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Tracking transnational Shakira on her way to conquer the world

*Rastreando a la Shakira
transnacional en su camino a la
globalización*

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zona próxima

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Cristo Hoyos. *Hamaca*. Pastel, tinta y acrílico sobre papel (detalle).

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The Colombian singer and composer Shakira, has become a transnational musical product. Her presence on the world stage is by now a commodity that screams the ideology of a unified globe. In the latest version of the FIFA's World Cup (2010) she was the main musical number for the inaugural concert because her proposed song was chosen as the event's anthem.

Controversy for her use of a song from Cameroon that was popular in Colombia in the 1980s was diffused on time by good political moves. With this latest song and video, Shakira again represents her "blackness", her "Caribbeaness", pointing strongly to a performative activity that has been having effect since she crossed the Colombian and Latin American borders in order to start recording under Miami's pop star producing machine. I trace in this paper, through a few of her music videos, what she has chosen or asked or coached to represent, as she performs her way to global stardom: tamed otherness. An ethics of aesthetics of popular culture is what is asked though this reflection, especially since Shakira is a professed humanitarian who has created the Barefoot Foundation in order to educate marginalized Colombian children.

KEYWORDS: Transnationalism, globalization, performance, performativity, otherness, race, ethnicity, identity.

ABSTRACT

RESUMEN

Shakira, artista compositora y cantante pop, se ha vuelto un producto transnacional. Su presencia como estrella principal en el show de La copa Mundial de Futbol es la más fuerte evidencia de su globalización. A tiempo se difuminó con movidas políticas y económicas, una controversia acerca del uso de una canción de Camerún famosa en los ochenta para su último video (Waka Waka) donde vemos claramente su asociación con "lo otro" y las ideas de raza que prevalecen en los Estados Unidos. Mientras Shakira es identificada como la otra, la caribe, ella asciende en la cultura popular mundial gracias a su performance de "deseable extranjera", término acuñado por Kasia Marciniak cuando analiza el cine desde una óptica feminista transnacional. Aplicamos aquí ese concepto para mostrar lo que encontramos durante un rastreamiento de sus veinte años de performance. Creemos que es necesaria una ética del performance identitaria en la cultura popular, sobre todo si una artista como Shakira desarrolla una importante labor a través de su fundación que provee de educación a miles de niños no privilegiados de Colombia.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Transnacionalismo, globalización, performance, performatividad, otredad, raza, etnicidad, identidad.

INTRODUCCIÓN

This paper sprung from a question that was posed by Rolling Stone Magazine in November, 2009. On its cover, we can see a beautiful woman, easily recognized now by North American audiences, and the title: Can Shakira Conquer the World? Why the question in the first place? Is it being implied that this artist's border crossing is different from others? Was it due to her being identified as a woman from an "underdeveloped" country, implying that her otherness made her less likely to succeed in conquering the global market? What does this tell us about the way globalization flows? In this paper I am suggesting that Shakira has become what Marciniak (2007, p.193) calls a "palatable foreigner," an idea that reflects the

[...] Western gaze (or more specifically a U.S. gaze) [that] is visually and conceptually "trained" in particular ways, already accustomed to certain kinds of onscreen female foreignness ready for spectatorial visual consumption: non threatening. Sentimentalized, often "comforting" in its awkwardness, shyness and "otherness, that Trinh calls "the exotic and erotic feminine ethnic minority" (Trihn 1991, p. 115).

Transnational studies is a new academic field that intends to look at social phenomena whose interactions can be seen through multiple perspectives in order to find how categories and identities change according to the particularity of situations that have to do with borders among and inside of nations, (Khagram and Levitt, 2008). Aligning myself with this postulate, I want to explore Shakira's internal and external transnationalism as an effect of the globalization of the music industry, which produces recognizable accepted and standardized stars that then begin to circulate all over the world as bearers of a special status that

makes them immune to rules and regulations that impede border crossing. These pop stars that had usually stared as "others" themselves, by becoming globally adored, after conforming to the cultural states of the global music industry, can in turn affect their own localities in many ways. But with this hard-earned ability to become transnational, comes an ethical obligation.

As Appiah (2006) suggests, once we realize we are in a global tribe, there are a lot of effects our actions exert on others and the planet. I wonder if Shakira is aware of her responsibility to her global tribe as she performs herself and allows herself to be performed.

Looking at Shakira's transformations on her road to global stardom, one can track a pattern that might seem obvious and easy to pinpoint, but whose movement signal to the repeated performance of an otherness that needs to be domesticated. In order to become global, Shakira first had to cross many borders. First she had to pass what I would like to call a "national identity border." She had to go from local-provincial, to central-national when moving from her hometown (Barranquilla) to the capital town (Bogotá). The next border was crossed when she became transnational in Latin America (she started performing all over the Latin American countries). Then, she became a USA resident after crossing the American border in order to work where the music industry is located and thus became a "Latina." Once she surpassed this last border and started to use identification markers that set her as a palatable foreigner, she was ready to go global. Her ability to pass, cross and defy cultural borders is what is interesting in order to instigate transnational theories.

Shakira was born in Barranquilla in 1977 from the second marriage of her father, William Mebarak,

of Lebanese ascendancy, and Nidia Ripoll, also Colombian with Spanish ascendancy. Barranquilla, the main Colombian port until the middle of the 20th century, is a city that has traditionally been the port of entry for all kinds of musical influences to the whole country. Wade (2000) in his book on Colombia's popular music, makes an extensive study of the importance of the city of Barranquilla and the whole North Coast of Colombia as a cultural marker of difference and a great producer of musicians, painters and writers, due to its connection to the United States and Europe via its large immigrant population.

There are many stories about Shakira writing songs and dancing since she was four years old. Nothing different from most of the kids, boys and girls in the city of Barranquilla, where one of the ways that Caribbean identity is forged as soon as a person is born, is by listening and dancing to music. She was also raised as a regular middle class girl who went to a very traditional Catholic school run by nuns (La Enseñanza), where ironically the chorus teacher prevented her from singing. Her disposition is told in a tale by Claudia and Liliana Patiño, her school friends as they relate in a documentary that their music teacher thought she had a voice that did not fit the school choir, and because Shakira so desired to be in the choir, envying them, she would jokingly tell them: "You are going to be the school choir singers but I will be the international star." (Hernandez 2010) These women tell in the same interview about how the nuns that were their teachers all through elementary and high school must have been horrified when they saw her first strongly sensual and sexual video *La Tortura* (The Torture, 2005), her first duo, with Spanish singer-writer Alejandro Sanz.

Shakira had struggled in her native city to find success since her childhood, but that only became possible when she moved to Bogotá, the capital city of Colombia, with her mother in order to pursue her career. She had crossed her first border, the regional one. Still an adolescent, she signed a contract with Sony Music, wrote her own songs and produced two records: *Magia* (1990) and *Peligro* (1993). She was on her way to becoming trans-national in a very regionalist country. In Colombia, people identify themselves with their places of origin and recognize each other by the accents, their ways of moving, food and many habits easily spotted by anyone raised in the country. The move to the capital city, where the economy of the country is dictated, meant acquiring new ways of performing herself. And perform she did: there she also landed a role in a soap opera (telenovela) called *Oasis* (1994).

The *costeña* (coastal) girl was becoming visible to people in her locality because she pertained now to the national space where cultural norms are dictated. Now Barranquilla was really looking out for her as attested by the local newspapers and TV shows noticing her movement upwards.

In 1996, Shakira released the album *Pies Descalzos* (Bare Feet), completely written by her, launching a strong "rockera" (female rock singer) image where she fused pop, rock reggae, dance music, ballads and folk sounds from Colombia and other Latin countries like Mexico. This record gained her recognition in Latin America. She moved and sang like a rocker, she performed mostly in black jeans and long-sleeved shirts, intentionally playing down her beauty while accenting her seriousness as a musician-composer. Her songs were soulful and with some feminist and political content. With the success of this album, she became transnational within Latin

American borders. This was easily done since the ideology of *mestizaje*¹ encompasses all of those post colonial nations once under the Spanish rule, and her audience could easily identify with what she was saying and with the way she looked and moved. While living in Bogota, she had positioned her strong Colombian-costeña identity: a barefoot woman, one who only needs her two bare feet that walk unprotected. Her body was still bearing the signs of Latin Lebanese heritage. She was not very thin and her hair was black and as a Caribbean, she walked barefoot and danced very well.

In 1998 Shakira crossed the next border, and went to Miami to work with Cuban expatriate producers Emilio and Gloria Estefan and launched the album that catapulted her to wider fame: *Donde Están los Ladrones* (Where Are the Thieves). This album still features her in her dark and unruly hair and her strong lyrics with political and protest undertones. It is in Spanish, full of compositions under her control but under the watch of the main Latino producers in the musical field that spreads pop music to the rest of the Americas from USA. Due to its location, climate and stability, Miami had become by 1980 the place where the major music corporations that produce Latin American pop artists have chosen to base their operations (Party 2008). Most of the songs that Shakira presented in her first Miami-based album are co-written. With this album released in 1998, she crossed into mainstream Latino audience in Anglo speaking countries. *Where Are the Thieves* established Shakira as the highest-selling Latin American recording artist in the world. In order to conquer the world, though, she later hired a new manager, Freddy De Mann who has also

¹ Extensive explanation of the ideology of *mestizaje* in the building of the Colombian nation can also be found in Wade, 2000.

managed Madonna and Michael Jackson. It was after this move that her image starts to become more "anglicized", blonder and thinner, in order to please a monolingual U.S. audience, as Cepeda (2003) suggests.

With the launching of *Laundry Service* (2001), an album mostly composed by her in English, featuring four songs in Spanish, Shakira erupted onto the global music scene. This album won many awards. The single *Whenever Wherever* and its Spanish version, *Suerte*, will serve me to start showing some of the strategies I have found in the forging of her global pop star image. This song became the 2002 worldwide hit; it topped the charts in most European countries. This album marks the main shift in Shakira's image. On the cover, we see her naked shoulder with the title (*Laundry Service*) as a tattoo. Her hair is dyed blonde and her eyebrows also softened by a clearer color. This cover photograph is very sensual, seductive. In the *Whenever Wherever* video, Shakira emerges from the ocean, aligning herself with Aphrodite, the powerful Greek goddess of love and beauty. This image is so entrenched in Western imagination by now that it does not need to be explained. As we see her shoot upwards and land on Earth, she is drenched in water and starts moving against an ever-changing background of landscapes. She strolls the whole earth; she sings and dances in deserts and mountains. Through this video she establishes her image as that of a world-encompassing pop star by playing on an archetypal figure.

As she dances seemingly in control as a powerful woman on the world stage, we can use a metaphorical microscope, such as the one Haraway (2004) uses when describing labor force, that can help us filter the blinding light of success: "To be feminized means to be made extremely

vulnerable; able to be disassembled, reassembled...leading an existence that always borders on being obscene, out of place and reducible to sex" (Haraway, 2004, p. 26). In this way, Shakira clearly embodies sexual and racial categories that make her a filtered commodity. Once she is aligned with the ideas of the Other that can be acceptable in the USA, an ideology performed in her songs, dance, videos, lyrics, through her body, creating an image that conforms to the norms understood by USA public, she is allowed to cross all the borders she wants.

But while Shakira succeeds in becoming global, she sacrifices a prior identity that has been discussed by her Colombian and Latin American fans in countless postings and blogs and even street talk. I am not proposing that identities are fixed, though. As Eagleton (1997) remarked, it is by doing, by performing, that all of us construct our identity. Identity is not a stable category: "For the human subject to be embodied is for it to be constantly non self-identical-which is to say that the root cause of our non-self identity lies in what we do, not in some ambiguous text or enigmatic discourse which would then be contrasted with the stolid, suspect certainties of action..." (Eagleton, 1997, p.265).

The fact, nevertheless, is that nationalities are constructed imaginaries that do become fixed in people's minds and hearts in ways that to play with them can destabilize them at a micro level. Therefore, if one performs oneself and at the same time one is performing for others, ethical questions are involved, because we are affecting other identities. When one aligns with the archetypes, with the stars, with goddesses, one is playing with imagination; one creates images that entice consumerism of oneself. What one is selling must be watched with care.

In a double take, Shakira is consumed while sacrificing part of her identity: Her body in display is made vulnerable and hyper-susceptible to criticism by the same people that have seen her reach the top with pride in Latin America.² At this point it is interesting to think again of Judith Butler says of what is lost in the formation of an identity while looking at Shakira's performance: The subject depends on a power that is established beforehand, a power that shapes her/him through culture. But he/she also effects power by an agency that even though still bound to power, transforms it. Inspired by Freud's ideas on melancholia, Butler thinks that while the subject forges its identity, it is mourning its other identities left in the way of becoming and thus integrates them in an unconscious way. I argue that Shakira's ascension to world per-formative power is frayed with latent losses and will always quietly reclaim her in a sense of mourning. I think her fans mourn for her, perform the mourning of that identity that she cannot do as her goal is in sight: the fantasy of being on the top of the world.

Discourses of mixed races that have become the Latin American identity and which are repeated countless times at every occasion and everyday, are effective and also produce a sense of loss in the people that for example, take pride in having a globally famous music star as part of their identity. US Latinas were quoted in a Miami magazine shouting at Shakira, during a promotional appearance in South Beach, things like: "Do not forget about us!" (Cepeda 2003). And as Shakira crosses borders, somehow she is renouncing her fixed Colombian Latina Arab image and intending to appeal to a wider audience. But, if we look at

² Any of her videos in You Tube has myriad comments on her appearance as a perceived treason to her original identity.

demographics, we could say that being blonde, white, and slender is not the majority of the global population. If that is what is needed in order to become a global musical product, who we ask, is calling the stakes of the game? Is Shakira in charge, or is she now part of a capitalist game that needs to discipline her? I would suggest that Foucault's (1991) theories about docile bodies can be applied as a lens to help us look at this situation, because "...a body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" Foucault, 1991, p.136).

In Shakira's next production, her second one in English, one that sold ten million copies world wide, *Oral Fixation Vol. 2* (2005), we can see a Shakira embodying feminine archetypes again. For the cover of the Spanish version, *Fijación Oral*, she is a blonde woman who holds a child in the same position as numerous "virgin and child" paintings. But particularly interesting is that this image is similar to many of the Isis images, a prototype of the Virgin Mary of ancient Egyptian origin. The powerful feminine image that she is embodying is talking about seduction and nurturing at the same time. On the cover of the English version of the album, she is an almost naked Eve, with a red apple in her hand and the same baby watching her but from a position in the tree as if Cupid or Eros could be here in some sort of post modern guise for a serpent.

As the artist matures, she positions herself as a nurturer. Unmarried and childless up to now, in order to pursue her career, her choice of portraying motherhood is intriguing. But it can become transparent once we learn that Shakira created the Foundation Pies Descalzos in 1997 in order to give education to under privileged populations of Colombian children. The ONG has already five schools across the country providing education

and meals for almost 5000 children.³ As Shakira becomes a transnational Colombian citizen, she has access to world money and enough influence to be heard and received in major institutions in order to promote her foundation. It is not a surprise that on December 7, 2009 she gave a speech about universal rights to education at Oxford University⁴. In December 2007, Shakira had been Unicef's Good Will Ambassador at Bangladesh⁵, and the USA President Barak Obama⁶ received her to talk about the same matter in February 2010. As a woman, exploiting the strong image of motherhood is just another step into composing her all powerful goddess identity, maybe even one that matches and balances the image she has of herself due to her Catholic education.

I would like to refer now to two particular songs and videos that pertain to the *Oral Fixation* series. For the song "No," in the official video, Shakira is a contemporary woman who sings of the poison left by lost love in her body. For this song she partnered with Soda Stereo's Gustavo Cerati (Argentinean rock song writer). The video is in black-and-white and the backdrop is a sea or river port. In some scenes, her body is transported in a cart on railways. Her movements are simple and minimalist, resembling modern and contemporary dance techniques. We see her working on some sort of garment, looking at a ball of thread and a needle. I argue that here she is portraying a contemporary Penelope whose story ends in travel and flight, contrary to the mythological

³ <http://www.fundacionpiesdescalzos.com/joomla/>

⁴ <http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2009/12/08/shakira-at-oxford-excerpts-from-the-pop-stars-speech/>

⁵ http://www.unicef.org/spanish/emerg/bangladesh_42266.html

⁶ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/02/22/obama-and-biden-meet-with_n_471795.html

Penelope who stays put and bound, awaiting Ulysses. Shakira in this video is situated among containers and then we see that she has been sewing big butterfly wings to the garment and she uses them to redeem her pain as she leaves, ending the song. I found it interesting while looking at live presentations of this same song, that she is dressed quite differently on stage, almost like a flowing Isadora Duncan (whose trademark was dancing barefoot). But upon watching the image carefully, I found a direct reference to another main figure of the modernization of dance: Lois Fuller (1862-1928) in her Serpentine Dance. Both Duncan (1877-1927) and Fuller were American trailblazers who had to cross the oceans in order to become famous and strong cultural influences back in their country of origin.

The direct allusion to American culture is a sign of a body that speaks to an intended audience. Positioned between these previously signaled images, as part of the Oral Fixation Vol. 2, Shakira partnered with Haitian rapper Wyclef Jean in what has become her biggest hit to date: *Hips Don't Lie*. Of all the points we could analyze in this song and video performance, I just want to refer here to how she positions her Caribbean-Colombian identity. Wyclef sings amazed that this woman dances "like that." How, we can ask. Like a white blonde girl that happens to be from the Colombian Caribbean Coast? As Shakira plays with Wyclef Jean, she stages a carnival parade from her native city and we can easily see how her Afro-Colombian moves are related to the hip movements from the belly dances of Arab traditions. We also see a bullerengue dance in typical white skirts, a very traditional dance that is part of the Atlantic Coast tri-ethnic dance tradition. As this song exploded on the world scene, becoming the most successful song of 2006 worldwide, Colombia and particularly the people of the city

of Barranquilla were very happy to be put in full view of the rest of the world. Blonde, anglicized Shakira had somehow vindicated herself with her Colombian fans.

But that same Shakira that had sung and danced about her native Barranquilla, comparing her nomadic self with that of the refugees of the world while partnering with Wyclef Jean ("She's so sexy every man's fantasy a refugee like me back with the Fugees from a Third World country"), then did a very strange thing. So strange a thing that her next album was not as successful as her label had expected (While the album of *Oral Fixation No. 2* sold ten million copies worldwide, the *She Wolf* album sold one million and a half.⁷) In this third studio album in English, her image was a shocker. The main track intended for worldwide audience success featured Shakira as a very blonde, clear-eyed, thin woman, dressed in skin-colored leotard, dancing in a cage. In this album she explores techno music and dance hall, something quite different from what she had done before. But who was this woman in the cage? In the video's first scene, we see Shakira open her eyes, clear color eyes that seem to belong to Botticelli's *Venus*. She gets up from the bed, leaves her lover asleep, and enters a red cave (vagina?) that is somehow in her walking closet and becomes a lustful primeval woman who dances in sexy black leotards and then inside the cage in nude leotards. I argue that it is at this precise point of the transformations dictated by the music industry, that it becomes evident that in order to become a global product, a female pop star that is a foreigner in the USA, must first pass the filters of domestication. One can trace the image that is placed in a cage, as an iteration of blackness, otherness, the sexual other that hooks

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakira_discography

(1997) talks about when she wonders about a culture where the “[B]lack females singers who project a sexualized persona are as obsessed with hair as they are with body size and parts” (p.122)...and “ [O]ften black female models appear in portraits that make them look less like human and more like mannequins or robots” (p.123). The cited performance for the audience to understand Shakira’s otherness in *She Wolf* is the body of another controversial black woman: Grace Jones, a diva model, singer and performer of the 1970s who appeared nude in a famous photograph inside a cage that had the sign: “Do not feed the animal.” No more words are necessary here to understand the performative pun.

By the time *Loba/She Wolf* appeared in the market, Shakira’s image was imploding in her own country as a reverse mirror where the signals read are that in order to be successful, your talent and perseverance are not enough: Your body must accommodate the North American standard. As she develops educational schools and programs in Colombia for under privileged children through the Foundation that bears the name of her first successful album: *Pies Descalzos* (*Bare Feet*), her image transformation is teaching a dangerous message. Paradoxically now her palatable image is also telling the dangerous story of homogeneity to Colombian youngsters who admire and imitate her.

Having now traced part of her image on her album covers and in specific videos, one can see how Shakira’s image has been aligned with that of the feared other: the black woman, the other, the foreign woman, the abject (Kristeva, 2002). It is precisely because she comes from the region of the “South,” the “Third World,” that she embodies a mixture of races and backgrounds that need to be sanitized before complete acceptable

consumption can happen. This proposed act of tracking needs to see more of the strategies used to seduce and conquer the world in the span of 20 years, if we count the start of her career in her local Barranquilla when she was around 13 years old. Allow me to continue to enumerate some more traces that support the claim. Shakira’s crossover album *Laundry Service*, and the music videos that ensued it, have all featured her from 2001 to 2003 as a blonde sexy border crosser: She dances tango in Argentina (*Objection Tango*) and she becomes a bullfighter in Madrid (*I Leave You Madrid*). Between 2005 and 2007 for the *Oral Fixation* series, she partnered with Haitian Wyclef Jean (*Hips Don’t Lie*), with Spanish Alejandro Sanz (*Torture*), Argentinean Gustavo Cerati (*No*) and with Mexican Carlos Santana (*Illegal*). In the video *The Torture*, Shakira does her sexiest moves bathed in something that looks like black tar. In the video for *Illegal* Shakira is a Madonna look-alike ditched by her champion black boxer lover. By 2007 she released *The Intuitive Ones* with a video in which there is almost no difference between her and other North American pop stars like Britney Spears: She is almost unrecognizable, wearing a purple wig and porn-star-like-clothes.

She also does a duet with Beyonce called *Beautiful Liar* released for Knowles B’Day album. In this R&B song the two women appear as look-a-likes, mirroring each other, while realizing they both love the same man. In 2009, as part of the promotion for her album *She Wolf*, a very Americanized pop star appears in various USA mainstream TV shows. Re-mixes of *Did it Again* with rapper Kid Cudi and of *Give Up to Me*, also with rapper Lil Wayne are released. In this last video a very white Shakira is dancing with an all-black women chorus background but at some points of the video, contrasting with the contemporary R&B woman style of dancing and costuming, she

is seen some sort of a post modern Hindu Goddess with the headdress of the Statue of Liberty, moving her eight arms.

In February 2010, another single from the She Wolf album is released: *Gitana (Gypsy)*. With this single, Shakira seems to be re-taking some of her original image, maybe sensing that her change has also changed her original audience: the Latin American one. The song is a statement about nomadic life, about being on the road constantly as a border crosser and the sounds seem to go to base one, her initial sounds. As a recent digital blog puts it, there seems to be a hint of return to previous identities, which sustains my claim that there has been some loss:

The track itself finds her stripping things back to the sound that first made her famous - it's by far the most organic-sounding offering from her She Wolf LP. To the earthy twang of a simple banjo riff, Shakira trills about life on the road: "Friends and thoughts pass me by / Walking gets too boring / When you learn how to fly." With a hint of tribal clapping added to the chorus, her transformation into the world's sexiest bohemian is complete.⁸

In the video for *Gypsy*, we again see two sides of her: one sexy costumed in black scant silky flowing robes that look like a new version of the contemporary R&B regular costuming and then a very tight silver sequined dress in which she does flamenco style dancing for her lover. Her bare feet here are a comeback (she also appeared barefoot and with a beautiful long red skirt on *American Idol* in April 2010), and interestingly, in the lyrics we can also find some hints to her audience. When she sings to her lover, she seems to be singing about her transformations: *Nunca usé un antifaz...yo soy quien elige como equivocarme...*

⁸ <http://www.digitalspy.com/music/singlesreviews/a211304/shakira-gypsy.html>

no intentes amarrarme ni dominarme....(I have never worn a mask....I am the one who chooses making mistakes....Do not intend to bind or dominate me...)

Shakira denies masquerades but her obvious performance of otherness has made us wonder. This essay was a proposed question arising from the cover of a magazine and a recent overt play on whiteness as a reversed blackened other in the She Wolf video. Shakira's video performances have been the site for interrogating her performative image, an image that having become transnational as part of a globalized industry is instigating other performances of identity in her country and hemisphere of origin. When one is confronted with something that does not fit the usual perception of a phenomenon, one wonders. Cognition and performance are intertwined.

One cannot ignore the signs. One should try to understand the signatures. Shakira has been able to disseminate a part of the "minor" culture she belongs to, but on the way she has been forced by non-admitted ideological forces to play the games of power: In order to stand at the top, she must perform accordingly. Globalization might sometimes seem to have come from "below," but does it really? Could it have happened if she did not perform accordingly? It seems that the one to conform is the artist who has assembled and re-assembled. Who sells and what sells and what stays in the global music market is not really in her hands. We could say that Shakira pays the price of entering the globalized music industry: she becomes a laborer who loses control over her own image. She needs to do what she has to do, and that implies reassembling. An act of reassembling that one can trace as she changes identities through her artistic performance, which is not only about music and lyrics and dance, but

also about physical appearance. At the same time she is completing the necessary masquerades (Riviere, 1929; Doane, 1997) that are her weapons to conquer the world, she is empowering a portion of the world map so much in need of a different kind of prism: Colombia. But exactly why the masquerades are necessary can be theoretically discussed using Franz Fanon's (1967) insights about the colonized subjects.

Even though Fanon doesn't refer to women and admits that black women are a mystery to him, we can use his analysis of the black man from his psychoanalytical and sociological point of view. He is interested in how the colonized black man is divided between a black and a white identity, immersed in a "psycho existential complex" springing from colonization. Fanon thinks black men in colonized countries suffer from split subjectivity. In the same fashion, it could be possible that a Latina, who has been able to succeed in the globalized music industry could be looking at the white woman to understand the rules of female performativity in order to be able to enter effectively the public sphere. But while she plays the game of performing the different guises needed to succeed, she might be sacrificing too much.

What are the implications for cosmopolitanism and transnationalism, if we look at the fact that in order to stay in the social global sphere, she must reject her own blackened, racialized body? Looking at Shakira perform her identity is interrogating how utopian theories of cosmopolitanism, globalization from below and transnationalism from below can really be.

Especially interesting in this case would be what Lionett and Shih (2005) ask for in their introduction to the reader *Transnationalism*: that there is much theoretical and practical work to be done

from approaching transnationalism from a "minor" perspective that would challenge the notion of homogenization in border crossing and examines the universalist tendency of globalization theories (5). As the formerly mentioned authors argue, globalization and transnationalism theories go hand by hand as they both spring from the same social and economical developments of late capitalism. But one could complicate the stakes by playing the game of the ones in power, in order to execute "transnationalism from below" (Lionnet and Shih, 2005) or a "globalization from below" (Appadurari, 2001) as Shakira might be doing. By conforming with domestication she might be intending a filtration on her identity "upwards." Can we encounter in Shakira's strategies for acceding to a global market also some sort of strength? Analysts and cultural theorists like Celis (2010) see Shakira's body as a rhetorical site of cultural intervention, where the Caribbean identity is reinforced positively. For Celis, Shakira's physical transformations are profoundly feminist strategies. One just needs to hope that she does not become engulfed in transformations in order to accommodate to the music industry taste dictates and retains her creative powers in order to keep going on with her career.

Divided in her aspirations for an identity, a Latin American spectator would find pleasure in Shakira's capacity to become someone else, one that can escape the Third World subjectivity and the woman's non-subjectivity. Granted, a Latina might just want some visibility, something in an image that will tell her that she is. Invisibility is totally the opposite of what a black body culturally has possessed since slavery until today. Latina women, as we have seen, are as racialized as the black women are in the USA. The black female body doubly carries the weight of this visibility of the Other. A woman's place in a society has made

her inessential. Let's remember that the ideology behind a woman's inessentiality was placed in the public transcript by Beauvoir (2000) when she said that one is not born a woman, that one is made a woman, one becomes one. The body of a woman is a site of intervention for ideologies because the subjectivity of woman is always at stake. Even more so, the body of that woman who is a foreigner, an other, needs to be domesticated, understood as not dangerous, therefore identified with sexuality, palatable. Butler (1997) states:

When Beauvoir claims the "woman" is a historical idea and not a natural fact, she clearly underscores the distinction between sex, as biological facticity, and gender, as the cultural interpretation or signification of that facticity. To be female is, according to that distinction, a facticity which has no meaning, but to be a woman is to have become a woman, to compel the body to conform to an historical idea of "woman," to induce the body to become a cultural sign, to materialize oneself in obedience to an historically delimited possibility, and to do this as a sustained and repeated corporeal project (404-5).

In Shakira's body, we have found the trajectory of real and imaginary borders that have allowed her to explode into the pop scene with force, borders that are not marked by nations, but by something more difficult to discern. Corporeal projects and questions of taste are not easy to extricate from normalized attitudes. But Shakira's transformations and according performances to the dictates of globalization has allowed her, a "Third World" woman, to become a transnational agent. She has agency that not many Latin Americans have in the world. This gives her some sort of power that comes attached to the star status symbol: She is now an international goddess who needs no visas to stroll the different landscapes.

Conquering the global music market impedes her stopping to reflect on what is lost in the crossing of borders. Being busy as a good will ambassador for UNICEF, giving interviews in behalf of the anti immigration law in Arizona and lobbying important institutions for education money, also keep her busy enough, so that she can put aside the fact that through abiding to the palatable foreigner image, she is casting a shadow on the thousands of kids that in Colombia look up to her. Lately, a global controversy about her image as part of the 2010 World Cup, has been successfully diluted. The fact that FIFA (International Football Association) has chosen Shakira's remake of the Zangalewa, a song from Cameroon, famous in her native city in Barranquilla during the 1980s, as the official song for the 2010 World Cup, evidences that she has become a global commodity, but also shows the concerns people all over the world have with local identities. South Africans became upset at the fact that a Colombian was singing the World Cup anthem, when they have so many good performers.⁹ The International Football Association has also much to gain, coupling her international star status with the multicultural image they aim to represent in such a global event. For the remake of Zangalewa (now called Waka Waka, This is Africa), she then partnered, in an obvious political, move with the South African Indie music group called Freshlyground. A monetary arrangement was reached with the original artists from Cameroon who made the song famous twenty years ago, by the time Shakira was beginning her ambitious ascension to star status. Cameroonians are reportedly happy about Waka Waka that is proudly displayed at cyber cafes

⁹ <http://entretenimiento.prodigy.msn.com/especiales/sudafrica-2010/articulo.aspx?cp-documentid=24127116>

and has given them an auspicious feeling about winning the world cup.¹⁰

Shakira can sing for world tournaments and disseminate ideologies of sameness around the world, as she has done in the past and is doing presently for the World Cup. But the "sameness" seems lopsided, aligned, still with whiteness, nonetheless.

While she gathers international money for her education program in Colombia, she is also presenting herself as the epitome of success and thus influences kids imaginations beyond artistic identification and pride. As she gives incredible opportunities to several thousand children, she is also confronting them with the impossibility of being perfect blonde white kids that can conquer the world.

I find useful in order to instigate theories on globalization, transnationalism, post-colonialism, cosmopolitanism and many of the many current "isms" to look at artists' performances. Most of the times, when observed intently and analyzed, they can shed a lot of light into processes that are not usually evident.

¹⁰ <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/05/24/shakira-remixes-african-hit-for-world-cup/?partner=rss&emc=rss>

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