexuality *as such?* What kinds of colonializations do such translations perform on 'other' traditions of sexual difference? (Fuss 1995, 159)'.

Fuss raises the question of the possibility of universal global formations under 'racial capitalism' (Robinson 1983) or European colonial mercantile capitalism, industrial capitalism and postcolonial global capitalism. The refusal to describe oneself and others using these categories became a significant marker of deviance, illness and racial and civilisational difference. As Massad notes: 'sex was always an important feature of orientalist fantasy and scholarship' (Massad 2007, 9). Sex was defined by ideas of clear anatomical differences and biological functions, normal and abnormal bodily forms, temperamental differences, healthy and unhealthy sexual practices and decency and indecency (Bauer 2010, McWhorter 2004; Mosse 1985). Sexual difference was harnessed to ideas of distinct gender roles in the bourgeois home and to ideals of classical, white beauty. The ideal woman embodied delicacy, modesty and purity and the ideal man embodied self-mastery, nobility and dignity. A fixed notion of sexual difference, rigid ideals of femininity and masculinity, classical white beauty, bourgeois sexual morality, decency and cleanliness were chained together in discourses on normalcy, respectability and nationness that emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century (Gilman 2005; Mosse 1985). They produced different 'types' of women such as the lady, the mistress, the affluent courtesan, the actress and the streetwalker (Bauer 2011). Respectability was used to distinguish between women of the same classes such as ladies, mistresses and courtesans (Hartman 1997, Mosse 1985; Stoler 2000).

Theories of 'intersectionality' have not discussed the colonial histories of the category sex in relation to the invention of different races, the creation of legal, economic and social obligations between colonial families, the consolidation of wealth within colonial classes and the further development of urban neighbourhoods and rural areas in Europe and the colonies (Davidoff and Hall 2002; Said 1993). The histories of these categories raise persistent and unanswered questions on if and how we can use them.

Inscription

These colonial histories lead to a transdisciplinary theory of racialised subjectification that is indebted to theories of 'intersectionality' as it begins from the premise that 'different dimensions of social life cannot be separated out into discrete and pure strands' (Brah and Phoenix 2004, 76). It rests upon histories of colonial nationalisms and does not reproduce common sense universal, static, racial categories, an immutable notion of sexual difference or the gender binary, the idea of separate cultures and other core elements of nationalist formations.

This anti-nationalist theory of racialised subjectivity departs from the premise that the borders of racial categories were drawn and redrawn in each colonial locality; that there were different local taxonomies within and between different colonies and that we do not know where the subject has been positioned and where they position themselves within local postcolonial racial typologies. It does not reproduce the common sense alignment of race, ancestry, a distinctive colonial history or history of genocide, a specific form of contemporary racism, a particular experience and a separate culture and community which furthermore dissolves the existence of hybridised ancient, medieval and modern worlds.

I begin with a notion of 'inscription' that reflects how the subject faces particular, unforeseeable and possibly contradictory discursive directives embedded in the practices of others. They have to grapple with the normative demands entrenched in daily demonstrations of banal, unremarkable, 'natural' and 'normal' forms of bodily demeanour and bodily style (Gilroy 1993; McNay 1992) and in the insistence of others that they occupy a particular racial category or specific separate racial categories.

Spade discusses how the sexual binary and notions of illness, gender identity disorder and transsexuality are harnessed together in medicine, psychiatry and law in the contemporary U.S. He states:

'The medical regime permits only the production of gender normative altered-bodies, and seeks to screen out alterations that are resistant to a dichotomised, naturalized view of gender. . . Containing gender distress within 'transsexualism' functions to naturalize and make 'healthy' dichotomised, birth-assigned gender performance. . . It is 'in the minds of the ill' that gender problems exist, not in the construction of what is 'healthy' (Spade 2010, 319.)

The subject is faced with these normative directives and inscribes and carves themselves and others with specific attributes such as healthiness and illness in response. Butler argues 'power not only *acts* on a subject but, in a transitive sense, *enacts* the subject into being' (Butler 1997, 13). They engrave and sculpt themselves with specific possibly conflicting qualities as they grapple with the injunctions and encouragements embedded in the violence, concern and indifference of others.

Jude in 'A Little Life' (Yanagihara 2015) is told that he could not be adopted as a young child possibly because his 'origins' are unknown. He cannot be racially classified. Yanagihara states: 'There were simply too many unknowns – his ethnicity, his parentage, possible congenital health problems, and on and on' (Yanagihara 2015, 146.) He suffers the horrific violence of others throughout childhood and adolescence and is then described as an adult looking at his body after cutting himself year after year. Yanagihara writes:

'. . . much of what his body has become has been beyond his control, but his arms have been all his own doing, and he can only blame himself. When he had begun cutting himself, he cut on his legs – just the calves – and before he learned to be organised about how he applied them, he swiped the blade across the skin in haphazard strokes, so it looked as if he had been scratched by a crosshatch of grasses. . . But now, no one could not notice his arms, or his back, or his legs, which are striped with runnels where damaged tissue and

muscle have been removed . . . When he has clothes on, he is one person, but without them,

he is revealed as he really is, the years of rot manifested on his skin, his own flesh

advertising his past, its depravities and corruptions' (Yanagihara 2015, 306).

Drawing from work on the creolisation of culture that I will discuss later, I want to

argue that Jude creolises the discursive directives embedded in the violence that he has

endured at the hands of others and then by his own hands. He gathers together

representations of himself that he is faced with in the hate of others and in their repeated

insistence that he is responsible for their violence. He combines the different images and

looks back at himself and sees himself '. . . as he really is, the years of rot manifested on his

skin, his own flesh advertising his past, its depravities and corruptions' (Yanagihara 2015,

306). He illuminates how the hate of others is indistinguishable from his own hate. He

illustrates how the subject consciously and unconsciously inscribes themselves with different

attributes such as 'rot', 'depravity' and 'corruption' as they face and reckon with the

normative demands of others.

This practice of inscribing the self cannot be separated from fashioning others. The

subject engraves themselves as they endlessly distribute different capabilities and

characteristics to others. Jude inscribes himself with responsibility for the violence of others

as he silently inscribes his assailants with innocence. The subject responds to the normative

demands embedded in the practices of others towards themselves and others simultaneously.

They may be faced with violence directed at themselves as they watch the protection of

others. They may encounter discursive directives embedded in the imagination of other lives

as those that must be protected as they look back at themselves as someone whose life is

expendable yet as they struggle against this insistence (Fanon 1986).

The subject reproduces different notions of who can be left to die or killed with impunity. These ideas are borne from racial nationalist discourses that have emerged at different historical conjunctures (Black Lives Matter 2016; Hillsborough Justice Campaign 2009; Justice for Grenfell 2017; Mbembe 2003; Say Her Name 2017; United Families and Friends Campaign 2017). The subject reproduces and recomposes different elements and properties such as the potential to make an important contribution, inherited intelligence and more or less developed cultural values as they inscribe themselves and others. Notions of cultural characteristics and biological attributes that stem from modern disciplinary discourses from different historical conjunctures are replicated and revised through this unnoticeable, unremarkable practice of inscribing and sculpting different subjects (Agamben 1999; Eze 1997; Mbembe 2003; McWhorter 2004; Spade 2010).

Reiteration

I want to draw psychoanalytically informed work on the family together with work on local racial and ethnic taxonomies, repetition and performativity and discuss how a divided subject struggles with themselves as they produce and try and preserve a clear, experiential sense of a stable, core self as their identity unfolds.

The subject has to reckon with parental ambitions and political concerns and discursive demands on who can be befriended, desired and loved inside the family however this is configured (Hall 2002a). Hall remembers his school friends in his discussion of the social and political affiliations of his family. He states:

> 'My school friends – clever scholarship youths of all colours, shades and backgrounds – were
> middle-class too, but drawn from a wider spectrum, mirroring the less colour-hierarchical
> Jamaica that was emerging. But I wasn't allowed to bring many of them home: only those

considered by my family equals in social status and of the 'right' colour. 'Not the sort of

people you should be fraternizing with!' (Hall 2017, 54)'.

The subject does not reckon with the norms that they encounter inside the family and

then with cultural norms outside. Their responses to the discursive imperatives that they

encounter at home are remade by the normative commands that they face outside. This is

illustrated by Lewis in an article that is addressed in part to her mother:

'The impact of a mother's relationships – with partners, family, friends – and her social

experiences do produce an ambivalence in her toward her children . . . when you had to

gather up your inner strength so as to be prepared for another sneer, another comment, yet

another demonstration of what people known to you or not, thought of you and your black

children, thought of you for having black children. How your father and brother claimed you

brought shame and disgrace on the family, on them. How others cast you as sexually

depraved and morally bankrupt. . . I think then, in those moments maybe it was the hatred

side of your ambivalence that took hold' (Lewis 2009a, 1).

Lewis illustrates how the responses of the subject to others at home are interrupted

and reconfigured by the discursive demands that they encounter in other spaces at other

times. The subject does not furthermore encounter a singular discourse on racial

categorisation that positions them within a universal, static racial category. They have to

grapple with different, shifting, potentially conflicting discourses on racial categorisation in

each neighbourhood (Back 1996; Hall 1990) including the taxonomies from different localities

in different colonies (Michael Keith, Personal Correspondence, 5 March, 2015). The subject

has to reckon with, for example, competing discourses on who is 'local', 'British' or 'white',

who is part of the 'Muslim community' or the 'black community' and the categories that they

are placed in 'back home'. They have to grapple with the 'different categories, different

antagonisms' (Hall 1996, 48) that they encounter. They have to face the hate, indifference, violence and protectiveness that this produces.

The identity of the subject does not simply unfold as they travel through different discursive spaces yet nor does it stay the same. Psychoanalytic notions of repetition can offer a way of understanding how the subject cultivates and tries to protect a clear sense of a stable, core self.

Freud argues for a theory of the subject who repeats what once took place without, 'knowing that he is repeating it' (Freud [1914] 1950, 50.) He argues in his discussion on the process of psychoanalysis that:

> 'The patient does not say that he remembers that he used to be defiant and critical towards his parents' authority; instead, he behaves in that way to the doctor. He does not remember how he came to a helpless and hopeless deadlock in his infantile sexual researches; but he produces a mass of confused dreams and associations, complains that he cannot succeed in anything and asserts that he is fated never to carry through what he undertakes. He does not remember having been intensely ashamed of certain sexual activities and afraid of their being found out; but he makes it clear that he is ashamed of the treatment on which he is now embarked and tries to keep it secret from everybody' (Freud [1914] 1950, 150).

He leads us to a subject who is not able to recall the discursive demands that they once grappled with and how they inscribed themselves and others with particular characteristics because they were never observed or never conscious. Freud argues for a subject who produces a clear sense of a constant, core self through the 'endless repetition of the same' (Freud [1914] 1950, 16). A notion of repetition can furthermore add to an understanding of how the bodily acts of the subject contribute to the production of this sense of an essential self. Butler argues:

'Identity' is 'instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the *illusion* of an abiding gendered self' (Butler 1988, 1).

Drawing these different threads together, the reiterated reinscription of the self and others with different attributes; repeated bodily movements and desires and the reiterated re-enactment of particular states of being such as the state of being 'out of place' produces the *effect* of a stable, core self. The subject struggles to preserve and protect this sense of self so they can continue to exist 'as they are' as their identities unfold. This 'endless repetition of the same' (Freud [1914] 1950, 16) is illuminated by Said as he describes how guilt, fatigue and a sense of failure and lateness mark the different hours of each day:

'This sense of the day divided into periods of appointed labor has never left me, has indeed intensified. Eleven a.m. still imbues me with a guilty awareness that the morning has passed without enough being accomplished – it is eleven twenty as I write these words – and nine p.m. still represents 'lateness' that moment which connotes the end of the day, the hastening need to think about bed, the time beyond which to do work means to do it at the wrong time, fatigue and a sense of having failed all creeping up on one, time solely getting past its proper period lateness in fact in all the word's senses' (Said 1999, 105).

The subject produces a clear sense of a constant, core self through the repetition of the same practices even if this leads, as Said illustrates, to disappointment and despair day after day. Every reiteration and reinscription is however enacted at a different time so cannot be an exact reproduction. The reiterated practices of the subject endlessly change as new competing practices may begin to come into being in response to new discursive demands.

Creolisation

The model of a core national white British society who is a benevolent host to her 'ethnic minority communities' that each follows a separate historical path and the idea that each subject responds to 'culturally specific' sets of 'values' persists as 'common sense' (Gramsci 1971, Lawrence 1982). I want to argue for an alternative theorisation of routed, relational creolised cultures that reconnects the histories of the colonies, colonial nationalisms which erase and reinvent pre-colonial and colonial histories and the formation of modern Europe (Fanon 1986; Hall et al 2014; Hobsbawm 1994; Said 1978). I will then discuss how the subject produces and tries to preserve a sense of an essential self as they reinscribe themselves and others and as they creolise culture.

Notions of 'cultural specificity' and separate cultural trajectories rest upon the reiterated erasure of creolised ancient, medieval and modern colonial and postcolonial cultural worlds (Abu-Lughod 1989; Adamson 2016; Anim-Addo 2013; Benítez-Rojo 1996; Bernabé et al 1990; Bernal 1987; Bhabha 1994; Gilroy 2000; Glissant 1999; Hall 2002b; Harris 1998; Haubold 2013; Mintz 1996; Richardson 1996; Vergès 2003, Whitmarsh and Thomson 2013). I will turn to the Caribbean to illustrate this strand of argument. I begin with an understanding of the region as a:

> 'juncture-point where the many cultural tributaries meet. . . the place of many continuous displacements; of the original pre-Columbian inhabitants, the Arawaks, Caribs and Amerindians, permanently displaced from their homelands and decimated; of other peoples displaced in different ways from Africa, Asia and Europe; the displacements of slavery, colonisation and conquest (Hall 1990, 234).

Caribbean cultural forms were forged through gathering together and breaking apart what we now classify as African, Amerindian, Chinese, European, Indian, Indonesian,

Lebanese and Syrian cultural materials from different localities and discarding, rearranging and combining different elements. These new forms were inscribed with contested meanings and utilised for different purposes. Bernabe et al describe this new colonial history as 'a braid of histories' (Bernabe et al 1990, 892). These cultural materials had however been creolised as they travelled through ancient and medieval worlds and were further 'braided' in the modern colonial Caribbean to form new cultural forms.

A panoramic view of Britain that rests upon cartographies of hybridised ancient, medieval and modern colonial worlds reveals innumerable, translocal, routed, relational, creolised postcolonial cultures without centres or borders each composed of numerous interlocking, kaleidoscopic patterns of cultural production and distinctive and potentially conflicting political visions.

Cultural forms such as forms of bodily style and adornment are produced through drawing available cultural materials from different localities together, breaking them apart, recombining different elements and reinscribing them with different local and international affiliations, political desires and political concerns (Hall and Jefferson 2006; Hebdige 1979).

The subject consciously and unconsciously reinscribes themselves and others with different biological features, drives, instincts and capacities and psychological characteristics as they creolise culture. They endlessly reinvent cultural forms which they inscribe with particular political concerns and affiliations as they attribute different political desires to others.

Conclusion

I have argued that the subject consciously and unconsciously draws from different discursive orders and inscribes and carves themselves and others with different biological capabilities, psychological characteristics, cultural traits and political concerns as they

creolise the normative demands embedded in the tenderness, indifference and violence of others. They sculpt and engrave themselves and others as they endlessly replicate, reformulate and distribute notions of different capacities, qualities and characteristics that have emerged at different historical conjunctures. Their responses to the normative demands that they encounter at home are reconfigured by the discursive imperatives that they face outside in their neighbourhoods and other localities. They produce the effect of an essential or core self through repeatedly reinscribing themselves and others with different characteristics and capabilities; their reiterated bodily movements, desires and significations and the repeated re-enactment of particular states of being. The subject tries to protect this sense of a core self so they can continue to exist 'as themselves' as their identities unfold. I have further argued, faced with common sense nationalist formations of 'cultural specificity', separate cultural trajectories and histories of suffering, that the subject reinscribes themselves and others as they creolise culture. I present a theorisation of transnational, 'local', routed, relational creolised cultures without borders or centres which rests upon intertwined, creolised ancient, medieval and modern colonial and postcolonial cultural worlds and reconnects the formation of Europe to the histories of the colonies.

I hope to contribute to debates on 'intersectionality', colonial nationalisms, postcolonial common sense and contemporary raciologies and nationalisms at a time when critiques of 'intersectionality' may insist upon the innocence of common sense modes of thought and other academic discourses which reproduce the same discursive elements. The project to decolonise education is incompatible with the reproduction of universal, fixed racial categories, the gender binary and other core elements of colonial nationalisms and contemporary, postcolonial raciologies. I present a theory of racialised subjectification which does not mirror the same nationalisms that I stand opposed to and which dissolves distinctions between histories of colonisation, genocide and exile reflected in divisions

between 'race studies' and 'migration studies' and accompanying models of different forms of racism which erase histories of empire. I hope that 'biocoloniality' can be applied to discussions on the naturalisation of nationalism and the militarisation of psychic life. I further hope to illuminate the connections between colonial nationalisms, histories of colonial wealth production and the formation of modern Britain, common sense modes of thought and postcolonial raciologies and nationalisms as I present an anti-nationalist theory of racialised subjectification.

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