

Collapsing the Binary in Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands*

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We are crucified between the opposites and delivered up to the torture until the
“reconciling third” takes shape. (Jung 375)

Introduction

The fallacy goes by various names such as black-and-white thinking, false dichotomy, and false choice. Richard Paul and Linda Elder include creating a “false dilemma” or “the great either/or” among forty-four dirty tricks to win an argument. They state:

A false dilemma occurs when we are persuaded that we have only two equally
unsatisfactory choices when we really have more than two possibilities available to us....
People are often ready to accept a false dilemma because few feel comfortable with
complexity and nuanced distinctions. We tend to like sweeping absolutes. We want clear
and simple choices. So those who are skilled in manipulating people...present arguments
in *black or white* form. (*Critical Thinking: Tools* 312; emphasis in the original)

David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen address a solution to black-and-white thinking called
“collapsing” or “reformulating” binaries. This process involves “discover[ing] that the two terms
of your binary are not really so separate and opposed after all but are actually parts of one
complex phenomenon or issue” and “coming to see that what had appeared to be an opposition is

really two parts of one complex phenomenon.” Rosenwasser and Stephen conclude that the essential task is not selecting A or B but asking “to what extent” A and B are both relevant (95, 97). Similarly, in *Learning to Think Things through: Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum*, Gerald M. Nosich states, “You need to see that you can combine alternatives, that a third possibility might allow you to accomplish both of two seemingly irreconcilable courses of action” (62).

I discuss binary oppositions and the imperative of achieving a middle way with my sophomore “Critical Reading, Thinking, Writing” students in connection with chapters 3 and 5—“Entering Into the Serpent” and “How to Tame a Wild Tongue”—in Gloria Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (B), which advocates creating a new third thing that is greater than the sum of its parts. My students and I use the text as a laboratory to illustrate the play of binaries and their resolution into balanced dualities. This essay maps my pedagogical approach and provides an aid to instructors. After describing my CRTW course and showing how Anzaldúa fits into it, I will discuss how related thinkers helpfully illuminate her project, especially with regard to binaries and common ground. The essay then employs collapsing the binary to demystify some of the text’s difficult background material. In addition to showing how binaries may transform into a new third thing, this section provides discussion questions for students and possible answers for instructors, including an interpretation of the Juan Diego story as a little allegory of balanced opposites. The conclusion examines common ground as a recurring theme in Anzaldúa’s writings, and a brief [Appendix](#) sketches additional critical-thinking approaches to the two chapters.

CRTW 201: Critical Reading, Thinking, Writing

Winthrop's University's General Education core consists of three courses: Writing 101, Introduction to Academic Discourse (freshman composition); HMXP 102, The Human Experience: Who Am I?, a seminar-type humanities course that features readings on the self from multiple perspectives; and CRTW 201, Critical Reading, Thinking, Writing. Unlike Writing 101, CRTW is not a writing course; it is a reading, thinking, and writing course or what my colleagues and I call a "dedicated critical-thinking course." Such emphasis is unusual, and in 2014 Winthrop became the eighth school in the United States to be recognized for excellence by the Critical Thinking Foundation in Berkeley, California, for our work with the Paulian model of critical thinking. As presented by Nosich, whose book is used in the course, the critical-thinking elements, standards, and traits are as follows: alternatives, assumptions, concepts, conclusions and interpretations, context, implications and consequences, information, point of view, purpose, and question at issue; accuracy, breadth, clearness, depth, importance/relevance, precision, and sufficiency; confidence in reason, fair-mindedness, intellectual autonomy, intellectual courage, intellectual empathy, intellectual engagement, intellectual humility, intellectual integrity, and intellectual perseverance.

Since The Council of Writing Program Administration's sub-statement on "Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing"—echoed by the title of our Critical Reading, Thinking, Writing course—mentions three of the elements (assumptions, information, interpretation) and two of the standards (accuracy, sufficiency), there is obvious imbrication between freshman composition and CRTW. The two courses, however, differ significantly in emphasis. Whereas in

Writing 101 greater facility in critical thinking arises from engaging with readings and papers, CRTW teaches a specific critical-thinking vocabulary that facilitates engagement with readings and papers. In other words, the course is designed to help students learn and practice the critical thinking “toolbox,” which includes elements, standards, traits, and other reading, thinking, and writing strategies. The difference between composition and CRTW, then, is a matter of degree of specificity, emphasis, and direction of approach with respect to a specialized vocabulary. Given CRTW’s emphasis on critical-thinking techniques, the course aligns nicely with the first of Winthrop’s four University-Level Competencies—critical thinking, effective communication, social responsibility, and awareness of global interconnectedness (Winthrop University, “University-Level”). The fourth competency relates in turn to the university’s Quality Enhancement Plan, the Global Learning Initiative, which encourages students “to take great joy at celebrating the very rich cultures of their communities, their states, their regions, their nations, and their world” (Winthrop University, “Global”). Faculty are encouraged to incorporate GLI-related texts such as *Borderlands* in courses across the curriculum.

The reading and writing assignments in CRTW are designed to help students practice the elements, standards, and traits of critical thinking. For example, students are required to include, boldface, and discuss all of the elements of critical thinking in all of their papers. This pedagogical strategy is a bit like identifying multiple kinds of frozen precipitation in the far north: such fine distinctions are perceived to the extent that persons have a specialized vocabulary. In my sections, the first assignment is a no-thesis paper that uses the elements to analyze a piece of students’ worldview (same-sex marriage is the default topic) and then

examines the influence of a filter, barrier, or impediment (FBI) on their thinking about that view. The paper is written in connection with Jane Tompkins’s article about authorial bias, “‘Indians’: Textualism, Morality, and the Problem of History.” The second paper uses the elements and standards to analyze and evaluate a cultural artifact (magazine ads are the default topic) in connection with Susan Bordo’s chapter “Beauty (Re)discovers the Male Body” from *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and Private*. The paper’s conclusion should include reflection on the traits. Paper three is a researched essay on either an environmental topic related to E. O. Wilson’s *The Future of Life* or an issue of students’ choice in their respective major fields. Here the elements and standards are deployed to examine and argue about the thinking—glitches within the elements and violations of the standards and the traits—that led to a problem. The fourth and final paper uses Nosich’s Paulian apparatus to review (analyze and evaluate) a global cultural event (students choose their own event) and to make a connection to Anzaldúa’s chapters. Thus, the overall course aims to help students build and practice a toolbox of critical reading, thinking, and writing skills so that (in Paul’s definition of critical thinking) they can think about their thinking while they are thinking in order to improve their thinking (Nosich 2), elevate their performance in other academic courses, and develop the critical thinking traits in their academic and personal lives. Although CRTW does not set out to change anyone’s opinions, its emphasis on “strong-sense” or fair-minded thinking (Paul and Elder, *Critical Thinking: Learn the Tools* 192–93) does mean that the toolbox should do more than make students more elegantly agile in shoring up their preconceptions.

Some dialogue with Russel K. Durst's study of freshman composition, *Collision Course: Conflict, Negotiation, and Learning in College Composition*, will further clarify the nature of CRTW and Anzaldúa's place in it. My course description reads, "This course encourages you to develop the critical-thinking traits of mind by fostering the tools (elements and standards) that you need to excel in your other courses and to be a responsible, clear-thinking citizen." Although Writing 101 and CRTW both aim to help students achieve a "critical disposition of mind" (Durst 4), there are significant differences between the courses. Since all assignments and activities in CRTW foster students' facility with the elements and the standards and promote students' development of the critical thinking traits, the emphasis includes but goes beyond writing. Rather than illustrating the expository modes, students' papers deploy a specific critical-thinking vocabulary in order to codify and add precision to the "higher-order thought" processes that Durst mentions: metacognition, questions, alternative positions, problem solving, others' ideas, transcendence of the literal, creativity, and new ways of viewing old issues (94). He also writes about using "issues of justice, oppression, and diversity" in the Writing 101 classroom in order to foster "political and cultural awareness" (4). My section of CRTW both engages with and avoids such issues. For example, Tompkins's article discusses her research into the problematic interaction of European settlers and Native Americans in the 17th century and its implications for our time; however, the text is used not to set up a debate on manifest destiny in American history or social justice in the present day but to illustrate the proliferation of authorial bias and to demonstrate how the elements aid analysis. Similarly, Wilson's *The Future of Life* deals with a current political issue, the global environmental crisis, but the pedagogical goal is not to pit the

conservationists against the economists but to get students (in presentations) to understand how their majors influence their reading of a chapter and to explore (in research papers) how problematic thinking led to a specific problem within a field. Also, Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* is assigned more as a laboratory for dealing with binary oppositions than as a motivator toward social justice, though the latter may be the case for some students. As with Tompkins's and Wilson's texts, students analyze her chapters objectively, using the elements; whether they adopt her political position is left up to them.

Durst's overall project in *Collision Course* is based on conflicting values—students' pragmatic, instrumental approach to writing and instructors' emphasis on critical literacy. Here instrumentalism is "broadly defined as an emphasis upon the world of work and career advancement" (174). In other words, students value writing's extrinsic utility, whereas instructors consider writing to be a heuristic that leads to intrinsically valuable thinking skills. Durst helpfully collapses this binary by using careerism as a platform on which writing can help students develop greater intellectual sophistication and political awareness, an approach he calls "reflective instrumentalism" (170). For example, students develop their thinking by writing about their majors. Similarly, CRTW achieves a version of reflective instrumentalism through Nosich's third chapter on thinking in a discipline, the application of disciplinary thinking in a major-related blue book and other assignments, and the toolbox as a marketable professional credential. As Amanda Hiner, our CRTW Director, argues in a previous issue of *The CEA Forum*, the elements and standards are a key to developing "a distinct skill set consisting of critical thinking, verbal communication, written communication, and analytical skills that are

highly desired in today's economy and that have been demonstrated in numerous research studies to result in job promotion and advancement" (24).

Anzaldúa in Dialogue with Others

The year 2017, the thirtieth anniversary of the publication of *Borderlands*, is a good opportunity to take stock of the intellectual matrix in which Anzaldúa's book participates. The following review of its antecedents and related subsequent work, although not a comprehensive review of literature, establishes a context for a reading of the text that features collapsing the binary. To begin with, having studied chapter one, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings," in W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* in The Human Experience course, most of my CRTW students may already be somewhat familiar with binaries and what it means to collapse them into a new and better third thing. Double consciousness, "this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" (45), illustrates the binaries—African Americans' positive view of themselves versus the opposing negative view by the dominant white culture, with the hegemonic perspective infecting the subalterns' self-image. Two statements, however, point hopefully toward future reconciliation and cooperation. "This, then," writes Du Bois, "is the end of his [the black person's] striving: to be a *co-worker* in the kingdom of culture, to escape both death and isolation, to husband and use his best powers and his latent genius" (46, emphasis added). In a passage on freedom, he stresses

the idea of human *brotherhood*, gained through the *unifying ideal* of Race; the ideal of fostering and developing the traits and talents of the Negro, not in opposition to or

contempt for other races, but rather *in large conformity to* the greater ideals of the American Republic, in order that some day on American soil *two world-races may give each to each those characteristics both so sadly lack*. (52, emphasis added)

If African Americans are welcomed as coworkers or family members in accord with unifying American ideals, then the binary double consciousness that sets the races apart will collapse so that blacks and whites, working together, can form a new third thing to which each contributes what the other lacks. Du Bois's conclusions are squarely in the spirit of collapsing the binary—hierarchical dualism's transformation into a more equal duality. Indeed, *Borderlands* itself is an example of the work that results when opposing influences like the American and Mexican cultures, or the English and Spanish languages, coalesce into something that is neither one nor the other but instead a hybrid whose essential feature is greater equality.

Unlike Anzaldúa's experience, the path to such cooperation involves the sort of rites of passage described by ethnographers. Writing in the early 1960s, for example, Arnold van Gennep refers not to the merging of cultures or states but instead to a process that includes separation, transition, and incorporation, or what he calls preliminal rites, liminal/threshold rites, and postliminal rites (21). Van Gennep likens society to "a house divided into rooms and corridors": if the society is civilized (similar to our own) the interior is more open and accessible; however, if it is "semi-civilized" the house's sections are more isolated so that passage from one room to another requires "formalities and ceremonies" and "rites of territorial passage" (26). Via such rites, one moves from A through a limen to B rather than merging A and B to achieve C (a new third state that collapses the binaries). Building on van Gennep's work, Victor Turner says

of binary states that “[l]iminality implies that the high could not be high unless the low existed, and he who is high must experience what it is like to be low” (97). In other words, he posits a hierarchical, zero-sum relationship in which persons experience “*rituals of status elevation*” and “*rituals of status reversal*” (167; emphases in the original). Indeed, a “principal cultural constituent” of liminality is “a putting down or humbling of the novice” because the “humbl[ing of] the neophyte [takes place] precisely because he is to be structurally exalted at the end of the rites” (168, 201). Status reversal, a key element of the ritual process that Turner describes, extends beyond the instructor-student dynamic to include other rituals such as “the supersession by women of masculine authority and roles” (183). Therefore, the initiate’s task is to pass out of the liminal state and to join the initiators, not to embrace liminality on a permanent basis. Anzaldúa’s project is very different, for instead of flipping binaries or facilitating the novice’s movement from subordinate to superior, she argues for a greater synergy through the merging of opposites in a permanent middle ground.

Homi K. Bhabha also comments on liminal space: “These ‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular and communal” (1). In his idiom, they are “interstices,” “interstitial space,” “an intervening space” or “a space of intervention.” Stairwell and bridge are his metaphors (2–7)—bridge being one of the ways Anzaldúa depicts her role, as we shall see. “Hybridity” describes these in-between spaces, resulting in a “bridging [of] the home and the world” (13) or a “borderline existence,” which resonates with Anzaldúa’s words “borderland” and “Borderland”—a geographical middle ground and a larger, more inclusive psychological space, respectively. Bhabha’s overarching term—“Third Space”—has

postcolonial roots because the concept challenges “the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force” (37) and makes the dominant culture’s hierarchical claims untenable as contraries are assimilated in favor of hybridity and liberatory cultural change (37–38). But in an interview with Gary Olson and Lynn Worsham, Bhabha stresses that hybridity has to do with giving the “less advantaged...the advantage” and with “the revision of authority” (390–91). In other words, rather than erasing hierarchy, Third Space involves the same movement from one opposite to another—a flipping of binaries—that van Gennep and Turner describe. Louise Rodriguez Connal notes the contrast to Anzaldúa thought: “She and other women of color subvert the system by keeping cultural characteristics that are important to them. They do not create a hierarchical image. Bhabha’s concept constructs the movement between cultures; however, the hierarchical nature of his discussion is countered by women of color in their discussions of subject formation or self-representation” (209). As the critic notes, although Anzaldúa shares the ethnographers’ interest in the dynamics between and within cultures, a feminist Chicana perspective on identity emphasizes balanced duality as a response to binary dualism.

Although van Gennep’s concept of the frontier where two countries meet is somewhat akin to a (lower-case) borderland like the Texas-Mexico border, the concept of rites of passage applies more to transitions within a single culture than to interactions between or among cultures. Nevertheless, a clash of cultures throughout Anzaldúa’s education merits discussion in terms of the ethnographers’ theory of transitional rites. Her experiences in school resembled liminal/threshold rites insofar as teachers attempted to recast her in the dominant cultural mode

through acts of exclusion masquerading as rituals of inclusion. In grade school, she suffered raps on her knuckles for speaking Spanish during recess and was reprimanded for attempting to correct her teacher's pronunciation of her name. Pan American University forced her, along with other Chicano students, to take two speech courses to correct their accent. She had to argue with her graduate professors in order to make Chicano literature a focus of study. Later on, she was even forbidden to teach Chicano literature to her own high school students. These examples are not only rites of passage (a humbling of the neophyte) but also acts of personal oppression and cultural suppression. When Anzaldúa emerged from the educational limen, she did not assimilate into the ranks of the professors and administrators who had oppressed her language and her academic interests; instead of becoming a professor, she came to dwell as a prophetess of (upper case) Borderlands, transformational spaces broadly defined. As a result of negotiating her way through the ritual educational process, she adopted the middle state as a permanent destination; rather than becoming "exalted" on the dominant culture's terms, she became a living illustration of a productive hybridity, an amalgam of hegemonic and subaltern. Although outside forces attempted to effect in her a change from A to B, she managed to fend off a total incorporation into the dominant culture in favor of C, a new third thing whose hybridity *Borderlands* illustrates. In turn, her book encourages readers to dwell in liminal space (*nepantla*) and to become borderland or threshold people (*nepantleras*) or what Turner calls "liminal *personae*" because "they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (95; emphasis in the original). This in-between state, then, is the

common ground that fosters a collapsing of binaries in favor of a Du Boisian cooperation between races.

If *Borderlands* are various types of mental space and borderlands are geographical regions, then the latter resemble Mary Louise Pratt's "contact zones." Pratt writes, "I use this term to refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (487). As Patricia Bizzell states, Pratt thinks "that the United States is another such contact zone, or more precisely, a congeries of overlapping contact zones, considered from the first massive immigration of Europeans in the seventeenth century up to the present day" (166). The Texas-Mexico border is a clear example, and Tompkins's essay on Europeans and Native Americans in the 17th century describes another such place, though the article lacks the subaltern voice that characterizes Pratt's treatment of the Europeans' encounter with the natives in Peru or Anzaldúa's merging of English with multiple dialects of Spanish. Furthermore, *Borderlands* shares characteristics of the two modes of composition that Pratt discusses: autoethnography and transculturation. In an autoethnographic text "people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them"; "autoethnographic texts are representations that the so-defined others [subalterns] construct *in response to* or in dialogue with those texts" by the dominant culture (487–88; emphasis in the original). A kindred practice, transculturation includes "processes whereby members of subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant or metropolitan culture" (491). Since these categories are

complementary rather than mutually exclusive, an autoethnographic text that responds to the dominant culture may do so by transcultural means. For example, as a self-portrayal of the native culture, Guaman Poma's *The First New Chronicle and Good Government* (a 1200-page letter that includes both Spanish text and line drawings of indigenous experiences) achieves a "transcultural character" by responding to the dominant culture's view of Peruvians (491). Poma's strategy differs from the depiction of Peru by the mestizo Inca Garcilaso de la Vega in *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, which Pratt calls "a mediation that coded the Andean past and present in ways thought unthreatening to colonial hierarchy" (492).

Anzaldúa's corresponding term for autoethnography and transculturation is "autohistoria," which merges personal history and a call for social justice. Although *Borderlands* tells her own story, other Chicanas' stories are implicit in her own, and the poems that conclude the volume speak of the Chicano experience more broadly. As autoethnography, the book merges "idioms of the metropolis or the conqueror" and "indigenous idioms" (Pratt 488), using both standard English and various dialects of Spanish. As transculturation, the text engages with the materials of the dominant culture or its institutions such as the Catholic church and American higher education. In various dialects of Spanish and in the standard English of the dominant culture, Anzaldúa writes about her own life and about Chicanos' experience more broadly: she both talks back in her own tongues *and* appropriates the dominant discourse for her own purposes. That is, *Borderlands* enacts the tension between subaltern discourse and what Brian V. Street calls "[f]ormal schooled literary practices" (13). As a result, *Borderlands* itself becomes a little contact zone, a laboratory in which students can see the play of binaries and experience

what it feels like to be at a linguistic disadvantage. Anzaldúa offers students the opportunity to be uncomfortable, as opposed to being in what Pratt calls “safe houses,” which are “horizontal, homogeneous, sovereign communities with high degrees of trust, shared understandings, [and] temporary protection from legacies of oppression” (497). Studying *Borderlands* is an unsettling experience also because, unlike the “*cultural mediation*” that Pratt mentions (497; emphasis in the original), the text invites readers to see their own complicity in Chicanos’ oppression via the maintenance of racial binaries.

Wendy Bishop’s definition of ethnographic writing research provides yet another comparison. *Borderlands* and an approach to it that centers on critical thinking partially imbricate Bishop’s definition of ethnographic writing research, which means “a complicated hybridization of research traditions—sociological, cognitive, and anthropological” (4). All of these fields are represented in Anzaldúa’s text—sociology in the complicated interaction between European religion and native spirituality, psychology in the attention paid to *la facultad*, and frequent references to history and mythology. Although *Borderlands* achieves such “interdisciplinary triangulation” (Bishop 48), Anzaldúa is not really analogous to the ethnographer who goes to a foreign country and observes. She is rather a participant-observer whose qualitative data provide students with an opportunity to assume an ethnographic point of view and to apply various analytical lenses even as they experience being at a linguistic disadvantage, as if members of the lower binary.

La facultad (psychic functioning), one of the most interesting and impressive Borderland states in the text, represents human cognitive potential in ways that are frequently denied by the

Christian church and in conventional “scientific” approaches. The term is borrowed from Charles T. Tart, one of the founders of transpersonal psychology, whose book *The End of Materialism: How Evidence of the Paranormal Is Bringing Science and Spirit Together* illustrates collapsing the binary in its very title. For Tart, “scientific” is “a shorthand way of reminding us that beliefs in science can become psychologically rigid instead of open to experimental testing, as they always are in essential science” (24–25). Tart’s study may be fruitfully paired with Jerome S. Bernstein’s work on the transpersonal and the transrational. Bernstein was introduced to *Borderlands* by his client “Hannah,” and it seems evident that Anzaldúa’s title may have inspired his own: *Living in the Borderland: The Evolution of Consciousness and the Challenge of Healing Trauma*. He states, “I resonated to the word ‘Borderland’ as one that best describes the phenomena that are the subject of this book” (102; emphasis in the original). For Bernstein, the mark of Borderland consciousness is the ability to experience transrational reality, that is, “objective nonpersonal, nonrational phenomena occurring in the natural universe, information and experience that does not readily fit into standard cause and effect logical structure” (xv). He states that “in some, if not many, individuals diagnosed as having Borderline personality disorder, what appears to be a lack of differentiation of the individual ‘from his non-human environment’ is, in fact, the presence of *Borderland* features, which in their essence are not pathological” (104; emphasis in the original). Bernstein considers an emphasis on the transrational to be an evolutionary movement, for it is not a reversion to old ways that exclude logic (a flipping of binaries) but instead an incorporation of both the logical and the psychic, a collapsing of these binaries into a new hybrid. The psychic

and the rational become complementary. In short, Tart and Bernstein argue for a place in Western culture for the very same psychic functioning that Anzaldúa describes in “Entering Into the Serpent” and refers to in *Light in the Dark: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality*. In the latter work, psychic functioning is what enables access to “the other world, what Don Juan calls the left side of awareness and what I call El Mundo Zurdo” (50); it is this alternative realm whose imagery feeds her writing. As a *nepantlera* or borderland person, she is heir to contrasting traditions—both the mystical Native American and the rational Western. As they find a local habitation in her lived experience, the hierarchy resolves into balanced dualities. *Borderlands* attempts to move humanity forward, not by flipping various binaries, which would merely redefine and perpetuate dualism, but by moving its readers toward a new third thing in which rational and transrational, along with many other binaries, are integrated.

Simply put, *Borderlands* demonstrates that the unconscious mind, psychic functioning, and the imaginal realm (the *mundus imaginalis*) are worthy of consideration. CRTW students’ discussion of these phenomena in connection with *Borderlands* leads to the possibility that the course’s emphasis on the elements, standards, and traits is colonizing *them* in the way that the Europeans diminished indigenous people’s capacity for psychic functioning. In fact, critical thinking may marginalize intuition, imagination, and the unconscious to the point where one may wonder if additional traits should be included in the course. Anzaldúa’s opinion of writing instruction is in this same spirit. Andrea A. Lunsford states that “the logical has had a stranglehold on the teaching of writing,” and Anzaldúa herself borrows the word “paralogical” from Kenneth Burke to describe a complement to the logical when she discusses the relationship

between spirituality and concrete reality (qtd. in Lunsford, "Toward" 63). To his credit, Nosich makes occasional references to instinct, intuition, and the unconscious, though he stops short of integrating them into his critical-thinking system. For example, he writes, "Suppose that while walking through a neighborhood at dusk, you become afraid that you are in danger" (15). The section heading is "*Emotions Give Us Data*," but really the imagined anecdote illustrates "body wisdom," in which the physical body, via gut feeling, manifests a warning perhaps from the unconscious mind. He is describing *la facultad*, which is "an instant 'sensing,' a quick perception arrived at without conscious reasoning...an acute awareness mediated by the part of the psyche that does not speak." Anzaldúa emphasizes that "[t]hose who do not feel psychologically or physically safe in the world are more apt to develop this sense" (B 60). In the next phrases, she touches on nonverbal communication via images, symbols, and feelings. Nosich's little anecdote illustrates such communication as well as Anzaldúa's idea that *la facultad* is "a kind of survival tactic that people, caught between the worlds [in the Borderland between physical reality and the realm of the unconscious, the imaginal, or spirit], unknowingly cultivate. It is latent in all of us" (B 61). Of that fact *Borderlands* provides an important reminder.

Anzaldúa's concept of "*nos/otras*" provides an alternative to Du Boisian double consciousness and a further example of collapsing the binary. There is neither *nos* ("us") nor *otras* ("others") but a unity of both. "With *nos/otras* [sic], Anzaldúa offers an alternative to binary self/other constellations, a philosophy and praxis enabling us simultaneously to acknowledge and to bridge the distances between self and other" (Keating, "Anzaldúan

Theories” 10). Anzaldúa states: “Now I think that us and them are interchangeable. Now there is no such thing as an other. The other is in you, the other is in me. This White culture has been internalized in my head. I have a White man in here, I have a White woman in here. And they have me in their heads, even if it is just a guilty little nudge sometimes” (qtd. in Lunsford, “Toward” 42). *Nos/otras* disrupts the relationship between dominance and subordination, and one suspects that students will have a bit of Anzaldúa in their own heads as a result of reading *Borderlands*. Lunsford writes that Anzaldúa emphasizes “spaces that go beyond dichotomies of all kinds: beyond male/female; beyond reason/emotion; beyond gay/straight; beyond other/white; beyond mythic/real; beyond mind/body; beyond spirit/matter; beyond orality/literacy; beyond I/you. In every case, Anzaldúa rejects either/or in favor of both/and then some, of an identity that is always in process” (34). Or as Lunsford mentions during their interview: “Your work goes beyond the deconstructive...to show what colonialism has done and been. But the kind of work that you’re talking about creates a new reality. It goes beyond the deconstructing and the showing of old oppressions and hurts” (65). This priority involves collapsing the binary: not flipping the hierarchy but merging opposites so that a new third thing emerges, a balanced duality rather than an adjusted hierarchical binary/dualism. With such a purpose in mind, we now turn to pedagogical strategy.

Collapsing the Binary

Data collected from twenty-four CRTW honors students suggest that an approach to *Borderlands* that involves collapsing the binary can be helpful to students. On the bright side,

100% of the students polled had done the reading, and 83% had a positive reaction to Anzaldúa's chapters (the rest found them "confusing" or uninteresting). In addition, 71% were aware that Anzaldúa is dealing with binaries, 83% were able to list one or more of her paired opposites, and 75% had at least a vague understanding of what she is doing with binaries. One response was perfectly on point: the author is "illustrating how binaries are (or can be) false. There is an in-between option, something created by overlap." However, other results reflected gaps in understanding. Only 62% could correctly define "binaries," 12% were able to relate the concept to Nosich's discussion of black-and-white thinking, and 25% were able to identify something else in the course that related to binaries in some way. Only one student remembered that binaries are part of "The Method," an analytical tool discussed by Rosenwasser and Stephen, which deals with repetitions, strands, binaries, and anomalies (26–27, 31–32, 59–60). As for how Anzaldúa is "constructing" her reader, one student wrote, "She's asking the reader to actively engage with the text, placing the reader 'on the borderland.'" This interpretation was unique, and only 46% of the responses to the readership question had any degree of relevance. Although some of these statistics are promising with respect to students' reading of *Borderlands*, others suggest that only two-thirds of the students surveyed could even define binaries, while not more than one-quarter could track the concept elsewhere in the course. If a survey of sophomore Honors students demonstrates deficiencies of various sorts, then the lesson on collapsing the binary mapped out below would appear to be useful and appropriate for sophomores in general.

Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* provides an ideal laboratory for discussing binary oppositions and how to collapse them. As a feminist, she seeks to elevate the position of women and others

in subordinate positions; but whereas deconstruction usually refers to the flipping of binaries so that privileged and subordinate terms switch places, she seeks to merge them to show common ground and to create a new and greater thing. She refers to this product as “a third element which is greater than the sum of its severed parts [and which] is [or reflects] a new consciousness—a *mestiza* consciousness” (B 101–02). *Mestiza* (a woman of mixed race or ethnicity) relates to the verb *mestizar*, to mix by crossbreeding. *Mestiza* consciousness is “a holistic both/and way of thinking,” and Anzaldúa’s word *mestizaje* (crossbreeding, miscegenation, fusion) refers “to transformed combinations” (Keating and González-Lopéz 243). Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano sums up the relationship this way: “Anzaldúa enacts this consciousness [*mestiza* consciousness, the third perspective] in *Borderlands* as a constantly shifting process or activity of breaking down binary dualisms and creating the third space, the in-between, border, or interstice that allows contradictions to co-exist in the production of the new element (*mestizaje*, or hybridity)” (11). This section reads *Borderlands* in ways that demystify the difficult historical and mythological references by showing how the text identifies binaries and suggests that they can yield a new, more balanced hybrid. The italicized questions can be used to help structure discussion or group activity.

1. What binaries does *Borderlands* contain?

Table: Binaries in *Borderlands*

Dominant Category	Subordinate Category
American	Mexican
Aztec	Nomadic tribes
Chicano	Black
Christian	Pagan
Class system	Tribal society
Empiricism	<i>La facultad</i>
Europe	The New World
Human	Animal
Light	Dark
Male	Female
Mexican	Chicano
Mind	Body
Rationality	Spirituality
Reason	Imagination
Spanish	Aztec
Western	Non-Western

I begin by having students identify the binaries in order to complete the chart above. In class, I give them a grid with the left column filled out and a term bank of all the items in the right column, randomly organized. The exercise is fairly straightforward, and students do it easily. The binaries that proliferate in *Borderlands* fall in turn within a couple of major categories. The first is nationality/ethnicity. National groups overshadow each other in the borderlands where the meeting of opposing cultures reflects and reinforces asymmetrical power relationships: the Aztecs over nomadic tribes, the Spanish invaders over the Aztecs, Americans over Mexicans, Mexicans over Chicanos, and Chicanos over blacks. Anzaldúa notes, by extension, the predominance of class systems over tribal society and the English language over Spanish and its dialects. A second organizing principle is what one could call Western Europe

versus the new world except that the former *infiltrated* the latter. In other words, the opposition involves not so much the new world versus the old as contrary forces that are both present in the Americas. Some of these forces have thinkers like René Descartes and Francis Bacon in the background: mind over body, rationality over spirituality, reason over imagination, and empiricism over alternative ways of knowing such as psychic functioning. Other binaries are even more obvious: light over dark, male over female, human over animal, and Christian over pagan.

Anzaldúa regrets the passing of “balanced duality” in “earlier times” (B 55). In her view, there was such balance in native culture until white European men imposed reason and Christianity, hence her present goal: to bring the right column *into sync with* the left column so that a new third thing—a hybrid—may be produced. In short, she seeks to bridge the paired terms so that power becomes more equal. This procedure is not a flipping of binaries or a summing of opposites but a merging of terms in the spirit of *mestiza* consciousness. Rather than engaging in black-and-white thinking, which inevitably creates a hierarchy of superior and inferior, we are encouraged to think of pairings that can coexist as a new third thing without subordination.

2. How do binaries inform the references to females in new-world mythology?

Anzaldúa’s mythological female figures offer an additional binary, not to mention a challenge to students’ interpretation. Coatlicue, the serpent goddess or “Serpent Skirt,” is the “creator goddess” and the mother of various children, including a daughter, Coyolxauhqui, and a

son, Huitzilopochtli, who decapitates his sister. Also descended from Coatlicue is Coatlalopeuh, which is the Indian name for Guadalupe (the Virgin Mary). Mary is Guadalupe, and Guadalupe is Coatlalopeuh. Coatlalopeuh (“she who crushed the serpent” [51]) links etymologically to her mother. Under “male-dominated Azteca-Mexica culture” (49) female deities were split into a virgin-whore binary. On the one hand, Guadalupe is associated with the Aztec goddess Tonantsi (the good mother), and la Llorona (mourner of her lost children). On the other, the darker feminine aspects are personified by Coatlicue; two Aztec fertility goddesses, Tlazolteotl and Cihuacoatl; and la Chingada, the fucked one. To counter this dichotomy, Anzaldúa emphasizes that “*Coatlicue-Cihuacoatl-Tlazolteotl-Tonantzin-Coatlalopeuh-Guadalupe...are one*” (72; emphases in the original). The author stresses unity among women because she is critical of the hegemony implicit in binary oppositions. In a section on the Aztecs, for example, a heading that refers to “The Loss of the Balanced Oppositions and the Change to Male Domination” (53) signals her advocacy for the subalterns.

3. What does it mean to see through “serpent and eagle eyes,” and how does doing so relate to the reader’s experience of Borderlands?

It is clear that Anzaldúa is interested in collapsing binaries because she uses language like “crosspollination,” “crossbreeding,” “[d]econstruct, construct,” and “blending” (B 99, 103–04, 107). Her hope is that “break[ing] down” and transcending “the subject-object duality” (102) will end various kinds of violence, including the indignities she suffered at all educational levels. But the combining process becomes more concrete in her imperative to “see through serpent *and*

eagle eyes” (100–01; emphasis added). The distinction is the main opposition in *Borderlands*: “The eagle symbolizes the spirit (as the sun, the father); the serpent symbolizes the soul (as the earth, the mother)” (27). She wants to heal the split between masculine and feminine (and their permutations) in order to bring about a holism that includes and transcends opposing qualities so that inner change will then lead to social change. How is such change to be accomplished? First, she promotes the hybridity of *mestiza* consciousness by creating a text that acts upon the reader. *Borderlands* is a montage, a new third thing that collapses frames of reference, genres, languages, subjects, and styles. It is loaded, for example, with Spanish words, phrases, and poems. Moreover, the book itself is a diptych: theoretical essays followed by a collection of her own original poems (some in Spanish); it is not a theoretical treatise or a collection of poems but a hybrid of both, in which the poems contribute details about the situation of Chicanos described in the essays. By using form to even the power relationship between dominant, mostly white, English-speaking culture and her own subordinate, Chicano, Spanish-speaking culture, Anzaldúa attempts to give her readers the experience of being in a subordinate position in the borderland between the U.S. and Mexico. That is, the text *acts out* its meaning and provides readers with a little taste of what it is like to be a disadvantaged person. By putting her readers in a liminal situation, she seeks to inculcate *mestiza* consciousness, not just to elevate the items in the right column of the chart but also to merge the left and the right columns by promoting a new awareness *in the reader*. Because the text is neither purely English nor purely Spanish but a montage of both, reader response becomes the third thing that bridges binary oppositions and promotes a hybrid state of consciousness in which new possibilities arise.

4. What role does Guadalupe play in Anzaldúa's argument about bridging binaries?

Anzaldúa demonstrates *mestiza* consciousness by presenting an example of opposites that have come to rest in a central figure, Guadalupe, who represents binaries bridged. Guadalupe (the Virgin Mary) “is a synthesis of the old world and the new, of the religion and culture of the two races in our psyche, the conquerors and the conquered. She is the symbol of the *mestizo* true to his or her Indian values.” Also, “*Guadalupe* unites people of different races, religions, languages: Chicano protestants, American Indians, and whites.... ‘Our *mediatrix* you will always be.’ She mediates between the Spanish and the Indian cultures...and between Chicanos and the white world. She mediates between humans and the divine, between this reality and the reality of the spirit entities.” In that capacity, Guadalupe “is the symbol of ethnic identity and of the tolerance for ambiguity” (B 52). More importantly, Anzaldúa styles herself as a Guadalupe figure. She says that the *mestiza*, the borderlander, has become “the officiating priestess at the crossroads” (102); but she herself, as the author of *Borderlands*, is the officiating priestess. Here are a couple of metaphors for her role in creating a new third thing: “I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining,” much as corn meal and water become tortilla dough (103); she is also a bridge between opposite points—“I span abysses,” she says elsewhere (“La Prieta” 209). Etymology supports the latter metaphor and underscores the author’s role as a modern-day Guadalupe. She notes that her last name, “‘Anzaldúa,’ is a Basque name, where ‘an’ means above, the upper worlds, the sky, the spirit; ‘zal’ means the underworld, the world of the soul, of images, of fantasy; and ‘dúa’ is the bridging of the two; and the bridge, to me, is the interface”

(“Creativity” 103). As her last name implies, eagle and serpent commingle in her person, making her the living embodiment of *mestiza* consciousness, the new third thing that results when binaries collapse and are reformulated. Her achievement is partly due to her lesbian sexuality. For example, she says, “As a lesbian, I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races.” She also recognizes that she is both male and female. As a result, she and other homosexuals are the “*hieros gamos* [sacred marriage]: the coming together of opposite qualities within” (B 102, 41; emphasis in the original).

5. How does Coatlique also signal a fusion of opposites?

The author resembles not only Guadalupe but also Coatlicue, “the earth goddess of life and death and mother of the gods” (Keating and López-González 242). Anzaldúa says of Coatlicue, “Simultaneously, depending on the person, she represents: duality in life, a synthesis of duality, and a third perspective—something more than mere duality or a synthesis of duality.” Coatlique symbolizes “the fusion of opposites: the eagle and the serpent, heaven and the underworld, life and death, mobility and immobility, beauty and horror” (B 68–69). In addition, Coatlicue “contained and balanced the dualities of male and female, light and dark, life and death” (54). Synthesis, fusion, and balance signal *mestiza* consciousness, a new third thing, not a mere summation of opposing parts.

6. How does *la facultad* fit into the collapsing of binaries?

La facultad helps demonstrate that binaries have come to rest in Anzaldúa. Having had a number of near-death experiences, being able to perceive spirits and subtle energy, and engaging in dialogue (active imagination) with images from the unconscious, she is not totally of the physical world or the spirit world but instead inhabits *nepantla*, an in-between or liminal space. Her psychic ability illustrates Borderlands' inclusion and transcendence of geographical borders. As a result, she is capable of writing in mainstream rationalistic ways, but her writing process itself is shamanistic, much like the poet's role, as William Shakespeare describes in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with "heaven" standing in for the collective unconscious, the source of her imagery.

The poet's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name. (5.1.13–18)

As Amala Levine puts it, Anzaldúa is promoting "a post-rationalist epistemology that acknowledges the spiritual, the imaginal and the emotional as legitimate sources of knowledge" (172–73). That is, the author and her text demonstrate and collapse the binary between empiricism, logic, reason, and science, on the one hand, and alternative ways of knowing, on the other, so that the eagle and the serpent engage and cooperate with each other.

7. How does the story of Juan Diego and the Virgin Mary illustrate the collapsing of binaries and represent Anzaldúa's entire project in *Borderlands*?

The hybridity that Anzaldúa advocates and embodies comes into clearer focus through her Spanish poem, which tells the story of Juan Diego and the Virgin Mary. Students who do not read Spanish are likely to skip over it, but providing a translation or summary is worth the effort because the tale allegorizes the book's message about collapsing binaries. Here is a translation:

On the ninth of December of the year 1531
at four in the morning
a poor Indian whom they called Juan Diego
was crossing the Tepeyác hill
when he heard a bird's song.
He raised his head and saw that the summit of the hill
was covered with a bright white cloud.
Standing in front of the sun
on a crescent moon
held by an angel
was an Aztec woman
dressed in Indian clothes.
Our Lady Maria of Coatloapeuh
appeared to him.
"Dearest Juan Diego, He-who-speaks-like-an-eagle,"

the Virgin said to him in the Aztec language.

“I choose this hill to make my altar.

Tell your people that I am the mother of God,

I will help the Indians.

This he told Juan Zumarraga

but the bishop didn't believe him.

Juan Diego returned, filled his coat

with roses from Castile

growing miraculously in the snow.

He took them to the bishop,

and when he opened his coat

the portrait of the Virgin

was painted there. (B 50)

A fuller version of the story, including Juan Diego's several trips to the skeptical bishop Juan de Zumárrago, is written by Luis Lasso de la Vega. Here is a summary of the story from the *Global Dictionary of Theology*:

According to Mexican tradition, a dark-skinned woman, dressed in pink with a turquoise veil, appeared at Tepeyac [sic], north of Mexico City, in 1531 to indigenous Juan Diego. She sent the reluctant Juan to ask the bishop to build a temple in her honor, but his requests were denied. When Juan avoided Guadalupe because his uncle was dying, she appeared and told him not to be afraid because his uncle was cured. As a sign, she gave

him roses, which he took to the bishop in his *tilma* (tunic). When he displayed the flowers, her image appeared on his *tilma*. In response, the bishop built a chapel honoring Guadalupe. The Spaniards, unable to understand the indigenous name for the woman [Coatlalopeuh], called her “Guadalupe.” The title “Our Lady of Guadalupe” designates her as an appearance of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. (“Guadalupe”) Juan Diego, who shuttles back and forth between Tepeyác (also called Guadalupe) and the bishop’s location, acts as a bridge and signifies *nepantla*. Through his in-between agency, binaries meet and start to interact: upper and lower classes, city and country, male and female, human and divine, the bishop’s intellect (eagle) and the virgin mother’s several numinous appearances as well as her miraculous cure of Juan’s dying uncle (serpent). The roses, which Juan harvests in cold weather on rocky, thorny ground in de la Vega’s account (amid snow in the poem), provide the miraculous sign that the bishop needs in order to believe that Juan Diego has indeed seen the mother of God. After recognizing the roses, the Virgin’s portrait, and Juan’s uncle’s renewed health as physical evidence of divine agency, the bishop accedes to the virgin mother’s wish that a temple be built in her honor.

The temple is a new third thing that is greater than the sum of the opposites it unites, where worshipers will practice a Catholic faith renewed by the Church’s recognition of one man’s numinous experience. In that sense, it responds to the dualism that Anzaldúa bitterly attributes to organized religion in comments like the following: “In my own life, the Catholic Church fails to give meaning to my daily acts, to my continuing encounters with the ‘other world.’ ...The Catholic and Protestant religions encourage fear and distrust of life and of the

body; they encourage a split between the body and the spirit and totally ignore the soul; they encourage us to kill off parts of ourselves” (B 59). In the Juan Diego story, however, the binaries of institutional religion (eagle) and personal spiritual experience (serpent), formerly opposed, now validate each other in a way that is greater than either could achieve on its own. Likewise, the new house of worship, Guadalupe herself, and *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* are all monuments to—they illustrate and enhance—the hybridity and the holistic *Borderlands/mestiza* consciousness that Anzaldúa seeks to bring about by advocating balance/equality among cultural and spiritual binaries. Versus the intellectual authority represented by the bishop, Anzaldúa and her text embody and enact the change that she seeks to inspire in her readers. By mediating between opposites, she creates a new third thing—the text—that acknowledges but transcends binary ways of seeing. In this way, the story of Juan Diego not only allegorizes Anzaldúa’s writing project but also represents her larger goal of celebrating her Mexican heritage in a non-binary way. She writes: “Deep in our hearts we believe that being Mexican has nothing to do with which country one lives in. Being Mexican is a state of soul—not one of mind, not one of citizenship. Neither eagle nor serpent, but both. And like the ocean, neither animal respects borders” (84).

8. Where does Anzaldúa ironically exhibit binary thinking?

Unfortunately, since Anzaldúa does not always practice what she preaches, the book’s case for unity and “balanced duality” is not pristine (55). We have already seen one example: Catholicism and Protestantism “totally ignore the soul” (59). Also, the Catholic Church “and

other institutionalized religions impoverish all life, beauty, pleasure” (59). Her people and culture will endure even when “the white [people’s] laws and commerce and customs” lie bleached on the sand (86). “Only gay men have had the courage to expose themselves to the woman inside them [the anima] and to challenge the current masculinity [*machismo*]” (106). As these examples reveal, her fine theory has some flaws in its execution: *Borderlands* includes the black-and-white thinking that it inveighs against. As a result, Anzaldúa is not totally successful in promoting the collapsing or reformulating of binaries because some of her statements illustrate the dualism of black-and-white thinking that she opposes. It would not be fair-minded, however, to mistake the part for the whole by discarding the text’s valuable message about balanced dualities because of a few contradictory statements. Even her inconsistencies are little lessons in themselves. Her fallacious thinking should perhaps be understood in the context of the *conocimiento* (self-knowledge) process, her “overarching theory of consciousness” (“Quincentennial” 177); it is a “transformation process” (*Light* 17) with seven nonlinear stages—“nonlinear” because personal transformation, like critical thinking, is recursive. The first stage is called *el arrebató* (literally the outburst) and involves fragmentation, rupture, disconnection, and *disconocimiento* (ignorance). It may simply be that the aporias in *Borderlands* are the sort of fragments that Anzaldúa must address early in the *conocimiento* process by doing inner work and later on by writing new stories about herself, much as students themselves need to take a process approach to achieving unity and coherence in their own writing. *Borderlands* leaves us, then, with the sense that the author may still be searching for parts of a personal myth that operates as

well as the Juan Diego story, in which collapsing the binary appears to be seamlessly effective.

Conclusion

It is fruitful for students to note that the Anzaldúa of *Borderlands* is on a path of personal growth but is not infallible. Even she must embrace the self-healing of the Coyolxauhqui imperative by moving from fragmentation to wholeness in the larger *conocimiento* process, which (like the collapsing of opposites) “represents a nonbinary, connectionist mode of thinking” (Keating, “Anzalduan Theories” 10). Along with individuation, she also seeks to promote spiritual activism in society, which finds common ground through the “synergistic synthesis of apparent opposites” (11). Encouraging readers to collapse the binary is not a discrete intellectual exercise but rather a call to political engagement in active search of a common ground—a search that involves fostering critical-thinking traits such as intellectual humility, intellectual empathy, intellectual engagement, intellectual autonomy, and fair-mindedness. Although the binary-collapsing exercise mapped out in these pages probably will not effect personal transformation or commitment to social justice, it does foster a better understanding of *nepantla* where common ground fosters social and psychological progress. Ultimately, *Borderlands* calls on readers to seek out the liminal space between binaries where change occurs and to become *nepantleras* in their own right.

Appendix

The approach to collapsing the binary discussed above comprises the first part of a two-day unit on Anzaldúa's *Borderlands*. Day one emphasizes the element of interpretation; day two, described here in the Appendix, uses the text to engage with alternative points of view. I assign a group exercise that requires homework: rereading of specific sections of the two chapters (see the bullet points below), group work in class, and brief reports to the whole class. Each group takes a prominent point of view in the text, summarizes related information, and generates interpretations. Here are the directions:

Question at Issue: What argument is Anzaldúa making regarding borderlands and Borderlands? Develop your answer within a specific point of view. Look for information and other elements that flesh out an answer to the question at issue from your group's assigned vantage point. Groups 1–3 will deal mainly with "Entering Into the Serpent." Group 4 should begin with "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" and branch out to the earlier chapter as time allows. Try to develop a basic understanding of your section. Then go deeper—be more analytical. Call your classmates' attention to a key passage or passages. Come up with a sub-question at issue for your group to ponder. It should be specific to your assigned section. Identify Anzaldúa's purpose for that section. Then identify information and concepts within your section. Look for other elements, especially context, conclusions, interpretations, and implications. You and your group members will make a brief presentation to the class next time.

- Group 1: Consider images related to a biological point of view: snakes, tongues, bodies, sexuality, and the title "Entering Into the Serpent." Your job includes the opening poem ("I dream of serpents") and the section "Sueño con Serpientes" (I dream with snakes).
- Group 2: From a mythological/anthropological/religious point of view, consider information on Guadalupe/Coatlalopeuh, history, and religion.
- Group 3: From a psychological point of view, consider information on the psyche, the mind, psychic ability, Freud, and Jung. Your job includes "Sueño con Serpientes" through the end of "Entering Into the Serpent."
- Group 4: From a literary/linguistic point of view, consider academic life, genres, languages, and texts. Your job is to focus on "How to Tame a Wild Tongue."

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