Introduction
Feminist Visions and Queer Futures

> The postulate of a founding heterosexuality must also be read as part of the operation of power—and I would add fantasy—such that we can begin to ask how the invocation of such a foundation works in the building of a certain fantasy of state and nation.
>
> (Judith Butler, "Is Kinship Always Already Heterosexual" 124)

The scene is a gathering of about two hundred students seated in tiered rows in an open-air auditorium. There is a hushed silence as the performers dressed in black shirts circle the stage chanting rhythmically. The performance is by Jana Natya Manch (People's Theatre Forum), a street theatre group invited to perform in a women's college at the University of Delhi, India. The play, *Hinsa Parmo Dharm* (*Violence as Supreme Religion*), based on a short story by India's foremost progressive writer, Munshi Premchand, depicts economic and gendered violence perpetrated by the nexus between religious fundamentalism and capitalism. I remember walking away amid groups of excited students animatedly discussing the performance wondering if classroom teaching ever generated such a response. Much like the play I saw performed that day, postcolonial Indian drama takes the social as the primary reason for its existence. This is evident not only in the themes central to contemporary drama written in various Indian languages but also in the goals of the state-funded National School of Drama, the country's premier institute of theatre training and performance studies.[1]

A little known fact about theatre in India is the noncommercial basis of activities of the National School of Drama (NSD) which sometimes works in close collaboration with other state-supported organizations such as the Sangeet Natak Akademi or the Academy for Music and Dance and has followed "a consistent program of publication, preservation, and patronage, especially in relation to the 'traditional' theatre arts" even when "funds for new theatres, amateur companies, and theatre education have not materialized on the scale imagined in the first decade of independence" (Dharwardker 43–44). In keeping with these noncommercial aims the NSD and other cultural institutions such as the Shriram Arts Center and the Nehru Youth Centre in New Delhi conduct free summer theatre workshops for children. One of my most vivid memories of these activities is of a summer workshop conducted by the NSD in the mid-1990s. I remember the workshop director telling a boisterous group of children to enact a situation they cared about, and looked on in amazement as a twelve-year-old boy lay on the ground

writhing in soundless agony. Asked to explain, he said that he was playing an old woman in pain, a person who had been abandoned by her family or perhaps did not have one to take care of her in her old age. Learning about the Jamaican theatre group, Sistren Theatre Collective many years later, the implicit connection between the enactment of an old woman in pain by a twelve-year-old child in India and Honor Ford-Smith's description of making plays dealing with real-life situations of poor, destitute, and old women in Jamaica provided the impetus for the transnational connections I was seeking.

My summer experiences at the children's theatre workshops over the course of a decade, the all-female audiences at performances such as the one by Jana Natya Manch in a Delhi University college, and my work with students-actors in women-centered plays, brought to the fore connections between social drama, performers, and their audiences. In many ways this book is an attempt to answer the questions I began asking about these experiences over a decade ago. As I read about and saw contemporary postcolonial drama in various metropolitan and nonmetropolitan settings I began to think about how drama, one of the most powerful mediums of conveying social concerns, has been deployed in India and other postcolonial nations to articulate gender justice. How do cultural and educational institutions such as schools of drama, colleges, and universities contribute performers and performance venues for socially progressive dramaturgy in postcolonial locations? What is the role of the postcolonial state in encouraging or curtailing the possibilities of socially inflected dramaturgy particularly if it explicitly critiques the state's gender policies? Is it possible to examine these performances as a form of 'citizenship education' that impacts on students and other audiences by shaping their views on pressing political issues of our times, among them the postcolonial state's reneged promise of gender justice to its citizens? How does the idea of the 'political' as gender justice connect feminist activism and postcolonial drama? In what ways and forms do postcolonial dramatists reflect on economic, gendered, and sexual violence and initiate a discussion on the situation of alternative sexualities, a contentious issue facing postcolonial feminists?

This book thinks through these some of these questions from a theoretical perspective informed by feminist, queer, and postcolonial studies. The comparisons charted in this book resonate with the key terms of Gayatri Spivak's call for "planetarity"—responsibility, community, citizenship, and pedagogy—as a model enabling the renewal of comparative literature in opposition to what is assumed to be self-explanatory globalization (*Death*). Encompassing a range of post-independence political, social, and cultural processes that may be analyzed comparatively, there is a productive tension between the various national contexts of my study and the implications for a particularly postcolonial mode of inquiry. I see the value of locally directed analyses as well as their implications within a comparative, cross-cultural framework. To this end, the first rationale for bringing together

Jamaican, Indian, and Nigerian contexts is chronological. The focus is on cultural activism and feminist organization in connection with specific forms of postcolonial governance between the 1970s and the 1990s, roughly corresponding with second- and third-wave feminist movements in these countries. This is a period also marked by theatre and feminist activists' engagement with the economic liberalization policies of neocolonial governments in India, Jamaica, and Nigeria.

The second rationalization for my selection of contexts and plays is a pedagogical imperative to examine similarities and differences in concerns addressed by cultural activists in nations that were often grouped together as the 'third world.' These are the basis of course offerings such as 'Twentieth Century Anglophone Drama', 'The Family in Postcolonial Literature', or even as general as topic as 'Contemporary Non-Western Literature' in the Euro-American academy. There are obvious cultural connections between Africa and the African Diaspora in the Americas; less recognized are campaigns to secure economic, gender, caste, class, and racial justice that connect social and cultural movements in Africa and the Caribbean to those in Asia and Latin America. These connections are often overshadowed by what Aijaz Ahmad calls the hegemony of literary translation and critical reception of Western texts in non-Western contexts and a concomitant neglect of the literary and political interfaces between non-Western literatures. While postcolonial studies has gone a long way in redressing this neglect, transnational connections between less studied genres, such as poetry and drama, can facilitate this interface.

Finally, the literary and political validation for this project is drawn from Helen Gilbert's summation of the *form* of recent postcolonial drama that "provokes the readers to consider how stylistic devices can articulate postcoloniality" since "the bias against naturalism is, in fact, fairly typical of the broader field from which these scripts are drawn." Gilbert argues, quite correctly, that "non-naturalistic theatre presumes a specific kind of relationship with its audience, one that avoids illusionism in favor of more explicit engagement with its interpretive community" (5). The plays analyzed in this book use structural devices associated with non-naturalistic drama to ensure critical engagement with spectatorial interpretive communities. Many of the playwrights also use rituals to comment on the inherently dramatic nature of everyday life and to disrupt the illusion of the theatrical experience by encouraging a critical mode of thinking. Of the non-naturalistic drama discussed in the book, some of the plays were created collectively while others were published under the name of individual playwrights. All the plays, whether collectively or individually conceptualized, are, I claim, 'performance events' that refer to political, economic, and social conditions of the times. Even the work published and performed under the names of an individual author rather than a collective carries the stamp of research collaboration. And in some cases the authors directly acknowledge the communities with whom they interacted

during the process of play making. The plays reference various subaltern groups: rural farming communities facing poverty and destitution demanding their rights through revolutionary action; professional mourners hired by wealthy patrons to mourn at funerals of family members; transsexual or transgendered men earning a living through performance and prostitution; and all-female households in uncertain economic conditions sharing obligations of kinship and support.

My argument about the cause-and-effect relationship between hegemonic gender ideologies and a normative citizenship impacting on subaltern groups considers the possibility of postcolonial drama generating a dialogue on citizenship. Such a dialogue takes into account the material and sexual aspects of the lives of women and sexual minorities with the awareness that drama has a limited reach and appeal, although still a tremendous impact, in these times of mass-mediated production and consumption of images. I introduce the key terms of this study—community, kinship, and citizenship—through two modes of analysis that are seldom conjoined due to a perception of theoretical discordance: postcolonial historical, political, and cultural analysis suggests new ways of looking at these concepts; feminist-oriented gay, lesbian, and queer studies from various disciplinary perspectives provide a methodology of grounding these in concrete gendered and sexual practices. Connecting this discussion to feminist and incipient queer activism in India, Jamaica, and Nigeria, my focus is on drama by groups and individuals who work in close conjunction with these efforts. Finally, I delineate key ideas in performance theory that have impacted postcolonial theatre and drama practitioners, and theorize the gendered and sexually marked body in performance and among audiences.

COMMUNITY, KINSHIP, AND POSTCOLONIAL CITIZENSHIP

Analyzing the representation of gender, sexuality, and citizenship in postcolonial drama involves examining ideas that subsume public discussions of women's sexual and material autonomy. Primary among these are 'kinship', 'community', 'citizenship', and implicitly 'development'. Under patriarchal state structures community relations replicate the power relations evinced in political structures at large. However, community and kinship structures can also work in opposition to patriarchal state apparati. For instance, the specific form of democracy in Jamaica has been defined by Carl Stone as "clientelistic" or as one marked by "predation politics" according to Obika Gray. This situation is similar to that in India where political patronage often enables citizens to secure their legal and extra-legal rights in a domain existing between the state and civil society, described by Partha Chatterjee as "political society." In the Nigerian context, characterized by the collapse of democracy, a resurgence of militarism, followed by restoration of democracy, Richard Joseph describes this phenomenon as "prebendalism"

or "machine politics," whereby rights are obtained through a process of personal and piecemeal negotiation including trading favors with and bribing various levels of the governmental machinery. Within such systems women's negotiating power is largely reliant on their class position, association with men, or trade-offs between sexual favors and material gain. Various forms of the postcolonial state are depicted in the drama analyzed in the following chapters: pedagogic democratic socialism, a privatized and corrupt neocolonial regime, a feudal heteropatriarchy, a disciplinary apparatus, and anti-resource redistributive. The female citizen's compromised citizenship under these structures makes her wary of excessive reliance on the state. This does not lead to her giving up her claims on the state, but, as I argue, encourages a reliance on non-biological kinship to ensure social, psychological, and emotional survival.

Some of the more useful definitions of community in relation to kinship have emerged from the subaltern school. Among these Chatterjee's and Gyan Pandey's implicit conjoining of community and kinship in India deserves special mention. Beginning with Benedict Andersen's famous theorization of the nation as an "imagined community," Chatterjee discusses how during the Indian nationalist struggle for independence from colonial rule, the concept of the nation "was made tangible in the concreteness of an imagined network of kinship extending outward from the local structures of community." This "fuzzy" notion of community, Chatterjee maintains, is retained in popular political discourse since the modern state, embedded as it is "within the universal narrative of capital, cannot recognize within its jurisdiction any form of community except the single, determinate, demographically enumerable form of the nation" (*Nation* 225, 238). Marking a slight departure from Chatterjee, Pandey speaks of the persistence of community as a "political project," much like class or nation. He also proposes that the political claim is effective because of "a moral, affective quality" inherent in notions of the community (410). It is the specific material consequences of this affective component that I emphasize by pointing to the conjunctions between community and kinship in contemporary Indian drama.

Caribbean historians and political scientists have also cogently discussed the political possibilities of community. From Jamaica, Carl Stone's phenomenal work on political formations in Jamaica proposes a three-tier model of community: urban populations with a minimum population size of five thousand residents; "main road" communities located close to main highways that connect to major populations, production, and commercial centers in Jamaica; and remote rural and hillside district communities (*Democracy* 139–41). In later work Stone modifies his theory to account for the powerlessness of certain groups in ways that suggest a conception of community based not merely on place but on levels of organization: "[P]oorer socioeconomic groupings have neither resources, leadership, nor motivation to organize on a community or other collective basis" (*Class* 50). David Scott proposes a nuanced adaptation of Stone's idea to "interrupt the

liberal discourse of community" with the aim of reasserting "the primacy of the political, and with it, a *politics of settlements*" (*Refashioning* 183). The possibility of organized collectivities demanding their entitlements as citizens while forming kin-like associations with other dispossessed members of the community is embodied in the "politics of settlements" depicted in Jamaican drama of the 1970s and 1980s.

Examining the applicability of the subaltern paradigm to African colonial and postcolonial historiography, Frederick Cooper rightly cautions that a recourse to community as an antidote to one sort of oppression might very well ignore other forms of oppression that might well lie within communities (177). Speaking of the construction of community among the Ibo in Nigeria, Axel Harneit-Sievers clarifies that a local community is defined by a shared awareness of belonging to a specific place of residence or origin, sometimes labeled "village groups." However, Harneit-Sievers also emphasizes that the active process of the construction of community may involve competing notions of 'progress' and 'development' brought over by members of local groups who are part of larger contexts such as migration to foreign countries (12). Contemporary Nigerian drama by Femi Osofisan and Tess Onwueme depicts class and ethnic alignments as insufficient for membership within a community. Indeed, some members of the community may actively work to fracture the common goals even while drawing on a specious rhetoric of kinship.

Given the various connotations of community in these three contexts, I outline the broad contours of the discussion and connect it to citizenship with the acknowledgment that this is a schematic and provisional summarization and one which is being redefined even at the very moment of my writing. In India, community is often synonymous with religiously defined and caste-based groups so that Hindus and Muslims are coded as majority and minority and upper and lower castes as powerful and powerless communities respectively. In Jamaica the word often connotes "garrison" communities primarily in urban neighborhoods comprising supporters of the two major parties—the People's National Party and the Jamaica Labor Party—sometimes engaged in violence of the kind witnessed between Hindus and Muslims or the upper and lower castes in India. In Nigeria, community is invoked in relation to both ethnic group and geographical affiliations as an expression of indigeneity, often in opposition to urban, Westernized lifestyles. Used in these senses community can predicate an atavistic recourse to religion, combative politics, and non-modern forms of existence even while it points to the inadequacy of the hegemonic idea of citizenship forwarded by the nation-state. Clearly if there are groups of people who are not willing to let go of their religious, political, and traditional ways of life, they cannot be successfully enumerated as the model 'citizen-subjects' of the nation-state. In fact, their very existence throws the postcolonial project of development into a crisis of sorts particularly since gender and sexuality are often the test cases for

inclusive and egalitarian conceptions of community in the contexts that are the subject of my investigation.

The project of a radical democracy forwarded by feminist political theorists is relevant to this discussion. Chantal Mouffe's thesis that "in the domain of politics, and as far as citizenship is concerned, sexual difference should not be a pertinent distinction" is articulated in opposition to feminist definitions of citizenship highlighting the political relevance of sexual difference. Mouffe argues eloquently that "an active conception of citizenship that emphasizes the value of political participation and the notion of a common good . . . [should be] prior to and independent of individual desires and interests" (377). Although the notion of a "common good" serves as a "social imaginary" and as a "grammar of conduct" for citizens marked by the awareness that "a fully inclusive political community can never be realized," Mouffe does not specify the contours of this "active conception of citizenship" (379). An incomplete realization of a political community and the minimal gains achieved by women and other feminized citizens on the horizon of the social imaginary are foils to alternative structures of kinship which interrogate normative postcolonial citizenship. This interrogation is framed by two contradictory ideas of community: as a differentially positioned structure that reinforces non-egalitarian social and gender relations and, as I argue in this book, as a non-biological support network that compensates for the state's neglect of the common good of all citizens.

Subscribing to the latter view of the community while interrogating whether kinship is always already heterosexual, Judith Butler mentions situations when "the relations of kinship arrive at boundaries that call into question the distinguishability of kinship from community." According to her, these constitute a 'breakdown' of traditional kinship that "displaces the central place of biological and sexual relations from its definition" to give sexuality a domain separate from that of kinship. In her opinion, this allows us to think of "durable tie[s] outside the conjugal frame and thus opens kinship to a set of community ties that are irreducible to family" ("Is Kinship" 127). Butler's connections between community and kinship draw on a long history of feminist-influenced gay and lesbian history and anthropology. Esther Newton's study of female impersonators in America was one of the earliest to account for the contested nature of the 'community' she studied. Newton demolished at the outset of her investigation the idea of a homogenous community based on sexual identity, stating that "the community is an on-going social reality in, around, and against which people align themselves according to their own self-definitions" (21). The community centered on voluntary associations such as organizations like the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, informal institutions such as bars and clubs, and informal social groups comprising parties and living arrangements with an acknowledgment that various "kinds and degrees of participation in the community are possible and available" (Newton 21). In his phenomenal history of the emergence of a "homosexual minority" in

the United States, John D' Emilio writes of gay men and lesbian women's participation in an "urban subculture that sustained their sense of belonging to a group" concretized by venues of socialization such as bars and clubs and later by magazines (53). D'Emilio's account of the making of a homosexual community emphasizes place, specifically urban locations, as important to self-conceptualization.

The theoretical contours of the discussion of community are connected to kinship in Kath Weston's study where "community as a cultural category" is "implicated in the renegotiation of kinship relations" (18). Weston points to the imbrication of community and kinship and the abandonment of this model in the 1980s. The "nonerotic ties elaborated in terms of community and or friendship" were, in her opinion, succeeded by "chosen families" which introduced something novel into kinship relations within the United States (136). An interrogation of the family model and the reinstatement of community and kinship as inextricable have marked much recent theory on the subject. Judith Halberstam asks "what alternatives to family models and normative kinship are available to us as we try to produce feminist and queer models of politics and relation?" (319). Halberstam's call for narratives of "cooperation, affiliation, and the appeal of forgetting family" implicitly reinstates community into her argument (323).

In the light of this account of kinship and community from feminist-oriented gay and lesbian studies, let me go back to the political arguments with which I began. Many postcolonial political theorists mention that the invocation of community introduces a precapitalist structure into the dynamics of postcolonial modernity. Might we then think of the invocation and recourse to community as a way of resisting the worst effects of capitalism in postcolonial nation-states? Secondly, although this is not necessarily the direction in which political theory runs, there is ample scope to read community and kinship from the vectors of gender and sexuality particularly since postcolonial feminist and queer activists and theorists are evolving and describing non-Eurocentric ways of sociality and relationality. Finally, feminist collectives as well as theatre groups, and sometimes a fortuitous conjunction of the two, can be seen as political communities with an acknowledgment of the historical specificity of these efforts as described in the next section.

POSTCOLONIAL FEMINISMS

The first phase of the women's movement in the three contexts of this study, India, Jamaica, and Nigeria, is roughly coterminous with first-wave Euro-American feminism. It is connected to women's participation in anti-colonial nationalisms from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s. During this period middle class men and women modeled their plans for gender equity on Western feminists' demands for electoral, educational, and employment

rights adapted to an indigenous program of social reform (French and Ford-Smith; Gandhi and Shah; Johnson-Odim and Mba). As formerly colonized nations attained independence, established postcolonial modes of governance, and moved on varying economic and political paths of democratically or militarily engineered socialism, capitalism, and globalization, the period from the 1940s to the 1980s was marked by interest in redressing women's socio-economic and legal standing as citizens (Cumper; Ojewusi; Agnes). The second-wave postcolonial feminist agenda often developed in conjunction with the newly independent nations' programs for women's development and included securing legislative and social security for women and children.[2] Besides the various political party-based women's development units working in collaboration with the state, this period witnessed the emergence of autonomous women's networks negotiating with the state not only to facilitate these changes but also to critique its policies when they perceived a discrepancy between proclaimed ideals and real achievements.

Networks such as Sistren in Jamaica, Women in Nigeria (WIN), and Manushi from India, emerging in the 1970s and 1980s, are often considered models of feminist organization for their threefold emphasis on social, cultural, and educational outreach. Although these groups understood the value of theatre and drama in furthering women's empowerment, the degree of their attention to the medium has varied widely. Sistren's cultural work in theatre and drama was the basis of a social and educational program that included a research component and later a journal on women in the Caribbean. WIN evolved a program of action through a series of conferences on legislative, religious, and economic factors affecting women's lives, later published as reports. While it has used drama in consciousness-raising, unlike Sistren this has not been a major activist strategy for WIN. Like WIN, the Indian feminist collective, Manushi, has relied largely on the publication of an independently run feminist journal on women and society to publicize violence against women combined with legislative action through public interest litigations. The core group has sporadically used street theatre to create public awareness about domestic and social violence in alliance with other feminist networks.

These organizations have been instrumental in pointing to and remedying the neglect of gender and sexuality as factors impacting citizenship in postcolonial nation-states. However, their attention to sexual minorities facing similar conditions of domestic and social violence is sporadic and, in some cases, nonexistent. One of the key ideas explored in M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty's introduction and some contributions to their anthology *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*—which can be seen as articulating 'third-wave' postcolonial feminist concerns—is that nation and citizenship continue to be "premised within normative parameters of masculinity and heterosexuality" ("Introduction" xiv). It is crucial to distinguish third-wave concerns addressed primarily by US-based feminists such as Rebecca Walker and

Barbara Findlen from the different set of issues articulated by postcolonial feminists. In the US, this body of work has addressed second-wave feminists' lack of emphasis on specific demands of women of color, an exclusive focus on theoretical analyses to the neglect of women's lived experiences, positing of women as victims rather than survivors, and a compromised relation to institutions such as the university critiqued, yet inhabited by second-wave feminists. On the other hand, US third-wave feminists have themselves been found lacking in an analysis of class relations and global political and economic processes (Kinser; Diaz).

When analyzing the third wave of women's organizing in postcolonial locations, it is useful to remember that, as in the US context, there cannot be a neat disjuncture between this and the previous phase. However, postcolonial feminists have only recently echoed US second-wave politicization of alternative sexualities, especially the emphasis on intersectional identities by lesbians of color. In some contexts such as Nigeria, the contours of the discussion are still taking shape. Hence, a focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and transgendered lives emerges as a specific (although not always explicit) third-wave postcolonial feminist concern. Rather than being reformist in its orientation, this stage is best characterized by a dual emphasis on material and identity-based claims of gendered and sexualized citizen-subjects, necessary because, according to Alexander and Mohanty, "these [postcolonial] states conflate heterosexuality with citizenship and organize a 'citizenship machinery' in order to produce a class of loyal heterosexual citizens and a subordinated class of sexualized, nonprocreative, noncitizens, disloyal to the nation" ("Introduction" xxiii). Postcolonial feminists' sporadic and, in some cases, sustained alliances with left-wing and socialist ideologies during the period 1970s to 1990s led to an interrogation of statist gender ideologies that I have conceptualized as 'national pedagogy' in the case of Jamaica, a term which is just as applicable to Nigeria and India, the other contexts of this study. I describe how postcolonial dramatists' involvement with gender issues has led to questioning the state's implicit conceptualization of the heterosexual male engaged in 'productive' occupations as the model citizen. This is achieved through dramatic representations of community and kinship contesting this model.

Of the many kin-like associations other than heterosexual monogamy, some are recognized by the community while others are invalidated, even stigmatized, in the contexts of my discussion. In the Caribbean, to take one example, anthropological research by Edith Clarke, Gloria Wekker, and Carla Freeman, among others, indicates that women's households share reciprocal obligations with those unrelated to them by blood or marriage through intangible relations of emotional support and caregiving as well as more tangible manifestations of material and economic sustenance. That these may translate into sexualized forms of intimacy is largely ignored in most accounts of socialities in the region. In Nigeria, these associations take the form of "clans" as described in Ifi Amadiume's ethnographic study

of Nnobi, an Ibo village. Here the "daughters" and "wives" of the clan have mutual obligations towards each other, although the "wives" enjoy a lesser social status than the "daughters." Amadiume's analysis hints at but does not follow up on the possibility of sexual relations between women socially related to each other either by clan obligations or by the communally accepted tradition of "female husbands." Similar quasi-kinship associations exist in India, such as those among the *hijra* households (a community of transsexual and/or transgendered men who earn their living as performers), where the leader of the house is "mother" to all its members who relate to each other as "sisters." Yet theirs is a stigmatized identity that is not granted social recognition unlike other caste, religious, and ethnic identities. Same-sex relations remain proscribed, so that while there is vigorous debate about reserved representation for women in structures of parliamentary democracy in India, Jamaica, and Nigeria, there are few efforts towards granting sexual minorities their rights as citizens by decriminalizing homosexuality.[3]

One of the most common arguments used to dismiss the provision of sexual justice in these nations is that there are other more urgent developmental issues facing the nation-state. Whereas gender concerns are earmarked as developmental by women's groups and international agencies, attempts at collective assertion by sexual minorities are dismissed as mimicking the divisive identity politics of Western societies and cultures. Kinship and community obligations are pressed into service to try and suppress any form of sexual expression other than heterosexuality. The panic discourse on AIDS in India, Jamaica, and Nigeria also reveals lack of concern about the health and welfare of alternative sexualities. Cindy Patton writes that "postcolonial health managers' ideas about the state of nations' development" have led to public information campaigns that, in Africa (as in India and Jamaica), advocate safe-sex practices in a clinically detached manner along with warnings about needle sharing in drug use and moral messages about the dangers of sexual promiscuity (xxvii). These campaigns are the only way in which these nation-states indicate a minimal awareness of alternative sexual preferences and posit homosexuality as invidious to public health.

Additionally, the criminalization of homosexuality is a colonial legislative legacy that is endorsed by these states. The message is conveyed in popular cultural forms such as music and films, advocating misogyny, homophobic violence, or a comic tolerance of sexual minorities. There is as yet no clear move among feminists to articulate a vigorous politics of defense and justice for sexual minorities that is directly oppositional to the state. This serious political neglect reflects the two distinct understandings of injustice Nancy Fraser categorizes "socio-economic injustice" and "cultural and symbolic injustice," so that economic marginalization and exploitation are considered just issues on the feminist agenda but identity-based claims to recognition such as those by sexual minorities are considered

secondary, echoing the state's hierarchy of developmental priorities (13–14). The absence of a coalition between feminist activism and the movement for rights of sexual minorities has not gone unnoticed or uncommented. This is rightly seen as a serious lack in the otherwise progressive agenda of the feminist movement in these nations (Vanita "Thinking"; Ogundipe-Leslie; Pike). *Feminist Visions and Queer Futures* forwards the claim that postcolonial feminist networks have worked towards (although not directly addressed) the bivalent claims of recognition and redistribution by highlighting socio-economic, physical, and sexual violence against women and sexual minorities. In this sense, postcolonial drama presents a progressive agenda, sometimes in advance of the feminist networks, by representing alternative forms of kinship offering material, social, and emotional sustenance to economically and sexually marginalized citizens.

METHODOLOGY OF POSTCOLONIAL DRAMA ANALYSIS

Taken individually, the chapters in this book look at the work of playwrights and groups insufficiently analyzed in postcolonial drama criticism, often defined by the canonized work of a few male dramatists. In contrast to critical accounts which either survey or further eulogize plays by celebrated postcolonial dramatists, some recent anthologies and critical commentaries examine canonized authors in conjunction with less well-known but equally important drama practitioners. However, drama by Dennis Scott, Jana Natya Manch, Mahasweta Devi, and Tess Onwueme often does not find a place in revisionist criticism supplementing the canon of postcolonial drama. Part of the feminist project of this book is to indicate the centrality of ideas of gender justice to postcolonial drama, neglected in available discussions of the field.

For Bruce King, one of the earliest commentators on this drama, the tension between the terms commonwealth and postcolonial seems to be resolved in favor of the former with a select focus on canonical male dramatists such as Athol Fugard, Wole Soyinka, and Derek Walcott. Colonial subjection and its impact on the language and culture of the colonized are key ideas in Brian Crow and Chris Banfield's account of postcolonial theatres through virtually the same dramatists. The authors argue that these playwrights' awareness of Western as well as indigenous forms of performance makes theatre and drama a medium of cultural reconnection in postcolonial times. Although Crow and Banfield do not dwell on the specific political impact of postcolonial drama, they suggest that politics is evident when practitioners "use the stage to define and affirm their people's cultural 'personality'—in the face of continuing cultural, economic, and political subjugation—by recovering the past, freed from the biases of metropolitan or mainstream history" and "expose the forces that still obstruct liberation" (17). The authors admit to have focused on male dramatists and

acknowledge that "female playwrights are still seriously under-represented in the post-colonial context." At the same time they reject the vitality of women's drama as equitable with published playscripts:

> If there has been no breakthrough by women dramatists in Africa or India to compare with the striking emergence of women writers in much Western theatre, or with female prose writers, *there has nevertheless been an encouraging growth in theatre reflecting indigenous feminist 'movements'*. It is, difficult, internationally, to find published material by or about them, but we should at least be aware of the remarkable work achieved by such groups as the women's theatre collective Sistren in Jamaica, by playwrights such as Mahasweta Devi and Dolly Mehta in India, and by workshopped productions such as *You Strike the Woman, You Strike the Rock* in South Africa. (167, emphasis added)

This remark acknowledges the tradition of feminist postcolonial drama evidenced in street theatre traditions and its variants across Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. The contrast between Western and non-Western women dramatists made by the authors ignores women's individual and collective contributions to postcolonial drama. The lack of published material noted by Crow and Banfield is a serious issue and one that makes it difficult to work on drama as a genre in postcolonial studies. This is particularly true when the focus is on locating and reading non-canonical drama that politicizes sexuality and citizenship in advance of "indigenous feminist 'movements'" focus on these issues.

The neglect of women's drama is analogous to drama being overlooked as a genre in postcolonial criticism. To cite a few instances: the Caribbean writers Dennis Courtney Scott and Derek Walcott are studied and taught primarily as poets rather than playwrights; in studies of African literature, Ama Ata Aidoo and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's plays are relatively less well-known (*The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* is an exception) than their fiction; and from South Asia, Mahasweta Devi's drama has received scant critical attention in contrast to her fiction. In a study published the same year as Crow and Banfield's account, Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins note the inattention to drama in postcolonial criticism, and observe that since "dramatic and performance theories, particularly those developed in conjunction with Brechtian, feminist, and cultural studies criticism, have much to offer post-colonial debates about language, interpellation, subject-formation, representation, and forms of resistance, this marginalisation of drama suggests a considerable gap in post-colonial studies" (9). My analysis of national pedagogies envisaging model citizen-subjects and postcolonial dramatists' resistance to these pedagogies through their representation of women and sexual minorities is indebted to Gilbert and Tompkins's theorization of postcolonial drama. Their attention to the three main areas of postcolonial performance—dramatic language, both vocal

and visual, as expressed through the performing body; the arrangement of theatrical space and time; and the manipulation of narrative and performative conventions of drama—has directly influenced the readings of performances and playscripts offered in the chapters. A key feature of Gilbert and Tompkins's study is their multivalent theoretical framework marked by equal reliance on work done separately in the fields of performance and postcolonial studies. Analyzing performance elements such as ritual and folklore, bodily movements, theatre spaces, sounds, and silences, they offer an interpretative methodology for cross-cultural analysis. Yet their primary focus on these elements precludes a detailed analysis of the plays themselves. My research into circumstances of production of the plays and their possible impact on spectatorial communities extends the scope of Gilbert and Tompkins's study.

Gilbert's anthology of postcolonial drama, published in 2001, supplements the theoretical focus of the book she coauthored with Tompkins. The anthology brings together important playscripts and provides a more recent overview of the field. Its introduction indicates that the lack of availability of primary texts, whether scripted or visual, while undertaking research in drama, is the most serious problem facing scholars working in the field. Hence the collection does not include many plays due to "lack of space, copyright difficulties, limited access to texts preservable in publishable forms, or the simple failure of communication technologies" (2). Taking up the challenge of Gilbert and Tompkins's suggestion that postcolonial drama is an archive waiting to be systemized, I studied playwrights and theatre groups whose work is recognized as significant but does not possess a secure place in the canon of postcolonial drama.

To do justice to the complexity of references in the plays I had to devise an eclectic methodology reliant on textual analysis, performance records in private collections, manuscripts of unpublished plays, magazines with limited circulation in special collections, documentaries, interviews, and personal recordings of performances made available by some of the dramatists and theatre groups. Collecting this material was always an exciting and rewarding endeavor, but sometimes also a frustrating experience since many of these documents are yet to be systematically archived and were obtained largely through personal contacts. One of the hardest aspects of my research was the discovery that performance records are not considered valuable enough for preservation. Jamaica remains a poignant case in point of this neglect since records of Dennis Scott's innovative use of drama for pedagogical purposes as well as his own playscripts carelessly stored in a cupboard at the Jamaica School of Drama were damaged during Hurricane Gilbert in 1988 (Ford Smith, "Performing Nation"). In 2004, the building housing Sistren Theatre Collective in Kingston burnt to the ground destroying a valuable collection of materials. Some of this material is in the safekeeping of individuals, awaiting cataloguing and an institutional repository.

Another challenge encountered was deciding on the degree of emphasis on the multiple versions of some of the plays. In the case of the Nigerian dramatist Tess Onwueme's play *Tell It to Women,* the Jamaican playwright Dennis Scott's *Dog,* and Sistren's *Bellywoman Bangarang,* the original versions are less easily available, although more radical in form and content, than the revised plays. The Indian playwright Mahesh Dattani's revision of *Seven Steps around the Fire* from a radio play to one meant for the proscenium stage, and his use of the central character Uma Rao in two other plays, marks significant departures from the original. Since these versions often involve substantial authorial or directorial revisions, and sometimes a complete change of the medium and audience they were originally intended for, it was often difficult choosing which version to discuss. Often the choice was contingent on the availability of the works since some exist only in manuscript form and there is hardly any video documentation of these performances. The larger and for the most part unanswered question raised by the neglect and non-availability of performance records is the role of cultural activities and their documentation in postcolonial nations. Drama as a cultural form in these nations draws on a legacy of performance theories that has addressed this issue in different ways.

AESTHETICS, POLITICS, AND THE APPARATUS IN POSTCOLONIAL DRAMA

Following Gilbert and Tompkins's emphasis on performance theory as essential to an examination of postcolonial drama, the ideas of Bertolt Brecht, Augusto Boal, and Jerzy Grotowski—whose theories and practice significantly impact South Asian, African, and Caribbean drama—have contributed to the argument of the book. Since some of these ideas are almost at opposing ends of the spectrum of materialist and aesthetic principles, an examination of key concepts such as "epic drama," "forum," and "poverty" in theatre is necessary to avoid a simplistic assessment of the nature and extent of their impact. Further, I deploy these concepts with an awareness of their different constituencies of influence: Brechtian principles have been used by dramatists working in first- and third-world locations with varying emphases; Boal's methods of theatre, therapy, and activism have impacted upon practitioners differently in Euro-America than in South Asia and Latin America; the sphere of Grotowski's aesthetic converts is primarily Western. Finally, an attention to aesthetic, temporal, and geographical spheres of influence is essential to chart a genealogy of performance that considers the applicability of these ideas to postcolonial dramaturgy and criticism. An explication of this work focuses on three related domains of inquiry: the relationship between aesthetics and politics; the dominant theatrical 'apparatus' and attempts to make meaningful dramaturgy in opposition to it; and a theorization of the female body in performance.[4]

The relationship between aesthetics and politics implicates the target audience and is contingent on the material resources required for cultural work. This emerges as a particularly postcolonial concern when cultural work, especially if allied to social activism, is either censored or dismissed as irrelevant, unless it is geared towards the consolidation of a specific version of national citizenry. Under these circumstances the choice of the form and content of drama is dictated as much by material constraints as by ideology. Ideologically, postcolonial dramatists subscribe to the dual emphasis of Brechtian Epic dramaturgy: inviting decisions from the bourgeois and proletarian audience the drama is aimed at; and fulfilling "paedagogic" ends by teaching "a quite definite practical attitude directed towards changing the world" (57). Brecht believed that the modern Epic theatre "demands not only a certain technological level but powerful movement in society which is interested to see vital questions freely aired with a view to their solutions, and can defend this interest against every contrary trend" (76). The drama I discuss has politicized the postcolonial stage through "vital questions" regarding women's work, reproductive and sexual choices, and the nature and incidence of social violence.

However, many of these performances do not fit Brecht's paradigmatic "technological level," if this is narrowly interpreted as a valuation of skilled stagecraft. There is a fundamental contradiction in Brecht's ideas about these paradigms. On the one hand he mentions the poverty or simplicity of small working class theatres constrained by lack of funds by clarifying that the simplicity of an acting technique that does not rely on extravagant emotions constitutes its 'poverty'. On the other hand he declares that once "it can overcome poverty the small working class theatre stands some chance of overcoming the simplicity which is the hallmark poverty gives to its performances" (148–49). This contradiction can be traced to Brecht's belief in the street scene as a model for Epic theatre. In Brecht's view the street scene is propagandist while Epic theatre possesses infinitely more value as art; the form mediating between the street scene and Epic theatre is "street theatre," described as "a primitive . . . but meaningful phenomenon with a clear social function that dominates all its elements" (126). By presenting political demands such as equal wages for men and women or justice to rape victims, in a form different from dominant theatrical appurtenances, street theatre and its variants have emerged as an extremely effective means of furthering feminist and working class agendas. Street theatre's denigration on artistic grounds by a staunch materialist like Brecht can be revaluated through drama that retains the notion of "poverty" in a different sense than the connotations of artistic simplicity implied by Brecht.

Grotowski is, of course, the most famous exponent of "a poor theatre" where performance is "an act of transgression" and theatre becomes "a place of provocation." Grotowski's Poor theatre is one without costumes and sets, music, or lighting effects, with the actor as its only essential element. This has also been called "an ascetic theatre" since no material

success accrues to the actor. Although there is no financial stability for the actor who chooses to be associated with Poor theatre, there is an inherent satisfaction in the work itself. Grotowski's quasi-mystical listing of the attributes of poverty in theatre and the holiness of the actors working in it is in contrast to the actual conditions of poverty faced by many postcolonial theatre practitioners. Although sparse allocation of resources is common to theatre workers in most nations, there is a difference between the poverty willingly embraced by Grotowski and the actors with whom he experiments, and groups like Sistren Theatre Collective from Jamaica, Jana Natya Manch or People's Theatre Front from India, or the Kakaun Sela Kompany in Nigeria. For these groups, scarcity of resources reflects national economic conditions which justifies the state's denial of funding to cultural workers, and is often one of the grounds for dismissing their work. These groups also speak from, of, and to the material inequities faced by workers, women, and other underprivileged members of society, in contrast to Grotowski's aesthetics of poverty, that he describes in an interview titled "The Theatre's New Testament" as an exploration of the "national" through quasi-spiritual introspection or a "sincere and absolute search into our historical ego" (52). Despite these differences, the idea of a theatre independent of the material paraphernalia of traditional dramaturgy remains an important one for practitioners. Not merely a metaphorical but a literal evocation of poverty is an important concern in any account of postcolonial drama.

Among the most useful responses to poverty or material constraints theatre workers encounter in third-world locations is Boal's "Joker system," first outlined in his account of the Arena Theatre of Sao Paulo. Of the theatre theorists and practitioners in the genealogy of postcolonial performance, Boal's is the most candid statement regarding financial exigencies:

> Drastic limitation of the purchasing power of the public brought about a reduction in the consumption of superfluous products, the theater among them. Each situation must be faced squarely in its own sphere, not according to optimistic perspectives, and the facts are these: the theater lacks a consumers' market, it lacks human resources, it lacks official support for any campaign aimed at popularization, and official restrictions are overabundant (taxes and regulations). (*Oppressed* 179)

The "Joker" function not only counters Brecht's charge of artistic simplicity in poor working class theatres, it also outlines concretely how to achieve cost-effective simplicity in staging. Boal takes into consideration the economics of staging by specifying that only one costume is allowed for each social role such as the army, the church, proletariat, and aristocracy. If there is more than one character playing the same role then the same costume can be used by many actors simultaneously. With the exception of love scenes, which Boal indicates must be performed by members of the opposite sex,

actors and actresses can perform masculine and feminine roles regardless of sex (*Oppressed* 183).[5] This is in contrast to Grotowski's productions, that metaphorized as well as literalized poverty by composing organic masks of the actor's facial muscles, stage props made of waste materials, and tattered costumes. The economy of staging is better explained by Boal than Grotowski, who is eloquent on evocations of poverty but not on its political rationale.

Although there are significant differences between Brecht, Boal, and Grotowski in their views on the relationship between aesthetics and politics, all three denounce the commercialism of the theatre of their times. Brecht's Epic dramaturgy was in part a reaction against the dominant theatrical "apparatus" in Germany and Western Europe. John Willett observes that Brecht's switch to pedagogics must be seen in the light of the political and economic crisis in Germany in 1929. In this period when revolutionary change seemed "not only desirable but imminent," Brecht wrote his most "communist" works (33). Speaking against the apparatus comprising the opera, the stage, and the press, Brecht observes that art that reinforces the status quo and does not threaten change in any form is "art as merchandise," or "culinary art" satisfying the general taste for spectacle and entertainment. His suggestions for theatre to achieve a social function include sacrificing illusion and encouraging free discussion so that the spectator casts a vote in favor of change rather than being content with a good theatrical experience (34–39).

Unlike Brecht, Grotowski's statements against commercial theatre refer primarily to the actor's training and performance. Contrasting the "holy actor" with the "courtesan actor," he says that the former fulfills the spectators' spiritual needs while the latter concentrates on satisfying cultural needs. This "prostitution" of the actor, that he also calls "publictropism," includes the caveat that the actor must not act *for* the audience but in "confrontation" with the spectators ("Actor's Technique" 213–14). Even if one ignores the obvious sexism of Grotowski's formulations, it is hard to overlook that his theatrical experimentations have been available to a select few, primarily male actors, trained under him. During the successive phases of his theatrical work he has withdrawn from audiences into the esoteric realm of theatre research with a chosen set of disciple-actors. This "peripheralization" of the spectator's role has been defended by Lisa Wolford and critiqued by Eric Bentley. It has increasingly become an indefensible position regarding the possible impact of his work. Addressing the charge of elitism in his work, largely closed to the general public, except invited audiences, Grotowski's statement that direct audience participation has become a new "myth" in theatre is at the opposing end of postcolonial practitioners' acknowledgment of Brecht's and Boal's techniques in ensuring audience participation towards public discussion and debate.

Boal's methodology of making socially relevant theatre has included a stepwise articulation of the spectator's transformation into the actor, a

move that counters the soporific and cathartic effect of conventional theatre. If Brecht wanted to raise the spectator's critical consciousness through alienation, Boal's preferred method of presenting theatre as a "rehearsal for revolution" that "stimulates the practice of the act in reality" is to invite the spectator to intervene directly in the dramatic action and change it by his or her actual presence on the stage. The Joker provides an on-stage model for intervention and is thus the "contemporary and neighbor" of the spectator (*Oppressed* 142, 174). Boal's Forum theatre techniques, in which the spectator's role is described as "spect-acting," have revolutionized the stage and invigorated community drama in many parts of the world as much as Brecht's ideas. They are variously conceptualized by Eugene van Erven as the Asian theatre of liberation, Alistair Campbell's British theatre in education, and African Theatre for Development by Ross Kidd, Frances Harding, and Oga Steve Abah.

This methodology resonates with the concerns of feminist and socialist theatre groups exploring discriminatory social policies and legislation in postcolonial locations. In India, the street theatre group of Sachetana, a feminist organization based in Calcutta, and the Pandies student theatre group in New Delhi use similar dramatic techniques, with varying degrees of success, to expose discriminatory laws and social practices impacting on women. From the Caribbean, the Jamaican group Sistren Theatre Collective applied Boal's techniques to talk about teenage pregnancy, urban destitution, and women's employment in a privatized economy. African Theatre for Development groups in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Ghana have worked with women's and human rights forums to create awareness about female genital mutilation, dispel popular myths about AIDS, and advocate education of girls and women.

Boal's conceptualization of "legislative theatre" extends his ideas and arises from his experience of being elected as *vereador* (legislator) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Boal outlines the aims of legislative theatre: "As the function of *vereadors* is to create laws and to ensure the proper enactment of those that already exist, the people's participation in this process could be achieved by means of theatre: transitive democracy." While citizens creating the show achieve the democratization of theatre, this process is furthered by their interventions during the part of the show designated "Forum" (*Legislative* 15, 66). Boal's conception of 'theatrical citizenship' can be counterpoised with Alexander and Mohanty's anchoring of feminist thinking in "the centrality of collective practice in transformations of the self and reenvisioning organizational democracy" (xxxvi). As collective practices that may lead to self-transformation and critical thinking, the genealogy of performance charted earlier also needs to be examined from the perspective of female or feminized citizens as spectators, actors, and spect-actors.

Feminist performance theorists have critiqued Brecht, Grotowski, and Boal for their incomplete assessment of the gendered and sexed body in performance. Speaking of the potentially facilitating connections between

Brechtian and feminist theory, Elin Diamond proposes an intertextual reading to arrive at a "gestic feminist criticism." Drawing upon Judith Butler's explication of performativity, Diamond envisages performance as a site where gender can be alienated by foregrounding "those moments in a playtext when social attitudes about gender and sexuality conceal or disrupt patriarchal ideology." In this way she amends Brecht's "blindness regarding sexuality and gender." She also redefines "apparatus" as involving "psychic and ideological relationships among text, stage, and audience" (45, 52–58). Privileging the female spectator's perspective on the events being staged, Diamond's retheorization of Brecht's principles focuses on the body of the female actor.

The following paragraphs present feminist revisions of Brecht's, Grotowski's, and Boal's ideas indicating the impact as well as questioning of their ideas in postcolonial contexts. My first example is from Nigeria. Tess Onwueme, a Nigerian diasporic playwright, subtitles her work *Tell It to Women* "An Epic Drama for Women," invoking Brecht's theories as formal and ideological intertexts. Structured in "movements" rather than acts and scenes, this play is an account of social conditions in postcolonial Nigeria where the upper and middle classes initiate fraudulent development programs in the name of grassroots women. It describes events in the 1990s when the military government's schemes such as the Better Life for Rural Women program invited international attention and foreign funding but did little to help rural women. The obvious references to frauds perpetrated by Nigerian dictators under the pretext of bettering people's lives, and the dramatic strategies involving social gests such as ritual offerings, community gatherings, music, masks, and incantations, are intended as alienation techniques. One of the many social gests in the play indicating the gulf between urban and rural women occurs in the stage directions to Movement Three:

> Sherifat and Yemoja together perform the traditional ritual honoring the Earth Goddess and Onokwu/ Yemoja, Goddess of the Sea, for whom the women are devotees and priestesses. Because they are in the city, away from the village where the traditional ritual items are readily available, they improvise with water and garden eggs in place of palm wine and Kolanut. Yemoja drums while Sherifat recites the incantation to which Yemoja responds. (95)

The city-based bureaucrat Daisy's comment on the ceremony: "Go on, drum! Drum, Voodoo Princess!" indicates the playwright's attentiveness to a Western audience's possible interpretation of this gest. Daisy's response alienates the ritual and prevents the audience from exoticizing either the ceremony or the women who enact it. Onwueme thus uses Brechtian principles in her dramaturgy to demonstrate the complex interplay of gender, class, and political power in the indigenous/Western, rural/urban, community/individual divide in postcolonial Nigeria.

As in the case of Brecht, commentators have observed that Grotowski's conception of the actor and the spectator in his para-theatrical experiments is not only elitist but also predominantly masculine and that the female body is largely absent in his theories. In one of the most strident post-colonial critiques of Grotowski's experiments in *Theatre and the World,* Rustom Bharucha feigns perplexity at Grotowski's motivations for coming to India to research Theatre of Sources: "But why did you need to go to a small town like Khardah in West Bengal and work with a group of actors on finding their 'sources'? What could you teach them about their selves that they didn't already know?" (50). Bharucha's analysis is applicable to Grotowski's techniques for training actors and to his almost completely androcentric productions. The most telling symptom of what Richard Schechner calls "structural sexism" is that although there have been a few strong women performers among those Grotowski has trained, the principals have always been men, leaving little scope for women as "inheritors" ("Exoduction" 482–85).

Postcolonial dramatists influenced by Grotowski inherit this masculinist bias. In her examination of the Jamaican dramatist Dennis Scott's work, Honor Ford-Smith observes that Scott was influenced by Grotowski's "poor" theatre to develop an aesthetic that "stressed a language of drama based on actor body and ritual." He "borrowed, transformed, adapted [. . .] and spliced it together with local codes to develop a mode of physical performance and knowledge production which emphasized actor body and ensemble imagery taken from popular religion and various carnival traditions." However, women remain subordinate in this borrowing since Scott's "performance strategies privilege men in ways which depend on the domestication of women" (Ford-Smith, "Performing" 14, 241). This privileging of the male body in Jamaican performance was implicitly contested by Sistren, an exemplary instance of the application, revision, and modification of Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed techniques.

Since Sistren's plays are about the lives of grassroots women, the performances reference women as actors and spectators. The group members were teenage mothers working in blue-collar jobs; their experiences were, in many ways, representative of urban Jamaican women. Sistren's innovative dramaturgy based on life experiences relied on an episodic structure comprising the group members' memories, children's games, and rituals. Presenting gender as ideology, the group sought to denaturalize the female body in its sexed and gendered roles. Some dramatic techniques necessitated by the all-female cast such as cross-dressing for male roles led to the group being labeled "sodomites" and "lesbians." Using the Brazilian literacy activist Paulo Friere's techniques of consciousness-raising as "conscientization" in the improvisational, workshop mode, Sistren interacted with rural communities in Jamaica to establish a network of women-centered theatre and activist groups across the island. Later this work had to be abandoned due to lack of funding. In many ways Sistren epitomized a

"poor" theatre struggling to survive in a situation where cultural activism was and continues to be neglected in favor of developmental concerns. Long before Boal outlined his structure of legislative theatre with a network of partners structured as "nuclei" and "links," deriving from Paolo Friere's conceptualization of "culture circles" in Brazilian literacy campaigns, Sistren had already established connections with communities outside their urban base in Kingston. The financial difficulties in legislative theatre and physical dangers faced by the nuclei of groups that Boal mentions were lived realities for Sistren; this continues to be a major problem faced by postcolonial theatre and drama workers.

Engaging with urgent questions about citizenship and its entitlements, postcolonial dramatists have used, challenged, altered, and reconceptualized some of the most influential theories of performance. The struggles and successes of these dramatists and groups are similar to those of the women's movements, although the former are thought to occupy the cultural and the latter the social terrain of postcolonial geographies. While we must be cautious in drawing either neat parallels or distinctions between social and cultural movements, the interfaces between the two need to be examined to arrive at an assessment of political versus apolitical dramatic acts. Articulated through the intersection of the women's movement and postcolonial dramaturgy, the concern central to this book is an interrogation of a predominantly masculine and heteronormative conceptualization of citizenship responsible for a model of development that dismisses identity-based social activism and denies the material exigencies of cultural work allied with these activist efforts.

Postcolonial dramaturgy is informed by an emphasis on the politics of recognition and redistribution that is, as mentioned early on in the introduction, the legacy of a feminist activism originating from the same locations as the drama discussed. Feminists have argued for implementation of laws to protect citizens against forms of social discrimination based on gender and sometimes sexual orientation, and the need for a fair estimate and compensation of women's waged and unwaged labor. These efforts have acquired urgency with the deleterious effects of globalization and structural adjustment policies in developing nations in Africa, the Caribbean, and South Asia. The degree of success of these efforts remains to be seen. In the meantime, the onus of responsibility for disenfranchised citizens falls on local communities and the non-biological familial ties they may form with some members of these communities.

The expectation that the primary structure of feeling in the intersection of drama and feminism would be one of optimistic struggle is unfulfilled; in fact, many of the texts and performances analyzed focus on coming to terms with loss. The centrality of ritualized personal or political mourning in the following chapters is dictated as much by the 'action' of the play—some of them depict rituals such as the Nine-Night ceremony or the public keening of the *rudalis* (ritual mourners); others contain indirect but

equally evocative expressions of public grief and outrage at the sickness, passing away, or murder of postcolonial ideals of social justice in neocolonial times—as by the anguish one observes in accounts of many decades of feminist efforts that have yielded less than expected returns. They also reflect grief, although not despair, at the distance between feminist ideals and the very real material, social, and geographical conditions confronting these ideals. This drama underscores that mourning can be an enabling condition for activism, since part of coming to terms with grief is the impetus to continue doing the work that is personally essential and politically meaningful. Charting a journey from hope to analysis, from grief to resistance, these chapters could have been arranged in several ways. The map eventually chosen is as follows:

Part I discusses how Jamaican dramatists' representation of communities of working classes and destitute women in the 1970s and 1980s presents ways of national belonging and citizenship that may, following David Evans, be called "sexual citizenship." This part introduces the possibility of sexuality as a vector in discussions of citizenship in the face of virulently misogynist and homophobic responses to dramatic representations of the social and sexual underclass in Jamaica.

Chapter 1 focuses on two plays by Dennis Scott, acclaimed dancer, poet, and Director of the Jamaica School of Drama from 1977 to 1982. Scott's dramatic career roughly coincides with Jamaica's experiment with democratic socialism under the People's National Party leader Michael Manley. Drawing attention to colonial history in Scott's plays *An Echo in the Bone* (1974) at the beginning of democratic socialism and social chaos in *Dog* (1978) during one of the worst periods of political violence witnessed in postcolonial Jamaica, the chapter first articulates the idea of normative citizenship propagated by the Jamaican state. It then discusses representations of community and kinship offered in the two plays with reference to the normative citizen as an Afro-Caribbean man engaged in productive labor. The chapter concludes by positing that Scott's dramaturgy, influenced by Brecht's and Grotowski's theories, exemplifies institutionalized cultural action contending with state ideologies in its conceptualization of citizenship.

Chapter 2 is about Sistren Theatre Collective, a grassroots women's group that arose out of the Jamaican national cultural policies detailed in Chapter 1. Under the direction of Honor Ford-Smith, Staff Tutor at the Jamaica School of Drama, a group of working class women wrote, produced, and performed plays on the private dimensions of women's experiences including teenage pregnancy, rape, and domestic abuse. Sistren's feminist program of drama for social justice is based on and supplements Augusto Boal's ideas about a people's theatre. The chapter claims that the group's work initiated a discussion of female sexuality in the public sphere to present material and sexual security as equally important aspects of 'postcolonial sexual citizenship' by emphasizing social support networks among destitute women. The chapter concludes by indicating the felicitous temporal conjunction of Sistren's work with the Gay

Freedom Movement's (GFM) efforts to forge a community in Jamaica in the 1970s. These efforts laid the ground for the 2001 campaign against discriminatory legislation and in support of effective citizenship for sexual minorities by the Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays (J-FLAG).

Part II continues the discussion on feminist dramaturgy initiated through Sistren and furthers the analysis of postcolonial drama, kinship, and citizenship by looking at the trajectory of a street theatre group that has sporadically collaborated with the women's movement in India. It also examines the plays of a feminist and a gay dramatist who are giving voice to quasi-kin communities of transsexuals and female mourners, subaltern groups whose existence is relatively marginal to the postcolonial state's implicit endorsement of the middle or upper caste heterosexual male as a legitimate citizen.

Chapter 3 is about popular theatre and consciousness-raising in India by Jana Natya Manch's (People's Theatre Forum) focus on sexualized violence against women through street plays. These plays were written and performed in solidarity with the Indian women's movement's campaigns against rape and sexual exploitation of children. Jana Natya Manch's or Janam's (the acronym is the Hindi word for "birth") program of taking theatre to the doorsteps of the people can be seen as modification of Bertolt Brecht's vision of a theatre for the working classes to include the involvement of women and men workers as audiences. Since its formation in the 1970s Janam has maintained its primary focus on the working classes but also directed attention to the family and immediate kin relations as sites of gendered violence. These representations are marked by the awareness that gender issues cannot be subsumed or divorced from material inequities. Like Sistren, Janam is a case study in the mutually facilitating relationship between the women's movement and efforts for a socially relevant theatre. The central idea explored in this chapter is how the interaction between Janam and the women's movement in India has held the state accountable for an insufficient attention to women's rights and how the group's recent work allows for a possibility of extending gender justice to other marginalized groups such as gay men and lesbian women.

Chapter 4 discusses two plays, one by Dattani, a gay male playwright writing in English, and another by Ganguli, a woman dramatist writing in a local language, Hindi. Dattani writes about *hijras,* transsexual or transgendered men; Ganguli's focus is on *rudalis,* or female mourners. I examine these plays with reference to the women's movement in India, that has successfully interrogated caste as a gendered structure doubly oppressing women as citizens. However, the movement has been less than willing to discuss sexual orientation as an equally significant factor in second-class citizenship. Dattani's and Ganguli's depiction of the intersection of caste, sexuality, and non-biological forms of kinship anticipates the Indian women's movement's relatively recent and reluctant acceptance of sexual orientation as an important axis of oppression in the struggle to obtain

gender justice. The chapter claims that the multiple colonization of this caste- and sexually marked subject by the postcolonial nation-state and by global vocabularies of identity affiliations ('gay', 'lesbian', 'bisexual', and 'queer') can be countered by a materially grounded exploration of 'queer subalternity' that acknowledges non-Western sexualities as influenced by but distinct from Western understandings of sexual identity.

Part III directs attention to the generation of Nigerian playwrights after Wole Soyinka who represent women as agents of revolutionary transformation as well as participants in a compromised postcolonialism. In the absence of explicit discussions of feminist and queer consciousness in Nigerian drama, it models strategies of reading to indicate how Nigerian, and by extension postcolonial drama, can be used to open a conversation on feminist and queer issues by drawing on local activism and indigenous understandings of gender, community, and kinship that illustrate queer subalternity.

Chapter 5 contends that Osofisan's Marxist dramaturgy, perfected through his work with university drama groups, can also be used to read the gender ideology of the Nigerian state. Osofisan's Brechtian play *Morountodun,* based on a peasant uprising, was first performed in the late 1970s during the time of Nigeria's second transition to democracy. Like Dennis Scott's drama, it was influenced by and commented on attempts at amendments in gendered structures of power in Nigeria. The issue of political representation for women that motivated both state-supported and autonomous women's groups in Nigeria during the late 1970s and early 1980s is the analytical lens in my close reading of Osofisan's play. I outline and critique recent theories of citizenship, democracy, and resistance in Africa by Mahmood Mamdani and Achille Mdembe to propose that the revolutionary kinship and the community of the exploited in Osofisan's play mirrors the national community Nigeria sought to engender during this period: both are characterized by an exclusion of women's contribution to postcolonial democracy.

Chapter 6 discusses how the work of the Nigerian diasporic playwright Tess Onwueme can be placed on the continuum of Nigerian cultural activism marked, on the one hand, by a critique of postcolonial governmentality and, on the other, by active support of the programs initiated by the state. Onwueme's focus on women's resistance to the developmental programs imposed by leaders and bureaucrats in Nigeria in her play *Tell It to Women* (1992/1997) can be seen in conjunction with the efforts of Theatre for Development (TfD) practitioners. Onwueme exposes the fraudulent claims of postcolonial Nigerian governance with respect to development; in contrast, TfD practitioners work in close conjunction with the government's development plans. Juxtaposing these differing cultural ideologies, I address the following questions: How is women's sexuality overdetermined by the imposition of developmental programs enlisting the aid of cultural activists? Can theatre and drama be useful in initiating a dialogue on

sexualities in Africa? Is it possible for women-centric traditions within local communities to yield a model of postcolonial development that embraces alternative sexualities? The chapter answers these questions by suggesting that despite presenting sexual identity politics as separatist and irrelevant to the communitarian ethos of Nigerian society, *Tell It to Women* initiates a long-overdue conversation on alternative sexualities in Nigeria.

Finally, the Epilogue examines how the imagined models of citizenship analyzed in the preceding chapters reflect women's movements nurtured in educational institutions in India, Jamaica, and Nigeria. Since schools of drama, colleges, and universities are important loci of analysis in this study, I conclude by proposing a multidisciplinary pedagogical approach required to counter hegemonic gender ideologies. This initiative can be based in universities, such as the University of Delhi, India, the University of West Indies at Mona, Jamaica, and Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria, that are already sites of feminist activism. In conclusion, the book claims drama as a form of public pedagogy that can bring about changes in social perceptions, provision of justice, and social and self-acceptance of non-normative life choices.