tive versus subjective, but something between inside/inside — objective in what is already claimed as objective. So, no real conflict.

Interdependency cannot be reduced to a mere question of mutual enslavement. It also consists of creating a ground that belongs to no one, not even to the creator. Otherness becomes empowerment, critical difference, when it is not given but re-created. Furthermore, where should the dividing line between outsider and insider stop? How should it be defined? By skin color, by language, by geography, by nation, or by political affinity? What about those, for example, with hyphenated identities and hybrid realities? And here it is worth noting, for example, a journalist's report, entitled "The Crazy Game of Musical Chairs," in an issue of Time. In this brief report attention was drawn to the fact that people in South Africa, who were classified by race and place into one of the nine racial categories that determined where they could live and work, could have their classification changed if they could prove they were put in a wrong group. Thus, an announcement of racial reclassifications by the home affairs minister once proclaimed that, in a certain time period, 9 whites became colored, 506 coloreds became white, 2 whites became Malay, 14 Malay became white, 40 coloreds became black, 666 blacks became colored, and the list goes on. However, said the minister, no blacks applied to become whites. And no whites became black.

The moment the insider steps out from the inside she's no longer a mere insider. She necessarily looks in from the outside while also looking out from the inside. Not quite the same, not quite the other, she stands in that undetermined threshold place where she constantly drifts in and out. Undercutting the inside/outside opposition, her intervention is necessarily that of both not quite an insider and not quite an outsider. She is, in other words, this inappropriate "other" or "same" who moves about with always at least two gestures: that of affirming "I am like you" while persisting in her difference and that of reminding "I am different" while unsettling every definition of otherness arrived at.

This is not to say that the historical I can be obscured and ignored and that differentiation cannot be made, but that I is not unitary; culture has never been monolithic and is always more or less in relation to a judging subject. Differences do not exist only between outsider and insider — two entities. They are also at work within the outsider herself, or the insider herself — a single entity. She who knows she cannot speak of them without speaking of herself, of history without involving her story, also knows that she cannot make a gesture without activating the to-and-fro movement of life.

The subjectivity at work in the context of this inappropriate other can hardly be submitted to the old subjectivity/objectivity paradigm. Acute political subject-awareness cannot be reduced to a question of self-criticism toward self-improvement nor or self-praise toward greater self-confidence. Such differentiation is useful, for a grasp of subjectivity as, let's say, the science of the subject or merely as related to the subject makes the fear of self-absorption look absurd. Awareness of the limits in which one works need not lead to any form of indulgence in personal partiality nor to the narrow conclusion that it is impossible to understand anything about other peoples, since the difference is one of essence. By refusing to naturalize the I, subjectivity uncovers the myth of essential core, of spontaneity and depth as inner