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RELOCATING SUBALTERNITY: SCATTERED SPECULATIONS ON THE CONUNDRUM OF A CONCEPT

Abstract

This article introduces the special issue ‘Relocating Subalternity: Scattered Speculations on the Conundrum of a Concept’, in which we take Spivak’s particular invocation of (gendered) subalternity and its scholarly reception as a point of departure to confront the ‘foreclosure’ of subalternity. While the gesture of (re)locating inevitably triggers a tense dialectic between the attempt to define contingent empirical loci and subalternity’s resistance to be empirically circumscribed, we suggest that relocating the subaltern from her (non)place may provide constructive avenues for performing a productive ‘ab-use’ of the notion of subalternity. The engagement with the notion of subalternity that this issue encourages, suggests that one should claim the heuristic epistemological and political value of the category of subalternity against every conceptual attempt to dilute its aporetic specificity, as well as against any simplistic effort to shorten the distances between the subaltern and its possible interlocutors in the name of too-easy transnational alliances.

Key words: Gayatri Spivak, subalternity, ab-use, aporia, mobility, borderlessness

Recognising the rich history of the concept of subalternity, originally coined by Antonio Gramsci in the Prison Notebooks (1971), and its subsequent development, notably by the Subaltern Studies Group in South Asia (1982–87), this issue takes as its point of departure the particular invocation of (gendered) subalternity as first presented in Gayatri Spivak’s seminal essay Can the Subaltern
Once Spivak’s figure of the subaltern was introduced, it provoked a decisive rupture in thinking about (feminist) solidarities and political agency, haunting theorizations of subjectivity and subjectification. While Spivak’s notorious article *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (Spivak 1988) has undeniably been the topic of fervent debate (Young 1990, Larsen 2001, Morton 2003, Parry 2004), become a canonical text in postcolonial studies (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 1995, Moore-Gilbert 1997, Loomba 1998), and continued to invite scholarly work reflecting on subalternity (Shetty/Bellamy 2000; Didur and Heffernan 2003; Morris 2010), there has been little collective effort in critical and political theory to confront the ‘theoretical deadlock’ that the notion of the gendered subaltern seem to present. The deadlock emerges from the fact that Spivak’s concept of the subaltern displays a peculiar troubling quality, as it can only be defined *via negativa*, namely through its inherent status as a non-subject or non-agent. Stephen Morton’s reading of Spivak’s use of aporia describes this non-subject as located in a (non)place: ‘[T]he concept of aporia thus marks the paradoxical (non)place that the subaltern woman occupies’ (2011, p. 75). Spivak’s repeatedly alludes to ‘the shadow’ as the location of the female subaltern in *Can the Subaltern Speak?*. The subaltern woman is ‘even more deeply in shadow’ (1988, p. 287) compared to her male counterpart. And, the female subaltern is ‘doubly in [...] shadow’ (1988, p. 288) compared to the metropolitan feminist pursuing the obstinate goal of a feminist global alliance. In Spivak’s short definition of what she later calls the ‘old subaltern’ – ‘to be removed from all lines of social mobility’ (2005, p. 475) – the issue of space and place (as well as mobility and access) gain further prominence. As a ‘position without identity’, subalternity defines less the status of subject than a space of obstruction and foreclosure, which originally seemed to coincide with the geographical location of enclosed non-metropolitan spaces. In her more recent writings, Spivak has introduced the figure of the ‘new subaltern’, who, in contrast to the ‘old subaltern’ is ‘no longer cut off from the lines of access to the centre’, but corresponds to ‘the rural and indigenous subaltern’ who is incorporated by the centre as ‘source
of trade-related intellectual property’ (2000, p. 326) yet still marked by ‘an absence of access to the possibility to the abstract structures of the state’ (Spivak 2014, p. 10). The new subaltern might then inscribed within a new spatial dynamics.

The title of this special issue ‘Relocating Subalternity’ reflects our interest in the aporetic space and (im)mobility of the subaltern, while also expressing the aim to confront – rather than undo – the foreclosure of subalternity by (re-)discovering and (re-)situating her. The gesture of (re)locating inevitably triggers a tense dialectic between the attempt to define contingent empirical loci and subalternity’s resistance to be empirically circumscribed. Moreover such an endeavor entails further relevant questions: which locations could be available to the project of relocation? And are these inside or outside hegemonic orders? How do empirical relocations retroaffect the notion of subalternity? In this regard, relocating the subaltern from her (non)place may provide constructive avenues for performing a productive ‘ab-use’ of the notion of subalternity, which following Spivak's suggestion, would make it available for other uses – as has already been the case with the original Gramscian notion of subalternity recovered by the Subaltern Studies (Srivastava and Bhattacharya 2012, 2013; Brennan 2013). Spivak has repeatedly stated that subalternity should not be preserved, that it is no romantic condition ‘to accept wretchedness as normality’ (Spivak 2009, p. 79; cf. also Spivak 1999, p. 310) which one would desire to return to or remain in. When she explains her work with Sabar women, she argues to be giving the subaltern ‘a chance at hegemony’ (Spivak 2009, p. 81). Is, then, the goal of the intellectual to help relocate the subaltern into the hegemonic? There seems, though, to be a residual intellectual desire to reach (out to) the subaltern in her subalternity (Halley 2006, p. 104), rather than through hegemonization. Maggio proposes, as what he calls ‘a possible solution to the Spivakean puzzle’, the idea that Western intellectuals should “translate” the subaltern’ (2007, p. 438). Warrior calls for recognition that the subaltern might just have ‘danced by’ in his article The subaltern can dance, and so sometimes can the intellectual (2011, p. 94). The second part of this
title, the intellectual’s tentative ability to dance, is in line with other work that draws on Spivak’s ‘learning to learn from below’ as a way to approach the subaltern (Morton 2011; Cherniavsky 2011). Yet this desire appears to be linked to traces of benevolence, which might be at the root of the silencing; to the point that ‘In fact, well-meaning liberals are implicated even deeper than mean-spirited conservatives in this silencing of the subaltern’ (Maggio 2007, p. 431). Such ‘learning to learn from below’ (in Spivak's previous formulation, 'the unlearning of one's privilege’ as an act of ethical responsibility, Spivak 1990, p. 42), also requires an unlearning of this desire for the subaltern: ‘it requires us to know that our desire to be freed by subaltern agency (our desire for the subaltern to break us out of hegemony) ultimately brings us no closer to subalterns’ own desires than any of the (variously inflected) projects to free subalterns (to break the subaltern into hegemony), insofar, as an elite “we” are the subject of both emancipatory narratives’ (Cherniavsky 2001, p. 158). Can relocating the subaltern resist those desires? This special issue seeks to explore whether alongside the political project of desubalternisation, it is possible to confront subalternity while avoiding theoretical paralysis as well as dilution of the concept of subaltern, in order to constructively employ what Spivak has called ‘the possibility of subalternity [acting] as a reminder […] something that would destroy [our] generalizations’ (Spivak 1996, p. 293).

The aporetics of subalternity, torn between its logical impossibility and its empirical inapplicability, have been recaptured by various scholars in different terms, which all reflect particular modes of apprehending Spivak’s core arguments. Closer analysis of the secondary readings of Can the Subaltern Speak? and Spivak’s further work on the subaltern reveals that authors understand and formulate the ‘problem of subalternity’ in various different ways, including at least four (related) interpretations: the subaltern cannot be heard; the subaltern cannot speak; the subaltern is being silenced; and, the subaltern escapes us – or, in Spivak's words, she is an 'elusive figure' (Spivak 2010, p. 21). Following the early controversy that emerged in response to the publication of Can the Subaltern Speak? (Loomba 1993; Lazarus 1994; Parry 1995) the most
accepted reading became that which holds that the subaltern cannot be heard, rather than that the subaltern cannot speak; in other words, ‘[Spivak’s] dictum was meant to signal less a problem of articulation than of reception’ (Byrd and Rothenberg 2011, p. 5). At the same time, it is important not to lose track of Spivak’s own insistence on the problematic of speaking or articulation – though this is clearly linked to the (lack of) hearing and silencing. For example, Spivak states very unambiguously that ‘there is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak’ (1988, p. 307).

Elsewhere, it becomes clear that even if intellectuals create such discursive space, the subaltern can still not speak (and make herself intelligible): ‘on the other side of the international division of labor, the subject of exploitation cannot know and speak the text of female exploitation, even if the absurdity of the non-representing intellectual making space for her to speak is achieved’ (Spivak 1988, p. 288). Warrior recenters the intellectual by stating that ‘Spivak’s rationale for discussing the subaltern is in response to an intellectual’s quandary. The problematic she explores is that of the epistemological availability of subalternity’ (Warrior 2011, p. 86). In a similar vein, Cherniavsky stresses that ‘what is irreducible to Subaltern Studies (in Spivak’s earlier accounts, as in the work of the group as whole) is not subaltern alterity, but rather the incommensurability between the terms of the investigator’s analytics and the subaltern as ‘object’ of investigation’ and that therefore the assertion that the subaltern cannot speak ‘is a report on the condition of the intellectual’ (2011, p. 157, italics in original).

In the Critique of Post-colonial Reason, Spivak states clearly: ‘[I] think it is important to acknowledge our complicity in the muting, in order precisely to be more effective in the long run’ (Spivak 1999, p. 309). Or, again, in Cherniavsky’s terms: ‘[T]he intellectual’s responsibility is to the history of the subaltern’s silencing, a silence that cannot be ‘filled’ without repeating the original act of erasure (by representing her who cannot represent herself)’ (2011, p. 153). It seems, then, as if for us intellectuals (scholars, teachers, researchers), there is no way to escape the fate
of ‘ventriloquizing’ and speaking for the subalterns while attempting to represent/relocate or simply address them. Within this process, the incommensurability of our respective locations emerges as ineliminable, and thus we arrive at the paradox that engaging with subalternity may appear as simply another way of perpetuating subalternity while ‘longing for a direct, unmediated, and plenituinous apprehension of the subaltern woman’ (Halley 2006, p. 104). How can we reflect upon and inflect our own complicity in ‘fabricating’ subalternity and reorient our pedagogical function of ‘permanent persuaders’, as Gramsci puts it (Gramsci 1971, pp. 9–10), inside and outside academia? What kind of exchange is possible under the conditions of an inescapable socio-cultural-economic incommensurability?

Spivak’s reference to the ‘complicity in the muting’ leads us to the third reading, which highlights the silencing of the subaltern. Maggio sketches out and reframes Spivak’s discussion of the double bind of the sati widow to illustrate this: ‘like a child being torn between two divorcing (or married) parents, the subaltern are silenced even when attempting to speak. The subaltern is always framed as a quisling or as a resistant’ (Maggio 2007, p. 425). According to Byrd and Rothberg, silencing can also occur through (deliberate) mishearing: ‘but perhaps more invidious are forms of partial and distorted reception: reception that fails to acknowledge an incommensurable relation to the source of the message, an incommensurability that is not a ‘natural’ product of cultural difference but derives from established power differentials’ (2011, p. 6). They make a distinction between ‘listening to’ and ‘listening in’, observing a more ready willingness on the side of hegemonic power to do the latter than the first ‘whether through surveillance, bio-piracy or reified forms of consumption’ (Byrd and Rothberg 2011, p. 6). Another way of silencing emerges from Beverley’s assertion that ‘one of the things being subaltern means is not mattering, not being worth listening to, or being understood when one is “heard”’ (Beverley 2013, p. 576). This reading, with its emphasis on the ‘not mattering’ as the essence of subalternity, slides into the fourth interpretation, in which the subaltern vanishes in the moment of speaking or
being heard. Spivak herself has incisively highlighted that 'When a line of communication is established between a member of subaltern groups and the circuits of citizenship or institutionality, the subaltern has been inserted into the long road to hegemony' (1999, p. 310).

Accordingly, other commentators emphasize the mutual incompatibility of the predicates of subalternity and *locution* conceived of as the capacity of the subaltern to express herself and articulate her instances in a decipherable language. In Warrior’s account, the elusive subaltern ceases to be a subaltern once speaking: ‘What rings true in the earlier conclusion is the aporia of how the subaltern is constituted in such a way that speaking represents a constitutional shift – that which mobilizes the speaker, in other words (political organizing, education), is also that which marks the movement from subalternity to something else. Speaking, in other words, is something a former subaltern might do’ (Warrior 2011, p. 90). And again, in a slightly different register, when Vahabzadeh remarks that ‘Subalternity is ended when locution becomes interlocution’ (Vahabzadeh, 2007, p. 109), he is suggesting that the very fact of becoming intelligible to a possible interlocutor would erase the condition of subalternity. Beverley argues that subalternity disappears ‘behind the gesture of the ethnographer or the solidarity activist committed to the cause of the subaltern in allowing or enabling the subaltern to speak’, since such a gesture would neutralize ‘the force of the reality of difference and antagonism’ that maintains the boundaries between the epistemic position of the subaltern and the dominant alive (Beverley 2013, p. 576). Victor Li pushes the argument about the inevitability of the subaltern's silence – as a tool to maintain subalternity – to the extreme by claiming that the subaltern as ideal figure can only be sustained by reference to her ‘sacrificial death’: ‘the subaltern has to die in order to serve as an irreducible idea’ (Li 2009, pp. 275–276; cf. Loomba 1993, p. 218). Drawing on Guha’s *Chandra’s Death*, Spivak’s narration of Bhubaneswari Bhaduri’s suicide, and referring to two literary works by Arundhati Roy (*The God of Small Things*) and Amitav Ghosh (*The Hungry Tide*), Li states that only such death ‘appears to enable a questioning of the limits of hegemonic thought and to secure
a utopian opening into another mode of life’ (Li 2009, p. 276). Is death the only possible culmination of the *via negativa* by which the subaltern is defined? And what about the ‘living subaltern’?

By drawing attention to what he defines as ‘necroidealism’ in the domain of postcolonial studies, namely the sacrificial immortalization of the subaltern carried out in the name of the exemplarity of the notion of subalternity, Li warns against the danger of making the subaltern the authentic embodiment of a ‘non-narrativizable singularity’ (Li 2009, p. 278). The fetishization of the subaltern, indeed, while ensuring the utopian purity of the concept and guaranteeing the intellectual the incontrovertible truth about subalternity, not only impedes the threat of incorporation or recuperation, but may also foreclose the possibility of any recovery of/from subalternity, by not allowing any living referent to occupy the location of the subaltern. In fact, Li notes that living subalterns may complicate the very logic of subalternity by attempting to ‘negotiate some kind of compromise with the status quo’ (Li 2009, p. 280) in their efforts seeking emancipation from their condition and undertake the uneven path to hegemony. Thus conceiving of the living subaltern seems to complicate the very understanding of the paradigm of subalternity: for subalternity would then become a much more ambivalent positioning, one that can also be conceived of as transitory and multilayered, as the subaltern would result from the intersection of distinctive modes of interpellation rather than merely being ‘the product of the failure of interpellation’ (Grossberg 2000, p. 76).

Along these lines, Vahabzadeh proposes to read subalternity as a fluid and temporal position (‘divided subaltern’) (2007, p. 108; cf. Gairola 2002) that one might move in and out of: ‘Every hegemonic subject, strictly speaking, could at certain historical moments cede into subalternity, sometimes totally, but often partially, and the extent of this oscillation between [hegemonic] subjectivity and subalternity depends on his or her subject positions’ (2007, p. 109), or in simple terms, ‘there remains […] in every subject something of a subaltern and in every
subaltern a bit of a hegemonic subject (p. 108). Such reading – of which one can find traces also in Spivak's words (Spivak 1993, 2014) – disrupts the totalizing character ascribed to the condition of subalternity; which is here understood as a temporary condition, and more interestingly as a partial instance that can progressively increase or decrease. In this sense, we can imagine subalternity as a ‘space of transition’ where several competing processes of subjectivation may take place. In other words, what is needed is the capacity to look at subalternity from the perspective of (non-linear and non-univocal) paths of (de)subalternization. Can one interpret the space of subalternity through a multilayered and non-homogenous constellation of agency and non-agency? And in this context, how can attempts of social and political recomposition be triggered and/or developed? As Rosalind Morris clearly states in the introduction to Reflections on the History of an Idea: Can the Subaltern Speak?, one of the challenges of the volume mainly consisted in rethinking the potential of the issues raised by Spivak in her 1988 article in the aftermath of many relevant social, economic and political changes: ‘the demise of state socialism in the Soviet Union; the globalization of capital; the resurgence of masculinist religious ideologies as reaction formations to the desire for liberation from the false (because not realized) secularity of European capital; and the intensification of global ecological crisis, felt most intensely in the rural peripheries of the global South’ (2010, p. 7; cf. also Didur and Heffernan 2003, p. 5).

According to Spivak, while we need to be attentive to the most recent configurations of subalternity, we should not be deceived to think that its essential features have radically changed – indeed, the difference between the old and the new subaltern is, as Spivak says, ‘only conjectural’ (2005, p. 484). Time and place need to be understood as co-creating subalternity and thought together in (re)locating: ‘the subaltern folks I am talking about are in our present, but kept pre-modern’ (Spivak 2009, p. 80). We should imagine, then, the coexistence and interrelation of both dynamic and static spaces of subalternity, whose articulation is constantly reshaped at the pace of the movements of a borderless global capital (Spivak 2012, 2014). Indeed, the pace at which the
globalization of markets, data and migrations is proceeding has in recent decades engendered the mirror image of a fast and seamless hyper-connected world, where every restriction is inevitably doomed to being superseded and where borders and boundaries are constantly eliminated in the new spatio-temporal dialectic of capital, which – as Marx noted in the *Grundrisse* – sees every limitation (*Grenze*) as a barrier (*Schranke*) to overcome (Marx 1993, p. 334). However, as Spivak has remarked, the very idea of borderlessness displays ‘a performative contradiction’. Capital is in fact *borderless*, but ‘it has to keep borders alive in order for this kind of cross-border trade to happen’ (Spivak 2012). In other words, capital’s all-encompassing borderlessness transcends political borderlines while at the same time it perpetuates the geographic and economic frontiers that separate the periphery from the core, the Global North from the Global South, and ceaselessly creates and recreates inner social fences within each of these spaces, too. Such paradoxical dialectic of borders and capital should encourage us to rethink the meaning and function of boundaries. If on the one hand territorial and legal boundaries, national constitutions and cultural frontiers may seem to embody a valuable form of resistance to counter the unlimited concentration of global power within corporate capitalism, on the other hand the desperate emergence of *borders as barriers*, clashing nationalisms and conflicting identitarianisms seem to warn us to handle this idea cautiously.

Thus a productive answer to the question of how to relocate subalternity has to go beyond merely moving the subaltern from the periphery to the core, or from the Southern to the Northern hemisphere and must pay attention to the inner frontiers occurring within the space(s) of subalternity. How is the borderlessness of capital affecting the condition of subalternity? How are the border(s) of subalternity displaced, moved and redefined under the imposition of contemporary global constraints?

While acknowledging Spivak's frequent complaints regarding the common abuse of her well-known term 'strategic essentialism' – turned into a 'union ticket for essentialism', as she calls
it (Spivak, 1993, p. 35), the engagement with the notion of subalternity that this issue encourages suggests that the very theoretical enterprise of relocating subalternity may be accomplished by the adoption of a strategic-essentialist perspective—, i.e. a strategic commitment to the validity of such a notion for developing new possible uses of it. In other words, it suggests that one should claim the heuristic epistemological and political value of the category of subalternity against every conceptual attempt to dilute or water down its aporetic specificity, as well as against any simplistic effort to shorten the distances between the subaltern and its possible interlocutors in the name of too-easy transnational alliances (Mohanty 1991). Nevertheless, the mutual complication of the abstract category of subalternity and the figure of the subaltern qua universal singularity (Grossberg 2000, p. 76) may supplement, on the one hand, the abstractness of subalternity with the determinacy of its empirical occurrences and, on the other hand, the singularity of the subaltern with the generalizability of its universal condition. As a consequence, the notions of subaltern and subalternity are made available for different and divergent strategic uses that – by displaying the contingent, positional and non-essential character of these terms – allow multiple metamorphoses of both concepts. What does a strategic employment of these notions entail? And how can it be enacted in different disciplines as well as in different socio-political contexts? The essays contained in this special issue constitute, among other things, an attempt to provide an answer to these questions.

Asha Varadharajan's essay entitled “… half-sick of shadows”: Figure and Ground in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s Imagination of the Subaltern’ focuses on the legacy of Spivak’s concept-metaphor of the subaltern contra subalternity conceived of as a substantive social category. The article responds to Vivek Chibber's criticism of the alleged primacy of ‘particularities and incommensurabilities’ in the Subaltern Studies paradigm, as formulated in his latest book on Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital (2013). Varadharajan's essay engages with the non-identity of the subaltern in Spivak’s works and in contemporary examples
(Vibeke Venema’s story of ‘The Indian sanitary pad revolutionary’, 2014, and Nisha Pahuja’s documentary, *The World Before Her*, 2012) and analyzes it not only as a mere reminder that we should be attentive to nuances, but rather as an ‘ethical and intellectual acknowledgement of the limit of disciplinary frames’ and theoretical structures (Varadharajan: this issue).

Stephen Morton, in ‘The Wageless Life of the Subaltern’, further probes constellations of present subalternity through a reading of Abderrahmane Sissakó’s film *Bamako* (2006). From this peculiar fictional perspective his essay thematizes the global economic conditions and power relations that circumscribe the living conditions of the subaltern and explores new formations of the indebted, wageless subaltern, whose wageless life remains located outside the logic of capital. Reconnecting Spivak’s work with Gramsci’s writing on the subaltern, Morton offers a critique of the illusory autonomous space of ‘civil society’, highlighting, on the one hand, its silencing effects on subalternity and, on the other hand, the subaltern’s awareness of its limitations.

Jamila Mascat's contribution ‘Subalternity Reloaded: Singularity, Collectivity and the Politics of Abstraction’ aims at outlining two different hypothetical trajectories that can be traced throughout Spivak's works, both of which take the concept of subalternity as their point of departure: the first analyzes subalternity as a path to singularity and problematizes its consequences and impasses, while the second focuses on subaltern politics as a process of generalizability. The essay attempts to show the mutual complementarity of these two (seemingly) opposite moves in the direction of a possible strategy of desubalternization.

In the article ‘Empirical and Analytical Subaltern Space? Ashrams, Brothels and Trafficking in Colonial Delhi’, Stephen Legg engages with two distinct figures of subalternity: one that is ‘empirically’ determined and stands for immobile life of the subaltern lacking access to the structures of the state and one that is ‘analytically’ employed to define voices irretrievable from the archive. Drawing on such distinction, Legg conceives of the corresponding experiences of subaltern space: one that is empirically accessible and one that remains out of reach; both are
illustrated on the basis of his reading of a 1935 City Inspector of Delhi police report about abuse in certain Delhi ashrams. Since the first contains the marks and traces of the irretrievable second location of the subaltern, subalternity can be read here as inside and inevitably beyond its empirical and documented presence, such as to map out a condition of 'impossible explorations' (Legg: this issue).

In ‘A Position Embedded in Identity: Subalternity in Neoliberal Globalization’, Sonita Sarker examine the processes of identity-making of two groups—the Minnesota Indian Women’s Resource Center (Minneapolis, USA) and the Feminist Dalit Organization (Lalitpur, Nepal) who emblematize geographically and historically distinct subalternities. Referring to the Gramscian ‘war of positions’, Sarker insists on the dialectical relation of positions and identities and argues for reinserting identity into subalternity as inherently co-constitutive with structures of marginalization and oppression.

Sarah Bracke attempts to (re-)conceive of subalternity through the lenses of the controversial notion of resilience, which is arousing growing interest in current social and critical theory. If Spivak’s discussion of agency is marked by a concern with how resistance by the subaltern remains unrecognized, Bracke’s essay ‘Is the Subaltern Resilient? Notes on Agency and Neoliberal Subjects’ pinpoints a shift in hegemonic framings of agency in the neoliberal era and investigates to what extent it is perhaps less agency-as-resistance that informs an understanding of the (lack of) subaltern’s agency, but rather agency-as-resilience.

This special issue closes with the ‘Interview on subalternity’, a translated dialogue between Étienne Balibar and Gayatri C. Spivak, which travels through a significant portion of Spivak’s conceptual production, revisiting classical topoi of her work – the figure of the gendered subaltern, the notion of ‘strategic essentialism’, her conception of the ‘double bind’, her ‘politics of translation’ etc. The interview also discusses important ethical and political issues stemming from Spivak's prolific oeuvre – such as the relationship between Western feminism and Third-World
feminism, anti-imperialism, globalization and its consequences, the ‘sabotage’ of the Enlightenment and the importance of self-awareness for postcolonial intellectuals – so re-staging the crucial role of critique while thinking, employing and relocating the very category of subalternity.

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