
REVIEW ESSAYS

COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL DISCOURSE

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COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS: EUROPE AND THE NATIVE CARIBBEAN, 1492-1797. By Peter Hulme. (New York and London: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, 1986. Pp. 350. \$35.00.)

DISCURSOS NARRATIVOS DE LA CONQUISTA: MITIFICACION Y EMERGENCIA. By Beatriz Pastor. Second edition. (Hanover, N.H.: Ediciones del Norte, 1988. Pp. 465. \$25.00 paper.)

UNFINISHED CONVERSATIONS: MAYAS AND FOREIGNERS BETWEEN TWO WARS. By Paul Sullivan. (New York: Knopf, 1989. Pp. 269. \$22.95 cloth. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991. Pp. 294. \$12.95 paper.)

CONTRACTING COLONIALISM: TRANSLATION AND CHRISTIAN CONVERSION IN TAGALOG SOCIETY UNDER EARLY SPANISH RULE. By Vicente Rafael. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988. Pp. 248. \$26.95.)

PASYON AND REVOLUTION: POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, 1840-1910. By Reynaldo Ileto. (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979. Pp. 344.)

In the late 1980s, historians and anthropologists became increasingly aware of how the ethnographies and histories they have written have been imbued with rhetorical and literary devices. Simultaneously, literary critics have become interested in using anthropological theory and historical facts to create different interpretations of texts traditionally regarded as "high culture." The result is an extraordinarily interdisciplin-

ary moment. Literary critics are reading history and anthropology. Cultural anthropologists are developing sophisticated opinions of literary theorists like Mikhail Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, and Jacques Derrida. And even historians have begun to move slowly toward what is being called "cultural history," a less-developed form of the cultural analyses already being practiced in the fields of anthropology and literary criticism.¹

Within this ongoing set of conversations, one trend of increasing interest to Latin Americanists, Africanists, and Asianists is an emergent interdisciplinary critique of colonialism known as colonial discourse. Originating from the intersection of dissatisfaction about the limitations of existing critiques of colonial rule with the contemporary intellectual movement known as poststructuralism, studies of colonial discourse are undertaking a major reappraisal of the European colonial experience in fields as diverse as literary criticism, history, and anthropology.

Dissatisfaction with traditional criticisms of colonialism arose from a growing awareness of the distressing sameness characterizing many historical and anthropological works on colonial empires and their post-colonial successors. Regardless of whether the subject was Africa, Latin America, or (less frequently) Asia and whether the colonizing power was Great Britain, Spain, France, Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands, or Belgium, anthropologists' and historians' versions of what happened were usually tales of either heroic resistance in which natives dramatically defended their homelands or accounts of manipulative accommodation in which colonial goals were maneuvered to serve the interests of the native community or some combination of those two story lines.² In the late 1980s, these tales of resistance and accommodation were being perceived increasingly as mechanical, homogenizing, and inadequate versions of the encounters between the colonizers and the colonized.³ As narratives of resistance and accommodation were losing credibility, a major new intellectual movement was emerging in association with thinkers loosely grouped as poststructuralists, ranging from Jean-François Lyotard, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Giles Deleuze, and Felix Guattari to Michel Foucault and Richard Rorty.⁴ One compelling theme advanced by these

1. See Roger Chartier, *Cultural History*, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988).

2. The saga of the "weapons of the weak" continues in James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1990). See also Zygmunt Bauman's review of this work, "How the Defeated Answer Back," *New York Times Literary Supplement*, 11 Jan. 1991, p. 7.

3. John and Jean Comaroff call these kinds of accounts "challenge and riposte." See their forthcoming work, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity and Colonialism in South Africa* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press).

4. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Post-Modern Condition*, translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, translated by Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977); Jacques Derrida,

diverse writers is a critique of the transparency of languages as vehicles of communication. Words, sentences, and phrases can have more than one meaning and more than one interpretation simultaneously. How words are interpreted and understood depends on a determination of their context, yet an understanding of that context depends on the interpretation or translation of the words or phrases in question. Within this framework, recognition of what theorists call the polysemic character of language (the possibility of a word having multiple and even contradictory meanings) has opened the door to a wider range of interpretive possibilities in history, literature, and anthropology. In this arena, knowledge of the cultural practices of a society has come to play an increasingly focal role in establishing broader interpretive possibilities for words, sentences, and phrases in a given time or culture.

Colonial discourse has therefore undertaken to redirect contemporary critical reflections on colonialism (and its aftermath) toward the language used by the conquerors, imperial administrators, travelers, and missionaries. For it was through language—the rhetoric, figures of speech, and discursive formations—that Europeans have understood and governed themselves and the peoples they subjected overseas. In reflecting on the linguistic framework in which the politics of colonial rule have been elaborated, writers have observed the limitations of European political discourses as well as the way in which the polysemic character of language has enabled natives of colonized territories to appropriate and transform the colonizers' discourses. A related critique of the language of independence movements and postcolonial nationalism, referred to as postcolonial discourse, has been examining how popular discourses, high literature, and political pamphleteering have all constructed anticolonial and nationalist vocabularies. But whether the focus has been on the colonial or postcolonial situation, the central concern of these studies has been the linguistic screen through which all political language of colonialism, including reactions to it and liberation from it, need to be read.

Of Grammatology, translated by Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976); Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, translated by Alan Bass (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1978); Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, translated by Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Random House, 1970); and Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979). For a historical introduction to the issues in the United States, see Jonathan Arac's introduction to his edited collection, *Postmodernism and Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). Useful secondary works include Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982); Jonathan Arac and Christopher Norris, *Derrida* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987); John Raichman, *Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Herbert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2d ed. (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1983); and Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

The central attractions of poststructuralist critiques of language for critics of colonialism are two. The first is poststructuralism's questioning of traditional humanism "by exposing its hero—the sovereign subject as author, the subject of authority, legitimacy, and power."⁵ The affinity between exposing the hero of Western European humanism and exposing the hero of imperialism has been noted by some commentators as a common thread.⁶ Poststructuralism's second major attraction lies in its dislodging the author's "intention" or "original meaning" from a central role, allowing literary critics and others to consider the ways in which the text is appropriated and used by different textual communities.⁷ This development has had two relevant effects. The first has been to undermine the tendency to pass normative judgments based on an interpretation's closeness to what the critics think the original authors of the colonial document intended. The corollary effect of this criticism has been to open the door to examining the ways in which a colonized people's reception and appropriation of a text has been shaped by a different social and political experience from that of the authors of a text or its orthodox "high-culture" interpreters. If critics or historians were to continue to insist on the primacy of what high-culture or imperial critics think the author originally intended, then what interpreters from colonized cultures have made of it would still be lost or dismissed as merely naive, unimportant, or a "misreading."

Both poststructuralism and colonial discourse share an affinity with a third set of critical contemporary discourses, those of feminism. All three criticize the traditional subject of humanism, with feminist critics attacking it as a gendered form—patriarchal discourse. Furthermore, the demand by proponents of colonial discourse to allow the natives to speak in their own voices has resonated with feminist demands to allow women their own voices. As a result, the fields of colonial and postcolonial discourse have attracted a number of prominent women, most notably Gayatri Spivak.⁸ Beyond this common demand to "let the woman or

5. See Barthes's "The Death of the Author," in *Image, Music, Text*, 142–48; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), chap. 2, especially pp. 38, 221–23; and "Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?" *Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie* 63, no. 3 (1969):75–95, published in English as "What Is an Author?" in *Textual Strategies*, edited by Josué V. Harari (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979).

6. Gayatri Spivak, "Deconstructing Historiography," *Subaltern Studies IV*, edited by Ranajit Guha (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), 330–63, especially 337.

7. A critical difference exists between the reception of literary texts by communities of readers and that by the subjects of imperial power. As Homi Bhabha has pointed out, colonial discourse is not simply appropriated by textual communities but is addressed to someone (or a specific community). To Bhabha's proposition, I would add that this discourse is maintained by the exercise of force through armies, inquisitions, secret police, and jails, all of which give it an entirely different inflection. The addressee does not have the freedom to ignore the discourse, and if he or she does so, it can be only as a gesture of resistance.

8. The best recent discussion of the relationship between feminism and poststructuralism

native speak," both feminist and postcolonial discourses have developed a critical perspective on naive celebration of feminist or nationalist voices that represent themselves as coming "from below."⁹

The beginnings of the field of colonial discourse are usually identified with publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), a repetitive but effective attack on the ways that Western writers and colonial officials had been constructing their knowledge of the Middle East and Orient since the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁰ Said's denunciation of the exoticizing, eroticizing, and romanticizing of remote Middle Eastern "others" and his critique of the narrowness of European representations of peoples who had been producing representations of themselves for centuries provoked a considerable stir. As might be expected, his book had a definite impact on Middle Eastern studies, but it also attracted general interest from three traditional academic disciplines—literary theory, anthropology, and more recently, history. Publication of *Orientalism* led further to a revival of interest in Frantz Fanon's powerful indictment of colonialism in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), which has since been reissued with a new introduction by Homi Bhabha, a leading theoretician of colonial discourse.¹¹

Until recently, Said's book and the revival of Fanon's ideas have had their greatest impact on literary theory and anthropology. Literary theorists (of whom Said is one) have historically been concerned with issues of textual representation, and they consequently found Said's textually ori-

is *Feminism/Postmodernism*, edited by Linda Nicholson (London: Routledge, 1990). See also Spivak, *In Other Worlds* (London: Methuen, 1987); Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–94; Spivak and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," *Boundary 2*, 12 (1984): 3–13; Lata Mani, "Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India," *Cultural Critique* 7 (1987): 119–56; Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986); and also the thematic issues of *Inscriptions*, nos. 3–4 (1987–88) and 5 (1989). See also Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

9. For example, Lelia Ahmed, "Feminism and Cross-Cultural Inquiry: The Terms of the Discourse in Islam," in *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics*, edited by Elizabeth Weed (London: Routledge, Chapman, Hall, 1989), 143–51. See also Homi K. Bhabha, "Dissemination: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation," in his edited collection, *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 291–322.

10. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978). Although Frederic Jameson claims in his foreword to the English translation of *Caliban and Other Essays* that Roberto Fernández Retamar's work was the Latin American equivalent of Said's *Orientalism*, their similarities inhere only in their critical positions. Unlike Said, Fernández Retamar does not deal with discursive practices. See *Caliban and Other Essays*, foreword by Frederic Jameson, translated by Edward Baker (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), viii.

11. Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1952), originally translated into English by Charles L. Markham as *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove, 1967). Homi Bhabha's introduction was published in 1986 in London in Pluto Press's edition under same title. The view that the field of colonial discourse begins with Fanon rather than Said has been argued most recently by Benita Parry in "Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse," *Oxford Literary Review* 9 (1987): 27–57.

ented approach familiar despite the novelty of his subject. In anthropology, the discipline historically concerned with representing other peoples, the subject matter was well-known—the construction of understandings of cross-cultural others—but the textual approach was soon accepted as a fruitful new angle on anthropological issues.¹² In history, Said's approach has been adopted mainly by Middle Eastern and South Asian historians, whose subject matter he explicitly addressed.¹³ More recently, his approach has become important in African history as well. The emerging interest in colonial discourse writings among Latin Americanists appears to be following the same disciplinary trends, appearing first among literary theorists, next among anthropologists, and most recently among historians.

LITERATURE

In the Latin American arena, the liveliest and most extensive interest in colonial discourse studies is occurring in literary studies. One of the first excellent studies of the terrain is Peter Hulme's *Colonial Encounters*.¹⁴ The first two chapters examine the category of "cannibal," which was invented in Spanish discourses about the New World at the end of the fifteenth century and was highly problematic in terms of the societies actually encountered. "Cannibal" became an ideological marker of the boundary separating native "savages" from "civilized" Europeans, one that provided a rationale for rule by the same Europeans whose religious ritual of communion carefully avoided use of the term *cannibalism*. The theme of cannibalism appears in Robinson Crusoe's anxious fantasies about being devoured whole and in Caliban's anagram in *The Tempest*. Hulme's next three chapters explore a central paradox of the early encounters between Englishmen and Indians: the Englishmen's technical superi-

12. George E. Marcus and Michael Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1986); James Clifford and George E. Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), published in Spanish as *Retóricas de antropología* (Madrid: Ediciones Júcar, 1991); and James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988).

13. Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt: Orientalism Reconsidered* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Many of the important articles and reviews in this field have been published in the journal *Middle Eastern Research and Information Project*. For a summary of the impact of *Orientalism* on Middle Eastern studies over the past decade, see *Khamsin* (1988).

14. See also Rolena Adorno's excellent pioneering work on Spanish America, *Guaman Poma: Writing and Resistance* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986); Adorno, "Discourses on Colonialism: Bernal Díaz, Las Casas, and the Twentieth-Century Reader," *Modern Language Notes* 103 (1988):239–58; Adorno, "Nuevas perspectivas en los estudios literarios coloniales hispanoamericanos," *Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana* 14 (1988):11–28; and Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America*, translated by Richard Howard (New York: Harper and Row, 1984). For recent work on Brazil, see Roberto Reis, "Hei de Convencer: Autoritarismo no Discurso Colonial Brasileiro," paper read at the meetings of the Latin American Studies Association, 4–6 Apr. 1991, Crystal City, Virginia.

ority in weapons but inability to feed themselves and their consequent reliance on native hospitality for food. Three different renderings of this paradox of technical superiority and physical dependence appear in *The Tempest*, John Smith's accounts of Pocahontas, and *Robinson Crusoe*. In the *Tempest*, Prospero's magic, like that of European guns and compasses, operates only in the colonial setting. Prospero, like Crusoe and the Virginia settlers, uses his magic (or Western technical superiority) not to produce food but to change his relationship to the natives from guest to master. By turning themselves into the lords of the land through magic, these Europeans also turn (or imagine they turn) the natives into labor to produce their food supply (pp. 131–32). When faced with withdrawal of the hospitality on which their lives depended in Virginia, English narrators uniformly characterized this loss as "Indian treachery." Hulme, however, suggests that it represented an "eventual loss of patience with a hostile drain upon the economy" (p. 130), given that the English demonstrated little inclination either to reciprocate the hospitality or to learn to feed themselves. In analyzing the once popular eighteenth-century English folk narrative of Inkle and Yarico, Hulme shows how a sentimental view of the Caribs was nevertheless deployed to justify British exile and extermination of the native Caribs of St. Vincent. In British narratives of their wars with these racially mixed Caribs, the "original" Caribs became the pacific victims of black usurpation, a rationale for British intervention against the defrauders. But the British had no intention of restoring these lands to their rightful Carib owners. After being defeated by an expeditionary force of seventeen thousand, St. Vincent's black Caribs were forcibly removed to an island off the coast of Honduras, and the land was taken over by British settlers. Hulme demonstrates how use of the term *cannibal* as a rationale for European conquest changed from grounds of "barbarity" into a sentimental eighteenth-century concept of (extinct) original owners. His *Colonial Encounters* is a model work on colonial discourse that combines textual analysis with a sophisticated understanding of cultural anthropology and history.

A less theoretically sophisticated critique of the political dimensions of conquest stories is Beatriz Pastor's *Discursos narrativos de la conquista: mitificación y emergencia*. Pastor focuses on five well-known sixteenth-century texts: Christopher Columbus's *Diario*, Hernán Cortés's *Cartas de relación*, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's *Naufragios*, several versions of the expedition of Lope de Aguirre, and Alonso de Ercilla's epic poem *La araucana*. For each work (and several less-known texts), she characterizes the position of the narrator, his description of nature and relationship to it, and his view of the natives. By contrasting the heroic and epic narratives of Cortés and Columbus with the trials, failures, and rebellions of Cabeza de Vaca, Fray Marcos de Nizza, Lope de Aguirre, and Alonso de Ercilla, Pastor attempts to locate critical discourses within tales

of failure and rebellion. In the narratives of failure, the main enemy is not the natives but the environment, and the search for gold is replaced by the search for more quotidian goals of food, clothing, and water. Pastor argues that the narratives of failure begin to criticize ideological and literary models following the explorers' inability to find the marvelous objectives they sought. Narratives of rebellion, as she categorizes that of Lope de Aguirre, begin with failure and end by denouncing "the reality of violence, rivalries, injustice and corruption" in the expeditions of conquest (pp. 294, 298). Pastor views this model as radically opposed to the heroic model (p. 307) because in the narratives of rebellion, chaotic terror replaces epic order (p. 309) and the rebel explicitly disassociates himself from the forms of authority represented by the king and his representatives (p. 312). Pastor argues that Ercilla's account of the expedition against the Araucanians, in which native warriors are endowed with the qualities of Spanish knights and native women are viewed as chivalric ladies, is the most critical narrative of all because it condemns the loss of heroic values and the transformation of the conquerors into the greedy *encomenderos*. Only a return to traditional heroic values is envisioned as bringing victory over the natives (p. 413). The problem with all of the forms of critique identified by Pastor is that they clearly reside within the limits established by sixteenth-century Spanish political orthodoxy. The critique of the grasping *encomendero* plays on a traditional Hispanic critique of motives of "interest" typical of a lament for an imagined earlier, less materialistic world. Even Aguirre justifies his own rebellion in terms of the decadence of vassalage and other traditional Spanish political values and institutions. These critiques are thus imbued with a nostalgic, even reactionary desire for the return of traditional medieval Hispanic values, which are credited with the successful early expeditions of conquest. But in characterizing these narratives as those of failure and rebellion, the perspective remains wholly European: they fail or rebel against European ambitions. As in all Orientalist discourse, the natives in these narratives remain a blank slate on which are inscribed the frustrations as well as the longings of the Europeans for the imaginary lost Eden of their own past.

Hulme's and Pastor's works share a concern for the historical period in which the literary texts of the conquest were produced. Both differ from an earlier generation of "New Critics" who denied the existence of political or historical context. Pastor and Hulme further demonstrate a commitment to developing literary critiques of the colonial context in which these texts were created.

Two of the texts that Hulme analyzes, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, have since come to be viewed as part of the literary canon. Attacks on the literary canon usually base themselves on the gender, ethnic, and racial characteristics of the

authors of books in the canon. Hulme, following Said, reminds readers of a political subtext in each work in the canon, which emanates not from the author's biography (the current litany of race, class, and gender) but from the political and historical position of the state in which the texts were composed. Thus the literary tastes enshrined in the canon may be said to reflect a desire for a certain image of empire. Not all of the canonical works of English literature from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reflect those imperial concerns, but a fair number do, suggesting a close link between relations of cultural and political authority.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Said's critique of the process by which Asia and the Middle East were represented by the West, as many critics have pointed out, rested solely on his reading of works of the West, continental philosophy, and the European literary canon.¹⁵ Despite Said's demand for the voice of the "Other," he failed to analyze or even cite any text actually composed by Middle Easterners or Asians. Nor did he take the necessary additional step of showing how or why such texts differed from those produced in the West.¹⁶ In other words, he failed to explain how different perspectives or worldviews functioned between cultures, and hence he provided no basis for the dynamics of cross-cultural understanding. Within anthropology, the discipline most concerned with the politics and ethics of representing perspectives from other cultures, the challenge of providing a model or strategy for cross-cultural translation or representing culturally different others was already being pursued when Said's book was published. A part of these efforts appeared as a series of experimental ethnographies, some written as dialogues and others produced under collaborative authorship.¹⁷

Different strategies of representing another culture are the crux of a number of recent works in Latin American anthropology, including Michael Taussig's pathbreaking *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*. This study attacks the "objectivist fiction" required of historical writing while producing an account of the terror that accompanied the rubber boom in the Putamayo region of Colombia. Taussig breaks with Andeanism (the local anthropological variant of Orientalism),¹⁸ which has in-

15. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 255–76.

16. Ibid. Said's defense against his critics in anthropology can be found in "Representing the Colonized," *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1989):205–25.

17. For multiple examples of these experimental ethnographies, see Marcus and Fischer's *Cultural Anthropology as Cultural Critique*.

18. Orin Starn, "Missing the Revolution: Anthropologists and the War in Peru," *Cultural Anthropology* 6 (1991):63–91.

sisted on the stability and coherence of societies (and their forms of representation) in the Andean region by describing a fragmented culture in which colonialism (terror) and healing (shamanism) are mutually contradictory, fractured discourses that are spread among multiple locales. In this fashion, Taussig goes beyond requiring the voice of the Other by showing that neither the voices of the West (colonialism) nor the voices of the natives can be represented as monolithic, regionally localized, or stable systems of meaning.

This trend in anthropology has also intersected with a greatly heightened consciousness of the local and international political context in which fieldwork is customarily done, an awareness paralleling concern about the designation of a literary canon based on the political conditions prevailing in the metropolis. George Stocking's most recent volume on the history of anthropology, *Colonial Situations*, compiles some of the important recent reappraisals of the imperial political context of early-twentieth-century ethnographies.¹⁹ One such account is Paul Sullivan's *Unfinished Conversations*, a critical reevaluation of the political context of archaeological digs and ethnographic work on the Maya in the 1930s. He describes how Sylvanus Morley, one of the first archaeologists to work on the Maya ruins of Chichén Itzá, undertook wartime reconnaissance for U.S. Naval Intelligence while continuing to work as an anthropologist. When Franz Boas condemned Morley's use of anthropology for political purposes, Boas, not Morley, was censured by the American Anthropological Association (pp. 131–36). With the advent of World War II and growing tension between Mexican officials and Mayan leaders over land reform, Morley and his institutional backer, the Carnegie Institution, withdrew from Chichén Itzá (pp. 152–53).

Sullivan outlines for the Maya the argument already developed more fully by Michael Herzfeld in *Anthropology through the Looking Glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe*.²⁰ Herzfeld argued that the Western vision of Greece has been shaped by a kind of Orientalism in which the focus on ancient ruins like the Parthenon has obscured the contemporary political plight of modern-day Greeks. Westerners interested in creating a mythic past have ignored or slighted the present. Similar tendencies have operated in recovering archaeological sites in the Mayan peninsula. The director of the archaeological plan to uncover Chichén Itzá described it in the 1930s as an aesthetic project to restore the beauty of the original buildings but to leave them partially in ruins to

19. George Stocking, *Colonial Situations*, vol. 7 of the History of Anthropology series (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991). An early statement is Talal Assad's collection, *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (New York: Humanities Press, 1973).

20. Michael Herzfeld, *Anthropology through the Looking Glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

signify the temporal distance between the present and the past (p. 83). The half-finished effect would remind viewers that they were to sympathize with the remote past rather than with the contemporary descendants, thus making it an exotic Orientalist monument.

A second consequence of this Orientalizing tendency was the conscious or unconscious elimination of references to contemporary political conflicts in archaeological or ethnographic accounts. Sullivan echoes familiar critiques of strictly community-based studies like those of Robert Redfield in his comment that these Maya communities “were not the small, homogeneous, meaning-filled, untroubled, family-oriented social isolates of a more pleasant human past that Redfield imagined, . . . rather the disinherited offspring of colonial empires and part-time laborers in the capitalist world economy” (p. 158). More precisely, these communities were engaged in a continuing military battle for independence from the central government in Mexico City.

Anthropologists and archaeologists who worked in the region in the 1930s omitted any account of the demand for arms made by local Mayan leaders in exchange for access to sacred archaeological sites. Sullivan describes how Morley arrived in the Yucatán during a Mayan rebellion against domination by the national government. The local translator who read the first letter from the Maya rebel commander controlling a key site translated the rebel request for guns as a request for written communication. A second letter asking for arms was translated as a request for the much vaguer category of “contraband.” The subsequently clarified demand for guns became an ongoing theme of communications between the Maya and anthropologists. As recently as 1971, explorers in search of “ancient” manuscripts were asked to provide arms in exchange for the opportunity to view old books (p. 194). Unfortunately, Sullivan fails to explore the political dynamics of mistranslation, restricting himself to a mechanical explanation of how mistranslation could have been possible in citing “reciprocal ignorance” (p. 111).

Two other anthropologists who worked in the region, Robert Redfield and his field assistant Alfonso Villa, also excised any mention of the Maya demands for arms in their ethnographies and omitted descriptions of the political conflict occurring all around their fieldwork. Put simply, the Maya wanted guns, and the anthropologists wanted the Maya to write autobiographies (p. 75).

While belaboring Redfield and Morley for romanticizing the ethnographic present, Sullivan himself romanticizes the past, presenting nostalgic accounts about the time before commodification of the relationship between anthropologists and native informants (pp. 172–78, 197–99). Morley (who apparently did not learn Maya) required a translator, and the latter translated Morley’s “wants” and “wishes” into a Yucatec Maya word meaning “desire,” which has sexual overtones (p. 110).

Although Morley was probably unaware of the sexual overtones of the Mayan translation of his words, Mayan leaders trying to sway anthropologists employed a rhetoric of courtship and love (p. 118). Sullivan describes the modern monetary nexus between fieldwork and informants (prepayment for interviews, wages per story or per hour) and how the Maya are now aware of their own presence in foreign ethnographies and have abandoned courtly rhetoric for the salesman's pitch, hawking their own stories to the highest foreign bidder (pp. 197–99).

HISTORY

In the field of history, colonial and postcolonial discourse has been inspired by a group of East Indian historians writing for *Subaltern Studies*, a publication founded and edited for seven years by Ranajit Guha.²¹ As the new approach expanded into yet another discipline, further problems with Said's angle on colonial discourse emerged. Said had affirmed rather than demonstrated any mechanism by which knowledge about another culture was actually translated into the exercise of power over them.²² The group conducting subaltern studies, in contrast, has produced a variety of analyses that specify for India the mechanisms by which British rhetorical practices, including the rewriting of India's past, were implemented in the colonial Indian legal and political system.²³ Even more significant for this field has been the critique created by subaltern studies of the rhetoric and practices of independence and contemporary nationalist movements.²⁴ Beginning with Guha's pioneering *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency*

21. *Subaltern Studies I*, edited by Ranajit Guha (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982). The last volume under Guha's editorship was *Subaltern Studies VI* (1989). See also my review of poststructuralism's impact on Third World history, "Poststructuralism in Postcolonial History," forthcoming in *The Maryland Historian*.

22. The confusion between literary and social practices of power is common to many post-structuralists, among them Derrida in his chapter of "violence of the letter" in *Of Grammatology*. See also Jacques Lacan's similar concepts in *Ecrits: A Selection*, translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977) and even Michel Foucault's "I, Pierre Rivère," translated by Frank Jellinek (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

23. See Ranajit Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal* (Delhi: Orient Longman, 1981) and his recent influential article, "Dominance without Hegemony" in *Subaltern Studies VI* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). Literary critics Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak also share an interest in the representation (and understanding) of the voice of the Other in historical writing about India during the period of British rule as well as a common goal of reinterpreting that history in light of contemporary poststructuralism. Bhabha is partial to Lacan, Derrida, Foucault, and Freud (including the discourse of psychoanalysis). Spivak mainly favors Derridean deconstruction.

24. See Ranajit Guha, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, edited by Guha and Gayatri Spivak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Guha's forthcoming biography of Mahatma Gandhi; and Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* (London: Zed, 1986).

(1983), members of the subaltern studies movement have been the leaders of the postcolonial discourse movement.²⁵

Among historians of Africa and Latin America, colonial and postcolonial discourse have generated a host of recent articles and professional presentations but few book-length studies as yet. African historians have reevaluated the language of health and labor in colonial documentation and have generated an intriguing discussion of the political struggle over construction of the past and the writing of history in postcolonial states.²⁶ Latin American historians have recently developed two interests: reexamining the conceptual and rhetorical biases (including the Orientalism) of European and American travel writing on Latin America; and reevaluating the colonial and postcolonial concepts of order.²⁷

Latin Americanists will be interested in yet another significant historical arena for colonial and postcolonial discourses, namely the rethinking of the history of the Philippines developed by a group of graduates of the Jesuit Ateneo University in Manila, among them Reynaldo Ileta and Vicente Rafael. Their books under review here demonstrate different approaches to independence and Spanish colonialism.

Rafael's *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* examines eighteen colonial Tagalog grammars, confessionals, and catechisms written mostly by Spanish missionaries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His purpose is to contrast the manner in which the Spaniards imposed religion with the ways it was appropriated by Tagalog society. Beginning with the observation that translation meant conversion, Rafael examines

25. The start of this collection was inspired by Guha's *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983). Other postcolonial books include *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, *The Post-Colonial Critic*, edited by Sarah Harasym (London: Routledge, 1990).

26. Frederick Cooper, "From Free Labor to Family Allowances: Labor and African Society in Colonial Discourse," *American Ethnologist* 16, no. 4 (1989):745-65; Randall Packard, "'The Healthy Reserve' and the 'Dressed Native': Discourses on Black Health and the Language of Legitimation in South Africa," *American Ethnologist* 16, no. 4 (1989):686-703; John Lonsdale, "African Pasts in Africa's Future," *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue Canadienne des Etudes Africaines* 23 (1989):126-46; Preben Kaarsholm, "The Past as Battlefield in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe: The Struggle of Competing Nationalisms over History from Colonization to Independence," *Culture and History* 6 (1989):85-106; and Fritz W. Kramer, "The Otherness of the European," *Culture and History* 6 (1989):107-23.

27. Much of this work can be found in articles, presentations, and unpublished theses. See, for example, Peter Mason, "Portrayal and Betrayal: The Colonial Gaze in Seventeenth-Century Brazil," *Culture and History* 6 (1989):37-62. See also William Taylor, "Mexico as Orient: Introduction to a History of American and British Representations since 1821," and Ricardo Salvatore, "Yankee Merchants' Narratives: Visions of Social Order in Latin America and the U.S., 1800-1870," papers read at the meetings of the Latin American Studies Association, 4-6 April 1991, Crystal City, Virginia. Also Alexandra David, "The Quest for Public Order," paper read at the meeting of the Southwestern Historical Association, 28-31 Mar. 1989, Fort Worth; and Pamela Voekel, "Forging the Public: Bourbon Social Engineering in Late Colonial Mexico," M.A. thesis, University of Texas at Austin.

the translation of linguistic and religious concepts. He contrasts the Latin-based grammars that Spaniards constructed for learning Tagalog with a seventeenth-century instructional book by a Tagalog for teaching Castilian. The Tagalog author bypasses Castilian grammatical categories (nouns, pronouns, verbs) in favor of counting as the first step in learning a language. Rather than conjugating verbs, he relates Spanish verb forms to a Tagalog speaker's intention to say "we" or "she." The Tagalog instructional treatise at times subordinates an exact translation of the meaning of Castilian words to the Tagalog poetic meter and rhyme required of anything translated (p. 62).

Borrowing from a popular nineteenth-century Philippine novel, Rafael describes the Tagalog appropriation of Spanish discourse as a form of "fishing." Native Tagalog speakers treated untranslated Spanish words like "Cristo," "Dios," and "Iglesia" not as sacred terms but as untranslatable irruptions into their own discourse (p. 115). These foreign words were "fished" out of Spanish discourse to produce a chain of association and interpretation unrelated to the Spanish construction of the word's relationship to its referent. Spaniards' use of untranslated concepts also justified Tagalog speakers' retention of words that could not be translated exactly into Castilian (pp. 111–15).

When translating words needed to explain Christian rituals, Spanish missionaries used Tagalog words that carried with them a range of other connotations, allowing for meanings other than those intended by the missionaries. For example, the Host (*viático*) given in the sacrament of extreme unction became in Tagalog the food that one takes on a long journey, a concept that fit the idea in with Tagalog experiences of the spirit world (p. 118). The vocabulary chosen for confession created an even wider range of interpretive possibilities. Spanish missionaries complained that Tagalog confessions tended to become labyrinthine discourses on a variety of unrelated issues rather than the direct response to questions that the missionaries desired. Rafael argues that the frustration voiced by Spanish missionaries over their inability to control confessional dialogue authoritatively resulted from their using the phrase "*utang na loób*" to describe man's debt to God. This phrase is employed to ask for forgiveness, but it also signifies bargaining, haggling, and using evasions. Because the missionaries used the Tagalog word for forgiveness within the concept of *utang na loób*, Rafael suggests, Tagalogs viewed confession as a means of bargaining with the priest about the nature of the debt owed to the higher authority. This view led to the kind of labyrinthine discourse that the missionaries complained of but failed to understand (pp. 132–22).

Missionaries viewed the natives' lack of comprehension of the requirements of confession as evidence of their lack of intelligence, childishness, or an insufficient grasp of doctrinal subtlety (p. 87). Rafael, however, suggests that Tagalogs had their own way of appropriating

Christian signs. The polysemic character of language noted by the post-structuralists (the ability of words to have more than one meaning simultaneously) plays out in this instance as having allowed Tagalog society to appropriate Spanish religious discourse in ways other than those intended by the conquerors.

A similar illumination of language's plasticity is provided by Reynaldo Ileto's *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840–1910*. Ileto's basic concern is to understand what the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Tagalog peasants' own categories of meaning were and how they shaped Tagalog perceptions of independence and their participation in the anticolonial struggle. This approach led him to use Tagalog materials rather than the traditional Spanish- and English-language sources. His choice of a noncolonial vocabulary reflects sensitivity to the way language carries with it the semantic and interpretive history of its speakers and also constructs a way of relating to the world different from that provided by the colonial languages, whether Spanish or English.

In explaining the enormous popular appeal of nationalist movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Ileto shows how Tagalog-speaking peasants' experience of the Holy Week drama called the *Pasyon* of Christ (a recitative performance committed to memory and repeated throughout the year) shaped their understanding of the anticolonial struggle. Although the Spanish colonizers used the play to inculcate loyalty to Spain and the Catholic Church, Tagalog Philippine society found in the popular version of the passion play the language for articulating its own values and ideals: for voicing protests against oppressive friars and agents of the state and for demonstrating leadership by a poor, unlettered Christ of humble origins whose lieutenants are, in the words of the play, "poor and lowly people without worth on earth" (p. 23). The massive popularity of the independence movement among the Tagalog peasants stemmed from the ideas of nationalism and independence expressed in the idiom of *pasyon*.

Ileto points out further that the independence movement was not begun by Westernized, educated elites but sprang up in a Tagalog secret society founded by a self-educated lower-middle-class clerk named Andrés Bonifacio. His widely circulated manifesto used language similar to that featured in the familiar Holy Week *pasyon* play to describe the Spanish occupation of the Philippines (pp. 103–9). For example, a Tagalog poem by Bonifacio's brother employed the tone of a grown-up child's tearful crisis on leaving home in the *pasyon*'s lengthy dialogue between Christ and the Virgin Mary to talk about Philippine independence from Spain (pp. 128–30). Bonifacio was eventually captured and executed by the leader of a rival independence faction, but the language of independence-*pasyon* outlived those who had created it (pp. 138–39).

Ileto also shows how a Spanish religious institution of brotherhood (the *cofradía*) with its initiation rites and emphasis on prayer became the

model for organizing for the popular nationalist movements that have contested first Spanish and then U.S. power in the Philippines. The hymns and prayers of these *cofradías*, later known as brotherhoods or *Katipunan*, reveal a world outlook dominated by ideas of transformation, control of *loób* (hearts or souls), and commitment in the face of suffering. Their goal was an earthly rather than otherworldly paradise that would bring the end of all forms of worldly oppression, including taxes and forced labor.

Belief in these aims as the true goal of independence led to continuing Tagalog peasant resistance to U.S. occupation in southern Luzon. The Hispanicized Philippine leaders who collaborated with the United States had little interest in the egalitarianism and mass mobilization that were the ideals of the *Katipunan* (brotherhood) independence movement, being more concerned about disruptions of their labor supply. Hence resistance to U.S. rule was initiated and led by individuals of low social status and minimal education who believed in the *Katipunan* way as the true essence of the mother country (pp. 215–16). Macario Sakay, leader of one of these movements, portrayed these affluent Filipinos as motivated by love of wealth, knowledge, and power and lacking the compassion for others central to the emotional dynamics of the *pasyon* play. Their hearts (*loób*) were hard, an allusion to Judas's hardness of heart in the familiar play (p. 222). Critics who have labeled the revolts of 1902 as "banditry" or religious fanaticism have failed to credit these groups with a different political vision of what independence was all about (pp. 225, 227). Sakay was eventually induced to surrender with the promise that he would not be harmed. He was promptly tried and executed. "Nationalist" leaders of the 1907 assembly were then elected by the same 3 percent who comprised the native elite (p. 244). *Pasyon and Revolution* illustrates how peasant communities appropriated Spanish religious texts and institutions in fashioning a mode of understanding and action that was wholly distinct from what had been intended by the colonial authorities. The book detaches itself from the usual understanding of Filipino nationalism as the handiwork of upper-class Hispanicized natives, arguing instead that this elite group muffled peasant voices in order to preserve the image of national unity against colonial rule. Postcolonial discourse studies such as Ileo's have moved beyond Said's point about "letting the native speak" to a critical examination of the internal politics of anticolonialism.

Ileo's critical perspective on nationalist movements is shared with postcolonial discourse scholarship in African and South Asian studies. These works focus critically on the rhetorical and political practices of well-known nationalist leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharal Nehru, and Jomo Kenyatta.²⁸ They examine how in opposition to colonial

28. See notes 21, 23, 25, and 26.

rule, nationalist leaders have invented something called “traditional society” by their practices of renaming towns, villages, and countries and creating new public rituals and ceremonies. These supposedly authentic national institutions, however, were actually unacknowledged pastiches of colonial and indigenous elements revamped for political purposes. Nationalist leaders have thus claimed the authenticity of “speaking as a native” or “speaking from below” to justify their own political positions, which are often exclusionary. What the nationalist leaders systematically exclude (both politically and intellectually) is of considerable interest to these critics, many of whom must develop their critiques from political exile.

Related to these South Asian and African postcolonial critiques are Latin Americanist anthropologists’ critiques of the rhetorical and political construction of indigenous communities in the postcolonial era. Michael Taussig, for example, deconstructs familiar Western mythology about Indian shamanism and healing by showing it to be not an “authentic” Indian discourse but one realized in reaction to colonialism. Brazilian anthropologist Alcida Ramos casts a critical eye on the rhetorical strategies employed by participants in the Brazilian debate over the status of Amazonian Indians. She shows how indigenous leaders, anthropologists (native and foreign), and Brazilian politicians each construct a rhetoric and semiology of “Indian” identity in a battle for political influence sometimes unrelated to the communities themselves.²⁹ Thus the boundary between colonial and postcolonial discourses is not always clear-cut. Both Taussig and Ramos analyze colonial dimensions of political discourse in a postcolonial era.

Many anthropologists, historians, and literary critics writing of those who are lumped together as “Third World people” adopt a stance of advocacy for those they have been studying and working with. Hence they are reluctant to criticize postindependence forms of nationalism. Coming to grips with the colonial past of their own countries through colonial discourse has proved more congenial for many scholars born and educated in the West. Critiques of postcolonial nationalist discourse have consequently been developed most saliently by scholars born in India, the Philippines, and Africa. Only recently have a few such critiques been published by scholars in the First World, and they have tended to treat Western discourses about postcolonial states.³⁰ The early theoreticians of

29. Alcida Ramos, “Indian Voices: Contact Experienced and Expressed,” in *Rethinking History and Myth: Indigenous Perspectives on the Past*, edited by Jonathan Hill, 214–34 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); and Ramos, “Indigenismo de Resultados,” *Revista Tempo Brasileiro*, no. 100 (1990):133–50.

30. Preben Kaarsholm, “The Past as Battlefield,” *Culture and History* 6 (1989):85–106; and Nancy Vogeley, “Colonial Discourse in a Postcolonial Context: Nineteenth-Century Mexico,” paper presented at the meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Miami, 4–6 Dec. 1989. See also note 27.

the colonial discourse field—Said, Spivak, and Bhabha—are themselves ambivalently located between the First and Third Worlds: born and educated in places like Palestine and Bengal, they have nonetheless made their academic reputations in the West. They speak from the West but are not of it. Yet by virtue of reputation and lengthy residence in the West, they are no longer of the East. Hence their contribution to shaping the field has arisen within the same context of the internationalization that they are attempting to study.

The attraction of the West's poststructuralism for those of the Third World and those on the boundaries between the First and Third worlds has not been its status in the West, as many might imagine. Rather, its internationalization has come from appropriation and manipulation of its ideas by textual communities outside the West, communities that have found in its attack on traditional humanism and recognition of the plasticity of language powerful resonances with critiques already being developed in their own political and cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

The interdisciplinary movement associated with colonial and post-colonial discourse is having a significant impact on a number of other Western academic disciplines with which it shares poststructuralist critiques of language. The movement shares a common concentration either on political language or on the political contexts of literary language with two of these fields, the new literary historicism and political theory. The oldest of these trends (dating from 1980) is the "new literary historicism," an effort to embed the study of language within canonical English literature (Shakespeare, Marlowe, Johnson) in elite Elizabethan politics and political culture.³¹ Colonial discourse shares with the new literary histor-

31. The term *new historicism* was first applied to the movement in the 1950s and 1960s that sought to unite literary history and literary criticism within the conventionally defined discipline of literature. See Wesley Morris, *Toward a New Historicism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), 14, 78; and Roy Harvey Pearce, *Historicism Once More* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 6–63. The more recent popularity of the term is usually attributed to Stephen Greenblatt's introduction to the collection *Power and the Power of Forms in the Renaissance* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982). His essay criticizes the earlier historicism for its failure to perceive the text in a complex relationship to the culture that produced it. For other important programmatic statements on the new historicism, see Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* (Manchester, Engl.: Manchester University Press, 1985), especially Dollimore's "Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism, and the New Historicism." See also Jonathan Goldberg, "The Politics of Renaissance Literature: A Review Essay," *ELH: A Journal of English Literary History* 49 (1982):514–42; Louis A. Montrose, "Renaissance Literary Studies and the Subject of History," *English Literary Renaissance* 10 (1980):153–82; Stephen Orgen, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975); Steven Mullaney, "Strange Things, Gross Terms, Curious Customs: The Rehearsal of Cultures in the Late Renaissance," *Representations* 1 (1983): 40–67; Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Johnson, Shakespeare, Donne*,

icism an interest in subsuming a greater number of discourses under the heading of political language—for example, religious tracts, political treatises, even ordinary correspondence. The two fields also share an interest in colonial discourses, with two of the most influential early essays in this field being written on colonial issues,³² but they diverge in their ultimate aim. The new literary historicism is ultimately concerned with canonical literature, while colonial discourse writers seek to understand the dynamics of the colonial situation.

A related emerging phenomenon is the study of language use in political science. Most attention here has been directed at a field that can be viewed as the twentieth-century successor to colonial discourse, namely international relations. But the discussion of language use in contemporary international relations differs considerably, centering on such topics as the language used in discussing nuclear war, a discourse ideally suited for poststructuralist analyses in that it has no “really real” referent.³³

What distinguishes colonial and postcolonial discourse analyses from these emerging discussions in political science is the focus on a different historic circumstance, that of imperial authority and its aftermath, the “colonial” and “postcolonial” situations. Further separating the field of colonial discourse from the two other poststructuralist critiques of political language is the need to consider the perspectives of different languages and cultures. Thus issues of translation and cross-cultural (mis)understandings complicate the general problems of linguistic transparency, rendering cultural anthropology more central to this interdisciplinary field. This cross-cultural aspect is also the most distinctive feature of colonial and postcolonial critiques of language.³⁴ While the

and Their Contemporaries (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983); Greenblatt, “King Lear and Harsnett’s Devil’s Fiction,” in *The Forms of Power*; and Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1980). A recent effort to broaden new historicist approaches to colonial discourse is *Macropolitics of Nineteenth-Century Literature: Nationalism, Exoticism, Imperialism*, edited by Jonathan Arac and Harriet Ritro (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

32. See Mullaney, “Strange Things”; and Greenblatt, “Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and Its Subversion, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*,” in Dollimore and Sinfield, *Political Shakespeare*, 18–47.

33. J. Fisher Solomon, *Discourse and Reference in the Nuclear Age* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988); William E. Connolly, editor of the journal *Political Theory* from 1984 to 1990; Michael J. Shapiro, *The Politics of Representation: Writing Practices in Biography, Photography, and Policy Analysis* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); and Shapiro, *Language and Political Understanding: The Politics of Discursive Practices* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981). A good collection of recent writing on the subject is *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics*, edited by James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1989).

34. For the influence of anthropology on the new historicists, see Louis Montrose, “The Purpose of Playing: Reflections on a Shakespearean Anthropology,” *Helios* 7 (1980):51–74. For a critique of literary theory in anthropological style, see Aijaz Ahmad, “Jameson’s Rhetoric of Otherness and the ‘National Allegory,’” *Social Texts*, no. 17 (1987):3–27. For a critique of literary theorists who have failed to incorporate such perspectives, see Richard Roth, “The

emphasis differs in various disciplines, this focus on the language that has been used in representing other peoples in the political context of colonialism and postcolonialism has produced powerful new critiques of the ways in which political power over cultural others has been constituted and maintained.

What all of these works do to varying degrees is to achieve one of the functions of a critique: to posit an idea about the humanities disciplines—history, literary criticism, cultural anthropology—as more than decorative knowledge, as knowledge critical of the relations of authority within a society. The aim of the critique in each of these disciplines is different—economic relations of authority, cultural relations of authority (the canon), conventional political relations of authority. But the basic target of critique remains the same—the relations of authority in colonial and postcolonial states—and it is thus an enterprise of cultural and political criticism being carried out in a resolutely postcolonial era.

Some disciplines, such as anthropology and literary criticism, are more willing to undertake self-criticism of the political agendas of their own discipline. Literary critics attack the idea and practice of canons while anthropologists consider the position of fieldworkers with respect to native subjects. Of the practitioners of these three disciplines, historians have been relatively reluctant to consider any form of reflexivity or reflexive self-critique of their practices.

Both the colonial and postcolonial discourse movements signify a revival of politics and its return to the center of intellectual debate after decades of being relegated to a secondary position in the predominantly social and cultural realms of history, anthropology, and literary theory. But this more recent body of work does not signify a return to the same political issues in history, literary theory, or cultural anthropology that prevailed in the 1950s. Rather, the revival of interest in the political that has permeated these three disciplines is occurring in a different historical context and consequently has a different intellectual inflection. The concern with “voices from below,” a legacy of the social history and interpretive anthropology of the 1960s and 1970s, remains. But the concern with language and rhetoric, the ethics and strategies of representing anthropological others, or those of representing historically distant cultural others are crucial and unprecedented questions with which this new work on politics must contend. We do not repeat the past, as Santayana claimed, we only reinvent it continually.³⁵

Colonial Experience and Its Postmodern Fate,” *Salmagundi*, no. 85 (1989):248–65.

35. The idea that any repetition, no matter how identical, always entails a difference is recognizably poststructuralist. See Jacques Derrida, *Limited, Inc.* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).