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Feminism

# Women, race and class in social movements: An extract

- Features - Feminism -

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**Jules Falquet looks at the complexity of identities, loyalties and the interests of everyone in social movements. The book *Imbrication. Femmes, race et classe dans les mouvements sociaux* published in February 2020 by Éditions du Croquant, presents the history of guerrilla (Salvador), Indian-peasant (Zapatista movement in Mexico) or Black (Brazil, Dominican Republic, USA) struggles, as well as the women's, feminist and lesbian movements of the continent: the women of the Americas and the Caribbean offer us an exceptional mirror to better understand “intersectionality” at a time of a profusion of struggles, sometimes confusing . Starting from the daily life of these movements in order to reach a veritable "science of the oppressed", this book is aimed at an inquisitive public as well as activists and the world of research.[*Contretemps*]**

## Falquet's Introduction to the book.

The current social, political, economic and environmental situation, in France and in the world, seems to produce a feeling of despair among many people. Many struggles are breaking out here and there, but the repression is brutal. The desire to make emerge alliances that are broad enough to reverse the relationship of forces comes up against political disorientation. What project should we fight for? With whom? Traditional class organizations (parties, unions) that had come together and won important victories in the twentieth century are discredited, and many people do not know whether the proletariat still exists - even though the highest levels of the bourgeoisie and the new rich are doing well. Feminist struggles, transformed into demands for parity and the inclusion of LGBTQI + rights [1], seem to have become a marker of the “Western” world, a “proof of civilization” in the name of which the governments of the former colonizing countries claim to justify their aggressions against the countries of the South, the migrants and the popular quarters. As for racism, faced with the globalization-fragmentation of the labour market and the complexification of migration, it has taken so many forms to aim at so many targets that we no longer know very well where to attack it: fight against unfair migration policies and for papers, against discrimination in housing and hiring, against Islamophobia, not only French but also international? Struggle to decolonize so-called progressive movements?

In this context, when the term intersectionality appeared in France a few years ago, it triggered off all kinds of reactions. Some take it as a noble way of finally designating a blind spot in anti-racist and feminist struggles (and much more, class struggles), namely women who are the subject of racism. In place of the notion, it is true quite unsatisfactory, of "racialized", Black or Arab women [2] become visible as "intersectional". Others are offended by the import of jargon from the United States, which is inevitably unsuitable for describing the specific characteristics of French society. Some see it as a fashionable university or activist concept on which to surf to obtain credits and notoriety. A small minority, whose voice makes itself heard in inverse proportion to its statistical weight, utters scandalized cries by assimilating in the same conservative reprobation the supposed "gender theory" and intersectionality. In all of this, the history of ideas is very roughly treated and the original project linked to this concept, namely the struggle for social justice, seems far away (Bilge, 2015). But fundamentally, what are we talking about?

## To begin to dispel the sound and the fury

*Sex, race and class: these misunderstood concepts*

There are many ways to try to understand these complex notions of class (a concept that is accepted although often ill defined), sex (wrongly naturalized, but taken for granted by the majority of people) and "race" (a theme so sensitive that at times I will put quotes around it). For many people, these three notions refer to individual identity and somehow constitute the coordinates which locate them in relation to each other. They can be "objective" identities (the quotation marks indicating that all of this is always relative - but are we, or are we not, for example, the owner of means of production?), subjective (generally, white people tend to feel that they have no colour or "race") or even assigned (the police officer who beats a black lesbian to death because he took her for a man and for a delinquent is indifferent to the fact that she is actually a mother who takes her son to music lessons - as was the case of Luana/Luan Victor Barbosa, to whom this book is dedicated).

From another angle, developed in particular in the context of collective struggles, we can think in terms of social systems. The capitalist system would be the one that produces social classes, the patriarchal system would produce arbitrary definitions of women and men and make girls and boys correspond to these models, through "positive" socialization and, if necessary, punishment. The racist system would maintain the marginalization and oppression of certain human groups by others, on the pretext that different physical appearances correspond to "races" with different abilities.

Finally, we can consider these notions, as do some schools of thought in sociology - and in particular the materialist feminist theory to which I subscribe - as the result of *social relations*. Social relations are themselves defined as power relations or tensions which structure the entire social field around certain issues - in particular, work. Each of these social relations creates two main antagonistic groups, dialectically linked to each other by contradictory interests. [3]

In this perspective, the capitalist relations that were set up on the rubble of feudalism and the Ancien Regime, following a double bourgeois and then industrial revolution, gradually (mainly) created two antagonistic classes (called social classes), the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The social relations of sex, claiming to be based on biology, define women and men as natural and immutable entities - although everyone can in reality observe the variability of the "feminine" and the "masculine" with time or in different cultures. Finally, the social relations of race as we know them today appeared first with the "reconquest" of Spain by the Catholic queens and kings against the Jews and the Moors, initially mixing an idea of "purity of blood" with the professed religion. Then the discovery of a continent hitherto completely unknown to Europe, arbitrarily baptized Latin America and the Caribbean - which I will call here rather Abya Yala [4] or Ladin Amefrica [5] and its colonization gave rise little by little to a new logic of "race": the local populations of these immense colonies were homogenized as Indians, dehumanized, brutally and massively murdered and their survivors savagely put to work, while other marginal European populations, then other populations torn from the African continent, were forcefully sent to these new colonies and held in slavery. When trafficking began to develop and to be concentrated on the coasts of sub-Saharan Africa [6] a new discourse assimilated black skin colour to a certain number of reputedly intrinsic traits, themselves constructed in such a way as to justify the unjustifiable treatment reserved for these Africans and their descendants. At the same time, those who benefited from their work became white and attributed to themselves the opposite qualities of the faults which they [7] claimed that the former were affected by. This is how I will understand race here: as a historical and arbitrary construction which is not based on any substantive difference in nature - this being said, I will generally remove the quotation marks.

*What links between gender, race and class?*

As for the way in which the links between gender, class and race have been thought of, there is a rather long history of reflection. The relative importance of gender and class for the Revolution has been the subject of debate for at least two hundred years, with the St Simonians from the 1820s and especially with Flora Tristan between 1830 and 1844. The debates became more bitter in 1889, with the Second International, and even more so from 1919, with the Third International- these two organizations demanding, as we will see in Chapter 1, that gender issues be put on the

back burner to build the unity of the proletariat. Much later, in 1968, it was the young American trade unionist Frances Beal who first wrote down the implications of being considered both black and female. However, it was the activists of the Combahee River Collective in Boston who had the honour of having collectively formulated in writing for the first time in 1977 the idea that racism, capitalism, patriarchy and heterosexuality were “interlocking systems of oppression”. However, it was another debate that was more visible in the late 1970s and early 1980s: that concerning the articulation between patriarchy and capitalism. This debate pitted more or less feminist Marxists against more or less radical feminists. The positions ranged from the assertion that capitalism is a system which includes patriarchy (reduced to an ideological or cultural instance) to the contrary idea according to which patriarchy preceded capitalism and is also observed in socialism - passing through various positions according to which the two systems are articulated but relatively autonomous.

So, when the proposal for intersectionality appeared, at the very end of the 1980s and at the same time as Black feminist epistemology was developing, many things had already been theorized, even if they were not necessarily integrated into the debates. It should also be noted that the proposals of the Black diaspora that lives in Brazil (which is, however, numerically the most important) remain unknown to Anglophones or Francophones, while Anglophones, Lusophones and Hispanophones miss the contributions of Francophone materialist feminism.

The 1990s saw the development of other trends. On the one hand, post-modern and post-colonial perspectives which affirm that it is necessary to stop reasoning on the basis of generic-universalizing categories such as "women". On the other hand, a gradual return of theses of Marxist and/or globalizing inspiration, such as the decolonial currents which emerged in South America and the United States shortly before the turn of the millennium and were enriched with feminist perspectives from the end of the 2000s – we will come back to that.

### *Three scales for a question*

Whatever the perspective from which we envisage the articulation of social relationships, we can distinguish at least three levels of interrogation. The first takes place on the scale of people, of processes of subjectivation, consciousness and identity. We then ask ourselves what the different systems and their conjunction produce on identities, behaviour, discriminations. We also question ourselves, from an epistemological point of view, on the standpoint on society that creates for everyone his or her particular position in the different social relationships.

The second level is on the very macro and abstract scale of the systems themselves: certainly, they build each other mutually, reinforce or lean on each other, but it is not a simple addition. They can at different times be in contradiction or in competition: the standards they produce for example, very often prove to be paradoxical for people. More structurally, the global logics of the systems also seem to contradict each other. Thus, for example, the tendency of the capitalist system to absorb all the labour force with a view to its exploitation, by putting women on the wage-labour market, empties homes and repeatedly provokes crises of social reproduction which threaten the very continuity of the system.

Finally, one may wonder how the articulation of these social relations or systems evolves over time - and whether they have always coexisted. This perspective is therefore more interested in the way in which the dynamics of the articulation of these relationships produce the movement of human history, at least in the last few centuries. It is then a question of revisiting the linear history of capitalism, highlighting the action of several interlocked dynamics or contradictions instead of only the class (“social”) contradiction as the motor force of history (Falquet, 2016) .

## **Project of the book and epistemo-methodological foundations**

Faced with the erosion of previous analysis and action plans, the difficulty in putting into practice new concepts that are sometimes poorly understood and the general disarray caused by the hammering of the idea that there is no alternative, this work affirms a double objective, theoretical and practical. On the one hand, to document and better understand the social struggles which try to resist the injustices resulting from these multiple interwoven social relationships and seek alternatives to them. On the other hand, to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the simultaneous functioning of several social relationships (especially of gender, race and class).

For this, the analysis of social movements as producers not only of action but also of knowledge and analysis, will constitute the key to entry. There are two main reasons for this choice. First, social movements have the advantage of being at the *mezzo* level : they speak to us about consciousness and collective actions which are based on individual situations while aiming to transform a structural framework, which makes it possible to observe both the micro-social and the macro-social. Second, because they allow us to go beyond individual action-feeling-thinking individuals, who are more fragile and often more difficult to objectify. Socio-political praxis, often dense, lasting, engaging - and for many, costly and risky - constitutes on the contrary a precious, public analysis material, already developed and partially ordered by the actors. Producing actions, speeches, leaflets, manifestos and other concrete documents, it constitutes in a way the material and collective face of individual subjectivation [8].

Another important methodological choice consists in focusing on social movements essentially or exclusively composed of members of minority groups [9] in one or more of the social relationships. I will focus here on those where there is a large proportion of people socially regarded as women. There are two reasons for this: first, the epistemological premise that I share with Patricia Hill Collins, for whom ordinary Black women do indeed have a specific point of view on their situation and on social reality (1990); and Monique Wittig, who places the minority who refuse to let themselves be deprived of their own knowledge and understanding of the facts at the centre of her project of a science of the oppressed [10]. Then, the fact that it is precisely the minority in several respects, Black working-class women, who were the first to tackle the subject of the gender-race-class link. In fact, until today, the vast majority of reflections on the question are being made by feminists, mainly racialized.

Third element of methodology: all the movements presented and analysed in this work come from the American continent. This choice itself corresponds to several considerations. Abya Yala is first of all my field of specialty, on which I work and where I lived during important periods for thirty years. Then, working on Abya Yala is doubly heuristic. On the one hand, because a very old, brutal, deep and lasting colonization combined with two centuries of independence created between this continent and Europe a certain familiarity at the same time as a real otherness - or an ideal distance to give us a particularly revealing mirror. Then, because what appears at first as a side road through exotic regions full of revolutionary fervour - quite sympathetic but subordinate and ultimately not conducive to the raising of theoretical generality - nevertheless leads us precisely into the backyard of "the masters of the world", at the heart of the neoliberalism that is being constructed. Now, a kind of epistemic privilege [11] is nestled in this geopolitical zone, severely exploited but essential, taken for a negligible quantity even though it is at the forefront of the transformations of capitalism and its population can be considered as the new outsider-within [12] of American society and by extension, neoliberal globalization. We will see what comes out of it in epistemological terms.

## Situating my point of view and methodology

*Where am I?*

Specifying where we are talking about is still often seen by positivists as an admission of unfortunate exhibitionism-militancy and a non-scientific bias. However, I locate myself in the long line of a feminism which needs not only to know where people are talking about, but which also requires everyone to take the measure of the weight of their position in their ability to see and to understand what she or he is talking about. Thus, my position in

sociological terms reads as follows: privileged class both in my origin and in the profession I practise (statutory teacher-researcher in a Parisian university), privileged nationality (French), white, non-migrant and finally considered a woman. In political terms, I try to contribute to collective struggles to abolish social relations based on class, race and gender. I fight against my second-class status as a woman by feminism, but also by political lesbianism as theorized by Monique Wittig: I fight with all my strength against straight thought, at the same time as I try daily to escape the relations of private and collective appropriation highlighted by Colette Guillaumin (2016) (1978 [\[13\]](#)).

The analysis of the advantages/disadvantages of being politically or sociologically in the minority or in the majority, in general and in relation to the people and groups we are talking about, being close or distant politically, fills whole books: my goal here is simply to give a few elements to readers so that they can develop their own thoughts. I certainly sympathize with the movements I will be talking about here - which does not mean an absence of critical thinking. On the contrary, it seems to me that proximity or participation gives access to more information (especially in movements partially clandestine because of the repression they face, like many of those I will talk about) and establishes a double right and duty of criticism. Besides, my proximity to these movements remains relative. I even find myself rather distant, by my sociological position and because I have occupied since 2003 a full-time university position in France, which has strained my links with the other side of the Atlantic and with militant action. However, I strive to maintain these links despite the lack of time, because they seem essential to me, both from an epistemological and personal point of view. In fact, a considerable part of my theoretical, political and human apprenticeship took place in peripheral regions of Mesoamerica (in Chiapas and El Salvador in particular), by participating in the feminist and lesbian movement, and in close proximity to various popular movements. I owe them a lot and I work with the goal of contributing to their feedback and their struggles,

### *A composite methodology*

My methodology here combines socio-history, political science and anthropology, combined with direct sociological and ethnographic observations. Most of the material comes from so-called field research that I have been carrying out for three decades in the different regions concerned. I lived in Chiapas for almost a year in 1989-1990, before the Zapatista uprising (which is the subject of Chapter 2) and I have returned there many times. I then lived for more than two years in El Salvador (analysed in Chapter 1), for my thesis research. I have participated in the region's feminist and lesbian-feminist movement every time I have lived on the continent. Over more than twenty years, I have attended several continental feminist and lesbian feminist meetings, which give the pulse of these movements and make it possible to meet and find activists dispersed to the four corners of the world. I have interviewed and translated several of them. I also drew on grey as well as scientific literature, trying to highlight the work of authors from the continent, especially indigenous people and Blacks. All of this feeds into chapters 4, 5 and 6. Chapter 3 has required a different type of methodology, dealing as it does with a country of which my knowledge is limited and of a group that no longer exists and in which as a white woman I would have been absolutely unable to participate (the Combahee River Collective). I had originally proposed to translate its Black Feminist Declaration into French [\[14\]](#) and it seemed important to contextualize this founding text: this work constitutes the basis of Chapter 3. I relied very heavily on the secondary literature [\[15\]](#) as well as on a network of colleagues, accomplices and friends with a fine knowledge of the United States and of Black feminist struggles.

## Theoretical and conceptual details

### *Variety of women's self-awareness*

Although all the societies known today seem to distinguish at least females and males, the concrete ways in which each organizes and conceptualizes the social relations of gender are extremely varied. In 1985, in a founding article, the anthropologist Nicole-Claude Mathieu showed the profound differences in the way of conceiving of sex, gender

and sexuality, according to eras and cultures. It thus highlighted three major conceptions of identity: naturalist (mode 1), culturalist (mode 2) and sociological (mode 3).

In "mode 1", which is often the most familiar to us, to the point of thinking it to be unique, we firmly believe that sex is natural and comes in two and only two mutually exclusive categories, females and males - which is incarnated in the bodies of individuals. Sex is conceived as central to identity, an identity thought out individually. Sex mechanically determines the social gender (also declined into two types known to be easily recognizable and mutually exclusive, women and men). Heterosexuality is seen as the natural crowning achievement and the vivid confirmation of "the difference between the sexes", itself conceived as natural, universal and intangible (according to an ideology that Monique Wittig (1980) baptized straight thought) [16]. This mode 1, with various expressions, largely dominates in contemporary Western societies - and therefore in the majority of feminist and LGBTQI movements that have flourished there. The naturalist conception of identity is also present among the Swahili of Kenya or the Hijras of India as well as among the Inuit of the Arctic Circle.

In "mode 2", the identity that prevails is that of gender. It is collective, linked to common social practices and generally punctuated by multiple initiations and rituals. It is supported by various more or less formal associations bringing together women, young women, men of this or that age group, warriors, etc. Sex is only a symbolic support of gender, with which it maintains an analogical relationship. However, we are well aware that gender is above all culture and collective belonging. Clothes, for example, make the gender. Heterosexuality remains as compulsory as in Mode 1, but it is different since it connects people of the opposite gender, regardless of their sex. This mode 2, in all its variants, dominates in a certain number of non-Western societies [17]. It has given rise to a number of misunderstandings and condemnations among many colonizers and anthropologists, but also to a certain fascination among others, believing that they are seeing lesbians, gays, queers or trans where the concerned population actually organizes respect for heterosexuality. According to Mathieu, this mode 2 can also be discerned in certain Anglo-Saxon "socialist feminists" or "Marxist feminists" (in France, in the tendency known as "class struggle"). She also indicates that "in Western societies, this bipartition into sex groups exists in peasant communities. In urban areas, there are phenomena such as "women's clubs" (pp 221-222).

Finally, in "mode 3", which characterizes in particular the currents that Mathieu calls radical feminism and political lesbianism in contemporary Western societies, we are aware that gender is a political category of opposition and of hierarchy, arbitrary, and social. As Christine Delphy (1998) wrote, we know very well that gender constructs sex during a long process that Mathieu calls differentiation of the sexes (2014, 1991b). It is society as a whole which, according to the gender attributed to people, works tirelessly not only on minds but also on bodies, by affixing all kinds of more or less permanent marks intended to signify and naturalize the "difference" of the sexes and above all, power inequalities (Guillaumin, 1992). Mathieu also places in this mode 3 the movement of resistance to marriage which counted up to a hundred thousand silk workers in the Pearl River Delta in southern China between 1865 and 1935, and the revolt of the Kono peasants from eastern Sierra Leone in 1971.

Thus, being and feeling oneself to be a woman (or a man) covers extremely different realities, including in the same national space. The analyses of feminist and LGBTQI people and movements depend on the mode of conceptualization of the links between sex, gender and sexuality in which they find themselves. Let us remember that Mathieu affirms that mode 2 can encourage mobilization as women, on the basis of a shared gender consciousness developed by women among themselves - when this is socially encouraged. However, this mobilization is not necessarily "feminist" in the sense of mode 3.

### *Several understandings of feminism*

Another important element is the complexity of the feminist movement, traversed by deep antagonisms. Monique Wittig (1980) was the first to point out the ambiguity of the very term feminism. Some understand it as a defence of

what Wittig calls the "myth of the Woman", namely a defence of femininity and all its components as defined by the patriarchal system in force. Others, on the contrary, aim at the outright abolition of social relations (of sex) whose logic creates women (as oppressed) and men (as oppressors). In a conference held in 1998, Colette Guillaumin (2017) proposed, for her part, to distinguish "the diversity of women's movements through their mode of social intervention according to whether they are in a 'corporatist', 'trade-union' or 'political' optic". The corporatist logic signifies concentrating only on:

"The interests of" women as women ", that is to say explicitly and intrinsically as pillars of their community, defined by the men of this community to which and to whom they belong. [It is] sort of defending and promoting the interests of a professional group, that of wives and mothers [...]. This corporatism is presented as the defence of real women [... according to a...] conception of women as elements of a community where they must take their place, all their place and only their place". Guillaumin, 2017)

The 'trade-union' logic is defined as:

"The defence of women certainly but also the acquisition of better or more equitable rights, in short a conquest and a recomposition of social distribution, that of roles and that of goods, so that men and women achieve a kind of statutory balance of partners, without furthermore the status of 'woman' and that of 'man' being themselves questioned." (idem)

This logic does not therefore question the very existence of women and men, even if it seeks what is sometimes called equity. Finally,

"The perspective is still different if we consider feminism as a 'political' movement, that is to say as a movement which has a project for society or which seeks to produce one". (idem)

As Guillaumin clearly warns us,

"The 'defence of women's rights' and anti-sexism are not necessarily linked to a concern for emancipation, sometimes even on the contrary [...] What, in fact, are 'women's interests ? Sometimes you think you are responding by asking, 'What interests of what women?' But that is a bad question. It is not women who are different (although obviously they are in their daily lives), it is their political choices that are. And then, it is their material possibilities that are different and which do not allow the same practical decisions". (idem)

This reflection will be particularly useful for understanding certain positions of Indian Zapatista women that we will analyse in Chapter 2: it is quite possible to be organized as women, including in a revolutionary project, without having an emancipatory project for women, or by making political choices "overdetermined" by material possibilities which do not allow, precisely, to formulate all the demands that we consider desirable. Patricia Hill Collins (1986) reports a similar phenomenon for Black women, who can have a very sharp analysis of injustices but keep quiet about certain demands when they know that they are in an unfavourable material situation.

Finally, a work by Elsa Galerand (2006) on the largest transnational "umbrella organization" of women currently claiming to be feminist (the World March of Women (MMF)) shows how different feminists can understand "women's interests" in very different ways. Galerand wonders how, or not, a "class of women" (which the MMF could "represent") appears which would mobilize according to its interests in the social relations of sex. By analysing two demands which then cause disagreements in the MMF (voluntary termination of pregnancy and lesbianism), she brings out several paradoxes. First of all, she notes that the demands that are the subject of consensus are those linked to the denunciation of globalization and North-South relations (in other words, to capitalism and

colonialism-racism). On the other hand, abortion and lesbianism (in the sense of Wittig), which are however key demands if women want to be able to decide on their procreation and try to escape appropriation, divide. In other words, demands that should logically be at the heart of the MMF struggle, since they are central to the organization of social relations of sex, are precisely those that do not produce consensus. Galerland adds that the analysis made by Quebec feminists of the refusal of certain "southern" women to face these demands is doubly problematic. On the one hand, because the former believe that it is a "cultural retard" or the existence of "other priorities" (implied, material and "more serious") that explains the reluctance of the latter. On the other hand, because the analysis demonstrates to what extent it is in reality the Quebec feminists who have a reductionist understanding of abortion and lesbianism, as if it was a question of "whims" or "comfort" demands, whereas the imposition of heterosexual practices followed by forced pregnancies is at the heart of the material oppression of women.

### *Some details on race (and class)*

Like "social relations of the sexes", the very concept of "social relations of race" remains insufficiently used despite its importance for denaturalizing racist logics and studying them in a fully sociological manner. Let us recall with Danièle Juteau (2017) that Guillaumin (1972) was the first to point out that racism was not the unequal and unfair treatment of different groups that pre-existed it, but rather the logic that creates ideologically then produces socially and physically models these groups with a view to imposing differential treatment on them - especially slave or forced labour. I will understand these social relations of race like Guillaumin, namely relations of physical appropriation of bodies as labour-power machines, legitimized by a powerful ideology of Nature [18] which was gradually forged in the colonial plantation system organized by the transatlantic slave trade. However, if Guillaumin thinks particularly of the enslavement of African populations and the naturalization of the "black skin" marker, for what interests us, it will also be necessary to include in the equation the very numerous and very diverse indigenous populations of the American continent [19]. Many of them have also been the object of forced labour in different forms, or even outright enslavement, even though others have managed to avoid contact with the Western world until today. This is why it is necessary to underline the existence of several logics of racial social relations, constructing several very different "racialized" groups, just as there are in fact several kinds of "racializing" groups. We will have the opportunity to return to these questions in the book, especially in its second part.

In fact, we will have in this book an outline of a wide variety of racial logics. The Black and white populations of Abya Yala differ from those of the United States, but also from those of metropolitan France: we must therefore beware of any hasty parallels. The social relations of race constituting the Indian populations also differ from those which create the Black populations. As for interbreeding, absolutely central politically, sociologically and in the concrete life of people, it is extremely complex and essential in order to understand the continent. It has led to the creation of all kinds of groups beyond the categories known in Europe (Indian, Black and white). There are, for example, many mixed cultures between Indian and Black populations, producing populations sometimes considered as Afro-descendant (Garifuna), other times as Indian (Miskito). And more broadly, as shown by the famous "caste paintings" of the eighteenth century, there are an infinity of possible unions between people who are themselves mixed, which make the situation even more complex. Make no mistake about it, however: this interbreeding does not in any way mean a reduction in racism, which remains geared towards a general ideal of whitening. As for the white Creole populations, by the very fact of them being of mixed race, I will sometimes qualify them as white, sometimes as white-mestizo (even if there are very many ways to name them according to the contexts). Indeed, although the majority of them appear as privileged in race relations on the continent, when they are in Europe or in the United States, most are treated as racialized. This is the case, even though certain populations of European origin have made it a point of honour to avoid any "mixing" and sometimes pride themselves on having rhesus O blood [20].

It is also necessary to evoke the complex but close links that race has with class on the continent. We know that the classic Marxist understanding of social classes and the development of Western capitalism has recently been challenged by decolonial theory. The Peruvian Anibal Quijano (2000) in particular, has affirmed that the formation of classes in Abya Yala was quite different from that which had prevailed in Europe. On the "old continent", Marxist

analysis shows how a historical process over several centuries gradually transformed feudal societies, making free communes appear from the middle of the eleventh century, then free towns and cities, in which the bourgeoisie gradually took shape. We know that it fulfilled its historical destiny at the end of the eighteenth century by overthrowing the feudal world and taking power. This bourgeoisie was then consolidated throughout the nineteenth century, at the same time as there developed on the ruins of the former regime an industrial revolution. After a particularly long and trying childbirth, this gave birth to a new social configuration where some people eventually discerned a new social class in formation, which was baptized proletariat and for which they predicted a bright future.

In Abya Yala, there was none of all that. Things started later but much more brutally in 1492 by an immense genocide which probably annihilated 90 per cent of the original population, which was extremely diverse, brutally transformed into "Indians" the few survivors and immediately put them to work. This is the reason why Quijano asserts that long before the appearance of the proletariat in Europe, the first social class which allowed primitive accumulation - which was to generate capitalism - was in fact a racialized population. To put it very quickly, according to Quijano, the Whites subsequently, and up until today, reserved for themselves access to paid work - to proletarianization as a "noble" condition, if we can put it that way. We cannot here go into the complexity of the debates opened by this reflection. However, it is useful to underline that that on the continent, race and class are effectively linked in a very specific way.

Thus, until today, the dark colour of the skin remains very strongly correlated with a very disadvantaged social position. However, since the start of colonization, by the mechanism of emancipation, redemption or flight, there were free Blacks and mestizos. Some even having slaves, or even becoming traffickers in their turn, like a part of the famous Agoudas, reaching eminent social positions. Although the Indians, more confined or refugees in the rural world, experienced structurally less social ascent, one of them - Benito Juárez, in Mexico - was however twice elected to the presidency of the country, in 1861 and 1867. Besides, the "colour" of the skin is not the determining element of the ethno-racial classification for the Indian [21]: it is generally the mastery or not of an Indian language that is used, in particular in the censuses. It is therefore difficult to rigorously superimpose the positions of class and race, at least according to phenotypic markers. All the more so since we find today, especially in Brazil and Argentina, large sections of the population with fair hair and blue eyes in the lowest social classes.

Furthermore, Abya Yala did not really experience the evolution of feudal structures towards a capitalist system via progressive urbanization followed by a revolutionary process, nor the formation of a dialectical couple bourgeoisie/proletariat. There were certainly Quilombos and Palenques [22] essentially Black and Indian "refuge zones", partially breaking with slave and feudal chains, but no free city developed. Similarly, although we witnessed important struggles for independence, mobilizing entire sections of the Indian and Black populations at the dawn of the nineteenth century, we did not experience, strictly speaking, a revolutionary process destroying the old classes. In fact, the industrialization and proletarianization of the popular classes were for a very long time and almost everywhere prevented by the maintenance of agro-exporting latifundism and peonage. The peasantry and the agricultural proletariat remained, and remain today, extremely important. Thus, dark skin is associated with the absence of privileges, but also often with rurality or informal urban jobs, rather than with the industrial proletariat.

### *Being Indian or Black in Latin America*

To summarize, let us remember that for Abya Yala, speaking of Indian populations can refer to quite different situations, which can be grouped around three poles. Urban populations, generally from fairly recent internal migrations, speaking the national language and partly "melted into" the rest of the mestizo population — they sometimes constitute the majority of the Indian population. Rural-peasant populations - often descendants of the peoples vassalized by the great Aztec, Maya and Inca empires, were gradually forced to a process of internal "agricultural colonization" pushing them towards inhospitable zones. Finally, rural-forest populations, including so-called "non-contacted" populations, often descended from populations which had remained outside the great Pre-Hispanic Empires, generally monolingual and among the least "integrated" with the rest of society. As a whole,

the Indian populations, even urban, generally claim a very strong link with the territory-Earth, which they defend with the utmost energy because it is associated with their cultural and spiritual life and therefore with their very existence as specific groups. It is extremely rare to find Indians in the upper classes, even though the last decade has seen the emergence of new generations of Indian intellectuals (in Brazil and Guatemala for example) whose works constitute one of the most stimulating components of the literature of the continent.

Black populations, on the other hand, although they claim very often their historic ancestry, do not generally have the same link to the territory-Earth - even when it concerns rural and peasant or forest communities settled in the same place for a long time, as is the case of the quilombola communities of Brazil or palenqueras of Columbia. A very large part of the Black population is urban, speaks the dominant language even if it sometimes also uses its own Creole, and the range of class affiliations is rather more open than that of the Indian populations. An undoubtedly larger share is agricultural or industrial proletarian, while there is a stronger tradition of small peasantry among the Indian populations, some having managed to conserve land (rarely the same as five hundred years ago) despite colonization.

Finally, in terms of the vocabulary most suitable for naming these different populations, the book shows my changes and my hesitations. They are placed on several levels. First, several terms are used by the populations concerned: they differ according to the regions but also the periods, the struggles often producing new names, which are not adopted at the same rate by everyone. Then, the translation into French also varies according to the French-speaking countries concerned, the theoretical and political currents; moreover, it evolves. When I started my research, the term "Native" was used almost exclusively in Quebec, while the rest of French-speaking countries essentially used the term "Indian". Indeed, the translation from Spanish *indígena*, a term generally considered to be less deprecative than *indio*) cannot be "indigenous" which, referring to a very specific colonial status, would constitute not only a complete anachronism but also a certain contempt for history, knowing that Europeans of the time thought they had arrived in India and not in "indigenoussness". Apart from this problem of choosing the term in French, it will be noted that a whole part of the movements of the continent are called *Indios* or *Indígenas* and very few call themselves *Autóctonas*.

Furthermore, I myself followed several successive uses, to be as close as possible to the terms used by those directly concerned while remaining intelligible to the French-speaking public. The new terminology proposed by anti-racist feminists such as the Afro-Brazilian theorist Lélia González (whom we will meet in Chapter 4), and more recently by the decolonial current, can be disconcerting. Let us repeat that *Abya Yala* will designate in this work, Latin America (Mexico, Central America, South America) and the Caribbean, excluding the United States and Canada. The term *Ladín Amefrica*, on the other hand, will include the United States. In order to avoid anachronisms and fashionable effects, I will also use the classic designation of Latin America and the Caribbean, insofar as it has been used for a long time by activists on the continent to name themselves and remains in force outside decolonial circles. In the same way, I sometimes write Black, sometimes Afro, sometimes Afro-descendant, or even American, depending on the contexts and according to the writing periods of the chapters, knowing that even among activists, the usage has not been decided. Finally, as far as Indian populations are concerned, many prefer today terms which do not assign them to a geographical and colonial error (aboriginal, first nations, original peoples, first peoples) or better, which designates them in a non-homogeneous way, by the name of their specific language, which is, moreover, often different from that which had been allotted to them by the anthropologists. So in Guatemala, most of the Indians are more specifically Maya, but the Maya groups are subdivided into very different ethnic groups whose languages are not mutually understandable, like the Mam and the Kakchikel or the Ixil. In Mexico, the Purépecha chose to claim this appellation rather than the old "Tarasque" which qualified them. In the Andes, the Kichwa are none other than the Quechua. In any case, I will endeavour here to respect the contextual customs in both ways.

## Presentation of the chapters

The six chapters that make up the book have a double objective. First, on a socio-historical level, document the history and action of social movements through the perspective of the interweaving of social relations of sex, race and class. This includes going beyond the idea that social movements are, or should be above all, based on the mobilization of identities- especially the movements of women or racialized populations, often so naturalized that one is surprised that their movements are not united and monolithic. Strategic essentialism, which sometimes seems to appear in some of these movements, also deserves to be examined in the light of the interweaving of social relations. It is also a question of grasping the complexity of the consciousness of the individuals who compose them, and of the evolutions of this self-awareness within the framework of collective struggles. Then, on the epistemological level, the work seeks to understand the links between the multiplicity of minority positions and the elaboration of complex analyses of social reality. We also aim to better understand how the production of knowledge is linked to the dynamics of participation, empowerment and alliance with other “single-cause” social movements (organized to transform a single social relationship). Finally, we will try to show under what conditions there can emerge from groups that are in all respects kept in a minority, broad political projects that go beyond their specific interests and are likely to produce global change - with as the horizon the simultaneous abolition of all social relations of power.

The first chapter deals with the experience of (ex) guerrillas from El Salvador, a small Central American country of 6 million inhabitants, who went through twelve years of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary war (1980-1992) demanding agrarian reform and the democratization of the country, after a long pre-revolutionary process impelled by a strong popular movement which mobilised the whole country from 1970. I myself lived there for more than two years, from 1992 to 1994, just after the signing of peace agreements, to carry out doctoral research on the participation of women in the revolutionary process and then in the redeployment of the women's movement in the post-war period. Simultaneously with this research work, as a (very young) feminist, I participated in this process as much as I could and as the Salvadorans allowed me to do so. This first chapter takes up a balance-sheet article published in 2009 on what I understood at the time as the inevitable and useful empowerment of women and of their movement, of the classic left political parties. Indeed, I had noticed a paradoxical support of revolutionary “class” organizations for the demands of women - a strong incentive to their commitment, with a limit not to be crossed: not to “divide the struggle” by defending a feminism that was necessarily '(petty) bourgeois'. I then had in mind the very French example of the distancing of the feminist movement from the left parties, after bitter debates notably with far-left organizations (Boon et Al., 1983).

This first chapter thus analyses the paradox which allows a very structured organization to mobilize women activists on a project that makes central the reference to (proletarian) class interests which are more defined in masculine terms, whereas the sociological profile of these activists is quite different. I focus on the ideological construction [\[23\]](#) of this process of “hijacking women”, a concept that I borrow from Mathieu (1985 a). I then clarify the conditions for the possibility of the development of individual and collective consciousness by different women of specific interests “as women”, linked to a process of gaining organizational autonomy in relation to parties and to a rapprochement with the continental feminist movement.

It is therefore a question of reflecting on what the “interests” of women can mean, when they are traversed by other social relationships, here particularly class. It is also a question of thinking about the way in which some Salvadoran women, following their experience in guerrilla warfare, tried to build a movement taking into account both the struggle against the capitalist system and feminist perspectives. This first chapter also makes it possible to note the falsity of the idea according to which the movements are built on the basis of the “pre-existing” identities of the women activists. On the contrary, it is within struggles that individuals gradually build an awareness of their interests and a political project. This project does not necessarily correspond mechanically to their objective social position and can go far beyond, indeed against, some of their “objective” interests.

The second chapter looks at another armed struggle, which appeared barely two years after the end of the war in El Salvador, in a very close and yet profoundly different territory. While Salvadoran guerrilla warfare concerned the whole of a small, ethnically very homogeneous country, from a clear Marxist-Leninist perspective, the neo-Zapatista

struggle, while arousing considerable enthusiasm throughout the country and abroad, concerned only a small part of a particularly underprivileged and little-known state of the country, Chiapas. This struggle is also led by an almost exclusively peasant-Indian actor. So, after analysing a movement posing both class and gender questions, we will examine a movement where it is race (strongly correlated with class but put forward to the exclusion of class) which is combined with gender.

The interrogation is deployed in two stages. The first corresponds to the very first field work that I carried out for almost a year, between 1989 and 1990, on the differential education of Indian girls in Chiapas. I then had the impression that the girls, and more generally the Indian women, were caught in pincers by a contradiction between on the one hand the need to study at least as much as the boys to be able to "get by" in the vast mestizo world and, on the other hand, the desire (parental and community) to protect them from racist, even ethnocidal violence, from the acculturative logics of the school system - all the more so since they were assigned the role of main agents of transmission of the mother tongue and everyday culture. This assignment, as effective as it is on the collective level to guarantee a certain "cultural preservation", seemed problematic to me, because it was based on the contradiction between interests as a woman and others as an Indian, as well as on the obligation for women to put their interests "as a woman" behind their interests "as an Indian" and especially behind the superior interests of their community or even of Indian populations in general. The second phase began a few years later, when one of the very first texts that the Zapatista uprising made known was a "Revolutionary Law of Zapatista Women". It was then a question of understanding how the Zapatista Indian women succeeded in affirming interests "as women" in a political organisation that was originally Marxist-Leninist, by organising as women, but without leaving the "mixed" organisation, and especially how from their own minority position in the social relations of gender as in those of race, they succeeded in reconciling their interests of race and of gender.

However, when you examine this law more precisely, you realize that things are more complex and that the diversity of Indian women prevents them from conceiving of their interests as fully unified. What is more, they must avoid the trap of instrumentalization by the state, which attempts to use a "gender" discourse to attack one of the bases of the material and cultural survival of the Indian populations: collective access to land. Again, we will insist on the importance of the context in order to understand how social relations actually overlap. First, the historical and political context: situations of war, repression and clandestinity or intense socio-political polarization considerably limit the possibilities of thinking and acting in a complex way. Then the cultural context, which implies a particular conceptualization of sex and gender. Here, a conception close to mode 2 seems to have favoured organising "as women", even if this does not prejudice "feminist" orientations. Finally, on the epistemological level, we will see that a minority point of view in the two relations allows us to understand that it is possible to reconcile your interests of gender and race, where white women (like myself) or Indian men (like their parents and comrades) tend to treat them as opposites.

The third chapter takes up socio-historical work carried out in 2005 in France, in the midst of a debate on the question of religious signs at school. Attempting to step aside in the very virulent debates concerning racism within the French feminist movement, wanting to make reappear in the discussion both class differences and the question of heterosexuality, I then devoted myself to translating the Black feminist statement by the American group Combahee River Collective. Indeed, these activists had proposed a particularly important analysis of the interwoven effects of four simultaneous systems of oppression, which they refused to prioritize: racism, patriarchy, capitalism and heterosexuality. However, they had posed this debate in a very different historical and cultural context that was not very well known in France, which I thought it essential to explain. I then carried out a long bibliographical research - helped by the immense progress of the Internet and several political-cultural accomplices - which led me to better define the conditions of possibility of production of such an analysis and to better understand the political practices proposed, therefore, by the group.

It is particularly interesting, with this chapter, to link the United States for once not so much to the western world and to the North as to the rest of the American continent. I also propose a change of scale. Indeed, it is no longer a broad

social movement with an armed dimension, affecting a large territory over several decades, in a predominantly rural and peasant context. On the contrary, we are talking about a group of barely a few dozen people, mainly of popular class origin, but this time urban. And instead of grasping the interwoven social relationships starting from certain apparent contradictions, it is a question of understanding how social relations are analysed by people placed in a minority situation in all these relations simultaneously.

These people participated in groups organized around race, others organized around gender and still others around class, but decided to organize themselves independently - while continuing to participate in other movements. The chapter also discusses how members of the Combahee River Collective have formulated an "identity" policy which, in reality, criticizes any naturalization of identity and, on the contrary, proposes "universal" political objectives. I analyse their strategies and their contributions, especially in the field of criticism of the family institution and the naturalistic metaphors that relate to it. Finally, on the epistemological level, this chapter shows that even the "privileged" epistemic point of view which was theirs, from an entirely minority situation, can lead to a blind spot.

The fourth chapter continues the analysis of the considerable contributions of Black feminists from Latin America, returning to the south of the continent and to the Caribbean. It allows us to grasp the great diversity of conceptualizations of race, based on very different social relations of race, even though these social relations all concern Black populations resulting from the slave trade and slavery in frameworks of white supremacy. From the 1980s to the present day, insisting on the 1990s during which the fundamental conceptualizations of several groups were developing, I will mainly evoke in this chapter the very distinct contexts of Brazil and the Dominican Republic, which have seen the creation of several particularly significant precursor organizations and initiatives. Here, it is a question of reflections coming from groups of Black women or urban popular origin, who start right away from the principle of the interlocking of the racial, sexual and capitalist dimensions, and for many of them are also engaged in organised lesbian militant activity (the activists of Combahee, for their part, at the time, called themselves lesbians on a more personal basis).

We will see here that the different definition of mixed race and race, as well as the explicitly cultural content of Black identity, which constitute their context, lead the activists to an analysis quite different from that of Combahee. In addition, by projecting themselves in a transnational and continental framework and by deploying over a much longer period, the analyses of American and Caribbean black feminism lead to a particularly important reflection. Indeed, some of them manage to radically overcome identity perspectives and immediate local struggles to reason clearly in terms of interwoven social relations, construction of a movement on a transnational scale and projecting themselves into a global analysis of globalization, from the South.

At the epistemological level, we will see that it is by anchoring their collective position as racialized and impoverished women living in regions of the world who face recolonization, in a long history of activism and resistance, structured by the development of a culture itself oriented by alternative spiritualities, that these feminists arrive at such a complete and "universal" analysis of the interweaving of social relationships and the historical dynamic of this interweaving. It is also from there that their proposal to "become Black" as a political project can be born.

The fifth chapter opens the reflection on the Latin American and Caribbean feminist movement, analysed globally, on a transnational scale, in particular through its continental meetings, by returning to the origins of the contemporary period, that is to say mainly the last third of the twentieth century. It is based on thirty years of more or less intense and direct participation in this movement and these meetings, especially around the sixth continental meeting of 1993 in El Salvador, during which a lasting opposition was formed between two major trends, "autonomous" and "institutional", against the backdrop of preparations for the UN Conference in Beijing. The chapter contains a series of articles I have published on the sixth, seventh and eighth continental feminist meetings, as well as various elements developed in my doctoral thesis.

Through this chapter, it is a question of grasping certain specificities of continental feminism which, in comparison with European movements, seems particularly strong, massive, organized and unified. The political origins of its early activists, as well as the class and "race" composition of the continent's population, explain some of its peculiarities. We will also underline the weight of a rather unfavourable historical and geopolitical context, since it is the continent's "lost decade", made up of dictatorships and the imposition of structural adjustment plans, which led to the neoliberal turn, from the 1990s. We will see that the growth of the movement is also linked to the particularly effective strategies of construction it has adopted - recognizing and confronting class-race differences and political oppositions within it through an explicit distinction between feminist movement and movement of women, and thanks to the original proposal of "feminism of the popular sectors". We will also see how this current, originally organised by "left" activists seeking to link gender and class issues, has been transformed into a "femocrat" tendency resolutely accompanying the inclusion of "poor women from the South" in the mainstream of the now neoliberal "development" advocated by international cooperation.

On this aspect, the feminism of the continent can be observed as a fascinating "laboratory" of the new policy of international institutions, of which the women of the continent have involuntarily constituted the guinea pigs and simultaneously, the first and very perceptive analysts. The cruel paradox to which the "feminism of the popular sectors" has led can be explained by the growing divorce between the objective interests of the new trans-nationalised elite which is being formed in the wake of the UN Conferences, and those of the often racialized popular women of the continent who are the subject of the attention of the former – who see themselves paid in dollars for their reports while the brutal impoverishment of other women following structural adjustment is struggling to be compensated by productive micro-projects. This is how we can understand the failure of a real alliance around the - however, promising - project of linking feminist struggles with class struggle, at the very moment when the neoliberal turn of capitalism would have made it particularly useful. The fact is that the same phenomenon of the institutionalization of feminism through the internationalized promotion of "gender" and the NGOisation of the feminist movement has gradually spread to the countries of the Centre, also contributing to producing in these countries an increasing divorce between women, according to different but yet parallel logics linked to a certain depoliticization-de-radicalization of the movement.

The sixth and final chapter deals precisely with the other side of this process, presenting twenty years of history of the self-baptized "autonomous" current, which was constituted in 1993 as the tendency opposed to the institutionalization of the movement under the aegis. of international cooperation. Even if it is a minority current, today fragmented and highly invisible in most research, it is particularly important to study. Indeed, it offers an extremely critical, striking and precursory look at the UN process in Beijing in 1995 and more broadly, on "development". Twenty-five years and two major economic crises later, some of their analyses are starting to make their way in common sense, in particular the critique of micro-credit "for women" and the rejection of the neoliberal doctrine of the IMF and the World Bank and even the poisoned solicitude of in the role of the UN as "good cop" of the new global order an "ally of women".

We see in this chapter how, after hard-hitting beginnings at the time of Beijing, the "autonomous" current broke up then gradually recomposed in the early 2000s, in a critical dialogue with the rest of the continent's feminist movement, but above all thanks to its work in the lesbian movement and during its continental meetings. In fact, those who take the lead in the reflection are lesbians, in the political sense of Wittig, but also for several of them, racialized and very involved in the fight against racism and its concrete and structural manifestations: militarization and war, to ensure internal and international colonization. Thus, autonomy gradually evolves towards an analysis of the interweaving of heteropatriarchal, racist and classist logics of neoliberalism. Participation in concrete struggles has led some activists to think more and more about the real recolonization of the continent. The bond with other Native and Afro women and feminists, as also with an alternative fringe of the university, is bringing a whole part of them on the track of decolonial analyses, of which they constitute today the most promising ferment.

On the epistemological level, we will see that it is by linking theory and practice, thanks to a collective reflection on a

transnational scale, made possible in particular by the feminist then lesbian-feminist continental meetings and the logics of self-education, and finally because a significant part of them occupy minority positions, in relations of sex as well as of class and especially of race-nationality-migratory status; because also a part of the autonomous feminists of Abya Yala has succeeded in proposing analyses, strategies and actions that are among the most innovative and hopeful that can be found today. They only ask to be better known, shared and of course, adapted to the context, extended and put into practice.

Thanks

*To Tuirá Kayapó and her niece Maial Paiakan, Kayapó, warriors for the freedom of the Xingu River in Amazonia, who agreed that this photo taken at the 14th Terra Livre camp in Brasilia from April 24 to 28, 2017, should become the cover of this book.*

*To Debora Saraã-va, who knowing my long-time admiration for Tuã-ra Kayapó, offered me this photo of which she is the author, which she then generously agreed to give for this book, and to Felipe Milanes who put me in contact with Maial Paiakan.*

*Tuã-ra Kayapó has been fighting against dams for a long time. In 1989, she appeared on television, brandishing a machete under the nose of an engineer from the Eletrobras company, declaring: "You are a liar. We don't need electricity. Electricity will not bring us food to eat. We need our rivers to flow freely: our future depends on it. We need our forest to hunt and gather our food. We don't need your dam". Shortly after, the World Bank cancelled a \$500 million loan to Brazil and the Xingãº river dam project was withdrawn.*

*Since 2016, the complex of dams known as "Belo Monte" has however ended up by being built, with disastrous consequences for the Indian populations.*

<https://www.rejectedprincesses.com/blog/modern-worthies/toulez-kayapo>

<https://fr.globalvoices.org/2016/11/18/203350/>

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[1] Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer, intersex and more.

[2] In accordance with certain militant traditions and especially the decisions of the editors and publishers of the Combahee Black Feminist Declaration which will be discussed in Chapter 3, I have respected here the capital letters they have chosen to use for words such as Black , Lesbian or Jewish, even when it comes to adjectives, with the aim of revaluing the groups mentioned. I will extend it to the terms designating Aborigines and all groups subject to racism. For further details concerning the terms that I will use to name Indian or Black people, see the end of this introduction.

[3] This reasoning can be made more complex, but at this stage, it is important to understand that power relations, conceived in a Weberian sense, create deep antagonisms which oppose two social groups, according to their interests. This abstract analysis is in no way contradictory with the fact that in reality, each person belongs simultaneously and/or successively to several social groups, depending on the antagonisms and the specific situations.

[4] A number of social movements have taken up this term, used by the Kuna populations of Colombia and Panama, to designate their land before the European invasion from a decolonial perspective.

[5] Concept proposed by the Black Brazilian Lélia Gonzalez, as we will see in Chapter 4.

[6] The first labour force used to supplement the decimated indigenous populations was a combination of captive populations torn from Africa and very poor Europeans, the "indentured". Thus, in Barbados, the first Caribbean island to experience intensive exploitation, the majority of the Irish sent to cultivate tobacco from 1630, replacing the exterminated Indian population, was made up of indentured workers. When it was not a case of abduction by ruse, force or for debt, the contracts of "voluntary servitude" proposed the financing of the crossing and upkeep in kind against one to seven years of work. The payer could restrict the activities of the workers (in particular by forbidding them to marry, however they were often young men), sell or transfer the contract to another employer and use legal sanctions (including imprisonment in the event of absconding). The formula was widely used in the seventeenth century in the North American colonies, where these indentured servants constituted between a third and two thirds of the whites who landed in the Thirteen Colonies between 1630 and the American Revolution. In the whole of the Caribbean, their number is estimated at 500,000. We also know that among the European women who arrived in the colonies, many were "daughters of the king", in other words, they were taken from hospitals and forcibly brought to the colonies (which seriously nuances the equation white women of the colonies = bourgeois). Subsequently Europe had a growing need to retain its own population, reduced by the Cromwellian wars (1641-1653), famines and the plague. Sub-Saharan Africa, on the contrary, saw an increase in the workforce "liberated" by the troubles linked to European colonization (especially after the fall of the kingdom of the Congo in 1665). The first result was a clear Africanization of the deportees. Then the slave trade itself took off considerably from 1672 (creation in England of the Royal Company of Africa and in France of the Company of Senegal) then from 1674, when the French and the English began to dispute with the Dutch the monopoly of the transport of slaves, and the cultivation of sugar experienced rapid development in the Caribbean.

[7] In French "ielles", an invented mixture of "ils" and "elles". By this neologism, I mean all people and not only those who are socially considered as men. Another possibility would have been to use the term 'ul', proposed by Michèle Causse. Beyond an "inclusiveness" which does not necessarily call into question the social fiction of a "natural" existence of women and men (and others), the term 'ul' allows a real "de-marking", according to the conceptualization of Dominique Bourque, who continues the analyses of Wittig and Guillaumin. However, the term not having been widely accepted yet, I have preferred "it", which is already familiar to some people. On this subject, we can consult in particular Bourque, 2006; Barsac and Causse, 2014 and Armengaud and Bourque, 2016.

[8] To resume Colette Guillaumin's conceptualization of the ideal and the material as two sides of reality.

[9] In the sense of Colette Guillaumin, that is to say of lesser power (and not in the quantitative sense). I prefer this qualifier to oppressed or exploited, one referring more to politics, the other to an economic dimension. As for the concept of domination, I avoid using it by taking on board the criticism of Nicole-Claude Mathieu (1985 b) for which it is the preferred term of the dominant groups because it gives a semblance of natural legitimacy to the phenomenon. She gives the following example: do we not hear a big difference between "the mountain dominates the plain" and "the mountain oppresses the plain"?

[10] Wittig draws on the example of a struggling Romanian peasant of 1848, deputy of a popular assembly, addressing a group of dominants: "Why do the gentlemen say it was not, for we know it to have been slavery, this sorrow that we have sorrowed" (p. 60). In other words: why do these gentlemen say that it was not slavery, since we know very well that it was slavery, this affliction that we have suffered? (1980)

[11] This concept, developed in particular by bell hooks (1989), tells us about people in a situation of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion, one of the classic and historical examples provided by Black feminists in the United States is that of Black domestic workers.

[12] To use the concept developed in particular by Patricia Hill Collins (1986)

[13] The central concept of Colette Guillaumin is that of sexing relationships, which she defines as relationships of direct physical appropriation, a general class relationship where the whole of one is available to the 'other' (1992) (1978), pp 21-22). It distinguishes two components: individual or private appropriation and collective appropriation. Individual appropriation takes place through marriage or its avatars, the matrimonial institution constituting only one of the possible institutional surfaces of the global appropriation relationship. Collective ownership is often overshadowed by the matrimonial institution, on which critics focus. Guillaumin distinguishes four concrete expressions of appropriation: the appropriation of time, of the products of the body, the sexual obligation and the physical load of the members of the group (including the able-bodied male members of the group). She then describes five ways of appropriating the class of women by that of men, which may or may not be specific to sex relations: the labour market; confinement in space; show of force (blows); sexual coercion; the legal arsenal and customary law (idem, pp 39-45). Finally, she insists on the fact that appropriation concerns the whole physical individuality, the mind and the body of the person, a body thought of as "body-machine to work". [...] She defines sexing as a relationship where it is the material unit producing the labour force that is taken in hand, and not only the labour force, stressing the proximity of sexing with serfdom and slavery. (Falquet, 2015).

[14] As I have translated the two revolutionary laws of Zapatista women which will be discussed here.

[15] Internet offering to certain documents of the time, digitized, an access perhaps better than that which the militants of the time had.

[16] As a result, "gender identity/sexuality" does not represent a fourth social relationship, but rather the cornerstone of gender relations. Indeed, it is heterosexuality, understood both as a relational practice and as an organizer of the family institution, fundamentally asymmetrical depending on whether it concerns women or men, which simultaneously constitutes the end and the means of maintaining social relationships of sex. This is what Monique Wittig (whose analysis concerns mode 1) has affirmed: women are heterosexual by definition, while men quite simply are, and can engage in sexual practices that appeal to them, as long as they do not give the impression that they are putting themselves in the position of women.

[17] For example, among the Igbo and Ibibio in Nigeria in the 1930s, in the kingdoms of South Azande–Sudan before colonization, among the Nandi of Kenya, the Gimi and Baruya of New Guinea and/or different Indian populations of the plains of 'North America (according to Mathieu). As we will see, we can think that it also concerns a part of the Indian and Black populations of Latin America.

[18] With the capital letter used by Guillaumin to make it clear that this is a naturalist ideology.

[19] Despite five centuries of genocide, at least 826 different indigenous peoples remain on the continent today (CEPAL, 2014).

[20] The rhesus O being in this case characteristic of Basque origins, themselves reputed to have preserved all their purity by escaping Jewish and Moorish influences during the period when the Spanish peninsula was conquered (CasaÃ's Arzu, 1992).

[21] Or sometimes the level of education: in the early 1990s, the Colombian Supreme Court rejected the claim of an urban group's Indianness, arguing that it had a level of education ... that was too high. It was in fact a question of denying them the recognition of property rights over the land. (Gros, 1991).

[22] These two terms refer to the physical places, often fortified and difficult to access, where people who had escaped from the plantations took refuge and settled. Some became large communities over the years, mainly populated by Afro-descendant populations, but also often by others fleeing from the dominant colonial system. Sometimes their descendants live there until today - we speak (in Brazil) of several hundred *remanentes* from Quilombos.

[23] I have analysed elsewhere its material dimensions, in particular the sexual division of revolutionary labour (Falquet, 2003 and 2019).