

## Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History

Push thought to extremes.

(*Louis Althusser*)

IT HAS RECENTLY BEEN SAID in praise of the postcolonial project of *Subaltern Studies* that it demonstrates, “perhaps for the first time since colonization,” that “Indians are showing sustained signs of reappropriating the capacity to represent themselves [within the discipline of history].”<sup>1</sup> As a historian who is a member of the *Subaltern Studies* collective, I find the congratulation contained in this remark gratifying but premature. The purpose of this essay is to problematize the idea of “Indians” “representing themselves in history.” Let us put aside for the moment the messy problems of identity inherent in a transnational enterprise such as *Subaltern Studies*, where passports and commitments blur the distinctions of ethnicity in a manner that some would regard as characteristically postmodern. I have a more perverse proposition to argue. It is that insofar as the academic discourse of history—that is, “history” as a discourse produced at the institutional site of the university—is concerned, “Europe” remains the sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories, including the ones we call “Indian,” “Chinese,” “Kenyan,” and so on. There is a peculiar way in which all these other histories tend to become variations on a master narrative that could be called “the history of Europe.” In this sense, “Indian” history itself is in a position of subalternity; one can only articulate subaltern subject positions in the name of this history.

Although the rest of this chapter will elaborate on this proposition, let me enter a few qualifications. “Europe” and “India” are treated here as hyperreal terms in that they refer to certain figures of imagination whose geographical referents remain somewhat indeterminate.<sup>2</sup> As figures of the imaginary they are, of course, subject to contestation, but for the moment I shall treat them as though they were given, reified categories, opposites paired in a structure of domination and subordination. I realize that in treating them thus I leave myself open to the charge of nativism, nationalism—or worse, the sin of sins, nostalgia. Liberal-minded scholars would immediately protest that any idea of a homogeneous, uncontested “Eu-

Europe" dissolves under analysis. True, but just as the phenomenon of Orientalism does not disappear simply because some of us have now attained a critical awareness of it, similarly a certain version of "Europe," reified and celebrated in the phenomenal world of everyday relationships of power as the scene of the birth of the modern, continues to dominate the discourse of history. Analysis does not make it go away.

That Europe works as a silent referent in historical knowledge becomes obvious in a very ordinary way. There are at least two everyday symptoms of the subalternity of non-Western, third-world histories. Third-world historians feel a need to refer to works in European history; historians of Europe do not feel any need to reciprocate. Whether it is an Edward Thompson, a Le Roy Ladurie, a George Duby, a Carlo Ginzberg, a Lawrence Stone, a Robert Darnton, or a Natalie Davis—to take but a few names at random from our contemporary world—the "greats" and the models of the historian's enterprise are always at least culturally "European." "They" produce their work in relative ignorance of non-Western histories, and this does not seem to affect the quality of their work. This is a gesture, however, that "we" cannot return. We cannot even afford an equality or symmetry of ignorance at this level without taking the risk of appearing "old-fashioned" or "outdated."

The problem, I may add in parentheses, is not particular to historians. An unselfconscious but nevertheless blatant example of this "inequality of ignorance" in literary studies, for example, is the following sentence on Salman Rushdie from a recent text on postmodernism: "Though Saleem Sinai [of *Midnight's Children*] narrates in English . . . his intertexts for both writing history and writing fiction are doubled: they are, on the one hand, from Indian legends, films and literature and, on the other, from the West—*The Tin Drum*, *Tristram Shandy*, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and so on."<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note how this sentence teases out only those references that are from "the West." The author is under no obligation here to be able to name with any authority and specificity the Indian allusions that make Rushdie's intertextuality "doubled." This ignorance, shared and unstated, is part of the assumed compact that makes it "easy" to include Rushdie in English Department offerings on postcolonialism.

This problem of asymmetric ignorance is not simply a matter of "cultural cringe" (to let my Australian self speak) on our part or of cultural arrogance on the part of the European historian. These problems exist but can be relatively easily addressed. Nor do I mean to take anything away from the achievements of the historians I mentioned. Our footnotes bear rich testimony to the insights we have derived from their knowledge

and creativity. The dominance of "Europe" as the subject of all histories is a part of a much more profound theoretical condition under which historical knowledge is produced in the third world. This condition ordinarily expresses itself in a paradoxical manner. It is this paradox that I shall describe as the second everyday symptom of our subalternity, and it refers to the very nature of social science pronouncements.

For generations now, philosophers and thinkers who shape the nature of social science have produced theories that embrace the entirety of humanity. As we well know, these statements have been produced in relative, and sometimes absolute, ignorance of the majority of humankind—that is, those living in non-Western cultures. This in itself is not paradoxical, for the more self-conscious of European philosophers have always sought theoretically to justify this stance. The everyday paradox of third-world social science is that *we* find these theories, in spite of their inherent ignorance of "us," eminently useful in understanding our societies. What allowed the modern European sages to develop such clairvoyance with regard to societies of which they were empirically ignorant? Why cannot we, once again, return the gaze?

There is an answer to this question in the writings of philosophers who have read into European history an entelechy of universal reason, if we regard such philosophy as the self-consciousness of social science. Only "Europe," the argument would appear to be, is *theoretically* (that is, at the level of the fundamental categories that shape historical thinking) knowable; all other histories are matters of empirical research that flesh out a theoretical skeleton that is substantially "Europe." There is one version of this argument in Husserl's Vienna lecture of 1935, where he proposed that the fundamental difference between "oriental philosophies" (more specifically, Indian and Chinese) and "Greek-European science" (or as he added, "universally speaking: philosophy") was the capacity of the latter to produce "absolute theoretical insights," that is "*theoria* (universal science)," whereas the former retained a "practical-universal," and hence "mythical-religious," character. This "practical-universal" philosophy was directed to the world in a "naive" and "straightforward" manner, whereas the world presented itself as a "thematic" to *theoria*, making possible a praxis "whose aim is to elevate mankind through universal scientific reason."<sup>4</sup>

A similar epistemological proposition underlies Marx's use of categories such as "bourgeois" and "prebourgeois" or "capital" and "precapital." The prefix *pre* here signifies a relationship that is both chronological and theoretical. The coming of the bourgeois or capitalist society, Marx argues in the *Grundrisse* and elsewhere, gives rise for the first time to a

thus central to any postcolonial, postmodern project of writing history. Yet Marx's methodological/epistemological statements have not always successfully resisted historicist readings. There has always remained enough ambiguity in these statements to make possible the emergence of "Marxist" historical narratives. These narratives turn around the theme of historical transition. Most modern third-world histories are written within problematics posed by this transition narrative, of which the overriding (if often implicit) themes are those of development, modernization, and capitalism.

This tendency can be located in our own work in the *Subaltern Studies* project. My book on working-class history struggles with the problem.<sup>9</sup> *Modern India* by Sumit Sarkar (another colleague in the *Subaltern Studies* project), which is justifiably regarded as one of the best textbooks on Indian history written primarily for Indian universities, opens with the following sentences: "The sixty years or so that lie between the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 and the achievement of independence in August 1947 witnessed perhaps the greatest transition in our country's long history. A transition, however, which in many ways remains grievously incomplete, and it is with this central ambiguity that it seems most convenient to begin our survey."<sup>10</sup> What kind of a transition was it that remained "grievously incomplete"? Sarkar hints at the possibility of there having been several by naming three: "So many of the aspirations aroused in the course of the national struggle remained unfulfilled—the Gandhian dream of the peasant coming into his own in *Ram-raiya* [the rule of the legendary and ideal god-king Ram], as much as the left ideals of social revolution. And as the history of independent India and Pakistan (and Bangladesh) was repeatedly to reveal, even the problems of a complete bourgeois transformation and successful capitalist development were not fully solved by the transfer of power of 1947."<sup>11</sup> Neither the peasant's dream of a mythical and just kingdom, nor the left's ideal of a social[ist] revolution, nor a "complete bourgeois transformation"—it is within these three absences, these "grievously incomplete" scenarios, that Sarkar locates the story of modern India.

It is also with a similar reference to "absences"—the "failure" of a history to keep an appointment with its destiny (once again an instance of the "lazy native," shall we say?)—that we announced our project of *Subaltern Studies*: "It is the study of this *historic failure of the nation to come to its own*, a failure due to the *inadequacy* of the bourgeoisie as well as of the working class to lead it into a decisive victory over colonialism and a bourgeois-democratic revolution of the classic nineteenth-century

history that can be apprehended through a philosophical and universal category, "capital." History becomes, for the first time, *theoretically* knowable. All past histories are now to be known (theoretically, that is) from the vantage point of this category, that is, in terms of their differences from it. Things reveal their categorical essence only when they reach their fullest development, or as Marx put it in that famous aphorism of the *Grundrisse*: "Human anatomy contains the key to the anatomy of the ape."<sup>5</sup> The category "capital," as I have discussed elsewhere, contains within itself the legal subject of Enlightenment thought.<sup>6</sup> Not surprisingly, Marx said in that very Hegelian first chapter of *Capital*, volume 1, that the secret of "capital," the category, "cannot be deciphered until the notion of human equality has acquired the fixity of a popular prejudice."<sup>7</sup> To continue with Marx's words:

even the most abstract categories, despite their validity—precisely because of their abstractness—for all epochs, are nevertheless, . . . themselves . . . a product of historical relations. Bourgeois society is the most developed and the most complex historic organisation of production. The categories which express its relations, the comprehension of its structure, thereby also allow insights into the structure and the relations of production of all the vanished social formations out of whose ruins and elements it built itself up, whose partly still unconquered remnants are carried along within it, whose mere nuances have developed explicit significance within it, etc. . . . The intimations of higher development among the subordinate animal species . . . can be understood only after the higher development is already known. The bourgeois economy thus supplies the key to the ancient. . . .<sup>8</sup>

For capital or bourgeois, I submit, read "Europe" or "European."

#### HISTORICISM AS A TRANSITION NARRATIVE

Neither Marx nor Husserl spoke—at least in the words quoted above—in a historicist spirit. In parenthesis, we should recall that Marx's vision of emancipation entailed a journey beyond the rule of capital, in fact beyond the notion of juridical equality that liberalism holds so sacred. The maxim "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" runs contrary to the principle of "equal pay for equal work," and this is why Marx remains—the Berlin wall notwithstanding (or not standing!)—a relevant and fundamental critic of both capitalism and liberalism and

type . . . or [of the] 'new democracy' [type]—it is the study of this failure which constitutes the central problematic of the historiography of colonial India."<sup>12</sup>

The tendency to read Indian history in terms of a lack, an absence, or an incompleteness that translates into "inadequacy" is obvious in these excerpts. As a trope it is ancient, going back to the beginnings of colonial rule in India. The British conquered and represented the diversity of Indian pasts through a homogenizing narrative of transition from a medieval period to modernity. The terms have changed with time. The medieval was once called "despotic" and the modern "the rule of law." "Feudal/capitalist" has been a later variant.

When it was first formulated in colonial histories of India, this transition narrative was an unashamed celebration of the imperialist's capacity for violence and conquest. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, generations of elite Indian nationalists found their subject positions as nationalists within this transition narrative that, at various times and depending on one's ideology, hung the tapestry of "Indian history" between the two poles of homologous sets of oppositions: despotic/constitutional, medieval/modern, feudal/capitalist. Within this narrative shared by imperialist and nationalist imaginations, the "Indian" was always a figure of lack. There was always, in other words, room in this story for characters who embodied, on behalf of the native, the theme of inadequacy or failure.

We do not need to be reminded that this would remain the cornerstone of imperial ideology for many years to come—subjecthood but not citizenship, as the native was never adequate to the latter—and would eventually become a strand of liberal theory itself.<sup>13</sup> This was, of course, where nationalists differed. For Rammohun Roy as for Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, two of India's most prominent nationalist intellectuals of the nineteenth century, British rule was a necessary period of tutelage that Indians had to undergo in order to prepare precisely for what the British denied but extolled as the end of all history: citizenship and the nation-state. Years later, in 1951, an "unknown" Indian who successfully sold his "obscurity" dedicated the story of his life thus:

To the memory of the  
British Empire in India  
Which conferred subjecthood on us  
But withheld citizenship;  
To which yet  
Everyone of us threw out the challenge

"Civis Britannicus Sum"

Because  
All that was good and living  
Within us  
Was made, shaped, and quickened  
By the same British Rule.<sup>14</sup>

In nationalist versions of this narrative, as Partha Chatterjee has shown, the peasants and the workers, the subaltern classes, were given the cross of "inadequacy" to bear for, according to this version, it was they who needed to be educated out of their ignorance, parochialism or, depending on your preference, false consciousness.<sup>15</sup> Even today the Anglo-Indian word "communalism" refers to those who allegedly fail to measure up to the secular ideals of citizenship.

That British rule put in place the practices, institutions, and discourse of bourgeois individualism in the Indian soil is undeniable. Early expressions of this desire to be a "legal subject"—that is, before the beginnings of nationalism—make it clear that to Indians in the 1830s and 1840s, to be a "modern individual" was become a European. *The Literary Gleaner*, a magazine in colonial Calcutta, ran the following poem in 1842, written in English by a Bengali school boy eighteen years of age. The poem was apparently inspired by the sight of ships leaving the coast of Bengal "for the glorious shores of England":

Oft like a sad bird I sigh  
To leave this land, though mine own land it be;  
Its green robed meads,—gay flowers and cloudless sky  
Though passing fair, have but few charms for me.  
For I have dreamed of climes more bright and free  
Where virtue dwells and heaven-born liberty  
Makes even the lowest happy;—where the eye  
Doth sicken not to see man bend the knee  
To sordid interest;—climes where science thrives,  
And genius doth receive her guerdon meet;  
Where man in his all his truest glory lives,  
And nature's face is exquisitely sweet:  
For those fair climes I heave the impatient sigh,  
There let me live and there let me die.<sup>16</sup>

In its echoes of Milton and seventeenth-century English radicalism, this is obviously a piece of colonial pastiche.<sup>17</sup> Michael Madhusudan Dutt, the

from where the transition narrative ends and read "plenitude" and "creativity" where this narrative has made us read "lack" and "inadequacy."

According to the fable of their constitution, Indians today are all "citizens." The constitution embraces almost a classically liberal definition of citizenship. If the modern state and the modern individual, the citizen, are but the two inseparable sides of the same phenomenon, as William Connolly argues in *Political Theory and Modernity*, it would appear that the end of history is in sight for us in India.<sup>23</sup> This modern individual, however, whose political/public life is lived in citizenship, is also supposed to have an interiorized "private" self that pours out incessantly in diaries, letters, autobiographies, novels, and, of course, in what we say to our analysts. The bourgeois individual is not born until one discovers the pleasures of privacy. But this is a very special kind of "private self"—it is, in fact, a deferred "public" self, for this bourgeois private self, as Jürgen Habermas has reminded us, is "always already oriented to an audience [*Publikum*]." <sup>24</sup>

Indian public life may mimic on paper the bourgeois legal fiction of citizenship—the fiction is usually performed as a farce in India—but what about the bourgeois private self and its history? Anyone who has tried to write "French" social history with Indian material would know how impossibly difficult the task is.<sup>25</sup> It is not that the form of the bourgeois private self did not come with European rule. There have been, since the middle of the nineteenth century, Indian novels, diaries, letters, and autobiographies, but they seldom yield pictures of an endlessly interiorized subject. Our autobiographies are remarkably "public" (with constructions of public life that are not necessarily modern) when written by men, and tell the story of the extended family when written by women.<sup>26</sup> In any case, autobiographies in the confessional mode are notable for their absence. The single paragraph (out of 963 pages) that Nirad Chaudhuri spends on describing his experience of his wedding night in the second volume of his celebrated and prize-winning autobiography is as good an example as any other and is worth quoting at length. I should explain that this was an arranged marriage (Bengal, 1932) and Chaudhuri was anxious lest his wife should not appreciate his newly acquired but unaffordably expensive hobby of buying records of Western classical music. Our reading of Chaudhuri is handicapped in part by our lack of knowledge of the intertextuality of his prose—there may have been at work, for instance, an imbibed puritanical revulsion against revealing "too much." Yet the passage remains a telling exercise in the construction of memory, for it is about what Chaudhuri "remembers" and "forgets" of his "first

young Bengali author of this poem, eventually realized the impossibility of being European and returned to Bengali literature to become one of our finest poets. Later Indian nationalists abandoned such abject desire to be Europeans, since nationalist thought was premised precisely on the assumed universality of the project of becoming individuals, on the assumption that individual rights and abstract equality were universals that could find home anywhere in the world, that one could be both an "Indian" and a citizen at the same time. We shall soon explore some of the contradictions of this project.

Many of the public and private rituals of modern individualism became visible in India in the nineteenth century. One sees this, for instance, in the sudden flourishing in this period of the four basic genres that help express the modern self: the novel, the biography, the autobiography, and history.<sup>18</sup> Along with these came modern industry, technology, medicine, a quasi-bourgeois (though colonial) legal system supported by a state that nationalism was to take over and make its own. The transition narrative that I have been discussing underwrote, and was in turn underpinned by, these institutions. To think about this narrative was to think in terms of these institutions at the apex of which sat the modern state,<sup>19</sup> and to think about the modern or the nation-state was to think a history whose theoretical subject was Europe. Gandhi realized this as early as 1909. Referring to the Indian nationalists' demands for more railways, modern medicine, and bourgeois law, he cannily remarked in his book *Hind Swaraj* that this was to "make India English" or, as he put it, to have "English rule without the Englishman."<sup>20</sup> This Europe, as Michael Madhusudan Dutt's youthful and naive poetry shows, was of course nothing but a piece of fiction told to the colonized by the colonizer in the very process of fabricating colonial domination.<sup>21</sup> Gandhi's critique of this Europe is compromised on many points by his nationalism, and I do not intend to fetishize his text. But I find his gesture useful in developing the problematic of nonmetropolitan histories.

#### TO READ "LACK" OTHERWISE

I shall now return to the themes of "failure," "lack," and "inadequacy" that so ubiquitously characterize the speaking subject of "Indian" history. As in the practice of the insurgent peasants of colonial India, the first step in a critical effort must arise from a gesture of inversion.<sup>22</sup> Let us begin

night's experience." He screens off intimacy with expressions like "I do not remember" or "I do not know how" (not to mention the very Freudian "making a clean breast of"), and this self-constructed veil is no doubt a part of the self that speaks:

I was terribly uneasy at the prospect of meeting as wife a girl who was a complete stranger to me, and when she was brought in . . . and left standing before me I had nothing to say. I saw only a very shy smile on her face, and timidly she came and sat by my side on the edge of the bed. I do not know how after that both of us drifted to the pillows, to lie down side by side. [Chaudhuri adds in a footnote: "Of course, fully dressed. We Hindus . . . consider both extremes—fully clad and fully nude—to be modest, and everything in-between as grossly immodest. No decent man wants his wife to be an *allumaise*."] Then the first words were exchanged. She took up one of my arms, felt it and said: "You are so thin. I shall take good care of you." I did not thank her, and I do not remember that beyond noting the words I even felt touched. The horrible suspense about European music had reawakened in my mind, and I decided to make a clean breast of it at once and look the sacrifice, if it was called for, straight in the face and begin romance on such terms as were offered to me. I asked her timidly after a while: "Have you listened to any European music?" She shook her head to say "No." Nonetheless, I took another chance and this time asked: "Have you heard the name of a man called Beethoven?" She nodded and signified "Yes." I was reassured, but not wholly satisfied. So I asked yet again: "Can you spell the name?" She said slowly: "B, E, E, T, H, O, V, E, N." I felt very encouraged . . . and [we] dozed off.<sup>27</sup>

The desire to be "modern" screams out of every sentence in the two volumes of Chaudhuri's autobiography. His legendary name now stands for the cultural history of Indo-British encounter. Yet in the 1,500-odd pages that he has written in English about his life, this is the only passage in which the narrative of Chaudhuri's participation in public life and literary circles is interrupted to make room for something approaching the intimate. How do we read this text, this self-making of an Indian male who was second to no one in his ardor for the public life of the citizen, yet who seldom, if ever, reproduced in writing the other side of the modern citizen, the interiorized private self unceasingly reaching out for an audience? Public without private? Yet another instance of the "incompleteness" of bourgeois transformation in India?

These questions are themselves prompted by the transition narrative that in turn situates the modern individual at the very end of history. I do not wish to confer on Chaudhuri's autobiography a representativeness it may not have. Women's writings, as I have already said, are different, and scholars have just begun to explore the world of autobiographies in Indian history. But if one result of European imperialism in India was to introduce the modern state and the idea of the nation with their attendant discourse of "citizenship," which, by the very idea of "the citizen's rights" (that is, "the rule of law"), splits the figure of the modern individual into public and private parts of the self (as the young Marx once pointed out in his "On the Jewish Question"), these themes have existed—in contestation, alliance, and miscegenation—with other narratives of the self and community that do not look to the state/citizen bind as the ultimate construction of sociality.<sup>28</sup> This as such will not be disputed, but my point goes further. It is that these other constructions of self and community, while documentable, will never enjoy the privilege of providing the meta-narratives or teleologies (assuming that there cannot be a narrative without at least an implicit teleology) of our histories. This is partly because these narratives often themselves bespeak an antihistorical consciousness, that is, they entail subject positions and configurations of memory that challenge and undermine the subject that speaks in the name of history. "History" is precisely the site where the struggle goes on to appropriate, on behalf of the modern (my hyperreal Europe), these other collocations of memory.

#### HISTORY AND DIFFERENCE IN INDIAN MODERNITY

The cultural space the antihistorical invoked was by no means harmonious or nonconflictual, though nationalist thought of necessity tried to portray it as such. The antihistorical norms of the patriarchal extended family, for example, could only have had a contested existence, contested both by women's struggles and by those of the subaltern classes. But these struggles did not necessarily follow any lines that would allow us to construct emancipatory narratives by putting the "patriarchs" clearly on one side and the "liberals" on the other. The history of modern individuality in India is caught up in too many contradictions to lend itself to such a treatment.

I do not have the space here to develop the point, so I will make do with one example. It comes from the autobiography of Ramabai Ranade,

the wife of the famous nineteenth-century social reformer from the Bombay Presidency, M. G. Ranade. Ramabai Ranade's struggle for self-respect was in part against the "old" patriarchal order of the extended family and for the "new" patriarchy of companionate marriage, which her reform-minded husband saw as the most civilized form of the conjugal bond. In pursuit of this ideal, Ramabai began to share her husband's commitment to public life and would often take part (in the 1880s) in public gatherings and deliberations of male and female social reformers. As she herself says: "It was at these meetings that I learnt what a meeting was and how one should conduct oneself at one."<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, however, one of the chief sources of opposition to Ramabai's efforts were (apart from men) the other women in the family. There is, of course, no doubt that they—her mother-in-law and her husband's sisters—spoke for the old patriarchal extended family. But it is instructive to listen to their voices (as they come across through Ramabai's text), for they also spoke for their own sense of self-respect and their own forms of struggle against men: "You should not really go to these meetings [they said to Ramabai]. . . . Even if the men want you to do these things, you should ignore them. You need not say no; but after all, you need not do it. They will then give up, out of sheer boredom. . . . You are outdoing even the European women." Or this:

It is she [Ramabai] herself who loves this frivolousness of going to meetings. Dada [Mr. Ranade] is not at all so keen about it. But should she not have some sense of proportion of how much the women should actually do? If men tell you to do a hundred things, women should take up ten at the most. After all men do not understand these practical things! . . . The good woman [in the past] never turned frivolous like this. . . . That is why this large family . . . could live together in a respectable way. . . . But now it is all so different! If Dada suggests one thing, this woman is prepared to do three. How can we live with any sense of self-respect then and how can we endure all this?<sup>30</sup>

These voices, combining the contradictory themes of nationalism, patriarchal clan-based ideology, and women's struggles against men, and opposed at the same time to friendship between husbands and wives, remind us of the deep ambivalences that marked the trajectory of the modern private and bourgeois individuality in colonial India. Yet historians man- age, by maneuvers reminiscent of the old "dialectical" card trick called "negation of negation," to deny a subject position to this voice of ambivalence. The evidence of what I have called "the denial of the bourgeois

private and of the historical subject" is acknowledged in their accounts but subordinated to the supposedly higher purpose of making Indian history look like yet another episode in the universal and (in their view, the ultimately victorious) march of citizenship, of the nation-state, and of themes of human emancipation spelled out in the course of the European Enlightenment and after. It is the figure of the citizen that speaks through these histories. And so long as that happens, my hyperreal Europe will continually return to dominate the stories we tell. "The modern" will then continue to be understood, as Meaghan Morris has so aptly put it in discussing her own Australian context, "as a *known history*, something which has *already happened elsewhere*, and which is to be reproduced, mechanically or otherwise, with a local content." This can only leave us with a task of reproducing what Morris calls "the project of positive unoriginality."<sup>31</sup>

Yet the "originality"—I concede that this is a bad term—of the idioms through which struggles have been conducted in the Indian subcontinent has often been in the sphere of the nonmodern. One does not have to subscribe to the ideology of clannish patriarchy, for instance, to acknowledge that the metaphor of the sanctified and patriarchal extended family was one of the most important elements in the cultural politics of Indian nationalism. In the struggle against British rule, it was frequently the use of this idiom—in songs, poetry, and other forms of nationalist mobilization—that allowed Indians to fabricate a sense of community and to retrieve for themselves a subject position from which to address the British. I will illustrate this with an example from the life of Gandhi, "the father of the nation," to highlight the political importance of this cultural move on the part of the "Indian."

My example refers to the year 1946. There had been ghastly riots between Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta over the impending partition of the country into India and Pakistan. Gandhi was in the city, fasting in protest over the behavior of his own people. And here is how an Indian intellectual recalls the experience:

Men would come back from their offices in the evening and find food prepared by the family [meaning the womenfolk] ready for them; but soon it would be revealed that the women of the home had not eaten the whole day. They [apparently] had not felt hungry. Pressed further, the wife or the mother would admit that they could not understand how they could go on [eating] when Gandhiji was dying for their own crimes. Restaurants and amusement centres did little business; some of them

were voluntarily closed by the proprietors. . . . The nerve of feeling had been restored; the pain began to be felt. . . . Gandhiji knew when to start the redemptive process.<sup>32</sup>

We do not have to take this description literally, but the nature of the community imagined in these lines is clear. It blends, in Gayatri Spivak's words, "the feeling of community that belongs to national links and political organisations" with "that other feeling of community whose structural model is the [clan or the extended] family."<sup>33</sup> Colonial Indian history is replete with instances in which Indians arrogated subjecthood to themselves precisely by mobilizing, within the context of modern institutions and sometimes on behalf of the modernizing project of nationalism, devices of collective memory that were both antihistorical and nonmodern.<sup>34</sup> This is not to deny the capacity of Indians to act as subjects endowed with what we in the universities would recognize as "a sense of history" (what Peter Burke calls "the renaissance of the past") but to insist that there were also contrary trends, that in the multifarious struggles that took place in colonial India, antihistorical constructions of the past often provided very powerful forms of collective memory.<sup>35</sup>

There is, then, this double bind through which the subject of "Indian" history articulates itself. On the one hand, it is both the subject and the object of modernity, because it stands for an assumed unity called the "Indian people" that is always split into two—a modernizing elite and a yet-to-be modernized peasantry. As a split subject, however, it speaks from within a metanarrative that celebrates the nation-state; and of this metanarrative the theoretical subject can only be a hyperreal "Europe," a Europe constructed by the tales that both imperialism and nationalism have told the colonized. The mode of self-representation that the "Indian" can adopt here is what Homi Bhabha has justly called "mimetic."<sup>36</sup> Indian history, even in the most dedicated socialist or nationalist hands, remains a mimicry of a certain "modern" subject of "European" history and is bound to represent a sad figure of lack and failure. The transition narrative will always remain "grievously incomplete."

On the other hand, maneuvers are made within the space of the mimetic—and therefore within the project called "Indian" history—to represent the "difference" and the "originality" of the "Indian," and it is in this cause that the antihistorical devices of memory and the antihistorical "histories" of the subaltern classes are appropriated. Thus peasant/worker constructions of "mythical" kingdoms and "mythical" pasts/features find a place in texts that are designated "Indian" history precisely

through a procedure that subordinates these narratives to the rules of evidence and to the secular, linear calendar that the writing of "history" must follow. The antihistorical, antimodern subject, therefore, cannot speak as "theory" within the knowledge procedures of the university even when these knowledge procedures acknowledge and "document" its existence. Much like Spivak's "subaltern" (or the anthropologist's peasant who can only have a quoted existence in a larger statement that belongs to the anthropologist alone), this subject can only be spoken for and spoken of by the transition narrative, which will always ultimately privilege the modern (that is, "European").<sup>37</sup>

So long as one operates within the discourse of "history" produced at the institutional site of the university, it is not possible simply to walk out of the deep collusion between "history" and the modernizing narrative(s) of citizenship, bourgeois public and private, and the nation-state. "History" as a knowledge system is firmly embedded in institutional practices that invoke the nation-state at every step—witness the organization and politics of teaching, recruitment, promotions, and publication in history departments, politics that survive the occasional brave and heroic attempts by individual historians to liberate "history" from the metanarrative of the nation state. One only has to ask, for instance: Why is history a compulsory part of education of the modern person in all countries today, including those that did quite comfortably without it until as late as the eighteenth century? Why should children all over the world today have to come to terms with a subject called "history" when we know that this compulsion is neither natural nor ancient?<sup>38</sup>

It does not take much imagination to see that the reason for this lies in what European imperialism and third-world nationalisms have achieved together: the universalization of the nation-state as the most desirable form of political community. Nation-states have the capacity to enforce their truth games, and universities, their critical distance notwithstanding, are part of the battery of institutions complicit in this process. "Economics" and "history" are the knowledge forms that correspond to the two major institutions that the rise (and later universalization) of the bourgeois order has given to the world—the capitalist mode of production and the nation-state ("history" speaking to the figure of the citizen).<sup>39</sup> A critical historian has no choice but to negotiate this knowledge. She or he therefore needs to understand the state on its own terms, that is, in terms of its self-justificatory narratives of citizenship and modernity. Because these themes will always take us back to the universalist propositions of "modern" (European) political philosophy—even the "practical" science

of economics, which now seems "natural" to our constructions of world systems, is (theoretically) rooted in the ideas of ethics in eighteenth-century Europe<sup>40</sup>—a third-world historian is condemned to knowing "Europe" as the original home of the "modern," whereas the "European" historian does not share a comparable predicament with regard to the pasts of the majority of humankind. Thus the everyday subalternity of non-Western histories with which I began this paper.

Yet the understanding that "we" all do "European" history with our different and often non-European archive opens up the possibility of a politics and project of alliance between the dominant metropolitan histories and the subaltern peripheral pasts. Let us call this the project of provincializing "Europe," the Europe that modern imperialism and (third-world) nationalism have, by their collaborative venture and violence, made universal. Philosophically, this project must ground itself in a radical critique and transcendence of liberalism (that is, of the bureaucratic constructions of citizenship, the modern state, and bourgeois privacy that classical political philosophy has produced), a ground that late Marx shares with certain moments in both poststructuralist thought and feminist philosophy. In particular, I am emboldened by Carole Pateman's courageous declaration—in her remarkable book *The Sexual Contract*—that the very conception of the modern individual belongs to patriarchal categories of thought.<sup>41</sup>

#### PROVINCIALIZING EUROPE?

The project of provincializing "Europe" refers to a history that does not yet exist; I can therefore speak of it only in a programmatic manner. To forestall misunderstanding, however, I must spell out what it is *not*, while outlining what it could be.

To begin with, it does not call for a simplistic, out-of-hand rejection of modernity, liberal values, universals, science, reason, grand narratives, totalizing explanations, and so on. Jameson has recently reminded us that the easy equation often made between "a philosophical conception of totality" and "a political practice of totalitarianism" is "baleful."<sup>42</sup> What intervenes between the two is history—contradictory, plural, and heterogeneous struggles whose outcomes are never predictable, even retrospectively, in accordance with schemas that seek to naturalize and domesticate this heterogeneity. These struggles include coercion (both on behalf of and against modernity)—physical, institutional, and symbolic violence,

often dispensed with dreamy-eyed idealism—and this violence plays a decisive role in the establishment of meaning, in the creation of truth regimes, in deciding, as it were, whose and which "universal" wins. As intellectuals operating in academia, we are not neutral to these struggles and cannot pretend to situate ourselves outside of the knowledge procedures of our institutions.

The project of provincializing Europe therefore cannot be a project of cultural relativism. It cannot originate from the stance that the reason/science/universals that help define Europe as the modern are simply "culture-specific" and therefore only belong to the European cultures. For the point is not that Enlightenment rationalism is always unreasonable in itself, but rather a matter of documenting how—through what historical process—its "reason," which was not always self-evident to everyone, has been made to look obvious far beyond the ground where it originated. If a language, as has been said, is but a dialect backed up by an army, the same could be said of the narratives of "modernity" that, almost universally today, point to a certain "Europe" as the primary habitus of the modern.

This Europe, like "the West," is demonstrably an imaginary entity, but the demonstration as such does not lessen its appeal or power. The project of provincializing Europe has to include certain additional moves: first, the recognition that Europe's acquisition of the adjective "modern" for itself is an integral part of the story of European imperialism within global history; and second, the understanding that this equating of a certain version of Europe with "modernity" is not the work of Europeans alone; third-world nationalisms, as modernizing ideologies par excellence, have been equal partners in the process. I do not mean to overlook the anti-imperial moments in the careers of these nationalisms; I only underscore the point that the project of provincializing Europe cannot be a nationalist, nativist, or atavistic project. In unraveling the necessary entanglement of history—a disciplined and institutionally regulated form of collective memory—with the grand narratives of rights, citizenship, the nation-state, and public and private spheres, one cannot but problematize "India" at the same time as one dismantles "Europe."

The idea is to write into the history of modernity the ambivalences, contradictions, the use of force, and the tragedies and ironies that attend it. That the rhetoric and the claims of (bourgeois) equality, citizen's rights, of self-determination through a sovereign nation-state have in many circumstances empowered marginal social groups in their struggles is undeniable—this recognition is indispensable to the project of *Subaltern Stud-*

ies. What is effectively played down, however, in histories that either implicitly or explicitly celebrate the advent of the modern state and the idea of citizenship is the repression and violence that are as instrumental in the victory of the modern as is the persuasive power of its rhetorical strategies. Nowhere is this irony—the undemocratic foundations of “democracy”—more visible than in the history of modern medicine, public health, and personal hygiene, the discourses of which have been central in locating the body of the modern individual at the intersection of the public and the private (as defined by, and subject to negotiations with, the state). The triumph of this discourse, however, has always been dependent on the mobilization, on its behalf, of effective means of physical coercion. I say “always” because this coercion is both originary/foundational (that is, historic) as well as pandemic and quotidian. Of foundational violence, David Arnold gives a good example in a recent essay on the history of the prison in India. The coercion of the colonial prison, Arnold shows, was integral to some of the earliest and pioneering research on the medical, dietary, and demographic statistics of India, for the prison was where Indian bodies were accessible to modernizing investigators.<sup>43</sup> Of the coercion that continues in the names of the nation and modernity, a recent example comes from the Indian campaign to eradicate smallpox in the 1970s. Two American doctors (one of them presumably of Indian origin) who participated in the process thus describe their operations in a village of the Ho tribe in the Indian state of Bihar:

In the middle of gentle Indian night, an intruder burst through the bamboo door of the simple adobe hut. He was a government vaccinator, under orders to break resistance against smallpox vaccination. Lakshmi Singh awoke screaming and scrambled to hide herself. Her husband leaped out of bed, grabbed an axe, and chased the intruder into the courtyard. Outside a squad of doctors and policemen quickly overpowered Mohan Singh. The instant he was pinned to the ground, a second vaccinator jabbed smallpox vaccine into his arm. Mohan Singh, a wiry 40-year-old leader of the Ho tribe, squirmed away from the needle, causing the vaccination site to bleed. The government team held him until they had injected enough vaccine. . . . While the two policemen rebuffed him, the rest of the team overpowered the entire family and vaccinated each in turn. Lakshmi Singh bit deep into one doctor's hand, but to no avail.<sup>44</sup>

There is no escaping the idealism that accompanies this violence. The subtitle of the article in question unselfconsciously reproduces both the

military and the do-gooding instincts of the enterprise. It reads: “How an army of samaritans drove smallpox from the earth.”

Histories that aim to displace a hyperreal Europe from the center toward which all historical imagination currently gravitates will have to seek out relentlessly this connection between violence and idealism that lies at the heart of the process by which the narratives of citizenship and modernity come to find a natural home in “history.” I register a fundamental disagreement here with a position taken by Richard Rorty in an exchange with Jurgen Habermas. Rorty criticizes Habermas for the latter's conviction “that the story of modern philosophy is an important part of the story of the democratic societies' attempts at self-reassurance.”<sup>45</sup> Rorty's statement follows the practice of many Europeanists who speak of the histories of these “democratic societies” as if these were self-contained histories complete in themselves, as if the self-fashioning of the West was something that occurred only within its self-assigned geographical boundaries. At the very least, Rorty ignores the role that the “colonial theater” (both external and internal)—where the theme of “freedom” as defined by modern political philosophy was constantly invoked in aid of the ideas of “civilization,” “progress,” and latterly “development”—played in the process of engendering this “reassurance.” The task, as I see it, will be to wrestle with ideas that legitimize the modern state and its attendant institutions, in order to return to political philosophy—in the same way as suspect coins are returned to their owners in an Indian bazaar—its categories whose global currency can no longer be taken for granted.<sup>46</sup>

And, finally—since “Europe” cannot after all be provincialized within the institutional site of the university whose knowledge protocols will always take us back to the terrain where all contours follow that of my hyperreal Europe—the project of provincializing Europe must realize within itself its own impossibility. It therefore looks to a history that embodies this politics of despair. It will have been clear by now that this is not a call for cultural relativism or for atavistic, nativist histories. Nor is this a program for a simple rejection of modernity, which would be, in many situations, politically suicidal. I ask for a history that deliberately makes visible, within the very structure of its narrative forms, its own repressive strategies and practices, the part it plays in collusion with the narratives of citizenships in assimilating to the projects of the modern state all other possibilities of human solidarity. The politics of despair will require of such history that it lay bare to its readers the reasons why such a predicament is necessarily inescapable. This is a history that will attempt the impossible: to look toward its own death by tracing that which resists

## The Two Histories of Capital

THIS CHAPTER presents a selective but close reading of Marx. Marx's critique of "capital" builds into the category two aspects of nineteenth-century European thought that have been central to the history of intellectual modernity in South Asia: the abstract human of the Enlightenment and the idea of history.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Marx makes these two elements of thought into critical tools for understanding the capitalist mode of production and modern European imperialism. Debates of privilege and social justice in India are still animated by the rationalism, humanism, historicism, and anti-imperialism of this legacy. The project of *Subaltern Studies* would have been unthinkable without the vibrant tradition of Marxist historiography in India.<sup>2</sup> Marx's writings thus constitute one of the founding moments in the history of anti-imperial thought. To revisit them is to rework the relationship between postcolonial thinking and the intellectual legacies of post-Enlightenment rationalism, humanism, and historicism. A book such as this one cannot afford to ignore Marx.

There are various ways of thinking about the fact that global capitalism exhibits some common characteristics, even though every instance of capitalist development has a unique history. One can, for one, see these differences among histories as invariably overcome by capital in the long run. The thesis of uneven development, on the other hand, sees these differences as negotiated and contained—though not always overcome—within the structure of capital. And third, one can visualize capital itself as producing and proliferating differences. Historicism is present in all of these different modes of thought. They all share a tendency to think of capital in the image of a unity that arises in one part of the world at a particular period and then develops globally over historical time, encountering and negotiating historical differences in the process. Or even when "capital" is ascribed a "global," as distinct from a European, beginning, it is still seen in terms of the Hegelian idea of a totalizing unity—howsoever internally differentiated—that undergoes a process of development in historical time.

and escapes the best human effort at translation across cultural and other semiotic systems, so that the world may once again be imagined as radically heterogeneous. This, as I have said, is impossible within the knowledge protocols of academic history, for the globality of academia is not independent of the globality that the European modern has created. To attempt to provincialize this "Europe" is to see the modern as inevitably contested, to write over the given and privileged narratives of citizenship other narratives of human connections that draw sustenance from dreamed-up pasts and futures where collectivities are defined neither by the rituals of citizenship nor by the nightmare of "tradition" that "modernity" creates. There are of course no (infra)structural sites where such dreams could lodge themselves. Yet they will recur so long as the themes of citizenship and the nation-state dominate our narratives of historical transition, for these dreams are what the modern represses in order to be.

A postscript (1999): This chapter reproduces in an abridged form my first attempt (in 1992) at articulating the problem of provincializing Europe. This original statement remains a point of departure for what follows. Several of the themes broached in it—the need to critique historicism and to find strategies for thinking about historical difference without abandoning one's commitment to theory—are fleshed out in the rest of the book. But the "politics of despair" I once proposed with some passion do not any longer drive the larger argument presented here.

and New York: Routledge, 1996). James Chandler's discussion of historicism in *England in 1819* is enormously helpful. I choose not to discuss Karl Popper's formulations on "historicism," as his use of the term has been acknowledged to be idiosyncratic.

68. "History is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now." Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" in his *Illuminations*, translated by Harry Zohn (New York: Fontana/Collins, 1982), p. 263. For a critique of Benjamin in terms of his failure to acknowledge why chronologies retain their significance for historians, see Siegfried Kracauer, *History: The Last Things before the Last* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1995), chapter 6 in particular.

## Chapter 1

### Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History

1. Ronald Inden, "Orientalist Constructions of India," *Modern Asian Studies* 20, no. 3 (1986), p. 445.
2. I am indebted to Jean Baudrillard for the term "hyperreal" but my use differs from his. See his *Simulations*, translated by Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Batchman (New York: Semiotext[e], 1983).
3. Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 65.
4. Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy*, translated by David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), pp. 281–285. See also Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1988), pp. 167–168.
5. See the discussion in Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, translated by Martin Nicholas (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), pp. 469–512, and in Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 3 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1971), pp. 593–613.
6. See my *Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal 1890–1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), chapter 7.
7. Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, n.d.), p. 60.
8. *Grundrisse*, p. 105.
9. See *Rethinking Working-Class History*, chapter 7 in particular.
10. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885–1947* (Delhi: Macmillan, 1985), p. 1.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
12. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press 1988), p. 43, emphasis added. The words quoted here are Guha's. But I think they represent a sense of historio-

ness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Times and the Trials of Cultural Translation," in his *The Location of Culture*, pp. 212–235.

58. I am grateful to Homi Bhabha for this expression. The relationship between the analytic and the hermeneutic traditions receives clear discussion in Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969). One cannot, however, be dogmatic about this division.

59. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?" *Representations* 37 (Winter 1992), pp. 1–26.

60. Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life" (1874) in his *Untimely Meditations*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 57–123.

61. See the discussion in my essay, "Reconstructing Liberalism? Notes toward a Conversation between Area Studies and Diasporic Studies," *Public Culture* 10, no. 3 (Spring 1998), pp. 457–481.

62. J. H. Broomfield, "The Forgotten Majority: The Bengal Muslims and September 1918," in D. A. Low ed., *Soundings in Modern South Asian History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), pp. 196–224.

63. See H. Aram Veeseer, ed., *The New Historicism Reader* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994).

64. See Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present* (Hanover, N. H.: University Press of New England, 1983).

65. Ian Hacking, "Two Kinds of 'New Historicism' for Philosophers," in Ralph Cohen and Michael S. Roth eds., *History and . . . Historians within the Human Sciences* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 1995), p. 298.

66. Maurice Mandelbaum, *History, Man and Reason* (Baltimore, 1971), p. 42 quoted in F. R. Ankersmit, "Historicism: An Attempt at Synthesis," *History and Theory* 36 (October 1995), pp. 143–161.

67. I depend here on Ankersmit, "Historicism"; Friederich Meinecke, *Historicism: The Rise of a New Historical Outlook*, translated by J. E. Anderson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972); Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), and "Droysen's Historik: Historical Writing as a Bourgeois Science" in his *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), pp. 83–103; Leopold von Ranke, "Preface: *Histories of Romance and Germanic Peoples*," and "A Fragment from the 1830s" in Fritz Stern, ed., *The Varieties of History: From Voltaire to the Present* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), pp. 55–60; Hans Meyerhoff, ed., *The Philosophy of History in Our Own Time: An Anthology* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959), see "Introduction," pp. 1–24 and the section entitled "The Heritage of Historicism"; and Paul Hamilton, *Historicism* (London

graphical responsibility that is shared by all the members of the Subaltern Studies collective.

13. See L. T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 26–27.
14. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968 [1951]), dedication page.
15. Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed, 1986).
16. *Madhusudan rachanabali* (in Bengali), (Calcutta: Sahitya Samsad, 1965), p. 449. See also Jogindranath Basu, *Michael Madhusudan Datter Jibancharit* (in Bengali) (Calcutta: Ashok Pustakalay, 1978), p. 86.
17. My understanding of this poem has been enriched by discussions with Marjorie Levinson and David Bennett.
18. I am not making the claim that all of these genres necessarily emerge with bourgeois individualism. See Natalie Zemon Davis, "Fame and Secrecy: Leon Modena's *Life* as an Early Modern Autobiography," *History and Theory* 27 (1988), pp. 103–118, and "Boundaries and Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France," in Thomas C. Heller et al., eds., *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), pp. 53–63. See also Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, translated by Katherine Leary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), pp. 163–184.
19. See Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought*, chapter on Nehru.
20. M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* (1909) in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 10 (New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1963), p. 15.
21. See the discussion in Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Studies and British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), pp. 128–141.
22. Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), chapter 2.
23. William E. Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989).
24. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), p. 49.
25. See Sumit Sarkar, "Social History: Predicament and Possibilities," in Iqbal Khan, ed., *Fresh Perspective on India and Pakistan: Essays on Economics, Politics and Culture* (Lahore: Book Traders, 1987), pp. 256–274.
26. For reasons of space, I shall leave this claim here unsubstantiated, though I hope to have an opportunity to discuss it in detail elsewhere. I should qualify the statement by mentioning that it refers in the main to autobiographies published

between 1850 and 1910. Once women join the public sphere in the twentieth century, their self-fashioning takes on different dimensions.

27. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Thy Hand, Great Anarch! India 1921–1952* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1987), pp. 350–351.
28. See Marx, *On the Jewish Question* in his *Early Writings* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), pp. 215–222.
29. Ramabai Ranade, *Ranade: His Wife's Reminiscences*, translated by Kusumavati Deshpande (Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1963), p. 77.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 84–85.
31. Meaghan Morris, "Metamorphoses at Sydney Tower," *New Formations*, 11 (Summer 1990), p. 10. Emphasis in original.
32. Amiya Chakravarty quoted in Bhikhu Parekh, *Gandhi's Political Discourse* (London: Macmillan, 1989), p. 163.
33. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cathy Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 277.
34. See *Subaltern Studies*, vols. 1–7 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982–1991), and Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983).
35. See various essays in *Subaltern Studies* and Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects*.
36. Homi K. Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," in Annette Michelson, et al., eds., *October: The First Decade 1976–1986* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), pp. 317–326; also Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990).
37. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Also see Spivak's interview published in *Socialist Review* 20, no. 3 July–September 1990.
38. On the close connection between imperialist ideologies and the teaching of history in colonial India, see Ranajit Guha, *An Indian Historiography of India: A Nineteenth-Century Agenda and Its Implications* (Calcutta: K. P. Bagchi, 1988).
39. Without in any way implicating them in the entirety of this argument, I may mention that there are parallels here between my statement and what Gyan Prakash and Nicholas Dirks have argued elsewhere. See Gyan Prakash, "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32, no. 2 (April 1990), pp. 383–408; Nicholas B. Dirks, "History as a Sign of the Modern," *Public Culture* 2, no. 2 (Spring 1990) pp. 25–33.
40. See Amartya Kumar Sen, *Of Ethics and Economics* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987). Tessa Morris-Suzuki's *A History of Japanese Economic Thought* (London: Routledge, 1989) makes interesting reading in this regard. I am grateful to Gavan McCormack for bringing this book to my attention.

41. Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 184.
42. Fredric Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping," in Nelson and Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, p. 354.
43. David Arnold, "The Colonial Prison: Power, Knowledge, and Penology in Nineteenth-Century India," in D. Arnold and D. Hardiman, eds., *Subaltern Studies 8* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995). I have discussed some of these issues in a Bengali article: "Sani, samaj o rashtra—oupanibeshik bharate mahamari o janasangskriti," *Amustup*, annual no. (1988).
44. Lawrence Brilliant with Girija Brilliant, "Death for a Killer Disease," *Quest*, May/June 1978, p. 3. I owe this reference to Paul Greenough.
45. Richard Rorty, "Habermas and Lyotard on Postmodernity," in Richard J. Bernstein, ed., *Habermas and Modernity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), p. 169.
46. For an interesting and revisionist reading of Hegel in this regard see the exchange between Charles Taylor and Partha Chatterjee in *Public Culture* 3, no. 1 (1990). My book *Rethinking Working-Class History* attempts a small beginning in this direction.

## Chapter 2

### The Two Histories of Capital

1. This chapter is concerned with the production—and not the circulation—side of capital. I concentrate mostly on *Capital*, vol. 1, the *Grundrisse*, and secondly on *Theories of Surplus Value*. Considerations from the circulation side should not contradict my basic argument.
2. See my "Marxism and Modern India," in Alan Ryan, ed., *After the End of History* (London: Collins and Brown, 1992), pp. 79–84.
3. E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," in M. W. Flinn and T. C. Smout, eds., *Essays in Social History* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974), pp. 66, 61.
4. *Wall Street Journal*, 11 October 1996. Thanks to Dipankar Chakravarti for drawing my attention to this article.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Sasthi Brata, *India: Labyrinths in the Lotus Land* (New York: William Morrow, 1985), p. 21, cited in S. N. Balagandhara, "The Heathen in His Blindness": *Asia, the West and Dynamic of Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), p. 21. I have discussed this trope and its use by the Indian Marxist historian D. D. Kosambi in my essay in Bengali, "Bharatbasher adhunikatar itihash o shomoy-kalpana," *Atitbahik* 6, no. 2 (September 1997), pp. 121–128.
7. For Marx's idea regarding real and formal subsumption of labor under capital, see his "Results of the Immediate Process of Production," Appendix to Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1 [hereafter *Capital I*], translated by Ben Fowkes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), pp. 1,019–1,049.

8. My book *Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal 1890–1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), discusses this proposition and takes it as its foundational gesture.
9. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Martin Ostwald (Indianapolis: Liberal Arts Press, 1981), Book 5, pp. 125–127.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 126; see Cornelius Castoriadis, "Value, Equality, Justice, and Politics: From Marx to Aristotle and from Aristotle to Ourselves," in his *Crossroads in the Labyrinth*, translated by Kate Soper and Martin H. Ryle (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), pp. 260–339, and in particular pp. 282–311.
12. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 126n35.
13. Marx, *Capital I*, p. 151.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
15. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, translated by Martin Nicholas (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 105.
16. *Capital I*, p. 134.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
18. I. I. Rubin, *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value*, translated by Milos Samardžija and Fredy Perlman (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1975 [1928]), pp. 131–138; Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 144–146; Castoriadis, "Value, Equality, Justice, and Politics," pp. 307–308; Jon Elster, *An Introduction to Karl Marx* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), chapter 4 rejects Marx's labor theory of value as unobjective and Hegelian (see p. 68 in particular).
19. *Capital I*, p. 128. Emphasis added.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 139, 165.
21. *Grundrisse*, p. 104.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 104–105.
23. *Capital I*, p. 128. Emphasis added.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 166–167.
25. Cf. Ronald L. Meek, *Studies in the Labour Theory of Value* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1979), p. 168: "The 'averaging' process, Marx's argument implies, takes place in history before it takes place in the minds of economists."
26. Castoriadis, "Value, Equality, Justice, and Politics," pp. 328–329: "to propose another institution of society is a matter of a political project and political aim, which are certainly subject to discussion and argument, but cannot be 'founded' in any kind of Nature or Reason. . . . Men are born neither free nor unfree, neither equal nor unequal. *We will them to be* (we will ourselves to be) free and equal." Emphasis in original.
27. *Capital I*, p. 465.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 550.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 635.