Chapter 7
Historical Disruptions in Ecuador: Reproducing an Indian Past in Latin America

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> Do you know why people like me are shy about being capitalists? Well, it's because we, for as long as we have known you, were capital, like bales of cotton and sacks of sugar, and you were the commanding, cruel capitalists, and the memory of this is so strong, the experience so recent, that we can't quite bring ourselves to embrace this idea you think so much of. As for what we were like before we met you, I no longer care. No periods of time over which my ancestors held sway, no documentation of complex civilizations, is any comfort to me. Even if I really came from people who were living like monkeys in trees, it was better to be that than what happened to me, what I became after I met you.
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> (Kincaid 1997: 36–37)

Introduction

In the first wedding ceremony ever held at the pre-Inca site of Cochasquí, near Quito in the north highlands of Ecuador, the local shaman made an incantation to the indigenous genealogy of the Ecuadorian bride that gave her the right to marry her foreign (Russian) husband in this land, rightfully hers. This native appeal is more telling when you take into consideration that the bride neither had direct ties with any contemporary Indian community nor had lived in the country for over a decade. Both she and her husband had flown in from Miami, where they lived, to get married at Cochasquí. She chose Cochasquí as the place from which to justify her Indian genealogy/ Ecuadorianess, which were called into question by her living outside of the country and marrying outside of the national fold.

As I participated as a guest at the wedding, held on the summer solstice of 1997, I sensed, in the inherent quality of the ritual activities held at Cochasquí, an urgency to connect to a national sense of belonging that maintained (and also questioned) what being a native signifies. The bride had come back to reclaim her Ecuadorianness, to "invent" it; her getting married at Cochasquí accomplished that. The wedding service was full of symbolic appeals to Incas, other Indian communities, and Andean deities without any actual concern for historical or geographical truths. Rather, the essentializing celebration expressed a constant need to reaffirm a symbolic truth that wove all of these indigenous elements into a common fabric, and allowed all the guests present to claim the site as Ecuadorian.

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Echoing Foucault (Miller 1993: 250), the symbolic truth at Cochasquí was not and did not necessarily have to be true – that did not make it less real nor did it have less actual implications on performers and spectators alike.

I use this wedding metaphor to introduce the present chapter on the politics of heritage identity in Ecuador today. This question of identity politics is large, containing within it greater issues of human rights in our globalizing existence, entertaining what it means to be a native, what is the role of the environment in this political enterprise, and ultimately what are the boundaries of local/global enterprises in the current discourse of development and political struggle.

The Indian movement is a particularly good place to interrogate these issues of belonging because Native Americans, or Indians, in Ecuador today are the best example of a postmodern identity and, in that sense, of the inherently localized manners in which the global gets constituted in localized fashion. It is this global/local dynamic that has allowed the Ecuadorian Indian movement (CONAIE/Confederation of Indian Nationalities of Ecuador) to become the largest social movement in the country in the last decade, paralyzing the nation several times during week-long strikes, ousting two democratically elected presidents, and even facing off the International Monetary Fund (IMF). And yet: who is Indian or not? What role do the environment and the past play in this identity enterprise? And what are the daily impacts of survival? These are looming questions that are far harder to answer than one would initially assume.

For the last 10 years I have spent a considerable amount of energy and time working on and researching the political implications of the past in the contemporary nation-state of Ecuador. As part of my research endeavor I have also assessed the relationship of the archeological past to one of the leading Indian movements in the continent, that of the CONAIE, and I grapple with the immediate relationship of notions of heritage to the construction of a more just and democratic society. During this time, I also have had to reconsider and negotiate my own troubled relationship to the research subject since, as an Ecuadorian national myself, these issues are anything but academic, and are intimately related to why I decided to become an archeologist/ anthropologist 20 years ago.

My passion for archeology was determined by my political ambition to contribute to the construction of a more coherent and congruent Latin American history, one in which the glories of the Indian past would not be alienated and distanced from the contemporary oppression of their descendants. In this manner, I (and comrades, both faculty and students) saw archeological research as a way of righting a profound historical wrong and allowing the native Indian communities to finally have their rightful place in the historical record, and, even more importantly, to be able to use this historical legitimization to ensure a political capital that could transform their livelihoods and with them revolutionize our understanding in order to make a more humane and Indian nation than our governments and elite would want us to believe Ecuador was capable of.

Twenty years after that youthful archeological imperative and 10 years after my initial considerations of the larger conundrums of historical production, I feel able to provide some insights into the enormous obstacles that not only Ecuador but also

many other postcolonial nation-states face in the new global order. This endeavor also necessitates assessing the pitfalls of a cultural heritage and human rights agenda that many times leaves its constituency behind in an effort to achieve lofty goals that depart from their original blue-prints.

In the following pages I will limit myself to what I believe are the biggest issues in terms of heritage and human rights in Latin America: (1) the challenge of creating congruent national histories where historical periods have been marked by rupture and colonial domination; (2) the politics of the Amazon within the shadows of a global ecological movement; and (3) understanding the relationship between heritage and development, and the limitations of generalizing a Western discourse beyond its initial ideological boundaries. It is these issues, I argue, that are essential in assessing the elements of political domination contained within the projects of heritage and historical production. And yet, as in all cultural projects and endeavors, from that of development to living our own lives, the challenge is not to regress to a utopian period that never existed but hopefully to provide some level of agency within the restricted structure of modern capital and postmodern forms of identity production.

Historical Disruptions and Congruent Narratives: Getting One's History Wrong

As I rapidly assessed from my ethnographic work at the pre-Inca archeological site of Cochasquí, there is nothing natural or congruent about national histories. Quite the contrary, national narratives by the state, local communities, or even the Indian movement were consistently put together from the same loose and jagged remains of the pre-Hispanic past and used to legitimize each one's political claim and cultural survival. The narratives I looked at changed as a result of a shifting kaleidoscope of images, memories, and evidence that served to construct and maintain differing notions of power.

And although each proclaimed its truthfulness in authentic terms, their main difference was not afforded by either the narratives or elements themselves but rather by the epistemological and hermeneutical devices used to define the narratives in the first place. It was this "proof of burden" that defined what was or was not considered evidence, which was what ultimately provided the most defining understanding of the character of each historical narrative. In this manner, while the CONAIE's narrative incorporated oral history as a valid form of historical heritage, national newspapers believed that scholarly (and popular public) opinions were most important in defining what was true about the past, and therefore deemed part of real history.

As many scholars have argued, history is never linear nor does it inherently express causality by itself but rather, it is our own renderings of it, as defined by the hermeneutics of historical production, that structure historical accounts (Foucault 1991). In this sense, archeological interpretations without exception are incorporated

into master narratives that reinterpret and meaningfully connect the nation's present with the past. In doing so, the narratives overlook the breaks and discontinuities that make smooth transition lines impossible and that would therefore delegitimize the whole national historic enterprise.

The need for historical continuity is particularly explicit in colonial settings, where the new leaders are keen to present themselves as the natural inheritors of the dominated group and territory (Kuklick 1991: 165). Colonialism always implies an artificial and violent break from the immediate past and a necessary legitimization of the new order as natural and ever-constant. In this enterprise, archeological interpretations are used to obliterate the break and present a new unproblematic extension of the archeological past to the political present. Ecuador is no exception to this postcolonial conundrum. The nation-state elaborates a complex discourse of colonial conquest: first, by the Incas over a thousand years ago; second, by the Spaniards less than five centuries ago; and most recently, a current white/*mestizo* elite that is continuously reinforced in its position of political and social privilege.

In this manner national histories homogenize cultural diversity by "permanently removing generations of (local) history from the landscape and create a national historic rootlessness under official state sponsorship" (Patterson and Schmidt 1995: 20). All historical versions, in their own fashion and for their own gain, strive to overlook the discontinuities in their own archeological rendering of the past. National archeological narratives, official or not, are always about presenting: a *smooth* history where there are only accidents; a *continuous* subject where there is only discontinuity; a *homogenous* nationality where there is heterogeneity of communities; and historical *truth* where there is only subjugated knowledge.

Therefore, while on the one side we have a pervasive production of national narratives that are vying for differing levels of acceptance and effects of power, we also have been privy to the struggle of a powerful Indian movement that has gone beyond any initial expectation and/or predictions in terms of its range of cultural influence and political power. However, quite dramatically, the growth of the CONAIE has not only demanded a new redefinition of who is Indian and who is not, but also of who represents Ecuador, and what role the archeological past and cultural heritage plays in that representation. What is even more interesting (and telling) in this regard is the almost complete absence of an archeological discourse or heritage agenda within the CONAIE's successful reclaiming of its past and political present.

Contrary to what many (including myself) would have ventured, the Indian movement today in Ecuador has a limited relationship with reclaiming ancient sites and archeological objects from what they deem their own original communities. Interestingly enough, the battlefield for the Indian's (and the nation-state's) past is fought within the political arena of the national congress, presidential elections, and nation-wide strikes and marches, not in the limited theaters of ancient sites and museums. This is not to imply that sites or museums do not play an essential political role in the national hegemonic imaginary but, rather, that the CONAIE's political process might give us insights (and hopefully short-cuts) to the destabilizing role through which heritage claims and human rights concerns might be better served.

The cold relationship between Indian and archeologist has a long tradition not only in Ecuador, but also throughout the Americas. The re-burial issue in the US and the commodification of the sites of Chichén Itza in Yucatan and Machu Picchu in Cuzco all point to the alienating role of archeology and archeologists in the reclaiming of original homelands. It is a difficult relationship that, as Deloria (1979) has keenly assessed, frankly reflects the colonial legacies within the discipline. Archeology and archeologists are still invested in fulfilling their patriarchal and dutiful role as the guides and givers of heritage to localized communities that should thank our endeavor. However, as the CONAIE's successful strategy indicates, many original descendent communities may be implementing historical plans different from our anthropological/archeological ones, and of even greater hegemonic implications.

Therefore, I strongly believe that in postcolonial settings such as Ecuador there is an overriding necessity, even an obsession to construct a congruent national narrative precisely because one never existed. It is this maddening Western historical imaginary ideal that pushes individuals and communities to vie for contrasting national narratives that will only fail in better ways (a la Beckett) to represent a national whole that does not exist. It is because of this postcolonial impossibility of national representation that some political strategy and plain human savvy might be the least harmful road to take. Why not forget about representing a whole (in this case, "Ecuadorianness") and, rather, articulate limited historical ethnic identities (as the case of Indian in Ecuador) that themselves are the result of a Western capitalist expansion that decimated and ultimately transformed not only the Americas but Europe as well. It is because of this eventual inherent relationship between global and local sites of contestations and identifications that much more dynamic and historically congruent forms of heritage and human rights need to be articulated and implemented.

In this manner, perhaps one of the most essential elements of the heritage project that must be analyzed is the role of Europe (and the US itself) in this global cultural enterprise. As I argue below, I believe that there are quite specific relationships between heritage production and development endeavors that make these issues of historical recovery one of the political domination and hegemonic implications. But even before formulating the necessary Western legacy contained within both the global heritage and human rights agendas, there is an even more pervasive and essential relationship between the Americas and Europe (and the US) contained within what Quijano (1993) refers to as "colonialities of power." It is these pervasive neo/postcolonial relationships that continue to reshape, epistemologically speaking, old mechanisms of historical appropriation that define what is even deemed recoverable history and what is not.

As an Ecuadorian who has been constituted as such by living most of my life outside of Ecuador, I am – in an intimately painful manner – well aware of the mechanism through which the local is inherently defined as such from a global vantage point. In this manner it is not surprising that it is Europe and transnational NGOs, not Ecuadorians (and, worse, the Ecuadorian government), that have fueled the political project of the CONAIE and served to revindicate the same historical subjectivity that

they (Europe and the US) so brutally vilified centuries ago. Yet, as Kincaid (1997) would have it, there is a world of things in this, this silence and apparent contradiction in terms of Indian ethnogenesis, legitimization of a pre-Hispanic archeological past, and ultimately the struggle for a human rights agenda for the continent.

But how does one begin to unravel not only the definition of history, but also – even worse – the recovery of a mutilated historical subject that is not unitary or unified other than in its imaginary proportions? Again, the project seems daunting, if not for the fact that it is carried out every day both in small and large political endeavors that allow postcolonial societies, like Ecuador, to struggle on with visions of a more prosperous and cohesive future. It is this same project that both the CONAIE and government are invested in, as is every single person who tries to define his/her livelihood against such terrifying uneven odds – perhaps with different understandings and outcomes but, ultimately interested in constructing a congruent narrative that will legitimize the advancement of the nation, however differently that may be defined and understood.

In these contested sites of historical narratives, the heritage and human rights agenda enters, not really as an outside/Western interruption, but rather as an inherent constitutive device of the colonialities of power that have defined the Latin American (and Ecuadorian) subject from the very beginning. Therefore, the struggle in a more realistic approximation is less about what history recovers and why, and more about why it is that we are invested in such a global project of local definitions, what political purposes it serves, and ultimately how that same venture defines and produces history in the process. After all, just like the Ecuadorian government and the CONAIE, academics and transnational cultural agencies have already entered the fray of producing history, with the added terrifying quality denial that we are doing so.

Historical Disruptions and the Greening of the Amazon's Past

Now that there is peace between Ecuador and Peru,[1] only Brazil, of the Amazonian countries, makes use of the Amazon in an explicit or direct manner to boost or define their own national identity (see Jan French's paper in this volume). Yet the fact that no direct or explicit relationship is established between the official state rhetoric and the regional historical complexes does not negate that even greater forms of subtle hegemonic discourses are being elaborated between the historical past and political present. Therefore, how does the Amazonian past enter into the political debate of the Andean nations in a time when the transnational discussion of native rights, ecological concerns, and even the rise of ecotourism enters the

[1] During the 1980s, as border tension continued between Ecuador and Peru, official Ecuadorian stationery was emblazoned with the slogan: "El Ecuador Fué, Es, y Siempre Será Un País Amazónico," referring to Ecuador's claim for Peruvian Amazonian territory down to Iquitos.

global imagination within specific national concerns as well as that of specific transnational corporations, particularly that of oil companies?

The Amazon has become one of the main representatives of ecological promise (represented as either paradise or decimation, depending on one's viewpoint) and the struggle for indigenous rights. These dual discourses, of ecological production and indigenous livelihood, are in stark contrast with the more traditional representation of Amazon land exploitation, either that of rubber trapping/cattle-herding or oil extraction. It is in this particular political scenario of daily struggle and global forces that Amazonian Indians struggle and archeological research is carried out. It is not lost on anybody, especially archeologists, that the last decade has seen an increase of archeological research in the area, funded by the same foreign oil companies that are responsible for decimating the region.

Similar to other regional arguments, such as the reburial issue, archeologists in the Amazon once again are faced with the serious dilemma of being seen as siding (and realistically so) with precisely the same global forces that they hope their own work would oppose. On the one hand this is not a new dilemma, but rather a clear and coherent corollary of the colonial legacy of the West's scientific (and humanistic) enterprise. Social knowledge production in the Americas has always been produced and utilized by those in power, in terms of both race and class, and even the most democratic of its development meets structural limitations that reemphasize the uneven distribution of cultural knowledge in the continent. In the Amazon this particular dilemma is expressed in the co-option of valuable intellectuals who, as experts of the past, align themselves with precisely those who are destroying the human and natural resources that the experts wish to save.

This reality is further complicated by a large and significant group of activists, both nationals and not, who are increasingly aligned with ecological conservation movements as well as with the Indigenous Amazonian communities who are fighting transnational corporations for their daily and cultural survival. At the same time these urban activists themselves are seen as foreign allies to the Amazonian communities and equally provide a much needed support coming from foreign international agencies and NGOs. Therefore, to present a picture of local natives fighting foreign global forces is in itself inaccurate, since at this point in time, native local identity production is as clearly contingent upon global support as it has been for the last five centuries (Benavides 2004).

It is also in this complex framework that the archeological research carried out in the Amazon seems rather insignificant in the production of regional identifications, national legitimization, and fodder for the globalization players throughout the world. The complex history of archeological research of the last 100 years has gone from seeing the Amazon as a cultural backwater to the original locus of high Andean civilization, but this seems highly irrelevant in the explicit political reconfigurations currently being worked out in the region or even being played out in the national imaginary of their Andean counterparts. Unfortunately, out of this archeological engagement – or more accurately, the lack of direct archeological engagement – two serious fallacies arise that are an impediment to a more accurate

discussion of the Amazon's cultural problematic and its representation, and that as an impediment also play an active part in the current problematization of the region.

The first fallacy in this regard is the belief, particularly by archeologists of the region, that a serious consideration of their findings would serve to make right most of the political and cultural wrongs. These experts think that if they were taken more seriously, and if their work were funded less by business concerns, and if they were given more cultural authority in the area, then the Amazon's problems would be seriously and positively reconfigured. This naïve and pervasive professional position is not new in archeology, and it characterizes development discourse as a racist and colonial legacy of our Western origins. Instead, it could be argued that experts are the ones who need to engage themselves more seriously with the sociopolitical reality of the regions and not vice versa.

The second fallacy is to believe that archeological knowledge does not already play an important part in the region and each nation-state's national imaginary simply because no explicit or direct link is made. On the contrary, archeologists and archeological knowledge are already playing an important part in the problematic distribution of the Amazon's productive resources, both cultural and economic. The fact that archeologists are seen as part of the problem for the development of native rights is not a misassumption by indigenous communities but rather a reality that most archeologists pretend not to see.

But archeological knowledge *is* readily used when it comes to the Amazon, particularly if it can provide a simple and unproblematic rendering of the region as a green natural paradise destroyed by western capital expansion. Of course, this panacea is also a rhetorical political tool, into which social knowledge easily falls. Therefore, it is not a surprise that recent books such as Tierney's (2000) *Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon* have a wide popular appeal. In many ways, his and other similar works are doing nothing more than giving empirical support for rhetorical ideas and discourses that 100 years of archeological research have already put into people's heads. If anything, it is quite interesting how archeology suffers from its own discourse against foreign intrusion.

In this sense, it is important to wonder about the manner in which archeology has been able to carry out this pervasive rhetoric in the region, and what the contemporary power-effects of archeology's effusive regional production are, rather than to advocate for an audience that it already has captivated. It is necessary to question the discourse that has "greened the past" and naturalized native rights; it is also necessary to be skeptical about the politics of transnational exploitation that fund archeological research. This awareness will permit a more realistic picture of the Amazon and the Andean nation-states. It is also in this charged environment that the future of the Amazon, national imaginaries, Indian communities, and archeological research will continue to embody the differing local and global forces at play in the region.

Historical Disruptions and Heritage: A History of Development

One of the most disturbing elements of the heritage and human rights global agenda is its eerie similarity with the development project. Perhaps as the Mexican Nobel Laureate, Octavio Paz, stated, anthropology is the conscience of the West; that in one way or another, these are all internal mechanisms of capitalism that surface to attempt to alleviate the system's unethical destruction of peoples and environment for capital accumulation and surplus. Although ironic, as an anthropologist I am even less hopeful than Paz.

As I have outlined elsewhere in terms of my research in Ecuador, the CONAIE is itself one of the most successful development projects to date (Benavides 2004). It has been able to muster financial and symbolic support from international NGOs, and its environmental and human rights agenda supports its critical positioning within contemporary global relationships. However, it is also in this fashion that the Ecuadorian Indian movement faces an enormous challenge – for in this alternative Indian version there is an embryonic element, by necessity, that seeks to represent its own version as a hegemonic history in similar terms but with a different context to the official version being contested (Wylie 1995; Chatterjee 1986).

The Indian movement finds itself on a political tightrope: at one level it strongly opposes the IMF and the World Bank's structural adjustment policies, yet at another level it consistently supports the development project being funded and planned by the World Bank. The movement continues to relate to the double nature of the World Bank's economic agenda without explicitly entertaining the idea that the development funds so badly needed by the country originate from the unequal globalization processes that overwhelmingly limit and dominate the third world's economic production.

At the same time, the recent Indian identity espoused by the movement is itself partly a result of modern capitalist globalization processes (Benavides 2004). Only this political and economic reality would justify the Indian movement's support by foreign NGOs and other First World institutions. This same "westernization" support of Indian identity makes the movement's relationship with its historically constituted enemies, the Catholic Church and the military, much more understandable. After 500 years of painful evangelization, the Indians have finally come full circle and are making use of the very religious institution that was initially implicated in the ethnocide and genocide of Indians (Native Americans) throughout the continent.

History and heritage enable Indians today in Ecuador to employ an ethnic identity that was the cause of their domination. Therefore, Indians are able to parlay their ethnic oppression as cultural capital to obtain funds, political recognition, and other resources from First World nations, many of which were once (and still are) perpetrators of their own cultural destruction. Native struggles, development schemes, and democratization plans are entangled retransformations of old uneven political alliances between First and Third World forces (Hall 1997). To this degree, the Indian movement is not a representative of some pristine cultural authenticity

but rather a "reconversing" of previous social symbols and meaning in contemporary terms (García-Canclini 1992).

In this complex reality, the Indian movement is the most modern, or even postmodern, signifier of Ecuador's contemporary political struggle – a struggle that is now also fought beyond the country's national borders. This particular global context places the Indian movement's financial support and identity in a very fragile context. If the counterhegemonic demands of the CONAIE are met – and this could only occur in a global reordering of the economic order – the movement would pretty soon find itself with no more First World NGOs and development projects to fund it, and perhaps more dramatically without a cultural global understanding in which Indians could translate their identity in such a positive manner. After all, it is instructive that Indian groups have taken this long to find a cultural context that enables their political projects. It is clear that Indian uprisings and protests are not new; only their current national success.

However, since a global economic reordering seems highly unlikely – the IMF, World Bank, and First World nations are not on their own going to invert the current uneven socioeconomic relationships – the Indian movement may have to face its own hegemonic reordering. Although the CONAIE consistently expresses itself as an instrument for the greater democratization for itself and the nation, it is plausible that the opposite might ensue. That is, since current unequal global conditions are continuously transforming, CONAIE will probably be co-opted into a hegemonic enterprise before the Ecuadorian state experiences any kind of democratic dissolution.

Few scholars, and even fewer anthropologists for obvious disciplinary reasons, have been willing to elaborate on the hegemonic constraints that the Indian project presents. As a singular exception to this reticence, Muratorio (1998) has expressed how the CONAIE is beginning to constitute itself as a hegemonic community along Western notions of gender, language, ethnicity, and class. It is not surprising to realize, as Muratorio points out, that the head positions of the movement are mostly occupied by academically educated Indian men with membership in the larger Quechua/Spanish speaking ethnic communities. Ironically, the movement's options are limited on both sides: on the one hand a more democratic reordering of the global order would signify its demise; and on the other hand its national success would secure its own form of political/gender domination and that of other racialized groups. . . . Although as the work of Hall (1997), García-Canclini (1992), and Foucault (1991) indicates, capitalism and social discourse are reconfigured in quite power-full and truly unpredictable ways.

Conclusion: The Politics of Forgetting

As Renan ([1890]1990) outlined over a century ago, part of being a nation is getting your history wrong. This is also relevant for national movements like the CONAIE, the development discourse, environmental NGOs, as well as other transnational interests such as the global heritage and human rights agendas.

Rather than pointing a finger at one or several of these institutions, endeavors, or projects, I think it more worthwhile to ponder some of the larger structural discourses on which these globalizing assumptions are built and from which the current production of a native identity is fabricated.

One of the essential elements in this regard is the understanding that the native is not an independent element counter to any globalizing force. Quite the contrary. *The native is the most global identity being produced under the subterfuge of local struggles*. Modern (and cyber) capital are in desperate need of natives and, unlike centuries ago, political governmentality is no longer afforded through the extinction of difference but rather through difference itself: transnational capitalism and its effects of power depend on difference as part of its hegemonic stronghold. Interrogating the native should make us realize that we are all natives and that this is an important element that modern capital seeks to hide and history to forget. But again, it is telling how both heritage agendas and human rights agendas target some people as natives, over others, and define them as more authentically native in their liberating enterprise.

This interrogation of a native identity also demands the interrogation of boundaries, not only in a physical and symbolic sense but also as constitutive elements of identity production. The boundary in which I am most interested is that fictitious or invented one (in Benedict Anderson's sense) between global and local enterprises; i.e., to understand the contemporary world as that of a (local) global with enormous effects of power that serve to reinsert differing forms of hierarchical differences since colonial times. What Stuart Hall refers to as old new forms of colonial exchange. At the same time it is important to interrogate how the Other continues to be essential in this globalizing enterprise of cultural and human heritage.

Why is it that the interrogation of the native other, whatever it might be (in this case Indian, but also women, black, and/or homosexuals) is still used to sustain an idea of globalization that might be new, even though the phenomenon is not? How is it that we have come to assess globalization as a worthwhile empirical phenomenon at the precise moment when fewer commodities are being exchanged than centuries ago? Why is it that interrogating the Other still serves to sustain the ultimate otherness of a reified white male Christian heterosexuality that seems as engrained in different forms of political and socioeconomic control as ever? As Kincaid (1997: 80–81) states:

> . . . eventually, the masters left, in a kind of way; eventually, the slaves were freed, in a kind of way. Of course, the whole thing is, once you cease to be a master, once you throw off your master's yoke, you are no longer human rubbish, you are just a human being, and all the things that adds up to. So, too, with the slaves. Once they are no longer slaves, once they are free, they are no longer noble and exalted; they are just human beings.

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