

Beyond What? An Introduction



ANIA LOOMBA, SUVIR KAUL, MATTI BUNZL,

ANTOINETTE BURTON, JED ESTY

The shadow the 2003 US invasion of Iraq casts on the twenty-first century makes it more absurd than ever to speak of ours as a postcolonial world. On the other hand, the signs of galloping US imperialism make the agenda of postcolonial studies more necessary than ever. In a context of rapidly proliferating defenses of empire (not simply *de facto* but *de jure*) by policy makers and intellectuals alike, the projects of making visible the long history of empire, of learning from those who have opposed it, and of identifying the contemporary sites of resistance and oppression that have defined postcolonial studies have, arguably, never been more urgent. In many ways, the new global reality has made the analysis of imperialism, in all its historical variants, more pressing, but also more difficult, than ever before. What, then, do we propose to move “beyond”?

We will address this question under a number of rubrics in this introduction, as will, in very different ways, each of the essays assembled here. This volume (and the conference “Postcolonial Studies and Beyond,” held at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, April 25–28, 2002, at which the essays that follow were first presented as papers) was conceived before September 11, 2001, and before US president George Bush’s so-called war on terror had catalyzed the new imperial situation. While no one could have foretold the exact sequence and pace of events that were to unfold, international relations across the globe were already marked by all the material and ideological tensions and inequities that fed into these later events, as the essays collected here make evident. When we conceived the conference, we had wanted to scrutinize whether postcolonial studies had proved important to the task of analyzing, with intellectual power and political clarity, both

the colonial past and the new empires of our own times. Or did we have to go beyond the paradigms and analytical methods developed under this rubric to find answers? Our questions were in part dictated by the sense that most ideas, methods, and movements tend to have a distinct and bounded life span, after which it becomes clear that they have outlived their critical or political usefulness.

We emphatically did not want to rehash the controversies with which postcolonial studies or postcolonial theory have been riven from their formal beginnings in the Western academy, and for the most part we have not done so in this volume. Both the appropriateness of the *post* in *postcolonial* and the persistence of the *colonial* in helping us understand the past or the contemporary dynamics of our world have been debated at great (and, some would argue, unnecessary) length. The relationship of postcolonial studies to anticolonial nationalisms and struggles on the one hand, and to poststructuralist theory and the so-called linguistic turn, on the other, have resulted in particularly contentious debates about the place of the Western academy and Western-educated intellectuals from once-colonized countries in the institutionalization of the subject the world over. But these (and many other) earlier debates that regularly questioned the validity, contours, and future of postcolonial studies have now been reshaped by newer developments, the most urgent of which is globalization, at once an extension of the world-systems of modern capitalism and colonialism and a newer network that presents a complicated picture of national and transnational agents, capital and labor, suppliers and markets, NGOs and multilateral agencies. Some scholars view postcolonial methods and vocabularies as out of step with an intellectual scene increasingly carved up by such rubrics as the information age (the so-called digital divide), transnational capital, globalization, and alternative modernities. What, then, is the value of postcolonial studies in our globalizing world, and does it have a viable future beyond its existing life span, identified by Vilashini Cooppan in this volume as the period from Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire* (2000)?¹

We wanted to arrive at answers by asking scholars from a variety of disciplines and locations to consider the ways in which colonial discourse studies and postcolonial modes of thought have shaped intellectual, political, and methodological agendas both within their disciplines and among and beyond them. Thus we invited participants to reflect on the most crucial issues for the study of past colonialisms and the contemporary world. One consistent response from many of those we had invited was that they would not define themselves as postcolonialists. But that, in part, was precisely our

point. Even among the five of us organizing the event, we could not always agree about who a “postcolonialist” might be. As Tim Brennan put it in his remarks at the conference:

In spite of being clearly marked (if not segregated) within individual academic departments, postcolonial studies is a porous entity rather than a discrete field. It arose in the form of a political metaphoric rather than a bordered space, either “field” or “discipline.” In disciplines like history and anthropology, postcolonial studies came into being under other names and without any claim to being a distinct subspecialty or field, as it did in English departments.

Postcolonial studies thus finds itself in a peculiar situation, one somewhat analogous to that of theory. It means different things to different people; it is housed in different disciplines yet widely associated with a few; it is viewed either as enormously radical or as the latest ideological offspring of Western capitalism; it is firmly entrenched in Anglo-US universities, yet its disciplinary status remains in question; it seeks to address the non-Western world yet is often received with hostility there.

Given this situation, we found it productive to move beyond narrow definitions of postcolonial studies and, frankly, beyond the usual suspects. Contributors address topics and issues that have had a transformative power in their disciplines, and in doing so, they remind readers that the project of postcolonial studies is a much larger and more variegated set of intellectual enterprises than we might have presumed so far. Very different kinds of scholarly inquiry now seem in fact postcolonial (even when their practitioners shy away from such identification).² Our belief is that this volume will serve as a powerful reminder of the different critical postcolonial practices that have been developing within, and are in turn rejuvenating, a variety of scholarly agendas and disciplines. We want in this way to signpost the expanded arenas of intellectual activity influenced by, and now constituting, postcolonial studies.

Of course, it is possible to argue that the term *postcolonial studies* has outlived its utility precisely because of this expansion of subject matter, analytical method, and historical scope. So one central question is: Does the work that we all agree is still relevant, perhaps more relevant than ever, proceed under the name *postcolonial studies* or not? One answer—the one we tend to gravitate toward—comes from Peter Hulme’s contribution:

If there is one particular stance I take with respect to the current state of postcolonial studies, it is that we are still discovering, slowly, perhaps, and unmethodically, but—as far as I am concerned—with a continuing sense of excitement, the dimensions of the field. What I mean by this is both that the field

is getting bigger as the characteristic language and thematic concerns of postcolonial studies spread across many disciplines and that at the same time we are unearthing a lot of earlier anticolonial work, often neglected at its time of writing, that is allowing us to piece together a fuller history of the development of postcolonial studies. So one of the fundamental “beyonds” suggested by my title is an encouragement to strip off the straitjacket of those accounts and definitions of postcolonial studies that simplify and narrow its range to the work of a handful of theorists and a handful of novelists. In the past, some of those who work within the field, or have a productive relationship to it, have even accepted that oversimplified picture of postcolonial studies. Fortunately, as this volume suggests, the picture is now beginning to broaden.

Thus, the *beyond* in the title of this volume is not meant to indicate a facile hope for a transformative shift in the practices loosely clustered round the affiliation postcolonial studies, nor does it mean to point to a wholly new mode of understanding the links between the critical study of empires and the neo-imperial structures of global inequality (although the volume does indicate significant new directions for future work). Rather, it charts a path between utopianism and “hip defeatism,” as much by renewing engagements with analytical models developed by older anticolonial thinkers as by positing new forms of critique that will address the ideological and material dimensions of contemporary neo-imperialism.³

To that extent, one important theme running through the volume is the need to recapture a history of transoceanic and transcontinental trade, travel, and conquest so as to avoid a shallow embrace of the contemporary notion of the global. In the process, various essays suggest the new shape of an area studies whose contours include, for instance, unbeaten paths through the locally specific archives of Latin America and the rediscovered poetics of a truly *African* Black Atlantic. Equally important in the historical and geographical range of the essays is their ability to think beyond the West-rest binary and the legacy of Eurocentrism that continues to bedevil even its most ardent critics. The essays gathered here do not simply dispense with that old problematic, but they do trace unexpected and uneven developments before, during, and after colonial modernity. Rather than ritualistically rehearse the theoretical problem of Eurocentrism, they tend to point to a series of disciplinary and interdisciplinary practices that have already begun to gather outside its increasingly pale shadow.

Another crucial aspect of this volume is detailed in several different demonstrations of both the limits and the usefulness of disciplinary thinking in the field of postcolonial studies. Some essays offer broad reflections on the two-way influence between postcolonial thought and established university

disciplines such as literary criticism and history, while others forge ahead into some vital if nascent areas for postcolonial research: media studies, environmental studies, religious studies, linguistic and semantic analysis, auto-ethnography, and the sociology of global cinema. At the same time, the volume presents several critical takes on the problematic intersections between the assumptions and practices associated with the term *multiculturalism* and those associated with the term *postcolonial*. Such discussion will be of interest to scholars concerned with the potential for postcolonial analysis as applied to the problem of multiethnic societies like Britain and the United States—especially with respect to the latter, where Jenny Sharpe’s question, “Is the United States Postcolonial?” seems as self-evident as it is belated.⁴

Postcolonial studies has been at various times and in various ways intertwined not just with multiculturalism and ethnic studies but also with an array of area studies, each with a differing sense of its place within (or angle of remove from) the prevailing conceptions of the postcolonial. The time seemed right to assess whether or not postcolonial studies was still offering new intellectual resources to those fields or, indeed, as some of its most stringent critics have asserted, had begun instead to divert attention from the concrete particulars and current agendas associated with specific regions or subdisciplines.⁵ As it turns out, some of our contributors do sense that postcolonial studies—once a provocative and illuminating new way to approach problems in their fields—has become staid or inert so that it now requires, in its turn, a revivifying influx from those intellectual quarters that once benefited from its paradigm-shifting energies. Although the volume reflects a range of views and attitudes, many of its contributors find common cause by reasserting the importance of the oppositional political energies that originally animated decolonizing intellectuals the world over in the twentieth century. Several ask provocative questions about what has been lost in the institutionalization of postcolonial studies as a cultural discipline dedicated to the analysis of discourse, and in the very important problematization of such central—and centrally imperial—Enlightenment concepts as “development” and “modernity.” A keynote of the conference and of the volume, then, is the reassertion of a certain historical urgency that may have been leached from postcolonial studies during its period of theoretical refinement and institutional consolidation.

The current effort to redefine and reassess (or, indeed, to elegize) postcolonial studies reflects a layered, complex history in which both anticolonial nationalists and, subsequently, postcolonial intellectuals generated distinct and sometimes antithetical approaches to the legacy of colonialism both in the once-colonized zones, and, more recently, within the metro-

politan academy. Moreover, in Britain, the old departments of Oriental and African studies—like state-sponsored area studies programs in the cold war United States—established and institutionalized influential divisions of academic labor, with the effect that Africanists (for example) have generally developed different understandings of postcolonial studies from those held by (say) Latin Americanists or South Asianists.

Indeed, the various legacies of modern colonialism across the globe have given rise not just to separate historical trajectories of conquest and resistance on the ground but to diverse traditions of postcolonial critique. Although, for example, postcolonial studies as such gained its footholds in the metropolitan universities through its rethinking of Anglophone and Francophone colonial legacies (due in no small part to the Anglo-French orientation of pioneering works like Said's *Orientalism*), the field has now been profoundly engaged by Latin American studies (among other area-studies fields that have remade themselves in the past fifteen years). The case of Latin America triangulates older models of West-rest geography and usefully reanimates the debate around alternative modernities, not just by pressing the claims of a historically salient semiperiphery but also by redressing the entire legacy of core-periphery thinking. Along these lines, Walter Mignolo has proposed a shift in orientation from "post-colonial" to "post-Occidental" reason, using the specific experiences and discourses of Latin America to come to fresh terms with what he calls the "modern/colonial world system."⁶ Mignolo's work also pays close and due attention to the languages of colonial and postcolonial knowledge: he notes, for example, that "scholarly production in French, English, or German" has often displaced and overshadowed "intellectual genealogies in Spanish and Portuguese."⁷ The encounter between postcolonial and Latin American studies means more than just recognizing new linguistic or geographic territory; it means a continual and reciprocal reshaping of key concepts, of intellectual practices reinflected by the thought of, say, José Martí and Roberto Fernández Retamar, rather than Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon, or W. E. B. Du Bois and C. L. R. James. Scholars like Mignolo and Alberto Moreiras have sustained a serious argument about the translation and transformation of subaltern studies methodology into and by various settings in Latin America, with Mignolo's concept of "border gnosis" and Moreiras's resignification of "subalternism" offering theoretical elaborations and revisions of the original insights of subaltern historiography.⁸

The intellectual concerns and priorities that animate the intellectual borderlands between Latin American studies and postcolonial studies differ again from those foregrounded by students of so-called minority discourses

within Europe and North America, from those whose approaches derive from the study of colonialisms elsewhere and, perhaps most problematically of all, from those who produce postcolonial scholarship in indigenous or noncolonial languages. Instead of glossing over (or endlessly belaboring) such historical differences, we wanted to ask how the study of colonialism had shaped various scholarly domains and disciplinary genealogies. Conversely, how had the study of colonialism and of postcolonial societies evolved in conformity with or reaction to the institutional protocols of different subdisciplines or geographical “schools”?

To pursue these questions systematically, we discussed them in biweekly seminars for a year leading up to the conference. Under the aegis of the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory at the University of Illinois, we asked scholars in a range of fields—these could be disciplines such as anthropology or sociology, or interdisciplinary fields such as Caribbean studies or women’s studies—to select and discuss seminal readings that addressed the reciprocal relations between postcolonial studies and their area of inquiry over the past decade. It goes without saying that even a yearlong seminar could not cover every geographic area or discipline, and we realized that this would hold even more true of a conference or a volume. While there have been very productive discussions about the relationship of postcolonial studies in relation to different histories and geographies (and scholarly languages), at this point we did not feel it to be intellectually useful to stage conversations that had as their main focus the differences between various colonial histories and postcolonial situations.¹⁰ These intensive seminars confirmed for us that a more productive way of addressing some of the lacunae in postcolonial studies—such as the widely bemoaned lack of specificity and historical engagement of its “theoretical” components or the perceived centrality of an Anglophone model—would be to move to scholars who might not call themselves postcolonial at all, but whose work engages with and simultaneously ranges further than the recognizable paradigms and debates in the field. Conversely, scholarly practices in a number of fields, including those that do not announce themselves as postcolonial, share—have derived intellectual energy from—postcolonial critical projects and political priorities. Thus we wanted to focus on work that seemed to retain what was most valuable in postcolonial critique. These questions about methods, commitments, and objects of analysis in postcolonial studies have become even more important in the time that has elapsed since those seminars were first conceived. The rapid pace at which globalization is revealing its imperialist structure and ideologies throws our past debates into new relief, reminding us anew why we need to go beyond a certain kind of postcolonial studies,

and also why we must reassert the value of many of the questions that it has examined so far.

Globalization and the Postcolonial Eclipse

Many commentators have recently observed that the debate around globalization—understood both as the structural transformation of geopolitical conditions and the academic study of that transformation—has in crucial sectors displaced postcolonial studies as the rubric under which interdisciplinary critique is produced in the academy today. This apparent eclipse of postcolonial studies by globalization studies works as perhaps the central galvanizing event shaping this volume. The key question addressed here is whether postcolonial studies can assert a specific method, interest, or political insight that can illuminate issues either ignored, marginalized, or depoliticized within the discussion of globalization.

Like most of our contributors, we think of postcolonial studies as a critical strain posed within and against, as well as antecedent to, dominant notions of globalization. As Simon Gikandi has recently noted, the shift from postcolonialism to globalization indicates the widespread belief that the explanatory, political, or intellectual power of the “narrative of decolonization” has collapsed.¹¹ Some take the eclipse of that narrative as a timely and progressive recognition that new answers and solutions must be posed to the problem of global social relations now, answers that no longer refer backward to the history of modern colonialism or to its legacies of core-periphery binarisms. But this, too, can function as an alibi for ignoring the persistent inequities and residual effects of colonially organized geopolitics. In the spirit of many contributors to this volume, Gikandi emphasizes a different orientation for postcolonial studies—one that does not prematurely overleap the nation, nor simply wish away Eurocentrism, nor accede to the image of a syncretic global village or to the neoliberal idea of a rising tide lifting all boats in the global economy.

Along similar lines, Susie O’Brien and Imre Szeman observe that “globalization may be the name for a false conceptual rapprochement between postmodernism and postcolonialism that eliminates all the worries expressed about the blind Eurocentrism of postmodernism through a spatio-temporal leveling of the globe.” O’Brien and Szeman, like several of our contributors, stake a claim for the importance of postcolonial studies as a critical wedge against the superficial allure of that rapprochement, noting that “no other critical practice has foregrounded the links between cultural forms and geopolitics to the degree that postcolonial studies has over the past four

decades.”¹² Many of the most creative practitioners of postcolonial studies now, eager to avoid the assumption that difference is itself an outmoded concept in the era of globalization, have been seeking new models for describing the relationship between local, national, and transnational forces. In this volume, both Peter Hulme and Ali Behdad contend that postcolonial studies, in its insistence on the structural links between colonial and neo-colonial forms of global hierarchy, has only now begun—in the age of globalization—to find its real critical vocation. Both present historically deep pictures of globalization—pictures, that is, of the embryonic and sometimes forgotten world-systems that have shaped the planet’s social spaces for centuries and that redress the more superficial models of globalization that have come to prominence in the past five to ten years. Hulme’s deft genealogy of the global image itself—the various techniques and technologies for representing planetary space and rendering planetary consciousness—gives a strong indication of how postcolonial studies might inflect or redirect the study of globalization. In particular, Hulme wonders what it might mean or whether it is indeed possible to imagine the globe without invoking imperial prospects and privileges. What he, following Denis Cosgrove, calls the Apollonian eye, that visual faculty powerful enough to generate an overview of the globe, seems almost always to require another kind of power that we call imperialism. In other words, Hulme’s skepticism about globalization stems from a postcolonial humanist’s insight into oversight: the way that the very vantage point necessary to enunciate the global implies an allegory of universal knowledge that cannot be ignored.

In this sense, Hulme provides precisely the kind of critical and postcolonial genealogy that Behdad calls for in his skeptic’s tour of the discourse of globalization. Behdad notes that the global escapes most attempts to theorize or describe it, especially those using the terms of globalization discourse itself. One way, he suggests, to resist such occlusion is to detail the continuities—and indeed the innovations—between today’s neo-imperialism and older systems of colonial capitalism. Like many in this volume, from different perspectives, Behdad envisions a vocation for postcolonial studies as, in a sense, the historical conscience—and consciousness—of the discourse of globalization. Behdad’s postcolonial studies must insist on viewing the antecedent structural and epistemological conditions leading up to this particular moment in the history of global relations.

Of course the deep, even ancient, roots of contemporary globalization can also be mobilized for very different rhetorical and political purposes. As Vilashini Cooppan notes, both apologists for and critics of US hegemony have taken to resuscitating a Roman analogy to describe the shape of super-

powerdom in the very epoch of globalization. Offering a brief reading of the blockbuster film *Gladiator* as a way to investigate and understand the United States' neo-imperial self-image in the flattering, silver-screened light of a Hollywood Pax Romana, she also marks the presence of such analogies in Hardt and Negri's *Empire*, which suggests (in Cooppan's paraphrase) that "the United States is closer to ancient Rome—with its expansionist republicanism, networked power, and syncretic, englobing culture—than to the territorial sovereignty, linear ambitions, and differentialist logic of the modern imperial European nation-state." Cooppan warns that if we follow "the implications of Hardt and Negri's analogizing of the United States and Rome as mirror republican empires, it becomes impossible to name, analyze, and contest the simple fact of US imperialism here and now." She sees the future task of postcolonial studies as more fully to address US power, to read that power as both an inner force and outer face of globalization.

It is not surprising that as the defense of the new empire becomes more unabashed in certain quarters, the Roman and British Empires, and particularly their fraudulent self-images, the Pax Romana and the Pax Britannica, are openly invoked by advocates of American hegemony. As the new imperial order shapes itself in the image of earlier empires, postcolonial studies must reshape itself to address that rhetorical effort and to redress the lost histories of colonialism obscured in the scramble for globalization's patina of universal progress. A large number of policy makers and academics in Britain and the United States are openly advocating the need for a Western, particularly US empire. They argue that the earlier wave of decolonization, not to mention the end of the cold war, has left a power vacuum that requires bold leadership on the world stage. Despite the fact that their essays were written before the events of 2003 had unfolded, and despite their methodological and philosophical disagreements and different assessments of postcolonial theory, our contributors agree that (to use Cooppan's words) "without an account of US imperialism in its various political, economic, military-industrial, and cultural guises, . . . we cannot hope to move postcolonial studies into the space of the beyond."

There will be no beyond, though, if we are held in thrall by the practice and the imagination of modern empires, especially given the remarkable speed with which US power is extended across the globe, threatening to outpace any description or analysis of it postcolonial critics might offer. As the writer-activist Arundhati Roy told a Harlem audience in May 2003, we live in a time when "we have to race to keep abreast of the speed at which our freedoms are being snatched from us, and when few can afford the luxury of retreating from the streets for a while in order to return with an exqui-

site, fully formed political thesis replete with footnotes and references . . . we have to think on our feet.”¹³ It is entirely the case that we must respond with speed and urgency to ongoing events, and true, too, that we need the conviction and simplicity of Césaire or Gandhi’s pronouncements about the indefensibility, immorality, and brutality of imperial domination. However, as intellectuals and scholars, we cannot afford to choose between political responsibility and footnotes. The rapidly proliferating defenses of empire in the mainstream media and in the academy are today mounted precisely by ignoring the rich and varied scholarship of decolonization that has documented the complexity of the imperial past in order not only to make visible its continuing legacies but also to indicate its possible future forms.¹⁴ Neo-imperialists have recently produced sound bites about the achievements of past empires and possibilities of future ones only by denying or distorting this scholarship. The destructive, even genocidal histories of modern empires are being whitewashed in order to rehabilitate the ideal of Western domination as an appropriate ideological cover for Anglo-American adventurism across the globe.

At this point, we should note how many postcolonial scholars (as illustrated in this volume) now take it as a central part of their work to come to terms afresh—analytically and critically—with the nature of US power in the contemporary world. Postcolonial scholarship thus has already shifted to consider more squarely the way US power has begun to absorb models of imperial might and rightness from the past. Since the invasion of Iraq, this agenda has become even more urgent in the face of historical claims such as this one from Niall Ferguson:

The British Empire has had a pretty lousy press from a generation of “postcolonial” historians anachronistically affronted by its racism. But the reality is that the British were significantly more successful at establishing market economies, the rule of law and the transition to representative government than the majority of postcolonial governments have been. The policy “mix” favored by Victorian imperialists reads like something just published by the International Monetary Fund, if not the World Bank: free trade, balanced budgets, sound money, the common law, incorrupt administration and investment in infrastructure financed by international loans. These are precisely the things the world needs right now.¹⁵

Ferguson wants the US empire to do what Rudyard Kipling did, which is to “dare” to “speak its own name” and to act on its imperial convictions.¹⁶ Thus the new imperial project appropriates the language of opposition. Ferguson’s efforts at populist journalism are, if anything, a watered-down ver-

sion of the pronouncements of that other holy warrior of Anglo-American expansionism, Paul Johnson, whose contribution to recent debate around Iraq also features the vocabulary and iconography of the British Empire:

The US should put its trust in the seas and oceans, which offer a home and a friendly environment to its forces and do not change with the treacherous winds of opinion. The military lessons to be learned from the lead-up to the Iraq operation are profound, and all point in the same direction: America should always have the means to act alone. . . . it must also cultivate the will. Fate, or Divine Providence, has placed America at this time in the position of sole superpower, with the consequent duty to uphold global order and to punish, or prevent, the great crimes of the world. . . . It must continue to engage the task imposed upon it, not in any spirit of hubris but in the full and certain knowledge that it is serving the best and widest interests of humanity.¹⁷

Both Johnson's crusading zeal and Ferguson's more pragmatic Realpolitik are derived from imperial worldviews developed in the past three centuries. Both writers arrive at their neo-imperialism only by ignoring the murderous record of colonial history in favor of an emphasis on the failure to thrive, in the past three to five decades, of many decolonized nation-states.¹⁸ Ferguson's nostalgia for Victorian imperialism stems from his belief that its leaders strove to implement "free trade, balanced budgets, sound money, the common law, incorrupt administration." But as Mike Davis has written in *Late Victorian Holocausts*, "If the history of British rule in India were to be condensed into a single fact, it is this: there was no increase in India's per capita income from 1757 to 1947. Indeed, in the last half of the nineteenth century, income probably declined by more than 50 percent."¹⁹ Further, during the "age of Kipling, that 'glorious imperial half century' from 1872 to 1921, the life expectancy of ordinary Indians fell by a staggering 20 percent."²⁰ Davis goes on to explore several paradoxes that have an enormous relevance for our globalizing world today: "Where were the fruits of modernization, of the thousands of miles of railroad track and canal?" he asks.

And where were the profits of the great export booms that transformed the subcontinent's agriculture in the second half of the nineteenth century? Here, if anywhere in rural Asia, integration into the world market should have resulted in significant local increases in local agricultural productivity and profitability. . . . Yet, as macroeconomic statistics demonstrate, such prosperity was usually ephemeral and quickly reabsorbed into the huge inertia of rural poverty. Peasant agriculture, even in the most dynamic cash crop sectors, remained radically undercapitalized. Only moneylenders, absentee landlords, urban merchants and a handful of indigenous industrialists seemed to have benefited con-

sistently from India's renewed importance in world trade. "Modernization" and commercialization were accompanied by pauperization.²¹

All this, and more, directly resulted from the imposition after 1857 in India of what the Victorians thought of as free trade. None of this makes for particularly new information: indeed, both colonial and anticolonial historians and political commentators from the late nineteenth century on argued about these agricultural and landownership policies, and postcolonial work has been assiduous in documenting the collaboration between local elites and the British government in the creation of systemic poverty and human misery.

Imperialism hijacked millions of people across the world away from local processes and into a world in which capitalist Europe pioneered the single coercive script of historical transformation, but the historical record is also replete with coruscating instances of alternative visions for human and social betterment. These are the visions that postcolonial historians must also pay attention to as we analyze the material and ideological foundations of imperial power. Indeed, this constitutes the most significant challenge facing democratic thought: what visions of a postcolonial world can we as humanists offer that will interrogate, perhaps even interrupt, the forms of globalization now dictated by politicians, military strategists, captains of finance and industry, fundamentalist preachers and theologians, terrorists of the body and the spirit, in short, by the masters of our contemporary universe?

Despite their other differences, contributors to this volume agree that our intellectual priorities must respond not only to the search for historical clarity about the making of the modern empires but also to the continuing and bloody ambition of neo-imperialism. As postcolonial intellectuals, we have to be responsible also to the cultural and political struggles that define the social being of once-colonized nations today. Faced with these circumstances, we see postcolonial studies reasserting its vocation in coming to terms with the contemporary shape of neoliberal global institutions, as well as with the wide ideological and intellectual spectrum that has begun—very recently—to align itself with the global juggernaut. Postcolonial studies cannot abandon, and must raise with new urgency, the epistemological questions that have animated the field from its inception: questions about the shifting and often interrelated forms of dominance and resistance; about the constitution of the colonial archive; about the search for alternative traces of social being; about the interdependent play of race and class; about the significance of gender and sexuality; about the complex forms in which subjectivities are experienced and collectivities mobilized; about representation itself; and about the ethnographic translation of cultures. These have to be

seen not as distractions from “real problems,” but as integral to our coming to terms with globalization as a new epoch nonetheless substantially organized by familiar and baleful structures of power. Writing the histories of unsuccessful or successful colonization, of anticolonial nationalisms, and of the state of nations after independence—the history of empire and its aftermath—requires an awareness of the struggles that define the present as much as of those that characterized the past. It is important, then, that we make explicit why we write, and to what institutional and ideological purposes, in the same way that Ferguson unabashedly writes on behalf of what he calls “Anglobalization” (and what Amitav Ghosh bluntly identifies as the “Anglophone imperium”).²²

As a corollary to the critique of US power, postcolonial studies has to maintain its historical awareness of imperialism and not too quickly to hail the now decentered mechanisms of empire. Thus postcolonial studies must add to its fields of analysis and explanatory reference not only the distant past but also the rapidly mutating present, thus, in a sense, trying to anticipate the future. Today, activists and public intellectuals in once-colonized countries not only recognize the new global situation as imperial but believe that this puts a special burden of responsibility on them. For example, in a recent request to Amnesty International to lead the international human rights community against US war crimes in Iraq, South Asian peace activists have expressed their conviction that

the lead has to come from the people of the once colonized countries, while the support of anti-war activists from the countries of the West and the examples set by them remain valuable and as inspiring as ever. . . . This war, more than any other in recent times, has shown the difference between the colonisers and the colonised and the semi-colonised. . . . It is we, the people of the once colonised and semi-colonised countries, who have witnessed the manipulation of our history, denigration of our culture, destruction and looting of our heritage, wealth and resources.²³

Others, however, have appealed to US citizens, saying that they have a pivotal role to play in the battle against empire.²⁴ While we cannot gloss over the real differences between our various locations across the globe, and between the histories and realities we analyze, it is equally important to forge connections between the differently positioned subjects of the new empire.

Several essays here address the question of how current academic disciplines and theories, especially those that think about globalization, can avoid the problem of being in thrall to the cultural kaleidoscope of contemporary world capitalism. How can scholars best distinguish the “Babel” (a term

Jean Comaroff deploys) of contemporary thinking on postcolonial history, economics, and culture from the atomized and consumer-oriented datascape of neoliberal capitalism? In his essay, Timothy Brennan notes with concern that “doctrines of disorganization, inarticulation, and circularity—all seen now as happy states, as heterotopias” have come to replace postcolonial studies’ historical investment in an “ethos of progressive betterment, social reorganization, and education.” Like Cooppan, Brennan wonders whether Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* ultimately conflates the shimmering fractured newness of its authors’ own method with that of the globalized world today, thus producing a deterritorialized critical language for a deterritorialized world.²⁵ Brennan insists on attending to the lingering and substantial effects of older kinds of imperial sovereignty and capitalist wealth extraction—phenomena that should not be mystified by the dazzling sign systems and image making of a new epoch and its sweeping dismissal of the politics of the past, whether hegemonic or oppositional.

Brennan’s emphasis on the economics of culture points up the enormously demanding challenges faced by postcolonial studies today, which are compounded by the recognition that the brute force of military conquest constitutes far from the only (and, indeed, perhaps makes for the least efficient) form of neo-imperial power. Until the destruction of the World Trade Center changed US priorities, Western dominance over the global economy was affected largely through trade and technological imbalance, with international financial and banking systems, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, adding to and enforcing structural disparities put into place during the long years of imperial rule. Neoliberal forms of globalization have of course been extensively debated—and challenged in more material and immediately political ways—for over a decade now.²⁶ Even as postcolonial studies is renewing itself by exploring the various forms of residually imperial power in the West, it is also moving beyond a monocular view of nation-based hegemony as the only force or form of neo-imperialism today. In other words, practitioners of postcolonial studies must and do recognize that there are newer as well as older forms of sovereignty and economic power subsisting side by side in the globalized world. Susie O’Brien and Imre Szeman argue that postcolonial studies has not yet managed to think its way beyond the conundrums of hybridity and authenticity in part because of its “commitment to a worldview that understands globalization as simply ‘ne imperialism’: something new, but not different in kind from earlier moments of global capitalist expansion and exploitation.”²⁷ While this volume does represent (as we have emphasized so far) the insistence of many scholars in postcolonial studies on the interconnections between cur-

rent forms of globalization and older forms of capitalist expansion and exploitation, it also underscores the importance, for postcolonial studies as an intellectual formation, to come to terms with what is *really* new about globalization.

Indeed, postcolonial studies has the intellectual potential and tools for subtly tracking both residual forms of national sovereignty within globalized institutions *and* emergent views of transnational power. For this effort, it still draws vital conceptual resources from the decolonizing strategies generated by struggles for national liberation, even while expanding the frame of the nation so as to include different models of political mobilization and solidarity. The forced (and voluntary) movements of vast populations under colonialism and after has shaped one significant strand of postcolonial studies, generally gathered under the heading of diaspora studies, and concerned with the struggles of minority or marginalized populations (such as indigenous peoples) in various locations. Technological change in the past five decades—and the acceleration of financial, media, and information flows in the past two—has demanded analytical attention to other kinds of burgeoning transnational networks as well. Transnationalism, of course, is not only the prerogative of multinational capital or of multilateral agencies like the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, or the Asian Development Bank but also the source of many oppositional sociocultural formations. The World Social Forum, an umbrella organization for antiglobalization activists and nongovernmental agencies, is one instance of the latter, even though critics worry that its radicalism, too, is compromised by the global nature of its funding.²⁸ Postcolonial analyses, which have always paid systematic attention to the historical role of Western colonialism in managing and directing the global flow of persons, commodities, and ideas, are now taking on the crucial vocation of highlighting various forms of transnationalism from below as a collective counterweight to the symbolic and material power of globalization from above.

Neoliberalism and the Postcolonial World

Two questions then face us: how to separate facile or tendentious visions of a neoliberal “world without borders” from genuine or progressive forms of transnationalism; and how to separate the abstract brand of freedom implied by market liberalization across the globe from the internationalist vision of freedom encapsulated in something like Fanon’s rhetoric of liberation. We recognize the great conceptual difficulties in separating the coercive constituent features of neoliberal globalization from forms of internationaliza-

tion that democratic and egalitarian thought supports. Some of the key terms in the debates surrounding these two questions—terms like *liberalization*, *liberalism*, “free” markets, *market rationalization*, *capitalism*, *democracy*, *modernization*, *development*, *consumer choice*, *empowerment*—codify histories and desires that not only mean different things to different policy planners and theorists but are also invoked to justify contradictory modes of national and international interaction. To take just one instance, parallel terms like *development* and *modernization* no longer stand for a transparent process of socioeconomic change, if only because postcolonial critics, among others, have shown how mainstream understandings of these processes—the move to greater privatization and capital-intensive agriculture and industry—are insensitive to local needs and, in many cases, ecologically unsustainable.

In her essay on “the end of history,” Jean Comaroff takes up these questions, emphasizing the challenge to postcolonial work posed by the convergence of liberation, liberalism, and liberalization in moments of decolonization and their aftermath. Comaroff points out that in Africa, “agents of structural adjustment have labored to make democracy synonymous with privatization and minimal government, as well as with constitutionalism and an almost obsessional reliance on legal regulation.” She notes that this problem, while truly global, is more obviously on display in postcolonies like South Africa, where the end of apartheid has provoked people to seize on history itself as a means to individual freedom and national redemption. Their efforts to anchor history to the ground of popular nation building unfold even as new forms of political economy threaten to erase it all together, as if the new South Africa had already appeared full-fledged, like a shrink-wrapped commodity.

The same challenge to postcolonial scholars—to separate (at the very least, conceptually) market liberalization from human liberation—reurs, in a somewhat different key, in Elizabeth Povinelli’s essay “A Flight from Freedom.” Through a dense linguistic-historical-philosophical genealogy, Povinelli reveals the very concept of freedom as one tightly, perhaps irretrievably, interwoven with a myth of individual autonomy that has only been intensified by neoliberalism and (neo)imperialism. Povinelli links her inquiry to the general question of postcolonial studies today by suggesting that colonized subjects have often been required to survive socially by performing their own distance from a metropolitan ideal of individual autonomy, that is, by claiming group identities based on ethnic or racialized forms of collectivity. She argues that the history of colonialism thus has left in its wake a legacy of worshipping freedom-as-individual-autonomy, and of defining freedom according to its distance from custom or tradition (rather than tracing freedom

as a form of agency routed *through* custom and tradition). With reference to Australian Aboriginal land claims and queer US culture, Povinelli identifies a residual liberalism in critiques that hold onto dubiously narrow conceptions of freedom and political progress, proposing in their place a radical and relational model of agency.

But there are other paradoxes and pitfalls to confront once we take on board a more or less institutionalized critique of the related concepts of freedom, progress, modernization, and development in their classic Enlightenment (and colonial) forms. What happens, James Ferguson asks in this volume, when we dispense with the “evolutionist time lines and static essentialisms of older modernization paradigms” and sever the “automatic connection” between the West and modernity by advancing “a broader, pluralized notion of the modern, as constituting an ‘alternative’ modernity”? What happens when scholars focus too much on alternative modernity or, indeed, on cultural heterogeneity, and focus too little on the continuing wish of peoples to improve their conditions within what is left of modernity in the most basic of ways? Writing from the perspective of an Africanist, Ferguson notes that if modernity is no longer seen as a telos, then the hierarchies between different parts of the world are made more, rather than less, rigid:

The developmentalist reassurance that history would, by its nature, transform status, that third world people needed only to wait, to have patience, for their turn to come, ceases to convince. . . . As understandings of the modern have shifted in this way, the vast majority of Africans today denied the status of modernity increasingly come to be seen, and may even (sometimes, and in complex ways) come to see themselves, not as less developed, but simply as less.

Ferguson suggests that although the modernization paradigm failed as a description of facts, its abandonment in the past two decades has left us prey to the hypostatization of global inequity under the culturalist alibi of alternative modernities. Ferguson’s essay thus speaks to two of the many forms of double consciousness that postcolonial studies has to live with—first, it resonates with those essays in this volume that discuss the question of periodization and reminds us of the ways in which challenging the global and temporal divisions of the past is impossible without attention to the new divisions being created today. Second, it insists that our critique of the forms of modernity bequeathed to us as the aftermath of colonialism must be supple enough to insist that democratic values, egalitarian ideas, distributive justice, and secular forms of civil society are the right and the responsibility of all, both within and across nations.

Ferguson’s skepticism about the practical effects of alternative-modernities theory represents a keynote in postcolonial studies today, which

turns on the question of whether the field's investment in the myriad forms of genealogical critique ended up obscuring what was most salvageable from older metanarratives of social change. With that problem in mind, we can understand Kelwyn Sole's essay as an exemplary model of how to qualify metanarratives via scrupulous attention to local conditions, but without ceding the ground of larger historical destiny altogether to the neoliberal version of global progress. Sole shows to what extent and how appropriately postapartheid poetry in South Africa has been insisting on the importance of quotidian experience, as opposed to the more overt, more Manichaean politics of apartheid-antiapartheid that had become somewhat stultifying (both culturally and politically) during the struggle for liberation. As a reader of that poetry, Sole insists on the everyday as a category that questions rather than reflects the local pseudofreedoms bred and licensed by neoliberalism in the new South Africa. As he writes, "It is one thing to wish to downplay macro issues and political, economic, or theoretical determinism . . . so that the aspects of ordinary, everyday culture and experience can find greater definition; it is quite another to discount (to the point of invisibility) macro issues that structure and limit what is locally possible . . . in the first place."

Placing essays like Sole's and Comaroff's side by side, we can see the emergence (in this volume and in this moment of doubt, renewal, and expansion for postcolonial studies) of a new critical language for articulating the linkage between local, lived experience and the broadest structures of global economic and political power. These essays do not just call for this rearticulation of the theoretical relations among spatial scales and social registers under globalization but also attend to the specific practices and languages already in play. In Sole's work, for example, we have a close ear to the ground of South African poetry, proliferating as a dialogue between the minute, concrete sensuality of everyday life and the vast abstractness of its structural determinants.

Nivedita Menon reminds us that such political suppleness will involve unpacking the complex alliances and tensions that mark the relationship of globalization and nationalism, modernity and tradition. In many once-colonized parts of the world, she argues, resistance to globalization can be mounted in the name of both "tradition" and "nationalism." She observes that "the challenge for feminist politics in this context is the working out of a different space for a radical politics of culture, one differentiated from both right- and left-wing articulations of cultural and economic nationalism, as well as from the libertarian and celebratory responses to globalization from the consuming elites." Menon is wary of reestablishing the universalisms of older metanarratives, including the Marxist one. As she says in her disavowal of both Jürgen Habermas and Fredric Jameson:

I venture to suggest that the critique of the reification of cultural communities should take us in the opposite direction—toward a greater fracturing of universalism. Our politics and our democratic institutions must take on board the destabilizing implications of communities constituting themselves continuously around different axes, of which the cultural is only one. Other forms of community exist, building themselves around political ideals, but these are rarely recognized as such—communities built around sexual identity, displacement by development projects, language-based communities that undercut national boundaries, and so on.

Menon's essay argues that, from the perspective of feminist analysis, the dyad of tradition-modernity—and indeed even the general run of antineoliberal or antiglobalization discourse—offers too crude a reading of the effects of globalization in India, especially for Indian women. Her perspective constitutes a postcolonial beyond in that its optic of gender analysis points the way past a debate between globalization and traditional holdouts of ethnic/religious/national identity, calling for a way of seeing democratic politics that is neither one nor the other.

Beyond the Nation-State (and Back Again)

If Menon's work suggests the value of feminist analysis to postcolonial studies today, that is, the specific virtue of articulating a politics beholden neither to the nation-state nor to the globalized world in their respective official forms, it exemplifies a kind of postcolonial work that does not so much choose sides between national and transnational politics as reorganize the terrain altogether. Rob Nixon offers a similar expansion of vision in an essay that constitutes one of the first sustained considerations of what happens when postcolonial studies meets ecocriticism. As he began his work on this encounter, Nixon discovered that literary environmentalism had been

developing, de facto, as an offshoot of American studies. The resulting national self-enclosure seemed peculiar: one might surely have expected environmentalism to be more, not less, transnational than other fields of literary inquiry. It was unfortunate that a writer like [Ken] Saro-Wiwa, who had long protested what he termed "ecological genocide," could find no place in the environmental canon. Was this because he was an African? Was it because his work revealed no special debt to Thoreau, to the wilderness tradition, or to Jeffersonian agrarianism? Instead, the fraught relations between ethnicity, pollution, and human rights animated Saro-Wiwa's writings. As did the equally fraught relations between local, national, and global politics.

Meanwhile, Nixon remarks, postcolonial studies has not engaged with environmental studies, “regarding them implicitly as, at best, irrelevant and elitist, at worst as sullied by ‘green imperialism.’” Nixon’s essay provides an eminently usable model for how disciplinary work in humanistic postcolonial studies can intersect with environmental knowledge, politics, and activism. Even more to the point, Nixon suggests (and shows) that the resources of postcolonial studies can prove useful, in their turn, to ecocriticism and other kinds of environmental humanities, not just because they help transnationalize a very US-oriented field but because they volatilize a category like “bioregional ethics,” making it less likely to slide into a smug or xenophobic celebration of the pure, the local, the traditional.

Like many others in the pages that follow, Nixon points out that national traditions and national institutions cannot simply be dismissed in postcolonial/environmental analyses, even if the forces that structure ecologically hazardous enterprises (and the protest movements they inspire) are themselves quite thoroughly transnational. Indeed, many essays herein argue that reports of the death (or atrophy) of the nation-state as a vital organizing force in the contemporary world have been greatly exaggerated. Several contributors fear that such reports advance a facile or premature model of nationlessness that, however unwittingly, answers to the neoliberal fantasy of a borderless planet. To them, postcolonial studies appears especially well situated not just to resist that fantasy but to offer in its place a more detailed, more patient, more accurate representation of the reciprocal flow of power (economic, social, and cultural) between nation-states and globalized capitalism.

After all, despite the copious evidence that can be adduced to suggest the power of capital, media, or technology to circumvent national frontiers, even more powerful reminders exist that posit the nation as an extremely supple and enduring ideal.²⁹ Even as some states are forced to cede particular functions to multilateral agencies, other states—particularly the most powerful ones—confirm themselves in unilateral pursuit of their interests and of their vision for the rest of the world. The recent financial and economic crises in East Asia and Latin America, and the economic depression and human misery that has marked the “transition” between centralized state planning in the Soviet Union and the so-called market economies of the post-Soviet states, have all offered evidence that even as “hot money” flows opportunistically and destructively in and out of countries that do not have regulated capital markets, the forms of market regulation are often defined by regulators located not in these countries but in Washington agencies and New York banks. And of course, the boundaries of the powerful nation-states are far from porous: two recently proposed bills before the US Congress seek to

restrict the granting of US visas to foreign employees of American firms—employees who will, it is feared, militate against the interest of American workers. At the same time, some US firms have argued that call centers in the third world (where employees are trained to speak with American accents and pretend they are speaking from inside the United States) are depriving American workers of jobs that are rightfully theirs. Postcolonial forms of inquiry must not only adjudicate between national sovereignties and multinational treaty regimes but must also recognize that no necessary gap exists between the one and the other and that, in fact, an enormously powerful source of legitimacy for state actors is their participation in transnational agencies.

What counts in these circumstances, and what the essays in this volume try to exemplify, is how well one can grasp and describe the relations of national to transnational power—how one assesses the scale, ratio, and effect of national forms of organization as against other micro and macro forms of organization. If globalization scholars look beyond the nation, postcolonial studies scholars are trying to look afresh at the relation between national and transnational forms of government, economy, society, and culture. As an instance of this, we might cite Laura Chrisman's essay, a close consideration of South African black intellectuals whose careers and writings pose a challenge to received ideas in both postcolonial and Black Atlantic studies. Specifically, Chrisman suggests that these hegemonic transnational studies, with their consistent political antipathy to nationalism, tend to miss the importance of certain complex and historically vital forms of national affiliation. She uses her case studies of Sol Plaatje and Peter Abrahams to show that the national and the transnational are not in practice structured as antinomial terms, and thus need not be theorized as such. Moreover, the case of Abrahams suggests that when national and transnational *are* posed as antithetical, it is often because of an ideological commitment to romantic individualism (as against collective or national politics).

The idea of the nation, of course, is available for appropriation by the marginalized as well as by the elites—indeed, although some of the most well-known anticolonial leaders of this century such as Fanon and M. K. Gandhi were aware of the pitfalls of national consciousness, most anticolonial struggles have powerfully invoked alternative visions of a national community in order to challenge colonial hegemony. In an essay that asks postcolonial theory to engage more seriously than it has done with the history of Latin America, Florencia Mallon reminds us that this continues to be the case. As elite versions of the nation break down the world over, Mallon asks,

Is there anything that might take their place? Tracing subaltern practices and alternative discourses across the past two centuries in Latin America would seem to suggest that there is, and contemporary indigenous movements have begun to demand it. Hybridity, difference, and decentralization, which for so long have been seen as impediments to national unification, turn out to be, in reality, key to national democratization. With all of its inevitable contradictions and limitations, might this notion still offer a potential pathway into a post-colonial nationhood?

Mallon does not propose that we “reinvent the wheel” and return to older certainties, but she does suggest that “today’s enduring and ever more urgent need for a politics of solidarity . . . challenges us to take seriously, from a postcolonial perspective, the deep yearning that so many common folk across the world have had for the promises of national autonomy and development.” Mallon sees in the future or beyond for both postcolonial Latin American studies and for Latin America itself the necessity to imagine fundamental ways of restructuring (not abandoning) the nation, especially given the resilience of its mechanisms for distributing power and of its capacity to organize its citizens’ political hopes.

In thinking through the differences and connections between and within nations, especially as these have been constituted by the legacy of colonialism, Robert Stam and Ella Shohat urge postcolonial studies to engage more seriously with the politics of multiculturalism, which (like socialism earlier and postcolonialism today) has been “dismissed by the far Left as too soft and co-optive and denounced by the Right as too radical and incendiary.” Examining the trilateral trade in ideas among the United States, France, and Brazil, Stam and Shohat are interested in how debates about multiculturalism (which have permeated the public sphere far more widely than those about postcolonialism) travel across borders. On the one hand, their essay traces the ways in which racial and ethnic mingling and difference in each of these countries have been shaped by their interconnected colonial pasts (all three are touched by the Black Atlantic, for example). On the other, the authors warn us that in debates about multiculturalism and race relations, even oppositional intellectuals in these countries “too often operate within intellectual boundaries dictated by the nation-state.” Mallon’s case for comparative work that looks at a handful of related but not identical cases (Cuba, Chile, Mexico, and Bolivia) offers a glimpse of how future projects might be configured—not according to the pure exceptionalism of *sui generis* states, nations, or regions, but not according to the one-size-fits-all pattern of a blandly literal postcolonialism either. Likewise, Stam and Shohat’s method of triangulation offers a promising new approach by tracing a specific set of

linkages connected through related but different colonial histories—an approach in which neither the opaque soup of globality nor the isolated case predominates.

Bringing the local and international dimensions of nationalism into simultaneous play, Rebecca Stein's essay maps the connection between Israel's place in the new global order, its colonial maneuvers, and its attempts to define itself as a European entity. In the spring of 2002, as exchanges of violence intensified, the Israeli media became preoccupied with leisure, especially the café, which began "to stand in for the Jewish nation-state and its fragility." Mainstream newspapers represented Palestinian attacks on cafés as assaults on the cosmopolitan modernity of the nation-state (casting the situation as, in the words of one Israeli journalist, a "War for a chance of a Western society to survive in the Middle East"). Such a construction depended, Stein argues, on the obfuscation of "the historic and iconic status of the coffeehouse in the Arab world" and the construction of Israel as a Western society, "a nation-state that, given both its Palestinian and Mizrahi histories, had never been." Thus Stein shows how the colonial politics of Israeli settler-nationalism can be unpacked only by attending to its local operations. At the same time, she suggests, the "colonial comparativism" with which postcolonial theory engages can be effectively used to challenge "the terms of Israeli exceptionalism." Indeed, one canonical concept of postcolonial theory, ambivalence, plumbed most thoroughly by Homi Bhabha, illuminates the case of Israeli middle-class self-description, revealing layers of historical misdirection and colonial confession. What Stein's innovative and synthetic methodology highlights, from the point of view of academic knowledge production, is that postcolonial studies continues to reinvent and transform itself, generating new applications and ideas for specific cases in a transnational framework as it cross-fertilizes with an ever wider range of disciplines and subdisciplines in the contemporary academy.

Postcolonial Studies and the Disciplines in Transformation

It is hardly surprising that Israeli nationalism constructs itself as both a European and a modern entity under attack from people who live beyond the physical and temporal borders of civility. As several of our contributors show, in colonial rhetoric, time and space are inextricably connected; one of the most important directions for future work is a dynamic rethinking of the temporal and spatial reach of postcolonial studies, particularly the question of periodization. If postcolonial studies—as an intellectual field poised uncertainly among the disciplines—concerns itself with the full history of

European imperialism rather than simply its aftermath, just how far back should it go? There are, of course, obvious connections between the imperial present and colonial beginnings; Stam and Shohat point out in their essay for this volume that “George W. Bush’s ultimatums against Iraq resonate with five hundred years of colonial ultimatums, going all the way back to the Spanish *requerimiento*, the document which the conquistadores read (in Spanish) to uncomprehending indigenous people and which told them, in sum, that they would have to give up their land, religion, and language, and that if they did not do so forthwith, the Spanish would burn their houses and rape their women, and that it would all be their own fault.” But postcolonial scholarship has not systematically engaged with the long, intertwined histories of empire and race, even though over the past few decades, scholars in precolonial or early colonial periods have begun developing a critical but highly productive relationship with postcolonial studies.

There has been a long-established tendency to seal off premodern periods, as the home of the barbaric, from an enlightened early modern and modern Europe in much the same way as the geographic margins of colonial societies were differentiated from the metropolis. This rhetorical interplay between the “darkness” of medieval life and that of colonized spaces produces a plastic vocabulary often invoked to mark cultural and religious differences. But while postcolonial scholars question the colonial construction of African barbarism, or Islamic medievalism, they do not always examine the way “the Middle Ages” have been constructed as the barbaric other of “the Renaissance,” and therefore of modernity. In his editor’s introduction to *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen writes that “postcolonial theory in practice has neglected the study of the ‘distant’ past, which tends to function as a field of undifferentiated alterity against which modern regimes of power have arisen. This exclusionary model of temporality denies the possibility that traumas, exclusions, violence enacted centuries ago might still linger in contemporary identity formations; it also closes off the possibility that this past could be multiple and valuable enough to contain (and be contained within) alternative presents and futures.”³⁰ With this in mind, postcolonial scholars need to do more than insist on the alternate modernities of once-colonized worlds. Scholars of contemporary race and colonialism also need to question a traditional periodization that sanctions ignorance of earlier periods without which, as is becoming increasingly clear, we cannot understand contemporary ideologies of difference.

The idea that the roots of racial ideologies need only to be traced back to different *colonial* encounters has been challenged by recent medieval and early modern scholarship. Medievalists have both extended and revised the

insights of postcolonial scholars and theorists by analyzing the Crusades as a form of early colonialism, characterized by a range of hostilities and hybridities every bit as complex as those of later times and crucial for understanding the latter. By illuminating the relationships between Muslims, Jews, and Christians at this time, medievalists have also traced the lineages of contemporary identity categories, making visible the foundational importance of religious difference in the development of racial ideologies. In this volume, Daniel Boyarin goes even further back in time, to late antiquity, and uses concepts developed in postcolonial theory in order to understand the separation of Christianity and Judaism in this period. Christian heresiologists, whom Boyarin calls a “religion-police,” attempted to define and codify the difference between Jews and Christians; for them, Jews, so-called Judaizers, and Jewish Christians marked “a space of threatening hybridity” that had to be externalized in order to consolidate and identify Christianity as a religion. Inasmuch as “religion” as a singular idea can only be understood in terms of a posited difference between religions, Boyarin argues, this process of externalizing the hybrid, the not-pure, also marks the invention of religion itself. Judaism appropriates these heresiological moves, but then refuses “finally to become or be a religion”; it is only in this extended history that what Boyarin calls the ambivalence of Judaism about its own status as a religion can be located.

Today, it has become more necessary than ever for postcolonial scholars to engage seriously with such early histories. Etienne Balibar has argued that contemporary European neoracism draws freely on the earlier anti-Semitic rhetoric of the Reconquista.³¹ The long history of Islamophobia has become increasingly visible after the destruction of the World Trade Center towers on September 11, 2001. Neo-imperial commentary has been quick to direct the rhetorical equation between barbaric pasts and uncivilized spaces toward first Afghanistan and then Iraq. Iraq, home to the oldest traces of civilization in the world, is seen to have progressed into the European Middle Ages and no further (or is it that it was bombed back into the Middle Ages after 1991?). The rhetoric of a clash of civilizations—and the fact of deep interdependence between cultures—can both be traced back to medieval and early modern European and Christian writings on Islam, as well as Judaism. At the same time, there exists a crucial difference between the power relations of the medieval world and those of contemporary times. In the medieval world, Islam did not simply constitute the Other of Christianity, nor was there an economic and military imbalance of the kind that exists today. Contemporary neo-imperialism revives key elements of the rhetoric of the Crusades not only because the vocabulary of religious confrontation plays

to historical fears, including those compounded by modern-day racisms, but also because such fears make for a formidable accompaniment to the real business of empire, the perpetuation of global inequalities. We need to go to the past not just to understand the long roots of contemporary ideologies of difference but also to put these ideologies into perspective by historicizing them and glimpsing alternative ways of being, which the past also makes visible.

In the past few decades, some early modernists have moved to precisely this terrain, mapping the complexity and diversity of the relationships between European and non-European societies at that time. Many “Eastern” societies were far from being just the inferior Others of Renaissance Europe—in fact, Europeans desired to enter the powerful economic networks of the Mediterranean, the Levant, North Africa, India, and China; feared the military might of the Turks; and were dazzled by the wealth and sophistication of many Asian kingdoms. Indeed, as world-system theorists such as Andre Gunder Frank have argued, early modern Europe in fact constituted the junior partner in this “traffic,” remaining on the periphery of a global economy whose center was located in the East. European domination of global commerce and colonial surplus does not begin till the eighteenth century.³²

In the light of postcolonial theorists’ demand that we learn to “provincialize Europe,” such a perspective seems especially apropos.³³ At the same time, it seems equally important not to gloss over the fact that by the end of the seventeenth century, several European city-states and provinces had already begun trading in slaves, that plantations were well underway in several parts of the world, that native populations in the Americas had already been subjected to genocide, and, most important, that colonialist and racist ideologies and practices were fairly well developed in Europe. Thus a great many of the material practices and ideological features that came to define modern colonialism began to be shaped at this time, and a historical inventory of such details is important in helping us understand their power in the later periods.³⁴ Further, early histories of the coercive forms and ideologies of empire prove important because both the ideologues and adversaries of modern European colonialism debated them at length and understood them as leading up to their moment.

However, even as the dynamics of relationships between different religious, ethnic, and geographic groups in precolonial times can often be productively analyzed to reveal the roots of later colonialist ideologies, historical transformation cannot simply be understood as progression or decline. Earlier periods are more than simply precursors to later periods, and they

must be understood in their own terms, a reminder that can often prove very productive for postcolonialists. In a recent essay, Bruce Holsinger has suggested that the work of the Subaltern School of Indian historians reveals a deep engagement with medievalist scholarship. He argues that many of the Subalternists' insights into the collective lives of the Indian peasantry under colonialism, and even after, are arrived at via a comparative consideration of medieval European modes of community and of the relationship to land of both peasants and proprietors. By tracing this "genealogy of critique," Holsinger thus suggests that these agrarian and communitarian practices, by virtue of their distance from those social forms made hegemonic by European colonial modernity, are useful in understanding non-European peasant communities under siege.³⁵ Thus he indicates an alternative way of conceptualizing the connections between the complexities of social formations in premodern periods and those of non-European spaces under colonialism.

Thus, at this juncture of history, we need to critically examine the grounds on which postcolonial studies has engaged with the past, and to think about the ways in which it needs to expand what Cooppan calls "the time and space of the postcolonial." By moving back into time beyond the usual boundary of 1492, and past those territories usually associated with European colonialism, we will be in a much better position to understand what Kenneth Pomeranz, a noted historian of modern China's place in the world-system, has recently styled the "great divergence" by which Europe came to dominate global political economy.³⁶

Among the most challenging cases of expanded postcolonial consideration is indeed that of China, long seen by its specialist historians as exceptional in the history of modern imperialism and, more recently, subsumed into a model of semicolonialism. Tani Barlow's essay offers a brief review of the relevant positions in the debate over colonial modernity in China, concluding that the relevance of such a concept (and by implication, the potential applicability of the tools of postcolonial analysis) to an understanding of the modern traffic in ideas through the treaty ports is undeniable, despite its imperfect fit to the Chinese case. Specifically, Barlow suggests that it is difficult to grasp the full context for Chinese modernist thinking on the matter of eugenic feminism without placing it in the discursive networks that can be said to define colonial modernity itself. Like Nivedita Menon's essay, Barlow's suggests that feminist scholarship in the postcolonial arena offers alternative methods for reconciling the demands of local archives and conditions with broader paradigms of colonial and postcolonial history. Of course, even as Barlow's patient considerations exemplify the fruitful exchanges that emerge from the encounter between postcolonial studies and

East Asian history, her essay also registers the resistance of both historians in general and China specialists in particular to the perceived intellectual baggage carried by postcolonial scholarship.

Despite the supposedly porous boundaries of postcolonial studies, then, and despite the increasing interdisciplinarity of the humanities and social sciences, the genealogies of individual disciplines and area studies—and the evidentiary and explanatory protocols normalized within each—exert an enormous and often starkly differentiating influence on the ways in which various scholars approach colonialism and neocolonialism. Postcolonial critics and their critics, both those who work in Western universities and those in recently colonized countries, have also had to confront pressing questions of location germane both to the individual scholar and to the geographical or political unit under scrutiny. Of course, the question of the proper provenance of postcolonial studies only becomes more complicated—but also more interesting and timely—when its practitioners take stock of different concepts of the postcolonial established in different international academic settings. Especially outside of the Western academy, for example, there is a widespread perception that postcolonial studies' poststructuralist bias accounts for its popularity and institutionalization in the West, and also that this bias and location are inextricably connected with its political and philosophical weaknesses.³⁷ In the discipline of history, the work of the Subaltern School of Indian historians, which has been seen as the most substantial and controversial bridge between history and postcolonial criticism, is routinely critiqued on the grounds that depends (increasingly) on poststructuralist method, and therefore cannot theorize resistance in any meaningful way.³⁸ Branching disciplinary genealogies and discrepant institutional locations are indeed the two chief reasons for the wide divergence of views about the shape and relevance of postcolonial studies today. These debates partially explain why comparatively few scholars in places like India and South Africa (to take but two noteworthy examples) see themselves as postcolonialists.

At the same time, the conversations that resulted in this volume have suggested that there prevails a curiously consistent paradox across a number of disciplinary and institutions settings: many scholars reported their sense that postcolonial concerns and methods have been widely adapted, broadly influential, and even taken for granted as necessary in a number of scholarly domains. Yet those concerns and methods have been fairly shallowly integrated with some of the bedrock methodological and epistemological procedures that still define the traditional disciplines. For instance, even as various strands of postcolonial thought have proven crucial to the development of new forms of historiography, and even as the study of history has proven

crucial for the development of key texts of postcolonial studies, it is arguable that history (like political science) has only sporadically engaged with the crucial challenge of postcolonialism. This claim would certainly hold true by comparison to the impact of postcolonial questions on literary studies and anthropology, where each discipline was forced to confront its own origins and implication within the ideological and institutional apparatus of modern empires.³⁹ As a result, the work of many historians who do not call themselves postcolonialists, and also many critiques of postcolonial studies from historians all over the world, have contributed substantially to the conversations within the field and have enriched and extended debates about colonial and postcolonial dynamics.⁴⁰ In the case of anthropology, the fate of the discipline and the history of colonialism are so closely intertwined that much of the revisionary thinking in the discipline over the past three decades could be glossed under the heading of postcolonial studies. At the same time, and also unlike literary studies, not much overt theorization of the category of the postcolonial exists by practicing anthropologists.⁴¹ Rather, one finds more of what we might understand as a convergence of concerns: the destabilization of received geopolitical categories, the critical focus on Western forms of power, the inquiry into global inequities and their local articulation, and the affirmative recuperation of subaltern voices. Meanwhile, in literary studies, the study of colonialism has been (along with several other intellectual developments since the 1980s) responsible for rethinking the social mission and institutional history of university literature departments. However, it is significant that despite the intellectual success of postcolonial methods (and their implied disciplinary critique), and despite the fact that postcolonial theorists have been most visibly and widely housed in departments of literature, the study of colonialism (and the teaching of non-Western literatures) still remains marginalized in the actual curricular and hiring practices of many literature departments, especially those most closely identified with the traditions of English studies.⁴²

For these reasons, in part, postcolonial studies has been seen not just as invigorating to the disciplines but also as enormously irritating, perhaps even risky in some quarters. Very often this intellectual agon results in the characterization of postcolonial studies as an abstract, procrustean, and arcane set of theories that challenge the scrupulous, time-honored, and concrete practices of the traditional disciplines.⁴³ A widespread suspicion exists among historians, for example, that postcolonial studies functions as a carrier (and the metaphor was apt even before these virus-wary times) of other perspectives, such as poststructuralist thought, critical race theory, and next-wave feminism, that may destabilize the core of their discipline. Similarly, many

anthropologists charge postcolonial studies with the decentering of ethnography—their discipline’s distinctive form of knowledge production—which they trace quite directly back to Edward Said’s *Orientalism* in particular. It is possible, in fact, to understand much anthropology written thereafter as a reaction to *Orientalism*. While not about the anthropological project per se, Said’s argument regarding the discursive violence transported in representations of the Other could be readily transposed into all the practices of traditional anthropology. After Said, ethnographic knowledge could never be politically innocent (a position that a number of radical anthropologists had already articulated in the 1970s, but that only entered the anthropological mainstream in the 1980s).⁴⁴ Although it seems improbable from the point of view of the more empirical social sciences, various literary traditionalists, too, have lumped a Saidian/Foucauldian politics of representation into a general *mélange* of “bad” theories that they believe threaten the autonomy and specificity of the literary object per se, by allegorizing it or reducing it unfairly to a set of (generally baleful) political or ideological propositions.

Coming from different disciplines and backgrounds—and with diverse views about the future and provenance of postcolonial studies—many of our contributors nonetheless agree that postcolonial studies is now poised to move beyond some of the debates and methods that become ossified in the course of the 1990s. In anthropology, for instance, the mode of self-reflexive ethnography adapted in the wake of the postcolonial intervention and the “writing culture” moment has now lost some of its excitement. Once the case for self-reflexivity as such did not need to be argued any longer, the ritualized discussion of the ethnographer’s position in the field began to seem forced, even gratuitous. In fact, the theoretical turn seemed to produce a newly formulaic ethnography that reiterated general lessons about cultural processes well established for a decade. In the past several years, this perceived impasse has led anthropologists to pursue a number of alternative modes of analysis; the five anthropologists represented in this volume each attempt to articulate a project for anthropology that reaches beyond, while being informed by, both the postcolonial and “writing culture” moments in the discipline.

With this kind of capsule intellectual history in view, it is possible to understand why, in several disciplines, postcolonial studies has been (at times unfairly) hobbled by narrow association with a predictable and self-conscious kind of theoretical scholasticism that seems both politically attenuated with regard to the field’s anticolonial origins and intellectually dull with regard to the complex ways in which creative scholars now try to represent the relation between culture and the state, between the imagination and the economy, between ideas and facts, evidence and interpretation. While it

is possible to read many of the essays in this volume as retrieving a historical-materialist dimension of postcolonial studies (posed implicitly against its poststructuralist dimension), it is perhaps more apt to think of the work gathered here as moving beyond that particular binarized intellectual genealogy altogether.

While this may seem like a promising mandate for a reinvigorated postcolonial studies (embodied in the essays collected here), this volume also seriously entertains the views of those who believe that postcolonial studies has reached a dramatic point of crisis in its own intellectual and institutional trajectory. Indeed, one of the ironic juxtapositions on display here is that scholars like Rebecca Stein, Daniel Boyarin, and Tani Barlow—coming from intellectual precincts generally considered outside the purview of the postcolonial—are finding new ways to deploy classic postcolonial techniques of analysis, while scholars strongly associated with key statements within postcolonial studies—notably David Scott (in anthropology), Frederick Cooper (in history), and Neil Lazarus (in literary studies)—offer substantial critiques of the field designed to challenge its current methods and assumptions. Scott’s essay, for example, issues something like an obituary for the field, while maintaining that it is crucial to continue to study (with fresh tools and new rubrics) the traces of colonial power in the history, culture, and economics of the present (the original *raison d’être* of postcolonial studies, of course). The endpoint of Scott’s essay is to claim a new vocation for postcolonial studies or its successor, one that shakes off the intellectual cobwebs of “normal social science” and rededicates itself to the crises and problems of the contemporary world. That is, Scott wants postcolonialists to stop generating finer and finer models of the past operations of colonialism and to start orienting themselves to a full and insistent ideological differentiation of power based on its effects here and now. Taking us full circle to the opening question of the fate of postcolonial studies in the era of globalization, Scott identifies a potentially exhausted paradigm (the postcolonial) that seems to have answered the questions it posed originally; if not reformed, he suggests, postcolonial studies is thus doomed to continue formulating the same insights.

Even many of those not unsympathetic to the way in which the humanities and social sciences have been changed by the intervention of postcolonial studies, then, remain wary of the potential reification of its general insights about the relationship between colonizers and colonized. For instance, Frederick Cooper argues that postcolonial critiques have resulted in a flattening of Europe itself as a polity devoid of internal fragmentations and contestations, and suggests ways in which some of the excesses of postcolonial critique can be redressed by going back to certain key tenets of older historiog-

raphy. Cooper offers a useful summary of one African historian's misgivings about the discursive-epistemic methods of postcolonial studies, including especially the danger that an emphasis on abstract knowledge-power patterns may interfere with our ability to recognize and recover the more determinate, more concrete, and ultimately more messy activities that advanced colonialism's economic and political interests, not to mention the manifold techniques for resisting them. Cooper's sharp criticism of certain excesses in the colonial-discourse approach modulates into a call for a more empirical, more wide-ranging, and more historically acute future for postcolonial studies—a future that several other contributors to the volume, sharing Cooper's concerns, are already helping to build.

Like Cooper, Neil Lazarus defines a strong vision for the beyond of postcolonial studies by articulating a stringent critique of certain prevailing interpretive protocols within the field. Lazarus's observations about the narrow structures of literary canonization—and the hermeneutical assumptions to which the metropolitan academy's postcolonial canon corresponds—crystallize an established critique of Eurocentric (and, not incidentally, Anglophone) postcolonial criticism. As Lazarus reminds us in his essay, only a handful of writers circulate in the postcolonial canon, and even these writers are interpreted only through a very narrow lens according to keywords such as “migrancy, liminality, hybridity, and multiculturality.” Moreover, those keywords are themselves interpreted in restrictive ways—thus “migrancy” usually means the movement of once-colonized subjects to the West, an emphasis that leaves out (to take just one stark example) the displacement of millions of people during the partition of the Indian subcontinent. Lazarus here joins forces with a number of writers and critics working outside the Western academy to highlight this problem, urging postcolonial critics to expand their research into the immense and diverse body of contemporary non-Western literature that remains relatively unknown in US and UK classrooms. We might add that the canon of critical and theoretical work in postcolonial studies is itself more expansive than many trained within the narrow confines of a single discipline or scholarly language might suspect; indeed, in the coming decade, postcolonial scholars must continue to identify and translate the vital intellectual projects already produced in (but not always recognized outside) noncolonial, indigenous, and creolized languages from across the globe.

Conclusion

Postcolonial Studies and Beyond both calls for, and attempts to begin, a gathering of scholarly, critical political energies that is no longer detained

by recycled debates and institutional jockeying, but instead is methodologically complex and eclectic, extroverted, experimental, and engaged in multiple sites of investigation and contest. One idea that this book clarifies, in its retrospect on postcolonial studies and its survey of the field's prospects, is that during the quarter century between 1978 and now, two simultaneous and overlapping, but not necessarily causally chained, events occurred: the disciplinary shift in postcolonial/global/third world studies from sociological and economic analysis to cultural and interpretive and theoretical/semiotic/discursive analysis; and the challenge to theorize models and metanarratives built on the dominant paradigms of modernization, development, and world-systems theory. This book in some ways tries to delink those legacies and reorganize them in two crucial ways. First, it imagines a study of culture that does not detach from the claims and conclusions of socioeconomic or structural analysis. Second, it revisits and revises broad models of global relations that insist on a systematic (yet critical) view of what is still the postcolonial world; that is, it argues that we need to keep alive particular metanarratives for critical purposes, while minimizing and accounting for their Eurocentric traces. This double disentanglement from the binaries of postcolonial studies in its formative period may now point the way to fresh insights and methods in the branching disciplinary and extra-disciplinary pathways that will define postcolonial studies in its current and future forms.

Our contributors here expand the project of postcolonial studies because they extend similar insights to new objects (geographically, methodologically), but particularly because their essays recapture the original importance of postcolonial analysis as a complement to other kinds of engaged intellectual and political work. Moreover, if there is something like a new empiricism on display in postcolonial ethnography, historiography, and criticism, it must be understood and appreciated not as a counter to the theoretical array characteristic of postcolonial studies but as a phenomenon that continues to emerge alongside and intertwined with it. Neither we nor the essayists represented here imagine that there is a choice to be made between empiricism or materialism, on the one hand, and theory, discourse, or culture, on the other. Instead, we are showcasing new methods for articulating the relation of material or socioeconomic facts with expressive art forms, new discursive histories, and abstract epistemological questions.

Taken together, the forceful critiques and inventive new applications of postcolonial methods on display in this volume suggest that the field has the resources and the momentum to reinvent itself and broaden its area of productive engagement. Indeed, stringent assessments of the limitations of

the postcolonial paradigm prove essential to the work of assessing and creating its future directions. Our goal here has not been to defend the territory of postcolonialism, or the term, but to survey its usefulness in the past and meditate on its uses in the future, keeping a wary eye on narrow constructions of postcolonial studies too quick to paint it as passé, involuted, ethnocentric, or irrelevant. The many-handed and continual work of postcolonial studies—as an innovative, interdisciplinary, and self-proliferating set of practices—has always been self-renewing and should not be read as suddenly galvanized by an intellectual crisis in the field or by the new challenge of globalization. Faced with the diversity and ingenuity of work in postcolonial studies, it makes little sense now to restrict its range of interest to a small handful of theories, buzzwords, or classic texts. Only with a broad and ecumenical sense of the genealogy of the field (a tradition of anticolonial thought and sociocultural analysis stemming from a great many intellectual and historical developments) can current practitioners envision an urgent, wide-ranging, and productive future for postcolonial studies.

Notes

1. It is possible to think of postcolonial studies as having passed through an *auto-critical* phase (as evidenced by the essays collected in a 1992 special issue of *Social Text*—including oft-cited critiques by Anne McClintock, and Ella Shohat—and those collected in a 1994 special issue of *Oxford Literary Review* edited by Suvir Kaul and Ania Loomba). More recently, Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks has identified a kind of *melancholic* phase for postcolonial studies, a phase marked by the fact that the field's theoretical impasses can no longer go ignored at a time at which it has achieved relative security in academic institutions. See Seshadri-Crooks, "At the Margins of Postcolonial Studies," 3–4. While remarking the institutional critiques and theoretical limitations that have dominated self-reflexive postcolonial work in the last decade, *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* rather emphasizes the array of vital and innovative new intellectual practices now enabled by engagement with issues of postcoloniality.

2. The work that we think of as postcolonial proceeds under many banners, including those listed by Robert Stam and Ella Shohat in their essay here: "revisionist 'bottom-up' history, diasporic indigenous studies, Afro-diasporic studies, critical race theory, transnational feminism, whiteness studies, antiracist pedagogy, media critique, postmodern geography, counter-Enlightenment philosophy, border theory, antiglobalization theory, and many other forms of adversarial knowledge." At several points in this introduction, we discuss questions of historical, temporal, and locational differences and how they alter conceptions of postcoloniality.

3. "Hip defeatism" is Martha Nussbaum's somewhat glib critique of Judith Butler. See Martha C. Nussbaum, "The Professor of Parody," *New Republic*, February 22, 1999, 37–45.

4. Sharpe, "Is the United States Postcolonial?" See also Frankenberg and Mani,

“CrossCurrents, Crosstalk”; Singh and Schmidt, *Postcolonial Theory and the United States*; and Hulme, “Including America.”

5. See, for example, Schueller, “Articulations of African-Americanism in South Asian Postcolonial Theory.”

6. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*, 91–111. Similarly, Carlos Alonso and Alberto Moreiras have recently asserted the specificity of Latin American intellectual traditions within the archive of colonial modernity, citing documents that sometimes anticipate, sometimes reiterate, sometimes complicate, and sometimes challenge the key texts of postcolonial studies. For crucial or summary statements about the difference Latin America makes to the analysis of colonialism and globalization, see Alonso, *The Burden of Modernity*, 33–37, and Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference*, 23.

7. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*, 194.

8. See Moreiras, *Exhaustion of Difference*, 111–26; and Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*, 172–214. For a similarly rigorous rethinking of postcolonial hybridity through the specific historical and intellectual lens of Latin Americanism, see Moreiras, *Exhaustion of Difference*, 288–97.

9. See Miyoshi and Harootunian, *Learning Places*.

10. It is not possible to enumerate here the different ways in which postcolonialism has been theorized in relation to different places and histories, or even to provide a comprehensive reading list on the subject. However, in addition to books and essays already cited in this introduction, as well as by several contributors to this volume, a good starting point for thinking about the issue is the debate around the validity of subaltern studies beyond India and in relation to Africa and Latin America as conducted in the pages of *American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (1994). Also useful are Young, *Postcolonialism*; Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*; Prakash, *After Colonialism*; and Lewis and Mills, *Feminist Postcolonial Theory*.

11. Gikandi, “Globalization and the Claims of Postcoloniality,” 13. Gikandi sees the field in a somewhat different way, viewing several recent figures in the field as postcolonial theorists of globalization (Appadurai and Bhabha), thus suggesting that postcolonial theory has in fact fed into (rather than resisted) the tendency of globalization discourse to privilege cultural products as against structural conditions.

12. O’Brien and Szeman, “The Globalization of Fiction,” 606.

13. Arundhati Roy, “Instant-Mix Imperial Democracy,” *Outlook*, May 26, 2003, 46–56.

14. David Cannadine’s *Ornamentalism*, for instance, which describes itself as “characteristically entertaining and provocatively original” achieves both by scrupulously refusing to engage with the conclusions of economic historians, or indeed of any scholars whose writing on politics and culture have been central to the detailed revision of imperial certitudes and arrogance. In his book, *Empire*, Niall Ferguson goes one better by simply omitting the scholarly debates usually registered in footnotes.

15. Niall Ferguson, “The Empire Slinks Back,” *New York Times*, Sunday magazine, April 27, 2003, 54.

16. *Ibid.*, 57.

17. Paul Johnson, “Five Vital Lessons from Iraq,” *Forbes*, March 17, 2003.

18. This failure to thrive is also understood in total isolation from the colonial

histories of these states, the deadweight of cold war allegiances, and, perhaps most important, the neocolonial power of banking, corporate, and military-industrial systems to intensify and perpetuate inequalities within once-colonized societies and across international borders.

19. Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, 311.

20. *Ibid.*, 312.

21. *Ibid.* In order to answer such questions, Davis focuses on a case study of the province of Berar, deriving his conclusions from the empirical and archival work of a host of economic historians, such as Laxman Satya (*Cotton and Famine in Berar*). For further sources on this topic, see also Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*; and Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State*.

22. Ferguson, *Empire*, 368; Amitav Ghosh, "The Anglophone Empire," *New Yorker*, April 7, 2003, 46.

23. See South Asia Citizens Wire, 13 June, 2003, available at sacw.insaf.net/pipermail/sacw_insaf.net/2003/001726.html.

24. Roy, "Instant-Mix Imperial Democracy."

25. See, in particular, Brennan, "The Empire's New Clothes"; Hardt and Negri offer a critical reply to Brennan in the same issue.

26. See, most recently, David Leonhardt, "Globalization Hits a Speed Bump," *New York Times*, June 1, 2003. Of the many full-blown critiques of the processes of coercive economic change described as globalization, Joseph E. Stiglitz's *Globalization and Its Discontents* has been particularly noteworthy not only because Stiglitz is a Nobel Laureate but because he has headed policy-planning bodies both in the US federal government and at the World Bank. At several moments in his scathing critique of "Washington Consensus" models, particularly of failed IMF policies, Stiglitz invokes colonialism as the appropriate referent for those policies: "All too often, the Fund's approach to developing countries has the feel of a colonial ruler" (40); developing countries dealing with the IMF have been forced to ask "a very disturbing question: Had things really changed since the 'official' ending of colonialism a half century ago?" (41). Stiglitz has no qualms about invoking a history that even so-called liberal commentators seem to have forgotten.

27. O'Brien and Szeman, "The Globalization of Fiction," 607.

28. See the *Economics and Politics of the World Social Forum* issue of *Aspects of India's Economy* 35 (September 2003), available online at www.rupe-india.org/35/contents.html.

29. For a brief recent summary of the ongoing power of "national hegemonies," see Bhabha, "Statement for the Critical Inquiry Board Symposium."

30. Cohen, *The Postcolonial Middle Ages*, 3.

31. Balibar, "Is There a Neo-racism?"

32. Frank, *Re-orient*.

33. The phrase comes from Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*.

34. In an argument that is both expansive in its traversing of cultural frontiers and time periods and pointed in its recognition of enduring ideas about slavery and civil society, David Wallace has traced the relations of medieval European humanism and "a live discourse of slavery" that became "more or less active as economic conditions" dictated ("Humanism, Slavery, and the Republic of Letters," 78). Wallace suggests that "many of the features we associate with full-blown European colo-

nialism—as the slaving Mediterranean steadily evolves into the black Atlantic—are clearly forming during the earlier period” (67).

35. Holsinger, “Medieval Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and the Genealogies of Critique.”

36. Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*.

37. The most widely circulated statements of these positions are Ahmad, *In Theory*; Appiah, “Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial?”; and Dirlik, “The Postcolonial Aura.”

38. Prakash, “Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism”; O’Hanlon, “Recovering the Subject”; and Sarkar, “The Decline of the Subaltern in *Subaltern Studies*.” Other essays in Ludden, *Reading Subaltern Studies*, are also useful.

39. Of course, in *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty contends that the discipline of history, too, is deeply enmeshed in European and Eurocentric practices. Chakrabarty’s claims parallel the work (for example) of Gauri Viswanathan in English literary studies and of Johannes Fabian in anthropology, so that all three of the disciplines in question have been reconceived in terms of their own origin stories, all of them variously but significantly interwoven with the history of colonial institutions in Europe. See Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest*; and Fabian, *Time and the Other*.

40. Salient examples of influential historical work of this kind are Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills*; Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation*; and Hofmeyr, “*We Spend Our Years as a Tale That Is Told*.”

41. For exceptions, see David Scott, *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

42. See, for example, Hasseler and Krebs, “Losing Our Way after the Imperial Turn.”

43. At the same time, others have argued that historians and anthropologists were in fact already aware of those methodological and critical insights that postcolonialists claim to have brought to the study of colonialism. For a relevant example of this discussion among historians, see the exchange between Vaughan, “Colonial Discourse Theory and African History,” and Bunn “The Insistence on Theory.”

44. Clifford and Marcus, *Writing Culture*, and Marcus and Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, were the two seminal publications of the 1980s that announced the arrival of a new anthropology—a discipline that would no longer claim political neutrality in the name of cultural relativism, but would instead see itself as a politically positioned field of knowledge production whose overarching goal was “cultural critique.”