Chapter Three

Epistemic Violence: Contesting Imperial Production of Knowledge

Epistemology, a significant branch in philosophy, deals with the nature, scope and limits of knowledge: “What is knowledge”, “What can we know?” (Greco 1). Any claim made within the philosophical domain calls for epistemological attention and interrogation. Epistemology encompasses the issues of knowledge related to truth, belief and justification. Since Plato’s Theatetus, traditionally, knowledge is associated with belief.

Classical theories of epistemology are absolutist in nature but later theories laid their prominence on “its relativity or situation dependence, its continuous development or evolution, and its active interference with the world and its subjects and objects” (Heylighen). However, postmodernists reject the foundationalist and absolute grounding for knowledge that rests on the privileging of the rational discourse. They reject absolute privileged epistemic discourses devoid of social, cultural and political context. Contemporary epistemologies maintain that there is “no set of rules for belief acquisition that are appropriate for all peoples and all situations” (Klein). Feminist, postcolonial and subaltern epistemologies challenge the foundations of absolute knowledge and advocate the renunciation of traditional evidence condition for knowledge and propose the justification of knowledge as a “causal condition.” Such theories
critically interrogate the production, proliferation and subjugation of knowledge/s imposed upon their subjects.

This chapter is a study on the Spivakian notion of epistemic violence and how she locates epistemic violence within imperialism which generates an epistemic *other* in a schematic manner and the implications of epistemic violence in postcolonial discourse.

Foucault, a poststructuralist critical theorist, offers one of the vehement critiques of the traditional epistemological framework recommending fresh ways of looking into epistemological problems. He challenges the traditional ahistoric notions of knowledge and the numerous distorted processes of justification and the universalizing tendencies. He develops a conception of power consequential on the issues of epistemology. Foucault’s epistemological foundation is based on his conception of episteme. By episteme, he understands the historical *a priori* that encompasses the various discourses and possibilities of knowledge in a particular era. Foucault’s account of genealogy as “insurrection of subjugated knowledges” (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 81) is key to the development of a critique to the dominant absolutizing epistemological theories. Genealogy as a method unveils the marginalized discourses and calls for a resistance over against the totalizing theories of knowledge. Genealogical point of view attempts to view how a subject is constituted and reconstituted by history as a differential and variable.

Subjugated historical knowledge can be understood as that which has been discarded by the mainstream or which is too local to be of any importance. Foucault identifies subjugated knowledge in two ways:
on the one hand,...the historical contents that have been buried and disguised in a functionalist coherence of formal systematization...those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematizing theory.... On the other hand...a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity. (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 81-2)

Subjugated knowledge is obliged to the inconsiderateness in the manner it is contested by everything that encircles it. This knowledge is historically authorized and characterized as having slighter significance. It corresponds to the forcefully cached principal forms of knowledges that are historically buried through the exertion of power. However, Barry Allen considers the subjugated knowledge as a synchronic phenomenon, which is erudite but eliminated and the lost knowledge as a diachronic phenomenon, which is "no longer known, that cannot be known" (154). The synchronic and diachronic positioning of knowledge clarifies the network of power relations that are in play in the procedure of generation of knowledge historically and ahistorically. Subjugated knowledge is a potentially insurrectionary knowledge which generates the resistive space to effect an opposition to the dominant. In order to unearth the subjugated knowledge, Foucault advocates archaeology as the procedure for investigation and "as the method of strategically disseminating such knowledge so that it can be effective for people's struggles" (O'Farrell 68). Foucault's notion
of subjugated knowledge and the archeological method has considerably influenced the postcolonial scene. Theorists like Said and Spivak take the cue for a postcolonial epistemological analysis from Foucault who offers them the framework to critically analyze and unearth the schematically generated knowledge of the colonized and the manner in which the imperial power had been exercised historically to silence the knowledge of the subaltern.

Dominant episteme envelops a monolithic body of theoretical assertions which have a propensity to 'privilege' certain segments of knowledge/s in a subjugative “non-mutual hierarchy” (Griffiths 165). In order to countermark the monolithic contention of the dominant epistemic claims and the production of knowledge, Spivak coins the term ‘epistemic violence.’ The issue of epistemic violence relates to the issues of the production of knowledge and “how power and desire appropriate and condition the production of knowledge” (Khatun 4) and disingenuously objectifies its victim through “a mechanistic, phallogocentric mode” of subjugation (Barton 150). It eventuates when violence as an affirmation of “power involves or arises from knowledge” (Hubbard 301) and creates historical discrepancies in power to mute the potential sites of knowledge. Epistemic violence can take varied forms, an elucidatory interface with knowledge of the underprivileged can twirl into an appropriation formed of exploitation or deformation which tampers with the source of knowledge by the dominant. Moreover, “an appropriation of otherness for one’s owns purposes, and an exertion of hegemonic control over the text or its adherents (Godrej 91-2) can damage the epistemic foundations of the subjugated by means of erasing or
silencing. Such a manipulative engagement corresponds to the method through which the production of knowledge is maneuvered through violent ways.

Spivakian epistemic violence deals with "the specific transactional elements involved in particular collaborative projects of knowledge production" (Desai 61). Reinforcing self-epistemic justificatory schemas include enforced projects such as 'Civilizing Missions', Manifest Destiny' or the White Man's Burden' (Gilson 33). Consequentially epistemic violence of imperialism offers "an imperfect allegory of the way violence is part of the possibility (the production) of epistemological spaces" (Cary 14).

Spivak uses the term 'epistemic violence' distinctively to the colonial performances in the Third World. Imperialism functions acquisitively as "an epistemological a priori within knowledge production" by affirming the "universals, dominant norms, values and beliefs" (Hubbard 301). Spivakian notion of epistemic violence is not founded on the symbolic mode that denotes the peripheral aspect of epistemic formations but founded within the historicity of colonialism which is at once strategic and exploitative. Epistemic violence "describes one of colonialism's most insidious yet predictable effects: violating the most fundamental way that a person or people know themselves" (Donaldson 51). Barton observes that Spivak's model of epistemic violence goes beyond Bourdieu's elucidation of structurally founded "symbolic violence" (150). Bourdieu does not handle issues of imperialism and sexism within his purview of symbolic violence, which is fundamental in the Spivakian notion of epistemic violence.
Imperialism infects iniquitously the basis of the making of a human being, the subject of epistemic formulations. The legitimate epistemic subject and sources are veiled deliberately through the process of archiving and the West is launched as the subject. West as subject assumes an epistemological privilege within the "sociodiscursive" realm that obscures the oppressed. Colonial discourse establishes and contours a subject of its own creation through a schematic production of knowledge and decipher for itself. The epistemological and ontological imperial schematic taxonomy is based on the Enlightenment epistemological assumptions that are absolutist in nature and that which pushes to the creation of an "objectified Other" (Yu 20). The formulation of the other is at the foundation for imposing the Enlightenment world view over against the world view of the colonizers that decimated and influenced the sociocultural legacies. The constitution of the West as subject can be viewed as a functional extension of the self that claims other's knowledge by itself. This procedure which engraves the means of knowing itself by the other, its functional and value system, its various conceptions and interconnections with the world "violates the subjectivity of the colonized by obliterating any trace of their ontological and epistemological existence" (Godrej 301). Colonialism, for Spivak, undertakes such a project that demolishes the possible native epistemic claims and sources of knowledge.

Spivak relies on Foucault's notion of "subjugated knowledge" to investigate epistemic violence. However, Spivak focuses primarily on the existential and ontological narratives of colonized women and explores the Heideggerian term "worlding" in relation to the manner of 'inscription' of the colonial subject as Europe's other. Knowledge as text is a complex and
comprehensive worlding that is existential and experiential (Allman 61). While Said endeavors to articulate for the unorganized and the segregated, Spivak's epistemic "formulations of a theoretical model of heterogeneous experience of colonized subjects focus more on the modes of functioning of the power and discourse of the imperial centre than on the resistance of the colonized" (Kennedy 126). Consequentially Spivak argues that texts should be interpreted and regarded as part of and embedded with sociopolitical realities.

Epistemic violence is an affirmation of power that methodically occurs within the realm of knowledge where order is perceived as a geopolitically stereotypical framework. Moreover, power relations are not only partial but also "ideological. Consequentially, "the colonial imaginary permeated the entire conceptual system of the social sciences from their inception" (Castro-Gomez 219). Eliade announced an Enlightenment accomplishment: "We have indeed pillaged other cultures" (Eliade 68). Such embezzlement is not merely physical but also epistemological. Imperial episteme envelops a "unitary body" of theoretical assertions which have a propensity to 'privilege' certain segments of knowledge/s in a subjugative hierarchy. These disabled knowledges, however, pose a threat to the potent episteme by stating consideration to their "oppositional emergence." The dominant narrative in a community adjudicates that which is seen and known in the world. Dominant narratives colonize knowledge and generate a series of stereotypical dichotomies between a rational, democratic, humanistic, creative, dynamic, progressive and "irrational, despotic, oppressive, backward, passive, stagnant and "feminine" "East" (Oldmeadow 8).
The colonized *other* as a generated epistemological category could never be innocent but implicated by power network that create territories through the representation of the otherness. The imposed hegemonic history makes the *other* a passive prisoner in its own culture and history predicking upon the discourse of universals. The discourse of universals is profoundly ethnocentric and predicated upon positions of power and subject formation is based on an asymmetric power structure. Spivak sets to unveil the power assumed in knowledge production that is fundamentally bound to binarial opposition. Spivak fancies creating alternative accounts of the historical Europen intervention with the colonized. Spivak in “Can the Subalter Speak”, “The Rani of Sirmur”, and “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism” and Said in *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* deal with the construction of the colonial subject through epistemic violence.

The affirmation of an epistemic *other* is an imaginary conception that is violently executed through strategic schemes. Such an imagination, Spivak assumes, went through a schematic process of colonizing/knowing the ‘unknown.’ The Western aspiration to theorize the subject, Spivak notes, is a willingly designated project to fend “the subject of the West or the West as Subject” (Spivak, “Can the Subalter Speak?” 271). The colonized *other*, an indispensable artifact of western colonial power/discourse, “the West’s Euro/Logocentric” imagination,” is a protuberance or deformation of the *other* which the West as subject aims to keep under control (Zhou 89). The self-originated and totalizing discourse that is extended through imperial power instilled model that reproduce the stereotypical West. They attempt to propose
alternative narratives by reconstructing the epistemic ruptures effect by imperialism.

Spivak’s approach conjectures Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* where he traces an overview of the association between imperial culture and politics to highlight that the history of the imperial culture should also be interpreted in the light of the history and culture of the colonized (Kennedy 124). Moreover, the notion of subject formation undergoes intense scrutiny in the post-humanist discourses because the subject is theorized as a ‘universal.’ Subject formation, followed by the Enlightenment discourse, is schemed by dominant “norms, normalization and subjection” (Thiem 80). Thereofcr, the production of theoretical multiplicity of “subject-effects” furnishes a misapprehension of deflating subjective autonomy while offering a veil for this subject of knowledge. In the programmatic narrativization of Europe as West, the sovereign Subject simulates to have “no geo-political” convictions.

The radically assumed Western academic critique of the sovereign subject, in fact, commences a subject through processes of production and subjugation of knowledge. The West as a discourse is a political-ideological programme that undergoes constant “negotiation and re-negotiation” in the process of making the epistemic *other* (Strath 14). This “privileged “subject people”—alternatively attempted to seize or negotiate the mechanisms of exploitation and progress and of containment and representation” (Santiago-Valles 229). Foucault not only reminds the vast institutional heterogeneity but also admits that institutionality forms “effective instruments for the formation and accumulation of knowledge” by forming the subjective *other* (Foucault,
Spivak challenges this dominant epistemic and theoretical production and its latent inclinations towards imperial ideology and power. Consequently, it becomes essential for a critic/intellectual to divulge and recognize “the discourse of society’s Other” (Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 272) without ignoring the issue of ideology.

The colonial epistemic other is characterized by negativity, the self that is not, that precariously faces the process of epistemic ‘obliteration.’ Spivak identifies various imperial schemes in history, culture, literature and philosophy through which the colonial epistemic other is configured as a “distorted appropriation” on knowledge which is an unconditional self-centric process. In the programmatic configuration of the other of Europe, systematic strides were taken to annihilate the epistemic constituents with which a subject cathectically produces an itinerary through ideology, science and law. Moreover, Europe as Subject ascertains its ethnocentricity as the circumference to establish itself to identify and define the other. This program is a magnanimous Western intellectual program which is assimilated at a historical moment into the other.

The manner in which Europe has combined itself to form a sovereign subject and identify its colonies as the epistemic other is key to the understanding of how programmatically the production of knowledge is configured. It is in this lost self of the colonies that the imperial subject set up the schematic plinth for knowledge production. The “Third World” becomes a “convenient signifier” through which an alternative historical description of the “worlding,” is established. The sovereign subject amplifies the systematic documenting and theorizing of the colonies. The Third World offers a space for a complete
privileged discursive *field* (Spivak, "Rani of Sirmur" 247) within which the West as subject is legitimized in order to know the epistemic *other*. This representational worlding, or as "contrapuntal reading," of the *other* fabricates a silenced signifier, an object of knowledge. For instance, "India as an object of knowledge" in the hands of the imperial sovereign *self* is nothing but what Hayden White names as "the unprocessed historical record" (5).

The territorialization of an uninscribed world by an imperial project, on an effortless cartographic level, inscribes what was presupposed. Such a world expresses a distinct manner of texting, a process of objectification which is a significant instance of organized epistemic violence of the imperial process. The inflicted change envisages a double inscription: the physical change inscribed on the land and the inscriptive creation of the *other*. The discursive field that is availed through the subject is not merely situation of the colonizer that is engaged in an encounter enveloped by power struggle with the colonized.

Imperialistic structures create "epistemic bourgeois" communities that allege to represent the subjugated. Spivak, similar to Foucault, views the imposition of epistemic violence as a "corollary of the epistemic overhaul" that happened in the eighteenth century Europe (Habib 165). Foucault situates epistemic violence as an absolute "overhaul" of the episteme in his attempt to redefine sanity concerning the eighteenth century European history. Spivak borrows Foucauldian notion of "overhaul" to appropriate a critique on the foundations of imperialism within the colonial discourse. The Foucauldian overhaul of the episteme is not only part of European history but also of the *"narrative history"* of the colonies which exert as "dislocated and
unacknowledged parts of a vast two-handed engine” (Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 281). The overhaul of the episteme as explicated by Foucault, for Spivak is an incomplete project that fails to critique the deeper implications of colonial scheme. Spivak refers to “the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project” that essays “to constitute the colonial subject as Other” (280-1) as the key case in point for the epistemic violence. Moreover, it is “also the asymmetrical obliteration of the trace of that Other in its precarious Subject-vity” (281).

Spivak, in order to elaborate the overhaul of the episteme, throws light on the foundations of the British systematization of the Hindu law. Hindu law is initiated, traditionally, on four foundational texts that introduced a four piece episteme explained by the subjective use of memory: sruti (that which is ‘heard’), smriti (that which is ‘remembered’), sastra (that which is ‘learned-from-another’), and vyavahara (that which is ‘performed-in-exchange’) (Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 281). One might not deduce any continuity or correspondence between sruti and smriti. Sastra and vyavahara are observed as “dialectically continuous.” However, practitioners and theorists of law were not assured if these bodies of texts formed the structural basis for a body of law. The systematic legal proceduring of the heterogeneous constitution of legal prosecution which is “internally” illogical and frees equally at either ends through a binarial vision that encompasses a narrative codification is an instance of imperial epistemic violence.

Spivak, though, lays the foundation for her notion of epistemic violence within the Foucauldian portals of overhaul of the episteme omits the explicit
narration of power-knowledge quotient within the revamping of the subject that essentially encompasses the discursive fields that limits the sanctioning of knowledge. Spivak's views on epistemic violence, on the one hand stresses the heterogeneity of the project that synchronically and diachronically affects the colonial discourse of knowledge. On the other hand, the monolithic fashion in which the colonial power is perpetrated by engirdling the various realms of colonizer finds no place in the epistemological discussion of Spivak. To counter such a power center, Spivak, instead of delving into the existential-ontological aspects of the colonized, delves into an approach that moves top down leaving the voices of the margins again in a predicament.

Spivak accounts for a close association of the chronicle of the systematization of Hindu law with the colonial program of Macaulayan education. Colonial education enhances the "production in law." A significant feature of imperialism is to dominate knowledge through English education to create a "class" of elite informants through whom the colonial rulers choose to extend their administration. Spivak sees in the Macaulayan scheme, the politics through which the colonial other is formatted within the epistemic realm. English education, instead of empowering the colonized, devalues the indigenous knowledge by discarding the local. Identifying the ambivalence of the colonial power politics, Spivak ascertains that the disruptive colonial force that effects the process of self-consolidating the other through education. Internalization of value corresponds internalization of knowledge through which the self is braced within the imperial territorialization of the other. From the viewpoint of epistemic violence, such educational/epistemological projects can be a conscientizing
imperial procedure that is overtly practiced through the politico-ideological inferences.

Spivak finds a systematic division between, on the one hand, in the establishment of the Sanskrit studies and, on the other, the maintaining of the Sanskrit "high culture." Colonial education offered to the students and scholars a positive "utilitarian-hegemonic" layout that tantalizingly poises between the "aggressive repression of Sanskrit in the general educational framework or the increasing "feudalization" of the performative use of Sanskrit in the everyday life of Brahmanic-hegemonic India" (Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 282). A history was founded to align the Brahmans and the systematizing intention of British on the same plane to conserve the Brahmanic society together by condensing the whole lot to "writing" which has preserved the Hindu society. Spivak quotes Edward Thompson who observes that Hinduism "was a higher civilization that won [against it], both with Akbar and the English" (qtd. in 282). The whole process is an attempt of the colonial "civilization of the Other." However, Spivak here intends to deal with the "nonspecialist, nonacademic" where the episteme functions in mute, the silent and silenced center.

One of the ways in which epistemic violence is forwarded is through representation – representation of unexplored knowledge corresponding to the formation of an epistemic structure. Spivak identifies two different levels of (epistemic) representation in her analysis of Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire*: *vertreten* "speaking for" and *darstellen* "re-presentation as in art or philosophy". Representation of the *other* as "faulty and inferior beings" (Lister 51) inscribes knowledge and consciousness through prioritizing the *self* as subject. These two
accounts of representation within the formation of state and production of law, and the subject formation are closely associated yet irreducibly alternative. Spivak persuades us to conceive the disparities between an alternate and a portrayal to comprehend the variations between two representations. The chief issue, for Spivak, is that the accord between these two different meanings of representation “elides” epistemic violence within the framework of the British India: “an alien legal system masquerading as law as such, an alien ideology established as the only truth, and a set of human sciences busy establishing the ‘native’ as self-consolidating other” (Spivak, Critique 205). Representation is graphic only within the political system and implies the psycho-politics depiction that corresponds to the consciousness and the oppressive system.

In the process of epistemic violence, the self is represented as subjectivity in opposition to otherness in an epistemically unknown centering consciousness. The representation of the other through consciousness continues as a continual imaged presence and a critical epistemic force shaping the culture and world view of the colonized. Therefore, knowledge as ideologically maneuvered fails to suggest the existential significance of subaltern consciousness as nontext. The cogence of presentation by means of intellect that intrudes representation is merely a manifestation of a mindful of reduplicating presence.

Within any critical analyses on the fabrication of the other, the historical and empyreal space is cathected by the subject. Derrida, Spivak opines, makes the issue of subject formation as a specific European predicament. The propensity to fabricate a marginal other corresponding to the ethnocentric imperial self is an impetuous attempt to relegate the epistemological other. It is this logocentric
desire that is supposed as the Derridean blankness of the text. The blank part of
the text is addressed to the other of the nontranscendental space. The unattainable
vacancy that is confined by a text that can be deciphered offers a postcolonial
challenge to imperialism. Spivak’s epistemic other is expanded within the canvas
of the production of knowledge that subverts the colonial invasion that inflates
beyond the existential and the ontological developments within the colonized
other. Spivak, in her attempt to bring out the various nuances of epistemic
violence preconceives the text-inscribed blankness inspired by the colonial self.

Spivak does not view the text-inscribed blankness as the productive space
of the other but the (dis)place of self-consolidating procedure of the dominant.
Conquering the thinking subject that is translucent or imperceptible is a relentless
dislocating act of the self in relation to the other through the assimilation of
knowledge. The fabrication of subject associates with the intermixing of
epistemic violence through a progressive learning making the subaltern subject
mute and buried within the text. History, here, conjectures a “double origin.” The
first is the unseen manipulation behind the British attempt to abolish widow
sacrifice in 1829 and the other is the justification laid in the classical Vedic
Hindu traditions. By way of bearing down the colonial other to the interstices of
existence and experience, the self aggressively shift the “consciousness beyond
the point at which monocentrism in all spheres of thought could be accepted
without question (Ashcroft et al., Empire 12). The process is at once estranging
and subjugating procedure that serves to consign the postcolonial epistemological
discourse to an “uncentered” and differential epistemic space.
The European historiography of the imperial era hegemonically authorizes archives as the central aspect of the epistemic generation perpetrated upon the epistemic other. Archives are the source of colonial knowledge and knowledge production, as a depository of "facts." Archive as the method of knowledge production, Spivak emphasizes, is "always open to question when one deals with writing or other inscriptions" (LaCapra 92). Spivak argues that, "for the early part of the nineteenth century in India, the literary critic must turn to the archives of imperial governance as her text" (Spivak, "Rani of Sirmur" 250).

Any critical reading of the nineteenth-century British literature, Spivak opines, is unfeasible without committing to memory and the decisive role imperialism played on the cultural representation of English social politics. The part played by literature in shaping the cultural representation of English society corresponds to the "imperialist project, displaced and dispersed into more modern forms" (Spivak, "Women's Text" 243). Beyond British literature, in the examination of the literatures of the European colonizing cultures generate a narrative of the worlding that constituted the Third World which mirrors not only the epistemological and cultural exploitation that the rich literary heritages went through but also points to the programmatic infiltration and production of knowledge. To form Third world as a remote culture to be exploited with deeper unharmed literary heritages anticipating to be determined, explicated and systematized in English translation advances the formation of the Third World as a signifier for the process of worlding.

Spivak's views about the schematic production of knowledge correspond to her notion of textuality. Textuality envisions the occurrence of theory and
practice stressing that which is ignored, veiled and silenced by a reduction through highlighting the expediency of a notion. However, textuality, as Spivak conceives moves beyond the verbal text, “the notion of textuality should be related to the notion of the worlding of a world on a supposedly uninscribed territory” (Spivak, *Post-colonial Critic* 1). What is under this radical outfit of textuality is the imperial procedure which presumes that space that had been territorialized was earlier uninscribed. It is the space that the imperial self strategically anticipates to engrave by forming a subtle alliance with the epistemologically unvalued and blank local literature and culture. Therefore, “a world, on a simple level of cartography, inscribed what was presumed to be an uninscribed” (1). The manner in which this world is assumed is also “texting, textualising, a making into art, a making into an object to be understood” (1).

Spivak also contends that to view the position of a language or semiosis as a paradigm also includes a particular form of worlding.

Spivak merges textuality to discourse to form an oblique way unlike the classical discourse which evades from the the issue of language production by a subject. Spivakian notion of textuality is a dynamic entity that recognizes the space where the generation of discourse of the positioning of language as a paradigm evades the subject or the collective that endeavours in practice so that textuality becomes an “uneven clenching space of dissemination which may or may not be random” (Spivak, *Post-colonial Critic* 2). The text as ‘fact’ or ‘life’ or ‘practice’ is worlded within the colonial practice of epistemic violence. Such a situation does not create a juncture of performance but a conception of common textuality where the blank spot of the text is encompassed by an interpretable text
by allowing the unavoidable power dispersal within the practice that identifies privileging. Differences infused by the dominant narrative through texting arbitrate the prepotent episteme defining the *other* as amorphous and inchoate (Yacoubi 213). Writing or texting, therefore, is framed within the boundaries of power of practice and knowledge that is beyond the position of imperial organization misrepresenting history through textuality (Cherry 77).

Spivak situates texting within the spatial and the temporal which aids her to locate the epistemological underpinnings of the making of the text. Textuality as a conceptual category in Spivak lacks the platform to elucidate the process of worlding. The reinscription of a text not only anticipates a politico-cultural but also an ideological interconnection between power and knowledge. Spivak misses out textuality as an idea when she reinforces textuality as fact. Fact in colonial context is a misrepresentation rather than reinscription that is concocted by the dominant *self* to reinforce in the schematic knowing of the *other*. The forming of text as epistemic violence is a creative notion that transgresses an unsighted receipt of the imperial mission to educate the subject. Worlding is a dynamic process only from the imperial vanguardistic point of view that generates knowledge by reengraving the text assuming and epistemic blankness that is forced upon the experience and existence of the margins. Textuality as a network of power relations situates the text to challenge and demarcate the boundaries that are laid by the imperial power.

Spivak cites the example of a letter penned by Captain Geoffrey Birch, an assistant agent of the Governor to Charles Metcalfe who resides at Delhi. Birch partakes in the process of securing the imperial *self* by necessitating the
colonized to emotionally invest "the space of the Other" in his native territory and thereby entering into the "worlding their own world" (Spivak, "Rani of Sirmur" 253) by which the colonized is made to cultivate the colonizer as their own chief. Birch writes that he has embarked upon a journey "to acquaint the people who they are subject to, for as I suspected they were not informed of it and seem only to have heard of our existence from conquering the Goorkah and from having seen a few European passing thro' the country" (qtd. in Spivak, "Rani of Sirmur" 254). The representative of an episteme corresponding to the "subjected subject" refers to the reflection of the epistemological consolidation formed by naïve and lopsided representation of the colonized.

In Birch Spivak identifies an example of a "Colonizing Power" determined to represent the heterogeneous in a monolithic fashion. She brings another letter written by General Sir David Ochterlony to John Adam, the Governor's Secretary. Ochterlony writes with utmost contempt upon the hill people: "them only possessing all the brutality and perfidy [sic] of the rudest times without the courage and all the depravity and treachery of the modern days without the knowledge or refinement" (qtd. in Spivak, "Rani of Sirmur" 254-5). Ochterlony sees in the hill people an "object of Imperialism." The third example that Spivak brings in is from some omissions of a letter to Marquess of Hastings Lord Moira, Governor-General-in-Council, by the Board of Control of the East India Company. The letter was written in the context of admonishing the Governor-general for allowing subalterns to serve with the troops of the native government. The letter gives an example of the "production of othering" by accentuating the heterogeneity of the imperial self and authorizing the
ideological/epistemological production. Imperialism violently yokes together the episteme “that will “mean” (for others) and “know” (for the self)” in relation to the colonial subject as “history’s nearly-selved other” through instances of deletions whereby meaning and knowledge interconnect power” (Spivak, “Rani of Sirmur” 255).

To elaborate on the matter of the colonial production of text, Spivak turns to the Freudian classic The Interpretation of Dreams (1911). In explaining dreams, Freud constructs the idea of “over-determination” as the basis of production of images in the “dream-text.” It is impractical to hold “text as expression” because of the expression is self-determined/situated intentional conscious of the self. Therefore, Spivak attempts to evaluate the imperial text production in relation to dream based on determinate representations. To view that expositions and discourses are indepriciatably ruptured by epistemic violence with regard to the prospect of self-determination. Spivak affiliates the concept of psychoanalytic transference to analyze the epistemic sources in a sense of repetition-displacement of the past into the present which bears an implication for the future. The transferential notion presumes the ‘construction’ of history as reflected in the colonial intellectual’s aspiration for power. If the past is the unqualified other, the self-consolidating history is located within the genealogical real. It is unfeasible to concede “the narrative of history-as-imperialism as such an originary text, a “fundamental history” (Spivak, “Rani of Sirmur” 251). The fundamental task is to offer a vehement critique that the narrative/episteme is silenced and manipulated and to propose that the tale of “history-as-imperialism’
is irreducible. If not the determined (auto)biography of the West masquerades as disinterested history even when the critic presumes to touch its unconscious.

Rani of Sirmur, an unnamed and taciturn individual, living in the royal premises under the patriarchal household and debauched husband was suddenly administered by a colonizer in her own house. The Rani declares her wish to be a Sati. The forced silences of the narrative of Rani are an example of epistemic violence of the “worlding of worlds.” Birch’s intention to prevent Rani from self-immolation is another instance of how colonial authority maneuvers the worlding. The “British ignore the space of Sati as an ideological battleground, and construct the woman as an object of slaughter, the saving of which can mark the moment when not only a civil but a good society is born out of domestic chaos” (Spivak, “Rani of Sirmur” 268). It is between the patriarchal subject-formation and the colonial object-constitution, Spivak locates the space of epistemic violence.

Spivak reads this whole project of the “construction of a self-immolating colonial subject for the glorification of the social mission of the colonizer” (Spivak, “Women’s Text” 251) as an epitome of imperial epistemic violence. Within the realms of nescience and bondage, the imperial project of transportation of knowledge for ignorance and freedom for bondage corresponds to the “subject-constituting project” of epistemic violence. The willful effort to create the “Third World” as a signifier is hegemonic description of literature/epistemology which is wedged within the history of imperialism. Within the imperialist rupture, a complete literary reinscription cannot thrive through a foreign legal and ideological masquerading that establishes Truth predicating upon the native as a self-consolidating other. With regard to the
Indian instance, one might find it challenging to locate an ideological clue to the schematic epistemic violence of imperialism purely by reorganizing the curricula within the presented dogmas of literary pedagogy. Therefore, to revive the imperial epistemic rupture without submitting for lost origins, one has to turn to the archives of imperial governance.

The notion of self who in many ways produce knowledge institutionally has to transact with specific practice of ideology and power. It is the institutionally sponsored power that the intellectual must challenge and confront as an intellectual is part of the same system that produces knowledge and power. Such a "situation-specific" production of knowledge corresponds to the proliferation of universals. An intellectual cannot exist in a "non-institutional" ambience. Thus, an intellectual is "imprisoned with an institutional discourse" where the claims of universal and specificity which is "doubly displaced" (Spivak, *Post-colonial Critic* 4). Citing the seventeenth century European situation, Spivak maintains that the process of institutionalization is being induced by that is effectuated exterior of the West. The ultimate product of this course of action is "the institutionalization of the West as West, of the West as the world, there is no extra-institutional space, even paraperipheral space in terms of Centre-Periphery definition is not outside the institution" (5).

Imperial self perpetrates the "universal human being" as its idealistic champion through a process of internalization so that the partaker on this educational process would become a human. At the centre of such internalization lies the perpetuation of the epistemic violence, "the Western intellectual’s longing for all that is not West, our turn towards the West – the so called non-
West’s turn toward the West is a *command*” (Spivak, *Post-colonial Critic* 8). The subjectship of knowledge is maneuvered through violating the intellectual proprietorship of the subaltern through the process of worlding. The universal human being that is engraved within the English education system reflects the institutional discourse that curbs the ingenuity of the subaltern knowledge through replacement of inscription.

The discourse on the epistemic *other* presumes a complex relationship that embodies an unhinged binarial opposition which was engendered by the West through a strategically conceptualized dominant project. The dialectic of *self* and the *other* can be situated within the purview of ‘knowing’ the *other* through *self*, where the *other* is constitutive of selfhood (Ricoeur 18). Spivak, though, draws heavily from the European high theorists Foucault and Derrida, challenges the manner in which the European high theories of *self* as the basis for critiques in colonial discourse. While acknowledging the influence of institutional function and position that a critic would bear upon the *self*, a critic should be antagonistic and unearth fresh ways of signifying the silenced and underprivileged.

Subtext and palimpsestic explains the method in which the knowledge of the *other* is seen and valued. The epistemic *other* is presumed to be insufficient, immature and short of required cognition. Spivak argues that the epistemic *other* is potent and compelling and characterized within “something Other, something not valued, something ‘subjugated’ something that is under the rule of others” (Allen 25). However, within the ‘narrative of imperialism’ positioning of knowledge in relation to value has been modified as the ‘subtext’ in a new
‘palimpsest’ story”. Relying on Foucault’s account of subjugated knowledge as disqualifed pushes the epistemic other from the hierarchical mainstream epistemological to construct a resistive scientificity that is inherent and obligatory.

Spivak attempts to elaborate the manner in which a veracious narrative was instituted as an epistemic normative through which certain methods of subjugation was established. The self-consolidating process splits the psychic unity of the subject requiring an estranging identity (Naficy 294). The palimpsestic narrative which Spivak establishes opens up fresh possibilities of looking into the subjugation of knowledge beyond Foucauldian notion of overhaul of the episteme. Creating a space that can be manipulated when narrated palimpsestically offers a glance into the intensity of colonial subjugative power established over the subaltern in terms of knowledge. The epistemic other, therefore, is not only a subtext but a ‘nontext’ that reflects the nonexistence of knowledge rather than a rewriting of the script of knowledge. The subaltern ‘nontext’ acquires a palimpsest tale of othering, silencing, erasing, unvaluing, and subjugating leaving subaltern epistemology as an intentional unexplored strategic absence of knowledge.

Epistemic violence happens “when a way of thinking is changed so that you construct your object of knowledge in a different way; in other words, how you know is changed” (Shaikh 187). Said’s postcolonial theorization of the (intellectual) representations of the East presumes the power related “dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (Said, Orientalism 3). Said refers to Foucault who considers textuality as a methodical exchange of the
network of power relations that colonizer and the colonized into sheer a written text to masquerade the materiality of organized production (Said, *World* 47). However, Spivak approaches text from a spatial perspective that induces a procedural worlding through violating the existing latent knowledge. Within the European representations of the epistemic *other*, Spivak’s spatial approach aides to counter the production and administration of a nonexistent “real” Orient and a presence of a created an extraneous experience. The postcolonial discourse, through the contribution of Spivak, essentially finds multifarious ways to respond to the power ridden subject formation in the text (Zhou 89).

Spivak challenges the notion of “fixity” in the ideological production of the *other* which stereotypically assigns the existent knowledge forms and recognition that shifts between the complacently placed subaltern knowledge and the knowledge that is renarrated. Imperialism assumes “exclusionary presuppositions and foundations that shore up discursive practices” (Hansen 215) that exclude the heterogeneity of the sources and claims of the epistemic *other*. The “monocultures of mind” perpetuate the epistemic violence upon the underprivileged. The strategies that are historically and discursively individuated and marginalized encompasses the ideological fixity that is stereotypically and logically construed *other*. However, Bhabha, rather than deconstructing the colonial misrepresentations that produce and govern the regime moves beyond the stereotypical colonial assertion to decipher the epistemic otherness as “an object of desire and derision, an articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity” (Bhabha, “Other Question” 19) by transgressing the precincts of the imperial *self*. 
Power ridden epistemic violations and fixations renounces the historicocultural differences of the other by producing knowledge through a schematic “surveillance”. Within such dialectic, as Spivak concurs with Bhabha, one may find “the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (Bhabha, Location of Culture 5). Moreover, imperial epistemic discursive practices generates the epistemic other as a fixity. It is identical with a form of narrative whereby the efficiency, productivity and transmission of the subjects and signs are encircled within a restructured and decipherable totality. It offers a coordination of representation, an administration of truth that is formationally similar to realism.

Stuart Hall stresses on the double nature of epistemic violence that operates within and outside (Hall, “New Ethnicities” 446). He maintains that subject formation by inflicting the dominant will through power is an internal duress “and subjective con-formation to the norm” (Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 226). The historical process of imperialism have created a symbolic binarial opposition of the self and the segregated other which is a ‘fundamental nature of imperial experience’ (Said, “Third World Intellectuals and Metropolitan Culture” 48). The authoritative epistemic enunciation ambivalently divide the differentiation that projects phenomenologically the Hegelian split dialectics that displaces knowledge offering a power defense to an open textuality that engraves self-willed normativity (Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wonders” 93-4). The colonized other collapses into a nebulous surrendering to the self that consolidates to know itself through the other (Brink 15).
Epistemic violence as a symbolic “affects the global politics of knowledge” (Schutte 168). Neocolonialism, which is functionally economic rather than “territorial or cultural”, assumes a very different and subtle role in the production of knowledge than colonialism. Neocolonial knowledge production harp on the Enlightenment models so as to create identity paradigms though they might seem like they are transpiring from a different cultural space. At the ideological level, there is a collaboration of the “indigenous capital thinking” and the production of epistemology that negotiates representation in a completely intricate fashion. Cultural relativism and the strong execution of involuntary neocolonialism forms the basis for the making of diverse “models of identity” that justifiably make the history of the other spaces where epistemic transformation and production becomes the right of a certain class.

Historically silenced epistemic other is an illustration of the epistemic configuration of subalternity. Spivak views the act of silencing through an inevitable blocking of the speech act as a product of the homogenous hegemonic epistemic discourse. She acknowledges that Gramsci is critical of the part played by the intellectuals in the “subaltern’s “cultural and political movement into the hegemony” (Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 283). The movement into hegemony denotes the dominant “gaze through the binoculars creates a unified field of image-making” (Emberley 102). Image-making is a process through which the hegemony extends itself through the homogenous hegemonic discourse. Within the development of this movement where the subaltern is withered away, Gramsci identifies a violent epistemic intrusion with legal and corrective descriptions by the imperial powers. Spivak argues that the idea of
subaltern is ambiguously developed within the epistemic imperialist project is also challenged by intellectuals like the Subaltern Studies Group which rethinks the colonial historiography from the view point of peasant insurgencies during the colonial rule.

Within the colonial and neocolonial historiographies, the execution of the elitist is acknowledged as the civilizing mission achieved. Therefore, any emergent subaltern epistemic position calls for a critique of the lopsided production of the subaltern knowledge where the splintered epistemic assumptions counter mark and create renitence against the schematic generation of the subject-object binary that rests on the asymmetrical power relations that is imbibed into the subaltern consciousness. The differential development, in addition, corresponds to the representation of the native to the colonial intellectuals inquisitive of the colonized. One also should remember the fact that the "colonized subaltern subject" is irrevocably heterogeneous.

Spivak expresses that within the subaltern studies, given the nature of the violence of the colonial epistemic, existential, experiential, social and disciplinary embedding the scheme realized in essentialist terms must deal with the essential textual performance of differences. The objective of the exploration deals not with the people but the "elite-subaltern" is a mark of difference and divergence from an ideal where the texts express the mission of rewriting "its own conditions of impossibility as the conditions of impossibility" (Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 285). However, for the subaltern group with a differential identity is a representable subject that can express itself abstaining from representation. The challenge lies in reaching the consciousness of the people to
know with “what voice-consciousness can the subaltern speak?” (285). The predetermined discontinuity enforced upon the subaltern corresponds to the subjugation of the episteme in its social and political insinuations. Spivak concurs with Foucauldian notion that, “to make visible the unseen can also mean a change of level addressing oneself to a layer of material which had hitherto had a no pertinence for history and which and been recognized as having any moral, aesthetic or historical value” (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 49-50). The veiling up of the perceptible circumvent any epistemological investigation is dependably taxing.

The alteration of consciousness engages knowledge (episteme) of social relations. In the association of consciousness and knowledge, Spivak finds the crucial missing link, the question of “ideological production.” Lenin, for instance, correlates consciousness with knowledge, the knowledge that constitutes social relations. Therefore, what is key in a text is what is absent in text or what the text refuses to express. Within this premise, Spivak identifies the methodology that could be applied to the colonial social texts which anticipates an ideological reinscription. The methods that Spivak recognizes for subaltern re-interpretive stance and to compute silences include: archiving, historiography, critical-disciplinary discourse and subcritical intervention.

Spivak persuades that the issue of consciousness and its affiliated question of epistemic validation represent chiefly what the narrative cannot articulate. The intellectual/historian who turns insurgency into text for knowledge evolves a social act. This significant social act calls for the suspension of the consciousness of the intellect/historian so that the subject does not boil down into
an object of investigation. Spivak argues that the “paradox of knowing the limits of knowledge is that the strongest assertion of agency, to negate the possibility of agency, cannot be an example of itself” (Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 299). Subaltern historiography indeterminately denies and confronts the phallocentric essentialization to silence the subjugated. Thus, the epistemic other often offered as an imperfect allegory in relation to postcolonial discourse encompasses the general possibility of a subjugated episteme leaving the specificity of the resourceful knowledge of the other.

Spivak not only offers an indepth analysis of the varied ways in which an epistemic other is forcibly generated by imperialism but also follows it up with a critique on the dynamics and manifestations of structural domination perpetrated in the contemporary scenario which is dealt with in the subsequent chapter.