Siting Postcoloniality

Critical Perspectives from the East Asian Sinosphere

Edited by Pheng Cheah and Caroline S. Hau

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Cover art: Collage of protest banner and photograph of imperial lion sculpture in Forbidden City, Beijing. Source: Pixabay.

Contents

First published in 1978, Edward Said's groundbreaking book *Orientalism* examines the intertwined vectors of power and knowledge that developed under Western imperialism in and around the region known as the "Orient." Although this study helped catalyze the modern discipline of postcolonial studies, which has been used to examine a wide range of imperial formations around the world, Said himself notes that his focus in this volume is more specifically on the "Anglo-French-American experience of the Arabs and Islam, which for almost a thousand years together stood for the Orient" (1978, 17).

Coincidentally, it was also in 1978, the same year Said published *Orientalism*, that Deng Xiaoping launched the Reform and Opening Up Campaign, which similarly helped catalyze a wide-ranging set of economic and political transformations in China. After nearly three decades of Mao-style communism, the nation's strategic shift to a hybrid system of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" yielded an extended period of rapid economic growth that ultimately helped transform the relatively poor country into the world's second-largest economy. During the first decade of this post-Mao political and economic transformation, meanwhile, a newly strengthened China reached important agreements with the governments of Britain and Portugal (in 1984 and 1987, respectively) to have the colonies of Hong Kong and Macau transferred to Chinese control. When these territorial transfers were carried out in 1997 and 1999, respectively, they marked not only the formal end of the once-vast British and Portuguese Empires but also an important watershed moment in China's reassessment of its own history under colonialism (or, as Chinese historians often describe it, the nation's "semifeudal, semicolonial" past).

While this post-Mao realignment of colonial legacies was unfolding in China, Hong Kong, and Macau, an indirect result of China's post-1978 political liberalization and economic expansion was simultaneously playing out across the Taiwan Strait. After having been occupied (either in part or in toto) since the seventeenth century by the Dutch, the Spanish, and the Qing, Taiwan had been handed over to the Japanese in 1895 following China's defeat at the end of the First Sino-Japanese War and remained a Japanese colony for the next fifty years. In 1945, after Japan's defeat at the end of World War II, Taiwan was handed over to the Republic of China, but after China's Nationalists were defeated by the Communists four years later, the entire government of the Republic of China relocated to Taipei, where it immediately implemented a martial law regime that would remain in place for nearly four decades. During this post-1949 period, the governments based in Beijing and Taipei maintained a delicate geopolitical balancing act, whereby they both agreed that there was only one "China," while each claiming to be the nation's legitimate leader. Once Taiwan's martial law regime was finally lifted in 1987, meanwhile, it became possible for locals to revisit a set of previously proscribed historical topics—such as the "2.28" government-initiated massacre in 1947, which occurred as the island was transitioning from its former status as a colonial possession under the Japanese to a quasi-colonial possession under the Nationalists from the Chinese mainland.

Just as Said's *Orientalism* helped encourage a general reassessment of European colonial legacies, these post-1978 developments in Greater China helped draw attention to the distinctive sociopolitical formations that had developed under the region's overlapping colonial and quasi-colonial regimes—including European imperialism, Japanese imperialism, and even the imperial dimensions of China's traditional dynastic structure as well as some of its post-1911 incarnations. In addition to Hong Kong's and Macau's long-term colonization by the British and the Portuguese, and Taiwan's historical palimpsest of colonization by multiple different powers, other colonial formations in the region include European nations' extraterritorial control over parts of some Chinese port cities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo (in what is currently northeastern China) between 1932 and 1945, overlapping colonial regimes in sinophone regions of Southeast Asia, and the quasi-colonial status of some of the border regions of the Chinese empire itself.

In *Siting Postcoloniality*, Pheng Cheah, Caroline Hau, and their contributors explore the sociopolitical, ideological, and cultural dimensions of colonialism and its legacies within a Sinitic geocultural context. The volume's

twelve chapters examine postcolonialism from different conceptual or thematic perspectives, while also considering the specific conditions in various "sites" in the Sinosphere—including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Manchukuo, and different regions in Southeast Asia. As such, the volume has important implications for our understanding of the Sinosphere's colonial and postcolonial pasts, presents, and potential futures—a topic that is particularly relevant at the present moment, as China uses its economic, political, and military heft to expand its influence not only over the various border zones/regions/nations over which it claims sovereignty but also (and particularly through its massive new Belt and Road transnational infrastructure initiative) over many countries throughout the world, especially in the Global South.

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Situations and Limits of Postcolonial Theory

Sites of Colonialism and Postcoloniality

The field of postcolonial theory and literary studies has been the subject of vigorous debate and contention since its emergence four decades ago, if one dates this with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Numerous introductory surveys, monographs, and edited volumes have explored its intellectual historical sources and subjected its central premises and concepts to questioning (R. Young 2001, 2004; Gandhi 1998; Moore-Gilbert 1997; Loomba 1998; Ahmad [1992] 2008; Chibber 2013b). However, none of these studies have examined a foundational limitation of the field: the historico-geographically determined conceptual matrix that tacitly ties postcolonial studies to certain experiences of *Western* colonialism and their enduring legacies in Asia and Africa (and, to a lesser extent, Latin America).

This limitation is justified on the grounds of Western colonialism's historically unprecedented expansiveness, its capacity for incorporating all corners of the globe into modern capitalism's web of domination. As Robert Young, a contributor to this volume, puts it in his authoritative historical survey of the field, the history of Western colonialism

> was extraordinary in its global dimension, not only in relation to the comprehensiveness of colonization by the time of the high imperial period in the late nineteenth century, but also because

> the effect of the globalization of western imperial power was to fuse many societies with different historical traditions into a history which . . . obliged them to follow the same economic path. The entire world now operates within the economic system primarily developed and controlled by the west, and it is the continued dominance of the west, in terms of political, economic, military and cultural power, that gives this history a continuing significance. (2001, 5)[1]

In the vocabulary of world-systems sociology, colonialism incorporated zones outside the European world-system and extended it to create the truly global modern world-system. "Eventually by the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, *the entire globe, even those regions that had never been part even of the external arena of the capitalist world-economy, were pulled inside*" (Wallerstein 1989, 129; emphasis added).

The postcolonial condition is strictly post-late-nineteenth-century Western colonialism. From a political perspective, it is concerned with the colonial power relations of Western states in a post-Westphalian interstate system and the external places to which the territorial nation-state form was subsequently transplanted through their coerced incorporation into the capitalist world-system. The postcolonial episteme was formed by abstracting from the cultural analysis of specific sites: British India, British and French colonialism in the Middle East, the French Maghreb, and the British and French Caribbean. Colonialism in these locations drew in varying degrees on the discourse of the civilizing mission. Because postcolonial theory originated from literary studies, it was concerned with how colonial discourse shaped canonical European literature. But these analyses were based on a broader argument about the fundamental role of discursive representation in imperialist political expansion and colonial governance: the axiomatic equation of cognitive and political authority. Edward Said argued that Orientalist discourse instituted an insurmountable ontological division between the West and the non-West. As a form of expert knowledge, it was an exercise of intellectual mastery that legitimized the non-West's political subjugation. Orientalism did not merely rationalize colonial domination but stimulated the West's will to colonial power through advance justification (Said 1978, 39). Non-Western peoples should be colonized because their true interests were served when governed by "a race that knows them and what is good for them better than they could possibly know themselves" (Lord Balfour, quoted in Said 1978, 35).

Said's diagnosis of Orientalism as the conceptual logic and discursive-representational system of colonialism tout court is exemplary (see R. Young

2001, 18). Colonial discourse, it was argued, not only made colonizing subjects arrogantly confident about their world-historical election as saviors of the non-Western world but also created compliant colonized subjects. Effective colonial government required the production of scholarly knowledge about colonized populations. Colonized subjects were created by internalizing this knowledge through "the epistemic violence of imperialism" (Spivak 1988, 287): colonial education, the administration of law, public health, and so on. In a similar vein, Homi Bhabha (1994) argued that colonial discourse employed racial and cultural stereotypes that established incommensurable differences between the colonizer and colonized while its pedagogical project reinforced these differences by requiring the colonized to mimic the colonizer's culture as an unreachable ideal.

This representationalist understanding of power emphasized the cultural dimension of political and economic relations: discursive, psychical, and ideational mechanisms secured the oppression and exploitation of colonized peoples. Colonial representational systems were so pervasive that it mattered little whether the colonized populations were savages consigned to the dark prehistory of humanity or had grand civilizations that required rescue and preservation from the degraded present. The colonized needed to be brought into Western modernity and were constructed as subjects of lack and inferiority that assented to being civilized and educated. This sense of lack continues to scar postcolonial peoples after decolonization. Said suggested that the enduring power of Orientalist knowledge leads to the modern Orient's willing participation in its own Orientalization (Said 1978, 325). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) argued that the violent exclusions of colonial culture continue into the present. It intersects with indigenous patriarchy and Indian class and caste hierarchies to ideologically produce the postcolonial bourgeois national subject who, by masquerading as "the people" and effacing the superexploited female subaltern from phenomenality, serves global capitalism.

Postcolonial studies' ethico-political vocation was to analyze colonial cultural hegemony and its legacy in the formation of postcolonial nationalism, neocolonialism, and contemporary globalization, focusing in particular on moments of opposition and resistance and the possibilities of strategic subversion in the colonial archive, literary texts, and cultural processes. The postcolonial critique of nationalism also led to an interest in processes of cultural transnationalism, diasporic movement, and globalization, often understood under the sign of hybridization, as means of undermining the territorial authority of the postcolonial nation-state.

The culturalist focus of postcolonial studies was subjected to critique from the moment of its academic institutionalization, especially by Marxist critics. Benita Parry (2004) argued that postcolonial theory was an offshoot of the poststructuralist linguistic turn and conflated the textual and the social. Its skepticism of universal narratives of legitimation led it to distance itself from the Marxist critical legacy, which informed anticolonial national liberation struggles. Its focus on resistance within signifying processes was an "exorbitation of discourse." When coupled with an "incuriosity about enabling socio-economic and political institutions and other forms of social praxis," this textual idealism obscured the concrete agency of colonized and postcolonial subjects (Parry 2004, 26). Indeed, despite postcolonial theory's radical rhetoric, its lack of a historical-materialist dimension resulted in a performative contradiction. Without a careful analysis of the connection between colonialism and global capitalism and an awareness of how the problems of postcolonial societies have been shaped by class divisions, postcolonial theory could only mystify the postcolonial world. Instead of being a concrete historical term, *the postcolonial* designated a general condition of subversiveness, a radical attitude, and even an empty signifier of difference from the hegemonic world order (Lazarus 2011, 17). Indeed, it has been scathingly argued that the ascendancy of postcolonial studies is a direct reflection of global capitalism in the 1980s, which produced postcolonial intellectuals employed by prestigious Western universities as unwitting ideologists who mystified the world capitalist economy (Dirlik 1998).

Another strand of criticism focused on postcolonial theory's spatiotemporal limits. It has been criticized for its inattention to experiences of Western colonialism beyond its implicit geographical purview and for its backward-looking temporal preoccupation with the legacy of the colonial past. Consequently, it has failed to analyze contemporary struggles for freedom in formerly colonized places that may no longer operate according to a colonial discursive logic and its postcolonial negation. For example, postcolonial theory has not focused on Southeast Asia because the surge of capitalist industrial modernization in much of the region led to an interest in economic growth in the present and future instead of an obsession with colonial history's aftermath (Chua 2008). Contemporary political movements such as the Arab Spring may indicate the exhaustion of the colonial/postcolonial episteme because they constitute a new future-oriented planetwide liberation geography that has transcended the binary between the West and the rest of the world (Dabashi 2012). The decolonial critique of postcolonial theory not only objects to the lack of attention given to Latin America but argues that

the colonizer-colonized model ignores the persistence of radical indigenous traditions and fails to account for the mixed indigenous-settler culture that developed in Latin America, which is distinct from North American settler culture (Mignolo 2000, 2007).

The problems delineated by these critiques have a common root. Postcolonial theory accords primacy to discourse in colonial power relations—Orientalism's subjectifying power, the epistemic violence of imperialism, or the psychical scars caused by colonial pedagogy—because it takes the civilizing mission as the paradigm of colonial power and generalizes the experiences of British and French colonialism, where the civilizing mission was most pronounced, into analytical categories for understanding postcoloniality. It also focuses on parts of the postcolonial world that are less developed because "development" and "modernization" are easily characterized as contemporary forms of the civilizing mission. This is the unspoken spatiotemporal matrix of postcolonial studies. The shortcomings of such a framework are apparent in the tedious mechanical application of Orientalism as an accusatory appellation or pathological diagnostic for contemporary cultural forms (for example, world literature, advanced technology) when Orientalism may have only a weak connection to power relations in postcolonial and postsocialist globalization.

History of Sino-Postcoloniality: "Chinese" "Colonial" Experiences

This collection's primary aim is to "reopen the box" of the postcolonial episteme and reevaluate its theoretical claims by focusing on a largely ignored site outside its geographico-temporal frame: the Sinosphere, defined as the region of East and Southeast Asia that has been significantly shaped by relations with various dynasties of the Middle Kingdom and the republican and communist regimes of modern China.[2] By definition, postcoloniality involves changes in global power relations in the wake of colonialism. Any account that does not consider the Sinosphere is necessarily distorted because the region's complicated experiences of colonialism have decisive consequences for the contemporary world order.

One can construct a conventional edifying narrative of colonial oppression, liberation, and postcolonial nation building. First, although mainland China was never formally colonized, it was a victim of Western colonial depredation. The collective sense of humiliation inflicted by the "unequal treaties" that concluded the Opium Wars stimulated modern Chinese nationalism. This national shame led to the anti-imperialist stance of the People's

Republic of China (PRC), which, in combination with the discourse of socialist internationalism, has resulted in the PRC's self-representation as the champion of all oppressed nations in the ongoing struggle against Western imperialism. As stated in its constitution's preamble, "China consistently opposes imperialism, hegemonism and colonialism, works to strengthen unity with the people of other countries, supports the oppressed nations and the developing countries in their just struggle to win and preserve national independence and develop their national economies."[3] In this spirit it has assumed unofficial leadership of third world countries and promoted South-South multilateral relations based on principles of equality and mutual benefit as a supportive observer of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Second, Western incursion in the mainland marked the beginning of the end of the Sinosphere-grounded tribute and trade system in Asia and created the conditions that brought Chinese subjects under the rule of European colonial regimes in the rest of the world.[4] The legalization of Chinese emigration to all parts of the British Empire by the Convention of Beijing (October 24, 1860), which followed the sacking of the Summer Palace by European forces, opened the floodgates for mass migration from China through the British and Portuguese colonies of Hong Kong and Macau and various treaty ports to other colonial dominions, especially those in Southeast Asia: British Malaya, the Spanish Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, and French Indochina.[5] The aim was to supply British and other colonies with cheap Chinese labor. Migration plugged China into the web of European overseas territories and created a condition of global interconnectedness. It established a network of overseas Chinese communities that would accumulate considerable wealth by strategically negotiating between multiple colonial regimes. This is the primal scene, so to speak, of one branch of the Sinophone that David Wang's chapter explores. This network was an important source of patriotic financial support for the republican nationalist revolution against the Qing empire and Western imperialism (Karl 2002) and the early phase of the socialist revolution; a source of knowledge and investment for China's economic modernization from the late Qing period onward; and a preexisting circuit for the PRC to tap for its Belt and Road Initiative. Third, postsocialist China is the only former colonized power that has emerged as a global hegemon that has decisively changed the world-system. Hence, recent theoretical attempts to dislodge the world-system from its North Atlantic center have argued for its recentering in China, with the broader goal of elaborating a polycentric world-system or a series of overlapping world-systems (Frank 1998; Arrighi 2009).

However, Chinese experiences of colonialism do not fit the straightforward Western colonizer versus non-Western colonized binary or the progression from colonial bondage to political freedom. First, although the brunt of the hardship inflicted by Western colonialism was borne by the masses, the violated political authority in question was not that of a nation-state but the Qing empire, the last in a long line of Middle Kingdom imperial dynasties. The Qing dynasty expanded the Middle Kingdom's territorial boundaries to its historically largest expanse through conquest, ruled its borderlands, and exerted control over its East and Southeast Asian neighbors through tribute and trade relations. Moreover, it was a foreign empire, the descendants of northern nomadic Manchu tribes that ruled over a Han majority and a multitude of ethnic minorities from 1644 to 1912. The modern Chinese national awakening was not primarily directed against Western colonialism but against the effete Qing empire, whose corrupt incompetence had caused China's degeneration into the "Sick Man of East Asia" and made it vulnerable to Western incursion. As Rebecca Karl observes, unlike the Philippine revolutions against Spain and the United States with which they identified, Chinese revolutionary intellectuals "reformulated the seventeenth-century Manchu conquest of the Ming dynasty as a modern colonial conquest of China and proposed revolution as the way to remedy this 'colonial' situation" (2002, 85).

Second, the topos of Qing imperialism raises the question of older forms of imperialism before nineteenth-century European territorial imperialism. For example, were the tributary relations between the Middle Kingdom and its neighbors colonial? Considered within the *longue durée*, Hong Kong and Taiwan (the subjects of parts III and IV of this book), territories the Qing empire ceded to Britain in 1842 and 1860 after the First and Second Opium Wars and to Japan in 1895 after the First Sino-Japanese War, were incorporated into the Middle Kingdom by imperial invasion. The area that is currently Guangdong and Hong Kong became part of Han territory after the defeat of the kingdom of Nanyue around 112 BC. Taiwan's annexation is recent: the Qing empire conquered this holdout of Ming dynasty loyalists during the Kangxi emperor's reign in 1683. These power relations were part of world-systems that preceded and were purportedly destroyed by the modern world-system created by European colonialism. However, they may have persisted into the early twentieth century. As late as 1904, Liang Qichao characterized earlier centuries of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia as a colonial enterprise: "In the hundred or more countries in the Southern seas [*hai yi nan* 海以南], the majority of the population are descendants of the Yellow Emperor. Whether

from a geographical or historical perspective, they are the natural colonies of our race [*wo zu zhi zhimindi* 我族之殖民地]" (Liang 1999, 1368).[6]

Finally, the fact that mainland China was not formally colonized suggests that it was only minimally subjected to the cultural violence of the Western civilizing mission. The influence of Western ideas from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century was mediated through translation and transculturation, much of it through Japanese thought. This puts into question postcolonial theory's privileging of discursive subjectification in securing consent to colonialism. Modern China's strongest relationship of political and cultural tutelage is arguably not with the West but instead with the Soviet Union. It may be here that China's postcoloniality is more fruitfully explored (see Pang, Larson, Part II of this volume).

Simply put, the multivalent complexity of colonial and postcolonial relations in the Sinosphere problematizes two fundamental axioms of postcolonial studies: the correlation of West and non-West with the opposition of colonizer and colonized and the power of colonial discourse as an ideology and technology of subjectification. Because this volume focuses on the Sinosphere from the twentieth century to the present, I will provide a selective digest of scholarship about its colonial experiences because of their legacy for the postcolonial era.

Although this lies beyond the scope of this volume, it is important to note that in the premodern period, the Middle Kingdom was the political, economic, and cultural center of East Asia and extended its influence into Southeast Asia by virtue of ritual relations of trade and tribute (*gong* 貢), expressed in diplomatic exchanges through the classical Chinese language shared with Japan, Korea, and Vietnam.[7] These tribute relations were consolidated by a Confucian moral-political model of administration. They intersected with trade relations and were facilitated by the "soft power" of intellectual, literary, religious, and cultural influence (Bary 1988). Despite their asymmetrical character, neither the Middle Kingdom's diplomatic relations with foreign kingdoms nor its land-based imperial expansion have been conventionally characterized in academic discourse as colonial because colonialism was associated with nineteenth- and twentieth-century European and American conquest and control of overseas territories for the purposes of exploiting their natural resources and human labor to benefit Western industrial capitalist economies (Schneider 2020, 317). Qing documents referred to European colonies in South and Southeast Asia as *shudi* 属地 or *shuguo* 属国, the dynastic terms for "inner territory" and "vassal" (Okamoto 2019a, 16; 2019b, 225), and nineteenth-century missionaries in China used *shudifang* (属地方)

to translate the term *colony* (Liu 2004, 254n33). The concepts "colonization" (*zhimin* 殖民) and "colony" (*zhimindi* 殖民地), essential terms in modern Chinese nationalist discourse used primarily to refer to modern Western and Japanese colonialism, entered Chinese thought only in the 1890s through neologisms adapted from Japanese publications read by students and intellectuals during their sojourns in Japan (Pan 2013). Hence, Liang's description of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia in the Ming and Qing period as colonizers is anachronistic. They were not colonial settlers in the Western sense: migrants who exploited their destination countries at the behest of their dynastic states to the advantage of their economies.

Some recent Ming and Qing historians have, however, attempted to define *colonialism* more broadly to encompass premodern Chinese imperialism. They have provocatively argued that the Ming empire engaged in colonizing activity. In addition to trade-related tribute diplomatic missions in Southeast Asia, the Ming state also incorporated Yunnan, annexed Dai Viet territory as a Ming province between 1407 and 1428, and undertook military excursions in maritime Southeast Asia.[8] The wave of large-scale migration of Chinese to Southeast Asia in this period gave rise to hybrid Sino-Southeast Asian societies (Wade 2008, 628). It is, however, erroneous to characterize such societies via a Eurocentric analogy with European colonialism in the Americas, the Caribbean, Africa, and Australasia as colonial settler societies because they were largely unconnected to the Ming state.[9] As Geoff Wade notes, the eunuch-led voyages of this period "constituted only a maritime proto-colonialism as there was no real rule over a people or territory" but merely "rule over nodes and networks" for short-term economic advantage (2005, 55). In contrast, the invasions and occupations of Dai Viet and Yunnan justified by the Ming dynasty's Heavenly Mandate (*tianming* 天命) to rule the Middle Kingdom and everything under heaven anticipate features found in high European colonialism: policies of divide and rule and indirect rule through local elites (Wade 2006, 88–89, 91–92).

In a similar vein, US proponents of New Qing History or the Altaic school have suggested that Qing territorial expansions into Yunnan, Guizhou, Xinjiang, Tibet, southern China, and Taiwan were colonial in character. Peter Perdue (2009, 92) has argued that the Manchu conquest of China in the seventeenth century and the subsequent Qing expansion into central Eurasia and incorporation of Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Taiwan fits Jürgen Osterhammel's (1997) expanded psychological definition of colonialism as a relation of political domination between an indigenous majority and an invading foreign minority whereby the colonizers, who are convinced of their superiority and

ruling mandate, govern by pursuing metropolitan interests (Perdue 2009, 92). Like British India, the Qing state also practiced indirect rule in these territories: the Altaic system involved the administrative co-optation of local elites while maintaining a hierarchical separation of Han and Manchu society through the banner system (Perdue 2009, 96). Of special significance for this volume, historians studying Qing travel writings and the journals of officials in Yunnan, Guizhou, and Taiwan have emphasized the recurrence of tropes that represent local ethnicities as primitive barbarians requiring cultural assimilation (Hostetler 2001; Rowe 2001; Teng 2004). These representations, it is argued, constitute a Confucianist civilizing discourse similar to European colonialism's civilizing mission. Although its civilizing project privileged Confucian culture, the Qing empire's Altaic ruling style suggests that it is fundamentally different from earlier Sinocentric Chinese empires and more closely related to the post-Timurid empires of Central, West, and South Asia (Perdue 2005, 542).

The heated response to New Qing History, especially from PRC scholars, indicates that these arguments have important political implications.[10] If the Qing empire is an alien colonizer instead of the legitimate successor of the unification programs of earlier Sinitic dynasties, the modern Chinese nation-state's territorial integrity becomes problematic (Perdue 1998, 255–56). And if the Sinocentric PRC regime is not a successor of the Qing state, then its sovereign claims over Qing-incorporated territories like Tibet and Taiwan are illegitimate (Schneider 2020, 325). With respect to Taiwan, the PRC's pledge to fulfill "the historical task of the complete reunification of the motherland" (Garcia and Tian 2021) is colonial in character. Eo ipso the inaugural Kuomintang (KMT) regime of the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan was also a colonial regime. The ROC's colonial origins have been ameliorated by its democratic political history, which has seen KMT governments voted out of power and has led to the constitutional enshrinement of Taiwan's non-Sinitic aboriginal peoples, its true indigenes or natives, as *yuan zhumin* (原住民). Taiwan's public culture has also attempted to document and preserve aboriginal cultural heritage and to promote contemporary aboriginal cultural production (see Lin, this volume). Such gestures are reminiscent of the reconciliation measures of Anglo settler colonial nations like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

The advent of Western colonialism in China did not create a situation that fit better with the presuppositions of postcolonial studies. Using Orientalist discourse analysis to study the Macartney Embassy of 1793 and the political impact of the Opium Wars on China, James Hevia (1995, 55) argued that the

Qing court regarded the first British mission as a cosmologically based tribute ritual between a supreme ruler (*huangdi* 皇帝) and a lesser foreign king (*fanwang* 藩王) instead of a relation between two equal national sovereigns operating within a post-Westphalian interstate system. The British in turn viewed the Qing emperor through Orientalist fantasies. The Opium Wars catalyzed a concerted pedagogical project to civilize China and discipline the Qing regime into a Westernized modern political entity that could engage in proper diplomatic intercourse with Western nation-states and be the signatory to treaties that conceded to foreign demands for territory, indemnity, economic privileges, and settlement and extraterritorial rights. This pedagogical discipline was a form of colonization. Hence, "China was not outside of the 'real' colonial world. Rather, it was a variation on forms that were both present and incomplete in Africa, South America, and South and Southeast Asia" (Hevia 2003, 26).

However, the target of this discipline was the Qing empire rather than the Chinese nation-people, which was in a nascent state of emergence, and this meant that Orientalism's penetration of any collective Chinese psyche was extremely limited. Because China was not formally colonized, there was no colonial education system to "create" á la Thomas Macaulay ([1835] 1995, 430) "a class of persons Chinese in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." That occurred only for elite Chinese subjects of British Hong Kong and "the Queen's Chinese" of Malaya, the upper echelon of the diaspora with access to anglophone colonial culture. As Prasenjit Duara observes, "The absence of institutionalized colonialism in most of China . . . meant that colonial ideology was not entrenched among both colonizer and colonized in the same way as it was in India and other directly colonized countries. . . . [There was no] urgent need to root out imperialist ideology in the very self-perception of a people" (1997, 224).

Moreover, as Bryna Goodman and David Goodman (2012, 1–2) point out, "the diversity of . . . colonial arrangements [in China] defies systematic characterization": they ranged from actual colonies (British Hong Kong, Portuguese Macau, Japanese Taiwan) and territories leased to Russia, Britain, Germany, and France, where Chinese sovereignty was suspended, to treaty ports with foreign settlements governed by extraterritorial law and areas of foreign residence that facilitated imperialist interests without full colonization, as well as coastal and inland zones of foreign colonial influence adjacent to European colonies. This complex and uneven field of multiple and varied colonialisms enabled a proliferation of manifold agencies among the colonized Chinese, who gained advantages by negotiating between different

colonial zones and Chinese-controlled territory in order to economically exploit other Chinese or to further the emerging nationalist movement.

Legalization of Chinese emigration to the British Empire created a different complexity in Southeast Asia, where the Chinese diaspora functioned as middlemen between European colonial regimes and indigenous populations and migrants of various ethnicities. Early twentieth-century Chinese nationalist intellectuals and contemporary Sinophone theory have mistakenly described such Chinese diaspora as settler colonialists. In actuality, they functioned within agricultural and resource-extractive colonial economies where they exploited Chinese and non-Chinese laborers alike. They were also oppressed by the colonial state, which dictated their comprador role even as it stigmatized them as exploiters of natives and migrants through racial ideology and divide-and-rule strategies.

The establishment of the nominally independent state of Manchukuo (1932) as a component of Japanese imperialism in China constitutes a different experience from European colonialism. Duara (2003) has provocatively suggested that it marks the ascendancy of a new form of colonialism in the modern world-system. Its two main features are imperial control without direct colonization, involving massive economic investment and infrastructure development, and the ideology of pan-Asian unity (see Lo, chapter 5). According to Duara, this modulation in Japanese imperialism was a response to the March 1, 1919, Korean uprising against the repressiveness of Japanese colonial occupation. Meant as an exemplar of Japanese industrial capitalism, Manchuria was established as an autarchic unit with modern industry and public infrastructure and was part of the yen bloc. This broke with older patterns of colonial domination in which a small Westernized industrial sector emerged alongside a traditional agricultural sector with little transfer of technology and negligible economic integration of colony and metropolis (Duara 2003, 68). Whereas European imperialism emphasized the inferiority of non-Western peoples, Japanese imperialism sought cooperation through a statist discourse of pan-Asianism, which espoused the formal equality of Asian peoples as members of a shared civilization requiring protection from Western imperialism (62–63). At the same time, Japan, the innately superior nation, would lead and unite all Asian peoples into a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. In its concretization as colonial violence, Japan's racist self-perception as an elect nation gave the lie to the idea of inter-Asian equality. However, Duara argues that Manchukuo left a lasting legacy in contemporary East Asia: "the East Asian modern," in which modern social, political, and economic institutions were indigenized by means of an ideol-

ogy of cultural authenticity. This paradigm is a precondition of the model of East Asian state-led capitalist development in the former colonies of Taiwan and South Korea and has influenced the PRC's postsocialist economic development. More broadly, the motifs of an authentic Asian culture requiring cultivation and Asian solidarity are important to modern Chinese and PRC nationalism and to postcolonial Asia.

The preceding overview of "Chinese" experiences of "colonialism" shows the term's semantic flexibility and referential elasticity. In its broadest definition, colonialism is a power structure in which a nation or people exists in a relation of political or economic subordination to another. In Chinese experiences, the line between colonizer and colonized is often indeterminate. Chinese are victims as well as perpetrators of colonialism, sometimes simultaneously. The colonial hierarchy is also not always based on the (Orientalist) difference between East and West. Japanese colonialism relied on an ideology of civilizational similarity. Colonialism's target also depends on the specific relation: it is variously the Qing state, the Han people, peripheral regions of China and their non-Han ethnicities, the Chinese diaspora, indigenous Southeast Asians, and the modern nation of China. Moreover, what is *China*? The two-character expression Zhina 支那 originally derived from an early Sanskrit transcription of Qin 秦, the dynastic name that foreigners used as a toponym for the Middle Kingdom, and can be found in Chinese Buddhist writings and Tang poetry (Fogel 2012, 8–9, discussing Aoki Masaru). However, as Lydia Liu has noted, the more proximate source of the expression's use as a self-appellation in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century China is a Japanese transliteration (Shina 支那) of the European term *China*, which was reimported to China by Qing students studying in Meiji Japan. Late-Qing nationalist intellectuals like Liang Qichao 梁启超 and Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 were concerned about the term's referent: China was a name imposed by colonial relations with foreigners and not an organic self-identity (L. Liu 2004, 76–79).

Nowhere is *colonialism*'s referential elasticity more apparent than in the differences between Sun Yat-sen's and Mao Zedong's uses of the term. Sun (1924, 1975) used the term to refer to China's oppression by Western powers and Japan. Since this oppression was primarily economic and did not involve political occupation, China appeared to be a semicolony, which Sun understood to mean having a higher degree of freedom than a colony.[11] To provoke shame and self-loathing as stimuli of patriotic passion, he argued that China's degradation makes it inferior to a full colony. Although Chinese deride Koreans and Annamese for being "slaves without a country [*wangguonu* 亡国奴],"

a colonized nation is better off than China because it may receive aid from its master in times of crisis (Sun 1975, 38). In contrast, unequal treaties reduce China to a colony of all great powers, who, not being its colonial masters, are not obligated to provide relief. Hence, China is a hypocolony (*ci zhimindi* 次殖民地), a neologism derived from the term used in chemistry to refer to lower-grade compounds (39).

Sun acknowledged China's imperial past as the omnipotent power in Asia around which a tributary world-system was centered to emphasize the extent of its degradation. But he distinguished Chinese imperialism from European colonialism using the traditional *wen*/*wu* (文/武) dichotomy, creatively interpreted as a civilization/barbarism opposition. Chinese imperialism "used peaceful means to influence others and what was called 'the royal way' to bring weaker and smaller nations under her rule [*changyong wangdao qu shoufu ge ruoxiao minzu* 常用王道去收服各弱小民族]" (67). He tendentiously suggested that small Southeast Asian countries were willing to be annexed by the Ming empire or felt honored to be a tributary state because they admired Chinese culture (91). In contrast, European colonialism is conquest by brutal means (*yeman shouduan* 野蛮手段) (67), the brute force (*wuli* 武力) of "the way of might [*badao* 霸道]" (7).[12]

Although Sun does not call the Manchu occupation of China colonial, the Qing empire is the colonizer par excellence. Far more pernicious than Western and Japanese colonialism, its policies of epistemic violence were technologies of subjectification that obscured the Chinese national spirit for almost three hundred years to the point of obliteration. Sun drew an analogy between the Manchu denationalization of China and the Japanese empire's educational project of Japanizing Korea so that Koreans would no longer recognize their identity as a formerly independent nation. The Kangxi emperor initiated a similar program of intellectual subjugation to quell anti-Manchu revolution. He co-opted former Ming-dynasty literati by instituting an examination system for bureaucratic advancement, thereby making it impossible for the national spirit or revolutionary ideas to be expressed in scholarly writings (58). Literature expressing nationalist sentiment was banned (*wenziyu* 文字狱), while pro-Manchu literature extolling the foreign Qing emperor's Heavenly Mandate was widely disseminated (64, 60). The Qianlong emperor destroyed literati national consciousness by erasing all distinction between Hans and Manchus: he prohibited these terms and revised Chinese history by deleting mention of Song-Mongol and Ming-Manchu conflict and banning histories of foreign invaders, the Manchus, Xiongnus, and Tartars (60). Thus deprived of literary phenomenality, the national spirit survived only through

the coded transmissions of secret societies and the fragmented oral narratives of homeless *jianghu* (江湖) wanderers and the lowest social strata (58).

Since nationalism is the driving principle of a country's progress and a people's survival (*guojiatu fada he zhongzutu shengcun* 国家图发达和种族图生存), Sun argued that the Qing eradication of Chinese national consciousness was the root cause of China's vulnerability to Western and Japanese colonial encroachment (55). Moreover, the Qing state was powerless to resist colonial demands and lost many territories and tributary countries such as Korea, Taiwan, the Pescadores, Annam, and Burma to foreign powers (33–34). The revolutionary overthrow of the Qing empire was therefore imperative. The immediate effectiveness of this cure is seen in the fact that foreign powers relinquished the idea of partitioning China after the 1911 revolution. But China's weakness had a deeper historical cause. Its imperialist legacy espoused cosmopolitan tolerance of other cultures. This was beneficial to conquered peoples but gradually eroded Chinese national consciousness to the point that the people welcomed a Manchu ruler and were eager to be "Manchu-ized" as part of the Chinese division of the Manchu army (68–70).

Sun's pathological diagnosis of colonialism is a technology of subjectification that counters the Qing lobotomization of the Chinese national spirit by reviving national consciousness. In a quasi-Schmittian turn of phrase, Sun suggests that the self-conscious recognition of the threat of *national* extinction, when understood as leading to clan extinction, becomes a unifying force and the occasion for sacrifice for the national good: "We could use the clan's fear of extinction [*miezu* 灭族] to unite our race easily and quickly and form a nation [*guozu* 国族] of great power" (117). The nation is the upscaling of the familial clan. Despite Sun's insistence on the national spirit's existence before Qing occupation, the Chinese nation is a modern collectivity generated from the process of anti-Qing revolution and the response to colonial economic exploitation and political oppression. Sun's Han-centric Chinese nation is created through a performative-constative ruse—the conjuration of a new collectivity that is declared to have existed since time immemorial and merely requires reawakening. Sun conceded that "we have never had national unity" (113). Indeed, China has always been an empire that governed territories with Sinitic and non-Sinitic ethnolinguistic groups. It is doubtful that the alienated territories he regarded as part of China or as tributaries attracted to its cultural grandeur viewed themselves thus.

The colonizer is a fluid position in the process of national subjectification via the diagnostic technology of colonial oppression. It is made determinate by and changes with specific historical conditions. Each determination of the

colonizer leads to a corresponding change in the national subject's character. Mao, for whom the colonizer is foreign capitalism, approached imperialism through the lens of a situationally modified Marxism-Leninism and linked it to foreign capitalism's retardation of the development of Chinese capitalism. Although the imperialist penetration of China undermined its feudal economy and stimulated capitalist development, it also had an obstructive dimension. The end of imperialist invasion "is to transform China into their own semi-colony or colony," and it employs "military, political, economic and cultural means of oppression" to achieve this, including "collusion with . . . Chinese feudal forces to arrest the development of Chinese capitalism" (Mao [1939] 1965b, 310).

Mao is confident in the Chinese nation's inevitable victory over imperialism, which he argued was based on the historical ability of "all the nationalities of China" to resist foreign oppression ([1939] 1965b, 306). Modern China is principally driven by the contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation, which is intertwined with the contradiction between feudalism and the Chinese masses. For imperialist rule is propped up by the feudal landlord class and a newly created comprador merchant-usurer class in the network of trading ports and areas of foreign influence. Hence, the Qing empire has been replaced by "the warlord-bureaucrat rule of the landlord class and then the joint dictatorship of the landlord class and the big bourgeoisie" (311–12). Accordingly, the national subject is a revolutionary mass subject uniting China's nationalities, and its enemies are the bourgeoisie of imperialist countries and the Chinese landlord class. But the enemy changes with the historical situation. After Japan's invasion of China, it is Japanese imperialism and Chinese traitors and reactionaries. During the first phase of the Chinese Civil War, it is the reactionary bourgeoisie of the KMT regime that has betrayed the revolution by forming an alliance with the landlord class and collaborating with imperialists (315).

Especially noteworthy here is China's changing relation with the Soviet Union (see Pang, chapter 4). Although Mao insisted on the Chinese Revolution's specificity, he also emphasized the importance of the Soviet Union's tutelary guidance: "The experience of the civil war in the Soviet Union directed by Lenin and Stalin has a world-wide significance. All Communist Parties, including the Chinese Communist Party, regard this experience and its theoretical summing-up by Lenin and Stalin as their guide" ([1936] 1965a, 194–95). However, after the Sino-Soviet split, Mao accused the Soviet Union of "great-power chauvinism" and of collaborating with US imperialism to divide the world into their colonial possessions. As a 1964 *People's Daily* editorial puts it:

> Under th[e] signboard [of peaceful coexistence] the Khruschov [*sic*] clique has itself abandoned proletarian internationalism and is seeking a partnership with U.S. imperialism for the partition of the world; moreover, it wants the fraternal socialist countries to serve its own private interests and not to oppose imperialism or to support the revolutions of the oppressed peoples and nations, and it wants them to accept its political and military control and be its virtual dependencies and colonies. Furthermore, [it] . . . wants all the oppressed peoples and nations to serve its private interests and abandon their revolutionary struggles, so as not to disturb its sweet dream of partnership with imperialism for the division of the world, and instead submit to enslavement and oppression by imperialism and its lackeys. (Editorial Departments of *Jen Min Jih Po* [People's Daily] and *Hung Ch'i* [Red Flag] 1964, 81–82)

In response to the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet proclamation of its right to intervene in any communist country to stop counterrevolution (the Brezhnev Doctrine, 1968), and the Sino-Soviet border war of 1969, the PRC accused the Soviet Union of "social imperialism," imperialism disguised as socialist solidarity (Schram 1977, 461–62). Because the latter was now viewed as the strongest imperialist threat, the PRC entered into a détente with the United States in the post–Vietnam War era to limit Soviet influence. Although the Soviet Union's fall and US support for the 1989 Democracy Movement made the United States the primary imperialist adversary, the PRC's ambivalent relation with the United States has remained intact.

Postcoloniality as a Nontotalizable Field of Immanence

In modern Chinese history, the self-conscious recognition of and protest against colonial oppression is a technology for stimulating national consciousness and mobilizing support for nationalist revolution and resistance. With the achievement of sovereign independence, the diagnosis of colonialism and imperialism can also function as a state ideology. Sinitic experiences of postcoloniality are framed by three modulations in the world-system: the New International Economic Order inaugurated within the political framework of the American informal empire; the alteration of the bipolar structure of the Cold War occasioned by the Sino-Soviet rift, which destroyed the unity of the communist world; and the PRC's ascendancy as an economic superpower from the late twentieth century onward.

Like Japanese imperialism in Manchukuo, US informal imperialism during the Cold War years is the exercise of control without direct colonial occupation. To contain the spread of communism, the New Deal political principle celebrating the virtues of productive efficiency that was initially exported to build the industrial economies of occupied Germany and Japan was extended to the free world through foreign aid and private capital investment (Maier 1978). The developmentalist regimes of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore willingly adopted this politics of productivity. Rapid growth through intraregional trade and export-oriented industrialization resulted in the miraculous rise of the East and Southeast Asian dragon and tiger economies, thematized as the "Asian model of capitalist development" (Sugihara 2019, 85–86).

This laid the groundwork for the PRC's rise as a postsocialist hegemon. When the PRC reformed its economy, it was integrated into the global economic system via the manufacturing and industrial complexes of the Pearl and Yangtze River Deltas (Sugihara 2019, 92–93). It is too early to say whether the PRC's emergence on the global political stage and its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) have decentered the Pax Americana world-system. However, its break from its earlier Soviet tutelage and its emergence as the leader of the third world are arguably postcolonial in character. At the same time, the PRC's assertion of sovereignty over Hong Kong and Taiwan and its flexing of economic power through the BRI have been viewed as forms of colonialism. In the former, a postcolonial gesture of reclaiming colonized territories has stimulated Taiwanese national and Hong Kong local consciousnesses and social movements for political freedom.

Although it lies beyond the scope of this volume, which focuses on the aftermath of modern Western and Japanese colonialism in the Sinosphere and responses to it, the cases of Tibet and Xinjiang are fascinating examples of the complex constellation of the historical legacy of dynastic imperialism with contemporary Chinese colonialism in postsocialist globalization. As late as the early nineteenth century, Xinjiang, Tibet, and Mongolia were viewed by the Qing court as *fanbu* 藩部, borderlands in the northwest that were not provinces of the Qing empire because they were neither Confucian nor Sinitic. By the late nineteenth century, they had metamorphosed into *shudi*, which, unlike *shuguo*, or vassal countries lying outside China proper, were part of China's inner territories. They are on the way to becoming colonies in the modern sense and subsequently, with the adoption of the modern concept of territory (*lingtu* 领土), the subjects of Chinese national territorial

sovereign claims (Okamoto 2019a). The PRC's current stance on Tibet and Xinjiang draws on this history of dynastic imperialism and territorial sovereignty. Cultural and religious oppression and political violence in Xinjiang and Tibet are euphemistically called "Sinicization" and justified as patriotism (*Economist* 2021a). Referring to Xi Jinping's invocation of the Silk Road as a precursor of the BRI's ideological project of promoting intercivilizational exchanges to facilitate human development and world peace, Prasenjit Duara (2019, 16–17) suggests that the BRI combines neotraditional soft power with the modern PRC state's expansionist political and economic ambitions, that is, a hybridization of ancient tributary relations with modern colonialism. We see a similar mining of dynastic imperialist archives in Xi Jinping's recent identification with the Qianlong emperor. This identification teems with historical irony. The same emperor whom the father of modern China, Sun Yat-sen, had reviled for erasing Han-Manchu distinctions and destroying national consciousness is now reimagined as a builder of the Chinese nation who pacified and expeditiously governed Xinjiang and Tibet and unified the multiethnic Chinese nation (*Economist* 2021b). These invocations of the Silk Road and Qing imperial heroism are instructive examples of the constellation of dynastic imperialism and contemporary PRC statist colonialism within its perceived sovereign territorial space and beyond. This is a novel modality of postcolonial power relations that requires further analysis in understanding the PRC as a contemporary colonial power.

To reiterate, the complexity of experiences of colonialism and postcoloniality in the Sinosphere challenges fundamental tenets of postcolonial theory. We can add two further shortcomings to the simplistic dichotomy between Western colonizer and non-Western colonized and the overemphasis on Orientalist discourse's disciplinary power. First, the mechanical application of Orientalist discourse analysis exaggerates the continuing hold of Western colonialism over the present. Rapid economic growth in East and Southeast Asia and corresponding changes in the international division of labor coupled with the relative decline of developed Western economies challenge the presupposition of cultural inferiority vis-à-vis Western modernity. Contemporary PRC triumphalism is not necessarily a mimetic rivalry with the West as former colonizer. Second, the PRC's position as a global hegemon is arguably secured at the infrastructural and ideological levels by networks and cultural resources that predate Western colonialism.

These far-reaching changes in the global political-economic landscape lead to the redistribution of cultural hegemonies and the rise of new hierarchies

in East-West, North-South, and South-South relations. This raises with renewed urgency the question of culture's relation to political and economic forces, which has also been the concern of materialist critiques of postcolonial theory. However, Sinosphere situations also problematize the implicit teleological fixation of such critiques. The historical-materialist emphasis on oppositional praxis requires identifying a righteous political subject of resistance that will eventually triumph against (neo)colonial forces. But such a subject cannot be fixed in the Sinosphere. The Chinese nation and diaspora have occupied the positions of colonized and colonizer, and the PRC has modulated from the leader of third world anti-imperialist struggles to a hegemon accused of colonialism.

This indeterminacy issues from the historical instability of power relations, and any adequate understanding of postcoloniality must account for it. Colonialism's noematic structure (to abuse a Husserlian term) is a relation where a nation uses the natural resources and human capacities of another people for its political and economic ends to the other's disadvantage, thereby constituting an encroachment on sovereign self-determination. Colonialism has conventionally been linked to nineteenth-century global capitalist exploitation. *Neocolonialism* retains the principle of sovereignty by stressing that the encroachment is primarily economic. The expanded psychological definition of colonialism as a *rationalized* form of collective domination (Osterhammel 1997) emphasizes colonialism's subjective basis: it is subordination of one sovereign *subject* by another sovereign subject. This subjectivist understanding of colonialism is seductive because it allows us to engage in moralistic pathologization of a sovereign power, isolate the period of its dominance, and suggest a cure for the disease.

However, the examples of Manchukuo and American imperialism and, more broadly, neocolonialism illustrate that the technologies sustaining colonialism are detachable and adaptable in situations sans colonial occupation or after decolonization to achieve similar ends where direct colonial rule is politically and economically inefficient or no longer ideologically justifiable. Mechanisms of premodern or early modern non-Western imperialism such as tribute relations can likewise be detached for use in a later historical period. Their mobility makes it difficult to clearly delimit epochal breaks between China's imperial past, modern Western colonialism, and postcoloniality. Moreover, although we conventionally view these technologies as the tools of collective subjects, they are processes that produce sovereign and subordinate subjects. These processes are dynamic and reversible depending on chang-

ing circumstances. In the 1911 revolution, the self-awareness of Han victimage from the Qing occupation and the Western and Japanese colonization of China induced a modern national consciousness that recognized, in its violation, its capacity for self-determination. It projected national sovereignty back into ancient history in order to reclaim it. In its short history, the imperialist powers denounced by the PRC have drastically changed, and it has adapted such technologies to produce colonial effects in the contemporary world. Although Hong Kong and Taiwan are not preexisting nations with international legal recognition, colonizing technologies have induced a sense of peoplehood and the desire for self-determination. Indeed, Hong Kong concerns about local cultural autonomy and the project of building Taiwan culture recall Sun's critique of the corrosive impact of Manchu epistemic violence on Chinese national identity.

In his analysis of the ascendancy of governmental power in Western modernity, Michel Foucault argued that unlike juridical subjects, who can be ruled by legal commands because their actions are knowable by the sovereign, homo economicus requires different political treatment because he or she functions according to contingent, unpredictable processes that cannot be fully comprehended and that work optimally by being left alone. Hence, homo economicus inhabits an indefinite, nontotalizable field of immanence, which can only be governmentally regulated (Foucault 2008, 277–83). This is a useful analogy for understanding the global field of colonial power relations and their constitutive technologies. The racist ideological justification of colonialism is morally reprehensible and clearly indefensible. But regardless of the extent of public enlightenment, collective entities will always attempt to use others to pursue self-interested ends. The pragmatic-realist technologies they deploy are shaped by conjunctural forces and are infinitely adaptable and reversible. The sovereign identity of actors—a people's self-identity and whether it is oppressed by other nations or oppresses other peoples or subgroups within the nation—is continuously shaped by the expedient use of such technologies. These instruments do not play (*jouer*) like a morality play with its lesson of poetic justice. Western colonialism made the Sinosphere part of a global field of immanence. Postcoloniality is the ongoing condition where actors adaptively deploy cultural, political, and economic technologies to reverse power relations to their advantage without possessing omniscience over the field. Hence, instead of judging the morality of sovereign actors according to the telos of national or revolutionary justice, each situation needs to be analyzed in terms of its oppressive distribution of power and the available strategies for altering this distribution.

Organization of the Book

This book interrogates the closure of Western colonialism/postcoloniality's conceptual matrix from the perspective of various locations in Sinitic East and Southeast Asia. Organized in five parts, it moves from theoretical considerations about the postcolonial; to socialist China's attempts to break with Soviet cultural hegemony; to Hong Kong's complex range of colonial experiences under the British, the Japanese, and mainland China after 1997; to the postcoloniality of Taiwan as it negotiates the legacy of Japanese colonial rule and fraught historical and contemporary relations with KMT and PRC official nationalism; and, finally, to comparisons with diasporic experiences of multiple colonialisms in the Philippines and Sinophone Malaysia.

The chapters in part I critique the axiom of temporal progression in postcolonial studies exemplified by the *post-* prefix. Taking as his point of departure Carl Schmitt's account of the emergence in 1919 of an Anglo-Saxon global order centered around the United States that displaced the nomos of Europe and its colonial territories, Robert Young argues that modern world orders are nomoi of coloniality because of their constitutive connection to colonialism. Raising the question of whether we can speak of a new nomos of postcoloniality, he cautions us against viewing postcoloniality as a triumphant progression from subjugation to liberation. Such mythical linear narratives are similar to colonial myths of the discovery and civilizing of the world. A critical study of colonial and postcolonial history should attend to the multiplicity of spaces and times. Dai Jinhua's chapter sounds a similar note about the dangers of narrating a break with colonial political-economic formations. She argues that postcolonial theory is an expression of the post–Cold War conjuncture that draws on the oppositional discourse of national liberation to code Cold War bipolar structures (socialist vs. capitalist, undeveloped South vs. developed North) as a cultural binary between the formerly colonized East and the West. However, it lost its political basis and connection to effective social practice in capitalist globalization, and its focus on cultural imperialism symptomatically obscures concrete third world problems. Dai asks, Does China's rise in the post–post–Cold War conjuncture lead to a new critical subject position with alternative political possibilities, or is it a different model of destruction? The book's later chapters on the impact of the PRC's rise on Hong Kong and Taiwan pick up these questions about postsocialist China.

Part II is concerned with cultural struggles that are markedly different from the struggle against Orientalism: the PRC's attempt to break away from

Soviet political-economic models and cultural forms and its relevance to postcolonial studies. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, some scholars of Eastern Europe and Eurasia have used a postcolonial framework to understand Russian imperialism. The PRC's de-Sovietization is the pioneering example of a postcolonial break with the Soviet empire. Wendy Larson argues that the Chinese conceptualization of permanent revolution anticipates postcolonial debates about the political import of cultural critique. In revising Leon Trotsky's concept, Mao argued that China's semicolonial status meant that the Chinese Revolution needed to rely on the politicization of subjectivity to mobilize the peasant masses. In this context, leftist writers adapted Maxim Gorky's socialist-realist theory of character type into a cultural guide for revolutionary conduct. She cautions us that this voluntarist-subjectivist view of revolutionary justice led to the coercive production of revolutionary subjectivity. Pang Laikwan argues that the PRC's efforts at de-Sovietization in the 1950s–1960s were an attempt to change the socialist world order by recentering it in the PRC as the leader of Asian, African, and Latin American peoples in the battle against Soviet and US imperialism. The project's basis in racial discourse is similar to Japan's World War II pan-Asianist discourse, which sought to unify Asia against Western imperialism. Pang argues that unlike the alternative modernity celebrated in subaltern studies, this is a hierarchical statist project. Its linear narrative of progress needs to be critically historicized to open up different spatiotemporal configurations from below.

Parts III and IV focus on Hong Kong and Taiwan, respectively, former colonial territories of Britain and Japan. These chapters explore two related topoi: negotiations with multiple and overlapping colonial pasts and concern about the PRC's assertion of sovereignty, which encroaches on local Hong Kong governance and Taiwanese national self-determination and has stimulated forms of agency that strategically draw on colonial culture, sometimes to the point of nostalgia for the colonial era.

The chapters on Hong Kong examine the ambivalent legacies of Hong Kong's British and Japanese colonial past and its post-handover repositioning in a drastically changed global economic landscape. Developing Prasenjit Duara's work on Japanese imperialism and Manchukuo, Lo Kwai-Cheung argues that Japanese policies in Manchuria are postcolonial because they liberated Manchuria from European colonialism and established a modern multinational client state. Aspects of this developmental state have influenced later state practices: the PRC's governance of non-Han nationalities and the control of client states by the United States and the USSR through economic modernization and support for local authoritarian rule. Post–World War II

British colonialism adopted similar ideas of local self-government, using economic liberalism to create healthy economic growth to prevent the spread of communism. Postcolonial Hong Kong civil society has internalized the British image of benevolent colonialism. Its principle of local self-government has become the basis for democratic demands in the onslaught of contemporary PRC nationalization. The latter is ironically viewed as colonial, while the colonial past has nostalgically become the marker of postcolonial freedom.

In contrast, Lui Tai-lok argues that the handover was not a genuine decolonization and that the problematic character of Hong Kong's demand for political autonomy stems from structural contradictions in the One Country, Two Systems (OCTS) arrangement. Despite its nationalist rhetoric, the PRC was pragmatically motivated in its plan to maintain a prosperous capitalist Hong Kong that would facilitate China's economic modernization. Hence, unlike the founding constitutions of decolonized territories, which specify the chain and division of political power, Hong Kong was constitutionally designated a special administrative region (SAR) under PRC sovereignty with loose political arrangements that preserved its colonial political-legal superstructure. This gave Hong Kong the *illusion* of autonomy with the promise of future political democratization. The PRC's accelerated takeoff and integration into the global capitalist system has made Hong Kong's development dependent on China's growth. The destabilizing consequences of PRC capital and human inflows have exposed the structural contradictions of OCTS's pragmatic-economistic framework. The SAR government's political legitimacy has declined, and the PRC has responded to civil-society protests such as the Umbrella Movement by passing the authoritarian National Security Law of June 2020.

Elaine Yee Lin Ho explores the postcolonial agency of anglophone Hong Kong literature. Echoing Lui, she suggests that the handover is not emancipatory but places Hong Kong in a difficult position between a British colonial past and a PRC "colonial" present. Anglophone Hong Kong literature offers an alternative telling of the Hong Kong story that linguistically performs the subversion of overlapping colonialisms through hybrid language that simultaneously provincializes English and estranges Cantonese. This linguistic subversion resonates with the Sinophone decentering of mainland Chinese.

The chapters on Taiwan explore how postcolonial Taiwan draws on resources from the Japanese colonial period and how the triangular relations among Taiwan, Japan, and mainland China problematize postcolonial theory's understanding of resistance as a Manichean struggle between the West and its colonized others. Lin Pei-Yin examines how Taiwan postcolonial

identity is generated from a slippage between the Japanese and Han Chinese empires. She traces the main phases of its formation—as the subjective correlate of demands for local self-governance in the Japanese colonial era, a response to the Han imaginary of KMT official nationalism, the search for tribal indigeneity to decenter Han hegemony, and a postmodern identity without ethnic history or cultural tradition. Lin suggests that Taiwan is heuristically useful for helping us understand the postcolonial not as a temporal period but as an ongoing construction of subjectivity from negotiations between hegemonic cultures.

Liao Ping-hui explores Taiwan postcolonial agency in the period of socioeconomic and political insecurity that characterizes the transition to the twenty-first century by focusing on the rise of new Buddhist sects in the 1980s. These religious cults alleviate the anxieties of the hegemonic class concerning the end of Taiwan's economic miracle in the era of the PRC's ascendancy by promising revitalization through ritual sacrifice and purification. Through an analysis of *Great Buddha Plus (+)* and *The Bold, the Corrupt, and the Beautiful*, two 2017 films that thematize the hidden violence and hypocrisy of Buddhist cultism, Liao foregrounds the vulnerability of the lower strata of postcolonial Taiwan society. Echoing Pang's point about alternative modernities from below, Liao suggests that postcolonial agency must be mass based and avoid co-option by hegemonic forces.

Diaspora is an important topic in postcolonial theory because migrants from former colonies remind Western nations of their imperial sins, and migrant experiences of inequality expose structural racism. Diasporic attachments also resist metropolitan narratives of national belonging. The chapters in the book's final section question the conventional postcolonial understanding of diaspora. Diasporic flows from China extend the field of multiple colonialisms beyond East Asia to Southeast Asia either by connecting the Chinese diaspora from different colonies of the same European empire into a transcolonial network or by traversing the dominions of different empires. These flows also connect them to other diasporas. They engender forms of agency that are more complex than the Manichean opposition favored by much of postcolonial studies. Chinese diasporas simultaneously are exploited by colonial regimes and also are beneficiaries that exploit others. They are economically powerful but politically vulnerable citizens of postcolonial nations and have fraught relations to the cultures of their ancestral homeland and their adopted countries. Diasporas can also resist colonialism in their own country or sustain national development by drawing on resources afforded by another colonial regime or postsocialist globalization.

David Der-wei Wang questions the adaptation of postcolonial theory in Sinophone studies by rejecting characterizations of China as a colonial power and of the Chinese diaspora as settler colonialists. Expanding the focus beyond China's immediate hinterland of Hong Kong and Taiwan to Malaysia, a former British colony with a sizable Chinese population, Wang argues that such Chinese subjects should be characterized as *postloyalist*. Their relations to Chinese culture and colonial culture are not those of simple resistance or acquiescence to colonial power but the complex weaving of multiple temporalities. Like the Chinese of Hong Kong and Taiwan, Malaysian Chinese have maintained their Chinese identities but problematically, alongside an uneasy sense of local belonging. The works of the Mahua writer Ng Kim Chew synchronize multiple temporalities by expressing an impossible dream of left political allegiance with a postsocialist motherland and the insecurity of not belonging in contemporary Malaysia.

Caroline S. Hau examines the agency of the Filipino diaspora in decolonization and postcolonial nation building through a study of Nick Joaquin's *The Woman Who Had Two Navels* ([1961] 1991). She argues that the novel's Hong Kong setting has a twofold significance. First, it connected the Philippines to the rest of Asia and was an enabling refuge for Filipino anticolonial, pan-Asianist, and socialist activities and networks. The *ilustrado* elite drew on this cosmopolitan network and the resources afforded by a history of multiple colonialisms (Spanish, Japanese, US) in anticolonial struggles. For example, unlike the indigenous elite of British India, the *ilustrado* could create knowledge about the Philippines for anticolonial use because of the lack of an extensive Spanish tradition of Orientalist knowledge. Second, it suggests that the spirit of revolution now resides outside the Philippines, which has become a failed developmental state under American governance. Overseas Filipino workers, whose remittances have been the main driver of economic development, have assumed the mantle of revolutionary promise, although this form of development holds both possibilities and dangers.

My contribution returns to the question of temporality by examining the inadequacy of influential theories of diasporic temporality (Homi Bhabha, Paul Gilroy) in postcolonial studies. I argue that temporality must be understood at a deeper level than representations of historical progress used to legitimize colonial and postcolonial regimes. A temporal order is a concrete regime that organizes experiences of time to facilitate capitalist accumulation. It is created by material technologies (such as the international division of labor) that produce corresponding subjects. Through a study of four anglophone bildungsromans by Hanif Kureishi, K. S. Maniam, Mohsin Hamid, and

Tash Aw, I contrast the Malaysian Chinese diasporic subject in postsocialist China with South Asian diasporic subjects in Britain and Malaysia in the 1970s and the United States in the 2000s. The impossibility of cosmopolitan *Bildung* for a diasporic subject on the subordinate side of the international division of labor reveals the limits of the North Atlantic diasporic model. The Chinese diasporic subject who is alienated in the metropolis of a PRC-centered world-system and can neither identify with his ancestral culture nor be at home in Malaysian public culture finds refuge from global capitalist modernity's temporal order by returning to the time of our first coming into the world. Remembering this time enables the envisioning of new worldings.

In summary, this book delimits the closure of the Western colonial/postcolonial episteme by elaborating on four themes. First, it suggests that fundamental changes in the world-system put into question the cultural supremacy of Western modernity, the reach of its civilizing mission, and the importance of Orientalist discourses of difference. These changes are the emergence of Asian solidarity in the wake of Japanese colonialism's use of Asian civilizational discourse to emphasize commonality between Japan and other Asian peoples (Pang, Lo); the rise of the socialist bloc; global financialization under the framework of US empire from the Cold War onward and the subsequent transformation of Cold War bipolarity by the Sino-Soviet rift (Dai, Larson, Pang, Hau); and the alteration of the Pax Americana world order by the PRC's rise and its exertion of cultural, political, and economic power (Dai, Lo, Lui, Cheah). Taken together, these chapters remedy a much-noted weakness of postcolonial studies by providing a thorough analysis of key features of global capitalism. Second, negotiations with the legacies of multiple and overlapping colonialisms in interconnected East and Southeast Asia engender complex forms of agency (Lo, Lui, Ho, Lin, Liao, Hau, Wang). Third, the historically changing identities of colonizer and colonized, exemplified by the ambivalent position of the Chinese diaspora and the colonial character of PRC sovereign claims over Hong Kong and Taiwan, problematize the colonizer/colonized binary and the conception of Manichean oppositional struggle (Lin, Ho, Wang). Finally, the book replaces the understanding of colonialism and postcoloniality in terms of linear temporal progression marked by clear breaks between epochs and political orders with more complex accounts of temporality (Dai, Young, Pang, Wang, Cheah).

While many of the book's chapters are analyses of literary, film, and cultural texts, their foregrounding of decisive changes in the global political-economic landscape corrects the overly culturalist focus of postcolonial studies. At the same time, they also reject the implicit teleological fixation of

materialist critiques of postcolonial studies by problematizing conceptions of Manichaean oppositionality and temporal progression. Although the book focuses on Sinitic East Asian sites, its intellectual perspective is structurally open-ended and contains an implied exhortation to test its provisional conclusions with examples from other postcolonial sites.

Notes

1 Ania Loomba (1998, xiii) also stresses European colonialism's geographic extensiveness, noting that it covered 84.6 percent of the globe's land surface by the 1930s.

2 Tani Barlow noted in 1993 that "postcolonial critiques work by analogy from India and West Asia, regions that were outright European possessions," and that China had been ignored (254).

3 Constitution of the People's Republic of China (amended March 14, 2004), http://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/englishnpc/Constitution/2007-11/15/content_1372962.htm.

4 This tribute system ended with the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), which destroyed Qing pretensions to suzerainty over Korea.

5 Qing laws prohibiting emigration were not officially rescinded until 1893. Between the 1850s and 1939, over six million moved from Hong Kong. From the 1870s onward, the primary destinations were Singapore and the Malay states, and by the turn of the century, over 100,000 people were leaving Hong Kong and Amoy annually for Nanyang (Skeldon 1996, 438).

6 These "Chinese colonialists" included the Ming-era pirate Liang Daoming, who ruled Palembang (part of Sriwijaya) with the recognition of the Ming court and the protection of Zheng He's fleet, and Zheng Zhao, or King Taksin, founder of the short-lived Thonburi dynasty in Siam (1767–82).

7 For a concise account of the related ideas of *gong* and *li* (禮, ritual/ceremony), especially in the Qing empire, see Perdue (2009, 86–88) and Hevia (1995, 9–25, 116–33). On the connection among tribute, international trade, and geopolitics in East Asia, see Hamashita (2008) and Nakajima (2018).

8 On the colonial character of the Ming dynasty's tributary relations with Southeast Asia, see Dreyer (2007) and Wade (2005, 2006, 2008). What is now Yunnan and parts of Guangxi and Guizhou were Sino-Southeast Asian borderlands whose Tai polities also paid tribute to Burma, Siam, and Tai polities outside China (Giersch 2006).

9 Although Shu-mei Shih doesn't go back to the Ming period, one of the main limbs of her theory of the Sinophone is this "rough parallel" (2011, 713).

10 For useful reviews of the political stakes of New Qing History, see Cams (2016), Schneider (2020), and Jenco and Chappell (2020).

11 Sun's use of the term is neither Leninist—for Vladimir Lenin (1987, 230–31), "semi-colonial countries like Persia, China and Turkey" designated "a transitional form" to being fully colonized—nor the later twentieth-century Marxist use of the term to refer to underdeveloped countries that were dominated by more advanced countries.

12 Sun equates colonialism with modern Western imperialism, defined as "the policy of aggression upon other countries by means of political force [yong zhengzhi li qu qinlüe bie guo 用政治力去侵略别国]" ([1924] 1975, 79).