



The self under domination: a dialogue between Nandy's *the intimate enemy* and Dangarembga's *nervous conditions*

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses two different endeavours to understand the effects of domination on the self as well as the tortuous ways by which emancipation is sought. One example is taken from Ashis Nandy's work *The Intimate Enemy* (1983), the other from Tsitsi Dangarembga's novel *Nervous Conditions* (1988). It is argued that domination deeply scars the human psyche so that the successful pursuit of the political emancipation of oppressed individuals and collectives depends on how the abhorred reality of oppression is dealt with, not only externally but – mainly – internally. In this vein, political emancipation consists of a politics of identification in that it must address both collective action towards freedom and an inner reconstruction of a vilified and downgraded self.

KEYWORDS

Domination; emancipation; nervous condition; intimate enemy

The insidiousness of the process of domination has in many ways been dealt with, mostly with regard to the impact caused by the objective structures and institutions that perpetrated the enslavement, torture, exploitation and annihilation of peoples and groups. In a less conspicuous way, the process of domination also encompasses the diverse, intense and enduring effects of oppression and exploitation on the selves of those who have been dominated. As Mbembe¹ points out, domination under colonialism concerns two decisive events for the human subject: a radical, and perhaps irreversible, alteration of one's relation to oneself and the other, and the extraordinary vulnerability of the psyche before the traumatism of the real. These, either in individual or more collective expressions, reveal the deep and long-lasting scars in the human psyche caused by domination, even after the objective conditions of oppression and exploitation have been altered and overcome. In this case, the key issue seems to be the pervasive transformation of the subject, whose process of emancipation can be partially, or even fully, flawed, mined or mitigated.

This article aims to discuss different human responses to domination, when attempts to face and deal with the violence it entails and restore the subject's condition of liberty are at stake. The discussion is based on two narratives that tackle the issue of the vicissitudes of self-construction under domination, providing insights into the painful and tortuous ways whereby subjects seek to recover their dignity and self-awareness. Both these narratives take the colonial experience of domination – one in India the other in Africa – as their

paradigmatic inspiration to unravel the inner struggles of those who have had to cope with the ills of domination and re-invent ways to restore their sense of freedom and self-worth. Clinical and political psychologist Ashis Nandy's seminal work *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism*, published in 1983,² represents a lengthy discussion of the cognitive and moral structures produced under British colonialism in India that entangle both oppressors and victims in a binding relationship. I contrast Nandy's erudite and cogently argued book with Tsitsi Dangarembga's outstanding novel *Nervous Conditions*,³ first published in 1988. In it, the inner condition of the colonial subject is scrutinised in its intersection with female domination. The book contains a unique and compelling narrative of human subjectivity, in particular, a girl's, under the domination of the British in Zimbabwe and subject to oppressive structures of generation, gender and race. Although distant geographically and diverse with respect to their discursive genres, both books demonstrate their authors' familiarity with the effects of domination on the psychic constitution. For both, the plight of the oppressed is conducive to resistance, even if it is ill-fated. However, the authors use different lenses through which to understand the intricacies of the escape from oppression, and consequently the available ways towards emancipation and critical consciousness.

This discussion of the dialogue between works in two very different genres, one fiction and the other psychoanalytical and cultural analysis, that detail subjective responses to the trauma of domination, seeks to examine how the figures portrayed by the two chosen authors use their inner and cultural resources to resist their oppressive condition. In this vein, the four characters under examination are taken as textual constructs, and thus in this sense, all of them may be regarded as fictions, even if two of them – Kipling and Aurobindo, who appear in Nandy's work – are real persons. Nevertheless, Nandy's reconstruction of Kipling's and Aurobindo's life stories, albeit faithful to autobiographical descriptions, remains a meta-narrative that seeks to account for the fate of the internal enemies constitutive of the oppressed selves of these figures. Kipling, for instance, is reconstructed by Nandy as a 'tragic figure' who reproduced in his own life the violence of an externally repressive imperialist world,⁴ an interpretation that underlines Kipling's inner limitation to reconstruct self–other relationships other than along the West/non-West divide, reflecting his deep internal schisms and psychological impoverishment. The objective here is thus to follow the authors' narrative construction of these characters, so that an interested reconstruction (my own) of the distinctive ways of elaborating and coming to terms with the experience of the internal tearing apart and fragmentation produced by colonial domination can be foregrounded. Thus, both Dangarembga's novel and Nandy's essay are read in view of establishing a dialogical, but not necessarily convergent, interlocution on the dilemmatic choices that befall the paroxystic condition of self–other relationships under colonial domination. Nandy's constructions of Kipling and Aurobindo transmit the author's political perspective on colonialism understood as a 'civilisational mission' and the production of a distinctive cognitive, moral and psychological relationship between self and other. In a different vein, Dangarembga's novel is a 'multi-layered textuality to negate the homogenizing effects of recuperating a singular voice from the margin'⁵ whereby ambiguities, irresolutions and disparate apprehensions of the fate of the colonial subject provide no linear denouement of their dilemmas. The task of bringing close together the delicate polyphony of Dangarembga's text and Nandy's scholarly psycho-cultural analysis further interrogates how emancipation, as a

concomitant psychological and political process, relies on the reconstruction of an interiority whose 'aim' should not consist in *winning the enemy inside* – the oppressor – but rather the process of being able to sustain the inner fragmentation and torment caused by domination. To count on cultural memory and collective values so as to unravel the alienated contours of the 'I–we' borders and identifications can re-signify the personal experience of past horrors within a collective context of the search for a common destiny.

Ashis Nandy and the 'intimate enemy'

The encounter between the colonised subject and his or her oppressor seals a hazardous destiny for both. For Nandy, colonialism produces degradation and pathology on both sides – for the colonised subjects and their cultures as well as for the colonising societies and their supposed victors. This standpoint not only runs counter to the common wisdom of victimising the oppressed but above all establishes a perspective from which to search for the hidden and often unacknowledged evil internalised by the oppressors themselves, even if it is normalised into a legitimate ethos. The brutality of oppression and domination establishes an inexorably binding relationship wherein both the master and the slave find themselves entangled, viciously suffocated and permanently haunted by one another. No terrain is left for uncurbed acts of relating and longing in a social relationship, since both the oppressor and the oppressed are encircled by the noose of massive projective identifications.⁶ Domination establishes a condition of entrapment pervasively constricting the subject's desire by way of the totalising effect of a reiterating persecutory fantasy: what does the other want from me?

Focusing on the self and its hazardous constitution under domination, Nandy ponders his chosen subjects' chances of ever negotiating breaches in lives encapsulated by the misery of alienation. The lives of English writer Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) and Indian writer, activist and yogi Sri Aurobindo (1872–1950) are surveyed and contrasted with respect to the choices each one makes towards leading a more desirable life. The lives of each start differently, Aurobindo as a colonial subject under the British Raj, and Kipling, born in India, representing the side of the coloniser. Nandy's choice of both Kipling and Aurobindo follows his argumentative purpose: to put in evidence human alienation on whatever side of the relationship.⁷

Nandy's Kipling was prey to intense ambivalence about Indian things and Indian-ness: his unforgettably idyllic childhood in India encompassed a dangerous nearness to and inclination towards the supposedly inferior culture of the colonised. Kipling's internal Indian child, doted upon and tenderly looked after by Indian servants, was carefully over-preserved as an idealised and intact adult memory, a seemingly non-communicable self-part, which did not have the effect of contaminating his other conscious adult-self attitudes and convictions about colonisation and the role of the British in India. Although Kipling could taste in the flesh the malignancy of solitude, oppression and humiliation he experienced as a child in boarding school at Southsea, England,⁸ this experience did not produce any identification with the oppressed Indians. However mortified he was by such an experience, it was assimilated as a valued self-part of control and an idealised cultural trace of the superiority and strength of those who have the prerogative to conquer and command. Thus, Nandy's reconstruction of Kipling puts in evidence the latter's deep

internal schisms that ultimately prevented him from formulating an emancipated criticism of the evil of colonisation and violence.

Nandy argues that for Kipling 'the victimhood he had known in England could be avoided, perhaps even glorified, through identification with the aggressors, especially through loyalty to the aggressors' values'.⁹ The cost of such a psychic operation implied building up rigid internal barriers against any upsurge of his more compassionate and compromising self, carefully enveloped as an intact reservoir of literary inspiration and remembrances, though forever disconnected from what was regarded as *real* life and *adult* emancipation. These aspects of the process of self-building remained entangled in the hegemonic paradigm of male dominance, geared towards a self that should rid itself of any feelings of dependence and vulnerability.¹⁰ Undoubtedly, at stake here are the notions of both reality and adulthood, forged as paramount icons of the Western account of social and self-evolution. Reality stands in opposition to myth and superstition;¹¹ it is the domain of the objectification of the world by way of calculation and instrumental reason. Therefore, reality cannot be grasped by imagination or fantasy, which is considered to be the modes of children; as they make their way towards emancipation, children must overcome their cognitive backwardness. In this vein, to become an adult means to acquire this second nature, leaving behind imaginary life and affective inclinations and proclivities. It is a taken-for-granted truth in the modern Western world that the path to (adult) emancipation is directly concerned with setting oneself free from any possible drawbacks of childhood experience that might hinder the process of building up rationality over and above affect and emotions, self-control over and above vulnerability, and self-consistency over and above incongruity and self-contradiction.

Nandy's account of Kipling foregrounds the latter's response to the incongruity of his childhood experiences: on one side, Kipling suffered the evil of domination and most probably hated his compatriots on this account; on the other, it was demanded that he be one of the colonisers, loyal to the values of Western civilisation, even if one of these – violence – could be personally experienced as pain. The failure to remonstrate with his own oppressors for their evil would eventually lead Kipling to sustain great psychic incongruity, adhering to Britishness *and* abhorring national stupidity. For Nandy Kipling's response led him to form a totalising adhesion to British values, paving the way for a conscious conviction about the legitimacy of violence, be it in the name of progress or civilisation by conquerors, or as counter-violence against tormentors by their victims. Furthermore, this psychic manoeuvre compelled him to cut off any access to his own violated and mortified self-part, whose affecting possibilities could but be repressed so as to keep under permanent control any internal conflict resulting from repressed identification with the victims (himself and others). Such internal cleavages safeguarded a wholesome and consistent identification with British ideals and values, at the cost of repelling and making alien any of his own self-parts and life experiences that were incongruous with them. As such, self-consistency required a clear delineation of what he chose to be: a British national, not an Indian; a conqueror, not a victim.

Self-consistency has long been a measure of good psychological adjustment in the Western version of adult competence, whereby being 'one' should mean being able to keep down one's internal contradictions and incongruities unless one is capable of facing the consequences of a stigmatised identity, such as that of the lunatic or the psychologically immature.

For Nandy, the denouement of relations of domination calls upon the oppressed to go beyond their present enclosure of horror and pain to resume an effaced humanity and thus disentangle themselves from the deadening embrace of domination. Emancipation from violence and oppression hinges, then, on the insight and initiative of the oppressed, who, according to Nandy, 'have to have categories, concepts and even defences of mind with which to turn the West into a reasonably manageable vector within the traditional world views ...'.¹² What count as resources against oppression are the victim's latent inner potentialities, available through their life history and cultural heritage. Accordingly, beating the enemy lies in the possibility of re-encoding the massive, contradictory and overarching evil of oppression under a different symbolic regime – one that ably fissures the seeming inevitability of oppression and victims' complicity with it. For the oppressed the choice of survival, rather than death, has meant compliance with, and obedience and surrender to the oppressors. Although death may seem more heroic than survival, it may eventually reinforce a seeming superiority of the master as he manages to eliminate all opponents. On the other hand, unheroic compliance represents not just the preservation of this ultimate value – one's own life – but also the preservation of one's culture, values and world view, which are made to survive as well. In her biographical narrative, Rigoberta Menchú describes an instance when she and her entire family had to attend the horror scenes of the torture and death of a younger brother.¹³ At that moment, resisting would bring about more torture and death for those who overtly defied the military; the extreme suffering of actively doing nothing could only be borne as they upheld the faith in continuing to fight for justice and freedom for their people. By choosing compliance rather than death, the total effacement of the victimised other – hated for being what he is – is avoided; an opportunity is secured for the survival of these memories, ways of life and values.

The futility of reducing oppression to its sheer objective conditions, to the incarnated figure of the master, is shown in Nandy's claims about the much less visible effects of domination – namely, the internal enemy assimilated within the victim that is ever capable of haunting the victim's life, even after the enemy's actual death. Emancipation thus concerns how to tackle the inner enemy, how to integrate those self-parts that are forever contaminated and tainted by the horror of oppression.¹⁴ It is in Nandy's analysis of Sri Aurobindo that this issue is illuminated and gains complex contours.

Aurobindo was marked by a harsh colonial education whereby urbane Brahmos, according to Nandy, were brought up as English, such that 'nothing Indian should touch [them]'.¹⁵ At five, Aurobindo went to a boarding school in India; his governess and surrogate mother, like his peers, was English. An overriding feeling of loneliness and alienation accompanied him from these days, echoing the strangeness of being Indian and having to comply with a British education, way of life and self-ideals. At seven, he became resident in England, together with his brothers, where they became students of Western knowledge, from Latin and Greek to English literature, and infused with Western discursive authority over other knowledges and cultures. Complete denationalisation, in Aurobindo's own words, according to Nandy, came together with acute feelings of strangeness and depression that only seemed to lessen when he returned to India after 14 years in England.

Colonial education not only was conducive to a murderous attack on Aurobindo's inner resources and possibilities but, most importantly, had an annihilating effect on

his sense of *being real*. This feeling of *un-realness* accompanied Aurobindo throughout his life. The psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott notes that feelings of un-realness are associated with intense early experiences of suffering that can severely damage one's sense that life is worth living.¹⁶ Aurobindo had to struggle throughout his life to rescue his own self from total inner annihilation and/or a suicidal choice. This entailed the project of reconstituting his Indian-ness on his own terms away from the vilified self-image he had once internalised. His attempt entailed a process of restoration of a more inclusive and humanised universalism in which colonisers and the West were not demonised but rather remained 'an internal human reality', as Nandy puts it.¹⁷

Victimhood and resistance are, in Nandy's view, indivisible; accordingly, the search for the meaning of the pain and suffering caused by colonisation may unfold into a process of defiance not only of established authority but also of conventionality and reality itself. Within a total system of domination, when the display of rebellion may seem hopeless, victims do resist by protecting their most precious possessions; often it is 'in the corner of the [victim's] heart', as Nandy puts it, that the necessary defiance to assert the fallacies of the white man's, or whoever's, superiority is housed, even if such defiance is kept secret and is not self-conscious; even if it looks outwardly like compromise with evil. Thus, staying alive, or choosing survival, represents the unheroic alternative, but this alternative hosts the possibility of an understanding of oppression over and above its own logic, in order that it can be surpassed not by counter-oppression or counter-violence but by the enlightened standpoint of the victim.¹⁸

When Aurobindo returned to India after his stay in Britain, he was involved in insurgencies and struggles to overthrow British rule, and on account of these he was accused of sedition and sent to jail. Coupled with his political activism was a gradual appropriation of latent cultural resources: Indian spirituality offered him an 'exotic' alternative¹⁹ to assist him to cope with the experience of pain and oppression that was unaccountable in terms of Western knowledge and codes. He longed to experience whatever sense of freedom he could still access; for a different self- and other knowledge and an alternative way to grasp the interrelationship with the organic universe; and for a vision of perfection that defied conventional wisdom about how to behave in a world of violence and exploitation.

Aurobindo chose to become a yogi and a spiritual leader. The choice of spirituality – Indian spirituality – provided him with a detour from Western rationality, whose encompassing system of intelligibility had legitimated the violence of colonisation worldwide in the name of civilisation, Christianisation and modernisation.²⁰ If rationality itself, as discourse and social practice, structures institutionalised oppression, then, as Nandy argues, it is beyond dominant rationality, or even in the domain of what is considered irrational, that resistance can be acted out. For Nandy, Aurobindo's struggle hinged on an 'insane' attempt at resistance, unleashed by the need to protect cherished values of self and culture under oppression, albeit eventually in a form severed from mainstream conventionality. Reciprocity between the self and the other grounded in a perspective of (self)-transformation and transcendence ensued from Aurobindo's mystical formulation of an inclusive humanity. In this instance, the intimate enemy could be rescued and redeemed as long as it was synchronised with another worldly view of emancipation and justice.

Indian spirituality was not the only resource in Aurobindo's struggle against insanity and psychological annihilation; there was also, according to Nandy, Indian society's 'traditional ability to live with cultural ambiguities',²¹ whereby a certain permeability between

self and non-self is allowed, a certain possibility to *be* and exist in contradictory roles, like that of being what the other demands and refusing to be such. For that, external reality does assume a certain farcical, or 'dreamlike', reality, and resistance may be reduced to a 'minimum gesture of protest'.²² Nevertheless, under the principle of *apaddharma* (the way of life under perilous conditions), argues Nandy, *acting out* (showing outward compromise with the other) while observing oneself as an object becomes paramount in order to stay alive and allow a seemingly ineffective or ridiculous dissent to be foregrounded. This, to a degree, preserves the innermost self from total engulfment by the dominating other. Surely this bi-, tri- or multipartite self-experience runs counter to a coherent and autonomous self-ideal, but it provides more tolerance insofar as internal incoherence is concerned. At stake is the possibility of sustaining incompatible self-parts, and some degree of looseness and even self-alienation.

Aurobindo may seem from a Westernised standpoint to be a bizarre figure whose attempt to overcome colonial oppression and violence resulted in a flight from reality and the construction of a grandiose mystical theory. His bizarreness may seem to be a gauche and infantile effort to resist and make sense of his victimhood and host the inner enemy. From this viewpoint, it might be argued that a demeaned emancipation would ensue, as he failed to construct freedom in terms of a *realistic* and *adult* (that is to say powerful and effective) struggle against domination. However, the idea of emancipation itself should be problematised, having in view that it cannot be thought of as a single and already formulated way to overcome oppression, notably one that deploys the enemy's own ways and definitions – that is, of effectiveness, of what counts as reality and so forth. In this sense, Aurobindo ventured to propose a unique and alternative path to freedom, upholding the intimate enemy as a motivating source for understanding the suffering that binds the oppressor and the oppressed together. Kipling, differently from Aurobindo, eagerly responded to the interpellation of being like the oppressor/enemy himself, which inevitably brought about his *internal* flight from and abhorrence of his own victimised self-parts. Aurobindo's choice of survival led him to defy reality as it stood, together with its cornerstone, rationality itself, for it was this that had legitimated the violence inflicted on him and his confreres. The brutality of violence *as reality and rationality* had to be re-signified as a way to give meaning to his suffering and the vileness of oppression, even if this implied upholding *other realities* that could host the vivid and incommensurate human experience of pain.

Tsitsi Dangarembga and the 'nervous condition' of the oppressed

Dangarembga's novel *Nervous Conditions* is a compelling narrative about the plight of the oppressed, incarnated by Tambudzai (or simply Tambu), a girl aged about 12 who is brought up in postcolonial Zimbabwe during the era of the anti-colonial guerrilla war. In the novel, the vicissitudes of self-constitution are foregrounded against the oppressive and stifling conditions brought about by male dominance and patriarchy. Although a few explicit references are made to the anti-colonial struggles going on at the time, the domestic plane of gender violence stands out, and it is through social and familial relationships that the political violence of colonialism is made visible. On this aspect of the text, Thiong'o makes the point that the restriction of the narrator's view to the domestic sphere – that of a girl in her teens – is both the strength and the limitation of the

novel.²³ The turbulent and bloody years of Zimbabwe's independence that set the political and historical context of *Nervous Conditions* are kept backstage so that the construction of the colonised selves – those of the narrator, her cousin and the other women in the story – can be telescoped mainly through gender politics. Rebellion against the coloniser is acted out in the context of the girl's relationships with Babakamuru, the 'whitewashed' African, who stands as a colonial creation useful for representing the colonial system of oppression.

The nervous condition is the unbearable condition of the colonial subject,²⁴ entrapped by the merciless evil inflicted on her while at the same time upholding the need to survive. Violence becomes a paramount practice – against oneself and/or against the master. It masks the agony of adhering to colonial values, lifestyles and beliefs, of being *like the coloniser*, while at the same time rejecting his values, his knowledge and his heritage in order to preserve one's own indigenous self and culture. However, neither one nor the other seems tenable for diverse reasons, and the ensuing psychological condition leads to a paroxysm of conflicts, an internal breakdown and even extreme violence against oneself. As Dangar-embga's novel unfolds, such a tragic condition of entrapment gains vivid contours, as shown in the selves of Tambu, the novel's main character, and also her cousin Nyasha.

Tambu's story concerns, in her own words, her 'escape'²⁵ from the oppression of poverty – not having enough food, living in conditions of squalor and misery – which is experienced with still more strain on account of woman's fate of submission to and compliance with men's commands. Very early Tambu realises the difference in the treatment afforded to her and her brother, Nhamo, who can enjoy privileges just because he is a man; most significantly, it is thought that education (Western education) is a boy's asset so that males can eventually help their families out of poverty. Tambu realises the injustice of her situation: 'thinking about it, feeling the injustice of it, this is how I came to dislike my brother, and not only my brother, my father, my mother – in fact everybody'.²⁶ Dislike of the family makes her more detached from attempts to win their approval and affection and, in a way, more at ease to defy their values and expectations.

Defiance of the girl's, or the woman's, fate becomes Tambu's permanent struggle. According to Tambu's mother, a ferocious woman who would tire herself out for the family, 'the business of womanhood is a heavy burden'.²⁷ She admires Tambu's tenacity and is perceptive about her daughter's wishes to go beyond her own plight, though she is mostly unsupportive of such audacity. Although Tambu suffers for her mother's misery, she cannot find relief except by contra-identifying with her fate and wishing to do what her mother has *not* done. Tambu's father remains a dim figure, psychologically fragile, dependent on his elder brother's favours and condescendence. It is then to the latter, her uncle Babamukuru, that Tambu resorts, as he is a figure endowed with the experience and 'savoir faire' to be successful in life. Her uncle has had to overcome poverty and prejudice to reach the position of head teacher of a mission school – 'the only African living in a white house';²⁸ he is a distinguished and educated man among his fellows. It is to him she resorts as one who can also offer the material conditions for her education – the opportunity to escape her present condition. So, after her brother's death, Tambu has to convince her uncle of her worth in order to step into a man's supposedly natural and privileged position of obtaining an education and helping the family.

In Babamukuru's home, Tambu can gradually trace her way towards emancipation. On the day of her departure to the school mission to live at her uncle's, the sight of her mother's utter sadness and disappointment, and her refusal to let her go, do not affect

Tambu, who feels 'triumphant' and 'vindicated'.²⁹ As she sees it, 'my horizons were saturated with me, my leaving, my going. There was no room for what I left behind'.³⁰ Mother, father, sisters are all part of a 'surplus scenery', as she feels the potency of changing her own fate, that 'circumstances were not immutable' and 'no burden so binding that it could not be dropped'.³¹

For Tambu education, 'the survival of the spirit', 'the creation of consciousness',³² is the portal to emancipation. Thus, her uncle Babamakuru represents the one who has managed to rid himself of the ill-fated family condition to help relatives out of material degradation. Tambu looks up to her uncle with admiration and respect, eager to conform to his commands and expectations, since to be like him, 'straight as an arrow, as steely and true',³³ seems to ensure the end result of freedom from need and acquisition of power and knowledge. However, Tambu's projective identification with her uncle as a way to emancipation also seals her submission to his wishes and commands and precludes her from finding *her own* way to salvation. This counterpoint, as we will see, is represented by Nyasha and her unremitting rebellion against her father, of which Tambu strongly disapproves. For Tambu, Nyasha 'had no right to be unhappy'³⁴ since she seemed to have everything.

Undoubtedly, Tambu's new situation at her uncle's has made her different – so different that she 'liked to think of [my] transfer to the mission as [my] *reincarnation*'.³⁵ In fact, outwardly, in good clothes, clean and looking nice, she *is* different. Though her intimate self can be assailed by doubts and conflicts, these have to be tamed and contained on behalf of her pragmatism: to succeed academically, to be liked by the teachers and to gain Babamakuru's recognition of her academic abilities.

Subdued by feelings of gratitude and admiration, even if in her heart she feels critical of Babamakuru's rigidity and sternness, Tambu feels obliged to her 'benefactor', to whom she owes obedience, love and respect, and with regard to whom it is sinful to feel angry.³⁶ However, on one occasion she does openly disagree with him: when her uncle insists on arranging a wedding ceremony for her parents. The purposelessness of the idea and the farce it entails – adding up to a ridiculing of her parents for the sheer sake of satisfying Babamakuru's fancies – undermine her intensively repressive mechanisms against her own ambiguities. She is internally disorganised in her certainties. As she puts it,

Coming to the mission, continuing my education and doing well at it, these had been the things that mattered. And since these things had been progressing according to *plan* for nearly two years, I had thought *that ambiguities no longer existed*.³⁷

Although the wedding does take place, Tambu holds to her decision, even though she is quite frightened about defying her uncle. But this stands as a unique event with seemingly no long-lasting effects on her conscious self in determining the course of her life or *who* she wishes to become. Soon after these events, another big step has to be taken in terms of her continuing education. About this, she has no doubt: she wants to go to Sacred Heart, a multiracial Catholic school, to pursue her studies. She has won a full scholarship.

She is convinced that this is the way to freedom, 'another step from the flies, the smells, the fields and the rags; from stomachs which were seldom full, from dirt and disease, from my father's abject obeisance to Babamakuru and my mother's chronic lethargy'.³⁸ For her mother, this is 'slaughter', an insidious cultural slaughter, a process of 'becoming English' and foreign that has already killed her son Nhamo. Tambu is not occupied by her mother's

fears, though she feels that ‘a seed of suspicion’³⁹ has been planted in her heart. This feeling is soon dispelled when she goes to Sacred Heart and enjoys ‘the books, the games, the films, the debates – all these things were things that I wanted’.⁴⁰ Again, ambiguities and doubts are repressed to provide ample room for Tambu’s predetermined plan of rebuilding her own self according to the internalised ideal of emancipation through education that Babamukuru iconically represents.

Dangarembga’s novel sways its reader into the daily, constant and yet feverish anguish of this African girl in colonial Zimbabwe as it recounts her journey to rescue her dignity and self-esteem within class, gender and race structures of domination. Education – that is, Western education – seems the way to achieve this aim. It is noteworthy that education is not problematised as possible entrapment, a possible losing of oneself in the *other* by becoming English and a stranger, especially if it does not allow room for the torments of ambiguity and the seeds of self-suspicion. If education can open up the mind, the price to be paid may be an alliance with yet other oppressors, and the tantalising divinisation of the supposedly knowledgeable and powerful.⁴¹

The relationship between the cousins Tambu and Nyasha is one of confidence and intimacy. About the same age, they are able to exchange opinions, tastes, dreams and hopes. Tambu is fascinated and intrigued by her cousin’s manners – she is ‘shocking, funny, disrespectful and irrepressible’⁴² – but also fearful of the havoc Nyasha can wreak on her well-arranged plan of self-management. As she puts it, ‘Most of me sought order. Most of me was concrete and categorical. These parts disapproved of Nyasha very strongly and were wary of her’, ... ‘everything about her spoke of alternative possibilities that if considered too deeply would wreak havoc with the neat plan I had laid for my life’.⁴³ Thus, as the novel evolves the reader becomes witness to a widening distance between the two girls as they face the dilemmas of self-construction under the oppressive structures of gender and race.

Nyasha seems to dramatise both a resolute rejection of patriarchy – incarnated by her refusal to accept, ipso facto, that her father possesses an absolute authority over her – as well as a feverish search for *authentic* knowledge, that is, knowledge deeply connected with one’s own urge for self-expansion but not subdued to instrumental purposes such as academic or economic success. As such she provides a counterpoint to Tambu, who seems to prioritise the gains of academic investment to the detriment of the more intangible effects of knowledge on the self. Nyasha seems to be always endangering the established certainties of knowledge, especially when it is assimilated as unproblematically originating from an unquestioned authority. It is from her that the reader is able to glimpse what is happening in colonial Zimbabwe outside the cloistered atmosphere of the household as she sets herself to answer ‘why UDI [Unilateral Declaration of Independence] was declared’,⁴⁴ what were the causes that freedom fighters held all around, was it not for terrorism as her father put it; or, still, how bad it was when a country gets colonised and its people as well. As Nyasha openly defies her father, she has to face debasement (being called a whore), physical punishment (she is severely beaten) and being expelled from home. As the situation reaches this extreme point, Tambu is shaken by Nyasha’s ways, which remind Tambu of the intensity and determination of her own early years, though now she feels ‘embarrassed with [my] acquired insipidity’.⁴⁵ For Nyasha what is at stake is her freedom ‘not to be someone’s underdog’, as one can easily get used to it and then just carry on, so ‘that’s the end ... You’re trapped’.⁴⁶ Thus, as both girls strive for

freedom, looking to books and knowledge as a way to emancipation, it is Nyasha who brings to the fore the internal torments of the colonial subject and how (Western) knowledge, (Western) progress and the entire subjectivisation process accordingly put in motion had to be challenged so that they did not become another veiled way of entrapping and subduing. Throughout this process, her father seems the nearest adversary, the embodiment of the colonial project ‘moulded by the whites into their image of the good African – he had let himself be so moulded through never questioning anything’, as Thiong’o puts it.⁴⁷ As Kona notes, (Western) education becomes part and parcel of the colonial condition, which perpetuates colonised people seeing themselves in a Western mirror ‘looking for the face that we think is ours’⁴⁸.

As the novel evolves, Tambu and Nyasha stand as counterpoints, each struggling to find her own escape from the oppressive injunctions of race, class and gender. As Tambu admits, ‘Beside Nyasha [I] was a paragon of feminine decorum’;⁴⁹ she feels that she has to take the chances of life as they come, whereas her cousin can afford, by virtue of being affluent, her ‘obstinate idealism’,⁵⁰ which leads her in other directions, towards ‘other struggles to engage in besides the consuming desire to emancipate [myself] and [my] family’.⁵¹ As the novel comes to its end, a clear bifurcation of their trajectories shows these unreconciled life choices against entrapment and oppression: either being true to oneself *or* subduing to the other; either yearning for the oppressor’s knowledge *or* refusing to become *like him*; and either condoning the established authority *or* attempting to overcome its gripping power. Tambu decides to pursue her studies at the Sacred Heart school as this is her ‘latest opportunity’,⁵² whereas Nyasha plunges into an anorexic syndrome followed by a nervous breakdown. In her confused state of mind, she pleads for being herself and being free, accusing a phantomised *them*:

‘Why do they do it, Tambu’, she hissed bitterly, her face contorting with rage, ‘to me, to you and to him? Do you see what they’ve done? They’ve taken us away ... They’ve trapped us. But I won’t be trapped. I’m not a good girl. I’m evil’.⁵³

For Tambu, Nyasha’s breakdown sounds a cautionary note about her own choices, stirring up ‘creeping feelings of doom’.⁵⁴ However, she soon recovers her certainties and her self-composure of rationality and pragmatism. After all, she feels that ‘she was a much more sensible person than Nyasha, because I knew what could or couldn’t be done’.⁵⁵ The novel ends here, bringing forth, on the one hand, the tragic outcome of the *nervous conditions* of the colonial female subject, and on the other, the unknown and unforeseeable effects of an escape that, by flirting with the enemy, can prove an illusion and a tighter and more long-lasting entrapment.

The forever-scarred psyche under domination: limits and possibilities of emancipation

In this article, I have used as my leading interpretive frame the interrogation of the vicissitudes of the self under oppression and its way to emancipation, as based on Nandy and Dangarembga’s works. The metaphors of the intimate enemy and nervous conditions evoke the devastating effects of cultural assimilation under unequal and violent social relationships, which give rise to an enduring condition of internalised abhorred self-parts resulting from experiences of humiliation and degradation.

The limits and possibilities of emancipation rely, then, on how the subject deals with the suffering and pain so that they are not repressed and banned from consciousness, to return as the subject's persecutory phantoms, capable of ever haunting and subduing the self. In this vein, Dubois' concept of double consciousness⁵⁶ is illuminating. This extraordinary American writer poignantly describes the psychic condition of black Americans: 'an American, a Negro: two souls, two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body'.⁵⁷ Emancipation cannot be achieved by alienating what is abhorred within oneself, a kind of necessary forgetfulness to allow for conscious cohesion about what one is or wants to become. Aurobindo's figure and life notably express the 'warring ideals and un-reconciled strivings' of one who could hardly be *one* and the *same*. Rather, beating the intimate enemy demanded that he admit the internal splits as a source of vulnerability and suffering, which opened up identificatory possibilities other than those provided by the enemy himself, whose ways may have once appeared to be the only alternative. As a matter of fact, it is not a case of *beating the enemy*, as this expression seems prey to a mystification of victors, but simply of a reconfiguration of internal forces that can amplify the victim's capacity to sustain her resistance to external pressures and to internal fragmentation, in order to uphold confidence in her own choices.

Both Nandy and Dangarembga agree that political emancipation is contingent on the subject's capacity to self-(re)construct after they have experienced degradation at the hands of oppressors. Nonetheless, their narratives are differently modulated, not only according to what is most significantly at stake under oppression but also by the possibilities for the subject to reconstruct her dignity and self-esteem.

For Nandy, the victimhood of oppression consists of an enduring and pervasive experience that interpellates the self, irreversibly adhering that experience of oppression to the person's subjectivity. Both the oppressed and the oppressor face the task of having to reconcile themselves with the evil they have experienced, of either having been degraded and enslaved or having tortured and killed. This entails the psychic labour of painfully establishing connections between the experience of such evil and possible other (good) experiences from other parts of one's life, in order to confer on them all some degree of connection as part of one's life history and self. Nandy's analysis of Kipling and Aurobindo shows how the abhorred self, victimised by oppression, is differently situated within the overall subjective dynamics in each of them. Kipling not only rejected his identification with Indian-ness and the oppressed Indians but also refused to *embrace his own vilified self*, as it seemed incongruous with his ideals of mastery, performance and adulthood. At stake was the supremacy of the conquerors, the British colonisers, who, by virtue of their proven superiority, stood as incontestable winners and models. For Nandy, however, superiority lies on the side of the victims, because it is they who envisage the evil of oppression and must overcome it, for their sake and also the oppressors'.⁵⁸ As they are morally and cognitively superior, they have to resort to their own resources – their past, their cultural heritage, their memories and myths – as the resources of resistance. Aurobindo is a case in point. His inner reconstruction found a way to accommodate his English-ness, acquired through his long years of childhood and youth, alongside a rescued Indian-ness in the form of a mystical theory of human constitution and salvation, even if such an accommodation defied the canons of Western rationality and reality.

In Dangarembga's novel, the oppressive colonial system bears responsibility for the asymmetrically violent conditions of existence for the colonial subject – squalor, lack of

education, hunger, labour exploitation – out of which the struggle to emancipate is made. As Basu points out, the central trope of the novel concerns ‘entrapment, rebellion and escape’.⁵⁹ This is made possible in Tambu’s determination to ‘revert her natural fate’ – being a poor African girl in colonial Zimbabwe – through the process of education. But as the novel unfolds, adherence to a Western way of being entails the tragic dimension of identification with the master, be that the coloniser, his values and knowledge, or the colonial puppet Babakamuru. The process violently tears Tambu from her original background towards an idealised emancipated self, whose anticipated vision demands the containment and forgetting of all ambiguities, doubts and anxieties aroused alongside the actualisation of this idealised position. On the other hand, the novel contains the character of Nyasha, who typifies the tormented subject who dares to doubt and defy the authority of colonial rule, incarnated in her father. Nyasha’s dramatic nervous condition exposes the collapse of the subject before two seemingly incommensurable and antithetic ideals: of emancipation by becoming Western and introjecting the superior other, and of emancipation as being true to oneself, one’s origin and one’s culture. In this way, Nyasha tragically exposes the utmost failure of the civilisational mission of colonisation, which attests to its violence towards and destruction of *other* civilisations and modes of living.

Tambu’s choice of emancipation relies on her capacity of ‘being more sensible than her cousin’ and thus rationalising that the way to autonomy is via Western education. She also dismisses her cousin’s inner torment as a sort of bourgeois artefact, since the latter could afford her struggles on account of having been born into well-off circumstances. For Tambu, there seems to exist *no other way* to become emancipated except that of taking her chances with those who rule by adhering to their values and knowledge. Narcissistic gains, such as being academically recognised by relevant superior others, reinforce her belief that she has laid her bets in the right direction, despite passing doubts: ‘was I taking enough care?’.⁶⁰ At times she realises that there might be pitfalls in the choices she is making, but these misgivings are firmly repressed to allow her a less faltering determination and a more coherent conscious self. Her compliant performance ‘plays the system’, as Bahri puts it,⁶¹ and she attempts to prevail within it for a modicum of satisfaction: an academic degree, whose power to transform the patriarchal and colonial entrapments seems very doubtful. Nyasha’s caution that Tambu should *not forget* is relevant here. The warning concerns the intangibility and amplitude of all that is at risk in forgetting: Tambu’s own self, her foremost and most cherished desires, and the utmost meaning of freedom. Memory, or in other words the possibility of sustaining within oneself what count as one’s former and incongruous self-parts, can safeguard against unanticipated and veiled serfdom.

Under colonialism, domination acquires a sovereign and absolute quality, created by multiple, diverse, reiterated and cumulative acts of violence thus setting up a scenario of hate and terror.⁶² For Fanon, the condition of the colonial subject, seen as ‘a permanent struggle against an atmospheric death’,⁶³ would necessarily lead to *giving death* to the coloniser, as if only the *gift of counter-violence* can symbolically restore the former’s equal humanity.⁶⁴ Mbembe argues that Fanon’s theory of violence must be understood as an *escalation of humanity* within the specific context of colonialism, whereby the dominated – by this utmost gesture of assassination – *give birth* to new life, a new language, a new humanity, turning the colonised *thing* into a man or a woman.⁶⁵ Counter-violence, in either or both of its symbolic and material forms, is considered to play a decisive role

in resisting the evil of domination. Here Nyasha and Aurobindo meet, as they, in different ways, do use violence against the enemy: the former in her permanent struggle against her father, once even physically beating him, the latter taking up arms against the British.

However, the question remains as to the aftermath of counter-violence. Counter-violence has its price, as it can transform the victimised human into a master like the predecessors, or it may not secure an internal intelligibility of the evil suffered. Thus, much more seems at stake in the process of coming to terms with the intimate enemy in the direction of *an interiority that must be reconstructed*, as pointed out by Eboussi Boulaga.⁶⁶ This African philosopher responds to the question of how human subjecthood can be recuperated in the face of the alienation and self-negation brought about by the violence of colonialism. How can the construction of one's historical reason become a praxis of freedom? The resort to tradition as a model of vigilant memory, critical identification and utopia, is discussed, hinging on an overarching individual and collective process of critical introspection and collective reconstitution. For Boulaga, tradition means 'a given being-together and a factual having-in-common that calls for a common destiny through the mediation of a rational and reasonable acting-together',⁶⁷ the past being thus enacted in action and in relation to a project. As identification and memory, tradition proceeds to affirm the self and one's culture but also to critically reconstruct one's mystified (for good or for evil) past, so that the present should become an object of vigilance. By opening up a return to what is fundamental in the self, and avoiding archaism, 'tradition is strictly revolutionary'.⁶⁸

The politics of emancipation draws on a politics of subjective identification as colonised individuals and collectives search to reconfigure their self borders – who I/we am/are; who I/we want to be – which have been obfuscated by the traumas of colonialism. Through this process, multifarious across dominated cultures and individuals, the evil of the past can be sutured to a 'having-in-common in view of a common destiny' to be collectively enacted. What seems noteworthy, though, is that while Aurobindo could count on Indian-ness and Indian spirituality as significant elements for reconfiguring his 'having-in-common', for Nyasha there did not seem to exist any Africanity⁶⁹ to which she could resort to embody her resistance and emancipation. Nyasha's war is turned onto her own body as the only site of resistance.⁷⁰ As well, Africanity, as an epistemic ground upon which a negation of the negations imposed on Africans might be constructed,⁷¹ could have encouraged in Tambu a recalcitrant attitude and thus greater inclination not to idolise colonial knowledge and to assert, rather, a denied identity and cultural heritage.

If the structures of colonial domination are here explicitly associated with India and Africa under the dominion of European powers, it is also true that other parts of the global South have succumbed to Westernisation and the imposition of ways of thought, language, faith and social customs. As Mignolo argues, in the last 500 years, the whole planet has had to respond in some way to the expansion of the West,⁷² which has meant the ravaging process of the colonisation of minds. Mudimbe⁷³ points at some of its far-reaching effects: the marginalisation and degradation of *other* cultures, the belief that no true knowledge can be produced except from the centre (Europe) and the belief that nothing can be learnt from *others* unless it is already *ours* (the colonisers'). Colonialism has effected the forging of various forms of double consciousness,⁷⁴ whereby colonial difference was *othered* as a subaltern, inferior and degraded and re-introjected into the colonial subject as an-*other* of herself. In this vein, Nyasha and Tambu seem to

dialectically act out the insoluble contradiction between *the violence of being othered and losing contact with one true self* and *the longing for being like the superior other and gaining 'legitimate' respect and recognition*.

The intricate dynamics of subjective conditions are foregrounded in the pursuit of emancipation. Political endeavours in the pursuit of freedom⁷⁵ seem contingent on subjective capacities to feel real and sustain one's choices in the face of disbelief and ostracism. Political struggles take place in the swampy territory of inter-subjective relationships, modulated by the tensions of separation from and dependence on the other. Refusal to admit the constitutive condition of human dependence and vulnerability can lead to strategies to dominate and subjugate the other.⁷⁶ The figure of the intimate enemy cautions one that evil, albeit incarnated by the oppressor, can be ultimately envisaged as an aspect of one's own constitution, as acutely pointed out in the *Isopanisad*: 'He who sees every being in his own self and sees himself in every other being, he, because of this vision, abhors nothing'.⁷⁷ Lack of acknowledgement of one's internal evil, as well as the inexorable dependence of oneself on the other can thwart the struggle for emancipation. As shown here in the reconstructive framework of the subjects' life choices, freedom, as an individual and collective endeavour, seems contingent on the ways that abhorred realities remain accessible not only to other struggles of once-oppressed individuals and collectives but also to one's desire to be oneself.

Notes

1. Achille Mbembe, *La raison nègre*, Paris: La Découverte, 2013, p 235.
2. Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy. Loss and Recovery of Self under Domination*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010.
3. Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, Banbury: Ayebia Publications, 2004.
4. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 37–38.
5. Sheena Patchay, 'Transgressing Boundaries: Marginality, Complicity and Subversion in "Nervous Conditions"', *English in Africa* 30(1), 2003, pp 145–155.
6. Joseph notes that there may be multiple objectives for the different ways projective identifications work. One of them – to get rid of undesirable self parts that cause anxiety or suffering – can be deployed to avoid the feelings of dependence, admiration and their consequences, such as feelings of loss, anger or envy. See, Betty Joseph, 'Identificação projetiva – alguns aspectos clínicos', in *Melanie Klein Hoje*, E. B. Spillius (ed), Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1991, pp 146–158.
7. The position I take here, rather than checking the veracity of Nandy's affirmations about the lives of both protagonists, aims at establishing a meta-analysis concerned with extricating how he constructs *his* own frame of analysis to understand the plight of the self under domination.
8. Kipling referred to this boarding house as the House of Desolation. For the literary account, see Rudyard Kipling, *Baa Baa, Black Sheep*, Collected Stories, New York: Alfred Knopf, 1994, pp 407–438.
9. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 68.
10. This issue has been extensively discussed in feminist writing. See, for instance, Jessica Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love Psychoanalysis, Feminism and the Problem of Domination*, New York: Pantheon, 1988; Gisella Bock and Susan James (eds), *Beyond Equality and Difference. Citizenship, feminist Politics, Female Subjectivity*, London: Routledge, 1992.
11. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialética do Esclarecimento*, trans. edition, Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1986.
12. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p xiii.

13. See Elizabeth Burgos, *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia*, Mexico, D. F.: Siglo Veintiuno, 2013.
14. The internalization of the abusing master can have devastating and lasting effects on one's life leading to suicide. In Brazil, many who suffered the pain of violence, persecution and torture under the military dictatorship, after having been set free, put an end to their lives unable to go on living under the haunting horror forever experienced. See, for instance, Leneide Duarte-Plon and Clarisse Meireles, *Um homem torturado: nos passos de Frei Tito de Alencar*, Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2014.
15. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 87.
16. For Winnicott to feel real is equivalent to feel that life is worth living. Donald Winnicott, *A família e o desenvolvimento individual*, São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2005.
17. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 87.
18. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 99.
19. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 96.
20. See Walter Mignolo, 'Globalization, Civilizational Processes and the Relocation of Languages and Cultures', in *The Cultures of Globalization*, F. Jameson and M. Miyoshi (eds), Durham: Duke University Press, 2001, pp 32–53.
21. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 107.
22. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 104.
23. 'The actions, conflicts, clashes of outlook move on the domestic plane only ...' Ngugi Thiong'o, *In the Name of the Mother – Reflections on Writers and Empire*, Suffolk: James Currey, 2013, p 136.
24. The title is taken from the Preface written by J-P. Sartre to F. Fanon's book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York: Grove Press, 1963. 'The status of the "native" is a nervous condition introduced and maintained by the settler among colonized people *with their consent*' (p 20).
25. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 1.
26. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 12.
27. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 16.
28. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 63.
29. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 57.
30. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 58.
31. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 58.
32. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 59.
33. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 95.
34. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 60.
35. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 94, my italics.
36. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 151.
37. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 166, my italics.
38. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 186.
39. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 207.
40. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 208.
41. See, for instance, Theophilus Okere, Anthony Njoku and René Devisch, 'All Knowledge Is First of All Local Knowledge', in *The Post-Colonial Turn – Re-imagining Anthropology and Africa*, R. Devisch and F. Nyamnjoh (eds), Leiden: Langaa, 2011, pp 275–296.
42. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 97.
43. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 96.
44. As Thiong'o affirms, 'what is known as UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence), took place on 11 November 1965. But by then ZANLA and ZAPLA guerillas had already entered the country ... Zimbabwe becomes independent in April 1980.' (Thiong'o, *In the Name of the Mother*, p 119).
45. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 118.
46. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 119.
47. Thiong'o, *In the Name of the Mother*, p 129.

48. Prakash Kona, *Contemporary Relevance of Tsitsi Dangarembga's Nervous Conditions*, 16 February 2018. Available at: <https://www.pambazuka.org/>
49. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 157.
50. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 183.
51. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 154.
52. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 182.
53. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, pp 204–205.
54. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 207.
55. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 208.
56. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black People*. Available at: http://www.wnorton.com/college/history/give-me-liberty4/docs/WEBDuBois-Souls_of_Black_Folk-1903.pdf
57. Bois, *The Souls of Black People*.
58. Again Rigoberta Menchú is an inspiration on this issue. She says:

As I say ... my cause has not risen from something good, but from something evil, something sour. Precisely my cause has radicalized on account of the miserable conditions of my people; on account of the malnutrition that we have suffered as indigenous people. (Burgos, *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchu y así me nació la conciencia*, p 271)
59. Biman Basu, 'Trapped and Troping: Allegories of the Transnational Intellectual in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*', *Ariel* 28(3), 7–24, 1997.
60. Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*, p 207.
61. Deepika Bahri, 'Disembodying the Corpus: Postcolonial Pathology in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*', *Postmodern Culture* 5, 1, 1994.
62. See Frantz Fanon, *Sociologie d'une revolution L'An V de la revolution algérienne*, Paris: Maspero, 1972.
63. Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*, Paris: La Découverte, 2004.
64. Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*.
65. Mbembe, *La raison nègre*.
66. Fabien Eboussi Boulaga, *Muntu in Crisis. African Authenticity and Philosophy*, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2014.
67. Boulaga, *Muntu in Crisis*, p 149.
68. Boulaga, *Muntu in Crisis*, p 157.
69. See Archie Mafeje, 'Africanity: a Combative Ontology', in, *The Post-colonial Turn – Re-imagining Anthropology and Africa*, R. Devisch and F. Nyamnjoh (eds), Leiden: Langaa, 2011, pp 31–44.
70. Bahri, 'Disembodying the Corpus'.
71. On this account, Wole Soyinka notes the 'subterranean reality of the African authentic being', see W. Soyinka, *Of Africa*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p 26.
72. Mignolo, 'Globalization, Civilization Processes', pp 32–53.
73. V. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
74. See Walter Mignolo, 'La colonialidad a lo largo y a lo ancho: el hemisferio occidental en el horizonte colonial de la modernidad', in *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales*, E. Lander (ed), Buenos Aires: CICCUS/CLACSO, 2011, pp 73–104.
75. And also epistemic endeavours to delink and to disobey seem also contingent on the subjective possibilities to cope with inner vilified self-parts. See Walter Mignolo, 'Geopolitics of Sensing and Knowing: On (de)coloniality, Border Thinking and Epistemic Disobedience', *Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 14(3), 2011, pp 273–283.
76. See Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love*.
77. Quoted in Nandy's, *The Intimate Enemy*, p 108.

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