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LIVING ALTERITIES

Phenomenology, Embodiment, and Race

EDITED BY EMILY S. LEE

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CONTENTS

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change" and force tacit racial maps into consciousness (284), more is required to put those racial maps into question and critically reconfigure the way in which they are navigated.

96. See Haslanger, "You Mixed?" 283–285. Also see bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 177, where she gives the example of white people who shift locations and begin to see the world differently.

97. Haslanger, "You Mixed?" 284; Sullivan, *Revealing Whiteness*, 161–162.

98. For instance, Haslanger speculates that "close inter-racial friendships and love relationships" may lead to similar disruptions in racializing habits as the ones she describes in transracial parenting ("You Mixed?" 278).

99. See Sullivan, *Revealing Whiteness*, 176–177.

100. This is to evoke a multiplicity within the self, in terms of identity and attachment.

101. This is, I believe, the import of the last line of Fanon's *Black Skin, White Mask*: "O my body, make of me always a man who questions!" (232).

SEVEN

HOMETACTICS

Self-Mapping, Belonging, and the Home Question

MARIANA ORTEGA

Home is a name, a word, it is a strong one; stronger than magician ever spoke, or spirit ever answered to, in the strongest conjunction.

—Charles Dickens

A whole history remains to be written of spaces—which would at the same time be the history of Powers—from the great strategies of geopolitics to the little tactics of the habitat.

—Michel Foucault

There is nowhere you can go and only be with people who are like you. It's over. Give it up.

—Bernice Johnson Reagon

To start, I have to make a confession: this is an exercise of self-mapping, an attempt to deal with a certain nostalgia, a painful fixation on loss and a desire to return to a place called home, a persistent desire that keeps returning, like the snow of February in Cleveland, the city I sometimes call home. In self-mapping, one locates oneself in life and space and recognizes locations imbued with histories, power relations, cultural and economic forces, and personal dreams and imagination. Home, says bell hooks, is "the safe place . . . the place where the me of me mattered."¹ Quoting Michael Seidel, Caren Kaplan says that home is the exile's "belated romance with a past, through memory heightened by distance."² I am that exile who unwittingly falls for this romance yet is perfectly aware of its traps.³ Perhaps it is exile that brings forth the will to belong in a more insistent and gripping way—I

am not sure. This essay is my way of writing my way home by leaving it, by stripping it away of its magic and its strong conjuration.

In one of its multiple appearances, the notion of home can emphasize the personal, the affective, such as "home is where the heart is," where I can feel comfortable and safe, where I can scratch my itches, where I can be who I am. Home is, as Dickens reminds us, a truly magical word, offering a most needed relief from the world of the weird, the unsafe, the *unheimlich*. Yet, as personal as this notion is, Chandra Mohanty reminds us that it is also a profoundly political question. She asks, "What is home? The place I was born? Where I grew up? Where my parents live? Where I live and work as an adult? Where I locate my community, my people? Who are my "people"?"⁴ Answers to these questions are complex and call forth a nexus of histories and experiences, playful and painful, chosen and inherited. Home is where the personal sometimes unexpectedly, sometimes inextricably meets the political. The home question can thus carry us from the confines of our own skin to the open space of a world inhabited by others like and unlike me. The notion of home carries us to a politics of location.

My aim here is to discuss this notion of home in connection to the notions of belonging and location. Importantly, I carry out this discussion of home, location, and belonging in light of the experience of what I call multiplicitous selves—selves that occupy multiple positionalities in terms of culture, race, sexual orientation, class, and so on. In part I, I discuss how the notion of home may be connected to a politics of location, which reaffirms so-called authentic identities and serves to exalt those identities by negating those who are deemed as not belonging. Home may become the "barred room" that Bernice Johnson Reagon warned us about in her now famous speech on coalitional politics.⁵ Moreover, in this section I illustrate some of the difficulties that arise when considering the meaning of belonging given the multiplicity of the self. We will see that given this multiplicity we cannot adhere to a notion of belonging that privileges so-called authentic or primary characteristics of identity.

Informed by Michel de Certeau's analysis of tactics, I conclude by introducing the notion of hometactics, practices that allow for a sense of familiarity with and a particular sense of "belonging" to a place, space, group, or "world" while avoiding the restrictive, exclusive elements that a notion of belonging may carry with it. Ultimately, while I look at the connection between the notion of home and location, it is not my aim to work out a politics of location here so that we can use it in order to form coalitions across multiple oppressions. I am deeply interested in a productive, nonexcluding,

relational politics of location and coalitional work. Yet, what I reveal here is another part of the story of home, location, and belonging, the small yet important everyday practices of multiplicitous selves as they negotiate their multiple and complex identities and attempt to get a sense of connection to those worlds, what we may call micropractices of lived experience.

Part I: Belonging, Location, and Multiplicitous Selfhood

Following Aimee Carrillo Rowe, I see the notion of belonging as a point of departure for understanding, naming, and imagining location.⁶ In other words, the notion of belonging is intimately tied to a politics of location, location here meaning not just spatial but also social location.⁷ Carrillo Rowe asks that a feminist politics of location theorize the conditions for the possibility of belonging rather than assume an individual subject already belonging to a location.⁸ While Carrillo Rowe ultimately moves away from a politics of location to what she terms a "politics of relation," in which locations are formed by a series of affective and political ties with others, her insistence that we understand conditions for the possibility of belonging is key to an analysis of the relationship between home, belonging, and location.

A politics of location that merely assumes individual subjects as already belonging to a location is indeed problematic as belonging is quickly interpreted by way of specific identity markers. Rather than understanding the complex ways in which an individual is said to belong to a social location—the ways personal identity markers as well as relational aspects are linked and negotiated—such a politics of location may quickly turn into a "home" for some members but also a "barred room" for those who are deemed not to belong. In other words, when belonging is a matter of satisfying particular conditions of identity, which in turn become homogenizing conditions, home serves to block out those who are not like us or whom we deem are not like us. Our bodies, our selves, are thus blocked from the entrance of that special room that is home for some but not others, the barred room that Bernice Johnson Reagon warns us about.

As Mohanty notes, Johnson Reagon's concern lies with the problematic spaces created by oppositional political movements that provide a "nurturing space" for a while but ultimately only provide the illusion of community and a freezing of difference.⁹ Johnson Reagon is concerned with the idea some have that a coalition should be as safe as a home when in reality it is not safe or comfortable. The barred room of those who believe in narrow identity

politics and who are seduced by overly nationalistic tendencies may serve as a nurturing space but not for long. Questions arise as to why I don't belong in that room, or why doesn't he or she belong? Why have others been let in and not me? Don't I satisfy the conditions of belonging? Am I not one of you? And soon enough the walls of that room become too thick. That nurturing space reminiscent of the mythic, safe home is transformed into an illusive community in the attempt to reify our difference as Latinos, as Asians, as African Americans, as lesbians, and so forth.¹⁰ Yet, as Johnson Reagon says, "the room don't feel like the room no more [sic]. And it ain't home no more."¹¹

According to Johnson Reagon, community doesn't mean those that are or look like me. Spaces that have been created to reify certain characteristics can be modified when we take into consideration the heterogeneity within our group. I will then have to open the doors for others to get in or for me to get out of my zone of comfort. In the same way, we all have to leave the safety of the home at some point so as to not hide from the rest of the world and others in that world . . . not to speak of those for whom home has never been safe or comfortable and have known better.

In order to problematize further the notion of home as connected to a particular kind of belonging, what we may call "authentic belonging," I would like to bring to light some specific experiences by selves that I call multiplicitous selves. A multiplicitous self is a self capable of occupying multiple positionalities in terms of gender, race, sex, sexual orientation, physical ability, class, and so on, and thus capable of occupying a liminal space or a space of in-betweenness. One specific description of multiplicitous selfhood is that of the border crosser "new mestiza" provided by Gloria Anzaldúa.¹² While Anzaldúa's account of the new mestiza emphasizes issues connected to the north-south border and the lived experience of Chicanas, in my view an account of multiplicitous selfhood can consider various other positionalities, such as race, sex, bodily ability, economics, class, and so forth in other contexts.

In this paper I highlight my own experience as a multiplicitous self due to my exile and relocation to the United States. In my view, there is a sense in which all of us are multiplicitous selves but there is a crucial difference between those whose experience is one of being mostly at ease in the world and those whose experience is marginalized, oppressed, or alienated in some way and have to constantly engage in what Maria Lugones calls world-traveling.¹³ So, it is key to note that multiplicity is more at issue for some selves than others, depending on the different ways in which their positionalities are perceived or negotiated given specific social, economic, and cultural

contexts as well as power relations. For example, consider the way in which power relations and other economic, social, and cultural issues related to the north-south border affect the new mestiza self and lead her to feel the contradictory aspects of herself and the sense of being at the limen. Consider the way in which such power relations and social and cultural issues affect a newly arrived immigrant to this country who does not speak the language and who is marginalized as opposed to the way in which these factors affect the life of someone who is part of the mainstream and who finds herself feeling comfortable in her world.

Multiplicitous selves are constantly negotiating their multiple social locations. They are also constantly involved in world-traveling. For example, I, as a Nicaraguan-born, bilingual, lesbian, academic Latina living in the United States, have constantly to negotiate the multiple aspects of myself and have to travel to the different worlds associated with my various positionalities. And I, as a multiplicitous self, also find myself asking the home question—a home question that comes in terms of geography—is Managua, Nicaragua really my home, or is it Los Angeles, or Cleveland? And also in terms of associations with others—do I belong with U.S. Latinos, Chicanos, Latin American exiles, or women of color?

The home question is particularly difficult for the multiplicitous self whose life and context are such that she has to continually worldtravel, and thus the home question becomes a question of *homes*. Reflection on such a question paradoxically shatters any illusion of there being a definite place of belonging, while it also shatters the very multiplicity of our selves by way of a feeling and a questioning—that feeling of wanting to come home and that question of whether there is a home (or even homes) for me—as if there were a will to belong, as Nietzsche claims there is a will to truth that inspires us to many a venture.¹⁴ It cannot be denied that even for those multiplicitous selves who are border crossers and world-travelers, the home question is still a question. Perhaps it is even a more painful question precisely because that home seems harder to find. Yet, despite the determination of this will to belong that may provide a feeling of security and comfort, we cannot avoid recognizing the limits and pitfalls of such security, namely the reification of certain identity categories as opposed to others, and thus the expulsion of those who do not fit a version of authentic belonging.

Recall María Lugones's early essay "Hispaneando y Lesbiando: On Sarah Hongland's Lesbian Ethics," in which Lugones replies to the call of lesbian separatism. In this essay, Lugones describes the contradictory nature of her lived experience as she asserts her identity as both a Latina and a lesbian in

the context of Nuevomexicano culture. While she finds it empowering to participate in keeping the Nuevomexicano culture alive by being part of its community, she realizes that she cannot be openly lesbian there, and thus she feels that her self is lacking in that environment. As she says, "These communities do not recognize us as fully their own if lesbian. The culture is heterosexualist. It does not recognize the possibility of women loving women unmediated by male domination."¹⁵ Yet, Lugones still cannot follow Sarah Hoagland's advice to render the homophobic culture meaningless and agree to lesbian separatism, as this would entail becoming an "obsolete being" or assimilating into another culture that disregards the needs of lesbians who are not white. Lugones concludes that

such a lesbian must, for her own survival and flourishing, acknowledge herself as needing more than "one world." Her ability to inhabit both a world where radical criticism of her culture is meaningful and to inhabit the world of her culture constitute part of the possibility of her future as a creative being.¹⁶

Lugones then inhabits both the Latina and the lesbian "worlds." In each world she is lacking, but, as a border-dweller, she is not completely caught in either world. Inspired by Anzaldúa, she continues to have the perspective of the crossroads or the borderlands, a position that allows her a critical edge from which to interpret the multiple worlds she inhabits. She asserts her Latina and lesbian identities without accepting the homophobia present in the context of Nuevomexicano culture and the ethnocentrism present in the Anglo lesbian community.

Like Lugones, I have also found myself wanting to belong in the Latino community, and yet being hurt as I experienced the Latino community's homophobia as well as alienation in the Anglo lesbian community. My positionality as lesbian and as Latina cannot be easily reconciled. In many cases these two identities appear as mutually exclusive. There is no acceptance within the Latino community, unless I hide an important aspect of myself or I confine myself to a smaller Latino community, that of Latina lesbians, yet another barred room. As Lugones so aptly puts it, "Pluralism also requires the transformation of those 'home' cultures so that lesbians can be rid of 'homo-phobia' in Anzaldúa's sense: 'the fear of going home.'"¹⁷

And yet, like Anzaldúa and Lugones, I still want to be part of the Latino community. This example as well as countless others (think of Anzaldúa's own example about the difficulties in being Chicana and American, Chicana,

and lesbian; Du Bois's example of being an African American and an American; Lorde's example of being lesbian and African American) illustrate why it is that the experience of the multiplicitous self may be complicated and fraught with painful moments of what Anzaldúa describes as "intimate terrorism." It also illustrates the need that even the multiplicitous self has of belonging and the drawbacks that such a need generates. While many agree with Anzaldúa's claim that the ambiguities and contradictions of the self of the borderlands lead in fact to creative ventures and critical resistance, others question what this multiplicitous self can do besides be tormented by the contradictions and ambiguities brought about by her multiplicity. What can we do except feel the cactus needles embedded in our skin?

In *Wealth of Selbes, Multiple Identities, Mestiza Consciousness and the Subject of Politics*, Edwina Barvosa tackles critics of what she calls the multiple self and attempts to show that it is in fact this multiple self with its ambiguities and contradictions that can become an agent capable of political critique and social transformation.¹⁸ Barvosa's strategy is to explain the ways in which a multiple, socially constructed self constitutes a cohesive whole that is capable of shifting its social identities in different contexts and is capable of using ambiguity and contradiction to form a critical stance capable of being deployed for political activism. While Barvosa provides an interdisciplinary, complex explanation of the multiple systems at work in the multiple self, I would like to concentrate on the way she explains Lugones's experience of being a Latina and a lesbian described above.

According to Barvosa, Lugones integrates her mutually exclusive identities as a result of a conscious "self-integrative life project," rather than the usual rank-ordering of identities as some philosophers suggest multiple selves should do. A self-integrative life project is one in which "self-chosen endorsements are loosely interwoven into broad self-guiding projects that serve as the basis for integrating the self."¹⁹ For Barvosa, it is precisely the experience of contradiction, ambiguity, and ambivalence that play an important role in the project of self-integration. Thus, she sees Lugones as being able to integrate her different identities of Latina and lesbian due to the fact that she has a life-project of antiracism, antiethnocentrism, and antiheterosexism. According to Barvosa, because of this life project Lugones remains highly identified as a Latina and a lesbian while she simultaneously uses different identity markers at different times to claim a group identity ("selective identification/differential self-presentation"), for example, not including the issue of her sexuality in the Latino context. Thus, Lugones's own ambivalence about belonging to the Latino group, given its homophobia, represents

a strategy to hold her multiple identities together.²⁰ Through having a life project Lugones, according to Barvosa, can form intersections between her mutually exclusive identities and can claim a space in both communities.

While I see the value of Barvosa's appeal to a strategic self-integrating life project and, in fact, it is something that may be helpful as multiplicitous selves carry on with their lives, it should not be understood as the preferred practice guiding multiplicitous selves as they negotiate their multiple positionalities. Despite the advantages associated with practicing the kind of strategic self-integrating life-project, not all multiplicitous selves have such a project or desire it. Many may prefer to give up the illusion of integration and be willing to live with the ambiguities and contradictions that their multiplicitous selfhood entails. Moreover, given Lugones's own characterization of her experience as well as the experience of world-traveling in general, it is unclear that she would call for an integration of her multiplicitous self. Yet, Barvosa's explanation of a multiple self's negotiation of its various and sometimes mutually exclusive identities by way of a self-integrating life-project is illustrative of the complexity of the notion of belonging. What we learn from examples such as Lugones's and from Barvosa's attempt to deal with the contradictions inherent in multiplicitous selfhood is that given the complexity of the selves as well as the complexity of spaces of belonging (in terms of its members as well as criteria for membership), there is no sense in which one can be said to *fully* belong. There are only different senses of belonging depending on which markers of identity are chosen. Full membership and belonging, the safe, comfortable home is indeed an imaginary space in need of demystification.

In both its personal as well as political instantiations, "home" can easily become a space of exclusion despite its many possibilities of providing nurture and inclusiveness. The childhood home not only may awaken our sense of comfort and love, if there was love and comfort within its walls, but also the sense of insecurity and bitterness at being merely a child that does not know better and a sense of alienation from the outside world. The political "home," the space to nurture our identities, not only affirms us and empowers us as group members but can also deny entrance to others not deemed as belonging unless they silence themselves. When thinking of the case of Lugones strategically choosing different identity markers in different situations, I see how despite being able to claim both identities as Latina and lesbian, when she joins the Nuevomexicano communities, she has to follow their rules/practices/norms and is making herself vulnerable to them. She embeds herself within a regularized location, and silence about her sexual

identity is her main option if she is going to participate and build community in such a location. Clearly, reconsiderations, reframings, remappings of the notions of home, of location, of belonging are necessary.

Part II: Hometactics

As we have seen, despite the problems associated with the notions of home, belonging, and location, there is no denying the power that the notion of home has in producing sentiments of safety, comfort, and belonging. But there is no forgetting its mythical, "unreal" qualities. The reality of the notion of home is often quite different from our imagined home, both in its personal and political instantiations. I wonder though, whether we can go beyond the myth of home and move toward a decentered praxis of home-making and belonging, one that gives up the possibility of full belonging and allows for the possibility of not longing to be on one side or site of belonging.²¹

Here I would like to introduce such a praxis as "hometactics."²² Importantly, I am not suggesting that we should give up all notions of belonging connected to a politics of location, as in Mohanty's work or to a politics of relation as in Carrillo Rowe's work, or that we should give up all attempts at projects of self-integration as in Barvosa's account. There is room and necessity for larger political projects of cobelonging, as well as moments when it might be necessary to integrate certain aspects of our multiplicitous selves. Yet, I would like to add another layer to our attempt to understand home, location, and belonging, a layer that is often overlooked as we emphasize the grander project of forging a politics of location capable of generating resistance to oppression or projects that emphasize unity or integration. This layer is that of the lived experience of selves who are being-in-worlds and being-between-worlds and that find themselves constantly negotiating their multiple identities in light of both ambiguities and contradictions, but also in light of what I have referred to here as a will to belong. Thus, my introduction of the notion of hometactics is an uncovering of what multiplicitous selves are already practicing in their everydayness, a disclosure of that which is already happening in our lived experience.

As opposed to strategies, which de Certeau sees as bound up with regulations or set ways (norms/practices/laws) upheld by a dominant order, de Certeau sees a tactic as "a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus" and as the "art of the weak."²³ Tactics are creative, inventive, combining different elements of a system (or a set of strategies) "blow

by blow” and cannot be easily traced or mapped. In terms of their relation to specific spaces, unlike strategies that impose and place limits on spaces, tactics divert spaces. According to de Certeau, tactics utilize time in a clever way, produce alternative opportunities, and introduce play into the foundations of power.²⁴ In short, tactics are temporal interventions aimed at producing favorable situations but not necessarily at abolishing a system of power.

De Certeau’s classic example of practicing tactics is walking in the city (he also considers reading, storytelling, and cooking)—the different ways in which we improvise when we walk—walking in the city without a set map, getting a sense of the city despite its largeness and foreignness (the pedestrian reading the city but also writing it through his or her walking). For example, de Certeau discusses the example of a migrant of North African descent now living in Paris and walking this city’s streets—the way he dwells in his housing development and uses the environment that he now has with plurality and creativity, and thus, “by an art of being in between, he draws unexpected results from his situation.”²⁵ According to de Certeau, he develops modes of use or “re-use” as he acculturates in his new environment.

Although I realize the difference of the context within which de Certeau introduces the distinction between strategies and tactics, an analysis of capitalist modes of production and consumption, it is possible to apply it to the context of an examination of the notion of belonging in light of the experience of multiplicitous selfhood. As we shall see below, Maria Lugones has already engaged de Certeau’s distinction to analyze the possibility of resistance on the part of those who are marginalized, although my discussion and hers have some significant differences. Hometactics share some of the characteristics described by de Certeau above, but not all. For example, while I doubt de Certeau would want to circumscribe tactics in this manner, I see hometactics as a decentered praxis, which is at the same time capable of having a general aim or result. The aim of hometactics can be understood as the production of a sense of familiarity in the midst of an environment or world in which one cannot fully belong, due to one’s multiple positionalities. Such a sense of familiarity, is of course, not to be associated with the problematic idea of belonging that leads to barred rooms generally associated with so-called authentic markers of identity. And while hometactics can be said to have this general aim, no specific set-formulation of what these practices look like is possible, since one of the main features of tactics is precisely their unmapability and their working “blow by blow” and thus taking advantages of opportunities as they present themselves.

In “Tactical Strategies of the Streetwalker/Estrategias Tácticas de la Callejera,” Lugones problematizes de Certeau’s dichotomous distinction between tactics and strategies.²⁶ Lugones believes that de Certeau’s view cannot offer the possibility of theorizing resistance from the point of view of the oppressed and from what she terms a concrete body-to-body engagement, because the strategist is not able to understand the logic of the tactical and the tactical is seen as “haphazard, happenstance, disjointed intrusions on dominant sense, a troubled sort of passivity.”²⁷ Lugones thus proposes “tactical strategies” in order to disrupt the dichotomy between strategy and tactic and in order to offer a position in which a liberatory project is not guided by a mastermind or strategist. Instead, the liberatory project is intersubjective and based on concrete, embodied subjects at the street level (tactical strategists, “street-walkers,” or “active subjects”), who perform acts that go beyond merely “making do.”²⁸ As Lugones states, “As we move from tactics to tactical strategies we move from ephemeral contestatory negotiations of sense to more sustained engagements.”²⁹

For Lugones, such sustained engagement is connected to the practice of “hanging out” which allows the tactical strategist to develop a sense of the spatial context so as to see new possibilities in it. This sense of the spatial context available to the street-walker or tactical strategist, is, according to Lugones, neither the “nowhere” of de Certeau’s tactician nor the “proper” space of the strategist. It is constituted by hangouts that are fluid spaces that allow for multivocal sense and critical interventions against structures of domination.³⁰ In effect then, while problematizing de Certeau’s distinction between strategies and practices, Lugones provides a “spatial politics.”³¹

Lugones’s emphasis on spatiality is one aspect of her analysis that I find particularly important and helpful. I agree that de Certeau’s analysis misses the significance of spatiality as it is connected to tactics. While de Certeau’s own characterization of tactics, as opposed to strategies, prioritizes the importance of time to that of place, in my view it is possible to understand tactics as giving meaning to both time and space without necessarily reifying them. De Certeau notes,

Tactics are procedures that gain validity in relation to the pertinence they lend to time—to the circumstances which the precise instant of an intervention transforms into a favorable situation, to the rapidity of the movements that change the organization of a space, to the relations among successive moments in an action, to the possible intersections of durations and heterogeneous rhythms, etc.³²

According to de Certeau, tactics prioritize time because of the way in which our actions create possibilities that may be favorable to our lives. Yet, it is possible to think how creating such possibilities may allow us to get a sense of connection to a particular location, while we traverse the complicated world of multiplicitous selfhood without necessarily having a particular location designated as our home.

Lugones is right on the mark to expose the weaknesses of de Certeau's characterizations of strategies and tactics in light of the possibility of a more sustained liberatory project or a "spatial politics." While an in-depth analysis of the virtues and the pitfalls of Lugones's account of the doings of the tactical strategist is beyond the scope of this paper, I welcome her proposal for a more intersubjective fluid, spatial, politics attentive to difference and leery of clearly marked dichotomies. My account of hometactics does not emphasize a larger spatial politics, not because of lack of interest but because of my desire to bring to light the more personal day-to-day practices of multiplicitous selves as they struggle with the home question. While I realize the connection between the personal and the political, here I am pointing to daily practices connected to the home question that are not necessarily aligned to an explicit political project.

Importantly, Lugones does not have any affinity to the notion of "home." Consider a footnote in her tactical strategies chapter:

Streetwalkers include women who are at odds with "home." The home-shelter-street-police station/jail/insane asylum-cemetery circle, in ever so many permutations, is their larger understanding of home. Home is lived as a place inseparable from other places of violence, including the street. One could punctuate any other place in this circle. I count myself more skillful at dodging violence in the street.³¹

For her, home is more reminiscent of violence. There are no magical conjurations in this concept, no appeal to comfort and ease. It is another chapter in the yet another unfortunate dichotomy of public/private that Lugones also wishes to dismantle in her analysis of tactical strategies. For me, however, the question of home and the will to belong associated with it are still issues, deeply personal issues, despite my clear understanding of the dangers of the myth of home and my understanding of the larger political questions associated with the home question. It is precisely this paradoxical position that motivates this investigation. My account of hometactics is both my response to the paradoxical will to belong while understanding the mythical, magical,

and thus unreal, aspects of home. It is also my disclosure of what multiplicitous selves are already doing in their everyday experience. I clearly do not oppose grander and more sustained political projects, but I do not wish to overlook or forget those moments when multiplicitous selves tackle with everydayness and find ways, yes, to "make do," to feel comfortable in spite of a clear understanding of the ways in which power relations are bound to undermine, hurt, and alienate.

In my view, hometactics can be deployed at a personal or relational level. They are everyday practices that multiplicitous selves can carry out in order to have a sense of familiarity, ease, or belonging in a space or location, even though that space is a new or foreign one, or in a social gathering or community, despite the fact that a community may be made up of members claiming different identities. Hometactics are practices that we may suddenly recognize as granting us new possibilities of belonging in a location and a sense of identification with others with whom we may or may not share social identities, all without the appeal to a fixed home location, an intentional self-integrating life project or a set of so-called authentic identity markers.

Since hometactics are everyday practices in which we literally "make do" with what we have, they do not form a robust sense of belonging or familiarity, whether it is associated with a location or a group and thus may not be capable of forging strong political coalitions that can establish practices of resistance. Yet, what can be viewed as a lack of political functionality or strength does not undermine their importance in terms of the lived experience of multiplicitous selves. The sense of individual or group "belonging" that they may provide is a great source of comfort in the midst of the complex, sometimes ambiguous, sometimes contradictory lives of multiplicitous selves. Such a comfort is not based in a great myth or conjuration, such as the traditional notion of home, or in a grand self-integrating life project, but in particular everyday practices of "making do" with the incredibly complex and thorny, yet creative and resourceful lived-experience of the multiplicitous self.

How multiplicitous selves "make do" in their everydayness with the use of hometactics is an important issue that we need to analyze further if we are to understand the phenomenology of multiplicitous selfhood. What I am calling hometactics, microtechniques of lived experience, is already being put into practice by these selves and might prove to be useful for those who are not already doing it. Important questions as to the extent to which such hometactics may be found to be too opportunistic within dominant schemas, may be representative of not just making do but of "selling out," may be too passive, may be too complicit in dominant schemes, and may or may

not preclude the possibility of more sustained political projects remain to be examined. Yet, given the open-ended and unmappable character of these practices, it is not possible to make a priori claims regarding what multiplicitous subjects are up to or what they always ought to be doing when they deploy these hometactics. For me, hometactics have been a way of not just surviving in my travels across different worlds but of feeling a sense of much needed familiarity and relief in the midst of an existence filled with contradictions and ambiguities that lead both to moments of intimate terrorism—or of cactus needles embedded in the skin—and exciting moments of creativity and resistance.

I would like to conclude with another confession. I am a philosopher working in an academic environment that continues to privilege maleness and whiteness and writing by maleness and whiteness, the two attributes still considered by many as the bearers of philosophical excellence. Recall how Hegel wrote that women are like plants, and Africans could not arrive at *Geist*—Hegel's view of women and people of color being just one of so many reminders of the narrow, restricting, and alienating intellectual space of philosophy, a space that I precariously inhabit. There have been changes; there has been growth, talk of inclusiveness, talk of justice. But the writing that comes from the white female hand is still more important even within feminism, the movement pushing philosophy and others to see further, to understand more. So what can I do? I take what is given to me and make it my own . . . with words, with ink, with my lived experience. I offer you these words, these thoughts. I carve out a space for me in this philosophy that was never meant to be a home for me—this is one of my hometactics.

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Notes

1. bell hooks, *Belonging: A Culture of Place* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 215.
2. Caren Kaplan, *Questions of Travel, Postmodern Discourses of Displacement* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996), 39.

3. I moved from Nicaragua to the United States in 1979, and after all these years I continue to return to the question of home.
4. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003), 126.
5. Bernice Johnson Reagon, "Coalitional Politics: Turning the Century," in *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*, ed. Barbara Smith (New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983), 356–369.
6. Aimee Carrillo Rowe, *Power Lines: On the Subject of Feminist Alliances* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2008), 29.
7. The notion of a "politics of location" was coined by Adrienne Rich in her analysis of her own positionality as a white, Jewish, lesbian, privileged woman (*Blood, Bread, and Poetry: Selected Prose, 1979–1985*, [New York: Norton, 1986], 210–231). It has become a crucial idea in feminism, as feminists carry out investigations about their own spatial and social positionality and how this positionality informs their political responsibilities. Various feminists, including bell hooks, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Rosie Braidotti, and others have elaborated on this important notion.
8. Carrillo, Rowe, *Povertines*, 25–46.
9. Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders*, 117.
10. Such "nurturing" spaces might not always become unsafe for those inhabiting them. However, given the heterogeneity of groups, it is likely that questions about belonging might arise.
11. Johnson Reagon, "Coalitional Politics," 359.
12. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco, Calif.: Aunt Lute Books, 1987), ch. 7.
13. María Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes, Theorizing Coalitions Against Multiple Oppressions* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003). While I have been deeply inspired by Lugones's account of world traveling I do not follow all of Lugones's characterization of world travel. See Mariana Ortega, "New Mestizas," "World"-Travelers, and "Dasein": Phenomenology and the Multi-Voiced, Multi-Cultural Self," *Hypatia* 16, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 1–29. My view is that world traveling does not have to entail "self-traveling," and thus we can understand the "I" as a *multiplicitous* self rather than a *multiplicity* of selves.
14. I must be clear here and add that by appealing to a "will to belong" I am not appealing to some metaphysical or psychological aspect or drive of humanity that we all must have by virtue of being human. It would be incredibly pretentious for me to make such a claim. Perhaps Shopenhauer and Nietzsche knew more when they made their appeals to the "will to live," the "will to truth," and "the will to power," respectively.

I am simply naming a feeling, perhaps an attitude that I find in myself as well as many other people, whether they are immigrants or exiles or not, although many exiles certainly discuss it more. I am making explicit something that is already there in my lived experience as well as in the experience of others. It is not my wish to reify, naturalize, or generalize from such an experience, but I do wish to engage this feeling in light of questions of home, location, and multiplicitous selfhood.

15. María Lugones, "Hispaneando y Lesbiando: On Sarah Hoagland's Lesbian Ethics," *Hypatia* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1990), 138–146, esp. 142.
16. Lugones, "Hispaneando y Lesbiando," 144.
17. *Ibid.*, 143.
18. Edwina Barvosa, *Wealth of Selver: Multiple Identities, Mestiza Consciousness, and the Subject of Politics* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008).
19. Barvosa, *Wealth of Selver*, 141.
20. *Ibid.*, 151.
21. I thank Kyoo Lee for her comments regarding the possibility of being without longing, or as she puts it, "without being forced to choose sites/sites of be-longing." I realize that I am still invested in being "with longing," even when the sites of belonging and belonging itself are being problematized.
22. Here I am using *praxis* as in "practice" or "activity."
23. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 37.
24. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 38.
25. *Ibid.*, 30.
26. Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes*, Ch. 10.
27. *Ibid.*, 216.
28. *Ibid.*, 207–209, 216.
29. *Ibid.*, 218.
30. *Ibid.*, 221.
31. *Ibid.*, 220.
32. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 38.
33. Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes*, 209.

EIGHT

WALLING RACIALIZED BODIES OUT

Border versus Boundary at La Frontera

EDWARD S. CASEY

An international border wall serves very diverse purposes. Some of these purposes are inclusive, some exclusive. Among the most pronounced of claims to inclusion is the assertion of national sovereignty. This assertion often takes the form of a territorial claim: on this side of the wall, the land is entirely ours to dispose of as we wish. All that is located here, up to the locus of the wall, is controlled by us: we own it, it is ours to manage and shape, and we have the right to determine who can stay inside this wall as a legitimate resident, a national citizen with papers to prove it. But the very same wall also acts to exclude, beginning with those on the other side of the wall who do not count as citizens, who belong elsewhere and should stay there—over there, out there. Crossing over the wall without permission is to be, by definition, an "illegal alien"—where "alien" signifies a stranger to this nation, someone who has no right to be over here, within the precinct of legal citizens.

Excluded by the same gesture are also those of other races. Whatever the political discourse of the country that has built and now maintains the wall—no matter how Enlightened it purports to be—it acts to exclude others whose bodily characteristics are taken to confirm their alien status, their proper standing as extramural. Race as a distinctive mark of these bodies is a primary indicator of their rightful proper place—which is outside the wall, on the other side. Even if not thematized as such by the nation that erects