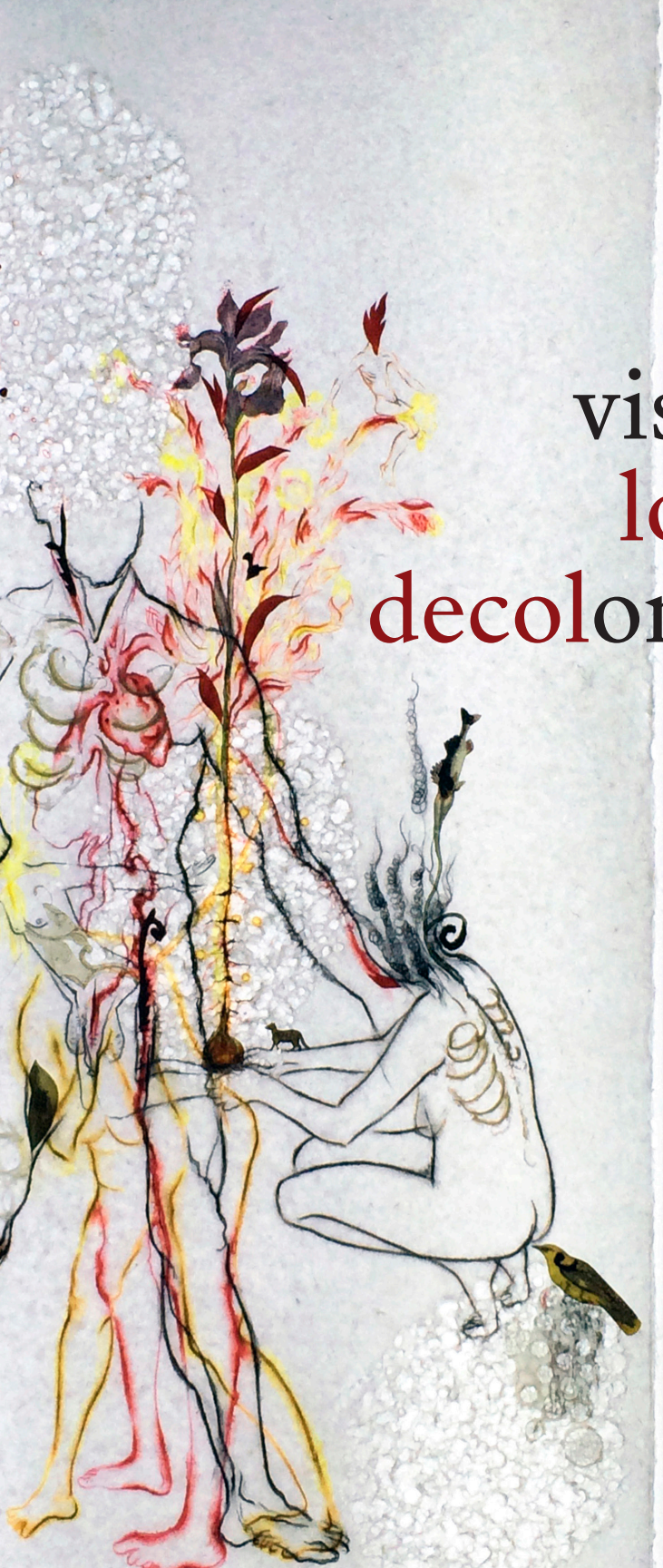

the visceral logics of decolonization.

NEETU KHANNA

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Introduction.

THE VISCERAL LOGICS OF DECOLONIZATION

We can feel new feelings. We can learn to be aware with a new awareness. We can envisage the possibility of creating new races from the latent heat in our dark brown bodies.
—Mulk Raj Anand, *Untouchable*

The interrogative impulse of this book emerges from a set of questions about how a racialized sensibility sediments in the reflexes of the colonized subject. If the unfinished project of decolonization demands we dismantle the enduring ideologies that continue to sustain the legacies of empire, I ask: How are we to account for and disrupt the ways in which the colonized subject becomes complicit with these social regimes? What would it mean to decolonize these deeply gendered sensibilities—to undo these emotive lessons in the habits of mind and memory of the postcolonial subject? How are we to feel new feelings? This study opens up a new pathway for thinking through the critical problematics of decolonization by exploring a dense and knotted set of relations between embodied experience and political feeling—a set of relations we may understand as *visceral*.

An itch, a craving, a tingling sensation, waves of nausea, the heat of anger, convulsions of ecstasy, the pull of emotive contagion—often staged through the bowels, digestive tracts, and viscous textures of the body—these richly phenomenological figures that characterize the visceral aesthetics of this archive drive my study of revolutionary feeling. *Visceral Logics* is a feminist study of the political forces and historical materialities that

bring forth a series of complex affective forms in the apocalyptic moments of decolonization and the rise of modern nationalism. In what follows, I turn to an archive of Marxist anticolonial writers who provide a remarkable experimental staging ground for a materialist exploration of racialized emotions. I take as my primary case study a collective of Muslim internationalist authors who shared a commitment to Marxist literature and art as a source of progressive transformation for the Indian nation and the consciousness of its new citizens. These writers, active from the 1930s through the 1960s, joined the world's literary intelligentsia by writing in dialogue with the Bloomsbury Group of London, the modernists of Paris, the Soviet socialist realists, the Afro-Asian Writers Association, and members of the Third World Marxist movements seeking to transform the global social order. *Visceral Logics* returns to this critical prehistory to the Bandung cultural moment of the 1960s.

Thinking with the visceral poses a particular challenge to our theories of empire and decolonization, which have largely focused on the discursive and ideological contours of colonial violence and power. This embodied interface confounds distinctions between thought and feeling, habits of mind and the habituated reflexes of the body, the ideological and the intuitive, the involuntary and the desired. The visceral traffics between the materiality and metaphor of bodily life. Any endeavor to think these dimensions of decolonization will necessitate an engagement not only with the discursive practices of empire, but also with how these habits of mind are secured by emotive ones. If our political and scholarly practices aim to dismantle colonial habits of thought and ideologies, we must be able to engage the multiple sites in which these enduring ideologies continue to operate. We must be able to attend to that fraught and unruly relationship between feelings and what we obscurely refer to as "consciousness." Tracing a constellation of bodily actions and reactions, I theorize the visceral as a critical dimension of Marxian theories of revolutionary consciousness, an anticolonial political thought born of the internationalist moment.

Scholars of decolonization have long been preoccupied with understanding the violence colonialism enacts on the mind and body of the colonized subject. Frantz Fanon famously refocused for us the definition of "decolonization," revising psychoanalysis to theorize the affective trauma of colonization within a "stretched" Marxist political philosophy and a phenomenology that imagines collective liberation along with a sustained critique of bourgeois historicism. As Gerard Aching writes, "The complex-

ity of [Fanon's] use of the term *decolonization* emerges precisely from his powerful combination of psychoanalysis, political philosophy, strategies of national liberation, and the critique of political elites" (25). One of the challenges Fanon lays out for us in his vision of decolonization in *Les damnés de la terre* (*The Wretched of the Earth* [1963]), especially when read through his earlier writings in *Peau noire, masques blancs* (*Black Skin, White Masks* [1952]), is that a collective revolutionary consciousness must both arise from and transform the psychic trauma of racialization. Decolonization in this conception draws on the experiential energies of a fractured psychic life to mobilize it into the very engine of an emancipatory consciousness.

In the writings of Fanon, as well as those of the Indian Marxist authors in this study, the visceral response of the colonized subject is imagined as that catalyst for this transformation. These authors pose vital questions about how the psychological trauma of colonial subjugation can become the resource and engine of a collective liberation. Thus, while my use of "the visceral" certainly draws on many familiar understandings—such as the body's intuitive, "gut" reactions and emotive response—what I mean by the term is quite specific to the political tradition under scrutiny in these chapters. Colonial and revolutionary affect both derive from the same emotive energetic. That they derive from the same substance, in the Spinozan sense, animates problematics of decolonization in this study. The visceral, as a *logic* of decolonization, interanimates the energies of both colonized and revolutionary affects within the physiological responses of the racialized subject; it is imbued with the potentiality of a radical affective reconstitution.

This book takes as a case study the Marxist movements within Indian nationalism, what has been called the "progressive" legacy in the history of Indian aesthetic and cultural production featuring the aesthetic experiments of the largely Muslim literary intelligentsia of India, including Ismat Chughtai, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Mulk Raj Anand, and Ahmed Ali. These writers placed questions of gender and sexuality squarely at the center of their debates on social transformation and decolonization. Writing primarily in Urdu, Hindi, and English, many of these writers organized formally under the title of the All-India Progressive Writers' Association (PWA) and the Indian People's Theater Association (IPTA). As Priyamvada Gopal characterizes these writers, they were "English-educated, fluently bilingual colonial subjects strongly committed to anti-colonialism; members of relatively elite social groupings invested in a variety of Marxist and

socialist projects; littérateurs who were devoted to the literary craft while urgently concerned with social and political transformation; and, last but not least, Muslims who were engaged in a critique of Islamist orthodoxy even as Hindu majoritarianism threatened to exclude Muslim communities from the life of the Indian nation" (*Literary Radicalism in India*, 7). *Visceral Logics* charts the artistic experiments of India's progressive political movements, from the utopian visions of the secular nation through the violent aftermath of independence and partition, to reveal how these authors reached for alternative, gendered sensibilities of national belonging. These imaginings, I argue, were predicated on a radical transformation of the emotive life of the gendered colonial—and increasingly "communal"—Indian citizen subject.

As the prevailing trauma of colonial violence remains lodged in the racialized sensibilities of our postcolonial world, what would it mean to undo the visceral lessons of colonialism in the habits of mind and emotive reflexes of the postcolonial subject? In pursuit of this question, I turn to the internationalist political thought of the decolonizing world of the 1930s through the 1960s, because, as I argue, these very questions were at the center of the artistic experiments and global debates on national liberation, albeit in poetic and aesthetic registers of racialized feeling that we have yet to fully understand. While Fanon's writings on decolonization remain a cornerstone for this project, I map an alternative feminist genealogy of the visceral in this book, one that both provokes and exceeds the questions Fanon has left in his wake. Studying progressive aesthetics through the lens of the visceral surfaces imaginaries of decolonization that are fundamentally driven by transformations of normative gender subjectivities through the reimagining of corporeal inhabitance and bodily being.

The visceral repositions our approach to the scene and study of affect by centering the somatic life of the body as a fundamental site of colonial subjugation and corporeal control. This study of decolonization necessitates that we shift our inquiries from the psychoanalytic unconscious to the somatic unconscious. I take the physiological reflex as our point of entry into the study of the colonized psyche as constitutive rather than merely expressive of thought and feeling. Thinking with the visceral, in other words, requires that our theories of consciousness and liberation contend with the involuntary and automated reflexes of the body—realms that are largely relegated to the instinctual or innate; seen as biologically programmed and therefore outside the reach of cultural critique. In fact, this study began by trac-

ing a peculiar pattern of densely affective, explosive figures specific to the foundational writings of the anticolonial philosopher Frantz Fanon. These bodily responses of laughter, weeping, trembling, nausea, and vomiting—both involuntary and emotive, bodily and cerebral—appear within the distinctive stylistics of Fanon's writings not simply as metaphors but, to borrow from Raymond Williams, hovering at "the very edge of semantic availability" (134). Why have these affective responses evaded sustained analytic inquiry? What are they being called on to do within the anticolonial theorizing of this moment? This book asks how we can "read" the visceral of this transnational aesthetic and how a rethinking might address deep and sedimented problematics of postcoloniality anew.

One of the best-known and most widely studied scenes of colonial affect remains Fanon's depiction of the colonized black subject's encounter with a young white child on the train. The child exclaims to his mother, "Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened," setting off the existential crisis of the narrator: "In the train it was no longer a question of being aware of my body in the third person but in a triple person.... I existed triply: I occupied space. I moved toward the other ... and the evanescent other, hostile but not opaque, transparent, not there, disappeared, nausea" (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 112). The Sartrean figure of nausea here renders the painful existential fragmentation and tripling of consciousness set in motion by the gaze and incisive speech act of a young white child on a train. In the chapters to come, I propose that we rethink this nausea through this scene's peculiar body logics: "'Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!' Frightened! Frightened! Now they were beginning to be afraid of me. I made up my mind to laugh myself to tears, but laughter had become impossible" (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 112). How may we read the sign of failed laughter within Fanon's race theories? For what begins as the unfulfilled desire for laughter ends in this state of nausea—a visceral transference of yet another frustrated desire for a cathartic release. I argue that it is in fact the narrator's thwarted desire for laughter—the explosive and vibratory logics of a colonized laughter—that sets in motion this visceral figure of nausea. Reading nausea in terms of failed laughter begins to open up the way in which these psychosomatic figures summon the accruing energies of the body. These visceral figures, I contend, are central to Fanon's theorizing of the black colonized consciousness as well as his theories of decolonization.

To magnify the peculiar bodily activities of Fanon's famous scene on

the train through the lens of the visceral is also to focus the volatility of gendered bodily response within the theater of colonial power, and to center our attention on the energetic life of emotions that cannot be wholly explained by the logics of the mind or language. This phenomenological rendering of the colonized consciousness places a certain ontological pressure on dominant conceptions of the body and its role in organizing the logics of decolonization. As Fanon's now canonical scene of colonial crises continues to unfold, there is another intriguing transference of the convulsive body of laughter:

> Look at the nigger! … Mama, a Negro! … Hell, he's getting mad.… [L]ook, a nigger, it's cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother's arms: "Mama, the nigger is going to eat me up!" …
>
> I sit down at the fire.… I felt an easily identifiable flood mounting out of the countless facets of my being. I was about to be angry. The fire was long since out, and once more the nigger was trembling. (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 114)

In this scene of psychosomatic dynamics between the white boy and the black man, a scene of terror and (mis)recognition and of semantic ambiguities and slippages (is he trembling in fear or anger, or is he cold? Who is afraid, angry, cold?), the psychic interiorities of the black subject resonate through the vibratory logics of his body. How do we read the trembling subjects of this scene of power and psychic violence?

Focusing the affective energetics that animate this scene, I ask how the black male subject and the handsome young white boy are "moved" (physically and emotionally) in this moment of colonial encounter. What bodies "tend to do," Sara Ahmed writes, are "the effects of history" ("Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology," 553). Underwritten by the materialist philosophies and scientific imaginaries of the historical moment in which Fanon is writing and thinking decolonization, these affects are a kind of energy accumulating within and between these bodies, the intensity of the trembling rising as the two bodies "heat up": *I sit down by the fire.… I was beginning to be angry.* The narrator recounts a tense phenomenology of racialized anticipation, the not yet of a racialized rage, compounded in

mounting energies between the black subject and the white child—*an easily identifiable flood mounting out of the countless facets of my being*. If, for Spinoza, affects are characterized by states between motion and rest, for Fanon, colonial affects are inscribed within temporalities of momentum and states of (agonized) suspension and anticipation. In the mirroring of these two trembling subjects—a peculiar synchronicity—the theater of a colonial power struggle plays out between the adult black man and white child, complicating a simple binary opposition. Like tuning forks, the somatic responses of this scene focus the energies vibrating between subjects. Their energies animate and enervate the subjects in ways that synchronize their physical responses, even as the scene seeks to stage the violence of colonial power and difference.

An affective reading of this scene reveals a rich and complex dynamic of colonial power and relation as Fanon brings to focus a peculiar phenomenon of emotive contagion and transmission. The transfer and transaction of emotive energies orchestrates these two bodies. Trembling in tandem, these two subjects seem to have little control over a certain affective manipulation organizing their bodily responses and setting in motion this colonial drama. Inextricable from the psyche and consciousness of the racialized subject, what is the nature of this *visceral* manipulation in somatic logics seeming to go awry? The corporeal logics of this scene tether the colonial subject to the colonizer. But it is the affective dynamic vibrating between them that binds them, interanimating these bodies in what Arun Saldanha terms the "event" of race, a historical force that operates through the "dynamic physicality of human bodies" (8). This volatility and interanimation of Fanonian affect are central features of the anticolonial imaginary that I analyze in this book. The visceral offers a materialist analytic that recasts the scene of racialized affect through the energetic dynamic that reverberates between two bodies, animating and activating racialized repositories in automated response.

It is in such volatile scenes of colonial encounter that a transformation of consciousness is imagined, precisely because this is where racialized logics in visceral responses begin to misbehave. These involuntary bodily responses archive and automatize a deep and violent history of colonial subjugation. The visceral logics orchestrating this scene cannot, however, simply be disrupted or overturned by a psychic intervention, even as they are intimately linked with a condition of consciousness. These sites of affective manipulation—where the colonial (dis)ordering of the gendered

body secures psychic logics in somatic action—are just as crucial to the study of colonial power as the discursive logics we have tended to privilege in postcolonial scholarship. Embodied repositories of racialized memories continue to play out recursively *because they remain unrecognized*. It is thus my contention that any study of colonial power must make legible the visceral logics of the colonized subject so that we may interrupt their incessant repetitions.

Our postcolonial pasts are exploding upon us in the present in the forms of militant nationalisms across the globe. The visceral, as I develop the concept in this book, is an analytic for the violent landscapes of our postcolonial present, shaped as they are by these traumatic pasts. What the visceral allows me to think (and, in fact, I argue that we cannot think without) are a set of questions imperative to the critique of postcolonial nationalisms, as well as their recruitment of diasporic communities. How does the nation-state, in its various colonial and postcolonial configurations, gain complicity from its gendered subjects? How are these conditions of "consciousness," these "structures of feeling," locked in the automatic reflexes of the body under modern regimes of subjection? How are colonial traumas and their structures of feeling inherited, their emotive genres passed down through generations?

This book argues that the biopolitical interface I call "visceral" was at the center of the anticolonial political debates surrounding the revolution of consciousness in the first half of the twentieth century. By mining the visceral, I seek to uncover an undertheorized dimension of a global Marxist aesthetics that emerged with particular force during the era of decolonization. Its literatures of decolonization are saturated with the kinds of biological and corporeal details I work through in the chapters that follow. Sartrean figures of nausea and Bakhtinian tropes of the grotesque, lingering at the abject sites where the body opens to the world, for example, are some of the most familiar visceral grammars of this era. Achille Mbembe writes about the colonial imaginary, "Beyond specifically the mouth, belly, and phallus, the body is the principal locale of the idioms and fantasies used in depicting power" (7). This study brings into focus the theoretical labor in which these figures engage within the global materialist imaginaries of decolonization. With readings spanning the canonical writings of Fanon and Muslim internationalists, I aim to draw out a philosophical through line that underwrites these writers' anticolonial imaginaries.

This book draws on and extends the modes of inquiry opened up by the

feminist and queer theory branches of affect studies and new materialisms for how they give name and form to the affects of late capitalism and their role in violent regimes of normative desire, "that place where appetites find a shape in the predictable" (Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 2).[1] I am indebted to the work of Sianne Ngai who argues, drawing on Fredric Jameson, that we need new emotive epistemes or "affective ideologemes" for the forms that emerge under these conditions of modernity and late capitalism (7). However, affect studies has largely failed to establish within postcolonial studies the traction it has gained in studies of gender and sexuality. We may understand this gap as due to the difficulty of theorizing the conditions of racialization and colonialism through the lens of affect, which has largely relied on Western archives and has often slipped into universalizing abstractions of embodied experience.[2] Such theories of affect risk eliding the historical and sociological specificities of the subject under the conditions of colonialism, as well as the epistemological assumptions underlying the theory of affect. Grounded in its challenge to universalizing tendencies of theory and criticism, postcolonial studies defined itself from its inception as a project of decolonizing knowledge production. What happens to our theories of affect when we shift our aesthetic focus to the colonial context, to non-Western literary and linguistic traditions, and to the era of decolonization rather than the aesthetics of late capitalism in the West that have tended to dominate affect studies archives?

While the recent "turn" to affect has become richly generative of new academic genres, reading practices, and modalities of intellectual discourse with which we may engage modern legacies of race and colonialism, much of affect theory, inflected by various schools of psychoanalysis, has largely relied on what Teresa Brennan calls the emotively contained subject as "the last bastion of Eurocentricism in critical thinking" (2).[3] In other words, theories of affect tend to rely on an imaginary of the individuation and self-containment of the emoting individual. Brennan locates this dynamic of emotive contagion as a crucial missing piece in the critical and scientific literatures in Western psychology—what she calls the transmission of affect. Throughout this study, we will find that the visceral appears only in moments of encounter—in other words, in the dynamics that "set off" or trigger the visceral response of the racialized subject. The somatic response is triggered by the proximity and presence of other bodies: bodily energies and actions inscribed in dense relations of power and alterity. Indeed, as we will find, the "event-ness" of race, to borrow from

Saldanha, becomes the very condition for the emergence of the visceral's appearance on the stage of a revolutionary history. Rejecting the fiction of the bounded individual, such an understanding of racialized embodiment requires a study of affect through the relations of colonial subjectivity and the experiences of the relational self and its inscriptions in power.[4]

Attending to the visceral grammars of colonial and postcolonial politics, I propose, is a task of retooling our reading practices. The questions of the chapters are refracted through one of the central questions of the Marxist anticolonial movements gaining momentum across the globe in the first half of the twentieth century: What roles do political art and aesthetics play in disrupting and reconditioning the visceral logics that sustain the projects of empire? Key political contestations—over decolonization and the nascent nation, between religion and secularism, regarding caste and heredity, or in regulating intimacy and sexuality, to name a few—are consistently hashed out in the cavities and tissues of the visceral. This book approaches the aesthetics of affect and embodiment within these texts as particularly saturated nodes of historical and representational predicament in a decolonizing world. Here I follow Ngai, drawing on Rei Terada, in her approach to the aesthetics of affect and emotion as densely knotted "interpretations of predicaments": "signs that not only render visible different registers of problem (formal, ideological, sociohistorical) but conjoin these problems in a distinctive manner" (3). The visceral is a concentrated site of postcolonial crises where the contradictions of colonial and postcolonial modernity are most violently at play. To borrow from David Eng, "These structures of feeling, to cite a concept from Raymond Williams, are those emergent social forms, ephemeral and difficult to grasp or name, that appear precisely at a moment of emergency, when dominant cultural norms go into crises" ("The End(s) of Race," 1486).

With this book I join a range of scholars who have sought to capture and explore the complexity of the Progressive Writers' aesthetic insights into Indian national politics, including Ulka Anjaria, Ben Conisbee Baer, Jessica Berman, Toral Gajarawala, Priyamvada Gopal, Gayatri Gopinath, Rakshanda Jalil, Aamir Mufti, Tahira Naqvi, Alex Padamsee, Geeta Patel, and Snehal Shingavi.[5] I am indebted to these scholars, and particularly to the South Asian feminist work that reveals the Progressive Writers' Movement's nuanced engagements with gender and sexuality as a site of radical transformation.[6] But this study diverges from previous projects on the Progressive Writers in significant ways. While the Progressive Writers' Move-

ment has been studied largely in terms of Indian national politics, to which my analysis is greatly indebted, the visceral logic of my study repositions this movement by drawing out its materialist philosophy—an index of its internationalist dimensions. The analytic I develop in this book reveals how progressive aesthetics provide the sites through which these writers mined the dense interplay between gendered colonial embodiments and a Marxian revolutionary consciousness. The aesthetics of the visceral emerge from the dense internationalist cross-traffic of philosophies and aesthetics: the hybridizing of European modernisms with Soviet realisms and Urdu literary forms, and of Western philosophical traditions (from existentialism to psychoanalysis) with Sufi metaphysics, Sanskrit texts, and indigenous religious performance genres. The visceral as a materialist logic of decolonization invokes both the historical materialism, the Marxism of the movement, and the materialist traditions of thinking through the energetic life of bodily matter: Freudian psychoanalysis, phenomenology, and the monism attributed to Spinoza.

These readings of the visceral shift the frame through which the Progressive Writers have been conventionally read in terms of both national politics and Marxist philosophy. Viscerality demands that we recognize materialism at play in their internationalist political thought. As Snehal Shingavi notes, the politics of progressive writing in India during this period have largely been explained "through nationalist figures rather than the internationalist genealogies of Marxism, realism, and modernism or vernacular genealogies" ("When the Pen Was a Sword," 9). The visceral, as an optic of anticolonial thought, sharpens our understanding of the role these writers played in the internationalist development of anticolonial political thought. The aesthetic and philosophical links between the Progressive Writers and the canonical writings of Fanon that bookend this study gesture toward the internationalism surfaced by the visceral.[7]

To consider the visceral figures in Fanon's canonical writings is also to ask what it means to understand the explosive and vibratory logics of a colonized laughter—its logics of pleasure and pain—as crucial mediators between his language and politics. While the vibratory logics of the body organize Fanon's revolutionary subject, it is the convulsive logics of a mass euphoria, of political agitation, that I center in this study of nationalist ecstasy. If it is the poetics of political "agitation" that organize the relationship between religious and nationalist euphoria within an Indian Muslim internationalism, it is the tactile poetics of "irritation" that guide my in-

quiries into the Dalit subject of India. In a chapter on colonial cravings, the compulsive logics of the body caught in the dialectic of desire and disgust guide my feminist inquiries into the violent regimes of colonial hygiene and sexual discipline. And while touch and tactility come to organize the imagined liberation of the casteized subject, this tactile palate is expanded to questions of texture for my interrogation of colonial disgust.

That I turn to the unlikely source of Marxist literature to explore these questions of emotive experience is a central intervention of this book. *Visceral Logics* intentionally reengages a Marxist category that seems to have become obsolete—dismissed as naïve or passé within contemporary postcolonial debates—so as to conjugate contemporary studies of affect with Marxian theories of consciousness.[8] The visceral inquiries of this book open up a far more complex and incisive mobilization of the revolutionary consciousness than previously understood. For that reason, my study constitutes a renewed engagement with materialist articulations of the revolutionary consciousness that were so central to the anticolonial literatures of this era.

Ann Stoler reminds us that colonial violence operated through two interrelated sources on the colonized body: "one that worked through the requisition of bodies . . . and a second that mold[ed] new structures of feeling—new habits of heart and mind" (2). In other words, the production of modern colonial subjects was carried out through both the management of physical bodies, sanctioned through racial grammars of difference, and the emotive conditioning and molding of the colonized subject. Colonial disciplinary regimes sought to train the proper sensibilities of taste and "comportment" in colonial subjects, and these structures of sentiment functioned as dense "transfer points" for the consolidation of imperial power (Stoler, 4). Education in the British colonies, for example, which was famously couched in Victorian obsessions with gendered and sexual propriety, was naturalized in the powerful "gut" reflexes of the colonized subject.[9] Parama Roy writes compellingly about the molding of new notions of appetite, health, and hygiene in colonial India—new forms of disgust that naturalized the cultivation of what Stoler identifies as taste and comportment. As Roy writes, drawing on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's formulation of the imperial project of "soul making"—transforming "the heathen into a human": "The projects of epistemic overhaul involved in making heathens human occurred in several registers concurrently. For one thing, they were irreducibly somaticized; souls in the making were more often than not incar-

nated in bodies whose appetites, expressions, and comings and goings had to be rigorously fashioned. *Soul making and body shaping, physiology and epistemology were intimately conjugated*" (7).[10] The visceral theories of this book explore the nature of this conjugation.

In a powerful internationalist vision of decolonization, the anticolonial writer and activist Mulk Raj Anand, a leading figure in the progressive Marxist movements in India, writes in 1935 that we can "feel new feelings." "We can learn to be aware with a new awareness," Anand writes (*Untouchable*, 153). What is so remarkable about this articulation of revolution is its imagining of a human collective whose very ways of feeling could be a site of radical transformation. In this vision, what we obscurely refer to as a racialized awareness could be a site of radical relearning. These emotive and embodied repositories of the body must be the sites of revolution precisely because empire has already monopolized them. Asking what it could mean to feel new feelings, to borrow Anand's poetic doubling, opens up a series of materialist engagements with the elusive space in which "the instinctual is subjected to the social," where colonial discourses are naturalized in the automated reflexes of the body (Gopal, *Literary Radicalism in India*, 71).[11] In this book I think with these artists and activists as they were debating the transformative potentialities of various visceral states that motivate "progressive" feeling: the convulsions of nationalist ecstasy, the heat of a righteous rage, the compulsions of forbidden cravings, the erotics of colonial disgust, the spasms of an ecstatic terror.

Poetics of Progressive Feeling

The PWA traces its genesis to a group of four Urdu writers who published a collection of short stories in an anthology titled *Angarey* (Embers, or Burning Coals). The collection openly criticized the religious orthodoxies of their Muslim communities and challenged their era's social mandates on gender and sexuality. It created such outrage and backlash that the anthology was banned by the British government six months after its publication (Gopal, *Literary Radicalism in India*, 15). Each of these writers—Ahmed Ali, Rashid Jahan, Sajjad Zaheer, and Mahmudazzafar Khan—became a leading member of the PWA four years later.[12]

While one line of the association's genealogy is rooted in a rebellious generation of the Urdu literary intelligentsia of India that placed gender and sexuality at the center of debates on decolonization and progressivism,

the PWA also understood its movement as deeply entrenched in the European modernist movements against imperialism and fascism, as well as in the global Marxist movements of this period. With its members writing primarily in Urdu, Hindi, and English, the PWA was established in London in 1935. It was influenced by the recent formation of the International Association of Writers for the Defense of Culture, an antifascist organization initiated in Paris by European modernists such as André Malraux and André Gide (Gopal, *Literary Radicalism in India*, 23).[13]

Adopting much of the vocabulary that emerged out of the 1935 congress for the Association of Writers for the Defense of Culture, Mulk Raj Anand described the PWA as "one of the largest blocs for the defense of culture" ("On the Progressive Writers' Movement," 2). The dissemination of progressive literature was conducted through the establishment of PWA libraries and through poetry and story recitals, including the organization of peasant poetry conferences. In addition to experimenting in a wide variety of literary genres, including short stories, novels, poetry, and plays, the Progressives worked in an array of artistic forms, including sculpture, dance, and politicized indigenous performance genres; they also experimented in radio and popular film (Gopal, *Literary Radicalism in India*, 123–24). They sought to bring about radical conditions through workshops, translation projects, seminars, conferences, and collaborative publications in the form of periodicals, books, and pamphlets (Gopal, *Literary Radicalism in India*, 25–26).

Anand drafted the PWA's manifesto on December 24, 1938, outlining the shared objectives of the newly born organization. Adopted at the second All-India Progressive Writers' Conference, the manifesto forecast how progressive artists and intellectuals would redefine the art and literature of India. Progressive literature was to have a pivotal role in awakening and transforming the collective consciousness of the nascent Indian nation:

> Indian literature, since the breakdown of classical culture, has had the fatal tendency to escape from the actualities of life. It has tried to find a refuge from reality in baseless spiritualism and ideality. . . . It is the object of our Association to rescue literature and other arts from the conservative classes. . . .
>
> We believe that the new literature of India must deal with the basic problems of our existence to-day—the problems of hunger and poverty, social backwardness and political subjection. All that drags us down to

> passivity, inaction and un-reason we reject as re-actionary. All that arouses in us the critical spirit, which examines institutions and customs in light of reason, which helps us to act, to organize ourselves, to transform, we accept as progressive. ("Amended Manifesto," 20–21)

Framed in the language of a universal rationalism, the definition of progressive literature emerged in opposition to what the group saw as the escapist and opiatic forces of religion—what it termed "cultural reaction." The Progressive Writers sought to counter these reactionary forces in Indian culture and society—the "narrow nationalists, revivalists, the priest craft or orthodoxy," in the words of Anand ("On the Progressive Writers' Movement," 18). For the Progressive Writers' Movement, as we will see, anticolonial critique does not fall into the same colonial Manicheism of Fanon's nationalist writings. Rather, it imbricates and layers in critiques of "indigenous" or precolonial institutions such as caste, class, gender, and religion with critiques of colonial modernity and a platform for national liberation. As captured in the language of Anand's manifesto, however, what constituted literature as "progressive" was not defined in strict aesthetic or ideological terms. Instead, it was measured by "the spirit" it was to awaken in the reader. This definition of progressive writing, in fact, articulates a vague, undefined—in fact, yet-to-be-defined—relationship among ideology, consciousness, and political "action." What would define progressive literature for this group, and which political sentiments it should arouse in its members' readers, remained an object of experimentation and debate from the movement's inception. In fact, the case studies of this book reveal how PWA inquiries into what defined art as revolutionary or "progressive" bring to light the extraordinary ways in which the possibilities of national revolution are underwritten by the visceral poetics of revolutionary feeling.

Driving the emergence of the Marxist revolutionary subject in these imaginaries of decolonization are feelings and emotions that energize or awaken the body, those that *move* the body and mind of the protagonist of History to new registers of consciousness and political action. The affects that motivate this ascension are volatile, emotive energetics. These imaginaries of revolution, inflected by psychoanalytic theory, are channeled through the drives and impulses, the visceral reflexes, of the gendered colonized body. The visceral actions and reactions further organize and orchestrate the historical imaginary of revolution within the artistic experiments I examine. I uncover their role in the emplotment and the unfolding

of a revolutionary horizon as imagined within the social realist novel—the literary form that became the contested staging ground for the utopian visions of a decolonizing world.

For example, conceived through emerging scientific and medical epistemologies of the time, from psychoanalysis to thermodynamics, the visceral reflex of anger is debated in Mulk Raj Anand's novel as a potentially revolutionary energetic in its capacity to vitalize, indeed viscerate, the revolutionary subject to an "ascendance" of political consciousness.[14] The role of political anger in impelling a transformation of consciousness, a topic long debated from Aristotle to Audre Lorde, appears in Anand's novel as a way of thinking the place of rage in mobilizing revolutionary transformation. In the aesthetics of the Indo-Soviet filmmaker Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, however, I take up the question of revolutionary rage to consider its ecstatic dimensions—the place of ecstasy in this nationalist form of rage and terror—by focusing on how its contagious and convulsive dimensions shape its mass emotive form. These novels reveal emerging vocabularies and discoveries not only in psychoanalysis, but in fields such as thermodynamics, quantum physics, and electro-conductivity, which influenced how these authors imagined the possibilities of emotive transformation as energetic. They foreground the ways in which the transmission and transformation of feeling is conceptualized through an imaginary of human emotion as a volatile, unstable energy.

Within these political imaginings, the affective energies of the revolutionary subject ignite the political consciousness of the nascent nation. Such explosive affects are thus predictably driven to catharsis, an inevitable bodily release. At stake in the cathartic release, we will find, is not simply an ascendance of consciousness, but a violent historical rupture, as I theorize in the coda of the book. This affective release is a key organizing logic of the revolutionary subject and the political imaginaries of these chapters. The volatile engine of a revolutionary transformation of consciousness, a "latent heat," in the words of Anand, housed in the visceral response of the colonial and subaltern subjects. This heat powers the unfolding of a revolutionary history.

Organized by a Marxist historical teleology, the social realist novels of this study—what Aamir Mufti terms the "national realist" novel—chart the utopian "ascension" of consciousness of the peasant or proletariat figure, which became the literary form for the vast array of artistic visions of social transformation in the Progressive Writers' Movement. As Mufti ar-

gues about the Progressive Writers' Movement's adopting of the social realist novel, "The protocols of social realism, first formulated as a program at the Soviet Writers' Congress in 1934 and adopted as official Popular Front policy in 1935, undergo a transformation in being transplanted to a colonial setting. What the language of realist aesthetics now seeks to define is a specific relationship between writing and the nation so that it is more accurate to speak of *national realism* in this context" (183). Each progressive novel uses the bildungsroman form to trace the "coming of age" of its protagonists against the coming of age of the nascent nation. While many of the historical protagonists of this study are subaltern figures—the prostitute, the untouchable, the orphan, the vagrant—the socialist realist project of representing the subaltern was hotly debated among the Progressives, and many chose instead to center middle class subjects that mirrored their own experiences.

The diverse literary styles of these novels bear the mark of the PWA's aesthetic experimentations and the transnationalism of the movement, such that, in the case of many of the novels examined in this study, in the heightened sensory aesthetics of Chughtai or Anand for example, contemporary readers may not recognize that it is "realist" writing that they are reading. We will find, for example, the simultaneous influence of both social realism and European modernisms within the diverse literary styles of the PWA, in ways that trouble conceptions of literary modernism as a corrective to realism within European literary trajectories. One also finds the unmistakable melodramatic inflections of an emerging Bombay popular cinema in the social realist dialogues of these novels, as many of the Progressives earned their living as scenarists and scriptwriters for the film industry. I take as my starting point Gajarawala's important insight that, for authors writing in the colony in the 1930s, "the newness of the novel, the presence of indigenous forms of narrative, social, and political radicalism, and various types of experimentalism meant that realism and modernism often functioned side by side and sentence by sentence" (72). Mining the visceral in this study requires that the reading practices through which we engage the literature of the Progressives be able to attend to the diverse array of generic codes at play, as well as to how their fiction re-works the aesthetic practices of modernism and realism when transplanted to the colony. As Anjaria compellingly argues of realist aesthetics in India during this era of nationalism, "against common perceptions, realism in the colony is highly metatextual, founded on variegated textual fields and con-

stituted not by ideological certainties but by contradictions, conflicts, and profound ambivalence as to the nature of the real world being represented, and the novel's ability to represent it" (*Realism in the Twentieth-Century Indian Novel*, 5).

My focus on the Progressive Writers movement begs the question: Why return to the moment of decolonization or this anticolonial movement at all, when both are marked by failure? To draw on David Scott, the "problem space" of the anticolonial moment in which the Progressives were debating the role of art in social transformation, the nature of the hopes and desires invested in revolution, have since shifted in the historical present (6). Scott calls for a rigorous rethinking and historicizing of our "past hopes" and "anticipated futures" after Bandung. In shifting from their historical present to ours, the task is to retool the very questions we ask of the revolutionary struggle. This book explores the richness and overlooked complexity of the transnational life of the Socialist and social realist novel as it hybridizes with global modernisms, for their materialist inquiries into (post)colonial affective genres and forms. I argue for the indispensable nature of this internationalist body of literature for understanding our violent postcolonial present as well as the past. Beyond simply revealing the Progressive Writers' Movement's experiments in thinking colonial affect—their questions, desires, and debates about the progressive or reactionary effects of certain impulses upon an emergent national consciousness—I aim to theorize the affective genres that emerge from within the historical moments of their formation and refurbish these genres as critical tools for the present. In other words, I am not advocating a particular affective platform for liberation. Rather, I am interested in how an understanding of the materiality and vitality of affective impulse and response provides a much-needed theoretical agility in grappling with the visceral impasses of our violent postcolonial present.

Visceral Logics

The visceral logics of decolonization explore the dynamic intra-action between psychic and somatic activities for where these energetics go astray. The revolutionary potentiality of the visceral is characterized by the volatility and unpredictability of its energetic activity, and how it unfolds in unruly and erratic ways. We only need to recall the trembling subjects of the Fanonian train scene with which we began. To dwell for a moment on an extended example, in an extraordinary experiment in realist sensory

aesthetics written in the 1940s, the Urdu feminist writer and anticolonial activist Ismat Chughtai depicts the struggles of a distinguished male artist commissioned by a museum to paint the portrait of a young peasant girl from a small village. The short story "Til" (The Mole) centers on the artist's frustrated attempts to render this subaltern figure in his painting. The artist continually struggles unsuccessfully to find the right hues and textures with which to paint her—the shades of her skin, the tint of her eyes—and thus to represent the girl in her "realistic" dimensions. Far from a cooperative subject for his portrait, the girl is characterized as boldly defiant, stubborn, temperamental, and brazenly coquettish, launching the artist repeatedly into bouts of uncontrollable rage. In one such scene, Chughtai depicts the frustrations of the artist, Chaudhri, as the young subject of his painting, Rani, refuses to sit in the instructed pose, balancing a pitcher on her shoulder:

> [Rani]: "Didn't you hear me say I'm tired? I will throw down the pitcher if you don't listen to me." …
>
> [His] feet set apart, the muscles in his face quivering with anger, Chaudhry glared at her. His grizzly beard fluttered like a sailboat flapping wildly in the storm, and tiny beads of perspiration appeared on the surface of his bald, smooth head.
>
> "My back hurts from sitting for such a long time." Scared, Rani quickly eased back into position. Then she burst into tears.
>
> "Boohoooo …" Her lips flapped as she blubbered.… Chaudhry widened his eyes and glared at her again. Whenever she started crying, the muscles in Chaudhry's jaws quivered violently, the bridge on his nose went askew, the brushes in his hand danced like firecrackers, and the colours on his palette flowed into a muddle and lost their glow. ("Til," 112–13)

The artist's inability to discipline his subaltern subject, to manage or contain her, is repeatedly articulated through his inability to represent her. Chaudhry's artistic frustrations are yoked within the short story to his battle with his own repressed sexual desire for the object of his painting, as the subject of his painting taunts him for the obscenity of his gaze.

In staging this subtle scene of power between the male artist and his female subaltern subject, Chughtai brings questions of realist aesthetics into crisis through a feminist lens sharply attuned to visceral dynamics of the erotics of power and subversion. What I highlight in this scene, however, is the corporeal drama that is taking place, recalling the trembling subject

of Fanon's writings. This scene of convulsion and contagion, however, is staged not between colonizer and colonized, but between male bourgeois artist and female subaltern, foregrounding within the anticolonial project a feminist critique of a masculinist anticolonial nationalism—a double-edged critique that is a defining characteristic of much of the Progressive Writers' literature.

Against the scene of the artist's failed mimetic endeavor—his inability to capture the girl in her "realistic" dimensions—there emerges, once again, this peculiar mirroring of these two trembling bodies. The artist's quivering jaw and fluttering beard are mirrored in the young girl's lips as she is caught in convulsive sobs, and he, conversely, is trembling in anger. In this scene of power and struggle, rendered on the terrain of aesthetic representation and staged between the frustrated bourgeois painter and the defiant subaltern subject, Chughtai amplifies the affective dynamic vibrating between these two bodies. The girl's defiance, the artist's frustration, his anger, her fear, her tears, his rage—this power struggle, staged on the grounds of both gender and class, is thus represented somatically through this back-and-forth ricocheting of their opposing emotive reflexes.

Chughtai maps questions of feminist representation onto this highly eroticized scene of domination and resistance: as the girl breaks into convulsive sobs, the artist begins trembling, and as her tears begin to flow, so do the colors on his canvas. The artist's project is not simply disrupted by this spectacle of emotion. In fact, the mimetic endeavor is strangely reversed: the subject of the painting orchestrates the body of the painter. With a characteristic sense of subtle self-reflexive humor and irony, Chughtai frames her short story with a scene that turns the bourgeois male artist's aesthetic project on its head. The story poignantly critiques the exotification of this artistic project, which, in Chughtai's opinion, characterized many of the works of her own male friends and comrades within the Marxist anticolonial movement.

The unruliness of the visceral energetic, its reckless contagion and erratic nature, becomes the site of Chughtai's feminist inquiry into both power and resistance. Scenes of viscerality expose how disruptive and nonnormative forms of gender and sexuality propel decolonization precisely because this is *where these affective energetics go awry*.[15] In other words, it is where visceral logics misbehave, where the volatility and "mindedness" of the somatic unconscious is most vividly on display (to borrow from Elizabeth Wilson) that the possibilities of decolonization are imagined. It is also

from these sites of somatic crises that I derive the visceral concepts I theorize in the chapters that follow: convulsion, compulsion, irritation, agitation, evisceration, explosion.

The visceral requires the body of the "other" to set off its somatic response. Perhaps one of the reflections cited most often from Deleuze on Spinoza: "We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it in composing a more powerful body" (Deleuze and Guattari, 284). Convulsion, a logic of (de)colonization that will return to us throughout this book, focuses the dynamics of affective exchange that interanimate bodies inscribed in logics of power and alterity, for it is in this encounter that the affective recomposition of the subject becomes possible.

Chughtai's agitated bodies, in contrast to Fanon's, reveal spasms isolated in localizable parts and particulate matter—lips flapping, beard fluttering, convulsive sobs, secretions of sweat—their motion escalating in intensity and speed as "relations of motion and rest, of speeds and slowness," in the words of Deleuze (12). The visceral, in Chughtai's writing, attunes our eye to a lower frequency of affective register, subtle somatic arousals that often are barely perceptible, and in so doing opens up a rich and subtle landscape for feminist inquiry. This materialist conceptualization of bodily matter and affective energy is inflected by vocabularies of energy and flows of matter, from thermodynamics and quantum physics to psychoanalysis and phenomenology, locating the biopolitics of empire in the "circulations of energy, affects, atoms, and liquidity in its accounting of the soma" (Lee, 7).[16] I draw these scenes of convulsion in tandem to begin the work of this book: I read this scene in Chughtai's "The Mole" as a feminist counterpoint to Fanon's famous train scene, one that demonstrates a shared materialist philosophy but also opens up an alternative feminist genealogy of viscerality that exceeds the imaginative horizon of Fanon's masculine and Manichean subjects. While the visceral in Fanon's writings draws the colonial subject into an affective exchange with the colonized—a game of destroying or being destroyed, in Spinoza's words—the somato-poetics of the Progressive Writers open up a more nuanced imaginary of corporeal relations, imaginaries of gender reconstitution and modes of collective bodily being that arise from these moments of affective encounter and exchange.

The visceral is thus held in the minor, in the minutiae. While I argue for

its importance within the revolutionary imaginary of each of these social realist experiments, the phenomenological moments that I mine emerge as extremely minor and marginal bodily details: the friction of a wool coat on the skin of the untouchable subject; a twitch in the tensed muscle of the politically agitated subject; the improper cravings of our feminist revolutionary subject who, while watching her sewing machine needle cut across the cloth, experiences an exhilarating tingling in her teeth. The affective forms I theorize in each chapter are woven of a subtle somato-poetics.

These tiny visceral expressions emerge out of anticipatory moments within the national realist arc of theses novels. They indicate early somatic arousals; low-grade, threshold moments that eventually will be driven to an explosive release, to what I theorize as a historical catharsis in my concluding chapter on Fanon. As I further explore in the concluding chapter, the possibilities of revolution are housed not simply in the visceral encounter, then, but more precisely in the anticipatory temporalities that precede the cathartic release. I linger in their temporalities and trace their emplotments in these revolutionary imaginings to open up their peculiar historical registers and imaginaries of revolution. In this sense, this project carries important resonances with the Marxist historiographers of subaltern studies. Gyanendra Pandey asks how we can write the histories of those who inhabit the realm of "unreason"—the unarchivable underbelly of reasoned and state history: "When and how do we archive the body as a register of events; or gestures, pauses, gut-reactions; or deep-rooted feelings of ecstasy, humiliation, pain?" (7). The tiny somatic arousals I mine in this study are inflected by a Marxist preoccupation with the materiality of the colonized body in relation to colonial modes of production and exploitation: how we labor on and in bodily and environmental matter; how we shape, consume, and exploit it in conjunction with the social and economic structures through which the everyday conditions of colonial modernity are produced and reproduced.

My readings of the visceral linger on a strange narrative immersion in the materiality of these mundane details—details that render the intended narratives of these texts unfamiliar and strange. While motivating the revolutionary arcs (or social realist trajectories) of these novels, the visceral emplotments I draw out also rupture and refuse the traditional trajectories of the "national realist" narratives—they queer or disorient the national frame of the novel form. I trace these unruly visceral plots for how they consistently refuse and derail the normative fantasies and frame-

works that stabilize national discourses, mobilizing what Ann Cvetkovich has described as an immersive reading that focuses "the sensation and feeling as the register of historical experience" (*Depression*, 11). This involves a crucial "slowing down," as Cvetkovich emphasizes, "so as to be able to immerse [oneself] in detail . . . turning the ordinary into scenes of surprise" (*Depression*, 11). Tiny corporeal details estrange the intended frame, much like the Barthesian "punctum" or, perhaps, like Arundhati Roy's millipede, curled up in the heel of the boot as the boot, crashing down on the skull of the untouchable character, appeases the god of Big Things and effaces the impossibilities of History.

The instability intrinsic in the visceral, both corporeal and temporal, orchestrates scenes of visceral crises that organize the political inquiries of these chapters. These crises, states of what Lauren Berlant and Ann Cvetkovich might term affective "impasses," are both the lubricants of and threats to the very possibility of revolution (*Depression*, 20). The scenes of crises rupture and remap the nationalist politics of these texts in important ways, forming a second conceptual arc of the book. If Spinozan bodies are distinguished by their affects in relations of motion and rest, speed and slowness, the visceral activates relations of energetic buildup and accumulation and, eventually and inevitably, its affective release. Convulsion, a visceral logic of the politically agitated subject, presents us with crises of the reflex inscribed within a problematic of affective momentum. Scenes of historical crises—of reflex and trigger, of bodily suspension and momentum—cluster around the explosive release of revolutionary affect. These corporeal and historical contradictions, for example, underwrite the paired Fanonian figurations of laughter and nausea with which I began, figures for the crises of momentum and suspension. Against a linear, "empty and homogenous" rationalist historical teleology, the visceral in these novels inhabits a full, disruptive, and erratic temporality (Benjamin and Arendt, 261).

Crises of convulsion underscore how the vitality and contagion of the somatic unconscious orchestrates a political dynamic that does not predictably correspond to conscious action or will and thus "dislocate[s] agency as the property of a discrete, self-knowing subject," in the words of Diane Coole and Samantha Frost (20). By focusing on the spasmodic logics of the politically agitated subject, these scenes often feature visceral states and feelings that move the body to such extreme heights of stimulation that it is caught by the recursive movements of its compulsion or muscular spasms—a

series of bodily suspensions that disrupt and dislocate the progressive movement, the utopic ascension, of the revolutionary subject. This dynamic somatic threshold appears between that which moves the body and that which crosses over to such intensity that the subject is conversely immobilized, convulsing—whether in a state of rage, terror, or grief or in the throes of ecstatic pleasure. These corporeal states and thresholds bring into focus a series of problematics of human agency and historical determinism that are intrinsic to the ecstatic logics of (de)colonization and nationalism.

While convulsion is a kind of visceral momentum that stages a loss of control over the reflexes of one's own body, nausea is the figure par excellence of another visceral (historical) crisis. The trope of nausea is a figure for a thwarted or "suspended" state of agency, a tense but stalled energetic state, that reoccurs throughout the chapters of this book, albeit in a surprising variety of permutations (Ngai, 1). While convulsion is a body logic of momentum, nausea is inscribed within a temporality of suspension: the frustrated desire for a cathartic release. And while convulsion is a figure for the problem of the vitality and volatility of the somatic reflex, nausea stages a crisis of the trigger. In the Fanonian train scene, the failure of laughter is a failure to access the trigger that would set off the bodily response. While laughter is a physiological response, it is dependent on a psychic trigger; the psychological block is the condition of colonial discourse for Fanon. It is in this sense that nausea emerges as a figure for the crisis of colonial consciousness, housed in the thwarted access to the visceral response (and release).

Nausea reappears in this study to continually remind us that the visceral is as much about the semantic refusals of the body as it is about its diagnostic promise. These racialized renderings of nausea replace the more abstracted Sartrean figure of existential nausea with a deeply embodied and often biomedical representation of the colonial subject's struggle with the automatized reflexes of the body, reflexes that fashion taste and desire. With nausea, whether focused through the mimetic contractions of the bowels in witnessing another's disgust or through the subject's fear (desire) of proximity and intimacy with the object of repulsion, we find that this trope becomes the sign of an agonized anticipation. Scenes of nausea focalize the involuntary reflexes of a body that refuses to comply with the will: the anxious search for the body's psychosomatic triggers. When linked to its biomedical conception, nausea will also bring us to the disorientation of the colonial subject—the loss of balance, orientation, proprioception—vertigo.

The visceral (as with nausea) layers and refracts the material and metaphorical semiotics of the body at once. The aesthetics of bodily knowledge refract and unravel in unexpected ways. In fact, the unruliness of the body in language becomes a crucial site of precarity, but it also opens the possibility of feeling new feelings—located in the gaps between sensation and language.

The energetic force of these visceral eruptions carries an unmistakable likeness to such Spinozan theories of affect as energy, intensity, and the capacity to move and be moved. Spinoza's monism famously challenged Cartesian and idealist distinctions between mind and body and human and nonhuman matter, which positioned matter as inert and human consciousness as the sole site of agency and knowledge of the self and nature. A recent return to Spinozist philosophy in the humanities restores an understanding of the energetic life of the body. Indeed, the anticolonial archive of the Progressives anticipates some of the "new" materialist trends in theorizing affect and corporeal materiality. Drawing materialism to the fore within the Progressive Writers' archive, I show how the aesthetics of decolonization and political transformation center the "vitality" of visceral matter as volatile, lively, productive, and self-organizing, independent of the mind's capacity to act on it (Coole and Frost, 20).

While the visceral's volatility and energetic behavior, as well as its centering of bodily actions and reactions, are key components of Spinoza's monism, particularly as invoked by the Deleuzian poetics of affect, I diverge from the Spinozist notion of affect as prelinguistic, outside of language and subjective experience—a "suspension" of meaning. For the Progressives, the visceral explores the relations between habits of feeling and habits of thought and discourse. I share Kyla Wazana Tompkins's concern about the inability of much of new materialism to address the legacies of colonialism. Like many working in materialisms at the intersections of postcolonial, critical race, and Marxist theory, I understand the relationship between "discursivity and materiality [as] circular and, in Karen Barad's terms, intra-active" (Tompkins, "On the Limits," 1). I join critical race and postcolonial scholars in situating the new materialism as one of many philosophical traditions and cosmologies that are grappling with the "animacy" of matter, to draw from Mel Chen, always inscribed in relations of power, and the "'thingness' of the human," viewing the circulations and exchanges of consciousness, feeling, and the energy of human bodies as "shared social phenomena as they rise out of the substance of the world" (*Animacies*; Tompkins, "On the Limits," 1).

How do we study affect in a way that is attentive to geopolitical difference? It is with this problematic in view that the visceral moves between theory for decolonization writ large, and the sociopolitical particularities of affective forms. Each chapter sheds light on a different dimension of the visceral as it emerges out of revolutionary political thought—its dynamics of affective release and transfer, for example, crises of the reflex and trigger, problematics of touch and texture, proximity, intimacy. These problematics are explored here through sociopolitical loci specific to the South Asian context, such as caste, gender, and religion, through which each affective form is excavated and theorized. Most prominently, the visceral—as an optic of contemporary postcolonial violence and trauma—emerges largely out of the prophetic visions of the Muslim intelligentsia. The visceral forms in this book are also powerful insights into the structures of feeling of what Mufti has termed the "minoritization" of the Muslim in India and the "crises" of modern secularism in Indian postcolonial society (2).

The study of racialized sensibilities through the lens of their visceral logics attunes us to the specific geohistories that produce their affective forms in gendered sensibilities. The range of visceral logics themselves—appetite and aversion, musculature and ecstatic excitation, longing and melancholy, touch and erotic texture—index very particular geohistories of colonial racial formation. They emerge out of an array of colonial and pre- and postcolonial institutions, from colonial regimes of hygiene and taste (desire and disgust), colonial experiments in medicine and gynecology (female bodily texture), Brahmanical codes of purity and pollution (touch and tactility), and the politicizing of Islamic spiritual practices under erasure by Hindu majoritarianism (ecstasy). These historical conjunctures reveal a very different history of racialization from the one theorized, for example, by the visceral logics of "epidermalization" in Fanon's canonical theories of black ontological crises. I point to these divergent geohistories to emphasize the visceral's utility in thinking across archives of racial and gender formation rather than to make the case for the irreducible particularity of the Indian context. Ania Loomba argues that the conflation of race with color or "biology" has created a false division between "scientific" (racial) and religious or cultural forms of discrimination, including caste and communal difference in India: "The histories of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and caste-prejudice cannot then be fully connected to those of slavery, bonded labor, plantation labor, and color prejudice" (516). Attending to the somato-poetics of race connects without conflating imbri-

cated global histories of colonial oppression. As Loomba writes, "Thinking across periods, and across regions, allows us to understand better why colonial race ideologies took the forms they did, and how they drew from other forms of oppression globally" (516).

Each distinct somatic logic in this book—agitation, irritation, compulsion, evisceration, explosion—animates a range of dense entanglements between gender sensibilities and racialized consciousness. In this study, I show how decolonization, as a transformation of racialized consciousness, is always contingent on the radical reconstitution of normative gendered subjectivities precisely because gender provided the grounds of colonial subjection through corporeal refashioning. Visceral regimes of gender (re)fashioning in "taste" and sensibility are produced out of, and therefore inextricable from, colonial and postcolonial regimes of racialization. The writers I examine in this study use the bildungsroman form, for example, to chart the psychosexual development of a range of subjects under the violent processes of gendered discipline (heavily influenced by the writings of Freud) under both the colonial civilizing mission and the imperatives placed on the citizen subject by a nascent nationalism. The visceral aesthetics of the Progressive Writers emerge from their sustained preoccupation with gendered processes of affective and corporeal fashioning in their fiction—the conjugations of physiology with epistemology, of "soul making and body shaping" (to borrow from Roy), through which racialized habits of thought and feeling sediment in gendered sensibility and comportment, and thus provides the site of their revolutionary undoing.

It is in this sense that this book charts an alternative feminist genealogy of viscerality that counters Fanon's canonical writings on colonial affect that locate the pathology of blackness in emasculation (or what he terms "castration") as defined by normative gender binaries. In contrast, studying progressive aesthetics through the lens of the visceral lays out theories of decolonization as fundamentally linked to a transformation of normative gender subjectivities. The diverse ways in which gender epistemologies of the visceral sediment, reconstitute, or disrupt racialized consciousness in somatic response is precisely what is at stake in the visceral inquiries across chapters. For example, inquiries into nationalist ecstasy in Abbas's *Inquilab* reveal the reimagining of normative patriarchal masculinities produced out of experiences of colonial violence in what I term "ecstatic terror." Related questions of revolutionary rage in Anand's *Untouchable* work through an aestheticized (and eroticized) hypermasculinity to overturn the

abjection of caste. In chapter 3, "disgusting" female bodily textures set off femme cravings that explore the undoing of lessons in proper femininity at the places where colonial and nationalist regimes of obscenity give way to women's erotic desire, as Ismat Chughtai and Rashid Jahan explicitly expose and challenge the masculinist assumptions of their male comrades.

Decolonization is thus necessarily grounded in disruptive formations of gender and sexuality, whether in the unruliness of women's desire that refuses normative gendered regimes of propriety and "taste" or (to borrow from Edward Said) in masculine affiliations that refuse patriarchal inheritance (*The World, the Text, and the Critic*, 23). In fact, the historical protagonists of PWA novels are often figures that disrupt or pervert normative patriarchal logics. Figures of familial illegitimacy such as the prostitute, the bastard, and the orphan disrupt the filial attachments organized by the nation.[17] Some of the most insightful scholarship on the sensorial investment of the Progressives emphasizes their gendered critiques of national belonging and filiation. For example, Gayatri Gopinath explores forms of queer desire that disrupt national configurations of femininity that refuse sedimentations into fixed identities in the writings of Chughtai, while Gopal charts the "reconstitution of bodily being" and the making of the modern gendered "habitus" in the writings of Jahan and Chughtai (*Literary Radicalism in India*, 54). Mufti reads the gendered figure of the prostitute in Saadat Hasan Manto's Urdu short stories as a reworking of the classical trope of the *tavaif* or courtesan that disrupts and perverts the filial organization of affect and attachment demanded by the (Hindu) nation (as mother) and thus as a figure for the crises of secular modernity and the minoritization of Muslims in India. Building on these insights but also reorienting our critical gaze to their somato-poetics, I propose that the Progressive Writers do something quite remarkable with the very category of gender in locating colonial discipline in somatic response, at the embodied sites where the innate and intuitive are subjected to the social. These novels furnish new ways to understand the complex processes through which racialized sensibilities develop through physiological reflex.

The Somatic Unconscious

The visceral repositions our approach to the scene and study of affect by centering its dynamics of affective release and transmission, which is also to say, the somatic life of the body. As Parama Roy writes, "Colonial poli-

tics often spoke in an indisputably visceral tongue. . . . [T]he stomach served as a kind of *somatic political unconscious* in which the phantasmagoria of colonialism came to be embodied" (*Alimentary Tracts*, 7, emphasis added). Borrowing from and extending Roy's provocative term beyond the "gastropoetic" valences of the visceral to a range of sensory realms, I refocus our inquiries into the colonized subject in this book from the psychoanalytic unconscious to the "somatic unconscious."[18]

Whether it is the heat of anger, the pull of the erotic, or the spasms of ecstasy, the visceral locates the vitality of bodily matter in the somatic response. Taking the somatic as our point of entry into the study of colonial affect, rather than the other way around, the visceral inquiries of this study take seriously Roy's provocative charge that the violence of colonization involved the "somatizing" of subjects, invoking the trafficking in the life of the mind and the life of the bodily, culture and biology, "epistemology and physiology" (*Alimentary Tracts*, 7). This materialist understanding of the radical reshaping and reconstitution of bodily life that characterizes the colonial project remains central to this study of colonial affect and the possibilities of its transformation.

The nondualistic understanding of the complex and dynamic relationship between the social and biological developed by feminist and race scholars working in food studies is something I seek to bring to our studies of colonial affect and the biopolitics of empire. Working at the intersections of food studies and postcolonial and critical race studies, Parama Roy's *Alimentary Tracts* and Kyla Tompkins's *Racial Indigestion* provide important supplements and provocations to Stoler, and these thinkers remain critical interlocutors for theorizing the visceral logics of colonialism. While Stoler locates the workings of colonial power in the ordering and reordering of intimate spaces to explore how the macropolitics of imperialism play out in the microeconomies of the everyday, Roy's and Tompkins's feminist work on the racial and colonial politics of appetite and aversion allows us to read the ordering and disordering of visceral logics: the "imaginative shaping of the matter we experience as body and self," to borrow from Tompkins, "fus[es] biology and culture" (*Racial Indigestion*, 1).[19]

Attending to the somatic life of the colonized subject, however, entails a reorientation to dominant imaginaries of the body. Taking seriously the visceral logics of subjugation that are so central to this materialist tradition of thinking decolonization places a certain ontological pressure on much of our body theory. The somatic is not simply inert bodily matter, merely

expressive of affective or psychic stimulus, but, rather, an agent within the energetic life of the somatic unconscious, always already inscribed within a relation of power. The somatic, as vibrant matter, is brought into focus in these texts as self-organizing, unpredictable, and volatile, refusing causality between either the mind's instrumentalization of the somatic (the psychosomatic) or, conversely, the somatic's animation of psychic life.[20]

What distinguishes my reading of the Progressive Writers is what I distill from their sensory aesthetics, what I call the "somatic vitality" of the visceral response. Scenes of somatic vitality expose decolonization—the transformation of racialized consciousness—as inextricable from the disruptive and nonnormative forms of gender and sexuality precisely because it is where visceral logics misbehave (where the vitality of the somatic unconscious is most vividly at work) that the possibilities of decolonization are imagined.

In emphasizing the "somatic vitality" of the visceral, the book makes a key postcolonial contribution to feminist and queer theory. Scholars such as Eve Sedgwick, Elizabeth Wilson, and Rachel Lee argue for the necessity of more nuanced and sophisticated models of the biological in feminist accounts of embodiment and affect, against the "anti-biologism" of feminist theories that equate biology with gendered essentialisms. The somato-poetics of the Progressive Writers highlight the colonial context as a crucial testing ground for visceral regimes of modern gender subjection, instrumentalized in the name of civilizational and racial difference (the "making of heathens into human"). Within these theories of the visceral the somatic reflex does not merely express the "inward" activities of racialized and gendered thought and feeling, but has a much more dynamic and dialectic relationship with them. Drawing on an array of Asian American artists, Rachel Lee centers the fragmentation and disaggregation of the biological body into a vital "ecology" of parts and processes under racial capitalism, a rich reworking of biopolitics for a postcolonial and critical race (particularly Asian Americanist) critique, but one that also explores the creative energy of biological matter and processes without seeking to restore the racialized subject to a fictive state of wholeness or integrity. Lee writes, "Recognizing the distributed agencies of body parts represents a mode of inquiry attuned to a more complex, networked notion of bodily intelligences" (25). As Lee notes, drawing on Wilson's *Gut Feminism,* Wilson challenges "the false divide" in trauma theory and psychoanalysis "of the separation and hierarchy of psychic over somatic phenomenon." The

visceral poetics of the Progressive Writers emerging in the moments of decolonization in India reveal a suggestive resonance with Wilson and Lee, writing in the contemporary field of feminist technoscience in the American context. In one of the most counterintuitive emplotments of the visceral within this study, for example, we will find a set of inquiries into the somatic unconscious of the subject by turning to logics of touch and tactility. What does it mean to understand touch, a logic of skin and surface, as visceral, imagined to reside within the deepest of bodily depths? In the writing of Anand, the visceral will force us to approach the epidermal arousal of the casteized and racialized subject, not as inert matter, motivated by sensations "beneath" the dead skin, but involving the very arousals and awakenings at the level of skin as the revolutionary impetus. The untouchable subject comes alive to his own tactility.

I rework visceral touch through a feminist lens that theorizes queer erotic bodily texture in the writings of Rashid Jahan and her student, Ismat Chughtai. I consider how female bodily texture activates and animates bodily appetites, both gastronomic and erotic, which becomes key to excavating disgust as a powerful aversive reflex that secures moralizing regimes through the cultivation of taste, hygiene, and propriety. Both touch and texture rely on the confusion and doubled invocation of metaphor and materiality, what Steven Connor calls the "sign and stuff" of our "material imagination" (40). The very possibilities of the feeling of new feelings, in fact, in making the body "mean" differently, are housed in the semantic splintering of the visceral. Touch and texture impel a gendered reconstitution of the sensorial and affective nodes of the racialized body within the epistemic overhaul of the imaginary, a reconstitution that includes the disorganization of the metaphorical and material registers of the body.

These readings are enabled by the range of documents and artistic experiments that I include, through which the visceral becomes readable as a crucial node of Marxist aesthetics and politics. The minute somatic details I examine in the novels of these chapters become legible in their poetic and historical registers only by reading the full corpus of each author's oeuvre, juxtaposing less well-known writings with the most acclaimed fiction, opening these authors up to new understandings of their political visions. Their visceral figures are set into relief by a rich array of archival materials and artistic experiments, including manifestos, pamphlets, public lectures, personal letters, memoirs, and journalistic writings, as well as indigenous performance genres, radio plays, and popular films. The full range of these

artistic forms makes possible readings of the fiction that take seriously the experimentation of their artistic endeavors, as well as their collaborative modes—how, in other words, these artists were thinking through and against one another.

Overview of the Book

The chapters of the book are organized by distinct visceral logics through which the revolutionary subject is imagined to be liberated within this cluster of Marxist literature. Each visceral preoccupation indexes the way it has been conceptualized through and against the energetic and affective forms of the others. By mining the corporeal imaginaries of these anticolonial works, each chapter leads us through various dimensions and visceral crises of the revolutionary problematic: what would it mean to decolonize when the racialized sensibilities of the postcolonial subject are so deeply automatized in the visceral responses of the body?

Chapter 1, "Agitation," contemplates the place of ecstasy and political euphoria in impelling the momentum and contagion of mass revolutionary emotion. By centering the convulsive logics of the political agitator, the chapter explores the double-edged character of affective transmission and corporeal manipulation, which is characteristic of visceral affect and its inevitable release. Positioned at the moments in which national euphoria begins to dissolve into communal violence in India, the chapter recalls familiar images of the masses caught under the spell of a revolutionary emotionalism—a collective longing and anticipation that recalls progressive political protests and rallies, as it does the threat of fascism. The specter of fascism that haunts the imaginaries of nationalist emotion is a master plot across the book's chapters. Tracking the cinematic and literary aesthetics of Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, most famous for his neorealist collaborations between the Bombay popular film industry and the state-sponsored film industry of Russia in the 1950s and '60s, the chapter probes Abbas's grappling with the relationship between nationalist and religious ecstasy.

Chapter 2, "Irritation," asks the questions at the heart of this project: what would it mean to feel new feelings when one's complicity with the colonial regime of thought has become naturalized in the automatized reflexes of the body? The chapter takes up this question surrounding the possibilities of transformative emotion and the revolutionary stimulant through the fiction of the anticolonial activist and author Mulk Raj Anand.

Whereas chapter 1 follows the political agitator to theorize the possibilities and pitfalls of nationalist ecstasy, the revolutionary subject of chapter 2 is an irritated one. The chapter centers the poetics of touch and feeling at the embodied interface between the surface and depths of the "untouchable" class. I focus on Anand's experiments in the poetics of touch and feeling in his famous social realist novel *Untouchable*, written in English and published in 1935 with the help of the Bloomsbury modernists Virginia and Leonard Woolf. "Irritation" in this chapter mobilizes its double meaning at the surface and depths of the revolutionary subject. Connoting a mild abrasion of the skin, as well as a slight or undeveloped anger, "irritation" conjugates the tactility of the skin, the site of both racial and caste oppression for Anand's subaltern subject, with the internal engine of a revolutionary rage—the "latent heat" of the revolutionary subject of India.

Chapter 3, "Compulsion," complicates the energetic trajectory of the previous chapters by underscoring the dialectic of attraction and repulsion that underwrites the visceral and its role in the production of colonial affect. While in the previous chapters the visceral stimulants of political rage and nationalist emotion are invested with the potential to energize the colonial subject to various states of consciousness and political action, disgust is a peculiar energetic within this context. The phenomenology of disgust in this study is theorized through its relationship with its dialectical other, desire. Disgust and desire, as energetic forces of repulsion and attraction, return us to the crises of the reflex and trigger. The question of how the body is "moved" viscerally in this chapter raises the additional question of how texture animates and activates bodily appetites, both sexual and gastronomic, through the compulsive figure of craving. Drawing on the socialist feminist writings of Rashid Jahan and her student, Ismat Chughtai, I offer a queer feminist critique of the traditional phenomenology of disgust by analyzing the codes of erotic texture produced out of histories of colonial hygiene and bourgeois sexual discipline in late colonial India. Both women were known for their incendiary gender critiques of both colonialism and the Indian Muslim orthodoxy, and Chughtai is now perhaps better known for the obscenity charges waged against her by the colonial government for the homoerotic content of her literature. Their femme figures of craving bring us to the instability and unruliness of the visceral energetic in this chapter; however, it is also from within the push and pull of the dialectic that these feminist writers locate the possibility of progressive feeling in the very affects harnessed by violent disciplinary re-

gimes of taste and propriety. "Compulsion" is a materialist exploration into how the female body—her erotic curvatures and grotesque protuberances, her sticky and viscous textures and fluids—become the focalized object of what I term the "erotics of colonial disgust."

In the early chapters of the book I trace a range of experiments in imagining the visceral subject, thought experiments that probe the emotive dimensions of decolonization. Chapter 4, "Evisceration," is about the erasure of the visceral, a flattening of affect through which the pitfalls of nationalist emotion, the fear of fascism, are represented and theorized. The novels of the Muslim internationalist author Ahmed Ali unsettle the Marxist teleology that structures the social realist novel form and perform a self-conscious rewriting and inversion of the visceral tropes we have explored thus far. With this rewriting, Ali's novels issue a prophetic warning against the forms of violent nationalism that were emerging out of the emotive genres of decolonization. Chapter 4 thus takes up the visceral as a logic of time, inextricable from the historical genres deployed in these anticolonial imaginings. Ali's novels replace and displace the visceral energetics of the previous chapters, which "move" and vitalize the body through a transformation of consciousness. In this way, they provide a self-conscious political critique that brings "the crises" of the potential Muslim citizen subject of India into view (Mufti, 2).[21] I propose we read this flattening of the visceral as an aesthetics of evisceration—holding in tension the double valence of the term: to disembowel and deprive of essential meaning or vital content.

I close with Fanon and his canonical writings on decolonization in a coda that articulates a foundational premise of the book: anticolonial writing demands that we understand the visceral dimensions of consciousness to be underwritten not only by racialized feeling, but also by a Marxist historical temporality, wherein the contradictions of colonial and postcolonial modernity are most violently at play. "Explosion" concludes with a call to think Marxist *history as visceral logic*, retracing my theories of the visceral energetic through the question of historical temporality. Meditating on a constellation of explosive bodily figures that appear throughout the anticolonial writings of Fanon—laughter, nausea, vomiting, shivering, ejaculation—I posit the visceral as a critical theory for Marxian revolutionary consciousness and liberation.

NOTES

Introduction

1. As Berlant, asks: "What makes so many people desperate to live conventionally rather than experimentally, when the prevailing norms generate so much noise and evidence of their failure to sustain life? How do conventional ideas of the good life get implanted in our viscera, and how do we go about enabling changes in our visceral understanding of our objects and our potential flourishing?" (Berlant, "Lauren Berlant")

2. As Anjali Arondekar and Geeta Patel write, "Affect, in however generative a guise, turns into a transposable logic or schema traipsing along from the United States to elsewhere" (156).

3. Brennan writes, "As the notion of the individual gained strength, it was assumed more and more that emotions and energies are naturally contained, going no farther than the skin. But while it is recognized freely that individualism is a historical and cultural product, the idea of affective self-containment is also a production is resisted. If we accept with comparatively ready acquiescence that our thoughts are not entirely independent, we are, nonetheless, peculiarly resistant to the idea that our emotions are not altogether our own" (*Transmission of Affect*, 2).

4. See Jose Muñoz's "Feeling Brown, Feeling Down: Latina Affect, the Performativity of Race, and the Depressive Position," Mel Chen's "Toxic Animacies, Inanimate Affections" and *Animacies*, Arun Saldanha's *Psychedelic White,* Saidiya

Hartman's *Scenes of Subjection*, Rachel Lee's *Exquisite Corpse of Asian America*, Ed Cohen's *A Body Worth Defending*, and Monique Alleweart's *Ariel's Ecology* for some important approaches to what Teresa Brennan terms the "transmission of affect" and the problematic of the bounded body for theorizing race, empire, and sexuality.

5. The authors I examine here have been written on extensively by South Asia–based academics, largely through the frame of Indian nationalism. See the work of Narasimhaiah, Mukherjee, Iyengar, Trivedi, Paranjape, Bhatia, Jalil, and Trivedi. For more on the history of the Progressive Writers' Association, see Gopal (2005), Pradan (1979), Coppola (1988), Ahmed (2009), and Zaheer (2006).

6. The Progressive Writers at times have been misunderstood and dismissed by contemporary critics, as they were by their own contemporaries, as socialist propagandists and didactic Marxists. As Priyamvada Gopal writes, "The dismissal of the Progressive legacy in some influential quarters resonates with a wider disavowal of Marxism within literary theory and postcolonial studies as 'economistic' or 'deterministic,' their literature marked by accusations of 'political orthodoxy and aesthetic tyranny'" (*Literary Radicalism,* 4).

7. Mufti similarly locates the Progressive Writers' Movement within a constellation of internationalist artists and an intellectual culture he terms "Bandung humanism." Mufti joins comparative literature scholars such as Lydia Liu and Stathis Gourgouris in their efforts to recuperate the humanism born out of internationalist thought in order to redirect a potential dead end in the anti-humanisms of European theory. These scholars return to the transnational era of nonalignment and anti-imperialist solidarity, formally institutionalized at the 1955 Bandung conference, among the newly liberated nations of African and Asia. I join these scholars in recovering a non-Western legacy of humanist thought born out of the global dehumanization of racial subjection.

8. As Lauren Berlant so brilliantly articulates in an interview: "Most people think of Marxism as antithetical to any sensitivity to affect, as a mode of analysis focusing on capitalist processes of value extraction and exploitation. At the same time, though, Marxist thought has also provided a powerful account of fantasy: of how our senses and intuitions are transformed in relation to property, to labor, to presumptions about being deserving, and to enjoying the world. The [Marxist cultural] theorists I responded to see art as a place that clarifies the subjective and visceral aspects of structural social relations. We read artworks as a space where a variety of forces converge and become visible, including the fantasy resolutions we make to be able to live within contradiction." ("Lauren Berlant")

9. See Gauri Viswanathan's foundational *Masks of Conquest* for an in-depth discussion of British colonial educational practices in India and its role in molding cultural norms and sensibilities, a brilliant extension and use of Gramsci's notion of cultural hegemony.

10. As Roy writes, for Spivak the nineteenth-century colonial imperative of subject constitution "is to be understood as 'soul making,' or 'the imperialist proj-

ect cathected as civil-society-through-social-mission.' For Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* . . . this involved the monumental but necessary task of transforming 'the heathen into a human so that he [could] be treated as an end in himself'" (7).

11. Here I draw on Gopal's phrasing in her reading of Chughtai's novel, *The Crooked Line*, and its central thematic concern with "the way in which the instinctual is subjected to the social, but it is by no means clear where the former ends and the latter takes over," a poignant description of what I term the visceral in this study (71).

12. For two recent English translations, see Snehal Shingavi's "Angaarey" and Vibha S. Chauhan and Khalid Alvi's "Angaraey."

13. As Ben Baer writes, "[the PWA's] locus of operation was primarily in the domain of culture, broadly conceived at the national level, and practically split into region and linguistic units. The PWA considered the national level of cultural work to be a metonymic part of an international whole. . . . In the India of the mid-1930s, the PWA's culturalist Popular Front anti-facism were among the first to perceive at first hand the connection between fascism and imperialism. Anand wrote in 1939, '[W]e saw the ugly face of Fascism in our country earlier than the writers of the European country, for it was British Imperialism which perfected the method of the concentration camp, torture, and bombing for police purposes'" (583).

14. I am indebted to Elizabeth Povinelli for the term "energetic" in this context (personal correspondence, Wesleyan University, 2011).

15. I am grateful to the anonymous reader at the University of Minnesota Press for helping me to bring this point into greater focus.

16. Posing a provocative and resonant question for this study in her dazzling book *Exquisite Corpse of Asian America*, Rachel Lee writes, "I inquire whether literary criticism and performance studies can still remain humanist if they think in terms of distributed parts rather than organic structures, or, more exactly, turn fragment and substance into patterns—circulations of energy, affects, atoms, and liquidity in its accounting of the soma" (7).

17. I am indebted to conversations with Jesus Hernandez on his brilliant thinking about "illegitimacy" in the context of Cuban American literature and politics.

18. The somato-poetics of the progressive writers index the influence of Freudian psychoanalysis. Even as I do not center psychoanalytic readings (properly speaking) in this book, I position this project as one that builds on and contributes to the invaluable work on colonial affect by psychoanalytic race scholars such as David Eng, Ann Cheng, and Ranjana Khanna and builds on the project of what Khanna terms the "worlding of psychoanalysis" (see "Worlding Psychoanalysis" in Khanna's *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism*).

19. I also join scholars, Holland, Ochoa, and Tompkins, who in a recent *GLQ* double issue, explore the queer and feminist potential of the visceral. They define "viscerality," at the intersection of food and sexuality studies, as "a phenomenological index for the logics of desire, consumption, disgust, health, disease, belonging, and displacement that are implicit in colonial and postcolonial relations" (395). See the *GLQ* double issue entitled "On The Visceral."

20. Jane Bennett's work with Spinozist affect is particularly apt here. Bennett collapses the distinction between affect and matter in her attempt to surface an obscured political ontology that centers what she calls the "vitality" of matter: "My aim is to theorize a vitality intrinsic to materiality as such, and to detach materiality from the figures of passive, mechanistic, or divinely infused substance.... Not a life force added to the matter said to house it.... I equate affect with materiality, rather than posit a separate force that can enter and animate a physical body" (3). Even as Bennett's vibrant matter attempts to think through the agency of nonhuman matter, a collapsing of the distinction between affect and matter becomes a requisite for rendering legible the life of the somatic within colonial forms of discipline.

21. Here I draw on Mufti's central thesis in *Enlightenment in the Colony,* to which I will return throughout this book: "The crisis of Muslim identity must be understood in terms of the problematic of secularization and minority in post-Enlightenment liberal culture as a whole ..." (2).

Chapter One

1. As Anderson writes, "No matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes there is in the singing an experience of simultaneity. At precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody. The image: unisonance.... How selfless this unisonance feels!" (149).

2. *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2015) defines "shock" as: "Something that jars the mind or emotions as if with a violent, unexpected blow. 2. The disturbance of function, equilibrium, or mental faculties caused by such a blow; *violent agitation*. 3. A generally temporary massive physiological reaction to severe physical or emotional trauma, usually characterized by marked loss of blood pressure and depression of vital processes. 4. The sensation and muscular spasm caused by an electric current passing through the body or a body part."

3. Here I am indebted to Mufti's crucial formulation: "The crisis of Muslim identity must be understood in terms of the problematic of secularization and minority in post-Enlightenment liberal culture as a whole and therefore cannot be understood in isolation from the history of the so called Jewish Question in modern Europe" (2). My reading of Abbas's novel also echoes a similar insight made by Mufti surrounding the poetry of the Progressive Writer and Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, whose engagements with modernity reveal "not mere rejection of religious experience but rather a wrestling with it" (222).

Chapter Two

1. I am indebted to Sianne Ngai's writing on irritation as an affect that connotes an "inadequate form of anger" as well as an affect that "bears an unusually close relationship to the body's surfaces or skin" (35).