

recounts Boza's past in Cuba and Florida, and readers may surmise that Boza's writings are autobiographical in nature. In an effort to analyze her struggles coming to grips with her adulthood, her Cuban identity, and her relationship with her parents, readers learn of her visits to various psychiatrists. The poignant account of Cubans' relationships in Florida ranges from Boza's discussing her father's friends, members of the Colegio de Periodistas, the Cuban journalists' association, who paid for his wake, to her extended family who are now socially distant from her. Readers also learn of Boza being spoiled by her father in Cuba and her mother's jealousy of that relationship. In Miami her father is disappointed with her academic pursuits. This culminates in a strained adult relationship between Boza and her parents, made evident when her parents are not invited to her nuptials. At times readers may respond to Boza with enormous empathy, at other times with extreme impatience, but through it all the reality of her experiences are indubitable. Boza makes the point that regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity, it is evident that respect, compassion, and love are what all humans desire most.

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**Rey Chow. *Ethics after Idealism*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998). 264 pp., \$29.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.**

I am largely sympathetic to Rey Chow's stated purpose of bringing together cultural studies with critical theory. Chow is critical of the gap that has been created between the two. She accuses critical theorists of believing that theory is superior to cultural studies and suggests racialization is implicit in this claim. But her real ire is reserved for cultural theorists who, in the name of recognizing and celebrating "otherness," reject theory and idealize and thus reify non-Western cultures. She argues that we need to portray non-Western cultures with the same kind of complexity and theoretical analysis as Western cultures. This means that we have to be able to take a risk and

critique these cultures, exploring what is exploitative, coercive, or manipulative in these so-called oppositional discourses. Chow refers to this as an “ethics” of cultural analysis. I agree with Chow that there is a version of cultural studies that is overly simplistic and reductionist, although I would hesitate to go so far as to say, as Chow does, that this is fascistic.

In order to avoid the idealism that she so describes, Chow suggests we apply critical theory to our analysis of non-Western cultures. She attempts to model this in the body of her text. She begins by giving an overview of the history of cultural studies, which I found helpful, and then through a reading of Slavoj Zizack and Gayatri Spivak she explores issues of ideology, deconstruction, naming, history, and politics. This makes for particularly dense and difficult reading. The problem that Chow runs into is that in order to follow her argument, the reader needs to be well versed in the particular theories which she describes, because these theories have their own language and reference points.

Where Chow is at her best is when she roots her theoretical analysis in specific case studies. For example, she examines the film *M. Butterfly*, doing a number of alternative readings of this film in order to avoid reproducing a reductionist orientalism or homosexual erotics. I found these readings of the film thought provoking and enriching, although I had a hard time following part of her analysis because I am not well versed in Lacanian theory. I found more interesting and accessible Chow’s gender analysis of Franz Fanon. Her argument is that his masculine and nationalist discourse is threatened by women of color, who represent multiplicity and variability which he is unable to contain. I also found Chow’s analysis of the film *The Joy Luck Club* enriching, especially her Foucauldian attempt to deconstruct this as an “ethnic film.” Instead, in her typically unorthodox way, Chow compares it to the movie *Jurassic Park*, suggesting that both films are interested in origins.

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