I am interested in examining the ways in which authors who self-identify with colonized sites position themselves - and the communities in which they are members and for whom they might be said to speak as proxies - as agents whose decisions and actions express subjectivity and ethical force. I will begin with Lisa Lowe's analysis of narrative as "an apparatus of European colonial rule," Audre Lorde's prescriptive assertion that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house," and Frantz Fanon's claim that "decolonization is always a violent event." A productive analogy may be drawn, I think, between the material violence that, in Fanon's estimation, the colonized must perpetrate upon the bodies of their oppressors in order to achieve liberation, and the figurative violence wreaked upon the corpus of the realistic aesthetic by decolonial authorship. This latter type of violence is most easily apprehended "in literary works, at least - in the various instantiations of that phenomena I will term "narrative transgressions" - e.g. the metaleptic intrusion of the until-then hypo-diegetic character Pucha at the end of Jessica Hagedorn's Dogeaters, or the similarly abrupt and equally enigmatic narrative interventions of Half-a-Crown in Sol T. Plaatje's Mhudi. If, as Lowe argues, modes of representation can be deployed as instruments of imperial initiative as effectively as military force, then the kind of narratological 'violence' just indicated might function tenably as an effective response to the oppression of an imposed or colonizing aesthetic. If, as Fanon claims, "Decolonization is truly the creation of new men...The 'thing' colonized becomes a man through the very process of liberation," then it is through such a praxis of violence that the colonized write themselves into the world, and incarnate a self capable of destabilizing that rupture or absence Homi Bhabha calls "the 'partial' presence" of the "colonial subject."

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