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INTRODUCTION

It has now been nearly twenty years since Fredric Jameson published “Modernism and Imperialism.” What was perhaps most striking about the essay when it first appeared in 1988 was its title: with a modest but provocative copula, Jameson willed into syntactic unity two concepts that had previously seemed alien, even antithetical.¹ What, after all, could modernism—reputedly that most aestheticized and rarefied of literary movements—have in common with the brute realities of conquest and empire? Where might one discover affiliations between the formal audacities of avant-gardism and the historical atrocities of colonialism? In short, how might one connect the culture of the cosmopolitan center with the politics of the imperial periphery? If we do not always agree with the answers Jameson supplied to these questions—indeed we often disagree with him—we nevertheless recognize that he was among the first to think searchingly about the ways in which modernist literary practice might be related, both formally and thematically, to the experience of empire.

Today the idea of joining the terms “modernism” and “colonialism” in a title provokes neither alarm nor surprise. Over the last two decades, numerous articles and books have examined how individual authors responded to empire (Conrad, Forster, Joyce), and a host of well-known critics have produced influential works on the subject (Bhabha, Eagleton, Gikandi, Parry, Said, and Suleri).² Yet, despite this scholarly activity, few studies have provided a sustained and comprehensive account of the relation of modernism to colonialism. The comparative absence of such scholarship is puzzling, given the political and historical imperatives of the modernist period. For while it is something of a commonplace to identify the nineteenth century

as the age of empire and the twentieth century with the end of empire, matters are a good deal more complicated than such a formulation would suggest.³ It should be remembered, for instance, that the British empire reached the height of its geographic expansion not in 1877, when Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India, nor in the 1880s and 1890s when England made substantial territorial gains in Africa, but during the boom years of modernism: the early twentieth century, especially the period between the two World Wars. In fact Britain's imperial influence expanded after the First World War on virtually all fronts, with new acquisitions in the Middle East (Palestine, Trans-Jordan, and Iraq), Africa (Tanganyika and South West Africa), and Melanesia (Samoa, Nauru, and the Bismark Archipelago).⁴

It was also in the early twentieth century that communications technology finally made it possible to consolidate the British empire into a single network of overland telegraphs and submarine cables. Of special importance was the laying in 1902 of the first trans-Pacific line, which joined Western Canada to Queensland and New Zealand. As William Roger Louis observes, the establishment of this link had "almost metaphysical significance," radically transforming the experience of time and space, while, on a more practical level, placing merchants throughout the empire "in direct touch with sources of supply."⁵ By the 1920s, in a striking anticipation of globalization, Great Britain's imperial cables and wireless beams had unified its colonial holdings into a vast communications system, extending from New Zealand, Australia, and India, through East and West Africa, to the Falkland Islands, British Guiana, and the Dominion of Canada. Between the two world wars, Britannia ruled not only the waves but also the airwaves, and this meant that if the sun never set on the English empire, the language of Shakespeare and Milton never fell silent in any of its domains. The military and political extension of empire had, in other words, cultural consequences, consequences that were felt in London, just as surely as they were in Dublin, Cape Town, Sydney, or Bombay.

Admittedly, the opening of the twentieth century, marked by Victoria's death in 1901 and the public reversals England suffered in the Boer War between 1899 and 1902, has often been seen as foreshadowing the decline of the British empire. Such a view appears all the more credible if we construe history retrospectively, reading backward from the vantage of 1947–60 when most of England's colonies gained their independence. But if we examine history from the perspective of the moderns, attempting to imag-

ine how it might have appeared to them, then the British empire looms large and indomitable, the kind of weighty edifice that inspired the famously pessimistic conclusion to *A Passage to India* (1924). Certainly a transformation did occur around 1900, but it was not the empire that changed so much as the attitude of a rising generation toward it. Many of the writers we associate with modernism were part of a new spirit of opposition, which challenged the social, economic, and political status quo in fundamental ways. Obviously central to this challenge was the question of England's imperial mission; as one contemporary observed: "The present generation is the first of a new order, and looks forward upon a prospect in which the idea of conquest and expansion find no place."⁶ Even those who had a more ambivalent reaction to colonialism nevertheless recognized it as a topic of enormous importance, one that was intimately bound up with the defining issues of the day. If to be a modern meant thinking these issues anew, then to be a modern meant thinking empire anew.

Of course, how one thinks about empire largely depends on the terminology one employs, and it will therefore be helpful to say a few words about the distinction we draw in the present volume between "imperialism" and "colonialism." While these terms are often used interchangeably, especially in the United States, they carry different connotations and evoke different associations.⁷ It is not surprising, for example, that Jameson prefers the term "imperialism," since Marxist criticism has historically tended to view colonialism as a discrete phase within the broader history of imperialism. As it happens, the terms "colonialism" and "imperialism" did not enter into English until the nineteenth century, and Marx himself never employed the word "imperialism."⁸ In the twentieth century, however, Marxist theorists have made wide use of the term—Lenin most notable among them—treating imperialism as the geographic extension of the acquisitive and expansionist practices of capitalism.⁹

In the present volume, we employ both these terms but with different emphases. For us "imperialism" refers to both the policy and practice whereby a nation establishes rule over another country or group of countries through the application of military force or conquest, while "colonialism" designates the institution and administration of an imperial power's foreign holdings and dependencies. Obviously imperialism and colonialism represent related aspects of the larger project of empire, but we have chosen to focus our discussion principally (though not exclusively) on colonialism

for a number of reasons. First, according to the *OED*, “colonialism” indicates not only the “colonial system or principle” (def. 2) but also “the practice or manner of things colonial” (def. 1a) and the “practice or idiom peculiar to or characteristic of a colony” (def. 1b).¹⁰ In contemporary usage, the word is probably more often associated with the second definition, but we wish to emphasize the first as well, since many of the essays in this collection deal directly with the colonial scene, as viewed at the local level. Considered from this vantage, “colonial” underscores the hybridity of a culture born out of conflict and compromise and shaped by what is native and alien, what is negotiated and imposed.

Second, the term “imperialism” derives from a Latin verb, *impero, imperare*, which literally means “to order, govern, command.”¹¹ Yet insofar as the word conveys a sense of complete or absolute domination, it misses a revealing aspect of British colonialism. For the latter often followed, for better or worse, what Michel Foucault has called the “gentle way” in exercising administrative authority, aiming at conversion as much as coercion.¹² Hence, the preferred English model of “indirect rule” often permitted greater local autonomy of colonial elites than did its French, German, and Belgian counterparts. Even where England relied upon a direct form of colonial rule, it employed a relatively spare and economical method of governance that allowed for lower administrative costs and smaller deployments of imperial military forces than would otherwise have been necessary.¹³ Of course, it must be remembered that Foucault himself treats “soft” power not as more “humane” than “hard” power but as more effective in achieving social control, and there is no doubt that such a system was ultimately designed to serve the interests of the Colonial Office.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the preferred English method of governance tended to produce a distinctive approach to the management of empire, one that—whatever its motivation—was often less imperious than that pursued by the other European powers.¹⁵

Third, precisely because British colonialism was committed to a strategy of cultural co-optation and absorption, education acquired special importance as a vehicle for disseminating the English language and English values. It is no accident that when Obi Okonkwo, the hero of Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease* and an exemplary instance of the colonized subject, applies for a position in the colonial government of Nigeria, the job interview turns into an examination on his knowledge of English literature. He impresses his prospective employer, securing the job in the process, by demonstrating that his

familiarity with English culture is not confined to the writers he has read in colonial schools but also extends to such contemporary figures as Graham Greene and W. H. Auden.¹⁶ Obi has learned—as did Achebe, the title of whose novel is drawn from a T. S. Eliot poem—that cultural capital commands respect and enables advancement within the British colonial system.

Finally, as a concept colonialism admits of temporal delimitation—one can speak meaningfully of precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods—and such temporal delimitations enable historical discriminations. Of course, the chronological parameters we have set for the present volume are artificial, but they are not arbitrary. The year 1899 marks the publication of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* on the eve of the new century, and 1939 marks the death of William Butler Yeats on the eve of the Second World War. With the exception of the Victorian romances discussed in the first chapter and the postcolonial poetry discussed in the last chapter, all the major works treated in this volume fall within the forty-year period that runs from 1899 to 1939. Obviously the Second World War represents a turning point in Great Britain's colonial venture. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the United States emerged as the dominant military power in the world, while Great Britain was left with its economy in shambles and, to a large degree, dependent on its American ally. The dissolution of the British empire, which followed hard upon the end of the Second World War, was mostly completed by 1960.

Each of the essays in *Modernism and Colonialism* examines the modernist rethinking of empire by focusing on an author, a formal problem or a literary theme. One of the key issues linking these essays is the question of how aesthetic innovation and formal experimentation, so often associated with modernism, is related to British colonialism. While we do not propose a simple or single answer to this question—so complex a phenomenon as modernism does not admit of such a response—we nevertheless believe that it is essential to investigate how modernist literary practice was variously shaped by the contemporary geopolitical scene, and how the modernist revolution can be understood as a critical and artistic engagement with the British and, more broadly, European quest for empire. We therefore devote considerable attention in these essays to placing the work of leading modernist writers within its historical context and to exploring the related developments of literary and political forms during the period.

Given such an approach, it is inevitable that this collection should engage

—sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly—with a number of current debates concerning the scholarly and institutional definition of modernism, or as it is sometimes called, the “new modernisms.” It is our hope that the present volume will serve to complicate and contest two of the dominant accounts of modernism, one older and the other more recent. The older account, inspired by formalist and humanist criticism, often ignored the connections that exist between modernism and politics, connections that we feel are of vital importance. For these critics, modernism bore little or no relation to colonialism.¹⁷ The more recent account, drawing on postcolonial and cultural studies, has sometimes pushed modernism too far in the opposite direction, treating it as indistinguishable from colonialism, a structure of ideological oppression that aided and abetted empire. The problem with both these accounts is that they tend to overlook the historical and cultural reality of modernism, which more often than not challenged the prevailing values of English culture, including its most powerful institution, the British empire.¹⁸

Having said this, we recognize that different modern writers responded to empire in different ways. We have attempted to register the diversity of their responses through individual chapters, many of which are devoted to examining in detail a single writer and his or her major work. At the same time, the organization of the volume underscores our conviction that modernism is not a unified or monolithic phenomenon so much as a series of intersections and overlappings, linked according to a principle of Wittgensteinian family resemblances. Hence, we approach Anglo-modernism as occupying a number of discrete cultural and geographic locales—not only in England, Ireland, and Scotland, but also in Africa, Asia and the Americas—which opens up the possibility of positing a series of “vernacular modernisms.” We also wish to consider the continuities that connect modernism to earlier and later forms of cultural expression, and we therefore begin our collection with Nicholas Daly’s essay, which looks back to Victorian themes, and end with Jahan Ramazani’s essay, which looks forward to postcolonial forms.

While the essays in this volume present a largely revisionary account of the relation of British and Irish modernism to English colonialism, one that challenges the occasionally reductive dichotomies of some postcolonial criticism, we do not want to be understood as in any sense attempting to justify or mitigate the horrors (we deliberately use this Conradian word) that

empire has inflicted on its victims, most particularly its native subjects. The contributors are unanimous in their unqualified condemnation of colonialism and imperialism, so much so that we have taken it as the unspoken—and therefore unwritten—starting point for our essays. In our view, the matter at issue is not whether one should defend the politically and morally discredited system of empire but how literary scholarship might unfold the enormously complicated relationship that exists between modernism and colonialism. It is this question that shapes and animates the chapters that follow.

Here we believe it is also important to address the scope and focus of the present volume. Obviously a collection of essays that includes among its topics Conrad, Forster, Woolf, Eliot, Lawrence, Yeats, and Joyce is weighted toward “canonical” modernist literature. Two principles have guided our selections. First, it is the traditional modernists who have most often been censured for being receptive to, or complicitous with, the project of empire. Insofar as this is a point of view we wish to interrogate, and in some instances to contest, we have found that our choices were often already made for us. In other words, the writers we examine in this volume have been selected as much by their critics as by us. Second, we fully appreciate that a strikingly different collection could be produced that would view modernism from outside our own largely metropolitan perspective. Such a work might not only explore how non-European writers like Coetzee, Desani, Emecheta, Naipaul, Ngugi, Rhys, Rushdie, Roy, Walcott, and others adapted and transformed modernism but could also engage more extensively with post-colonial theory and criticism than we do. A volume conceived along these lines might stand as a valuable companion piece to our own, but it would have its own logical and historical integrity—one that we have not presumed to reproduce in our study.

To date one other collection of essays has been published on the subject before us: *Modernism and Empire*, edited by Howard J. Booth and Nigel Rigby (2000). A welcome entry into the field, the Booth-Rigby volume brings together a series of penetrating and provocative essays. The approach that Booth and Rigby take is, however, different from our own. Their volume assembles essays on a variety of topics and authors, each interesting and valuable in itself, but it does not attempt to cover comprehensively those writers that several generations of modernist critics regarded as central to British and Irish literature. Hence, there are no individual chapters on

Conrad, Forster, Woolf, Eliot, Lewis, and Pound, while less prominent figures such as Elizabeth Bowen, Hugh MacDiarmid, and Evelyn Waugh are never mentioned. In our view, a fully articulated account of British and Irish modernism on the one hand, and English colonialism on the other, should include those authors and works that historically have been most influential in shaping the literature of the period and the body of criticism that has accumulated in relation to it. Such an approach enables one to see the extent to which the moderns often focused on a set of shared issues and problems, while producing distinctive, even idiosyncratic, responses to them.

We have presented these issues and problems in a structure that is organized into historic and geographic sections. Part I, “Victorian Backgrounds,” features an essay by Nicholas Daly that deals with the relation of colonialism to popular culture at the end of the nineteenth century. It is generally accepted that the so-called imperial romance, which inspired later writers like Conrad and Forster, had its origins in popular adventure novels. Focusing on two examples of this kind of literature, Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* (1883) and H. Rider Haggard’s *King Solomon’s Mines* (1885), Daly proposes that these treasure-hunt novels connect the imperial project of competing for plunder abroad with the mass-market project of competing for profit at home. For Daly the marketplace—often viewed as antithetical to the interests of modernism—is key to understanding how we move from the Victorian romanticization of colonialism to modernism’s more negative attitude toward it. Yet if Stevenson’s and Haggard’s narratives seem to glamorize colonialism, they also betray a deep ambivalence, even anxiety, over their own efforts at pandering to the marketplace, suggesting that even for writers of the imperial romance, notions of morality and materialism could be as complicated as they were for the modernists.

Part II, “Modern British Literature,” brings together six essays that trace a series of varied but largely critical responses to colonialism. Chapters 2 through 4 examine how British imperialism inspired Conrad, Woolf, and Eliot to seek new aesthetic forms appropriate to the sense of dislocation and decadence which they associated with empire. In chapter 2, Michael Valdez Moses reads two seminal works by Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899/1902) and *Lord Jim* (1900), arguing that the experience of a European consciousness confronting an alien culture, an experience regularly enacted at the periph-

eries of empire, played a crucial role in generating formal modernism. Contesting the view that modernist innovations implicitly serve (or explicitly promote) the larger projects of colonialism and Orientalism, Moses maintains that Conrad's use of avant-garde literary devices—delayed decoding, anachrony, perspectivism, *mise-en-abyme*—transformed and subverted the Victorian imperial romance. More specifically, Conrad's narrative experimentalism functions to disorient the reader, thereby undermining his or her confidence in the morality and legitimacy of British imperialism and European colonialism. In chapter 3, Jed Esty also addresses the question of how modernist innovations remade and unmade Victorian literary forms. Taking Virginia Woolf's *The Voyage Out* (1915) as his principal example, Esty considers how the developmental logic of the bildungsroman is drastically revised in the modern period, as national economies expanded and fractured into colonial and global systems, and the allegorical pair of nationhood/adulthood was destabilized. What resulted was a nonteological bildungsroman in which the hero lingers in adolescence, forever deferring the closure that adulthood implies. The political consequence of such anti-*Bildung* is a hero who, failing to assume the duties and responsibilities implied by the Victorian imperial romance, does not become a servant of empire. In chapter 4, Vincent Sherry turns to the issue of imperial decadence in Eliot's *Poems* (1920), showing how it inspired both the form and content of the ironically detached "quatrain" poems. While Eliot's own views on empire were ambivalent—Sherry discusses both the figures of Bolo and Sweeney—the poet's interest in literary decadence, especially as it developed out of Swinburne and Rossetti, indicates that he took a decidedly elegiac perspective toward empire. One can read this attitude as lamenting a fading ideal or as acknowledging a failed ideology, but in either case Eliot was not among those who, in the aftermath of the First World War, still regarded the empire as an integral part of Great Britain's mission.

Chapters 5 through 7 deal less with an imperial imaginary and more with a colonial reality. In chapter 5, Brian May challenges the claim that *A Passage to India* (1924) reenacts a colonialist appropriation of India through overly symbolic landscape descriptions that serve to de-realize what they are supposed to represent. On the contrary, May contends that the novel acknowledges India's material otherness, even as it resists reducing it to colonialist stereotypes of the natural or primordial. Indeed, it is only by means of a

modernist epistemology of skepticism that Forster is able to strike a balance between an object world that is bereft of meaning and one so symbolically freighted that it ceases to be real. In chapter 6, Andrzej Gąsiorek considers the topic of primitivism—of obvious importance to colonialism—in the fiction of D. H. Lawrence and Wyndham Lewis. While both authors were critical of nationalism and imperialism, their divergent views on the “primitive” indicate two highly distinct approaches to it within modernism. Lawrence believed that the cultural renewal of the West could only be achieved by turning to the animism and atavism he identified with non-Western cultures, such as the “Indians” of New Mexico. Lewis, on the other hand, equated atavism with the destruction of the war and opposed to it a Hellenic aesthetic that stressed clarity and order. Completing part II of the collection, Rita Barnard analyzes Evelyn Waugh’s notorious *Black Mischief* (1932) in chapter 7. Concentrating on colonial mimicry, she demonstrates that the novel reverses the typical logic of European original/African imitation, suggesting that Waugh’s view of imperialism was far less sympathetic than critics have alleged. She goes on to connect the novel’s treatment of geographical dislocation to the modernist technique of collage, revealing how Waugh’s handling of experimental form—ironic juxtapositions, rapid shifts in point of view, and so on—mirrors the geographical and epistemological dislocations that characterize the colonial experience.

Part III, “Ireland and Scotland,” brings together five essays, but here colonialism is viewed from the perspective not of the colonizer but the colonized. Matters are further complicated by the fact that the colonized themselves represent an array of perspectives, from Irish to Anglo-Irish to Scottish, from Catholic to Protestant, from nationalist to cosmopolitan. The first three essays in this section plot Irish reactions to colonialism by probing the stresses and strains that occur as aesthetic imperatives confront political and historical reality. In chapter 8, Richard Begam investigates how *Ulysses* (1922) also employed modernist techniques for anticolonial purposes. Focusing on a number of metafictional moments, Begam maintains that the novel strategically situates its modernism in relation to two of the dominant trends of the Irish 1890s: Oscar Wilde’s aestheticism (which dared not speak its Irishness) and Douglas Hyde’s nationalism (which spoke nothing but its Irishness). Seeking an alternative to both these traditions, Joyce constructs what is in effect a literary Trojan horse, designed at once to advance the

claims of an international modernism and to smuggle within itself a distinctly Irish modernism. Begam then proceeds to show that two of modernism's most frequently cited techniques, stream-of-consciousness and the "mythical method," are deliberately used by Joyce not so much to establish the novel's universalism as to insist on its decolonizing particularism.

Chapter 9, by Nicholas Allen, turns to a markedly different use of myth, W. B. Yeats's spiritualist experiment, *A Vision* (1926). Often dismissed as occult escapism, the book occupied Yeats for almost ten years and was written during a historically tumultuous period, which included the First World War, the Russian Revolution, and the Irish Civil War. Reading *A Vision* alongside Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West*—books Yeats himself regarded as companion pieces—Allen reveals that both works function as narratives in search of authority in the aftermath of empire. The effect of Allen's reading is to cast *A Vision* in a new light, seeing it as a work whose multiple voices and modernist collage connect literary form to the disorienting experience of empire. In chapter 10, Maria DiBattista also considers the question of how one writes history under the pressures of a dissolving empire, only in the case of Elizabeth Bowen's *The Last September* (1929) that history is envisioned not as universal but as personal and is viewed prospectively as well as retrospectively. Of special interest to DiBattista is the way Bowen's self-consciously Proustian novel uses formal innovation as a vehicle for working through her divided loyalties during the Troubles (Bowen was Anglo-Irish). Here that innovation involves what DiBattista calls "retrospective intimation," a narrative device that intimates an event carries great significance for the story, while acknowledging that its significance can only be understood after the fact. Such a device makes time move both forward and backward, integrating a lyrical present with a historical past through the manipulation of voice and point of view.

Chapter 11 shifts the scene from Ireland to Scotland, as Ian Duncan focuses on Hugh MacDiarmid's modernist masterpiece, *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (1926). Duncan uses the MacDiarmid poem to analyze, as a number of other essays have, the problematic relation between nationalist aspirations and modernist commitments, especially insofar as they are linguistically expressed as an opposition between "provincial" Scots and "global" English. It is Duncan's larger claim that Scotland's position in the 1920s, as a culturally distinct but politically subordinate part of the United Kingdom,

proved a vexing obstacle for a nationalist and modernist like MacDiarmid. The result is a conflicted and self-canceling modernist work, whose very success depends, paradoxically, on the announcement of its own failure, its inability to discover a suitable form for the expression of a modern and modernist Scottish identity.

Part IV, “Toward the Postcolonial,” concludes the volume with essays by Declan Kiberd and Jahan Ramazani. In chapter 12, Kiberd examines how, in the immediate aftermath of World War Two, literary critics such as Hugh Kenner and Richard Ellmann institutionalized modernism as an internationalist and universalist phenomenon. While Kiberd, unlike other contributors to this volume, views T. S. Eliot as an unambiguous apologist for the universalism of empire, he regards Wilde, Yeats, and Joyce as firmly rooted in and committed to the Irish scene. Taking *Ulysses* as his test case, Kiberd argues that in Ireland colonization meant that the country never progressed from an aristocratic phase (associated with the epic) to a bourgeois phase (associated with the novel). Ireland’s historical underdevelopment had, in Kiberd’s view, aesthetic consequences, opening up the possibility for radical experimentation, which led in the case of *Ulysses* to the novel’s famously mixed form—part epic and part novel. Finally, in chapter 13, Jahan Ramazani takes up the relation between modernist and postcolonial poetry. While modernism is generally assumed to stand in opposition to postcolonialism, Ramazani points out that writers such as Yeats, Pound, and Eliot provided their postcolonial followers with a set of poetic models that were both formally radical and politically liberating. More particularly, a range of techniques that Ramazani identifies with modernist bricolage provided non-Western poets with precisely the aesthetic tools they needed for exploring their own hybrid cultures and postcolonial experiences. As for such modernist poets as Yeats, Pound, and Eliot, while they all exemplify some degree of Orientalist appropriation, their handling and quotation of the East signal a far more critical attitude toward the West than has generally been recognized. If Kiberd’s chapter asks in its title whether Irish modernism wasn’t always already postcolonial, Ramazani’s essay suggests that we might extend that question to modernism per se, not to ignore the differences between Anglo-modernism and postcolonialism, but to understand that these categories are fluid and the writers who inhabit them given to change.

The arguments mounted in these final two chapters recapitulate and reaffirm the polemical thrust of the volume as a whole. Again, while we do not wish to reduce modernism to a single or unitary phenomenon, or to airbrush away its more objectionable attitudes, we believe that the moderns were significantly more varied in their views of colonialism and substantially more critical of empire than their critics have allowed. If, for example, the racial views or ethnocentric perspectives of Conrad, Waugh, or Eliot were often deplorable, it is nevertheless worth considering that such attitudes paradoxically and unexpectedly helped to generate a skeptical modernist interrogation of empire and of its deleterious effects upon English and European culture. Although Anglo-modernism was Eurocentric—how could it not be?—it was nevertheless deeply committed to thinking beyond its cultural moment. The conclusion to *A Passage to India* tellingly evokes the situation we are describing. Fielding asks Aziz, “Why can’t we be friends now? It’s what I want. It’s what you want.” But the friendship is impossible, because in 1924 the forces of history seemed as implacable as the forces of nature. As the two friends attempt to embrace they are separated by the earth itself, which, along with the sky, answers their plea for brotherhood with a cosmic “No, not yet,” “No, not there.”¹⁹ It is as though time and space, the categories of knowledge itself, have rendered impossible the desired communication between Fielding and Aziz, between the cosmopolitan center and the colonial periphery. But what is perhaps most interesting about the novel’s conclusion is Forster’s own paratextual addendum, the postscript: “Weybridge, 1924.” Here Forster acknowledges with quiet eloquence the limitations of his own position. Yet the matter is more complicated still. For Forster has situated himself, through an act of triangulation, outside the defining binary of empire—the cosmopolitan center and the colonial periphery. His own point of view may be partial and restricted, but by dislocating it from the center, by relocating it along a divergent axis of perception, he raises the possibility of producing a kind of cultural anamorphosis. Modernism proposed to do much the same. Like Forster, it could not see beyond its field of vision—could not achieve a universalist high ground—but it could and did imagine alternatives to its own perspective. Among those alternatives was a radically different conception of England, one in which the shadow of empire would fall less darkly and less comprehensively around the globe.

Notes

- 1 Jameson's essay was first published as a pamphlet by Field Day Theatre Company; it was later collected in Eagleton, Jameson, and Said, *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature*, 43–66.
- 2 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*; Eagleton, "Nationalism, Irony and Commitment," in *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature*, 23–39; Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness*, and *Writing in Limbo*; Parry, *Delusions and Discoveries*; Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, and "Yeats and Decolonization," in *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature*, 69–95; Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India*.
- 3 Historians often date the high-point of empire as the last third of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century, running up to the beginning of World War I; see, for instance, Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire*, and Shannon, *The Crisis of Imperialism*.
- 4 See map 1.1 in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, ed. Brown and Louis, 4.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 6 Quoted in *Oxford History of the British Empire*, 3.
- 7 Williams and Chrisman discuss this distinction in the opening of *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*, where they cite Hobson's *Imperialism*, as well as Lichtheim's *Imperialism*; for another view, see Koebner and Schmidt, *Imperialism*.
- 8 On Marx and the word "imperialism," see Williams and Chrisman, *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, 2. According to the *OED*, "imperialism" was first used in 1858 (*COED*, vol. 1, 1385) and "colonialism" in 1864 (*COED*, vol. 1, 469).
- 9 See Lenin, *Imperialism*; Bukharin and Luxemburg are among the other notable Marxist thinkers from the early century to offer a sustained consideration of imperialism in their works.
- 10 *COED*, vol. 1, 469.
- 11 This sense is expressed by definition 1 in the *OED*: "An imperial system of government; the rule of an emperor, esp. when despotic or arbitrary" (*COED*, vol. 1, 1385).
- 12 In part 2 of *Discipline and Punish*, see chapter 2, "The Gentle Way in Punishment," 104–31. Although *Discipline and Punish* deals with penal institutions and the "carceral" network, many of its claims can be extended to colonialism, something Foucault occasionally does himself.
- 13 To be sure, if the British looked askance at the genocidal methods of the Germans in their African colonies, the use of virtual slave labor in the Belgian Congo, and the dreaded *corvée* in French colonies, they were willing to maintain control of their colonies by means of violent military interventions and unequivocally brutal methods when it suited them: witness the wholesale slaughter of the Mahdist "rebels" at Omdurman in 1898, the razing of 30,000 farms and herding of Boer women and children into pestilential concentration camps from 1900 until 1902, the massacre of hundreds of un-

armed Indian civilians at the Jallianwalla Bagh in Amritsar in 1919, and the violent outrages of the Auxiliaries and Black and Tans in Ireland in 1920, to name only a few of the more notorious instances of Britain's use of "hard" as opposed to "soft" power.

- 14 In the opening pages of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault observes that the "disappearance of torture as a public spectacle . . . has been attributed too readily and too emphatically to a process of 'humanization'" (7). He later remarks that the result of penal reform was "not to punish less, but to punish better; to punish with attenuated severity perhaps, but in order to punish with more universality and necessity" (88).
- 15 Of course, government authorities, pro-imperial statesmen, and jingoists in the press certainly recognized the advantages to be gained by stressing that English colonial policies were more "progressive" or "enlightened" (to employ the parlance of the day) than those pursued by the other (mainly) European empires against which Britain struggled in the global contest known as "great power politics."
- 16 For Obi's exchange with the colonial office, see the beginning of chapter 5, *No Longer at Ease*, 42–44. That Achebe is also providing an anticolonial gloss on how to read the ending of *Things Fall Apart* enhances the irony of the scene.
- 17 The two major anthologies on modernism from this period are *The Modern Tradition*, ed. Ellmann and Fiedelson, and *Modernism*, ed. Bradbury and McFarlane; neither offers any discussion of modernism's relation to colonialism or addresses the issue of empire. Even a recent collection on modernism, the excellent *Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, ed. Levenson, omits any discussion of how the experience of empire influenced modernist writing.
- 18 Representative of this school of thought is the discussion of modernism in *The Empire Writes Back*, ed. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, esp. 156–60.
- 19 Forster, *A Passage to India*, 362 (pages citations are to the 1952 reprint edition).

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