Distribution Agreement

In presenting this thesis or dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree from Emory University, I hereby grant to Emory University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive, make accessible, and display my thesis or dissertation in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known, including display on the world wide web. I understand that I may select some access restrictions as part of the online submission of this thesis or dissertation. I retain all ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis or dissertation. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis or dissertation.

Signature:

_____ _____

Alyssa Stalsberg Canelli Date

Imperial Postcoloniality: Narrative, Race and Reproduction in White Settler Histories

By

Alyssa Stalsberg Canelli
Ph.D.

English

_____
Deepika Bahri
Advisor

_____
Jonathan Goldberg
Committee Member

_____
Benjamin Reiss
Committee Member

Accepted:

_____
Lisa A. Tedesco, Ph.D.
Dean of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies

_____
Date

Imperial Postcoloniality: Narrative, Race and Reproduction in White Settler Histories

By

Alyssa Stalsberg Canelli
M.A. New York University, 2006
B.A. Smith College, 2000

Advisor: Deepika Bahri, Ph.D.

An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in English
2016

Abstract

Imperial Postcoloniality: Narrative, Race and Reproduction in White Settler Histories

By Alyssa Stalsberg Canelli

My dissertation proposes a term, "imperial postcoloniality," which describes the particular situation of settler colonialism in which independence is simultaneously elaborated through new configurations of colonialism, imperialism and racialization. The imperial postcolonial condition is reproduced through a complex set of affiliations, repudiations and reconciliations with the parent colonial power, and sustained through a kinship of shared whiteness. This project explores literary representations of the racialized narrative structures of the new white settler nations. By analyzing texts written by J.M. Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer and Zoe Wicomb to Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson and William Apess, I argue that at the heart of the imperial postcolonial nation's imagined community lies an anxiety over the origins and reproduction of the nation. Further, it is precisely this anxiety that exposes the modes of racialized desire that are central to the nation's ideological and material reproduction. However, this white settler narration is continually unsettled by other voices and presences, including its own fictions of whiteness. In fact, the cohesion of national narratives is always threatened by the historical reality of non-linear, dispossessed, obscured and rerouted lines of descent.

Although the comparativism of this project is historically non-contiguous, it is grounded in a tradition of comparative historical work, inaugurated by George F. Frederickson's *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study of American and South African History* (1982). I draw upon the rich tradition of "nation and narration" scholarship by Homi Bhabha and other postcolonial studies scholars in order to examine how heterosexual (and occasionally same-sex) desire, reproduction and familial relations are incorporated into these racialized national narratives. I also engage with key arguments in queer theory about the relation between the figure of the child and the nation, and the ways in which contemporary queer identity formations are inextricable from white settler histories. By bringing together the fields of postcolonial studies, American studies and queer theory, this project addresses several issues in each discourse: the relative lack of analysis of sexuality in postcolonial studies and the controversial relationship of white settler histories to postcolonial theory; the ideological persistence of American exceptionalism; and the relation between whiteness and queerness.

Imperial Postcoloniality: Narrative, Race and Reproduction in White Settler Histories

By

Alyssa Stalsberg Canelli
M.A. New York University, 2006
B.A. Smith College, 2000

Advisor: Deepika Bahri, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in English
2016

Acknowledgments

I am most indebted to Jill Canelli, who took a leap of faith with me when she moved down to Atlanta when I entered into this Ph.D. program. We didn't know then how much our lives would be altered in the coming years by illness, grief and a total reorientation of our life priorities. It is her love and support that has given me strength, and it is her belief in me that has pushed me to the finish line of this dissertation.

I cannot thank Deepika Bahri, my advisor, enough. Her support of me, through major life events, has never wavered. But perhaps even more importantly, she always maintained her confidence in my work, intellect, writing and contributions. When I was consumed by other things in life, she reminded me that I was still capable of good—even great—work. I cannot adequately express how much those reminders meant to me throughout the years.

My committee members, Jonathan Goldberg and Benjamin Reiss—thank you for creating the most intellectually exciting classrooms I have ever experienced. Your guidance in the dissertation has been invaluable, as has been your support. As scholars and teachers, you are my inspirations.

This dissertation would never have gained momentum if it were not for the weekly GAG meetings: Roopsi Risam, Maureen McCarthy and Kate Doubler. Equal parts friendship, and writing accountability—both necessary, and the former enduring.

My family, both chosen and extended: thank you. Especially to Janna Kellinger, my original mentor and inspiration. JP Urban Family outlasts everything, including out-of-state moves and even Ph.D. programs and dissertations!

And finally, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Kathy Stalsberg and my grandmother, Norma Lawson. You are two of the most brilliant women I have ever known, and your dream that I become the first generation of educated women in our family is now accomplished.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Within postcolonial studies, one often encounters references to "*the* postcolonial condition" or "postcoloniality" as if everything contained within that reference was indeed reducible to a single unified condition. However, if we recognize that there are multiple forms of colonialism and imperialism, we must also acknowledge that there are multiple modes of postcoloniality. White settler histories, including that of the United States, do not fit within the conventional narratives of the postcolonial condition because they are structured by imperialism and racialization, rather than liberation and self-determination. My dissertation proposes a term, "imperial postcoloniality," which describes the particular situation of settler colonialism in which independence is simultaneously elaborated through new configurations of colonialism, imperialism and racialization. This term allows me to consider the ways in which the emancipatory promise of the postcolonial condition is unevenly fulfilled, and in so doing, I explore the ways in which the postcolonial moment can also produce imperialist impulses and colonizing projects.

Given this definition, imperial postcoloniality can describe apartheid-era South Africa (1948-1994) and the early national to mid-nineteenth century United States. By considering the development of white settler nationalism as a modality of postcoloniality, this dissertation examines the ways in which postcolonial conditions persist within contemporary configurations of globalization and the nationalist narratives in South Africa and the United States. While the historical conditions of imperial postcoloniality precede these moments, the twentieth and nineteenth centuries mark the historical

moment of each nation's appearance on the global historical stage; it is within these literary periods that writers become aware of representing, narrating and reproducing the nation and its origins. Writers were grappling with ideas of nationalism, dissent, critique, power and the ways in which the imagined national unity required racialized and heternormative forms of bodily and social belonging. The affective stance of these texts is linked to this node of reproduction, racialization and nationalism, and all of which in turn, are linked to particular capitalistic and heternormative modes of drive and desire.

My comparative analysis of these two historically non-contiguous colonialisms and their attendant national literatures is structured through four pairings of South African and American texts, all of which can be read as narratives of familial or national reproduction, with each pairing allowing me to explore a set of interrelated features of imperial postcoloniality. This project explores literary representations of the racialized origins and narrative structures of the new white settler nations. By analyzing texts written by J.M. Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer and Zoe Wicomb to Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson and William Apess, I argue that at the heart of the imperial postcolonial nation's imagined community lies an anxiety over the origins and reproduction of the nation. Further, it is precisely this anxiety that betrays the modes of racialization and heteronormativity that are central to the nation's ideological and material reproduction. This dynamic becomes especially visible in narratives about women, sex, reproduction and desire. However, this white settler narration is never fully settled, and it is continually unsettled by other voices and presences, including its own fictions of whiteness. In fact, the cohesion of national narratives is always threatened by the historical reality of non-linear, dispossessed, obscured and rerouted lines of descent.

Chapter One draws together key threads from comparative historical scholarship, postcolonial studies, American literary studies and queer studies. Although the comparativism of this project is historically non-contiguous, it is grounded in a tradition of comparative historical work, inaugurated by George F. Frederickson's *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study of American and South African History* (1982). As the ground for comparativism, Fredrickson identifies the "emergence of long-term, historically conditioned tendencies leading to more self-conscious and rigorously enforced forms of racial domination---trends that were similar in general direction but surprisingly variable in rate of development, ideological expression and institutional embodiment" (xix). John W. Cell's 1982 book *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and American South* deepens Fredrickson's argument by investigating the connection between the development of South African apartheid policies and American Jim Crow legal structures of segregation. The vast majority of US/South Africa comparative scholarship follows this early 20th century parallel of white supremacy and the various legal structures in both countries, and the subsequent Civil Rights and anti-apartheid movements. For instance, American social scientists who were involved in the South African Carnegie Commission of 1929, which investigated the status of poor whites in South African, were the architects of racial economics and apartheid in South Africa as a response to this issue. In 1999, the journal *Safundi* was founded for "scholars, professionals, and students interested in viewing and analyzing the United States and South Africa from an international, transnational, and/or comparative perspective." James T. Campbell's work is an example of this type of scholarship. Rather than focusing solely on 20th century apartheid and segregation

structures, Campbell's essay "The Americanization of South Africa" details the exceptional degrees of American entanglement in South African trade, industry, racial ideologies and culture, beginning in the 18th century and continuing through the present.

I also draw upon the rich tradition of "nation and narration" scholarship by Homi Bhabha and other postcolonial studies scholars in order to examine how heterosexual (and occasionally same-sex) desire, reproduction and familial relations are incorporated into these racialized national narratives. I also engage with key arguments in queer theory about the relation between the figure of the child and the nation, and the ways in which contemporary queer identity formations are inextricable from white settler histories. By bringing together the fields of postcolonial studies, American studies and queer theory, this project addresses several issues in each discourse: the relative lack of analysis of sexuality in postcolonial studies and the controversial relationship of white settler histories to postcolonial theory; the ideological persistence of American exceptionalism; and the relation between whiteness and queerness, respectively.

I begin my literary analysis with a novel written on the threshold of the transition from imperial postcoloniality into a more conventional form of postcolonial independence. J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999) takes place in a post-apartheid landscape, and it would seem that the newly written national Constitution makes legible all types of national citizens, including gay and lesbian ones. Within the novel however, Lucy (a lesbian) resists legibility and instead claims a right to opacity (a term I borrow from Edouard Glissant), a right that calls up a history of racialized sexual trauma that will remain always remain illegible to readers of authorized national history. Mobilizing an allegorical reading of this novel, I explore the transmission of racial and sexual historical

debts and I argue that Lucy's refusal to become legible as a lesbian in these national legal and narrative structures is precisely because of these structures' inability to contain this racial and sexual economy of debt. Indeed, this novel points toward a politics of illegiblity and opacity that aligns more readily with anti-identitarian queer theory instead of rights- and recognition-based human rights discourses. The novel ends with Lucy's decision to continue her pregnancy after her rape, which calls upon tropes of the children who will inherit the bright (or apocalyptic) national future.

If *Disgrace* offers a politics of illegibility, then Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) seems to present a case of hyper-legibility; as Sacvan Berkovitch has shown, the proliferating interpretations within the novel and the overproduction of readings about the novel itself do a certain kind of nationalist ideological work. I build on Berkovitch's argument by claiming that this ideological production of consensus also forecloses any Native American, African or extra-national claim that would disrupt Hawthorne's and Hawthorne's readers' narratives of national origin and reproduction. The national origin narratives of white settler nations must accomplish two things at once: sublimate or forget the originary racial violence of the nation while also indigenizing the white settlers. For Hawthorne, it is the Puritan excesses that were the illegitimate origins of the nation, and not the past and current genocidal actions towards Native Americans, or the new nation's economic foundation of chattel slavery. He positions Pearl as the new future citizen, the one who (or whose descendants) will come to the United States and be absolved of the Puritan illegitimate origin, which is itself a substitute for other origins. I argue that at the end of the novel, Pearl's journey away from her birthplace and Hester's return to her migrant destination invokes a circle of structural

globality that belies the lineal descent of a national family. I use Maryse Condé's novel, *I Tituba* (1992) as an example of a counternarrative that highlights the disnarration in Hawthorne's novel. While national genealogy is deployed to evoke origins and authority, the repressed historical reality of illegitimate national origins will always return—as it does in *The Scarlet Letter*—to destabilize that authority.

While the second and third chapters focus on national origin narratives, the fourth and fifth chapters explore the worlding processes that occur in these national narratives. I work with Ralph Waldo Emerson's *English Traits* (1856), Edgar Allan Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1837) and Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist* (1974) in order to highlight a particular set of relations among race, desire, and capital. Emerson's desire for imperial power not only animates his ethnotravelogue, but it drives his formulation of what I call white hybridity. For Emerson, white hybridity is the solution to the looming threat of emancipation because it consolidates the many origins of white ethnic groups into a single powerful mixture. To emphasize this point, I argue that the oversaturated racial metaphors of whiteness in the last third of Poe's fantastical and paranoid novel show how the borders of whiteness can be shifted to meet the threat of overwhelming blackness. If Emerson builds a world of racial and filial inheritance driven by his (and by proxy, all white male Americans') desire for imperial power, then Gordimer's novel flirts with the seeming failure of that inheritance. By using the technique of free indirect discourse, Gordimer's novel presents a meditation on the ways in which apartheid created a structure of white heteronormative masculine subjectivity, but one constantly under threat by the proximity of queer desire and non-white bodies. The main character discovers that his son may be queer, and at

first, this moment seems to destabilize the novel's worlding, breaking the links between heterosexual desire, colonial conquest and economic possession. However, I argue that desire produces material and historical effects, and these effects do not simply disappear when desire becomes wayward or queer once again. When desire fails to find its proper racial and heteronormative object—and this failure is always inevitable—this triangulated dynamic does not collapse precisely because it has already been used to anchor material relations of capital and property.

Not all of the texts in this dissertation are white canonical writers in either the American or South African literary tradition. Similar to the way that the Black Lives Matter movement is committed to exposing the deadly lie at the heart of the white supremacist assertion that "All Lives Matter," several of the texts expose the lie at the heart of the national origin narrative. In Maryse Condé's novel, *I Tituba* (1992), the titular character reflects on this lie, in an allusion to the famous rosebush at the threshold of the jail in *The Scarlet Letter*: "This somber flower of the civilized world poisoned me with its perfume and I could never again breathe the same way. Encrusted in my nostrils was the smell of so many crimes: matricides, parricides, rapes, thefts, manslaughter, murders, and above all the smell of so much suffering" (102-103). In Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness* (2003) a traumatic event from the colonial past is contemporaneous with postcolonial present. By insisting on the co-presentness of multiple moments in time, Mda punctures the temporal logic of the colonial/postcolonial distinction.

The final chapter explores examples of resistance to these national origins and narrative worldings. Zoe Wicomb's incredibly complex novel, *David's Story* (2002) looks at ethnic Coloured history and its simultaneously complicit and resistant role in

colonization and apartheid policies. By destabilizing the fetishistic aspects of the "great man" narrative of history, Wicomb instead offers a radically opaque, polyvocal and fragmented version of South African historiography. William Apess' *Eulogy on King Philip* (1836) functions as anti-colonial resistance; the entire text is a sustained counterattack against the mythology of Puritan and white settler rights to power while interrupting the mythic function of King Philip's War within the violent policies of Indian removal in the 1830s. It is a text that refuses to let the white national genealogy hide its own violence. It insists on an intergenerational relation to and responsibility for the ongoing violence committed in the name of the nation—we are indeed responsible for the crimes of our fathers. I end with a discussion of Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* (2008), a novel seemingly unconnected with the white settler histories I have been exploring, as it tells the story of the *Ibis*, a former slave ship repurposed for the opium trade, and the people who eventually board her to sail to Mauritius. However, the novel's two points of contact with these white settler histories—the slave ship and the global migration of Indian workers in the mid-nineteenth century—illustrate the ways in which national narration is always extra-national, even as it works to sublimate and repress such globality. Ghosh's novel also provides a model of kinship by consent and affiliation, rather than racial and patriarchical descent. As an alternative to racial and blood descent models of kinship which provide a foundation for white supremacy, kinship comes into being through the work of friendship and the solidarity of the oppressed. Set afloat by the forces of colonialism and capitalism, the passengers on the Ibis create a new familial and national heritage.

Coda

When I first began to think about this project, I had to confront an ethical dilemma: if I am intellectually and politically committed to critiques of colonialism, racism, Eurocentrism and American imperialism, then how do I justify writing a dissertation that centers whiteness, even though I am always critiquing it? Shouldn't I be doing work that centers non-canonical, non-white and politically resistant writers? As I discuss in Chapter One, this is a crude form of the underlying critique of the inclusion of white settler histories within the category of "postcolonial." However, as I completed the revisions of this project in the summer and fall of 2016, I felt a deep sense of unease because I was unable to have faith that when the Democratic nominee is finally elected as president—another watershed moment in identity representation—we will have "but slumbered here/While these visions did appear/And this weak and idle theme,/No more yielding, but a dream." Rather, this "theme" is the reality of our national narrative, both historically and presently.

It is also not lost on me that the 2013 Supreme Court Decision, *United States v. Windsor*, is the high-water mark for federal and state recognition of same-sex marriage. For the past three years, normative same-sex couples and liberal allies have been celebrating this victory, and reaping the many material and cultural benefits of assimilation and mainstreaming. However, this was also the year that the Black Lives Matter hashtag was created, after the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the murder of the unarmed black teenager, Trayvon Martin. If at one time queer liberation was conceived as a radical network of resistance to state power and violence across class, racial and gender lines, it certainly does not exist as such now, at least in the mainstream;

the holy grail of state-sanctioned marriage has been achieved, while the detritus of black bodies and communities continues to accumulate. This is no surprise to those of us who have engaged with Jasbir Puar's *Terrorist Assemblages (*2007). Puar argues that the rise of queer political legibility and assimilation is aligned with the rise of the wars on terrorism, and the increasingly fetishized figure of the dark terrorist, who has replaced the queer as the figure of death. It has become increasingly clear that this dark "terrorist" figure of death also includes any black American citizen as well.

I have come to the conclusion that it is more imperative than ever to critique, deconstruct, resist and make visible the structures of whiteness, white supremacy and systemic racism. We cannot rest on the fiction of historical progress, nor can we afford to believe that our current historical moment is an aberration. This work of making white supremacy visible cannot be solely borne by activists and academics of color—if I have centered whiteness in this dissertation project, then I have done so with the express intent to make it visible, legible and accountable.

Chapter One

Intersections: Postcolonial Studies and American Studies

Similar to any scholarly field after it crosses the threshold of institutional credibility, postcolonial studies has undergone a process of claims and counterclaims about its own definitions, borders and scope. Here, I am revisiting these debates precisely because I want to mobilize some of the openness and contingency at the beginning of the field's history, in order to think about both the heterogeneous pasts and presents of postcoloniality. When scholarly fields develop, one can lose track of the multiple possibilities that were glimpsed at the beginning. The repetitive citations tend to lead in one direction and certain debates are prioritized over others. What has been lost in these field-specific consolidations and turns of scope is that the imperial and the postcolonial, in all their meanings and senses, can, and do, coexist. However, if we recognize that there are multiple forms of colonialism and imperialism, so must also acknowledge that there are multiple modes of postcoloniality, with radically uneven elaborations. In addition, if we are to take postcolonialism's critique of historicism seriously, we must also be attentive to the coexistence of imperial/colonial/postcolonial conditions.

Even the acknowledgements of this imbrication are often superficial, as the scholarship tends to fall on one side or another. Yet postcolonial theory has insisted, again and again, that there are multiple postcolonialisms and conditions of postcoloniality. I want to suggest that one of these conditions could be called the imperial postcolonial condition—a type of postcoloniality that is characteristic of settler colonialism in which racialization and heteronormativity are the mechanisms of

normative subject constitution. The imperial postcolonial condition is reproduced through a complex set of affiliations, repudiations and reconciliations with the parent colonial power, and sustained through the development of a kinship of shared whiteness and masculinity. This racialized kinship, even when it is being violently rejected through wars of independence, forms the basis on which European capital flows into and through the imperial postcolonial nation, which leads to the transfer and inheritance of capital instead of a relationship as foreign capital. This relation originates from the difference between the economic and social formations of settler colonies and economies other types of colonialism.

The many meanings of "postcolonial"

The term "postcolonial" has been widely and contentiously debated for over twenty years, and many theorists have disagreed about the temporal/geographical boundaries of what can be called postcolonial. The most pressing concern surrounding the use of the term is the tendency to collapse historical, social, cultural and economic differences into a generic "postcolonial condition." However, most scholars working in postcolonial studies would agree that the term entails a commitment to a rigorous analysis of the power relations of domination and oppression. While other theoretical approaches offer a similar commitment, the interdisciplinary character of postcolonial studies has developed strong diachronic and synchronic perspectives, which depend on both material and discursive archives and analysis. As a body of scholarly work, most postcolonial theory developed out of analyses of South Asian, Caribbean and African colonial histories, and indeed, this work at once deeply particular and comparative. Even so, postcolonial theory has often been critiqued on the grounds that it theorizes "*the*

postcolonial condition" and therefore, offers a homogenous version of imperial power, relations of domination, oppression and resistance.

When the term "postcolonial" is used, it can point in three directions: the temporal-historical designation that describes the time after colonialism, which often assumes a linear and causative relationship between colonization and the postcolony; a method of colonial discourse analysis which is applied to various colonial and postcolonial histories, archives and texts; and a mode of critique that engages with the philosophical, conceptual, material and sociohistorical inheritances of European Enlightenment and modernity in order to show how European colonialism throughout the globe subtended the very concepts and discourses of universality, natural rights and liberty, historical and scientific progress and development. In this mode of critique and at various points, both simultaneously and divergently, postcolonial studies has reoriented the concepts of modernity, historicity and temporality, often with a strong foundation in Marxist theory. Colonial discourse analysis destabilizes universals and the conceptual binarisms that structure the relation between the colonizer and the colonized, the self and the Other, the West and the East, and Marxist historiography has tended to focus on material, historical, economic and political forces that shape the colonial/postcolonial divide, and even questioning the nature of the divide itself. To be sure, this is quite a broad brush with which I am painting, but it is useful to first take a distant view, particularly when one wants to revisit moments and nuances that have become lost in the larger framing.

Debates within postcolonial studies often followed disciplinary splits—literary studies versus historians, for example. One of the most enduring strands of postcolonial theory is anchored within a tradition of poststructuralist and psychoanalytic theory, which

examines the constitutive processes of the colonial subject, usually through literary texts. And, in fact, in the 1980s, postcolonial theory was often tied to, engaging with, and pushing against postmodern and poststructural theoretical writings because the fields overlapped in their analysis of textuality and discourse. As Linda Hutcheon's 1992 essay title shows, "Circling the Downspout of Empire; Post-colonialism and Postmodernism" the first cycle of debates were preoccupied with the conflation and relation of postcoloniality and postmodernity. As to be expected, scholars working in the Marxist historiography tradition rejected, or at the very least, rolled their eyes, at postcolonial literary studies' obsession with discourse, textuality and the constitution of the (textual) hybrid colonial subject. This split was reinforced by the 1989 publication of the field-defining text, *The Empire Writes Back*, which lands very clearly on the literary studies and textuality side of the field. I will return to this later, but what is important to note here is the role of this text in defining the borders of what can be called postcolonial and how scholars working in different disciplines viewed this border-making and the subsequent outcomes of the disciplinary divides. Perhaps one could attribute Gayatri Spivak's central, but always liminal position in postcolonial studies to these divides---a Marxist literary critic, her work refuses the easy split between history/text, historiography/literature, material conditions/representations.

Near the end of the 1990s, postcolonial studies became a home for globalization theory. Most famously, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri theorized that the new form of empire was a decentralized, fluid and homogenizing form of late capitalism. The historical era of revolutions and wars for independence had passed, and studies of empire began to focus on American cultural, economic and military hegemony, and the

asymmetrical ways in which globalization has been implemented. The cache of the term "postcolonial" has waned, and in its place are "planetarity," "globalization" and "world," in part because many feel that the time of the postcolonial is past, and it is not an accurate descriptor of our contemporary moment. It has become a term which identifies a particular set of histories, and the scholarship on those histories belongs to those past moments, not to our present ones.

However, what I want to argue is that the time of the postcolonial is both past and our contemporary moment. It is not that we have slipped out one era and progressed into another—postcolonial theory has taught us to be extremely wary of such linear accounts of historical development. Rather, it is that we do not see the continuity of our present moment with what we label our postcolonial past, precisely because our ideas of what can be called postcolonial have accumulated the sediment of field and disciplinary calcification. This is more an outcome of disciplinary and field-building legitimizing processes, rather than blind spots within the scholarship itself. As I will discuss in a moment, early postcolonial scholarship was very prescient about its own development, and the process through which some strands of inquiry are taken up, canonized and then reproduced, and others are simply left as interesting side questions that are eventually forgotten.

As I mentioned previously, by the early 1990s, scholars generally agreed that there were three strands to the definition of the term: the historical period of transition after a colonial power was defeated, removed from power or withdrew of its own accord; the field of colonial discourse analysis inaugurated by Edward Said's *Orientalism;* a theoretical position of critique. Deepika Bahri's 1996 article, "Once More with Feeling:

What is Postcolonialism?" explains these strands as originating from the denotative and connotative aspects of the term, with the former tracking the temporal and historical coordinates and the latter grounding a method of inquiry and a commitment to thinking about relations of domination and oppression. These strands simultaneously proliferate multiple usages and definitions of the terminology as well as a reliance on overgeneralized concepts, which "can lead to cognitive erasures, displacements and suppressions" (52). While some critics argue that postcolonial theory relies on binary thinking and generic abstractions (even while deconstructing binarisms and universals), Bahri suggests postcolonial theory has failed "to locate itself within a more comprehensive historical framework that accounts for continuities along with ruptures….within the larger conspectus of historical movements, one might then ask, given that the history of humankind is one of exploitation and colonization of various kinds, is not much of the inhabited world in some stage or other of postcoloniality?" (55). If the answer to this question could be a provisional yes, then postcolonial theory should be theorizing a repertoire of multiple postcolonial histories.

When one considers the denotative aspect of the term, the 'post' prefix signifies some degree of afterwardness to a colonial condition. Yet as Gayatri Spivak points out, these nations are not "'post' the colonial in any genuine, or even cursory, sense, as covert mercantile neo-colonialism, potent successor to modern colonialism, continues its virtually unchallenged march across the face of the earth, ensuring that the wretched would remain so, colluding in, as they did before, but now also embracing, the process of economic and cultural annexation, this time well disguised under the name of modernization" (59). The imperial and neocolonial also coexist within the postcolonial—

and in fact, it is the recognition of this fact that underpins the preference for 'postcolonial' without the hyphen. 'Post-colonial' accents a too simplistic temporal gap from the colonial, whereas 'postcolonial' leans towards framing a method of reading and critique. But it is this recognition of the coexistence of the colonial/postcolonial and the destabilization of the afterwardness of postcoloniality that is most critical to understanding the relations of postcolonial histories.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, one of the main theoretical concerns of postcolonial studies centered around its relationship to postmodernity—and the correlative relationship between colonialism and modernity. These relationships also entailed a larger consideration about temporality and historiography, often revolving around debates about the multiple meanings of the prefix "post." In her 1992 essay, "The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "Post-Colonialism" Anne McClintock observes that "the almost ritualistic ubiquity of 'post-' words in current culture….signals…a widespread, epochal crisis in the idea of linear, historical 'progress'" (85). The paradox at the heart of the term "postcolonial," as McClintock sees it, is that while postcolonial studies "set[s] itself against this imperial idea of linear time…[it] is haunted by the very figure of linear 'development' that it sets out to dismantle…[postcolonial studies is] organized around a binary axis of time rather than power, which, in its premature celebration of the pastness of colonialism, runs the risk of obscuring the continuities and discontinuities of colonial and imperial power" (85). Rather than insisting on the difference of space, postcolonialism insists on the difference of time—which is yet another instance of modernity's drive to colonize space and time.

Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodges directly address this danger in their 1991 essay, "What is Post-Colonialism." Written two years after the monumental publication of the Ashcroft and Tiffins anthology, *The Empire Writes Back*, this essay both acknowledges the disciplinary force of the anthology as well as its limitations. As with any field-defining scholarship, the anthology relies on a homogenizing strategy, rather than one that presents non-contiguous set of heterogeneous formations arising from different historical processes (408). According to Hodge and Mishra, Ashcroft and Tiffins make two significant mistakes. First, the anthology emphasizes the textual and discursive aspects of postcoloniality, perhaps as a strategy to find the commonalities between postcolonial histories of India and various Caribbean and African nations. However, this emphasis entails a disavowal of political and historical forces: "The danger here is that the post-colonial is reduced to a purely textual phenomenon, as if power is simply a matter of discourse and it is only through discourse that counter-claims might be made" (401). Secondly, what they call "the homogenizing drive" of the anthology flattens important distinctions between and among postcolonial nations, the most salient one being the difference between, for example, a white settler colony like Australia and a colonial conquest over a non-white population in Kenya. Britain had a very different relationship with these two colonies; for white settler colonies, Britain was "not the imperial centre but the Mother Country" (408). Therefore, Hodge and Mishra urge postcolonial scholars to acknowledge "the fact that we are really talking about not one post-colonialism but many postcolonialisms" (407). At the same time, they also remind postcolonial studies to question the postness of its temporality, to see stronger continuities between the colonial and postcolonial, also echoing Spivak.

Postcolonial studies scholars have generally moved on from these definitional debates and accepted the functionality of the postcolonial toolkit of theoretical perspectives, modes of critique and historical archives. Historically speaking, if second half of the 20th century could be called the postcolonial-decolonization era, then the 21st century seems to be the era of globalization and late capitalist neoimperialism. In 2004, Hodge and Mishra revisited their original essay by asking instead, "What was Postcolonialism?", a phrasing that indicates an acknowledgment of the pastness of the postcolonial historical moment. Whereas the first essay was a critique as the field was consolidating its institutional and disciplinary power, the second essay offers a vantage point from which Hodge and Mishra look backwards and offer a version of postcolonial studies that can only thrive through the acceptance of its own pastness. Part of this acceptance requires a reexamination of historical archives, "those postcolonialism has opened and those to which it has been blind" (376). This involves both a return and an expansion; revisiting the narratives about colonialism and postcolonialism that we think we know, and recognizing the wider affiliations postcolonial thought has with other modes of critical thinking. Hodge and Mishra also point out that the field's overreliance on textuality and discourse has created a body of scholarship that has partially disavowed its connection to Marxist traditions and therefore, they argue that postcolonial studies must reinvigorate itself by rebuilding those connections in its return to the past. They cite the fetishization of Homi Bhabha's theorization of hybridity as the pinnacle of this tendency, where hybridity has become a cosmopolitian elitist structure that only serves the interests of the academic: " "Bhabha's term 'hybrid' has become the mantra of much recent postcolonial theory, where it functions as an archeseme, a redemptive sign that affirms the agency of

the postcolonial subject, without need of further exemplification, nowhere more so than in those nation states where the postcolonial is also a diasporic subject" (383). I will return later to this fetishization of hybridity—it is quite noteable that when American studies transports postcolonial theory to its domain, Bhabha's work on hybridity becomes the sign for postcolonial theory as applied to American culture and texts.

One of the effects of this valorization of hybridity is that it creates conditions for what becomes worthy of narration and what is foreclosed from it. What is left out of the field's narration is the radically uneven, divergent and nonsynchronous histories of colonial and national struggle; postcolonial studies often centers around the individual subject, rather than the "historical experiences (the Marxist understanding of 'consciousness as bearing social effects') [that] are materially constitutive of postcolonial sociality" (385). I will return to this critique at a later point, but what I want to emphasize here is the way in which Hodge and Mishra always move towards multiple postcolonialities, rather than a single, coherent postcolonial condition[1].

---

[1] Rather than elaborate these postcolonialities in a present "marked by global flows and hybrid identity politics" they urge the field to remember "the fundamental lesson of Marxist historiography: the past can be redeemed only through a radical consciousness of it" (391). While Hodge and Mishra specifically mention scholarship that unearths pre-modern and counter-modern tendencies in the ruins of colonial history, the essay repeatedly asserts the necessity of diverse inquiries and a critical interrogation of the present, most forcefully through its meditation on Kant's "What is Enlightenment" essay and Foucault's response to it. Of course, the way that Hodge and Mishra foreground the issue of history and historiography is itself a hallmark of postcolonial studies, which is precisely what makes their argument so powerful; we must always look sideways, underneath and beyond any history that purports to present a single thread of narrative, even—and especially—when it is our own history. Dipesh Chakrabarty's book, *Provincializing Europe*, is an example of this postcolonial perspective on history. In his introduction, he succinctly describes his project of provincializing Europe thusly: "To find out how and in what sense European ideas that were universal were also, at one and the same time, drawn from very particular intellectual and historical traditions that could not claim any universal validity. It was to ask a question about thought was related to

The need for multiple theorizations of postcoloniality is perhaps most obvious when one considers colonial and postcolonial white settler histories. For many reasons, these nations (United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, etc.) have not been fully included within postcolonial studies. The two most salient reasons for this are the racial dynamics of independence (white settlers instead of indigenous peoples or former slave populations) and being outside the wave of 20th century decolonization movements and revolutions. Australian scholars were quite influential within the development of the postcolonial studies field and recognized that Australia's postcoloniality was quite different from what was elaborated in either the Caribbean or the Indian contexts. For a time, it was called "Second World" history, and when the Three-World terminology became passé, postcolonial settler history[2].

---

place" (xiii). This question—about the relation of thought to place—implicitly surrounds McClintock's early impulse to rethink "the global situation as a multiplicity of powers and histories, which cannot be marshaled obediently under the flag of a single theoretical term" (97) and Hodge and Mishra' insistence on multiple modes and sites of postcoloniality. In his critique of historicism, Chakrabarty argues that historical time "is out of joint with itself" (16) because the heterogeneity of colonial pasts and postcolonial presents cannot be reconciled with historicism's narrative of progression and development: "the naturalism of historical time…lies in the belief that…it is always possible to assign people, places, and objects to a naturally existing, continuous flow of historical time" (73). Historicism allows us to believe that the past is dead and that the present is unified and singular, while rehearsing the same colonial paradigms of development, difference and teleology. Hodge and Mishra remind postcolonial studies of this critique, and urges the field to apply it in a more self-reflexive way.

[2] Robert Dixon gives an account of the relationship between Australian Literary Studies and Postcolonial Studies. I will return to this point later, but it is a very similar story in terms of the national development of American literature—the nationalist contours, the historical exceptionalism, the resistance to comparativism (both historically and textually), and the Aboriginal resistance to postcolonial theory. Comparativism, when it happened, was limited to Canada, New Zealand and occasionally, South Africa and the United States.

This leads us to the question of the relationship of the United States to postcolonial studies. In a curious way, the term "colonial" as used to refer to pre-Independence history, is more of a positive descriptor, evoking images of New England towns, hardy settlers, merchants, particular styles of clothing and domestic arts, and perhaps Indians. The American Revolution was indeed a war of independence from England, the colonial power, yet the application of the term "postcolonial" to the early national period of the late 18th-century and early 19th century doesn't feel quite accurate. The reason for this could be located in the argument made by the historian Louis Hartz, who defines the American colonial period as one in which "the colonial process [was] constructed from the point of view of the heirs of European colonialism" (xii). This accounts for Amy Kaplan's argument that the anticolonial origins of the nation were also the places that provided the birthplace of the empire for liberty. The relationship of England and the United States was one of alienated, competitive kinship, rather than subalternity or periphery/center. However, postcolonial scholars rejected the claim *The Empire Writes Back*, that the relationship between the US and England provided a model for all center/periphery postcolonial relations, particularly within the literary realm. The turn away from postcolonial as applicable to the United States also signals the ways in which globalization has been theorized as a mechanism of American capital. Therefore, to align the United States with postcolonial nation-states like Haiti or Nigeria seems incongruous, to say the least.

But then, Peter Hulme's 1995 essay, "Including America," argues that postcolonial studies should not excise the United States because "a country can be postcolonial and colonizing at the same time" (122). Hulme points out the value-laden

usage of the term itself: "one misconception is that 'postcolonial' represents some kind of badge of merit, a reward for having purged one's writing or intellect of the evils of colonialism…if 'postcolonial' is a useful word, then it refers to a *process* of disengagement from the whole colonial syndrome, which takes many forms and probably is inescapable for all those whose worlds have been marked by that set of phenomena: 'postcolonial' is (or should be) a descriptive, not an evaluative, term" (120). However, Hulme's argument has been taken up by few postcolonial scholars, perhaps because of an uneasiness with aligning the United States, the engine of twentieth and twenty-first century empire, with anti-colonial traditions, resistances, histories and critiques.

Even while many postcolonial scholars acknowledge the imbrication of the colonial and postcolonial, there has been a great deal of resistance to including the United States within postcolonial studies. For example, McClintock asks: "By what fiat of historical amnesia can the United States of America, in particular, qualify as 'post-colonial'—a term which can only be a monumental affront to the Native American peoples?" (85). And indeed, for the past fifteen years, many American studies scholars have developed compelling arguments for the coexistence of imperial and colonizing aspects alongside the democratic and Enlightenment ideological inheritance of the US. As I will discuss later, there have been very few attempts to seriously integrate postcolonial studies within American studies, and when they do happen, these attempts often elevate and dislocate a keyword from postcolonial studies in order to repurpose it for American studies. With a few notable exceptions, including Malini Johar Schueller, Amy Kaplan and David Kazanjian, this body of work tends to ignore the historical, theoretical and archival depth of postcolonial studies while fetishizing terms like "hybridity" or "Othering." So in these

cases, postcolonial studies is very justified in its skepticism regarding the pairing of postcoloniality and the United States. Yet, as Bahri critically observes, "one might note that critiques of such appropriation of 'postcolonial' status can only be levied under the comfortable umbrella of the essential binarism that characterizes much postcolonial discourse: critics in Western metropolitan universities can thus pretend that they are outside the economic and political structures of the countries in which they reside, while those in more 'legitimate' postcolonial locales can ignore internal modes of colonialism in their own countries, or relegate them to a 'different' system of exploitation, or even position them on a continuum with and as a result of European occupation" (56).

Although in this passage Bahri is specifically discussing the resistance to postcolonial status being conferred upon the United States, her insight also holds larger resonances for the field. While Said's inauguration of colonial discourse analysis, with its reliance on binarisms in order to analyze the process and function of such structures, has been enormously important to postcolonial studies, it has also created a too-easy professional shorthand, whereby all that is postcolonial is assumed to stand in opposition to all that is colonial, and all that is abject, oppressed or exploited is grouped as Other. McClintock's essay is often cited as sounding the cautionary note about these tendencies, when the term itself becomes "a singular and ahistorical abstraction…[and therefore it] may license too readily a panoptic tendency to view the globe within generic abstractions voided of political nuance….run[ning] the risk of telescoping crucial geopolitical distinctions into invisibility" (85).

Alan Lawson's 1995 essay "Comparative Studies and Post-colonial 'Settler' Cultures" uses a comparative framework to theorize the formation of the (white) settler

subject, as a site that is dually colonized and colonizing, constantly moving between authority and authenticity. While this also describes the condition of any modern subject who is interpellated within uneven positions of power, Lawson's point about the particularity of the (white) settler subject is a good one. Explaining this more fully, Lawson details the coordinates of (white) settler subjectivity:

> The Settler subject enacts colonial authority on behalf of the imperial enterprise which he (and sometimes she) represents; the Settler subject represents, mimics, the authentic imperial culture from which he (and usually she) is separated. But at the same time, the settler also exercises authority over the indigene and the land while translating his (and, less often, her) desire for the indigene and for the land (with which the indigene is, even in the mind of the settler, instinctively linked) into a desire for native authenticity in a long series of familiar historical and fictional narratives of psychic encounter and indigenization.
>
> 157

Lawson also describes this position in terms of Three-World theory; the Second World of the [white] settler subject is caught between two First Worlds—the imperial Mother Country and the First Nations of the indigenous peoples. In another piece, Lawson points out the ramifications of excluding settler colonialism from postcolonial theory: "to overlook the particularity of the settler site, to collapse it into some larger and unspecified narrative of empire or metropolis, or even to exclude it from the field of the postcolonial altogether, is to engage in a strategic disavowal of the actual processes of colonization, as self-serving forgetting of the entangled agency of one's history as a subject with that of

the displaced Native/colonized subject" (151 "Postcolonial Theory and the 'Settler' Subject").

However, Lawson's astute claims about settler postcoloniality are unsettled by his implicit assumptions about race, and I have marked this with my parenthetical notation of "[white] settler subject." While perhaps it is obvious that the settler subject is always white, Lawson's lack of explicit analysis of racial categories implies that race is simply not a constitutive feature of settler subjectivity. However, I will argue later that the settler subject position, as elaborated by scholars such as Lawson, Dixon and Slemon, requires whiteness as its precondition and foundation.

In the critical geography collection, *Making Settler Colonial Space*, edited by Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmonds, the racialisation of space is foregrounded in the process of settler colonialism. For critical geographers, whose work deconstructs the conception of space as natural, given and elemental, race presents similar assumptions about its naturalness. Referencing Judith Butler's work on the imbrication of bodies and spaces, Mar and Edmonds explain that "settler colonialism's political economies have always pivoted on relations of race, with all of its sexual and gendered constructions…settler colonialism's economic and social imperatives therefore necessitated the creation of difference while also seeking its removal" (4). Lorenzo Veracini's essay "The Imagined Geographies of Settler Colonialism" in this collection grounds this racialisation of space within a particular type of anticipatory geographical imagination within settler colonialism. He explains that "according to the imaginative geographies…it was generally understood that the temperate regions of the globe would be the domain of self-sustaining exclusivist settler collectives" which eventually

established "a settler colonial network of 'white men's countries'" through the "emergence and consolidation of a global system of independent white settler polities" (182, 184). It is also crucial to note that these "white men's countries" were created out of different modes and geographies of colonialism. Whereas modern colonialism relied on "detailed inventories of colonial peoples, commodities and the possibility of their mobilization and integration within international markets, settler colonialism usually proceeds by 'emptying' the landscape before it is thoroughly reorganized" (190). This difference has a very significant impact on the ways in which race and space are configured within colonial and postcolonial histories.

Although Lawson does not explicitly acknowledge the white racialization of his settler subject, race does play a significant role in his analysis of the dynamics of the settler subject's desire. He describes a "complex chain of signification between desire for indigenized identity, spirituality, and land and desire for Aboriginal women…The settler's desire to stand in for the Native produces inadmissible desire for miscegenation, what in South Africa is often known as the 'taint'" (157). Of course, Lawson is specifically addressing an Australian history, but what is significant in this moment how the settler subject is constituted through racialized (heterosexual) desire.

American Studies takes up Postcolonial theory

In order to understand the interactions between American and postcolonial studies, we have to first understand how the ideology of American exceptionalism undergirds certain strands of American literary and historical studies. Donald Pease's "American Studies After American Exceptionalism" gives an excellent overview of the development of the ideology of exceptionalism. American exceptionalism refers to

several things. First, it holds that American history is unlike any other because of divine providential guidance (the Puritan origin myth of the nation). Second, it points to the United States as the exception to Marxist communism, a nation where socialism could never take root, which also led to the cold war consolidation of American exceptionalism. Third, it frames genocide, racism, slavery, state-violence as a state of exception which are only regrettable aberrations to the "true" nature of the nation. Pease shows that the origins of American studies are rooted in its role as a medium of acculturation and Americanization, with the discourse of American exceptionalism as the regulatory mechanism. His main argument is directed towards the postnationalist scholars who celebrate the porousness and openness of national borders, but ignore "any knowledge of the disparate, colonial, expansionist, imperial projects through which the state had established regulatory control over these processes of interconnectivity" (73).

American exceptionalism has not only shaped the development of both early American literary studies and history, but the relation of these two disciplines as they interact within the same historical period. In their 2009 essay "The Theory Gap" Ed White and Michael Drexler try to account for the lack of theory within early American literary studies, which they link to the field's relationship to early American historians, whose methodology is deeply rooted in social history, rather than theory. But White and Drexler also stress that this disciplinary overlap can result in a different relationship to theory, by pointing out that another field has had a similar intertwining of literary studies and history—postcolonial studies.

> Early American studies bears interesting continuities with postcolonial studies, another emergent field characterized by the strong alliance of historians and

> literary scholars (the Subaltern studies movement an exemplar of sorts) and a canon with a strong classroom core but an obvious range and dispersal of research. Yet this is a field almost characterized as hyper-theoretical, and open to a much wider critical palette-psychoanalysis, Marxisms and poststructuralisms not only thrive but in fact shape and direct theoretical discussions….essential here was and is the process of explaining, in synthetic arguments, the dynamics of imperialism, colonization, and nationalism as the critical and necessarily speculative imperative of the moment….If postcolonial criticism explores history's most destructive phenomena in an urgent search for new strategies, early American criticism seeks counterfactuals and complex scenarios of resistance to stress that these catastrophes were not always inevitable.
>
> 489

In part, one can see that American studies itself could and can be resistant to postcolonial theory, precisely because of its own disciplinary trajectory. Or, when American studies does engage with postcolonial theory, too much may be lost in the translation between the two fields' range of methodological and theoretical tools.

On the other side of the disciplinary split, in the 2008 essay, "Expansionism and Exceptionalism in Early American History" the historian Joyce Chaplin diagnoses the malady of exceptionalism within early American history, and also turns (although more cautiously than White and Drexler) to postcolonial studies as an inspiration for modes of inquiry. Whereas Pease addresses the tendency of American studies to disavow exceptionalism but simultaneously reinscribe it under the new designation of "postnationalist," Chaplin still sees the old version of exceptionalism going strong within

the disclipine of history. She notes that "early Americanists are even more reluctant to look beyond the Atlantic world, showing little curiosity about a comparative dimension within colonial histories" (1432) while also paying little attention to indigenous rights or the second British empire. Exceptionalism allows early Americanist historians to ignore how the colonies and United States shared histories (including reprehensible histories) with other societies and peoples" (1433). At the end of her essay, Chaplin advocates a move towards historical comparativism because "the place we study was one stupendously successful example of the colonizing process…to winkle out what is or is not distinctive about early American, much more consciously comparative work would be necessary" (1454). For Chaplin, while "careful translation would be necessary" (1453), postcolonial theory is the first place early American historians need to begin in this consciously comparative work.

The most obvious place to begin in thinking about postcoloniality in relation to the United States might be Native American studies. However, these two fields have a vexed relationship; Native American studies rightly points out that while postcolonial theory mentions Native Americans, they are rarely the subject of postcolonial scholarship. This has created a tokenizing effect, and Native American scholars do not consider their work as consonant with postcolonial theory. In his 2001 essay, "Postcolonialism, Ideology and Native American Literature" Arnold Krupat explains that contemporary Native American literatures cannot be grouped among global postcolonial literatures "for the simple reason that there is not yet a "post" to the colonial status of Native Americans. Call it domestic imperialism or internal colonialism: in either case, a considerable number of Native people exist in conditions of politically sustained

subalternity" (73). However, this is exactly the point that Gayatri Spivak makes about subalternity, globalization and postcolonial discourse, and it is also what Bahri notes in the tension between the temporal post and the ongoing situation of neocolonialism. The post never indicates pastness—indigenous peoples, in postcolonial nation states, are still colonized, not postcolonial, peoples.

Chaplin is also troubled by the way that early American historians use the concept of hybridity to discuss the contact between Indians and white settlers, because invariably, "ideas about cultural mixture and colonial populations have inexorably pulled historians toward descriptions of white settlers, whose hybridity is presented as comparable to that of Indians" (1448). This scholarship tends to flatten the power dynamics between the white settlers and the indigenous peoples in order to emphasize the ways that cultural mixing produced a condition of American hybridity: "In contrast to non-Americanist critics' presentation of hybridity as a dilemma and a temporary state, early Americanists present it as a positive accomplishment and a permanent 'American' State, entering into the new tendency to reidentify the American past as multicultural and to see multiculturalism as a creative condition" (1449). The other effect of this mobilization of hybridity is that "many early Americanists are borrowing from the field of Indian history without taking on board its insistence that Indians, as well as settlers, need to be at the center of the story" (1449).

As Malini Johar Schueller points out, the intersection of postcolonial studies and American studies has the potential to be incredibly productive and " challenge not only the central assumptions of American studies but also those of postcolonial theory. The major components of this debate are the applicability of the term postcolonial to the US,

the suitability of the internal colonization model to describe US postcoloniality as well as ethnic studies in general, and more recently, the questioning of center-periphery models in view of globalization and transnational capitalism" (163). As to be expected, the history of this intersection has resulted in the development of multiple "turns," all of which gesture towards the inspiration of postcolonial studies, but incorporate and synthesize postcolonial theory to widely varying degrees of success.

Chaplin's critique of the uses of hybridity in relation to Native Americans and white settlers is also consonant with the one internal to postcolonial studies—this concept, when taken as the unifying signifier of the postcolonial condition, elides many of the material, economic and historical relations of power in favor of its emphasis on subjectivity, textuality and discourse. As exported to American studies, hybridity has been mobilized, along with the terms "displacement," "diaspora," "exile," and "migration," in the service of ethnic American literary studies, as a tool to enable the cultural study of American identity and multiculturalism. Clearly, the development of ethnic American literary studies as a field is not solely indebted to postcolonial studies, and it has developed a robust set of methodologies and defined its own scope on its own terms. In their collection *Postcolonial Theory and the United States*, Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt solely locate the influence of postcolonial theory within U.S ethnic studies theory and practice, and that the first set of outcomes has been the development of two schools, the "borders" school and the "postethnicity" school. They also identify whiteness studies and globalization studies within the field of American studies as also drawing on postcolonial theory.

Inspired by postcolonial studies' critique and theorization of the nation, the post-nationalist turn has tried to create a version of American studies that is "less insular and parochial, and more internationalist and comparative," that questions the dominant American myths of nationhood and citizenship, and is "critical of US hegemony and the constructedness of both national myths and national borders (Rowe 2-3). Embracing cosmopolitanism, theories of the nation, and appropriating theories of subalternity, the post-nationalist scholarship also makes several comparativist moves. According to John Carlos Rowe, these moves are both internal, in order to complicate the assumed homogeneity of American culture and history with different versions of cultural hybridity, and external, which bring versions of American studies outside the U.S. in contact with the ones developed inside. However, as Pease points out, this scholarship has tended to valorize hybridity, porousness and border fluidity without paying much attention to the places and bodies where nationalism, borders and state power are regulated and reinforced[3]. While I generally agree this impetus to dislodge and decenter

[3] This recognition of the contingent and constructed nature of national borders also fuels Caroline Field Levander and Robert S. Field's collection *Hemispheric American Studies*. This collection isn't so much interested in larger movements of empire, power or imperialism as in the complexity of encounters and the contingency of "multiple and sometimes competing conceptions of geography and chronology" that allow a national literature and culture to emerge "out of a series of subordinations, alliances and cross-fertilizations" (6). It also builds on the critique of American studies as a term—that it is exceptionally U.S-centric and the word America refers to an entire hemisphere of histories, nations and contexts. Despite critiquing Levander and Levine's spatializing framework for privileging unity and recentering American exceptionalism, Brian T. Edwards and Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar also make a similar move to present a more cosmopolitan, multilateral and comparative American studies. In the introduction to their edited collection, *Globalizing American studies*, they argue that the era of American imperial power is coming to an end, and so therefore we should conceive of American studies not as a destination or unity but a node, a place of passing through. This is the collection where the Pease essay appears, and Edwards and Gaonkar frame the chapters

American studies from the ideology of exceptionalism, and the insights about the ways in which diasporic affiliations, contingency, hybridity and ruptures have always been present within the nation, my main issue here is that this perspective often minimizes the actual force of material, capitalist, ideological and imperial effects of American exceptionalism and power. Part of this is due to the way that some American studies scholarship mobilizes terms like "postcolonial" "transnational" "globalization" without engaging with the postcolonial theory that developed these terms. For instance, it is quite telling to see the way that Edwards and Gaonkar argue for provincializing American studies, without ever referring to Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe*, either within the piece itself or the notes. This is not a simply a matter of citational respect—it is about the ways in which American studies is universalizing the portability of its methodology, without acknowledging that "others" were there first. I have no doubt that Edwards and Gaonkar are quite familiar with Chakrabarty's work, and were intentionally drawing on Chakrabarty's phrase to guide their own. But I do think that the lack of direct engagement with postcolonial theory to be symptomatic of this strand of American studies. The insight that the flotsam and jetsam of American culture take on different meanings in its dispersal across the globe, and that these things become untethered from the "imaginary master signifier called America" and that 'America' is constituted from a jumble of such fragments'" (39) should explicitly call to mind Homi Bhabha's work on fetishization, mimicry and signification in his essay "Signs Taken for Wonders." Again, this is not to say that the editors and contributors are unfamiliar with Bhabha's work, and indeed,

---

as tracing "variously the emergent consciousness of American as one among many—even with all its imperial impulses—in an emerging multilateral imaginary" (6).

several essays in the collection are thoroughly engaged with major strands of postcolonial studies, but without the explicit engagement, a reader would come away from this collection with the impression this is the very first time in history that cultural objects and fragments have circulated globally and that the operations of signification are twisted, shifted, fractured, mirrored, split and mimicked.

The most successful integration of postcolonial studies and American studies has been the American empire studies scholarship. Amy Kaplan, Malini Johar Schueller, David Kanzjian, and John Carlos Rowe, to name a few, have applied colonial discourse analysis to American studies to make arguments about the constituitive relation that imperialism has played in the construction, imagination, elaboration, economics, politics and policies of the American nation. At first, this scholarship tended to cluster around the Spanish-American war of 1898 as the beginning of the era of American imperialism and interventionism. As the scholarship developed, its historical scope widened, taking in the whole 19th century, including the other imperial war, 1848's Mexican-American war. David Kazanjian 2003 book, *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America* makes a brilliant argument about the ways in which the "systematic production and maintenance of hierarchically codified, racial and national forms actually enabled equality to be understood as formally and abstractly universal" (5). What postcolonial studies did for European Enlightenment universals and ideals of progress and development, Kazanjian does for American nationalism and articulations of liberty and freedom.

However, in his essay "Settler Postcolonialism as a Reading Strategy," Edward Watts critiques American empire studies for using colonial discourse analysis to "brand

even the earliest U.S. culture as unilaterally imperialist" (460). Immediately acknowledging settler colonialism scholars, Tiffin, Slemon and Lawson, Watts echoes their argument about the in-betweenness of settler subjectivity, which should not be flattened into one side or the other of the colonizer/colonized binary. Watts christens the American empire studies scholars as Saidian postcolonialists, and asks whether there are only two ways to frame the United States: are the only options that either the US is "an 'immemorial' nation based in idealized democratic principles", or a "racist, sexist and elitist empire whose literature is only propaganda? Both traditionalists and Saidian studies read from the side or the other of the colonial/colonizer, European/American binary without considering the double-minded settler identity" (461). According to Watts, the Saidians are committed to a "narrative of uninterrupted continuity between British and Anglo-American rhetorics of empire building and colonization" (461).

Putting aside the vast oversimplication and homogenization that must occur in order to call this scholarship Saidian, Watts does make an important move towards rethinking the significance of settler colonialism in American studies, as analyzed through postcolonial theory. Watts sees the "scholarly reconstruction of the binary of empire and resistance" at odds with "conceptualizing the simultaneity of settler identity" and turns to postcolonial theory to address the latter issue. However, he ends on a defensive note, with an assumption that he needs to defend and recuperate white male American writers from the Saidians and their penchant for seeing imperialism and racism everywhere. Or at the very least, he thinks that the whiteness and maleness of American writers means that they are uninteresting and problematic, according to the Saidians. It seems that Watts is refashioning Lawrence Buell's 1992 argument about the ways in

which the American Renaissance writers are postcolonial writers through the application of settler postcolonial theory. He advocates finding more supple ways to read the canon, finding hidden resistances, as well as recovering the radical texts by other noncanonical writers. He advocates for reading for "in-betweenness, ceding the impossibility of purity and the inevitability of mimicry and complicity informs the study of settler literatures. Settler writing responds both to the external burden of the imperial archive and to internal declarations of detachment from the tradition---resisting both colonial cringing and jingoistic self-enunciation—to reflect on how parallel pattern of continued colonization or implicit imperialism might be disguised as nationalism" (464).

This is a good insight, but there is a particular kind of racialization that structures his advocacy of claiming the term "settler" instead of "colonizer": "Our literatures have always been nervous about their derivative status and the U.S. has always been a set of former colonies and an emergent empire. Always settlers, and never settled, and hence the vitality and necessity of these debates" (469). Who are the settlers? Implicitly, "our" refers to a shared whiteness, and it would be a stretch to assume that position of always settling, never settled could include Native American histories or slave histories.

Within the same issue of *American Literary History*, Chandan Reddy writes "Globality and the Ends of the Nation-Form" as a response to Watts. While he agrees with Watts' move to contextualize the United States as a settler social formation akin to New Zealand, Australia and other Anglo-English settlements, he takes Watts to task for applying critiques of Said's work directly to Kaplan and Kazanjian's scholarship, whose projects are embedded in the ambiguity and dynamism of "enunciative positions of dominant and residual, domestic and foreign, and settler, colonized and colonizer" (472-

473) Reddy further critiques Watts' position as being achieved at the expense of accepting the writers' violation and silencing of Native Americans and other racial groupings, aestheticizing material history by dividing the material and the aesthetic realm (by locating the text as a place in which the content of material history is represented and autonomous). Reddy takes this into the pedagogical realm by saying it forces the racialized student subject to look for a possible antiracist past in these texts, which in turn forces the subject to identify with the settler postcolonial subject within.

Ann Stoler's recent work on the United States provides another avenue into these issues of comparativism, imperialism and postcoloniality. A colonial anthropologist, she works with imperial archives (most famously of the Dutch East Indies) so her work as the editor of *Haunted by Empire*, a collection of essays about the relationship between the United States and empire, is a comparative venture. Stoler's main insight—that managing intimacies between bodies is a primary target of any imperial project—draws heavily on Foucauldian methodologies, theorizing the "education of desire" and the affective, intimate and domestic grids within the microtechniques of colonial rule. Stoler's definition of postcolonial theory focuses on the "politics of knowledge and the macrodynamics of colonial rule in intimate microenvironments" (4). Imperial power has appeared and disappeared throughout US history, so Stoler draws an image of haunted intimate zones that resonate with the archives and affects of imperial power. Strongly influenced by Foucault's insight that "sexuality is an especially dense transfer point of power," Stoler privileges domestic spaces and zones of intimacy as "genealogies of the intimate" because of colonial authority's dependence on "shaping affect, severing some intimate bonds and establishing others" with the goal of "proper distribution of

sentiments and desires" (2). Imperial power also uses "race as a central colonial sorting technique" in order to manage and legislate the "tense and tender ties" between colonized and colonizing subjects (8).

While the American studies turn to empire studies is the most rigorous example of engagement with postcolonial theory, I do think that Watts' argument about particularity of the settler subject position one is quite a valid one, in the same way that I think that the recuperation of discussions about the position of the United States within postcolonial studies is also useful. I am arguing that the concept of imperial postcoloniality is a crucial intervention for postcolonial studies as well as American studies. In the horizon of the 20th century wave of anti-colonial struggles, thinkers such as Fanon and Cesaire saw a liberatory moment of potential. And indeed, much of the resistance from postcolonial scholars to the inclusion of the United States can be traced to this emancipatory potential. Yet the promise of the postcolonial has faded as capitalism has harnessed globalization to its drive of expanding markets with the accumulating detritus of bodies and ecosystems. If we acknowledge that the promise of the postcolonial as emancipatory is but one of many types of postcoloniality, we can also pay attention to the ways in which other types of postcoloniality have developed, and by what mechanisms, ideologies, histories, imperial economic and military practices they have they been sustained.

One of the ways in which American studies can enrich postcolonial studies through a theorization of imperial postcoloniality is its powerful foundation of critical race theory and whiteness studies. For postcolonial studies, race has often been a secondary mode of analysis, but in American studies, critical race theory has been foregrounded precisely because of the constituitive nature of the Atlantic slave trade with

modernity and the United States itself. Whiteness is one of the ideological foundations of imperial postcoloniality. Racism is not only systemic, institutional and ideological—it is what happens when ideology is translated into affect. It is what one feels about the marked body of another, whose difference becomes a trigger for not only the dynamics of a subject/object relation, but for the affects of disgust, revulsion, desire, eroticism, ambivalence, pleasure. Although what we call "race" is far more complicated than the flattened dark/white binary, it still true that the global story of race is one of the flexible positional superiority of whiteness.

In American Studies, there is a long history of scholarship that focuses on the history of American slavery, nationalism, the development of 19th century scientific racial discourses and the reproductive function that racialized women's bodies fulfilled in the legal, economic and ideological systems. Alys Eve Weinbaum's 2004 book, *Wayward Reproductions: Genealogies of Race and Nation in Transatlantic Modern Thought* explores how "competing understandings of reproduction as a biological, sexual, and racialized process became central to the organization of knowledge about nations, modern subjects and the flow of capital, bodies, babies and ideas within and across national borders" (2). In the nineteenth century, these biological theories of race culminated in specific ideological and fetishistic investments in whiteness. Imperial postcoloniality demands an elaboration of this whiteness, as both a function of desire, heternormativity and subject-constitution. Although Weinbaum and Stoler's work demonstrates the necessity of thinking race, sexuality and biopolitics simultaneously, often they are separated by disciplinary and field-specific emphases. Stoler urges colonial studies to think harder about how "the making of race has figured in placing sexuality at

the center of imperial politics, and the colonial state's investment in norms and normal and affective states and politics" (141). In a similar accusation of selective mobilization, Stoler wonders about the relative absence of biopower from sexuality studies, with its operating mechanism of the "polyvalent mobility of racial discourses" and its link to "racisms in statist form" (159).

In her 1998 book, *Romancing the Empire*, Amy Kaplan analyzes the ideological entwinement of historical romances and imperial expansion, and describes the triangulated relation between nationhood, white manhood and territorial expansion. The most provocative aspect of her argument is the way that national power is figured as disembodied while masculine identity is reconceived as embodied, and it is actually the close of the frontier that sets off this turn in ideology. This relation between embodiment and disembodied (or abstracted, universalized) forms of power or discourse is especially critical to imperial postcoloniality as a practice sustaining its reproduction, but it is also the relation which destabilizes and fractures its own ideologies.

This relation becomes most visible through textuality. And while I am in sympathy with the critiques directed at the over-emphasis on textuality, discourse and subject-constitution instead of material economic conditions, historical and political configurations and histories, I believe that all of the latter are reproduced, sustained, challenged, elaborated and supplemented through modes of representation. In her studies of the Dutch colonial East Indies, Stoler demonstrates that representations of sexuality and sexual practices matter to colonial strategies. Material practices and deployments of power have both material and textual effects, particularly within the zones of the intimate, which are most often constituted through the embodied experiences of

sexuality, race and gender. How are normative racial and sexual practices consolidated, and how is that consolidation fragmented and ambiguous and always in need of shoring up? One must always discipline one's sexuality and race precisely because it is never coherent and always under threat of proximity and contamination.

In another early postcolonial essay, we can see Ann McClintock warning against the sedimentation of a single term allied with the prefix "post." Noting that "the global situation[is] a multiplicity of powers and histories" she calls for a "proliferation of historically nuanced theories and strategies…which may enable us to engage more effectively in the politics of affiliation" (97). A politics of affiliation is also one of the political valences of queer theory, which redefines kinship and offer alternative modes of connection in order to counter heteronormative family and sexual structures. Within American Studies, Werner Sollors pursues a project that looks at "the complicated interaction between narratives of descent (inherited family and ethnic and/or national ties) and narratives of consent (chosen identities and imagined communities) in the making of the American self" (Singh and Schmidt 10). I will argue that because of its investment in racialized reproduction, the narratives of the imperial postcolonial nation will try to insist on narratives of descent, rather than consent.

Conclusion

With an extensive literature review, I have shown how these two fields have occasionally overlapped but without much success. In terms of postcolonial studies, I argue that the United States (and more broadly, white settler histories) are ignored precisely because it does not fit within the conventional understanding of "the" postcolonial condition. Yet, in returning to an earlier stage in the development of the

field, we can recover calls to think about multiple postcolonialisms--which is precisely what my term, "imperial postcolonial" does. Through the turns to the transnational, hemispheric, imperial and global, American studies has tried to use postcolonial theory, usually within a cultural studies model of hybridity. However, most of the scholarship that is produced within American studies is rarely grounded in the traditions of postcolonial theory--a term like Orientialism or hybridity is transported into the new field, and it makes for an uneasy fit, partially due to both the inadequacy of postcolonial studies to develop a model of white settler histories and the drive to cherry-pick an unfamiliar field. The term "imperial postcolonial" is an important intervention because it allows us to develop a more particular account of white settler histories, which in turn, will more securely ground the intersection of American and postcolonial studies. Within this dissertation, I set out four features of imperial postcoloniality: 1. shared white racialization with the colonizing nation; 2. white racialization that subtends the reproduction of the nation, both ideologically and materially; 3. the desire for racialized filiation and heteronormativity which is linked to imperial and colonizing desires; 4. national independence that gives rise to colonial and imperial impulses.

Chapter Two

Legibility and Opacity in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

One semester, I decided to teach Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Salman Rushdie's *Shame* and J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*. My rationale for teaching them was to think about the connection between national histories and literary representations, the function of allegory, and the mythologies surrounding national origins. As evident from the titles, these novels share themes of sex, shame, disgrace and women, and to differing degrees, pregnant or recently pregnant women are integral to the narratives of familial and national reproduction. Or rather, the allegorical function in each novel is linked to the narrative of reproduction.

The class read these novels in chronological order, and unsurprisingly, *The Scarlet Letter* was their least favorite. Some students were already familiar (and therefore bored) with the novel and others disliked the nineteenth-century prose style. What did surprise me was the fact that out of ten students who had read the novel in high school, only two of them had read "The Custom House," the long preface that introduces the thinly concealed narrator/author voice and the central conceit of the narrator's discovery of the scarlet A and its explanatory documents. My students had variations of the same explanation; either their teacher decided that it was too long and unnecessary to a full understanding of the "real" story, or the textbook anthology had excised the preface and simply summarized it in a paragraph or two before the text of the "real" story.

I allotted several days of class discussion for "The Custom House" and I carefully drew their attention to many important things: political issues in the 1840s and 1850s and Hawthorne's experiences within the spoils system; the anti-revolutionary themes and

images that culminated with the "Decapitated Surveyor"; Hawthorne's genealogical link to Judge Hathorne and Hawthorne's admission about that "sad chapter" in national history; and the genre conventions of the historical romance. I explained that the preface functions as a frame, so in order to understand the whole, we needed to understand the limits and borders placed on it by the frame. Even so, the students were still resistant—as long as they understood the conceit for what it was, and as long they were able to understand the historical context, whether through summary or a teacher's lecture, what difference did it make? Despite my repeated references to the preface during the rest of our class discussions and my reminders to think about the preface during their paper writing process, all of their papers focused on the typical *Scarlet Letter* themes, without reference to the preface: the imagery of light and darkness, the dynamics of concealment and revelation, the triangulated relation between Hester, Dimmesdale and Chillingworth and the symbolic function of Pearl. Of course, the vast majority of critical work on the novel is a variation on one of these themes, and my students produced good papers with strong close readings, which was the primary purpose of the assignment. After we finished the novel, I took an informal poll to see if they still agreed with the decision to excise the preface when reading or teaching the novel. A large majority answered yes.

Later in the semester, we read *Disgrace*, and I spent a great deal of time guiding them through an analysis of the narrative perspective. This process began on the day we discussed David Lurie's rape of his student, Melanie. Later, I will explore this scene in much more detail, but the critical issue here is the way in which David believes he is seducing his student, but his rape denial is immediately followed by the definition of forced sexual contact: "Not rape*,* not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to

the core" (25). Only two or three of the students interpreted this scene as rape during their first reading, and after we did a group explication of the scene, only a handful more acknowledged it as a rape scene. I posed a question to the class: What do you think accounts for your inability to see this scene as rape, even if we all agree that the definition of rape is sexual contact that is "undesired to the core?" Clearly, my students' resistance to naming rape as rape is part of a larger cultural phenomenon of rape culture, victim-blaming, shaming and silencing. This came up in our initial discussion and I acknowledged it, but asked them to bracket that out for a moment and think about the text itself. It was at this point that I introduced the concept of focalized narration, a strategy that takes the form of third-person but is very closely aligned with a single character's perspective. As readers, even if we are aware that the third person form is not omnipotent, we tend to trust the third-person narration as a vehicle for "objective" or "true/truer" perspectives.

Once the class began to understand that the third-person narration was actually so focalized through the character of David Lurie that it might be useful to approach the novel as if it were overtly written in Lurie's first-person perspective, an entirely new set of interpretative possibilities became visible to them as readers. Several students who had already finished the novel told me that this insight compelled them to reread it again; upon the rereading, they all commented on how the novel felt like a very different book. This led to several class discussions about how the focalized narration is actually a framing device: a frame that coercively insists on a particular kind of response and interpretation from the reader. If a reader can recognize the frame for what it is—a border that marks the limits of what is available for interpretation within an authorized narrative

and a threshold that determines what is legible and what is silenced within that narrative—then she must also focus her critical attention on the framing device itself.

During our last class together, while enjoying a mid-morning snack of Krispy Kremes and fruit, we engaged in some big-picture discussions about the class material, the thematic connections among texts and each student's personal experience as a reader, thinker and writer over the course of the semester. One student commented that while he wasn't going to reread *The Scarlet Letter* in the near future, he could see how understanding the framing device of the preface could really alter how a reader interpreted the novel. Another student agreed with him and stated that she finally "got" what I was saying about the preface—yes, you could summarize the essential plot point of the preface and learn the historical context, but the frame "is doing something else." She couldn't say what exactly that something else was, but she thought that if a reader approached the frame of *The Scarlet Letter* with the same amount of distrust or skepticism as we approached the focalized narration of David Lurie, that the reader would get something "really different" out of the novel.

My argument begins with this process of getting something "different" from each novel's frame. In some respects, this process may align with a reader-response critical process, but as my readings will show, these frames are integral to each text's structure, whether or not the reader recognizes them as such. In fact, when the reader goes through this process of recognition she is reproducing the very mechanisms of legibility and legitimacy that structure each text. Although one could argue that this is simply a generalized description of any critical or interpretive work, I suggest that because these texts are narratives of reproduction that allegorize national origins whereby national

legitimacy is represented by legibility, the reader is interpellated into the textual frame. These texts offer allegorical representations of national origins, and in order for these representations to function allegorically, the reader must render the frames legible. Legibility then metonymically slides into legitimacy; the representation of national origin becomes a legitimate one. The ideological work of each novel produces a particular myth about the national origins, which then becomes legitimized or undermined by the interpretive work on the part of the reader.

In both the nineteenth-century United States and apartheid South Africa, full citizenship was predicated upon racial legitimacy. While the actual moment of birth is not at the center of each novel, the circumstances surrounding the conception are charged with symbolic and ideological meanings precisely because of the racial anxiety surrounding national origins. At the heart of the imperial postcolonial nation lies the truth about its own legitimacy—in order to claim white settler indigeneity and the attendant mythologies of anti-colonial revolution and freedom fighting, the imagined community of the imperial postcolonial nation must render its past and current external and internal colonization projects as illegible. Although Ali Behad argues that within the United States, this is a process of amnesia and forgetting,[4] I suggest that because of the intertwining of the imperial/postcolonial modes, these nations *cannot* forget that their movement across the national independence threshold is structured by their own colonizing projects. Rather, the task is to shift the frame in order to render certain national origin stories more visible and legible. Coeztee's novel gives us an unreliable narrator whose perspective stands in for the ideological position of a white national

[4] Behad, Ali. *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Identity in the United States*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

subject for whom the national origins of the post-apartheid Republic of South Africa resonate (subconsciously) with the fears of miscegenation. The reader's task is to make the focalized narrative frame visible, and to interpret what lies behind or outside it. As I will discuss in the next chapter, Hawthorne's novel is firmly situated within the historical romance genre, which by definition, seeks to give an interpretive frame for historical events.

While this process of making legible certain national origins while repressing others is arguably a feature shared by many postcolonial texts that narrate the nation, it is the intertwining of legibility, legitimacy and reproduction that defines the process for imperial postcoloniality. What is legible also becomes legitimate; legibility anchors the legitimacy of both racial, and therefore, national, origins. The birth of the imperial postcolonial nation is also the begetting of a system of racialized biopower—indigenous prior claims on land and space are destroyed whether through genocide or internal wars of colonization; the population is increasingly managed through structures and strategies of racialization, all of which rely on the legal and ideological management of sex, reproduction and family structures; and the legal status of persons is determined by that process of racialization. In the United States, this was most visible in the legal structure of slavery, but as others have noted, the management and regulation of intimate relations and physical spaces only intensified after the Civil War and into the twentieth century.[5] For South Africa, because there was no single moment of independence from Great Britain, the transition to national independence was deeply intertwined with the

[5] Scholars including Werner Sollors, Alys Eve Weinbaum, Laura Doyle, Ann Kaplan have extensively argued that it was precisely the dismantling of the institution of slavery that was the catalyst for an intensification of the "one-drop" rule and other racialized legal structures.

construction of the legal, geographical and institutional structures of apartheid. Indeed, it is useful here to recall that *apartheid* means "the status of being apart" and its guiding principle was separate development, which required an arsenal of population and geographic management techniques.

Disgrace takes place shortly after South Africa crossed the threshold of post-apartheid, a moment that many considered a new birth for the nation. Coetzee's novel surveys this new origin and it refuses to offer a triumphal or hopeful horizon for the new nation. In one way, the novel does offer a new origin story, and some readers have interpreted this story as one that is filled with the white South African's fear of miscegenation and a cycle of violent black on white retribution. Sexual violence is at the center of the novel's plot, and desire, violence and reproduction are the driving themes. However, as my argument will show, the novel's plot and themes are framed by claims of legibility and counterclaims of opacity—and it is this framing that structures the novel's allegorical resonance on a national level.

Winner of the 1999 Booker Prize, *Disgrace* is disquieting in its depiction of the shifts in South African power relations and the nature of justice in post-apartheid South Africa. David Lurie is a middle-aged communications professor and he pursues an affair with an undergraduate student, which ends when she files a complaint of sexual harassment. After a disciplinary inquiry, the University dismisses him and David goes to visit his lesbian daughter Lucy at her smallholding, where she welcomes him when he retreats into her world. Lucy farms her land, operates a kennel and works alongside Petrus, a black South African. One day, three black men come to the farm and assault David, rape Lucy, kill her dogs and rob the farmhouse. Lucy and David have very

different responses to this event; David reacts angrily, righteously and is confused by Lucy's resignation to the violence and her acquiescence to the new order of things, particularly when Petrus protects one of their assailants. As a result of the rape, Lucy becomes pregnant and decides to keep the child. The novel ends with Lucy's decision to enter into a protective alliance with Petrus in exchange for the ownership of the land, and David's decision to live near Lucy and work at an animal euthanasia clinic.

Very quickly, the novel positions itself for an allegorical reading. David's appearance in front of the University's committee of inquiry obliquely satirizes South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Trials. He pleads guilty to the charges, but frustrates the committee members by refusing to play the role of the properly shamed and confessional defendant. David's perspective is that in a legal context, he has no obligation to confess and the convening body only needs to determine guilt or innocence, not the moral state of his soul. However, the committee's only purpose is to make a recommendation regarding consequences, thereby protecting the University's public image by demonstrating that the institution has appropriately dealt with an abuse of power. By refusing to confess, prostrate and rehabilitate himself, David makes the point that the inquiry has no power to change what has happened and that its purpose is more about the appearance of ethics and the construction of a suitable truth, rather than any real justice or consequences. The TRC has often been criticized for similar reasons; as long as perpetrators of apartheid made an adequate show of contrition and regret, they could be "reconciled" to the new conditions of South Africa and move on with their lives, most often without the type of justice for which the victims of apartheid hoped.

With some basic knowledge about post-apartheid South Africa and the TRC

issues, a reader of *Disgrace* could arrive at the allegorical reading of the inquiry scene. However, how does one arrive at the interpretation that the entire text can be read allegorically? Much of the academic literary criticism about Coetzee, and South African literature in general, has come from within postcolonial literary studies. Within this field, one cannot discuss the role of allegory within a novel without calling to mind a formative debate between Frederic Jameson and Ajiaz Ahmad. Jameson made a sweeping declaration that all third-world literature is necessarily national allegory and Ahmad responded with a trenchant critique of the categories of worlding that require significant repression of differences within and among the categories themselves. When one discusses a postcolonial novel in relation to political allegory, this debate often plays around the edges and the majority of postcolonial critics find themselves agreeing with Ahmed's rejoinder. Neil Lazarus recently revisited this debate for two central reasons: first, to show how the response from postcolonial scholars to Jameson's argument was indeed, overdetermined and second, to reread Jameson's essay on its own terms and recuperate some of his key points about allegory, representation and the nation-state. Even though the Three Worlds terminology is no longer in use, I want to spend a moment with Lazarus's defense of Jameson's equation of "third-world literature" with national allegory because it illuminates an important point about the relationship that gay and lesbian citizens (note, I purposefully do not use *queer* in this formulation) have with the South African state, which also opens up into the larger issue of what types of bodies become legible citizens.

Lazarus provides the historical contextualization of the term "third-world" by explaining that "'third-worldness', as a regulative ideal, [was] born of anticolonialist

and anti-imperialist struggle" (Lazarus 2011, 106). This political ideal anchors what we now think of as postcolonial or Global South solidarity, and indeed, "in a world of colonies and nation-states, such an aspiration [popular self-determination and independence] can only be imagined as coming into being through nationalism—not that nationalism is necessarily a terminus…but that it is unforgoable as a site of liberation struggle" (Lazarus 2011, 106). With this in mind, Jameson's proposition that "literature which rises to the challenge of 'third-worldness' will of necessity allegorize the nation" (Lazarus 2011, 106) does not seem so egregiously offensive. Although the problem of where South Africa belongs in the Three World schema demonstrates some of the reasons behind the subsequent jettisoning of this terminology, Lazarus's point about the confluence of liberation struggles and nationalism is a valid one for South Africa.

Section Nine of the Constitution of South Africa protects the following classes from discrimination: gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth. In the political and popular construction of the multiracial "rainbow nation" of South Africa, gay and lesbian identity occupied a central position; carrying the rainbow flag of diversity, gays and lesbians became what Brenna Munro calls "stock minor character[s] in the pageant of nationhood, embodying the arrival of a radically new social order and symbolically mediating conflicts of over race and class" (Munro 2009, 398). In a related move, Munro makes a connection between South African literature, coming-out narratives and national allegory, arguing that "gay identity offered white South Africans, in particular, a way to 'come out' as national subjects and to reimagine

whiteness" (Munro 2009, 399). I will return to Munro's work a bit later, but what I want to highlight here are the operations of signification and legibility that are entailed from her argument: written into the founding text of the new nation, gay and lesbian subjects became legible as minor subjects of the new nation, and that legibility entails a mediating function between South Africa's major historical conflicts of race and class, and in turn, the gay and lesbian minor national subjects and their mediating functions become aestheticized, narrativized and allegorized within South African literatures. It is also worth noting that this mediating function depends upon the separateness, rather than the intersection, of blackness and gay/lesbian identity. The lynchpin of this entailment is legibility—if the gay or lesbian subject becomes opaque, unreadable, or perhaps *queer*, then the mediating and allegorical functions also become incoherent.

Lazarus's careful recuperation of Jameson's essay supports what I have always found most useful about Jameson's argument about the difference between first- and third-world literatures, which Jameson identifies as the former being invested in the psychological and libidinal economies of individuals (often using realist techniques) and the latter in the narratives of the nation. It has always seemed to me that this difference could also be a matter degree or tendency, rather than a distinct difference in content or form; many properly psychological novels from the first-world certainly can be read as allegorical narratives of the nation (at least in part) and many "allegorical" postcolonial novels contain psychological and realist aspects. Lazarus traces Jameson's use of third-world in his other writings and focuses on the way in which Jameson analyzes the first-world position as one that is only made possible through reification—a process of social forgetting which involves the effacement of the traces of production from the object

itself. In the terms of Jameson's argument, one could speculate that in fact, all national literature is always allegorical and through reification, first-world literature has simply forgotten the conditions of production of its own history (the institutionalization of national literature departments as a medium for transmitting national culture and narratives both to its internal citizens and those abroad, for instance). In this sense, what Jameson calls first world novels of psychological realism and interiority are also allegorical, precisely in the way that they resist national and allegorical readings. It is possible to frame this division as one that comes from reading positions, rather than the literary texts themselves; if psychological/libidinal/allegorical elements can be present (as they surely can be) in any kind of literary text, then it is a particular politics of positionality and reading that demands the legibility of one feature, and the repression of another.

This divide between what is read on the one hand as the development of individual subjectivity and on the other as political and social history also animates Gayatri Spivak's foundational 1985 "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" essay. Spivak argues that what is constructed as individualistic within literary texts is precisely what is historical and grounded in imperial ideology and material conditions, while modeling a way of reading that calls us to ask what the limits are to any individual subjectivity within a given text. In this sense, what Jameson calls first world novels of psychological realism and interiority are *also* allegorical, precisely in the way that they resist national and allegorical readings. In fact, this tension between what can be claimed as historical and what is protected as the right of individual subjectivity describes the allegorical structure of *Disgrace*.

The interplay of psychological/libidinal/allegorical elements and their varying degrees of legibility are central to any interpretation of *Disgrace*. However, there is an important distinction to be made between national allegory with a propagandistic function and a novel which both cultivates and undermines an allegorical reading. In fact, Jameson defines the allegorical text as "profoundly discontinuous, a matter of breaks and heterogeneities, of the multiple polysemia of the dream rather than the homogeneous representation of the symbol" (73). For Jameson, allegory resists a 1:1 correspondence between the plot and the nation, precisely because of its "capacity…to generate a range of distinct meanings or messages, simultaneously, as the allegorical tenor and vehicle change places" (73). Taking this more nuanced definition of allegory, one can read multiple allegorical structures in *Disgrace*: David's disciplinary inquiry, David's affair/rape of Melanie and Lucy's rape, and the relationship between Lucy, Petrus and David in the aftermath of the rape and assault. One of the techniques of allegory is to blur the boundaries between what is represented as belonging to the private sphere of individual subjectivity and the public sphere of the nation and history. As generations of feminist scholars across the disciplines have shown, these boundaries are ideological ones that elide the material, economic, linguistic, political and historical conditions that construct the category of woman. Within this novel, an allegorical reading must keep in flux the boundaries between private and collective historical trauma, and we must ask: what is the relation between Lucy's rape and pregnancy and the sexual and reproductive history of South Africa?

Lauren Berlant's essay, "Intuitionists: History and the Affective Event" offers another way to think about the relationship between history and subjectivity, via affect

theory. If an allegorical reading functions through the imbrication of the individual and the collective events, then it often requires affect—a subjective emotional response—as the circulating agent. Berlant claims that "the national is lived simultaneously in diffused and specific places as well as in bodies that are working out the terms of what it means to feel and to be historical at a particular historical moment" (845). Berlant's argument seems to be particularly responsive to a history which is working through the meaning of a "during" and a "post" period (colonial and postcolonial, apartheid and post-apartheid). How does one grasp one's historical present and come to terms with it? What happens when a character is trying to catch up to her historical moment, and in fact, history demands transmission through her body? In her analysis, Berlant follows "the building of an intuitive sense of the historical present in scenes of ongoing trauma or crisis ordinariness. In it, all generality---what nations do, how power works—is derived from stories constituted by catching up to a crisis already happening in worlds that are being shaped by a collectivity that is also caught up in making and apprehending the present moment" (846).

Again, in terms of the allegorical reading of *Disgrace*, what does an "intuitive sense of the historical present" mean in context of rape and forced reproduction within the racial reproductive logic of a national past and present? When thinking about Lucy's sexual identity in *Disgrace*, how do her sexual, affective and emotional gendered object choices come under pressure in a historical moment? Here, I want to emphasize Berlant's sideways movement away from linear legibility (how history is represented, how an individual makes sense of it, how we read the relation between individual subjectivity and history) towards intuition, affect and belatedness (how it feels to be

historical, how we intuit historical moments, how our understanding of the relation between the individual and history is always too late and too opaque). The operations of reading, understanding and making sense of history can be quite different from the affective experiences of intuiting and apprehending it. As I will argue a bit later, the conflict between Lucy and David centers around her refusal to translate herself into his system of legibility, his way of understanding her relation to the law and justice. Both David and Lucy understand her rape and pregnancy in historical terms—but it is Lucy who insists on her right to affective opacity and so she resists David's attempts to make her trauma legible in the legal and national domain.

With this traumatic violence at the center of the novel, the question of history becomes linked to individual and collective trauma and how both are worked out in contradictory and paradoxical ways. *Disgrace* offers a framing of history that is structured through an economy of debt. What debts must be paid for the violence of history, who has the right to collect them and from whose bodies are they collected? Can we understand this debt collection as a traumatic inscription of history upon an individual's body? When an individual is raped and this rape is understood as "coming down from the ancestors," (Coetzee 1999, 156) how does the very concept of an individual's sexuality—a right of desire—bear the historical pressure? David and Lucy take turns understanding, and then disavowing, Lucy's rape as standing in for the racialized sexual violences of apartheid history. Yet how can a single traumatic violent event stand in for a collective traumatic history of violence? What is the difference between Lucy's rape as a traumatic event and the decades of everyday, constitutive violence in the South African apartheid state?

This question also brings us to the distinction between violence and trauma. All trauma is not necessarily violent, but is all violence a subset of trauma? In his book *Routine Violence*, Gyanedra Pandey argues that individual instances of violence "constitute a complex social fact" with expressions in collective juridical, political, economic and aesthetic institutions (8). Even more fundamentally, violence is constitutive of the very institutions, borders, boundaries and polities of the nation-state: "There is a violence written into the making and continuation of contemporary political arrangements, and into the production and reproduction of majorities and minorities, which I have called *routine violence*" (Pandey 1). Apartheid created a violent legal structure of power built upon the majority/minority split between racialized bodies. What is experienced as trauma by some bodies is not named as such in the public sphere precisely because it is constituted as the legitimate power of the state. In the context of power structures, what is named as violence is determined by the position of these subjects to the state: "The actions of politically disadvantaged, or unrepresented, people are commonly labeled violent; the acts of those in power, the authorities and the arms of the state, less frequently so" (Pandey 3). Pandey's argument relies on Franz Fanon's analysis of the bonds of violence that form in a power structure of imperialism and colonization, which, Pandey adds, "can easily be deflected onto a group's most vulnerable segments, particularly women and children"(4) whose experiences are rendered illegible within the power structure. In a narrative framing of an historical economy of debt, the routine violence of the past may erupt into legibility through a single traumatic act of violence in the present because routine violence of the apartheid state was never named as such by its agents.

Disgrace's staging of the historical movement between the apartheid past and post-apartheid present and its attendant economy of debt requires one to think about the topography of history and embodiment. Pandey urges a conceptual reorientation from a horizontal framing of history to a vertical one. Thinking of history as vertical rather than horizontal brings our attention to the contact and violence between bodies and histories. Some bodies and histories bury others, some dig their way through from the bottom to the top, some shift and cause the entire pile to topple over again. Embodied historical transmission—history written on a subject's body—is a literalization of allegory. French psychoanalysts Francoise Davoine and Jean-Max Gaudilliere explore this historical transmission and inscription process and define madness in terms of a generational transmission of trauma; often, the "mad" family member is the one who carries the weight of a collective or parental experience of trauma. Both madness and trauma are instances of an "interruption in the transmission that links people to one another [that] is, paradoxically, searching for the pathways of an inscription" (Davoine and Gaudilliere 12). Madness is the break in the social narrative which brings one back to the site of a historical catastrophe. To use Berlant's terms, an individual must generate an intuitive sense of her historical present (the links between her trauma and history) in order to suture the break in the social narrative. On a collective level, the trauma consists in the refusal of transmission; during the historical period of the apartheid state, the state's routine violence was illegible in the legal and national domain, and therefore, this history searches for a path of inscription in order to become legible. However, it is important to keep these terms—transmission, inscription, intuition—from entailing a clear correlation with legibility.

There is a branch of trauma theory that has developed out of Holocaust studies and Freudian psychoanalysis that relies on conceptual structures and figures of erasure, departure, inscription and unspeakability. However, as Pandey's work makes clear, to think about trauma in colonial and postcolonial histories, one needs to turn to a different model of thinking. If, in a very broad and overly simplistic generalization, one can name the experience of colonialism as traumatic, then it should be immediately clear that alongside the erasures of culture and peoples, colonialism is also immensely productive, generative and even reproductive. The structures of imperialism and colonial governmentality could not function with complete erasures and absences—they needed to assure a reproductive continuity of communities, labor and cultures, in order for their own mechanisms to work. This continuity was, of course, extremely violent, exploitative, oppressive and at times, annihilating. But it still remains that colonialism is a highly productive and reproductive form of power. Ann Stoler's work examines the reproductive logic of colonial power, and she argues that managing intimacies between bodies is a primary target of any imperial project. This is why it is impossible to think about the heterosexualized social contract of the nation without thinking about race, or to think about the racial reproductivity of the nation without thinking about sexuality. For instance, one cannot think about Lucy as a lesbian without thinking of the racial modifier "white," nor the rapists without thinking "black." And in fact, David Lurie's affair with his student must also be thought in terms of a white man who has sex with/rapes (as indeed, it could be read) a young woman about whom he fantasizes that her name is "Meláni: the dark one" (Coetzee 18).

In a different register of legibility, the astute reader of *Disgrace* must come to

terms with the problem of David Lurie as an unreliable narrator, whose focalized narration is never interrupted by another character's perspective. This is a technique that Coetzee uses in several of his novels, to great effect: the reader begins to unravel the justifications and rationalizations of the agents of the white supremacist apartheid state, or to question the deliberate blindness of a colonial administrator to the moral bankruptcy of the regime. As for David Lurie, his status as an unreliable narrator begins with the first line of the novel: "For a man of his age, fifty-two, divorced, he has, to his mind, solved the problem of sex rather well" (1). Not only does the entire plot of the novel undermine this statement, but within the next several pages, we find that his solution consists of paying for sex with a woman who calls herself Soraya. Although aware of the nature of their relationship, David constructs a fantasy of intimacy between them, a fantasy infused with racial exoticism—"her honey-brown body" (1), his belief that she is a Muslim (3), and her professional categorization as "Exotic" (7)—and sexual narcissism, believing that his pleasure in her body and affection for her is reciprocated.

David's self-deluding fantasies of desire also allow him to characterize his relationship with his student as an affair of passion. The first night he tries to seduce her, he tells her that she should spend the night with him because "a woman's beauty does not belong to her alone," a few lines later, he thinks "she does not own herself" because "beauty does not own itself" (16). His claim on her body becomes more chilling in the next chapter, when he describes having sex with her: "Though she is passive throughout, he finds the act pleasurable, so pleasurable that from its climax he tumbles into blank oblivion" (19). If the reader began to wonder if the sex was consensual, their second encounter, even through his self-deception, provides the answer. David shows up at

Melanie's house and pushes his way inside, ignoring her plea of "No, not now…my cousin will be back!" (25). Unstoppable, David envisions his passion as divinely sourced—"Strange love! Yet from the quiver of Aphrodite, goddess of the foaming waves, no doubt about that" (25). The next paragraphs describe what is very recognizable as rape, except to himself:

> She does not resist. All she does is avert herself: avert her lips, avert her eyes. She lets him lay her out on the bed and undress her…Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core. As though she had decided to go slack, die within herself for the duration, like a rabbit when the jaws of the fox close on its neck. So that everything done to her might be done, as it were, far away (25)

Later, after the disciplinary hearing and when David arrives at Lucy's farm, Lucy asks her father to explain himself. He replies that his "case rests on the rights of desire" (89). While this is yet another example of his self-deception, it also articulates one of the thematic arcs of the novel. Who can claim the "rights of desire" and who must submit to those claims? What rights of desire are legible and what ones are unreadable? As I argued in the previous chapter, these rights of desire are also linked to global circuits of imperialism, capital and colonialism, which are then transmitted through filial and reproductive relations, on both macro and micro levels. These circuits are naturalized through the familial and reproductive tropes, a process which forecloses discursive resistance through its very appeal to what is "natural."

In yet another justification for his natural rights of desire, David often imagines affinities between himself and various different animals. At the beginning of the novel,

David often describes his sensual desires and experiences through these animal comparisons. When he thinks about having sex with Soraya he imagines it to be "rather like the copulation of snakes; lengthy, absorbed, but rather abstract, rather dry, even at its hottest" (2-3). Again, when David explains to Lucy why he pursued the affair with Melanie, he tells her about a dog that was beaten because he became aroused whenever he smelled a female in heat: "But desire is another story. No animal will accept the justice of being punished for following its instincts…the poor dog had begun to hate its own nature." (90). These comparisons are exceedingly useful to David's self-justificatory belief that he is being punished for the natural state of his sexual desire. In fact, they could be characterized as examples of reification themselves—the signification operations of analogy and comparison efface the ways in which his experiences of "natural" desire have been managed, molded and directed into particular racialized and misogynistic forms by the colonial and apartheid histories of South Africa.

Given his status as an unreliable narrator, it is quite clear that the attentive reader should reject Lurie's justifications and fantasies about sex and his relationships with women. However, when we begin to frame the novel with an allegorical reading, we must come to terms with the fact that much of the explicit allegorical interpretation of the rape and assault comes from Lurie himself. He constantly refers to the relationship between national history and the rape, and in fact, at several points, Lucy rejects this framing. Because of his narrative role, should a reader accept or question David's insistence on the historical significance of Lucy's personal experience of trauma? The answer to this question can be found in an analysis of the conflict between David and

Lucy about whether or not to report the rape to the authorities and the need for legal justice. When the men leave the farmhouse and David is beginning to realize the extent of his physical injuries and what must have happened to Lucy, David begins to abstract the violence in order to comfort himself: "[it's] not human evil, just a vast circulatory system, to whose workings pity and terror are irrelevant. That is how one must see life in this country: in its schematic aspect. Otherwise one could go mad. Cars, shoes; women too. There must be some niche in the system for women and what happens to them" (98). In the immediate moment of intense physical pain, David frames the violence as the aftereffects and residue of a new type of legitimate state violence: South Africa's history of violence, oppression and injustice is one that demands its pound of flesh from the next generation, and this pound of flesh is demanded from the female body differently than the male body. While David was also violently attacked, he intuits that history revisits his daughter across a divide of sexual and generational difference that forces her body to bear its lessons. Lucy's body is a gendered commodity within this history in a way that David cannot share. Her body bears an exchange value within this dialectical movement from conquest to submission, from power to abjection. In this system, David has been the capital holder, and blind to the transactional costs of his own desires as shown by his inability to see the dynamic between Melanie's sexual passivity and his coercive sexual power.

When he attempts to gain some insight about Lucy's silence about the rape by talking with her friend Bev, he is infuriated by both women's refusal to discuss the details of the rape itself: "Do they think he does not know what rape is? Do they think he has not suffered with his daughter? What more could he have witnessed than he is

capable of imagining? Or do they think that, where rape is concerned, no man can be where the woman is? Whatever the answer, he is outraged, outraged at being treated like an outsider" (141). The answer to his question is that no, no man can be where the woman is, in this event of rape, in this particular way, place and time. This is not to deny that men are raped. But within this allegorical perspective, a woman's body carries a differential burden of violence. Lucy's body becomes a site of history; her rape is the repetition of the illegible constitutive violences of apartheid. It is men who collect the debt from Lucy's body, not other women survivors of rape who demand recompense or justice. But even within this gendered economy of history and debt, what David refuses to see is that he is not an outsider to rape because he is a man, but because he too is a rapist. David's compulsive need to allegorize and abstract covers over the extent to which rape constitutes his "rights of desire." So while Lucy's rape is a historical repetition that calls up the innumerable rapes committed by white men against black women, it is also a familial repetition.

When Lucy finally begins to talk to her father about the rape, she tells him that she was shocked by the personal hatred they had for her. In response, David widens the historical context of the assault: "'It was history speaking through them,' he offers at last. 'A history of wrong. Think of it that way, if it helps. It may have seemed personal, but it wasn't. It came down from the ancestors'" (156). Again, this mirrors David's own justification for rape and aligns David with the assailants. David raped because he became "a servant of Eros" (52) and the three men raped because "it was history speaking through them." Both reasons seem to partially absolve the individuals of guilt. Within the allegorical structure of the novel, the rape does indeed seem to function in

this way. However, this allegorical structure also requires us to recognize that history is not only speaking through the black rapists; it is speaking through David's "rights of desire" as he also repeats the history of white heterosexual male rights of desire, conquest and property. In a revealing aside in his 1995 essay, "Postcolonial Theory and the 'Settler' Subject," Australian postcolonial scholar Alan Lawson mentions that he had an illuminating conversation with Coetzee about what is known in South Africa as the "taint," which is the "inadmissible desire for miscegenation" produced by the "complex chain of signification between desire for indigenized identity, spirituality, land and desire for Aboriginal women" (Lawson 157). The main reason it is easy for Lurie to resign from his position at the University is that he has already been dispossessed and alienated from the University: once a professor of literature, he is now a professor of communications, and he believes that he is an old relic with no claim in the post-apartheid educational system. While Lurie never admits that he supported apartheid policies, it is clear that within that system, he knew his place and felt at home. For instance, as he is thinking about seducing Melanie, David's thoughts riff on her name: "Melanie—melody: a meretricious rhyme. Not a good name for her. Shift the accent. Meláni: the dark one" (18). In an echo of all historical conquests that were anchored by the right to rename a place or people, David couples his "rights of desire" to the racial claim of white ownership.

Under pressure from David to report the rape and pursue the crime legally, Lucy rejects the premise that the rape is an event that should enter the legal and public domain: "The reason is that, as far as I am concerned, what happened to me is a purely private matter. In another time, in another place it might be held to be a public matter.

But in this place, at this time, it is not. It is my business, mine alone…This place being South Africa" (112). I will return to Lucy's insistence on privacy, but it is important to note here that the crux of the disagreement between David and Lucy is whether or not the rape can be legible within a legal system designed to determine individual, rather than historical, guilt. Even though both David and Lucy understand the assault in terms of history, Lucy understands her current distance from the public domain of the law as one that is shaped by the structures of past violence, whereas David still believes that the just consequences for the rape should exist outside of the historical genealogy and fall upon the individual perpetrators. The legal system of apartheid in South Africa instituted unequal distances between racialized bodies and the law and therefore, the legitimating power of the public sphere. Post-apartheid power structures have attempted to realign these bodies' relations to the law and what counts as the collective narrative of history. Lucy's rape exists between these two configurations of power: the system of apartheid and the dismantling of it. Her individual trauma summons countless other rapes; her inability to claim public justice echoes other historical estrangements from the law.

Near the end of the novel, the pregnant Lucy secures her place in the town by accepting the protective alliance offer from Petrus. Lucy tries to explain to her father that in this new South Africa and her life post-rape, she is coming to terms with her new position in the world: "'…it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity" (205). Where does this position of "with nothing" leave the category of lesbian

and lesbian desire? In an allegorical and historical sense, if "rights of desire" are figured as ownership through rape, and a lesbian body is coerced and conscripted into the heterosexual racial reproductivity of the nation's past and future, then it would seem that the category of lesbian disappears from historical view. From a realist perspective, it is simply absurd to claim that a rape and subsequent pregnancy suddenly erases a woman's lesbian identity. But from an allegorical/historical perspective, why would we claim that that a rape of a lesbian erases her identity, and therefore, her legibility?

Certainly from her father's perspective, the rape of a lesbian is a different violation than the rape of a heterosexual woman. As David reflects on Lucy and her former lover's relationship, he thinks he understands why "they are so vehement against rape…Rape, god of chaos and mixture, violator of seclusions. Raping a lesbian worse than raping a virgin: more of a blow. Did they know what they were up to, those men? Had the word got around?" (105). However, yet again, David pairs the act of rape with an absolving figure of abstraction, which connects this line of thinking with his other perspectives on rape. For David, raping a lesbian is the ultimate violation—we do not know whether or not the rapists knew Lucy was a lesbian, nor do we know Lucy's thoughts on the matter. This moment must be read in terms of David's own "rights of desire" and reading of history; for him, the new order of racial reproductivity in South Africa demands the symbolic and actual rape of a lesbian body in order to demonstrate its power precisely because it is the worst imaginable kind of rape. David knows nothing about the rapists' intents—this is *his* projection of the rapists' "rights of desire." The racialized heterosexual reproductive logic of the nation conscripts female bodies, and while symbolic when raped, the lesbian body is incidental, and illegible, in this logic. In

an allegorical and historical sense, if "rights of desire" are figured as ownership through rape, and a lesbian body is coerced and conscripted into the heterosexual racial reproductivity of the nation's past and future, then it would seem that the category of lesbian disappears from historical view. David's horror at the violation of his daughter's lesbian body comes from the assumption of her body's non-relation to a heterosexual man; if a lesbian is raped, and chooses to keep the resulting pregnancy (new citizen for the nation), and has a marital relation to a man, then in the historical structure, the function of lesbian in its non-relation to a heterosexual man, disappears. Again, I stress that this is David's interpretation of history. The novel has been much criticized for playing on racist fears of black male rapists threatening white women and for its bleakness of vision regarding the post-apartheid race relations. However, I would argue that this criticism of the novel relies on a conflation of David Lurie (the narrator) with J.M. Coetzee (the author). As I discussed earlier, Lurie is the quintessential unreliable narrator and to assume that his perspective is coextensive with the novel's larger vision simply misses the entire function of an unreliable narrator—which is to offer openings for critique and subversion by forcing the reader to distrust the narrative perspective. Although the novel does offer a version of the reformed and penitent Lurie, a careful reader will see that his self-justifications still persist within each moment of reform. When novel ends with Lurie's acceptance of humility, the reader should still question how and why Lurie arrived at this place. If, for David, Petrus and the rapists stand in for post-apartheid South Africa's new political power structures as a whole and if the rape of a white lesbian is a *sine qua non* symbol of this new power structure, then we should consider the source of these interpretive moves.

In her discussion of *Disgrace*, Munro concludes that the novel "is a warning that the utopian possibilities of new narratives about race and sexuality…might be lost if the problems of poverty and land are not solved. *Disgrace* mourns the loss of, or is haunted by, Lucy's lesbianism as a sign of the fragile promise of postapartheid democracy, given up as payment for the sins of the fathers, while the novel also indicates that new sexualities cannot reconstruct the social body without other modes of social justice" (422). Munro's nuanced argument about South African gay and lesbian legibility, coming-out narratives, rainbow nation citizenship, and allegorical significance works quite well in the context of the two Gordimer novels she discusses, *None to Accompany Me* and *The House Gun.* However, I suspect that the relatively short amount of space she devotes to her analysis of *Disgrace* is directly related to the way in which *Disgrace'*s portrayal of sexual identity is fundamentally at odds with Gordimer's. As Munro very keenly observes, "Gordimer seems genuinely perturbed by the prospect of a total loss of clear identities" (415) particularly when legible sexual identity categories (gay, lesbian, heterosexual) are undone by wayward, unexplained and unexplainable assertions of queer desire. Munro reads Gordimer's novels as being heavily invested in the legible categories of gay and lesbian rainbow citizenship and threatened by the wayward, unexplainable and illegible category of queerness. However, Munro makes similar assumptions to Gordimer's when she asserts that *Disgrace* "mourns…the loss of Lucy's lesbianism as a sign of the fragile promise of postapartheid democracy." Although earlier in her essay she acknowledges that the new queer family romance could simply be a new iteration of what Lee Edelman calls "reproductive futurity" and she critiques the homonormativity of lesbian/gay South African citizenship, Munro's

interpretation of Lucy's lesbian identity simply accepts the multicultural logic of the rainbow nation—Lucy is no longer legible as a fully visible lesbian citizen whose woman-desiring-woman desire is out and proud for everyone to see and celebrate. By this logic, the novel erases the category of lesbian because the rape is a violation of her legibility and her citizenship, and as such, testifies to the "fragility" of the democratic promise of postapartheid South Africa. While this reading is certainly sustained by the novel, particularly if one relies heavily on Lurie's perspective, I want to suggest a different possibility, one left open by Lucy herself.

When Lucy is telling her father about the personal hatred she felt from the men, she goes on to ask her father about the erotic thrill of sex for a man and equates it with the thrill of killing: "When you have sex with someone strange—when you trap her, hold her down, get her under you, put all your weight on her—isn't it a bit like killing? Pushing the knife in; exiting afterwards, leaving the body behind covered in blood—doesn't it feel like murder, like getting away with murder?" (158). Later that evening, David writes her a note pleading with her to reconsider her decisions. He writes that "you wish to humble yourself before history." But the road you are following is the wrong one. It will strip you of all honour; you will not be able to live with yourself" (160). Lucy quickly writes back and tells him: "You have not been listening to me. I am not the person you know. I am a dead person and I do not know yet what will bring me back to life. All I know is that I cannot go away…if I leave the farm now I will leave defeated, and will taste that defeat for the rest of my life" (161).

Lucy is trying to tell her father that on some level, the rape and the historical debt demanded of her body have killed her. One reading of Lucy's "death" is that the

"rights of desire" enacted through rape, which also secure the rights of property and ownership, have annihilated her rights of lesbian desire. If desire is configured as a right to murder, then lesbian desire is dead. Yet Lucy is surviving—she has "over-lived" the trauma. She is insistent on making choices about her life, even if she understands these choices as being forms of "subjection…subjugation" (159). But what if Lucy is not referring to the death of her "rights of desire" at all? What if death is a metaphor for illegibility in national and legal narratives, and the debt of historical traumatic transmission is also an economy of what moves into and out of legibility? She insists that her father has not listened to her (and indeed, through the focalized narration, he has not, and we have not) and she insists that she is not the person he/we know. If he/we insist on reading Lucy only through the lens of legible racial national allegory, identity politics and rights-based national citizenship, then yes, Lucy as the legible representative of the category of lesbian is erased.

Although Munro reads *Disgrace* as a corrective warning for Gordimer's longing for stable racial and sexual categories, she still interprets Lucy's lesbianism as signaling a promise for rainbow nation citizenship. However, I want to suggest that Coetzee's novel actually destabilizes this promise. Further down in her letter to her father, Lucy accuses him of being deliberately blind to her reasons for staying at the farm. She can be forced and coerced into the racialized heterosexual reproductive logic of history, and she also understands that the law will fail to be a site of recognition of this history. While South Africa's 1996 Constitution was the first in the world to inscribe gay and lesbian national subjects, *Disgrace* shows us the failure of the legal sphere to contain the racial and sexual economy of historical debts and transmissions. Understanding the historical

transmission written through her body, Lucy transfigures her "rights of desire" into "rights of opacity," to borrow Edouard Glissant's term.[6]

A right to opacity is a right to *not* be understood—it is a right that is more fundamental than a right to difference. It is a right to refuse the hierarchy of organization, the process through which one person can look at another and state "I see and understand you and can place you in a category." Glissant identifies this process as one in which understanding constructs a Self/Other relation: "If we look at the process of 'understanding' beings and ideas as it operates in Western society, we find it is founded on this kind of transparency. In order to 'understand' and therefore accept you, I must reduce your density to this scale of conceptual measurement which gives me a basis for comparisons and perhaps judgments for judgments" (204). In short, when we understand another person, it is an epistemic violence, because we are reconfiguring their particularity into something we can enclose and appropriate.

For Lucy, this movement towards her right to opacity is a transfiguration is disconnected from wholeness; fractured and fragmented, torn between a historical debt and the individual violence, these rights of opacity become the vehicle of "over-living" and a way of inhabiting the historical debt in her world. Early in the novel when David arrives at the farm for the first time, he sees Lucy and describes her as the vision of a *boervrou*, a farmer's wife (60). This term defines Lucy's relationship to the land through a marital relation. At the end of the novel, Lucy decides to accept Petrus's offer of protection by signing the land over to him, with the understanding that she can keep her

---

[6] Glissant, Edouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997.

house and live as a tenant on his land. David describes this position as that of a *bywoner*, a tenant, a sojourner (204). By insisting on her rights of opacity, as do many individuals caught within historical trauma and violence, Lucy "over-lives" by starting "with nothing." This also accounts for why Lucy both accepts and resists the allegorical reading that David offers. While she does recognize her body as racialized sexual site of traumatic historical transmission, she also knows that in order to live through the transmission, she must insist on her right to be illegible. To be defeated would mean to give her body and agency over to history; to "over-live" means to become a sojourner, to give up any claims of ownership grounded in "rights of desire" and to insist on the only rights that cannot be collectivized or abstracted by modes of narrativity, allegory or citizenship.

To return to the earlier strands of this argument, we can see that Lucy's refusal of legibility and her insistence on her right to opacity has significant resonances for any consideration of the category of lesbian, both within the novel and within South African history. If the category of lesbian depends upon a politics of recognition and legibility—politically, nationally and historically—then it is also vulnerable to the politics of representation and appropriation. When a lesbian becomes a minor subject (stock character) who mediates and stands-in for the claims of all other modes of national belonging, it sets in motion a different sort of fiction—the additive logic of multiculturalism. If the nation simply acknowledges the legitimacy of these multiple identities, provides them with concrete legibility in its Constitution or other legal structures, and allows them to fully participate in the "pageant of nationhood" (Munro 2009, 398), then recognition, representation and legibility become their own ends,

instead of the means for legal and representative justice. Coming-out narratives provide an easy teleology, particularly in the tautological trope of "I recognize and represent my authentic self, therefore I am here." Legibility becomes a panacea for all claims for historical justice, no matter how traumatic or topographically vertical a particular history and embodiment may be. Munro's argument does take these problems into consideration, and she acknowledges that even a constitutional legibility does not anchor a permanent place in nation-building discourses (398) but she still valorizes this mode of national belonging and legibility. Lucy's accusation to her father, that he does not know who she is, is an accusation to these discourses and operations of legibility—he can only read her identity as a lesbian through this particular national/allegorical lens, which is always anchored in his understanding of the rights of desire that anchor claims of ownership, property and power. David understands the historical transmission of racial and sexual debt by the same linear multicultural representative logic, but Lucy intuits and inhabits her historical present fully—not by demanding legibility, but by insisting on her right to opacity. She is fully aware that she is caught up within an allegorical and national economy of racial and sexual debt but she apprehends the impossibility of a fully legible transmission precisely because this economy has been, and continues to be, constitutive of the nation itself. In order to over-live, to live within this transmission, Lucy embraces the failure of legibility, she refuses translate herself into public and legal spheres, and she insists on her right to remain unreadable even within a national allegory. She is a lesbian, but she refuses to answer to the category's demand for legibility and representation as a rights-bearing national subject.

When considering the overall tenor of the novel, it is no surprise to discover that

Disgrace moves away from what Munro calls coming-out mode of national allegory (Munro 399) and towards a politics of illegiblity and opacity which aligns more readily with anti-identitarian queer theory instead of rights- and recognition-based human rights discourses. Although my arguments about the status of Lucy's lesbian identity have followed two contradictory paths—the national allegorical reading that erases her rights of lesbian desire in the transmission of racialized and sexual historical debts and Lucy's refusal to become legible as a lesbian in the national narrative and legal structures because of those structures' inability to contain this racial and sexual economy of debt—I want to insist on their co-presentness. Illegibility and opacity do not always mean erasure, erasure does not always guarantee non-transmission, and legibility does not always lead to justice. If we interpret Lucy's claim to opacity as obtaining within a national or allegorical frame, then we must also consider the inadequacy of representation as a panacea for historical trauma and national wounds, a question I take up in the following chapter.

In fact, it is the lack of representation of Lucy's not-yet child that also refuses legibility. The tropes of the unborn child, the children who will inherit the bright/apocalyptic national future are firmly tied to discourses of nationalism. Queer theorist Lee Edelman's polemical work, *No Future* brilliantly demonstrates the brutal mechanisms of reproductive futurism. For queerness to have any ethical or political purchase, Edelman argues that the queer must embrace his nihilistic negativity and illegiblity and reject futurism. While I agree with Edelman's analysis of how reproductive futurism has become a mechanism for nationalisms, I have always been troubled by the question of gender in this embrace of queer negativity. A queer

woman—Lucy, for instance—can be violently caught within these regimes and histories, and for her, the choice may not be between reproductive futurism and queer negativity. Rather, the choice may come down to one made between becoming legible and legitimate within the legal frames and national origin narratives, or claiming a right to opacity. Indeed, neither Lucy nor David ever claim that her not-yet child is either the hope or the bad omen of the new nation; they both refuse to look upon the national horizon with any sense of the future. The novel ends with a radically presentist vision—Lurie spends his days euthanizing animals and giving them the dignity of a witness, and Lucy's pregnancy grows while she works on the farm day in and out, having agreed to become part of Petrus's family. What this work means, for both of them and for a national future, is something that the novel refuses to answer.

What is important to note here is that the future as such is always in the condition of illegibility and opacity—the symbol of the child, of the not-yetness but soon-to-be projection of the nation, is also a threatening, unpredictable one. As I will argue in the next chapter, Hawthorne's ending contorts and forces Pearl's changeling and queer nature into his own fantasy about the future. As most parents come to understand, children have a strange way of thwarting parental expectations. *Disgrace* does not present a vision of the future, insofar as it resists the future orientation of the trope of the unborn child. However, it does offer a narrative and allegorical frame through which we can interrogate the narrative structure of the national origin.

Chapter Three

Conceiving the Nation's Origin: National Narratives in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*

In 2001, the Supreme Court issued a decision in *Nguyen v. INS*, holding that an out-of-wedlock child born to an American mother overseas is subject to a less stringent citizenship requirement than an out-of-wedlock child born to an American father overseas. In the first case, a child born to an American mother automatically acquires U.S. citizenship at birth. In the second case, the child will only acquire citizenship if the father's paternity is convincingly established and he agrees to pay child support until the child is an adult:

> In the case of a citizen mother and a child born overseas, the opportunity for a meaningful relationship between citizen parent and child inheres in the very event of birth, an event so often critical to our constitutional and statutory understandings of citizenship. The mother knows that the child is in being and is hers and has an initial point of contact with him. There is at least an opportunity for mother and child to develop a real, meaningful relationship. The same opportunity does not result from the event of birth, as a matter of biological inevitability, in the case of the unwed father. Given the 9-month interval between conception and birth, it is not always certain that a father will know that a child was conceived, nor is it always clear that even the mother will be sure of the father's identity…The second important governmental interest furthered in a

> substantial manner by § 1409(a)(4) is the determination to ensure that the child and the citizen parent have some demonstrated opportunity or potential to develop not just a relationship that is recognized, as a formal matter, by the law, but one that consists of the real, everyday ties that provide a connection between child and citizen parent and, in turn, the United States.

The Court went to great lengths to explain that the different application of citizenship law was not an issue of sex discrimination; it was only a rational application of the facts of biological difference. It is true, if a woman gives birth to a child, we can be sure of her biological connection to that child—although not always, given the increasingly high rates of assisted reproduction techniques like surrogacy and egg donation, a fact which the Court completely sidestepped. However, the Court's double assumptions are quite extraordinary in their scope: first, that the event of birth itself necessarily gives rise to a parent/child bond that cannot be replicated; second, that the relationship between a mother and child (but not a father and child) entails a connection to the nation itself. As this argument will show, our national narrative about citizenship, legitimacy and sexuality has not changed very much from 1852 to 2001.

In the previous chapter, I began with an anecdote about teaching a course in which the novels all shared themes of sex, shame, disgrace and women. In these novels, and to differing degrees, pregnant or recently pregnant women are integral to the narratives of familial and national reproduction. My anecdote focused on the ways in which narrative framing device structure the novels *Disgrace* and *The Scarlet Letter.* In the former, the framing device is the focalized narration of the main character, David Lurie; in the latter, the framing device is the novel's preface, titled "The Custom House."

The framing devices have two significant functions: as a border that mark the limits of what is available for interpretation within an authorized narrative and as a threshold that determines what is legible and what is silenced within that narrative. In fact, when the reader goes through this process of interpretation, she reproduces the very mechanisms of legibility and legitimacy that structure each text. In *Disgrace*, the allegorical function of the novel depends on the movement between legibility and legitimacy, between the reader and the character's ability to read or remain legible to history. Both characters, David and Lucy, understand their experiences as thoroughly historical—but what their experiences signify within the novel's narrative of national origins depends upon whether the reader consents to the interpretive entailment that historical legibility entails historical and national legitimacy. The second half of the chapter makes an argument about Lucy's status as legible minor national subject (a lesbian). As Brenna Munro has argued, insofar as the category of the gay/lesbian South African citizen is written into the new Constitution, the role of the gay/lesbian is to mediate historical conflicts between race and class in the new nation. However, my argument regarding Lucy's lesbianism is that she refuses historical legibility and claims her right to historical and individual opacity. This is echoed through the narrative framing structure of David Lurie's focalized narration—his voice is the only one that is legible to us, and as readers, we must work to recognize it as such. This resonates allegorically as well, when we consider the ways in which narratives of national origins work to conceal and disnarrate inconvenient truths about the violent racial, sexual and colonial origins of the white settler nation.

Now, I will focus on the ways in which the frame of Hawthorne's novel offers a certain version of the origins of the United States. In both novels, sexuality is at the

center of each narrative. This happens in two ways: sex is a scandal because it is either violent (*Disgrace*) or illicit (*The Scarlet Letter*) and the resulting pregnancy/child becomes the narrative fulcrum around which contradictory interpretations about national origins and futures pivot. As I will discuss a bit later, the figure of the child stands in for the future of the nation. In a fundamental way, this is a metaphor that is rooted in a material process; the reproduction of the nation (its citizens, institutions, narratives, imagined community, borders, boundaries) depends upon the labor and outcomes of human reproduction. The origin of a nation, its genealogy, is often described or envisioned as a family tree. By definition, all national narratives do the work of imaginative ideological labor—of including and excluding—because a nation must have borders. The violence at the heart of the origin of the nation, of the state itself, is often sublimated or forgotten in these narratives.[7] Over a century ago, Ernest Renan observed that "forgetting…[even] historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation, which is why progress in historical studies often constitutes a danger for the principle of nationality. Indeed, historical enquiry brings to light deeds of violence which took place at the origin of all political formations" (45).

However, national narratives of nations with white settler colonialism origins must accomplish two things at once: sublimate or forget the originary violence of the nation while also indigenizing the white settlers. Many nations that come into being through revolutionary violence often do so through an indigenous claim—for instance, the wave of mid-twentieth-century postcolonial revolutions that overthrew the British

[7] In this discussion, I am drawing on the work of theorists of nationalism and national narratives including Benedict Anderson, Étienne Balibar, Homi Bhabha, Partha Chatterjee, Eric Hobsbawm and Anne McClintock, among others.

empire was fueled by the right to self-determination and self-government and the rejection of external occupation, exploitation and control. Even so, the 1947 simultaneous creation and partition of the independent Indian state also proves that the question of which people are counted as indigenous to the new nation is shared by many national histories, not just white settler ones. In white settler revolutions for independence, the claim to self-determination rests on the degree of indigenization; the white settlers are no longer citizens or subjects of the colonial power, and their (in truth, illegitimate) claims on the new land have in turn transformed them into (illegitimate) natives. It is this status as natives who have a right to self-determination that drives the move to independence. Of course, the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate native claims is due to the fact that white settlers are never native; in order to indigenize themselves, the white settlers marginalize, exploit, ethnic cleanse and murder the real natives. As many American studies scholars have argued, the trope of already disappeared noble Indian was a critical ideological tool in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century policies of Indian removal.[8]

Here, I am arguing that there is a particular type of anxiety unique to white settler (or imperial postcolonial) national narratives. Anxieties about the legitimacy of national independence, one elaborated through new forms of colonialism and racialization, is visible in narratives of reproduction. It is an anxiety about legitimacy, race and national reproduction that becomes especially visible in narratives about women and sex. In the mid-nineteenth century United States, a national literature formation was coalescing and coming out onto a global stage. Writing at this moment, Hawthorne and his

[8] See Lisa Brooks, Russ Castronovo, Maureen Konkle, Arnold Krupat and Cheryl Walker.

contemporaries were acutely aware of the national need to define, embody or exemplify Americanness, which itself was a hybrid product of racialization and indigenization.

The links between *The Scarlet Letter* and the national narratives of the United States can also be found within the critical history and reception that of the novel itself.[9] It may be banal to observe that literary criticism reflects not only the history of a text's reception and interpretation, but the history of literary criticism and theory itself; however, this observation is particularly germane when one looks at the long critical history of this particular novel. While the novel's popularity finally gave its author his long-sought commercial success, it did not achieve its status as a pillar of the American literature canon until the New Critics christened the American Renaissance writers as embodying the very essence of American literature. Early critics of the novel, including those in the nineteenth century, shared Hawthorne's sense that the cultural origin of the United States was rooted in Puritan culture. This origin was both literally and symbolically transmitted through bloodlines. Through familial acknowledgement of the sins of the ancestors (as in Hawthorne's regret for his ancestor's role in the violence of the Salem witchcraft trials) this origin is reconfirmed and reconsolidated. Hawthorne drew on this already circulating Puritan national origin mythology that anchored the myth of an indigenous national past. However, this origin story is a double one—some Puritans became the dissenters who migrated to the New World, but others joined the radicalism of the English Civil War, a historical trajectory that would eventually lead to the French

[9] My summary of the critical history is greatly indebted to the following editors of critical editions of the novel: Rita K. Gollin, Claudia Durst Johnson, Kimberly Free Muirhead, Ross C. Murfin, Joseph Pearce, and Leland S. Person.

Revolution. While Hawthorne's own political views are often characterized as anti-revolutionary, the novel displays a tension between the double legacy of the Puritans.

Similar to Hawthorne's recuperation of seventeenth-century history in service of nineteenth-century political debates, the New Critics of the mid-twentieth century looked to the nineteenth century to support their own claims about the values embodied in authentic American literature. In their efforts to create a canon of "great" American literature, the New Critics turned their attention to the formal qualities of the novel, like narrative structure and symbolism. For instance, the eminent critic F. O. Matthiessen focuses on the theatrical and symmetrical structure of the novel's three scaffold scenes. Others like Hyatt Wagonner and Richard Harter Fogle and Harry Levin, explore the motifs and symbolic functions of the light/dark imagery and the novel's sustained theme of tragic concealment.

Among its many symbolic functions, the A joins the two historical frames of the novel—the fictional one of 1642-1649 and the authorial time frame, 1848-1852. After the New Critics, historicist readings of the novel began to situate both Hawthorne and his writing within the political context of the 1840s and 1850s: the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the annexation of western territories, the war with Mexico, the Fugitive Slave Act and the 1848 revolutions in Europe. In the 1980s and 1990s, critics with feminist and queer theory lenses produced Hawthorne scholarship that highlighted the construction and erotics of gender and sexuality in the novel. The feminist critic Jamie Barlowe reads both the gender politics within the novel as well as the gendered claims and the citational histories of the previous generation of Hawthorne critics. Using Eve Sedgwick's foundational insights about the erotics of homosocial bonds, Scott S. Derrick's "A

Curious Subject of Observation" notes the homosocial erotic triangle of Hester, Dimmesdale and Chillingworth. In a brilliant essay, Lora Romero explores how the novel's linguistic and erotic ambiguity creates a queer frame for the heterosexual romance plot.

Throughout its many phases, the critical history of this novel consistently highlights its features of opacity, ambiguity and interpretive proliferation. While some critics have stressed the poststructuralist aspects of the novel's interpretive "both/and" ambiguity, I agree with those who have argued that the ambiguity functions in a deeply conservative and political way. In his 1986 essay, "The Politics of *The Scarlet Letter,*" Jonathan Arac argues that the novel actually functions as anti-revolutionary and anti-abolition propaganda. He notes that while understanding the local politics of Hawthorne's gain and loss of a politically appointed job is important to understanding the immediate inspiration for the story, only "national concerns account for its powerful reception and effect" (248). He asks why Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, is received as propaganda and not as art, and why conversely, Hawthorne's novel is canonized as art and not recognized as propaganda. While I do not fully agree with Arac's argument regarding the propagandistic functions of the novel, I do think his point regarding the ways in which particular works of art function within national narratives and contexts is an important one. Arac highlights what he calls the "logic of romance—social motion regulated by Providence alone…Action is intolerable, character takes its place" (253). In the nineteenth century, the abolitionists demanded action—the full abolition of slavery—while those who advocated compromise (including Hawthorne himself) wanted slavery to disappear through some abstract Providential mechanism, not

through political and martial force.[10] Arac identifies the novel's both/and rhetoric as "the organization of (in)action…[which] works through a structure of conflicting values related to the political impasse of the 1850s" (259). Even though Hawthorne's narrator acknowledges the deeply flawed Puritan origins of the nation, Arac argues that the novel is an example of "the nationalizing of literary narrative" in which texts that are deeply skeptical about the United States come to affirm the importance of dissent, reform, revolution and other norms.

A few years later in his exhaustive ideological critique of the novel, Sacvan Bercovitch argues that *The Scarlet Letter* produces a particularly American political ideology—the development of consensus. In the novel, at a moment when Hester's thoughts are moving with rebellious energy towards the idea of ending both her own life and Pearl's, the narrator observes that "the scarlet letter had not done its office" (135). Berkovitch uses this observation to explore the nature of the A's office, and he concludes that office itself is a process, rather than a finite goal:

> It seems to confirm what we are often told, that Hawthorne's meanings are endless and open-ended. To speak of an office not done, especially without specifying the office, implies a commitment of process, a principled indefiniteness. But in fact Hawthorne is saying just the opposite. Everything we know about the novel, from title to plot, tells us hat the letter has a purpose and a goal. And to speak of an unfulfilled office when fulfillment is underway,

---

[10] Hawthorne wrote this infamous passage in his 1852 biography of Franklin Pierce: "But there is still another view, and probably as wise a one. It looks upon slavery as one of those evils which divine Providence does not leave to be remedied by human contrivances, but which, in its own good time, by some means impossible to be anticipated, but of the simplest and easiest operation, when all its uses shall have been fulfilled, it causes to vanish like a dream."

> not yet done, is to imply teleology. Hawthorne's meanings may be endless, but they are not open-ended. On the contrary, they are designed to create a specific set of anticipations, to shape our understanding of what follows in some definite way….on the one hand, process; on the other hand, purpose and telos. The coherence of the symbol lies in its capacity to combine both. It has a certain end, we might say, in the double sense of certain, as certainty and as something to be ascertained. The office of the letter is to identify one with the other: to make certainty a form of process, and the prospect of certain meanings a form of closure and control.
>
> 629

I have quoted this passage at length because Bercovitch's analysis highlights three important points about connections between this particular novel and the national origin narratives. First, as his main argument demonstrates, this combination of process and telos produces an external effect on the reader. The reader does not passively understand the novel's themes, but actively produces them through her own interpretive process; she does not conform to the narrative, but rather actively consents. It is an ideological process, similar to the one through which citizens actively construct their nationalities through ideological consent. This recognition of ourselves as national citizens is one that often takes place through narrative.

Second, a proliferation of meanings does not exclude closure. Bercovitch argues that the novel is "a story of concealment and revelation, where the point of revelation is not to know the truth but to embrace many truths, and where concealment is not a crime but a sin" (635). National narratives and national origin stories rarely exist as single,

uncontested authorities. Because national hegemony requires resistance in order to harness and contain threats to its stability, national narratives also allow for multiple origins and alternative views. For instance, some political scientists and sociologists have argued that the late twentieth-century embrace of American multiculturalism (the tolerance and appreciation for plural ethnicities and races, and their various experiences and perspectives on the United States) actually functioned as a profoundly conservative bulwark against more radical claims about continuing racial and class inequality and discrimination which was rooted in the very origins of the nation itself.[11] In this way, the novel's presentation of many truths can also be interpreted as a closure, a frame that excludes many more truths than it embraces. As Bercovitch notes later in his argument, this is an effect of pluralism itself, which is not to be confused with true multiplicity. It is partly a mystification process—one that conceals its own mechanisms—so that what seems like multiplicity is actually a "set of questions and answers turned toward the same solutions: all meanings are partly true" (639). In this way, the very act of interpretation gives us a both/and logic in which seeming polarities are mutually constitutive. Politically, this leads to consensus, consent and evasion of conflict.

Third, it is precisely this entanglement of textual interpretation and politics that is at the heart of national narratives. Hawthorne's commitment to political compromise and his aversion to revolutionary action is manifested within the novel itself. This is not a heavy-handed assertion about the link between a writer's politics and his art—rather, it is an example of the general relation between aesthetics and politics. This work of art produces a particular myth about national origins, which then becomes

[11] See Valerie Babb, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva and Nell Irvin Painter.

legitimized by the interpretive work on the part of the reader. This interpretive work centers on the proliferation of meanings for the symbol A, Hester and Pearl herself within the novel. As the critical history shows, the novel generates a critical compulsion in readers to interpret this highly symbolic novel—but it is this very proliferation that circumscribes the boundaries of historical legibility. This argument is linked to the Frankfurt School/Marxist insight that the proliferation of choices available to the consumer actually is linked to the highly controlled mechanisms of mass production and capital that prevent the consumer from seeing that the variety is actually all the same thing. The consumer is anesthetized by the variety and has the illusion that there is endless difference, when in reality, they are only presented with iterations of the same thing. The multiplicity of meanings and readings actually foreclose other possibilities for meaning in the text.

As many critics rightly observe, *The Scarlet Letter* is a novel that is saturated with symbolism and history—which then raises a question about the general relation between symbolism and history. Bercovitch argues that "Hawthorne's answer to the threat of multiplicity is to redefine conflict as the absence of ambiguity—and ambiguity, therefore, as the absence of conflict…Historical facts tend towards fragmentation; but the symbol brings this tendency under control, gives it purpose and direction, by ordering the facts into general polarities" (643-644). For Hawthorne, what historical facts tend towards fragmentation? What is accomplished—historically, politically and narratively—by transforming history into symbols? If the frame of the novel insists upon ambiguity and ambiguity is the absence of conflict, what conflicts are rendered illegible by the frame narrative?

Laura Doyle answers these questions in her 2008 book, *Freedom's Empire: Race and the Rise of the Novel in Atlantic Modernity, 1640-1940.* Spanning over 300 years, Doyle connects the history of the English language novel with the political and social histories of colonization and race. She argues:

> To be white is to be fit for freedom, and the white man's burden is to lead others by forging the institutions and modeling the subjectivities required to practice proper freedom, even if along the way this requires enslaving, invading, or exterminating those others who may not (yet) be fit for freedom. That is to say, in Atlantic modernity, freedom is a race myth.
>
> 3

Doyle's analysis draws upon work by other scholars on the black Atlantic (most famously, Paul Gilroy) who demonstrated that the Atlantic slave trade gave birth to modernity itself. Doyle then goes on to argue that the rise of the English language novel entailed a racialized pattern of narrative—one that was structured by an emergent differentiation between modernity and barbarity (6). Within these narratives, this structure is found in the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean and a swooning scene in which female characters "distill the undoing effects of the Atlantic crossing" (9). The trope of the swoon also "implicitly references an older history and discourse, a classical set of associations between rape and the founding of republics" (9).

Although Hester's Atlantic crossing happens prior to the beginning of the novel, Doyle turns to *The Scarlet Letter* as an example of this racialized narrative. She also links the critical history on the novel with the double histories within the text: "the novel is a historical palimpsest…Not just one but two histories are submerged here, one

contemporary with Hester and one with Hawthorne…what is ultimately submerged is the deep connection between these two histories, that is, the uninterrupted project of colonization" (302). This connection is so easily submerged precisely because colonization itself is obscured from the frame of the novel. Chillingworth's encounters and bondage with the Indians happens offstage, and Hawthorne obscures the messy historical reality of the violent conflicts happening between the settlers and the Native Americans in 1640s Salem. As Doyle notes, "this way of placing key events at one remove, gestured toward yet submerged, characterizes the novel's historical method and its repressed relation to Atlantic history (302). She argues that Hawthorne's narrative strategy veils colonial guilt—he keeps the secret of the characters' sins and in so doing, he does the same for his audience of national readers.

In making this argument—that Hawthorne obscures the historical realities of colonization and violence—Doyle turns to Michael Colacurcio and Laura Korobikin's work as it delineates the nexus of legal, sexual, moral, religious and economic crises in play during the actual month of June 1642.[12] Through meticulous historical research, Colacurcio concludes that the governors Richard Bellingham and John Winthrop were in the middle of a crisis about freedom, sex, and liberty (Bellingham himself was out of office because of a sexual scandal). However, why was Colacurcio was the first critic to note this actual historical resonance with the novel? Korobikin answers this question by pointing out that the historical allusion is buried within the novel, and that Hawthorne "suppresses rather than exposes the political turmoil of the Puritan community" (306). Doyle argues that this suppression is significant because it allows Hawthorne to obscure

[12] See Doyle's extended discussion in *Freedom's Empire*, p. 304-306

the colonial violence at the heart of the nation's origin. Interestingly enough, while Hawthorne's origin story is cleansed of colonial violence, it embraces and develops sexuality and sexual scandal—a point I will return to later. Doyle explains the historical and narrative significance of Hawthorne's elisions:

> For operating hand in hand with his muffling of political instability in Massachusetts are his suppressions of this colony's involvement in Indian wars and in a transatlantic political crisis that would culminate with a king's beheading in 1649, the same year that Hester's and Dimmesdale's relationship comes to its final crisis and Hawthorne's story-proper ends. As Hawthorne well knew, his story takes place in a colony flanked on one side by the peopled and troubled nation of England and on the other side by the peopled and troubled nations of Indian America, but…he largely de-peoples these adjacent, interlocked communities. His softening of the violence…within the colony extends into his absenting of the foundational violence among these communities…. Hawthorne's historical revisions dissociate his story from colonization as a wrenching, wrangling and regularly brutal process…[the novel] is a veiled allegory of romance writing as sublimated colonial violence.
>
> 306, 308

Doyle's meticulous close readings demonstrate the ways in which what she names "Indianism" (a reference to Toni Morrison's term, "Africanism") subtends much, if not

all, of the narrative and its extended metaphors.[13] My own argument develops from her insights about how the novel develops a racialized—white, Anglo-American—national origin narrative. In the previous chapter, I analyzed the relationship between national origins, national narratives, sexuality and historical legibility in South Africa. Here, using Doyle's arguments as a foundation, I will explore the ways in which Hawthorne's novel develops a national origin story that forecloses its own colonial violence, and in turn, racializes that origin so that non-white presences are forced outside the frame.

This foreclosure is highlighted when we read Hawthorne's novel alongside other novels that puncture the closed circle of national narrative. For instance, in the Guadeloupan writer Maryse Condé's 1986 novel *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem,* we have a fictionalized account of the historical figure, Tituba, the only person of African descent named in the Salem Witch Trials. Not only does the fictionalized Tituba meet the fictional heroine, Hester, in Salem, but her migration to and from the Caribbean gives the lie to Hawthorne's nineteenth-century fantasy about seventeenth-century national origins. Condé's narrative punctures Hawthorne's disnarration of non-white and non-violent national origins. Bharati Mukherjee's *Desirable Daughters* underlines the extent to which the canonical *The Scarlet Letter* and its cultural authority is underwritten by the American trade with the East and it explores the connections between seventeenth-century Massachusetts and precolonial Moghul India.

---

[13] When I am discussing historical and theoretical issues regarding white settler colonialism, I use the terms "indigenous peoples" or "Native Americans;" when I am discussing Hawthorne's novel, I will use the term "Indian." The former usage connotes a contemporary understanding of the issues of tribal identity, authenticity and integrity, while the latter usage is synchronous with the text's historical and ideological location.

In a very different way, James Fenimore Cooper's novel, *The Last of the Mohicans,* published roughly 25 years prior to *The Scarlet Letter*, pushes against Hawthorne's fantasy of Anglo-American national origins. As historical fiction, both the Cooper and Hawthorne novels revisit a particular moment in the pre-independence colonies—respectively the French and Indian War and the Puritans in Salem. Cooper offers a version of indigenized white man whose claim to the land is legitimized through the transfer of knowledge and skills from the "disappearing Indian." Even so, white racial reproductivity is always secured by the white woman's eventual marriage to the white soldier—the indigenized Hawkeye is too much of a hybrid figure himself to represent the racial reproductive future of the nation, and perhaps, functions "too" well in the homosocial Indian wilderness. In contrast, Hawthorne's novel actively suppresses the Indian and Puritan history, and the events (Chillingworth's captivity) happen offstage. Given the immense popularity of captivity narratives and the growing abolition literatures and writings in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, *The Scarlet Letter*'s avoidance of race becomes quite remarkable.[14]

I will return to this consideration of how other narratives counter Hawthorne's historical foreclosures, but first I want to revisit my original discussion regarding the function of the framing device—the preface—of *The Scarlet Letter*. It is true that "The Custom-House" must be placed into the local political context of the Zachary Taylor's election and Hawthorne's subsequent frustration with the loss of his political patronage job; however, the preface also functions as a frame, a border, which pulls certain histories into view and excludes others.

---

[14] For example, see *Hope Leslie or Early Times in Massachusetts* by Catherine Maria Sedgwick, 1827.

Within the preface, Hawthorne uses a very common literary conceit: he states that the raw materials of his tale are authentic, and they were found in a dark corner of the titular Custom-House. His readers would have been aware that this assertion of historical veracity was simply an ingredient of the fictional genre itself. Near the end of the preface, the narrator admits that in his novelization of Surveyor Pue's documents he takes "nearly or altogether as much license as if the facts had been entirely of my own invention. What I contend for is the authenticity of the outline" (44). Hawthorne could have been faithful to the literary conceit by stating that the narrator found the following narrative and he was simply presenting it to his audience as it was found, save for a few editorial changes. However, the narrator is completely staking his creative claim to the narrative, which was inspired by the object and the sheets of historical documents accompanying it. The narrator imagines Surveyor Pue's ghost urging him to use these materials in order to write his own story, so that the "profit shall be all your own" (45). For a long while, the narrator struggled with his task, and felt that his "imagination was tarnished mirror" and that the characters responded with the "rigidity of dead corpses" (45). It was not until the narrator lost his position at the Custom-House due to the electoral results and became the "decapitated surveyor" (52) that his creative ability began to flow again. On the one hand, the narrator's insistence on the authenticity of the outline—the frame of the novel—is simply a claim that his authorship of the novel was only inspired by the objects. On the other, it is also an assertion of veracity: that while the details may be made fictional and the history translated into a symbolic register, the outline—or frame—is itself true and authentic. The origin of the story is true—and therefore, as we will see, the story about the beginning of the nation—the outlines of that story—are true.

The novel itself fits squarely within the genre tradition of the historical romance, and it is the genre itself that also provides a particular framing structure. In his 1800 essay, Charles Brockden Brown describes the relationship between history and romance.

> If history relates what is true, its relations must be limited to what is known by the testimony of our senses. Its sphere, therefore, is extremely narrow…Useful narratives must comprise facts linked together by some other circumstance. They must, commonly, consist of events, for a knowledge of which the narrator is indebted to the evidence of others. This evidence, though accompanied with different degrees of probability, can never give birth to certainty. How wide, then, if romance be the narrative of mere probabilities, is the empire of romance? This empire is absolute and undivided over the motives and tendencies of human actions. Over actions themselves, its dominion, though not unlimited, is yet very extensive.
>
> 251

At a historical distance, the writer is able to use the historical romance genre to produce a particular type of truth. It is a creative and fictional truth, but one which retains a fundamental sense of fidelity to history. If the novel was associated with realism and with the minute historical details of place, custom and person, then the historical romance was understood to be impressionistic and concerned with the essential truth contained in the heart of historical experience. Writers of historical romance believed that it was possible to present a type of historical truth independent of realistic modes of representation. In fact, the historical romance seems to be well-suited to literary representations of imperial postcolonial nations; the historical details about external and internal colonization,

slavery and genocide are rather inconvenient truths, and the genre allows for the substitution of a more suitable national truth. As Brockden Brown states, the raison d'etre of the historical romance to create a sense of cause and effect, and a feeling of psychological authenticity in the reader. It offers a narrative about history, a modality of interpretation whereby particular historical truths become legible.

This historical legibility is not a straightforward one, however. As many critics have recognized, *The Scarlet Letter* is a novel that is saturated with acts of speaking and writing, and it moves between moments of revelation and concealment, speaking and silence. On a rhetorical level, the novel's language often functions through questions posed to the audience and questions asked between the characters, rather than affirmative statements. Put in Bercovitch's terms, Hawthorne does not simply give his readers a story about national origins—it is one that the readers themselves create and consent to through the dialogical process of answering the questions and acknowledging the ambiguous presence of multiple truths at once. As the narrator gazes at the newly discovered A, he begins to grasp that "how it was to be worn, or what rank honor, and dignity, in by-past times, were signified by it, was a riddle which …I saw little hope of solving" (43). This riddle has no single solution, but nonetheless, the narrator is compelled to interpret it, even though he—and we—are unable to fully articulate its meaning, which comes to us through intuitive, rather than analytical, labor: "And yet it strangely interested me. My eyes fastened themselves upon the old scarlet letter, and would not be turned aside. Certainly, there was some deep meaning in it, most worthy of interpretation, and which as it were, streamed forth from the mystic symbol, subtly communicating itself to my sensibility, but evading analysis of my mind" (43).

While the narrator does find Surveyor Pue's document of oral testimony regarding Hester Prynne's life, he mourns the general status of lost historical archives, particularly those prior to the founding of the nation: "Prior to the Revolution, there is a dearth of records…It has often been a matter of regret with me; for going back, perhaps, to the days of the Protectorate, those papers must have contained many references to forgotten or remembered men, and to antique customs, which would have affected me with the same pleasure as when I used to pick up Indian arrow-heads in the field near the Old Manse" (41). This passage does three important things. First, it implies that because the pre-national archives are missing as they were "probably…carried off to Halifax, when all the king's officials accompanied the British army in its flight from Boston" (41), historical events must become legible through means other than archives (hence, the intuitive rather than analytical labor). Second, these missing historical archives are colonial documents, as such, are silent archives in two senses: the physical aspect of being lost and the presence of indigenous peoples and imported slaves which are rendered into official accounts of battle or columns of monetary value. Third, the narrator believes he would derive pleasure from a leisurely perusal of these missing documents—an equivalent pleasure as that derived from picking up Indian arrow-heads. The comparison is between the two feelings of pleasure—which are the same—but the sentence metonymically slides into a comparison of the missing archives and the arrow-heads. Yet, does comparison here yield the same conclusion—are the missing documents and the gathered arrow-heads equivalent?

The passage seems to imply yes; they are both historical relics, and the difference is simply one of degree, not of kind. However, the narrator's wistful tone also implies

that what is valuable is not the information included in the archive or the arrow-heads themselves, but the *feeling* produced in himself by the archive and the arrow-heads. He does not wish for historical accuracy, but for a historical feeling, the same one he feels when handling an Indian arrow-head. This elision of history—the actual events that led to Native arrow-heads becoming decorative flotsam on an Anglo-American man's lawn—is partly accomplished through the preface's production of historical feeling in the reader. History becomes feeling—the outline or frame of historical events is authentic insofar as compels the reader to feel the "deep meaning" that "streams forth from the mystic symbol" which stands in for history. This passage's logic of substitution is emblematic of how the preface as a whole functions rhetorically.

To return to Doyle's insight about the submerged shared connection of colonization of both the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, it is quite significant that the city of Salem itself was a contact zone, in the sense of Mary Louise Pratt's definition: "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (35). In her 2007 book, *Fictions of America: Narratives of Global Empire*, Judie Newman argues that this fact is central to understanding the extent of Hawthorne's historical amnesia, because in connecting the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, Hawthorne elides Salem's role in the eighteenth-century trading empire with the East, which was the foundation of his own family's existence and of the economy of maritime New England (9). Hawthorne himself was the son of an East India captain who died in Surinam in 1808. As Gloria Erlich notes, however, most biographers of Hawthorne have been much more interested in his Puritan forebears than in the tradesmen and sea captains who actually dominate the family

history (qtd. in Newman 18). Newman does an excellent job of explicitly tracing Salem's link to the East and Hawthorne's own connection to trade and globalization: "By 1799, 41 Salem vessels had called at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay; 21 at Batavia and Sumatra and the Dutch East Indies and 5 at Canton. The ships bore names like Arab, Bengal, Borneo, Ganges, Grand Turk, Hindoo, Mala, Tigris and Zenobia. It was the richest city per capita by 1790" (17). Newman's central question is the mystery of why, when Salem and Hawthorne himself were deeply connected with the East, did he choose to write a novel focusing purely on the Puritan moment.

This is not a simply a banal question of why any writer writes the book they have written instead of another possible one—it has everything to do with how Hawthorne positions himself and his narrator in the novel's preface, which is a scene of decline and degeneration. He deliberately deemphasizes his own immediate family's maritime history and reaches back to his Puritan ancestors. It is the Puritans' sins for which he feels the historical burden, a weight that the entire nation also carries. By effacing Salem's eighteenth century's trade relations with India, Hawthorne's narrative bypasses the global era of colonization and empire. It is this historical origin—the fact that the Puritans were part of an ongoing historical trajectory of colonization, empire, trade, exploitation and illegitimate occupation—that Hawthorne's novel works to render illegible.

However, the narrator does not simply ignore the global maritime history of Salem—he mentions it in order to illustrate Salem's decline and degeneration. The narrator's contemporary Salem is but a pale imitation of its former shipping glory or its center of Puritan life: "In my native town of Salem, at the head of what, half a century ago, in the days of old King Derby, was a bustling wharf—but which is now burdened

with decayed wooden warehouses, and exhibits few or no symptoms of commercial life" (23). The narrator notes that occasionally, the Salem wharf will awaken from its slumber and greet "three or four vessels [that] happen to have arrived at once, usually from Africa or South America" (24). However, the narrator's contemporary Salem is usually "scorned…by her own merchants and ship-owners who permit her wharves to crumble to ruin, while their ventures go to swell, needlessly and imperceptibly, the mighty flood of commerce at New York or Boston" (24). What the narrator is lamenting here is precisely the outcome of European empire and globalization. Salem is a casualty of capitalism, of capital moving from place to place. The once thriving local economy, a global hub, is now in decline because of the very forces that brought it to power.

While this, the history of expanding empire and continuing colonization, is elided from the main portion of the novel, its repression is less successful in the preface. Doyle argues that colonization is submerged in the novel—and indeed it is—but curiously enough, Salem's relation to globalization and European empire surfaces at the same moment as the A itself. Immediately after the narrator laments the missing pre-national archives, he tells us of his discovery. He was in the middle of reading old documents and exerting his "fancy, sluggish with little use to raise up from these dry bones an image of the old town's brighter aspect, when India was a new region, and only Salem knew the way thither—I chanced to lay my hand on a small package, carefully done up in a piece of ancient yellow parchment" (41). The moment the narrator discovers the A is immediately preceded by his imagining of newly "discovered" India and Salem's previous relation with that region. Here, the A is indelibly linked to a global history of colonization, empire and globalization. As we will see, although the narrator goes to great

lengths to root his narrative into the soil of a (racialized) national family tree and to frame his narrative as one of national origins, this extra-national, global moment always destabilizes his version of national genealogy.

These histories come into contact again at the end of the novel, during the third scaffold scene. The narrator is describing the market-place and how it was "enlivened by some diversity of hue," first observing "a party of Indians" (180). However, "wild as they were," they were not "the wildest feature" (180). Instead, this superlative was bestowed upon the group of mariners from the Spanish Main, whose eyes gleamed with "a kind of animal ferocity. They transgressed without fear or scruple, the rules of behavior that were binding on all others" (181). The narrator then wryly remarks that "it remarkably characterized the incomplete morality of the age, rigid as we call it, that a license was allowed the seafaring class… the sailor of that day would go near to be arraigned as a pirate in our own" (181). Even so, the Puritans were still very friendly with the sailors, despite the ostensible crimes and sins the latter committed on a daily basis. The sea itself reveals the nature of the strange affinity between the Puritans and the sailors: "But the sea, in those old times, heaved, swelled and foamed very much at its own will, or subject only to the tempestuous wind, with hardly any attempts at regulation by human law. The buccaneer on the wave might relinquish his calling, and become at once if he chose, a man of probity and piety on land" (181). Today's Puritan might have been yesterday's pirate, and every original Puritan settler must have made that Atlantic crossing. The two historical geneaologies—the Puritan origins of the United States, and global colonization and trade—are revealed as intertwined.

The extended metaphor of the family tree and its attendant plant, root and soil imagery pervades the entire preface. The narrator feels a deep affection for Salem, his "native place" because of "the deep and aged roots which [his] family has struck into the soil" (26). He goes on to quantify the age of those roots—"nearly two centuries and a quarter since the original Briton, the earliest emigrant of my name, made his appearance in the wild and forest-bordered settlement" (26). The pre-origins of his American roots are British—which, although the war for national independence was waged for freedom from Britain, will always be a key aspect of the national origin story because of the way "Briton" functions as a racialized term for legitimate whiteness. A bit later, the narrator repeats this British settler origin: "Planted deep, in the town's earliest infancy and childhood, by these two earnest and energetic men, the race has ever since subsisted here" (27). The first denotation of race here points towards his own familial ancestry and heritage, but because of the narrator's ties to national history, it also implies a national genealogy as well. The local/national family tree is indeed intertwined, and therefore, the second denotation of race as a category through a person's relation to the nation is defined is also present here.[15]

However, the narrator's extended metaphor also holds an interesting tension. He feels an "attachment" to Salem because of the "mere sensuous sympathy of dust for dust"—his ancestors have "mingled their earthy substance with the soil" over generations, so that his own body is necessarily composed of their substances as well (26). The ancestral line is of blood and dust, at once. His very molecules are in sympathy with the land itself because of his long (two-hundred-year) ancestry—even though his

[15] In the next chapter, I will directly address the links between racial and national genealogies in the formation of white settler, or imperial postcolonial, nationalism.

ancestors are colonizers. This is a moment of indigenization, in which white settlers appropriate a long historical continuity with the land they are colonizing. Later, the narrator repeats this claim, saying, "this long connection of a family with one spot, as its place of birth and burial, creates a kindred between the human being and the locality…It is not love, but instinct." (28). However, the narrator goes on to acknowledge that "few of my country men can know what it is; nor, as frequent transplantation is perhaps better for the stock, need they consider it desirable to know" (26). At the same time the narrator makes a claim for indigeneity, he also acknowledges the need for frequent movement, emigration, and transplantation. This horticultural metaphor combines the necessity of rootedness and transplantation; it is precisely through the strength of transplantation that the roots will grow and the line will continue. White settler indigeneity comes into being through two directions: the claim to Puritan origins as the first settlers in the New World and then the subsequent waves of settlement and transplantation that renew and restrengthen the "stock."

This is also a moment when the narrator's seafaring familial history resurfaces. As he recounts the generational movement, from father to son, he notes that they all "followed the sea…a gray-headed shipmaster, in each generation, retiring from the quarter-deck to the homestead…spent a tempestuous manhood, and returned from his world-wanderings, to grow old, and die and mingle his dust with the natal earth" (27-28). His family has become native, by the very act of leaving and returning, which is what Hester herself will do. This leaving/returning is necessary for the health of the individual and national family. As the narrator tells us earlier, rootedness without movement or transplantation is an unhealthy, sickly condition. "Human nature will not flourish, any

more than a potato, if it be planted and replanted, for too long in a series of generation, in the same worn-out soil. My children have had other birthplaces, and so far as their fortunes may within my control, shall strike their roots into unaccustomed earth" (28).[16] This is a rationale for settler colonialism—and it is quite different from that of exploitative or extractive colonialism. Instead of colonization for the glory, wealth and expansion of the motherland, it is a call for a new rootedness in a different geographic location. It is a call to expand the frontier in order to secure vitality for the new roots of the next generation. It is also, given the context of nineteenth-century scientific racism and its own roots in horticultural metaphors, a call to strengthen the white race itself through settler colonialism.

This pairing of rootedness and transplantation is similar to the movement between revelation and concealment in the main part of the novel. In fact, the narrator's rhetorical reliance on the former produces the effects of the latter. Salem is a national origin, one that is stained with blood and violence; however, this origin is redeemed through a series of removals, transplantations, sea-journeys and returns. Yet this redemption is one that conceals, rather than reveals. Hawthorne redeems the Puritan violence by taking "shame upon myself for their sakes…may be now and henceforth removed" (27), but he is not referring to the shame of settler colonialism, but the excesses of the witchcraft trials. By substituting the shame of the Puritan legal system for the shame of violent settler colonialism, Hawthorne collects the "profit" bequeathed to him by Surveyor Pue. By condemning the violence of the national origin, he also cleanses it; by confessing his

[16] Jhumpa Lahiri's 2008 short story collection, *Unaccustomed Earth*, is a direct reference to this passage—in fact, it is the epigraph. Lahiri translates this passage's original sense—that of settler colonialism—into one of contemporary migration, immigration and cultural hybridity.

ancestors' sins, he also claims his own native status. However, this narrative act of confession and absolution is also one that conceals and represses the founding—and continuing—colonial violence of the nation. In this passage, the narrator names Quakers and witches as the victims of Puritan violence, and it is for their sakes he takes the shame upon himself. He does not mention Indians or African slaves.

Yet this repressed truth slightly surfaces within the third paragraph of the preface, in the form of a synecdoche. As the narrator is describing the exterior of the Custom-House, he meditates on the American eagle statue hovering over the entrance. The eagle is simultaneously threatening and welcoming, and the narrator wryly notes that "many people are seeking, at this very moment, to shelter themselves under the wing of the federal eagle; imagining, I presume, that her bosom has all the softness and snugness of an eider-down pillow. But she has not great tenderness, even in her best of moods, and, sooner or later, --oftener soon than late, is apt to fling off her nestlings with a scratch of her claw, a dab of her beak, or a rangling wound from her barbed arrows" (24). The narrator is referring to the brutal world of political patronage jobs, and the ways in which people (himself included) look to the federal government to provide job security, but then suddenly find themselves cast out when the political winds shift. However, the use of synecdoche itself here also allows another meaning to surface—the nation itself is violent, and founded upon exclusion and wounding. While the official narrative of the nation may present ideals like freedom and liberty, at its heart is a brutal hypocrisy.

Priscilla Wald in her 1995 book *Constituting Americans* makes the distinction between official narratives of nationalism (legal, political and literary) and the narratives that puncture such myths. She argues that authors often have an "uneasy awareness of a

larger story controlling their stories…they could not tell their stories without the conventions those larger stories provide" (3). In her analysis, Wald uses the psychoanalytic concept of the uncanny—*unheimlich*, meaning not homely or homelike—to explore the tension between what is familiar, what is concealed and what is made strange in these literary texts. Two meanings converge in *Heimlich*—the familiar and the concealed—to produce the unsetting experience that results from the resurfacing of what is supposed to remain hidden, an experience named by *unhelimich*. Something reminiscent of home turns the unfamiliar into the disturbing. The psychoanalytic concept comes from Freud's anecdote where he does not recognize his own reflection in a window, and he experiences a visceral dislike for the figure he sees. The self has become a stranger, but we experience that strangeness precisely because we recognize the stranger/self as familiar. *Unheimlich* is an experience of home that is not where we think it is, or an experience of the self that is not who we recognized. Although Wald does not discuss Hawthorne, Lora Romero also mobilizes the concept of *unheimlich* (the uncanny) in order to think about the gender politics in the novel. According to Romero, Hawthorne's body of writing demonstrates an aesthetics of defamiliarization, linking alienation and self-estrangement with masculinity and self-identity and realism with the feminine (484).

I also think that the concept of the uncanny is a useful one in reading *The Scarlet Letter* as narrative of national origins. The experience of feeling unsettled, of feeling what is familiar as strange, is what is produced by these white settler narratives of origin, precisely because of the historical elisions of the colonization violence. Our history is not what we thought it was. As the narrator is meditating on his "sensous sympathy of dust

for dust," he also notes that he feels a connection to "the figure of that first ancestor, invested by family tradition with a dim and dusky grandeur…It still haunts me, and induces a sort of home-feeling with the past, which I scarcely claim in reference to the present phase of the town" (26). In this moment, the narrator feels a "home-feeling" precisely because of one who is not himself. It is the "grave" of his "progenitor" that anchors his "claim to a residence" (26). This is the psychological experience of the white settler: one feels home only when confronted with the past, because the feeling one has in the present is that of being unsettled. It is not until the ancestral settling figure appears that a native claim can be made; this claim rests upon the ancestral grave, which itself is a repression of the countless graves of indigenous peoples. The grave reminds the white settler of this violence, but it is so unsettling that it can only be experienced through the structure of *unheimlich* in which the surfacing violent settler history becomes unfamiliar and unrecognizable. The experience of white settlement is profoundly unsettling, and it is this psychological relation to his national origin that Hawthorne works through in his novel.[17]

---

[17] The trope of translation could be another way to understand how Hawthorne's novel approaches national history and cultural origins, particularly because translation itself brings up difficult questions of fidelity and origins. A translator can be faithful to the original text, not straying from its intended meaning and essence, or she can betray it by deliberately making choices that twist and turn the translation away from the original. A faithful translation honors the rhythms, cadences, tenor of the original language; it is a translation which retains the foreignness of its source language. Betrayal occurs when the translator excises, flattens, changes the text in the process of translation; domestication is one effect of this betrayal. In her 1997 book, *Metaphors of Dispossession: American Beginnings and the Translation of Empire, 1492-1637*, Gesa Mackenthun analyzes the preoccupation with beginnings and origins and the way that "indigenous prehistory" is turned into a "prophetic anticipation of the arrival of the Europeans" (4). She explains that European westward expansion was often referred to as "'translation of empire' in imperial prose from the sixteenth century onward…the historical event of [westward discovery] embraced a series of discursive or ideological processes that served to

At the heart of the illegitimate birth of the United States is the historical violence of colonization, the indigenization of white settlers and the dispossession and extermination of native peoples. Hawthorne displaces (in an act of deliberate amnesia) this issue of illegitimacy away from the colonization and into the Puritan crimes of the Salem Witch Trials. Or, as Frantz Fanon famously noted, "the colonist makes history…the settler thinks he is the absolute beginning and writes his history accordingly" (15). Scholars of Native American literature and history, including Maureen Konkle and Lisa Brooks, have repeatedly observed that issues of erasure lie at the heart of "the underlying political psychology of the American nation" (qtd in Brooks xxxvii). Lisa Brooks explains that "native peoples' connection to land is not just cultural, as it is usually, and often sentimentally, understood; it is also political—about governments, boundaries, authority over people and territory" (xxxvii). Significantly, Brooks also argues that the emphasis on chronological precedence rather than the claim to geography is a rhetorical construction that has political power ("we were here before" instead of "this is the Native nation, the Native land"). It is also a rhetorical strategy that is synchronous with the tropes of familial/national origins and reproduction—the national family tree. This reliance on the chronological rhetoric is precisely what allows Cooper

---

'translate' a cognitively and morally ambivalent enterprise into acceptable history" (3). She also reminds us that in the Renaissance the actual terms metaphor and translation never referred to linguistic processes alone but were related to process of national centralization and colonial expansion (18). In *The Poetics of Imperialism* Eric Cheyfitz rescues the terms of figurative language from the ahistorical connotations they have acquired over time to remind us that the reality of imperialism is inscribed in the linguistic concepts we use. Although Mackenthun's work shows the confluence of the figurative, linguistic and material aspects of translation, I hesitate in using it to describe the relationship between Hawthorne's writing and national history, mostly because the novel itself is too invested in forgetting, displacement and substitution.

and other writers to develop the trope of the disappearing/already disappeared Indian which anachronistically enabled the genocidal policies of Indian Removal in the 1830s. The vision of indigenous territory as empty land was a part and parcel of settler efforts to transform themselves into native and to escape the very category of colonialism.[18]

If, as Bercovitch argues, the ideological mechanism of American political consensus in *The Scarlet Letter* is so finely tuned that it recaptures all dissent or conflict and redirects it into consensus, then one must turn to other narratives for an alternative. It is only when the novel works as a closed system that its ideological function is so successful—in the same way, a national narrative holds such power over the self-image of its citizens only when it prevents other narratives from challenging it. There is a distinction to be made between national narratives that are created and developed through legal, governmental, constitutional and bureaucratic archives and those that are created through works of art. Clearly, Hawthorne's novel belongs to the latter group, and my analysis of the novel is not an attempt to flatten its aesthetic and literary functions into its function as national origin narrative.

---

[18] In his 2010 book, *The Two Faces of American Freedom*, Aziz Rana argues that in the United States, "the centrality of settler colonialism to the development of national institutions and ideas remains essentially hidden in collective consciousness" (8). Rana calls the United States a "settler empire" because the former colonists now citizens understood "their own internal account of liberty as necessitating external modes of supervision and control…[it] required Indian dispossession and the coercive use of dependent groups most prominently slaves, in order to ensure that they themselves had access to property (3). For the United States and other white settler nations, the moment of national independence—the step across the postcolonial threshold—is one of empire. Ali Behdad further explains that although the official history of the nation does not deny the occurrence of these violent institutions (internal colonization, slavery), it does ignore their historical implications for how the nation was founded, by considering them aberrations from America's exceptionalist path" (6).

As I mentioned before, Maryse Condé's novel destabilizes Hawthorne's narrative of origins. Similar to Jean Rhys' novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea, I, Tituba*, offers an alternative history for a woman on the margins of history. While Antoinette/Bertha is fictional, we do have historical evidence of Tituba's existence, and her role in the Salem witch trials. Very little is known about Tituba's actual origins—various scholarly debates have ensued about whether she was African, Native American or Caribbean. However, Condé's novel begins with Tituba (as the first-person narrator) stating that her mother was raped by an English sailor: "I was born from this act of aggression. From this act of hatred and contempt" (3). With this first paragraph, Condé establishes that rape and slavery are at the origin of Tituba's story, and by entailment, at the origin of the Salem Witch Trials, since Tituba was the first person accused.

Tituba was born into slavery, but through a series of events, she escapes being sold when the plantation was sold, and eventually becomes an island squatter in the jungle of Barbados. She studies under the wise woman Mama Yaya, learning healing and magical knowledge. However, Tituba soon falls in love/lust with a man named John Indian (the historical Tituba was actually married to an Indian), and chooses to follow him into slavery in New England when he is sold. Thus begins the novel's depiction of what happens between Tituba, the girls who accused her of witchcraft and the larger Salem community.

Eventually, Tituba is jailed, and anachronistically, meets Hester in jail (1692/1642). Of course, the bending of historical timelines is something that Hawthorne himself employed to great effect in his novel.[19] In some key ways, Condé constructs this

[19] See Ross C. Murfin's discussion in the 2006 Bedford/St. Martin's critical edition.

scene as a parody of what feminists think that historical women should/could be saying, and how sisterhood should reach across race. Condé's Hester was the child of two of the Mayflower's Puritans instead of being born in England; she married a minister with whom she conceived four children all of whom she aborted through "potions, concoctions, purges," instead of marrying the physician in England; she hangs herself in jail before giving birth, instead of living out her life with Pearl. Even with its parodic elements, this is a powerful scene of "writing back" to history and narratives of the nation. As Tituba sits in her jail cell, she becomes very depressed and finds herself waking from horrible nightmares:

> Sometimes my fear was like a baby in its mother's womb…I am back on the island I thought I had lost!...No less satiny the emerald belt around her waist! But the men and women are suffering. They are in torment. A slave has just been hung from the top of a flame tree. The blossom and blood have merged into one…They are lopping off our ears, legs, and arms. They are sending us up in the air like fireworks.
>
> 101-102

This passage turns Hawthorne's plant/root/origin/birth imagery inside out. If in Hawthorne's novel Hester's child is the symbol of the origin and future of the new nation, then Tituba's simile turns this symbol into one of death, torture and dismemberment. By allowing Hester to hang herself in jail, and thereby preventing Pearl's birth, Condé gives the lie to Hawthorne's narrative of national redemption. Hester and Tituba's friendship also punctures the closed racial circle in Hawthorne's novel, even though Condé's Hester does exoticize Tituba's life and fetishize her skin.

When Tituba leaves the threshold of the jail, she meditates on the effects of her imprisonment. In an allusion to the rose-bush at the threshold of Hawthorne's jail, she thinks: "This somber flower of the civilized world poisoned me with its perfume and I could never again breathe the same way. Encrusted in my nostrils was the smell of so many crimes: matricides, parricides, rapes, thefts, manslaughter, murders, and above all the smell of so much suffering" (102-103). "This somber flower" is in complete opposition to Hawthorne's "sweet moral blossom" which will "relieve the darkening close of a tale of human frailty and sorrow" (54). Hawthorne's novel works to redeem the shame of the national origin, and in so doing, condense the originary violence into a single story of waywardness, desire and eventual redemption. Condé's Tituba knows that this historical narrative is a lie, a poison, one which alters the very relationship between her body and the air. The crimes she lists are at the heart of the origin of the future nation, and they are crimes that no blossom, somber or sweet, could redeem.

Both of these novels were written from a genealogical impulse, an attempt give a narrative to a hidden part of history. In a very meta-narrative moment, Tituba rages against the historical injustice she will face.

> I felt I would only be mentioned in passing in these Salem witchcraft trials about which so much would be written later…There would be mention here and there of a 'slave originating from the West Indies and probably practicing 'hoodoo.'' There would be no mention of my age or my personality…As early as the end of the seventeenth century, petitions would be circulated, judgments made, rehabilitating the victims, restoring their honor…I would never be included! Tituba would be condemned forever! There would never ever, be a careful,

> sensitive biography recreating my life and its suffering. And I was outraged by this future injustice that seemed more cruel than even death itself.
>
> 110

It is precisely the Titubas of history that the frame of *The Scarlet History* works to erase. Hawthorne's novel is not about the witch trials, but it is about the way in which a national narrative takes shape, and how certain genealogies become legitimate and authoritative and how others become illegitimate and silenced. This is also why it is so significant that Condé's Tituba never has a biological child. At the end of the novel, she finds her way back to her island, and decides to "choose a descendant" (176). This is a move away from genealogical (and racial) descent and towards a kinship of consent. The racial reproductivity of a nation depends upon this genealogical descent—and Condé's novel shows us a little glimpse of how anachronistic, lateral and cross-literary contact can destabilize the authority of descent.

While Condé's novel gives the lie to Hawthorne's disnarration of nonwhite national origins, Bharati Mukherjee's *Desirable Daughters* is propelled by the relationship between Salem and India, a relationship that Hawthorne elided. Mukherjee was inspired by Pearl's journey away from America, and the exotic presents she sends to her mother from the foreign land: "Letters came, with armorial seals upon them, though of bearings unknown to English heraldry" (200). Most readers assume that Pearl returned to her mother's homeland of England (as do I), but Mukherjee's novel riffs on the historical possibility that Pearl could indeed have traveled to India instead. In puncturing the closed circuit of national origin narrative that Hawthorne depicts in his novel (England to the New World, Indians removed into the shadowy offstage settings), these

novels demonstrate the selective, and often violent, ways that certain people, places, histories are actively written out of—disnarrated—national narratives. What these three novels share, and what makes these interventions possible, is their participation in literary temporality. These three novels, written in 1852, 1986 and 2003 interact with each other in an anachronistic way across time, both as objects and within their own internal narratives.[20]

To return to my previous comment regarding Hawthorne's avoidance of the actual Puritan/Indian conflicts in 1642 and the slave trade, but his embrace of sexual scandal, I want to quote in full a very complex passage from Hawthorne's 1862 essay, "Chiefly about War Matters." Here, using tropes of reproduction and family, he combines the racial and the sexual histories of the new nation.

> There is an historical circumstance, known to few, that connects the children of the Puritans with these Africans of Virginia in a very singular way. They are our brethren, as being lineal descendants from the Mayflower, the fated womb of which, in her first voyage, sent forth a brood of Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock, and, in a subsequent one, spawned slaves upon the Southern soil,--a monstrous birth, but with which we have an instinctive sense of kindred, and so are stirred by an irresistible impulse to attempt their rescue, even at the cost of blood and ruin. The character of our sacred ship, I fear, may suffer a little by this revelation; but we must let her white progeny offset her dark one,--and two such portents never sprang from an identical source before.

---

[20] For an intensive discussion on literary temporality, see Pascale Casanova's *The World Republic of Letters,* 2004.

While many critics have analyzed this passage in terms of Hawthorne's political views about slavery and the imminent Civil War, I want to focus on the ways in which the metaphor of reproduction structures this entire moment. First, although it first seems to be a parallel structure, the phrase "the children of the Puritans with these Africans of Virginia" is not quite balanced. It is strange that the Puritans have children, but there are no named parents of the Africans. They are simply "of" Virginia—which could signify parentage but more likely, ownership. Already the children of the Puritans are securely fastened within an unbroken line of descent, whereas the Africans are parentless, owned by Virginia. But immediately, he claims that these two lines (one legitimate, one orphaned) are indeed "brethren" because they are both the "lineal descendants of the Mayflower." The ship is now the mother of both lines of descent, whose womb lovingly "sent forth a brood" of Pilgrims but "spawned slaves upon the Southern soil." The first birth was the legitimate one, the one of unbroken racial descent, the one that history fated to bring forth a new nation; the second is a "monstrous birth," one which breaks natural laws, and which is an abomination. The sibling relation between the two descendants is that of the legitimate heir to the bastard. But if only the second birth was monstrous, how was the "instinctive sense of kindred" born? If the two births were actually of a different kind, then it would bely the connection that the passage insists upon. In truth, the first birth was monstrous as well—it spawned hundreds of years of exploitation, war, genocide and colonization. But even so, the legitimate heir finds in his heart "an instinctive sense of kindred" and is moved to rescue those "spawn," at great cost. This inconvenient historical truth—that the Mayflower was also a slave ship—tarnishes her reputation, but her "white progeny" (both signifying her white descendants and the

righteousness of the war to free her black descendants) will "offset her dark one." The ending line, "two such portents never sprang from an identical source before" rings particularly false, given that Hawthorne wrote a novel ten years earlier in which he labored enormously to reconcile the "white" and "black" elements of Puritan history and the national origin.

These reproductive tropes also saturate *The Scarlet Letter*, and it is very significant that in both places, they are gendered as feminine and female, which is why I am grounding this discussion about tropes of reproduction, and the race/reproduction of the nation through the female/feminine side of the concept. Several scholars have raised the question of whether reading race and nationalism as tropological and discursive—as narratives—minimizes the actual inequality and injustice of these structures. However, reproduction of the nation itself happens along two axes: it is materially reproduced through raced and sexed bodies, individuals and systems and it is reproduced ideologically (the imagined community) through representations, ideas and language. To ignore the tropological and narrative axis of the nation is to ignore what gives the nation its power in the hearts and minds of its citizens. Valeria Fincchi notes that tropes of generation, degeneration, reproduction have a long gendered history: generation is figured as male while sexual reproduction has been gendered as female. Women can conceive, but they do not actively author or generate ideas. For instance, the politics of intellectual inheritance vis à vis intellectual or scientific genealogies relies a great deal on the idea of generation, rather than conception. However, it is possible to look at the racial reproductivity of the nation from the paternal/fraternal side. Russ Castronovo traces the law of the father and the father/son metaphors throughout the American national

narrative. He focuses on the homosocial narrative and how freedom is constructed as masculine. [21] [22] However, for Hawthorne, female sexual reproduction and conception are at the heart of his national narratives, in part, I suggest, because racial and national legitimacy can only be confirmed through the mother—as is still true today, as the starting discussion of *Nguyen v. INS* demonstrates.

I will return to this discussion about reproductive tropes and nationalism, but first I want to move into a series of reading of the novel, in order to trace these tropes in the text itself. After the reader moves through the frame of the preface, she is confronted with yet another frame—the prison door. The first chapter of the novel proper begins with another set of plant imagery. On the "threshold of our narrative" (the prison door) grows a "wild rose-bush" which, "by a strange chance, has been kept alive in history" (54). Immediately, the plant imagery is gendered when the narrator contrasts the survival of the rose-bush with the "fall of the gigantic pines and oaks that originally overshadowed it" (54), a reference to the narrator's "steeple-crowned progenitor" (26). Again, the genealogy of natural world stands in for the genealogy of the nation, and the narrator makes this link explicit when he wonders whether the origin of the rose-bush itself came from the "footsteps of the sainted Ann Hutchinson" (54). Critics have variously

---

[21] See *Fathering the Nation: American Geneaologies of Slavery and Freedom*, 1995. His project is to "read and dismantle the architecture of national narrative and examine how fragmentation and unit as formal principles have been inextricably wrapped up in the most significant political issues, from representation to exclusions, from participation to disenfranchisement, from freedom to slavery…examine the ironies and inconsistencies that arose as patriarchical lineage administered a national narrative through the deployment of dates, biographies, memorials and patriotic rituals" (5).

[22] David Leverenz's study about paternalism is also relevant. He shows how this model of fatherly care became part of imperial rhetoric and how those in authority should treat individuals or groups not part of the one's family (employees, students, slave, natives of occupied territories).

interpreted this passage in terms of the novel's gender politics and Hawthorne's antirevolutionary beliefs, but what I want to point out here is the way in which the narrative doubles back to assure itself of its own frame. As I, and others, have argued, the preface frames the novel proper in order to include/exclude historical realities about the nation's origin. Why then does the novel proper begin with yet another threshold, another frame and another set of natural reproductive tropes? Why does the narrator "pluck one of its flowers and present it to the reader" in hopes that it will "symbolize some sweet moral blossom" or "relieve the darkening close of a tale of human frailty and sorrow" (54)?

Perhaps the second frame in the first chapter is meant to forestall the reader's experience of an uncanny moment. When the narrator first found the archival evidence of Hester's life in the Custom-House, he was unable to make any particular meaning out of the old scarlet letter, except that he was certain that there was "some deep meaning in it, most worthy of interpretation." In the same way, the reader, after stepping across the threshold of the preface, is uncertain of what meaning there is to be found within the tale to come. As the narrator sits and studies the letter A, feeling "perplexed—and cogitating, among other hypotheses, whether the letter might not have been one of those decorations which the white man used to contrive, in order to take the eyes of Indians," he feels a very strange sensation. The narrator wonders what connection the A has to the Indians, then he places the letter on his own breast and he suddenly experiences "a sensation not altogether physical, yet almost so, as of burning heat; and as if the letter were not of red cloth but red-hot iron." (43). While a surface reading of this passage seems to point towards the conventions of gothic romance, I want to suggest that is a moment in which

the repressed violent settler history resurfaces again, triggered by the very thought of Indians. Further, it is a thought that summons the entire sordid history of white colonists exploiting indigenous peoples through vastly unfair and deceptive trading practices and property law. This thought must be repressed immediately so the narrator "happens" (43) to place the letter on his breast; the not quite physical sensation of burning distracts him from this thought, but it also summons a trace of guilt as its red-hot iron presence overtakes his mind. This is what the narrator is trying to forestall for the reader—to turn her thoughts away from the Indians and towards Ann Hutchinson, to receive the meaning "stream[ing] forth from the mystic symbol" but allow it to "evade the analysis of [her] mind" (43). Here, Hawthorne betrays his own anxieties about his national narrative as he reinforces its threshold yet again.

In the second chapter, Hester makes her appearance wearing the A with Pearl in her arms. Undergoing another stage of her punishment, Hester stands on the scaffold and turns her thoughts to her past life, "her native village, in Old England, and her paternal home" (61). Hester left England, her birthplace, to migrate across the Atlantic, but a bit later, the narrator tells us that because of her sin, her origins are now firmly rooted in the soil of Salem. Even though Hester was free to return to England, she chose not to. Or rather, it was almost as if she did not have the choice: "Her sin, her ignominy, were the roots which she had struck into the soil. It was as if a new birth, with stronger assimilations than the first, had converted the forest-land, still so uncongenial to every other pilgrim and wanderer, into Hester Prynne's wild and dreary, but life-long home" (75). Through an almost supernatural force, the forest—and in the novel, the forest is also a metonym for Indians—has been "converted" into her home. Hester is the first true

settler of the forest—partially prefiguring the ideology of Manifest Destiny in which the wildness of the forest and frontier is providentially given to the American settlers. However, instead of the ideology of nationalist exceptionalism, it is Hester's sin itself that paves the way for the forest's conversion into home. This passage also echoes the narrator's guilt for the sins of his own ancestors—guilt which also indelibly nativizes him.

Immediately preceding these lines, the narrator pairs the idea of home with force of haunting: "But there is a fatality, a feeling so irresistible and inevitable that it has the force of doom, which almost invariably compels human beings to linger around and haunt, ghost-like, the spot where some great and marked event has given the color to their lifetime; and still the more irresistibly, the darker the tinge that saddens it" (75). While there is a trace of the uncanny in this passage, it is saturated with iterations of haunting. Hester is morally haunted by her sin, therefore she lingers and haunts the place of her fall, which in turn repeats the ways in which human beings tend to haunt their own personal and historical places of wounding. This haunting compulsion seems to be at odds with what the narrator has told us about the necessity of movement and transplantation; however, it is the haunting itself that is the genesis of Hester's new rootedness (from England to Salem). "All other scenes of earth—even that village of rural England, where happy infancy and stainless maidenhood seemed yet to be in her mother's keeping, like garments put off long ago—were foreign to her, in comparison. The chain that bound her here was of iron links, and galling to her in to her soul, but never could be broken" (75). Hester Prynne has become foreign to her own birthplace, and indigenized to the forest surrounding Salem. This process—becoming foreign to become native—is set in motion

through a sexual encounter, the outcome of which is a child. Sexuality and maternity are necessary aspects for this indigenization process, so much so that the narrator brackets out the time of Hester's "infancy and stainless maidenhood" as foreign to her. Hester gives birth to a child of the New World, one that is at first as wild an Indian, but who eventually brings together the old ancestral roots and the racial need for transplantation.

In this reading, the figure of the child, and the meaning of Pearl herself, becomes quite significant because it symbolizes the future of the nation. The illegitimate child is part of a mysterious line of descent, a vexed inheritance. At the end of the novel, Pearl's journey away from her birthplace and Hester's return to her migrant destination invokes a circle of structural globality that belies the lineal descent of a national family. In fact, the cohesion of national narratives is always threatened by the historical reality of non-linear, dispossessed, obscured and rerouted lines of descent. While national genealogy is deployed to evoke origins and authority, the repressed historical reality of illegitimate national origins will always return—as it does in *The Scarlet Letter*—to destabilize that authority. Homi Bhabha describes this return as constitutive of national narratives; national discourse and narrative are at the crossroads of what is known and what, though known, must be kept concealed (3-4).

While it may seem that the term national narrative itself denotes a distinction between a nation and a narrative, it is important to remember that narrative is constitutive of the very existence of a nation, as defined by Benedict Anderson's analysis of the nation as an imagined community. Anne McClintock's work challenges two conceptual blind spots in theories of nationalism: the connections of racial nationalism to sexism and of race to nation. This imagined community is a nation of flesh and blood, and

McClintock reminds us that it is one that is both racialized and gendered: men create the nation while women symbolize it. Parallel to the gendered distinction between active generation/passive conception, the very time of the nation is figured as gendered. Women tend to be inert, static, preservers of tradition (nonhistorical) while men are the progressive drivers of national history and modernity. In context of Hawthorne's novel, the preface frames the creators of the nation as men—referencing the ancestor Judge Hathorne—while Hester and her daughter Pearl become the symbols of the nation's origins. But even this separation of national creation/generation and national symbolism is a deceptive one precisely because nationalism is thus constituted from the beginning as both gendered discourses and gendered historical practices and cannot be understood without a theory of gender power:

> All nationalisms are gendered, all are invented and all are dangerous—dangerous not in Eric Hobsbawm's sense of having to be opposed, but in the sense that they represent relations to political power and to the technologies of violence…Benedict Anderson views nations, in his all too famous phrase, as "imagined communities'-in the sense that they are systems of cultural representation whereby people come to imagine a shared experience of identification with an extended community. As such, nations are not simply phantasmagoria of the mind but are historical practices through which social difference is both invented and performed. Nationalism becomes, as a result, radically constitutive of people's identities through social contests that are frequently violent and always gendered…as Cynthia Enloe remarks, nationalisms

have ‘typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope.

352-353

If we turn to anthropology, we can better understand the gendered ways in which the nation’s genealogy is constructed. In her early brilliant Marxist analysis of the kinship system, Gayle Rubin explains the ways in which gender is deeply embedded in societal and communal functions: “Kinship systems do not merely exchange women. They exchange sexual access, genealogical statuses, lineage names and ancestors, rights and people—men, women, and children—in concrete systems of social relationships” (177). Anthropologist Igor Koptyoff observed that kinship patriarchy takes political shape because “the idiom of kinship relations provides a metaphor for political relations” (qtd in Doyle 22).[23] This means that community, national and political borders and bonds are translated into the tropes of kinship and familial bonds. In these tropes, the role of the mother and the mother’s body comes to signify both the collective past (mother) and future (reproducer of children). However, there is a paradox in this relation between the nation and the family: nations are symbolically figured as domestic genealogies, but the family itself has been figured as the antithesis of history. “The family as metaphor offered a single genesis narrative for national history while, at the same time, the family as an institution became void of history and excluded from national power” (McClintock 357).

[23] Doyle also uses the concept of racial patriarchy, which “authorizes through words its military maneuvers and its economic programs, its distribution of material goods and its differential treatment of bodies through curfews, ads, laws, speeches, songs, ceremonies, and treaties. It capitalizes on that connection between words and acts, bodies and texts” (232).

Many scholars have explored the material and ideological deployments of motherhood within colonial and imperial projects.[24] Felicity Nussbaum analyzes the representations of women in the emergent eighteenth-century British empire's expansion of commercial and imperial authority in order to analyze the interrelations that evolved among sexual racial and class hierarchies (2). Although Nussbaum valorizes the unity of women in their mutual oppression on both sides of the colonial divide, she notes that the regulation of women's sexuality was about racial purity as well. In her analysis, she mobilizes the concept of a torrid zone: it references both the geographical torrid zone of the territory between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, and the torrid zone of the human female. The contrasts in geographic climate (torrid, temperate and frigid) were translated into the types of women associated with the imperial locations. The sexualized woman of in the colony was as distinct from domestic English womanhood as the torrid zone was from the frigid one. This idea relied on the eighteenth century body of thought that linked natural history, climate and peoples, and the assumption that warmer climates produce more sexual activity and libidos.

For my purposes here, one of the most useful distinctions Nussbaum draws is her separation of the concept of maternity from the reproductive body. She wants us to recognize the way maternal power is distinct from reproductive activity because this separation allows us to question maternity as the central metaphor for female difference and to consider the uses it serves in a particular historical formation (23-24). What seems like a universal (women give birth) is not always the case—not all women give birth and it could change in the future. The way we conceptualize the body is itself part of its

[24] See Amy Kaplan, Ann McClintock, Ann Stoler and Laura Wexler

constitution. The body itself is historically constructed and can be radically changed by diet, drugs, surgery, history, among other things. Nussbaum reads a conflict between the sexual and the maternal, and in Hawthorne's novel, the two aspects of Hester's identity are, if not in conflict, then separated via the novel's structure. The moments of passion and intimacy between Arthur and Hester occur offstage, but readers are left with no doubt about Hester's torrid and wayward nature. The mystery of Pearl's paternity is at the center of the novel's plot, but Hester seems to have very little maternal power. It is clear that Hester has little control over Pearl's changeling nature. To follow the lines of my argument regarding the national narrative in the novel, Hester's power is the power of reproduction, not of maternity. She conceives an illegitimate daughter, who, through her exile and her progeny's anticipated future return to Salem, will then become the legitimate mother of the new nation. In this novel, Hester's reproductive power, not her moral maternal function, is central to the national narrative. Hester gives birth to Pearl as the true racial origin of the new nation, even though the novel acknowledges the illegitimacy of that origin.

Both sexual and national reproduction happen over time—but not necessarily within a linear form of temporality. Both Dipesh Chakrabarty and Ann McClintock work against paradigms of temporality that assume a linear, teleological narrative of progress, i.e. that the history of European global empire was an inevitable march towards progress, scientific rationalism and technological perfection. In this model, national time is secularized and domesticated—because it shares in this linear temporality of progress, each nation can belong to single global family tree, albeit one demarcated along lines of development and hierarchy (developed vs. developing vs. undeveloped; First vs. Second

vs. Third Worlds). As Chakrabarty has argued, the nation itself occupies multiple places in time, and humans do not "exist in a frame of a single and secular historical time that envelops other kinds of time…historical time is not integral…it is out of joint with itself." (16). The nation itself is anachronistic. Anachronism also plays a substantial role in the work of such queer theorists as Jonathan Goldberg, Madhavi Menon and Kim Hall because it can be more specific than historical and geographic difference. An over-emphasis on historical difference (hetero-ness) can obscure other lines of contact between points in time (homo-ness). A strident adherence to historical and chronological difference leaves little room for contact and hybridization of not only peoples but discourses. Heteronormativity operates not simply through axes of ideological and gendered norms—it also operates through assumptions of linear temporality and chronological difference.

So here, we have the anachronistic temporalities of narrative, sexuality and the nation on the one hand, and the linear temporality of biological reproduction on the other. How, or do, these temporalities come into contact, and what does this have to do with Hawthorne's novel? In fact, the narrator himself is at least partially aware of these anachronistic temporalities. In the preface, while discussing his lack of passion for writing while serving in the Custom-House, he notes that his own name traveled globally through his official duties as the clerk: "Borne on such a queer vehicle of fame, a knowledge of my existence, so far as a name conveys it, was carried where it had never been before, and I hope, will never go again" (40). For the narrator, this queer vehicle—the official documents of global shipping—is a disappointment, a failure, because he had hoped his name would travel through literary fame, rather than as a meaningless signature

on financial documents. However, while the contemporary meaning of the word *queer* is anachronistic in this novel, it is also a *queerly* fitting meaning in this moment. The narrator is mourning his signature's meaningless fame precisely because it is non-reproductive. These are dead documents, with no national or filial afterlife. They mean nothing to the future. As Casanova has argued, literary temporality is a profoundly generative, if not always reproductive, temporality. This "queer vehicle" is one that is without a future, which is precisely what the narrator wishes. Even so, to return to the previous discussion regarding historical archives, these documents themselves are linked to a global history of colonialism, globalization and trade. So if these documents are indeed linked to a global past and future and have more in common with the silent archives of the slave trade than a majestic national history, it is not that the narrator's name is dead to the future—it is that his name was carried "where it had never been before," outside the nation. The narrator mourns his legibility in a national future.

As I have been arguing, national genealogies that deploy narratives of reproduction are preoccupied, even troubled by, issues surrounding the nation's origin or future: for Coetzee, it was the future of the new South Africa, a nation reborn into constitutional equality, but haunted by racial trauma; for Hawthorne, it is the illegitimate origin of a nation founded by white settlers. Hawthorne elides colonial violence but embraces the sexual scandal. Given that Hawthorne is repressing the colonial violence of the national origin—its illegitimacy—it is quite fitting that the plot of the novel centers on an illegitimate sexual affair and the progeny thereof. These narratives displace anxieties about national origins and futures into a plot about wayward, monstrous or aberrant sexuality. The historical romance, as applied to histories of national origins, does

have an affinity for heterosexual romance plots because they are also narratives of reproduction. In fact, if we turn to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's work, we can recover her call for making visible the way in which heterosexuality became the normative plot structure for history.

> There are stubborn barriers to making it [heterosexuality] accountable, to making it so much as visible, in the framework of projects of historicizing and hence denaturalizing sexuality. The making historically visible of heterosexuality is difficult because, under its institutional pseudonyms such as Inheritance Marriage, Dynasty, Family, Domesticity, and Population, heterosexuality has been permitted to masquerade so fully as History itself—when it has not presented itself as the t otality of Romance.
>
> 10-11

However, Alys Eve Weinbaum has argued, one cannot think about national genealogy and individual sexual reproduction without thinking about race. In the nineteenth century United States, in order to be a fully enfranchised citizen, one must have been born within a particular national border and be able to claim white racial legitimacy. Racial legitimacy created the line between the state of holding citizenship and being property. In apartheid South Africa, racial categories structured every aspect of the national subject's interaction with the state. It was racial legitimacy that mattered most; marriage was a mechanism for ensuring racialization, although it by no means guaranteed it. As Weinbaum argues, on a very fundamental level, "competing understandings of reproduction as a biological, sexual and racialized process became central to the organization of knowledge about nations, modern subjects, and the flow of capital,

bodies, babies and ideas within and across national borders" (2). Weinbaum calls this the "race/reproduction bind" and she analyzes how ideas of "reproductive genealogical connection secure notions of belonging in those contexts in which the nation is conceived of as racially homogenous" (8).

Pearl, while illegitimate, is also categorically white, even though the narrator's description of Pearl's nature often veers quite close to the discourse of miscegenation: "In giving her existence, a great law had been broken; and the result was a being, whose elements were perhaps beautiful and brilliant, but all in disorder" (82). To varying degrees in the novel, all three main characters (Hester, Arthur, Chillingworth) are affiliated with the Indians—it is the Indian's wildness, freedom or medicinal knowledge that is appropriated by or associated with each character. While Hester and Arthur's sexual affair produced Pearl, the triangulated relationship among all three is actually forms a third parental origin for Pearl. Pearl, whose being is "disordered" and whose existence breaks "a great law," belongs in the forest, almost as if she herself were an Indian. It is critical that Pearl's racial parentage is not in doubt, so the indigenization process must happen through a different pathway—Hester, Arthur and even Chillingworth all transmit their own Indian-like qualities to Pearl. Hester gives Pearl her Indian wildness in the womb: Hester could only account for the child's character…by recalling what she herself had been, during the momentous period while Pearl was imbibing her soul from the spiritual worlds and her bodily frame from its material of earth. The mother's impassioned state had been the medium through which were transmitted to the unborn infant the rays of its moral life" (83). After the first scaffold scene, Chillingworth visits Hester in prison and gives the infant a medicinal concoction to

calm her—bestowing on Pearl his familiarity "with whatever the savage people could teach, in respect to medicinal herb and roots that grew in the forest" (69). At the end of the novel, Dimmesdale gives Pearl freedom, but it is not the freedom of the forest. It is the freedom of legitimacy, of the absolution of her past origins. Pearl kisses Arthur's lips as he confesses, and "a spell was broken. The great scene of grief in which the wild infant bore a part had developed all her sympathies; and as her tears fell upon her father's check, they were the pledge that she would grow up amid human joy and sorrow and nor for ever do battle with the world but be a woman win it. Towards her mother, too, Pearl's errand as a messenger of anguish was all fulfilled" (197). This is the moment in which the deeply troubling configurations of hybridity—the wayward desires of Hester and Arthur, Pearl's changeling nature, Chillingworth's dark medicinal arts—are resolved into harmony through supernatural means. The threat of miscegenation—cultural if not racial—is dissipated, and Pearl's illegitimacy serves a higher purpose.

After Arthur's confession and death, the narrator remarks on the immediate denial that takes place: "According to these highly respectable witnesses, the minister, …had desired to express a parable…that, in the view of infinite purity, we are sinners all alike" (198). However, the narrator calls this denial an "instance of that stubborn fidelity with which a man's friends…will sometimes uphold his character; when proofs, clear as the mid-day sunshine on the scarlet letter, establish him as false and sin-stained creature of the dust" (198-199). This phenomenon is also true of the national origin—despite the exceedingly violent and undeniable historical facts of white settler colonialism, "highly respectable" national authorities will always explain away, repress, sublimate and transform the illegitimate origin into a legitimate one. In a similar moment, when Pearl

recognizes her father after their encounter in the forest, Hester instructs her daughter in the ways of denial—"we must not always talk in the market-place of what happens to us in the forest" (186). Certain historical events are rendered illegible by the frame of the narrative—the frame determines what events are narrated and disnarrated.

While the third scaffold scene of Arthur's confession is the climax of the plot and what follows is technically the denouement, I suggest that Hester's subsequent exile from and return to Salem is the climax of the national narrative plot. After Arthur's death, Chillingworth "wither[s] up, shrivel[s] away…like an uprooted weed that lies wilting in the sun" (199) and dies within a year. While Chillingworth's roots never found purchase in the New World except through his relationship with Arthur, he bequeathed a substantial amount of property to Pearl in his will. Not only is Pearl's illegitimate origin redeemed through Arthur's confession, but also through her mother's husband's wealth. As I will discuss in the next chapter, this journey of capital—anchored in England, moving to the New World and back again, only to fully return to the United States in the future—is not insignificant to the origins of an imperial postcolonial nation. For the moment, I want to emphasize that it is this transfer of capital that brings about " a very material change in the public estimation…little Pearl, at a marriageable period of life, might have mingled her wild blood with the lineage of the devoutest Puritan among them all" (200). And in fact, it remains a mystery to the narrator, why Pearl chooses to live her life in a foreign land rather than returning to her birthplace to make such a prominent marriage, particularly when Hester does return to take up "her long-forsaken shame" (200).

The narrator fully believes that Hester's return to Salem is a return home: "But there was a more real life for Hester Prynne, here, in New England, than in that unknown region where Pearl had found a home. Here had been her sin; here, her sorrow; and here was yet to be her penitence" (201). The incanatory force of the repeated "here" summons all of the imagery of rootedness. The rhythm of these lines is punctuated by the pauses surrounding "here;" it is a moment in which we feel striking of the soil, the deep planting of Hester's roots. As I suggested, Hester's power is reproductive, and at the close of the narrative, that power is translated into a form of natural rootedness which will give birth to the rose-bush upon the narrative's threshold. But again, why does Pearl not return home with her mother? She maintains a great deal of contact with her mother, and the narrator mentions that an "inhabitant of another land" sends Hester letters with "armorial seals upon them, though of bearings unknown to English heraldry" (200) and that Hester was once seen "embroidering a baby-garment" (201). Where Pearl does live is a mystery, and as previously discussed, was the inspiration for Mukherjee's novel. The entire novel is about illegitimate origins, guilt and redemption—Hester, as an original ancestor, cannot redeem herself entirely, hence her return to Salem to complete her penitence. Hester's later generations must take up the task of ancestral redemption, in the same way that the narrator takes the shame of his ancestors upon himself in order to finally purge it from history. Pearl does not return to the New World with her mother because her future task is to purify and purge the illegitimacy of her origins. If she had returned, she would be part of the "immediate posterity" of her mother's community, which was the generation that "wore the blackest shade of Puritanism, and so darkened the national visage with it, that all the subsequent years have not sufficed to clear it up" (180). This

national narrative requires an alternate possible origin, one that has ancestral roots in the earliest settlement, but which can also claim a future origin of transplantation. Pearl's children can immigrate to the new nation, without the stain of Puritan violence in their history. Of course, this novel foregrounds Puritan violence internal to the settler community in order to repress the violence of colonization and slavery. Pearl represents the hope that the nation's illegitimacy can be transformed into a redemptive exception.

Whereas *Disgrace* ends with an insistence on opacity, the end of *The Scarlet Letter* tries to recuperate and eliminate the moments of inscrutability, opacity and anxiety: Pearl's non-human traits are magically redeemed through Dimmesdale's dying moment on the scaffold, the opacity of desire is overwhelmed by the positive production of community, and the racialized origin of the nation is displaced by the metaphors of plants and roots. "The Custom-House" disavows, in part, the legacy of the Puritan theocracy and the persecution of witches, but it does so in order to substitute a more legitimate origin. The ending of the novel recuperates Pearl's illegitimate origins when she returns to her mother's home country, England, while Hester returns to the scene of her punishment, where she is transfigured into a wise woman. For Hawthorne, it is the Puritan excesses that were the illegitimate origins of the nation, and Hawthorne substitutes Pearl as the new future citizen, the one who (or whose descendants) will come to the United States absolved of that origin. In the logic of the novel, this new origin cannot be Hester—as the narrator expounds, it must be a woman, "but lofty, pure and beautiful; and wise, moreover not through dusky grief, but the ethereal medium of joy" (201-202). When Pearl settles in England (or elsewhere) she again reconciles her origins: the Puritan heritage was the wayward, illegitimate origin and she is the true heir of the

formerly rebellious and now properly chastened American Hester and the mother country, England.

Hester returns to the scene of her shame, and she reinscribes this history voluntarily upon herself. She surrenders herself to history, becoming one with the symbol, which eventually "ceased to be a stigma…and became a type of something to be sorrowed over, and looked upon with awe, yet with reverence too" (201). Lucy in *Disgrace* resists becoming a historical symbol and insists on her own opacity; so too, does Hester, in the sense that we never hear from Hester, and all we hear is the narrator's insistence that we ought to interpret this ambiguity in many ways. However, the novels end in very different registers—*The Scarlet Letter* moves forward into the horizon of a hopeful, redemptive national future and *Disgrace* condenses into a routine of daily, animal survival. The race/reproduction bind is at the heart of both these novels, as it is at the origin of both the United States and South Africa.

The next chapter takes up the relation between race, desire and capital in these national narratives. How is sexual reproduction linked to the reproduction of capital, and how does desire, both heterosexual and homoerotic, structure these narratives? If Pearl's illegitimate origins could be redeemed so easily by the influx of capital, why does desire play such a significant role in the novel? In both Ralph Waldo Emerson's *English Traits* and Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist,* we will see how race, capital and desire circulate within the national narratives of white settler histories and imperial postcolonial nations.

Chapter Four

It's a White Man's Imperial World: Ralph Waldo Emerson's *English Traits* and Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*

In her seminal essay, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," Gayatri Spivak describes "worlding" as a narrative process that accompanies material and ideological conquest. Similar to the Marxist theory of reification, it is a process that naturalizes forms of colonial power and knowledge by allowing us to forget the actual conditions and relations that produce these forms. Worlding is intimately connected to the production of history because it creates the narrative shapes and forms through which conditions of colonialism and oppression are obscured. Spivak's term plays on the Three-World schema (First, Second and Third)—then bluntly used as a simple descriptor but now viewed as an outdated terminology that has been supplanted by a hierarchy of development (developed, developing, undeveloped), which, in point of fact, shares the same legacy of colonial teleology as the terminology it replaced. As Spivak explains, "to consider the Third World as distant cultures, exploited but with rich intact literary heritages waiting to be recovered, interpreted, and curricularized in English translation fosters the emergence of 'the Third World' as a signifier that allows us to forget that 'worlding,' even as it expands the empire of the literary discipline" (269). Spivak's argument makes it impossible to read nineteenth-century British literature as standing apart from the concurrent global process of European colonialism and imperialism—Jane

Eyre's triumph of feminist individualism is formed through and against Bertha's colonial creoleness.

As the previous chapter's discussion illustrated, national origin narratives also participate in this worlding process; for white settler nations, worlding is a process of forgetting, repressing and reframing the illegitimate origins of the nation. What is important to note here is that worlding (or framing) is not a simple description of an a priori set of conditions and relations: the narrative worlding/framing process is also constitutive of these conditions and relations. Not solely, of course, but there is a fundamental way in which the founding of an independent white settler nation requires a constitutive framing narrative that elides and justifies the racialized violence and exploitation of that founding.

Here, I will examine the worlding process that takes place in Ralph Waldo Emerson's *English Traits* and Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*. Although the texts differ greatly in scope—Emerson is theorizing the world historical position of the English, whereas Gordimer's novel is claustrophobically focused within a single man's consciousness—both highlight a particular relation between race, desire and capital. Emerson creates a narrative of racial and filial inheritance, but Gordimer's novel is about the seeming failure of the inheritance. If sexual reproduction is linked to racial reproduction, then how are these two forms of reproduction linked to the reproduction of capital? What role does desire play, whether heterosexual, homosexual or queer, within these modes of reproduction? In Chapter Two, I linked what Coetzee's main character called "rights of desire" to historical legibility and opacity. In this chapter, desire both drives and destabilizes the racial inheritance of empire and capital. Emerson's famous

"eyeball" moment in his 1836 essay *Nature*[25] in which he experiences a radical sense of omnipotence turns to explicit empire envy in *English Traits*. In Gordimer's novel, the link between capital, desire and heterosexuality is brilliantly captured in her portrait of the main character.

In their 2001 essay, J.K. Gibson-Graham explore the ways in which the language of rape is often superimposed on the language of globalization. Inspired by Sharon Marcus' analysis of how the phenomenon of rape is scripted, Gibson-Graham argue that "rape becomes *globalization*, men become *capitalization* or its agent, the *multinational corporation* (MNC), and women become *capitalism's* '*other*'" (240). Capitalism itself is figured as the agent, the one who has the ability to spread and invade because it is naturally stronger than other forms of economy; therefore, "the globalization script normalizes an act of nonreciprocal penetration" (243-244). While their analysis seeks to rescript the effects of rape/globalization, I want to mobilize their initial insight about the

---

[25] "I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances—master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty" (10). Here, what Emerson seems to be enjoying is the radical abandonment of his privilege—he rejects friends, brothers, acquaintances. And then he skips along, with the punctuation mark of a dash, to both equate and separate the relation of brothers/acquaintances with that of the positions of master and servant. In this list, the positions of slave, woman and child are absent. Does this mean that in the radical dismantling of hierarchy, which is catalyzed by this transcendent apprehension of unity and power, there are still some hierarchies left undisturbed? Or by this absence does Emerson implicitly recognize that these positions hold some sort of weight that cannot be dismissed as a "trifle" or "disturbance?" Would a servant think his relationship to a master was a mere "trifle?" Emerson finds pleasure in abandoning himself, feeling possessed by the world and viewing himself as absolutely other. This could only be experienced in this way by a person who retains his self-possession and dominant position within a political economy. Emerson's pleasure in this prone position comes from its exotic nature, its very otherness to his usual states of being.

ways in which the language of rape and the language of capitalism overlap. The traditional feminist analysis of rape is that rape is not about sexual desire, but about a desire for power; however, in this narrative process of worlding, desire for power and capital is often coded as sexual desire. These desires both constitute and destabilize the constellation of nation, race and reproduction. And, as I argued earlier in my reading of *Disgrace*, these "rights of desire" anchor claims to both property and history. The worlding that occurs within both Ralph Waldo Emerson's *English Traits* and Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist* is one that creates an unbroken chain between the white settler nation's colonial past and its imperial future. Desires for imperial power and expansion are harnessed to racialized sexual desires, and this potent combination drives the worlding narrative that imagines a continuous filial and divine obligation to take up the burden of empire.

At the heart of Emerson's writing lies a story about power. Whether in his early or later writing, or his abstract, philosophical or political essays, Emerson tells many stories about how power functions and how an individual, race or nation rises to greatness. For instance, near the end of *Nature*, Emerson discusses the ways in which man should work the spiritual and historical truth held within a natural and material object. For some, this could be a dizzying and destabilizing project, because the "fearful extent and multitude of objects rightly seen, unlocks a new faculty of the soul" (25). Instead of trepidation and a sense of humility in the face of such knowledge, Emerson feels exhilarated and thinks we should feel a sense of imperial power, without limits, and describes this feeling thusly: "That which was unconscious truth, becomes, when interpreted and defined in an object, a part of the domain of knowledge—a new weapon in the magazine of power" (25).

When man understands and locates the primitive truth in an object, and brings it into the domain of knowledge over which man has dominion, then that object and its truth become a weapon. Knowledge production is about adding ammunition to the magazine of power. Each object becomes weaponized once a man applies his force of knowledge to it, and man explicitly aims to maximize his magazine of power.

This search for a new weapon in the magazine of power animates Emerson's 1856 book *English Traits,* which grew out of his two trips to England in 1833 and 1847-48. The reception of *English Traits* was quite favorable in the United States, in part because Americans were happy to have the ethnographic and travelogue eye reversed back towards England. The overall tone is one of admiring, but opportunistic, criticism. It is the tone of the son who admires his father, but shrewdly understands that the partriarch is aging, and that the mantel of virility and power has settled onto his own shoulders. *English Traits* eagerly plots the racial inheritance of England's imperial power and wealth; desire for a racially hybrid white masculinity (not a contradiction in Emerson's racial schema) is the plot's engine. This ethno-travelogue demonstrates the peculiar double meaning of afterwardness in the term "imperial postcoloniality." Emerson's obsession with inheriting English empire is both about being next in line for empire and "going after" empire, in the sense of actively desiring and moving towards it. In this way, the relationship between the metropole and the postcolony is qualitatively different in a white settler history: the relationship of England and the United States was one of alienated, competitive kinship, rather than center/periphery. Emerson believed that there is an unbreakable link between Englishness and true American vigor and destiny. By deploying tropes of familial and paternal relationships, he illustrates the relationship

between American identity and Englishness—the American Revolution was a family quarrel, and in the nineteenth century, the United States is poised as the true heir of English power and imperialism.

The first two chapters describe the particulars of Emerson's two voyages to England, and function as a preface by informing the reader of how the following text was inspired and came to be written. The third chapter, "Land," truly begins his analysis of the features of Englishness. Emerson frames "the problem of the traveller landing at Liverpool" as "Why England is England? What are the elements of that power which the English hold over other nations? If there be one test of national genius universally accepted, it is success; and if there be one successful country in the universe for the last millennium, that country is England" (784). It is the moment of landing on the shores of England that brings to mind the actual geographical features of that "Land." That word play immediately gives way to an association of geography with power; the moment a traveller lands is the moment he is confronted with the power of the land he enters. England's power is the power of empire, which Emerson conflates with national genius and success. Interestingly enough, while Emerson later discusses the role of industry and capitalism in the chapter "Wealth," it is missing here in his formulation of empire, national genius and success. Success flows from national genius—the wellspring of which Emerson locates in the white racially hybrid origins of the English people, as he argues in the following chapter, "Race." However, he does not explicitly link race with national genius here, although his conclusion that "the American is the only continuation of the English genius into new conditions, more or less propitious" (785) is an acknowledgment that white settler colonialism anchors a racial and filial relation between

England and the United States. While Emerson does not explicitly say that whiteness is the link, it would be preposterous for Emerson to claim the same relation between India and England. A few pages later, Emerson uses the metaphor of marriage to describe the British empire: "The sea, which, according to Virgil's famous line, divided the poor Britons utterly from the world, proved to be the ring of marriage with all nations" (787). Emerson's racial and filial logic culminates in the following way: if England is polygamously married to three-quarters of the globe, and therefore, has legal property rights to all its nation-brides, then the United States is England's heir by primogentiture and race. This inheritance is coming due, as Emerson notes that England's omnipotence "has culminated, is in solstice, or already declining" (785).

In describing the immense cultural power of the British empire, Emerson states that "England has inoculated all nations with her civilization, intelligence, and tastes." This turn of phrase is reminiscent of the writing of the British politician and colonial administrator, Thomas Macaulay. In his 1835 "Minute on Indian Education" he explicitly states that colonial education policy should strive to "form a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." Also, the concept of inoculation resonates with Gibson-Graham's argument regarding the way that capitalism is figured as an act of non-reciprocal penetration. In this case, it is not sexual penetration, but infectious penetration. Two meanings of inoculation—to imbue with a feeling or habit, and to engraft or implant a disease or virus (OED 3a, 3d)—are relevant in this usage. The British have imbued their values to other civilizations through acts of imperial inoculation.

However, Emerson frames this cultural imperialism not as a result of extractive and exploitative colonization, but as an outcome designed by Nature herself:

> Nature held counsel with herself, and said, 'My Romans are gone. To build my new empire, I will choose a rude race, all masculine, with brutish strength. I will not grudge a competition of the roughest males. Let buffalo gore buffalo, and the pasture to the strongest! For I have work that requires the best will and sinew. Sharp and temperate northern breezes shall blow, to keep that will alive and alert. The sea shall disjoin the people from others, and knit them to a fierce nationality.
>
> 788

Here, Nature is figured as the ultimate architect of empire, a rhetorical move that effectively elides the historical, material, economic, political and cultural forces that shape the development of empire.[26] Empire is not only born from Nature's will, but it is explicitly linked with race and masculinity. Emerson ventriloquizes Nature, traditionally personified as female, as she gazes upon the English men. Her (and his) desire is fueled by the "brutish strength" of the English race, which is "all masculine." While this passage upholds an illusion of heterosexually directed desire, it is continually undone with its homoerotic energy: "a competition of the roughest males" results in buffalo goring one

[26] It is also useful to contextualize *English Traits* within nineteenth-century theories of history. Stadial theory, which narrated history as stages within cycles, was a very popular way of understanding the development of human civilizations (See G.W.F. Hegel, the German Enlightenment philosopher and Auguste Comte, the French sociologist). For instance, in 1833-1836, Thomas Kohl painted a very popular series of paintings titled "The Course of Empire" that depicted the five stages of human civilization: savage, pastoral, empire, destruction of empire, and desolation. In addition, many nineteenth-century writers explored the relationship between History and Nature—just as Nature moves through cycles, so does History, but mankind's relationship with Nature enables History to move in an ever more progressive direction. Emerson himself believed that a person should read history in order to rise above history, and that an individual could have an intuitive identification with particular historical events, persons or stages.

another with their long horns. The winner of the masculine competition, the buffalo with the most successful penetrative horns, gets both the territory ("the pasture") and the females in that territory. Strangely enough, while Nature is supposed to be contemplating the masculine strength of the English, she (he) imagines a competition between buffalo, animals native not to England, but to North America. This use of buffalo as a metonym for America reinforces that filial link between England and the United States, even as the passage ends by extolling the ways in which England's geographical specificity results in a race built for empire-building.

Emerson's instinct to first analyze geography as a primary element of British power makes a great deal of sense in terms of the structures of settler colonialism itself. In his 2010 essay, "The Imagined Geographies of Settler Colonialism" Lorenzo Veracini defines settler colonialism by its anticipatory geography. As Veracini notes, European settlers engaged in labor (often Sisyphean) to transform local habitats into mimicries of European gardens, landscapes and agriculture. In the introduction to their edited collection, *Making Settler Colonial Space*, Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmonds contextualize this anticipatory geography as follows:

> It is a historical process of making new meanings and [asserting new] social demography…over existing and enduring Indigenous spaces…In geopolitical terms, the impact of settler colonialism is starkly visible in the landscapes it produces: the symmetrically surveyed divisions of land; fences, roads, power lines, dams and mines; the vast mono-cultural expanses of single-cropped fields; carved and preserved national forest, and marine and wilderness parks; the expansive and grid-divided cities; and the socially coded areas of human

> habitation and trespass that are bordered, policed and defended. Land and the organized spaces on it, in other words, narrate the stories of colonization.
>
> 1-2

Emerson's linking of space and race is also critical to any settler colonial project. As Mar and Edmonds explain, race and space are both conceived of as "natural, given and elemental" and therefore, both are viewed as "nature, *par excellance*" (5). In a solipsistic logic, therefore, Nature creates race in order to build empires upon natural spaces which already belong Nature, who has already granted the rights of empire to her chosen race. Not only does this logic entail the racial/filial chain of empire, but it also undermines any indigenous claim to land and space. As I noted above, Emerson's goal is not only to analyze the engine of England's imperial and cultural power, but to position the United States as its legitimate and sole heir. For Emerson, the racialization of space not only signals an anticipatory geographical imagination for the United States (as in Manifest Destiny) but it anchors the claim to the inheritance of empire.

The next chapter, "Race," in English Traits has garnered the most attention from literary critics. However, Emerson's dialectical method (thesis, antithesis, synthesis) presents a challenge for critics who try to stabilize the meaning of the term "race" in Emerson's work. Emerson makes assertions only to undermine them and synthesize them later. Indeed, synthesis is often missing from his thesis/antithesis pronouncements; Emerson's writings can leave the reader at a loss as to what he truly thinks. Some scholars generously explain that while his racial pronouncements seem harsh, they are simply part of his method, and cannot be isolated and taken out of context. For instance, Lawrence Buell argues that in Emerson's work, race is a "casually elastic" term that

encompasses nationality, religious affiliation, political temperament as well as biological essence (264). Others, like Nell Irvin Painter, trace Emerson's race theory across his body of work and conclude that he did develop a consistent theory of the superiority of Anglo-Saxon whiteness.[27] Still others, like Christopher Hanlon, historicize Emerson's racial theories in the context of the growing abolition and emancipation movement as well as the 1840s and 1850s flourishing amateur market for English genealogy.[28] Although I will not argue that race is a fixed and stable concept for Emerson, I do believe that Emerson's writings about race display a remarkable ability to incorporate and synthesize contradictory racial theories into his own narrative about the virility and superiority of an Anglo white hybridity. In fact, Emerson's dialectical method allows him to work different racial theories against one other in order to come to his own predetermined synthesis: race does indeed determine the arc of history and the character of a people. In addition, it is important to note that this preoccupation with race is also quite characteristic of settler colonialism. Rhetoric of racial difference and purity coexisted alongside the creation of hybrid polities, and settler colonialism necessitated the simultaneous creation and removal of difference.

---

[27] See "Permanent Traits of the English National Genius" (1835); "Genius of the Anglo-Saxon Race" (1843); "Traits and Genius of the Anglo-Saxon Race" (1852); "The Anglo-American" (1853). Painter claims that Emerson wrote the "earliest full-length statement of the ideology later termed Anglo-Saxonist, synthesizing all the salient nineteenth and early twentieth-century concepts of American whiteness" (151).

[28] During this time period, many Americans sought to prove or concoct some familial and historical associations with Englishness. American anglophilia was both strong and ambivalent. Hanlon argues that *English Traits* engages a process "through which various portions of the white American population were affiliated with specific and nominal racial categories of Englishness…desires animating many Americans to associate with and also distance themselves from various strata of Englishness" (803).

However, even if race is a relatively "elastic" term for Emerson, masculinity is a remarkably fixed one. It is precisely through its alliance with masculinity that race comes to occupy a relatively consistent trajectory in Emerson's writing. In her 2002 book, *Fleshing out America: Race, Gender, and the Politics of the Body in American Literature*, Carolyn Sorisio connects Emerson's desire for masculinity with the nineteenth-century's obsession with the effects of urbanization on the young male, which in turn was linked to a desire for a national (and racial) identity.[29] She argues that Emerson's "definition of national identity endorses stereotypical conceptions of Anglo-Saxon masculinity…his call for a new manhood was a racialized call for a Saxon brotherhood" (105). Painter also argues that Emerson's obsession with Anglo-Saxon racial and masculine superiority was a projection of his own desires: "He was obsessed with Saxon violence and manly beauty, both of which qualities he lacked. He was, in fact, a tall and skinny man…who…suffered from various nervous and bodily ailments…As a house-bound intellectual when not lecturing before appreciative audiences, Emerson grew fascinated by the primeval virility of outdoor men of physical strength" (166). While I hesitate to agree with such a blunt psychological-biographical claim, it is nevertheless true that masculinity and Anglo whiteness are intertwined

[29] Sorisio notes that Emerson's anxiety about American masculinity was one shared by other nineteenth century writers: "Like Whitman, Emerson feared that his era's increased urbanization and industrialization negatively affected young men" (121). However, this anxiety is also bound up with ideas of national identity, and "American authors calling for a distinctive American literature were influenced by the German writers who saw literature and language as embodying the soul of a nation" (124). In *Race and Manifest Destiny* (1986), Reginald Horsman observes that American romantics were less interested in the features uniting nations and humankind than in the features separating them.

throughout *English Traits*. It is impossible to analyze Emerson's writings about race outside of his ideas about masculinity.

The "Race" chapter begins with a reference to Robert Knox, the Scottish anatomist who wrote *The Races of Man* in 1850. Knox was a very influential thinker in the development of nineteenth-century scientific racism, and he believed that race was an immutable biological feature and that racial hybridity works against natural law. While Emerson at times seemed enamored with Knox's theories (Hanlon 816), here he rejects them, by observing that while "individuals at the extremes of divergence in once race of men are as unlike as the wolf to the lapdog…you cannot draw the line where a race begins or ends" because "each variety shades down imperceptibly into the next" (Emerson 790). A few paragraphs later, he observes that "the fixity or inconvertibleness of races as we see them, is a weak argument for eternity of these frail boundaries…all our experience is of the gradation and resolution of races, and strange resemblances meet us every where" (793). As Hanlon argues, at this point Emerson has moved away from the biological fixity of race towards a view that "increasing orders of biological complexity entail increasing orders of 'melioration.' [This means that] lines of racial demarcation appear as frail boundaries, links within a subtle chain" (816). However, Emerson's rejection of Knox's racial theories does not mean that Emerson also rejected the popular beliefs about the hierarchy of racial differences. As I will show in a moment, Emerson's rejection of Knox at the beginning of this chapter is a strategic, rather than ideological, move. Emerson finds the concept of hybridity enormously useful in his analysis of the historical and racial origins of Englishness, but it is a hybridity that lives within the spectrum of whiteness.

A journal entry from June 1851 reveals why Emerson feels so comfortable with the possible dangers of racial hybridity.

> America. Emigration. In the distinctions of the genius of the American race it is to be considered that it is not the indiscriminate masses of Europe, that are shipped hitherward, but the Atlantic is a sieve through which only or chiefly the liberal, adventurous, sensitive, America-loving part of each city, clan, family are brought. It is the light complexion, the blue eyes of Europe that come: the black eyes, the black drop, the Europe of Europe is left.
>
> *Journals* 102

Not only does this passage demonstrate the typical rhetorical move of scientific racism (connecting traits to physiognomy), but it also shows a deep confidence that the "best" or "strongest" race will win out over the "lesser" or "weaker" racial characteristics. Here, the Atlantic is called more appropriately a "sieve" rather than a womb; a sieve keeps out impurities, whereas the characteristics identified in this passage (blue eyes) are actually the recessive genes in sexual reproduction. In addition, it illustrates Emerson's belief in assimilation as a racial force—the "black drop" is left behind so that only the "light complected," "liberal," "adventurous," and "sensitive" are assimilated as Americans.[30]

In fact, it is this power of assimilation that Emerson admires about the English: "They have assimilating force, since they are imitated by their foreign subjects; and they are still aggressive and propagandist, enlarging the dominion of their arts and liberty"

---

[30] Strangely enough, Emerson's assessment of the direction of assimilation works against the racial mixing theory that already developing in the late nineteenth-century, the one-drop rule. Instead of the assimilating power of whiteness overtaking darkness, one drop of "dark" blood would be enough to render a person legally non-white. However, it is very clear that throughout Emerson's writings about race, "Negro" is a racial classification that remains separate from his ideas about white racial hybridity.

(791). However, he is quick to note that this assimilation is not brutal or annihilating; rather, "their laws are hospitable, and slavery does not exist under them. What oppression exists is incidental and temporary; their success is not sudden or fortunate, but they have maintained constancy and self-equality for many ages" (791). Clearly, Emerson's claims about the "hospitable" nature of British empire and the "incidental and temporary" existence of oppression are belied by the fact that slavery was only abolished in the British empire a mere twenty-three years prior[31] to his book. The Indian Rebellion of 1857 (otherwise referred to the Indian Mutiny or the First War for Indian Independence) which ushered in the prolonged struggle for Indian independence from British control is also looming in the immediate future. But here, Emerson is constructing a prescient version of "soft" cultural imperialism, one which would come to characterize the cultural and military power of the mid-twentieth century United States. Emerson, while generally averse to both revolution and brutally oppressive colonialism, was a proponent of imperialism. Often, colonialism and imperialism are used interchangeably, but Emerson demonstrates a clear understanding of the difference between the two in this passage. If colonialism is defined as the practice of one nation's domination, subjugation and exploitation of the land, labor and resources of another nation or polity then imperialism is the exercise of power, both materially and culturally, over other countries. Put another way, imperialism is the idea, or the ideology, that drives the practices of colonialism. Emerson may be critical of certain (supposedly past) practices of British colonialism but he is very entranced by power of imperialism.

---

[31] *The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833*

After praising the English for their impressive powers of assimilation and their humane practices of colonialism, Emerson connects race to imperialism. He asks: "Is this power due to their race, or to some other cause?" He then quickly undermines his own question by noting wryly that "men hear gladly of the power of blood or race…as it makes the praise more personal to him" (791). But he quickly reasserts a doctrine of racial superiority, followed by a claim about which races are more immutable than others: "It is race, is it not? That puts the hundred millions of India under the dominion of a remote island in the north of Europe…but whilst race works immortally to keep its own, it is resisted by other forces. Civilization is a re-agent and eats away the old traits. The Arabs of to-day are the Arabs of Pharaoh; but the Briton of to-day is a very different person from Cassibelaunus or Ossian" (792). Although Emerson does not explicitly answer his own question, the sentence asks a question, for which no other answer can be found—if it is not race, then what could it be, other than race? This moment also provides a key insight into Emerson's theories of racial hybridity. Borrowing fully from the ideology of Orientalism, Emerson claims that "the Arabs" remain stagnant, fixed in history; as they once were, so they always shall be. However, it is the Britons, and other civilized peoples, who can move forward, change and develop over the course of history.

Over the next several pages, Emerson affirms the common ancestral bond of all humanity and that the common experience of any human is that of "inoculation" not "pure descent" because "a child blends in his face the faces of both parents and some feature from every ancestor whose face hangs on the wall" (793). It is important to understand that Emerson's writing about race occurred after the shift in nineteenth century racial discourse from monogenism to polygenism. The racial theory of the

sameness of all races (monogenism) was popular into the 1830s, but in the late 1840s, polygenism, the belief in innate differences between and origins of the different races became more popular. In this text, Emerson rejects innate racial differences in favor of racial differences as a result of hybridity. Racial differences and samenesses exist as a result of historical processes of cultural mixture, not because of an innate biological destiny. Yet he immediately links this hybridity, this "inoculation," to colonialism and imperialism: "The best nations are those most widely related; and navigation, as effecting a world-wide mixture, is the most potent advancer of nations." (793). However, it is clear that Emerson is not referring to the relationship between England and African polities when he mentions "related" nations and or the (seemingly impossible) idea of African imperialism when he mentions a "world-wide mixture." Here, he implicitly references his previous pronouncement that the "American is only the continuation of the English genius." It is this racial relation of white mixture between the United States and England that Emerson believes is the "potent advancer of nations." This pattern—assertions regarding the purity and immutability of race followed by the acknowledgement of racial mixture and the impossibility of racial categories—continues throughout the chapter. However, this racial genealogy of *white* mixture is central to Emerson's understanding of the relationship between the United States and England. In addition to being the first-born manifestation of British Empire, the United States is the legitimate racial heir of the Empire. Only hybridity within a spectrum of white mixture is desirable, and it is this white hybridity that infuses the American spirit with vitality and virility.

The remainder of the chapter is focused on the "mixed origin" of the British Anglo-Saxon "composite character" (793). Emerson constructs a very thorough English racial/cultural geneaology by tracing the exact origins of this hybrid mixture—Celts, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Germans, Danes and Norsemen. In a description that could be easily reworded to describe his own rhetorical method, Emerson praises Englishness as "a fusion of distant and antagonistic elements. The language is mixed; the names of men are of different nations…nothing can be praised in it without damning exceptions, and nothing denounced without salvos of cordial praise" (793). Emerson continues his racial analysis by mobilizing the familiar plant imagery to claim that "neither do this people appear to be of one stem; but collectively a better race than any from which they are derived" (793-794). In an echo of Hawthorne's belief in the necessity of transplantation and mixture, Emerson also states that this hybridity results in a "better race" than its origins. However, he then acknowledges the immense difficulty of tracing distinct racial lines of descent: "Nor is it easy to trace it home to its original seats. Who can call by right names what races are in Britain? Who can trace them historically? Who can discriminate them anatomically, or metaphysically?" (794). After this set of rhetorical questions that frame the impossibility of a such a task, Emerson moves forward in his historical, anatomical and metaphysical analysis of the English race.

As many scholars have shown, the Norman/Saxon roots of English heritage were mobilized in particular ways in nineteenth-century American racial and sectional discourses.[32] As Hanlon argues, the political narrative of *English Traits* "interweaves

[32] See Nell Irvin Painter, Christopher Hanlon, Carolyn Sorisio. Painter argues that within the transatlantic racial and national discourses of the nineteenth century, Emerson faced a dilemma in terms of selecting the best racial origin: "If the Norsemen endowed Britain

what Emerson alternatively calls 'character or 'temperament' with race in a way that is on the one hand typical of antebellum ethnology but which on the other is grounded in a broader transatlantic racial historiography" (804). Emerson valorizes the racial temperament of the Saxons; he draws on an established Revolutionary era discourse that framed the colonial break with England as a return to Anglo-Saxon democracy (Patterson 134). Hanlon shows that Emerson believed that the sectional crisis was a continuation of hostilities between two English racial branches. The Norman/Saxon conflict was a useful historical palimpsest upon which Northern/Southern clashes could be written. This historical parallel allowed both sides to claim a racial and ancestral origin for their contemporary conflict, and substitute a white racial history for the actual racial conflict (slavery and abolition) at the heart of the sectional crisis.[33] Emerson turns current political practices into racial traits; for Emerson, racial genius, not historical or economic forces, aligned the Saxon race (Northerners) with liberty, therefore entailing their natural superiority for imperialism (Painter 175).

Hanlon goes on to contextualize both Emerson's valorization of Anglo-Saxons and his insistence that race itself undergoes a process of melioration: "*English Traits*

---

with all its 'Saxon' Greatness, how to explain the relative obscurity of contemporary Scandinavia?" (168). Emerson's weak solution was to repurpose a fruit tree metaphor—the tree itself is exhausted with its initial fruits and has succumbed to the process of degeneration: "The continued draught of the best men in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, to these piratical expeditions, exhausted those countries, like a tree which bears much fruit when young, and these have been second-rate powers ever since ("Race" 799).

[33] "But the eventual sharpening of a sectionalist account of the Norman Conquest provided the surroundings within which *English Traits* would acquire urgency and force. Emerson's own accounts of the Norman Conquest and the struggles of ethnicity and temperament it signaled were bound to similar accounts being generated by others, and because of this *English Traits* could not but appear as a similar effort to enlist English bloodlines in the conflict between the states" (Hanlon 814).

becomes Emerson's way of redescribing the nation itself as a process of melioration and resolution, rather than the latest stage upon which Saxons and Normans would clash. The biological principles of melioration and admixture Emerson deploys in his critique of Knox thus become the principle guarantor of America's futurity as a national entity" (818). By intervening in the contemporary discourses about the Norman/Saxon conflicts, Emerson is able to show (white) Americans that their seemingly antagonistic temperaments actually have more in common than previously thought: a "composite" origin of racial mixture. *English Traits* offers a solidarity in white hybridity—white Americans have more in common with each other than they do with other racial categories—in order to assuage the racial anxieties over a post-Emancipation United States. For instance, it is not accidental that the end of his 1844 anti-slavery address, "Emancipation in the British West Indies," he concludes by asserting the "genius of the Saxon race" which is "friendly to liberty." He is addressing the mixture of white Americans, facing the imminence of emancipation. He tells them that their racial character, "the very muscular vigor" of the nation, is "inconsistent with slavery" (*Political Emerson* 119). This is a rhetorical act of comfort and solidarity; we (as white Saxon Americans) can find strength in our racial genius to face the coming waves of emancipation, because it is only by drawing together that we will fulfill our liberty-loving destiny. In other words, Emerson ends by telling his audience that emancipation is really about Saxon "us," not the emancipated "them."

Here, I would like to note the distinction between whiteness and white supremacy: as Mason Stokes so succinctly explains,[34] "white supremacy, so often imagined as extreme, allows whiteness once again its status as the nonthreatening, as the good…white supremacy becomes something of a scapegoat for whiteness, the convenient location of white violence and lawlessness, distracting our attention from the violence and lawlessness of whiteness itself" (13). Emerson may have distanced himself from the more egregious theories of scientific racism, but it is a strategic distance that allows him to recoup the benefits of white solidarity. Again, it is important to note that Emerson does not jettison the rhetoric of racial essentialism—once he has established the essential white hybridity of Englishness, he reinvokes the racial genius of the English race, and by extension, the American race. If emancipation conjured the frightening specter of racial mixing, then *English Traits* offers a pathway to white solidarity by turning the idea racial mixture to advantageous ends (for white Americans). In addition, this pathway also solves another nineteenth-century dilemma: what to do about the emasculated, soft, urbane American man. By insisting on the continuity of Saxon racial traits, Emerson appeals to a racial heritage of masculinity.[35] [36]

---

[34] *The Color of Sex: Whiteness, Heterosexuality, and the Fictions of White Supremacy* (2001)

[35] "Having identified his audience as civilized Saxons, Emerson mourns what the modern male has lost through his superior civilization…if civilization brought with it the threat of a feminized culture, this was a confinement that Emerson believed the Saxon male was programmed to resist. His desire to reclaim the American male's manhood, to emancipate them from the captivity of the feminized parlor, coincides with some of the most pronounced language of racial difference in his writings from this time period…His anxiety about masculinity manifested itself, in part, in a racialized language that enables him to reclaim and redefine manhood…Emerson takes comfort in envisioning the English as his ancestors, because of their masculine roots" (Sorisio 123-124).

In her 2007 book, *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America, 1880–1940*, Julian Carter explores this powerful mix of evolutionary racial ideology and the imperatives of heterosexual desire and reproduction. As she explains, "evolutionist perspectives on civilization implied that social inequality—the dominance of native-born, financially secure, educated white men—was determined by heredity and so was beyond the bounds of meaningful dissent" (5). Evolutionary thought "emphasizes reproduction as the vector for inheritance" which in turn entails an attention to the importance of a "specifically sexual 'fitness' among modern whites" (5).[37] This awareness of sex as potentially racially reproductive (and transgressive) worked to define whiteness in terms that mandated and naturalized heterosexuality (21). While Carter's work is grounded in the mid-twentieth century United States, we can see the antecedents of this thinking in *English Traits*. Emerson, aware of the threat of emancipation to the composite character of the American nation, embraced the idea of racial transgression/reproduction by leveraging it in favor of expanding white solidarity. He also amplifies the concept of the reproductive family by extending it metaphorically into the relation between nations. However, as I will discuss later, while Emerson returns again and again to the filial (and racial) relationship between England and the United States, there is little mention of heterosexual desire or coupling as either the literal or

---

[36] Painter notes that "bodily strength, vigor, manliness and energy emerge as natural outgrowths of early Saxon blood-thirstiness…homicidal history, synonymous to Emerson with gorgeous male energy, comes to life in his two quintessential 'Norsemen'" (172).

[37] Julian Carter's analysis focuses on the ways in which "the mutually dependent racial and sexual hierarchies condensed in the notion of the normal…Normality discourse appeared to be politically neutral in large part because it so often framed its racially loaded dreams for the reproduction of white civilization in the language of romantic and familial love" (6). She argues that in the mid-twentieth century, whites' racial place in the nation was so secure that it wasn't a question of whether whites would continue to dominate, but how to perpetuate that white civilization.

symbolic engine of this relationship. In fact, Emerson's text overflows with a homosocial and homoerotic sensibility, and with the exception of the last image of England as an aging queen, the relationship between the two nations is one of racialized masculinity.[38]

The ambivalence about racial and cultural essentialism versus hybridity has a very particular context with the history of the emergent Republic. As Sean Goudie argues, the United States was engaged in what he calls paracolonialism in the West Indies.[39] Prior to the Revolution and continuing into the early national years, the United States was the beneficiary of an ongoing relationship with Europe's West Indian colonies. While not a rival to the European colonial powers, the United States operated alongside and often imitated the practices of European colonization. Goudie describes the position of the United States in this era as definitely not postcolonial, but not quite imperial. If paracolonialism describes the economic, military and colonial operations of the new nation, then what Goudie calls "the creole complex" describes its cultural and racial position. The creole complex mitigates the myth of exceptionalism and undermines the stability of the national character by demonstrating that "early American literature and culture was formed not only according to an East-West transatlantic axis but also a North-South hemispheric one" (22). Both creole and Anglo Americans were quite anxious about "the unpredictable effects on the Anglo-American national character of extensive political, economic and cross-cultural relations between the slave colonies of

---

[38] Over forty years after the publication of *English Traits*, the concept of hybridity was curiously linked to homosexuality In 1897, Havelock Ellis, the British sexologist, wrote in a footnote that "homosexual is a barbarously hybrid word; it is, however, convenient and now widely used" (*Sexual Inversion* 1). His irritation with the word came from its mixed etymological heritage (both Latin and Greek components), but it also summons anxieties about sexual and racial mixtures.

[39] *Creole America: The West Indies and the Formation of Literature and Culture in the New Republic* (2006)

the West Indies and the democratic states of the New Republic" (9). However, when the North American colonies gained independence, they became invested in a process of national and cultural purification, a process of un-becoming creole. Goudie contends that "the shadowy presence of creole American identities underlies anxious efforts to construct exceptionalist American identities" and that "the presence of Haiti [functioned] as the shadow black republic to the would-be exceptional and exceptionally white U.S. nation" (9, 11).

David Kazanjian's *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America* traces this racial anxiety into the nineteenth century. The book's title refers to David Walker's 1829 *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World*, a manifesto that argued for emancipation solidarity and equality, and against the movement to sending newly emancipated African Americans to colonize Africa. In the appeal, Walker argued that the deportation and resettlement of black Americans outside the territorial boundaries of the United States was anything but emancipatory. Kazanjian argues that this colonization movement enabled "the racial purification of a domestic space and the exercise of imperial power over a foreign space" (31). The colonization movement was but one aspect of the larger ideological process that instantiated formal equality between citizens through codified conceptions of race and nation (Kazanjian 7). Henry Charles Carey, an influential political economist in the nineteenth century, predicted that America's future depended on this particular alliance of racialization, colonization and cultural assimilation. His book, *The Past, the Present and the Future* advocates mercantilism, African colonization, Indian assimilation and the US colonization of Mexico.

The confluence of racial anxiety, imperial ambition and wealth demonstrated in paracolonialism can also be seen in Emerson's analysis of the development of capitalism in England. In the chapter titled "Wealth," Emerson first praises the industrialization and colonialism that fuels England's wealth and luxury economy and then critiques it by asking if England takes "the step beyond, namely, to the wise use, in view of the supreme wealth of nations? We estimate the wisdom of nations by seeing what they did with their surplus capital" (858). Michael Gilmore traces the evolution of Emerson's approach to the market, capital and other forces in his 1985 book, *American Romanticism and the Marketplace*. By the time of the publication of *English Traits*, Gilmore argues that Emerson has repudiated the "radical excesses of his early thought and views worldly success as a sign of spiritual election…[he] attributes to great wealth the very powers that he once ascribed to spirit…riches advertise their owner as a man of character…property rushes from the idle and imbecile to the industrious, brave and persevering" (31). This transition is borne out by Emerson's remark regarding the relationship between England, her wealth and her people. The chapter begins with the assertion: "There is no country in which so absolute a homage is paid to wealth" (850). After describing the various aspects of England's wealth, Emerson claims that "the cause and spring of it is the wealth of temperament in the people…The English are so rich, and seem to have established a tap-root in the bowels of the planet, because they are constitutionally fertile and creative" (857). This passage cleverly links wealth/capital with race and reproduction: England's wealth is an outcome of the racial traits of fertility and creativity, and this is naturalized through the image of a "tap-root" that grows deep in the "bowels of the planet." At this point, Emerson elides any mention of his previous discussion of England's role in

industrialization and global finance, and England's wealth is represented as a fundamentally racialized outcome.

While Emerson moves towards this straightforward link of race and wealth, he also presciently describes what we would currently recognize as our own contemporary moment of globalization and what some would call the post-national era:

> But another machine more potent in England than steam, is the Bank. It votes an issue of bills, population is stimulated, and cities rise; it refuses loans, and emigration empties the country; trade sinks; revolutions break out; kings are dethroned. By these new agents our social system is moulded. By dint of steam and money, war and commerce are changed. Nations have lost their old omnipotence; the patriotic tie does not hold. Nations are getting obsolete, we go and live where we will.
>
> 854

This description is significant for two reasons: first, it is a reminder of the continuity of past imperialism and contemporary globalization; second, it demonstrates the racial logic through which globalization operates. While Emerson's theories of race are unsupportable for a number of reasons, there is indeed a racial foundation for the colonial/postcolonial nation. This becomes even more pronounced in terms of white settler histories—it is race that determines and directs the flow of capital, the outcome of the extractive and exploitative practices of colonialism. Once nations become "obsolete," the racial logic still directs the flow of capital.[40]

---

[40] In the twenty-first century, we are in the middle of a massive shift of global finance from the West to the East, and we are moving into a different racial logic of capital. One could argue that this is a shift in the dialectic that started in the early nineteenth-century

At the end of the chapter, Emerson wonders whether England is able to "take the step beyond, namely, to the wise use, in view of the supreme wealth of nations? We estimate the wisdom of nations by seeing what they did with their surplus capital" (858). Unsurprisingly, Emerson finds England's antidotes to social ills inadequate, and predicts that England's fetishization of wealth will also be part of its downfall, with the implication being that the successful management of capitalism and leadership in social progressivism now falls in the purview of the United States.

The penultimate chapter, "Result," positions England as the current seat of wealth, power, influence and empire. It begins by stating that "England is the best of actual nations" (929) while it does offer a few critiques, it always resolves in favor of England's true greatness. For instance, Emerson acknowledges that "the foreign policy of England, though ambitious and lavish of money, has not often been generous or just" but then he praises England for abolishing slavery in the West Indies (conveniently forgetting that the English perpetuated and profited from at least a century of slavery in the British West Indies) and "putting an end to human sacrifices in the East, which is an oblique reference to the Indian custom of sati.[41] Turning yet again to the nature and character of the English, Emerson conjures a nation of teeming multiplicity, which is itself the main characteristic of the unified national character: "It is a people of myriad personalities. Their many-headedness is owing the advantageous position of the middle class, who are always the source of letters and sciences. Hence the vast plenty of their aesthetic

---

and the Opium Wars between Great Britain and China. I will explore this further in the next chapter in my discussion of *The Sea of Poppies*.

[41] See Gayatri Spivak's essay about sati and the dangers of speaking for and representing the Other, and the problem with white men saving brown women from brown men: "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988).

production" (931). By linking multiplicity with the middle class, scientific and aesthetic innovations, Emerson underscores this relationship between character, race and capital.

The rest of the paragraph interprets this national character of multiplicity as a natural fit for empire. "As they are many-headed, so they are many-nationed: their colonization annexes archipelagoes and continents, and their speech seems destined to be the universal language of men" (931). Again, in a prescient moment, Emerson predicts that English will be the global language of the future. However, while this sentence at first glance connects colonization with the rise of global English, the phrasing of "and their speech seems destined" curiously disconnects the spread of the English language from the material facts of colonization. The conjunction "and" functions here as a simple pause between the two facts that explain the "many-nationed" quality of the English, instead of creating a causal link between the colonization of continents and the development of English as a global language. In Emerson's worldview, this global language is bestowed as a gift upon the colonized peoples, but what haunts this gift is the shadow of Caliban, whose "profit" on learning Prospero's language is knowing "how to curse."[42]

Emerson's distillation of English empire—the separation of the inconvenient facts of exploitation, brutality and oppression from the fruits of imperial power, i.e. wealth and global power—continues as he uses Orientalist and anti-revolutionary references to compare the "reserve of power in the English temperament" (931). While Emerson notes that the Norse heritage brings with it the threat of "Berserkir rage," the English "never let out all the length of all the reins" (931), meaning that the English are able to maintain a

[42] William Shakespeare *The Tempest*, Act 1, scene 2

judicious restraint over their figurative stallion of imperial power. This restraint is compared to the "abandonment or ecstasy of will or intellect, like that of the Arabs in the time of Mahomet, or like that which intoxicated France in 1789" (931). But then, Emerson lets out all the length of the reins from his own prose, and his rhetoric spirals into dizzying heights of praise and sycophancy:

> But who would see the uncoiling of that tremendous spring, the explosion of their well-husbanded forces, must follow the swarms which pouring now for two hundred years from the British islands, have sailed, and rode, and traded, and planted, through all climates, mainly following the belt of empire, the temperate zones, carrying the Saxon seed, with its instinct for liberty and law, for arts and for thought—acquiring under some skies a more electric energy than the native air allows,--to the conquest of the globe.
>
> 931

The "swarms" of English colonizers have spread across the globe bringing with them their masculine, virile "Saxon seed." Yet while Emerson explicitly references the cultural and aesthetic elements contained in this seed, there is an implicit reference to the mechanisms of racialized sexual reproduction as well, because of its racial (Saxon) origin. However, this seed is also a wayward one, given the colonizer's deep investment in regulating the intimate connections between and among the differently gendered and racialized bodies throughout the history of European colonization.[43] Whiteness has an ambivalent proximity to and interaction with heterosexuality because heterosexuality is both the reproduction of and the threat to whiteness. However, while this passage does

---

[43] See Ann Stoler.

gesture towards the necessary alliance between Saxon whiteenss and heterosexual reproduction, it, alongside many other passages in *English Traits*, has a homosocial charge. Women's bodies—both white and brown, given that spreading the Saxon seed entails a process of sexual inoculation and mixture—facilitate this homosocial structure of colonizing virility and white masculinity.[44] Once again, Emerson creates a chain of entailments between race/temperament/masculine virility/empire.

This distillation process continues as Emerson remarks on the liberalization of British colonial policies, most notably evidenced by the way in which "Canada and Australia have been contented with substantial independence" (931). Of course, Canada and Australia, like the United States, were white settler colonies, therefore, their "Saxon seed" gave them their instincts for "liberty and law" which in turn resulted in a degree of substantial independence. However, India is a different case altogether. The English are "expiating the wrongs of India, by benefits" (931). Although the syntax renders it unclear whether the "wrongs of India" refers to the brutalities and exploitation of British colonization, or the heathen and societal "savagery" of the less civilized East, I strongly suspect Emerson meant the latter. The "benefits" include "works for the irrigation of the peninsula, and roads and telegraphs" (931) and which, as Mars and Edmonds have pointed out, tell the story of colonization. The second benefit that England is bestowing upon India is "the instruction of the people, to qualify them for self-government, when the British power shall be finally called home" (931). Emerson's rhetoric here is fueled

[44] This is a very Sedgwickian dynamic: a homoerotic male/male relation that requires a woman in a mediating position, in a position of exchange. See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (1991).

by a racist colonial logic, one that finds its aesthetic zenith in Rudyard Kipling's 1899 poem, "The White Man's Burden."[45]

English Traits ends with the text of a speech Emerson delivered a few days after his arrival in Manchester, in November 1847. He decided to include the text of the speech because after looking over a newspaper report of his lecture, he judged his remarks as "fitly expressing the feeling with which I entered England, and which agrees well enough with the more deliberate results of better acquaintance recorded in the foregoing pages" (934). In other words, Emerson traveled to England with a particular idea about the relationship of England to history and the United States, and rather unsurprisingly, he interpreted all of his experiences as a confirmation of that idea. In a pattern that by now is very familiar to the reader, this speech begins with effusive praise and flattery, but then turns to critique. However, the target of this turn is the relationship between England and the United States. Early in the speech, Emerson summons the racial bond between the

---

[45] Coincidently, Kipling wrote the poem in response to the American invasion of the Philipines after the Spanish-American War. The first three stanzas:

Take up the White Man's burden, Send forth the best ye breed
  Go bind your sons to exile, to serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness, On fluttered folk and wild--
  Your new-caught, sullen peoples, Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden, In patience to abide,
  To veil the threat of terror And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple, An hundred times made plain
  To seek another's profit, And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden, The savage wars of peace--
  Fill full the mouth of Famine And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest The end for others sought,
  Watch sloth and heathen Folly Bring all your hopes to nought.

two nations: “That which lures a solitary American in the woods with the wish to see England, is the moral peculiarity of the Saxon race,--its commanding sense of right and wrong,--the love and devotion to that,--this is the imperial trait, which arms them with the sceptre of the globe” (935). It is the racialized “moral peculiarity” that draws Americans to England to pay homage; like draws like, and the Saxon racial bond cannot be broken because it inheres in the moral character of its people. This moral character is the “imperial trait”—many empires have risen and fallen throughout history, but this “commanding sense of right and wrong” commands an imperial destiny, one that is aligned with its racial destiny.

If England currently is armed with the “sceptre of the globe,” Emerson clearly believes that the United States is its firstborn heir, and that England will eventually hand its imperial reign over to Americans. The last paragraph of *English Traits* personifies England as an aging mother monarch—an image that turns away from the masculine Saxon racial virility towards a feminine regal and aging eminence. This switch in gender is an interesting turn in Emerson’s rhetorical categories, but it also fits quite well with his alignment of racial reproduction with images of masculine virility, rather than feminine gestation. The aging queen may have imperial power, but not reproductive power, a trope that draws heavily on the iconography surrounding Queen Elizabeth the First. Even a few lines later, when Emerson refers to England as the “mother of nations, mother of heroes” (936), the metaphor holds more generative, rather than reproductive, valences.

Emerson sees that this “aged England, with the possessions, honors and trophies, and also with the infirmities of a thousand years gathering around her” is being “pressed upon by the transitions of trade, and new and all incalculable modes, fabrics, arts,

machines and competing populations" (936). England is the aging mother, bewildered by the newfangled technology and the speed at which change is occurring in the world. However, she is not yet elderly, and still retains her power and wisdom because she remembers that "she has seen dark days before" and she has "a secret vigor and a pulse like a cannon" (936). She may be aging, but she is still the imperial monarch, whose lifeblood moves with the rhythm of her military and her ever-increasing global conquests. Emerson pays homage to her imperial power and strength: "I see her in her old age, not decrepit, but young, and still daring to believe in her power of endurance and expansion. Seeing this I say, All hail! Mother of nations, mother of heroes, with strength still equal to the time; still wise to entertain and swift to execute the policy which the mind and heart of mankind requires in the present hour" (936). Yet within the homage, his tone strikes a challenge—England "still daring to believe" in her power, which implies that it is indeed a risk to believe in her continuing strength. Emerson hails the "mother of nations" whose power *should* be able to meet the challenges of her time, and ends his homage with the proclamation "So be it! So let it be!" (936).

But *English Traits* does not end with this proclamation of continued imperial strength. Emerson immediately turns to the vision of England's failure: "If it be not so, if the courage of England goes with the chances of a commercial crisis" (936), all is not lost because Emerson immediately offers a vision of the United States as the last great hope of humanity. In the seemingly inevitable face of England's decline, Emerson declares that he "will go back to the capes of Massachusetts, and my own Indian stream, and say to my countrymen, the old race are all gone, and the elasticity and hope of mankind must henceforth remain on the Alleghany ranges, or nowhere" (936). The Saxon vigor and

virility has disappeared from England, now personified by an aging Queen Mother. The only hope of continuing the Saxon imperial line lies within the "Alleghany ranges" (a metonymic referent for the United States). It is also significant to note that Emerson's claim for the "hope of mankind" is subtended by an act of dispossession and colonialism through his reference to his "own Indian stream." There is also double referent in the phrase "the old race are all gone"—ostensibly referring to the "English race" whose courage may go with the chances of a commercial crisis, but also referring to the Indians, who are also disappearing, or rather, being figured as disappearing. In this passage, Emerson claims an imperial future for the descendants of the white hybrid English people in two ways: through the racial continuity of the Saxon traits and through the claiming of his "own Indian stream" and the disappearance of the natives. It is a double racial inheritance, one that also represents the subject position of the white imperial postcolonial subject.

If Emerson was using the fantasy of white racial hybridity to create a racial unity across the sectional divide in the nineteenth-century United States, then Edgar Allen Poe's 1838 novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, provides a psychological counterpart to this racial/national fantasy. The ending of Poe's novel—part adventure story and part Gothic supernatural fantasy, received at first by some readers as nonfiction[46]—allegorizes the inevitably fatal clash between whiteness and darkness. In fact, as many critics have pointed out, gothic novels actively engaged themes and

[46] Some readers and reviewers took the novel as a work of nonfiction, as an account of an actual voyage to the South Pole. While these credulous readers certainly missed the many signs of the novel's fictional nature, it is also important to note that to these readers, the ideas presented in the novel about "black savages" and white explorers were quite credible.

fantasies about slavery: the terror of possession, the iconography of entrapment and imprisonment, familial betrayals and transgressions, and the supernatural effects of haunting that conjure fantasies of race.[47] Toni Morrison, in her clarion call to recognize the ways in which blackness has always been constitutive of the very soul of American literature, pulls our attention to not only gothic's blackness, but its whiteness as well.[48]

Whereas Emerson attained the status of a prominent writer and public intellectual during his lifetime and literary historians and critics sustained this canonical reputation long after his death, Poe's reputation, in both life and death, veered wildly from commercial popularity to personal ignominy and until relatively recently, canonical ambivalence. In part, this was due to Poe's categorization as a pro-slavery Southerner. Teresa A. Goddu argues Poe's work has been domesticated and located in the American South in order to bracket out racism from the American canon.[49] Goddo goes on to explain that the gothic form offered Poe a "complex and complementary notation with which to explore the racial discourse of his period, a discourse concerned as much with perfect whiteness as terrifying blackness" (76). As she also explains, to read *Pym* only as a Southern text by a Southern writer is to miss its engagement with a complex contradictory national, and not just regional, racial discourse. The novel's racial codings and our subsequent critical deciphering of these codings depends upon the interpretative framing of Pym's journey to the South (and again we must ask, which South—the American South, the global South or both?). If Poe is simply regarded as a pro-slavery Southern writer, Pym's obsession with whiteness and blackness turns into a

---

[47] See Kari J. Winter, *Subjects of Slavery, Agents of Change* (1992)
[48] *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992), 33.
[49] *Gothic America* (1997)

straightforward proslavery allegory. But as Goddu points out, this is a circular argument: "*Pym* is at once the sign and the signifier of Poe's southern racism" (81).

Taking Goddu's insight about Poe's engagement with not only a regional, but national, racial discourse even further, I am suggesting that Poe was also engaging with a global discourse about white settler histories and futures. *Pym* was published in installments, in *The Southern Literary Messenger*, beginning in January 1837. Alongside the first installment was a review of Jeremiah N. Reynolds's address to Congress advocating for a southern ocean exploring expedition. At the heart of his argument was a heady ideological mix of nationalism, racialized colonialism and global capitalism:

> While there remains a spot of untrodden earth accessible to man…no enlightened, and especially commercial and free people, should withhold its contributions for exploring it, whether that spot may be found on the earth, from the equator to the poles…the enterprise should be national in its object, and sustained by the national means…it belongs of right to no individual, or set of individuals, but to the country and the whole country.
>
> 70, 98

Antarctica itself is an exceptional setting for colonial desires and white settler fantasies. In his 2010 article, "Appropriating Space: Antarctic Imperialism and the Mentality of Settler Colonialism" Adrian Howkins argues that the terms of expression used in evoking exploration and scientific endeavor in the Antarctic were deeply colonial, as well as gendered and raced.[50] Antarctica seemed like an ideal settler colony, brimming

[50] Antarctic exploration has always been extraordinarily racist and sexist. In fact, the British were overtly racist in their dismissal of the Japanese attempts at exploration. In

with potential wealth but conveniently devoid of indigenous people. Antarctic space represents the highest and purist state of settler colonialism, because the rhetorical justification for colonial settlements is the existence of empty space. The rhetoric of empty space is deeply violent, because it equates indigenous cultures and peoples with empty space, therefore entailing the "manifest destiny" of genocide and assimilation. However, unlike North America, Australia or New Zealand, Antarctica truly is empty (of human life, at least). Because of the severity of the conditions, it wasn't until the twentieth century that the continent became part of the broader processes of European imperialism, even though the first expeditions from Britain, Russia and the United States occurred in 1820. This is why, as Howkins argues, "imperial claims to Antarctica exemplified the mentality of settler colonialism. Antarctic imperialism offered an ideal type, the highest phase of settler colonialism…[it] epitomizes the elitist, racist and exclusionary mentality of the settler colonial project…The hostility of the environment offered an opportunity to demonstrate the racial fitness of the imperial powers" (31).

The emptiness—the whiteness—of Antarctica offered a perfect setting for Poe to work through the terrifying conflict between absolute whiteness and blackness. Precisely because Antarctica was still a "dark continent" in the 1830s, in terms of the lack of knowledge about its geography, resources and character, its very whiteness became a symbol of its darkness. The first three-quarters of the novel follow Arthur Pym's experiences as a stowaway on a ship, upon which a bloody mutiny occurs.[51] The mutiny,

---

this landscape, women's reproductive labor was not needed, and the geography was gendered as female, as a place to be conquered.

[51] The original source material for the novel was the speculative theory of the hollow earth and the story *Symzonia* by John Cleves Symmes (1820). In this story, the main

in combination with violent storms, a shipwreck and an act of cannibalism, leaves only two survivors: Pym and his friend Dirk Peters. While Pym is a white New Englander, Peters is racially mixed, or what the nineteenth-century would call a "half-breed" because his mother was Native American and his father was a white man. In contrast to Emerson's praise of white hybridity, Poe's description of racial hybridity relies on the associations of physical deformity and ugliness of a mongrel.[52]

> This man was the son of an Indian squaw of the tribe of Upsarokas, who live among the fastnesses of the Black Hills near the source of the Missouri. His father was a fur-trader, I believe, or at least connected in some manner with the Indian trading-posts on Lewis river. Peters himself was one of he most purely ferocious-looking men I ever beheld. He was short in stature—not more than four feet eight inches high—but his limbs were of the most Herculean mold. His hands, especially, were so enormously thick and broad as hardly to retain a human shape. His arms, as well as legs, were bowed in the most singular manner and appeared to possess no flexibility whatever. His head was equally deformed, being of immense size, with an indentation on the crown (like that on the head of most negroes), and entirely bald. To conceal this latter deficiency, which did

---

character encounters a race of white beings whom he calls the internals. He sees himself as inferior because in comparison to perfect whiteness, he may be more black than white. In this story, race is fluid because moral failings can cause white men to transform into dark men, but even this fluidity upholds the equivalence of whiteness with goodness and darkness with depravity. In Poe's novel, the journey to the South/center of the earth is a journey into blackness.

[52] OED: *hybrid*: offspring of two animals or plants of different species, or (less strictly) varieties; a half-breed, cross-breed, or mongrel.

> not proceed from old age, he usually wore a wig formed of any hair-like material which presented itself, occasionally the skin of a Spanish dog or American grizzly bear. At the time spoken of he had on a portion of one of these bearskins; and it added no little to the natural ferocity of his countenance, which betook of the Upsaroka character.
>
> 41-42

The last quarter of the novel follows Pym and Peters as they take passage on another ship, bound for the South Pole. Upon reaching their destination, the rest of the crewmembers are slaughtered by the black inhabitants, and only Pym and Peters, the white man and the racially hybrid man, escape once again. However, it is interesting to note that as Pym realizes that they are the only survivors of the original crew, he thinks, "We were the only living white men upon the island" (156). Even though Poe originally characterizes Peters as a physically grotesque racial mongrel, here, in this section of the novel, he becomes white—his racial hybridity becomes assimilated into whiteness, in the face of absolute blackness. This logic appears in Emerson's text as well; the definition of whiteness can and should be expanded in the interests of solidarity against the threat of blackness. However, as Goddu argues, even though this section of the novel deals in images of absolute whiteness and darkness, it is a polarization that is always collapsing into itself. The self can easily become the Other; whiteness is terrifying and all-powerful, but one is always at risk of losing one's whiteness.

As Toni Morrison has argued, blackness often becomes the reflexive surrogate through which white identity is mediated through a simultaneous desire for and dread of blackness (38). The simultaneous desire/dread for blackness is dramatized in a scene in

which Pym and Peters are trying to escape the island, and so they must climb down into a chasm of black granite. Peters descends first, and then Pym musters the courage to follow. As Pym descends, his mind is gripped by sensations of dizziness and delirium: "The more earnestly I struggled *not to think*, the more intensely vivid became my conceptions, and the more horribly distinct" (170). He begins to imagine the sensation of losing his grip and falling into the abyss, and then, "with a wild, indefinable emotion half of horror, half of a relieved oppression, [he] threw [his] vision far down into the abyss" (170). In this moment of terror, his fingers "clutch convulsively upon their hold," while at the same time, "the faintest possible idea of ultimate escape wandered, like a shadow, through my mind" (170). Suddenly, his "whole soul was pervaded with *a longing to fall*; a desire, a yearning, a passion utterly uncontrollable" (170). Overwhelmed by terror and his own desire to fall, Pym swoons: "There came a spinning of the brain; a shrill-sounding and phantom voice screamed within my ears; a dusky, fiendish and filmy figure stood immediately beneath me; and, sighing, I sunk down with a bursting heart, and plunged within its arms" (170). Falling into the darkness of the abyss is both a suicidal and ecstatic experience, and as he swoons, Pym is caught by his "dusky fiendish" companion Peters, who in this moment represents darkness instead of whiteness. If, as Laura Doyle has suggested, the swooning moment in the eighteenth-century novel distills the disruptive effects of the Atlantic crossing, what does Pym's swooning moment do here?[53] Swooning, as a feminine trope, feminizes Pym as he collapses with fear and excitement into his companion's arms, creating a frisson of homoerotism. But here, the swoon shows the desire for, and the actual fact of the permeability of the color line;

---

[53] *Freedom's Empire: Race and the Rise of the Novel in Atlantic Modernity, 1640-1940* (2008)

Peters, with his status of racial hybridity, can be read as both white and black, and Pym desires and craves his own fall into the abyss of blackness.

Pym and Peters finally escape the island with a stolen canoe, and as they keep venturing southward, the water becomes warm and milky and ashy material falls from the sky. The last entry from Pym's journal, dated March 22, describes the moments before they "rushed into the embraces of the cataract, where a chasm threw itself open to receive [them]" (179). The last sentences of Pym's journal are the following: "But there arose in our pathway a shrouded human figure, very far larger in its proportions than any dweller among men. And the hue of the skin of the figure was of the perfect whiteness of the snow" (179). While one could interpret this part of the novel as demonstrating that whiteness can only be reached through blackness, and that race itself is a fantasy and projection, I want to emphasize the ways in which whiteness allies itself with hybridity, and it does so through desire. Over and over again in this novel, Peters, the "mongrel," comes to Pym's aid in moments of mortal peril. Pym is the only white crew member who survives both ships, and he is accompanied by Peters. On the southern island, the black inhabitants overwhelm and kill the rest of the crew (whiteness under threat of extinction), and it is Pym's recognition of the erasure of whiteness that prompts the inclusion of Peters into the category of "white man." The ending figure of supernatural whiteness embraces both Peters and Pym—they both will fall (swoon) into this figure's arms, as pure whiteness embraces something less than white.

The expansion and contraction of the category of whiteness is a very well documented historical process, and it is precisely on this slippery slope that Irish and Italian immigrants eventually became "white" in the United States, and why the South

African apartheid marriage laws became so nonsensical. When whiteness is under threat, it seeks to expand its ranks by incorporating those nearest its current borders, a strategy it borrows from expansionism and colonialism. Chasms of racial and cultural difference (between the Saxons and Normans, or between the "half-breed Indian" and the white man) can be bridged very easily; all that matters is that the new ally is not as dark as the people (emancipated slaves or the "black savages") who threaten the supremacy of whiteness, an ideologically supported positionality. Skin color is a convenient method of naturalizing what is in fact a result of political, economic and historical relationships. In the previous chapter, I explored how white settlers anchored their claim to indigenity through tropes of human sexual and plant reproduction. However, Emerson's text, while it emphasizes the familial and racial relationship between the two nations, does not revolve around sexual reproduction or heterosexual desire. Rather, two modes of desire—the desire for a virile white masculinity and the desire for expansionism—drive the reproduction and inheritance of England's capital and imperial destiny. White racial hybridity does not occur through new sexual coupling; it comes into being through a desire for whiteness and a desire to interpret global history as moving inevitably towards white supremacy and imperialism. Poe's novel also excises heterosexual desire; rather, it offers a homoerotic pairing of whiteness and hybridity that saves whiteness from extinction. However, Poe's novel also demonstrates that no matter how powerful, terrifying and pure whiteness becomes, it can never exorcise its desire for blackness, nor ever stop being haunted (and hunted) by its own projections of blackness.

Over a century later, this dynamic of racial fantasy and haunting is taken up in Nadine Gordimer's 1974 novel *The Conservationist*. Gordimer's novel presents a

meditation on the ways in which apartheid created a structure of white heteronormative masculine subjectivity, but one that is constantly under threat by the proximity of queer desire and non-white bodies. It draws a portrait of a South African industrialist (whom we only know by the last name Mehring) who revels in every possible position of power—whiteness, masculinity, wealth, property, patriarchy and education. Gordimer's protagonist (if he could be called that) is heavily invested in heterosexual desire and his son's heterosexual future—and this investment is mirrored in the character's views of the political future of South Africa. The focalized narration of Gordimer's novel illustrates the racially and sexually violent structures of apartheid; women's voices in the novel appear in a mediated form through the main character's internal monologues and streams of consciousness, and serve to anchor his own right to possess them sexually. Reading the novel is a difficult and unpleasant experience at times, precisely because of the unrelenting grip of Mehring's narrative focalization; there is no "outside" and the reader's final interpretation of the novel will depend upon her ability to recognize the unreliable status of Mehring's worldview. The novel's plot is very bare, and it begins and ends with the discovery and burial of the body of a nameless black man who appears on Mehring's farm one day. Throughout the novel, Mehring is haunted by his thoughts about the nameless dead black man found on his property, a haunting that begins to be obsessive, in the way that it interrupts his sexual fantasies and breaks his sense of peace and transcendental connection to the land. The novel proceeds through a slow unraveling of Mehring's life and his eventual, and unmourned, violent death.

In a 1990 interview, Gordimer explained why *The Conservationist* is so difficult for the reader, and what she was trying to accomplish through Mehring's focalized narration.

> In *The Conservationist*, nothing is stated. There is no real mention of any law. I just thought: to hell with the reader. If they don't know what I'm talking about, too bad. Still, it's up to me to carry the reader over what he or she doesn't understand, so that two pages on they will understand; they will understand the relations, they will understand what sort of man Mehring is, they will understand why he's got that farm. So I did it harshly, I put it without any authorial didatisicms at all…My approach through Mehring was: you've no right at all to own this land. It's quite the opposite…[the novel] is really one long internal monologue with little relation outside, when he goes to coffee bars and so on. But there's the feeling right through the book that it's all really him, that it's all really what he's thinking. The parts that are authorial, when we come to the black farm workers, that obviously is not. It's what he misses. But there's a feeling that comes from the black part of his brain, that he doesn't know what he's seen."
>
> *Between the Lines* 49

Critics view *The Conservationist* as Gordimer's break with conventional realism, and while some have praised it as radically deconstructive, others have criticized its solipsism and its re-centering of the white consciousness. *The Conservationist* can be read as a revolutionary prophecy of political reversal; if politics are founded upon a resistance to macrostructure, the dialectical struggle is due for reversal and the end of the novel predicts the rise of the opposition. Abdul JanMohamed characterizes Gordimer's novel as

postbourgeouis but prerevolutionary because it "focuses on the subjectivity of her protagonist at the expense of an adequate portrayal of social conditions and processes" (117).[54] The novel also engages critically with the plaasroman genre (the farm novel), a genre of literature which assumed the right of white settlers to claim the land and offered a pastoral representation of the relationships between the white farmer and his land, and the white farmer and his black workers. The conventional realism of the plaasroman genre entails a belief in the truth of representation itself, and it is this belief that Gordimer's novel challenges. Or, as other critics have claimed, it is an antipastoral response to a society governed by a nationalist pastoral myth.[55] In her 2004 article, "Conserving the Cogito: Rereading Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*," Tamlyn Monson argues that this is why the novel is so radically deconstructive: the novel itself performs the symbolic violence of a narrative stream of consciousness. This "violence of subjectivity elides racial alterity through its own confident imperialism, of which political realities are often merely an extension" (35). While I agree that *The Conservationist* does indeed demonstrate the rhetorical and political violence of white subjectivity, I would not

---

[54] *Manichean Aesthetics* (1983)

[55] See Irene Gorak, "Libertine Pastoral: Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*." "A recurring figure in the literature of white colonization from 1700s to the 1930s is the figure of the farmer, as frontiersman and Trekker, constantly moving on to seek empty space, space to be apart. The achievement of Hendrik Verwoerd and other National Party ideologues of the 1940s and 1950s was to shift this marginal figure to the center of a new, clerically sanctioned apartheid mythology…the new nationalist mythos emphasized the homogeneity of the Trekker community versus the primitive heterogeneity of the faceless absent non-whites outside it…[this mythos entailed] a quest to recover the peaceful rural family life of the past, and present peace became the generous gift of past war. This is clearly a pastoral alternation rather than an historical one; its antecedents lie in Virgil and Marvell rather than in actual settler history." 248-249

categorize it as radically deconstructive. Gordimer uses deconstructive rhetorical and narrative techniques, but the novel itself is not radical, for the reasons that JanMohamed articulates.

Extending JanMohamed's critique, Irene Gorak argues that the novel is not radical politically because of the distance between the text and its social formation; the symbols, allegory and thematic and narrative patterns of modernism and postmodernism do not have any connection to the Black insurgency. In addition, Gorak notes that even in the moments where Mehring's stream of consciousness is absent and a more objective narrator takes over, "this objectivity still associates Blacks with natural rhythms and pregnant silences, reserving both control and conflagration of expression for the linguistically dominant whites" (253). According to Gorak, "Blacks and Indians in the novel are introduced as representative of their age, occupation and cultural background, and in most cases they draw a certain strength from their own typicality…but [the novel] identifies no representative white consciousness but rather a series of divergent fractured psyches. Consciousness is problematized in this fiction, not social process, and the most problematic consciousness is always white. Mehring is the outcome of a culture to which Gordimer belongs, and she prefers to reimagine and repossess rather than puncture or escape" (253, 255-256).

However, I would argue that Gordimer never intended *The Conservationist* to be a radical novel, which is why those particular critiques of the novel, while well-taken, are a bit off the mark because they presuppose the novel to be something other than what it was intended to be. And, contrary to Gorak's claim, I argue that the novel does offer a representative white, heteronormative consciousness, and Gordimer explores the ways in

which this consciousness depends upon racial and sexual violence to secure its own foundation. In her 1983 essay "Living in the Interregnum" Gordimer explains: "In the official South African consciousness, the ego is white: it has always seen all South Africa as ordered around it. Even the ego that seeks to abdicate this alienation does so in an assumption of its own salvation that in itself expresses ego and alienation" (1407). In fact, the ancestor of Gordimer's character, Mehring, could be Henry Rider Haggard, the author of *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and *She* (1887), which take place shortly after the 1867 discovery of diamonds and gold in southern Africa. These are quintessential adventure and treasure-seeking novels, and they are saturated with racist, sexist and colonial discourses. In her book, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, Anne McClintock argues that through these novels, Haggard "played out his phantasms of patriarchal power in the arena of empire…[he] begins with a mythology of racial and gender degeneration, reinventing the Family of Man in the cradle of empire, and culminating in the regeneration of the authority of the white father…[the novel] figures the reinvention of white imperial patriarchy through a legitimizing racial and gender poetics' (233, 248)

Gordimer's novel must be also understood in the South African political, economic and historical context of the mid-twentieth century. After the 1948 rise of Daniel Malan's National Party with a platform of apartheid, the United States increased its investment by setting up local subsidiaries in South Africa. By the end of the 1950s, over half of American investment in Africa was in South Africa, including corporations like General Motors, Johnson and Johnson, Dow Chemicals, Coca-Cola, Mobil Oil and IBM. With a rate of return of 20-27%, corporate investment in South Africa was a smart

fiscal strategy. In "The Americanization of South Africa," Joseph T. Campbell argues that given the deepening American economic involvement in apartheid South Africa, "one can begin meaningfully to speak of the United States as South Africa's political metropole" (145). This economic involvement also coincided with the Cold War—South Africa was a vital US ally not only because of its strategic ocean route position, but because of its vast mineral resources. South Africa produced 13 of the 24 minerals listed in the US strategic stockpiling program (i.e. vanadium, platinum, manganese, uranium).[56] The late 1960s and 1970s were a period of accelerated economic growth in South Africa, in large part due to American and European capital investments. While the Nationalist Party relied heavily on the history and ideology of the Boer farmers and trekkers, the South African economy was transitioning into urbanization, ushering in an era of lavish white consumption fueled by global and multinational investment in South Africa. This was the golden era for the white South African industrialists and businessmen; after the mid-1970s, opposition Black political protests against the apartheid state, along with internal political corruption and corporate mismanagement, began to curtail the economic boom.

However, only the white ruling minority reaped the benefits of the economic boom and development. During this time, non-white people were forcibly moved into what were called "homelands" by the government and "Bantustans" by anti-apartheid opposition. Approximately three million people were removed between 1960 and 1985, and the reserves had extraordinarily high rates of poverty. Pass laws were instituted, which meant that all workers traveling out of the reserves to their jobs in the city were

[56] See Joseph T. Campbell's work for an extensive discussion.

required to have their papers with them at all times. Women workers were particularly vulnerable in this situation, because they often were illegally employed as domestic servants in white homes, and therefore were isolated and subject to exploitation.

At the same time, the nationalist pastoral mythos continued to flourish. Raymond Williams, in *The Country and the City*, posits that any presentation of rural family life masks a recently evolved set of economic relationships—the opposition between town and country is an epiphenomenon of capitalism itself. Capitalism is responsible for the false division between rural experience and urban experience, between the private and public sphere—divisions which repeat and intensify a further alienation in consciousness and in work. In the pastoral mode typical of white settlers, white psyches seek to discover (or falsify) an authentic relationship with the African landscape, thereby becoming indigenous and justifying white control and ownership of African resources and land. In Gordimer's novel, Mehring's impulsive (and somewhat fashionable) purchase of his farm near the city punctures the myth of the remote, inherited Boer family farm because it clearly shows that Mehring's relation to his farm is simply one of capital, not familial tradition or national history. In addition, *The Conservationist* has been considered an antipastoral novel precisely because it reveals the Black labor and poverty at the pastoral heart of white South African Nationalist myth, and the self-delusions of the white owner. For instance, as Mehring thinks about the labor necessary to sustain a working farm, he not only repeats the racist stereotype of Black laziness[57] but deludes himself into thinking

[57] Anne McClintock explains the origins of this idea about African idleness. "The settlers brought with them to South Africa the remnants of a 300 year old British discourse that associated poverty with sloth…the discourse on idleness is, more properly speaking, a discourse on work—used to distinguish between desirable and undesirable labor….complaints about black sloth were as often complaints about different habits of

that it is his weekend labor that truly secures the success of the farm: "On the farm it is time for conservation—buildings to be repaired, fire-breaks cleared, he must go round all the fences with Jacobus. The sort of jobs they'll never think to do unless you push them to it. A place must be kept up" (74). Even in the moments when Mehring almost achieves a feeling of oneness, a synchronicity with his land, he is always haunted by the truth of his illegitimate and violent claim to ownership. He experiences a pastoral moment one day: "He has been sitting so still he has the fanciful feeling that so long as he does not move the farm is as it is when he's not there. He's at one with it as an ancestor at one with his own earth" (161). But later, the marshy river mud begins to suck him in: "He must get his leg out of the mud, that's all. It has already seeped in over the top of the boot and through the sole and holds him in a cold thick hand round the ankle. A soft cold black hand" (228).

Early in the novel, Mehring recalls his motivation for buying his farm, and his memory jumps back to his initial exchange with his lover. This is the first time we hear his (unnamed) mistress's voice; she is a married white leftist, who eventually gets into trouble for her anti-apartheid activity. It seems to appear as if Antonia is slightly critical of him, and indeed, in multiple moments throughout the novel, her responses to Mehring are quite cutting:

> --I'm in pig-iron—Confident enough to clown a little: these were the preliminaries, the exchange-of-unvital-information stage.

---

labor…thus the discourse on idleness was not a monolithic discourse imposed on a hapless people. Rather it was a realm of contestation, marked with the stubborn refusal of Africans to alter their customs of work" (*Imperial Leather* 252-253).

> --No ordinary pig-iron dealer—she said. But it was not flattery, not her—ironic, sarcastic even, condescending, weighing him up.
>
> 42

At various points in the novel, her voice functions as an interlocutor for Mehring's own voice; however, it is not really her voice at all. Because of the focalized narration, we can only hear Mehring fantasizing about her voice or Mehring's recollections of their conversations. In an interview from 1979, Gordimer explains that the novel has both interior monologue and a narrator, but "the line between when he is and when he isn't is very vague, my theory being that the central personality is there, whether it's being observed from outside or whether from inside—it's the same entity." With this kind of narrative focalization, the reader should recognize that Antonia's voice is mediated through several layers of Mehring's perspective; his memories of past conversations, which are recollected in his interior monologue and through the narrator's voice, which is the "same entity" as his own. Indeed, it's more accurate to say that Antonia's voice as such is not present at all; rather, Mehring's voice is co-opting and neutralizing her voice and its critique, and by doing so, he possesses it.

Besides Mehring's mediation (and foreclosure) of a woman's voice, what is also apparent from his interior monologues is a conceptual metonymic slide: woman—desire—land—possession. Mehring often repeats a myth to himself while at the same time acknowledging its falsity; he bought the farm as an investment, he wants it be profitable and productive, but in truth, he really bought it to impress Antonia and the farm itself fails, over and over again, to be productive. His desire for a woman anchored his desire for land, both of which he desires to own and possess. "Just as everyone

believes—he himself has long ago come to believe—that the farm was acquired as a good investment. Yet when he brought her here that day, the first time he saw the place, and they were walking over the very piece of ground on which he is stretched now, allowing that distant first time to return to him, he was possessed only by the brilliant idea of the farm-house as a place to bring a woman." Later, Mehring recalls telling Antonia about the "special pleasure in having a woman you've paid" (77) which is a feeling that "you're not only taking this woman, you've also paid for her" (78). For Mehring, his desire to buy a woman and to buy land is linked to his desire to possess them, and his desire for one begets the desire for the other. However, the novel's dramatizes Mehring's failure to fully possess either the women or the land he buys.

Mehring's consciousness always pivots towards sex, sexuality or desire when he is confronted with the political, economic and historical realities of South Africa. For instance, when he takes weekend trips to look for a farm to purchase, his thoughts center on Antonia rather than on the actual material conditions of racialized poverty and displacement that surround him. As he returns from a lucrative business trip, he does not think about South Africa's exceptional status due to Western investment in the white-governed nation; rather, he sexually assaults the teenage girl sitting next to him on his flight. When his son visits the farm, he ignores his son's refusal to join the military which is fighting against Black opposition in Namibia, but instead obsesses over his son's possible homosexuality.

This metonymic slide (woman—desire—land—possession) achieves its most disturbing height when Mehring assaults a sixteen-year-old girl on an airplane. He is seated next to her during a red-eye flight, and he fondles and penetrates her with his hand

for hours. As he begins his assault, he imagines that his hand and her thigh are having a conversation, and he wonders "who spoke first" (127). Unsurprisingly, he reads consent from her tightly closed thighs, and the alternating italicized words and parenthetical attribution create an illusion of a conversation, where there are only actions of violation and silencing.[58] The girl is seated next to him because she cannot sit near her mother and sister and Mehring's predatory appraisal begins immediately.

> She was a subdued girl, not pretty, nor perfumed beside him when the cabin lights were lowered and conversations gave way to henhouse shufflings. She had not said good evening, just looked at him with cow-eyes, someone who never got her own way, resigned to any objections that might be made as she approached the seat….He was aware that she twisted her body, several times, to look back where mama and sister were sitting some rows away but she couldn't have been able to see much. He could hear her swallow, and sigh as if they were in bed together.
>
> 127

Mehring sees this girl as a victim, already accustomed to "never getting her own way," "resigned" to her fate. He interprets her awareness of him as dangerous ("twisted her body…to look back where her mama and sister were sitting," "her could hear her swallow") as a sexual awareness ("sigh as if they were in bed together") that foreshadows their next interaction. The following passage is quoted at length because it is important to

---

[58] If a reader is paying attention to the ventriloquized and mediated women's voices in this narrative perspective, it would seem impossible to read this scene as anything other than assault. Strangely enough, when one does a brief search of popular and scholarly reviews about the novel, it seems that at least half of the reviewers categorize this scene as a "sexual encounter" rather than assault. This resonates with the rape scene in J.M. Coetzee's novel, *Disgrace*: many readers only seem to recall one, the gang rape of Lurie's daughter, Lucy, and interpret Lurie's rape of his college student as an "affair."

trace both Mehring's focalized narration and the accrual of details that counter his portrayal of this interaction. The full scene extends over six pages, and it graphically describes how Mehring's penetrates and assaults the girl sitting next to him.

> Who spoke first?
>
> Was it at all sure that it was he? Here in the dark a hand lies half curled against a thigh. The thigh is crossed (he guesses) over another, or its inner side swells laid against a second identical to it.
>
> --*And if another hand should move over the thigh, from the outer side, near the knee somewhere (her body takes up the narrative), up and inwards at the same time, it will meet the parallel lines of the two thighs where, like two soft bolsters or rolls of warm dough, they feel the pressure of their own volume against each other.—*
>
> …
>
> --*The hand may be cool or it may feel warm. The thighs may freeze against it, tendons flexed rigid, or maybe they will lie helpless, two stupid chunks of meat, two sentient creatures wanting to be stroked.*
>
> …The attendant with her blond chignon passed silent down the rows in surveillance and the exchange stopped until she had gone, the hand waiting quietly on the thigh…the hand took up the thread of communication as happen when interruption cannot really disturb deep level of preoccupation at which it has been established…
>
> This time the question was differently phrased, that's all, but it must have been understood all the same; there was no rejoinder of change of position. The thighs,

> he could feel where the heel of his palm rested a moment on them, continued to clasp excitedly against nothing. His finger, just the one forefinger again (an appreciative monologue) roamed amid the curly hair in no hurry…suddenly—found itself tongued by a grateful dog. That was exactly what it felt like—delightful, fluttering, as innocent as the licking of a puppy; although it was he who was stroking movement along this wet and silky lining of her body, he had the impression it was his finger that was being caressed, not the finger that was doing the caressing. Now and then, quite naturally, he encountered the soundless O of the little mouth that made no refusal. As the night wore on…the finger was able to enter, many times…the only thing he could not get her to do was touch him; her rather plump and quite womanly hand went limp and stiff-wristed when he tried to carry it over to himself; she would not.
>
> 127-130

Similar to his ventriloquism of Antonia's voice, here Mehring is creating a dialogue between himself and the girl's body, even though she remains silent and resistant throughout the entire scene. His strategy is also very typical of a sexual predator; while he is assaulting her, he creates a fiction that it was she who wanted it, she who seduced him, since it was possible that she "spoke first" rather than himself. However, this consensual conversation is repeatedly undercut by his own observations. The narration vacillates between ascribing agency to her body parts and objectification. Even though her body supposedly "takes up the narrative," Mehring describes her thighs as "rolls of warm dough" and "two stupid chunks of meat" which then become "two sentient creatures wanting to be stroked," an image that combines the false agency with a mute

animalistic objectification. When his finger penetrates her, he again revises the scene of violation as one of consensual desire; he imagines that her vagina reaches out to take in his finger and "tongue[s]" it like a "grateful dog." She does want it, and her vagina "made no refusal"—except that her "little mouth" was "soundless" and could not voice a refusal. Even when he does encounter her resistance, when her "hand [goes] limp and stiff-wristed" and she refuses to touch him, he does not heed it, and continues his violation of her body.

This entire scene takes place on a long intercontinental flight, and Mehring is traveling back to Johannesburg after a business trip. This assault intoxicates Mehring—he finds himself "magnificently tense, not only his sex but his whole body and legs, arms, neck, huge in the seat, swollen into unusual awareness of the bounds of himself" (130). He feels so powerful, so swollen with his ability to take what he desires, that even his own body feels too small to contain his raw power. In the last paragraph of this scene, we discover that what also intoxicates Mehring is his ability to get away with such a crime. He imagines what would happen if he was prosecuted for the assault: he would "never be free of tittering disgrace," he would be met with "silence in the boardroom" (132). But he knows he will get away with it, "it was so easy" (132) even though "her fluid on his hand" is proof of his crime just as " a man has blood on his hands" (131). Mehring's assault takes place as they are flying over the continent of Africa; this setting links Mehring's possession of the girl's body to the history of European colonialism in Africa. It summons the rhetorical history that links colonialism with rape and sexual conquest. Mehring's subjectivity stands in for the worldview of white settler colonialism writ large. The desire to possess and conquer a new/empty land is fueled by a sense of sexual power,

one that forecloses any possible resistance, and silences any refusal. It is no accident that this scene is bracketed by scenes of capitalism. His business success as one of the global elite relies upon the same logic of sexual assault: exploitation, silencing, violence, violation, and ideological justification for the material conditions of oppression.

This airplane sexual assault represents the height of Mehring's power of desire and possession, even though the rest of the novel portrays the unraveling of this power. At the end of novel, Mehring stops to pick up a mixed-race girl on the side of the road. She leads him to a secluded place where he anticipates and possibly experiences his own mugging and death.[59] In the final moments before Mehring believes he will be killed, his thoughts enact this metonymic slide yet again: "He's going to run, run, and leave them to rape her or rob her. She'll be all right. They survive everything. Coloured or poor-white, whichever she is, their brothers or fathers take their virginity good and early. They can have it, the whole four hundred acres" (264). The pronouns perform this slide; his black assailants are "they" and Mehring transfers ownership from himself to them, and lets them both her and the land. This was Gordimer's point—to show the inevitability of the downfall of apartheid. However, I want to emphasize that for Mehring, this transfer of ownership happens through the field of sex and rape—which again shows the links between desire, possession, women and land.

Yet the actual transfer of ownership in the very last sentence of the novel happens not through rape or sex, but through the burial of the unnamed black man: "The one whom the farm received had no name. He had no family but their women wept a little for him. There was no child of his present but their children were there to live after him. They had

[59] It is unclear whether Mehring is actually killed, or whether the reader is experiencing his terror and fear about what might happen.

put him away to rest, at last; he had come back. He took possession of this earth, theirs; one of them" (267). Jacobus and the other workers give the corpse a proper burial, and through this ritual corpse becomes part of the farm, incorporated into the familial, national and racial history. The body "takes possession" of the earth—in this moment, another interesting reversal of agency in which the inanimate body actively claims the earth—and in so doing, extends the solidarity of indigenous African kinship long past Mehring's momentary ownership of the farm. Gordimer's last scene shows that white colonial possession was always destined for this fate—long before and long after white supremacist oppression, this kinship between the indigenous people and the land will continue to exist.[60]

The ending of the novel seems to indicate that Mehring's logic of power (heterosexual desire and economic dominance) is failing. This failure is also signaled in another key moment in the novel, when Mehring's son, Terry, comes to visit the farm on a holiday. Terry has refused to go into the army to colonize Namibia, and he is having a conflict with his father about it. In the car, Mehring appraises Terry's growth into adolescence and masculinity, and feels slightly alienated by his son's physical presence, which is both a mirror and a distortion of his own youth. "The incredibly long and slender creature so newly emerged into maleness; does it realize its capacity" (134) he wonders. "Capacity for what?" is the question, which Mehring does not answer. He recalls Terry's reaction to getting reacquainted with a childhood playmate: "Brought together again—the two who used to play with one another as children—the only

[60] This romantic, and often bordering on racist, representation of the black African as naturally and authentically "one" with the land, is precisely why some critics view Gordimer's writing as still engaging in the same racist terms, stereotypes and polarities as other white colonial writers, despite her liberal political commitments.

reaction to that lovely girl with a waist the length of a swan's neck was a remark that she couldn't help it but she was a typical spoilt Johannesburg girl. At sixteen (going on seventeen), has he no eyes? No dreams burrowing the bedclothes into flesh all night" (137). Mehring is exasperated with Terry's nonreaction to the girl's sexual attractiveness, but his tone is one of generational distance, and he doesn't doubt his son's heterosexuality. Mehring begins to fantasize about the charms of this 'spoilt' girl: "good God, what that matters can be 'spoilt' in a girl, at sixteen, for any boy: teeth sweet and clean as fresh-peeled almonds, a tongue that's only just stopped being used to lick ice-cream, breasts larger than expected, delightfully heavy-looking in contrast to the rest of her, at her mother's swimming pool" (137). There is an unquestioned transference of heterosexual desire between the father and son and it is the most important link between generations of father and son—it is the way that Mehring imagines himself connected to Terry, across their politics and his divorce from his mother.

For Mehring, it is also heterosexual desire that anchors his son's proper place as the heir to his father's wealth, property and power. At the end of the visit, Mehring finds a book hidden in his son's bag. Mehring recognizes it as a book with sexual content, but then he wonders "why no girl on the jacket?" and quickly reads the title: "Eros Himself: An Anthology Compiled and Published by the Campaign for Homosexual Equality." As he looks over the book, he remembers his own experiences with erotic literature as a young man. "As if—indeed, at that age again—he had suddenly got his hands on one of those copies of *Lady Chatterley*, that, pirated and ill-printed in Egypt for sale to English-speaking soldiers, had found their way down from one desert country to another, he opens the book here, there, anywhere" (150). Mehring instantly substitutes his son's

homosexual book title for D.H. Lawrence's novel of masculine heterosexual desire and feminine submission. Mehring's recollection of his own experience with an erotic book is associated with global economics and colonialism—the pirating of copyrighted material circulating within the military sphere of European colonialism. This passage works in two directions—it illustrates the threat of queer desire to a racialized heteropatriarchy, but it also shows how the circulation of queer desires is a truly global one, enabled by circuits of capital and militarized imperialism. The Egyptian-pirated English novel, Lady Chatterly, a novel purely infused with heterosexual desire, was passed from "one desert country to another"—and Mehring's memory of this novel overlays his immediate perusal of the *Eros Himself* Anthology. But even while the two books seems juxtaposed in terms of object desire, both texts have traveled a global circuit of production and consumption. At the end of this passage, Mehring's thoughts travel to Japan, France and Latin America, as cultural examples of handling misdirected desire. Even though this queer desire is threatening to Mehring, it is not coded as backwards or African—rather, it is a desire that circulates through a cosmopolitan network and global literary sites, and this 1974 novel presciently looks towards the contemporary reality of sexual orientation in South Africa. Although Mehring resists and disavows his son's homosexual desires, his revulsion is not coded as backwards, as are other African responses to homosexuality, but rather as a response of a wealthy white patriarch who fears that his son will not carry the mantle of racial and capital inheritance—Mehring, as a white man, is already part of global modernity, and his own thoughts prefigure the contemporary reality of "progressive" views of same-sex desire. In fact, Neville Hoad has argued that homosexuality itself is one of many imaginary contents that circulate in the production of

African sovereignities and identities.[61] He describes the double bind: first, Western colonialism repressed and criminalized African same-sex erotic and political practices, because such things were primitive, backwards and heathen practices. A century later, after same-sex relations became coded as unnatural and un-African, the West uses African criminalization of homosexuality as evidence of its backwardness, yet another way in which the Africans have not caught up with modernity.

What follows next is Mehring's stream of consciousness performance of desire and disavowal:

> What instinct has led him to look at the book? Instinct? Sometimes his are what he thinks of as bestial, but different from this. A lover of women may have many inclinations in a lifetime, he remains a lover of women. His heart is actually beating audibly in his ears, hard and slow. For years he hasn't been in communication with that other woman, his ex-wife, except through divorce lawyers, but he is writing rapidly now, Your son's a pansy- boy. A bugger. She will understand; she will remember and take as an insult, perfect family woman that she is, these days, the reminder that she didn't object to being made love to like that, herself. It must come from someone.
>
> Could this be the subject?
>
> Published by the Campaign for Homosexual Equality.
>
> He belongs to some club, then. Already. Or did the university student give it to him. He got it all from some university student. That's it, that's more likely. That could be it. In Japan they would have arranged things better. By now, going on

[61] *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Globalization* (2007)

> seventeen, some suitably worldly uncle would have taken him off to a suitable house with experienced girls. Or was that the French? Someone explained (talking late in a hotel bar, a nightcap after a conference) Latins never leave an adolescent to find his own way in these matters. Very sensible. Because unless you are lucky. It's pure chance you meet what you need, just put out a hand.
>
> 151-152

There is a great deal to say about this passage, but I want to focus on the movements between desire and disavowal. First, he questions his instinct—his motivation to search in his son's belongings for evidence of his sexual desires—but then it becomes a metonymic question, which is linked to his own "bestial" desire, but different from the "bestial" instincts of the unnamed "that" which refers to whatever instincts are represented by "Eros Himself." But then he acknowledges that a lover of women may have many "inclinations"—and of course, one must wonder what exactly those inclinations are, perhaps he has had some encounters in the military, or on a business trip; but nevertheless, he "remains a lover of women." But why? What makes his bestial instincts, his unstated inclinations heterosexual? If his desires are not quite enough to guarantee his status as a heterosexual, then it is precisely the disavowal of "that" which is the anchor of Mehring's heterosexual desire. He has a compulsive need to trace the inheritance of his son's desire for "that"—if it isn't from himself (and it must not be from himself) it must be from his mother, who "didn't object" to having anal sex. Note the location of desire here—she didn't object, but neither does Mehring say that she "enjoyed" or "wanted" this sex—the desire is actually his—one of his inclinations, which allows him to remain a lover of women. This moment also echoes the way in which he

projected his own desire onto the girl on the airplane. The final sentence betrays just how fragile this chain of heterosexual desire becomes—if you are lucky, you find the correct object of your desire, but desire is always wayward and must be guided. Meeting a proper heterosexual object choice is "pure chance"—one is just as likely to put out a hand and find a beautiful phallus to desire. The ellipsis at the end of the above passage is actually in the text, and it leaves open this possibility, that putting out one's hand could result in an infinite array of inappropriate sexual object choices.

So if desire is always in need of constant regulation and will always eventually stray, what happens to the links among heterosexual desire, colonial conquest and economic possession? Desire produces material and historical effects, and these effects do not simply disappear when desire becomes wayward or queer once again. When desire fails to find its proper racial and heteronormative object—and this failure is always inevitable—this triangulated dynamic does not collapse precisely because it has already been used to anchor material relations of capital and property. I am suggesting a triangulated dynamic between desire, the transfer of property rights and capital and the racialized reproductive logic of the nation. In "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" Frederich Engels writes:

> According to the materialist conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a twofold character: on the one side, the production of the means of existence, of food, clothing and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species.

For Engels, the modern nuclear family has only one purpose: to pass on private property in the form of inheritance. For the imperial postcolonial nation-state, the reproductive family is the means to pass on capital and property through racialized inheritance lines. The role of desire, and its role in both capitalism and reproductive logics, is a very complex one. It can function as the link in the filial chain that guarantees the transfer of property and capital. But as my reading of the scene in *The Conservationist* shows, desire is always wayward and must always be disciplined, directed and educated—and it is precisely this need for regulation and discipline that reveals the fragility of these links. This insight has been developed in the scholarship of Ann Stoler, Ann McClintock, Amy Kaplan and Alys Weinbaum, to name a few. Desire both constitutes and destabilizes the constellation of nation, race and reproduction.

What happens when queer desire unsettles the racialized genealogical line of capital and property? Does queerness truly unsettle the white settler nation state? If Mehring's own heterosexually directed desire requires so much discipline and disavowal, what happens when the next generation begins to affirm such queer desires and demand recognition from the imperial postcolonial nation state? In a very canny way, Gordimer's novel gestures towards the future of the marriage equality movement:

> It's not a story—articles, essays, with bits of poetry in between, an extract from the famous trial (Oscar Wilde). *Homosexual Marriage: The Case for Sanction by Church and State. Sexual Pathology—or Love? The Healthy Norm: Law of the Jungle.* An index means nothing. His eyes remember how to skim with intense concentration, tossing aside…*the old equation of Darwininan selection with the*

> *healthy norm is an argument which, carried to its logical conclusion, must equate civilization with the jungle…residual disabilities…in any case, given the change in the law, why is not the homosexual campaign for equality, even if this involves attempting to change public opinion, as decent as, for example, the highly decent campaign of women who demand…if strong feelings are consistent with a wide range of pathological activity…gay marriages are 'repugnant' to…inasmuch as heterosexual marriage as the basis for family life.*
>
> *150-151*

To Mehring, as well as the majority of the readers at the time of the novel's publication, the book's agenda would seem quite radical, but contemporary readers probably move through this passage with a wry awareness of the rapid (if uneven) shift to same-sex marriage acceptance and legality in the intervening forty years. Even Mehring's own performance of disavowal reveals that queer desire itself was always already part of the circuit of desire that shapes his own subjectivity. The inclusion of these fragments that question the pathology of same-sex desire and advocate for legal recognition of "homosexual marriage" casts some doubt on the prospect that queerness could truly disrupt the racialized reproductivity of the white settler nation state. This is not because the vast majority of any nation's population would continue their heterosexual reproductive pairings, but because queerness itself is not a threat to whiteness, or to the racialized circuits of global capital partially born from a settler colonial network of independent white settler polities, or to the desires for empire. Whiteness and white settler desires remain after queer liberation.

A number of scholars have critiqued normative liberal queer politics precisely on these grounds. In his 2010 book, *The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialization of Intimacy*, David Eng accuses queer liberalism of engaging with the politics of colorblindness and of opposing "a politics of intersectionality, resisting any acknowledgment of the ways in which sexuality and race are constituted in relation to one another, each often serving to articulate, subsume, and frame the other's legibility in the social domain. In short, queer liberalism is predicated on the systematic dissociation of (homo)-sexuality from race as coeval and intersecting phenomena" (4). The very emergence of queer liberalism depends upon the active management and repression of race, and furthermore, "the emergence of privacy is a racialized property right, one extending the long juridical history of 'whiteness as property'" (17). In any iteration of post-racial or colorblind ideology, whiteness always remains as the uninterrogated norm.

In her 2007 book, *Terrorist Assemblages*, Jasbir Puar argues that queerness itself is a process of racialization which

> informs the very distinctions between life and death, wealth and poverty, health and illness, fertility and morbidity, security and insecurity, living and dying…there is a transition underway in how queer subjects are relating to nation-states, particularly the United States, from being figures of death (AIDS) to becoming tied to ideas of life and productivity…homosexual, gay and queer bodies may be the temporary recipients of the 'measures of benevolence' that are afforded by liberal discourses of multicultural tolerance and diversity. This benevolence toward sexual others is contingent upon ever-narrowing parameters

> of white racial privilege, consumption capabilities, gender and kinship normativity and bodily integrity.
>
> xi-xii

Puar uses the term racialization as a figure for specific social formations and processes that are not necessarily or only tied to what has been historically theorized as race. She mobilizes the concept of assemblage "as a pertinent political and theoretical frame within societies of control….queerness as an assemblage moves away from excavation work, deprivileges a binary opposition between queer and not-queer subjects, and, instead of retaining queerness as exclusively as dissenting, resistant and alternative…it underscores contingency and complicity with dominant formations" (205). In other words, Puar is arguing that queerness and queer identity cannot be thought as simply one discrete axis that intersects with other axes of experience and identity. Rather, it not only functions with and alongside dominant structures of power, but these structures provide the very materials out of which queerness itself is created and conceptualized. Queer bodies are hailed into the ideological and biopolitical regimes of power and control, not as figures of death and pathology, but as proactive, regenerative, and often reproductive citizens. In the global North, this transition of queers from figures of death into legible citizens who can reproduce and regenerate the nation entails a racialized transition as well; the rise of queer political legibility and incorporation is aligned with the rise of the wars on terrorism, and the increasingly fetishized figure of the dark terrorist, who has become the figure of death. Puar also responds to Lee Edelman's brilliantly polemical analysis of reproductive futurity[62] by noting that the child is just one figure "in a spectrum of

---

[62] See Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004)

statistical chances that suggest health, vitality, capacity, fertility…For if race and sex are to be increasingly thought outside the parameters of identity…as assemblages, as events, what is at stake in terms of biopolitical capacity is therefore not the ability to reproduce, but the capacity to regenerate, the terms of which are found in all sorts of registers beyond heteronormative reproduction" (xiii).

The position of the queer as a newly incorporated figure of national and biopolitical regeneration is precisely why the specter of his son's queerness does not radically destabilize the racialized inheritance of capital, property and power in which Mehring is so invested. Even while heteronormative reproduction is the mechanism that perpetuates the filial inheritance line, it is the alliance of race and capital that secures this inheritance against the threat of queer desire. Kevin Floyd's work provides a lens through which we can understand how and why sex, sexuality and sexual identity is connected to capitalism. In his 2009 book, *The Reification of Desire: Toward a Queer Marxism*, Floyd reactivates perhaps the single most important (in my judgment) Marxian insight about the workings of capital and capitalism. Marxism "refutes epistemological fetishizations of difference" because it understands "a social and epistemological severing of connection is precisely one of capital's most consequential objective effects" (6). This social forgetting of connection is called reification—relations between people take the form of exchange value relations between things, which in turn appears to be independent of people. The very process of social differentiation preempts any critical comprehension of the social.[63] Floyd's work offers a way to understand reification not only as a condition of

[63] For instance, the (false) division between private/public spheres was an outcome of the workings of capital itself, as it naturalized the concept of private property and the concept of a gendered division of labor. However, as Floyd notes, "reification's objective effects

mystification, but of possibility for new forms of social differentiation (the opposition between heterosexual and homosexual forms of subjectivity). Therefore, "bodies are increasingly, if quite unevenly, normalized not only as heterosexual and homosexual subjects but also and inseparably, as consuming subjects….sexually disciplined, regulated bodies, simultaneously deployed as strategies of capital accumulation, are defining aspects of the mode of regulation that begins to emerge in the United States" (35-36).

What we can take away from Floyd's analysis is that the opposition of homosexuality and heterosexuality is itself an outcome of capitalism. Homosexual desire, in and of itself, is no more liberatory than heterosexual desire (recall to mind Foucault's exploration of the fallacy of sexual repression and liberation), if for no other reason than it is always already contingent upon dominant structures of power and capital. This is not to say that queer desire cannot ever be disruptive or transgressive. However, to use Puar's terminology, we should examine the ways in which it aligns with other social formations and assemblages of biopower. In this discussion of Gordimer's novel, it is clear that while his son's possible homosexuality unnerves Mehring, his own thoughts demonstrate the permeability of the hetero/homo divide: desire is desire is desire. What will come to matter most is his son's whiteness and access to the familial wealth and property, not the shared heteronormative desire, as the post-apartheid history of South Africa has demonstrated.

---

must be understood not only in terms of the tenacious resilience of capital…but in terms of capital's persistent instability, its fundamental opposition to itself, and the way in which this instability is negotiated historically through a range of forms of social regulation" (35).

Interestingly enough, while post-apartheid South Africa was the first nation to enshrine sexual orientation as a class worthy of constitutional protection, the path to this protection was a queer one—and I use that adjective deliberately. In her exhaustive 1997 article, "Queer Comrades: Winnie Mandela and the Moffies" Rachel Holmes explains that while the National Coalition of Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE) did indeed engage in successful grassroots organizing, there was no neat teleology within the ANC victory that inevitably led to lesbian and gay liberation. In fact, it was often an antagonistic process developing alongside and counter to the process of political negotiation and settlement for the new South Africa. Holmes argues Winnie Mandela's public trial for kidnapping and assault in 1991 drew upon and incited a homophobic public discourse. This discourse was characterized by the explicit racialization of sexual orientation in discourses of cultural nationalism, which sought to represent homosexuality as an implicitly white colonial contamination of black culture, "marking it as antithetical to the fraternity of the nation" and a "form of deviance tainted by whiteness" (Holmes 170).[64]

This association of colonization, whiteness and homosexuality is quite common, for an incredibly complex set of historical reasons, within African postcolonial nation states. And in fact, post-apartheid South Africa's constitutional protection of sexual orientation served to further complicate its relationships with other African states. Neville Hoad explains that "the end of apartheid meant that South Africa emerged from world pariah status, and its position as economic superpower in the region acquire a new moral

[64] See Holmes for a full explanation of the trial. The NCLGE protested Winnie Mandela's defense strategy, but the National Executive Committee of the ANC was caught between its formal policy commitments to lesbian and gay rights and the racial politics of the national liberation struggle.

authority. Namibia or Zimbabwe could cite the South African constitution's assertion of equal rights for those of divergent sexual orientations as evidence that they, and not the more racially hybrid giant to the South, still laid claim to the region's authentic African moral leadership…this deployment of rhetorics linking questions of homosexuality to African identity may have produced a corresponding need for post-apartheid South African leaders to assert authentic Africanness" (xiii)[65]. However, the linking of Africanness to heterosexuality and whiteness to homosexuality is a convenient political revision of history, because ever since the laws against sodomy were instituted in South Africa by the white colonists (and in other colonized nations), it has been African and Coloured men who have borne the main brunt of sodomy prosecutions.

However, I am not arguing that queerness or queer desire can (or even should) completely destabilize the nationalist and colonialist discourses that have polarized homosexuality/heterosexuality along the white colonizer/indigenous African axis. Rather, I agree with Hoad's articulation of why we should pay attention to the genealogy of the ideas of race, sex and nation: "Attention to questions of desire, affect and experience suggests the contested and palimpsestic nature of Africa under the time-spaces of colonialism, decolonization, postcoloniality and now globalization" (xv). When we begin to explore the very idea of queerness and queer desire within white settler colonial histories, we must also take seriously the ways in which queerness and queer desire does align with whiteness and colonization. It participates in the worlding of these narratives, particularly when it moves alongside desires for empire and masculinity.

---

[65] *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Globalization* (2007)

In the following chapter, I will finally explore the resistance to these narrative worldings of imperial desires. How can this dynamic of desire, capital and whiteness be challenged? What narrative forms, tropes and strategies resist these canonical attempts to reframe national origins? To use Gibson-Graham's terminology, how do writers rescript the effects of these racialized narratives of colonization and empire?

Chapter 5

The Nation Cannot Contain Us

O my body, always make me a man who questions!

Frantz Fanon

This sentence ends Frantz Fanon's 1952 book, *Black Skin, White Masks*, a brilliant exploration of the psychological effects of racism. Not only is Fanon, a psychoanalyst himself, writing back/against the Eurocentrism of psychoanalysis, but he is also rejecting racial essentialism of the Negritude movement. While Fanon finds black political solidarity important to decolonization movements, he points out that the celebratory racial essentialism of the Negritude movement is simply the Euro/Western projected fantasy of blackness. The essential meaning of the black body grounds both Western racism and Negritude, and it is a meaning (whether negatively or positively valenced) that comes directly from Euro/Western racial fantasies and beliefs. In this statement, Fanon calls out to the performative force of his black body, not its ontological meaning. Fanon calls out to the blackness of his body, which brings him into subjectivity through its experiences of living in a violent colonized and racist world. But it is not as if Fanon the subject and Fanon the embodied human are separate—this phrase at first seems to depend upon the dualistic split of mind/body, but it moves toward a unity, not of ontological meaning, but of dynamic embodied living in the world as a questioning subject. Fanon's work is often known for its calls for revolutionary decolonization, but in this text he is concerned with the narratives that colonized peoples internalize. Living

within a violent white supremacist order, black children often come to think of themselves as partially white in order to deal with the overwhelming inferiority of blackness and their own black bodies. However, according to Fanon, effective resistance to these narratives does not arise from turning the racist essentialist truths on their heads, but from the act of questioning and puncturing these narratives and structures. Black political solidarity is effective not because of the good qualities of essential black culture, but because of its insistence on the extra-national and global connections that national myths and narratives attempt to erase. Nations arise out of this global traffic, but the imagined community of the nation tries to forget these extra-national relations, particularly those forged in global colonization.

As I have discussed previously, postcolonial analyses of nationalism are grounded within Benedict Anderson's insight about the relation between nation and narrative. While previous work on nationalism emphasizes the self-contained narrative enclosure of the nation, contemporary scholarship explores the ways in which nations are founded on fluid and complex relations to other historical identities. In his 1996 article, "Historicizing National Identity, or Who Imagines What and When" Prasenjit Duara examines national identity "less in its distinctiveness than in its changing relationships to other visions of political community, both historical and contemporary" (151). Duara uses China as a counterexample to an axiomatic assumption about national identity; whereas it has been accepted that modernity birthed forms of national identity, what is actually unique about modern nationalism is "not political self-consciousness but the world system of nation-states" (157). Duara concludes by arguing that individual national discourses and narratives are also participating in global discourses, which in turn reveal

"the imposition of a historical narrative of descent and/or dissent upon both heterogeneous and related cultural practices" (168). Duara's insight about the imposition of descent narratives echoes that of Werner Sollors groundbreaking 1986 book, *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture*, which is an examination of "the conflict between the contractual and the hereditary, the self-made and the ancestral…between consent and descent as the central drama in American culture" (5-6). Sollors explains that "descent language emphasizes our positions as heirs, our hereditary qualities, liabilities and entitlements; consent language stress our abilities as mature free agents and architects of our fates to choose our spouses, our destinies, and our political systems" (6).

National narratives, particularly those of white settler nations, emphasize the linearity of descent as opposed to the heterogeneous and contingent relations of consent, even as consent relations seem to intermingle with those of descent—consider the plant imagery of rootedness and transplantation (which only infuses the original stock with new strength) in Emerson and Hawthorne. In this chapter, I will explore how William Apess' *Eulogy for King Philip* (1836), Zoe Wicomb's *David's Story* (2001) and Zakes Mda's *The Heart of Redness* (2000) resist, puncture, question and challenge linear national narratives of racialized origins and descent. I will conclude this chapter with a discussion of Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* (2008). While this novel has only tangential connections to the national histories of the United States and South Africa, it is precisely this tangentiality that exposes the extra-national and global contexts out of which individual national narratives are born. While the previous texts in this dissertation often framed or worlded the nation in the interests of linear racial origins of the white

settler nation, the texts in this chapter fracture the very possibility of a pure national origin.

Any postcolonial studies scholarship on the relation between narrative and nation must engage (or wrestle) with Homi Bhabha's articulation of the ambivalence of the nation as a narrative strategy and an apparatus of symbolic power (200). Bhabha's work emphasizes the metaphoricity of the peoples in the nation's imagined community: "the people" are a performative rhetorical strategy as well as the historical objects of a nationalist pedagogy (202, 209). Bhabha argues that the nation is "split within itself, articulating the heterogeneity of its population…[It] becomes a liminal signifying space that is internally marked by the discourses of minorities, the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense locations of cultural difference" (212). Within queer theory, José Muñoz translates this concept of a nation split within itself into his theory of disidentification, a political strategy of minority subjects. Muñoz builds on Stuart Hall's theory of encoding/decoding cultural messages, texts, objects and events. The process of disidentification

> scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes the coded message's universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recruits its workings to account for, include and empower minority identities and identification. Thus, disidentification is a step further than cracking open the code of the majority; it proceeds to use this code as raw material for representing a disempowered polity or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture.

Here, I take up both Bhabha and Muñoz's insights and I will focus on texts that "crack open the code of the majority" and challenge the homogeneity of the imperial postcolonial nation state's imagined origins.

In my arguments thus far, I have emphasized the ways in which white settler national narratives insist upon white racial national origins and engage in a worlding process that obscures its own dependence on racial and ethnic violence. While I have acknowledged the ambivalence and instability within these narratives, I have been more interested in exploring how these texts use racialized sex and reproduction to stand in for national origins and futures. However, as I began to argue at the end of the last chapter, it is unclear whether queer desire (or queer theory) can function as resistance within a white settler history: queerness itself is not a threat to whiteness, or to the racialized circuits of global capital partially born from a settler colonial network of independent white settler polities, or to desires for empire. While none of the texts I discuss in this chapter directly engage queer desire, I want to extend this discussion a bit more in this chapter because these texts do explore the ways that indigenous histories and resistance can disrupt the racial genealogy of the white settler nation. Queer theory can be very useful in thinking about non-linear, anachronistic and disruptive relations—yet some would argue that its very origins are aligned with white settler ideology which render it, at the very least, suspect within indigenous knowledges and resistance movements.

For instance, in his 2011 book, *Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*, Scott L. Morgensen not only critiques white American queer culture's appropriation of indigenous cultures but he argues, to similar effect but in

a different theoretical mode than Kevin Floyd,[66] that queer identity as a category is produced by the heteropatriarchal power of white supremacist settler colonialism. In the 1970s, Two-Spirit and Native spirituality became a way for queer activists to authenticate their sexual and gender identity positions. By claiming indigeneity by way of appropriating Native knowledges, white queers were simply repeating their own white settler national history. Expanding on Patrick Wolfe's insight that settler colonialism is a structure, not an event,[67] Morgensen argues that modern queerness is a location within the structure of settler colonialism (3). Morgensen also forcefully charges queer studies with an examination of settler colonialism as a condition of its own work: "A queer critique of location, temporality, or belonging that naturalizes its relationship to settler colonialism no longer will be considered transgressive. Native queer appeals to national traditions or liberation in turn no longer will be considered normative if their effect is to denaturalize settler heteropatriarchy and homonationalism while investing in Native decolonization and feminist and queer social change" (26).

Morgensen's work builds upon (and actively honors) a body of critical theory of Native queer activism and practice. In her 2010 article, "Queer Theory and Native Studies: The Heteronormativity of Settler Colonialism," Andrea Smith argues that queer theory reproduces the violences of settler colonialism. She identifies a trend in Native studies of incorporating queer theory by moving beyond representing queer peoples within Native studies and towards "queer[ing] the analytics of settler colonialism" (41).[68]

---

[66] See Chapter Four's discussion of Kevin Floyd's *The Reification of Desire: Toward a Queer Marxism* (2009)

[67] "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native" (2006)

[68] Smith also points out that Native Studies can benefit from queer theory's subjectless critique by placing focus "on a 'wide field of normalization' as the site of social

Addressing Lee Edelman's theory of "no future" queer politics, Smith wonders about the value of "no future" for Native peoples: "This call for 'no future' relies on a primitivizing discourse that positions the [white] queer subject in relation to a premodern subject who is locked in history. The 'Native' serves as the origin story that generates the autonomous present for the white queer subject" (48). Queer studies must interrogate the political goal of no future in the historical context of white settler policies of genocide, when generations of indigenous peoples have been consigned to "no future" through an array of annihilating tactics. Smith ends by calling for a queering of the logics of settler colonialism and decolonization "in order to properly speak to the genocidal present that not only continues to disappear indigenous peoples but reinforces the structures of white supremacy, settler colonialism, and heteropatriarchy that affect all peoples" (64).

This strand of queer studies critique—from Andrea Smith and Scott L. Morgensen to Kevin Floyd and Jasbir Puar—brilliantly demonstrates that modern sexuality is inextricable from settler colonialism and white supremacy. Whiteness is allied with the heterosexual reproduction of new national citizens, but as I argued in the last chapter, even when queer desire appears, it is not a disruptive force in the racialized relations of capital and property. Instead, queer desire, as it appears within the ideology of the white settler nation, forms an alliance (even if a deeply uneasy one) with settler colonialism and therefore, whiteness. As Smith and Morgensen have argued, queerness as an identity position is deeply implicated in the history of whiteness. For instance, within the North American context, indigenous dispossession occurred alongside the legal infrastructure protections for whiteness as a form of property. In 1993, Cheryl Harris famously

---

violence," which in turn helps "demonstrate Native studies' broad applicability, and moving beyond a politics of inclusion in the colonial academy" (44).

documented the history of whiteness as a legally protected form of property. During and after the institution of slavery and the policies of Indian Removal, white racial identity provided the basis for allocating legal rights and societal benefits, and it became a type of status property, one which was enshrined (and continues to be) within the legal infrastructure. Whiteness became a protected form of property during the same time that indigenous claims to land and sovereignty were repeatedly nullified and betrayed. Because of its relation to whiteness, queer politics and queer theory cannot simply disown these histories. My own analysis to this point in the project has demonstrated a commitment to making whiteness and heterosexuality visible as regimes of coercive and dominating power, instead of accepting them as natural traits that are somehow outside of politics and power. While I will leave this thread of argument here for later development in a different project, I want to emphasize that queer desire and queer politics cannot be transgressive or liberatory within these white settler histories. Queer studies scholars and queer political activists can certainly choose to activate new alliances with anti-colonial and anti-racist movements, but for these alliances to work through the historical wounds of white supremacy and settler colonialism, queer studies cannot function as the political or theoretical "white savior." This current project explores the entanglement of heterosexuality, race and reproduction within these national narratives, but an analysis of more contemporary texts would reveal that queer desire has been harnessed to homonationalism, which is entangled with race and reproduction as well.

If twenty-first century indigenous scholars like Andrea Smith critique the contemporary anti-reproductive queer politics of "no future" then the writings of William Apess, the nineteenth century Pequot Christian minister and activist, show us settler

colonialism's genocidal vision of "no future" for indigenous peoples. Born to racially mixed parents (Pequot, African and white) in 1798 in Massachusetts, William Apess was sold into indentured labor as a young child and raised by whites. As a young man, he reconnected with his Pequot heritage and dedicated his life to Native resistance and sovereignty, later becoming one of the leaders of the 1833 Mashpee Revolt to regain self-government. After a brief enlistment period in the United States Army during the War of 1812, he converted to evangelical Methodism and was ordained as a minister in 1829. He quickly became disgusted by the racism and hypocrisy of white Christians and by 1834 he left Methodism in order to found his own church. As a well-known public intellectual, he delivered many public sermons and lectures, even though at the time of his early death in 1839, he was living in obscurity.

In 1992, Barry O'Connell republished William Apess' writings, and sparked a new wave of literary and critical scholarship on Apess' life and work. David Murray, Arnold Krupat and and Maureen Konkle were among the first to revisit his legacy, placing Apess within a genealogy of indigenous resistance and writing. His last lecture, *Eulogy on King Philip* (1836) is a brilliant rebuttal to ideologies of settler nationalism and white Christianity. It also challenges the ways in which the seventeenth historical Wampanoag leader, King Philip, and King Philip's War (1676-77), was being used within the politics of Indian Removal under President Andrew Jackson.[69] The *Eulogy* is a complex text that leverages the rhetorical strategies of abolitionist oratory and

---

[69] As Arnold Krupat explains *All That Remains: Varieties of Indigenous Expression* (2009) the white liberal sentimental narrative of King Philip's War as a last revolutionary stand reinforced the notion that contemporary Natives had no more fight left in them: "Apess's texts work against the dominant, racialist construction of Indians as an inferior race, and they contest the dominant narrative of the Jacksonian period in the tragic mode, the story of the sad-but-inevitable disappearance of the Indians" (74).

evangelical sermons in order to expose the violence at the heart of white settler nation's origins.

Arnold Krupat[70] analyzes the form and genre of the *Eulogy* and concludes that Apess was rewriting "the dominant, comic narrative of the progress of civilization and its parallel narrative of tragic Indian decline in the ironic mode. It is an ironic narrative in which white triumph is an unjust consequence of force and greed" (90).[71] Cheryl Walker takes a different view of the Eulogy's rhetorical form. In her 1997 book, *Indian Nation: Native American Literature and Nineteenth-Century Nationalisms* she explores Indian interrogations of national identity and narrative in the nineteenth century, by engaging with "the Indian's America, not the white man's Indian" (12). Walker identifies several hybrid[72] modes of Native American writing, which were deployed in order to secure access to dominant discourses so that Native Americans could generate a space in which to shape national ideologies (58). She explores two forms of national allegory, the

---

[70] *All That Remains: Varieties of Indigenous Expression* (2009)

[71] Krupat also argues that that the *Eulogy* directly challenges Edward Everett's "Address Delivered at Bloody Brook, in South Deerfield, September 30, 1835," which narrated the Puritan's victories as triumphal comedy.

[72] While Walker's use of the term hybridity here does not map onto Homi Bhabha's usage in his essay, "Signs Taken For Wonders," there are some intriguing resonances between the two, particularly because these hybrid rhetorical modes grow out of a space of subjectivity that Bhabha would recognize as hybrid: "Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power…It unsettles the mimetic or narcisstic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. For the colonial hybrid, it is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire" (159-160). For Bhabha, hybridity is not an identity, but a "problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of colonialist disavowal, so that other denied knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority—its rules of recognition" (162). Apess' writings are hybrid not because he is racially mixed and partially assimiliated, but because they unsettle and implicate colonial authority even as they demonstrate their mastery and mimicry of the dominant forms.

egalitarian and the differential, and then defines two rhetorical modes of response, the transpositional and the subjugated. The transpositional mode makes claims for rights and inclusion on the basis of universal claims to personhood, while subjugated mode actively seeks new arrangements of power by exposing all hierarchical arrangements within the field of the nation as historical and therefore open to political revision (60). Walker frames the *Eulogy* as nationalist rhetoric that both critiques dominant national discourse while revising the national narrative using the same components in their true, non-hypocritical form. Using both rhetorical modes of response, Apess holds up the mirror to white America and reverses the referents of "savage" and "Christian" and exposes the racist exclusionism at the heart of the national discourse. Walker also argues that in the text, "King Philip is a personification not of just Indian America but of the nation American should aspire to become" (167).

Maureen Konkle, in her 2006 book, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography 1827-1863*, argues that in all his writing, "Apess attacks the center of that false knowledge about Native peoples, in the form and narrative most common in the production of that knowledge, the concept of racial difference, and shows how that knowledge about racial difference is the foundation of the knowledge deployed to oppress Native peoples" (134). By tracing the continuity of racial violence over several centuries, the *Eulogy* tells the story of how the nation moves from the Puritans to New Echota (133). In his 2005 book, *Fugitive Empire: Locating Early American Imperialism* argues that it is important to remember that there were two ideologies of removal in the early nineteenth century: Indian Removal and African colonization ("repatriation" of African Americans to Liberia). Here, I will build on

Doolen's argument that the *Eulogy* questions the dominant national genealogy by puncturing its "elaborate set of racial fictions, all of which invent the nation as a homogenous site in which nonwhites have no legitimate place and are destined to disappear" (8). Apess lifts the veil of the dominant narrative of the nation's founding, exposing what Doolen calls the historical trinity of US nationalism: war, slavery and territorial expansion. I will explore several moments in the Eulogy where Apess not only exposes the racial violence in the national genealogy, but also destabilizes any attempt on the part of Puritan descendants to "move past" or redeem the sins of their ancestors. If the rosebush on the threshold of Hawthorne's novel is still blooming in spite of its connection to its shameful violent origins, then Apess shows us the rivers of blood that continue to nourish this rosebush, a symbol of national genealogy.

First delivered as a public lecture in 1836, the *Eulogy* indicts white Christianity as a violent instrument of war and colonization. Apess tells a counternarrative of national origins, one founded on deception, violence, blood-lust and colonization, which in turn begets a national genealogy of white supremacy, violence and colonization, instead of liberty, freedom and enfranchisement. Throughout the speech, Apess also constructs a lineage of blood descent. However, this blood lineage does not only refer to a racial genealogy—or rather, it points both towards the racialized descent that legitimizes the descendants of Puritans the true national citizens, and to the lineage of blood violence that stains and continues to sustain this legitimacy. In his opening remarks, Apess directly addresses his white audience. The direct address is situated in a sentence with a very confusing and convoluted syntax[73] but it accomplishes several things. First, it connects

[73] See Cheryl Walker's careful reading and explication of this passage's syntax.

the white audience with the "those few remaining descendants who now remain as the monument of the cruelty of those who came to improve our race and correct our errors" (2).[74] By doing so, Apess frames the legacy of the Puritans as that of cruelty, and as living monuments, these descendants can never escape their ancestors' past. Monuments function as a temporal bridge—they bring the past into the present, and by telling his audience they are monuments to this cruelty, Apess refuses to let his audience recant or deny their past. Whether or not they are actual descendants of the Pilgrims, the white members of his audience bear the collective racial/blood guilt of the past and present.

Then, Apess appeals to the sacred place of honor Washington occupies in his audience's hearts in order to show that King Philip occupies a similar place in Native American history:

> …and as the immortal Washington lives endeared and engraven on the hearts of every white in America, never to be forgotten in time- even such is the immortal Philip honored, as held in memory by the degraded but yet grateful descendants who appreciate his character; so will every patriot, especially in this enlightened age, respect the rude yet all accomplished son of the forest, that died a martyr to his cause, though unsuccessful, yet as glorious as the American Revolution.
>
> 2

Not only is Apess making a case for King Philip's inclusion in the national mythology, but he is also puncturing the unity of the national origin. If George Washington is revered as the father of the nation, what does it mean that King Philip is in every sense

---

[74] http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/apess-eulogy-speech-text/ There are no page numbers, but this source numbers by paragraph. Subsequent text citations will refer to paragraph number.

Washington's equal? Could it be that King Philip fathered Washington? Or perhaps Apess is suggesting to his audience that there have always been multiple lines of national genealogy? Here, I suggest that both implications are true; there is no Washington without King Philip, but at the same time, there are powerful indigenous counternarratives and genealogies that destabilize any single linear narrative of the white citizen as heir to Washington's commitment to liberty.[75] This section ends by asking, "Where, then, shall we place the hero of the wilderness?" (2). But Apess has already answered his own question: both Washington and King Philip live on, as monuments, within the nation's memory.

The speech proceeds with a detailed accounting of Pilgrim atrocities, deceptions and religious hypocrisy. Apess regularly calls out to his audience, interpellating them into the events: "O thou pretended hypocritical Christian, whoever thou art, to say it was the design of God that we should murder and slay one another because we have the power" (8). Although the phrasing dilutes the direct address by the qualifying aside "whoever thou art," Apess the minister knows that any general mention of the sinner or Christian is directed towards each individual listening to the sermon. A few moments later, after relating an incident in which an Indian woman is mourning the loss of her children at the hands of a Captain Hunt, Apess refines his address even more carefully:

O white woman! What would you think if some foreign nation, unknown to you

---

[75] To further complicate the narrative of descent on the Native American side, Krupat considers the motivation behind Apess' claim that King Philip was a Pequot. King Philip was actually the sachem of the Pakanokets (also known as Wampanoags) around Mount Hope in Rhode Island, Krupat argues that rather than making a mistake, Apess strategically claimed his own descent from a royal line. This claiming also blurs the historical fact that Apess' own ancestors, the Pequots, fought with the British against King Philip.

> should come and carry away from you three lovely children, whom you had dandled on the knee, and at some future time you should behold them, and break forth in sorrow, with your heart broken, and merely ask, "Sirs, where are my little ones?" and some one should reply: "It was passion, great passion.' What would you think of them? Should you not think they were beings made more like rocks than men?
>
> 9

Apess uses a sentimental strategy by asking the white woman to imagine herself in the place of the Indian woman, and appealing to the presumed universality of motherhood. However, even as this moment of address is successful on the sentimental level, it also subverts the very assumption of universal mother-feeling to which it appeals. If indeed the sympathy of mother for other mothers was a universal experience, then why would Apess need to appeal to it in the first place?

Apess continues to use this strategy of reversal in order to show the true nature of the Pilgrim's savagery, violence and deception, questioning the very legitimacy of any act of settler colonialism:

> The Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, and without asking liberty from anyone they possessed themselves of a portion of the country, and built themselves houses, and then made a treaty, and commanded them [Indians] to accede to it. This, if now done, it would be called an insult and every white man would be called to go out and act the part of a patriot, to defend their country's rights; and if every intruder were butchered, it would be sung upon every hilltop in the Union that victory and patriotism was the order of the day.

10

This is why later in the speech Apess calls the 4th of July a "day of mourning not of joy" (20). The nation came into being through deception, treachery and decidedly un-Christian acts of savagery,[76] and its independence was articulated through racial hierarchies.

When Apess narrates the events of King Philip's War, he repeatedly emphasizes the double standards of both his white audience and the original settlers. As above, Apess reverses the gaze and forces his audience to acknowledge that what was of Providential design in their dominant narrative would be acts of war and injustice if the sides were reversed. Apess leverages the general acceptance of King Philip as a noble chief to make a much more political claim. In the events leading up to the war, King Philip refused to enter into a new treaty with the colonial governor, and in Apess' narration King Philip states: "Your governor is but a subject of King Charles of England; I shall not treat with a subject; I shall treat of peace only with a king, my brother; when he comes, I am ready" (40). King Philip not only claims sovereignty but his own equality to any other sovereign in the world. Apess interprets this moment for his audience: "This answer of Philip's to the messengers is worthy of note throughout the world. And never could a prince answer with more dignity in regard to his official authority than he did -disdaining the idea of placing himself upon a par of the minor subjects of a king; letting them know, at the same

---

[76] "Another act of humanity for Christians, as they call themselves, that one Captain Standish, gathering some fruit and provisions, goes forward with a black and hypocritical heart and pretends to prepare a feast for the Indians; and when they sit down to eat, they seize the Indians' knives hanging about their necks, and stab them to the heart. The white people call this stabbing, feasting the savages. We suppose it might well mean themselves, their conduct being more like savages than Christians…And who, my dear sirs, were wanting of the name of savages–whites, or Indians? Let justice answer" (11).

time, that he felt his independence more than they thought he did" (41). In fact, Apess argues that this assertion of sovereignty and the brilliance of his military tactics place King Philip within the ranks of the most brilliant tacticians and leaders in history, including Philip, the Grecian emperor, Washington and Napoleon, both of whom actually "patterned after him, in collecting his forces and surprising the enemy" (66).

Within the historical context of the 1830s, King Philip's insistence on equal sovereignty and his prophetic vision were the most useful aspects for Apess political claims. Apess tells his audience that King Philip gave a speech in which he saw a vision of his people's future:

> All our ancient customs are disregarded; the treaties made by our fathers and us are broken, and all of us insulted; our council fires disregarded, and all the ancient customs of our fathers; our brothers murdered before our eyes, and their spirits cry to us for revenge. Brothers, these people from the unknown world will cut down our groves, spoil our hunting and planting grounds, and drive us and our children from the graves of our fathers, and our council fires, and enslave our women and children…How deep, then, was the thought of Philip, when he could look from Maine to Georgia, and from the ocean to the lakes, and view with one look all his brethren withering before the more enlightened to come; and how true his prophecy, that the white people would not only cut down their groves but would enslave them. Had the inspiration of Isaiah been there, he could not have been more correct. Our groves and hunting grounds are gone, our dead are dug up, our council fires are put out, and a foundation was laid in the first Legislature to enslave our people, by taking from them all rights, which has been

> strictly adhered to ever since…Yea, every charter that has been given was given with the view of driving the Indians out of the states, or dooming them to become chained under desperate laws, that would make them drag out a miserable life as one chained to the galley; and this is the course that has been pursued for nearly two hundred years. A fire, a canker, created by the Pilgrims from across the Atlantic, to burn and destroy my poor unfortunate brethren, and it cannot be denied.
>
> 43, 64

Here, I want to note the relation between the past and the present in this passage. In the present of his oration, Apess is "recalling" the vision of his ancestor (although, as previously noted, the veracity of his claim of descent from King Philip is questionable). This vision looks into the future, and Apess confirms its prophetic nature by listing all of the things that have come to pass, in the time between King Philip's vision and his own present. At the end, he calls this history "a fire, a canker" and unequivocally accuses the Pilgrims of setting it all in motion. This moment is a canny prefiguration of what Emerson praised as genius of the English race, but instead Apess calls out the violence within the settler colonial structure. Where Emerson sees imperial strength and masculine vigor, Apess sees blood-lust and destruction. By naming the settlers as "Pilgrims from across the Atlantic," Apess both destabilizes the white claim to indigeneity and implicates all European colonialism, past and present. If, as I argued, Hawthorne was attempting to reroute the illegitimate national line of descent by sending Pearl back to England and confining the shame of Puritan violence within its own community, then Apess digs up the twisted roots of national descent and exposes their bloody, cross-

century and extranational origins.

Then, Apess asks his audience what should be done: “Shall we cease crying and say it is all wrong, or shall we bury the hatchet and those unjust laws and Plymouth Rock together and become friends? And will the sons of the Pilgrims aid in putting out the fire and destroying the canker that will ruin all that their fathers left behind them to destroy?” (64). In these questions one can hear a tone of mockery, one that implicates our contemporary moment as well. It is a familiar plea in our multicultural times: why can’t we just get along, and why do we have to revisit the past and make reparations for slavery or territorial expansion? Indeed, Apess knows these questions are absurd and that affirmative responses are impossible, but rhetorically, they function to assign collective responsibility and guilt in the present.

What happens next is a very unsettling and subversive rhetorical moment. Prior to this, Apess only directly ventriloquizes King Philip. Here, he takes on the persona of President Jackson, and speaks to the Natives, as his “red children.”

> You see, my red children, that our fathers carried on this scheme of getting your lands for our use, and we have now become rich and powerful; and we have a right to do with you just as we please; we claim to be your fathers. And we think we shall do you a great favor, my dear sons and daughters, to drive you out, to get you away out of the reach of our civilized people, who are cheating you, for we have no law to reach them, we cannot protect you although you be our children. So it is no use, you need not cry, you must go, even if the lions devour you, for we promised the land you have to somebody else long ago, perhaps twenty or thirty years; and we did it without your consent, it is true. But this has been the

> way our fathers first brought us up, and it is hard to depart from it; therefore, you shall have no protection from us.
>
> 65

In the previous moment when Apess appealed to the sentimental ideology of universal motherhood, it was clear that for his white audience and their ancestors, the bonds of familial sympathy were constrained within racial and civilizational hierarchies. Here, Apess deploys the concept of the national family, but the familial relation itself is revealed to be corrupt and violent. The tone of the passage moves between political satire (by exposing the lies of racist colonial paternalism) and a deeper subversion of the ideology of national descent. The President addresses his "red children," with whom he claims a collective white relation of fatherhood. Yet this is not a relation of direct racial descent, and the President's usage of possessive pronouns clearly mark this. While he has "red children," it was "*our*" (white, not red) fathers who "carried on this scheme" which made "*us*" rich and powerful, therefore "*we*" have "a right to do with *you*" as "*we* please." These claims are syntactically connected through semi-colons, which lead to the final claim of being "*your*" fathers. As I have argued elsewhere in this dissertation, the logic of national white racialization mobilized an array of metaphors of filial descent and relations of inheritance. This passage shows the perversion of such metaphors when applied to other nationally sovereign peoples. This is not a consensual relation; it is a violently colonial one, justified by the logic of internal colonialism. The white racial genealogy of the nation is not only protected through the management of racial marital relations, but through the conscription of "red children" into the national family and their subsequent removal from it. This double move—claiming indigenous peoples as part of

the national family and then banishing them from it—also reveals the connection between white settler colonialism and hetero-patriarchy, as Andrea Smith has argued. If indigenous peoples are to remain outside national family but still occupy space within the borders of the nation, their sovereignty is a threat to the nation. By deploying paternalism and conscripting the indigenous peoples as children, the nation is able to contain the threat, and then enact their removal on the basis of a national/patriarchical right of power and protection. This double move also depends upon an intergenerational transmission of power and violence; the white fathers inherit their right of occupation from their own fathers, and the "red children" inherit their current and future state of colonization and "parentlessness" from their families' history of dispossession. In this moment, Apess also seems to have a moment of prophetic vision: the Bureau of Indian Affairs' establishment of Indian boarding schools in the late nineteenth century ushered in a century of the national "father" claiming Indian children as his own, and assimilating them into the national family.

Apess ends his speech with an ironic closing, stating that "you and I have to rejoice that we have not to answer for our fathers' crimes; neither shall we do right to charge them one to another. We can only regret it, and flee from it; and from henceforth, let peace and righteousness be written upon our hearts and hands forever, is the wish of a poor Indian" (72). After a speech that does nothing but emphasize collective white responsibility for the past, present and future crimes against indigenous peoples, this insincere reversal knowingly performs an example of the Christian hypocrisy it has targeted. By stating that "regretting" and "fleeing" are our only options, Apess is mocking the white liberal position of mourning the disappearance of the "noble Indian."

And of course, the only ones doing the "fleeing" are the Indians who are being removed from Georgia.

The *Eulogy* is a text that refuses to let the white national genealogy hide its own violence. By confronting this national narrative with its own terms and metaphors, Apess tears apart the veil of religious and racial superiority that frame the nation's origins. In addition, the text also insists on an intergenerational relation to and responsibility for the ongoing violence committed in the name of the nation—we are responsible for the crimes of our fathers. However, even as it asserts this collective guilt, the text, particularly in the end, undermines the very structure of that relation of father/son inheritance. It is a relation so corrupt and violent that it relies on the conscription of "children" in order to contain threats to its legitimacy. It is a relation without consent, of ongoing internal colonization.

Turning to the South African context, we can also find examples of texts that expose the corruption and violence that characterizes the white national family. Mark Behr's 1995 novel, *The Smell of Apples*, is narrated from the perspective of the eleven year old son of a powerful apartheid military general. At first, the reader is drawn into Marnus' idyllic rural childhood, but the racism and violence of the apartheid state begin to become visible through discordant details and strange interactions. Marnus holds firmly to his blind faith in the rightness of his world and the omnipotence of his father, until he witnesses his father commit a horrifying act of brutality. The novel can be interpreted as an answer to the question: how could so many English and Afrikaaner South African whites claim ignorance of the violence and corruption of the apartheid system? The analogy of the apartheid state to that of a patriarchical family is very clear in

this novel, and the children who are legitimate heirs of that patriarch have a vested interest in keeping silent and turning a blind eye to the violence that happens within that family. It is not until Marnus secretly witnesses his father raping his best friend, Frikke, that he comes to understand that the father he worships is capable of unthinkable acts. The title of the novel comes from the scene between the two friends the morning after the rape. Marnus and Frikke eat breakfast together, neither of them acknowledging what had happened. Frikke is trying to eat an apple, but every apple he picks up smells bad. Marnus thinks the apples smell fine, and then smells Frikke's palm and tells him it is his hand, not the apples, that smells sour. At first, Marnus wants Frikke to tell him what happened, but later he is comforted by the fact that if Frikke could not even tell Marnus, his best friend, about the rape, then Frikke would keep the secret forever and Marnus' family and father would be safe. The smell of apples is a rotten smell, and it is an echo of the famous Shakespearean line in Hamlet "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" (1.4.90). Something indeed is rotten in the apartheid state of South Africa, and it is a white family secret, one which can only be exposed through organized military resistance and the dismantling of the state itself.

While Behr's novel takes place in 1974, the year Gordimer's novel was published and at the zenith of apartheid's power, Zoe Wicomb's 2001 novel, *David's Story*, is set in 1991, the year Nelson Mandela was released from prison and entered into negotiations that would bring the end of white minority rule. Wicomb's novel airs the dirty family secrets of both the ANC's military wing and the history of the Coloured ethnic group. The novel questions the ways in which women (and the sexualized violence they endure) are both central to and made illegible within the history of the Coloured ethnic group and

the ANC's freedom fighting. For Wicomb, the national narrative of the struggle between white vs. black and the apartheid regime vs. the ANC only tells one side of the very complicated origins and history of the nation and its struggles. Writing in the aftermath of ANC victory, Wicomb grapples with the legacy of revolutionary violence, and she questions the clean narrative framings of this history, as well as the new national myths of racial descent. In fact, I began this chapter with a discussion of the Fanon quotation because Wicomb's novel begins with this quote as an epigraph. This novel, and the performative force of its deconstructed, multivocal narrative, begins from the insight that questioning itself must accompany all forms of revolution.

Zoe Wicomb was born in 1948 and raised in the Western Cape, in a Griqua (Coloured) settlement, Vrendenal/Van Thynsdorp, known as the Gate to Namaqaland. After twenty years of voluntary exile in Great Britain, she returned to South Africa in 1991. Coloured is a heterogeneous ethnicity in South Africa that originated from a mixture of Khoi, Cape Malay, Indian and Dutch ancestors. In fact, race, class, ethnicity have always been highly mutable in South African history. Even when the entire population was classified according to race on supposedly biological grounds (1960-1990), every year the Government Gazette published lists of people who had been reclassified from one race to another. However, despite their multi-ethnic origins, Coloured politics (and specifically, that of the Griqua) have repeatedly insisted on their racial and ethnic purity. Much of the South African literature that has engaged with apartheid history has done so from either the Afrikaaner white, British white, or black

perspective, rather than the Coloured experience, in part because of the latter's complicity with the National Party and ethnic nationalism.[77]

Wicomb's novel offers a radically opaque, polyvocal and fragmented account of history and narrative with multiple plots and temporalities. The titular David, a South African freedom fighter, has hired a (female) biographer to help him shape and narrate his history with the ANC and the Coloured ethnic group. So while the novel may be called *David's Story*, it is actually his unnamed biographer who writes the narrative and the "I" in the novel is actually the biographer's voice. This structure pays homage to *The Long Journey of Poppie Nongena* (published in 1978 in Afrikaans and in 1980 in English) written by Elsa Joubert. It is actually a collaboration between Joubert and Nongena herself, and it is a mix of autobiography, biography, novel and oral history.[78]

---

[77] In her afterword to the novel, Dorothy Driver exhaustively explains the history of Coloured ethnic group and its relation to other groups in South Africa. "South Africans have been forging new political, cultural and ethnic identities through the opportunities provided by democracy and a new constitution….one subject of debate includes the nature and status of the Khoisan people, and, within them, the Griqua, in whose name are raised questions about ethnic identities felt to have been politically eclipsed in both the old and new systems. The novel's interest in Griqua history makes it unusual in South African literature. The Griqua, who claim as their original language the Khoi language, Xiri (not part of the Bantu linguistic group), have not generally identified themselves with the far more numerous Bantu-speaking indigenous peoples of South Africa, and the concerns of *David's Story* stand somewhat apart from the black-white antagonisms often focused on in South African history. Moreover, the relation between the Griqua and the more general grouping of 'Coloured' has been variable and complex" (216).

[78] Anne McClintock calls it a double scandal: it is a political scandal because it tells the life story of a very poor black woman and the realities of poverty and abuse, and it is literary one because "as the double-tongued collaboration of two women, it flouts the Western notion of the individual engendering of narrative…the book's unruly political substance, its birth in the violent crucible of the uprising, its doubled and contradictory female authorship, its violation of racial, gender class and aesthetic boundaries all amounted to a flagrant challenge to a number of white male certainties" (301)

While David's Story is single-authored by Wicomb herself, it is still important to understand the effects of the novel's polyvocal structure. In several interviews, Wicomb has explained at length the relation between the novel's form and its content. In a 2010 interview with Ewald Mengel, Wicomb notes that "the narrative structure was really dictated by the subject-matter and I hoped that a measure of the equivocal nature of that subject, a sense of its untellableness would remains" (22). In a sense, Wicomb is following in the footsteps of the subaltern historians of India[79] who have argued that empirical, discrete historiography is itself a genre, a way of ordering past events and experience according to certain rhetorical and disciplinary conventions. What events, voices and experiences are left out of official narratives? What genre or form gives space for these silences, gaps and multiple truths? For Wicomb, writing in a realist mode would have been inadequate for her fictional excavation of national history: "…the point surely is that in rewriting history you don't come up with definitive, authoritative assertions; rather you too are also producing a text from a particular point of view. It is for this reason that the realist mode becomes inadequate. We have had to find ways for showing that our new representations are themselves contingent, open to revision" (Mengel 28). Yet, Wicomb also insists that her solution the form/content dilemma is not a new one because all fiction, in some way or other, is polyvocal:

> For me it was simply a struggle, not only with the aesthetics of combining two stories, but also the ethics of representing the ambiguities of the situations. I dealt with that problem as best I could through a fragmented, indeterminate narrative, and a narrator whose voice is arch, ironic, unsympathetic. Hardly radical—it is

[79] Dipesh Chakrabarty, Partha Chatterjee, Gyanendra Pandey, Gayatri Spivak, among others

> after all a generic condition of prose fiction (as Bakhtin pointed out) to be multivoiced; in this case I draw attention to the different voices.
>
> Meyer 185

Wicomb's preoccupation with the relation between form and content is one moment in what is perhaps the longest cross-historical conversation in literary history, ranging from Aristotle, Hegel and Kant to Adorno, Marcuse, Spivak and Jameson.[80] And in fact, Wicomb has commented at length about the interrelation of the novel's political and aesthetic goals:

> My conceit of David fathering the story from a distance tries to capture the interrelatedness of the political and aesthetic concerns. The inchoate story, which for political reasons can't be told, threatens to fall apart; only the reader can hold together some sense of the events…[the novel] resistant to telling THE story; there isn't, there can't be a definitive story. And [it is] certainly resistant to the liberal-humanist take on the events in our troubled history.
>
> Meyer 187

---

[80] Aristotle defines a wide range of forms, including tragedy, comedy, and epic poetry, and subdivided these forms into components. Each part contributes to the symmetry and unity of the whole form, and the content shapes and fits within the demands of the form. Art's purpose is to bring together Idea and form into a reconciled unity (or, the concrete), according to Hegel. The content carries the principle of its form, and bad art is attributed to the defectiveness of content, not skill or form. Form is linked to purpose, for Kant, and this purposiveness of form directs the judgment of content. Adorno sees the relationship between form and content within the historical trajectory of capitalism and the rise of the culture industry. However, Marcuse argues that the fusion of form and content is simultaneously a crystallization of history and a different form of truth and reality. Art can break with material history to define a different sort of reality. For Spivak, the question of form, specifically the genre of the novel, always entails relations and productions of imperialism, whether it is in the construction of an individual subjectivity as bounded by the novel, or the uses of art forms in imperial administration and education. In Jameson's argument regarding the third-world novel, the content (history) creates the form (national allegory).

While Wicomb's content (which persons and what experiences are written out and into history or deemed unrepresentable) shapes the form (a polyvocal and non-linear narrative), the novel remains ambivalent about its own relation to history. By imagining other genealogies, and giving fictional life to women's experiences, does the novel also bring into being a different mode of justice through aesthetic representation? The novel itself is a brilliant, polyvocal meditation on representation, and it actively contributes to the textual history of representation of South African literary traditions and ethnic history. However, does it actually shift the material conditions upon which these structures of representation depend? As Deepika Bahri has argued, postcolonial critics must not discount the "attempt of the postcolonial text that imagines justice through aesthetic modes more fictional than functional" (99).[81]

Wicomb was writing this novel while the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was taking place, and she, like many others, found that the TRC was very limited in its definition of trauma and overly optimistic about the healing that remembering would bring. It focused on individual acts and perpetrators, and the Afrikaaner became the scapegoat, while liberal whites were not called to account for their own silence as they benefited from the apartheid system. The TRC could not deal with the institutional and historical violence that shaped entire communities for generations. In a certain sense, Wicomb's novel accomplishes what the TRC could not: it created a structure through

[81] Bahri's work engages with the Frankfurt School's theories of aesthetics and cultural production. She argues that we should value postcolonial art not only for its emancipatory social vision, but for its aesthetic qualities, an axis traditionally reserved for "great" works of art that transcend the particularity of their social conditions into the category of universality. Herbert Marcuse, in *The Aesthetic Dimension*, argues that art itself, "expresses a truth…which although not in the domain of radical praxis, [is] nevertheless [an] essential component of revolution" (548).

which the reader becomes aware of certain unsayable things and untellable stories, even if the things and stories themselves remain untold. The novel pays tribute to absences, and performs this tribute through its own struggles with the narrative compulsion to tell the stories. However, Wicomb is very clear about the different roles of dissident writing and revolutionary action, because while the former may articulate resistance and a new vision, it would be up to the latter to bring the new social order into being:

> And that really was the great sacrifice that revolutionaries had made. It was Nadine Gordimer who saw it so clearly at the time. In her essay "Living in the Interregnum" she speaks of violence as a terrible threshold none of us is willing to cross, but that what it means is that it will be left to blacks to do so. In other words, she acknowledged that dissident writing could not do the trick; that it would be the actual military wing of the ANC that would accomplish it.
>
> Mengel 22

David's Story questions the ways in which women (and the sexualized violence they endure) are both central to the history of freedom fighting and the Griqua community but also erased from official representations of these histories. The titular David, a South African freedom fighter, has hired a (woman) biographer to help him shape and narrate his history with the ANC and the Coloured ethnic group. So while the novel may be called *David's Story*, it is actually his unnamed (female) biographer who writes the narrative and the "I" in the novel is actually the biographer's voice. However, this does not mean that women's voices, as a category, find a secure representation within this novel. Both David and the biographer are obsessed with the absent voice (and haunting

screams) of Dulcie, his ANC comrade who was raped and tortured in an ANC detention camp in Angola.[82]

In discussing her motivation for writing the novel, Wicomb has often talked about the relation between the revolutionary violence necessary to overthrow an oppressive colonial regime and the subsequent spiraling into excesses of violence. In fact, she explains that what really sparked her creative process was watching the decommissioning of the IRA: "The story took off in its present emphasis as a result of the British press on the IRA—it was at the time of decommissioning—the ludicrous liberal conception of violence as something that is embraced by unnatural demons as if it were not produced by colonization, as if colonization were not itself responsible for the excesses into which a liberation movement slips" (Mengel 22). In this moment, Wicomb is also showing us that one cannot understand South Africa's national history without also understanding the dynamics of colonization and revolution. This novel, so grounded in a particular national history, is simultaneously tethered to a global, extra-national history as well.

In this same interview, Wicomb further explains her novel's approach to revolutionary violence:

> I wanted to look at the condition of revolution that is never discussed, the suspension—in the service of freedom—of certain values and beliefs during the period of political struggle, and the topsy-turvyness of that world means that the truth about that period is problematic and has to be nuanced in its representation….My task was also to avoid liberal humanism's pieties about

[82] I will not attempt to summarize the novel's intricate plots; it is a very difficult task because of the narrative fragments, voices and multiple temporalities. For my purposes, the plot details are not significant to my current discussion.

> bloodshed, or racist assumptions about black liberation politics, while at the same time discussing unflinchingly that inevitable slippage from idealism to corruption—which is the price of opting for an armed struggle.
>
> Mengel 24

The TRC operated on the principle that truth-telling would bring some measure of collective healing to the new post-apartheid nation. However, taking this truth-telling approach about the guerilla military tactics of the ANC was far more politically risky. It is a clear narrative: the apartheid state was the enemy, and the ANC fought for liberation. For years, Western leaders, including Margaret Thatcher, labeled the ANC a communist terrorist organization. Now that the ANC succeeded in overthrowing the apartheid state, it was politically impossible for the new leadership to officially acknowledge anything that could lend credence to claims of terrorism. In the novel, David mirrors this official inability to come to terms with the ANC's violent past. He is unable or unwilling to talk about what happened to his comrade Dulcie.[83] Dulcie's untold story, however, becomes the structural center, the black hole around which the events of the novel are circling.

The narrator and David consistently spar about the place and nature of Dulcie's story within the story they are writing. As the writer pushes David for more concrete information about Dulcie, he responds:

> I suppose…that I don't see the need to flesh her out with detail, specifically the kind invented by you. You see, she's not like anyone else; one could never, for

[83] It is possible that Wicomb's inspiration for Dulcie was the female freedom fighter, Phila Ndwandwe, who was a commander of the Natal Operations, the highest appointment of a woman in the ANC. She was arrested and killed by South African apartheid security forces, and hers was the first body uncovered and exhumed by the TRC. However, it is clear that in the novel, Dulcie was tortured and killed in an ANC detention camp in Angola.

> instance, say that she's young or old or middle-aged. I think of her more as a kind of—and he has the decency to hesitate before such a preposterous idea—a kind of scream somehow echoing through my story.
>
> A scream, I laugh, a scream? You won't get away now with abstracting her. Besides, Dulcie herself would never scream. Dulcie is the very mistress of endurance and control. Dulcie knows that there is only a point to screaming if you can imagine someone coming to your rescue; that a scream is an appeal to a world of order and justice—and that there is no such order to which she can appeal.
>
> 134

The narrator laughs because she knows that it suits David's purposes just fine for Dulcie's presence to be nothing but an unrepresentable scream of pain that haunts his narrative; otherwise, he would have to confront the material facts of her experiences and the ways in which the leftist revolution repeated the gender and sexual violences of the apartheid state. Later, the narrator deliberately writes a section that illustrates the sexual assaults and physical torture that Dulcie may have undergone, in order to force David to recognize the price that women pay, even in leftist freedom fights. A survivor of an ANC torture camp himself, David refuses and evades the narrator's claims, unwilling (or unable) to face the genealogy of violence.

If one part of the novel examines how violence is transmitted from one structure to another, then the other part explores how we collectively construct ethnic or racial genealogies. As David is reading one of the narrator's drafts, he accuses her of populating his story with too many women: "You have turned it into a story of women; it's full of old women, for God's sake…Who would want to read a story like that? It's not a proper

history at all" (199). This is precisely an issue that Wicomb's novel wrestles with; when women's voices are represented, they are judged (by David) as not attaining the threshold of proper history, but the woman's voice that does enter the national historical threshold (Dulcie's) can only be represented as an illegible, incoherent, unembodied scream.

The narrator's insistence on imagining the lives of the Griqua patriarchs' wives and female family members points to the partiality of David's conception of his ethnic and national history. David's motivation is to offer a corrective to the increasingly racially narrow definition of Griqua, by returning to the past and recovering Griqua roots of racial diversity. While David's motivation is commendable, the narrator's insistence on the co-presence of all these "old women" shows the narrowness of his vision of national history. Through the narrator's invented stories, the novel establishes what Shane Graham calls "an alternative archive—an intricate web of connections between people, bones and bodies, places and haunted landscapes" (42). David wants to reclaim his Griqua ancestor, Andrew LeFleur, who was known for his patriarchical, messianic, and separatist vision of ethnic nationalism. Instead of doing a "proper history" of Le Fleur, David's amanuensis fleshes out the life of his wife, Rachel Susanna Kok, as well as other female Griqua ancestors.

In addition to the narrator, Wicomb the novelist plays with genealogical fictions by creating a new ancestor for Andrew Le Fleur. The historical person, Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) was a professor of animal anatomy at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris. Madame Le Fleur, the historical mother of Eduard Le Fleur, was a Protestant Huguenot who left France in 1688 for the Cape. Wicomb transports Le Fleur a century forward and makes her Cuvier's housekeeper, which has the effect of implying

that her son, Eduard, is Cuvier's bastard. This means that Andrew Le Fleur himself comes from a hybrid (bastardized) racial genealogy, belying his belief in pure ethnic origins and ethnic separatism. This genealogical fiction also cleverly writes back against Sarah Gertrude Millin's *God's Stepchildren* (1924) a profoundly racist novel about the tragedy of miscegenation in South Africa, engaging in what J.M. Coetzee calls "a poetics of blood, tracking the degenerate seed from one generation to the next" (72). By creating a fictional genealogical link between David and Le Fleur, Wicomb reminds us that all genealogies have an element of fiction, whether because we forget inconvenient truths or we bend lines of descent to fit an official frame. The novel's false genealogies encourage the reader to rethink the relation between the present and past, even encouraging us to reinvent the past to make use of it in our future. Wicomb's playful genealogical reshuffling also destabilizes the pure genealogy that determines who belongs to the community or nation, and who is excluded.

The final scene of *David's Story* ends with the death of the narrator's computer and her story. A bullet flies into her computer: "Its memory leaks a silver puddle onto the desk, and the shrapnel of sorry words scuttle out, leaving behind whole syllables that tangle promiscuously with strange stems, strange prefixes, producing impossible hybrids that scramble my story" (212). This image itself is a beautiful mixture of etymological and botanical development processes. The narrator's hybrid text is fulfilling its own "promiscuous" and "impossible" destiny, as the words leak out of the "silver puddle" of computer memory. The narrator watches an intruder climb over her garden wall, as she wonders what will come next. The last five sentences of the novel are short, declarative lines:

My screen is in shards.

The words escape me.

I do not acknowledge this scrambled thing as mine.

I will have nothing more to do with it.

I wash my hands of this story.

213

The narrator, who had wrestled for control of the narrative with David, finally acknowledges that she is out of control as well. The words and history have escaped her. In a reversal of Prospero's famous claiming of Caliban, the hybrid "thing of darkness," (5.1.289-90) the narrator refuses to acknowledge her own work, now that it has become a hybrid thing scrambled beyond intelligibility. She refuses responsibility for this now destroyed narrative, but perhaps, like Lady MacBeth, no amount of hand washing can erase the telling spot. The end of the novel moves in contradictory directions—on the one hand, the fictional textual representation of unheard voices and unacknowledged genealogies will always fail by "producing impossible hybrids," but on the other hand, fleshing out the abstracted scream is part of building an order to which the historically silenced voices can appeal.

Zakes Mda's 2000 novel, *The Heart of Redness*, also dramatizes the relation between the colonial past and the postcolonial present in South Africa. If Wicomb's novel focused on silences and absences, Mda's novel is about the excessiveness of the past as it bleeds into the present. It asks the reader to think about how cultural trauma is generated and transmitted through generations, and how that trauma affects the genealogy of the nation. The novel shifts between the 1850s and the 1990s, in order to show how the events of the

past continue to live in the future. The protagonist, Camagu, who has returned to Johannesburg after living in the United States, leaves the city for the remote Eastern Cape coastal village, Oolorha-by-Sea. There, Camagu finds himself immersed in a community that is divided between feuding clans: the Believers who oppose capitalist development and modernization and embrace the "redness" of traditional Xhosa culture and the Unbelievers who are working to bring a casino luxury resort to their community in order to develop and modernize their village. This feud dates back to the 1850s when the Believers' ancestor Twin chose to follow Nongqawuse, the prophetess of the cattle-killing movement, while his twin brother Twin-Twin (the Unbelievers' ancestor) rejected the prophecies. The cattle-killing movement was a key event in the war between the Xhosa and the British, and it fractured the anti-colonial resistance, leaving the British in control of Southern Africa.

Upon its publication, the novel was met with much acclaim, but its reputation has suffered for several reasons. First, it feels a bit didactic at times because Camagu advocates a middle way in order to resolve the community's feud, and Camagu as the cosmopolitan exile is presented as offering the only possible solution to all the village's problems. Second, and most seriously, Andrew Offenburger published an article that argued that much of Mda's narration of the cattle-killing events was directly plagiarized from historian Jeff Peires' book, *The Dead Will Arise* (1989). Here, I will not discuss either of these issues, except to note that the plagiarism issue is, yet again, an issue of legitimate/illegitimate origins and genealogy.

Instead, I want to briefly discuss how the novel deals with an origin story—this time, not an origin of national independence, but of the beginning of British colonial rule—and

how that origin obscures indigenous lines of descent while at the same time, carving its lessons into their bodies. Before the title page, a family tree appears, and it is titled "The Descendants of the Headless Ancestor." The tree begins with three levels. Then, the branches all stop at a line titled "The Middle Generations." After the Middle Generations, the family tree begins again with names that the reader will recognize from the 1990s present of the novel. Resonating with the term "Middle Passage," the "Middle Generations" represent all those generations lost within the years of colonization. Clearly, there must have been at least five levels to the tree to span those years, but these were the generations with no sovereignty, and who were therefore illegible to history. But they are not only illegible to colonial history, but their own descendants, who desperately wish to forget colonization, even as they are living its legacy in their postcolonial present: "The sufferings of the middle generation are only whispered. It is because of the insistence: *Forget the past. Don't only forgive it. Forget it as well. The past did not happen. You only dreamt it. It is a figment of your rich collective imagination. It did not happen. Banish your memory. It is a sin to have a memory. There is virtue in amnesia. The past. It did not happen. It did not happen. It did not happen*" (137). Even as they are driven to forget their history, every first boy child descendent of Twin-Twin, the original Unbeliever, bears "scars of history" (156) that remind them of their origin. Even while the Middle Generation is lost to its own descendants and to any narrative, testimony of its survival emerges in these scars.

The lost generations of the Middle Passage, which birthed modernity itself—this is the subject of Paul Gilroy's groundbreaking book, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness* (1993). Gilroy recognized the need to move out of the national

frame in order to think about intermediate concepts lodged between the local and global (6). He uses the chronotope of the ship "a living, micro-cultural, micro-political system in motion" (4) to represent the currents, movements and structures that birth nations but which are not national, in themselves. Amitav Ghosh's 2008 novel, *Sea of Poppies*, breathes fictional life into this chronotope. Set in Calcutta in 1838, the novel opens with a village woman's vision of a ship, and the reader soon comes to understand that Deeti's vision signifies the origin of a new dynasty. Deeti's vision is of the Ibis, at that moment dropping anchor off Ganga-Sagar Island in the Bay of Bengal. The Ibis was a blackbirder, a ship for transporting slaves. However, the omniscient narrator (eventually revealed to be Neel, a future member of the Ibis family) tells the reader that "in the years since the formal abolition of the slave trade, British and American vessels had taken to patrolling the West African coast in growing numbers and the Ibis was not swift enough to be confident of outrunning them. As with many another slave-ship, the schooner's new owner had acquired her with an eye to fitting her for a different trade: the export of opium. In this instance the purchasers were a firm called Burnham Bros, a shipping company and trading house that had extensive interests in India and China" (10).

Sea of Poppies tangentially touches on both national histories I have been discussing. The Ibis (the former slave ship) drops anchor in Calcutta two years after Apess delivers the *Eulogy* and excoriates white American Christians for their racism and national amnesia. During Apess's speech in Boston, the fictional Zachary would have been working the docks in Baltimore, where he had fictionally encountered Frederick Douglass. While the new owners of the Ibis intended the ship to run opium shipments into China, China's ban on opium imports forced them to make another plan. First, the

Ibis will first transport indentured Indian workers to plantations in Maurititus, which desperately needed labor after slavery was outlawed. This is the same colonial indentured labor system that brought Indian workers to South Africa in the nineteenth century, and among whom Mahatma Gandhi first practiced law and agitated for equal treatment. What seems defined as a national issue (slavery and the history indentured of indentured labor) when viewed within the nation, becomes legible as a global system when viewed from outside the nation.

The novel also punctures the fiction of closed racial and national genealogies. No matter how tightly the frame of descent grips the narrative, these extra-national and global relations will always seep into the picture. The second mate on the Ibis is Zachary Reid, the son of a Maryland freedwoman and a white man. Although his race was noted as Black on the ship's manifest, Zachary passes as a white first mate through a series of fortunate events, and with the help of the head lascar (a racially mixed sailor), Serang Ali. Zachary and Serang Ali form an alliance/friendship across their national and racial categories: "This was Zachary's first experience of this species of sailor. He had thought that lascars were a tribe or nation, like the Cherokee or Sioux: he discovered now that they came from places that were far apart, and hand nothing in common, except the Indian Ocean; among them were Chinese and East Africans, Arabs and Malays, Bengalis and Goans, Tamils and Arkanese. They came in groups of ten or fifteen, each with a leader who spoke on their behalf" (12-13). Both Zachary and the lascars have mixed racial origins, although the hybridity of the lascars inheres in their collectivity, rather than their individual parentage. However, Zachary's initial impression of the lascars as a tribe or nation is not as far off as he might have thought: although not bound by national, racial

or linguistic characteristics, the lascars have created an elective affinity group based on their common experiences. This type of collectivity—born of solidarity and affinity, not descent and destiny—is repeatedly illustrated throughout the novel, as the characters, all bound for the Ibis, begin to meet one another and their fates become aligned.

Neel Halder, a wealthy Bengali landowner who is stripped of his fortune through the machinations of Benjamin Burnham the shipping magnate, eventually comes to experience this non-blood and non-caste kinship. Neel's sentence is that of overseas indentured labor and one of his fellow prisoners explains its significance: "The sentence you have been given will tear you forever from the ties that bind others. When you step on that ship, to go across the Black Water, you and your fellow transportees will become a brotherhood of your own: you will be your own village, your own family, your own caste" (290). Similarly, Putli, another Ibis passenger, explains this new kinship to Deeti: "From now on, and forever afterwards, we will all be ship-siblings—jaházbhais and jaházbahens—to each other. There'll be no differences between us" (328). While Neel and Deeti may lose their caste by crossing the "Black Water," they will gain a new set of lateral kinship relations. It is a new birth, brought into being through the mechanisms of colonization and globalization, but outside of the nation proper. Putli's insight spurs Deeti's new understanding of the meaning of her original vision: "It was now that Deeti understood why the image of the vessel had been revealed to her that day, when stood immersed in the Ganga: it was because her new self, her new life, had been gestating all this while in the belly of this creature, this vessel that was the Mother-Father of her new family, a great wooden mai-bap, an adoptive ancestor and parent of dynasties yet to come: here she was, the Ibis" (328). The ship, not the nation, is the parent, the dual-

gendered giver of this new life, this new dynastic family. Ghosh's novel also provides a model of kinship by consent and affiliation, rather than racial and patriarchical descent; set afloat by the forces of colonialism and capitalism, the passengers on the Ibis create a new familial and national heritage.

Narration and nation are never self-contained. The nation does not give birth to itself, which is why national narratives often seek the origin of that birth. At the heart of the imperial postcolonial nation's imagined community lies an anxiety over the origins and reproduction of the nation. This anxiety becomes especially visible in narratives about women, sex, reproduction and desire. However, this white settler narration is never fully settled, and it is continually unsettled by other voices and presences, including its own fictions of whiteness. In fact, the cohesion of national narratives is always threatened by the historical reality of non-linear, dispossessed, obscured and rerouted lines of descent.

Bibliography

Ahmad, Aijaz. *In Theory: Nations, Classes, Literatures*. Verso, 2008.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New Edition. Verso, 2006. Print.

Apess, William. *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot*. Ed. Barry O'Connell. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992. Print.

---. "William Apess, 'Eulogy on King Philip,' Speech Text." Web. 19 June 2014.

Arac, Jonathan. "The Politics of The Scarlet Letter." *Ideology and Classic American Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. Print.

Aravamudan, Srinivas. *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688–1804*. Duke University Press, 1999. Print.

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 2002. Print.

Attridge, Derek, and Rosemary Jolly. *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995*. Cambridge University Press, 1998. Print.

Attwell, David. "J.M. Coetzee and the Idea of Africa." In *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture*, edited by Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington, 219–236. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Babb, Valerie. *Whiteness Visible: The Meaning of Whiteness in American Literature*. NYU Press, 1998. Print.

Bahri, Deepika. *Native Intelligence: Aesthetics, Politics, and Postcolonial Literature*. 1st ed. University Of Minnesota Press, 2003. Print.

Balibar, Etienne. *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004. Print.

Balibar, Etienne, and Immanuel Wallerstein. *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities (Radical Thinkers)*. Second edition. Verso, 2011. Print.

Banivanua-Mar, Tracey, and Penelope Edmonds. *Making Settler Colonial Space: Perspectives on Race, Place and Identity*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Print.

Barlowe, Jamie. *The Scarlet Mob of Scribblers: Rereading Hester Prynne*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000. Print.

Behdad, Ali. *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Identity in the United States*. Duke University Press Books, 2005. Print.

Bercovitch, Sacvan. *The Office of The Scarlet Letter (Parallax: Re-Visions of Culture and Society)*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. Print.

Berg, Allison. *Mothering the Race: Women's Narratives of Reproduction, 1890-1930*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002. Print.

Berger, Maurice. *White Lies: Race and the Myths of Whiteness*. 1st ed. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000. Print.

Berkhofer, Robert F. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*. 1st ed. Vintage, 1979. Print.

Berlant, Lauren. "Intuitionists: History and the Affective Event." *American Literary History* 20, no. 4 (2008): 845–860.

Bhabha, Homi K. *Nation and Narration*. 1st ed. Routledge, 1990. Print.

---. *The Location of Culture*. 2nd ed. Routledge, 20014. Print.

Boehmer, Elleke. “Coetzee’s Queer Body.” *Journal of Literary Studies/Tydskrif Vir Literatuurwetenskap* 21, no. 3–4 (December 2005): 222–234.

Boehmer, Elleke, Fiona Bateman, and Lionel Pilkington. “Where We Belong: South Africa as a Settler Colony and the Calibration of African and Afrikaner Indigeneity.” In *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture*, 257–261. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*. Third Edition. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009. Print.

Brooks, Lisa. *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*. University Of Minnesota Press, 2008. Print.

Brown, Charles Brockden. “The Difference Between History and Romance.” *Monthly Magazine* 2.4 (1800): 251–253. Print.

Byrd, Jodi A., and Michael Rothberg. “Between Subalternity and Indigeneity: Critical Categories for Postcolonial Studies.” *Interventions* 13.1 (2011): 01–12. Print.

Campbell, James T. “The Americanization of South Africa.” *Here, There and Everywhere: The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture*. Ed. Reinhold Wagnleitner and Elaine Tyler May. Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2000. 34–63. Print.

Campbell, James T, Matthew Pratt Guterl, and Robert G Lee, eds. *Race, Nation and Empire in American History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. Print.

Carey, Henry Charles. *The Past, the Present, and the Future*. Philadelphia : Carey & Hart, 1848. *Internet Archive*. Web. 9 May 2014.

Carter, Julian B. *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America, 1880–1940*. Duke University Press Books, 2007. Print.

Castronovo, Russ. *Fathering the Nation: American Geneaologies of Slavery and Freedom*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Print.

Césaire, Aimé, Joan Pinkham, and Robin D.G. Kelley. *Discourse on Colonialism*. Monthly Review Press, 2001. Print.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference (New Edition)*. Princeton University Press, 2007. Print.

Chapman, Michael. *Southern African Literatures*. 2nd ed. University of Kwazulu Natal Press, 2003. Print.

Chatterjee, Partha. "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question." *Postcolonial Discourses*. Ed. Gregory Castle. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001. Print.

Cheyfitz, Eric. *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from The Tempest to Tarzan*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997. Print.

Coetzee, J. M. *Disgrace: A Novel*. Reprint. Penguin (Non-Classics), 2008.

---. "Farm Novel and Plaasroman in South Africa." *English in Africa* 13.2 (1986): 1–19. Print.

---. *White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988. Print.

Condé, Maryse et al. *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem (CARAF Books: Caribbean and African Literature Translated from the French)*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1992. Print.

Coombes, Annie E. E. *Rethinking Settler Colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada, Aotearoa New Zealand and South Africa (Studies in Imperialism)*. Reprint edition. Manchester University Press, 2012. Print.

Derrick, Scott S. "'A Curious Subject of Observation': Homoeroticisim, The Body and Authorship in Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter." *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 28 (1995): 308–26. Print.

Dimock, Wai Chee. *Through Other Continents: American Literature across Deep Time*. Princeton University Press, 2008. Print.

Dimock, Wai Chee, and Lawrence Buell. *Shades of the Planet: American Literature as World Literature*. Princeton University Press, 2007. Print.

Donaldson, Laura. "Making a Joyful Noise: William Apess and the Search for Postcolonial Method(ism)." *Interventions* 7.2 (2005): 180–198. Print.

Doolen, Andy. *Fugitive Empire: Locating Early American Imperialism*. U of Minnesota Press, 2005. Print.

Doyle, Laura. *Bordering on the Body: The Racial Matrix of Modern Fiction and Culture*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1994. Print.

---. *Freedom's Empire: Race and the Rise of the Novel in Atlantic Modernity, 1640-1940*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. Print.

Duara, Prasenjit. “Historicizing National Identity, or Who Imagines What and When.” *Becoming National*. Ed. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Print.

duCille, Ann. *The Coupling Convention: Sex, Text, and Tradition in Black Women's Fiction*. First Paperback Edition. Oxford University Press, USA, 1993. Print.

Duran, Eduardo. *Native American Postcolonial Psychology*. State University of New York Press, 1995. Print.

Edelman, Lee. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. Duke University Press, 2004. Print.

Edwards, Brian T., and Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar. *Globalizing American Studies*. University Of Chicago Press, 2010. Print.

Ellis, Havelock. *Studies in the Psychology of Sex: Sexual Inversion*. The Minerva Group, Inc., 2001. Print.

---. *Studies in the Psychology of Sex: Sexual Inversion*. The Minerva Group, Inc., 2001. Print.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Emerson: Essays and Lectures: Nature: Addresses and Lectures / Essays: First and Second Series / Representative Men / English Traits / The Conduct of Life (Library of America) by Emerson, Ralph Waldo Published by Library of America (1983) Hardcover*. New York: Library of America, 1983. Print.

---. *Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Penguin, 2011. Print.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo, and David M. Robinson. *The Political Emerson: Essential Writings on Politics and Social Reform*. First edition. Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 2004. Print.

Eng, David L. *The Feeling of Kinship: Queer Liberalism and the Racialization of Intimacy*. Duke University Press Books, 2010. Print.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press. 2005. Print.

Finucci, Valeria et al. *Generation and Degeneration: Tropes of Reproduction in Literature and History from Antiquity through Early Modern Europe*. Duke University Press Books, 2001. Print.

Fletcher, Pauline. *Black/White Writing: Essays on South African Literature*. Bucknell University Press, 1993. Print.

Floyd, Kevin. *The Reification of Desire: Toward a Queer Marxism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009. Print.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. Vintage, 1990. Print.

Freud, Sigmund. "The 'Uncanny.'" *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVII (1917-1919): An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works*. N. p., 1919. 217–256. Print.

George, Robert Blair St. *Possible Pasts: Becoming Colonial in Early America*. Cornell University Press, 2000. Print.

Gibson-Graham, J.K. "Querying Globalization." *Postcolonial, Queer*. Ed. John C. Hawley. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. Print.

Gilmore, Michael. *American Romanticism and the Marketplace*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985. Print.

Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double-Consciousness*. Harvard University Press, 1993. Print.

Glissant, Edouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. Print.

Goddu, Teresa A., 0231108176, and 978-0231108171. *Gothic America*. Columbia University Press, 1997. Print.

Goldberg, Jonathan. *Tempest in the Caribbean*. University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Goldberg, Jonathan, and Madhavi Menon. "Queering History." *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 120.5 (2005): 1608–1617. Print.

Gopinath, Gayatri. *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Print.

Gorak, Irene. "Libertine Pastoral: Nadine Gordimer's The Conservationist." *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 24.3 (1991): 241–256. Print.

Gordimer, Nadine. "Living in the Interregnum." *The New York Review of Books* 20 Jan. 1983. *The New York Review of Books*. Web. 9 May 2014.

---. *The Conservationist*. London: Penguin Books, 1974. Print.

Goudie, Sean. *Creole America: The West Indies and the Formation of Literature and Culture in the New Republic*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006. Print.

Graham, Shane. *South African Literature after the Truth Commission: Mapping Loss*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.

Gray, Stephen, and Nadine Gordimer. "An Interview with Nadine Gordimer." *Contemporary Literature* 22.3 (1981): 263-271. Print.

Gutman, Huck. *As Others Read Us: International Perspectives on American Literature*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1991. Print.

Hanlon, Christopher. "'The Old Race Are All Gone': Transatlantic Bloodlines and English Traits." *American Literary History* 19.4 (2007): 800–823. Print.

Harris, Cheryl I. "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review* 106.8 (1993): 1707. *CrossRef*. Web. 23 June 2014.

Hawley, John C. *Post-colonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections*. State University of New York Press, 2001. Print.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Chiefly About War Matters." *Atlantic Monthly* (1862): n. pag. Web. 20 Jan. 2014.

---. *The Scarlet Letter*. Second Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006. Print. Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism.

---. *The Scarlet Letter and Other Writings: Authoritative Texts, Contexts and Criticism*. Ed. Leland S Person. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005. Print.

---. *The Scarlet Letter: Complete Text with Introduction, Historical Contexts, Critical Essays*. Ed. Rita K. Gollin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002. Print.

---. *The Scarlet Letter: With an Introduction and Contemporary Criticism*. Ed. Mary R Reichardt. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009. Print.

Hoad, Neville. *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Globalization*. 1st ed. Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2007. Print.

Hodge, Bob, and Vijay Mishra. *Dark Side of the Dream: Australian Literature and the Postcolonial Mind*. Allen & Unwin Pty., Limited (Australia), 1992. Print.

Hogan, Jackie. *Gender, Race and National Identity: Nations of Flesh and Blood*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print.

Holmes, Rachel. "Queer Comrades: Winnie Mandela and the Moffies." *Social Text* 52/53 (1997): 161–280. Print.

Hull, Richard. *American Enterprise in South Africa*. New York University Press, 1990. Print.

Hunter, Eva, and Craig MacKenzie, eds. *Between the Lines II: Interviews with Nadine Gordimer, Mean Du Plessis, Zoe Wicomb, Lauretta Ngcobo*. Grahamstown: National English Literary Museum, 1993. Print.

Ingersoll, Thomas N. *To Intermix With Our White Brothers: Indian Mixed Bloods in the United States from Earliest Times to the Indian Removals*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005. Print.

"Inoculate, v." *OED Online* Mar. 2014. Web.

Jameson, Fredric. "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism." *Social Text* 15 (1986): 65–88.

JanMohamed, Abdul R. *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1983. Print.

Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the state of Virginia*. J.W. Randolph, 1853. Print.

Johnson, Claudia Durst. *Women's Issues In Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter*. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2009. Print.

Kaplan, Amy. "Manifest Domesticity." *American Literature* 70.3 (1998): 581-606. Print.

Kaplan, E. Ann. *Looking for the Other: Feminism, Film and the Imperial Gaze*. 1st ed. Routledge, 1997. Print.

Katz, Jonathan Ned. *The Invention of Heterosexuality*. University Of Chicago Press, 2007. Print.

Kazanjian, David. *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America*. University of Minnesota Press, 2004. Print.

Klein, Kerwin Lee. *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America, 1890-1990*. Reprint edition. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Print.

Konkle, Maureen. *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Print.

Krupat, Arnold. *Red Matters: Native American Studies*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002. Print.

---. *All That Remains: Varieties of Indigenous Expression*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. Print.

Lacapra, Dominick. *History in Transit: Experience, Identity, Critical Theory*. Cornell University Press, 2004. Print.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Unaccustomed Earth*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008. Print.

Lake, Marilyn, and Henry Reynolds. *Drawing the Global Colour LIne: White Men's Countries and the Question of Racial Equality*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2008. Print.

Lamar, Howard, and Leonard Thompson. *The Frontier in History: North America and Southern Africa Compared*. New Haven etc.: Yale University Press, 1981. Print.

Lawrence, Buell. *Emerson*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003. Print.

Leap, William L. "Strangers on a Train: Sexual Citizenship and the Politics of Public Transportation in Apartheid Cape Town." *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism*. Ed. Arnoldo Cruz-Malave and Martin F. Manalansan IV. New York: New York University Press, 2002. 219–235. Print.

Levander, Caroline F., and Robert S. Levine. *Hemispheric American Studies*. Rutgers University Press, 2007. Print.

Leverenz, David. *Paternalism Incorporated: Fables of American Fatherhood, 1865-1940*. Ithaca, N.Y.; Bristol: Cornell University Press ; University Presses Marketing, 2004. Print.

Levin, Harry. *Power Of Blackness: Hawthorne, Poe, Melville*. 1 edition. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1980. Print.

Libby, David J., Paul Spickard, and Susan Ditto. *Affect and Power: Essays on Sex, Slavery, Race, and Religion*. University Press of Mississippi, 2007. Print.

Lopez, Alfred J. *Postcolonial Whiteness: A Critical Reader On Race And Empire (SUNY Series in Postmodern Culture)*. State University of New York Press, 2005. Print.

Love, Heather. *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*. Harvard University Press, 2009. Print.

Macaulay, Thomas Babington. "Minute on Indian Education." 1835. Web. 8 May 2014.

Mackenthun, Gesa. *Metaphors of Dispossession: American Beginnings and the Translation of Empire, 1492-1637*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997. Print.

Marx, Anthony W. *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of the United States, South Africa*. Cambridge University Press, 1998. Print.

McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. 1st ed. Routledge, 1995. Print.

McSmith, Andy. "Margaret Thatcher Branded ANC 'terrorist' While Urging Nelson Mandela's Release." *The Independent*. Web. 30 June 2014.

Mda, Zakes. *The Heart of Redness: A Novel*. Picador, 2003. Print.

Menon, Madhavi. *Unhistorical Shakespeare: Queer Theory in Shakespearean Literature and Film*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Print.

Meyer, Stephen, and Thomas Olver. "Zoe Wicomb Interviewed on Writing and Nation." *Journal of Literary Studies* 18 (2002): 182–198. Print.

Monson, Tamlyn. "Conserving the Cogito: Rereading Nadine Gordimer's 'The Conservationist.'" *Research in Afrcian Literatures* 35.4 (2004): 33–51. Print.

Moon, Michael, and Cathy N. Davidson. *Subjects and Citizens: Nation, Race, and Gender from Oroonoko to Anita Hill*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1995. Print.

Morgensen, Scott Lauria. *Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*. Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2011. Print.

Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. Reprint edition. New York: Vintage, 1993. Print.

Muirhead, Kimberly Free. *Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter: A Critical Resource Guide and Comprehensive Bibliography of Literary Criticism, 1950-1000*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004. Print.

Mukherjee, Bharati. *Desirable Daughters: A Novel*. New York: Hyperion, 2003. Print.

Muñoz, José Esteban. *Disidentifications: Queers Of Color And The Performance Of Politics*. Minneapolis: Univ Of Minnesota Press, 1999. Print.

Munro, Brenna M. "Queer Family Romance: Writing the 'New' South Africa in the 1990s." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 15, no. 3 (2009): 397–439.

Murray, David. "Christian Indians: Samson Occom and William Apess." *Forked Tongues: Speech, Writing, and Representation in North American Indian Texts*. London: Pinter Publishers, 1991. Print.

Ndebele, Njabulo. *Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Essays on South African Literature and Culture*. University of Kwazulu Natal Press, 2006. Print.

Newman, Judie. *Fictions of America: Narratives of Global Empire*. New York: Routledge, 2007. Print.

Ngai, Sianne. *Ugly Feelings*. Harvard University Press, 2007. Print.

Nussbaum, Felicity A., 0801850754, and 978-0801850752. *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives (Parallax: Re-Visions of Culture and Society)*. 1 edition. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995. Print.

O'Brien, Jean M. *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England*. University Of Minnesota Press, 2010. Print.

Offenburger, Andrew. "Duplicity and Plagiarism in Zakes Mda's 'The Heart of Redness.'" *Research in African Literatures* 39.3 (2008): 164–199. Print.

Owens, Louis. *Mixedblood Messages: Literature, Film, Family, Place*. University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. Print.

Painter, Nell Irvin. *The History of White People*. 1st ed. W. W. Norton & Co, 2010. Print.

Patterson, Anita. *From Emerson to King: Democracy, Race, and the Politics of Protest*. First Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Print.

Peretz, Eyal. *Literature, Disaster, and the Enigma of Power: A Reading of 'Moby-Dick'*. 1st ed. Stanford University Press, 2003. Print.

Plumstead, A.W., William H. Gilman, and Ruth H. Bennett, eds. *Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Vol. 11. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975. Print.

Poe, Edgar Allan. "South Sea Expedition (review) [pp. 68-72]." *Southern literary messenger; devoted to every department of literature and the fine arts.*

---. *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*. New edition. Modern Library, 2002. Print.

Pratt, Mary Louise. "Arts of the Contact Zone." *Profession* (1991): 33–40. Print.

Puar, Jasbir. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2007. Print.

Pulitano, Elvira. *Toward a Native American Critical Theory*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003. Print.

Rana, Aziz. *The Two Faces of American Freedom*. Harvard University Press, 2010. Print.

Renan, Ernest. "What Is a Nation?" *Becoming National*. Ed. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Print.

Roach, Joseph. *Cities of the Dead*. Columbia University Press, 1996. Print.

Romero, Lora. "Homosocial Romance: Nathaniel Hawthorne." *The Scarlet Letter*. Ed. Ross C. (ed.) Murfin. xii, 507 pp. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006. 466–484. Print. Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism (CStCC).

Rowe, John Carlos. *Post-Nationalist American Studies*. 1st ed. University of California Press, 2000. Print.

Rubin, Gayle. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." *Toward and Anthropology of Women*. Monthly Review Press, 1975. Print.

Rushdie, Salman. *Shame: A Novel*. Picador, 2000. Print.

Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. Random House Inc, 1994. Print.

---. *Orientalism*. 1st ed. Vintage, 1979. Print.

Sandoval, Chela. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis, MN: Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2000. Print.

Schueller, Malini Johar, and Edward Watts. *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies*. 2003. Print.

Scully, Pamela. *Liberating the Family?: Gender and British Slave Emancipation in the Rural Western Cape, S. Africa, 1823-1853*. Heinemann, 1997. Print.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Tendencies*. Duke University Press, 1993. Print.

---. *Epistemology of the Closet*. University of California Press, 1991. Print.

Shava, Piniel Viriri. *Peoples Voice: Black South African Writing In the Twentieth Century*. Ohio University Press, 1989. Print.

Slotkin, Richard. *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*. University of Oklahoma Press, 2000. Print.

Smith, Andrea. *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. South End Press, 2005. Print.

Sollors, Werner. *Multilingual America: Transnationalism, Ethnicity, and the Languages of American Literature*. NYU Press, 1998. Print.

---. *Beyond Ethnicity : Consent and Descent in American Culture: Consent and Descent in American Culture*. Oxford University Press, 1986. Print.

Somerville, Siobhan. *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture*. Duke University Press, 2000. Print.

Sorisio, Carolyn. *Fleshing out America Race, Gender, and the Politics of the Body in American Literature, 1833-1879*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002. Print.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism." *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 1 (1985): 243–261.

--. "'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1988). in Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg, Eds. Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988: 271-313." *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Ed. Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988. 271–313. Print.

Spurlin, William J. "Broadening Postcolonial Studies/Decolonizing Queer Studies." *Postcolonial, Queer*. Ed. John C. Hawley. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. Print. Stasiulis, Daiva, Yuval-Davis, Nira. *Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulation on Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class*. London [u.a.: Sage, 1995. Print.

Stokes, Mason. *The Color of Sex : Whiteness, Heterosexuality, and the Fictions of White Supremacy*. Duke University Press Books, 2001. Print.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Princeton University Press, 2010. Print.

---. *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*. Duke University Press, 2006. Print.

---.*Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*. 1st ed. University of California Press, 2002.

Sundquist, Eric J. *Empire and Slavery in American Literature, 1820-1865*. University Press of Mississippi, 2006. Print.

--. "Slavery, Revolution and the American Renaissance." *The American Renaissance Reconsidered*. Ed. Walter Benn Michaels and Donald E. Pease. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Print.

Symmes, John Cleves. *Symzonia: A Voyage of Discovery*. J. Seymour, 1820. Print.

Takaki, Ronald T. *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Print.

Tuan Anh Nguyen V. INS, 533 US 53. N. p. Web.

Unterhalter, Elaine. "Constructing Race, Class, Gender and Ethnicity: State and Opposition Strategies in South Africa." *Unsettling Settler Societies*. London: Sage Publications, 1995. Print.

Veracini, Lorenzo. "Telling the End of the Settler Colonial Story." In *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture*, edited by Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington, 204–218. New: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

---. “The Imagined Geographies of Settler Colonialism.” *Making Settler Colonial Space: Perspectives on Race, Place and Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Print.

---. *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Print.

Wade, Michael. *White on Black in South Africa: Study of English-language Inscriptions of Skin Colour*. Palgrave Macmillan, 1993. Print.

Wagnleitner, Reinhold, and Elaine Tyler May. *"Here, There and Everywhere": The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture*. 1st ed. Salzburg, 2000. Print.

Wald, Priscilla. *Constituting Americans: Cultural Anxiety and Narrative Form*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1995. Print.

Walker, Cheryl. *Indian Nation: Native American Literature and Nineteenth-Century Nationalisms*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997. Print.

Wasserman, Renata R. Mautner. *Exotic Nations: Literature and Cultural Identity in the United States and Brazil,*. Cornell University Press, 1994. Print.

Weinbaum, Alys Eve. *Wayward Reproductions: Genealogies of Race and Nation in Transatlantic Modern Thought*. Duke University Press Books, 2004. Print.

White, Ed. *The Backcountry and the City: Colonization and Conflict in Early America*. 1st ed. Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2005. Print.

Wicomb, Zoe. *Playing in the Light: A Novel*. New Press, 2008. Print.

---. “Shame and Identity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa.” *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid and Democracy*. Ed. Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 91–107. Print.

Wicomb, Zoë, and Dorothy Driver. *David's Story*. New York; Lancaster: The Feminist Press at CUNY, 2002. Print.

Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford University Press, 1975. Print.

Winter, Kari J. *Subjects of Slavery, Agents of Change: Women and Power in Gothic Novels and Slave Narratives, 1790-1865*. University of Georgia Press, 2010. Print.

Wolfe, Patrick. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8.4 (2006): 387–409. Print.

Wolfe, Patrick, Fiona Bateman, and Lionel Pilkington. "Race and the Trace of History: For Henry Reynolds." In *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture*, 272–293. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Wyss, Hilary E. *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America*. University of Massachusetts Press, 2003. Print.

Zwarg, Christina. *Feminist Conversations: Fuller, Emerson, and the Play of Reading*. 1 edition. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995. Print.