Imperialism resembles Darwinism, in that many use the term but few can say what it really means. This imprecision is encouraged by a surfeit of synonyms. Two stand out: imperialism is taken to be interchangeable with colonialism and reducible to the word “empire.” Add to these the compounding effects of elaborations such as hegemony, dependency, or globalization and the definitional space of imperialism becomes a vague, consensual gestalt.

In its stricter Marxist-Leninist applications, the word “imperialism” dates from the end of the nineteenth century and minimally connotes the use of state power to secure (or, at least, to attempt to secure) economic monopolies for national companies. On this basis, imperialism is not necessarily an extranational project, which would appear to distinguish it from colonialism. Moreover, the monopoly criterion excludes open-door policies, relegating “U.S. imperialism” and “cultural imperialism” to the realm of rhetoric but seeming to leave “Soviet imperialism” with at least a leg to stand on.¹ Since the term “imperialism” has been so closely associated with Left opposition to U.S. foreign policy, it is apparent that later usage of the term has not been too respectful of Marxist technicalities.

In what follows, I shall not presume to dispense a received definition of imperialism. Rather, the term will be used heuristically to group together a somewhat disparate set of theories of Western hegemony (including Marxism, dependency, postcolonialism, globalization, etc.).² Although these theories have most often been discussed in relative isolation from each other, taken together, as they will be here, they make up a multifaceted debate that continued for most of the


twentieth century. I shall attempt to characterize and criticize some of the more influential contributions to this debate. To give a sense of the theoretical contexts to which authors have been responding, the account will generally proceed in chronological order. This should not be taken to suggest a teleology in which theories of imperialism have progressively improved (or, even worse, approximated more closely to reality). As should become clear, these theories have varied so widely in terms of emphases and problematics that they are not necessarily even commensurable. Moreover, they have been enunciated under different historical conditions. This notwithstanding, a reasonable degree of coherence can be achieved by organizing discussion around two oppositions that, though misleading, have demonstrably structured debates about imperialism. The first of these is between the internal and the external, variously manifesting as European versus colonial, core versus periphery, developed versus developing, etc. Although this opposition is false because its two terms co-produce each other, accounts of imperialism are comparable on the basis of the ways in which they have distributed emphasis between the two. The second opposition is between the ideal and the material, whose alternatives include ideological versus practical, cultural versus economic, discursive versus instrumental, etc. Even though this opposition overlooks the obvious fact that consciousness is inseparable from practical activity, the majority of the theories that we will consider stress one at the expense of the other. These two oppositions are meant as implicit guides and should not be imposed too rigidly on the material. I intend to show that, at different times, in different political situations, and with different strategic intentions, they have been differently emphasized and configured. The interplay between theories of imperialism and the varied contexts within which they have been framed will, I hope, be more informative than an attempt to rank them on their merits. To this end, we will start with Marx.

Although Karl Marx preceded the debate on imperialism and did not use the term, the majority of theorists of imperialism have claimed to be furthering his ideas. While Marx saw capitalism's need for endless expansion as producing a Malthusian struggle for survival between an ever-dwindling group of monopolies, it is important to recognize that this vision was thoroughly positive, in the nineteenth-century sense. Rather than simply decrying capitalism, Marx admired its achievements, which were historically prerequisite to the transition to socialism. Moreover, the dialectical process ensured that, before a given mode of production was transcended, the class struggle would have scoured out its full historical potential. Historical development was, in short, as much qualitative as quantitative.

Although the "internal" dialectic of class conflict largely accounted for the historical preeminence of Europe, other societies were a different matter, for the simple reason that, unlike the European case, their historical development was not unprecedented. Rather, Europe was already there, a coexistent future whose impact was bound to be transformative. Hence Marx's famous assertion—which

3 In the case of the United States, this situation was reversed, since, unlike Europe, it lacked a
was to prove so embarrassing to Marxist liberation movements in the following century—that England had a double mission in India. While colonial intrusion and the reorganization of native society to serve the requirements of European capital had certainly occasioned untold destruction, the corollary was that capitalism itself—with its railroads, industrial infrastructure, and communication systems—had introduced a dynamic historical germ that would rouse Indian society from the timeless stagnation of the Asiatic mode of production and set it on its own course of historical development, a course that would eventually lead through capitalism to an Indian transition to socialism.4

In the decade following Marx's death in 1883, capitalist monopolization did indeed gain rapid momentum, only the consequences were not as he had foreseen. For, rather than carving up each other, monopolies began to carve up the market, with cooperative trusts, oil cartels, and, on the other side of the Atlantic, empire-wide closed shops becoming the order of the day.5 Given the inconsistency between this trend and some of Marx's predictions,6 it is not surprising that the most developed initial responses to it should have come not from within Marxism but from the world of liberal capitalism itself. Even though the English liberal J. A. Hobson's Imperialism: A Study, which appeared in 1902, was to shape subsequent debates about imperialism as a result of the formative influence it had on the thinking of V. I. Lenin, Hobson was not the first in the field. As Norman Etherington has shown, in the United States, with the possibilities of frontier expansion exhausted, the era that saw John D. Rockefeller's formation of the Standard Oil Trust, the recession of the 1890s, and the Spanish-American War produced a range of American proposals for exploiting the opportunities that imperialism held out. Not for the first time, description lagged behind prescription,
or, as Etherington phrased it: “Hobson did not invent the idea that capitalism would benefit from imperialism. Capitalists invented that idea.”

For canonical purposes, though, the terms of the post-Marxian debate on imperialism were definitively set by Hobson, whose views were prompted by opposition to the Boer War. Hobson’s starting point, which was to become axiomatic to the entire debate on imperialism, was the problem of the economic surplus that capitalism generated. The downsizing and new technologies that an increasingly competitive domestic market generated boosted productivity beyond the market’s capacity to consume its output, leaving a glut of both commodities and, since reinvestment was thus rendered pointless, of profits (the “underconsumptionist” thesis). The solution lay in immature markets overseas. Hence imperialism as an outlet for surplus. Since it only benefitted a plutocratic few and directed national expenditure toward warfare and away from socially beneficial undertakings, Hobson recommended that imperialism be discontinued in favor of an income redistribution that would produce a more equitable and domestically viable form of capitalism.

The details of Hobson’s analysis need not concern us here. The crucial feature—which, apart from presaging World War I, distinguishes the “technical” imperialism that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century from earlier forms of colonial or imperial hegemony—is the element of compulsion that arose at the point where productivity exceeded the consumptive capacity of a metropolitan market conceived as finite and contained. Co-conditioned by this imperative, monopoly trusts—which maintained domestic profits by fixing prices—and imperialism—which displaced the pressure of domestic limits—were two sides of the same coin.


8 He was also reacting more generally to Britain’s post-1872 economic decline. Hobson’s polemic on propaganda and the Boer War, *Psychology of Jingoism* (London, 1901), is a neglected gem that substantially anticipated cultural studies and amply rewards a contemporary reading. See also Hobson, *The War in South Africa: Its Causes and Effects* (London, 1900).

9 Hobson’s assessment was to receive laborious cliometric validation in Lance E. Davis and Robert A. Huttenback, *Mammon and the Pursuit of Empire: The Political Economy of British Imperialism, 1860–1912* (Cambridge, 1986), which concluded that, from 1880 on, empire did not provide the ordinary investor with better returns than the domestic economy.


11 In view of the constraint of space, I have decided not to discuss Karl Kautsky’s “ultra-imperialism” (or Hobson’s “inter-imperialism”) thesis, important though it is for appreciating the implications of market-apportioning compacts between nation-states. Even though, as is well known, Kautsky had the misfortune to have an article explaining why wars between imperial powers were unlikely to happen published in *Die neue Zeit* on September 11, 1914, as the battle of the Marne was getting into full swing, his prediction that the capitalist states would cooperate rather than engage in internecine destruction has clearly had more purchase on the long term than it had on the immediate term. See Kautsky, “Ultra-imperialism” (original German title “Der Imperialismus”), *New Left Review* 59 (January–February 1970): 39–46, but ignore the introduction. For the same reason, I will not be discussing either Joseph Schumpeter or the Wisconsin school of Cold War revisionism associated with the name (and authority) of William Appleman Williams, which one might see as having much in common with Kautsky, especially insofar as it stressed the role of U.S. diplomacy in preventing political rivalries between the leading industrial democracies from hindering the international advancement of corporate
The classical Marxist debate on imperialism shuffled the foregoing concepts and derived varying strategic implications from them. Given the emancipatory aspirations of the Communist movement, however, it could hardly remain just a view from above. Initially surfacing at the Amsterdam and Stuttgart congresses of the Second International, in 1904 and 1907 respectively, but achieving full expression a decade of so later in the 1920 Comintern theses of M. N. Roy, founder of the Communist Party of India, the view was expressed that, rather than leading the rest of the world, the revolution in Europe was contingent on revolution in the colonies. Briefly, this conclusion followed from the observation that the bourgeoisie could buy off the metropolitan proletariat, and thus postpone the revolution in Europe, by intensifying exploitation in the colonies. This consequence of imperialism was widely accepted, not only by prominent Marxist theoreticians such as Karl Kautsky, Rudolf Hilferding, and Rosa Luxemburg but by arch-imperialists such as Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain. Although the strategic implications that these varied figures derived from their common perception differed widely, for our purposes the perception itself is significant for its negation of a barrier between the metropolitan and the colonial, which emerged as integrated aspects of a systemic whole. This theme would be considerably elaborated in later twentieth-century thinking on imperialism.

Of perhaps even greater significance for later—indeed, for some of the most recent—writing on imperialism is Roy's conclusion, which the classical theorists of imperialism rejected, that the colonized could be the subjects and authors of revolution. At the 1920 Comintern, Lenin made concessions to Roy's position, a gesture that was enabled by the accommodation to Asia that was built into his own theory of imperialism, an accommodation that a Russian revolutionary could hardly...
avoid. Even though Lenin’s *Imperialism, the Highest* [or should it really be the latest?] *Stage of Capitalism* (1916) enjoys unrivaled status in the annals of theories of imperialism, apart from its Asian dimension, the work’s originality was strategic rather than analytical. In arguing that the small but politically conscious Russian proletariat could sustain a revolutionary vanguard that would lead the feudal masses of Russia’s Asian empire to skip over the capitalist mode of production and proceed straight to a socialist revolution, Lenin was not only revising the Eurocentric orthodoxy of classical Marxism. Where the dialectic of history was concerned, his theory was also premised on the contention that, in extending the life of capitalism, imperialism enabled it to expand quantitatively but without the qualitative compensation. Lenin was an activist. In the lived exigencies of the practical struggle against imperialism, life had become too short to wait for Europe.

That Asia should figure at all was a fateful sign of things to come. Mao’s peasants, agents and bearers of their own revolution, gathered just over the historical horizon, while, further on, Frantz Fanon would declare Europe to be so corrupting that the natives whom it touched could but betray the anticolonial movement. In the crucible of the struggle against imperialism, Eurocentrism would shift from program to problematic. This occurred in a world that had changed utterly since the late nineteenth century, when Marx had been fresh in his grave and the scramble for Africa was proceeding apace. In the post–World War II era of decolonization, neocolonialism, and development, dependency theory would insist that economic backwardness in the Third World resulted from the presence rather than the absence of capitalism, thus turning Marxism on its head. This was despite the fact that the theory’s proponents (the *dependencistas*) either styled themselves as Marxists or closely aligned themselves with Marxism in theory and in practice. In turning to dependency theory, then, we turn to a new style of theory for a new style of imperialism, one that increasingly dispensed with the formality of colonial rule.

A dual provenance is conventionally ascribed to *dependencia*, giving the doctrine a combined North and South American pedigree. In the United States, long-time collaborators Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy first formulated the contention that monopoly capitalism had stultifying rather than dynamic consequences for economic development. Third World markets were not so much profitable in their own right as on account of the massive state expenditure that safeguarding them triggered: “The loans and grants to so-called friendly governments of dependent countries, the outlays on the military establishment . . . all assume prodigious magnitudes.” In this early theorizing of the military-industrial complex, the Third World functioned as an alibi for ever-increasing levels of state patronage of domestic corporations. Since indigenous enterprise obstructed this arrangement, it

19 Though it should perhaps be noted that, in a letter written toward the end of his life, Marx had referred to the Russian peasant commune as “the fulcrum of social regeneration in Russia.” This letter was not, however, published until 1924. Karl Marx to Vera Zasulich, March 8, 1881, *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: Collected Works* (London, 1992), 46: 71–72.

20 In most of Latin America, neocolonialism had been prefigured, since this formality had not applied since the nineteenth century.

was either incorporated or disabled. Accordingly, the only areas outside the West where indigenous enterprise could be expected to flourish were those that had escaped Western domination. Hence Baran’s famous contrast between the modernizing achievements of uncolonized Meiji Japan and India’s abject failure to develop. Somewhat later, and from the hemisphere below, Silvio Frondizi, Sergio Bagú, Luis Vitale, André Gunder Frank, Theotonio Dos Santos, and others asserted that underdevelopment in Latin America was not a frustration but an outcome of capitalist development.

Though complementary, the two theories emerged in quite different contexts. Within European Marxism, Leon Trotsky notwithstanding, theories of imperialism had received little development since the death of Lenin. Not only had Stalinism constrained theoretical innovation within the Soviet Union, but, in the rest of Europe, the success of fascism had provided Marxists with a major distraction from external concerns. As U.S. dominance was consolidated in the wake of World War II, the Cold War, and McCarthyism, on the other hand, it was understandable that, in 1957, a beleaguered American Marxist such as Baran should recall the Great Depression and warn that all was not as it seemed, that monopoly capitalism was bound to produce stagnation in both the domestic and foreign economies. In contrast to Baran, the Latin American dependencistas of the 1960s and 1970s did not have the problem of explaining away the reality of a domestic boom. Rather, their immediate historical experience was dominated by an appalling mutuality between development programs and popular immiseration. As Arturo Escobar has recounted, the era of Third World development that was inaugurated along with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund at Bretton Woods in 1944 produced and systematized a new regime of deprivation in Latin America, one that differed in quality and extent from the modes of exploitation that had characterized European domination of the subcontinent. Dependency theory formalized its proponents’ anger at the gap between the rhetoric of modernization and the reality of exploitation.

A basic premise of dependencia was that of historicity: European history was transcended and unrepeatable. Ignoring this, the theory and ideology of modern-

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22 Baran, Political Economy of Growth, 149–50.
23 Published in Buenos Aires in 1947 and 1949 respectively, Silvio Frondizi’s La integración mundial, ultima etapa del capitalismo (respuesta a una critica) and Sergio Bagú’s Economía de la sociedad colonial appeared well before Paul Baran’s Political Economy of Growth (1957). All the same, Bagú and Frondizi were unrepresentatively (not to say presciently) early. In any event, Paul Sweezy, The Theory of Capitalist Development: Principles of Marxi nas Political Economy (New York, 1942), can be seen as a bridge between classical Marxism and later work, as Brewer does (Marxi Theories of Imperialism, 137). Latin American dependencia generally emerged in the mid to late 1960s, in the decade after Baran and generally after Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order (New York, 1966).
25 The following is intended to express some of the central characteristics of dependency theory. Although individual theorists differed in matters of detail, it is contended that most would accept these basic premises. In view of his prominence, I have generally expressed them in the language of André Gunder Frank, though this should not be taken to imply endorsement of his oddly amateurish, nineteenth-century style of presentation, which involves tacking together extended verbatim quotations from a range of sources to an extent that can make it difficult to discern whether Frank himself has anything to add. For a judicially balanced collection on dependency theory as a whole, see Dudley
ization held out capitalist development as a process of catching up, forgetting that, when the West had been undergoing its own momentous development, there had not been another "West" already there. Rather, there had been colonies, whose exploitation had historically produced—and, in changing ways, continued to produce—the paramountcy of the West. In other words, the great global fact that modernization theory obscured in representing Western history as autochthonous and repeatable was that development and underdevelopment were not two distinct states but a relationship. Underdevelopment was not, as modernization theory's dual thesis would have it, external to capitalism, a condition that prevailed in backward regions that had yet to develop. Rather, it was of the essence of capitalism, being both precondition to and corollary of the developed status of the dominant countries. In a fundamental break with Marxist temporality, therefore, underdevelopment did not figure as a residue or survival from a superseded mode of production—usually, from feudalism—but as an integral component of modernity. (In this respect, the theory prefigured a key feature of the thinking of the Subaltern Studies group.) Underdevelopment was, in short, a transitive condition (to put it in Foucauldian terms, a positivity)—something that capitalism produced. If there were any areas of the globe that had yet to be touched by capitalism, their independence of the international division of labor was undevelopment, an intransitive historical separateness, rather than underdevelopment.

Focusing primarily on unequal exchange, dependency theory provoked controversy in orthodox Marxist circles for seeming to privilege distribution over production. Though employing geopolitical units of analysis (nation, colony,
country), the theory simultaneously problematized and, implicitly at least, subverted them (a feature to be elaborated in world-systems theory). A distinctive characteristic of dependency was a hierarchically replicated cyclopean structure whereby a metropolis (also known as “center,” “core,” etc.) dominated a number of (usually surrounding) satellites (the “periphery”). In addition to dominating its satellites, a metropolis was itself satellite to a higher-order metropolis further up the chain of dependency, say a state or regional capital, and so on up to the final metropolis, the colonial center. Apart from the very lowest and the very highest links in the chain, therefore, each level had a dual aspect, functioning both as metropolis and as satellite. A crucial difference was, however, that, as metropolis, it monopolized a number of satellites, whereas, as satellite, it served only one metropolis.

Though static, the model was not balanced. Rather, it was emphatically unidirectional. Power traveled downward: to depend was to subserve. In consequence, the theory was disappointingly undialectical. There was little sense of the metropolis’ own dependence on the compliance of its satellites, little sense of the possibilities of contradiction. Above all, there was little sense of ideology, little evidence of Gramscian perspicacity concerning the crucial calculus of force and consent in the maintenance of hegemony, with the result that collaboration figured as crudely utilitarian. Yet it did not have to be thus. At various points, dependency theory was potently suggestive in regard to such matters, only to hurry back to economism as if questions of culture or consciousness were a frivolous indulgence. It has been suggested that Frank’s theory was more influential than the sterner stuff that Baran dispensed because it fortuitously coincided with the Western radicalism of the 1960s. While there may be some truth in this, we should not overlook the appeal of what lay between the lines, implicit but profound, in dependencia. This applies particularly to the client or comprador role of local elites, whom Frank deftly disparaged as lumpenbourgeoisie. They were the agential linchpin of the whole system, acquiescing in their own exploitation from above in return for the balance left over from what they had expropriated from below—including, of course, the military, political, and economic support that the metropolis committed to maintaining them in power. This deeply ambivalent condition confounds dualistic schemes of domination in a way that is particularly vulnerable to ideological critique. Indeed, Dos Santos seemed to lay some of the ground for Homi Bhabha’s psychology of colonialism, though with greater economic and geopolitical substance, when he observed, “Domination is practicable only when it finds support 

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Surprisingly perhaps, the terms “center” and “periphery” were coined by Raúl Prebisch, the first director of the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL). See Ronald H. Chilcote, “Introduction: Dependency or Mode of Production? Theoretical Issues,” in Chilcote and Johnson, Theories of Development, 12; and Escobar, Encountering Development, 90.

among those local groups which profit by it. Thus we see the irrelevance of the concept of alienation which claims that our elites are alienated because they look upon themselves with alien eyes.”

Shying away from its discursive dimension, however, the theory failed to account for the extent to which lumpenbourgeois leaderships could deploy the rhetoric of national independence to mobilize popular support for programs that actually intensified national dependency. Inattention to this paradox of liberalism rendered utopian the remedy (autocentric or independent development) that dependencistas advocated, a consequence that was exacerbated by the fact that, for all its radicalism, dependencia never questioned the concept or value of development per se. Rather than imagining alternatives to development, it sought to orchestrate a takeover bid. Having so stressed the limits of local agency in the face of the enormous power of international capitalism, however, the theory subverted in advance its own commitment to enabling satellites to break free and keep their surpluses to themselves.

As noted, dependency was conceived as unidirectional—spreading out from Europe, it reduced the whole periphery (the singular is significant) to undifferentiated subordination. Small wonder that other schools of thought have since stressed heterogeneity and particularity. In the 1970s and 1980s, Marxist anthropologists and economic historians influenced by Louis Althusser employed structuralist methods to map the complexities of social (including colonial) formations. A Western communist reacting against Stalinist iron laws, Althusser amended the teleology that had characterized much Marxist thought to that point, insisting that modes of production were ideal abstractions not to be found empirically. Actual social formations conjoined (articulated) a number of modes of production. (Even in Europe, feudalism persisted locally in subordinate relations to capitalism.) Rather than simply instantiating (however awkwardly) a predetermined stage of unilinear development, a given social formation comprised a particular configuration of modes of production, articulated together in unpredictable ways that had to be reconstructed anew in each particular case. Of these modes of production, one predominated—that is, it subordinated the others to the requirements of its own historical reproduction. In keeping with Marxist fundamentals, economic factors were determinant, but only in the last instance. They were not necessarily

33 Dos Santos, “Structure of Dependence,” 78. Although he did not specify a particular target, Dos Santos must have had in mind Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, Constance Farrington, trans. (New York, 1966, first French edn., Paris, 1961).
34 Such questioning is the principal concern of Escobar’s profoundly thought-provoking Encountering Development.
36 Samuel P. Huntington, “The Goals of Development” in Myron Weiner and Huntington, eds., Understanding Political Development (Boston, 1987), 283–322, noted that the dependencistas’ failure to acknowledge cultural differences prevented them from accounting for obvious counterexamples such as Korea and Taiwan.
37 This premise is more clearly associated with Emmanuel Terray than with Althusser himself, whose
dominant as well, as in the case of capitalism, although they did determine which sphere was dominant (for instance, the political in the case of feudalism or kinship in the case of hunter-gatherer societies).

The concept of social formation provided a powerful tool for analyzing the structural dynamics of complex societies in a manner that both preserved their historicity (inscribed in the power balance between the component modes of production) and identified points of tension around which historical transformations could occur. In the course of a long-running and celebrated French debate involving ethnographic and archival data from West Africa, for instance, Emmanuel Terray took issue with Claude Meillassoux’s use of technological criteria to define the “lineage” mode of production, arguing that, since the same technologies occurred in different social systems, it was necessary to employ social criteria.

Terray instanced the Abron kingdom of Gyaman, in which the peasants (lineage mode of production agriculturalists) were dominated by slave-holding Abron aristocrats. Even though the peasants were only liable for the most token of agricultural tributes, they were obliged to be available constantly for the warfare that maintained the supply of slaves. Thus the low level of tribute was explained on social criteria, the dominance of the slave mode of production, whose reproduction was the primary determinant of the social formation. On the basis of their account of Portuguese slave-trading on the west coast of Africa, Georges Dupré and Pierre Philippe Rey contended that Terray’s model was too static. To account for historical change, it was necessary to bring out the tensions and contradictions between the articulated modes. According to Rey and Dupré, the slave trade had hooked into a chain of indigenous exchanges (slaves for prestige goods) that had obtained in the political sphere of indigenous society and predated the Portuguese. Since the political sphere had been the dominant sphere, and since the Portuguese trade had intensified rather than conflicted with it, indigenous society had remained intact. Upon the abolition of the European slave trade, however, the capitalist commitment to structural causality rendered such formulations problematic. As elsewhere in this review, I am presenting an overview of the salient characteristics of the general approach.

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38 I use the term “societies” rather than “modes of production” to avoid controversy as to whether “hunter-gatherer,” “lineage,” “hoe,” etc., constitute valid criteria for categorizing modes of production, a controversy that I cannot enter into here.


40 Slaves were emancipated into the peasantry in the second generation to prevent them from developing a potentially disruptive class solidarity on the basis of the shared language and culture that their parents, captured from a variety of different groups, had lacked.
mode of production had sought new sources of profit, penetrating the subsistence realm of indigenous society (that is, articulating to the economic rather than to the political sphere), which it rapidly dominated and subverted, engendering socioeconomic chaos and encouraging colonial occupation.41

For all its dated mechanicism, the social-formation model brought a welcome leaven of specificity to historical-materialist accounts of complex social structures. In contrast to dependency theory, it paid due heed to local determinations. It also conclusively invalidated the illusory but pervasive anthropological (functionalist/relativist) image of the contained and homogeneous culture, replacing it with a fissured, unstable composite that did justice to the fact that few if any human societies have developed in isolation. And yet, in suggesting that contingent features of a social formation could be inferred automatically once the dominant mode of production had been identified, the model failed to break with the predictive scientism that has so dogged the career of Marxism. By the same token, it failed to pay due attention to ideological and discursive factors, which were bypassed in the mechanical play of final determinations.42 These deficiencies were not, however, essential to the model, whose deep structural strengths remain recuperable in an era preoccupied with rhetorical form. In particular, the concept of articulation enables us to distinguish between different modes of colonialism (settler, franchise, internal) and, accordingly, to gain insight into the different types of discursive regime that they respectively subend.43

If the social-formation model paid due heed to local determinations, Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher’s distinctively British theory of “excentric” development, framed in the context of decolonization and the Nasserite revolution in Egypt, tended to make local determinations a law unto themselves. Although Robinson and Gallagher acknowledged that European imperialism had been partly motivated by economic and political factors internal to Europe, in their writings these factors were overwhelmed by the efficacy of local pressures that emanated from outside Europe and threatened imperial interests.44 In this, their rejection of

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43 This point will be developed below.

44 “Historically European imperialism might be defined as a political reflex action between one
the Marxist tradition was explicit, as was their privileging of political and diplomatic considerations over economic ones.\textsuperscript{45} Their case was built on a rereading\textsuperscript{46} of the scramble for (or partition of) Africa, a historical phenomenon that, in keeping with Marxist premises, had been represented as a contest between the major European powers for formal control of markets that capitalism had already, at least initially, opened up. Robinson and Gallagher reversed this schedule, placing colonial annexations before the development of markets: “It was not the businessmen or missionaries or empire-builders who launched the partition of Africa, but rather a set of diplomats who thought of that continent merely as a function of their concerns elsewhere . . . Only at the end of the process did the businessmen arrive . . . Imperialism was not the cause of the partition. It was the result.”\textsuperscript{47}

According to Robinson and Gallagher, throughout the nineteenth century, British imperial policy was consistently minimalist (“informal control if possible, formal rule if necessary”\textsuperscript{48}), a strategy that relied crucially on the offices of native or (better still) white-settler collaborators.\textsuperscript{49} The sudden rush of formal annexations in Africa during the 1880s and 1890s did not result from a change to this general policy but from a fear that nationalist successes in Egypt and South Africa might jeopardize wider imperial interests, specifically trade routes to India (the Suez Canal) and to Australasia (the Cape). Fears for the security of the Suez Canal led to the British occupation of Egypt, which, in turn, prompted France to annex large portions of West Africa so as to prevent the British from achieving cross-continental domination. Franco-British rivalry spiraled across the African interior, a situation that Bismarck was not slow to exploit. In this fracas, the strategic priorities that the contending parties displayed were not consistent with economic motivations. For instance, in order to keep the French out of Egypt, Lord Salisbury sacrificed West Africa, whose commercial potential was considerable, in favor of securing the Nile Valley, whose light soil was largely unproductive. Robinson and Gallagher concluded that the European powers had scrambled \textit{in} rather than \textit{for} Africa, their primary concern being to deny each other rather than aggrandize

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\item \textsuperscript{45} D. K. Fieldhouse significantly qualified Robinson and Gallagher’s understatement of economic factors. See \textit{The Theory of Capitalist Imperialism} (New York, 1967); and \textit{Economics and Empire, 1830–1914} (London, 1973).
\item \textsuperscript{46} The archives had only recently become available under the fifty-year rule.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, “The Partition of Africa” (1962), rpt. in Louis, \textit{Imperialism}, quote p. 117.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, “The Imperialism of Free Trade,” \textit{Economic History Review} 6 (1953): 13. This much-cited article launched their theory.
\item \textsuperscript{49} In Robinson’s memorable phrase, the white settler was the “ideal prefabricated collaborator” (“Non-European Foundations,” 134).
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themselves. Once they had acquired their African possessions, however, they were obliged to make them pay their way. Hence trade followed the flag.50

Robinson and Gallagher’s scheme, which they presented in some detail, attracted criticism on empirical and even documentary grounds.51 For contemporary purposes, however, it is more revealing to consider its implications for subsequent scholarly alignments than to rehearse what are now ageing controversies. For instance, its emphasis on the significance of local collaborators was consistent not only with Baran’s, Frank’s, and Fanon’s analyses of the role of comprador elites but also with Benedict Anderson’s and Partha Chatterjee’s more recent critiques of the derivativeness of colonial-nationalist discourse.52 In this light, it is notable that Robinson and Gallagher’s reversal of Eurocentrism, congenial as it now seems to postcolonialist sensibilities, should have been welcomed in conservative circles as providing a refutation of Marxism. Whether or not the theory did offer a challenge to Marxism is, however, another question. As Eric Stokes pointed out nearly a quarter of a century ago, Lenin’s definition of imperialism as dating from the point at which the capitalist powers had finally divided the world up between them is hardly affected by Robinson and Gallagher’s thesis.53 Indeed, when it is recalled that they were not denying either intra-European or economic factors but (ostensibly at least) were merely arguing about relative emphases, it is surprising how little they were actually saying. After all, no self-respecting Marxist dialectician would deny the relative determinacy of a wide range of factors.54


54 Various scholars have criticized Robinson and Gallagher on the grounds that their distinction between the political and the economic does not withstand scrutiny. See, for instance, Geoffrey Barraclough, An Introduction to Contemporary History (1964; Middlesex, 1967), 58; Ronald Hyam, Britain’s Imperial Century 1815–1914 (London, 1976), 373; Robin Law, “Imperialism and Partition,”
In view of its bearing on contemporary debates over postcolonialism, Robinson and Gallagher's emphasis on extra-European factors invites consideration. It should be noted that the enthusiasm with which some proclaimed their theory to be "Afrocentric" was misplaced.\textsuperscript{55} The imperial interests that motivated British takeovers in Egypt and southern Africa were not internal to Africa, which merely functioned as an arena for the European powers to fight out wider imperial concerns. Moreover, Robinson and Gallagher's "collaborator" category grouped white settlers together with tribal federations, Muslim mujahideen, and other indigenous entities, a conflation achieved by treating those who resided in a sphere of colonial influence as undifferentiatedly belonging there.\textsuperscript{56} In many cases, white settlers were not so much collaborators as delegates. In other words, Robinson and Gallagher's departure from Europe was merely geographical. In social, economic, and political terms, their purview remained resolutely Eurocentric, a quality reflected in their fondness for colonial boys'-club rhetoric.\textsuperscript{57}

In positing foundations that, though external to Europe, were not internal to anywhere in particular but were, rather, empire-wide and systemic, Robinson and Gallagher's theory begged the basic question of globalization: how are we to conceive of a system that lacks exteriority? This question grows ever more insistent in a decentered era that we might term virtual imperialism, when radically de-territorialized forms of capital flash around the globe at fiber-optic speed, seeking out low wages, tax and tariff advantages, currency disparities, and innumerable other opportunities that presuppose the very nation-state boundaries that their exploitation transcends. Although it would be unrealistic to deny the profound impact of cyberspace and satellite communications, we should resist the techno-
logical determinism that credits them with effecting a wholesale historical rupture. Throughout the twentieth century, imperialism has been theorized as a global category cross-cut by the discontinuously intersecting dimensions of class, nation, race, and, more recently, gender. Moreover, Lenin’s dating of imperialism from the end of the nineteenth century has by no means stood unchallenged, with writers such as Eric Wolf stressing the global significance of the late eighteenth century (the Industrial Revolution), ones such as Immanuel Wallerstein and Samir Amin stressing the late fifteenth century (Columbus) and the renovated Frank plumping (at the last count) for 2,500 B.C. 58 The choice of late fifteenth, late eighteenth, or late nineteenth century correlates, of course, with the emergence of mercantile, industrial, and monopoly/finance forms of capital respectively. Whichever one prefers, the point is that globality is not merely a postmodern condition.

A world system dating from the end of the fifteenth century had been prefigured in dependency theory, in which capitalism had rapidly and contagiously converted underdevelopment into underdevelopment—for instance, in the Latin American case, had converted Amerindian economies into dependencies whose exploitation was subsequently to prove indispensable to the development of, first, Iberian (mercantile), then British (industrial), and, most recently, U.S. (monopoly/finance) capitalism. This scheme involved spatial and historical considerations that conflicted with the abstract concept of mode of production as theorized in the Marxist tradition. In particular, they were inconsistent with the definition of capitalism as being constituted on the basis of wage (that is, commodified) labor. The issue is similar to that noted in relation to Althusser: actual social formations do not manifest as pure theoretical types. In the case of world-systems theory, though, heterogeneity was (is) not conceived as obtaining between different modes of production as they were articulated together. Rather, it is conceived as obtaining within a single capitalist world-system. To cite two instances favored by Wallerstein, capitalism in urban northwestern Europe required as a concomitant condition of its development non-wage systems in eastern European wheat production (the so-called “second serfdom”) and in American plantations. 59 Empirically, such considerations had been familiar to Marx. 60 As an inherent (as opposed to incidental) feature of capitalist expansion, however, non-wage labor lacked the flexible capacity for surplus production that “free” alienated labor alone enabled. 61 On the basis of this


60 "The veiled slavery of the wage-workers in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the new world," Karl Marx, Capital, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1954), 711.

61 To simplify a complex set of considerations, the proportion of the working day that labor takes up in ensuring its own reproduction is reducible by improvements to the efficiency of the means of production, which improvements require the reinvestment of accumulated surplus, one of the
and related questions, world-systems theory was driven by the force of its own logic to depart from orthodox Marxism to the extent of arguing that world capitalism had been shaped by the development of systems of distribution and accumulation as much as by the system of production.\textsuperscript{62}

Defining capitalism as “the full development and economic predominance of market trade” and a world economy as “a single division of labor but multiple polities and cultures,” Wallerstein held that the two were “obverse sides of the same coin,” different ways of representing the same indivisible phenomenon, the capitalist world-economy.\textsuperscript{63} On this basis, the unit of analysis ultimately becomes the world itself,\textsuperscript{64} a level at which there is no separating internal from external factors, as in Robinson and Gallagher, since all factors are internal to the system. For Wallerstein, nation-states, which are crucial to the unequal exchanges whereby center (“core”), periphery, and “semi-periphery” relations are constituted, are cut across by the axial division of labor. Although the regional distribution of wealth and power shifts over time, the dependencia-style linkage between development at the core and underdevelopment in the periphery (uneven development) remains integral to the system and persists through alternating periods of growth and contraction.\textsuperscript{65} The problem with taking the world as the unit of analysis is, of course, the dispersal of agency that almost inevitably follows. Lacking a stable location, “the core” is hard to track down and threatens to degenerate into a reified abstraction. This tendency is exaggerated in globalization theory, where the global system becomes so decentered that it can figure as a kind of disenchanted Gaia that looks for all the world like a hidden hand.\textsuperscript{66}

Defined as a single division of labor with multiple polities, a world system need not, however, cover the whole globe. Nor need it be capitalist. Developing this aspect of the theory, Samir Amin has contended that the notion of a universal hallmarks of capitalist development. See Marx’s discussion of relative surplus value and the intensification of labor, \textit{Capital}, 1: 380–92.\textsuperscript{62} Frank goes further: “I vote for replacing the focus on mode of production with a focus on the modes of accumulation in the world system”; “Theoretical Introduction to 5,000 Years,” 177.\textsuperscript{63} Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis” (1974), rpt. in Wallerstein, \textit{The Capitalist World-Economy} (New York, 1979), 6.

\textsuperscript{64} In this regard, histories of the world (e.g., Arnold Toynbee, Charles Tilly) should be distinguished from world-histories (e.g., Fernand Braudel, Christopher Chase-Dunn). To exemplify the latter, it seems fittingly ecumenical to cite the sentence with which the anthropologist Eric Wolf introduced his magisterial \textit{Europe and the People without History} (Berkeley, Calif., 1982), 3: “The central assertion of this book is that the world of humankind constitutes a manifold, a totality of interconnected processes, and inquiries that disassemble this totality into bits and then fail to reassemble it falsify reality.”

\textsuperscript{65} Extending Wallerstein, Christopher Chase-Dunn has argued that military/political competition between states is as fundamental to the capitalist world-system as economic competition over markets. See Chase-Dunn, \textit{Global Formation: Structures of the World-Economy} (Oxford, 1989). I cannot do justice here to the many modifications and elaborations that Wallerstein and others have added to the basic theory. For a good recent account of the current state of play in world-systems theory (one that evinces a promising sensitivity to the approach’s shortcomings insofar as cultural issues are concerned), see W. G. Martin, “The World-Systems Perspective in Perspective: Assessing the Attempt to Move Beyond Nineteenth-Century Eurocentric-Conceptions,” \textit{Review} (Fernand Braudel Center) 17 (1994): 145–85. See also Peter Worsley, “Models of the Modern World System,” \textit{Theory, Culture and Society} 7 (1990): 83–96.

\textsuperscript{66} For Gaia, see Brett Fairbairn, “History from the Ecological Perspective,” \textit{AHR} 99 (October 1994): 1205.
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History originating in European capitalism's unprecedented unification of the globe is misleading and Eurocentric.67 Prior to the sixteenth century, groups of societies were linked by trade into regional and perhaps world systems. Of a number of proto-capitalist regional systems (Indian, Arab-Islamic or Mediterranean, Chinese, barbarian-Christian), all operating on a tributary basis (power was the source of wealth), barbarian Christendom was distinguished by its relative lack of administrative centralization.68 In combination with the colonization of the Americas, this produced wage-labor based European capitalism (wealth became the source of power), which, though a qualitatively novel phenomenon, established itself on proto-capitalist foundations that were not unique to Europe. Once European capitalism had emerged, however, it stifled further development on the part of the other proto-capitalist systems.

Amin's analysis combines Marxist rigor in relation to wage labor with the postcolonial sensibility of an Egyptian scholar based in Paris. Compared to the dependency/world-systems tradition as a whole, his theory is refreshingly attuned to cultural and ideological questions, situating the discursive politics of the Western academy (as in the critique of Eurocentrism) in the context of the historical development of world systems. Observing that the philosophico-religious movements that culminated Antiquity and inaugurated universal history (Hellenism, Oriental Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Buddhism) emerged in concert with the consolidation of the great tributary societies, Amin locates the break between Antiquity and the Middle Ages, not, as the Eurocentric scheme of things would have it, at the end of the Roman Empire in the West but from the time of Alexander's unification of the Hellenic East. ("The choice of the conventional division at the end of the Roman Empire betrays a deeply rooted preconception that the Christian era marks a qualitative decisive break in world history, when in fact it does not."69)

AT FIRST SIGHT, AMIN'S MARXIST BLENDING of cultural and material factors might seem to distinguish his approach from critiques of Eurocentrism that have been couched in the idiom of discourse analysis. Before dismissing poststructuralism as an idealist perspective that overlooks the material consequences of the international division of labor, however, we should recall that Marx himself was unfailingly attentive to questions of ideology and consciousness. Analogously, the fact that Michel Foucault appropriated the term "discourse" from linguistics should not lead us to forget that, in his hands, the concept encompassed institutional configurations

68 Samir Amin, Class and Nation, Historically and in the Current Crisis, Susan Kaplow, trans. (New York, 1980).
69 Samir Amin, Eurocentrism, Russell Moore, trans. (New York, 1989), 58. It is instructive to compare Amin with Marshall Hodgson: "In sum, the whole Afro-Eurasian Oikumene was the stage on which was played all civilized history, including that of Islamicate civilization, and this stage was set largely by the contrasts and interrelations among the great regional cultural complexes"; Hodgson, The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization, Vol. 1: The Classical Age of Islam (Chicago, 1977), 114.
as solid as the prison or the asylum. (As practices go, few can be more material than architecture.) Despite this, postcolonial writing has too often excluded historical, economic, and material factors. In terms of the second of our guiding oppositions, it is fair to state that, with the advent of poststructuralist methods, the dominant focus in scholarly discussions of imperialism shifted dramatically from material to representational phenomena. While it is easy enough to lament this development, as many have, it should be noted that the introduction of a Saussurian concern with the operation of difference within fields of signification has produced an illuminating discussion of race, an issue that, bizarre as it may seem, had largely been left uninterrogated in traditional accounts of imperialism. Thus it is worth considering the historical conditions under which issues of race and representation should have come to acquire a hold on scholarly debates.

One of the major determinants of contemporary global discourse is the significant (albeit limited) extent to which imperialism has been de-territorialized. This is, of course, an extremely complex and still emergent phenomenon. All the same, it is increasingly apparent that the escalating volume, speed, and intensity with which capital, information, commodities, technologies, and people move about the globe constitutes a situation that confounds stable categories of class and location, necessitating more labile, situational, and opportunistic modes of analysis than the repertoire of oppositional modernism makes available.


71 Phillip Darby and Christopher Fyfe have both made this point. See Darby, Three Faces of Imperialism: British and American Approaches to Africa and Asia (New Haven, Conn., 1987), 84–87; and Fyfe, “Race, Empire and the Historians,” Race and Class 33, no. 4 (1992): 15–30.

home to roost in the form of labor, refugee, and other migrations, the metropolis followed in the demographic footsteps of the periphery, with major Western cities taking on the creolized, multi-ethnic look of a nineteenth-century colonial center.73 Whereas, in traditional theories of imperialism, race had been redundant as an index of domination when that domination was most obviously constituted by spatial separation, in the post-imperial city the reverse has come to apply. Downtown, home addresses are not the main issue—people change neighborhoods more easily than they change races.

Space is not the only material casualty. Marxism's notorious color blindness is symptomatic of economic thinking as a whole, which simply lacks the categories to specify racial, ethnic, or cultural differences. When it comes to difference, the sovereign paradigm is phonology, which is exclusively given over to the refinement of discriminations. In poststructuralist hands, then, domination became a kind of language, with race figuring as an aestheticized construct that belied the physicality of its conventional signs. As we shall see, though, this did not need to be the case and has not always been the case. In turning to the controversial topic of postcolonialism, therefore, my argument is very simple. As noted at the outset, the distinction between the discursive and the instrumental is a false one; representations dialectically inform the (mis)understandings that permeate practical activity. Postcolonial theory offers suggestive ways for historians to open up some of the discursive and ideological dimensions of the complex field of imperialism, but this should not be allowed to suppress other dimensions.74 Our goal should be a unified historical field.

The linkage of Marx and Foucault in this context is not accidental. Though appealing to kindred political instincts, their epistemologies are axiomatically incompatible. A consequence has been an uneasy division of radical loyalties in the Western academy. Within Europe, the circumstances of the late 1960s (in particular, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the events of May 1968) undid the revolutionary credentials of a dour master-narrative of labor and class. In the Third World, on the other hand, Marxism's role in decolonization—and, above all, the


73 "[T]he culture, society and space of early twentieth century Calcutta or Singapore pre-figured the future in a much more accurate way than did that of London or New York. 'Modernity' was not born in Paris but rather in Rio"; Anthony D. King, "Introduction," King, ed., Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity (Binghamton, N.Y., 1991), 8.

74 Thus I concur with the attitude recommended by Dane Kennedy, "Imperial History and Post-Colonial Theory," Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 24 (1996): 345–63. I also agree with Kennedy that postcolonialism's promise need not warrant impenetrable terminology: "Let us agree that the non-Western world remains in thrall to the discursive system of the West, to the system that Said identifies as Orientalism. How do the post-colonial theorists propose to liberate these hostages? By writing in a manner that is utterly inaccessible to most of them? By writing as the acolytes of Western theorists? By writing to mainly Western audiences from mainly Western academies about mainly Western literature? By writing? [!]" (p. 350).
triumph of the Viet Cong—gave it continuing vitality in oppositional discourse. Unlike many of their Western counterparts, therefore, Third World intellectuals who embraced poststructuralism were unlikely to see this as requiring them to renounce Marxism. This was the case even though most of those involved were based in the West. Rather than viewing the incompatibility between Marxism and poststructuralism as necessitating a choice between them, diasporan postcolonialism has derived much of its disruptive energy from a strategically provisional juggling of the two. Edward W. Said’s Orientalism (which, along with Fanon, enjoys ironically foundational status in postcolonialism) is a case in point. A prefatory quotation from The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte dramatizes Marx’s own complicity in Orientalism: “They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented.” Yet no sooner has the introduction gotten under way than Foucault’s concept of discourse is yoked to Antonio Gramsci’s thoroughly Marxist concept of hegemony, as if the problem of the humanist subject did not present an

75 The diasporan status of many (but by no means all—let us be fairer to Partha Chatterjee, Shalib Amin, Gyan Pandey, et al.) of these intellectuals has made them a soft target for critics such as Ajiaz Ahmad (ex-Rutgers) and Arif Dirlik (Duke). Dirlik is wickedly effective: “When exactly . . . does the “post-colonial” begin?” [he quotes Shohat, and answers . . .] When Third World intellectuals have arrived in First World academe”; Dirlik, “The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism,” Critical Inquiry 20 (1994): 328–29.

76 Trained in Paris, Marxist to the core, Ranajit Guha prefigured this conjuncture, to which Bhabha is a notable exception, by some two decades. The conjuncture itself has been variously criticized on epistemological grounds. See, for example, Dennis Porter, “Orientalism and Its Problems,” in Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen, eds., The Politics of Theory (Colchester, 1983), 179–92 (in reference to Said); and Rosalind O’Hanlon and David Washbrook, “After Orientalism: Culture, Criticism, and Politics in the Third World,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 34 (1992): 141–67 (in reference to Gyan Prakash). Various Western scholars have effected the same conjuncture. See, for example, Peter Hulme, Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1797 (London, 1986), 7–8. See also Florence E. Mallon, “The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History,” AHR 99 (December 1994): 1515.

77 From the point of view of the history of ideas, an epidemiology of Edward Said’s Orientalism (New York, 1978) could cast light on the conditions of academic receptivity. Despite its extraordinary impact, Said’s thesis was by no means unprecedented. In significant ways, it had been anticipated by, among others, Maxime Rodinson, “The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam,” in Joseph Schacht, with C. E. Bosworth, ed., The Legacy of Islam, 2d edn. (Oxford, 1974), 9–62; Mohammed Arkoun, “L’islam vu par le professeur G. E. V. Grunebaum,” Arabica 11 (1964): 113–26; and Hichem Djait, L’Europe et l’Islam (Paris, 1974). More is involved here than the fact that Said’s book was in English or that it employed French theory. Consider, for instance, the following representative passage from a critique of the “neo-orientalism of western Europe” which appeared fifteen years before Orientalism in a journal (Diogenes) that is hardly obscure or lacking international credibility (excuse the length, but it is surely striking): “According to the traditional orientalists, an essence should exist—sometimes even clearly described in metaphysical terms—which constitutes the inalienable and common basis of all the beings considered; this essence is both ‘historical,’ since it goes back to the dawn of history, and fundamentally a-historical, since it transfixes the being, the ‘object’ of study, within its inalienable and non-evolutive specificity, instead of defining it as all other beings, states, nations, peoples and cultures—as a product, a resultant of the vection of the forces operating in the field of historical evolution. Thus one ends with a typology—based on a real specificity, but detached from history, and, consequently, conceived as being intangible, essential—which makes of the studied ‘object’ another being, with regard to whom the studying subject is transcendent: we will have a homo Sinicus, a homo Arabicus and, why not, a homo Aegypticus, etc., a homo Africanus, the man—the ‘normal man’ it is understood—being the European man of the historical period, that is, since Greek antiquity. One sees how much, from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, the hegemonism of possessing minorities, unveiled by Marx and Engels, and the anthropocentrism dismantled by Freud are accompanied by europoeocentrism in the area of human and social sciences, and more particularly in those in direct relationship with non-European peoples”; Anouar Abdal-Malek, “Orientalism in Crisis,” Diogenes 44 (1963): 108. Malek goes on to implicate one of Said’s prime targets, Louis Massignon, who had died the previous year.
obstacle. In terms of scholarly outcomes, however, it seems safe to say that it has not presented an obstacle. Moreover, using Foucault without (say) Gramsci would have entailed an erasure of subjecthood that would have taken the colonizer out of colonialism. In this as in other respects, Said knew what he was doing.

In contrast to Marxist thought—which, with varying degrees of subtlety, posits a gap between reality and (mis)representation—Foucault’s notion of discourse is constitutive (or, as he put it, “positive”). As opposed to a distortion put about by the powerful, discourse produces realities—regulating, ordering, and conditioning the possibilities of practical existence. Thus discourse is not simply ideational. Rather, it operates (though not homogeneously) through all the institutions and routines of social life. This basic distinction has crucial implications for postcolonialism. In particular, it means that, when Said termed Orientalism a discourse, he meant much more than that the Western academy had disseminated misleading ideas about the Islamic Middle East: “Orientalism [is] a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient . . . [an] enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period.” In underwriting Orientalism, the Western academy was, in a very wide sense, making the Middle East, a scenario that credited certain academics with extraordinary power. This consequence flowed from Said’s harnessing Foucauldian positivity to a Marxist sense of hegemonic ideology. As a result, rather than a collaborative or dialogic process, discourse became unidirectional, something that the colonizers wielded. It would be hard to imagine a more fertile flaw.

In Said’s account, Orientalism has a distinctly Cartesian quality. In producing its other as an object of thought and acting upon it, colonial discourse reproduces the familiar priority of mind over matter. The final object of colonial thought, a category that emerged in concert with Europe’s encompassment of the rest of the globe, was the world itself (a historical achievement that Mary Louise Pratt termed “planetary consciousness”). This dioramic purview was exemplified in cartography, a “projection” that reduced terra incognita to order, banishing the monsters and converting space into place. As Paul Carter has observed, Captain Cook did not give New Island its name because it had only recently emerged from the Pacific...

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78 In view of the constraints of space, I shall use the term postcolonialism loosely to refer to a generic body of work that brings poststructuralism to bear on colonial questions.
79 Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (New York, 1992), 134.
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Ocean but because, as Cook noted in his journal, “it is not laid down in any chart.”

In the discourse of discovery, to chart was to call into existence.

If mapping fixed the world for European statesmen, museology brought it home to the European masses. It also went beyond visuality, rendering the spectacle of empire a performative experience that democratically and pansensorily involved the whole body. One of the key features of museums (in common with imperial exhibitions, world fairs, and theme parks) is the fact that people walk through them; they are shaped and shaping experiences. Their immediacy makes them key sites of subject-construction, as evidenced in their openness to all classes and their incorporation into school pedagogies. As various analyses have shown, the two most important discourses in which nineteenth-century museums involved their publics were those of citizenship and empire. Moreover, the two were inseparable. Given evolutionary anthropology’s all-encompassing phylogenetic hierarchy, any ethnological display was necessarily a statement about rank. For instance, commercial fairs that provided competing industrial nations with opportunities to demonstrate the superior efficiency of their products typically included anthropological displays that illustrated the world-historical development of the advanced technologies in question. These displays conflated what we would today distinguish as archaeology and ethnography on the evolutionist premise that “their” present was “our” past—that non-European peoples differentially occupied the series of developmental niches through which European society had progressively raised itself. Thus space and time were collapsed; to travel beyond the bounds of European civilization was to travel back in time. This global narrative was reenacted by the museum- or fair-going public when they moved between stands, pavilions, or model villages—a sensation that, at the larger fairs, was cemented by the provision of railways and other atmospheric devices designed to popularize imperial subjecthood.

In positioning the European spectator at the apex of universal history, “ethnological showbusiness” potently articulated nationalism and imperialism.

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85 The pattern was set by the Crystal Palace exhibition of 1851, evoked in the pen picture with which George W. Stocking, Jr., opens his definitive _Victorian Anthropology_ (New York, 1987), 1–6.
86 On temporality in colonial discourse, see particularly Johannes Fabian, _Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object_ (New York, 1983).
performative dimension, which is crucial here, eludes traditional approaches in which ideology figures as a species of misinformation that leaves reality continuing in parallel. Thus many recent analyses have turned to Foucault for ways to express the fuller discursive production of imperial subjects. This is not to say that what Tony Bennett has called the “exhibitionary complex” was semantically monolithic. Display practice is inherently polyvocal and, accordingly, contested. To cite an obvious example, a skull in a museum might speak to an ethnologist of evolutionary taxonomy and to an Aboriginal person of grave robbery. Even within ostensibly unitary paradigms, as Annie Coombes has noted of British images of Africa, heterogeneity and discontinuity prevail. Coombes might have mentioned Timothy Mitchell’s Colonising Egypt, which counterposed the European metaphysic of representation informing the “world-as-exhibition” to the differently framed cultural responses of Egyptian visitors to the Egyptian exhibit. Not only did the Egyptians confront simulacra of themselves within the exhibition; once back outside in the “real” world of nineteenth-century Paris, they found themselves immersed in

display of native peoples for the entertainment of European audiences. His subject is the infamous treatment of Saartjie Baartman, the San woman who was exhibited in London in 1810–1811 as the “Hottentot Venus,” a topic he discusses without replicating the prurience of the gaze at which the display was directed (compare Sander Gilman, “Black Bodies, White Bodies,” in Critical Inquiry 12 [1985]: 204–42). Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett notes how, in the “tomb with a view,” human exhibits, whether alive or dead, are subsumed into the economy of display objects: “The semiotic complexity of exhibits of people, particularly those of an ethnographic character, may be seen in reciprocities between exhibiting the dead as if they are alive and the living as if they are dead, reciprocities that hold as well for the art of the undertaker as they do for the art of the museum preparator”; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Objects of Ethnography,” in Karis and Lavine, Exhibiting Cultures, 398. On the display of human ethnological “specimens” generally, see Rydell, All the World’s a Fair; Phillips Verner Bradford and Harvey Blume, Ota: The Pygmy in the Zoo (New York, 1992); Christian F. Feest, ed., Indians and Europe: An Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays (Aachen, 1987); C. A. Vaughan, “Ogling Igorots: The Politics and Commerce of Exhibiting Cultural Otherness, 1898–1913,” in Thomson, Freakery, 219–33.

A brilliant example is Tony Bennett’s argument that nineteenth-century museums performed a function complementary to Foucault’s carceral prisons and asylums, which only operated in cases where the museum’s (and related civic institutions’) production of a docile and self-regulating citizenry failed. In the museum, the crowd is not so much subject to a controlling view from above, à la Foucauldian panopticon, as exchanging looks between themselves, a “self-monitoring system of looks” that forms “a technology of vision which served not to atomize and disperse the crowd but to regulate it, and to do so by rendering it visible to itself, by making the crowd itself the ultimate spectacle”; Bennett, Birth of the Museum, 68. The possibilities of this approach for analyzing the construction of racial subjectivities in contexts like that of the museum, where anthropological displays incite glances across, between, and within “races,” seem to me to be considerable.


Coombes, Reinventing Africa, 2–3.
a sea of signification ("exotic" commodity displays in shopping arcades, etc.) that was continuous with the self-consciously staged space of the exhibition. Reciprocally, when Europeans who had been to the exhibition visited the "real" Egypt, they found a disorderly confusion that challenged them to establish a commanding vantage point for themselves, to impose European form on the unruly oriental content.

Mitchell's inclusion of the Egyptian visitors' reactions emphasizes the Eurocentrism of analyses that present the colonial encounter monologically, as a narcissistic projection of the Western will to power. As noted above, domination is a relationship. Europe became what it was through its unequal exchanges with the rest of the world; the Englishman's sweet tooth required the slave triangle. Within the field of visibility itself, modernism's debt to colonial museology is well known. Fifteen years after Orientalism, Said moved to remedy the book's one-sidedness by demonstrating that the development of European culture—right down to the genteel provincial reaches of Jane Austen's Mansfield Park—had presupposed imperialism as a condition of its possibility. Whether or not an effective antidote

93 As Benjamin put it, "There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism"; Walter Benjamin, Illuminations, Harry Zohn, trans. (New York, 1968), 256.
95 Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism (London, 1994). A growing number of studies have brought out metropolitan culture's indebtedness to colonialism. For instance, Vron Ware and Moira Ferguson have both argued that British feminist thought from Mary Wollstonecraft to John Stuart Mill borrowed language and imagery from the campaign to abolish slavery. See Ware, Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism, and History (New York, 1992); Ferguson, Colonialism and Gender Relations from Mary Wollstonecraft to Jamaica Kincaid: East Caribbean Connections (New York, 1993). More subversively, Antoinette Burton argues that British feminism in the late nineteenth century was deeply complicit in the ideological work of empire, particularly in orientalizing Indian womanhood. See Burton, The Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915 (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1994). Javed Majeed, Ungoverned Imaginings: James Mill's "The History of British India" and Orientalism (New York, 1992), has shown how British Orientalism around the turn of the nineteenth century was concerned with British as much as with Asiatic society, providing a means for philosophical radicalism to fashion its critique. More generally, Linda Colley has argued, in "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument," Journal of British Studies 31 (1992): 309–29, that possession of the empire united British society, an argument that is more fully developed in John M. MacKenzie's work on empire and British popular culture. See MacKenzie, Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880–1960 (Manchester, 1984); and the introduction to his Imperialism and Popular Culture (Manchester, 1986), 1–16. See also Bill Schwarz's collection, The Expansion of England: Race, Ethnicity, and Cultural History (New York, 1996), in particular the articles by Couze Venn, "History Lessons: Formation of Subjects, (Post)colonialism, and an Other Project," 32–60; and Catherine Hall, "Imperial Man: Edward Eyre in Australasia and the West Indies, 1833–66," 130–70. The anthropologists Richard Handler and Daniel A. Segal have cogently argued that European nationalism was a product of the colonial project. See R. Handler and D. A. Segal, "How European Is Nationalism?" Social Analysis 32 (1992): 1–15; and Handler and Segal, "Introduction: Nations, Colonies and Metropoles," Social Analysis 33 (1993): 3–8 (this whole special edition is interesting). See also Shula Marks, "History, the Nation and Empire: Sniping from the Periphery," History Workshop Journal 29 (1990): 111–19.
to Eurocentrism is more Eurocentrism, Said's shift reflects the development, largely in response to *Orientalism*, of a widespread concern with Europe’s reciprocal dependence on those whom it subordinated. Ideologically, the production of the European bourgeois self relied significantly on the colonized (savage or barbarian) not-self in a manner congruent with the way in which the productivity of Manchester cotton mills relied on the coercion of labor in Louisiana, India, and Egypt.  

In one sense, this brings us back to M. N. Roy. When stressing Europe’s dependence on colonialism, however, Roy had refused any dilution of its spatio-racial specificity. Colonial and metropolitan labor regimes were not homogeneous. On the contrary, colonialism had enabled the relative cossetting of a domestic aristocracy of labor, whose quiescence reflected its status as colonialism’s beneficiary. Roy’s view maintained the structure but reversed the value of Hobson’s liberal fear “that the arts and crafts of tyranny, acquired and exercised in our unfree Empire, should be turned against our liberties at home.”

The operative difference between Roy and Hobson was, of course, their antithetical positioning in relation to the colonial divide. The clarity of this distinction has regularly been called into question. It has already been observed, for instance, that imperialism could be conceived without reference to spatial separation. Hybridity also undermines colonial boundaries, as do synthetic analyses in which race, gender, and class figure as distinct but mutually encoding (in Anne McClintock’s formula, as “neither separable from nor reducible to” each other). In more direct relationship to Hobson’s concern, the colonies have been seen as a laboratory in which ideological and disciplinary regimes have been developed before being brought back home to regulate metropolitan society. Roy, however, remains provocative. After all, fingerprinting may have been pioneered in Bengal, but Englishmen were immeasurably more likely to be cautioned of their rights first.

QUESTIONS OF BALANCE ASIDE, the fact remains that Europe and its others were co-produced in and through their unequal interactions. Discursively, this meant that, in constructing its other as an object of thought, Europe constructed itself as subject. From the Enlightenment on, this was a curiously unstated, transparent type


100 To put it in Gramscian terms, the balance between civil and political hegemony (ideologically elicited consent and direct repression) shifted radically between the metropolis and the colonies. For a developed argument (“how professions of bourgeois democracy were violated in the practice of imperialism”), see Ranajit Guha, “Dominance without Hegemony and Its Historiography,” *Subaltern Studies* 6 (1989): 210–309.
of subjectivity, a universal taken-for-grantedness in relation to which difference could only constitute default. In *Writing Degree Zero*, Roland Barthes provided a model for this elusive concept, associating the first cracks in bourgeois hegemony with the emergence of a concern with style—a concern which, in conceding that writing was not simply “white,” a neutral medium for the copying of reality, conceded the disruptive possibility of alternatives.101 Like nature itself, white writing is just there102; its power lies in its authorlessness (hence the embarrassing egotism of some postmodernist writing). To resist this kind of power—to tackle the Mercator behind the projection—it is first of all necessary to denaturalize it, to bring out the idiosyncracy of universal categories. Thus the concerted poststructuralist assault on Reason, Progress, the Nation, the Citizen, etc.

So far as historians are concerned, this assault would seem to have reached an end of sorts in Dipesh Chakrabarty's disconcerting conclusion that Europe is the subject of history—that the very historical project itself, regardless of its contents or emphases, is inherently and inescapably Eurocentric.103 At first sight, Chakrabarty might seem to have mistaken history for geography. After all, as should be clear by now, Europe may occupy a fixed portion of the map, but its history is ubiquitous. But this (I think) is Chakrabarty's whole point—through inscribing its creole genealogy, we begin to undo Europe's arrogation of universal subjectivity.104 In its positive or critical aspect, therefore, his ostensibly pessimistic thesis enjoins an invigorating politics, the project of provincializing Europe. Chakrabarty’s position is informed by the Subaltern Studies collective’s longstanding aversion to the prosopopoeia that replaces active consciousness with prefabricated scripts rehearsing the teleological Mission of the class or institution that historical actors are deemed to represent.105 The other side of this coin is the problematic of exteriority: what can evade European discourse, and how to recover it?106 Hence the labor of recovering subalternity from between the lines of colonial

104 The term creole genealogy is taken from Handler and Segal, “Introduction,” 4.
106 Since well before *Orientalism*, scholars writing on India have been doing forms of discourse analysis on the modernity of tradition, generally focusing on the codifications of Hindu law that were
and nationalist discourse. Hence, too, Chatterjee's project of claiming "for us, the once-colonized, our freedom of imagination." 107

The notion of exteriority is, of course, unsatisfactory here, since exteriority is not freestanding but is a determinate residue of interiority. Yet it is extremely difficult to find a better word. This difficulty itself illustrates the depth of the problem, which is one of the starting points of deconstruction. Subaltern discourse is not simply a mirroring negation of colonizing discourse. Hindu-Muslim communalism, for instance, is not some feudal survival, a transcendent essence that repetitively recruits human agents to frustrate postcolonial modernity. Rather, communalism is an integral component of modernity, concretely and specifically grounded in the complex modern consciences of those who participate in it. (The point recalls the distinction between undevelopment and underdevelopment.) To narrate the phenomenology of practical historical consciousness (in this case, of the subaltern), it is necessary to confound the essences and teleologies that colonial discourse ceaselessly disseminates; in Gyan Prakash's phrase, it is necessary to write "post-foundational" histories. 108

To adopt Homi Bhabha's much-adopted terminology, the modern condition that includes but also exceeds colonialism's binomial categories can be expressed as hybridity. In Bhabha's theory, which represents a high point in the aestheticization of race, the concept of hybridity registers the (post)colonial co-production of Europe and its others, going beyond notions of colonial discourse as a unilateral projection to open up the reciprocal complexities of the colonial encounter. Hybridity confronts colonial discourse with the threat of recognition; the other is like, but only partially like, self—"almost the same but not quite/white." 109 With an unerring eye for contradiction, Bhabha repetitively points to the effort that colonial discourse was obliged to put into rehabilitating stereotypes that, though meant to be eternal, were constantly subject to historical change. In its anxious renovation of the racial essences that underpinned domination, colonial discourse betrayed a


107 Chatterjee, Nation and Its Fragments, 13.
profound ambivalence. On the one hand, it strove to domesticate—to assimilate—the native; on the other, it was undone—deauthorized, disavowed—by the partial resemblance, the “difference between being English and being Anglicized” that was thus produced. Sincere or not, sly or not, imitation was a profoundly threatening form of flattery. The scornful stereotype of the Indian mimicking Englishness attested to the colonizer’s fear of that which was held back in mimicry, of the recalcitrant brownness that mocked even as it mimicked. Recognizable in a brown skin, Englishness broke down.

In its basic form, hybridity is, of course, a palpably material outcome of the primary subversion of the colonial divide. Wherever they have gone, male colonizers have impregnated native women. This notwithstanding, issues of gender and sexuality (especially homosexuality) have until relatively recently been marginalized in scholarly discussions of imperialism. Over the past decade or so, however, our understanding of the complexities of the colonial encounter has been enriched and transformed by an emergent body of work whose significance can hardly be overstated. To survey this work would require an article on its own. I shall merely indicate a few directions here.

As in so many areas, feminist scholars of imperialism have been obliged to labor the most elementary of points before being able to move on to more demanding questions. Thus they have had to remind us (or, at least, too many of us) that women were there too and that women have colonized and been colonized in different ways to men. Much of this work has been recuperative, rereading the imperial archive to disclose its female dimension. White women in the colonies have emerged in all their variety, exploding the stereotypical opposition that James Buzard has characterized as “the Spinster Abroad and the Memsahib, the eccentric


112 Ronald Hyam regularly broaches this topic, though not in any great depth, in Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience (Manchester, 1990). Richard C. Trexler, Sex and Conquest: Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas (Ithaca, N.Y., 1995), falls ironic victim to one of its own claims, since the repression of detailed reportage on homosexuality, even among the Amerindians of whom it was routinely and formulaically reported, repeatedly reduces the author to guesswork.

113 This ever-growing literature is much too extensive for representative citation. Some of the many notable contributions not already mentioned include Napur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, eds., Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance (Bloomington, Ind., 1992); Cynthia Enloe, Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (London, 1989); Patricia Grimshaw, Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii (Honolulu, 1989); Margaret Strobel, European Women and the Second Empire (Bloomington, 1991).
traveler and the pampered Hill Station denizen." Attempts by female scholars from the West to recover Third World women's experiences from against the grain of patriarchal discourse have, however, provoked controversy. A number of scholars, mainly from the Third World, have objected that the sharing of gender does not entitle Western women to claim a sharing of experience substantial enough to transcend the colonial divide from which they themselves have historically benefited. Moreover, in taking up the cudgels on behalf of brown women against brown men, Western feminists have resuscitated a stock justification for colonialism. As Gayatri Spivak and, following her, Lata Mani have argued (their common example is sati in British India), the championing of native women's rights provided colonial authorities with a pretext for imposing their own order on native society. Who, then, can speak for subaltern women who lack access to the academy? The very existence of an academic discourse on colonial discourse attests to the hazards of ethnographic ventriloquism.

Gender is not, however, restricted to women. Rather, as Joan Scott so influentially stated, it is a way of encoding power relations. Following up some hints in Said's Orientalism, a number of scholars have analyzed the inherent genderedness of the colonial project. This has been most apparent when colonialism has functioned as a discourse on land, which, in settler colonies in particular, has


117 "The subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with 'woman' as a pious item. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual as intellectual has a circumscribed task which she must not disown with a flourish"; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Chicago, 1988), 308 (from which article the brown women/brown men line is also adapted). Though acknowledging the problems, others have adopted more pragmatic approaches. See, for example, two of the contributions to the AHR Forum on subaltern studies; Cooper, "Conflict and Connection," 1528–30; Mallon, "Promise and Dilemma," 1507. The phrase "ethnographic ventriloquism" comes from my "Should the Subaltern Dream? 'Australian Aborigines' and the Problem of Ethnographic Ventriloquism."

118 Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *AHR* 91 (December 1986): 1053–75, rpt. in her *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, 1988), 28–52. A powerful forerunner to this style of analysis was the anthropologist Sherry Ortner's "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" in Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds., *Woman, Culture and Society* (Stanford, Calif., 1984), 67–87.

figured as waiting to be penetrated, opened up, made fertile, and so on ("Guiana . . ."); as Walter Raleigh remarked, "hath yet her maydenhead"). As gender provides a model and precedent for the dominated, so, by the same logic, does it construct the dominator as male—or, in Catherine Hall's more complete formulation, which restores race as well as gender to the account, as white, male, and middle class.

To begin to evoke the multifaceted fullness of imperialism, then, we not only have to bring it home, wherever that may be. We also have to trace its complex discursive intersections—not just around the triptych of race, class, and gender but, as noted, around (homo)sexualities and, it seems to me, the psychology of violence. Synecdoche—a cat massacre perhaps, or a Balinese cockfight—would seem to be favored. In her remarkable study of imperialism, which encompasses all these intersections, McClintock homes in on a filthy leather wrist-strap worn defiantly by Hannah Cullwick, working-class wife, servant, and cross-dressing partner in transgressive fantasy to a prominent Victorian lawyer. Cullwick’s "slave-band," the imperial leather of McClintock’s book title, functions as a fetish, a nodal point for the intersection of imperialist discourses: “The cross-cultural experiences marked by the fetish fuse in the slave-band: in the triangular relations among slavery as the basis of mercantile capitalism; wage labor as the basis of industrial capitalism; and domestic labor as the basis of patriarchy.”

A DIMENSION THAT DOES NOT SEEM TO CONVERGE on Cullwick’s slave-band is that of territory, a precondition for any system of production. As a historian of European/indigenous relations in Australia, I find that, suggestive though recent writing on imperialism can be, much of it is irreducibly heterogeneous with Australian conditions, for the simple reason that, unlike Bhabha’s India (though like Said’s Palestine), Australia is a settler colony. For all the homage paid to difference, postcolonial theory in particular has largely failed to accommodate such basic structural distinctions. To register them, and to trace their discursive ramifications, I suggest that Althusser provided a starting point, one that could be greatly


121 Catherine Hall, White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History (Cambridge, 1992).

122 McClintock, Imperial Leather, 151.

123 A recent, though hardly postcolonial, exception is Daiva Stasiulis and Nira Yuval-Davis, eds., Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class (London, 1995). See also
enhanced by bringing poststructuralist rigor to bear on materialist approaches to ideology. (Neo)structurally, the concept of social formation enables us to specify material conditions that favor the currency of particular colonial discourses. For instance, the narrative of the dying race, which harmonizes with the project of removing natives from the land, is congenial to settler colonization. It is incompatible with franchise colonization, where native labor is at a premium. Though black, therefore, Australian Aborigines have discursively figured as dying rather than as being endowed with a natural sense of rhythm. On the same basis, the colonization of Native Americans has been structurally distinct from the colonization of African Americans. In the main, Native (North) Americans were cleared from their land rather than exploited for their labor, their place being taken by displaced Africans, who provided labor to be mixed with the expropriated land, their own homelands having yet to become objects of colonial desire. Thus the two colonial relationships were (are) fundamentally opposed. The ramifications of this distinction extend to the present, particularly insofar as they affect the different constructions of "miscegenation" that have been applied to the two communities. Briefly, while the "one-drop rule" has meant that the category "black" can withstand unlimited admixture, the category "red" has been highly vulnerable to dilution. This is consistent with a situation in which, while black labor was commodified (so that white plantation owners fathered black children), red labor was not even acknowledged (so that white fathers generated "half-breeds" whose indigeneity was compromised). In Australia, the structural counterparts to African-American slaves were white convicts, which has meant that racial coding and questions of emanci-
pation have operated quite differently between the two countries. Where the respective indigenous populations have been concerned, however, there are substantial similarities between the racial calculations on which official policies toward them have been predicated. Such discursive distinctions, which survive the de-territorialization of imperialism, are clearly of considerable historical significance. They only make sense in relation to the material conditions that historically shaped the different colonial relationships concerned.\textsuperscript{126} If we wish to produce histories that tell us enough about imperialism to suggest ways of resisting it, we should start with these conditions.


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