

Is the Post-in Postcolonial the Post-in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique David Chioni Moore

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“Except for Australia in the old days and Cayenne, Sakhalin is the only place left where it is possible to study colonization by criminals: all Europe is interested in it, and we pay no attention to it.”¹

“You have delved deeply into the Russian mind of the 19th century [...] It was filled with the same disquiet, the same impassioned and ambiguous torment. To be the extreme eastern end of Europe? Not to be the western bridgehead of Asia? The intellectuals could neither answer these questions nor avoid them.”²

“But it is above all Budapest and Suez which constitute the decisive moments of this confrontation.”³

“Marlow comes through to us not only as a witness of truth, but as one holding those advanced and humane views appropriate to the English liberal tradition which required all Englishmen of decency to be deeply shocked by atrocities in Bulgaria or the Congo of King Leopold of the Belgians or wherever.”⁴

In much of the Western academy, the term “postcolonial”—beginning in the 1980s, with massive growth by the middle 1990s—has come to be the principal designator for a range of activities formerly known as the study of Third World, non-Western, world, emergent, or minority literatures. The term “postcolonial” has come into fashion not only because of evident defects in the former vogue labels but also because “postcolonial” accurately describes, to varying degrees, good chunks of the contemporary political, social, cultural, and literary situations in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Caribbean, the Arab world, and to lesser or different extents Latin America, Australia, Canada, Ireland, and even the United States. According to a rough consensus, the cultures of postcolonial lands are characterized by tensions between the desire for autonomy and a history of dependence, between the desire for autochthony and the fact of hybrid, part-colonial origin, between resistance and complicity, and between imitation (or mimicry) and originality. Postcolonial peoples’ passion to escape from their once colonized situations paradoxically gives the ex-colonials disproportionate weight in the recently freed zones. And the danger of retrenchment, or of a neocolonial relation, is ever present.

In the hands of postcolonial and resistance theorists such as Frantz Fanon, Edward W. Saïd, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Aimé Césaire, postcolonial perspectives have generated powerful analyses of societies and texts. Postcolonial critique has also illuminated parallels between areas heretofore seen as noncomparable, such as Senegal and India, and it has energized fields like Irish culture studies.⁵ Postcolonial studies has also become remarkably autocritical: since its inception, numerous important critics have interrogated the discourse itself.⁶ Yet these autocritiques, now a genre of their own, have only strengthened the field’s hold. These critiques have tackled questions such as the political utility of the category “postcolonial,” the near-disappearance of formerly important terms such as “Third World” and more specific terms like “Africa,” the often impenetrable vocabulary of postcolonial studies, and specific concerns about its major claims. In this essay I extend these debates by examining an enormous geographic, or rather geopolitical, exclusion embodied in the range of situations that have been generally understood, in postcolonial studies, to be postcolonial. After reviewing what counts as postcolonial, I turn to the post-Soviet sphere: the Baltics, Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. This essay thereby challenges both too-narrow postcolonial and too-parochial post-Soviet studies; consequently, it is addressed to both audiences at once. It is written from the perspective of a scholar of the black Atlantic, whose post-Soviet views are those of a comparatist.

It is no doubt true that there is, on this planet, not a single square meter of inhabited land that has not been, at one time or another, colonized and then postcolonial. Across Eurasia, Africa, the Americas, and more, peoples have formed and re-formed, conquered and been conquered, moved and dissolved. And virtually all groups on this earth, whatever their claims to migrant, exile, conquering, returned, or indigenous status, have come, at some remove or other, from somewhere else. The result of all this movement, much of which has been arguably criminal, is that many cultural situations, past and present, can be said to bear the postcolonial stamp, often in ways only partly corresponding to current notions.

In roughly 1387, for example, the poet Geoffrey Chaucer was faced with an important choice, somewhat similar to the one Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o faced in 1980 when he wrote, against English-language fashion, his *Devil on the Cross* in Gikuyu. Chaucer lived at a time when England was a relatively poor margin off Europe’s northwest shore, and England’s elite culture had been heavily Latinized and Frenchified since the Norman Conquest. And so, Chaucer asked, do I write in a foreign, formerly colonial, transnational Romance tongue, thereby guaranteeing international and local-elite readers and participating in a rich, old, but largely external tradition? Or do I write in the vernacular, “my” language, of narrower geographic compass and socially lower, principally oral use? A similar dilemma for Ngũgĩ and Chaucer, but only Ngũgĩ is today called postcolonial, while Chaucer is perceived to stand at the head of a colonizer’s literary history. And yet much of Ngũgĩ’s critique of colonial English circa 1980⁷ echoes the sense of French and Latin circa 1440 expressed by Chaucer’s near contemporary Osborn Bokenham:

“This corrupcioun of Englysshe men yn ther modre-tounge [...] toke grete augmentatcioun and encrees after the commyng of William conquerour [...] [B]y decre and ordynance [...] children in gramer-scolis ageyns the consuetude and the custom of all other nacyns,

here owne modre-tonge lafte and forsakyn, lernyd here [...] Frenssh [...] and to maken here Latyns on the same wyse [...] [B]y the same decre lordis sonys and all nobyll and worthy mennys children were fyrste set to lrynyn and speken Frenssh, or than they cowde spekyn Ynglyssh, and all wrytyngis [...] in courtis of the lawe [...] be doon yn the same [...] thus by processe of tyme barbarizid thei in bothyn and spokyn neythyr good Frenssh nor good Englyssh.”⁸

Eight decades later, in 1521, when the brigand Hernán Cortés reached what is now Mexico, early in one of the most brutal chapters in all history, he did not arrive in a pristine land of independent peoples. Rather, he stumbled on a political maelstrom in which the Mexic state dominated neighbor peoples. The young Teticpac woman Malintzín, who served Cortés as translator and guide, was a member of one of these subject peoples. Malintzín’s hybridizing, other-identifying, certainly not wholly voluntary, and ultimately self-defeating choice to ally herself with Cortés was therefore initially intended as a decolonizing act. The Khoisan, in present-day South Africa, are a third nonstandard example. The current broad narrative of South African history is that, beginning in the 17th century, first Dutch and then English colonists usurped lands rightfully belonging to indigenous Africans such as the Zulu and the Xhosa. It was only in the 1990s that this power distribution began to change. And yet for other South Africans, in particular the Khoisan, the Zulu were also late arrivals and so also counted among the colonizers’ ranks. Thus in South Africa today one sees, at fleeting moments, an unusual uniting of the Khoisan with the formerly ruling white minority in the interests of reversing perceived Nguni domination.

I raise these examples—none of which is clear-cut, unambiguous, or unchallengable—to make the following point. When the term “postcolonial” arose it was rightly envisioned, as I have mentioned, as a replacement for terms like “non-Western,” “Third World,” “minority,” and “emergent.” The notion “non-Western” was a sham since it lumped four billion people under a single name and privileged the fragment called the West.⁹ “Emergent” worked no better, since the cultures and peoples so described had been producing literature for millennia before most Europeans stopped wearing bearskins or began to read; even Goethe was aware of that.¹⁰ “Minority” was even worse. And “Third World,” though of honorable, even revolutionary, birth and still with strong defenders, also seemed to have flaws: the tertiary status; the recent disappearance of the Second World; the presence of Third Worlds within the First; the odd lumping of, say, Singapore with Mali; and more.¹¹ “Postcolonial” apparently worked better: it lacked the derogations of the former labels, it specified what unified its compass (a former subjugated relation to Western powers), it embodied a historical dimension, and it opened analytic windows onto common features of peoples who had only recently, and to the extent possible, thrown off their European chains. Equally importantly, though less honorably, “postcolonial” still allowed literature departments to hire just one person in this “field,” this several-billion-person space, an outcome that would not have happened (the embarrassment would have been too great) had categories like African, Indian, and Caribbean emerged as strongly separate.

Much less expected, however, is the degree to which the notion “postcolonial” has exceeded its initial scope. Postcolonial theory, as I have observed, was initially a critique of Western power. And yet the West has hardly monopolized colonial activity. For one thing the West has often colonized itself, as when England’s subjects colonized what is now Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States and then fought to free themselves of England. Ireland’s long history of English subjugation is equally well known. Thus, the contemporary literatures of Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and more reluctantly the United States have been admitted into postcoloniality.¹² But still these additional cases fit, since the colonial hegemon is still England, the familiar villain in places such as Africa and India.

It is more troubling, however, when the postcolonial model reaches even further, if never unproblematically, as in the case of Chaucerian England, the 16th-century Mixtec state, the contemporary Khoisan, or, for that matter, Norway and Finland, which emerged from Swedish and Russian thrall only early in the 1900s.¹³ In what follows, therefore, I turn to a postcolonial designation for another zone: the post-Soviet sphere—the Baltic states, Central and Eastern Europe (including both former Soviet republics and independent “Eastern Bloc” states), the Caucasus, and Central Asia. In my view, at least two features of this giant sphere are significant for currently constituted postcolonial studies: first, how extraordinarily postcolonial the societies of the former Soviet regions are, and, second, how extraordinarily little attention is paid to this fact, at least in these terms.

To suggest a richer understanding of what I mean by post-Soviet postcoloniality, I will describe an area whose postcoloniality is clear—sub-Saharan Africa. A historically rich and important set of cultures, of great diversity and sometimes little unity, sub-Saharan Africa before the arrival of Europeans has a long history of independence, though at times internal strife there is great. Then, an external colonization or imperial control begins at the borders and extends into the center. Indigenous governments are replaced with puppet control or outright rule. African education is revamped to privilege the colonizer’s language, and histories and curricula are rewritten from the imperium’s perspective. Autochthonous religious traditions are suppressed in the colonial zone, idols are destroyed, and alternative religions and nonreligious ideologies are promoted. The colonized areas of Africa become economic fiefs. Little or no “natural” trade is allowed between the colonies and economies external to the colonizer’s network. Economic production is undertaken on a command basis and is geared to the dominant power’s interests rather than to local needs. Local currencies, if they exist, are only convertible to the metropolitan specie. Agriculture becomes mass monoculture, and environmental degradation follows. In the human realm, African dissident voices are heard most clearly only in exile, though accession to exile is difficult. Oppositional energies are therefore channeled through forms including mimicry, satire, parody, and jokes. But a characteristic feature of society is cultural stagnation.

And then independence comes, across Africa, all at once. Yet though resistance has been continuous throughout the colonial period, as periods and places of intense struggle have alternated with quieter times and times of great repression, in ways the newfound freedom is less won than handed over. External forces, world forces, or forces internal to the colonizing powers seem responsible for the sudden change. There is no moment of full satisfaction, as when Cornwallis surrendered to Washington at Yorktown in 1781 or when Vietnam defeated France in 1954 and the United States in 1974. Not surprisingly, the newly independent African states are often underprepared for self-rule. Once rich domestic polities have withered, and nationals with government experience are tainted by colonial complicity.

Thus, in places the former opposition rapidly assumes control, though it seems at times that they still are better at opposing than at leading. New governments, anxious to expel the colonizer's demons, swing the ideological pendulum, seeking alliance with the former imperium's opponent.

Attempts are then made in Africa to apply wholesale the principles—economic, social, and otherwise—of this great ideological alternative, at times without regard for the applicability of those principles or for their tragic dislocations. In some places lawlessness, graft, corruption, and a continuation of colonial-era ways take hold, followed by a human drain, particularly of intellectuals and the economically productive. In other places dictators emerge, often drawing on their training in the colonial regime. Thus, after an initial euphoria disillusion sets in, resulting from what Neil Lazarus has called Africa's "preliminary overestimation of emancipatory potential."¹⁴ Now neither the collapsed imperium, nor the outside alternative, nor the local elite is seen to have the answers. At times these tensions are expressed in ethnic terms, since map lines, ethnic categorizations, and the newfound states themselves are often fabrications of the former powers. Settler colonies uncomfortably remain in some places, while in others large imported populations stay. These "map distortions," combined with more or less authentic differences, economic hardship, and radical uncertainty, can result in tragic interethnic tensions.

Postcolonial Africa, I suggest, is like this. But is it only Africa, South Asia, the Caribbean, and "such places" that are like this? For does not the description of postcoloniality offered here reasonably as well apply to the giant crescent from Estonia to Kazakhstan, which also includes (it is worth mentioning all 27 nation-states) Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the former East Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the remaining Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan? These nations, some young and some quite old, were unquestionably subject to often brutal Russian domination (styled as Soviet from the 1920s on) for anywhere from 40 to 200 years. From this long list I have left out only Afghanistan, whose Anglo- and Russocoloniality was never complete, and Chechnya, whose grim coloniality is hardly "post." Africanist close readers of the prior paragraphs will note exceptions in Africa to the postcolonial characteristics I have listed. And scholars of Eastern and Central Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia might note ways in which these paragraphs apply imperfectly to specific states there. The post-Soviet world, like the postcolonial world, is enormously diverse. But review the three preceding paragraphs, only now with Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia in mind: it should be clear that the term "postcolonial," and everything that goes with it—language, economy, politics, resistance, liberation and its hangover—might reasonably be applied to the formerly Russo- and Soviet-controlled regions post-1989 and -1991, just as it has been applied to South Asia post-1947 or Africa post-1958. East is South.

In view of these postcolonial-post-Soviet parallels, two silences are striking. The first is the silence of postcolonial studies today on the subject of the former Soviet sphere. And the second, mirrored silence is the failure of scholars specializing in the formerly Soviet-controlled lands to think of their regions in the useful if by no means perfect postcolonial terms developed by scholars of, say, Indonesia and Gabon. South does not speak East, and East not South. In detailing these twin silences, let me turn first to postcolonial critique. In notable synoptic articles on postcolonial studies and in recent major classroom-use anthologies such as those by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman and by Bill Ashcroft and his coeditors, the broadest range of nations is generally mentioned, both colonial and colonized, *except* for those of the former Soviet sphere. Ella Shohat's fine 1992 article "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial'"—today a classic postcolonial-studies reference—is an excellent case in point. One reason Shohat's essay is so widely cited is that it is apparently exhaustive: it tackles an enormous range of the issues surrounding *postcolonial*, including the term's origins, implied temporality, supplanting of prior designations, political effects, specificity, potential overgenerality, relation with neocoloniality, and more.

The geopolitical range of Shohat's essay is also large, but in a way it is also strange. I apologize in advance for reproducing here every geographic and cultural designator in her essay, but I ask the reader imaginatively to take a colored pencil and cross-hatch on a map all the places mentioned. What will be blank once you finish?

Shohat's article refers specifically to Algeria, Angola, Australia, Brazil, Britain, Canada, Egypt, Germany, Grenada, Italy, Jamaica, Lebanon, Libya, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nigeria, Panama, the Philippines, Senegal, and South Africa, and it mentions with particular frequency France, India, Iraq, and the United States. Adding complexity to those invocations, her article also speaks of (these citations are verbatim) Israel/Palestine, India/Pakistan, Iraq/Kuwait, Kuwait-Iraq, the Gulf states, Anglo-America, Euro-Israel, Europe, North America, the Americas, European Empires, Africa, Asia, Central America, the Middle East, Southern Africa, Latin America, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and Puerto Rico. The essay often uses "Third World" and "First World," partly as descriptive terms and partly to interrogate them. Shohat also offers designators for peoples and identities, including (and this list is again complete and verbatim) Aboriginal Australians, the Jindyworobak in Australia, white Australians, the Algerian, the Algerian in France, Algerians, the *Pied Noir*, the Arab-Jew, Middle Eastern Jews, the [Amazonian] Kayapo, the Zuni in Mexico/US, indigenous peoples of the Americas and Afro-diasporic communities, Afro-Brazilians, Afro-Cubans, Anglo-Dutch Europeans, Egyptians, Fourth World peoples, Indians, Malians, New Worlders, Nigerians, Pakistanis, South African Blacks, Sri Lankans, Tunisians, and Turks. The article refers to identities that are African, African American, Anglo-American, Arab, Brazilian, Cuban, Latin American, Mexican, Middle Eastern, Native American, Nicaraguan, Palestinian, and Senegalese. It also mentions the Gulf War, New World Order, Intifada, International Monetary Fund, Anglo-American informational media, Monroe Doctrine, Carter Doctrine, US Independence Day, [United States] Ethnic Studies, Camp David, [the Brazilian] Tropicalist [movement], rap music, pre-Nasser imperialism, [United States–Mexican] Trade Liberalization Treaty, First World multinational corporations, Third World nation-states, [Christopher] Columbus, and New York Harbor. Finally, Shohat quotes the suggestion that "the post-colonial" might arguably include "African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries, and Sri Lanka."¹⁵

The great blank space on the map I have asked my reader to create is, of course, the former Soviet sphere and China, which Shohat relegates to two passing mentions of the "Second World"—mentions that, despite their brevity, are worth assessing. On the essay's second page she notes, entirely in reference to the eclipse of the term "Third World," the "collapse of the Soviet communist model [and]

the crisis of existing socialism.”¹⁶ The penultimate page again situates the massive Soviet sphere and China solely in relation to perceived desires of traditionally constituted Third World peoples: “The collapse of Second World socialism, it should be pointed out, has not altered neo-colonial policies, and on some levels, has generated increased anxiety among such Third World communities as the Palestinians and South African Blacks concerning their struggle for independence without a Second World counterbalance.”¹⁷ What is remarkable or, rather, remarkably ordinary here is the way in which a scholar enormously concerned with the fate of colonized and recently decolonized peoples across the planet should treat events that were widely perceived, at least in the 27 nations from Lithuania to Uzbekistan, as a *decolonization*, instead as a distant, indeed abstract (see Shohat’s term “model”), *noncolonial* event, and as a loss, since it increased the anxieties of, for example, Palestinians and Black South Africans. I should underscore that I do not mean to “pick on” Shohat’s essay, which I admire. Rather, I mean only to identify an absence in currently constituted postcolonial discourse—a world system with no theory of its former Second World—which I could demonstrate in dozens of similarly apparently comprehensive essays.

In Eastern and Central European, Caucasian, and Central Asian studies, a diametric lack of engagement with postcoloniality obtains. There has been, to be sure, a growing Western scholarship on 19th-century Russian literary Orientalism. Drawing on the colonial discourse analysis inaugurated by Saïd’s *Orientalism*, this work focuses on the texts, from Pushkin’s 1822 “Prisoner of the Caucasus” to Tolstoy’s 1904 *Haji Murat*, that thematize the Russo-Caucasian colonial encounter.¹⁸ However, when one chats with intellectuals in Vilnius or Bishkek or when one reads essays on any of the *current* literatures of the formerly Soviet-dominated sphere, it is difficult to find comparisons between Algeria and Ukraine, Hungary and the Philippines, or Kazakhstan and Cameroon.¹⁹ At times the media today treat the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the former Yugoslavia in Third World terms, but these treatments tend more to awful “Asiatic” tropes than to serious considerations of postcoloniality.²⁰

It is difficult to theorize a silence—that is, this lack of dialogue between current postcolonial critique and scholarship on Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. On the postcolonial side, a historical indebtedness to three-worlds theory is one cause of silence. In three-worlds theory, Western Europe and North America constitute the First, the socialist economies the Second, and all that remains—largely the world’s economically weakest states—by default becomes the Third. An enormous and honorable political commitment to the Third World has been central to much in three-worlds theorizing, the ancestor of postcolonial critique. One aspect of that commitment has been the belief, not without reason, that the First World largely caused the Third World’s ills, and an allied belief that the Second’s socialism was the best alternative. When most of the Second World collapsed in 1989 and 1991, the collapse resulted in the deflected silence apparent in Shohat, and it still remains difficult, evidently, for three-worlds-raised postcolonial theorists to recognize within the Second World its postcolonial dynamic. In addition, many postcolonialist scholars, in the United States and elsewhere, have been Marxist or strongly leftist and therefore have been reluctant to make the Soviet Union a French- or British-style villain.

The reluctance, in contrast, of most scholars of the post-Soviet sphere to make a mirrored move—to recognize that their situations might profitably be analyzed with postcolonialist tools initially developed for, say, Tanganyika—may be laid to different reasons. Here I mention two. One obtains for those post-Soviets with claims as “European”: all those peoples north and west of the fractured, fissured, “racially” and religiously inflected line that places Azeris, Chechens, Ossetians, Kabardians, Abkhazians, Tatars, “and the like” (in short, “Asiatics”) on one side and all Georgians, Armenians, and, broadly, Slavs (or “Europeans”) on the other. Because of this discursive line between the “East” and “West,” the post-Soviet region’s European peoples may be convinced that something radically, even “racially,” differentiates them from the postcolonial Filipinos and Ghanaians who might otherwise claim to share their situation.²¹

Across the entire zone, however, on both sides of the post-Soviet region’s “European-Asian” split, a second factor blocks postcolonial critique: that factor is, indeed, the region’s postcoloniality. As many colonization theorists have argued, one result of extended subjugation is compensatory behavior by the subject peoples. One manifestation of this behavior is an exaggerated desire for authentic sources, generally a mythic set of heroic, purer ancestors who once controlled a greater zone than the people now possess. Another such expression, termed mimicry, occurs when subjugated peoples come to crave the dominating cultural form, which was long simultaneously exalted and withheld. In India a worst case might be the perfectly anglicized Anglo-Indian subject, whose accent, manners, and literary and sporting interests caricature those of some English gentleman who does not exist.

This postcolonial compensatory tug plays out differently in post-Soviet space, since postcolonial desire from Riga to Almaty fixates not on the fallen master Russia but on the glittering Euramerican MTV-and-Coca-Cola beast that broke it. Central and Eastern Europeans type this desire as a return to Westernness that once was theirs. Any traveler to the region quickly learns that what for 40 years was called the “Eastern Bloc” is rather “Central Europe.”²² One hears that Prague lies west of Vienna and that the Hungarians stopped the Turk, and one witnesses an increasingly odd competition to be at Europe’s “geographic center”—the claimants ranging from Skopje, Macedonia, to a stone plinth 20 miles east of Vilnius, in Lithuania. These assertions of Western affiliation are, of course, not without reason, but one who makes them also doth protest too much. In short, I am arguing that it is, in circular fashion, a postcolonial desire, a headlong Westward sprint from colonial Russia’s ghost or grasp, that prevents most scholars of the post-Soviet sphere from contemplating “southern” postcoloniality. From all these factors comes the double silence.

In the remainder of this essay I have two aims. First, I investigate the differences between Russo-Soviet and Anglo-Franco forms of (post)colonial relations, since in pressing parallels one must also interrogate their limits. Second, I address the possibility that this paper—which leaves no corner of the planet outside the postcolonial compass—inflates postcoloniality into a category so large as to lose all analytic bite.

First, then, some Russo-Soviet and Anglo-Franco differentiation. Standard accounts of Western colonization suggest a three-part taxonomy. The first colonization type is what one might call the “classic”: that of, for example, the British in Kenya and India or the French in Senegal and Vietnam. Here a long-distance but nonetheless strong political, economic, military, and cultural control is exercised over people taken as inferior or, in Saïd’s terms, “Orientalized.” A second colonization type is that found in, for example, the

United States, Australia, and South Africa, in which the colonizers settle, turning the indigenous populations into “Fourth World” subjects. A third “standard” type of colonization is what one might call dynastic, in which a power conquers neighbor peoples. Ottoman and Hapsburg empires spring to mind, but one must also recall the more successful empires—such as France *inside* its once diverse hexagon—that resulted in the disappearance of the subject peoples as such. Both Ernest Renan and Benedict Anderson have characterized this as a dynamic of memory and forgetting,²³ a process Daniel Defoe memorably described in his 1701 *The True-Born Englishman*, a fragment of which I reprint here:

“The Western Angles all the rest subdu’d;/A bloody Nation, barbarous and rude:/Who by the Tenure of the Sword possest /One part of Britain, and subdu’d the rest./And as great things denominate the small,/The Conqu’ring Part gave Title to the Whole./The Scot, Pict, Britain, Roman, Dane submit,/And with the English-Saxon all unite:/And these the Mixture have so close pursu’d./The very Name and Memory’s subdu’d:/No Roman now, no Britain does remain;/Wales strove to separate, but strove in vain:/The silent Nations undistinguish’d fall,/And Englishman’s the common Name for all./Fate jumbld them together, God knows how;/What e’er they were, they’re True-Born English now.”²⁴

Now, Russo-Soviet colonial activity fits imperfectly with this three-part taxonomy. Certainly the notion of dynastic reach can be applied to many Russian moves, though Russia’s dynastic language is suffused with rhetorics of sibling unity, as with Ukraine and Belarus, and with rhetorics of to-and-fro, as with historical Polish control and German invasion of Russian-speaking lands. For the Baltic states as well, historically swapped among larger Germanic, Scandinavian, and Slavic neighbors, the notion of a pristine anterior autochthony is mainly a 19th-century Herderian invention. Second, settler control over native peoples is also found in the Russo-Soviet experience, described most recently for the Eurasian north in Yuri Slezkine’s *Arctic Mirrors*. The inhabitants of Kazakhstan and Latvia today, nearly half of whom are ethnic Russian, are another case in point,²⁵ and the million Koreans now in Central Asia bear comparison with Eastern Indians in Africa. Third and finally, the “classic” colonial control over distant Orientalized populations (again, as with the British in India or the French in Vietnam) is found in 19th-century Russian expansions to the Caucasus and Central Asia. Here, however, the case of Russia deviates in two respects from standard Western models: in the lack of ocean between Russia and what it colonized, and in the way that Russia has long been typed (and has typed itself) as neither East nor West.

The first of these two deviations is captured early in Saïd’s *Culture and Imperialism*, a book devoted largely to colonial texts from France and Britain. In explaining why he does not tackle Russia, Saïd writes that “Russia, however, acquired its imperial territories almost exclusively by adjacency. Unlike Britain or France, which jumped thousands of miles beyond their own borders to other continents, Russia moved to swallow whatever land or peoples stood next to its borders, which in the process kept moving farther and farther east and south.”²⁶ What is puzzling about this explanation is not only how it seemingly “excuses” brutality by adjacency but also how it grants odd primacy to water. For when one considers the easy Marseille-Algiers sail or the generally pleasant London-Cairo voyage, one is puzzled that the infinitely rougher path from Moscow to Tashkent—which until the opening of the colonial Central Asian railroads in the 19th century took months to travel and traversed 1,000 miles of freezing-broiling steppe and desert—is granted an “adjacency.” Indeed, a lack of adjacent ice-free ocean was exactly Russia’s problem, and much of its expansion—toward the Baltics, the Crimea, the Persian Gulf, and finally the Pacific—was a frank attempt to get some.

This widespread adjacency myth is likely influenced by Russia’s purported Eurasian character—a notion (expressed at various times by Russians and non-Russians) that has long typed Russia as neither European nor “Asiatic” but as somehow in between, and particularly as more primitive than (Western) Europe.²⁷ Whatever the truth of this odd, unprovable idea, which rests on hypostasized continental essences, that notion causes analysis of Russian colonization once again to deviate from Western models. It is true that the 19th-century Russian southward push to Central Asia mirrored British forays north from India. Indeed, these movements were in explicit competition. One need only scan the curious finger of Afghanistan’s northeastern Wakhan valley, 10 miles across at its narrowest and 200 miles long, to see how the imperial enterprises intertwined. In the 19th century, as the Russians and British rushed to map the interceding high Pamirs—a process well described in Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, though *Kim* is generally read solely as a document of British colonization—the fear was that the colonizers’ spheres might touch. Thus, in 1893 the slim, separating Wakhan strip, extending all the way to China—a sheer colonial fantasy of the Russo-British mind—was inscribed on maps as belonging to Afghanistan’s emir and remains there to this day.

And yet, despite this clear connection, the Russian venture south to Central Asia was not identical to that of Britain overseas in India. Whereas the British mimicked no one but themselves, the Russians were mimicking the French and British, to whom, again, they had long felt culturally inferior. In the later 19th century, colonial expansion was the price of admission into Europe’s club, and this was Russia’s ticket. Recall this essay’s first epigraph, from Chekhov: “Except for Australia in the old days and Cayenne [in French Guiana], Sakhalin is the only place left where it is possible to study colonization by criminals: all Europe is interested in it, and we pay no attention to it.”²⁸ Chekhov made this observation in a March 9, 1890, letter written six weeks before he began his ethnographic expedition to Sakhalin, an island off Eurasia’s Pacific coast. Note that Chekhov not only offers Europe as the colonizing standard but also suggests that “we” Russians do not belong to Europe.

Still, even beyond this colonial adventure on a Western model, the Russian colonial experience embodies yet one other difference from that of France and Britain: a rhetoric of revenge or, indeed, return. Only several centuries before, Muscovy was a Mongol vassal state, and Central Asia’s khans held European slaves into the 19th century. For those who would characterize Russians as different from the peoples to their south and east, the 19th-century Central Asian colonizations thus become revenge. But for those others who held that Russia was already partly “Asiatic,” from Russian Eurasianists and Scythianists to Western European Russo-Orientalists, Russia’s Central Asian conquest constituted a *return*. Here is George Curzon, British viceroy in India from 1899 to 1905, sketcher of the 1919 Polono-Soviet frontier, and self-described authority on Eurasia, in his 1899 book *Russia in Central Asia*:

“[Russia’s] conquest of Central Asia is a conquest of Orientals by Orientals, of cognate character by cognate character. It is the fusing of

strong with weaker metal, but it is not the expulsion of an impure by a purer element. Civilised Europe has not marched forth to vanquish barbarian Asia. This is no 19-century crusade of manners or morals, but barbarian Asia, after a sojourn in civilised Europe, returns upon its former footsteps to reclaim its kith and kin.”²⁹

The complexity of this situation, full of inflammatory typings but by no means a projection of the British only, is perhaps best illustrated by a passage from Mikhail Lermontov’s 1840 novel *A Hero of Our Time*, which is set in the Caucasus in the 1830s and concerns Russian military officers sent to secure a colonizer’s peace. Though much of the novel offers a society tale along classic European lines, and the pacification of the “Caucasian tribes” is intended merely as a backdrop, one must be alert, as Chinua Achebe informs us,³⁰ to read such tales from the perspective of those cast as savage, even incidental, decoration. At one point the angry antihero Pechorin, off in the forest, jumps out from behind a bush to surprise the mounted party of the delicate Princess Mary:

Mon dieu, un circassien! [“My God, a Circassian!”] cried the princess in horror.

To reassure her completely, I made a slight bow and replied in French:

Ne craignez rien, madame. Je ne suis pas plus dangereux que votre cavalier. [“Fear nothing, madam. I am no more dangerous than your mounted escort.”]³¹

Several items are of interest here, items that complicate a monodirectionally Orientalist interpretation of this famous text. First, and classically, the Asiatic Circassian—as with Conrad’s Congolese—is typed as horrifying; but then Pechorin adopts Circassian identity as a sort of antibourgeois, antiestablishment, perhaps super-Russian romantic wild mask; and finally both Pechorin and Princess Mary use, as was normal for elites in Russia, a Western language to discuss it. Importantly, and consistent with long-term Russian literary practice, in the Russian-language text the French is rendered in the *Latin* alphabet—a courtesy wholly normal in the culturally subaltern Russian context but one that no Western literature returns even for directly borrowed terms like *Пепестрѳйка*.³² Russia’s relations with its colonial possessions east and south and its cultural relations with the West are, then, quite complex.

When Russia moves its colonial enterprise to the West, the situation sharply changes, and I speak here principally of the post–World War II Soviet expansion to the independent Baltics and into nations such as Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria. By most classic measures—lack of sovereign power, restrictions on travel, military occupation, lack of convertible specie, a domestic economy ruled by the dominating state, and forced education in the colonizer’s tongue—Central Europe’s nations were indeed under Russo-Soviet control from roughly 1948 to 1989 or 1991. It is, of course, possible to see these cases as “dynastic,” since Russia had often come and gone there, especially in Poland and the Baltics, just as Poles, Lithuanians, and others had invaded Russia. But in ways dynastic colonization is unavailable as a category by 1948: the 19th-century ideologies of organic ethnonationhood and national rebirth had culminated, immediately after World War I, in the end of intra-European empires and the establishment of new sovereign and generally ethnically focused states like Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia, and a reconstituted Poland. Thus, at least psychologically, the European dynastic era was no more. It is perhaps for this reason that the Lithuanian Forest Brothers fought a guerrilla war against the KGB as late as 1956, their last holdout, like some Japanese soldier in the tropic jungles, emerging only 23 years ago.

Thus, if dynastic colonization is out of bounds, it might be profitable, I would argue, to consider the Baltic and Central European states as a distinct fourth case I call “reverse-cultural colonization.” Once again, the standard Western story about colonization is that it is always accompanied by Orientalization,³³ in which the colonized are seen as passive, ahistorical, feminine, or barbaric. However, in Russian–Central European colonization this relation is reversed, because for several centuries at least Russia has, again, been saddled with the fear or at times belief that it was culturally inferior to the West. *Mittel*-European capitals such as Budapest, Berlin, and Prague were therefore seen in Russia, at least by some, as prizes rather than as burdens needing civilizing from their occupiers. In return, the Central Europeans often saw the colonizing Russo-Soviets as Asiatics. In the closing days of World War II, for example, it frustrated Stalin that while German troops on western fronts surrendered relatively readily to American and British armies, those in the East fought desperately to avoid Soviet capture. The Soviets would exploit this fear in later years when they stationed Central Asian troops in Central Europe during troubled moments in the Warsaw Pact.

It is useful here to recall that Joseph Conrad, the deepest chronicler of the West’s colonial forays, was born a Pole in Russian-ruled Ukraine in 1857, a date his father called “the 85th year of Muscovite oppression.”³⁴ Though Conrad scholarship has thoroughly investigated his Polish and his Western lives, only rarely do these investigations meet. *Heart of Darkness* (1899), Conrad’s best-known tale of the colonial encounter, seems focused on the supposed incomprehensibility of the Congo, but the most unreadable text mentioned in the story is a book marked up in Russian, or “in cipher!” in the narrator’s words.³⁵ In Conrad’s Swiss- and Russian-set *Under Western Eyes* (1911), the narrator, a specialist in languages, is an Englishman, or rather someone “described as an Englishman,”³⁶ who reveals that though he acquired Russian as a boy he feels “profoundly my European remoteness” when faced with Russia.³⁷ Using language strikingly similar to that he uses for the Congo, Conrad in this tale terms Russia “incomprehensible to the experience of Western Europe” and burdened by “the confused immensity of [its] Eastern borders,”³⁸ victim of “the slavery of a Tartar conquest”³⁹ and producer of “the gigantic shadow of Russian life deepening [. . .] like the darkness of an advancing night.”⁴⁰ It is reasonable to suggest, then, a relation between Conrad’s masterly, vexed narration of Western colonial encounters and his upbringing in and lifelong identification with the Russocolonized Poland of his birth.

These questions of the shifting, gradated eastern western European border, especially as regards post-Soviet postcoloniality, are enormously complex. Recently they have been addressed historiographically by Larry Wolff⁴¹ and Milica Bakić-Hayden. They have been asked specifically for the Balkans in two superb Saïd-inflected studies, by Maria Todorova and by Vesna Goldsworthy, and in two

explicitly postcolonialist dissertations, by Nikola Petković and by Dubravka Juraga. All these works highlight the degree to which Eastern Europe and especially the Balkans—inheritors of centuries of colonizing waves from all directions, often more Ottoman and Hapsburg than Russo-Soviet—have returned to their former status as the West's original Third World, its nearest quasi-Oriental space. The great Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe, because of his colonial education, is well aware of this. As noted in the last epigraph to this paper, drawn from Achebe's famous essay on Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, in Achebe's view the 19th-century English mind judged Bulgaria the psychological equivalent of "the Congo of King Leopold of the Belgians," to which Achebe adds a genericizing "or wherever."⁴² Separately, intellectuals such as Michael Ignatieff, Ryszard Kapuściński, and Timothy Garton Ash have provided comparative though not expressly postcolonial perspectives on this subject. Much more remains unwritten.

I conclude with a brief account of some of this essay's omissions, and with an answer to the question, Whither postcolonial theory when it covers the entire globe? The largest omission in this paper results from my thin consideration of the *Soviet* experience from 1917 to 1991 and my too easy yoking of it in my repeated "Russo-Soviet." By all accounts, the Soviet Union attempted something very different from the Russian imperium it succeeded: instead of declaring itself an empire, it proposed a multilayered "voluntary" union of republics. Though according to the strictest Marxist-Leninist approach, national identities would eventually dissolve into *homo Sovieticus*, Lenin and his Commissar of Nationalities, Joseph Stalin, developed an approach, "nationalist in form, socialist in content," that offered an alternative to the then current imperial, colonial, caste-based, universalist, and melting-pot ideologies. Thus, in judging if the Soviets were colonizers, one must consider numerous dimensions. Those who would characterize the Soviet experiment as noncolonial can point, inter alia, to the Soviet Union's wish to liberate its toiling masses; its dismantling of many ethnic-Russian privileges in its east and south; its support of many Union languages; its development of factories, hospitals, and schools; its liberation of women from the harem and the veil; its support of Third World anticolonial struggles, seen as intimately connected with the Soviet experiment, from 1923 to 1991; and the fact that some minority of the Soviet sphere's non-Russians wished the Bolshevik regime.

Those who would argue that the Soviets were simply differently configured colonists could point, again inter alia, to the mass and arbitrary relocation of entire non-Russian peoples; the ironic Soviet national fixing of countless formerly less defined identities and the related tortured intertwining of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz-Tajik border to guarantee an ethnic strife; the genocidal settling of the Kazakh nomad millions from 1929 to 1934; the forced monoculture across Central Asia and the consequent ecological disaster of the Aral Sea; the Soviet reconquest of the once independent Baltic states in 1941; the invariable Russian ethnicity of the number-two man in each republic; the inevitable direction of Russia's Third World policy from its Moscow center; and tanks in 1956 and 1968 in Budapest and Prague. Complicating either argument is that the Soviet Union and its predecessor Russian empire were often as lethal to their Russians as to non-Russians, and that the USSR radically devalued specifically Russian identity for several decades. Is the net result of all these items—each subject to a complex bibliography⁴³—some version of "colonial," and are its consequences "post"? From an Uzbek, Lithuanian, or Hungarian perspective one would have to answer yes.

As for the risked inflation of the category "postcolonial"—a category already so crazily diverse, ranging from accounting to the Middle Ages, nautical archaeology to the Bible,⁴⁴ that one wonders how anyone could unify it even before a Soviet inclusion—I recognize that when terms expand their scope they risk losing analytic force. There is little sense in claiming terms like "colored," for example, if all the world has color. Or perhaps not. In closing, then, I would like to defend an inflation of the postcolonial to include the enormous post-Soviet sphere. Primarily I do so because Russia and then the Soviet Union exercised powerful colonial control over much of the earth for from 50 to 200 years, much of that control has now ended, and its ending has had manifest effects on the literatures and cultures of the postcolonial-post-Soviet nations, including Russia. Of course, as I have noted, the specific modalities of Russo-Soviet control, as well as their post-Soviet reverberations, have differed from the standard Anglo-Franco cases. But then again, to privilege the Anglo-Franco cases as the colonizing standard and to call the Russo-Soviet experiences deviations, as I have done so far, is wrongly to perpetuate the already superannuated centrality of the Western or Anglo-Franco world. It is time, I think, to break with that tradition.

As for universalizing the postcolonial condition, I close by supporting such a move. Recall the imaginative map I asked readers to draw in response to Ella Shohat's geography. Shohat's signifiers drew a map of the First and Third Worlds, to which I added the Soviet portion of the Second. One might now add China, for China has been buffeted by the Mongols, Manchus, Japanese, and British, and today it imperially-colonially controls Tibet and the giant Turkic Muslim Xinjiang Uighur region.⁴⁵ But even after these regions are cross-hatched, certain smaller zones remain unmarked. However, these zones, by their rarity at least, stand not outside but *in relation to* a global (post)coloniality. I speak here, for example, of created buffer states like Nepal, the aforementioned Afghanistan, Iran, and once colonizing Turkey, whose historic freedoms from Western and Russo-Soviet control were due, in part, to occidendo-Russian calculation. And now that I have added these, the reader may rightly wonder what still has gone unmentioned. Japan, for one. Long isolated by a conscious choice, Japan ironically avoided the global hegemony of 19th-century European power with a westernizing program: a French-style army, a British navy, Dutch civic engineering, a German-model government, and United States-style public education. Japan in the 20th century saw struggles with the Russians and its own deplorable colonial forays, followed by a total United States military occupation. Does this nation, rarely included in discussions of the postcolonial, stand outside (post)colonial dynamics? And what, theoretically, can one make of Fiji, Western Sahara, Mauritius, Kurdistan, or Cuba?

The African American tradition also includes a substantial discourse on coloniality. Participants from W.E.B. Du Bois to Malcolm X have debated whether African Americans, like other colored peoples around the globe, could be termed colonial. Indeed, the African American engagement here includes a 1930s interchange with Soviet Central Asia.⁴⁶ One of the earliest important texts in postcolonial theory, Albert Memmi's 1957 *Portrait du colonisé*, had its English version dedicated "to the American Negro/also colonized." And more recently, the colonial-Trinidadian-born and ordinarily centrist Arnold Rampersad, in a review of the notion of the universal in African American poetry, reflects powerfully and at length on the poetic influence of the "colonial relationship such as that existing between blacks and whites in the United States."⁴⁷ Beyond "endocolonial" situations like these,⁴⁸ one has also seen the argument that, for example, even 19th-century German national identity, in the absence of major colonial engagements, depended heavily on Germans' imaginative

participation in the imperial conquests of their English, Dutch, French, and Spanish neighbors.⁴⁹

The colonial encounters of the past two hundred years—from Dakar to Calcutta, Samarkand to Jamaica, Skopje to Tallinn, or Vladivostok to Seattle by the long route⁵⁰—were so global and widespread, in unstandardizable diversity, that every human being and every literature on the planet today stands in relation to them: as neo-, endo- and ex-, as post- and non-. This observation, as this essay has suggested, should recast the views of postcolonial and post-Soviet scholars alike: not so much to help them judge whether place X “is postcolonial or not”—this is not an essay in ontology—but rather to cause them to ask if postcolonial hermeneutics might add richness to studies of place or literature X or Y or Z. In sum, the colonial relation at the turn of the millennium, whatever it may be, is thus not theoretically inflated to a point of weakness, nor is it the property of a certain class or space of peoples, but rather it becomes as fundamental to world identities as other “universal” categories, such as race, and class, and caste, and age, and gender.

Note

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1 / Anton Chekhov, *The Island: A Journey to Sakhalin*, Washington Square, New York 1967.

2 / Cheikh Hamidou Kane, *L'aventure ambiguë*, Julliard, Paris 1961.

3 / Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove, New York 1968.

4 / Chinua Achebe, “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*,” *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays*, p. 1–20, Anchor-Doubleday, New York 1988.

5 / See, e.g., Kiberd (*Inventing*, 1996, “White Skins,” 1997) and Waters on Ireland, 1996. Though a postcolonial perspective on Ireland is seen as recent, it is not; cf. Hechter, 1975.

6 / Landmarks include Parry, 1987; Hutcheon, 1989; Prakash (“Who's Afraid,” 1996, and “Writing,” 1990); McClintock, 1992; Shohat, 1992; Huggan, 1993; Dirlik, 1994; Ray and Schwarz, 1995; and Ghosh, 1998. After 1998 the autocritical debate becomes too large to track. Here I leave apart the related controversies surrounding Ahmad (see esp. his “Jameson's Rhetoric,” 1987 and *In Theory*, 1992), which do not focus on the postcolonial.

7 / Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, Heinemann, London 1986.

8 / Quoted in Burnley, 1992, p. 172, with spelling slightly modernized by the present writer. Ironically, Bokenham here adapts Ranulph Higden's ca. 1327 Latin *Polychronicon*. For discussion, see Burnley, 1992, p. 133–136.

9 / For “the West,” see Lewis and Wigen, 1997, chaps. 2 and 3.

10 / In the January 31, 1827 conversation in which Goethe famously first pronounces “Weltliteratur,” he discusses a Chinese novel he has just read. His amanuensis Eckermann asks whether it is one of the best. “Not at all,” Goethe answers, “the Chinese have thousands of them and already had them at a time when our forefathers still lived in the forests” (1973, p. 228, no. 7).

11 / For a characteristic discussion of “Third World” and “Third World literature,” see Ahmad, *In Theory*, 1992, chaps. 1 and 8.

12 / For Canadian literature as postcolonial, see Hutcheon, 1989 and the response by Brydon, 1990. For white Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians, and South Africans as postcolonial, see Slemon, 1990. Slemon appropriates the term “second world” for these settlers, whom he sees as neither First nor Third. He ignores the more common definition of “Second World”—a sign of the Soviet-sphere absence from the postcolonialist academy. For United States 19th-century literature as postcolonial, see Buell, 1992; the reluctance I refer to is shown by the limited influence of Buell's article. Subsequent work on United States postcoloniality comes in Stratton, 1993; Sharpe, 1995; Hulme, 1995; and—evidence that the reluctance has receded—three books: Watts, 1998; King, 2000; and Singh and Schmidt, 2000. See also Krupat, who notes that contemporary Native American writers live “in a postcolonial world” but write “from within a colonial context” (1996, p. 54). The strength of settler studies within postcolonial studies partly stems from the Australians Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, who wrote the first monograph in the field (*Empire*, 1989) and produced one of its first classroom-use anthologies (*Reader*, 1995).

13 / After the death of Håkon VI in 1380, Norway was ruled by Denmark and then Sweden for five centuries. In 1905 the king of newly independent Norway took the name Håkon VII on accession. Finland operated as a Swedish duchy for centuries before being

transferred to Russia in 1809, and it gained independence in the turmoil of the Russian Revolution in 1917.

14 / Neil Lazarus, "Great Expectations and After: The Politics of Postcolonialism in African Fiction," *Social Text* 13–14 (1986), p. 49–63.

15 / Ella Shohat, "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial,'" *Social Text* 10/2–3 (31–32) (1992), p. 99–113.

16 / *Ibid.*, p. 100.

17 / *Ibid.*, p. 111.

18 / See, e.g., Austin, 1984; Scotto, 1992; Layton, 1994; and Brower and Lazzerini, 1997.

19 / Rare exceptions include Pavlyshyn ("Ukrainian Literature," 1993 and "Post-colonial Features," 1992); Tottossy, 1995; Yekelchik, 1997; and Lyons, 1999.

20 / For clear examples, see Kaplan (*Balkan Ghosts*, 1993, and *Ends*, 1997).

21 / An exception is the immediate popularity in Poland of Ryszard Kapuściński's *Cesarz* (1978), which chronicled the downfall of the emperor of Ethiopia and was widely read allegorically for its applicability to local Polish conditions. Notably, *Cesarz* was quickly translated into Spanish but only later into English.

22 / Early considerations of this rebirth are found in Schopflin and Wood, 1989.

23 / Renan (cf. Anderson, 1991, chap. 11) famously observed that a nation must forget the historical brutalities that produced its present unity (1990, II).

24 / Daniel Defoe, *The True-Born Englishman: A Satyr*, H. Hills, London (Black-Fryars) 1708, p. 15.

25 / Postcolonial Mikhail Baryshnikov, born in Riga, Latvia, in 1948 of Russian parents (his father was a senior military officer sent there after reannexation) is a notable product of this population. In his sole return (1997) to the former USSR since his 1974 defection, Baryshnikov visited only Riga, and not Moscow or St Petersburg. Baryshnikov had felt himself "a guest always" in Russia, yet he termed his parents "occupiers" in Riga. "The minute I stepped again on Latvian land," he said during his visit, "I realized this was never my home" (Acocella, "The Soloist," p. 44).

26 / Edward Saïd, *Culture and Imperialism*, Knopf, New York 1993, p. 10.

27 / Russian intellectual and literary movements, including Eurasianism (Riasonovsky, 1967; Trubetzkoy, *Legacy*, 1991 and "Pan-Eurasian Nationalism," 1927), and Sychthianism (Zamyatin), 1970 have promoted this view.

28 / Anton Chekhov, *The Island: A Journey to Sakhalin*, Washington Square, New York 1967, xix.

29 / George N. Curzon, *Russia in Central Asia in 1889, and the Anglo-Russian Question*, Longmans, Green, London 1889, p. 372.

30 / "Image" 12. The context comes from my telephone interview with Achebe.

31 / Mikhail Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*, Penguin, London 1966, p. 114.

32 / That is, perestroika. My deferral of the Latin script aims to underscore that point.

33 / Or Africanization, Latinization, or other classic forms of Western "othering" and self-construction. See Trouillot, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot," in general, and Trubetzkoy, "Europe and Mankind."

34 / Zdzislaw Najder, *Joseph Conrad: A Chronicle*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1984, p. 11.

35 / Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, Penguin, London 1995, p. 66.

36 / Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes*, Penguin, London 1985, p. 192.

37 / *Ibid.*, p. 198.

38 / *Ibid.*, p. 322.

39 / *Ibid.*, p. 164.

40 / *Ibid.*, p. 210.

41 / Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization in the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1994 and Larry Wolff, "Voltaire's Public and the Idea of Eastern Europe: Toward a Literary Sociology of a Continental Division," *Slavic Review* 54 (1995), p. 932–942.

42 / "Image" 10. The context comes from my telephone interview with Achebe. On the Bulgarian horrors, see Gladstone, 1876; Butler-Johnstone, 1876; Shannon, 1975.

43 / Among many recent studies in this shifting landscape, see Motyl, 1992; Suny, 1993; Lazzerini, 1994; Mesbahi, 1994; Slezkine ("USSR"), 1994; Brubaker, 1997; and Khalid, 1998.

44 / See, respectively, Chua, 1995; Cohen, 2000; McGhee, 1997; and Sugirtharajah, 1998.

45 / See Adas, 1998. For direct considerations of China and postcoloniality that are highly derivative of standard theorists and shamefully say zero about Tibet or Xinjiang Uighur, see Ning, 1997; Ning and Xie, 1997; M. Xie, 1997; and S. Xie, 1997. For historically broad Third World support of Tibet, see Report. Here I note that all major powers test-detonate their nuclear weapons exclusively in their post- or endocolonies, including China (Lop Nor, in Xinjiang Uighur), the USSR (Kazakhstan; Novaya Zemlya, in the Arctic), the United States (Nevada; the South Pacific; Amchitka Island, in the Aleutians), France (Algeria in 1960; the South Pacific), and Britain (Western Australia in 1952–1956). The joint 1980s antinuclear Kazakh-Shoshone Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement exemplifies truly global endocolonial resistance.

46 / See, e.g., Bunche's early "Marxism and the 'Negro Question'" (1929; 1995) or Hughes's Moscow-published 1934 *A Negro Looks at Soviet Central Asia* (1934), which embraces Soviet Central Asian peoples as liberated versions of their also southern, "colored," cotton-growing American brethren. Cf. Moore, 1996. For Afro-diasporic intersections with Soviet-colonial questions, see Blakely, 1986; Von Eschen, 1997; Padmore, 1946; and C.R. James on Hungary in 1956 (Lee, Chalieu, and Johnson).

47 / Arnold Rampersad, "The Universal and the Particular in Afro-American Poetry," *CIA Journal* 25.1 (1981), p. 1–17.

48 / The writings of the Ogoni Nigerian Saro-Wiwa are considered landmarks in endocolonial resistance literature.

49 / See Zantop, 1997 for an account of German "imaginary" colonialism. I recognize, of course, that Germany held colonies in Africa from 1884 to 1918, a fraction the size of colonies held worldwide by England, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, or Russia.

50 / For the trip from Vladivostok to San Francisco by the short route, see the Kyrgyz writer Chingiz Aitmatov's 1980 *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*—a novel that, despite its galactic scope, can be read against Western-colonial railway novels such as Ousmane Sembene's *Les bouts de bois de Dieu* (1960).

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Postcolonial studies have often based their critiques of colonialism on critiques of modernity. As a result, they tend to limit their purview to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Postcolonial... On the ways in which the body in pain grounds—makes material—belief in cultural abstractions, see Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1985), 117ff. Google Scholar. 4. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 139–70, citation at 254; Google Scholar. David Chioni Moore, "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique," *PMLA*, 116 (2001): 111–28, at 112–13. Google Scholar. 14. Toward a global postcolonial critique | Find, read and cite all the research you need on ResearchGate. Although it has been argued that post-communist countries have been neglected in Western post-colonial studies (Moore 2006; Kołodziejczyk and Cristina 2012), there exists a substantial body of scholarship that recognizes the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union that succeeded it as comparable to other European colonial empires (see, e.g., Clem 1992; Ferro 1997; Kappeler 2001; Carey and Raciborski. Post-colonial theory, being a well-established field in the West, drops a deep shadow on what one could define as post-Soviet space. Is it possible to apply post-colonial and decolonial approaches to Russian colonialism? Where is the Post-Soviet in the "Post" of post-colonial? The conversation that was started by US scholar David Chioni Moore in 2001 with the key article "Is the Post- in Post-Colonial the Post- in Post-Soviet?" made very clear the impossibility of taking any shortcuts when it comes to the topic of decolonization in post-Soviet space. Moore, Spivak, Ram, Tlostanova, and Chernetsky formulate the continuity of the argument that warns against the direct substitution of "post" in "post-Soviet" by "post" in "post-colonial." As for the post-WWII era, most important work from the perspective of Baltic studies – that is, general arguments about the developments in Soviet Union – remain on the level of single articles, the best known of these being David Chioni Moore's „Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a

Global Postcolonial Critique“. The article makes a distinction between the general term „empire-studies“ and the more restricted notion of „studies of colonialism“; it further distinguishes post colonial studies as a sub-category of studies of colonialism. Though the notions „colonial“ and „postcolonial“ are widely in use in contemporary Soviet studies, the postcolonial turn is far from complete. Keywords. No keywords specified (fix it).