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Poetics of Identity: Feeling "Othering" in Layli Long Soldier's Poem "38"

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Abstract. This article seeks to examine the notion of "Othering" in Layli Long Soldier's renowned poem "38". It examines the way in which "38" functions as a moving and emotional reflection on the historical and cultural experiences of Indigenous people, chiefly in relation to the Wounded Knee Massacre and its lasting influence on Native American identity. It clarifies how identity is created and represented through poetic manifestation. The present study employs Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notion of "Othering" to be the methodological tool for examining Layli Long Soldier's poem "38". Spivak, as a substantial postcolonial theorist, expresses how dominant narratives often create downgraded identities as "Others" and deprive them of agency and voice. Throughout the study of Layli Long Soldier's renowned poem "38" in the light of Spivak's notion of "Othering", the findings demonstrate that she uses language, imagery, and structure in order to confront the procedures of "Othering" that have relegated Indigenous voices within dominant narratives. Her poetry depicts the real experiences of Indigenous people struggling with exclusion and cultural displacement effects which reflect Spivak's examination of the mental and social impacts of "Othering". To conclude, by foregrounding the complications of identity, memory, and resistance, Long Soldier's poetry not only condemns the mechanisms of "Othering" but also encourages recuperation and agency in the face of historical trauma. This article is significant because it will lead to a more comprehensive discourse on Indigenous literature and identity by underlining the implication of Long Soldier's poetic voice in defying predominant representations and raising a profounder recognition of the Indigenous experience.

Keywords: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, identity, indigenous literature, Layli Long Soldier, othering, resistance

Conflicts of interest. The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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Поэтика идентичности: концепт «отчуждения» в стихотворении Лейли Лонг Солджер «38»

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Аннотация. Цель исследования – раскрыть важность философской категории «отчуждения» в художественном творчестве на примере стихотворения известной американской поэтессы индейского происхождения Лейли Лонг Солджер «38», вошедшего в сборник *Whereas* (2017). В стихотворении повествуется о том, как 38 индейских воинов-дакота были повешены с одобрения президента Линкольна в ходе войны с коренным населением 26 декабря 1862 г. Лонг Солджер отмечает, что одновременно Линкольн подписал закон об освобождении от рабства. В статье приводится анализ стихотворения, в котором рассказ о казни в Вундед-Ни сочетается с личными переживаниями, размышлениями о своих отношениях с дочерью и материнством. Показательная казнь вождей индейцев дакота оказала большое влияние на последующее решение проблемы идентичности коренных народов Америки. Демонстрируется, как автор стихотворения воспроизводит образ индейской идентичности с помощью поэтических выразительных и изобразительных средств. В качестве важного методологического инструмента анализа стихотворения используется философский концепт «отчуждение», предложенный профессором Колумбийского университета, теоретиком постколониальной эпохи Гаятри Чакраворти Спивак (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak). Ученый утверждает, что господствующие в обществе нарративы наносят ущерб национальной идентичности коренных народов, отменяют их самостоятельность и право на выражение собственного мнения. Анализ стихотворения Лейли Лонг Солджер показывает, что автор посредством образных средств, языка, стиля стремится противостоять агрессивной тенденции «отчуждения» коренных народов Америки. Творчество поэтессы отображает реальный исторический опыт индейцев, культурное наследие индейского этноса, попытку противостоять изоляции и разрушению самобытной идентичности. Ее поэзия является наглядной образной иллюстрацией теории философа Спивак о психологических и культурных последствиях социального «отчуждения». В заключении делается вывод о том, что в своей поэзии Лейли Лонг Солджер на первый план выдвигает проблему сохранения этнической идентичности благодаря сохранению памяти о прошлом и духу сопротивления разрушительным нарративам. Пафос поэзии американской поэтессы – в осуждении механизмов «отчуждения», утверждении социальной и духовной активности пред лицом исторической травмы.

Ключевые слова: Гаятри Чакраворти Спивак, идентичность, коренная литература, Лейли Лонг Солджер, отчуждение, сопротивление

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Introduction

In contemporary poetry, the examination of identity is often interconnected with the themes of relegation and representation. Layli Long Soldier's moving poem "38" functions as a reflective introspection on these themes, predominantly in the context of Gayatri Spivak's concept of "Othering". Spivak, a significant postcolonial philosopher, expresses how dominant narratives often construct relegated identities as "Others", depriving them of agency and voice. This procedure not only preserves systemic discriminations but also obscures the very spirit of identity itself (Thomas-Olalde, Velho, 2011, pp. 28–29). Spivak (2006b, p. 197) states:

> The work of the Subaltern Studies Group offers a theory of change. Concurrently, this change is seen as the inauguration of politicization for the colonized. The colonial subject is seen as emerging from those parts of the indigenous élite which come to be loosely described as "bourgeois nationalist".

In "38", Long Soldier deals with the apprehensive subject of Native American identity, reacting to historical prejudices while concurrently retrieving her narrative from the commands of colonial discourse. The poem is a reaction to the historical framework of the US government's execution of thirty-eight Dakota men in 1862, an occurrence that has still been a hurting stage in the shared memory of Native Americans. Through her skilled use of language and form, Long Soldier expresses the difficulties of trauma, loss, and resilience (Gallegos, 2023, p. 8).

By using Spivak's notion of "Othering", we can better understand how Long Soldier's poetry not only condemns the historical procedures that have downgraded Native voices but also proclaim the prominence of self-representation and agency. In this research, I seek to explore the ways in which Long Soldier's "38" exemplifies the dynamics of "Othering", inspecting how the poem leads to a deeper understanding of identity that is both formed by and resistant to exterior delineations. I will also examine how the poet's discussion of history, memory, and language helps to defy the reductive binaries of colonizer and colonized, self and "Other".

Statement of the Problem

The idea of "Othering", as uttered by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, acts as a critical viewpoint through which we can inspect the process of identity development and representation in literature. In her poem "38", Layli Long Soldier challenges the historical and existing inferences of colonialism, trauma, and identity, predominantly with regard to Native American experiences. The poem not only mirrors the brawls of Indigenous peoples but also censures the mechanisms of "Othering" that have relegated and degraded these communities throughout history.

In spite of the rich studies encompassing "Othering" in postcolonial studies, there remains a gap in the examination of how contemporary Indigenous poets like Long Soldier express and fight back against these subtleties in their work. Specially,

"38" functions as a touching case of how poetry can depict the intricacies of identity, belonging, and the effect of historical narratives on contemporary realities. This raises essential questions about the implication of poetry in determining and retrieving identity, along with its capacity to defy dominant narratives that disseminate "Othering". In other words, the questions that are addressed in order to fill the mentioned gap include:

1. How does Layli Long Soldier's poem "38" exemplify the notion of "Othering" as demarcated by Spivak, chiefly in the background of Native American identity?

2. In what ways does "38" work as a system of confrontation against the historical and unending "Othering" of Indigenous people?

3. How does the usage of language, structure, and imagery in "38" lead to the development of identity and the criticism of "Othering"?

4. What role does historical memory play in the poem, and how does it inform the current understanding of Native American identity in the context of "Othering"?

5. How can Long Soldier's work be positioned inside the larger framework of Indigenous literature and its reply to colonial narratives of "Othering"?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several key reasons; initially, Layli Long Soldier's poem "38" revolves around the historical and cultural implications of the US government's execution of 38 Dakota men in 1862. By examining this poem, this research is going to emphasize the significance of Indigenous narratives. Also, Spivak's concept of "Othering" presents a critical outline for understanding how specific groups are relegated in society.

By benefitting from this concept in analyzing Long Soldier's poetry, we intend to inspect the mechanisms of "Othering" in the context of colonialism and the never-ending impacts of historical trauma. This examination helps to disclose how such mechanisms continue to influence identity in contemporary literature. Moreover, this paper underlines the complication of identity construction, mainly for colonized populations. It studies how Long Soldier's poetry echoes the complex association between individual identity and shared cultural memory.

By analyzing the poem, the study aids to reclaim historical narratives that have often been written by colonial authorities. Exploring "38" paves the way for a critical reassessment of history from an Indigenous standpoint, defying dominant narratives and nurturing a profounder understanding of historical inequalities. The close relationship between poetry and postcolonial theory offers a rich field of investigation. Long Soldier's moral and artistic usage of language calls for discussions about form, style, and the inferences of storytelling. Finally, I have to add that this study functions as a resource for students, educators, and intellectuals keen on postcolonial studies, Indigenous literature, and contemporary poetry. It inspires interdisciplinary dialogue and endorses critical thinking about identity.

Literature Review

On the Theory

Can the Subaltern Speak? is a very important essay by Indian intellectual Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, published in 1988. In this significant work, Spivak has discussed the ways in which marginalized groups, predominantly women in postcolonial settings, are often quietened in discourses subjugated by colonial and male-controlled power structures. The word "subaltern" denotes the people who are communally, politically, and geographically outside of the hegemonic power structures (pp. 271–274).

Spivak maintains that the subaltern cannot truly "speak" in a way that is heard and understood in the contexts recognized by those in control. She condemns Western scholars and feminists who assert to represent the voices of the subaltern without distinguishing their own positionality and the boundaries of their interpretations. She similarly inspects the implications of representation and the challenges of enunciating the experiences and requirements of the subaltern (pp. 282–289).

In her investigation, she refers to some significant questions about agency, identity, and the morals of speaking for "Others". The essay is a critical contribution to postcolonial studies, feminist theory, and cultural criticism, and it continues to incite negotiations about voice, representation, and power relations in modern discourse (pp. 304–313).

Postcolonialism and the Deconstructive Scenario: Representing Gayatri Spivak (1999) discusses the close relationship between postcolonial theory and deconstruction, chiefly in relation to the studies of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. The article has examined how Spivak's viewpoints about representation are associated with the challenges experienced by subaltern groups in expressing their own experiences and identities. It also investigates how deconstructive attitudes can disclose the intricacies and contradictions intrinsic to demonstrating relegated voices (pp. 475–478).

The article then denounces the way in which Western academic agendas often appropriate and misapprehend the voices of the Global South, reflecting Spivak's worries about the restrictions of speaking for the subaltern. Best (1999) as the writer has inspected how deconstruction, as established by Jacques Derrida, can be used in postcolonial texts and contexts. This includes studying how deconstructive methods can discover fundamental power relations and conventions in colonial and postcolonial narratives (pp. 479–484).

Then, Best discusses Spivak's studies in both the postcolonial domain and feminist theory, underscoring her critical perceptions and the influence of her work on contemporary arguments regarding identity, power, and representation. He also probes the ethical inferences of representation, bearing in mind how researchers and activists can deal with the complications of speaking for or about relegated groups without preserving colonial or masculine undercurrents (pp. 487–494).

Othering and its Effects – Exploring the Concept (2011) as another article refers to the notion of "Othering", which is a highly pivotal word employed in different fields, such as postcolonial studies, sociology, and cultural studies. This research starts by explaining "Othering" as a procedure through which people or groups are demoted and referred to as different from a prevailing group. This procedure often contains forming a binary division between "us" (the in-group) and "them" (the out-group), resulting in the dehumanization or objectification of the "other" (pp. 27–31).

The article then delves into the historical origins of "Othering", tracing its establishment through colonialism, imperialism, and globalization. It also discusses how colonial authorities constructed identities for colonized people that highlighted their differences and subordination, thus justifying dominance and manipulation. The impacts of "Othering" on both the demoted and overriding groups are the other significant points here. The article has examined how "Othering" determines individual and cooperative identities, bringing about subjugation for those who are "Othered" and strengthening biases and stereotypes for those who belong to the governing group (pp. 32–40).

Thomas-Olalde and Velho, as the authors, have scrutinized contemporary instances of "Othering" in different settings, such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexuality. They discuss how "Othering" is palpable in societal, political, and financial scopes like immigration discussions, racial discrimination, and the representation of relegated groups in media. A detailed investigation of language and discourse in the procedure of "Othering" is another focus of this paper by analyzing how language is used to make and underpin differences and how narratives and representations in literature, media, and politics lead to the preservation of "Othering" (pp. 42–50).

A Literary Representation of the Subaltern: A Woman's Text from the Third World 1 (2006a) concentrates on the representation of subaltern females in literature from the Global South, mainly inspecting how their experiences, voices, and identities are expressed in literary texts. Spivak started by describing the term "subaltern", which denotes those groups that are socially, politically, and geographically marginalized. In this context, the emphasis is on women from the Global South who encounter manifold layers of domination because of such features as gender, class, race, and colonial history (pp. 241–248).

She also examines the literary agendas and genres used to embody subaltern women by probing how these texts defy dominant narratives and offer substitute viewpoints that emphasize the intricacies of their lives. She scrutinizes particular literary texts by women authors from the Global South, discussing how these texts depict the brawls, agency, and resilience of subaltern women. The investigation embraces a thorough reading of characters, themes, and narrative methods that illuminate the real experiences of these women (pp. 249–259).

An important focus of the article is on the challenges of representation. It addresses the question of whether subaltern women can truly "speak" for themselves in literary texts, mirroring Gayatri Spivak's renowned question, *Can the subaltern*

speak? Spivak similarly discusses the notion of intersectionality, inspecting how different systems of identity (such as race, class, and gender) interconnect to form the experiences of subaltern women. This analysis highlights the multiplicity of experiences within the classification of "subaltern" and critiques any overgeneralized representations (pp. 261–268).

On the Poet

The Kinetic Poetics of Sherwin Bitsui, Natalie Diaz, Allison Adelle Hedge Coke, and Layli Long Soldier (2021) analyzes the poetic works and styles of these four contemporary Indigenous poets, concentrating on how their poetry exemplifies movement, rhythm, and the vibrant interaction of language and culture. Papa (2021), as the writer has begun by introducing Sherwin Bitsui, Natalie Diaz, Allison Adelle Hedge Coke, and Layli Long Soldier, presenting context about their experiences, cultural legacy and literary contributions. Each poet has a discrete voice and style, often drawing from their Indigenous identities and experiences (pp. 4–5).

The phrase "kinetic poetics" is defined as a perception that accentuates movement, rhythm, and the sensory experience of poetry. The article explores how these poets employ language in order to generate a sense of motion, whether through the physicality of their imagery, the musicality of their verse, or the expressive tone of their themes. The article then inspects how these poets depict the themes of place, land, and landscape in their work. For Indigenous authors, the connection to land is often essential to identity, and the article analyzes how each poet expresses this association through kinetic language and imagery (pp. 21–25).

The poets are mostly discussed in the framework of Indigenous oral traditions and cultural memory. The article thus delves into how their works replicate or reinterpret oral storytelling practices, highlighting the significance of memory, history, and ancestral knowledge in their poetry. Likewise, Papa analyzes how these poets deal with the language as a tool to articulate their identities and experiences, including negotiations of code-switching, the practice of Indigenous languages, and the retrieval of language as a system of resistance against colonial plots (pp. 30–32).

Never Allowed for Property: Harriet Jacobs and Layli Long Soldier before the Law (2022) is another article that inspects the intersections of race, gender, and legal status in the works of Harriet Jacobs and Layli Long Soldier, two important figures in American literature who discuss subjects of oppression, identity, and resistance within their individual historical settings. This article offers background on Harriet Jacobs, an African-American woman who fled slavery and wrote Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, and Layli Long Soldier, a contemporary Native American poet recognized for her work studying Indigenous identity and the influence of colonialism. The article tries to explore how both writers cope with the legal systems that have historically demoted their communities (pp. 331–335). Manshel it is stated (2022, p. 331):

> Jacobs and Long Soldier both locate an alternative to the law in the radical divinity of maternal care. Through Jacobs's and Long Soldier's discussions of holy maternal care, we can recognize the interrelation of Black and Indigenous freedom struggles in a way that's not solely defined by shared subjugation.

The phrase "Never Allowed for Property" proposes a concentration on the ways in which both Jacobs and Long Soldier challenge the legal outlines that negate agency, autonomy, and ownership to sidelined people. The article also studies how their works echo the historical and constant brawls against legal and systemic domination. Next, the way in which both authors discuss the intersections of race and gender in their writings is studied. Jacobs's narrative depicts the sexual manipulation of enslaved women and their combat for self-possession, whereas Long Soldier's poetry probes the difficulties of Indigenous identity and the influence of colonial laws on Native females (pp. 337–345).

Manshel analyzes the ways in which Jacobs and Long Soldier declare their voices and identities in the face of domineering legal structures. He emphasizes the subjects of resistance, resilience, and the repossession of agency through their literary works. The consideration of cultural memory and the impacts of historical trauma is an important theme. The article has also well studied how both authors demonstrate their respective histories, Jacobs with the heritage of slavery and Long Soldier with the impression of colonialism, underlining the ways in which these histories form their narratives and identities (pp. 346–355).

The present article is different in that it sheds light on Layli Long Soldier's renowned poem "38". By employing Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notion of "Othering" as a methodological tool to investigate Soldier's poetry, analyzing how identity is created and represented via poetic manifestation. Spivak, a substantial postcolonial theorist, expresses how dominant narratives often create downgraded identities as "Others" and deprive them of agency and voice. By performing a detailed analysis of the poem, this study inspects how Long Soldier uses language, imagery, and structure in order to confront the procedures of "Othering" that have marginalized Indigenous voices within dominant narratives.

Materials and Methods

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (born in 1942), an influential postcolonial thinker and researcher, is chiefly famous for her critical discussions of such issues as representation, power, and identity in the framework of colonial and postcolonial discourse. One of her important studies in the realm of feminist and postcolonial theory is her notion of "Othering", which denotes the procedure through which dominant cultures describe and create downgraded groups as the "Other".

This procedure not only underlines the intrinsic power relations in cultural representation but also discloses the intricacies of identity development in a world characterized by colonial histories and unending discriminations. Spivak (1988) utters, "The question of the subaltern is a question of representation" (p. 274). This quote underscores the importance of representation in the framework surrounding downgraded identities. Spivak contends that the way the subaltern is represented by dominant narratives often disseminates their relegation and underlines the present power structures.

"Othering" is a discursive practice that includes the formation of a binary opposition between the self (the dominant or normative group) and the "Other" (the

downgraded or subdued group). This procedure often involves stereotyping, dehumanization, and estrangement, while the "Other" is depicted as basically different, lesser, or intimidating. Such representations are meant to strengthen the identity of the self by creating a sense of dominance and cultural supremacy.

Spivak's theory is intensely entrenched in the historical heritages of colonialism, where colonizers created colonized people as bizarre, embryonic, and isolated. This not only justified colonial command but also removed the difficulties and multiplicities of Indigenous cultures. By referring to the colonized as the "Other", colonial authorities were able to proclaim their own identities as cultured and enlightened, thus legitimizing their abusive behaviors.

An important feature of Spivak's analysis is her assertion regarding the significance of agency and voice for the subaltern as those groups that have been generally relegated and hushed. In her influential essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988, pp. 271–313), Spivak claims that the voices of the subaltern are often co-opted or distorted by those in control. The challenge, then, is not only to listen to these voices but to form spaces where the subaltern can express their own identities and experiences without being strained through the lens of dominant narratives.

Likewise, as stated by Spivak (1988), "To refuse to speak for the 'Other' is to refuse the Other's voice" (p. 201). In this citation, Spivak underlines the moral duty of researchers and advocates to avoid speaking for relegated groups. Instead, she supports creating spaces where these groups can express their own experiences and identities. In a nutshell, whereas Spivak's theory emphasizes the oppressive mechanisms of "Othering", it also opens up paths for resistance and recovery. By defying the narratives enforced by dominant cultures, disregarded voices can affirm their identities and histories.

Another significant point is epistemic violence. Spivak argues that Western intellectual discourse "Others" the colonized subject by denying them the ability to represent themselves. This is what she calls epistemic violence, where knowledge is produced through the lens of the colonizer, erasing the voices and experiences of the colonized. In other words, at the core of epistemic violence lies the indication that the colonizer's viewpoint becomes the main agenda through which knowledge is created and dispersed. This outline often depicts colonized subjects as inert, primitive, or in need of saving, effectually othering them. By putting themselves as the conveyors of knowledge, Western scholars not only pervert the realities of colonized people but also remove their intervention and the intricacy of their cultures, histories, and identities.

Also, Spivak highlights that women from colonized and marginalized backgrounds experience a double form of otherness as both women and subaltern subjects. This makes their voices even more imperceptible within male-controlled and colonial systems. In fact, women, regardless of their cultural or national upbringings, often go through systemic discrimination entrenched in male-controlled structures. In many societies, customary gender roles determine women's access to education, financial occasions, and political contribution. This gendered repression is worsened in colonized societies, where colonial rule often underpins

and sometimes exaggerates the present masculine norms. Women are recurrently downgraded to the domestic domain, their roles limited to caregiving and domestic errands, consequently restraining their discernibility and agency in public life.

Results and Discussion

"Othering" in Literature: Definition and Explanation

"Othering" is a notion that has its origins in postcolonial theory, chiefly associated with the works of such researchers as Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. It denotes the procedure through which a dominant group describes and relegates a group observed as different, often bringing about the formation of an "Other". This "Other" is marked by features that are perceived as lesser, mysterious, or intimidating in comparison with the standards of the dominant culture. The act of "Othering" can be demonstrated in different practices, including race, gender, class, sexuality, and nationality, and functions to strengthen the power relations between the dominant and subsidiary communities (Brons, 2015, pp. 71–72).

"Othering" is not only a replication of variances; it is also a cultural structure that includes narratives, symbols, and representations. Literature often plays a very important role in determining views of the "Other". Through storytelling, writers can either strengthen stereotypes or undermine them, affecting how readers realize and relate to relegated groups. Likewise, "Othering" often depends on binary oppositions like us vs. them, civilized vs. primitive, normal vs. abnormal. These obstructions simplify multifaceted identities and experiences, framing the "Other" as a menace to societal unity or as an object of inquisitiveness. Literature recurrently uses these binaries in order to create characters and plot subtleties, which can either prolong or overthrow conventional narratives.

One of the most significant facets of "Othering" is the matter of voice. The dominant culture often speaks for the "Other", depriving them of agency and the ability to recount their own stories. This quieting is an essential theme in Spivak's work, mainly in her renowned essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Literature can either intensify this hushing or offer a platform for demoted voices, permitting them to retrieve their narratives and declare their identities. Moreover, "Othering" is convolutedly associated with identity development. The creation of the "Other" not only influences how the dominant group observes disregarded communities but also affects how those communities recognize themselves. Literature often examines the strain between self-identification and exterior views, unveiling the difficulties of identity in the face of "Othering" (Dervin, 2016, pp. 50–53).

Based on the psychoanalytical theories of Jacques Lacan, the concept "Othering" was re-coined by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in the framework of postcolonial theory, and since then it has been extensively used, especially within anthropology (Thomas-Olalde, Velho, 2011, p. 27).

In her article *The Rani of Sirmur* (1985), Gayatri C. Spivak renovates the dialectical procedure of "Othering" that establishes the colonizing subjects who dwell in the hegemonic place in addition to the colonized, demoted "Others".

Similar to Edward Said, her investigation illustrates that the information and practices of British colonial rule in India created a relationship between the "natives" and colonial controllers, which formed the former as the "Others" and made them perform as specimens, while the latter engaged in a place of dominance. Spivak draws from diverse instances from official correspondence of the British colonial epoch, the times of the East Indian Company in the Indian Simla-Hills in the early 19th century (Thomas-Olalde, Velho, 2011, pp. 32–33). Brons (2015, p. 69) has noted:

> Othering is the construction and identification of the self or in-group and the other or out-group in mutual, unequal opposition by attributing relative inferiority and/or radical alienness to the other/out-group. The notion of othering spread from feminist theory and post-colonial studies to other areas of the humanities and social sciences, but is originally rooted in Hegel's dialectic of identification and distantiation in the encounter of the self with some other in his "Master – Slave dialectic".

This quotation from Brons offers a deep understanding of the notion of "Othering", highlighting its implication in the production of identity and the dynamics of power between groups. This excerpt suggests that "Othering" includes the "construction and identification of the self or in-group and the 'Other' or out-group". This implies that groups often describe themselves concerning those they regard as different or outside their group. The "self" is characteristically the prevailing or normative group, whereas the "Other" is the relegated or secondary group.

The phrase "mutual, unequal opposition" emphasizes that while both groups are defined in relation to each other, the association is fundamentally imbalanced. The dominant group regards itself as greater while ascribing lowliness to the "Other". Furthermore, "Othering" contains attributing undesirable traits to the out-group, which can manifest as alleged subordination. This acts to validate the relegation or domination of the «Other» by concerning them as different and mediocre, therefore legitimizing unequal treatment. Thomas-Olalde and Velho (2011, p. 27) have also added that:

> Othering has been established as a key concept of postcolonial theory, and as such, it has also found entry into critical analyses of racism. In this context, Othering is defined as a process in which, through discursive practices, different subjects are formed, hegemonic subjects – that is, subjects in powerful social positions as well as those subjugated to these powerful conditions. To arrive at such an analytic description, however, some measure of abstraction is required, because Othering denotes simultaneously both the features of discourse structures and processes and the formation of subjectivity engendered by such discourse. Our contribution focuses on ways in which these two moments constitute each other.

The researchers both declare that "Othering" is a significant concept in postcolonial theory, and this shows its significance in comprehending the subtleties of power, identity, and representation in contexts formed by colonial histories and unending discriminations. By concerning "Othering" as essential to postcolonial discourse, they emphasize its importance in examining the associations between colonizers and the colonized, along with the larger inferences for identity construction in a globalized world.

The quote also means that "Othering" has been assimilated into critical examinations of racism. This specifies that the procedure of "Othering" is not restricted to postcolonial circumstances but is also related to discussions about race and racialization. The writers suggest that understanding how certain groups are fabricated as "Others" can show the mechanisms of racism and the ways in which social hierarchies are preserved. "Othering" is explained here as a process facilitated by "discursive practices", which alludes to the ways language, narratives, and cultural representations form our realization of different subjects. Discourses are not unbiased; they transport authority and impact how individuals and groups are observed and behave. The writers both emphasize that "Othering" includes the formation of subjectivity, denoting that individuals come to recognize themselves and their identities in relation to the discourses that surround them. This twofold procedure, how discourse forms identities and how those identities can, in turn, affect discourse, is decisive for understanding the convolutions of societal associations.

Crisis of Feeling "Othering" in Soldier's Poem "38"

The poem "38" acts as a touching illustration of the historical and current effects of colonialism on Native American identity, predominantly in relation to the US government's treatment of Indigenous peoples. The poem alludes to the execution of 38 Dakota men in 1862, a substantial and painful happening in Native American history. This historical background paves the way for recognizing the ingrained feelings of "Othering" that infuse the poem. The massacre is not merely a past occasion but an enduring trauma that continues to affect the identities of Native peoples today. Long Soldier's interest in this history emphasizes how the past is inseparably related to the present, forming a crisis of identity for Indigenous individuals who deal with the burden of their ancestors' grief.

Spivak's concept of "Othering" includes scrutinizing how relegated groups are often described in opposition to dominant cultures. In "38", Long Soldier exemplifies how Indigenous identities have been created through the lens of colonial narratives that degrade and remove their histories. The poem's consideration of the Dakota men's execution functions as a token of how Indigenous people have been reduced to the "Other" by a society that attempts to hush their voices and experiences. Long Soldier's practice of language suggests a thoughtful expressive reaction, seizing the sense of loss, sorrow, and irritation that goes with the experience of "Othering". The poem's structure, with its disjointed lines and fluctuating rhythms, echoes the interruption and disintegration of identity that happens due to being relegated. The crisis of feeling othered is tangible as the speaker grapples with the bulk of historical trauma while trying to proclaim their own identity in a world that often tries to obliterate it.

In "38", Long Soldier entwines individual and shared narratives, underscoring that the experience of "Othering" is not just an intangible idea but a real reality. The speaker's consideration of their identity is intensely entrenched in the communal history of their people. This amalgamation of individual and communal experiences

emphasizes the crisis of identity that rises from being othered, as people deal with their position in a society that often deprives them of agency. The poem also refers to the power of language in determining identity. Long Soldier's selection of words and imagery means to retrieve the narrative surrounding Indigenous identity, defying the dominant discourse that has historically relegated Native voices. By declaring their own language and style, Long Soldier fights the "Othering" that has been enforced upon her community, producing a space for Indigenous representation that is both dependable and authoritative. At the beginning of the poem, it is written:

> Here, the sentence will be respected.
> I will compose each sentence with care, by minding what the rules of writing dictate.
> For example, all sentences will begin with capital letters.
> Likewise, the history of the sentence will be honored by ending each one
> with appropriate punctuation such as a period or question mark, thus
> bringing the idea to (momentary) completion.
> You may like to know, I do not consider this a "creative piece".
> I do not regard this as a poem of great imagination or a work of fiction.
> Also, historical events will not be dramatized for an "interesting" read.
> Therefore, I feel most responsible to the orderly sentence; conveyor of thought.
> That said, I will begin.

In this selection from the poem, the speaker creates a discrete context for how they will do the act of writing. This context is intensely linked to the notion of "Othering" as expressed by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, which includes the relegation of specific groups or standpoints in dominant narratives. The introductory lines accentuate a commitment to structure and order in writing: "Here, the sentence will be respected". This declaration can be inferred as an assertion of the significance of language and its instructions, which historically have been employed in order to proclaim power and control over narratives, chiefly those of Indigenous people. By deciding to admire the rules of writing, the speaker recognizes the burden of language as an instrument that can either authorize or dominate.

The persistence in starting each sentence with a capital letter and ending with suitable punctuation shows an aspiration for lucidity and decency in communication. This scrupulous emphasis on the mechanics of writing acts as a counterpoint to the muddled and often fierce history of colonization, where Indigenous voices have been systematically quietened or distorted. The speaker's systematic attitude can be perceived as a repossession of narrative control, proclaiming that their voice is worthy of being heard in a way that sticks to recognized settlements, even while distinguishing the restrictions of those settlements.

Additionally, the speaker's statement, "I do not consider this a 'creative piece'", depicts a strain between the outlooks of literary manifestation and the speaker's intention to transport historical veracities without exaggeration. This denial to exaggerate historical occasions represents a profounder dedication to genuineness and a craving to honor the real experiences of those who have been "Othered". By separating the work from the idea of creativity, the speaker wants the reader to challenge the reality of Indigenous histories without the covering of romanticism or artistic authorization.

The phrase "conveyor of thought" also accentuates the implication of the sentence as a tool for carrying meaning, yet it also points at the larger inferences of language in determining identity and experience. In the framework of Spivak's theory, this focus on the sentence can be realized as an act of confrontation against the expurgation of Indigenous identities and stories. The speaker's careful formation of sentences becomes a form of declaration, a way to assert space within a literary tradition that has often relegated or unnoticed Indigenous voices. In another part it is written:

> You may or may not have heard about the Dakota 38.
> If this is the first time you've heard of it, you might wonder, "What is the Dakota 38?"
> The Dakota 38 refers to thirty-eight Dakota men who were executed by hanging, under orders from President Abraham Lincoln.
> To date, this is the largest "legal" mass execution in US history.
> The hanging took place on December 26, 1862 – the day after Christmas.

In this section of Layli Long Soldier's poem, the speaker talks about the historical incident of the Dakota 38, placing it in the larger framework of Indigenous experiences and the heritage of colonization. The way the information is delivered represents a cognizant attempt to address the readers openly, asking them to take part in a conversation about an agonizing and often disregarded stage in American history. This methodology is in accordance with Spivak's notion of "Othering", which inspects how demoted communities are signified and often hushed in dominant chronicles.

The lines, "You may or may not have heard about the Dakota 38", directly create a feeling of inclusivity, yet they also emphasize a serious gap in knowledge concerning Indigenous histories. By recognizing the likelihood that the reader does not know about the Dakota 38, the speaker accentuates the bigger social negligence of Indigenous narratives. This issue acts to defy the reader's expectations and demands that they focus on the material, efficiently putting the speaker as both an educator and an observer of history.

The rhetorical question, "What is the Dakota 38?" similarly underlines the poem's educational goal. It inspires inquisitiveness and thinking, provoking the readers to challenge their own unfamiliarity or prejudices about Indigenous histories. By doing so, the speaker vigorously fights back against the expurgation of Indigenous identities and experiences, proclaiming the significance of recalling and recognizing such happenings. This agrees with Spivak's assertion that those who are "Othered" must have their voices regained and augmented so as to defy dominant historical descriptions.

The following lines offer a concise historical explanation of the Dakota 38, remarking that they were killed under the instructions of President Abraham Lincoln. This particular acknowledgement of responsibility is essential since it disturbs the often disinfected narratives about American history that mean to ignore the involvement of important figures in acts of vehemence against Indigenous people. Also, the mention of the execution date, "December 26, 1862 – the day after Christmas", adds a moving layer to the narrative. This collocation of a holiday

linked with amity and benevolence against the conditions of a terrible occasion means to emphasize the illogicalities intrinsic in American historical narratives. It encourages the reader to focus on the inferences of honoring national holidays while disregarding the historical disturbances that continue to disturb Indigenous populations. Long Soldier has similarly noted:

> So it's possible that you're asking, "Why were thirty-eight Dakota men hanged?"
> They were hanged for the Sioux Uprising.
> I want to tell you about the Sioux Uprising, but I don't know where to begin.
> I may jump around and details will not unfold in chronological order.
> Keep in mind, I am not a historian.
> So I will recount facts as best as I can, given limited resources and understanding.
> Before Minnesota was a state, the Minnesota region, generally speaking, was the traditional homeland for Dakota, Anishinaabeg, and Ho-Chunk people.
> During the 1800s, when the US expanded territory, they "purchased" land from the Dakota people as well as the other tribes.
> But another way to understand that sort of "purchase" is:
> Dakota leaders ceded land to the US government in exchange for money or goods, but most importantly, the safety of their people.

In this segment of Layli Long Soldier's poem, the speaker refers to the historical setting surrounding the Dakota 38 and the Sioux Uprising, concurrently admitting the intricacies of unfolding such an important yet excruciating history. This attitude signifies the matters of "Othering" and identity as uttered by Spivak. The speaker's explicit allusion to the reader, "So it's possible that you're asking, 'Why were thirty-eight Dakota men hanged?'" establishes a close dialogue that asks the audience to explore history. This bombastic approach functions to disassemble the distance often created in historical narratives, where Indigenous experiences are rendered abstract or distant.

The admission, "I want to tell you about the Sioux Uprising, but I don't know where to begin", represents the challenges of expressing a history that is troubled by trauma and loss. This self-awareness emphasizes the restrictions of both individual understanding and historical narrative, mirroring Spivak's statement that those who are 'othered' often go through hindrances in enunciating their own stories in a dominant outline that aims to downgrade them. The speaker's acknowledgment of their non-expert position, "I am not a historian", additionally underscores the fight for power in describing indigenous histories, which have often been surpassed or distorted by typical historical narratives.

The speaker's frankness about possibly "jumping around" and presenting details out of sequential order depicts the fragmented nature of memory and trauma. This non-linear narration echoes the real understandings of indigenous peoples, whose histories have been disjointed by colonization and systemic destruction. By referring to the narrative in this way, Long Soldier confronts typical anticipations of historical storytelling, signifying that the reality of indigenous experiences cannot be effortlessly summarized in linear timelines or customary historical outlines.

Moreover, the discussion of land "purchases" presents a serious inspection of the language employed to refer to the repressions of indigenous peoples. The speaker's decision to frame the ceding of land as a transaction that included "money or goods" but also the "safety of their people" underlines the intimidating nature of these agreements. The usage of quotation marks around "purchased" indicates a criticism of the vocabulary that has often sanitized the ferocity intrinsic in colonization.

In addition, the themes of identity and othering in this poem echo Spivak's notion of epistemic violence. The poem actually works as a moving criticism of the dominant narratives that have historically relegated native voices and experiences. The poem places the reader in the historical framework of the Dakota War and the succeeding execution. This historical framework is central for understanding how the colonizer's narrative has historically portrayed indigenous people as the other. The dominant narrative often shows these people as violent, vicious, or primitive, consequently vindicating their relegation and the elimination of their histories and identities.

It must be also added that Long Soldier's exercise of language in "38" is an influential instrument for fighting against the epistemic violence. By using a poetic form that interweaves individual reflection with historical narrative, she produces a space for native voices to be heard. This act of exemplification counters the dominant discourse that has historically quieted indigenous people.

Finally, the intersection of gender and colonialism is important in the chosen poem, predominantly in light of Spivak's proclamation concerning the double marginalization undergone by women from colonized circumstances. Long Soldier's work not only refers to the historical prejudices suffered by the Dakota people but also stresses the particular ways in which native women deal with the intricacies of identity, agency, and representation in both colonial and male-controlled structures.

The poem's historical backdrop in fact functions as a cue of the systemic violence that native communities have undergone. Still, it also opens a dialogue about the influence of this violence on women, who often bear the burden of both colonial repression and gendered discernments. The historical narrative surrounding the Dakota War inclines to concentrate on male figures, obliterating the experiences and voices of women who were also intensely affected by these occasions.

Conclusion

In Layli Long Soldier's famous poem "38", the complex relationship between identity and "Othering" can be viewed and regarded as an influential comment on the historical and never-ending demotion of Indigenous people. By drawing from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notion of "Othering", we can find out how Long Soldier expresses the intricacies of identity creation in a framework intensely affected by colonial plots and systemic marginalization. Through her touching language, vibrant imagery, and groundbreaking structure, Long Soldier not only

challenges the agonizing heritage of such happenings as the Wounded Knee Massacre but also retrieves agency over her own narrative and that of her community.

The poem can be assumed to be a vibrant and effective act of confrontation due to defying the prevailing discourses that have long tried to outline and restrain Indigenous identities. By focusing on historical memory and personal experience, Long Soldier demands her readers to be engaged with the multilayered realities of Native American life and reassess how identities are created and observed. Her work demonstrates the capacity of poetry to disrupt the cycles of "Othering" by presenting a space for healing, reflection, and recuperation.

In the end, it is concluded that "38" symbolizes a witness to the resilience of Indigenous voices in the face of expurgation and falsification. As we deal with the difficulties of identity in an increasingly interrelated world, Long Soldier's examination of "Othering" acts as a decisive token of the significance of listening to and strengthening disregarded narratives. In doing so, we can nurture a deeper understanding of identity that celebrates the miscellaneous experiences of all human beings, chiefly those historically demoted to the margins. Via her art, Long Soldier not only improves the literary landscape but also brings about a more all-embracing dialogue about identity, belonging, and the persistent effect of colonial histories.

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