

THE FAMILIAL RECONFIGURATION OF THE SUBJECT OF CULTURAL
DISCOURSE IN TSITSI DANGAREMBGA'S *NERVOUS CONDITIONS*

by

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PREFACE

I hereby state that this thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my original work. However, I must express my gratitude to my supervisor, Jill Arnott, for her invaluable assistance and intellectual demands which made this work possible. I would like to thank Katherine Wagner for her many comments with regard to questions of specificity and clarity. Concerning any advice I neglected to heed for the sake of originality, I ask for her patience. My thanks also go to David Attwell for initial revisions of earlier drafts of this work. Most importantly, I thank the following persons: my colleague, Myrtle Hooper, whose constant encouragement motivates me; Mrs Maureen McAlpine for the timeous and patient typesetting of this dissertation; my daughter, Lerato, for inspiring commitment to my work and most of the good things I do; my daughter's grandparents, Margaret and Manaileng Masemola, who believe in my intellectual effort and support it in ways too many to be enumerated here; and my fiancée, Thembeke, whose stable and fulfilling companionship strongly influenced this thesis' stubborn concern with familial subjectivity. Above all, glory be to G-d on high for fortifying the hearts of many unfunded scholars who suffer the effects of gate-keeping, and for proselytizing all those hitherto unwilling and unable to come to terms with the germane pursuit of postcolonial theory.

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation marshals cultural discourse theory to analyze the extent to which Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* (1988) deploys a representation of the family so as to reconstitute the discourse of cultural difference, intervening as such representation does in the ideological discourses of modernity by exploring its social pathologies. The analysis will therefore address the problematic of representation as reflecting the dispersions of signification and historical contingencies that render the female protagonist's choices and agency as existing in an interstitial space structured by the ambivalent moments of modernity. In essence, the analysis will assess the possible success of a rearticulation of the emergent histories of women in Shona culture through reinscribing their identities outside the othering tendencies of the realist epistemology to which familial representation is usually amenable.

The introduction presents a brief discussion of the relationship between the representation of the family and patriarchy, proceeding to show how the arguments *for and against* the family do not necessarily take account of the ambivalence of the family

in the Shona situation of colonisation and decolonisation. The elision of the said situation, argues this dissertation, has serious implications in terms of women's subjectivity in relation to colonial discourses as these are tested and are shown to be unsustainable at the local domestic level. Add to this the fact that through relations there is a "re-embedding" of social relations in the very indeterminate contingencies immediate to the circumstance of the family. The problematic of representation, therefore, bears testimony to the potentialities of female subjectivity within the family in a postcolonial situation.

The psychic splits of the colonial subject at familial level make it possible for women to re-inscribe their identities through a form of mimicry that raises the question of the authorization of colonial and patriarchal representations. The retrospective narrative of *Nervous Conditions* is argued to be an account that explicitly denies negative ontologies when it represents the growth and development of women as being concomitant with a process of splitting and doubling, a process that begins with adaption as producing negative ontology and continues to show the space for mimicry and menace in that adaption. Ultimately adaption, in part inevitable because the familial site is a "contact zone", is a choice made in relation to the contingencies of modernity. So that Tambudzai's entry into the wealthier branch of the Sigauke family and missionary schooling becomes an entry into what has been called an environment of "trust", where rational constructs are chosen in order that women may be affirmed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	<u>INTRODUCTION:</u>	
	A. The Familial/interstitial space in Nervous Conditions	1
	B. Black Women's (Re-)Writing of the Family: Community and/or Self at Stake?	2
2.	<u>CHAPTER 1:</u>	
	"Embracing the Shadow"?: Recognising Liminality in Dangarembga's Jungian Undercurrents	16
3.	<u>CHAPTER 2:</u>	
	Family, Agency and Authority: Representing Group Subjectivity and Resistance	63
4.	CONCLUSION	86
5.	WORKS CITED	94

INTRODUCTION

A. The Familial/interstitial Space in *Nervous Conditions*.

The text which this dissertation examines is a celebrated example of postcolonial women's writing from Zimbabwe. Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* proffers a representation that is quite unique and also apposite to its task of highlighting issues that confront women in a postcolonial society, without emphasising a rift between African men and women. The question of subjectivity is approached in such a manner as to suggest not only difference but also ambivalence in both the discourses of modernity and the colonial subject. I shall begin my introduction with a discussion of familial representation and its possible connection with Black Feminism or 'womanism', arguing that the subjectivity of women is as divided as that of Black men because both are constructed in relation to colonial discourses. I shall then proceed to point out that the pursuit of 'wholeness' or selfhood is not only a journey (see Willis, 1985) but a continuous doubling and splitting of the colonial subject within the interstitial space. The said space is a site of both oppression and enunciation of new, potentially subversive subjectivities. The said space can be the colonial and/or domestic space. Deliberately, the dissertation will focus largely on the family, not because of its theoretical reliance on Bhabha, Lacan, Jung or Deleuze and Guattari, but because I situate the various positions I mobilise within colonial discourse theory, implying that a focus on the postcolonial familial representation is in the present case a disavowal of nationalism.

B. Black Women's (Re-) Writing of the Family: Community and/or Self at Stake?

To theorise resistance requires an acknowledgement that women's acts are "marginal" acts of social survival (see Bhabha's "Freedom's Basis in the Indeterminate"; 1992), rather than a pedagogical endorsement of the transcendent authority of nationalism's narrative. Contrary to the discourse of anticolonial nationalism, I interpret the practice-bound reinscriptions of identity and difference within the family setting as acknowledging the realities of interstitial positioning, which performatively anticipate what Bhabha in his essay on "DissemiNation" calls the 'liminal figure of the nation-space'. Besides, it has already been observed that

[a]ccording to some writers, women are relegated to the margins of the polity even though their centrality to the nation is constantly being reaffirmed. It is reaffirmed consciously in nationalistic rhetoric where the nation itself is represented as a woman to be protected or, less consciously, in an intense preoccupation with women's appropriate sexual conduct. The latter often constitutes the crucial distinction between the nation and its 'others' (Kandiyoti: 377).

In Dangarembga's text, women such as Lucia are condemned for sleeping "with anybody and everybody" (126). Similarly, Nyasha's provocative short skirts and dresses, as well as Tambudzai's

innocent but tentative dance manoeuvres, are condemned at the level of community. For a while Maiguru, the educated woman in the novel, cannot say anything in the domestic space, irrespective of whether it involves her children or herself. She has to be obedient and busy herself with domestic work. Her Master's degree does not guarantee participation in the public sphere. This situation is a result of a subject-constitution that denies women access to the public sphere through what Bhabha calls "the production of differentiations, individuals, identity effects through which discriminatory practices can map out subject populations that are tarred with the visible and transparent mark of power" (cf. "Signs": 153). This individuation involves the presumption that women's power is affirmed through the domestic space where reproduction resulting from a heterosexual relationship allows the male partner to regulate or deregulate/deform the woman's body through the implicit obligation of reproduction.

Significantly, a line of divide between male and female histories of subjectivity can be readily inferred from the individualist interpellation of the Black female colonial subject. Gayatri Spivak problematizes this interpellation beyond its original Althusserian concepts and concerns, arguing that what is at stake for feminist individualism in the age of imperialism is represented on the two registers of childbearing and soul making ("Three Women's Texts": 244). Women have had to be confined to the domestic space, prohibiting their participation outside the community of families; so that women cannot recognise themselves

outside the domestic space. This seems to have been the case before the onset of colonialism in Shona society. Traditional discourse was reflecting the male principle. This underscores one of the two forms of patriarchy: private and public patriarchy (cf. B.S. Walby, 1990). The former form is "based on the relative exclusion of women from areas of social life other than the household and the appropriation of their services by individual patriarchs within the confines of the home" (quoted in Kandiyoti: 277). Childbearing then can be best understood in the context of exclusion and domestication where *childbearing (reproduction) stands in opposition to soulmaking:*

The first is domestic-society-through-sexual-reproduction cathected as "companionate love", the second is the imperialist project cathected as civil-society-through-social-mission (Spivak: 244).

It is perhaps the acknowledgement of the stake of the imperialist project that complicates or rather positively problematizes domestic oppression; for the sympathy that Black feminism or "womanism" shows towards the African male can be interrogated and possibly validated. Let me explain that womanism, so designated because it is rooted in black culture, was enlisted on the grounds that 'feminism' was perceived to be coming out of White women's culture. The *Encyclopedia of Feminism* informs us that

[a]s defined by Alice Walker in 1979, womanist encompasses feminist and also refers to someone who is instinctively pro-woman. She traces its roots to the black folk expression 'womanism', used by mothers of female children who display wilful, courageous or outrageous behaviour (Tuttle: 352).

Owing to imperialism, it became logical for womanism to formulate the colonial subject of the Black male variety as the Other to colonial discourses. Over time, Simone de Beauvoir's observations in *The Second Sex* (1953) that women are the Other in all cultures, directly or indirectly influenced most feminisms, impacting on womanism's theorising of Black women's subjectivity. Thus there is a sympathy with the Black patriarch-cum-victim in the womanism of Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, for instance; far from insisting on an unproblematized power/subject configuration, she demonstrates an acute awareness of the impatience of African men as they are the Other to the Colonizing Self. It is not difficult to see that the position of females as the Other to the patriarchal Self (such as Babamukuru) is not separable from the oppressive Black male's subjectivity; both are a function of the discourse of cultural difference.

Without having to produce an image of a "universal Black woman", the objectives and concerns of Black women in America in general, and womanists in particular, lend themselves successfully to addressing the question of subjectivity and the family. It is perhaps also useful to use some insights from American womanism

on the basis of the similarity of their experience of patriarchal oppression in conditions foregrounded by discourses of modernity.

In other words, to speak of Black women writers means having to take into account the "uneven development" that renders the concerns of the Black women writer in the "Third World" different yet paradoxically similar because of the disembedding and reembedding processes concomitant with modernity (see Giddens, 1990). What was normative before colonisation and decolonisation is shown to have been false as well as proved unsustainable by the conditions of the interstice.

Patently, the reformulation of an account of patriarchy must run parallel to a hearing of resistance. If, according to Spivak earlier, females are debarred from civil society (245), a re-entry into the sphere of the soul making mission would, I suppose, require either a radical reembedding of familial relations or allowing women to speak symptomatically from the margins. Since the role of literature in the production of cultural representation cannot be ignored (Spivak: 243), generating a narrative that defies exclusion from the public arena must of necessity transcend the individual and look into possibilities of speaking in terms of groups, communities or the public. There are benefits in doing this, if only the voice of the narrative does not pretend to speak for all women without taking care to highlight the history of subjectivities of each member of the group or, more pertinent to this dissertation, of the family. Thus I shall argue that the terms deployed by Felix

Guattari in *Psychoanalysis and Transversality* are appropriate for theorising the splits attending the subjectivity of the native female. Guattari speaks of a group-subject and a subjected group in order to explain how group subjectivity is the absolute preliminary to the emergence of all individual subjectivity (90), as well as to show how the production of cultural meaning is plastic if perceived to be mediated between groups - each group attaching meaning to value with its incommensurable practices. (An in-depth discussion of Guattari follows in Chapter 2 of this dissertation).

An unqualified reference to what is being called a collective female voice might then lead to the pitfall of inadvertently putting the subjectivity of each incommensurable instance and experience under suppression, particularly if we speak of identity as if that identity were not produced in a place of difference. The main object must be one of reconstituting the discourse of cultural difference within groups and families. One cannot but glean from Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?", that the globalisation and socialization of capital can consolidate and duplicate the international division of labour through reinscriptions of women as a unified Other (84). The epistemic violence associated with this reinscription deals with the sovereignty of a subject at an ontological level, a level where the Others, women and men, are resident in a discursive field that yields to heteroglossia that reify the Law of the Father. Differently put, the epistemic violence that is being avoided by the alternative representations of identity undermines the

binaristic vocabularies that place women at the margins of discursive power. Indeed, there are discourses into which the putative others are interpellated and in the presence of which particular psychic forms become apparent.

Perhaps the impression I have created so far with my analysis tempts one to comment on the manner in which I enlist Spivak, Guattari and womanist concerns almost unproblematically. An explanation to clarify the situation is in order. Firstly, the women now understood as Others to patriarchy and then to imperialism have their ever-shifting residence in a discursive field that has its conditions of possibility regulated by an epistemology that insists on an ontological Identity called Self and attributes the conditions of being Self to itself by appropriating from difference the privilege of organizing the signification and destiny of women. There is in my discussion a deliberate use of Guattari's *Psychoanalysis and Transversality* as opposed to Guattari's collaborations with Gilles Deleuze or, sometimes, with Michel Foucault, the reason being that the recognition of the group-subject disallows the subject-constitution and object-constitution that inform the theorising of the sovereign subject. We cannot afford to reduce the encounter with modernity to a power/subject configuration as if the subject is conditioned by, or exists as a functional axis of, power without considering the issue of interest and desire at various levels of action or the impossibility of action.

As for the pertinence of the effecting of the mostly post-structuralist moves around womanism, I always believed that the sympathy with men should not go without the severest qualification even where that means that the difference of colonial subjects of whatever variety may be overemphasised. I have a reason for this: women will risk losing their individual identities if, taken from a different position of the colonial dialectic, their subjectivities are theoretically understood as the same. This would not be helpful for the postcolonial criticism I proffer here; for it would limit the possibilities of mimicry and transvaluation of missionary education which come into play when Tambudzai "decided it was better to be like Maiguru, who was not poor and had not been crushed by the weight of womanhood" (16). Each woman follows a particular trajectory of resisting and subverting patriarchy. So that to speak of community may produce Anna, a helper and the exemplum of the silenced female within both private and public arenas.

To reduce Dangarembga's narrative to concerns of community, journey, sensuality and sexuality (See Willis: 212) is to embark on a nativist return to traditional society as if modernity does not effect a time-space distanciation that "zones" social life (Giddens: 17). If time-space distanciation underlines the conditions under which time and space are organised so as to connect presence and absence, the connection of the individual who is present within the family to the absence at the level of community will be an explicit gesture of disembedding relations from their local contexts of interaction. I argue that

postcolonial theory needs to return to these local contexts by a reembedding of social relations, ensuring that the contingency characterising marginality is kept visible. This marginality can be discerned in relation to each of the women whose history of subjectivities is narrativized through what Tambudzai designates as "entrapment" (1).

The context of entrapment is familial and cultural, since the discursive field that makes anything marginal signify is ultimately a function of cultural discourse. Similarly, the thematic concerns that Susan Willis puts forward as offering ways into black woman's writing must be seen in the light of what I observe in *Nervous Conditions* as a shift from a nativist claim of 'community' to a marginal group of woman on the receiving end of patriarchy within and as a result of familial relations.

The notion of a community as deployed by Willis loses its currency in its failure to address the problematic of cultural discourse as a field which is the residence of individuals negotiating the axioms, rules and practices that accrue as a formation at familial level. The tendency in my analysis is to avoid speaking of women as a collective Self; for doing so transfers the struggle of marginality to a homogenous and often transcendental plane of interaction governable by transcendent narratives of authority which determine and 'put under erasure' the subjectivity of each woman. The collective or community self is amenable to processes which render women as what has been described as a group subject. The patriarchal oppression of

Maiguru, Babamukuru's educated wife, attests to the power relations within which domestic society, the domain of women in their childbearing mission, is enmeshed. Following Millet, I shall argue that patriarchy's chief institution is the family (33), adding that patriarchy can be undermined at this level of the family.

In *Nervous Conditions* Babamukuru organises as well as disorganises the lives of everybody, organising a wedding to the displeasure of Tambudzai; electing to grant Tambudzai's brother Nhamo the privilege of getting an education; deciding how Nyasha should conduct herself in public; determining what is to be done to Takesure and Lucia once an illegitimate child is conceived; and administering his educated wife and her finances as if she were a child. It is similarly within the familial context that Nyasha stages a rebellion, that Lucia asserts her selfhood, Maiguru decides to break the silence and, to Babamukuru's surprise, casts serious doubt on the assumption that Tambudzai must get married instead of going to Sacred Heart College (181).

A quality of ambivalence runs through Tambudzai's narrative because *difference* bears the potential of being mobilised against women and also carries the prospect of subversion as women like Tambudzai, Lucia and Maiguru reconstitute the discourse of cultural difference through mimicry. (Chapter 1 deals with this aspect of the reconfiguration of the subject of cultural difference). Familial repression gives rise to a shadow complex

which is then, according to Jungian undercurrents in Dangarembga's text, embraced on account of its ambivalence. Much as we can speak of the women's plight as one that is common to all, I suspect Dangarembga delimits oppression in terms of a stubborn focus on a story of family, which Shona culture conceptualizes as including members of the extended family.

Lucia earns Babamukuru's respect as well as a job at the mission in order that she may obliterate the dependency that, she believes, everyone thinks she enjoys, even though she has just had a baby (157). In spite of her being Ma'Shingayi's sister, she

ultimately forges strong links with Tambudzai and Nyasha, especially when Babamukuru punishes Tambu unduly for refusing to attend her parent's wedding: she confronts him and asserts her authority without having to undermine Babamukuru's power in a silent fashion. She makes and remakes what Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse call "charivari" (or, following Bakhtin, the "carnavalesque") (11). Apparently, charivari does violence to such social orthodoxies as rites and displays of patriarchal power (Stallybrass: 51). Consider the following passage:

Lucia's attitude offended Maiguru, who would not normally have left a visitor alone, but this time she went until Babamukuru returned. When eventually Babamukuru came, Lucia was blunt with him. She told him quite openly that I should not be punished so

severely. 'Did you ask her what was on her mind?' she demanded (171).

Two things emerge from this passage. First, the respect that has attended Babamukuru, "the revered patriarch" (197), is nowhere demonstrated by Lucia. She assumes an authoritative voice, reversing her position as subordinate woman to the dominant patriarch. Second, a position of solidarity is established by Lucia's interest in the fair treatment of a growing adolescent female, taking the risk of losing a job Babamukuru found her. The intervention by Lucia sparks off Maiguru's decision not to be silent, despite the exploitation she suffers within the homestead: she quarrels with Babamukuru for the first time as well as leaves home. As far as Nyasha is concerned, her mother's departure is the best thing she could do for herself under the circumstances:

She did not think her mother had deserted her. She thought there was a difference between people deserting their daughters and people saving themselves. Maiguru was doing the latter and would be available to her daughter when she was needed ... Consequently she thought only in terms of her mother's emancipation ... (174).

The sojourn at Maiguru's brother, away from her home and Babamukuru, makes her return very significant; for "most of her baby-talk had disappeared" (175), a development that

consolidates her stance as an independent woman when she defends Tambudzai's educational interests in the face of familial repression (181). The postcolonial family provides fertile ground for the subversion of patriarchy by virtue of the possibilities of solidarity, especially if, according to the argument in *Sex and Destiny: The Politics of Human Fertility*, it is an extended family:

The Family offers the paradigm for female collectivity; it shows us women cooperating to dignify their lives, to heighten each other's labour ... growing in real love and sisterhood (Greer: 241).

Despite the fact that Maiguru does not pledge solidarity with other women when the issue of Takesure is discussed, she later intervenes in bolder ways in her quest for Tambudzai's education and emancipation. Hence I consistently argue that the reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse is located in the interstices that endow the family with an ambivalence that is crucial to emancipatory mimicry by some women. The discourse of cultural difference is accordingly marginal and amenable to the symptomatic "selfing" of women in incommensurable instances of multiplicity rather than within a depersonalizing collectivity-as-community or what Felix Guattari calls a subjected group. In the end, it is difficult to reject the family or embrace it without severe qualification or, better still, without taking advantages of the conditions of indeterminacy as

they afford an opportunity for the reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse.

CHAPTER 1

EMBRACING THE SHADOW? : RECOGNISING LIMINALITY IN DANGAREMBGA'S JUNGIAN UNDERCURRENTS

The interview between Tsitsi Dangarembga and Jane Wilkinson in 1989, published in 1992, carries greater significance than has been accounted for. It is here that all questions asked relating to the act of writing as 'rewriting', remembering and forgetting, the difficulty of the interface between fact and fiction, and the viability of norms and values, especially in terms of the family constellation, are related to Carl Gustav Jung's archetypes of the soul. When asked about the distinction drawn between fairy tale and romantic stories on the one hand and reality, history on the other, Dangarembga says: ... "at the end of the day it's like this Jungian idea of embracing the shadow, isn't it? I mean, where you have fact you have fiction as well and sometimes the interface is difficult" (Wilkinson: 191). It becomes difficult to have strict binaries in operation here since the clear line of divide disappears in the conditions of anomie that characterise the situation of colonisation and decolonisation. Writing becomes the rewriting of history from an ambivalent space. Like Homi K. Bhabha elsewhere, Helen Tiffin states that "[p]ost-colonial cultures are inevitably hybridised, involving a dialectical relationship between European ontology and epistemology and the impulse to create or recreate independent local identity" (95).

What is at stake here is that the silencing of women within the family as well as other ways of "othering" them, is not sustainable since it takes Nyasha's situation of a voyaging into English modernity, for instance, to be able to challenge the privileged discourses of Shona society. Similarly, Tambudzai finds it necessary to adapt to these patriarchal discourses while at the same time exploring the possibilities offered by the "Englishness" that was detrimental to her brother Nhamo. Tambudzai's agency exists in an interstitial space structured by ambivalence. For Dangarembga, "We need another set of norms...to rethink all these norms and values and customs - both traditional and Western". (Wilkinson: 194). More importantly, she responds to the comment on the success of the wedding:

the fact that the wedding was a success makes an important point in that again its a question of embracing the shadow ... and so if irrational systems can help us to cope ... I feel that's OK. (194).

Specific to Jungian undercurrents in Dangarembga's work, the archetype of the shadow becomes all the more important. I shall argue that "embracing the shadow" corresponds directly with the conditions of the interstice. For "embracing the shadow means embracing the powerful dynamic that we take with us wherever we go, unwanted though it is" (Stevens: 47). As a complex, the shadow tends to appear as "a sinister, threatening figure possessing the same sex as the dreamer, and is not infrequently a member of a different nation, colour, or race in such a way

that its archetype of the Enemy, the Predator, or the Evil Stranger" (Stevens: 47/48).

To embrace the shadow is to embrace the coloniser and the Colonial edict. This act, however, requires a defiance of what Jung calls the moral complex or, in a different context, what Freud called the super-ego. I argue here that the superego or moral complex represents the discourse of cultural difference. This is crucial because it is Jung who refers to the two important sources of the shadow complex as cultural indoctrination and familial repression (Stevens: 48). The discourse of cultural difference discriminates against women and "the Evil Stranger," and becomes slightly complicated as women become the other and their subjectivity constructed in relation to the discourses of the "Evil Stranger" (coloniser) and patriarchy. Since the shadow is unwanted and antisocial, it is quite clear that embracing it in effect carries with it the prospect of being rejected by that society.

Nyasha and Lucia are subversive in their acts; yet Nyasha's rationality, which symptomizes her English acculturation, does not really or efficaciously undermine cultural discourse or the moral complex whose recognition actually depends on rationality. Tambudzai's ability to be in a sense oblivious to the negative prospects of 'Englishness' makes her "too eager to embrace the 'Englishness' of the mission; and after the more concentrated 'Englishness' of Sacred Heart" (Dangarembga: 203).

Cultural indoctrination, as Jung would have it, would want the moral complex to posit 'Englishness' as the archetype of the Predator or Evil Stranger. Nyasha upholds the self/other binaries that typify the discursive ontology and European epistemology that renders subjectivity as the Other:

'I won't grovel. Oh no, I won't. I am not a good girl. I'm evil. I'm not a good girl' (Dangarembga: 200).

Nyasha's less successful subversion stems from her ironic willingness to see men and colonisers as the Enemy or the Predator or, in short, a shadow she will not embrace. In so doing, she unwittingly exercises her subjectivity under and within the tyranny of binary oppositions. Her experience of familial repression, of seeing her mother and Ma'Shingayi living for their husbands and Maiguru's education not enough for her emancipation, cause her total rejection of males in general. At the peril of reinforcing the false distinctions between masculine and feminine, Nyasha unleashes serious regret of her mother's pandering tendency towards males, even when she (Maiguru) had left Babamukuru to spend some time with her brother and his family:

Nyasha was unhappy that Maiguru had gone to her brother. 'A man! She always runs to men,' she despaired. 'There's no hope, Tambu. Really, there isn't'. Nor did she want her mother to come back soon.

It was difficult to say whether she wanted her to come back at all (175).

The perception of males as the Enemy generalises and generates stereotypes about men in such a way that women have to challenge men instead of the discourse of cultural difference. It is, however, significant that a Jungian model sees Nyasha's acts as part of and integral to her development and individuation. Stevens points out that in Jung's *Collected Works VIII*, going through the stages of life in a quest for life necessarily includes experiencing complexes such as the shadow, in accordance with the principle of adaptation among others (44). Nyasha's rebellious predisposition therefore is a part of her adaptation to Shona realities. Wholeness, the goal of the Self, has adaptation as a *sine qua non*.

For Nyasha, adaptation means a painful process of deculturation whereby the English culture she is meant to rid herself of provides her with the conceptual tools by which she will paradoxically attain her wholeness:

It happens ... [y]ou get so comfortable and used to the way things are. Look at me now. I was comfortable in England but now I am a whore with dirty habits ... I know ... [i]t's not England any more and I ought to adjust. But when you've seen different things you want to be sure you're adjusting to the right thing (Dangarembga: 117).

Tambudzai, however, does not see Babamukuru as a Predator or the Enemy even when she experiences the familial repression that should be the source of the shadow complex. She says:

I was beginning to suspect that I was not the person I was expected to be, and took as evidence that somewhere I had taken a wrong turning. So to put myself back on the right path I took refuge in the image of the grateful poor female relative. That made everything a lot easier (116).

In principle she is responding to historical necessity and the question of survival; responding to what Jung earlier on called the principle of adaptation. Tambudzai's personality has to undergo changes convenient enough to assume her persona as "the grateful poor female relative". Carl Gustav Jung is quoted as having said that "[O]ne could say, with little exaggeration, that the persona is that which in reality one is not, but which oneself as well as others think one is" (*Collected Works IX. i* - also quoted in Stevens: 47). That explains why Tambudzai is aware that, in her own words, "I was not the person I was expected to be" (Dangarembga: 110). According to Stevens, "through the persona we codify ourselves in a form which we hope will prove acceptable to others. It has sometimes been referred to as the social archetype or the conformity archetype, for on it depends the success or failure of one's adaptation to society" (47).

It is interesting to see that Tambudzai effaces not the "self",

which in Jung's use means "the centre of consciousness and it what we refer to when we use the terms 'I' or 'me'". (Stevens: 45). Its functions is to defend consciousness against unwanted contents arising from the unconscious through repression, denial, projection and rationalization. To quote Tambudzai:

But in those days it was easy for me to leave tangled thoughts knotted, their loose ends hanging. I didn't want to explore the treacherous mazes that such thoughts led into. I didn't want to reach the end of those mazes, because there, I know, I would find myself and I was afraid I would not recognise myself after taking so many directions (Dangarembga: 116).

What Tambudzai does is repress the contents of the unconscious in such a manner as to repress the thought that, she suspects, would lead to premature conflict and sabotage her long-term goal of wholeness and emancipation. The Self, therefore, is not compromised as one denies oneself, for that may be affirmative as it allows Tambu the possibility of education to which she had hitherto been denied access. When she assumes her personality it is because of the rationalization of ego defence. This in itself indicates that Tambudzai's self-fashioning is ambivalent. In this sense the 'I' or 'me' that for Jung constitutes the centre of consciousness allows the self to exist with the possibility of assuming different personas in order that self may survive. In a different context, Bhabha sees this assumption of a persona as

mimicry. In Tambudzai's case, she wants to be "selfed" through education; she wants to be like Babamukuru who had "Plenty of power. Plenty of money. A lot of Education. Plenty of everything" (Dangarembga: 50).

Tambudzai's acquisition of education is an act of self-empowerment. For education, albeit negatively mobilised against women by Babamukuru, is important for the proper exercise of women's subjectivity. It becomes something of the kind of what has been called a *pharmakon* elsewhere: it is both poison and cure. To embrace it is therefore an act of "embracing the shadow". As in the case of Maiguru, acquiring that education involves assuming a persona that will be convenient for emancipation. Despite Babamukuru's authoritative and domineering tendencies with regard to women, she "felt secure at the mission under Babamukuru's shadow and [she] could not understand why Nyasha found it so threatening" (116). She faces a situation of historical necessities whereby she also has to negotiate the colonial discourse synonymous with the "Englishness" of education. She also has to negotiate the patriachial discourse that makes possible the alienating circumstances of social marginality because she is already implicated in it as a daughter of Babamukuru's brother.

The shadow complex that arises from familial repression also offers possibilities since, projecting herself as the "grateful poor relative", Tambudzai cannot be totally seen as an objectivized other who depends on men like Babamukuru. Once

embraced, the shadow can be instrumental for the woman who leads her life as the in-between figure. As such, she cannot have a fixed identity but evinces positive alterity and becomes what Sally McWilliams calls "a composite of shifting selves" (105). At one moment she has to be the obedient niece and at another a cousin who sympathises with Nyasha's assertiveness, and yet disapprove of Babamukuru's treatment of Nyasha while distancing herself from Nyasha's rude and unstrategic rebelliousness. "Embracing the shadow" allows Tambudzai considerable purchase on the simultaneous subversion of cultural indoctrination and familial repression through the exploration of the pathologies of a traditional discourse that clashes and melds with modernity. To embrace the shadow in this case is to exercise agency in a liminal space.

If, as Sue Thomas points out, Babamukuru is "mastered by the discourses of progress" (28), education and Christianity render useless the conditions of liminality. Tambudzai, though, will not only be mastered but will exercise control over those discourses. There is no point, it seems, in seeing them as the Enemy or Predator. In fact, the emancipation of women relies on the notion of and access to the discourses of progress, education and Christianity. When Tambudzai informs Nyasha of Babamukuru's plan for the Christian wedding which will be a substitute for the traditional cleansing rituals, a debate about progress ensues:

... we did not often perform the rituals anymore. And I was quite proud of this fact, because the more I saw

of worlds beyond the homestead the more I was convinced that the further we left the old ways behind the closer we came to progress (Dangarembga: 147).

Tambudzai clearly sees progress in Christianity as it is decolonised and used as a cleansing ceremony that would end the misfortunes that beset the family. Nyasha sees Christianity as a form of colonisation, forgetting that in the colonial scene it alters because it exists in a thoroughly specific, problematic temporality. Still, Nyasha sees differently:

It's bad enough, ... When a country gets colonised, but when the people do as well!! That's the end, really that's the end (47).

For her, Christianity is a colonising Other against which Shona people must be insulated, which insistence is a hypostatization of the colonial edict. That the wedding is used for purging purposes should have indicated to her that the transposition and transformation of Christianity in the colonial sphere attests to its being continually split and doubled between its Western origination and Shona enunciation. Tambudzai's embracing of this Christian shadow is indicative of the opportunities of their being interpellated by split forms of Christian enunciation in a situation of Shona colonisation and decolonisation. For being effective, Tambudzai is aware of the enactment of lack in the construction of the subject by Christianity. Accordingly, she resists the notion that, like her parents, she is living in sin:

Babamukuru was saying that [in sin] was where my parents were, which meant myself and my sisters too. I could not associate myself or mine with sin so I smothered my misgivings in literal translations of the things we were taught in Sunday School. I convinced myself that sin was what people who had lived long ago, in BC and AD, had done to each other...It was a complex problem ...(151).

Tambudzai then mobilises Christianity in order that she may reconfigure herself as the subject of cultural discourse. Uncannily, the putative inferiorisation by Christianity can potentially be turned from lack of holiness into a space of subverting the traditional patriarchal discourse which parades as "the old ways" that fascinate Nyasha (147). So that Tambudzai does not hesitate to embrace Christianity and the mission because in so doing she actually enlists mimicry to such an extent that a restaging of Christian values introduces a moment of slippage and displacement of Babamukuru's position. For instance, she earlier on associates her position as a pupil with Babamukuru, describing the danger of being under his custody not in terms of evil but God. The following passage critiques the order of things in the same fashion:

the real situation was this: Babamukuru was God, therefore I had arrived in Heaven. I was in danger of becoming an angel, or at the very least a saint, and forgetting how ordinary humans existed (70).

Beneath the comfort living in Babamukuru's house lurks the danger of artificiality and overbearing ceremony, particularly where that comfort causes forgetting. There is therefore in this passage a satirical apotheosis of Babamukuru and a house that is no safe haven. The description itself, read symptomatically, institutes a critique at the level of representation, since it brings to view the impossibility of "Babamukuru-as-God" through satire. In effect, his God-like personality is not given primary ontological status, nor does it have some transcendental identity. Without access to Christianity Tambudzai would not have successfully put Babamukuru's identity "under erasure", which helps us understand Nyasha's annoyance when she says that she "can't just shut up when he puts on his God act" (190). It becomes imperative for Tambudzai both to embrace Christianity and to disclaim the identity-giving hypostatization such as "sin" and "Heaven". This does not only show her embrace of the Evil Shadow but also demonstrates that the choices she makes, particularly in her language, are attestations to her divided subjectivity as well as her ambivalent self-fashioning.

Liminality, therefore, becomes an important aspect of "embracing the shadow" within a specific moment of Tambudzai's encounter with the subject of cultural difference. It is Dangarembga who, as we discussed earlier, insists on the interface between fact and fiction or, put differently, between binarisms, being difficult (Wilkinson: 191). If where there is fact there is fiction, the women of which she speaks throughout the novel will

have to negotiate the split forms of familial repression, instead of falling victim to the tyranny of binaries reified by treating men such as Babamukuru as the Enemy or Predator. Having both Predator and provider, fact and fiction in the same space not only deflates binarisms but also suggests hybridity.

As earlier discussed, mimicry is also important in the situation of "embracing the shadow", which indicates the possibility exists of inscribing heterogeneity within an opposition so as to displace it. Tambudzai acts out Babamukuru, by way of exchanging positions with him so that she will have empowerment and simultaneously disempower him. She subverts and mocks the binary structure of male/female by repeating Babamukuru, dislocating him fractionally through mimicry. In the interstice where splits are continuously negotiated, becoming Self and Other or existing as both gives us a clear sense of the ambivalent self-fashioning that is instrumental for meaningful survival. Acquiring whatever education Babamukuru has signifies progress.

Yet Thomas thinks of power, education and money as functioning to "sustain the spell of Englishness over [Babamukuru] and the myth that an English education represents progress" (28), emphasising only the price to be paid in the course of acquiring education. Of course, education has fashioned Babamukuru into "a good boy, a good munt. A bloody good kaffir" (Dangarembga: (200) who has to use that English education to give Nyasha and Chido a glimpse of the English values that influence Nyasha's desire to resist traditional patriarchal discourse. As a result

of the selfsame education Nyasha is able to be sufficiently critical about history, consciousness and colonialism which, if she had not been to England, would not have been possible. Besides, the interest that she has in traditional history of the Shona as well as the "old ways" (147) bears testimony to her embracing of the very culture that inscribes her position as inferior to men on the basis of gender. Going to England avails to Nyasha the benefits of hybridity.

One of the greatest dangers of the argument such as Thomas's, which singles out progress as if it is enunciated in the manner in which the colonial edict articulates it, is its unproblematized critique of the notion of progress. Granted, Babamukuru becomes a much more patriarchal authority who effectively silences his wife regardless of her education, but it is not difficult to recognize throughout Dangarembga's novel a refusal to render Babamukuru, education, Whites and colonialism as stable categories that can be neatly mapped onto the "either/or" scheme of binaries. Besides, in *Nervous Conditions* education, the West and its discourse of progress create what is known as an environment of "trust" (Giddens: 102), for in the absence of alternatives investing in rational constructs is better than operating outside the discourse of equality and emancipation.

Sue Thomas does not recognize the liminality of colonisation and decolonisation, the interstitial space of the subject of cultural discourse. Nor does she appreciate that progress is not only to

"self" women; for that "selfing" is not moving from the margins to the centre. It is also a process that is represented in what Bhabha calls a "specific, problematic kind of temporality at the heart of colonial governance and administration, the authoritative position of a colonialist ideology, peculiarly split and doubled in its effective implementation" (Attwell: 102). Englishness is therefore not some spell cast on a docile colonial subject who is willing to encounter and be subdued by myths of progress and later uphold them; the interstitial space's possibilities of mimicry may repeat the myth of associating English education with progress into real progress.

In other words, if where there is fact there is fiction (in Jungian terms), that myth of which Thomas speaks can be exchanged with factual progress through the exchange of hybridity as well as through parodic doubling. The edicts of English education and language, as well as an external notion of progress, are not imposed on passive colonial subjects, particularly where there is a specific problematic of temporality at work.

Since we own that the colonial subject is not passive but finds agency in the split forms of English education, the choices that Babamukuru, Maiguru and Tambudzai make serve to demonstrate the difficult conditions under which their agency operates. Tambudzai makes a choice that will disallow or reverse the helplessness that Sue Thomas unwittingly expects and projects in her analysis. It is not difficult to take note of Tambuzai as she says:

In this way, I banished the suspicion, buried it in the depths of my subconscious, and happily went back to Sacred Heart (203).

Again, let us consider this decision as it was earlier anticipated:

... I did not know because I did not speak English. But, I assured him, I was going to learn English when I went back to school (28).

Tambudzai can master the discourses that constitute her, but she also has to reconstitute them. This is an act of reappropriation of English education and the language itself. This, however, requires a recognition of the liminality of the position from which such a reappropriation takes place. For it is not a matter of responding directly to an Englishness that is an Enemy on the other side of the binarism: it is more a matter of reconfiguring the subject of cultural difference, which transforms the processes of reappropriation at a level that is specific yet undermining whatever discourse aspires to claim a primary ontological status for itself in relation to some "othering" education or language. The reappropriation of English education or English as a language is very much a part of undermining the alterity that obtains in the specific and problematic temporality of colonisation and recolonisation.

Taking the project of embracing the shadow seriously, it is not difficult to comprehend that, once embraced, English education can be an enabling mode for progress in terms of its access to "re-embedding" systems such as the discourse of the liberation of women. Familial repression, the very cause of the shadow complex, engenders a lack which is eventually turned into a space for the subversion of the older source of the shadow complex, that is, cultural indoctrination. The potential for subversion is limitless because the historical situation of postcoloniality includes displacements and contradictions. This situation's potentialities are hardly surprising given that, according to Jungian psychology, irrespective of having familial repression as its source, the shadow complex emerges "out of potentially-actuality relations [and], in time, comes to structure those relations" (Brooke: 17); and this in itself goes to show that for the putative other to be "selfed", embracing the shadow reconstitutes the particulars of family life. Examples of this are when Maiguru turns her docility into emancipatory activity; when Tambudzai disapproves of her parents' wedding; and when Lucia recognises her potential for agency as an unmarried woman without totally rejecting marriage.

Dangarembga is acutely aware of the vulnerability of the "dominant discourse". That this discourse, thoroughly patriarchal and coinciding with colonialism, does encounter counter-hegemonic discourse requires an account that will not compromise the self of the woman as she encounters conflicts that are discursively positioning femininity as a marginality. Following Jung, becoming

the self is paramount to development, particularly because the conflicts of the complexes in general, and those of the shadow in particular, lead toward resolution. The victimisation of women therefore almost naturally ensures that potentially, because of that space of lack being opened, emancipation is actualised. This evidenced by Tambudzai:

now I began to see that the disappointing events ... were serious consequences of the same general laws that had almost brought my education to an abrupt, predictable end ... I did not want my life to be predicted by such improper relations. I decided I would just have to make up my mind not to let it happen (Dangarembga: 38).

Nyasha also confesses that

it's not virtue that keeps me so busy! I think, though, that your uncle is pleased with the quieter environment and I have discovered that it is restful to have him pleased, and so these days I am doing my best not to antagonise him. You can imagine how difficult that is. Impossible, it seems. (Dangarembga: 196-7).

The interstitial space is difficult but somehow uncannily necessary. Thus the view that:

The oppressed are victims of social injustice; their significance, however does not reside in the fact of their victimisation but in the possibility that their agency will transform their fixed relations (Hitchcock: 8).

That Nyasha was taken to England was not deleterious but in some ways fortunate in that she was soon to find herself in conditions of hybridity, the very conditions that give her energy, "at times stormy and turbulent, at times confidently severe, but always reaching, reaching a little further than I thought of reaching" (Dangarembga: 151-2). This is a benefit of what Homi K Bhabha in a different context describes as

a willingness to descend into that alien territory [a means for the] recognition of the split-space of enunciation [which] may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture based ... on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity (cf. 1988, 22).

As earlier pointed out, the possibilities for mimicry are legion in hybridity. The subjectivity of females, both growing adolescents and grown-up women, may be exercised positively although initially appearing to be split in a process through which they "self" themselves from what seems to be marginality. Tambudzai learns from Nyasha that

there were other directions to be taken, other struggles to engage in besides the consuming desire to emancipate [herself and her] family. Nyasha gave [her] the impression of moving, always moving and striving towards some state that she had seen and accepted a long time ago. Apprehensive as [she] was ... [she] wanted to go with her (Dangarembga: 152).

The retrospective narratorial voice suggests some form of continuity and development, since, seen in retrospect, "the self [she] expected to find at the mission [which] would take time to appear" (85) is actually found in the company of Nyasha. Tambudzai's development includes "having to cope with [Nyasha's] experimental disposition, her insistence on alternatives, her passion for transmuting the present to the possible" (178). This experimental disposition characterises the mimicry of the problematic temporality of liminal space. The alternatives that some women pursue guarantee, unlike in the case of Maiguru, that it is not a matter of choosing between "self and security" (101). 'Embracing the shadow' means that self and security are not mutually exclusive but of necessity inextricably intertwined.

Accordingly, in Jungian psychology complexes such as the shadow are not isolated entities but tend to be related to each other, particularly in polarity: for example child and mother, mother and old wise woman, woman and death, mother and father, hero and father, hero and maiden, victim and victor, or trickster and wise

old woman ... [they] tend towards conflict and resolution (Brooke: 17).

Although a victim of the patriarchal discourse that constructs the subjectivity of females in Babamukuru's family and a person whose radical behaviour leads to her loss of appreciation for values of respect, Nyasha becomes important for Tambudzai:

Nyasha was something unique and necessary for me. I did not like to spend too long without talking to her about the things that worried me because she would, I knew, pluck out the heart of the problem with her multi-directional mind and present it to me in ways that made sense, but not only that, in ways that implied also that problems existed not to be worried over but to extend us in our search for solutions (Dangarembga: 151).

In reading Dangarembga's narrative, one senses that purposeful character of in-betweenness: that what is lamented as deleterious in modernity is in fact matter to be transculturated directly or indirectly in a situation of colonization and decolonization. This situation prevails, even at the height of enjoyment. We actually revise our tendency to view things as portrayable in an oppositional dialectic, so that in the end we recognise that the benefit of the diasporic movement is related to the impossibility of an ontological marginality. Hence we are tempted to disagree with Nyasha, or at least have some forbearance, when she does not

recognise the difficulty and benefit of being in an interstitial space.

Attwell and Bhabha in fact describe the tendency of arguing for a psychic need to "make up for the lack" as unprogressive, for according to them the lack that metropolitan accounts are always suggesting had to be covered up, is part of a disseminatory negotiation with the colonial (106). What in my mind corresponds closely with this disseminatory negotiation is hybridity. Nyasha's behaviour or place in a much more critically balanced retrospective account is no ordinary ratiocination. She acts and speaks of herself in a tone that is nothing short of regret at times but I suspect Dangarembga hails the condition Nyasha laments. As for Nyasha, she describes her situation thus:

We should have gone ... They should have [packed us off home]. Lots of people did that. Maybe that would have been best. For them at least, because now they're stuck with hybrids for children. And they don't like it (Dangarembga: 78).

Already positioned within modernity, having to make-up for what she thinks is some offensive cultural deficiency, she blames herself. Tambu regrets and mimics as I have already pointed out. She knows how difficult it is and at the same time considers it an opportunity to be hybrid. Hence she chooses the image of the "poor female relative" who depends on the mercy and patriarchal design of Babamukuru. When Tambudzai voices her dissatisfaction,

it is with the intention of a strategic engagement that will involve no spectacular conflict but still salvage victory and authority:

The most I could do was ask in a small, timid voice to be allowed to stay, with Nyasha, I specified, for a few more days. Nobody was surprised by my audacity than I was. Babamukuru did not answer, but I was not taken home. I did not take it as a victory though I took it as proof that Babamukuru was good (Dangarembga: 199).

The question that needs to be asked can be phrased simply: What good is it recognising the good of an oppressive patriarchal figure such as Babamukuru? It is not difficult to see his behaviour as symptomatic of the functional ambivalence of the processes of Enlightenment, such as education, as well as the pathological dysfunction and reconstitution of the colonial edict. In fact in the order of things interstitial, victim and victor, related to each other in polarity (Brooke: 17), are as much exchangeable as repeatable when splitting and doubling occur in the specific temporality of the colonial situation. In this exchange Babamukuru becomes reinscribed so that parodic doubling effects a relation of alterity between women (as the same) and men (as the other). This is crucial in that we do arrive at a position where women, in turn, become both truth and falsehood.

In This Sex Which Is Not One (1985) Luce Irigaray invokes a much

more radical and clearer sense of mimicry whereby we have the same as that which it simulates but necessarily also different from the same, until the woman being the same mimes herself without being herself. Tambudzai mimes herself as a disempowered adolescent *female* without being disempowered; she stands more to benefit as she takes refuge in the image of "the grateful poor female relative" (116). In Jungian terms Tambudzai moves from self to persona, wearing a mask which is necessary for the accomplishment of wholeness. Irigaray is not at odds with the Jungian phenomenology of the self, in the sense that, as Stevens already inferred from Jung's *Collected Works IX*, the persona is that which in reality one is not, but which oneself as well as others think one is (47). In other words in terms of both Jung and Irigaray, Tambudzai repeats the patriarchal relations that she finds without actually reinforcing them.

Nyasha fails to reinscribe identity but instead provides the customary specular reflection in a corresponding relation of symmetry to men. In other words, unlike Tambudzai, she does not become different from the men she duplicates in her doubling. She is still situated within modernity's intended or articulated Enlightenment ideal which strictly requires the tyranny of binary opposites in order that it may function. As she doubles, she mimes herself trying to be the opposite rather than the contingent. In short, she inscribes herself as opposition as well as within the antagonistic defining terms of polarity. Whether Nyasha perceives herself as belonging to the other or the same, she is available to the categories that render her a victim of

her femaleness. These categories are mobilised by Babamukuru as he encounters the potential of efficacious mimicry, reducing gender issues to the question of authority:

We cannot have two men in this house. Not even Chido, you hear that Nyasha. Not even your brother there dares to challenge my authority (115).

It could have been more productive not to be the same or the other. The in-betweenness arising out of her hybridity should have better facilitated an ambivalent self-fashioning corresponding to her liminal situation. Tambudzai recognises the opportunity for the transculturation of language availing itself when Nyasha says:

I am convinced that they have other reasons for disapproving of me. They do not like my English, because it is authentic and my Shona, because it is not (Dangarembga: 196).

Add to this that she says "I am not one of them but I'm not one of you" (210).

If a choice has to be made here, where Nyasha is already positioned within the world of "Englishness" together with enlightenment and modernity, it must be to embrace it in such a fashion as to disorient and reconstitute the subject of cultural difference. Embracing it thus, she would establish a new

enunciative position within it. So long as we do not read Nyasha's development account too carefully we will not recognise the constructedness of her 'reality' in relation to colonial and traditional discourses. Her subjectivity is a divided one and she should, being a split subject, have greater purchase on the benefit of the undecidability that permeates liminal space.

But this is not just to score the odd point off Nyasha by remarking on her occasional lapses into binaristic tendencies of reasoning. On the contrary: her behaviour shows the difficulty of enunciating or installing English ways of Reason in a colonial situation. For it just does not follow from the fact that she is aware of the unreason of patriarchal oppression that Reason should prevail. Above and beyond that, Nyasha is reacting to both symptoms of tradition and modernity as she grows more and more aware of her isolation from both Shona society and the missionary or christian civilising mission. Nyasha cannot be seen wholly as a failed model of resistance, since she re-defines the prevailing conditions of constructing women as the Same, of the hypostasization of herself as an African woman *sui generis*. We should do well to remember that she is the one who is acutely aware of the historical link between racism and the missionary civilising mission when she remarks, as she hugs Tambudzai, "Have a good time, you African" (Dangarembga: 195).

Far from seeing herself as English, she alerts Tambudzai to the confrontation between oppression and enlightenment at the mission school. In other words, Tambudzai is soon to find herself in a

situation where, studying with and taught by whites, she will be subjected to forms of institutional racism. All this in spite of the fact that the mission is the institution from whence her emancipation comes. Indeed, the encounter is not really between black and whites as opposites: threats of disruption to ontological identities through conflictual rather than benign difference are felt.

I have mentioned the ways in which Nyasha unconsciously, though inevitably as regards liminality, reinforces and at points anticipates the missionary practices that consolidate a discursive regime based on the otherness of the native, but I have not examined the extent of the othering tendencies she foresees, a fact already embedded in the streamlining, almost panoptic, structuring of the school. They walk at the entrance of the mission over "crazy-paving of geometrically cut stone, through a corridor of creamy-white roses that appeared to be the main entrance" (193). The great order suggested by geometry is subjected to a semantic dispersal that in the end subverts the notion of order in a craziness that transcends pavings and transfers itself to the unsustainability of all meanings such as "creamy-white".

If, following Jean and John Comaroff's observations in *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, the colonisation of the colonised subject is deliberately patterned and accordingly contested in a "long history of symbolic struggle" (235), Tambudzai's representation defies the institutional order of

political regulation symbolically embedded in the colonial aesthetic of the College's design.

Deliberately, I have elided a focus on the Foucauldian uses of the panopticons for the simple reason that such an approach would necessarily imply that Tambudzai is a self-knowing subject, the problem with which would be that the women as other would be hypostasized; the subjectivity of women would not correspond to the splitting involved in the interstitial colonial space. Tambudzai's expectations are therefore disrupted by the ordering of things at the mission, which should better help us appreciate that she is not the one who is unilaterally disrupting as a subject involved in a power/knowledge configuration. The point is that it is not proper to reduce her struggle to one over power only because in that event the subject of power will be recognizable as such, recognizable as belonging to either this side or that side of a power binary system. This will clearly defeat the objective of showing how the self-fashioning of each of the women is ambivalent.

Besides the obvious disadvantage of using the power/knowledge configuration in an interstitial space, a development of an approach such as this will undermine the epistemological critique ushered in by the liminal conditions within which Nyasha's or Tambudzai's actions are re-inscribed. Certainly that has been a reading canvassed by those who want to argue on essentialist grounds as if there is a "true" woman and a "false" woman, the Self and the Other. That is to say, it is a matter of refusing

to break with the prevailing discourse of Western 'logocentric' reason that Tambudzai has to be a self-knowing subject when she is in fact the object of the knowledge that constructs her subjectivity in part. When Nyasha says "Have a good time, you African," she foregrounds the discourse of cultural difference regulating the conditions of possibility at the Young Ladies College of the Sacred Heart. True to Nyasha's sobering perception, Tambudzai renders a descriptive account:

Anticipation. Disappointment. I looked and looked and searched carefully through the crowd, but I could not find a single black face which did not belong to our party, except of course for the porters. The porters were carrying trunks, but none of them carried mine (193-4).

Tambudzai is now in a different world, under extremely alienating conditions. Yet awareness of difference is no excuse for her to wallow in despair when she can exploit the conditions in which she can effect slippages: she has to "voyage in" and not repudiate difference. "Voyaging in", a phrase advisedly used in the same context as that envisaged by Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* (1983), means that Tambudzai will have to adapt to the interstitial dynamics operative in the differential discourses that are by design supposed to marginalise her. As in the case of assuming the image of "the grateful poor female relative", Tambudzai is adapting a persona (in Jungian terms) that permits her to lay claim to enlightenment values that the

West has repudiated in practice through what Said, inferring from George Antonius and C.L.R. James, calls "honourable dependency" (Said: 297).

As I have said, Tambudzai finds herself in an interstitial situation at Sacred Heart where the problem is not really one of identity but of inferiorisation and a production of lack through the differential discourses that at the same time give Tambudzai access to the values of humanism, enlightenment, and so forth. We read that in a school that is in Rhodesia, a country with more Africans than Whites, the Sister remarks: "We have more Africans here than usual this year and so we had to put them all in here" (Dangarembga: 194). Tambudzai is therefore to be reduced to the same through institutional processes of categorization. All this while we bear in mind that it is similarly inevitable that the Jungian Self has individuation as *its raison d'etre* (Stevens: 45), the objective of this wholeness that is the identity Tambudzai seeks and finds. She is not only a subject produced spectacularly in a plane of difference but finds herself "in-between", so much so that her identity is best accounted for in terms of liminality.

Since being in a position of in-betweenness, in that liminal space Tambu accrues more chances for the productive undermining, exchanging, repeating and mimicking with a privileged self-assured presence until she can live "with and within difference". (See Trinh: Woman: 84). Tambudzai, unlike Nhamo, does not find it necessary to repudiate her family background as she pursues

her emancipation. She lives instead in "two worlds", ensuring that she does not grow aphasic like Nhamo (53) or anorexic like Nyasha when she feels the need to, in her own words, "discipline my body and occupy my mind" (197).

Accordingly we are given a Tambudzai who arrives at Sacred Heart, through her "honourable dependency", embraces the shadow in order that inferiorisation processes may be reducible to fiction, instead of consolidating a discursive regime based on the otherness of an African. Familial repression, which sees Nhamo as better deserving of education because he is male, informed her consciousness before she even arrives at the mission:

I didn't have anything to do with my uncle's kindness. He would have taken in any poor, needy relative, and to prove it I was only here because my brother had died (Dangarembga: 65).

This act of substitution does not fade into oblivion, nor does it rouse feelings of helplessness and regret for having "[gone] to the mission all the same" (56). She suffers terribly and is forced into a position of introspection and concludes that "Babamukuru could only be so charitable to our branch of the family because [they] were so low. He was kind *because of the difference*" (65, my emphasis). The experience of difference is thus used to forge a new interstitial position. For it is only in such a position that the lack of individual identity effected

by the "depersonalization" of Tambudzai by the nuns can be turned into a space of emancipation.

What Albert Memmi means by "depersonalization" is that on each individual colonial subject is embossed the "mark of the plural", implying a systematic creation of an anonymous collectivity (85). This process is effectively disavowed by the individuation essential to, often concomitant with, the personal adjustment that underscores the reconciliation of opposites and tensions within the psyche of the (Jungian) Self as well as within the archetype of the shadow (Brooke: 17). It therefore becomes part of the adjustment and the psychic totality of the Self that difference with regard to Europe and its others be reconciled without losing sight of individuation.

Of course "the anonymous collectivity" of which Memmi speaks is meant to undermine the hybridity of the colonial subject, curbing in advance the reconstruction of the subject of cultural difference. In short, embracing the shadow confirms the positionality of Tambudzai within the liminal space where the othering processes are effectively disallowed. Revisiting Jung, archetypes are "the sources of those typical patterns of behaviour, reaction and experience that characterise the behaviour of birds" (16). Thus it is that "we come into the world bearing with us an archetypal endowment which enables us to adapt to reality in the same way as our remote ancestors" (Stevens: 45).

Now in one sense clearly Jung must be right; it is impossible to uphold the hypostatizations that discursively construct difference when, according to Jung's archetypal endowments, the European "Self" is sharing the collective unconscious with its others. How does one sustain the reconstitution of the subject of cultural difference when individuation is not only a pathological symptom of familial repression, which in turn is the source of a shadow complex that reconciles tensions? Quite simply, the logic of the liminal space is as much contingent as it is ambivalent, so that the individual does not become the stigmatised, inferior Same. In the same breath, the collective bears testimony to universal potentialities that can be actualised in the reconciliation of tensions and opposites. Yet the site of the actualization and/or reconciliation is interstitial and, accordingly, the self-fashioning is ambivalent. That should better explain why Tambudzai will not be deterred by any of the alienating circumstances, saying:

... I was ashamed of my weakness in succumbing so flabbily to the strangeness of my new circumstances
... I reaffirmed my vow to use the opportunity my uncle had given me to maximum advantage (Dangarembga: 89).

It is not a matter of "embracing the shadow" for her emancipation and only that: Tambudzai affirms her place in the hybridised scheme of things, the evidence of which is nowhere better illustrated than in her guilt whenever she is close to a nativist

strain of anti-Europeanism. She confesses that she admires the smooth, healthy sun-brown skin of the young missionaries in spite of the suspicious nature of their enlightenment mission in "darkest" Africa:

I used to feel guilty and unnatural for not being able to love the Whites as I ought. So it was good to see the healthy young missionaries and discover that some Whites were as beautiful as we were (104).

In fact Tambudzai discovers that missionaries themselves are not the same for there are the 'strange' ones who speak more Shona than English and even their children did not speak English at all until they learnt it at school with and like Africans. One such missionary's child is Nyaradzo, who is White and Tambudzai's age and also Nyasha's "very good friend" (104-5). As Tambudzai stops seeing the shadow as the Enemy or Predator, she embraces difference so that she becomes eager to attend the multiracial secondary schools where blacks are even fewer and the consequences are, according to Nyasha, dire. For Tambudzai, though:

[Nyasha] was not very explicit about these consequences beyond assuring me that they would follow, and I did not push her because, in spite of the warning, I would still have liked to go to a multiracial school, and I liked the feeling of

ambition and aspiration that went with this desire (105).

There are two chief points that need to be made about this passage; Tambudzai anticipates the benefit of being in a situation of difference, where her hybridity and individuation are possible. For her, embracing difference seems to be part of the subject of cultural difference. And the second point follows directly from this, since it concerns her encounter with the differential discourses at the mission which enables her to resist being fashioned into the knowable other of the "stabilizing" presence of a White ontological identity. She is therefore seeing the opportunity of a liminal space, where the master narratives of the European civilising mission are both to be embraced and commensurately tested and contested. Hence embracing the shadow is a choice which is quite deliberate, particularly because the history that Nyasha blames for misrepresenting Africans has a direct link with the attitudes that inform the discourses in relation to which their subjectivity is constructed.

Without embracing the shadow and mimicry, though, the inclusion of blacks in mission school, or Sacred Heart later, can misrepresent the desire and pleasure of "the feeling of ambition and aspiration" (105), especially where blacks are made amenable to stereotypes generated by a discursive regime within a situation of difference in general and of a multiracial school in particular. In "Difference, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonisation", Bhabha says of this discursive regime:

Its predominant strategic function is the creation of a space for a "subject peoples" through the production of knowledges in terms of which surveillance is maintained. It seeks authorization for its strategies by the production of knowledges of colonizer and colonized. The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction (198).

Of key interest is that the space which is designated as the one occupied by a "subject peoples" does not actually belong to the "subject peoples". It is a site of objectification which is designated to make Tambudzai unhappy and desperate. Being the object of certain stereotyping and depersonalizing, there might be a misrecognition on the part of the colonial subject, invoking delusions of self-knowledge when the subjectivity of females continuously divides and splits. Yet the persona that assumes the image of an inferior other can mislead (and somehow disrupt the consciousness of) the colonizer or Shona patriarch.

Tambudzai's quest for education is not an act of wholesale adoption of values that are dangerous for her identity in so far as they can efface it through stereotypes essential to and symptomatic of the colonizer's discourse. These stereotypes also show the colonizer's incapacity to exercise the virtues of christianity, enlightenment as well as humanism. When Tambudzai

arrives at the convent she is confronted by inhuman and marginalising ways of greeting, ways that underscore objectification. She reconstructs the event:

At the door a nun, smiling beautifully, made us welcome by shaking our hands and asking us 'Which one is this?' before taking us up and down corridors to a room at the end of a long hallway (Dangarembga: 194).

Tambudzai, always determined to learn the English language, might internalise the stereotypically naturalised address of Africans as regarding her to be one amongst others that are the same. The Comaroffs explain the situation thus:

Colonizers in most places and at most times try to gain control over both the material and semantic practices through which their would-be subjects produce and reproduce the very basis of their existence (236).

If Tambudzai has all along been seeing the earlier difficulties as a result of "[f]emalesness as opposed and inferior to maleness" (Dangarembga: 116), it would make sense to forge links with other females such as Nyasha in order that they may share an identity as oppressed women. To say 'Which one is it' seems to be singling out one of those women whose solidarity is possibly amenable to generalising stereotypes. Having brought the arguments thus far, I should be able to show how Jung's influence

on Dangarembga counters the generalising of Tambudzai into Sameness by presenting her instead as the ego that emerges out of the fragments which gradually cohere. Brooke explains Jung's archetypal themes of childhood as a process of development:

Through childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood, the ego develops and strengthens, thus giving the person *a sense of identity and autonomy*. This development necessitates *overcoming the power of the Great Mother*, so it often symbolised by the hero slaying the dragon in some form and embarking on a journey (22, my emphasis).

One reason why the reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse cannot be distanced from Jung's archetypes is that it more or less duplicates the conditions under which differential discourses can be simultaneously embraced and undermined through a disseminatory negotiation that renders the journey emancipatory. One might add that Tambudzai appropriates the violence of naming by categorizing the nuns, paying particular attention to their vices as well as insisting on difference in order that she may make discriminatory choices, choices that underline negative attributes rather than emphasise a disseminatory negotiation that continues nonetheless:

There were nuns to be observed and classified according to whether they were human or not, lay-teachers whose idiosyncracies had to be identified so

that you did not fall prey to them. The white students needed careful study to decide whether they were different or similar to me, whether they were likeable or not and what their habits were (Dangarembga: 195).

This description evidences the restaging of the values attending difference. For it is in and through such a restaging of values that her identity and individuality will be assured. Not only that, the agency or reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse is shown to necessarily involve the transposition and substitution of the subject of cultural difference, culminating in an alterity that bears testimony to what the Comaroffs earlier on in this chapter designated as the "long history of symbolic struggle" (235). Tambudzai is engaged in the kind of struggle mentioned here, not only constituted but also constituting (in an ambivalent mode of self-fashioning) discursive conditions of possibility. The continuity of this self-fashioning is in turn commensurate with the splitting and doubling that effects alterity on the part of the colonizer, too - a phenomenon that should better elucidate the significance of overcoming what Jung calls the Great Mother.

Overcoming the Great Mother, acquiring education, restaging the relationship between males and females: these underline the trajectory of the differential history of female subjectivities. The Great Mother, somewhat ironically stood for by the white nun, is overcome by the act of acknowledgement that there is value in difference, that difference engenders the possibility of making

transparent and transmutable the relations of power. As fear is overcome, the Great Mother and the Enlightenment values of progress, as well as the English language as an enabling tool, are embraced by Tambudzai.

There is no denying the elegance and persuasiveness of Leon de Kock's argument in *"Civilising Barbarians: Missionary Narrative and African Textual Response in Nineteenth-Century South Africa"*: that the mission governed access to African social and cultural empowerment, further insisting that these Africans had little choice but to embrace the progressive ethos and religious values "embedded in the exalted medium of English which was promoted in missionary education" (56). Tambudzai, like Lucia later, finds the mission crucial in the symbolic struggle that later culminates in the wholeness or "selfing" of women, albeit that their subjectivity has to undergo divisions that render them "unnatural" in relation to traditional and colonial discourses. "Unnaturalness" indicates the new enunciative position that emerges when mimicry turns the discursive conditions of dominance into grounds of intervention.

In "The Transculturation of English" we learn that the position of acknowledging difference and, through embracing modernity, the incorporation into a global and teleological history and adaptability to change of in-between figures can become currency (Attwell: 12). Taking this further, Attwell agrees with de Kock when he describes that in-betweenness of colonial subjects as being in an "antagonistic" relationship to power (244 - quoted

in Attwell). It seems that the difficulty of the interface is not based on antagonisms but a multiplicity that, true to the colonial experience, bears witness to the agony of subversion. Bhabha, as in the case of de Kock, is more precise when he explains the agonistic in "Signs Taken for Wonders": the colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative, and its articulation as original and authoritative (169).

The slippage that is effected at the heart of the colonial episteme is nowhere more apparent than in Tambudzai's ability to see tan skins instead of either black or white ones in the missionaries' children. She can use her gaze to disrupt the discourse underpinning the construction of the other. There are possibilities for reconciling females with males, colonizer and colonized, victims and oppressors. It only takes being unnatural, being outside cultural discourse's axiomatics; that is, being situated uncannily between adaptation to culture while resisting its indoctrination. One would do well to remember here that being "unnatural" is understood in terms of a deliberate and conscious effort by females such as Nyasha in her rebellious rantings or Tambudzai in her resistance to culture's call (or, in fact, cultural discourse's claim) for a woman's subservience, or even Lucia's forthright, confrontational character. That is to say, being unnatural is in a sense affirming the subjectivity of women.

At the same time, though, Nyasha's behaviour does sometimes cast

a shadow of doubt as to whether it confirms or disavows her subjectivity. She does not sustain the mimicry that underlines ambivalence but rejects the positionality of the subject of cultural discourse. At some moments, she misdirects her anger by further debilitating her selfhood in what at first may seem like a rejection of her constructed subjectivity. She stabs herself and, rejecting the dependency of taking whatever comes from Babamukuru as immutably coming with patriarchal authority, becomes weak. In fact, she "grew weaker by the day. She weaved when she walked and every night was the same" (Dangarembga: 200).

On the one hand, one senses a willingness to disaffirm the strength of females that was always deliberately eschewed by social representations of cultural discourse. It does not look as if she gains more ground when she first has to be weak in order that she may deny patriarchal objectification. That cannot be efficacious. On the other hand, Shorter emphasises the role of the father with regard to anorexic behaviour in Jungian terms of the father archetype:

her own father figure will be decisive, the one whose conscious participation, like that of Zeus, fulfills or denies incest responsibility with consequent effect on the psychological maturation of his girl-child however their relationship is ritually contained, represented and interested (8, quoted in Samuels).

The significance of this archetype is elucidated by the effect of the father's failure to support his daughter as far as her initiation into adult womanhood is concerned. Says Shorter:

a woman may either strive to *become* an authority, or convert a man into a fatherly authority for herself and serve him. She may flee from her sexuality, or maltreat her body, as in anorexia nervosa (Samuels: 165).

Babamukuru failed to support her, but instead "thought she was making a scene" (Dangarembga: 200). He misrecognizes the symptoms of difficult existence in hybridizing conditions. But she understands that Babamukuru is himself a victim of what Nyasha explains to Tambudzai as a process:

The process...was called assimilation, and that was what was intended for the precocious few who might prove a nuisance if left to themselves, whereas the others - well really, who cared about the others? So they made a little space into which you were assimilated, an honorary space in which you could join them and they could make sure that you behaved yourself (179).

Dangarembga somewhat privileges Nyasha, so that one cannot totally reject her agency on the basis of an obvious lack of tact. Her space of agency and her inconsistencies can be

explained in terms of an overdetermined space which, on account of her displacement with regard to Shona culture, is ambivalent. She is trying to work through the interstices of her situation and does not find it any easier to "embrace the shadow" when Babamukuru is not as sympathetic as he should be, not to mention supportive. The reality of Babamukuru's interstitial positioning can be explained according to Nyasha's description when she actually sympathises with him, whereas it should be the other way round:

It's not their fault. They did it to them too. You know they did...[t]o both of them, but especially to him. They put him through it all. But it's not his fault, he's good (Dangarembga: 200).

Babamukuru's subjectivity is also constructed by colonial discourses, meaning that his actions, however they may index oppressive patriarchal axiomatics, should be perceived as overdetermined. We cannot, however, excuse his failure to make relevant choices when modernity offered them as such. The pathologies of modernity in the context of contingencies and the incoherence of the traditional purgation of curses should have signified to him that education or even the colonial edict cannot claim metaphysical authority for itself. The legitimating factors of the colonial master narrative are being tested and contested by the colonial situation. This is not apparent to him because of the power he wields, and perhaps, the trappings of power he owns.

Nyasha pities him even where she is a victim of the pathologies Babamukuru cannot explore:

I don't hate you, Daddy ... [t]hey want me to, but I won't (Dangarembga: 201).

Nyasha's consciousness of the extent to which the subjectivities of colonized subjects are constructed in relation to colonial discourses does not extend into the realm of women's agency. As I earlier pointed out, she does not sympathise with Maiguru; she thinks Maiguru silences herself despite her qualifications; she cautions Tambudzai of the disadvantages of being in the nun's school. What is more striking here is her disavowal of possibilities for the reconstituting of the subject of cultural difference. It is here, in the space against which Nyasha admonishes Tambudzai, that the misrule of discourse takes place. Tambudzai recalls:

they made a little space into which you were assimilated ... into which you could join them and they could make sure that you behaved yourself. I would be comfortable in such a position, she remarked nastily, because look how well I had got on with Babamukuru. But, she insisted *one ought not to occupy that space.* (179 - my emphasis).

Rejecting that space, Nyasha disavows ambivalence; but that ambivalence is being staged when Tambudzai rationalizes the

"Englishness" that her mother laments and resolves to affirm the subject of cultural discourse within the realities of interstitial positioning in the history of divided subjectivities. Tambudzai, then, will speak symptomatically and exercise her agency as she engages in a disseminatory negotiation with the colonial edict. Her position, like Maiguru's later, relates more to the undecidability of a discourse whose central ambivalence reflects the historical contingencies attending interstices. Her residence in such a space is amenable to her differential representation of the liminality of cultural knowledges, ambivalent as they are in modernity. She embraces modernity and its social pathologies in order that she may reinscribe her difference in a fashion that lends authority to her marginal articulation of her selfhood. The shadow Tambudzai embraces is thus shown not to possess the quintessential properties of the predator but rather propensities to undecidability. It is her undecidability that, according to "Freedom's Basis in the Indeterminate", is "built into the factual processes of mutual understanding" (Bhabha: 50).

Jung similarly speaks of the reconciliation of opposites in the quest for wholeness qua persona. To "embrace the shadow" is in Bhabha's terms, a form of subversion, "founded on that uncertainty that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention" ("Signs Taken for Wonders": 173). It is this uncertainty, to which a Jungian reading of Dangarembga's narrative alludes as it refers to the "grateful

poor female relative" (116), that reveals the liminality of cultural knowledges on a differential and contingent scale.

CHAPTER 2

FAMILY, AGENCY AND AUTHORITY: REPRESENTING GROUP SUBJECTIVITY AND RESISTANCE

This chapter argues that the reconfiguration of cultural discourse in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* finds expression in the reconstitution of the representation of the family. Since the family with its patriarchal head triangulates individual females and reterritorialises desire at a social level, the individual's libidinal attachments are immediately social. The reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse requires a coherent notion of collective agency, irrespective of the fragmented psyche of individuals since the subject engages institutions. Thus, it is important that we see the family as one of the available ways of underwriting multiplicity as group subjectivity; for the family, in itself a site of social inscription, at some moments renders an individual such as Tambudzai a member of a subject group (*groupe assujetti*) and at others prohibits her existence as a group-subject (*groupe-sujet*). The distinction between the two, carefully explained by Felix Guattari in *Psychoanalysis and Transversality*, is that the subjected group receives its determinations from other groups, while the group subject proposes to "rediscover its internal law, its project, its action, in relation to other groups" (156). Thus I will proceed, following Guattari, from the premise that group subjectivity constitutes "the absolute preliminary to the emergence of all individual subjectivity" (90).

Dangarembga's strategy, I shall attempt to explain throughout, seems to locate characters in the tension between acceding to a representation that situates characters within a subjected group or resisting that representation in so far as they can, like Tambudzai, become the group subject. She refuses to comply with the characteristic existence as a subjected group, considering that such a group reinforces traditional roles, concepts, hierarchies and modes of exclusion (53). The said tension, however, constitutes not only the gist of the narrative but also the interstitial space that emerges in the form of splits or even a lack that is acted upon. Dangarembga calls the tension of this ambivalence "embracing the shadow" (Wilkinson: 191), a way of rethinking norms, values and customs - both traditional and Western - in a way that affirms them as if they are not diametrically opposed but require each other for the subject's survival. It seems plausible, then, to explain the familial representation in *Nervous Conditions* as a contestation, as part of the "representations of the world [that] in written discourse are engaged in accommodating their writers, performers, readers, and audiences to multiple and shifting subject positions within the world they both constitute and inhabit" (Montrose: 16).

The family, therefore, becomes a site of ambivalence whose socius inscribes a lack within which individuals, especially females like Nyasha, Maiguru and Lucia, must find their identity and agency. I maintain that this lack is related to and corresponds with Oedipal representation which, coinciding with the colonial edict, cannot sustain itself. Hence there is in *Nervous*

Conditions the opportunity for Dangarembga to proffer a representation that brings to view the dysfunctional socius whose repressive character emphasises identity by differentiation and triangulation. Dangarembga's representation does not fix possibilities by being absolute or complete, rather, it reveals the instability of identity by positing liminality. To this effect Dangarembga's novel depicts the family as one of the focal points of "an uneven, incomplete production of meaning and value, establishing the family as part of the symbolic textuality that, in its promise of pleasure and possibility of stagnation, renders the women's search for emancipation an act of social survival" (Bhabha: *Freedom's Basis in the Indeterminate*: 47). She once said, in an interview:

I find that with my experience, being a woman and an African woman and having had the background I have had, it's difficult to make any points of any sort outside the family framework. This is the clay I am used to working with. (Wilkinson: 193).

So that, if anything, Tambudzai's story is not after all about death, "but about my escape and Lucia's; about my mother's and Maiguru's entrapment; and about Nyasha's rebellion" (Dangarembga: 4). This clearly shows the extent to which escape and emancipation, or the impossibility of these, are constitutive of auratic practices that underline social survival. Thus, following the tension of Dangarembga's interventionist representation, the

women's acts of social survival determine whether each of them remains part of a subjected group or achieves the status of a group-subject. Extending the thesis I proposed in Chapter 1, the adaptation of a persona of "the grateful poor female relative" is also an act of social survival. For a while Tambudzai constructs a group fantasy around Babamukuru, "around an 'institutional object' that is never called to question, thereby granting the individual a parasitic 'immortality'" (Guattari: 168).

In terms of a strict consideration of gender relations, it would perhaps be germane to begin by looking at the way in which sexual difference is used against females within an excluding cultural production-cum-representation. Tambudzai's quest for education, giving substance to a specific history of cultural displacement, allows her space for acting on the lack imposed by the socius and therefore accords an aura of selfhood to the cultural experience of her time. She explains that she did "understand why she could not go to school, but [she] loved going to school and was good at it Therefore, [her] circumstances affected [her] badly". (Dangarembga: 15) These circumstances are what familial representation ushers women into; they constitute an accession to the differentiation that imitates the strong othering process which colonialism attempted but could not sustain. Tambudzai cannot be successfully represented, by the repressive socius, as a unified self that is easily mappable into social debt.

Arguing that filiation is administrative and hierarchical, Deleuze and Guattari insist that debt is a primary disequilibrium

which sets in motion the circulation of gifts (Tambu's temporary acceptance that Nhamo must, in her stead, go to school) and counter-gifts (Nhamo's guaranteed place of privilege in relation to his sister) (Deleuze and Guattari: 146). Nhamo assumes that the debt being paid to him is indeed naturally due to him, but it is all really a matter of representation being governed by a phallic master-signifier.

And you had better stop being jealous. Why are you jealous anyway?, he retaliated, free to use all his ammunition now because I began the engagement. Did you ever hear of a girl being taken away to school? You are lucky you even managed to go back to Rutivi. With me it's different. I was meant to be educated (49).

Since it is the appropriation of sexist differentiation in operation here, it should not surprise us that Nhamo actually echoes the Law of the Father, as spoken by his father earlier : In fact, "have you ever heard of a woman who remains in her father's house?" growled my father, "She will meet a young man and I will have lost everything" (30).

For Jeremiah, a man whose inadequacy and lack of wealth render him all too ready to dismiss the need to educate his children, tends to be rather predictable as to his source of authority and signification: the phallic signifier. In educating Tambudzai he will be losing, as he expresses it, everything. The usage of

"everything" must be severely qualified, especially since we own that he has no authority in terms of his social standing but only as the head of the family, as the male administrator whose gender engenders the debt of privilege on the part of women. His efficiency is unquestionable since he is male. This becomes all the more clear when Mr Matimba intervenes in Tambudzai's fight against Nhamo.

I am shamed of you, ... Nhamo, if you are going to fight your sister, who will look after her? And you Tambudzai, must also behave better (Dangarembga: 23).

Without establishing the causes of the fight by way of listening to each one's side of the story, he proceeds to echo the phallic signifier's claim on a woman's passivity. She must, according to Mr Matimba, behave better. Put differently, she must be an exemplary subject who acknowledges specific gender differentiations that render males custodians of welfare and life itself. Tambudzai's actions, however, are not merely indicative of a rebellion but a sum total of acts of assertiveness. Dangarembga allows her space to assert herself through the English language, education and encounter with Englishness. Albeit entrenching in many ways the colonial edict's attempts at the colonization of thought and consciousness, the ambivalence that arises opens up an interstitial space which, even though entered through lack, cannot totally affirm the othering of women. Instead, it parodies itself by being situated in a site of enunciation that permits education to be instrumental in the

negation of the phallic signifier and the colonial edict. Hence Tambudzai finds Maiguru appealing as a woman who, in spite of having to play a "woman's role" in the household, manages to be educated.

Yet it is the voice of a woman, Tambudzai's mother, that confirms the irony of being educated as a woman in a mother-daughter conversation:

Even Maiguru knows how to cook and clean and grow vegetables. This business of womanhood is a heavy burden, she said. How could it not be? Aren't we the ones who bear children? When it is like that you can't just decide today I want to do this, tomorrow I want to do that, the next day I want to be educated (16).

It seems the destiny of women is fathomable only if it is by phallic design, which is symbolically confirmed when, coming back from England, and her education notwithstanding, "Maiguru entered last and alone" (Dangarembga: 37). In a sense, education initially seems to do less in the way of social and domestic amelioration of the condition of women, recalling as it does Tambudzai's mother who thinks it is difficult for women to be immediately decisive about their lives "with the poverty of blackness on one side and the weight of womanhood on the other" (16). Dangarembga, however, allows us to have women who receive an education to the extent of being emancipated. Tambudzai and

Nyasha are two women who each strive to attain the status of a group-subject using a discourse of liberation founded on Englishness and education. Through these she will be able to "modify the different coefficients of unconscious transversality at different levels of the [family] institution and to bring about a structural redefinition of the role of each person" (Guattari: 80).

It is important at this stage, especially when referring to the amelioration of the condition of women, to appreciate the significance of the title of Dangarembga's novel. That the book is named *Nervous Condition* is not only an apt way to describe the colonial subject but also significant as regards the deployment of Frantz Fanon's insights into the structure of the novel. Thus it is also the intention of this discussion to show that the acquisition of the English language, education and an encounter with Englishness are indices and differentials by which the novel attempts to show that "psycho-affective equilibrium", as Fanon himself defines it (210), can be achieved. This psycho-affective equilibrium is shown to be achieved by Tambudzai through her equanimity of mind, in her quest for the acquisition of the colonial language of English, in her balance between the oral history of the native and modernity's version in institutional education, and in her consciousness of something called "Englishness".

When Tambudzai points to Babamukuru to show that education is essential in enhancing the dignity of native people, albeit

informed by the colonial edict, she brings to view the extent to which education can be used to redefine family relations and empower women. Tambudzai sees fit to put paid to a situation where "tears of impotent rage threatened to decompose [her]" (23). She sees fit to upset the anticipated failure of women, that "weight of womanhood" (16). Instead she declares:

Whereas before I had believed with childish confidence that burdens were only burdens in so far as you chose to bear them, now I began to see that the disappointing events surrounding Babamukuru's return were serious consequences of the same general laws that has almost brought my education to an abrupt, predictable end. It was frightening. I did not want my life to be predicted by such improper relations. I decided I would just have to make up my mind not let it happen (38 - emphasis added).

Assimilation, the first step towards revolutionary practice, means access to the first site of colonial enunciation, the site of origination. Fanon's deployment of assimilation indicates that the native should have access to notions of enlightenment, freedom and justice, for these would be instrumental in gaining for him/her insights which should be augmented by the peculiar ambivalent colonial experience. Elsewhere Tambudzai, explaining why she is incapacitated in speech when she is supposed to converse with an old white couple, identifies their language as

something to be acquired as a requisite for progress, or even an enabling tool for knowledge:

I was obliged to tell him that I did not know because I did not speak English. But, I assured him, I was going to learn English when I went back to school (28).

English is not only the language of progress but of access to the colonial speaker's spheres of "othering" and "selfing" capacity. So that Tambudzai can have access not only to a language that commits the violence of naming her a "mite" but also to the liberal humanistic attitudes of Doris, her "benefactor". Seeing oneself as an absolute other, Dangarembga seems to say, deprives the colonial subject of the internal logic of the colonial edict's master narratives of modernity.

Contact with other groups helps the subjected group to find an identity in, to refer to Bhabha, a spectacular position of difference (Attwell: 103). Tambudzai knows that she is being called a "kaffir" by the beefy white youth, a racist remark; she is being called a "mite" and a piccanin, an ageist condescending remark; and Babamukuru, of all people, does not call her name without first indexing her as a girl: "When we heard that both Nhamo and heyo-er, this girl-er, Tambudzai" (Dangarembga: 46). This is all-important in the light of the fact that Babamukuru, now guilty of reinforcing the symbolic Oedipal discursive field with his education, and attempting to forget

Tambudzai's name, desires to render it in picturesque terms. He repeats, with a promise of disquieting chronicity:

I will not feel that I have done my duty if I neglect her for that reason. Er - this girl - heyo, Tambudzai - must be given the opportunity to do what she can for the family before she goes into her husband's home (58).

I will return here to the observations by Deleuze and Guattari, that filiation is administrative and hierarchical, which means that Babamukuru, although admirable for having "[p]lenty of power. Plenty of money, a lot of education. Plenty of everything" (50), is exercising the authority bequeathed to him by education in order to reinforce hierarchical ends disguised as administrative roles. Be it noted that Babamukuru is somewhat arrogant and self-aware as regards his importance as the head of the family. From his first day of returning from England, his assimilation into ideas of progress, he appreciates everybody, although in a distancing fashion he methodically greets everyone: "'Yes, yes,' he kept saying: 'It is good, it is good'" (37). This is the same man who, to use Tambudzai's own phrasing, when he speechifies, which as head of the family he had to do often, captivates attention and arrogates to himself a sense of self-importance by "clearing his throat and removing pieces of meat that had stuck between his teeth with the slim blade of his multi-blade penknife" (44). Instead of being plain, he imposes his foppish preponderance over others.

Dangarembga, however, decides to portray Babamukuru saying grace, as if that were anticipating, not strictly consonant with, the meal that "began with much clapping of hands, praising of the gods for their providence and us for our hard work" (41). Elsewhere, as Nhamo displays his male arrogance, we hear the 'soon-to-be-educated' retorting to Tambudzai that Babamukuru did not use a fork and knife at the wedding ceremony because there were none available, that Babamukuru did not want to embarrass Jeremiah's poor family. Thus Tambudzai concedes that she "could not argue with such concrete evidence". Babamukuru's response to Uncle Thomas' and Jeremiah's eulogies, which magnify Tete Gladys' praise, is fairly simple considering that Jeremiah went down on one knee to do homage: "Babamukuru belched magnanimously" (47).

His modesty in insisting that they should not thank him is not so much pretentious as it is indicative of Dangarembga's sympathy towards the colonized man. It is perhaps true that, as Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi notes: "The intelligent black woman writer, conscious of black impotence in the context of white patriarchal culture, empowers the black man. She believed in him, hence her books and integrative images of the male and female worlds" (Lockett: 16). The suggestion, it seems, is that the radical feminist attitude should be eschewed; instead, the representation of the emancipation of women should be womanistic and therefore cognizant of the need for the unity of the marginalized subjected groups facing oppression on the basis of race and class.

It is precisely because of this womanistic tendency of accommodating and sympathising with men that Babamukuru, for all his arrogance and failure to mobilise reconstitution through education, remains the model of a powerful being, to an extent that the acquisition of education depends more on him than on Doris, the old white woman. Babamukuru, therefore, is being depicted as what Fanon called that native intellectual who, in spite of an education received from the West, in spite of British education's possibilities for assimilation, maintains his traditional role as the administrative head of the family since he "discovered that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the past, but rather dignity, glory, and solemnity" (Fanon: 210). Of course Shona society is being decolonised and the conditions of change cannot allow for an unproblematic re-invention of a "glorious" past. The family is now a site of the reinscription of cultural identities. Through this attitude, also manifest in Tambudzai's respect for the oral history told by her grandmother in the fields, Dangarembga stresses the psycho-affective equilibrium that results from going back to traditional norms and values that have been salvaged by the claim to a national culture. One can safely say that Dangarembga's attempts, nowhere more apparent than in the family's patriarchal marks of the socius, can be seen without the evocation of yet another rendition of the colonial binaries, because Lucia's an-oedipal acts of promiscuity ought not be read as Negro barbarity and bestiality. That is to say that Oedipal thematics are seen to be situating the immanent discursive field within which a colonial subject is constructed, although negotiating the construction of

identity requires a lack preconfigured by both the colonial edict and the Law of the Father.

Let me point out that women as a subjected group rather than as group-subjects should be seen as reconstituting the subject of cultural discourse in ways outside of, and therefore not liable to the judgement of, a grammar and signification that enforces rules of triangulation. For it is possible to recuperate agency by acting on the lack effected by a patriarchal, containing grammar.

'Ha! You!' mocked my mother, raving at her sister. You think you can tell me to contain myself, you! He-hee! Now this is something to make a woman laugh! When Lucia, just tell me, when, did you ever contain yourself? Do you ever know what it means, you who were in the blankets with my husband the moment you arrive? And with Takesure. You were probably there, the three of you together, Jeremiah having his ride, enjoying himself, and then Takesure, and so it carried on (Dangarembga: 140).

We also read that Lucia is a wild woman in spite of her beauty, that she sleeps with anybody and everybody, and that she is in a sense incestuous in sleeping with Jeremiah, her brother-in-law, and with Takesure, a distant cousin of Jeremiah's. Lucia, then, deterritorializes the social codes that channel desiring-production into prescribed pathways, claiming as she does her

place as a group-subject whose agency is exercised by articulating new significations and new modes of interactions, which demand and acquire becoming - animal, becoming-promiscuous (76). She produces fantasies that directly contradict and call into question the institutional object around which familial representation is organised: the family as that grammar that facilitates the signification of the Law of the Father. Through becoming such a group-subject Lucia reconfigures the subject of cultural discourse, since her libido is represented through extra-familial desire.

Escape from the grammar of patriarchy underlines the agency of women in affecting a structural redefinition of desire, which alters the way in which the power of Babamukuru and others will be exercised. This is especially true where there is an exploration of desire outside monogamy and bigamy, given that the latter enforces the controlling aim of containing within the structure of the family apparently schizoid desire - the desire symptomizing and arising out of "nervous conditions".

In his reaction to Nyasha's late home coming, Babamukuru is horrified by the possibility of disembedded forms of desiring - production:

No decent girl would stay out alone, with a boy,
at that time of the night, Babamukuru was
insisting in a quavering tenor. But you did it.
I saw you (Dangarembga: 113).

Again, recalling Lucia's nomadic and deterritorialised approximations of desire, by stating that Nyasha sleeps "with anybody and everybody" like Lucia (126), Babamukuru becomes defensive:

I am your father. And in that capacity, I am telling you, I - am - telling - you, that I do not like the way you are always walking about with these - er- young men today this one, tomorrow that one. What's the matter with you, girl? Why can't you behave like a young woman from a decent home? (113).

What this means, translated in the thematics of reconfiguration is this:

I am your Authority/Administration. And in that capacity the "I" of my Authority demands subjectification by telling you, I - am - subjectifying you - that I do not like the way you express nomadic (walking about) thought through smashing the one-person channelled desiring-production of our society by migrating from desiring-machine to desiring machine. Today this one, tomorrow that one. What is the escape for, girl? Why can't you behave like a proper subject of triangulation?

These foregoing lines should explain quite lucidly why Lucia's extra-familial desire earns her the epithet "witch" and Nyasha

the name "whore" (114). It does not take the immediate proclamation from Chido as the male principle to say: "You are the daughter There are some things you never do" (117).

Even Tambudzai earlier on recounts what her grandmother insisted on when telling a story that indicated "that life could be lived with a modicum of dignity in any circumstances if you worked hard enough and obeyed the rules" (19). Nyasha's rebellion seems to be directly answering to her grandmother's admonition when, first, she makes it a point to look as though she had been to England with the little dress she wears, "hardly enough of it to cover her thighs" (37); second, she indicates her solidarity with Tambudzai when she lets water slop out of the dish on to one disclaiming uncle's feet, indicating that solidarity "with the ghost of a smile and a twitch of her eye," which Tambudzai thinks is insulting (41); third, Nyasha clicks her tongue scornfully and switches herself off when she is told to join in the dancing (43); fourth, when it is apparent to Tambudzai that Nyasha shows little respect for her mother and can say anything to her (74), even confronting her about her copy of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (83); fifth, and perhaps the most spectacular, when she punches Babamukuru in the eye (115).

Even if too Anglicised, as Maiguru explains (74), Nyasha is self-conscious about the fact and the difference of being back home, especially if she cannot be what she wants to be in the familial scheme of things:

It's not England any more and I ought to adjust. But when you've seen different things you want to be sure you're adjusting to the right thing. You cannot go on all the time being whatever's necessary. You've got to have some conviction, and I am convinced I don't want to be anyone's underdog. It's not right for anyone to be that. *But once you get used to it, well, it just seems natural and you just carry on. And that's the end of you. You're trapped. They control everything you do* (117-emphasis added).

Nyasha observes what Tambudzai has been witnessing when she states that "Babamukuru was God" (70) when she (Nyasha) becomes impatient with him to the extent that she "can't just shut up when he puts on his God act" (190). Indeed, Babamukuru is the ultimate point of reference, the way, the truth and the door to prosperity through his education. If Babamukuru is "the institutional object" around which the group fantasy of an education - inspired fantasy is constructed, then it is only temporary that he is not called to question. As in Chapter 1, he is seen as providing the connection for the entry into a "contact zone" that is at once a site of difference and an environment of "trust" (Giddens: 102) allowing entry into the discourse of equality. He represents the master-signifier without reference to whom, without the relation to whom, nobody else signifies. In a letter to Tambudzai, Nyasha calls him a "revered patriarch" (Dangarembga: 197). The approximation of significance-as-God is further amplified by Tambudzai's dissatisfaction:

I was and would remain Tambudzai, the daughter. Babamukuru was still and would always be the closest thing a human being could get to God (199).

He gives content to every signifier that forms Tambudzai's dream. Although Tambudzai is aware of Babamukuru's power, Tambudzai embraces him as a "transitional fantasy". He effects the holy family by suggesting marriage to Tambudzai when she should be sent to Sacred Heart (180). And yet, Ma'Shingayi shows the irony of his power when she suggests things less than holy about this God-figure: "Truly that man is calling down a curse of bad luck on my head ... ruling my life. He says this and we jump" (184). This attitude is a result of the repression that is caused by assigning lack to these trapped women: the need for education and marriage. Unfortunately, the problems are legion where that lack causes a conflict between repression and ambition, as evidence by Nyasha's condition. The dynamics of power that attend an acquisition of education are acted upon in a manner that anticipates schizoid existence in the case of Nyasha.

In effect, therefore, and this should do well to conclude this chapter, the patriarchal signifier that organises all other signifiers or dreams becomes dispersed and deauthorised such that the representation of these trapped women is disfigured as the cultural space in which they have to operate becomes a matrix for a group-subject which has as its task "a structural redefinition of the role of each person and a re-orientation of the whole" (Guattari: 80).

Throughout the novel, the representation of the family is traced back to Babamukuru, who in turn seems to uphold a traditional representation of the family such that it parallels history as represented by colonial discourses. For it is this particular history of representation that elides the agency of women and men in cultural discourse. Thus Dangarembga privileges, although uncomfortably, the schizoid voice resisting representation as a subjected group:

Do you see what they've done? They have taken us away. Lucia. Takesure. All of us. They've deprived you of you, him of him, ourselves of each other (200).

This is a statement about, a direct symptom of, the repression that accompanies the hypostasis of the subject of cultural discourse; for it takes a radical departure from the history of representation at the familial level, something that sees Tambudzai eschewing marriage, attempting to reconfigure her agency, to redefine the role of Babamukuru as the one who is mad because of that history. Lucia exclaims, "Babawanguwe!" and adds, "But there are still mad people in the world, isn't it?" (170). This seems to be a redundant question until one considered what uses femaleness is put to in marriage. The postcolonial family, or rather a particular representation of it, renders one and all "mad", Babamukuru included; hence Lucia points out:

Well, Babamukuru ... maybe when you marry a woman, she is obliged to obey you. But some of us aren't married, so we do not know how to do it. That is why I have been able to tell you frankly what is in my heart. It is better that way so that tomorrow I don't go behind your back and say the first thing that comes into my head (171).

The point is that, against the demands of established familial representation, she takes her place with an agency that reflects extra-familial desire. She affirms that the subject of cultural discourse can be reconfigured by resisting triangulation, and that everything else that is in the service of an oppressive familial representation - like education - can be reconstituted such that it may empower women, such that it may effect "psycho-affective equilibrium" rather than leave one at the position of radical schizoid truths that underline Nyasha's nervous conditions. Dangarembga's narrative strategy, therefore, is one that reconfigures the subject of cultural discourse by setting up familial representation through three different positions. Firstly, that of Maiguru who, despite her education, temporarily acquiesces to the entrapment that results from her marriage. For her it is a question of choosing "between self and security" (101). Then follows the position of Lucia, who transgresses all the strict inscriptions of the socius by being promiscuous and incestuous. The third position is that of Nyasha, which defies everything in its rebellion, instead of defying a specific phallic master signifier. Tambudzai, though, strives to achieve

"psycho-affective equilibrium" by prioritising not marriage but education. She participates in a marginalized cultural discourse that does not hinge on familial inscription. It becomes quite clear that she needs, and I suspect that this is a deliberate Fanonian design, to go through "assimilation" at the Sacred Heart College, which is followed by an "immersion" in the values of respect that caricatured Nyasha's rebellion and then let this be followed by an altogether reconfigured subject of cultural discourse, which is "revolutionary practice". At the core of this later practice is a strategic group subjectivity that does not reject but reconstitutes familial representation. It does not privilege passionate opposition to an extent of teetering on the brink of madness. This can be heard in Tambudzai's voice when she says with equanimity:

I told myself I was a much more sensible person than Nyasha, because I knew what could or couldn't be done. In this way, I banished the suspicion, buried it in depths of my subconscious, and happily went back to Sacred Heart (203).

Dangarembga, therefore, brings to view the choices that modernity offers in its ambivalence. She allows Tambudzai and the rest of the women to explore modernity's pathologies with their deauthorising practices, to acquire an aura of selfhood under alienating circumstances of social marginality. A reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse then, is not so much rejection of modernity or of education as a transposition of the

colonial edict. Nor is it that the family is in itself deleterious: it is more that reconfiguration asserts a different frame of representation, one that gives Tambudzai's choices an auratic authority in her struggle to find her place as a group-subject.

CONCLUSION

While my criticism mobilised colonial discourse theory with the intention of contributing to the larger meditation on postcolonialism, I equally asserted that criticism around Tsisti Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* shouldn't, as the bent of this dissertation shows, elide the psychologism to which the novel's title bears testimony. Thus in accounting for women's histories of divided subjectivities in a Shona situation of colonisation and decolonisation, "the split-apart condition" of which Dangarembga speaks (Wilkinson: 193), she subscribes to a Jungian psycho-analytic model of development when she repeatedly invokes the Shadow archetype. Accordingly, the novel's representation has been understood to reflect Dangarembga's movement from strictly Fanonist explications of the colonial subject. I speculated, and reasonably evidenced, that this shift could be amenable to connections with Bhabha's revisions of Fanon's work, especially when Dangarembga deliberately enlists Jung's theory of archetypes. Surely there is some purpose in this: archetypes are related to each other, and if Fanon has hitherto suggested a wedge between self and other, coloniser and colonized, the discursive hypostasis of these opposites is not only eschewed but also dispelled by a reference to Jung's emphasis on the resolution of oppositional conflicts and "embracing the shadow".

Dangarembga's representation of the female putative Other within the family mirrors the postcolonial problematic in its conflation of dream and reality when Tambudzai "dreams" about Nhamo:

he paused from time to time to pick a fat juicy cob and stuff it in his mouth. The cobs were full of white gravy.... I saw him eat and became alarmed that he would make himself ill with the strange mealies He spoke with such authority that I was ashamed of deserting this family that I did not have. So when my husband appeared at the bottom of the field I was not surprised, only terrified, to see it was Babamukuru and his two ferocious dogs tracking me down to return me to my spouse. Then I remembered that I was at school and began to explain to say I should wash first. I was half-way to the bathroom before I realised that I had woken up (Dangarembga: 90).

That the shadow emerged in a dream as the Evil Stranger (Stevens: 42), and that dream being reality, the white gravy and the family seem not only to generate the complex but also require to be seen beyond their dream mode. By this I mean that familial repression, the very source of the shadow complex, can provide possibilities for the development of its opposite: selfhood. Of necessity, the "Evil Stranger", the white juice or education, must be in reality embraced. The Stranger is evil in the dream yet conditionally; so too with education (the white gravy of strange mealies). In fact it is not so much that the colonial edict, education or the family are deleterious; it is more that these are ambivalent and that modernity gives women the opportunity to exercise their agency within the interstitial conditions. The more successful of these women, Tambudzai, goes through a process of ambivalent

self-fashioning. The interface between binary oppositions is difficult yet uncannily progressive.

Engendered by the colonial edict, the alienating conditions of social marginality are symptomatic of the pathologies of modernity that are explored by Tambudzai and Maiguru, so much so that the values of Enlightenment may effect a critical enhancement to the extent that they may be enabling tools for the reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse. Similarly, the in-betweenness of Tambudzai bears marks of new enunciative positions as she assumes her persona as an obedient female who adapts and effects mimicry. Her adaptation involves an adoption of colonial, missionary and traditional discourses and entails the transculturation and transvaluation of the aims of the colonial edict. Where the discourse of cultural difference could have othered and depersonalised women, a new enunciative position and auratic authority is discernible in Tambudzai's transculturative and transvaluative history.

Once transculturated and transvaluated, the discursive particulars of cultural difference are amenable to a re-writing of the history of female subjectivity. The re-writing, done in retrospect, is the defining moment in a process of "selfing", a moment when it is possible to re-articulate a femininity that does not fall into a trap of ushering in false womanhood. The position from which this re-articulation takes place underwrites the auratic authority of an affirmative re-writing of group subjectivity, especially of the kind that arises from a problematic representation of familial relations. Following

Guattari, I have used the term "group subjectivity" to delineate a moment as well as a description: in the postcolonial problematic of representation the ambivalent self-fashioning of Tambudzai is shown by her slow, calculated transition from group subjectivity to individual subjectivity, shown by a gestured vacillation between the subjected group and the group subject. Since "group subjectivity" constitutes an absolute preliminary to the emergence of all individual subjectivity (Guattari: 90), in-betweenness rather than being either the subjected group or the group subject is more progressive.

While Anna and Ma'Shingayi clearly and properly belong to the subjected group which, by constructing a group fantasy around an "institutional object" that is never called into question, grants the individual a parasitic immortality and enforces traditional roles, concepts, hierarchies and modes of exclusion (167-8), Lucia and Nyasha as group-subjects establish unorthodox, transverse relations between various levels of the family institution and bring about a "structural redefinition of the role of each person and reorientation of the whole" (80). The Lucia who sleeps with everybody and intimidates Babamukuru with her culturally outrageous behaviour is the group-subject that opens itself to its finitude, articulates its desires and attempts to articulate new significations and form new modes of signification. Tambudzai as an in-between figure represents the progressive unification of these subjectivities in her quest for wholeness.

Ultimately, familial representation in *Nervous Conditions* captures the process of being "selfed" as affirming the conditions of multiplicity within the group subjectivity of the family. That the story, told in retrospective voice, is about all these women she loved "and our men" (Dangarembga: 204) attests to the family as not necessarily and always being "the chief institution of patriarchy" (Millet: 33). There is the undermining of patriarchal discourses when, in the exercise of group subjectivity, it tends to prompt internecine clashes. Due to the often strategic, qualified conformity and subversions, taking the form of carnivalesque in Lucia and Nyasha's case and in Tambudzai mimicry, they can live "in and within difference" (Trinh: 84), instead of being unproblematically caught in the mire of patriarchal and colonial discourses.

What appears to be conflict when Maiguru does not want to intervene in a crucial meeting involving Lucia, is actually the mark of difference. Dangarembga's familial representation does not pretend that the multiplicity is always harmonious: it affirms a group subjectivity based on difference. Further than that, Maiguru's gesture of not pledging solidarity is deliberately paradoxical; for her behaviour cannot be read of as upholding "sameness", particularly if each woman risks being embossed with what Memmi described as "the mark of the plural" (85). Familial oppression and cultural indoctrination do generate the shadow which, in turn, can be embraced because of the ambivalence of the family institution. There are agonistic relations to power that arise when women like Tambudzai recognise the inner dissension within the discursive space in which they

are resident. Thus in assuming her persona as "the grateful poor female relative" (116) and desiring to be like Babamukuru, she discerns more opportunity than oppression in the liminality that facilitates her ambivalent self-fashioning.

The persona supplements Tambudzai's mimicry when she maintains her difference as she repeats the image of Babamukuru to her benefit. She is not merely submitting to cultural indoctrination which would produce a false womanhood. Nor is she internalising the stereotypes that render feminine subjectivity as irretrievably powerless. Babamukuru is not, in relation to colonial discourses, totally powerless because of his hybridity and the ambivalence of English education. In aspiring to power, Tambudzai mimics Babamukuru. According to Bhabha in "Of Mimicry and Man", mimicry represents "an ironic compromise in that it is the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power" (126). Tambudzai must, through her persona, reform and discipline herself so that disavowal accompanies her empowerment. Through mimicry, she becomes powerful and therefore puts paid to patriarchy's Oedipal fantasy of females as inferior and powerless. Ironically, probably because of ambivalence, the family which is supposed to be the socius that posits lack in women, provides possibilities for group subjectivity rather than an anonymous collectivity. The family is in itself affirmed as a paradoxical site when women move away from the subjected group towards becoming the familial group-subject.

So it becomes apparent that the history of subjectivities of women is to be traced in the interstices that show the inner dissension of colonial and patriarchal discourses. The specific problematic of postcolonial representation is borne out in the history of female divided subjectivities when disavowal and empowerment coincide in mimicry. The family as a socius of repressive triangulation allows the ambivalent self-fashioning of women. Through this representation of the family, patriarchy is not reified but undermined, for the consequences are felt at the level of colonial discourse, too. In short, one speaks of the subversion of the othering practices of both colonial and patriarchal discourses at familial level.

If there is a simultaneous process of colonisation and decolonisation, the ambivalence of the family renders the discourse of patriarchy as less authoritative. The female colonial subject is no longer the recognizable familial Other of either colonial or traditional discourses: she is "a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha: 126). When Ma'Shingayi complains of the Englishness that will kill the likes of Tambudzai and Nyasha, she misrecognises the colonial edict. Mimicry serves to repeat not re-present (128). "Honorable dependency" on the colonial edict affords the occasion to glean from modernity a position of liminality that is apt for the reconfiguration of the subject of cultural discourse. Through familial representation agonistic relations to power arise between the female colonial subject and the powerful male colonial subject, such that the colonial edict can be embraced to empower the colonial subject.

Whereas Jungian psychology designates the colonial edict as the shadow or Enemy, colonial discourse theory theorizes its transvaluation in modernity. Thus it is that in "embracing the shadow", there exist possibilities for the reconstitution of the discourse of cultural difference, primarily because the embrace is indictative of the ambivalence of the figures of modernity in a liminal space. In the final analysis, I aver that embracing the shadow is historically inevitable and progressive, particularly where every marginal space (so defined by colonisation) is a site of interpellation and agency. This space, what Homi Bhabha calls liminality, is the hybrid matrix within which the ambivalent self-fashioning of the female colonial subject takes place.

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