

Spatial and Discursive Violence in the US Southwest

ROSAURA SÁNCHEZ
AND BEATRICE PITA



Spatial and Discursive Violence
in the US Southwest

BUY

Spatial & Discursive Violence in the US Southwest

ROSAURA
SÁNCHEZ &
BEATRICE PITA

DUKE

Duke University Press
Durham and London 2021

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

© 2021 Duke University Press

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞

Designed by Aimee C. Harrison

Typeset in Whitman and Helvetica Neue Lt Std by

Copperline Book Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Sánchez, Rosaura, author. | Pita, Beatrice, author.

Title: Spatial and discursive violence in the US Southwest /
Rosaura Sánchez and Beatrice Pita.

Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2021. | Includes
bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020021369 (print)

LCCN 2020021370 (ebook)

ISBN 9781478010609 (hardcover)

ISBN 9781478011736 (paperback)

ISBN 9781478021292 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: American literature—Mexican American authors—

History and criticism. | Violence in literature. | Indians of North

America—Colonization—Mexican-American Border Region. |

Discourse analysis. | Land settlement—Southwestern States. |

Southwestern States—In literature. | Southwestern States—History.

Classification: LCC PS153.M4 S263 2021 (print) | LCC PS153.M4 (ebook) |

DDC 810.9/979—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020021369>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/202002137>

Cover art: Judithe Hernández, *Coyolxauhqui Chicana*, 2008.

22 by 30 inches, pastel on paper.

DUKE
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

To Our Parents

A. R. Sánchez
Frances Arteaga Sánchez

Joseph Pita
Beatriz Rodríguez López

DUKE

**UNIVERSITY
PRESS**

Contents

Acknowledgments ix

Introduction 1

Spatial and Discursive Violence in the US Southwest

Chapter 1 26

Spatial Violence and Modalities of Colonialism: Enclosure

Chapter 2 43

Indigenous Spatial Sovereignty and Governmentality:
Rights and Wrongs in Oklahoma

Chapter 3 92

Enclosures in New Mexico: Land of Disenchantment

Chapter 4 148

Texas Narratives of Dispossession: When the Land Became Real Estate

Conclusion 202

Spatial Moorings and Dislocation

Notes 213

Bibliography 241

Index 253

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Acknowledgments

All projects have a backstory. This project on enclosures in the US Southwest took a long time to finish as our teaching and mentoring obligations at the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) left little time for research and writing. Life intervenes.

We do very much appreciate the ongoing interaction with colleagues in the UCSD Departments of Literature, Ethnic Studies, History, and Communication for their comments on several of the issues we take up.

Without the writing of all the historians, economists, political scientists, theorists, critics, and novelists cited, our work would not have been possible, and we are most grateful for their scholarship and the opportunity to dialogue with them.

We also much appreciate all the interaction we have had with our graduate students in discussions of these topics in the last few years. We want to give a special thank-you to Barry Masuda of Hawaii, a former graduate student who first introduced us many moons ago to the Midnight Notes Collective and its work on new enclosures. From there we found the works of several other scholars, economists, political scientists, and critics, several of whom had their essays published in thecommoner.org.

Issues of enclosures, social space, gentrification, settler colonialism, and Marxism have been taken up in several graduate seminars and workshops, and we'd like to thank and acknowledge our more recent UCSD students, in-

D

UKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

cluding Justin Wyble, Caitlin Yamamoto, Randy Williams, Ed Ortiz, Crystal Pérez, Adrian Arancibia, Chris Perreira, Anita Huízar-Hernández, Bernadine Hernández, Leonor McCrory, Melissa Martínez, Bernardo Núñez, Axel Montepique, Ed Avila, Ryan Heryford, Andrew Escudero, Benjamin Balthaser, Alex Chang, Irene Mata, Martha Gonzales, Ofelia Cuevas, Demian Pritchard, Tania Triana, Yu-Fang Cho, Anna Eng, David Carroll, Irene Villanueva-Smith, Eric Cazdyn, Mari-Paz Balibrea, Mar Alberca, Stacey Trujillo, Norell Martínez, Andrea Zelaya, Jessica Aguilar, Gabriela Cázares, Gabriela Núñez, Alai Reyes-Santos, Kim Hester-Williams, Jeanelle Horcasitas, Camila Gavin Bravo, Soraya Abuelhiga, Bailee Chandler, Gina di Grazia, Betty Ramírez, Reema Rajbanshi, Luis Cortés, Stephanie Gómez-Menzies, Susana Bustamante, Chris González Reyes, and Brenda Chávez. Our discussions across these many years have been immensely productive.

We acknowledge and appreciate the Duke University Press readers of the manuscript for all their tremendously helpful feedback, comments, and suggestions. We also want to express our gratitude and appreciation to everyone involved in the editorial process, with a very special note of appreciation to Ken Wissoker, Elizabeth Ault, and the Duke University Press staff for all their help in getting the manuscript ready for publication.

Un millón de gracias.

DUKE

x Acknowledgments
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Introduction

SPATIAL AND DISCURSIVE VIOLENCE IN THE US SOUTHWEST

Spatial and Discursive Violence in the US Southwest deals at one level with the imposition of enclosures in the US Southwest during the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries and at another with their discursive configuration in Chicano/a and Native American literature. These processes of enclosure, carried out through colonization and settler colonialism by Spanish, Mexican, and US invaders, led to the dispossession and displacement first of Indigenous populations and later of *Nuevomexicano/a* and *Tejano/a* settlers. The loss of land was accompanied by transformations in relations of production and resulted in concomitant changes in subject formation as well. Invasion and colonization in the Southwest decimated Indigenous populations and led not only to their displacement, destitution, enslavement, and reduction to debt peonage, but also—importantly—to their resistance. *Nuevomexicano/a* and *Tejano/a* settlers, originally part of the colonial forces that deprived Indigenous populations of their lands, hunting

D

UKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

grounds, and settlements, would in turn, after 1848, find themselves not only despoiled as well, becoming field or ranch workers on lands taken over by US invaders and settlers, but also subject serially to lynchings, massacres, and beatings. This process of dispossession and the various mechanisms of enclosure are central to the narratives that we examine in this work, each set within particular historical circumstances. Assessments of the various and distinct periods and regions discussed are central to our analyses; we start from the premise that the lived experience of those subjected to dispossession, exploitation, violence, and marginalization is often overlooked, as historians prefer to focus on macro events that enabled colonization and invasion. Literature, on the other hand, supplements and complements these accounts as it necessarily centers on characters' perceptions and affect, that is, the experience of enclosure and how it is processed by individuals and their respective collectivities. The narratives produced by Native American and Chicano/a collectivities index these transformations and register how they are perceived, made sense of, and both resisted and assimilated.

Enclosures, of course, have a long history not only in the Southwest and the rest of the United States but also in Latin America and throughout the world. Each particular phase of capitalist development has involved different strategies of enclosure to separate producers from the means of production, principally from the commons. Colonization and privatization are two important strategies and explain why geographical issues and the spatial ideologies that underpin the process of enclosure are fundamental to our understanding of history. In what follows we first address the notion of enclosure as a constituent element of capitalist relations and accumulation in the United States and how the mechanism of privatization is used to carry out spatial violence in the US Southwest.

But this geospatial violence is not specific to this area, nor, for that matter, an issue of bygone days. Recent events in the Amazon region, in Peru, Brazil, and Ecuador, where Indigenous groups continue to rise up to protest land concessions and to claim their right to make use of jungle territories that provide water, timber, and other resources threatened by transnational mining, oil and gas drilling, and logging enterprises are a clear sign that what we are terming enclosures are not a thing of the past; dispossession is an evolving process, not only in the Américas but in Africa and Asia as well. The issue of enclosures, or the separation of workers from their means of subsistence, to paraphrase George Caffentzis,¹ has also been referred to as “accumulation by

DUKE

dispossession,” to use David Harvey’s coinage.² Enclosures then are at the core of the ongoing accumulation of capital, and what makes this concept particularly productive is that it is not limited to land, as dispossession and displacement can take place in multiple domains. In every case, however, enclosures involve appropriation of space, that is, different types of spaces, including territorial, financial, political, and cultural spaces. Enclosure operates, in fact, as the structuring mechanism for both capitalist and imperialist undertakings, and in the United States it goes back to the very beginning of the nation-state.

While the analysis of imperialism in terms of two logics of power, the capitalist and the territorial, allows us to distinguish between neocolonialism and colonialism, in fact the two logics always go together, for, although not entirely capitalist, in the case of Spain, colonialism was never merely political and territorial but economically driven as well, as it enabled the primitive accumulation of capital. The term *primitive accumulation* is generally associated with the first enclosures in sixteenth-century England that gave rise to new social relations with the separation of producers (the serfs) from the commons; these early European enclosures signaled the end of feudal relations and followed both a territorial and economic logic. In the Américas, where enclosures began with the dispossession of the Indigenous populations by Spanish, British, and Portuguese colonizers, colonialism was always likewise both a territorial/military and an economic project, linked as much to the territorial and political expansion of Spain, Britain, and Portugal as to the accumulation of land, gold, and other resources and products.

Massimo De Angelis underscores that enclosures are a fundamental tenet in Marxist economic theory because capital always encloses.³ As De Angelis, along with Michael Perelman and Caffentzis, has noted, enclosures are often studied as a historical phenomenon, that is, as sites of primitive accumulation.⁴ Those who study history as a linear model of development are given to see enclosures as a precapitalist phenomenon that allowed for the accumulation of capital and enabled the transition in Europe from feudalism to capital. But as the Midnight Notes Collective, De Angelis, and even Marx make clear, there are both new and old enclosures, since enclosures are ongoing processes.⁵ It is that ongoing and recurrent process of dispossession and privatization that structures our study of Southwest US history and its rendering in cultural forms.

In the transition to capitalism in Europe, common land was enclosed to prevent serfs from using the commons for subsistence. Land tenancy gave rise

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

to “privatization” by “the landed gentry” who used “private” property as the mechanism for accumulating capital, forcibly changing the relations of production. If in Europe these enclosures were first carried out by violence by the lord’s forces, by the eighteenth century in England, Marx notes, Parliament handily intervened and “the law itself [became] now the instrument of the theft of the people’s land.”⁶ This shift has clear resonance in the future history of the US Southwest, as we shall see. Words and paper have as much a hand in the process of dispossession as guns and fences.

Land in England was expropriated and privatized, first by force and then through extra-economic means, like legislation. This separation of workers or producers from the means of production (and the redirection of their energies) has been a constant since the very onset of capitalism. In time, this expropriation and the twin processes of privatization and accumulation appear as a constant, even natural, process. In time as well, the privatization of land for new industries; the relocation of communities for roads, freeways, and dams; and the privatization of public services and basic resources, medications, or common space all come to be seen as normal. In more recent times, both economic and extra-economic forces have been brought to bear to produce and maintain this separation and the channeling of productive forces.

No one can be oblivious to the fact that the most egregious “hostile takeover” in the Américas was that of the land of native peoples post-1492. In *Indios, ejército y frontera*, Argentine historian and cultural critic David Viñas brilliantly details how the establishment of positivist liberal states in nineteenth-century Latin America effected the further destruction of the Indian commons, already initiated by European colonial enterprises.⁷ As under the mission and *encomienda* systems, the dispossession of Indigenous populations by *hacendados* with the support of newly minted postindependence states was also accompanied by genocide, ethnic cleansing, and the further induction of Indians into forced labor. These processes, and the narratives of settlement (*gobernar es poblar*) by expansion and displacement voiced by the likes of nineteenth-century Argentina’s Domingo Sarmiento, were likewise at work in Mexico, especially on the ranchos and haciendas further north, and resonated as well in Texas, New Mexico, and California. North, south, east, and west, enclosures were part of expansion and the juggernaut of modernization, underpinned and fostered by narratives of modernity.

DUKE

4 Introduction
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Across time and place, enclosures and the reduction or outright loss of the commons were implemented by various means, including invasion and genocide but also coercion, laws, and fraud. Looking at US history, and more specifically at the wholesale dispossession of Indian lands after 1776, reveals that a variety of mechanisms were put in place to enable both the state and individuals to gain control of this ostensibly open territory. Thereafter, various mechanisms were mobilized to dispossess Indigenous populations in the US Southwest region as well as Californios/as, Tejanos/as, Nuevomexicanos/as, Louisiana French landowners, and formerly enslaved people. These included (1) state coercive practices, including wars, treaties, acts and laws, and court decisions; (2) disciplinary actions, including the naming of guardians, designating Native Americans as wards, and establishing reservations (what we might like to call open-air prisons); and (3) governmentality, including the chartering of government agencies that serve to control populations and allow for land takeovers, gentrification—what today goes by the name of redevelopment—and eminent domain, and, last but not least, outright theft and fraud.⁸

In the United States, this dispossession was, we must recall, based in part on exerting military force. Andrew Jackson's forays into the South and his success in forcing Native American tribes to make land cessions are abundantly well known.⁹ But, as a rule, force was, more often than not, accompanied by legal measures and state policies that facilitated the use of outright coercion, as in the case of the Removal Act of 1830.¹⁰ Political discourses at times contradicted what was put into effect, as, for example, when official policy (on paper at least) was that Indian lands would be taken only with the landholders' consent and that removal would be voluntary, when in fact native peoples were coerced to abdicate tenancy.¹¹ Policy statements are often at odds with practices. Moreover, Indians were promised compensation for land taken; yet for many Indian tribes the check is still in the mail. Other means, however, were also employed: fraud, bribery, debt, sale of alcoholic beverages to secure signatures, consumerism, and, foremost among them, the creation of bureaucratic state apparatuses like the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an institution that serves perhaps as the ideal exemplar of what Michel Foucault calls "governmentality."¹² In the dispossession of Mexicans, war, attacks by Texas Rangers and army soldiers as well as vigilantes, and legislation worked in tandem.

What took place in the US Southwest, and the Américas more broadly, was not at all a one-time event or even an anomaly. While speaking about

wholly different geographical areas, years ago Samir Amin emphasized the continuous character of primitive accumulation,¹³ leading De Angelis to remark further that “the fact that capital encloses is not something that has been sufficiently theorised by critical social and economic theory.”¹⁴ Enclosures, the latter notes, are “a continuous characteristic of ‘capital logic’ once we understand capital not as a totalised system but as a force with totalising drives that exists together with other forces that act as a limit on it.”¹⁵ Seen in this way, enclosures are thus constitutive and necessarily an ongoing practice, for capital is, by definition, always looking to “capitalize,” to look for what Harvey calls “spatio-temporal fixes” for the overaccumulation of capital that is at one and the same time its goal and its bane.¹⁶ These spatiotemporal fixes are intimately linked to imperialist practices, be they of old or more recent vintage. Today, some would argue that new enclosures are being practiced in a new era of globalization by transnational corporations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and various nation-states to dislocate peasants from their land and workers from particular industries, in turn giving rise to forced migration and public, as well as private, debt. Thus a variety of new strategies and mechanisms for dispossession are being deployed today. As previously noted, historically military force has been the sine qua non of capitalist development.¹⁷ But it is not always the most cost effective.

In fact, any kind of practice that denies people the right, access, or entitlement to food and the means of subsistence implies dispossession; consequently, the practice of enclosure produces sites of contention and struggle; survival is often the trigger for migration or emigration.¹⁸ As De Angelis notes, current global justice and solidarity movements are organizing precisely in terms of opposition to these new enclosures, for example, by opposing attempts to relocate communities to make space for dams, by resisting the privatization of public services and basic resources like water (as in the case of the 2000 water wars in Cochabamba, Bolivia¹⁹), by creating commons through occupation of land and buildings (contemporary squatting), by struggling against exclusionary patents (that, for example, make medications prohibitively expensive), and by downloading and sharing music and software. De Angelis further argues that an analytical framework is needed with which to study the “processes of identification, types and modes of enclosures” in the present historical conjuncture and, we would add, a framework that can address what we would like to call the lived “experience” of enclosures—past and present—which is precisely what we often find constructed in literature.²⁰

DUKE

Discursive Legitimation

The fact that this mechanism of enclosure has been actualized at different historical moments and throughout the world requires that dispossession be viewed in relation to the actual means, including coercion, by which the process of enclosure is carried out.²¹ In all of these cases, we are talking not only about structuring mechanisms but about the historically specific enabling discourses and practices that allow it. In fact, De Angelis underscores that “if capital encloses it cannot do it without a corresponding discourse.”²² Here he refers to discourses that accompany the establishment of enclosures, that is, the arguments used to gain consensus by convincing populations of the rationality of enclosure based on the logic of capital accumulation, even at the cost of disregarding social needs. Of course discursive violence is itself almost always to some degree spatial, as in racist signs like “No Mexicans or Dogs Allowed” that even as late as the 1960s sought to exclude Mexicans from particular spaces in Texas or in racist comments like “Go back where you came from” voiced recently by the US president to deny people’s rightful presence in this country. Here the discourse being marshaled is that of citizenship, the notion of identity and belonging. Race is also a discourse that plays a significant role in dispossession, with respect not only to Indigenous populations but also to Black farmers dispossessed between 1950 and 1969 of six million acres in the Mississippi delta, as noted by the US Commission on Civil Rights with respect to assistance denied to Black farmers by the US Department of Agriculture to enable the takeover of these lands by whites or corporations.²³ One of the points that interests us particularly in De Angelis’s formulation is that here a specific subject formation is a necessary corollary of enclosure, as in the case of the transformation of serfs to wage laborers; new norms and regulations to which these subjects must adapt are also instituted. The state, in its supporting role to capital, is central in this as it often seeks the consent of the governed through, as pointed out above, a promotion of discourses of Americanization, fiscal and personal responsibility, debt management, trade liberalization, anti-inflation policies, and the like. Not to be forgotten, especially in speaking of nineteenth-century practices of enclosure, is the whole set of discourses of modernization/modernity that in the United States, Latin America, and elsewhere played out in terms of the opposition of *civilización* v. *barbarie* and cast those being dispossessed as antithetical to modernity.

The various forms of discursive violence in tandem with material enclo-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

sures lead to the despoliation not only of the commons but also of existing communities, for “there is no enclosure of commons without at the same time the destruction and fragmentation of communities.”²⁴ It is this destruction of communities across US history that we would like to engage further in what follows. The fact, however, that the process of enclosing is an “ongoing feature of capitalist regimes” means that the phenomenon is not limited to the United States or to a specific period.²⁵ Our particular interest in the phenomena of enclosure, both old and new, requires seeing that in distinct historical periods various mechanisms of implementation and conceptual frameworks have served for the actualization of enclosures. Our overriding concern is the configuration of the experience of dispossession in the literary text. With this in mind, how then to approach the literary or cultural text? The text—and we will be talking principally about the novel genre—is a literary actualization with its own generative mechanisms and configurations. The structure of the novel is thus of particular importance, as the organization of the constitutive discourses of this content gives an indication of the historical perspective, that is, of the ideology that undergirds it. The narratives we examine do not—and cannot—provide us with a substantive analysis of the historical contradictions behind enclosure. That is not their *raison d’être*. Narratives can, however, provide partial analyses; some, especially if they are a pastiche of a particular period, may ignore the complexity and layering of mechanisms and discourses, while others may operate by summoning up amnesia or nostalgia. We consider a variety of elements, including structuring mechanisms, time-spaces, ideology, and other sociopolitical formulations that include race, ethnicity, gender, and class, to see how these are rendered in the texts as they register the aftereffects, as it were, of dispossession.

It makes sense, then, to start by discussing a variety of practices, policies, and discourses reconstructed in fiction that relate particularly to nineteenth- and twentieth-century enclosures in the United States and that have specifically affected Mexican-origin and Indigenous populations; these are discourses that are used either to legitimate and justify enclosures, on the one hand, or to counter and critique the establishment of these enclosures, on the other. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, we find enclosures to be the structuring mechanism of several novels in Chicano/a, Latino/a, Native American, and other literatures in the United States and Latin America. These works do not, of course, use the term *enclosure* or seek to engage deliberately with the concept.²⁶ Still, we argue, enclosure is the structuring mechanism behind many of these works that have the effect of documenting the experience of being separated from the

D

means of production and in so doing reveal the inner workings of this process as well as the direct and collateral effects on affected communities.

Examining how literary texts deal with the actualization of dispossession and represent it requires that we focus first on the actual, historical events that led to dispossession in what is now US territory. For this, one of our necessary primary sources is the work of historian Paul W. Gates.²⁷ Time and space are likewise important considerations for us, for without periodization and a focus on regions we cannot begin to see patterns and draw comparisons. A brief discussion of the historical antecedents in England and Spain are to our mind crucial to an understanding of what happened in the Américas, but so are the particular patterns of colonization. The type of economy that developed—be it pastoral, agricultural, or mining—is a key factor, too, in the type of settlement and the particular distribution of lands. The mode of production in the homeland, whether it stressed a capitalist possessive individualism or aristocratic privilege with the personal services of subjected laborers, is also a significant differentiating factor. The next four chapters review how the dispossession of Indigenous populations took place under English, Spanish, and Mexican colonial regimes. As one should expect given the range of variables at work, dispossession took many different forms across time and space, but all were instances of spatial and discursive violence.

Geographical and Political Considerations

This work focuses on enclosures or, more precisely, on the multiple processes of land tenancy, dispossession, and displacement in the Southwest, during several temporalities that beginning in the late sixteenth century brought Spanish colonizers to occupy this space, principally to exploit it, but especially to claim it politically, particularly in view of rival claims by French, British, and Russian powers and later US threats of invasion. Long before the sixteenth century, however, perhaps even as long as 25,000 to 100,000 years ago by some accounts, the Southwest was home to Indigenous populations who used these lands for hunting, cultivation, and residence. Indigenous perspectives and experiences, absent in good measure from most histories of the Southwest (as well as from most Chicano/a literature), would clash with those of gold seekers, soldiers, missionaries, trappers, and settlers who saw these ostensibly open lands as prime for exploitation, appropriation, settlement, and cultivation. For the most part, colonizers saw Indigenous populations dwelling on these lands in one of two ways: either as obstacles to be removed or as

a potential labor force to be exploited to gain access to gold, silver, land, crops, and service. The coming of land-hungry US settlers to the Southwest in the nineteenth century continued the dispossession of Indigenous lands begun in the earliest moments of British and Spanish colonization. Not altogether surprising perhaps, the sequential dispossession of Indigenous populations by Spanish, Mexican, and US soldiers and settlers would in turn be followed, after 1848, by the dispossession of Mexican settlers.

It will prove useful to think of the Southwest as a relative space, viewed, conceived, and lived according to the historical moment, the political and economic forces dominant in the area, the geographical location, and the demographic composition of the settlers and Indigenous inhabitants.²⁸ In the colonial era of New Spain, *la frontera*, the Southwest, was the back of beyond, under Spanish titular control but scantily populated by Spanish settlements, missions, or presidios. In the United States, the frontier designation varied, too, by historical period, at times designating an area west of the original thirteen colonies and later an area west of the Mississippi, the area of the plains, or the Northwest and Southwest. As defined famously by Frederick Jackson Turner, the frontier, for a series of reasons, attracted a continuous westward movement that enabled the United States to engage in a “perennial rebirth” as it expanded into new territory that offered opportunities for growth and “free land.”²⁹ What Turner does not take it upon himself to account for is that this rebirth came at a cost; it was at the expense of Indigenous lives, relocated or exterminated in the process of expansionism. While obvious, clearly this territory was not at all vacant and was in fact taken over by force. Nor could the lands be construed as free. Even today the notions of the frontier and supposedly vacant lands in historical accounts skirt and therefore evade the issue of the United States as a colonizing power in an effort to normalize its expansion westward and distinguish itself from European colonial nations, setting itself apart as exceptional. Gareth Stedman Jones underscores this in saying that the United States’ own imperial record is concealed by historians “who speak complacently of the absence of the settler-type colonialism characteristic of European powers [and] conceal the fact that the whole internal history of United States imperialism was one vast process of territorial seizure and occupation.”³⁰ The westward movement cannot be seen as other than a concerted imperialist policy.

Aziz Rana examines the political history of the United States, finding that it has often been couched in terms of republican freedom and a search for liberty and economic independence. But, as he points out, this freedom aspect

D

was accompanied by what he calls the “settler empire,” which required the dispossession of Indigenous peoples and the subordination of non-Anglo groups, including Blacks, Mexicans, Chinese, and sometimes Catholic European groups as well as others.³¹ As he notes, the mythology of exceptionalism and democratic equality has disregarded “a historical record riddled with ethnic, racial, and sexual exclusion, not to mention real class inequalities and conflicts.”³² A marked contradiction exists between myths of democracy (when in fact matters are decided by the very few, the elected elite sponsored by wealthy stakeholders) and the social and political reality of the vast majority of citizens and residents in this country, down to the present day. There is also a marked dissonance between claims of freedom and equality and the reality of spatial violence of a nation-state in good measure founded on genocide and slavery, that is, predicated, on the one hand, on the extermination and dispossession of Indigenous natives and, on the other, on African slavery. Another significant myth or chimera on which the edifice of American exceptionalism is built is the story of free land for those participating in the westward movement, a myth that some historians, like Lee Benson and Leslie E. Decker, have sought to debunk.³³ Clearly the Southwest cannot be viewed independently of the larger US territory and the land and social policies that affected residents in the nineteenth century and continue to do so today. And clearly, too, US imperialist policies presenting themselves in the twenty-first century can be traced back to the nineteenth century.

As a standpoint from which to depart, we view the Southwest as a territory that can be divided into separate regions and places marked by colonial and imperial differences. And though all the territory was once colonized by Spain, later by Mexico, and then the United States, the type of colonization differed significantly between Texas, New Mexico, and California in terms of established Indigenous populations, the type of colonization that took place (whether military, mission centered, or settler colonialism), the relative distance or proximity to other Spanish colonies or Mexican towns and the political/administrative center, the type of Indigenous land distribution and use, the type of land dispossession implemented, the type of immigration that the region attracted, and, especially, the mode of production and the type of economic development that marked each area. All these differences (geographic, demographic, economic, environmental, and political) served to mark distinctions between how the territory was conceptualized, perceived, and ultimately settled.

The territory that constituted northern Mexico after 1821 was vast; still,

the link with Mexico lasted only a historical blink of an eye, that is, for a brief twenty-seven years (1821–48), and in the case of Texas an even shorter period, since Texas claimed independence in 1836, only fifteen years after Mexican independence. In some cases, the link to Spain was in fact stronger, in view, for example, of stipends that the Crown afforded soldiers and officers before 1821; thus, breaking colonial linkages in the process of occupation and deterritorialization, that is, by imagining the territory as no longer Spanish, was thus more difficult in some regions that did not align themselves immediately or positively to Mexican independence or later to the United States. For a different set of reasons, in the absence of strong, long-standing ties to Spain or Mexico, the reterritorialization of East Texas, that is, reimagining itself as an autonomous republic or as a US territory, was a relatively easy process for the Anglo settlers. The very heterogeneity and fluid history of the US Southwest precludes viewing it as a homogeneous region. These southwestern spaces have to be conceived in terms of different temporalities and spatialities and for that reason space and time—in particular in relation to land—need to be seen not as abstractions but as constitutive factors. What is equally clear is that losing the land as private property, in the case of the landed Mexicans, did not necessarily mean a diasporic relocation or losing access to the region. Access and habitation in these lands has, if anything, expanded with the arrival of millions of Mexican immigrant workers since 1848.

We focus primarily, but not strictly, on the representation of land disposition in the vast territory that is the US Southwest, especially in the work of Chicano/a writers from Texas and New Mexico, viewing these textualizations in relation to historical accounts that address land dispossession. In their configurations of land loss, Chicano/a writers focus primarily on the Mexican loss of land as a defining moment marking the history of Tejanos/as, Nuevomexicanos/as, and Californios/as, for the most part eliding both the Spanish and Mexican dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Admittedly, these writings are in part a response to and refutation of Anglo writings on the notion of vacant lands, Manifest Destiny, and racial superiority. But they likewise evidence discourses bent on claiming Spanish (white rather than mestizo) ancestry and culture and a role in nation building, arguing that marginalized US populations of Spanish/Mexican descent have also contributed to the US national formation. This inclusivist—at times even celebratory, “we, too, are part of the US national narrative”—perspective contrasts sharply with that found in the work of Native American writers Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and Mishuana Goeman, who stand out in this regard and reject the multiculturalist narrative

of inclusion, making the point that Native Americans are not one more in a succession of ethnic groups seeking inclusion within the US nation.³⁴

The texts and writers taken up here are not concerned only with larger issues of space like land, but also with the importance of space in subject formation and with struggles for the control of those discursive spaces. Space, following Neil Smith, can be viewed as both the product of socioeconomic processes and relations and also productive of socioeconomic processes and relations.³⁵ From that, it follows, and we argue, that the Southwest needs to be seen as both a product of history and productive of history. We will therefore be looking at space in terms of geographical particularity and difference as we consider local, regional, national, and global spaces. The Southwest, inhabited first by Indigenous peoples, then colonized by Spain and Mexico, and later occupied by the United States, was also impacted by more global processes at work in different ways at different times; variables in local responses to colonization likewise reveal marked differences.

The overarching aim of this work, then, is to provide a historico-geographical reading of literary texts dealing with land, dispossession, and settler colonialism in the West and Southwest, focusing particularly on New Mexico and Texas, with discussion of Indigenous dispossession in Oklahoma as well. While Texas and New Mexico are the primary focus of this work, California is necessarily referenced at various times, but not extensively.³⁶ To lay out the contours and architecture of what follows, we start by exploring not only the concrete establishment of enclosures in the Américas, but also the various modalities of dispossession and colonization that took place in the Southwest between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. Examining renderings of literary texts in conjunction with historical accounts, we explore issues of dispossession or enclosure in relation to imperialism and colonialism more globally and how these processes carried out or enacted what we are terming spatial and discursive violence in the Américas.

Problematics of Coloniality and Decolonization

Harry Harootunian notes that during the period of the Cold War, Western Marxism progressively distanced itself from economic realms to privilege the cultural, philosophical, and psychological, “especially in the domain of aesthetic production, art and literature, which contributed to valorizing a specific (and provincial) cultural endowment as unique, superior, and universal, regardless of its critical intent.”³⁷ In his critique of cultural Marxism and of

postcolonial theorists, Harootunian notes that these critics have often failed to note the coexistence of different temporalities and have failed to account for capital's subsumption of prior modes of production.³⁸ The confluence or conjuncture of different temporalities, by contrast, figures importantly in the literature that we examine.

This postcolonial move away from political-economic analysis to focus on cultural identities, difference, and what has been called "alternative modernity,"³⁹ could also be said to characterize current thinking in terms of coloniality as the explicatory historical/cultural paradigm on the ascendant in Latin America. Aníbal Quijano's assessment of colonialism in Latin America in terms of the "coloniality of power" makes a case for highlighting "difference," in this case racial difference, in view of the prevalence of a Eurocentric perspective of knowledge that naturalized colonial relations on the basis of race.⁴⁰ It is the colonization of culture that is foregrounded by those proposing the framework of the coloniality of power with an aim toward developing a new concept of modernity based not on the Westernization of non-European societies and cultures but on an alternative epistemic modernity, a "transmodernity" based on transculturalism that is the product of native or domestic epistemologies and modes of production.⁴¹ Like Quijano, Walter D. Mignolo also sees the imposition of a Eurocentric perspective of knowledge and the blind and blatant ethnocentrism of Western philosophy.⁴² Arguing for a consideration of the geopolitics of knowledge and the limits of Western philosophy ("the border where the colonial difference emerges") by stressing the production of a new subjectivity—"decoloniality"—to counter the "coloniality of being," Mignolo argues that the development of an epistemology from a subaltern perspective, from the perspective of colonial difference, is key to decolonization or liberation.⁴³ In view of the preeminence given to the cultural, it should not surprise us that the reference to the decolonial liberation to come from rejecting imposed Western paradigms speaks largely to an epistemic liberation rather than a material, revolutionary liberation. We would argue that it is not the logic of colonialism or coloniality, as defined by Mignolo, that defines the marginalized of the Américas but the logic of capitalism and dispossession, albeit as part and parcel of one another and mutually constitutive. Culturalist positions such as these privilege culture and tend to overemphasize the global representation of Eurocentric historiography and social science as the key problems, as is obvious in recent trends in Latino/a works stressing decolonization.⁴⁴ We argue that a parallel operation underlies the erasure of Indigenous material dispossession while stressing Indigenous cultural contributions.

In contradistinction to this approach, our focus is on cultural representation as a register, but not under a culturalist optic since our overriding concern in this work is what one might term the narrativization of history; put another way, what interests us is the material history of the Southwest, and—more importantly—the capacity of narrative to capture the layering of temporalities and to challenge dominant historical perspectives. To our minds, the coexistence of different temporalities is fundamentally linked to the coexistence of different modes of production attendant to different and contending logics.⁴⁵ Under colonialism, a subsumption of earlier forms of production takes place both in the colonial state and in the colonized site—this in view of capital's capacity “to take over what it found at hand and subordinate it to serve the pursuit of surplus value.”⁴⁶ As noted earlier, formal subsumption or appropriation is what some economists term “accumulation through dispossession,” or the establishment of enclosures; this process is naturally central to our work.⁴⁷ For example, Spanish colonization necessarily admitted the survival of Indigenous modes of production, especially during the *encomienda* system, even as Spanish feudal and semifeudal modes and later capitalist modes were being imposed. It is this notion of plural temporalities that will permit us to focus on the various layers of time that characterize all epochs and are especially in evidence in particular practices from different periods of Spanish, Mexican, and US colonialism in the Southwest. Most importantly, we argue that literary and/or cultural representations are productive sites to mine for historical evidence of this type of plural and oftentimes contending temporalities.

For its part, Chicano/a and Latino/a cultural production has of late focused on issues of decolonization, taking as a starting point that we are a colonized people, forgetting in the process—ironically perhaps—the role that our ancestors played as colonizers. Whether the colonizers in what is now the US Southwest were Spaniards, *criollos*, *mestizos*, or even Indigenous peoples like the *Tlaxcaltecas*, they all came from the interior of New Spain (now Mexico), in the name and in the service of the Spanish Crown, and they came north to dispossess the natives of what would become the US Southwest. On the receiving end of subsequent dispossessions, we must acknowledge, too, that we have conveniently developed a selective amnesia for our role in the colonization of the native peoples of the Southwest; our own role in the subjugation and exploitation of Indigenous peoples and, in some cases, the massacre of these natives cannot be skirted, downplayed, or displaced. Spanish colonizers, whatever their race or ethnicity, were in turn replaced by the Mexican state, later to be defeated by US soldiers. The settler colonists sent to the Southwest

by Spain were the very same settlers later called Mexicans. Their role as dispossessioners continued to be the same, whether under one banner or another. It bears recalling that most people of Mexican origin in the US today are not direct descendants of the initial Spanish or later Mexican colonizers in the Southwest, although New Mexican Hispanos do claim this distinction, choosing to disregard their *mestizaje* with local Indians, as do some Tejanos/as in the lower Rio Grande valley. We are, however—whether we want it or not—descendants of Spanish, mestizo, mulatto, and Indigenous peoples who, by being part of the colonies of New Spain for some three hundred years, were imbricated and implicated in the colonizing enterprise. If truth be told, most of our actual ancestors came to the US Southwest much later than 1848 and primarily after 1900 as immigrants, where they in turn faced xenophobia, racism, exploitation, violence, and classism when they arrived, not altogether unlike what they had experienced in the lands from which they migrated and not unlike what we continue to experience today in the United States.

Our overriding interest, then, lies in examining how history, especially the history of enclosures, is emplotted in literature and how the multilayered temporalities in history are registered and configured. It is in the intersection of these temporalities, an intersection given in dissonance and effected through spatial and discursive violence simultaneously, that contradictions are made visible.⁴⁸ A linear view of history inherent in most historical accounts does not—and cannot—capture the complex intersection in dissonance of multiple forces and dimensions. Literature, on the other hand, given its play with structure, voice, and literary strategies and techniques, is perhaps more able to configure multiple temporalities, narrativize the depth of a moment, and explore subject formation under changing spatiotemporal conditions. While no doubt at times guilty of idealizing and attempting to rescue the past as a quasi-utopian space of freedom and enjoyment, literature is nevertheless able to provide a complementary account of the subsumption of precapitalist modes of production by capital and in the process represent the tensions and contradictions of unevenness introduced by this fusion of previous moments along with emerging economic and political configurations.

Historical and Literary Approaches to the Analysis

It becomes necessary, or at least expedient, to lay out some of the tools, concepts, and strategies that we work with in detailing spatial and discursive violence in what follows. Likewise, it is useful to point to continuities in con-

temporary Chicano/a and Latino/a writing. Dispossession or its enactment through enclosure is not at all a thing of the past. It is still ongoing in the form of displacement, although now in urban areas, a product of urban renewal, gentrification, and eminent domain, and as such it very much continues to be configured in the early twenty-first-century work of Chicano/a and Latino/a fiction writers. Just two examples make the point of the ongoing relevance of these issues. Dispossession is the overriding topic, for example, in *Chavez Ravine*, in which the playwrights and performers of Culture Clash focus on a twentieth-century case of dispossessed Los Angeles barrio dwellers.⁴⁹ Dispossession, as we find in this play, can be effected by force or by legislation, or more likely both. Here it is urban planning and eminent domain, for what is purportedly to be a public housing development that led the Los Angeles City Council in the early 1950s to evict and relocate residents from Chavez Ravine, an area of three Chicano/a communities close to downtown Los Angeles: La Loma, Palo Verde, and Bishop. Residents were told that after the public housing units were in place they could return, but the housing project was canceled and the area used instead for the construction of privately held Dodger Stadium. Dispossession and displacement are likewise topics configured in the fine 2007 Helena María Viramontes novel *Their Dogs Came with Them*, which focuses on another Los Angeles instance of dispossession.⁵⁰ In this case, the state of California in the 1960s again used eminent domain to buy up land in the East Los Angeles barrio for the construction of a complex freeway system. The East Los Angeles Interchange, consisting of six feeder freeway segments connecting four highways, would displace a good number of Chicano/a residents of East Los Angeles. Displacement also takes place today in urban spaces undergoing gentrification as landlords push low-income tenants out to make room for affluent residents. Smith's analysis of rent gap theory and the impact of gentrification on Puerto Rican renters in Spanish Harlem is likewise captured in Ernesto Quiñonez's novel *Chango's Fire*, where displacement is forced by arson.⁵¹ It goes without saying that the phenomenon of gentrification is taking place broadly, displacing for the most part poor and minority populations.

This work, however, deals primarily, but not exclusively, with configurations of land loss in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico, focusing on how enclosures and discursive violence figure in cultural production. Land loss has often been seen in relation to the loss of Spanish- or Mexican-era land grants, but that is a rather limited (and limiting) example of the dispossession of peoples in the Southwest. Still,

the perspective of historians on land grants—somewhat ironically—is quite useful in highlighting precisely what has been left out by historians and what is possibly better addressed by fiction writers. It will be in these gaps that we find the most intriguing aspects of this reading of history through literature.

In their volume *Land, Water, and Culture: New Perspectives on Hispanic Land Grants*, editors Charles L. Briggs and John R. Van Ness note that a number of studies of Hispanic land grants have been published in recent years from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, but the editors also reflect on the inadequacy of the existing literature on land grants in view of a number of crucial gaps.⁵² Some of the lacunae they mention—interestingly—include failure to deal with resistance to Anglo-American domination, the day-to-day activities of land grant residents, the way land grant communities see their history and land/water rights, the physical characteristics of the land, the way land has been used by residents, and the way these factors have affected the settlement of grants: “That is to say, the human ecology has been largely ignored.”⁵³ Briggs and Van Ness further note that many of these studies are written from the perspective of non-Hispano and non-Native American scholars who find it difficult to deal with the notions of community ownership of land, the role of local custom in determining land rights, and the resonance and implications of these land issues beyond a Southwest audience.⁵⁴

For their part, historians like Gerald E. Poyo and Gilberto M. Hinojosa and other contemporary historians also provide a critique of Borderlands historians who fail to “analyze the dynamics of community formation and development” and lament that the few local narratives available “provided only vague references to townspeople and Indians.”⁵⁵ Others, like Samuel Truett and Elliott Young, suggest a transnational historical approach in a world with border crossers, while still others, like Marvin Mikewell and Alexander Murphy, propose a comparative global approach.⁵⁶ A few, like Pekke Hämäläinen and Benjamin H. Johnson, offer historical analyses that consider sex, gender, class, and marriage in their compilation of abridged articles by numerous authors.⁵⁷ We agree that this broadening of studies whose scope focuses on the “cultural and socioeconomic underpinnings of Hispanic communities” is necessary.⁵⁸ Some Chicano/a historians are understandably especially dissatisfied with a Spanish Borderlands approach that analyzes the Spanish colonial period but does not go beyond it. The Spanish Borderlands notion, as noted by David J. Weber, was derived from Herbert E. Bolton’s framework that analyzed the experiences of Spanish colonials in the Southeast and Southwest; some recent historians, however, see no meaningful continuities between the two areas,

nor do they see the Borderlands as ending with the Spanish colonial period.⁵⁹ Interestingly, Bolton's focus on the Spanish period undoubtedly also influenced early twentieth-century fiction and autobiographical works that sought to stress the Iberian connection. While it is important to note the presence of Spanish colonial settlements in the Southeast long before the British came to the so-called New World, especially in view of the neglect of the Spanish presence in US history, it is also crucial to be conscious of the key differences between colonization in the Southeast and Southwest. Some historians see the Borderlands approach as tied to the US nation-state narrative, with borderlands seen only with respect to the US-Mexico border. Other historians, like José Cuello, see a strong relation between the Southwest and the Mexican colonial north.⁶⁰ Taken as a whole, however, historians are increasingly critical of the imperial institutional approach within the Borderlands framework that focuses primarily on missions, presidios, and villas controlled by Crown officials, rather than on social relations, modes of production, and autonomous local interests. Especially absent have been accounts of class and racial relations between settlers and between Spanish settlers and Indigenous tribes, often reduced to comments on raids and conflicts. It is here that more recent scholarship, like that of Southwest historians Raul Ramos and Omar S. Valerio-Jiménez, has taken steps to remediate these lacunae and biases.⁶¹

These absences and implicit biases within academic historiography and social science scholarship need, however, to be borne in mind as one examines fiction itself. How is land in the Southwest represented in our literature? What is said about social relations, culture, modes of production, and socio-economic relations between settlers and Indigenous groups? A look at several Tejano/a, Nuevomexicano/a, and Native American texts allows for locating sites of comparison vis-à-vis what historians and sociologists discuss in their scholarship. The question is whether cultural production—and specifically fiction—offers a different perspective, although not necessarily a less biased examination of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Southwest experiences. While the texts that we consider are quite diverse in their structure, literary strategies, and historical perspective and have been produced in different periods, but primarily in the twentieth century, several limit themselves to a representation of quaint village life, colorful characters, magical events, and the importance of making clear that within these communities there were (often) white, highly intelligent, educated individuals, and that not all were like the Mexican street people to be found in the cities and towns. Ramos puts a finer point on studying social hierarchies within Béxar and the social barri-

ers between military and civilian, elite and poor in Texas. And though some historians write of a “relatively unstratified class and racial structure” and of shifts in attitudes among the Béxar elite, even they admit that when it came to marriage, and therefore to land tenancy and transfer, there was by 1780 a decidedly ethnic racial elite or, more rightfully, a socioeconomic elite operating throughout the area.⁶² A dominant elitist and sometimes outright racist positioning is at the core of what we are terming spatial and discursive violence.

Put in broader terms, the question in analyzing Chicano/a literature dealing with nineteenth- and twentieth-century dispossession in the Southwest is, whose story has currency? Whose story is left out? What is said about dispossession? Where and by what means is a discursive violence being enacted?

We have found that the narrative told is primarily that of the landed, whether of Spanish or Mexican origin. By and large—as might be expected—the peons’ and servants’ stories have not carried weight, much less the story of Indigenous peoples. The narrative more often than not is that of the colonizers, the very same people who dispossessed the Indians. When Anglo settlers and soldiers arrived, the tables were turned and the Spanish/Mexican colonizers became in turn dispossessed, primarily of their land and power. Some of the settler colonists in South Texas, for example, continued to possess the land for a while; they maintained their Spanish language and their culture as the majority population in the lower Rio Grande valley, although English became the dominant official language. Later, macroeconomic factors, that is, changes in the mode of production, led to wholesale land transfer. In New Mexico, as in Texas, legal and economic factors likewise facilitated the eventual loss of land.

For the most part, our Chicano/a literature does not present early settlers, ranchers of Spanish and Mexican origin, as colonizers, as those who deprived Indigenous populations of their lands, killed a good number of them, and reduced a good portion to peonage and slavery, but rather as brave and intrepid settlers, bringing order and modernity to either (1) an empty landscape or (2) a barbaric hinterland. Much is made, on the other hand, of the Spanish origin of these landed ancestors, as if to stress that *Nuevomexicanos/as* and *Tejanos/as*, too, are white. The demonstrable truth is that most of the population of Mexican origin in the United States today, as previously noted, can trace their ancestry not to these early colonizers but to subsequent waves of immigrants, primarily mestizo, mulatto, and Indigenous peoples. Attempts at disavowing our role in the colonial enterprise and what might be termed “whitewashing”

DUKE

20 Introduction
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

this history cannot go unacknowledged and are part and parcel of the violent processes carried out on spatial and discursive terrains simultaneously.

It goes without saying that geography plays a prominent role in Chicano/a literature; geography is in many ways destiny, and to recall Harvey, “All geography is historical geography and all history is geographical history.”⁶³ But a caveat is in order: treating these works as part of a homogeneous territory is also highly problematic. As previously noted, many historians have found the Borderlands framework to not be an effective model for analyzing Spanish and Mexican settlements. But if the Borderlands approach has its shortcomings, so, too, does the treatment of the Southwest as one homogeneous region and Chicanos/as as a monolithic grouping. The Southwest, where the majority of people of Mexican origin still reside, is quite diversified, and the particular histories of the areas are quite different. For, as we shall see, colonial settlement in New Mexico, Texas, and California in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries varied widely in terms of demographics, class, race, social interaction with Indigenous populations, and proximity to other Spanish/Mexican communities. In fact, the very notion of region would have to be redefined, since in Texas, for example, North Texas and South Texas constituted two distinct and differentiated regions. Shifting territorial boundaries throughout this period also point to the need for a more complex, multiperspectival regional approach that considers and accounts for the multiplicity of temporalities in place in each.

Critical Antidote: Discursive Violence and the Damage Done

Ethnic minority writers in the United States have often felt the need to recount a history that has been neglected, erased, or misrepresented by official discourses and mainstream writers. Often the fictional accountings of the marginalized involve reconstituting memories of the past, whether memories of the writer, of his or her family, or of particular characters. In some cases memory is not only the other side of amnesiac forgetting but should also be seen in contradistinction to nostalgia, as pointed to by Houston A. Baker.⁶⁴ Nostalgia as a narrative modality often, if not always, results in a pastiche of a stereotypical past.⁶⁵ As Fredric Jameson makes clear, the nostalgic mode is incompatible with genuine historicity, and, in line with Baker, nostalgia conceives of past struggles as a “well-passed aberration.”⁶⁶ Critical memory, on the other hand, “judges severely, censures righteously, renders hard ethi-

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

cal evaluations of the past that it never defines as well-passed.”⁶⁷ It is Baker’s notion of critical memory that we draw on and adapt in our analysis, while bearing in mind other key notions like those of “cultural memory,” “national memory,” and “historical memory.”⁶⁸ In all these cases we have in mind collective memories—or even an intergenerational, almost genetic blood memory as some conceive it—but not always national memory, as in fact several collective memories necessarily coexist within a nation-state, whether within the United States or Mexico, as examples. Likewise, all of these forms of memory involve the effacing or repression of particular memories or traces of memories and, at the same time, the construction, deployment, and manipulation of false memories.⁶⁹ How does one then go about a more systematic and revealing analysis of particular effacings, manipulations, distancing, and reformulations of memories? What is the discursive violence being enacted at that level and, more importantly perhaps, to what end? Jameson’s notion of strategies of containment provides an access point, for clearly memory is always constituted and contained within particular ideological parameters.⁷⁰ Memory, too, is a contested terrain and site of discursive violence that is ironically, not merely in name only, rhetorical.

What we want to stress is that memory and identity are often closely linked to place, and while obvious, there is, as Harvey puts it, a “strong association between place, memory, and identity.”⁷¹ Local space is key to the fiction to be analyzed. In several of these texts there is also an overt attempt to construct—or rather reconstruct—a relational memory, a fluid spatial-temporal site subject to numerous influences.⁷² But whose memories are being constructed in these various texts? As previously noted, it will be primarily the memory of the elite, the landed colonists, that gets figured. One’s social location or relative positioning affects the specific standpoint from which one recalls—or reconstitutes—the past.

The writing of fiction that reconstructs memory, much like historiographic narratives themselves, implies the rewriting or recoding of textualized history, and these rewritings can vary greatly. Weber’s examination of perspectives on the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 in what is now New Mexico offers a prime example. In his introduction to a volume that includes essays by five historians of this watershed event, Weber points to several readings. While historians agree, for the most part, on what happened, there is much disagreement as to why. Some posit religion as a primary cause for the uprising; others offer an economic explanation that incorporates additional elements like drought, famine, and Apache raids; still others look to demographic changes and mis-

cegenation.⁷³ These multiple readings within the field of history are, of course, to be found as well when both the object and the optic lens are literary; both readings, however, are necessarily partial in scope and never impartial.

Recent historically revisionist fictions are particularly interesting in this regard. If one takes, for example, the 1999 novel *Shaman Winter* where through the device of a dream sequence Rudolfo Anaya presents how his twentieth-century detective, Sonny Baca, visits 1680, the year of the Pueblo Revolt, one finds that the past here is a simulacrum and accuracy of representation is not an issue. What stands out in Anaya's rendering and representation is the Pueblos' collective decision to rebel, predicated by the Spaniards' flogging and hanging of their medicine men, the prohibition of their rites and prayers to their kachinas and other religious practices, and the destruction of their kivas; although backgrounded, it comes through clearly as well that they were also concerned with the ongoing pestilence, drought, hunger, and wars brought by the Spanish.⁷⁴ While the men visiting the kiva mention the enslavement of their women and children, they do not bring into the picture the odious Spanish colonial *encomienda* system that underpinned that enslavement. Anaya's focus on religion as the primary cause and concern is in keeping with the rest of the novel, which puts into high relief shamans, kachinas, and the impact of the supernatural on moral and ethical issues of today. That said, Anaya's work stands out for its multiple temporalities and its incorporation of Indigenous concerns and revolts. In that way, it is unique in Chicano/a literature, in which Indigenous history and issues have rarely been configured, unless it is to focus, for example, on Aztec cosmogony. By contrast, as we will see later, the 2009 novel *Forgetting the Alamo, Or, Blood Memory* by Emma Pérez does make it a central point to exercise critical memory and to acknowledge the presence of Indigenous peoples in Texas in 1836, presenting us with another all-too-rare, if brief, instantiation of that often-erased history in our literature.⁷⁵

By and large, however, an overture to realism is the dominant mode of representation in the fictional narratives dealing with enclosures that we will analyze. A suggestive trend in some recent ethnic minority criticism argues for examining ethnic literature in terms of "peripheral realism."⁷⁶ In their work, Jed Esty and Colleen Lye, for example, convincingly point to the importance of theorizing "the referential function of the text," arguing that a peripheral vantage point has much to offer in its recoding of history.⁷⁷ We agree with Esty and Lye that this off-center, eccentric as it were, recoding of sociospatial considerations is crucial for understanding the process of enclosures and for analyzing how they are conceptualized and represented in

literature. As spatial-temporal constructions, enclosures require multilayered frameworks that take into account not only the historical moment, the phase of the capitalist mode of production, and the type of enclosure, but also how these enclosures are spatially enacted and imposed. While we draw from a range of frameworks for our analysis of enclosures and literature, the peripheral standpoint suggested by Esty and Lye interests us in particular as we look at what literature includes or leaves out about dispossessions of the past and how it examines earlier periods. We will look to these peripheral representations of nineteenth-century local events for the relevancy of these renderings for regional histories, even when there is—perhaps necessarily—partial distortion involved. In this regard, a brief example is telling: Alejandro Morales's 1983 novel *Reto en el Paraíso* deals in part with spatial violence through a narrative that recounts the dispossession of the historical figure Antonio Coronel.⁷⁸ While dispossession of Mexican landowners was in fact widespread throughout the US Southwest after 1848, in this particular case, the Californio Coronel, who supported the Confederacy during the Civil War, who was elected treasurer of the state of California, and who profited personally from the forced sale of Californio lands, cannot be construed as the unmitigated, blameless victim of dispossession through violence as he is represented in Morales's novel. Yet the novel does allow for enunciating a peripheral and translocal vantage point of the many who lost their land in California, even if not in the specific instance recounted. Fiction by definition takes liberties with history, but then again so does historiography. Our analysis thus calls for a review of the historical moments as well as the implementation of a theoretical framework that examines—and takes seriously—how these spatial and sociohistorical issues are configured in literary texts in all their complexity, contradiction, and discursive violence. Space, like time, as we know, is multilayered and variable, and often the site of violence as well. The same follows for literature.

The next four chapters look at the spatial and discursive violence enacted by a variety of both old and new enclosures in the US Southwest and address the range of modalities these enclosures exhibit, including those imposed by force and violence, by means of legislation and treaties, or by court decisions and governmentality as well as through debt and, even more recently, by neoliberal policies, urban renewal, and eminent domain policies.

A short conclusion takes up the overarching issues discussed and the centrality of identity as tied to land—as well as land loss—as an experience, both formative and traumatic. The inscription, as it were, of this relationship to

the land and the mechanisms by which land is alienated from its inhabitants is registered in the literature produced in the affected areas and underscores the importance of a nuanced accounting for spatial and discursive violence. We end by discussing the import of contemporary changes and new patterns of the ongoing process of enclosures evident in the current moment and think on how these might lead to the generation of new senses of place identity as we move further into the twenty-first century.

DUKE

**UNIVERSITY
PRESS**

Notes

Introduction

- 1 Caffentzis, “Tale of Two Conferences,” 6.
- 2 See Harvey, *New Imperialism*, 137.
- 3 De Angelis, “Separating the Doing and the Deed.”
- 4 See also Perelman, *Invention of Capitalism*; and Caffentzis, “Power of Money.”
- 5 De Angelis, “Separating the Doing and the Deed,” 75. De Angelis uses “primitive accumulation” and “enclosures” as interchangeable terms. Marx himself noted that the difference between accumulation and primitive accumulation is not a substantive one and that it continues. In the *Grundrisse* Marx notes, “Once this separation is given, the production process can only produce it anew, reproduce it, and reproduce it on an expanded scale” (461). Consult, too, Midnight Notes Collective, *Midnight Oil*.
- 6 See Marx, *Capital*, 724.
- 7 Viñas, *Indios, ejército y frontera*. His work is unfortunately little referenced by US historians but has much to add to a deeper and layered understanding of enclosures and dispossession in the Américas, North and South.
- 8 For an analysis of Foucault’s notion of governmentality, see Dean, *Governmentality*.
- 9 Wallace, *Long Bitter Trail*, 4.
- 10 Wallace, *Long Bitter Trail*, 73.
- 11 Wallace, *Long Bitter Trail*, 74.
- 12 Foucault, “Governmentality.”
- 13 Amin, *Accumulation on a World Scale*, 3.
- 14 De Angelis, “Separating the Doing and the Deed,” 57.

D

U

K

E

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

- 15 De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 60.
- 16 Harvey, *New Imperialism*, 232.
- 17 Wood, "Logics of Power."
- 18 Caffentzis, "On the Notion of a Crisis," 2.
- 19 Olivera and Lewis, *Cochabamba!*
- 20 De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 71.
- 21 See De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 77, for a typology of new enclosures.
- 22 De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 82.
- 23 Newkirk, "Great Land Robbery."
- 24 De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 58.
- 25 De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 59.
- 26 Another instance of a concept having a determining if not explicitly enunciated role can be found, for example, in Rene Girard's work on scapegoats. Girard finds that in narratives where there is no direct mention of scapegoats, scapegoating is often the controlling principle. See Girard, *Scapegoat*, 119–20.
- 27 Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*.
- 28 On Lefebvre, see Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism*, 134.
- 29 Turner, "Significance of the Frontier," 2.
- 30 Stedman Jones, "History of U.S. Imperialism," 217.
- 31 Rana, *Two Faces of American Freedom*, 8–19.
- 32 Rana, *Two Faces of American Freedom*, 7.
- 33 Benson, "Historian as Myth Maker," 3. See also Decker, "Great Speculation," 358.
- 34 Dunbar-Ortiz, *Indigenous Peoples' History*; Goeman, *Mark My Words*.
- 35 See Smith, *Uneven Development*.
- 36 For a discussion of the California process of spatial and discursive violence and the place of the *Californio* testimonios in these, see Sánchez, *Telling Identities*.
- 37 Harootunian, *Marx after Marx*, 5.
- 38 Harootunian, *Marx after Marx*, 201.
- 39 Harootunian, *Marx after Marx*, 211, 216.
- 40 Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Social Classification," 181–82.
- 41 Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Social Classification," 194–95. Transmodernity is discussed by Quijano. See also Dussel, "Philosophy of Liberation," 345.
- 42 Mignolo, "Geopolitics of Knowledge," 234.
- 43 Mignolo, "Geopolitics of Knowledge," 238.
- 44 Harootunian, *Marx after Marx*, 64.
- 45 Tomba, "Marx's Temporal Bridges," 90.

- 46 Harootunian, "Piercing the Present with the Past," 64.
- 47 Harvey, *New Imperialism*, 137.
- 48 Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic*, 531.
- 49 Culture Clash, *Oh, Wild West!*
- 50 Viramontes, *Their Dogs Came with Them*.
- 51 Smith, *Uneven Development*, 200; Quiñonez, *Chango's Fire*.
- 52 Briggs and Van Ness, introduction to *Land, Water, and Culture*, 6.
- 53 Briggs and Van Ness, introduction, 6.
- 54 Briggs and Van Ness, introduction, 8.
- 55 Poyo and Hinojosa, "Spanish Texas and Borderlands Historiography in Transition," 411.
- 56 Truett and Young, "Borderlands Unbound," 326; Mikesell and Murphy, "Framework for a Comparative Study."
- 57 Hämäläinen and Johnson, *Major Problems in the History of North American Borderlands*.
- 58 Poyo and Hinojosa, "Spanish Texas and Borderlands Historiography in Transition," 413.
- 59 Weber, "John Francis Bannon and the Historiography of the Spanish Borderlands."
- 60 Cuello, "Beyond the 'Borderlands,'" 292.
- 61 Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo*. See also Valerio-Jiménez, *River of Hope*.
- 62 Poyo and Hinojosa, "Spanish Texas and Borderlands Historiography in Transition," 415–16.
- 63 Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism*, 135.
- 64 Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*; Baker, "Critical Memory and the Black Public Sphere."
- 65 Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 19, 21.
- 66 Jameson, *Postmodernism*; Baker, "Critical Memory and the Black Public Sphere," 7.
- 67 Baker, "Critical Memory and the Black Public Sphere," 7.
- 68 Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 3; Pierre Nora's work on memory is reviewed in Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 406; Maurice Halbwachs's notion of collective memory is also taken up in Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 408.
- 69 Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 444.
- 70 Jameson, *Political Unconscious*, 266.
- 71 The connections between place and memory are nicely drawn out in David Harvey, "Place as the Locus of Collective Memory," in *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference*, 304.
- 72 Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism*, 137.
- 73 Weber, *What Caused the Pueblo Revolt of 1680?*, 3–18.
- 74 *Shaman Winter* is part of Anaya's detective tetralogy that includes *Zia Summer*, *Río Grande Fall*, and *Jemez Spring*.

- 75 Pérez, *Forgetting the Alamo*.
- 76 Esty and Lye, "Peripheral Realism Now."
- 77 Esty and Lye, "Peripheral Realism Now," 278.
- 78 Morales, *Reto en el Paraíso*.

Chapter One. Spatial Violence and Modalities of Colonialism

- 1 In the case of Australia, the elimination of Aboriginal peoples, that is, the native population, took a similar form, according to Patrick Wolfe, who in his work on settler colonialism in Australia explains what happened there by distinguishing between colonialism and settler colonialism. See Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*.
- 2 Marx, *Capital*, 723. In Australia the strategies were also cultural and legal. The European settlers manufactured their justification with a gendered bent through what Wolfe calls "nescience," false rumors about female promiscuity and uncertain paternity that led to official rejection of the rights of Aboriginal children to inherit their father's land once the father's paternity was placed in doubt (Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*, 26–27).
- 3 Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz cites Cree scholar Lorraine Le Camp, who calls this kind of erasure "terrannullism." See Dunbar-Ortiz, *Indigenous Peoples' History*, 230–31.
- 4 Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, 33.
- 5 Berle, "A Few Questions for the Diplomatic Pouch," 3, 32.
- 6 Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 21.
- 7 Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 25.
- 8 Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 26, 27, 33, 29. "Improvement" may come, on the other hand, through mestizaje. Children of mixed parentage in Australia, for example, were deemed non-Indigenous and thus belonged to the white population; in this way the Aboriginal race was reduced, as no half-caste children were allowed to remain in native camps, nor were they able to inherit, in effect separating children from their mothers and "breeding them white" (Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*, 11).
- 9 Marx and Engels, *Ireland and the Irish Question*.
- 10 Marx and Engels, *Ireland and the Irish Question*, 29.
- 11 This midcentury catastrophe occurred at the same time as another agricultural revolution that enabled landlords to produce through the use of machinery and modern systems of agriculture, leaving farmworkers without work and land. The Irish were not only dispossessed but pauperized and forced "to cross the sea in search of a new country and of new lands" (Marx and Engels, *Ireland and the Irish Question*, 66). Enclosures and the forcible eviction of Irish peasants led to the emigration of 1,200,436 Irish agricultural workers to the United States between 1847 and 1852.