

Decolonizing German theory: an introduction

GEORGE STEINMETZ

This special issue is concerned with *German theory*, which is to say, theory generated in German cultural and linguistic spaces, in the territories claimed by the various German states over time, and among German-speaking emigrants and refugees. ‘Theory’ is defined here to encompass the space shared by philosophy, social theory, and cultural theory—the theory-space that is most relevant for the humanities and interpretive social sciences more generally. Since the eighteenth century this theory-space has borne a strong imprint of the inherited and burgeoning archive of German theory.¹

The German genealogy of theories of colonialism and postcolonialism is, however, much less evident at first glance. Of course some of the earliest theorists of colonialism and imperialism—from Lenin, to dependency theory, to theorists of the articulation of modes of production, to writers like Ranajit Guha, Mahmood Mandani, and Dipesh Chakrabarty—trace their lineage partly to Marx. Postcolonial theory is rooted in psychoanalysis and poststructuralism, such that Freud, Heidegger, and Nietzsche figure centrally. But for reasons that are not immediately obvious, postcolonial theory has not subjected these German theoretical antecedents to the same sorts of criticism that it directs at most European cultural texts. Yet these theories and the texts they are used to interrogate presumably emerged from the same colonial and imperial context.

Intellectual history and postcolonial thought are often still approached in a somewhat nationalist way, oriented toward specific European countries and traditions. But such a ‘national-container’ view of history ignores the fact that Germany was part of a wider pan-European economic and cultural formation for centuries before the late nineteenth-century explosion of colonial activism. Germany’s modern overseas colonial empire lasted just a little over three decades, from 1884 to World War I. And unlike the other world powers, Germans had participated only fleetingly in the Atlantic slave trade and the colonization of America. Germany’s early loss of its colonies meant that the decolonization movements of the twentieth century tended to ignore Germany (or even to deploy Germany and German thinkers tactically against the other colonial powers).² But Germans were involved in European exploration, colonialism, and slaving, often in the service of another flag, throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.³ German Jesuits, Moravians, and (starting in the nineteenth century) Lutherans were active around the globe as missionaries. This European colonial formation

shaped Germany before the 1880s in many other ways, including the shops selling ‘colonial wares’, the widespread use of Africans as symbolic, decorative figures in royal marching bands, the participation of German anthropologists and race theorists in Europe-wide networks of scholars, and the proliferation of literary and artistic fantasies about an imaginary or future German colonialism.⁴ But this more oblique and indirect involvement in overseas empire has meant that analysis of the place of colonialism in European thought has often faltered when it has come to the problem of Germany.

A second set of complications revolves around Nazism. German intellectual and cultural life was thoroughly and lastingly remade by the thirteen years of Nazi dictatorship. The country is haunted by postfascist memories and *revenants* to this day.⁵ For many people, probing German theory with an eye to its colonial wellsprings might seem like a less pressing, even a less plausible, enterprise than focusing on the more recent and more terrible atrocities. Moreover, there is a well-established narrative according to which the seeds of Nazism lie partly with German ‘irrationalism’ (romanticism, Nietzsche, etc.). The thought of Carl Schmitt and Martin Heidegger, seemingly so useful for thinking about empire, is compromised by those writers’ political involvement with Nazism. Carl Schmitt’s analysis of American imperialism in *The Nomos of the Earth* (1950), for example, can be read both as offering an oblique explanation of Nazism as resulting from the lack of a European *Nomos* in the first half of the twentieth century and as an attempt to change the subject away from Nazism by shifting attention to the new American hegemon and to the topic of overseas as opposed to continental empire.⁶ But many of the originally German theories that continue to circulate in the present emerged *before* Nazism, which subsequently overshadowed colonialism within German collective memory and German historiography. Another response has been to explore the connections between the two forms of ‘totalitarianism’, colonial and fascist. If the seeds of Nazism lie partly in colonialism, as suggested by Hannah Arendt and Klaus Theweleit, then there is no contradiction between the anticolonial and antifascist projects.⁷ Indeed, the recent attention to the German colonial genocide in Namibia (1904–1907) has emerged partly because of a successful campaign by historians and others to forge a discursive and causal link between the century-old Namibian events and the Holocaust.⁸

A third complication stems from the very centrality of both the dominant and the ‘minor’ traditions in nineteenth- and twentieth-century German thought within postcolonial studies. What would postcolonial analysis be without Hegel’s discussion of the lord–bondsmen relation and the ‘struggle for recognition’; Marx’s theory of the runaway dynamics of capitalist accumulation and its assault on practices that do not belong to capital’s ‘life world’ (Chakrabarty’s ‘History 2’);⁹ List’s theory of economic nationalism; Heidegger’s corrosive critique of European modernity; Freud’s theories of fetishism, narcissism, double consciousness, and identification; Adorno’s negative dialectics; and Carl Schmitt’s analysis of the European *Nomos* and its collapse? Other, less canonical Germans have been celebrated for their

precocious distance from Eurocentrism and for their proto-postcolonialism. These include Georg Forster, with his relativistic and appreciative comments on Oceanic cultures;¹⁰ Schopenhauer with his reliance on the philosophy of Vedanta and the mysticism of the Vedas (Hindu scriptures) and his claim that the *Upanishads* or philosophic Vedas constituted one foundation for his whole philosophical system; and Richard Wilhelm, the Sinologist who translated the *Yi Jing* and other Chinese philosophical classics, founded the German journal *Sinica*, and took a vigorously anti-imperialist line on China, starting before World War I.¹¹

The centrality of these German traditions means, however, that post-colonial theory would need to subject its own main antecedents to the same ruthless criticism that it has applied to other texts. It is perhaps natural to avoid sawing off the branch on which one is sitting.¹² This may explain the ‘resistance to analysis’, that is, to self-analysis.¹³ But it is hardly plausible that theories generated within the same context as the texts they are used to criticize would be completely exempt from imperial and colonial ideologies. Of course it is also true that these European and transcultural milieux generated anticolonial theories and texts. The title of this issue, ‘Decolonizing German theory’, suggests *both* a need to decolonize German theory *and* an interest in asking how and why some German-speaking theorists might have been able to be anticolonial in ways that were perhaps less typical in the French and British contexts. Germans like Georg Forster proposed a form of anticolonialism that was less reactionary than that of Burke, and less romanticizing than that of Rousseau and Rousseau’s acolytes such as François Le Vaillant.¹⁴

The best-known example of a missed connection with respect to German theory in postcolonial studies is Said’s *Orientalism*, which acknowledges the centrality of German Orientalist contributions in the nineteenth century but fails to examine them. The implicit suggestion is that this bracketing is justifiable due to Germany’s more limited impact on the ‘Orient’ and the resulting difficulties in tracing a direct lineage from German ‘travellers’ tales’ to oriental colonies. This was of course not the case either in the Ottoman Empire or in the German Chinese coastal colony of Qingdao.¹⁵ Similarly, Talal Asad’s 1973 classic *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* focused on British social anthropology, while Gérard Leclerc’s *Anthropologie et colonialisme* (1972) focused on the French tradition. But surely, if postcolonial criticism is to be helpful it must also be directed at the theorists it finds most useful and compelling, addressing texts that ‘brush up unstintingly against historical constraints’ rather than those which remain ‘inertly of their time’.¹⁶ The current issue therefore does not discuss theorists like the eighteenth-century race theorist Christoph Meiners or the notorious eugenicist Eugen Fischer, who worked in Southwest Africa and later became a Nazi scientist, and whose work did influence German colonial projects and was replete with racist and colonialist assumptions. Instead the focus here is on theorists whose ideas are still (or once again) attractive. As the special editor for this issue I certainly did not require that the contributors ‘unmask’ their respective subjects, showing them to be complicit with colonial and racist ideologies,

although in the cases of Hegel and Weber this was in fact the result of the analyses. Other theorists discussed here, including Johann Gottfried Herder and Georg Forster, appear as partly anticolonial or postcolonial theorists *avant la lettre*. Most reveal a complex combination of colonial-racist and anticolonial or anti-imperialist elements, including Kant and Arendt. Before turning to these particular theorists, however, I want to briefly discuss two prominent counterexamples—German theorists who have not been immune to postcolonial criticism: Marx and Freud. They have not escaped decolonizing scrutiny, even if the readings that have been provided thus far have not always been entirely satisfactory.

Marx was central to the first generation of modern anticolonial activists and thinkers, and has been treated as foundational in this area by writers from Lenin and Anthony Brewer through to the editors of *Marxism, Modernity, and Postcolonial Studies* (2002) and Gayatri Spivak.¹⁷ But he was dismissed by Edward Said in *Orientalism* as a garden-variety Eurocentric racist with a ‘homogenizing view of the Third World’ who used generalities about the Orient ‘unquestioningly’ and viewed the ‘Oriental man’ as ‘first an Oriental and only second a man’.¹⁸ This reading was based on a single newspaper article from 1853, ‘The British Rule in India’, and ignored not only the main thrust of Marx’s analysis of capitalism but even his articles on European imperialism in China, which argued *inter alia* that ‘the next uprising of the people of Europe, and their next movement for republican freedom and economy of Government, may depend more probably on what is now passing [in 1853, during the Taiping revolution] in the Celestial Empire—the very opposite of Europe—than on any other political cause that now exists’.¹⁹ However empirically implausible, this was certainly a precocious formulation of the idea that Sartre later called the ‘moment of the boomerang’, and which postcolonial criticism has discussed as a cultural backflow or ‘blowback’ from empire. Other examples could be added, but the more important point is that these newspaper articles do not really get to the heart of Marx’s main project or even his analysis of empire. Surely the critical analysis of capitalism’s voracious engulfment of noncapitalist (read: ‘traditional’) practices and spaces is analytically useful for postcolonial theory, even if some of Marx’s language is mired in the civilizational and racial assumptions of mid-nineteenth-century Europe. Said later called those who criticized his reading of Marx as a racist ‘stupid’, and he insisted that he always tried to interpret figures like Marx ‘contrapuntally’. But there is little that is contrapuntal in Said’s actual analysis; Marx figures instead as one of those writers that are ‘inertly of their time’, which is surely a distortion.²⁰

Freud has undergone the same peculiar fate as Marx, although in his case Said offered a more nuanced interpretation. On the one hand, Freud (and psychoanalysis more generally) was foundational for postcolonial studies, in the writings of Fanon and Bhabha, for example. In his lecture at the London Freud Museum in 2001, Said defended Freud as ‘antiprovincial’ and ‘quite unlike his contemporaries who denigrated other non-European cultures as lesser or inferior’.²¹ On the other hand, Freud’s language provides easy targets for critics, with his statements about the ‘proud conquests’ that

psychoanalysis was making 'in foreign countries', metaphors of woman's sexuality as a 'dark continent', or comparisons of psychoanalysis to archaeology, a discipline some see as contaminated by its imperialist assumptions.²² Much more relevant for postcolonial theory and more central to Freud's work is the fact that he extended 'the realm of the primitive to all humans, through using it as a referent for the unconscious' and counteracting the 'racist belief that only exotic "others" were primitive' while simultaneously undermining the legitimacy of any colonialism based on a 'civilizing mission' or social evolutionary hierarchies by insisting that all men were civilized the moment they began walking upright.²³ Only someone who has not really read Freud could assert that psychoanalysis actually repudiates the 'primitive', as opposed to being partly an analysis of the ways in which society represses whatever it deems 'primitive' and abject.²⁴

Rather than continuing to develop these examples, which could easily be multiplied, it may be more useful to turn directly to the theorists analysed in this issue. I will discuss these in reverse chronological order: Arendt, who is analysed by Pascal Grosse; Max Weber, discussed by Andrew Zimmerman; Hegel, whose philosophy of religion is criticized by Arvind Mandair; and Herder, Forster, and other theorists of the German Enlightenment, interpreted here by John Noyes. The emphasis on German theory differentiates this issue from previous projects that have employed postcolonial theories to illuminate German art and literature.²⁵ We focus exclusively on theorists who continue to have a wide influence *beyond* German area studies and *Germanistik*.²⁶

Hannah Arendt seems to need less decolonizing criticism and more reconstruction than most of the other authors, according to Grosse's synthetic analysis of her most famous and influential work, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Indeed, Grosse argues that Arendt's book 'is one of the constitutive books of postcolonial studies'. Arendt is a hinge figure in the current project, for two reasons. First, she is the only author here who provides an explicit, in-depth analysis of colonialism (or 'colonial imperialism'/'*Kolonialimperialismus*, as she calls it), rather than discussing it in passing or ignoring it altogether. Second, rather than *displacing* the focus from colonialism to Nazism, her book directly connects the two, arguing that colonialism 'affected and modified the European world at its core' (Grosse, this issue). This suggests that a postcolonial reading of German theory can no longer be screened or masked by a greater concern with the more horrific of the two modern phenomena. For Arendt, nineteenth-century imperialist overseas expansion and Nazism are both expressions of the decline of the European nation-state, and both are examples of totalitarianism. Arendt's insight into the genetic connections between overseas imperialism and Nazism, though often overlooked, has recently given rise to a more detailed historical literature tracking those supposed filiations.²⁷ The renewal of interest in Arendt's imperialism hypothesis is a reflection less of the rise of postcolonial studies than of the increasing interest among historians of Nazism and the Holocaust in racism as an autonomous causal factor (in contrast to an earlier emphasis on economic and political determinants).

Nazism is also coming to be seen as, among other things, the apotheosis of a series of imperial and colonial expansions, that is to say, as a form of empire.

Nonetheless, Arendt's analysis of "imperial-colonialism" can be criticized on various counts. The simplest critique is that she relies on racial stereotypes, specifically in her analysis in chapter 7 of the Boers' alleged descent into the condition of African 'savages', people 'without a culture and a history of their own'. 'Slavery in the case of the Boers was a form of adjustment of a European people to a black race'; the Boers 'agreed to vegetate on essentially the same level as the black tribes had vegetated for thousands of years'; and so on. But then we discover why she has mobilized this rebarbative cluster of stereotypes: the Boers are the prototypes of the continental 'Pan' movements that later undermine the European state. The Boers' treks, which supposedly resemble the migrations of pastoralist South African 'tribes', demonstrate to Arendt that they had 'transformed themselves into a tribe and had lost the European's feeling for a territory, a *patria* of his own'. Paradoxically, Arendt provides a critique of a racist organization prone to massacre using terminology that was itself often used to motivate or justify massacre.²⁸ Moreover, Arendt's description of the Boers is torn from the pages of the British colonial masters in South Africa after the turn of the eighteenth century, who justified their takeover by representing Dutch settlers as animals—an 'ethnographic representation' that contributed to the massacre of more than 20,000 Boer women and children in the British concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer war (1899–1902).²⁹ But in contrast to Hegel's project of generating a hierarchy of religions, Arendt's reliance on this racist material does not seem to be driven mainly by a need to classify Boers or Africans in general as inferior. A more serious criticism is that she sees the Boer settlers as an analogue to the pan-movements and therefore as a movement opposed to the nation-state principle. But the Boers had a state—a colonial state. Like many other political theorists, Arendt refused to see the colonial state as a specific form of state. No other theorist, however, went so far as to describe it as the *antithesis* of the state.³⁰ Finally, Arendt does not perceive the contradiction within her own analysis: by defining colonialism as destroying local sovereignty (parallel to the destruction of European states by anti-Semitism and the pan-movements and fascism), she is implicitly acknowledging that Africans had sovereignty, and therefore had something like states, before colonialism.

Andrew Zimmerman's article takes on a German theorist whose extraordinary racism has rarely been discussed, much less connected to the main thrust of his work. One reason for this is that Weber's influence is located mainly in the fields of sociology and political science, where postcolonial criticism has made few inroads. Zimmerman gestures toward the continuities between the colonial and Nazi dimensions of German theory. Weber's advocacy of German colonization and apartheid in the formerly Polish regions did not call for the extermination of Poles, but laid some of the ideological groundwork for the Nazi *Generalgouvernement* there. Similarly, Weber's comparative analysis of the 'world religions' continued the work begun by Hegel (see below), by arranging religions in a clear hierarchy.

Although this can be shown in any of Weber's religious case studies, his *Religion of China* can serve as an example. Weber's interpretation of China was structured around the premise of the country's economic stagnation, its failure to develop capitalism internally. He explained this in terms of the shortcomings of Chinese values, its religious ethos. Weber drew most heavily here on the writings of J J M de Groot, the contemporary Sinologist who deviated from most of his colleagues at the University of Berlin in considering the Chinese to be 'semi-civilized' rather than a world civilization on a par with Europe.³¹ Weber failed to make sense of, or even to perceive, the growth of Chinese capitalism in the late nineteenth century, including in the German colony of Qingdao/Kiaochow.³² Weber completely ignored the *fettering* impact of external forces – western imperialism and British opium – on Chinese capitalism and the Chinese work ethic. He accepted de Groot's sweeping assertion that Confucianism was oriented toward 'adjustment to the world' rather than 'rational transformation of the world' in ways that prevented the emergence of 'those great and methodical business conceptions which are rational in nature'.³³ As Andrew Zimmerman notes, Weber saw the Chinese as coolies. This view of Chinese as patiently adapting to the world rather than rationally transforming it was influenced by the fact that Chinese were being used throughout the world by this time as 'coolies', and by the intense 'yellow peril' discourse that resulted in Germany and elsewhere.³⁴ The Boxer (*Yihetuan*) movement in 1900/1901 raised the spectre of a rebellion like the one Weber and his *Verein* feared in Europe. Like Hegel, Weber rigorously selected evidence to buttress his overarching argument, evidence that came almost exclusively from Sinophobic sources. Since Weber stood out among distinguished German university professors in this period in his virulent anti-Polish racism, it is perhaps not surprising to find him expressing Sinophobic views that would have been more typical for a German professor and intellectual a century earlier, at a time when Hegel sided with the bourgeoisie against monarchy (at least until 1815) and aligned himself with the critical mercantilist view of China rather than the earlier eighteenth-century vision of Voltaire and Christian Wolff that saw China as a model for an enlightened monarchy.³⁵ But Weber's civilizational or cultural (though not biological) racism was located at the core of his overarching theory, which focused on the impact of religious cultural orientations on the rise or failure of capitalist development.

As Arvind Mandair demonstrates here, Hegel's philosophy of religion was fundamentally premised on a hierarchical inequality of world cultures and religions. Hegel is thus responsible for the central premise of later nineteenth- and early twentieth-century theories of the 'world religions' like Weber's and in of contemporary discussions of religion on the left and the right.³⁶ Although Susan Buck-Morss has argued that Hegel's discussion of the lord–bondsmen dialectic and the necessity of self-liberation through a 'trial by death' was a direct response to Atlantic slavery and the 1794 slave revolt in Sainte-Domingue, she also notes that 'Hegel's lectures on the Philosophy of History (1822) ... in fact mark a retreat from the radical politics of *The Phenomenology of Mind*'.³⁷ The latter may have been Hegel's single 'moment

of clarity of thought', she argues, standing alongside a more pervasive cultural racism in his work which 'has provided for two centuries a justification for the most complacent forms of Eurocentrism'. Of course, Hegel's 'moment of clarity' has also given rise to current discussions of the 'struggle for recognition'.³⁸ Mandair shows that Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion* (as well as his *Philosophy of History* and *Logic of Science*) produces a specific world-picture that classifies religions and places them inside a comparative grid in a way that defends Europe against the threat of a shared origin with India, which had been demonstrated linguistically by Schlegel and others.³⁹ Some postcolonial critics of Hegel respond with a secular thrust, insisting (with Marx) that 'the criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism'.⁴⁰ This very act of secularization, according to Mandair, preserves the developmental schema in Hegel.

John Noyes provides a synthetic overview of thinking about global geography, capitalism, and colonialism in the German Enlightenment. Here, Kant and Hegel are read more redemptively as attempting to 'think history in geographical terms'. Exploration and commerce in the eighteenth century led to changes in German imaginary geographies and to a globalization of morals, such that slavery, colonialism, and the exploitative relationship to nature that they implied, became problematic. Goethe was still 'optimistic on questions of social improvement through commercial activity and colonization', as was Hegel, but Forster and Herder rejected Kant's belief in the existence of distinct racial groups. Herder believed that humanity was obliged to participate in economic and cultural traffic, but he defended an alternative to violent expansion and exploitative colonial domination, a mode of 'gentle, productive interaction, holistic respect for other cultures, and environmental conservation'. German thinkers in the late Enlightenment developed a critique of the uneven development of the modern world and of European expansionism. At the same time, some of these Germans tried to imagine a counter model to this hierarchical global order in a way that could 'respect diversity while taking account of our common humanity'. This implied a challenge to universalizing narratives of development and an interrogation of the 'opposition between the human and the natural'.⁴¹ Forster and Herder provide the two main examples of a noncolonial, even anticolonial, response to these modern conditions.

Notes

¹ Although this German lineage is obvious enough for philosophy it may be less self-evident for social theory. As we know it today, social theory emerges from a variety of national traditions, each of them internally diverse. But even here, the German tributaries are especially strong. Social theory is itself largely a product of modernity, emerging in tandem with its object, 'the social', which is usually construed as a distinctively modern phenomenon. Some of the most significant formulations of this object come from Hegel, Marx, and Hannah Arendt, and some of the most devastating critiques of the ontological cogency of the category of 'the social' have been inspired by Nietzsche and Heidegger. Sociological theory since the 1970s has constructed Marx and Weber as canonical figures. The other major 'founding father', Emile Durkheim, had a strong sense of the social but a scientific definition of

social science and epistemology that owed more to Comte than to German historicism. But Durkheim's collectivist view of social subjectivity and his organicist theory of society were more deeply Hegelian than most German writing in the early twentieth century; see E Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*, London: Routledge, 1992, pp 42–75; S Lukes, *Emile Durkheim, His Life and Work: A Historical and Critical Study*, London: Allen Lane, 1973, ch. 4. For the invention of 'the social' see Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, London: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 122–174 (paragraphs 182–271); H Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, and J Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989. Against 'the social' see E Laclau and C Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London: Verso, 2001, a book whose master thinker, arguably, is Heidegger. Pierre Bourdieu was able to break with the predominantly positivistic strain in French sociological thinking by bringing in the phenomenological tradition—another tradition that was originally largely German. The 1960s and 1970s led to a rediscovery in and outside Germany of the writings of Adorno, Horkheimer, and the other members of the original Frankfurt Institute for Social Research as well as more recent social theorists in this tradition. The archive of influences on cultural and literary theory is much deeper in historical terms and much broader geographically. That said, many of the postwar debates here pitted Sartrean 'voluntarist idealism' against structuralist and poststructuralist antihumanism, which was deeply influenced by Marx (for Althusser), Nietzsche (for Foucault), Freud (for Lacan), and Heidegger (for Derrida). A somewhat later polarization saw poststructuralism arrayed against philosophically realist and historical approaches. Psychoanalysis straddled the two camps. One of the most systematic responses to the poststructuralist critique of translatability and commensuration can be found in the work of another German theorist, Jürgen Habermas.

- ² I am thinking in particular of the pro-German movements in interwar Cameroon and Togo and the paradoxical adoption of German military practices and uniforms by Ovaherero in the mandate colony of Southwest Africa. On the tangled memories of German colonialism in post-World War I Southwest Africa and independent Namibia see G Steinmetz and J Hell, 'The Visual Archive of Colonialism: Germany and Namibia', *Public Culture* 18(1), 2006, pp 141–182.
- ³ The Jesuits who travelled from a politically and economically feeble Germany in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to a politically unified and powerful China were often assimilated into Chinese culture. Most of the German Jesuits in China, including the Würzburger Kilian Stumpf (in Beijing from 1695 until his death there in 1720), argued that the veneration of ancestors and Confucius had a 'civil' character and could be reconciled with Christianity. See B H Willeke, 'Würzburg und die Chinamission im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in *Reformation und Gegenreformation. Festschrift für Theobald Freudenberger. Würzburger Diözesangeschichtsblätter* 35/36, 1974, pp 417–429. Although it is impossible to attribute this to their origins in a relatively backward part of Europe, this may have played a role. In the eighteenth century Germans who voyaged to sites of Dutch and British empire often seemed to develop a sort of distance from the imperial and colonizing projects. Peter Kolb at the beginning of the eighteenth century at the Cape of Good Hope treated the Khoikhoi not as ignoble or noble savages or as an earlier version of Europeans but as a radically incommensurable culture. Georg Forster, who travelled to the Pacific with Captain Cook in the 1770s, elaborated a relativizing vision of some of the societies he visited.
- ⁴ On Africans in early modern Germany see P Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, edle Mohren*, Hamburg: Junius, 1993; on colonial literature before colonialism see S Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies. Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997, and R Berman, *Enlightenment or Empire. Colonial Discourse in German Culture*, Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 1998. On eugenic science before and during the colonial era see P Grosse, *Kolonialismus, Eugenik und bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland 1850–1918*, Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2000.
- ⁵ See J Hell, *Post-Fascist Fantasies. Psychoanalysis, History, and the Literature of East Germany*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997.
- ⁶ C Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, New York: The Telos Press, 2003 (1950).
- ⁷ K Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987–1989 (1977–1978). On Arendt, see below.
- ⁸ See Steinmetz and Hell, 'The Visual Archive of Colonialism'.
- ⁹ D Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- ¹⁰ G Forster, *A Voyage Round the World*, 2 vols, Nicholas Thomas *et al.* (eds), Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000 (1777); G Forster, 'O-Taheiti', in *Georg Forsters Werke*, vol. 5, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1985, pp 35–71.

- ¹¹ R Wilhelm, 'Aus unserer Arbeit (Konfuziusgesellschaft)', *Zeitschrift für Missionskunde und Religionswissenschaft* 8, 1914, pp 248–251; R Wilhelm, *The Soul of China*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928; and L Sun, 'Richard Wilhelms Vorstellung über den Kulturaustausch zwischen China und dem Westen', in K Hirsch (ed.), *Richard Wilhelm, Botschafter zweier Welten*, Frankfurt am Main: IKO-Verlag für interkulturelle Kommunikation, 2003, pp 85–101. German Romantic Indology is much more problematic than Wilhelm's Sinology; if early Indologists like Friedrich von Schlegel identified Europeans (or Germans) with Indians, violating the colonial 'rule of difference', he did so using the category of Aryan, which was juxtaposed to the 'Semite' category. In this case anticolonialism came at the cost of anti-Semitism. See A L Willson, *A Mythical Image: The Ideal of India in German Romanticism*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964, and Sheldon Pollock, 'Indology, Power, and the Case of Germany', in A L Macfie (ed.), *Orientalism: A Reader*, New York: New York University Press, 2000, pp 302–323. See also F List, *The National System of Political Economy*, New York: A M Kelley, 1966.
- ¹² Similar resistance has characterized some responses to efforts to probe the possible influence of Nazism on the inner logic of the theoretical writings of Heidegger, Paul De Man, and Carl Schmitt. For the critique of Heidegger see V Farias, *Heidegger and Nazism*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989, and E Faye, *Heidegger: l'introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie*, Paris: Albin Michel, 2005. On Schmitt see G Balakrishnan, *The Enemy: An Intellectual Portrait of Carl Schmitt*, New York: Verso, 2000. See C L Griswold, 'Deconstruction, the Nazis, and Paul De Man', *New York Review of Books* 36(15), 12 October, 1989, and reply by D Donoghue; also W Hamacher, N Hertz, and T Keenan (eds), *Responses: On Paul de Man's Wartime Journalism*, Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.
- ¹³ P Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996, p xvii.
- ¹⁴ See M Bokhorst, 'François Le Vaillant. His Life and Work', in *François Le Vaillant, Traveller in South Africa, and his Collection of 165 Watercolor Paintings*, Cape Town: Library of Parliament, 1974, pp 1–28.
- ¹⁵ See J L Wallach (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East, 1835–1939: International Symposium, April 1975*, Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, Faculty of Humanities, Aranne School of History, Institute of German History; and G Steinmetz, 'Precoloniality and Colonial Subjectivity: Ethnographic Discourse and Native Policy in German Overseas Imperialism, 1780s–1914', *Political Power and Social Theory* 15, 2002, pp 135–228.
- ¹⁶ E Said, *Freud and the Non-European*, London: Verso, 2003, p 27.
- ¹⁷ A Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism. A Critical Survey*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980; C Bartolovich and N Lazarus (eds), *Marxism, Modernity and Postcolonial Studies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002; G Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- ¹⁸ E Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage, 1978, pp 14, 102, 231, 325. This simplifying reading stands in sharp contrast to that of Anwar Abdel Malek, from whose article Said drew heavily.
- ¹⁹ K Marx, 'Revolution in China and Europe' [1853], in Dona Torr (ed), *Marx on China 1853–1860. Articles from the New York Daily Tribune*, New York: Gordon Press, 1975, p 1.
- ²⁰ Said, *Freud and the Non-European*, pp 24, 26.
- ²¹ E Said, 'Freud, Zionism, and Vienna' (16 March 2001), online at <http://www.counterpunch.org/saidfreud.html>. At the same time Said reduced Freud to an optimistic theorist of a pluralistic hybridity, ignoring his emphasis on violence, unreason, repetition, and the fixity and the *bad* 'flaws and fissures of identity'. J Rose, afterword to *Freud and the Non-European*.
- ²² S Freud, 'The Question of Lay Analysis', in *Standard Edition*, vol. XX, p 212. C Hartnack, 'Vishnu on Freud's Desk: Psychoanalysis in Colonial India', *Social Research* 57(4), 1990, p 921; R H Armstrong, 'Contrapuntal Affiliations: Edward Said and Freud's Moses', *American Imago* 62(2), 2002, pp 235–257.
- ²³ S Frosch, review of C Brickman, in *Psychoanalytic Review* 91(3), 2004, p 458; S Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, London: L & Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press, 1930.
- ²⁴ As Diane Jonte-Pace writes, 'to paraphrase Mitchell . . . "psychoanalysis is not a recommendation for a colonialist society, but an analysis of one"', 'Psychoanalysis, Colonialism, and Modernity. Reflections on Brickman's *Aboriginal Populations of the Mind*', *Religious Studies Review* 31(1), January, 2006. Jonte-Pace is referring to J Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1974, which provides a parallel recuperative argument *vis-à-vis* Freud with respect to feminist theory. The simplifying postcolonial reading being criticized here is C Brickman, *Aboriginal Populations in the Mind: Race and Primitivity in Psychoanalysis*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- ²⁵ J Noyes, *Colonial Space: Spatiality and Colonial Discourse in German Southwest Africa*, Chur: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1992; S Friedrichsmeyer, S Lennox, and S Zantop (eds), *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacies*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998.

- ²⁶ There is a sizeable literature, from Abusch and Lukács through to George Mosse and Fritz Stern, on German-language writers who contributed to racism. The relations between colonialism and German eugenics are discussed in Grosse, *Kolonialismus*; the relations between colonialism and anthropology are treated by A Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001; my own work examines the effects on later German colonial state formation of precolonial German travel narratives, pioneer ethnologies, and theoretical writing: G Steinmetz, 'The Devil's Handwriting: Precolonial Discourse, Ethnographic Acuity and Cross-Identification in German Colonialism', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45(1), January, 2003, pp 41–95. But few of these nineteenth-century German writers have much currency in contemporary discussions. Who reads Eugen Fischer on racial mixing nowadays, except as raw material for intellectual and colonial history? An ethnologist like Augustin Krämer is still influential in the tiny field of Samoan studies and inside Samoa but he is rarely mentioned even in histories of German anthropology; see V Harms, 'Die ehemals private Südsee-Sammlung von Augustin Krämer in der Tübinger Universität. Eine sammlungsgeschichtliche und biographische Skizze', *TenDenZen* 11, 2004, pp 51–60, and G Steinmetz, 'The Uncontrollable Afterlives of Ethnography: Lessons from German "Salvage Colonialism" for a New Age of Empire', *Ethnography* 5(3), 2004, pp 251–288.
- ²⁷ M Roth, "'Pioneers of the East": The District Chiefs (Kreishauptleute) in the Government-General in a Comparative Perspective', Presentation at the conference of Europeanists, Chicago, March 2004; J Zimmerer, 'Die Geburt des "Ostlandes" aus dem Geiste des Kolonialismus. Ein postkolonialer Blick auf die NS-Eroberungs- und Vernichtungspolitik', *Sozial Geschichte* 1, 2004, pp 10–43.
- ²⁸ H Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973 (1950), pp 186, 193–194.
- ²⁹ See for example J Barrow, *An account of travels into the interior of Southern Africa in the years 1797 and 1798*, London: T. Cadell, jun. and W. Davies, 1801–1804.
- ³⁰ On the colonial state as a specific type see C Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994; T von Trotha, *Koloniale Herrschaft: Zur soziologischen Theorie der Staatsentstehung am Beispiel des 'Schutzgebietes Togo'*, Tübingen: J C B Mohr, 1994; and the special issue of *Politix, revue des sciences sociales du politique* 17(66), September, 2004, on 'L'Etat Coloniale'.
- ³¹ J J M de Groot, *The Religion of the Chinese*, Leyden: E J Brill, 1892, p. X; on the other Sinologists at Berlin University before and during de Groot's time there, see M Leutner, 'Sinologie in Berlin. Die Durchsetzung einer wissenschaftliche Disziplin zur Erschließung und zum Verständnis Chinas', in H Kuo (ed.), *Berlin und China: Dreihundert Jahre wechselvolle Beziehungen*, Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1987, pp 31–56.
- ³² On capitalism in China, Shandong, and Qingdao/Kiaochow in particular, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see K Mühlhahn, *Herrschaft und Widerstand in der 'Musterkolonie' Kiautschou*, München: R. Oldenbourg, 2000.
- ³³ M Weber, *The Religion of China. Confucianism and Taoism*, New York: The Free Press, 1964, pp. 235–242. Weber's mistake may reveal the dangers to historical sociology of relying too heavily on secondary sources, but a more important factor is the extreme selectivity in his use of sources. See A Pigulla, *China in der deutschen Weltgeschichtsschreibung vom 18. Jh. bis zum gegenwart*, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 1996, p 35.
- ³⁴ H Gollwitzer, *Die gelbe Gefahr. Geschichte eines Schlagwortes*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962.
- ³⁵ See C Wolff, 'Rede von der Sittenlehre der Sineser', in *Gesammelte kleine philosophische Schriften*, vol. VI, Halle: Renger, 1740 (1726), pp 1–320; Voltaire, 'Lettres chinoises, indiennes, et tartars', 1776, in *Oeuvres Complètes*, vol. XXIX, Paris: Garnier Frères, 1879, pp 452–498; and 'De la chine (Dictionnaire philosophique II)', 1764, in *Oeuvres Complètes*, vol. XVIII, Paris: Garnier Frères, 1879, pp 449–458.
- ³⁶ See also T Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions, or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- ³⁷ S Buck-Morss, 'Hegel and Haiti', *Critical Inquiry* 26, Summer, 2000, pp 856–857.
- ³⁸ S Buck Morss, 'Hegel and Haiti', p 865; A Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, Cambridge, Mass.: Polity Press, 1995; L Siep, *Anerkennung als Prinzip der praktischen Philosophie: Untersuchungen zu Hegels Jenaer Philosophie des Geistes*, Freiburg [Breisgau]: Alber, 1979.
- ³⁹ F von Schlegel, *On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians*, London: Ganesha Pub., 2001 (1808).
- ⁴⁰ K Marx, 'Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right', in R C Tucker (ed.), *Marx–Engels Reader*, New York: Norton, 1972, p 53.
- ⁴¹ G C Spivak, *Imperatives to Re-Imagine the Planet*, p 56, quoted in J Noyes, this issue.