Introduction

Binayak Roy
University of North Bengal, India

Esterino Adami
Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy

> Every human being is an amphibian—or, to be more accurate, every human being is five or six amphibians rolled into one. Simultaneously or alternately, we inhabit many different and even incommensurable universes. — Aldous Huxley, *Adonis and the Alphabet*

> Now that the stirrings of the earth have forced us to recognize that we have never been free of non-human constraints, how are we to rethink those conceptions of history and agency? —Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*

Amitav Ghosh's creative virtuosity is perfectly matched by his intellectual vibrancy. His specialty lies in his deft handling of political and philosophical issues without sacrificing the graces of art. He has a personal stance on such controversial issues as postcoloniality, postmodernity, subjectivity, subalterneity; he interweaves them in a complex pattern in his works, which themselves are generic amalgams. Despite his training in it, anthropology disenchants him because it reduces people to "abstractions and makes them into […] statistical irregularities" (Aldama 86). He rejects the prescribed anthropological assumptions about cultural coherence and authenticity. It may be the statesmen who draw borders, but people leave the human imprint by creating the melting pot of sub-cultures to subvert these borders. Ghosh acknowledges the antiquity of this dynamic: "In the 12th century, people developed a much more sophisticated language of cultural negotiation than we know today. They were able to include different cultures in their lives, while maintaining what was distinct about themselves" (Interview with Amitav Ghosh, "Lessons from the 12th century" 52). These travels dismantle the stable boundaries of nationalist discourse and the conception of cultures as fixed and homogeneous systems. For James Clifford, there could be no better image of postmodernity than the conflation of an Egyptian village with an airline transit lounge. As a literary artist, Amitav Ghosh, Clifford argues, draws attention to the complex "roots" and "routes" that constitute inter-cultural relations: "Everyone is on the move, and they have been for centuries: dwelling-in-travel" ("The Transit Lounge of Culture" 8).

The key to understanding Ghosh lies in his double inheritance. By Ghosh's own confession, his mother was a staunch nationalist whereas his father served in the British Indian Army, and fought in the Second World War in Burma and North Africa. He was thus "among those 'loyal' Indians who found themselves across the lines from the 'traitors' of the Indian National Army" (*The Glass Palace* 552). The young Ghosh grew up on stories, especially patriotic stories of India's freedom struggle, heard from his mother, which he found more appealing than the idyllic stories of his father's life in the British Indian Army. Then one day, towards the end of his life, Ghosh's father told him an altogether different story, that of racial prejudice and humiliation. He confided that "at the siege of Imphal, he had turned away from the main battle to confront a South African officer who had called him a 'dirty nigger.'" The dismayed son responds: "Suddenly these stories came pouring out of him: I was presented with a vision of army life that was completely different from that which I had grown up with" (Correspondence with Dipesh Chakrabarty 4). Evidently, his mother stands for nationalism, his father for imperialism. These two conflicting strands find a confluence in the psyche of the impressionable, adolescent Ghosh, stimulating his quest for his own identity. It is not without significance in this context that when Mary Gray Davidson, the producer of the American radio programme "Common Ground," asked him how he identified himself, he responded: "I must say, I wish I knew. I mean to me, identity is a kind of, it's really an impossible question. And I never feel at all the compulsion to stand up and say, 'I am this and nothing else'" (cited in Hawley 165). This aversion to an exclusive Indian identity is Ghosh's point of departure. In his revealing confession with Dipesh Chakrabarty, Ghosh portrays himself as an incurable amphibian, hinting at the elusiveness of his determinate identity. He claims that "to look for agreement is really futile, since — let us face it — much of the time, it's quite a struggle even to agree with oneself" (10). It would, however, be a mistake to think that he is altogether bereft of any sense of self-identity. Thus on another occasion, Ghosh asserts his position as an "Indian" writer. It is just a result of his "being an Indian" (Chambers 34). He thinks of himself "as an Indian writer" for his work has its roots in the experience of the people of the Indian sub-continent, at home and abroad. Accordingly, "'Indian Writing in English' seems to me to be a perfectly acceptable categorisation of my work" (cited in Hawley 169).

Complexities and contradictions in Ghosh the man go to make up Ghosh the writer. They constitute his intellectual dialectic and his creative dynamic. He seems to betray his predilection for ideas, if not theory, in his interview with Ramya Ramamurthy:

> I write the books that I want to read, about the things that interest me. I am curious about the environment,

> about history, words and language. The idea of writing a book where you leave those things out seems boring because these are the textures that make life interesting. (1)

Conversely his confession to Claire Chambers that he is "not a theoretically minded person at all" (Chambers 29) tends to align him with the postmodernists with their strong aversion to the grand narrative of any kind. He repudiates anthropology as "a kind of hegemonic voice," "an authoritative" and "authoritarian voice" (Chambers 29), thus rebelling against any kind of totalizing, over-arching concept or ideology. Nevertheless, he finds it very difficult to read contemporary fiction because the "relationship between writer and public has become, especially in postmodern writing, very, very, distanced." Postmodern writers, Ghosh believes, create hard-edged, self-referential texts, "and the whole effort creates a very glittering crystalline edge which keeps the reader out." Confessing as he does that "I have done that myself," he perhaps adumbrates that he is a quondam postmodernist. Now he craves "that other form of address, that intimacy which writing creates. That form of communion which one used to discover in novels" (Silva and Tickell 221). Ghosh writes novels because novels can synthesize geology, history, personal relations, and emotion: "Novels can tell us about politics, geology, finance, and about individuals, along with their pain and suffering, and the ways the world has impacted them" (Branagan 5). That is why the purely psychological novel finds no favour with him. It is an article of faith with him that "[t]he novel is the most ambitious form of creative endeavour and should not flinch from looking at the world in its completeness and diversity" (Branagan, 5).

Postcolonial studies, like postmodernist thought, have an insistently anti-nationalist and anti-statist leaning. Postmodernists, as Stuart Hall puts it, tend to reject all the "great collective social identities of class, of race, of nation, of gender, and of the West" ("Old and new identities," 44). They view them as hegemonic identity narratives that suppress marginality, heterogeneity and difference. This applies with equal force to the concepts of "nation" and "state." Hall's contention is an offshoot of Lyotard's famous cry "Let us wage a war on totality" (82). Lyotard defines postmodernism as an "incredulity towards metanarratives" (xxiv). "Grand Narratives" like the Enlightenment, Christianity or Marxism are illusions which smother difference, opposition and plurality. Therefore, the best we can hope for, concludes Lyotard, is a series of "mininarratives," which are provisional, contingent, temporary, and relative. They provide a basis for the actions of specific groups in particular local circumstances. Postmodernity thus dismantles the idea of a unitary end of history and of a subject, the basic aim of the Enlightenment.

The nation is a fundamentally modern concept. For Sudipta Kaviraj, the nation is an "unprecedented" institution which attempts to replace premodern communities, marked by "fuzzy" boundaries and intense emotional ties with an "enumerated" and modern national community. The latter is territorially specific, has clear boundaries and must "enumerate" what belongs to it. Hence, "the endless counting of citizens, territories, resources, majorities, minorities, institutions, activities, import, export, incomes, projects, births, deaths, diseases" (30-31). Benedict Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community —and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (15). It is imagined by its people and ideologues, and these imaginings are fraught with incongruities. One of these is that nation-states, although historically "new" entities, "always loom out of an immemorial past" (19) as the same entity of united people sharing the same heritage. Modern India needs to be judged from this perspective.

The Indian nation is "not an object of discovery but of invention" (Kaviraj 1). For Kaviraj, colonialism in India created a rupture out of which the nation emerged as an entirely new historical institution. Colonial borders were drawn up without any knowledge of the peoples or cultures whose lives they affected. Not only did this sometimes result in people with little historical connection being thrown together, it also often resulted in communities being torn apart, internally divided on the basis of administrative fiat. Pertinent here is Arundhati Roy's observation that "India, as a modern nation state, was marked out with precise geographical boundaries by a British Act of Parliament in 1899. Our country, as we know it, was forged on the anvil of the British Empire for the entirely unsentimental reasons of commerce and administration." This leads her to question the very Indianness of India: "But even as she was born, she began her struggle against her creators. So is India Indian? It's a tough question. Let's just say that we're an ancient people learning to live in a recent nation." (28) Be that as it may, the borders become so important for a nation that it has to protect them for its own salvation. Herein lies the difference between the modern nations and the older empires. Twentieth-century state sovereignty is recognized by a "legally demarcated territory. But in the older imaginings, where states were defined by centers, borders were porous and indistinct and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another" (Anderson, 26).

Ghosh is not exactly an apostle of the nation-state with well-defined boundaries. He concedes that "nations do matter, they matter profoundly and it's a kind of solipsism to pretend otherwise" (Vijay Kumar, 101). Each nation has its own project which marks it out from the other. Yet the classical nineteenth-century ideology of an "essentialized," homogeneous conception of a "nation-state" no longer holds. He believes that it has eroded at two levels. First, it has eroded

at the top, where the rich nations have essentially begun to melt into each other e.g. the E.U., or the concept of the G8, or the West in general. Second, it has also melted at the bottom where the borders between Burma, Thailand and India are completely porous: "If you look at the map of Asia, there is this whole sort of grey area, stretching from the Caspian Sea essentially all the way across to Burma, where no one knows who is in power, who is not in power. It's just small warlords who are in power. So it melted away at two levels" (Vijay Kumar, 102). Hence, Ghosh boldly declares, in an interview with Sheela Reddy in 2002, that "I think we are at a point where the ideal of the nation as a way of organizing society is no longer holding" (cited in Hawley, 5). He inveighs against the very idea of ethnicity as the basis of a state with fixed boundaries: "All boundaries are artificial: there is no such thing as a 'natural nation', which has journeyed through history with its boundaries and ethnic composition intact" (*Dancing in Cambodia* 100).

Both the nation and the novel figure prominently in Ghosh's thought because he posits an intimate relationship between the two:

> Novels almost always implicitly assume a collective subject: this is what usually provides the background, milieu, setting, dialect, etc. Sometimes this collective subject is the nation itself. Sometimes it is a culture or a class or a "generation". All of these are clearly the subsets of the nation ─ since the boundaries of the culture, class or generation are usually assumed to coincide with the boundaries of whatever country the writer happens to be from.

Then he explains why in India the family substitutes for the nation:

> In India, collectivities such as nation, class, generation, culture, etc. do not have the same imaginary concreteness that they do elsewhere […]. This is one of the reasons why Indian (and African) writers so often look to a different kind of collectivity, the family.

More important of all is his revelation that "[i]n my case, the family narrative has been one way of stepping away from the limitations of 'nation'" (Correspondence 10). Ghosh remarks by the way that not only this is his way of "displacing the 'nation'" but this is the "case also with many Indian writers other than myself" (1). In support of his practice, he invokes the precedent of Tolstoy and Proust: "I think there is a long tradition of this, going back at least to Proust ─ and it's something that Jameson, Anderson (and even Bhabha) never seem to take into account" (Correspondence 1). No wonder he rejects out of hand Frederick Jameson's thesis that Third World novels are "essentially about nation and nation building. I think that's just a load of rubbish" (Aldama 89). Actually he turns the tables on Jameson by suggesting that his thesis fits better the First World rather than the

Third World novel: "In fact, it is precisely the First World novel that is most commonly about nations and nation building […]. In countries like India the nation as such is still too young and too tenuous an institution to have acquired this axiomatic status" (Correspondence 10). For many Indians, the nation is a project rather than a reality. This is why Ghosh uses the family as a surrogate for the nation. For Ghosh, the family, however, is not static but continuously on the move. It cuts across national boundaries, thereby subverting the fixity of this modernist concept. This perfectly accords with his observation that "families can actually span nations" (Aldama, 89).

True to his spirit, Ghosh emerges as a champion of secularism in his diatribe against both "contemporary Muslim fundamentalists" (98) and "extremist Hindus in India" (103) who have created a religious and political controversy about the Babri Masjid in Ayodha by "exhuming aspects of Mughal history" ("Empire and Soul," *The Imam and the Indian* 103). He urges the former to reevaluate their opinion about the Middle Ages by looking at the strong-willed, independent women that the Mughal Emperor Babur talks about in his autobiography *The Baburnama*. Dismissing the claims that Babur was a religious bigot, Ghosh cites archaeological evidences which suggest that many Hindu temples were built upon earlier Buddhist monasteries. In an assertion which has a strong contemporary relevance in contemporary India dominated by right-wing Hindu fundamentalism, Ghosh, like Amartya Sen and Wendy Doniger, glorifies the age of religious tolerance and solidarity which helped in the flourishing of the arts:

> Hinduism as we know it today, especially the Hinduism of north India, was essentially shaped in the early years of Mughal rule, often with the active participation and support of the rulers and the officials and feudatories. The *Ramcharitmanas* […], the version of the *Ramayana* that was to be canonized as the central text of north Indian devotional practice, was composed in Akbar's reign by the great saint-poet Tulsidas. ("Empire and Soul", *II* 104).

Ghosh's reiteration that the Hindu fanatics who destroyed the Babri Masjid actually attacked "a symbol of the very accommodation that made their own faith possible" ("Empire and Soul", *II* 105) has a strong resonance in the contemporary world which has witnessed the rise of right-wing fundamentalism in Brazil and Germany.

Questioning the authoritarian and coercive actions of the postcolonial nation-state, Ghosh pines for the Nehruvian utopia of a secularist, democratic national unity which assimilates Indian diversity in a syncretic whole. Based on an ethically conceived solidarity, this feeling of communitarianism would provide an ideal alternative to religious and ethnic chauvinism and "the standard majoritarian argument trotted out by Hindu extremists in India" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 275). This explains the religious/ethnic

violence rampant in contemporary Hindu nationalism, which dwindles into fascist supremacism. In almost every strife-torn region of the world, be it South Asia, Africa or Eastern Europe, "religion, race, ethnicity, and language have no real content at all. Their only significance lies in the lines of distinction they provide" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 275). Ghosh celebrates the "non-sectarian, anti-imperialist nationalism" of Gandhi or Saad Zaghloul which was founded on a belief in the "possibility of relative autonomy for heterogeneous populations and had nothing to do with asserting supremacy" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 276). Like Gandhi, he prizes pre-existing local identities and traditions as integral parts of a larger Indian whole. This explains the recurrent trope of weaving in his works. It becomes a metaphor not only for interconnections but also for a self-producing community incommensurable with the Western concept of the political nation-state with clear-cut territorial demarcations. As a corollary, Ghosh distrusts the nationalist political and official discourse of faceless and dehumanizing statist machinery which is detached from the actual lives of the people. Ghosh's antipathy towards traditional Western political nationalism and to the idea of the nation springs from his deep-seated ideological affiliations with Tagore and with the mid-nineteenth century Bengal Renaissance. Hence his efforts to carve out a specifically Indian modernity out of the encounter between the indigenous cultures and the Western model.

In his correspondence with Dipesh Chakrabarty, Ghosh points to a "profound ambiguity in Enlightenment thought," which parallels Partha Chatterjee's "liberal dilemma." This ambiguity was often used, sometimes quite deliberately, to dupe the colonial subject. Ghosh equates nationalism or "blatant expansionism cloaked in the language of reform and political progress" with racism. "Racism," as he conceives it, "is not just an exclusivist or supremacist ideology. It is an ideology that is founded on certain ideas that relate to science, nature, biology and evolution ─ a specifically post-Enlightenment ideology" (Correspondence 6). The liberal thoughts of "J.S. Mill, or Bentham or any other 19th century British liberal" are grounded in the idea of race. To expose how blatant racism vitiated even the operation of the rule of law in British India, he cites the infamous double standard in this regard. He launches a scathing attack on Francis Bacon's sanction for the extermination of "certain groups" of non-Europeans in his *An Advertisement Touching on Holy War*: "Bacon's advertisement for a holy war was thus a call for several types of genocide, which found its sanction in biblical and classical continuity" and "it continues to animate the workings of empire to this day" (*The Nutmeg's Curse* 26). The putative racial superiority of the Britishers and the racial inferiority of the Indians and hence their incorrigibility justify the conquerors' perpetual rule over the conquered for the sake of civilizing them. Tearing to shreds this sophistry, Ghosh unmasks

British hypocrisy. He concludes his diatribe against British imperialism thus: "In this discourse Race is the unstated term through which the gradualism of liberalism reconciles itself to the permanence of Empire. Race is the category that accommodates the notion of incorrigibility, hence assuming the failure of all correctional efforts (and thus of tutelage)" (Correspondence 4).

Ghosh's subversion of the Enlightenment concepts of nation and nationalism would tend to align him with the postmodernists. Still he has fundamental differences with them. Ghosh belongs with the modernists. His affiliation with them comes through in his "real interest […] in the predicament of individuals" (Aldama 86-87). Ghosh espouses the individuality and freedom of all writers: "Artists are nothing if not individualistic and each must, and ought to, forge their roles according to their own ideas and desires" (Hawley 11). He firmly declares that every writer is "an individual and every writer has a right to define their own role" (*Calcuttaweb* 2). Belief in the individual's autonomy, as in art's, is modernism's romantic heritage. Since Ghosh is a proponent of both, he believes very strongly that books should be read on their own terms. No wonder he overturns Derridean deconstruction: "One of the lessons I've learned as a writer is that it is hellishly difficult to say anything at all: to me what a book says is much more important than what it does not say" (Correspondence 11).

What further strengthens Ghosh's modernist credentials is his belief that literature and art are essentially the enhancement of life and the propagation of human values. As a vital life celebrant, D.H. Lawrence too professes a similar creed, which becomes by his time an orthodoxy: "The novel is the book of life. […] To be alive, to be man alive, to be whole man alive: that is the point. And at its best, the novel, and the novel supremely, can help you. It can help you not to be dead man in life" (289, 291). All these writers testify that to reject religion or theology is not necessary to plunge into the morass of either pessimism or cynicism. The Edwardian writers, for example, "almost to a man […] rejected Christianity" in favor of "the religion of life" (Ellmann, "Two Faces of Edward" 192, 210). Literature and religion "have been virtually inseparable everywhere" "for most of human history" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 270). He is shocked at the absolute dominance of the "logic of late capitalism": "Today, for the first time in history, a single ideal commands something close to absolute hegemony in the world: the notion that human existence must be permanently and irredeemably subordinated to the functioning of the impersonal mechanisms of a global marketplace" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 285). He totally rejects this capitalist dogma of postmodernism in his essay "The Fundamentalist Challenge":

> However, the market ideal as a cultural absolute, untempered by any other ethical, political, or spiritual

> ideals, is often so inhuman and predatory in its effects that it cannot but generate dissent. It is simply not conceivable that the majority of human beings will ever willingly give their assent to the idea that the search for profit should be the sole or central organizing principle of society. (*II* 285)

For his spiritual anchorage, he veers towards that brand of modernism which erected "religion as a bulwark against the dehumanization of contemporary life" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 268). Ghosh dissociates himself from his postmodernist contemporaries by calling himself "a pre-postmodernist": "Still I, for one, have swum too long in pre-postmodernist currents to accept that some part of the effort that human culture has so long invested in matters of the spirit will not, somehow, survive" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 285-286).

Ghosh's 1992 essay "Petrofiction: The Oil Encounter and the Novel" asserts his literary goals in writing about oil and the late twentieth-century phenomenon of globalization, its concomitant capitalism and the horrors of the "post-modern present": "city-states where virtually everyone is a 'foreigner'; […]; vicious systems of helotry juxtaposed with unparalleled wealth; deserts transformed by technology, and military devastation on an apocalyptic scale" (76). He braces the question of how a writer can create a new kind of novel, the structure and form of which will reflect a globalized world. Ghosh expresses his dismay at the writers' "muteness" about writing about the Oil Encounter: "on the American (or Western) side, through regimes of strict corporate secrecy; on the Arab side, by the physical and demographic separation of oil installations and their workers from the indigenous population" (77). While American novelists have turned insular, "becoming ever more introspective, ever more concentrated upon its[novel's] own self-definition" (77), Indian writers themselves have preferred to ignore to write about the few thousands who live and work in the oil kingdoms as dehumanized beings. He laments the "radical turn away from the non-human to the human, from the figurative towards the abstract" (*The Great Derangement* 160) in twentieth-century art and literature. The story of the migrant laborers, the tools as well as victims of capitalism and dehumanizing industrialization, evoke "horror, sympathy, guilt, rage, and a great deal else" (76) which "no one […] who has any thought either for his conscience or his self-preservation can afford to ignore." In *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* Ghosh laments the equation of the novel in the Western tradition with what John Updike terms the "individual moral adventure" (103) at the expense of the collective. Ghosh thus emerges as a theorist of the novel who celebrates the inextricable bond between ethics and aesthetics rather than their cleavage in a world in which "[d]ifferentials of power between and within nations are probably greater today than they have ever been" (*The Great Derangement*195-196).

The intertwining forces of capitalism, empire and the processes of decolonization create an unprecedented climate crisis and produce climate refugees who cannot be confined within the territories of the nation. Community is neither a productive project of becoming nor is it a social contract produced by citizens. It is a sharing of singularities that are together unbecoming and unbinding in their sharing and social binding. This unworking is the refusal of unity. It is resistance to totalizing communion. Nancy suggests that fascism annihilates community by destroying difference but that there is always a resistance to this destruction. "[T]he fascist masses," Nancy writes, "tend to annihilate community in the delirium of an incarnated communion.... [C]ommunity never ceases to resist this will. Community is, in a sense, resistance itself: namely, resistance to immanence"(35). The celebration of the collective, the "men in the aggregate" (106) has been a recurrent trope in Ghosh's oeuvre. The community presented in these narratives is one that challenges, provokes, threatens, but also enlivens, is a community of disagreement, dissonance, and resistance. The narratives explore the heterogeneity of exploitative labor conditions, their situatedness as well as their "lived experiences" documenting the variegated landscape of neo-slavery for vulnerable migrant workers thereby veering away from constructing the migrant "as a pure *artifact*" (Sayad 178).

Ghosh's first commitment is to his art. The question that has engaged him a lot is whether this commitment excludes all other commitments. He admits that "a writer is also a citizen, not just of a country but of the world" (Hawley 11). Whether a writer should be a responsible citizen or an insouciant aesthete is the issue that occupies him in the essay "The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi." His point of departure is Dzevad Karahasan's essay "Literature and War," touching on the relation between modern literary aestheticism and the contemporary world's indifference to violence. Karahasan holds that "[t]he decision to perceive literally everything as an aesthetic phenomenon—completely sidestepping questions about goodness and truth—is an artistic decision. That decision started in the realm of art, and went on to become characteristic of the contemporary world" (cited in *II* 60). Ghosh abhors Karahasan's brand of aestheticism, and plumps for moral activism:

> Writers don't join crowds ─ Naipaul and so many others teach us that. But what do you do when the constitutional authority fails to act? You join and in joining bear all the responsibilities and obligations and guilt that joining represents. My experience of the violence was overwhelmingly and memorably of the resistance to it. (*II* 61)

The twentieth century has witnessed a more engaging role of artists and writers with more increasing fervor, "not just in aesthetic matters,

but also in regard to public affairs" (*GR* 162) in a period of accelerating carbon emissions. By advocating resistance to violence and rejecting the "aesthetic of indifference," Ghosh squarely denounces the postmodernist dogma of pan-aestheticization as enunciated by Patricia Waugh: "Postmodern theory can be seen and understood as the latest version of a long-standing attempt to address social and political issues through an aestheticised view of the world, though it may be more thoroughly aestheticising than any previous body of thought" (6). Lamenting the space for dissent in contemporary world, Amitav Ghosh clamours for the need to "recreate, expand, and reimagine the space for articulate, humane, and creative dissent" ("The Fundamentalist Challenge," *II* 275) to smother and neutralize the misdirected and banal energies of religious extremism. For Ghosh, "the affirmation of humanity" is more important, "the risks that perfectly ordinary people are willing to take for one another" (*II* 61). Ghosh thus straddles the currents of both modernism and postmodernism.

The institutionalization of postcolonial studies occurred at a time when the linguistic turn dominated both philosophy and literary theory. This set the stage for theoretical tendencies which Edward Said has deplored for permitting intellectuals "an astonishing sense of weightlessness with regard to the gravity of history" (*Culture and Imperialism* 366-367). This postcolonialist shift away from the historical processes disrupts the "customary epistemological and ideological divisions between colonizer and colonized" (Parry 75). As a result colonialism appears as "a mode of authority that is agonistic (rather than antagonistic)" (Bhabha, 173, 108). "Significantly, 'agonistic' relates to ancient Greek athletic contests, 'agon' being derived from the word for 'a gathering' and denoting '(a) public celebration of games, a contest for the prize at games, whereas 'antagonistic' specifies '(t)he mutual resistance of two opposing forces, physical or mental; active opposition to a force" (Parry 75-76). The conflict within the colonial encounter is thus occluded. In this re-reading of the colonial archive, the historical project of invasion, expropriation and exploitation is reconfigured as a symbiotic encounter. Simon During suggests that postcolonial thought, which fused postcolonialism with postmodernism in its rejection of resistance along with any form of binarism, hierarchy or telos signified something remote from self-determination and autonomy. By deploying categories such as hybridity, mimicry, ambivalence "all of which laced colonized into colonising cultures, postcolonialism effectively became a reconciliatory rather than a critical anticolonialist category" (31-32). This is what Benita Parry says about the Bhabha-Spivak variety of postcolonialism:

> It is an irony that the story of mutuality now being
> composed by some postcolonial critics makes an

> inadvertent return to the narrative of benign colonialism once disseminated by British imperial historiography and which in the metropolis continues to have a purchase on the official and popular memory of empire, especially of the Indian Raj. (77)

Ghosh rejects the suggestion that he is part of the postcolonial writing movement: "I think that's a term critics use, but it's certainly not a term I would use for myself. I think of myself as an Indian Writer" (Branagan 5).

Ghosh's objection to the term "postcolonial" stems from his conviction that "'Postcolonial' is a term that describes you as a negative. I mean, when I think of the world that I grew up to inhabit, my dominant memory of it is not that it was trying to be a successor state to a colony; it was trying to create its own reality, which today is the reality that we do inhabit" (Vijay Kumar 105). It is because of largely similar reasons that Ghosh spurned the Commonwealth Writers Prize for his novel *The Glass Palace* in 2001:

> I have on many occasions publicly stated my objections to the classification of books such as mine under the term 'Commonwealth Literature'. Principal among these is that this phrase anchors an area of contemporary writing not within the realities of the present day, nor within the possibilities of the future, but rather within a disputed aspect of the past (Letter to the Commonwealth Foundation 1).

The "postcolonial" that Ghosh has in mind is the one conceptualized by Homi Bhabha. He emphatically declares that "I have no truck with this term at all." He contends that the term has gained immense popularity in the last five or six years, but he does not know a single Indian writer of his acquaintance who does not detest it. More importantly, it completely misrepresents the focus of his work: "What is postcolonial? When I look at the works of critics, such as Homi Bhabha, I think they have somehow invented this world which is just a set of representations of representations. They've retreated into a world of magic mirrors and I don't think anyone can write from that sort of position" (Silva and Tickell 214-215). He makes his repudiation of the "agonistic" or "reconciliatory" strand in postcolonial studies quite explicit in his letter to Dipesh Chakrabarty: "the unintended effect of concentrating solely on the 'persuasive' and discursive aspects of the Raj is that it sometimes makes colonialism itself invisible, as though all that had happened was a consensual exchange of ideas between equals"(Correspondence 11).

European colonialism was a lucrative politico-commercial enterprise inextricably tied with capitalism. Exploring the relationship between the ideology of imperialism and its functioning through the practice of colonialism, Denis Judd argues that "no one can doubt that the desire for profitable trade, plunder and enrichment was the primary

force that led to the establishment of the imperial structure" (3). Ghosh concedes that "capitalism and empire are certainly dual aspects of a single reality" but asserts that the "relationship between them" has never been "a simple one" (*GR* 117). In "Histories," the second section of *The Great Derangement*, he develops a "genealogy of the carbon economy" that finds resonance in theories of postcolonialism, environmental justice, and modernity. Disagreeing with Naomi Klein, Ghosh argues that it is not capitalism per se but rather the unequal operations of empire that have driven global dysfunction. Contrary to conventional histories of fossil fuel development that locate its birthplace in nineteenth-century Pennsylvania, Ghosh finds the use of coal in China in the eleventh century and traces the history of Burma's oil industry much earlier "possibly even a millennium or more" (*GR* 134). In spite of this, neither China nor Burma emerged as large-scale fossil fuel-based economies before Britain or other Western countries. While steam power initially thrived in the Calcutta and Bombay shipyards, it "could not take hold in India" (*GR* 144) because the British Parliament passed the Registry Act in 1815 which imposed tight restrictions on Indian ships and sailors. While Britain and Europe witnessed rapid industrialization in the nineteenth century, the stringent rules of the colonial machinery forbade the synchronous development of carbon economy in India and Asia. Consequently, industrialization became a "process of technological diffusion that radiates outwards from the West" (*GR* 126). Hence carbon emissions were "closely co-related to power in all its aspects" which is a "major, although unacknowledged, factor in the politics of contemporary global warming" (*GR* 146). Although Asian countries have been the biggest contributors to recent climate changes due to the boom in industrialization, Ghosh reverses the scale in his crisp observation that "some of the key technologies of the carbon economy were first adopted in England, the world's leading colonial power" (*GR* 148). Examining the congruence between the logic of capitalism and the physical properties of fossil energy and its impact on climate change, Timothy Mitchell adroitly predicts that "the political machinery that emerged to govern the age of fossil fuels, partly as a product of those forms of energy, may be incapable of addressing the events that will end it" (7)

Amitav Ghosh firmly believes that history is "never more compelling than when it gives us insights into oneself and the ways in which one's own experience is constituted" (Correspondence, 1). What relates history to the novel is that history "gives us particular predicaments which are unique predicaments, not repeatable in time and place" (Vijay Kumar 101). Ghosh's conviction that history "is notoriously not about the past" ("Empire and Soul", *II* 102) is akin to Kierkegaard's: "Why bother to remember a past that cannot be made into a present?"(cited in Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* 109). His

belief in the organic interrelation between the three segments of time underlies his statement that "one of the paradoxes of history is that it is impossible to draw a chart of the past without imagining a map of the present and the future" ("The Greatest Sorrow," *II* 317). No wonder Ghosh enters into a democratic dialogue with the past, and treats it not as object but as subject. The endeavour of the modern egalitarian historian is to treat the subaltern past as contemporaneous. And then he is to see that past from its own perspective not as an object but as a subject. That is why subaltern history shapes up as a dialogue between two interlocutors. This dissolves the subject-object relationship between the historians and their archive. In consequence, the nonmodern subaltern becomes the subject of his own history, his dialogue with the modern becomes democratic and open-ended. The writing of history thus implicitly assumes a "plurality of times existing together, a disjuncture of the present with itself. Making visible this disjuncture is what subaltern pasts allow us to do" (Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* 109).

Ghosh prioritizes space over time as the structuring principle in narratives. In "The March of the Novel through History," he applauds the novel's specialty to eloquently communicate a sense of place and also to interweave the entire spatial continuum from local to global:

The novel as a form has been vigorously international from the start; […] And yet, the paradox of the novel as a form is that it is founded upon a myth of parochiality, in the exact sense of a parish — a place named and charted, a definite location. […] Location is thus intrinsic to a novel […]. ("The March of the Novel through History," *II* 294).

Reflecting on "the rhetoric of location" ("The March of the Novel through History," *II* 303), Ghosh stresses that he is not thinking merely of place or the physical aspects of the setting. Asserting that the links between India and her diaspora are "lived within the imagination" ("The Diaspora in Indian Culture," *II* 247), he examines the modes in which "the spaces of India travel with the migrant" to create what Rushdie calls the imaginary homeland: "That is the trouble with an infinitely reproducible space: since it does not refer to actual spaces it cannot be left behind. […] Eventually the place and the realities that accompany it vanish from memory and […] [t]he place, India, becomes in fact an empty space, mapped purely by words" ("The Diaspora in Indian Culture," *II* 248-9). These "words" which signify memories and inherited values, are the "metaphors of space" that constitute "the symbolic spatial structure of India" for the migrant ("The Diaspora in Indian Culture," *II* 248). Ghosh calls this kind of alternative mapping in terms of sites of lived experience and memory and not of material location "the cultural representation of space" ("The Diaspora in Indian Culture," *II* 250). For Ghosh space is perceived and imagined in the narrator's memory as a fundamental facet of individual, national, familial, and communal metamorphoses.

Space is not merely remembered as an imaginative construct but is represented as a domain of political and cultural encounters, encounters which actually shape the connection of different characters with territory and location. Hence, space is represented as a dynamic arrangement between people, places, cultures and societies. James Clifford argues that "space is never ontologically given. It is discursively mapped and corporeally practiced" (Clifford, *Routes* 54). According to Clifford, space is composed through movement, produced through use, at the same time an agency and result of action or practice. The construction of space for Ghosh does not simply manifest territorial struggles but serves to show the interplay between local and global influences, national and transnational reconfigurations and above all the search for community and alliances that cut across boundaries of cultural and ethnic identity. This contentious space seems to be a transcultural space—a space of cultural and ethnic transactions where characters seek to overthrow artificial frontiers to come to terms with the reality of cultural and political transformations.

The anthropocentric world of the European Enlightenment put a premium on human reason as a panacea for all existential problems. The Enlightenment project, for example, looked to reason to free mankind from the darkness of superstition, prejudice and slavish obedience to religious precepts and thus pave the way for progress. This blend of rationalism and scientism is what Habermas calls "modernity". Contemporary theorists have thoroughly debunked the Enlightenment's millenarianism. An important advocate of the concept of the Counter-enlightenment, Isaiah Berlin consistently depicts the Enlightenment ideals as false, naïve, absolutist and dangerous. Berlin dismisses the Enlightenment as "monist" because the Enlightenment thinkers strived to understand the world in terms of a systematic and coherent whole subject to a set of universal and eternal laws knowable by man. What he celebrates is value pluralism. In his essay "The Decline of Utopian Ideas in the West," Berlin builds on J.G. Herder's contention that there could be no comprehensive, unified "science of man" and that values were not universal:

> every human society, every people, indeed every age and civilization, possesses its own unique ideals, standards, way of living and thought and action. There are no immutable, universal, eternal rules or criteria of judgment in terms of which different cultures and nations can be graded in some single order of excellence. (*The Crooked Timber of Humanity* 37)

Any monist attempt to impose a single set of norms on all societies and all individuals is profoundly dangerous. The belief in the possibility of an ultimate solution to all human problems is "responsible for the slaughter of individuals on the altars of the great historical ideals" (Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," 238-239). Hence,

Enlightenment monism ultimately resulted in oppression. Amitav Ghosh endeavors to revise the aspects of thought based on Cartesian dualism that "arrogates all intelligence and agency" (*GR* 41) to the human being (a white human being) and marginalizes other forms of life. Indian intellectuals produced works of tremendous vitality in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; these ideas circulated in the Arabian world and even percolated into the West. Although "modernity" was not confined in the geographical space of Europe and was a global phenomenon, the Western brand of modernity, quite self-reflexively, flaunted its own uniqueness and "suppressed, incorporated and appropriated" other variants of modernity into "what is now a single, dominant model" (*GR* 146).

While the nineteenth-century European novel assumed in "both fiction and geology, that Nature was moderate and orderly" (*GR* 29), the intrusion in the novel of the "weather events" which have a "very high degree of improbability" (*GR* 35) challenged the orderly expectations of bourgeois ideals and refuted Enlightenment rationality. The modern novel, deeply rooted in middle class ethos with its exclusive focus on the questions of probability, was based both on the Enlightenment ideals of rationality and the uniform expectations of the bourgeois. Ironically, however, the novel's attempts to be realistic by conjuring up worlds through vivid details of everyday life "to give a regularity, a 'style' to existence" end up by relocating "the unheard-of toward the background […] while the everyday moves into the foreground" (Franco Moretti, cited in *GR* 22-23). Realist modes of fiction aimed at the rationalization of modern life by "offering the kind of narrative pleasure compatible with the new regularity of bourgeois life" converting the world of the novel into "a world of few surprises, fewer adventures, and no miracles at all" (Moretti 381). Weather events, surrealism, or magic realism with its celebration of the improbable were unwelcome in the "deliberately prosaic world of serious prose fiction" (*GR* 35) because novels conjure up worlds "that become real precisely because of their finitude and distinctiveness" (*GR* 82). Ghosh locates this cleavage in the very nature of modernity and echoes Bruno Latour's contention that modernity triggered the partitioning or "deepening of the imaginary gulf between Nature and Culture" (*GR* 92). "Somewhere in our societies, and in ours alone," asserts Latour, "an unheard-of transcendence has manifested itself: Nature as it is, ahuman, sometimes inhuman, always extrahuman" (*We Have Never Been Modern* 98). However, Latour also insists that modernity never really achieved the separation of nature from culture to which it aspired: "Furthermore, the very notion of culture went away along with that of nature. Post-natural, yes, but also post-cultural" ("Waiting for Gaia" 30). Interestingly, however, it was the Hungarian sociologist of culture Karl Mannheim who regarded the nature/culture distinction as one that

had taken shape historically and indeed as the quintessence of modernity's view of culture. For moderns, argued Mannheim, "being and meaning, actuality and value were experienced as having parted from one another." This was how "the designation of culture as non-nature became genuinely concrete and internally consistent" (45-46). This project of "purification," according to Latour, ensured that Nature was consigned entirely to the sciences, remaining distanced from the limits of Culture. The upshot of this fracture resulted in the suppression of hybrid genres like science fiction, or its new form, climate fiction from the literary mainstream: "The line that has been drawn between them exists only for the sake of neatness: because the zeitgeist of late modernity could not tolerate Nature-Culture hybrids" (*GR* 96).

The climate crisis expanded the horizon of fiction to incorporate within its domain alternate forms of human existence. The era of global warming has questioned the stance of "those old realists" (*GR* 107) and has "made audible a new, non-human critical voice" (*GR* 107). Moreover, the acknowledgement of "forces of unthinkable magnitude" (*GR* 84-85) has also led to the refurbishing of the novelistic techniques. No wonder, climate change "has reversed the temporal order of modernity" (*GR* 84). The extent to which non-human forces can intervene with human thought and uproot human settlement can be traced in the demographic dislocations caused in the delta region of the Sundarbans because of the devastations of violent storms. Climate change has been a matter of particular urgency for Amitav Ghosh as he explicitly states: "The Bengal delta is so heavily populated. . . . If a ten-foot rise or even a five-foot rise in the seas were to happen […] [m]illions of people would lose their livelihoods. […] It is not something that we can postpone or think about elsewhere; it is absolutely present within the conditions of our lives, here and now" (*UN Chronicle* 51). The inconceivably vast forces of nature are inextricably intertwined with the language of fiction. This interrelation between what were once considered unbridgeable binaries: living and the non-living; animate and the inanimate, establishes the human-nature continuum. Human life is about becoming, but a becoming-with other life forms; a non-anthropocentric conception of life in which human life has always been intertwined with multiple life forms and technologies. Amitav Ghosh thus emerges as a key proponent of the posthumanist vision of life which includes "all non-anthropomorphic elements. Living matter […] is intelligent and self-organizing, but it is so precisely because it is not disconnected from the rest of organic life […] the non-human, vital force of life" (Braidotti 2013, 60).

Interestingly, Donna Haraway brings in the concept of the "cyborg" to erase the nature/culture divide and assert the interdependence of species. The notion of human nature is replaced by a "nature-culture" continuum (Haraway, 1985, 1999), which brings to

an end the categorical distinction between life as bios, the prerogative of Anthropos, as distinct from the life of animals and non-humans, or zoe (Braidotti, 2006). Amitav Ghosh therefore questions the restrictive nature of the Western tradition of the novel and also expands its scope.

A syncretist in the realm of ideas, Ghosh conceives the novel as an all-inclusive form. As a novelist, he is precisely what D.H. Lawrence claims to be: "being a novelist, I consider myself superior to the saint, the scientist, the philosopher, and the poet, who are all great masters of different bits of man alive, but never get the whole hog. The novel is the one bright book of life"(289). The novel is able to incorporate elements of every aspect of life—history, rhetoric, politics, beliefs, religion, family, love, sexuality. Ghosh looks up to it as a "meta-form that transcends the boundaries that circumscribe other kinds of writing, rendering meaningless the usual workaday distinctions between historian, journalist, anthropologist, etc"(*Asia Source* 2). There are no limits to the novel as a form. For the eclectic Ghosh, it is not necessarily fictional; rather "it overarches fiction, and non-fiction, and history, the present, the past" (Chambers 32). Thus the hallmark of Amitav Ghosh, both as thinker and as artist, is inclusiveness. He is pre-eminently an intellectual amphibian. The novel's generic heterogeneity, or discursive inventiveness, enables Ghosh to retain sensitivity to various kinds of discourses, voices and agents, while narrating into existence unforeseen connections between them. Ghosh's generic mixtures are ethically aware in that they break and re-construct pre-existing generic formations, thereby changing their political implications. The self/other relationship is also narrated ethically as a reciprocal relationship, in which neither is reduced to a passive target of scrutiny; both appear as active agents in a relationship with a voice of their own. Ghosh's writings concentrate on interpersonal relationships, emphasizing the need for solidarity across ontological and epistemological divides, while retaining the ultimate alterity of the other.

The articles in this Special Issue on the discursive writings of Amitav Ghosh explore and analyze some of his key concepts. Alessandro Vescovi explores in his essay "Amitav Ghosh as a Secular Essayist" how Ghosh's engagement with climate crisis compelled him to disavow rationalism and secularism, and extol the vitalism of those who are closer to the earth and therefore know it best. Ghosh challenges the notion that humans are the only sentient beings and that empirical rationalist science is the only way to knowledge. Contrarily, Vescovi explicates how both in his fiction and non-fiction since *The Great Derangement*, Ghosh upholds shamanic and religious approaches to the mystery of nature. In her article "Posthuman Nature in Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement*" Sankaran argues that Ghosh, in proposing an alternative view that sees nature as far from inert, and foregrounding vital materiality, is not only aligned with

ecocritics who conceive of a posthuman nature, but is also in step with some ancient concepts from Asian philosophical schools that continue to remain influential in Asia. In his article "Representability and Realism in Cuarón's *Children of Men* and Ghosh's *The Great Derangement*" Aleksandr Wansbrough reflects upon how, for Ghosh, the novel as a modern form is cemented in and constructs an understanding of reality that he deems deeply unreal; an understanding that pushes the uncanny unpredictability of nature aside. Ana Luszczynska's article "Being-in-the-World: Recognition and Subjectivity in Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement*" asserts that the constitutive overlapping of being, language, and the world, is indeed central to several aspects of Ghosh's argument. Understandings of the entirely distinct being (as an atomistic and isolated individual), language (largely representational and transparently owned by an Author), and the world (as the object of the subject's will), undergird Ghosh's critique of imperial ways of knowing and inhabiting the world. O.P. Dwivedi enunciates in his essay "Subaltern Ecologies: Cultures of Concealment and Carbon Economy in Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement"* how Spivak's pedagogy of alterity toward the Other finds echo in Ghosh's compelling arguments about the urgent need to widen our lens of social imagination. The computational skills of capitalism and power-absorbing carbon socialism will not work to maintain the planetary health and the concomitant habitability. Terri Tomsky's contribution "Imagining Plural Cosmopolitanisms in the Essays of Amitav Ghosh" addresses Ghosh's engagement with plural *cosmopolitanisms*, including one which could be termed "utopic cosmopolitanism" as well as the special role of literature in bearing witness to the traumas of minority groups and in remediating the xenophobia of present-day nationalisms and neo-imperialisms. Prachi Ratra and Anjali Gera Roy's article "The Small Voices of History in Amitav Ghosh's Writings" analyzes how Amitav Ghosh fills up the gaps in nationalist histories through recovering untold, forgotten, repressed stories of ordinary people in small localities and neighborhoods, or peoples' histories. They argue that he revises official histories through revealing frequencies of boundary crossing, mixing, hybridity and violence that interrogate the reiteration of the rhetoric of purity, authenticity and indigeneity in Hindu nationalist and non-violence in nationalist discourses. Such diverse interpretations of Amitav Ghosh's non-fictional writings underline their profundity and establish their contemporary relevance.

Notes

1. Henceforth abbreviated to *II*.

2. Henceforth abbreviated to *GD*.

Works Cited

Aldama, Frederick Luis. “An Interview with Amitav Ghosh.” *World Literature Today*, Spring 2002, pp. 84-90.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 1983.

Berlin, Isaiah. “The Decline of Utopian Ideas in the West.” *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1991.

—. “Two Concepts of Liberty.” *The Proper Story of Mankind: An Anthology of Essays*, edited by Henry Hardy and Roger Hausheer. Strauss and Giroux, [1958],1998.

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture.* Routledge, 1994.

Braidotti, R. *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics*. Polity, 2006.

—. “Posthuman, All Too Human: Towards A New Process Ontology.” *Theory, Culture and Society,* vol. 23, no. 7-8, 2006, pp. 197-208.

—. *The Posthuman*. Polity, 2013.

Branagan, Lesley. “Tale of outsiders on the edge.” *Book News*. U of Technology Sydney, 2004-2005, pp. 5.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. OUP, 2001.

Chambers, Claire. “‘The Absolute Essentialness of Conversations’: A discussion with Amitav Ghosh.” *Journal of Postcolonial Writing,* vol. 41, no. 1, May 2005, pp. 26-39.

Clifford, James. “The Transit Lounge of Culture.” *Times Literary Supplement,* 3 May 1991, pp. 7-8.

—. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Harvard UP, 1997.

Ellmann, Richard. “Two Faces of Edward.” *Edwardians and Late Victorians*. Columbia UP, 1960.

Ghosh, Amitav. *Dancing in Cambodia, At Large in Burma*. Ravi Dayal Publisher, 1998.

—. Interview. Correspondence with Dipesh Chakrabarty. <www.amitavghosh.com> Accessed 2 September, 2006.

—. “I think in images.” Interview with Ramya Ramamurthy. *Mid Day*, 4 August 2004.

—. Interview. *Calcuttaweb* 2000.

—. Interview. *Asia Source*. August 11, 2006.

—. “Lessons From the 12th Century.” *Newsweek,* 13 December, 1993.

—. *The Glass Palace*. Ravi Dayal Publisher, 2000.

—. *The Imam and the Indian*: *Prose Pieces*. Ravi Dayal Publisher, 2002.

—. *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Penguin Random House India, 2016.

—. *The Nutmeg’s Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis*. Penguin, 2021.

Hall, Stuart. “Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities.” *Culture, Globalization and the World System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity,* edited by A. King. Macmillan, 1991, pp. 41-68.

Haraway, Donna. “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century.” *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. Routledge, 1999, pp. 149-181.

—. “A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s.” *Socialist Review*, no. 80, 1985, pp. 65-108.

Hawley, John C. *Amitav Ghosh*. Foundation Books Pvt. Ltd., 2005.
Kaviraj, Sudipta. "The Imaginary Institution of India." *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, edited by Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey. OUP, 1992, pp. 1-39.

Kumar, Vijay,T. "'Postcolonial' Describes You As A Negative". An Interview with Amitav Ghosh. *Interventions,* vol. 9, no. 1, 2007, pp. 99-105.

Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Translated by Catherine Porter, Harvard UP, 1991.

—. "Waiting for Gaia: Composing the Common World through Arts and Politics." *What is Cosmopolitical Design? Design, Nature and the Built Environment*, edited by Albena Yaneva and Alejandro Zaera-Polo. Ashgate, 2015.

Lawrence, D.H. "Why the Novel Matters." *English Critical Texts,* edited by D.J. Enright and Ernst De Chickera. OUP, 1962, pp. 286-292.

Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. 1979. U of Minnesota P, 1984.

Mannheim, Karl. "The Distinctive Character of Cultural Sociological Knowledge". *Structures of Thinking* (1922–24). Translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, edited by David Kettler, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr. Routledge, 1982.

Mitchell, Timothy. *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*. Verso, 2011.

Moretti, Franco. *The Novel Vol. 1: History, Geography, and Culture*. Princeton UP, 2006.

Nancy, Jean-Luc. *The Inoperative Community*. U of Minnesota P, 1991.

Parry, Benita. "The Institutionalization of Postcolonial Studies." *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies*, edited by Neil Lazarus. CUP, 2004, pp. 66-80.

Roy, Arundhati. *The Algebra of Infinite Justice*. Penguin Books, 2002.

Sayad, Abdelmalek. *The Suffering of the Immigrant*. Translated by David Macey Malden, Polity Press, 2004.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.

Waugh, Patricia. *Practising Postmodernism, Reading Modernism*. Arnold, 1992.