

Postcolonial Remains

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WHAT REMAINS OF THE POSTCOLONIAL? Has it already perished, leaving only its earthly relics, forgotten books, abandoned articles floating in cyberspace, remnants of yellowing conference programs? So one might think on reading the obituary announced by *PMLA* in 2007: “The End of Postcolonial Theory?”¹ There, a group of apparently former postcolonial critics pronounced “it” over. The members of the forum, for the most part, discussed postcolonial theory as if it were an entirely American phenomenon, and even there, as something of interest only to English departments. In that Anglophone characterization, the forum concurred with the more recent view of the French political scientist and director of research at the prestigious Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) in Paris, Jean-François Bayart—except that for Bayart the postcolonial is far too alive, prompting him to write a whole book objecting to postcolonial theory as an unpleasant Anglo-Saxon intrusion into the purity of French thought.² Despite its noisy appearance in contemporary French intellectual culture, Bayart dismisses the postcolonial by claiming that its sources are entirely French, even if its identity is Anglo-Saxon, which therefore makes “postcolonial theory” altogether superfluous.

The desire to pronounce postcolonial theory dead on both sides of the Atlantic suggests that its presence continues to disturb and provoke anxiety: the real problem lies in the fact that the postcolonial remains. Why does it continue to unsettle people so much? The aspiring morticians of the postcolonial concur in scarcely relating it to the world from which it comes and for which it claims to speak: that outside Europe and North America. The desired dissolution of postcolonial theory does not mean that poverty, inequality, exploitation, and oppression in the world have come to an end, only that some people in the U.S. and French academies have decided they do not want to have to think about such things any longer and do not want to be reminded of those

distant invisible contexts which continue to prompt the transformative energies of the postcolonial.

“Postcolonialism” is not just a disciplinary field, nor is it a theory which has or has not come to an end. Rather, its objectives have always involved a wide-ranging political project—to reconstruct Western knowledge formations, reorient ethical norms, turn the power structures of the world upside down, refashion the world from below. The postcolonial has always been concerned with interrogating the interrelated histories of violence, domination, inequality, and injustice, with addressing the fact that, and the reasons why, millions of people in this world still live without things that most of those in the West take for granted. Clean water, for example. This is not to say that “the West” is an undifferentiated economic and social space, and nor, of course, are those countries outside the West, as economic booms transform nations such as Brazil, China, and India into new dynamics that contribute to a shifting of paradigms of economic and political power that have certainly modified the sensibility of colonial dependency.³ Far from being over, the twenty-first century is already the century of postcolonial empowerment. The widespread anxiety that this produces provides a further reason why Western academics want to deny the realities of the postcolonial.

The postcolonial will remain and persist, whether or not it continues to find a place in the U.S. academy, just as it did not need academia to come into existence. Postcolonial theory came from outside the United States,⁴ and has never involved a singular theoretical formation, but rather an interrelated set of critical and counterintuitive perspectives, a complex network of paronymous concepts and heterogeneous practices that have been developed out of traditions of resistance to a global historical trajectory of imperialism and colonialism. If anti- and postcolonial knowledge formations were generated by such circumstances, peripheral as they may seem to some metropolitan intellectuals, now, as in the past, the only criterion that could determine whether “postcolonial theory” has ended is whether, economic booms of the so-called “emerging markets” notwithstanding, imperialism and colonialism in all their different forms have ceased to exist in the world, whether there is no longer domination by nondemocratic forces (often exercised on others by Western democracies, as in the past), or economic and resource exploitation enforced by military power, or a refusal to acknowledge the sovereignty of non-Western countries, and whether peoples or cultures still suffer from the long-lingering aftereffects of imperial, colonial, and neocolonial rule, albeit in contemporary forms such as economic globalization.⁵ Analysis of such phenomena requires shifting conceptualizations, but it does not necessarily require the regular production of new theoretical para-

digms: the issue is rather to locate the hidden rhizomes of colonialism's historical reach, of what remains invisible, unseen, silent, or unspoken. In a sense, postcolonialism has always been about the ongoing life of residues, living remains, lingering legacies.⁶

The British Prime Minister David Cameron, for example, forgot to consult his Special Advisor in Postcolonial Studies before he led his November 2010 trade and business delegation to China, a delegation billed as the biggest ever in British history. Cameron clearly had not been reading Amitav Ghosh's 2009 novel, *Sea of Poppies*, either.⁷ When the British ministers arrived at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing for the reception, they wore their Remembrance Day poppies in their jacket lapels, as people in Britain do every year in the week running up to Remembrance Sunday. The poppies symbolize the sacrifice of more than a million servicemen who have died on active service since the First World War. The flowers reminded the Chinese, however, of a rather different poppy—the opium poppy, and therefore the Opium Wars fought by Britain against China in 1839–42 and 1856–60, which among other things, led to the concession of the British colony of Hong Kong. When Prime Minister Cameron and the British delegation arrived wearing their poppies in November 2010, the Chinese officials asked that they remove them, since they considered these poppies “inappropriate.” In an echo of the famous incident when the British ambassador Earl McCartney refused to kowtow before the Emperor in 1793, Cameron refused to back down and insisted on wearing his poppy. When he followed this refusal with a lecture on human rights, the historical irony was apparent to all but himself.

Whereas the British often forget the Opium Wars, just as Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States forget the international “eight-nation alliance” sent to Peking to put down the Boxer “Rebellion” in 1898–1901, in China the historical injustices of its semicolonial past lingers on in official memory, repeated tirelessly to every tourist who visits the Summer Palace in Beijing, where visitors are reminded that the original was destroyed by British and French troops in 1860. The perpetrators of violence forget far sooner than those subjected to their power. Derrida used to argue that there will always be something “left over” and in that sense the postcolonial will always be left over. Something remains, and the postcolonial is in many ways about such unfinished business, the continuing projection of past conflicts into the experience of the present, the insistent persistence of the afterimages of historical memory that drive the desire to transform the present.

The postcolonial remains: it lives on, ceaselessly transformed in the present into new social and political configurations. One marker of its continuing relevance is the degree to which the power of the postcolonial perspective has spread across almost all the disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, from classics to development theory to law to medieval studies to theology—even sociology, under the encouragement of postcolonial-minded scholars such as Arjun Appadurai and Paul Gilroy, has abandoned its former narrow national focus to turn to an interest in globalization in the present.⁸ So many disciplines have been, so to speak, postcolonialized, along with the creation of related subdisciplines such as diaspora and transnational studies, that this remarkable dispersal of intellectual and political influence now makes it difficult to locate any kind of center of postcolonial theory: reaching into almost every domain of contemporary thought, it has become part of the consciousness of our era. Inevitably, in each discipline in which it has been taken up, the postcolonial has been subtly adapted and transformed in different ways—in sociology's turn to globalization, for example, the historical perspective so fundamental to postcolonial studies gets largely removed. But how has the postcolonial itself changed in response to the historical transformations that have been occurring in the last decades, and, even more to the point, how should it change in the future? What conditions and situations have risen to a new visibility? What have been the greatest challenges to postcolonial analysis? And, continuing in the necessary mode of perpetual autocritique, what aspects of its own theoretical framework have limited the reach of its own radical politics?

In a reconsideration of the role of the postcolonial in the era of the twenty-first century that attempts to begin to answer these questions, I will focus on contemporary issues that have involved what can be characterized as the politics of invisibility and of unreadability: indigenous struggles and their relation to settler colonialism, illegal migrants, and political Islam. None of these fall within the template of the classic paradigm of anticolonial struggles, but they all involve postcolonial remains as well as prompting political insights that show the extent to which the postcolonial remains. What can be learned from them? They all invoke historical trajectories that have hitherto been scarcely visible, but which offer potential resources for critiques and transformations of the present. Since political Islam has highlighted questions of religion and secularism, I consider the example of the history of practices of toleration in Islamic societies, in which otherness is included rather than excluded. This in turn prompts the need for significant theoretical revision of a problematic concept appropriated by postcolonial theory from philosophy and anthropology: the idea of the Other.

I. The Politics of Invisibility

What has changed in the twenty-first century, from a postcolonial perspective? To answer the question in the first instance conceptually rather than historically, what the postcolonial eye can see more clearly now are the ways in which, like the conflictual meanings of Cameron's poppy, postcolonial remains operate in a dialectic of invisibility and visibility.

One of the most influential theoretical innovations of postcolonial theory has been the appropriation and reconceptualization of Antonio Gramsci's concept of subaltern classes.⁹ Modified and typically singularized into the idea of the subaltern, this concept has enabled subaltern historians and cultural critics to recover a whole arena of historical agency that had remained invisible while history was written according to exclusive protocols of nationalist movements or class conflict. The preoccupation with the subaltern can be interpreted more generally to suggest the extent to which the postcolonial has always been concerned with a politics of invisibility: it makes the invisible visible. This is entirely paradoxical to the extent that its object was never, in fact, invisible, but rather the "invisible visible": it was not seen by those in power who determine the fault lines between the visible and the invisible. Postcolonialism, in its original impulse, was concerned to make visible areas, nations, cultures of the world which were notionally acknowledged, technically there, but which in significant other senses were not there, rather like the large letters on the map that Jacques Lacan characterizes as the structure of the unconscious. To take a simple example, until very recently, histories of "the world" were really histories of European expansion. Even today, so-called "world literature" is only belatedly being transformed from its long historical containment within the same Eurocentric paradigm. So the politics of invisibility involves not actual invisibility, but a refusal of those in power to see who or what is there. The task of the postcolonial is to make the invisible, in this sense, visible.

Within academia, this task begins with the politics of knowledge, with articulating the unauthorized knowledges, and histories, of those whose knowledge is not allowed to count. In the world beyond, politics itself often involves a practice of acting in order to make the invisible visible so that its injustices can be redressed. A postcolonial perspective will be more alert in detecting the signs of such transformations, but it, too, can be belated in its recognition of the campaigns of subaltern historical agents. This would be the case with indigenous struggles, which have only recently come to be regarded as a central issue for postcolonial politics. The obvious reason for this is that, drawing from the history of anticolonialism that formed part of so many national narratives of

emancipation, postcolonial studies did not give equal weight to the history of indigenous activism in what are, for the most part, long-standing postcolonial countries, such as those of North and South America. At the same time, there was a political-theoretical issue: indigenous activism uses a whole set of paradigms that do not fit easily with postcolonial presuppositions and theories—for example, ideas of the sacred and attachment to ancestral land. This disjunction, however, only illustrates the degree to which there has never been a unitary postcolonial theory—the right of return to sacred or ancestral land, for example, espoused by indigenous groups in Australia or the Palestinian people, never fitted easily with the postmodern Caribbean celebration of delocalized hybrid identities.¹⁰ Postcolonial theory has always included the foundational and the antifoundational at the same time, indeed, it could be characterized by the fact that it has simultaneously deployed these apparently antithetical positions, a feature entirely missed by those who criticize it either as being too Marxist or alternatively too postmodern, though the fact that it is criticized on both counts is indicative. Suspicions about the foundations of established truths are not necessarily incompatible with, and indeed are more likely to be prompted by, the memories of an empirical, experienced history of colonial rule.¹¹

While it is debatable whether the “third world” as such exists today, there is little doubt that the fourth world emphatically remains. With the demise of the third, the fourth world has risen to a new prominence, its issues thrown into starker visibility. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, a transformation was underway in the long history of continued contesting resistance by tribal peoples, a history whose written articulation began with Bartolomé de Las Casas’s *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1542), whose institutional initiatives included the setting up of the Aborigines’ Protection Society by Thomas Hodgkin in 1837, and which culminated many years later in the global political campaign that produced the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007.¹² The scope of indigenous struggles, and the ways in which they have been articulated through the power of the UN Declaration and by the use of the internet and other media as a means of facilitating transnational affiliations and forms of political organization, has meant that in a new and powerful way, indigenous peoples have been able to assert themselves effectively and very visibly within an international arena against the power of the sovereign states that have oppressed them for centuries. The narrative of emancipation whose goal was national liberation through the Leninist model of the capture of the central state apparatus has been supplemented by a political dynamic that in earlier decades was only visible to radical intellectuals such as the Peruvian

socialist José Carlos Mariátegui.¹³ Despite these successes, however, oppressive forms of “fourth-world” internal colonialism continue to operate on every continent of the earth, particularly with respect to exploitation of natural resources that shows scant regard to the lives and lands of indigenous peoples. Who, though, is authorizing such exploitation? Thinking indigenous struggles through a postcolonial frame points to a topic that has remained comparatively neglected: settler colonialism.

In the arena of postcolonial studies, settler colonialism has managed, through its invocation of the tradition of colonial nationalism, to affiliate itself to the emancipatory narratives of anticolonial struggles—witness the widely circulated *The Empire Writes Back* of 1989, which assimilates all forms of colonial liberation into a single narrative of freedom from the imperial metropolis.¹⁴ What this passes over is the degree to which settler colonies themselves practiced a form of “deep colonialism,” a term recently revived by Lorenzo Veracini, which underscores the extent to which the achievement of settler self-governance enforced the subjection of indigenous peoples and indeed increased the operation of oppressive colonial practices against them.¹⁵ In almost any settler colony one can think of, settler liberation from colonial rule was premised on indigenous dispossession. The emancipatory narrative of postcolonialism was not accessible to those who remained invisible within it. Indeed for them, national emancipation produced a more overpowering form of colonial rule, often enforced by a special contract for indigenous peoples distinct from that between settlers and metropolis.

The postcolonial question that remains is how indigenous emancipation, that is the acquisition of land and rights not mediated or already conditioned by the terms of settler emancipation from which indigenous people were excluded, can be achieved. It also becomes clear that the same paradigm of sovereignty through dispossession applies to many nonsettler colonies, where indigenous minorities or historically excluded groups have found the freedom of a postcolonial sovereignty to mean comparable or even worse forms of oppression than under colonial rule, even if the political structure is that of a democracy. One leading marker of the nationalist drive for domination over heterogeneous peoples can often be located in the history of the language policies of the independent national state. What we need to recognize now is that the postcolonial narrative of emancipation and the achievement of sovereignty was in many cases deeply contradictory. The civil wars and the often continuing civil unrest that, in many cases, followed independence have often been the product of the nationalist creation of a deep colonialism that has sought to make indigenous people or other minorities invisible.

Today this practice has in certain respects become more widespread with respect to other kinds of minorities across the world. As some minorities make themselves conspicuous, others must live their lives unseen. Paradoxically, it can often be the visible minorities who are in certain respects invisible. In Beirut, when you go to a restaurant, the waiters who serve you will generally be local people, of one sort or another. But hidden below, and only visible when you go downstairs and glance into the kitchens, you see that those cooking and washing up are Bangladeshi. While indigenous peoples have been making themselves visible, a new tricontinental has developed. Not this time the militancy of the Organization of Solidarity of the People of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OSPAAAL) that was developed in the 1960s, but a new subaltern tricontinental of migrants from the poorer countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, often fleeing state or other forms of violence, moving around the world in search of jobs and livelihood. These people form an invisible tricontinental diaspora, made up of refugees, internally displaced persons, stateless persons, asylum seekers, economic migrants, illegal migrants, irregular migrants, undocumented migrants, illegal aliens. They remain almost invisible, working in unregulated conditions in building sites, hotel kitchens, brothels, cleaning lavatories, on farms, until for a moment they are thrown into sharp relief: when the media reports that the boat onto which too many are crowded has capsized off Lampedusa during the journey from Libya to Italy or off the coast of Morocco on the way to Spain or off the coast of Sudan on the way to Saudi Arabia or shipwrecked on the Australian coast at the end of the journey from Sri Lanka. These invisible migrants only move into visibility when they die in this way, or when they are arrested by border police or when they suddenly appear in their thousands fleeing war, as in the case of those who fled to the borders of Egypt and Tunisia from Libya in the spring of 2011—or when they are demonized by politicians in election campaigns. Otherwise, they remain as the invisible support system of the economies of Western countries, the Middle East, and elsewhere, hidden in their fugitive illegality or kept separate in workers' compounds, visible only in the fruit and vegetables they have picked that are bought at the supermarket, or the sleek skyscraper that rises on the distant horizon. Invisible until the moment, as imagined in the 2004 film *A Day Without a Mexican*, when the “illegals” suddenly disappear and the whole of California grinds to a halt. How do you make the invisible visible? the film asks. The answer: you take it away.

The problem with *A Day Without a Mexican*, on the other hand, is that it encourages the idea that migration is just a Western issue, whereas the reality is that, of the 43 million displaced people in the world, the great majority find themselves in poorer countries outside the West. From a

Western perspective, these are the really invisible invisible people. Many of them are children. Often without papers or documentation, they are denied the basic rights of the nation-state and are left only with the interminable inaccessibility of the dream of self-emancipation. Whereas migration theorists tend to examine migration issues generated through specific case studies, postcolonial theory can provide a theoretical and historical framework for understanding new phenomena such as the globalization of migration, and for thinking through the question of how to reformulate the emancipatory aims of anticolonial struggle outside the parameters of the nation-state. Today, it is no longer a question of a formal colonizer-colonized relation. That is for the most part over, though versions of it persist in the settler colonies, and its legacy continues to inflect attitudes, assumptions, and cultural norms in the world beyond. What we have instead is something almost more brutal, because there is no longer even a relation, just those countless individuals in so many societies, who are surplus to economic requirements, redundant, remaindered, condemned to the surplusage of lives full of holes, waiting for a future that may never come, forced into the desperate decision to migrate illegally across whole continents in order to survive.¹⁶ The postcolonial question now is how to make the dream of emancipation accessible for all those people who fall outside the needs of contemporary modernity.

II. Unreadable Islam

The second shift in the visible landscape of postcolonial studies involves a comparable transformation, in which the struggles of people who were visible but not seen or taken seriously by global populations in positions of power and their political and cultural leaders have moved into political prominence—with the re-emergence of radical Islam. As with indigenous struggles, this political story goes far back into the colonial era, and it is also one that the fight for national sovereignty, which formally ended the period of colonial rule, left in different ways unresolved. The resurgence of Islam and of indigenous struggles both developed out of remainders, the living-on remnants of the conflicts of the past. The two “new” political issues that postcolonial studies has begun to engage with more actively in recent years are in fact two of the oldest, once regarded as outmoded and finished, but which refused to die. What was repressed and left without resolution has re-emerged, articulated in new forms. And what disconcerts Westerners the most is when it becomes starkly visible: hence the Western obsession with women who choose to assert their beliefs visibly by wearing the veil.

While the question of representing or covering (up) Islam was always central to the work of Edward W. Said, it was not a major preoccupation of postcolonial studies as a whole in its first twenty or so years of existence. If, since its inception in academic form with Said's *Orientalism* in 1978, postcolonial thinking broadly defined has become integrated within dominant cultural and institutional practices, then one reason why it found relatively easy acceptance was because it tended to sideline not only the Israel-Palestine conflict, but also the question of Islam and the role of religion in anticolonial struggle more generally—this despite the fact that *Orientalism* was published just a year before the Iranian revolution of 1979.¹⁷ Postcolonial activism transforming the Eurocentrism and ingrained cultural assumptions of the West and advocating greater tolerance and understanding of people who displayed ethnic and cultural differences received a dramatic setback, however, with the political reactions that followed the 9/11 attacks on the United States in 2001.

At this point, a different history of the twentieth century was thrown into a violent visibility, highlighting not the “world” and “cold” wars, or the anticolonial struggles of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, but focusing instead on the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the Israel-Palestine conflict, together with related events such as the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. The Caribbean model of creolization and hybridity, championed so effectively by postcolonial theorists and adapted without too much difficulty to Britain's own earlier models of integration with respect to the Irish, other Catholics, Jews, and other minorities, or with respect to American hyphenated minority identities, no longer seemed so obviously appropriate as a way forward.¹⁸ The fact that Salman Rushdie, the best-known advocate for the new hybridized cultural model, had come into conflict with Muslims across the world with the controversy around *The Satanic Verses* that erupted in 1989 was transformed from what had at the time seemed like a particular incident epitomizing the clash of artistic and religious values into a symptomatic and indicative marker in this newly visible history.

In retrospect, the arguments around *The Satanic Verses* demonstrate the degree to which the new forms of Islam were effectively unreadable to those in the West. What had been little noticed was that Islam had also been changing—a difference highlighted in the contrast between the Iranian Revolution, which developed into an attempt to transform Iran into a properly Muslim state, and the Rushdie controversy ten years later, which revolutionized traditional configurations of Islamic activism. In so far as both events were precipitated from Iran, many assumed that the Revolution and the fatwa were part of the same Islamic “fundamentalism” that had been identified in the militant Islamic political parties in

Algeria, Egypt, and Pakistan, entirely missing the point that the former were Shiite and the latter Sunni. Despite the amply funded Wahhabi Islamism promoted from Saudi Arabia, the Rushdie controversy was the first moment in the production of a new syncretic configuration of Islam, whose only connection with Wahhabism was its transnationalism, albeit of a rather different kind.¹⁹

Westerners tend to read all forms of radical Islam as the same, that is, as fundamentalism, itself ironically a Western concept, as is wittily suggested in Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* of 2007.²⁰ The *Satanic Verses* controversy was taken to initiate a conflict between the new Western cultural language of hybridity and the language of the pure, of a fundamentalist Islam. Instead the controversy signaled the appearance of a new hybrid Islam, marked by the fact that the Shia fatwa was supported internationally all over the Muslim world by people and groups whose own ideologies were radically different from each other, including Sunni Wahhabi and fundamentalist groups such as Jamaah al-Islamiyyah of Egypt or the Jamaat-e Islami of Pakistan. As Faisal Devji has persuasively argued, the international reach of the agitation against Rushdie was the first sign of a new globalized form of Islam, whose next major manifestation would be spectacularly launched with 9/11.²¹ What Devji calls the "democratic" tendency of Al Qaeda, eschewing all traditional forms of Muslim authority, drawing on an international range of supporters, and employing a heady eclectic mixture of Muslim motifs, often more Shiite than Sunni despite its Sunni identity, marks the emergence of a new heterogeneous Islam whose objective, far from being focused on the traditional takeover of control of the individual nation-state on the Leninist, anticolonialist, or Islamist model, involves the liberation of the "Holy Land" of Islam from a century of Western domination and pins its hope on a transnational utopia created through the return of the Caliphate.

Far from being "fundamentalist," Al Qaeda is a dialectical product of the long-standing interaction of Islam with the West, as eclectic in its ideology as in the provenance of its often Westernized operatives, and for that reason it sees the West as its own intimate enemy and draws on a form of anticolonial rhetoric to establish its objectives, even if these are transnational rather than national. It was hardly surprising, in this context, to discover that Osama Bin Laden spent his time in hiding videotaping himself watching videos of himself on TV. Al Qaeda's political objectives are equally bound to its antagonist, preoccupied as it is with the historical grievance of the history of Western imperialism in the Middle East. In his public statements, Bin Laden explicitly traced the origins of Al Qaeda's grievance back to the dismemberment of the

Ottoman Empire in 1919 and the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate by the new National Assembly of Atatürk's Turkey on 3 March 1924. Already by 1919, the French and British occupation of Istanbul had produced the "terrorist" or military response of the Khilafat Movement across Asia Minor and, particularly, British India, and in some respects Al Qaeda represents a modern recreation of that extraordinary transnational campaign.²² Its irreverence for tradition, and its secularization of Islam, suggests that in certain ways Al Qaeda could be seen as one of the many factors that encouraged the Arab Spring of 2011 by breaking the deadlock between Islamic fundamentalism and repressive autocracies operating as Western fiefdoms. While the Arab Spring has remained predominantly national in terms of political objectives, it has also involved an insistent transnationalism in its outlook, with demands for democratic participation arising across almost every nation in the region. We should not be surprised that, as in any history of anticolonial or antiauthoritarian struggle, the results have varied, depending on the particular situation in each country. What is clear, however, is that Islamic cultures are not, and have never been, characterizable according to a singular form of Islam, even if this idea persists in Western perceptions.

While an intense interest in postcolonial theory has developed in Islamic countries, in 2001 Islam was just as unreadable for most postcolonial theorists in the West as for everyone else.²³ The development of Islamism in its diverse configurations as a contemporary oppositional discourse and practice to Western interests in the Middle East caught postcolonial studies off-guard. Developed out of the secular tradition of Marxism, in which religion was deemed to merit little serious attention, postcolonial studies has had comparatively little to say about the diverse modalities of Islamic resistance effected through unorthodox global formations in the present or the past, focusing for the most part on what is presented as the new Western imperialism in Afghanistan and Iraq. On the assumption that Al Qaeda and fundamentalisms of various kinds can all be identified with each other and identified with the return of religion to the sphere of the political, one major response has involved an interest in secularism. Contemporary work on secularism originally developed in the context of the rise of Hindutva ideology in India, and in many ways, India's Shiv Sena can be regarded as the Hindu equivalent of Afghanistan and Pakistan's Taliban. The problem, however, with much work on secularism has been that it begins from a stance that is already committed to secularism itself. This means that it takes a position within the political as well as philosophical spectrum of the very situation that it seeks to resolve, for the separation of the religious from the worldly is exactly what is being contested.²⁴ What are the alternatives

to a secularism whose claim to stand outside the conditions of belief is seen by some to be partial rather than impartial? What can secularism learn from nonsecular societies, where secular practices may nevertheless still figure in significant ways in an alternative configuration with the religious? One approach has been to interrogate the concept and philosophy of religion, as in the work of Talal Asad.²⁵ Another would be to re-examine different concepts and practices of social and political toleration within nonsecular societies, for toleration is a concept which, as we shall see, is by no means exclusively identifiable with secularism or the West—indeed Western secularism can itself produce intolerant behavior, such as the banning of the niqab in France. In the face of forms of communalism that in many different countries of the world such as India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Iran, Israel-Palestine, Northern Ireland, may have a fundamentally religious basis, there are limits to what Western secularism, and the liberal forms of toleration that are often assumed to follow from it, can offer. How can populations learn again how to live with each other without the imposition of state secularism? What can be learned from the historical example of nonsecular societies? It is here that a postcolonial interest in alternative cultural forms and in histories that are given limited attention in the West can be constructive. This may need to begin with thinking the unthinkable.

Even though I have spent most of my life writing against imperialism in various ways, it is time for some forms of empire to be re-examined in at least one respect: empire's structure of government was necessarily organized around the accommodation of diversity, albeit according to an imperial hierarchy.²⁶ Empire was destroyed by the principle of nationalism, the drawback of which was often an intolerant principle of autonomous ethnic or cultural homogeneity that tended to disallow heterogeneity and difference, seeing them as a problem to be resolved or eliminated. The huge (and unbearably costly, in terms of human life) movements of peoples at the times of the institution of the nation-states of Greece and Turkey, India and Pakistan, Israel and Palestine, are all material indicators of the antinomy between the modern concept of the nation and the ability of empires to sustain the diversity that preceded nation formation. An earlier example would be the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims at the time of the *Reconquista* in Spain in 1492.

III. *Convivencia*

What can nations, which represent the modern political form of the state, learn from the empires which they replaced? The initial drive

to homogeneity within many postcolonial nation-states is in many cases only now (if at all) beginning to shift towards the cultivation of heterogeneity and toleration of difference, something that was fundamental to the practice of empire. I am not necessarily thinking of the British empire, though it was certainly a bizarrely heterogeneous institution, negotiating its diversity in the first instance by discounting other differences in favor of rank.²⁷ Today, in a world in which Islam is automatically connected by those in the West with fundamentalism and terrorism, there is an often-forgotten history that remains particularly relevant as a long-standing achievement of equitable relations between different communities, different people living in the same place, tolerating each other's differences. While Islamic Spain constitutes one of the reference points for Al-Qaeda's unorthodox *longue durée* account of Islamic history—a preoccupation that it shares, uncharacteristically, with Salman Rushdie—in the West it is rarely acknowledged that, prior to the Canadian invention of multiculturalism in the 1970s, the major and historically by far the longest example of successful multiculturalism in Europe was the Islamic state of al-Andalus in the tenth century, during the eight hundred odd years of Muslim rule in Spain. This has never been adequately acknowledged in Western assumptions of the superiority of its recent political systems. It was under the Caliphate of Cordoba (929–1031) that Cordoba became one of the greatest cities of medieval Europe and the Near East, a beacon of learning rivaled in that era only by Baghdad, with the largest library in Europe serving as the effective conduit of Arabic, Greek, and Latin philosophy and science into Renaissance Europe.²⁸

What was unusual about Cordoba, certainly compared to other parts of Europe at that time, was that it was a multicultural society comprising Muslims, Jews, and Christians living peaceably together—*Convivencia*—and even engaging with each other convivially, for it was scholars of all religions who facilitated the reception and translation of the great philosophical texts into Arabic and the composition of classic writings such as Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed*, the major text of Kabbalah, the *Zohar*, and the Arabic rhymed prose narrative of Ibn al-Astarkuwi.²⁹ This intellectual work was the product of the environment created during the rule of Abd-ar-Rahman III (912–961) when, despite wars with the Christian kingdoms to the north, tolerance and freedom of religion was instituted as the marker of Islamic rule. Al-Andalus involved a thriving commercial as well as intellectual culture, one in which Muslims, Jews, and Christians lived together in a relative equanimity that would be unparalleled in Christian Europe until the last decades of the twentieth century. This is the world portrayed in the concluding pages of Rushdie's

The Moor's Last Sigh (1995). J. M. Coetzee has commented on what he calls Rushdie's "provocative thesis": "that the Arab penetration of Iberia, like the later Iberian penetration of India, led to a creative mingling of peoples and cultures; that the victory of Christian intolerance in Spain was a tragic turn in history; and that Hindu intolerance in India bodes as ill for the world as did the sixteenth-century Inquisition in Spain."³⁰ The tolerant society of al-Andalus remains Europe's most sustained and successful experiment in communal living in a pluralistic society; yet, because it occurred under Muslim rule, it merits little discussion among analysts of multiculturalism or toleration today.³¹ Similarly, there has been little discussion of contemporary Arab multiculturalism, such as can be found in some of the Gulf States, one of the closest modern equivalents to al-Andalus in political terms in a number of respects (including autocracy as well as tolerance of diversity). States such as Qatar, in which migrant noncitizens make up as much as three-quarters of the population, are producing complex, heterogeneous new cultural formations very different from Western multiculturalisms, even as they struggle to adjust to (or repress) demands for democracy, human and workers' rights. For similar reasons, there has been comparatively little analysis of the Islamic millet system, in which different communities were allowed to rule themselves under their own legal codes, despite the fact that remnants of its legacy lives on today in certain respects in many formerly Ottoman or Muslim countries, including Bangladesh, Egypt, Greece, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Palestine, and Syria. Once again, we encounter postcolonial remains, hidden beneath the surface of modern national states, but living on, the past persisting in the present, but in what ways (legal, political, and social), with what effects—and with what possibilities for the future?

Although it is hardly the preferred narrative of the BJP, even today one still sometimes hears the claim being made in India that before British rule the different communities lived in harmony together, and that it was the British who destroyed this amicable concord with their divide-and-rule policy. If this were at all true, that time must refer to the Mughal era, when much of India was ruled on the basis of the Islamic *dhimma* system. There is not space here to analyze that institution in any substantial way, and I am certainly not proposing it as a model (but then which models are not imperfect?). The *dhimma* system was hardly a system of equal human rights and citizenship as we would think of them today, and there are many examples of abuses of various sorts in different places, or of limits to the forms and degrees of tolerance that it offered. However, the fact remains that, as even Bernard Lewis remarks, up until the end of Ottoman rule there were no large-scale

massacres of Jews or Christians in Muslim lands comparable to those that took place in Europe.³² Christians and Jews were not forced to submit to the harsh options of conversion, expulsion, or death offered to Muslims and Jews at the time of the *Reconquista* in Spain 1492. A system of fundamentally tolerant living together in difference obtained. When British Indian troops entered Baghdad in March 1917, there were more Jews living in the city than Arabs. The extraordinary cultural and ethnic heterogeneity of cities such as Alexandria or Smyrna at that time has now been completely lost, but the destruction of those heterogeneous societies has not formed part of postcolonial critique. While Europeans were engaging in a thousand years of internecine strife, with incessant war between states conducted in Europe and beyond, and perennial persecution of religious and racial minorities, the Islamic societies that stretched around the other side of the Mediterranean managed to create a long-lasting system of comparative tolerance of diversity and cultural syncretism that was only destroyed by European imperial greed and the rise of nationalism in the nineteenth century.

Wendy Brown has argued that tolerance is less an ethic or a virtue than a structure and discourse of power and a structure of governmentality, as if to expose its hidden flaw.³³ The *dhimma* system never pretended otherwise—it was a form of government—but this did not mean that its tolerance was not based on, or practiced without, a fundamentally ethical structure. Given the politico-religious framework, we might call this system one of dissent—the “absence of collective unanimous opinion”—the very opposite of the typical model of nationalism. It involved a system of coexisting dissenting communities: each community at variance with each other in its opinions, customs, and beliefs, while nevertheless respecting the autonomy of the other. It was not, in the manner of Jacques Rancière, dissensus in the sense of a fissure within the polity.³⁴ The structure of dissent was the fundamental basis of how the system was organized, not the oppositional form of the political to the juridical. If tolerance of others is a central aspect of communal organization, it would make no sense if there were no conflict, for tolerance means to endure, suffer, put up with, involving an ethics not only of acts, but of restraint, of forbearance in the face of forms of unsettling of the self, the disruptive ethos of being placed in translation.³⁵ Tolerance implies an active concept of duty as a primary part of any ethical life; its precepts become unreadable within an exclusively individualistic rights-based discourse. If, in practice, tolerance must always be qualified, nevertheless, like forgiveness, tolerance only has meaning if it is imprescriptible, unconditional, and unqualified at the same time.³⁶ These heterogeneous and aporetic divisions were fundamental to the *dhimma*

system—the Muslims put up with the Christians and Jews, the Christian and Jews suffered the rule of the Muslims. Yet within this unsettling and imperfect cosmopolitan dissensus, tolerance, respect, and a mode of mutual living found its place.

Though we now tend to promote tolerance as a way of solving or avoiding social and political strife, the idea of an underlying conflict was fundamental to the idea of tolerance which forms the basis for the liberal Western tradition that was gradually instituted from the seventeenth century onwards. We find it laid out most notably in John Locke's "Letter Concerning Toleration" of 1689.³⁷ Locke's letter proposed a radical solution to the question of religious differences and the role of the state. Whereas Thomas Hobbes had taken what we might call, anachronistically, the nationalist perspective and advocated the need for homogeneity of religion for the successful nondisruptive functioning of the state, Locke took the opposite view, and argued that it was more probable that dissent, and a plurality of religious groups, would create stability and prevent civil unrest. Locke argued that any attempt by the state to repress other religions is in fact more likely to produce civil unrest than if it allows them to proliferate. The state becomes stronger through the tolerance of heterogeneity, weaker by repressing it. Giving one church the authority of the state is insufficient. One of the logical paradoxes of Protestantism, Locke argued, is that one church does not possess enough authority to condemn another. His example, significantly, comes from two rival churches residing in Constantinople: "To make things clear by an example, let us imagine two churches at Constantinople, one of Remonstrants, the other of Antiremonstrants. Would anyone say that either church has the right to take away the liberty or property of those who disagree with them (as happens elsewhere), or to punish them with exile or death because they have different doctrines or rituals? The Turks meanwhile say nothing and laugh up their sleeves at the cruelty of Christians beating and killing each other."³⁸

In the founding philosophical text on tolerance in English, Locke thus contrasts the forbearing and tolerant behaviour of the Turks with the inhuman cruelty of the intolerant, warring Christian sects. Tolerance is typically considered to be both a Western virtue and a Western invention. But it is significant that two of its greatest theorists, Locke in the seventeenth century, and Voltaire in his entry on toleration in the *Philosophical Dictionary* in the eighteenth,³⁹ both invoke the Islamic world of their time as an example of the kind of tolerance that they are proposing. Although modern commentators, such as Will Kymlicka, argue that the Islamic and the European traditions comprise two entirely different models, the second was nevertheless developed from knowledge

of the practices of the first.⁴⁰ Islam always provided the great example for the Reformation and Enlightenment proponents of tolerance. Can that example be retrieved for today?

IV. The Other

Tolerance requires that there be no “other,” that others should not be othered. We could say that there can be others, but there should be no othering of “the other.” Critical analysis of subjection to the demeaning experience of being othered by a dominant group has been a long-standing focus for postcolonial studies, initiated by Frantz Fanon in his *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952).⁴¹ Central to postcolonial critique has been the observation that implicit in the idea of “the other” is a distinction between the modern (the same) and the residue that is nonmodern (the other). Yet people regarded as being outside modernity, or outside the West, are still frequently described and categorized in terms of the concept and the term of “the other.”

You can find examples everywhere. Linda Colley, for example, in *Britons: Forging the Nation*, invokes a whole consensual body of late twentieth-century thought when she writes that, “Britishness was superimposed over an array of differences in response to contact with the Other, and above all in response to conflict with the Other.”⁴² No one, of course, in the nineteenth century talked about people as “Other,” with a Sartrean or Lacanian capital O. It is one thing to claim that so-called “Britishness was superimposed over an array of differences.” However, when Colley adds “in response to contact with the Other,” she conflates the historical event of contact with diverse peoples around the world with a contemporary, late twentieth-century characterization of these diverse peoples as “the Other.” Why describe the contact of the British with a vast array of different peoples around the world, made British by virtue of being made subjects of the British Empire, as an encounter with “the Other,” a concept that serves to repeat the very perspective that Colley is criticizing?

The casual use of this concept has led to the odd perpetuation of the very category that postcolonial theorists have been challenging for many years—a colonial remainder that resurfaces sometimes even within the rhetoric of the postcolonial. For everywhere we look today we still read or hear about “the other.” “This is all very well,” commented a member of the audience after a panel discussion on postcolonialism in which I participated in New York, “but where is the other? Hasn’t this panel continued to exclude the very others that it is supposed to be champi-

oning?” There were two possible responses to this question. The first would have been to point to the “race” or ethnicity, that is the visible otherness, of various panel members that the questioner had clearly not registered. The other response, which was the one I made, was to point out that there is, or should be, no “other” as such, only individuals or groups who have been, or feel that they have been, othered by society. The idea that there is a category of people, implicitly third-world, visibly different to the casual eye, essentially different, and “other,” is itself a product of racial theory, its presuppositions drawn from the discriminatory foundations of modernity.⁴³ The legacy of this, of course, is the existence of minorities, who struggle for full participation within a society that continues to other them as “the other.”

Othering is what the postcolonial should be trying to deconstruct, but the tendency to use the concept remains: the often-posed question of how “we” (implicitly the majority or dominant group) can know “the other,” who remains implicitly unknowable and unapproachable, or how “the other” can be encouraged to represent itself in its otherness rather than merely be represented as other, is simply the product of having made the discriminatory conceptual distinction in the first place. It accepts the discriminatory gesture of social and political othering that it appears to contest. The question is not how to come to know “the other,” but for majority groups to stop othering minorities altogether, at which point minorities will be able to represent themselves as they are, in their specific forms of difference, rather than as they are othered.

Another way of putting this would be to say that in some theoretical and even historical discourse since the 1980s, there has been an unexamined conflation of two ideas: first, the invention of the “other” as a philosophical category of the philosophy of consciousness from Hegel onwards, in which the other is, in fact, not essentially different but the very means through which the individual becomes aware of him or herself, and vice versa (a formulation developed most actively in recent times by Sartre, Levinas, and Lacan); and second, the category of whole cultural or ethnic groups as “other” which has been the product, as well as the object of, anthropological inquiry, in a formulation that goes back at least to John Beattie’s *Other Cultures* (1964).⁴⁴ For postcolonial studies an early example was Tzvetan Todorov’s *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* of 1982, followed by his *Nous et les autres* [*On Human Diversity*] of 1989.⁴⁵ The founding conference of the field of postcolonial studies, held at the University of Essex in 1984, was programmatically called “Europe and its Others.” As the conference title suggests, the philosophical, anthropological, and geographical had by then become conflated. The critical question raised by delegates at the conference

was to what extent that title described a historical situation—the ways in which Europe “othered” non-Europeans—and to what extent it was being used as a description of the present, without implying any critical perspective. Since that time, the term “the other” has come to designate both the individual and the group whose unknown, exotic being remains the object of postcolonial desire—a desire that seeks to reach the very unknowable that it has itself conjured up. To that degree, the concept of “the other” simply continues the founding conceptual framework of modernity, in which a portion of humanity entered modernity towards the end of the eighteenth century, at least in Kant’s account, while the rest of humanity was relegated to the status of an immature, primitive, and scarcely human “other.”⁴⁶

The concept of the other, in short, simply comprises the modern form of the category of the primitive, notwithstanding the fact that the latter has been critically interrogated for many years by Bruno Latour and others.⁴⁷ There have been specific anthropological and philosophical critiques of the idea of the Other, such as Johannes Fabian’s *Time and the Other* (1983),⁴⁸ or Levinas’s life-long critique of Hegel, or Derrida’s essays on Levinas, but these critiques have not prevented the continuing, often unnuanced, use of this idea even in postcolonial studies—the very field in which the concept has also been thoroughly interrogated and unpicked. Levinas, for example, begins by arguing that in Hegel, even the achievement of knowledge of the other is tainted, because the other then loses its otherness and becomes the same. The result of this line of argument is an extended pursuit of the absolute other, the other that will remain untainted, which Levinas, in a catachrestic gesture, calls “face.”⁴⁹ Levinas thus offers us the other *plus ultra*, truly othered, respectfully. His idea of the authentic other has been attractive to those who, in a well-meaning way, have been pursuing the attempt to break down modernity’s same-other distinction by coming to know or represent the culturally other or by encouraging this other to represent itself. In fact, however, any such attempt ironically only perpetuates the divisive category in which “the other” must always remain incomprehensible. As soon as you have employed the very category of “the other” with respect to other peoples or societies, you are imprisoned in the framework of your own predetermining conceptualization, perpetuating its form of exclusion.

This is the substance of Derrida’s 1964 critique of Levinas in “Violence and Metaphysics,” where Derrida argues, as Gabriela Bastera puts it, that “if the other is absolutely exterior, if it is separated from the self by an untraversable distance, how does one know that the other exists?”⁵⁰ To which the answer is, only by having created the concept in the first place. In *Otherwise than Being* (1972), therefore, Levinas revised his posi-

tion to develop a new way of understanding the relation to the other, for him a question of both ethics and politics, by tracing it through the remains of its derangement of the self, “the restlessness of the same disturbed by the other.”⁵¹ “The psyche is the other in the same,” Levinas argues, in a move which brings him closer to Hegel as well as Freud.⁵² Levinas’s move to “auto-heteronomy,” a philosophy of the same, but a same that has been heterogenized with the recognition that sameness must be determined and unsettled by the other against which it defines itself, has, however, made little impact on the discourse of postcolonial studies. In philosophical terms, there should be no difference between any of the various “others” who resides outside the domain of individual subjectivity—the politics of recognition is once again a self-fulfilling paradigm that only seeks to cure the illness that it has itself created. There are really two categories here: others whom “we” know or do not know, and others whom “we” do not know at all, those who are not even recognized as strangers but generically classified as *the* other.⁵³

The time has come for postcolonial scholars to rethink the category of the other according to Levinas’s later positions, or according to the arguments of Jean-Luc Nancy, Giorgio Agamben, and others that alterity is not something produced as a form of exclusion but fundamental to being itself, which must always involve “being singular plural” from the very first. Until people rethink the idea of the other in this way, the most useful thing that Postcolonial Studies could do to achieve its aim of mutual understanding and universal equality would be to abandon the category of “the other” altogether.⁵⁴ Not all—if indeed any—forms of difference require the absoluteness of the category of “the other,” unless that otherness is chosen by the subject him or herself to describe a situation of historical discrimination which requires challenge, change, and transformation. No one is so different that their very difference makes them unknowable. Othering was a colonial strategy of exclusion: for the postcolonial, there are only other human beings.

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NOTES

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1 Editor’s Column, “‘The End of Postcolonial Theory?’ A Roundtable with Sunil Agnani, Fernando Coronil, Gaurav Desai, Mamadou Diouf, Simon Gikandi, Susie Tharu, and Jennifer Wenzel,” *PMLA* 122, no. 3 (2007): 633–51.

2 Jean-François Bayart, *Les études postcoloniales, un carnaval académique* (Paris: Karthala, 2010). For a response, see Robert J. C. Young, “Bayart’s Broken Kettle,” *Public Culture* 23, no. 1 (2011): 167–75.

- 3 The claim that the economic rise of India and China outdates the postcolonial forgets that rapid economic development in Asia is hardly new as a phenomenon: China and India are in fact latecomers, the latest in a long line of countries that have experienced such economic booms—they were preceded in Asia by Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan. And yet the postcolonial has hardly become irrelevant to these post-boom “tiger” cultures: indeed, a preoccupation with postcoloniality has only intensified there.
- 4 See Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).
- 5 Arif Dirlik, *Global Modernity: Modernity in the Age of Global Capitalism* (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2007).
- 6 Cf. Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004); Achille Mbembe, *Sortir de la grande nuit. Essai sur l’Afrique décolonisée* (Paris: La Découverte, 2010).
- 7 Amitav Ghosh, *Sea of Poppies* (London: John Murray, 2008).
- 8 Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986); Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera, eds., *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004); Lorna Hardwick and Carol Gillespie, eds., *Classics in Postcolonial Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007); Piyel Haldar, *Law, Orientalism, and Postcolonialism: The Jurisdiction of the Lotus Eaters* (London: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007); Lisa Lampert-Weissig, *Medieval Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2010); Cheryl McEwan, *Postcolonialism and Development* (London: Routledge, 2008).
- 9 For a differentiation between the Gramscian and postcolonial concepts of the subaltern, see Robert J. C. Young, “Il Gramsci meridionale,” in *The Postcolonial Gramsci*, ed. Neelam Srivastava and Baidik Bhattacharya (New York: Routledge, 2012), 17–33.
- 10 Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 222–37.
- 11 Cf. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1999).
- 12 Bartolomé de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* [1542], trans. Nigel Griffin (London: Penguin, 1992); UN Declaration: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/drip.html>.
- 13 José Carlos Mariátegui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*, trans. Marjory Urquidi (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1971).
- 14 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 1989).
- 15 Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Mike Davis, *Planet of Shums* (London: Verso, 2006).
- 16 Cf. Yto Barrada, *A Life Full of Holes: The Strait Project* (London: Autograph, 2005); Craig Jeffrey, *Timepass: Youth, Class, and the Politics of Waiting in India* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2010).
- 17 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978).
- 18 See Robert J. C. Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).
- 19 Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2004).
- 20 Mohsin Hamid, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (New York: Harcourt, 2007).
- 21 Faisal Devji, *Landscapes of the Jihad: Militancy, Morality, Modernity* (London: Hurst, 2005).
- 22 Al Qaeda is not the first globalized or transnational anticolonial campaign: that distinction belongs to the Irish. See Robert J. C. Young, “International Anti-Colonialism: The Fenian Invasions of Canada,” in *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity and Culture*, ed. Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 75–89.

23 The controversies surrounding Saba Mahmood's *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2005) are indicative of the West's difficulties in reading the forms of Islamic belief.

24 Derrida characteristically puts the question more subtly, asking "if this word [secularism] has a meaning other than in the religious tradition that it maintains in claiming to escape it." Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London: Routledge, 2001), 46. Cf. Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), 144.

25 Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2003).

26 For an extended discussion of how empires managed difference, see Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2011).

27 David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002).

28 Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *Comment philosophe en Islam?* (Paris: Panama, 2008); George Makdisi, *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West: With Special Reference to Scholasticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1990).

29 Gil Anidjar, "Our Place in al-Andalus": *Kabbalah, Philosophy, Literature in Arab Jewish Letters* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2002). The argument for the *Convivencia* was first proposed in modern times by Américo Castro in *España en su historia. Cristianos, moros y judíos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1948); for recent more critical views, see David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1996), and Maya Soifer, "Beyond *Convivencia*: Critical Reflections on the Historiography of Interfaith Relations in Christian Spain," *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2009): 19–35. On the role of al-Andalus in the culture of memory of Arab, Jewish, and Hispanic peoples, see Stacy N. Beckwith, ed., *Charting Memory: Recalling Medieval Spain* (New York: Garland, 1999); the prominence of the imagined memory of al-Andalus in the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish is of obvious relevance to the wider implications of my argument. In that context, see also Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2011).

30 J. M. Coetzee, "Palimpsest Regained," review of *The Moor's Last Sigh*, by Salman Rushdie, *The New York Review of Books*, March 21, 1996, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1996/mar/21/palimpsest-regained/?page=1>.

31 Hasan Hanafi, "Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society: A Reflective Islamic Approach" in *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society*, ed. Simone Chambers and Will Kymlicka (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2002), 171–89.

32 Bernard Lewis, *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1998), 127.

33 Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006).

34 Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, trans. Steven Corcoran (London: Continuum, 2010).

35 Anidjar, *Our Place in al-Andalus*, 14.

36 Cf. Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, 44–45. Space prevents me here from discussing Gandhi's ideas and practice of tolerance.

37 "A Letter Concerning Toleration" (1689) in *John Locke on Toleration*, ed. Richard Vernon (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2010).

38 "A Letter," 13–14.

39 Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary*, trans. Theodore Besterman (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1972).

- 40 Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), 82.
- 41 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 1986).
- 42 Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1992), 6.
- 43 Paul Gilroy, *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture beyond the Color Line* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2000).
- 44 John Beattie, *Other Cultures: Aims, Methods and Achievements in Social Anthropology* (London: Cohen & West, 1964).
- 45 Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984); *Nous et les autres: La réflexion française sur la diversité humaine* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), translated as *On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism, and Exoticism in French Thought*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1993).
- 46 Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment?” in *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and What is Enlightenment?* trans. Lewis White Beck, 2nd ed. rev. (New York: Macmillan, 1990).
- 47 Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1993); Adam Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion* (London: Routledge, 1988); Marianna Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1990).
- 48 Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1983).
- 49 Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne Univ. Press, 1969).
- 50 Gabriela Basterra, “Auto-Heteronomy, or Levinas’ Philosophy of the Same,” *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 31, no. 1 (2010): 114; Jacques Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics,” in *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1978), 97–192. Derrida makes a similar argument in his critique of Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization*, “Cogito and the History of Madness,” also collected in *Writing and Difference*: if Foucault is speaking on behalf of a madness that he claims has been reduced to silence, Derrida asks, how can he avoid participating in the very structure of exclusion that he is criticizing?
- 51 Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being, or, Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1981), 25.
- 52 Levinas, *Otherwise*, 112.
- 53 Cf. Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-coloniality* (London: Routledge, 2000), 21. Though not questioning the category as such, Ahmed provides a critique of the abstract use of the concept of “the other” by emphasizing the fact that the stranger is always embodied in any encounter.
- 54 Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1993); Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, trans. Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhey (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1991); *Being Singular Plural*, trans. Robert D. Richardson and Anne E. O’Byrne (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2000).