

Tribute

## A TRIBUTE TO DOROTHY E. SMITH

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If we begin from the world as we actually experience it, it is at least possible to see that we are indeed located and that what we know of the other is conditional upon that location. There are and must be different experiences of the world and different bases of experience. We must not do away with them by taking advantage of our privileged speaking to construct a sociological version that we then impose upon them as their reality. We may not rewrite the other's world or impose upon it a conceptual framework that extracts from it what fits with ours. Their reality, their varieties of experience, must be an unconditional datum. It is the place from which inquiry begins (Smith 1990)

When I agreed to write on Dorothy (Smith) I didn't expect it to be a difficult task. She has been with me through much of my adult life, it would be a simple matter I thought, of sitting down with the intent of writing an account. It would begin at the beginning and tell in the middle what I saw, felt and learnt until the end, our last encounter. But it turned out to be quite the opposite, for the very reason that we were together for so long and so involved in seeing the world in similar ways, to which we came independently and conjointly. There was the sharing of histories and stories, of experiences and politics, and all along I learnt from her mostly in agreement, and in the process reading Marx and her especial feminist way of reading his critique of ideology. We also learnt things together as we tried to apply this method in its enriched form through Edward Said's (1978) *Orientalism*, David Goldberg's (1993) *Racist Culture* and, in my case, to Frantz Fanon's analytics of race and colonialism. All this goes to say that the boundaries of our relationship were porous, the mutuality and the nature of our perceptions were not clearly delineated. How could this not be, as she was at once a teacher, a mentor, a comrade sharing the street on many occasions and a friend, for me and, I dare say, for many others. Thus there could be, I should have known, no linear narrative constructed about her. "We are always in the middle of it all," she would say, "we are always in history, in race, in class, in the social." Once while walking back from OISE to a nearby underground station she asked: "Where is the beginning, the middle and the end of the social?" "It is not a flat earth," she said. She expressed this and similar sentiments in many ways at Dooney's cafe, her regular hangout, her office out of office, in her classes or seminars and, of course, in her writings. She wrote books with such titles as *Writing the Social* (1999), addressing this nebulous concept of the social, defaced in indiscriminate use by many hands. Her relational way

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of thinking, her attention to experience as indispensable to generating knowledge, the fissures and contradictions that she discovered in the groundwork of the social in which the subject lives and subjectivity arises, were at the core of the method of social inquiry she devised. It is not a surprise therefore, that I could not disentangle the different strands of her life and thought, her ways of relating to people and ideas, and tell a straight linear story. Hence this all over and all at once recuperation. In fact in her own person Dorothy embodied this way of being that was in process, thus simultaneously integrating her head and heart composed of critical rational thinking, righteous anger and an abiding love for people and nature. With this she devised her own kind of sociology, which expanded with social investigations conducted over time from being one for women (*The Everyday World as Problematic*, 1987) to one for people (*Institutional Ethnography*, 2005). It is not a surprise that she loved Karl Marx and William Blake, Virginia Wolf, and Adrienne Rich and detective novels without the least compulsion of choice. Through her analytical and critical discernment of unstoppable social relations and their modes of mediation the social came together for her. Her two favourite phrases, as her students and audiences can testify, were "what actually happens" and "how it is put together". It is from this viewpoint of constitutive mediations of social reality that she developed her own particular kind of sociology, making the road as she walked. And that is what attracted me to her as I got to know more of her, through personal interactions, her work, her politics of passionate rage and critique; that is why she is still with me to this day.

Dorothy is now regarded as an institutional figure, an academic par excellence, the founder of a sub-discipline within the corpus of a larger one. It is important to note for this reason that Dorothy was no mere academic. She was "in" the university but not "of" it. Her attention ranged from the University of Toronto and Hamilton steel workers lives, she was distributing anti-war leaflets and speaking in numerous feminist rallies and walking in labour marches. Her motivations for being an academic were much more than the pursuit of a profession, of being the standard bearer and handmaiden of an objectifying institutional social science. In this as in everything else she was a fundamentally political person, on her own and others' behalf. She put the subject, the "I" into sociology. claiming a validity for experience. Remembering the reality of the social and biological forms of reproduction that she left at the door of the university as she came into a space of disciplinarian and institutional reproduction, she created her sociological problematic from this disjunction. This prompted her to an act of disobedience to patriarchal bourgeois intellectual disciplines. Personally experiencing the oppressions, exclusions and erasures by bourgeois social organization imposed on people's lives, particularly focussing on women's experience in daily and institutional life, she set about understanding these processes and making this knowledge actionable in and through the women's movement. She drew on the resources available to her – methods of critique, empirical sociological investigations, scholarship, insight and intuition. Her fight against women's oppression was a large part of her struggle for a just world for all.

Before we move further, following her example I want to situate Dorothy's intellectual and political interests and their development in her lived time. Her life was long and spanned all the formative moments in the twentieth century extending into the twenty-first, much of which most

of us share with her. But what interests me most is the earlier world, the one in which Dorothy grew up from a child to a young woman and shortly thereafter. The conclusion is inescapable that her social and political unconscious and consciousness developed in those decades. Among other things these decades comprehended the long struggle between forces that Rosa Luxemburg called “socialism” and “barbarism”. Behind this struggle lay the backdrop of the first world war, to be rapidly succeeded by the second. By 1945, when she was nineteen and the war had ended, she went, as did many women at that time, to secretarial college instead of university. Through the years of work for the publishing company Faber and Faber, partly owned by the poet T.S. Eliot and which would publish Sylvia Plath in the future, Europe was a phoenix in ashes. The recovery of Europe through the “gift” of the US Marshall Plan brought with it the cold war, in which “christian” democratic and similar parties of the right displaced communist and social democratic ones. US hegemonic status over Europe was securely established with the rhetoric of the “free world”, a situation that continues to this day. It is in the middle of this reality that the young Dorothy grew up. Directly or indirectly she had to cope with the devastations wrought by the war. In the rubble of cities and factories she endured air raids and severe food rationing amidst an army of industrial women workers now enfranchised by their contributions to the two world wars. There can be little room for doubt that much of Dorothy's politics, her enduring interest in socialism and anti-war movements, began in these experiences. The feminism implied in her socialism gained its definition and strength as she moved from England to America.

The topic of feminism turns us to Dorothy's personal life as it contributes to her future work. In the extreme times of the war her personal life within a nuclear family had not yet become politicised. Pre-war feminism, of which she was aware, took a back seat for now and yielded place to anti-imperialism and anti-fascism, as well as the basic survival needs of repair of human lives and the restoration of their habitat. Speaking of her personal background, Dorothy was an only girl in the middle-class Place family, among caring parents and brothers. Her mother was educated and intellectually inclined. Dorothy did well in school and spent much time outside, including long walks in the Yorkshire moors. She also read voraciously, was intellectually curious, and specially spoke to me of her brothers. Her oldest brother, a future philosopher, encouraged her intellectual and literary interests. She may have shared her interest in poetry, which she kept until the end, with her younger brother, Milner, the late British poet, whose poetry she read to her former students last year on a Zoom gathering. She and I sometimes toyed with the idea of what feminism would look like if these roles of brothers were included in feminist analysis, as it said little about positive sibling relations, making such issues extraneous to the idea of the family. The family was typified strictly in terms of patriarchal authority represented by father, husband and male sexual partners. Siblings were never portrayed as having direct relations with each other independent of the manipulation and competitiveness for parental attention. The feminist portrayal of the family has something of a Weberian ideal type about it, something of an ideological construction, with resemblance to a Hobbesian - Freudian model. I remember wondering what feminist theory would look like if experiential and historical details provided by feminist historians were actively integrated. This may not have substantially changed feminist analysis, though perhaps portrayed

more complicated contradictions within it. It would not alter the fact that people would continue to experience the reality of a bifurcation between everyday lives and their institutional aspects. This bifurcation, Dorothy tells us, is not to be treated as schizophrenic. In fact we could politicize it by using it to create an investigative method which would lead to a proper analysis.

Talking of feminist theories brings us to questions surrounding the problem of knowledge as explored by Dorothy in her books, such as *The Everyday World as Problematic*, in which she elaborates her marxist feminist epistemological critique of different modes of knowledge production. In these texts she is concerned with the relation between the knower and the known, what mediates their mutual intelligibility, the kinds of knowledge produced and the reasons for seeking them. This method of investigating basic epistemological premises she called “social organisation of knowledge”. To get a proper grasp on this methodology we can turn to the example of mother-child relations and their institutional involvement. In her joint research and writings with her former student and colleague, the late Allison Griffith, Dorothy showed how this everyday and taken-for-granted relationship and its various appropriations in different situations are crucial in both existential and critical terms. This relationship is so naturalized that it provides a great site for exploring subjects’ experiences within the private and public spaces of capital's sociality. Through this are disclosed the modalities of appropriation of our existential and emotional needs by organisational institutional aspects typical to capitalism. We grasp how our deepest emotional and daily needs as mothers and children become grist for the mill of what Dorothy called “relations of ruling”. Through this and other examples Dorothy demonstrates the double-sided nature of social experience in our current times. We see how daily needs and tasks or basic relations of mothering and other kinds of caring take on different meanings at the personal and the institutionally mediated level. This also signals how the subsumption of labour in the family helps to commodify labour, and reveals the hidden exploitation endemic to a market oriented society. In this context of the family in capitalism Dorothy also speaks to the sub-contracted nature of wealthy and middle-class women's work in corporate enterprises, thus showing capital's social outreach into so-called private lives. Essays in *The Everyday World as Problematic* tell how our daily lives and experiences are divided as well as intermeshed in their ontological aspects in capitalism. Qualitative differences between types of experiences constitute the social moments of the subject. There is a crack, metaphorically speaking, marking the social surface, a fissure lies in the very ground that we stand on. Though we may be unconscious of it, this way of being in the world creates a malaise in us, an existential anxiety. We feel out of control, especially in institutional and public spaces. Dorothy's analysis through social organization of knowledge provides us with a critical grasp of this crisis-governed life within capital's sociality. We begin our work from here, the entry point of knowledge production lies in this sense of disjunction and using it as the counter-force to the ruling rationality of capital.

In her accounts of academia Dorothy feels a palpable split between her daily life as a woman, a mother, and her academic institutional one. A double life consciousness pervading all impels her to devise a method of inquiry to investigate this phenomenon. She needed to explore the terrain people occupy for such a divided consciousness to arise. As the social of capitalism is a

space mediated by institutions, such as state and corporate bureaucracies, educational and health systems, by policing and workings of law, she needed an adequate method to analyze the social. For this she turned not to specific theories, but rather to an investigative method that would not just describe or explain (away) the doubleness of her and others' awareness. The method was meant to analyze and explain which would not use reality as a mere illustration of theoretical correctness. Though she was not averse to reading sociological theories, Dorothy saw a distinction between theory and method and considered the latter as a priority for sociologists.

For the construction of this methodology Dorothy turned to multiple sources. Other than whatever feminist critiques were available at that time, she explored the ethnomethodology of Harold Garfinkle, writings of Alfred Schutz and George H. Mead, and the phenomenology of everyday life of Henri Lefebvre, among other sources. She told me in a private conversation that what she had learnt from these non-marxist sources did not fall into place for her until she made herself thoroughly conversant with Marx, which gave her a principle of selection of sociological theories that she read. As for Marx, as she says in her book *Feminism and Marxism* (1977), she read him through a feminist lens, emphasizing patriarchy and sexual division of labour in the organization of capital. Dorothy's main Marx texts were *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology* in its entirety, as well as *Capital*. Having read them intensively, she realized that Marx's critique of ideology might provide her the strongest clue for understanding how social and experiential contradiction, instead of being obstacles, could direct her to understand the social organization of "what actually happens" both in the realm of consciousness and of daily life. Recognition of the roots of social and experiential contradictions helped her to formulate an epistemology which set things right side up. Taking the critique of ideology from Marx, Dorothy could selectively use and critique texts written from other sociological perspectives. Marxism did not drive her to structuralism, however, as the centrality of the (woman) subject's experience remained the point of departure. She felt confident that a critical understanding of existing conditions required starting from the ground. Entering through the subject's experience, both personal and institutional, immediate and mediated, she could establish a two-way relationship between the personal and the social, the local and the extra-local, thereby abolishing an ontological bifurcation in actual reality. Initially starting as a feminist from her own experiences of life and love, of a husband's abandonment with two small children to raise, she wanted to create "a sociology for women", but later, at a more mature stage of methodological development, she devised "a sociology for people" (Smith 2005). Her foundation lay in "social organization of knowledge", in distinction from "sociology of knowledge". From a feminist marxist perspective she could penetrate the organization of the social without bypassing individual experience in a daily and institutional sense. She did not pre-empt her social inquiry by seeking refuge in the philosophical terminology of dialectics. Instead, she took into account the researcher's own involvement as a social subject in the reality she inquired into. In this framework the researcher is not passive and absent from her own knowledge project, claiming an objective neutrality enjoined by positivist sociology, nor are social objects inert blocks of reality, but practically created and shaped

dynamically by other subjects. Both the knower and what is sought to be known are implicated. The terms of knowledge, seen in this manner, are not alien to them.

Needless to say, Dorothy's new and critical, at times polemical approach to sociology of knowledge created a fair bit of controversy and confusion in the world of disciplinarian sociology. The "fathers" of sociology, which could not claim "mothers", and their followers were disturbed by the fact that she not only understood knowledge to be socially organized, but treated traditional sociological knowledge as "ideology" in Marx's sense. She saw ideology not as a neutral organization of ideas, as did Destutt de Tracy, but as a mode of elite theoretical enunciations with hegemonic consequences, as supports of status quo relations of power/class. Ideology therefore was not actively produced in the course of daily life, but as Marx had said, by an elite intellectual class attached to the bourgeoisie. To prove her point she explored Marx's three tricks for creating ideology, and in fact in her teaching encouraged her students to make such ideological versions of what actually happens by regularly analyzing newspaper reports. In *Conceptual Practices of Power* (1990), particularly in the essay on Marx's method ("The Ideological Practice of Sociology"), she detailed his ideology critique, and showed why and how it could be crucial for understanding women's (and people's) experiences. She realized the simple truth that all ideas or any conceptual deployment of an expression or word are not ideological, but rather that ideology is a particular kind of knowledge produced from within the social organization of capital through manual and mental division of labour in the context of creating institutions or theories for ruling. Categorical usages of concepts per se can be for ruling or for resistance/critique. This is the reasoning that Dorothy provides, showing their possible use in struggle against capitalist patriarchy. The point of departure for this practice she designated as "women's standpoint". But unfortunately this notion was misunderstood as arising from a fixed spatial location for women, as though they stand outside of the whole social organization. Perhaps it was taken too empirically, thus privileging all ideas and experiences of women, understood in a non-relational and undifferentiated way. In Dorothy's understanding, the social organization is relationally mediated, and consciousness generated from any aspect of this social relation can be useful if it is cognizant of the multi-dimensionality of the social organization. Considered thus, identifying women as denizens of a vertical spatial metaphor, as permanently below, can only create a one-dimensional subaltern of all women. This understanding of Dorothy misrepresents her. Her epistemological method challenges the detachment of knowledge from reality and superordination of ideas above reality, bending Marx's critique as her own contribution. Not much attention has been paid to her own use of the critique of ideology, but attempts have been made to connect her with Althusser's and Foucault's uses of it. This attempt has been motivated by an inadequate understanding of Dorothy's epistemological project, which has only a partial and superficial resemblance to theirs. Primarily the difference lies in the fact that Althusser and Foucault imbed the existing subject agent in the structuration of ideology, losing thereby both the subject agent and the specificity of the concept of ideology, which is only one production of use and ideas among a whole slew of others. In Dorothy's method the inquiring and existing subjects are never lost, and social reality is lived and organized by people rather than being self-organizing and automatically renewable, and thus rendered, the social

becomes a homogeneous space. The social, whose dynamic Dorothy detects, necessarily involves a multi-dimensionality with formative contradictions and coherences, becoming a concert of sameness and difference. These do not cohabit our life sphere parallelly or linearly, but inter-incarnate and activate each other. This life sphere, that is, capital's life sphere, is not, according to Dorothy, an Archimedean but rather a Copernican one, without a fixed centre and a periphery. This is to say that the social organization of capital is capitalist everywhere, in its smallest unit. This is pointed out by Marx (1990) in the first chapter of *Capital* Vol 1, in discussing the commodity form as the essential genomic one of social organization of capital as a whole. Social organization of knowledge reveals that the life sphere of capital is also constructed by constitutive and reactive identifications and differences in all its moments. The dynamics of capital's life sphere are motivated and activated by, are productive of, practices and ideas whose deployment and meanings both vary and conjoin. Measured by their revelatory power of exposing or occluding the scope and the nature of the social, the production and deployment of ideas and practices can be critical or ideological. This open-ended method devised by Marx, and developed by Dorothy, leaves the researcher to her own motivations for undertaking an inquiry and the method of investigation. But at all points she must measure her research findings and conclusions against the initial entry point of the subject's experience and the social organization which prompts them.

The importance given to experience by Dorothy might be considered suspect by traditional sociologists. It might be objected that experiences are phenomenal, subjective, and therefore imprecise and unable to help in a reliable process of knowledge production. Furthermore, the local situatedness of the subject might offer other hindrances. There is always a chance that the use of experience might stop at the experience itself and therefore produce a solipsistic result, but it is also true that for some types of experiences to be possible and repeated for a substantial group of people, there have to be certain socio-historical and conceptual conditions within which they regularly occur. Also, importantly, making sense of experiences or seeing them as such is possible from any social site because the same social organization is inhabited by all. This, as Marx said of language, constitutes the principle of intelligibility, coming from shared practices and cultures. Something makes sense to us because it makes sense to others.

Since this project of an ever-widening scope of research distinguishes her, and she and I share the love of detective novels, I often think of Dorothy as a detective of the social, a kind of Miss Marple of her trade. She constructs a case against the crime of capital where the criminal is always in plain sight, in fact always everywhere, and yet so hard to pin down. The criminals who sustain capital's systemic exploitation are found in all its organizational nooks and crannies. It is a curious hybrid of human operatives and an organizational structure. The harm that capitalism causes, creating a social with ironclad institutions or structures, is fueled by people's lives and needs, and requires a systemic exposure so that we may find ways of resisting it. This search for the criminal does not need a theoretical pre-emptiveness with its assertions and certitudes, but simply a method of detection or inquiry. This method cannot be bound by either positivism or idealism, because they are two sides of the same coin. Dorothy agreed with what Marx said about mere interpretation, and theory can also become a mere substitution when it hegemonizes

explanation and analysis. This view of course requires a belief in a reality, a truth, made and participated in by us, which is independent of our personal will or wish. Made possible by a given moment in history of social division of labour particularly emanating from capitalism, theory can be useful if it maintains its tentative and modest nature, as found in the sciences. Then it can help in tandem with other forms of consciousness in building a problematic. Any other claim made on its behalf exceeds its provision. In an essay in *Writing the Social*, “On Speaking the Truth after Postmodernism”, Dorothy discusses this problem with regard to the epistemological grounds of postmodernism, which disable us from having any concept of truth, any predictable historical reality out there which makes and is made by us. For Dorothy the world we live in is knowable. It is mysterious, but not a mystical thing that shifts itself in an unending process of relativization. If we adopted her perspective of social organization of knowledge, real challenges to the ills of the world could be mounted, rather than simply interrupting or unsettling them. Nor would the world be robbed of real subject agents with their fleshliness, their sensuousness and myriad experiences. Instead of being lost among others, we would find ourselves in our full individuation among them, both in coherence and contradiction. Our experiences would open doors to the social, as we try to understand how they came to be. In fact we would learn to see them *as* experiences, and be able to name what they are experiences of. That is how social movements develop, as did the women’s movement of our time, of Dorothy’s time, as it became possible to connect the personal with the political, the microcosm of our daily lives with the macrocosm of the organization of capital’s social.

Dorothy’s methodological innovation came from the realization that the form and the scope of the social varied in different modes of production. Capitalist social formations and states were derived from the earlier ones, but they changed by the context. Her training in social anthropology in London University gave her a thorough understanding of the historical context and foundation of capitalism. This was indispensable for a useful analysis of capitalist societies. She adopts this approach in *Institutional Ethnography*, showing how the waning of feudalism called for another way of organizing social life and economy. This change emerged slowly, and over time subsumed the previous forms of life or put them to the new mode’s use. This formational moment of capitalism, though long, was roughly situated in its fuller form in seventeenth century Britain, but also found in parts of Europe. The development of capitalism, with the panoply of social relations and institutions that mediated and realized its production and reproduction, became relatively stable over a period of a century or so. The state under capitalism and the major institutional complexes of class relations gradually took shape and strengthened, and all other social developments were connected to the new mode. The life cycle of whole populations came into its purview and was administered through capital’s specific terms of labour, production and everyday life. The practices and ideas of the social in growing capitalism were congealed in and largely referential to the organizing principles of various institutions which were connected with each other. The new social was no longer organized by the church or through feudal and communal economic and cultural protocols, nor through direct interpersonal or small group interaction. Instead large scale institutions for production and administration of reproductive



aspects of social life ensnared lives of people. This recognition of capital's historical development prompted Dorothy to devise a new ethnography, not in the tradition of anthropology, but one befitting the institutions comprising the modern social. Her methodological emphasis shifted to a method of inquiry of demographic administration imbricated in the necessities of daily life and how they are procured. This new ethnography, therefore, had to be of popular lives within the scope of the institutions of capital and the capitalist state. This redefinition of ethnography in sociological terms was Dorothy's singular contribution to sociology. In this schema she emphasized both the lives and needs of "real" people, as Marx would have said, and pitched the basis of our inquiry in the confrontation and reshaping of the lives of these real people in institutionally governing terms. She exposed how ideology, as understood by Marx, as standardized and standardizing categories became the articulating device of these institutions, which in reality are ruling apparatuses. It is accepted by now that institutional ethnography (IE) as a polyvalent methodology has come to stay. Her last publication, immediately before her death, was entitled *Simply Institutional Ethnography* (2022).

But that is not where my story ends, because something more needs to be said about IE. It has done both a service and disservice to Dorothy. It has revealed and obscured at once her great contribution to radical sociology. But why do I think that? It is my feeling that as IE has become an established branch of the discipline of sociology, at least in the anglophone world, it has also developed a life of its own. As a method it has often come to be seen as simple technique, a tool of identification, an ordering of the formal features of any and all institutions, regardless of why or what is being instituted. In this sense, it has become a mapping tool in the hands of many for the sequencing of the structure of an organization, somewhat in the manner of studies of formal organization. For many it does not include an ostensible reason for the inquiry, its critical premises, or a negative critique and political end. As a method divorced from its reason of existence, like all technologies, IE can be treated as indifferent to what it is applied to or why. In this use it has the danger of becoming a mode of affirming, or at least leaving unquestioned, the reality as we find it. Without an explicit motivational beginning, or an end, it becomes a device for an accurate but limited observation, the very reason which makes the social a static phenomenon or an inert, unchanging object. In this way its innovative quality is pushed out of sight.

Therefore, it must be stressed that institutional ethnography is a necessary development for a much larger project of inquiry into capital and the social forms it gives rise to. It is this recognition that gives us a handle on Dorothy's insatiable curiosity regarding what actually happens, or why and how we become divided subjects, that is, why experiences of individuals are split between those of direct social interactions and those of institutionally mediated ones. Treated as a neutral technique, IE may obscure two crucial aspects of Dorothy's method of inquiry. One, what the social means particularly for Dorothy, since it is used in different ways by others. And the other, what kind of knowledge she is seeking, and for what purpose. Traditional sociological knowledge has a passive objectivist character, while feminist marxist sociology insists on an active subjective participation in the production of knowledge, which involves the researcher herself. The first approach implies a quiescent acceptance of the existing social relations and values. It stands

on an objectivist positivist epistemology, while feminist marxism is looking for a dynamic knowledge for change. Debates on methods and goals involved in different types of knowledge production are avoided by conventional sociology, and the researcher's task becomes merely taxonomic. Feminist marxism holds an open-ended approach regarding the issues of history, social formations, organization and relations. Another name of this epistemological stance is historical materialism. Similar to Dorothy's project, the problematic of a historical materialist enquiry involves experiencing subjects in a given social setting. The participants include both her who initiates the inquiry and those about whom the inquiry is being done. The social world is the same for both, and textured with fissures around which the researcher stands, along with those about whom she wants to know. Both groups experience the shaping force of the institutions with which their interpersonal relations contradict. In this understanding institutional ethnography serves in providing the motive for undertaking the research in order to reject an objectivist epistemology and capitalist institutional and social practices. Dorothy's marxist feminist, therefore, is an activist sociology and dedicated to social movements. Her writings make it clear that it is not only possible, but imperative, for any social/political activist, to be a feminist and a marxist at once.

This brings me to venture the opinion that, similar to what Althusser tried to do about Marx in asserting an epistemological break in his social thought, a similar move is being introduced in reading Dorothy's critical trajectory. It is a fact that Dorothy's contra-Weberian social organization of knowledge has been relegated to a lesser place, and her work has been often divided between two phases of the earlier social organization of knowledge and the later institutional ethnography, with the result that the formative connection between these two critiques has been generally lost to view. How and why did this happen? One of the answers to this question perhaps illustrates Dorothy's own reflections regarding the damage a critical concept suffers when it is "disciplined" or put to pragmatic use. Dorothy's own refusal of conventional sociology, which created her critique of sociology of knowledge or Manheimian passive reading of ideology, as well as of adoption of a reificatory approach to sociology, has not gained as much traction as it should have. This may account also for the fact that Dorothy is not seen as a major marxist thinker. Among marxists only a few philosophical and cultural marxists have taken up the question of ideology as seriously as she did. Those who have, such as Terry Eagleton, equated it with the notion of the organization of ideas for political praxis, thus adopting a simpler understanding of what Marx meant. Althusser, on his side, equated ideology with the work of consciousness in general. The fact that Marx himself used this concept in a specifically critical way, restricted to the knowledge production of intellectuals and ideologues, was not noted by him. What became important for Althusser and others was that Marx himself did not use the concept of ideology, in so many words, after settling his and Engels' account with various epistemological positions and abandoning their manuscript to the "gnawing criticism of mice." But to not use a certain terminology does not mean that Marx did not use what the concept of ideology stood for to him and Engels throughout their course of writing. In fact, *Capital's* discussion on commodity fetishism is a version of ideological potentials of practical consciousness available empirically to obscure the nature of the commodity. Likewise, the ideology critique's importance for debunking the claims of Adam Smith and that of

“primitive accumulation”. In this context of diminishing interest in Marx’s critique of ideology, it becomes difficult to place Dorothy, who attributed great value to it, among the marxists. In fact, I have encountered academics who have either denied that she is a marxist, or queried what makes her so. The answer should be obvious in a close reading of her work, without inserting a break between social organization of knowledge and institutional ethnography.

The other diagnostic device for identifying an author as a marxist is an author’s submission to political economy. Political economy, or even economics, have generally overdetermined the reading of Marx. Dorothy herself, remembering Marx’s own titling of *Capital* as a *critique* of political economy, wrote in the same vein in an essay on feminist critique of political economy (“Feminist Reflections on Political Economy”, in *Writing the Social*). But the power of economism cannot be ignored in pushing to the side or in a limited attention given to a feminist reading and use of Marx’s work. Another twist to the story is added by a general acceptance of Dorothy as a feminist by feminists with non- or anti-marxist proclivities themselves. Thus it is that the instrumentalization of institutional ethnography can wipe out Dorothy’s great contribution in bringing feminism and marxism into a mutually formative relation. But because the potentials of feminism’s contribution to marxism are attracting less attention than before, we should look forward to an integrated reading of Dorothy’s work which shows her as both feminist and marxist. In my understanding, she is a towering figure in the project of feminist marxist sociology. From the beginning to the end of her working life Dorothy put up a challenge against any status-quo in epistemology and politics. Contemptuous of bourgeois niceties and radical sectarianisms, never passive, ever attentive to what actually happens, she dedicated herself to showing us the way to a critical knowledge for changing the world.

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