



## Introduction: Inner Territories

### Troubled Territory: Thinking the Nation in an Era of Globalization

“The history of nations,” writes Étienne Balibar, “beginning with our own, is always already presented to us in the form of a narrative which attributes to these entities the continuity of a subject.”<sup>1</sup> As defined by Balibar, the nation form owes its existence to a “retrospective illusion,” a fiction of collective identity produced by a regular movement from the present into the past and paralleled by a spatial equivalent. Paraphrasing J. G. Fichte’s foundational essay on becoming national, *Addresses to the German Nation* [*Reden an die Deutsche Nation* (1808)], Balibar writes: “the ‘external frontiers’ of the state have to become ‘internal frontiers’ or—which amounts to the same thing—external frontiers have to be imagined constantly as a projection and protection of an internal collective personality, which each of us carries within ourselves and enables us to inhabit the space of the state as a place where we have always been—and always will be—‘at home’” (95). For Balibar the legacy of colonialism intensifies this relation as immigration from former colonies into the former metropolises effects a literal “interiorization of the exterior” that reproduces racialized practices of internal exclusion, alongside an “exteriorization of the interior” resulting from the formation of postcolonial states “throughout the immense periphery of the planet” (43). Often invoked to explain such excesses as cultural nationalism, ethnic chauvinism, and new racism, the

unification of subject and nation and of interiorization and exteriorization described by Balibar also reorients us to the nation's *other* history as a project of plural attachments, including the border-crossing blurring of global and national identifications that has been described as cosmopolitics and linked to projects of liberation.<sup>2</sup> Thinking through the subject, and lingering on its propensity to mix up the realms of inside and outside, past and present as it constructs the narrative of identity, can we rethink the nation as an entity made through movement? To do so, we must first revisit the scene of nationalism.

Grounded and bounded by the problematics of territory and identity, nationalism seems to find its central tenet in a freezing isomorphism, from European romantic nationalism's organic symmetry of soil and character, to imperial nationalism's attempt to consolidate its power by quite literally mapping identity onto space on the conference tables of Europe, to anticolonial nationalism's call for the restoration of occupied lands to their original inhabitants, to the mystified and mythified "homeland" that articulates postcolonial nationalism at home and in the diasporic abroad. Of course, not all nations can lay claim to a state, by which I understand the governmental, juridical, and economic structures attached to territory, nor can individual states assume the linguistic, religious, ethnic, and cultural homogeneity of those within their borders, or even that all of their subjects will live within their borders. Alternative spaces to the territorialized nation-state exist—the multiethnic cosmopolitan crossroads, the transnational ethnic imaginary, the regional bloc, the world-system, the network, the new social movements based in identities that cross national borders (green, antiglobalization, feminist, queer), others grounded in the local, and, of course, the ubiquitous global sensibility. Just as contemporary globalization theory espouses, in Anthony D. King's words, "the rejection of the nationally-constituted society as the appropriate object of discourse, or unit of social and cultural analysis, and to varying degrees, a commitment to conceptualising 'the world as a whole,'" these various alternatives to the nation-state reach out to the history of global connection.<sup>3</sup> If some critics understand globalization, with its pluralizing flows of culture and capital, to herald what Kenichi Ohmae calls "the end of the nation-state,"<sup>4</sup> others argue that the standardizing reign of global capital has created new degrees of inequity among and within nations and ever

more virulent forms of nationalism, including state corruption, ethnic genocide, and new imperialism. Paul Smith situates globalization's mobile utopia, "a kind of isochronic world wherein the constrictions of time and space have been overcome," as capitalism's "millennial dream," a form of capital accumulation that "derives from the moment of direct imperialism and is in many respects the continuation of colonialism and imperialism by other means."<sup>5</sup>

Seemingly homogenizing and hegemonizing, a Deleuzian smooth space of flows in which capital finds its mirror image and most potent prefix, the term "global" is for many critics inseparable from the "globalization" and "globality" that together function, in R. Radhakrishnan's account, as a "descriptive totality that disallows the very chronotope of the 'outside.'" Radhakrishnan, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and others have proposed, by way of Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, the terms "world," "worlding," and "worldliness" as alternative ways to name the rich heterogeneity, coequality, and interconnectedness of human experience, much as other critics have hastened to rehabilitate cosmopolitanism's strictly European roots for newly mobile critical uses.<sup>6</sup> As I understand it, "global" names the transverse networks of influence and exchange that interrupt and cut across the fictive linearities of national history and the fictive homogeneities of national subjectivity, while also locating those mobile subjectivities and histories within the world-systems of imperialism, nationalism, and capitalism. To use, as this book will, "global" to designate the extranational is both to keep alive the history of modern capital that is the motor of empire and its aftermath, and to resist the notion that capital is the only object that global processes can designate and that wholesale homogenization is the only way in which they can work. If global names the world dreamed by Euro-American capital expansion, it also names a cultural and psychic process of connection, of making sense of some bounded identity, some "home," by reaching out to something that seems to lie beyond it.

The globalization whose economic stranglehold we need to resist is not entirely synonymous with the global we need to theorize. As a process that encompasses both sameness and difference, compression and expansion, convergence and divergence, the concept of the global has less to do with universals than, as Stuart Hall points out, with how "the global/

local reciprocally re-organise and re-shape one another.”<sup>7</sup> Marked by this kind of relational thinking, the best theories of globalization engage both economic and cultural processes and refuse to antinomize their effects as either heterogenizing or homogenizing. Still less do they imply that globalization entails the wholesale transcendence of national forms and imaginaries, choosing instead to explore how local and national cultural practices contest the putative universalism of transnational capitalism.<sup>8</sup> Finally, these theories resituate globalization not as a particular end point in time, modernity’s final form, but rather as a process of connection that regularly intercalates one time and one space with others, reaching all the way back from the present to the nineteenth-century capitalist expansion of imperial nations to the fifteenth-century formation of a world-system dominated by European mercantilist states and divided into core and peripheral zones, for Immanuel Wallerstein, and even earlier to the eras of non-European hegemony under the Chinese, Islamic, Indo-Persian, and Egyptian empires, for scholars such as Andre Gunder Frank. For Hall, globalized timespace is multiply differentiated and conjunctural, cut across by a series of “transverse, transnational, transcultural movements” and “the double inscriptions of colonial and metropolitan times,” while for David Harvey and Ulf Hannerz, globalized timespace is uniformly accelerated and interconnected. Wallerstein and other world systems theorists describe a constant and nonsynchronous collision between the developed and developing world over some five hundred, perhaps five thousand, years of human history.<sup>9</sup> For the sociologist Roland Robertson, globalization is a historically deep, conceptually double, cultural process characterized by “the interpenetration of the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism,” with the practical result that “the *idea* of nationalism (or particularism) develops *only* in tandem with internationalism.”<sup>10</sup>

This book traces a politics of relationality within which the national and the global are tandem ideas, twinned identifications, and doubled dreams. Even as postcolonial criticism labors to recognize the work of continuing empire in the global movements of capital and culture, it should not cede the concept of the global to hegemony alone. Nor should it dismiss all that is opened by the possibility of reading political ideologies, whether globalization or the nation that globalization is erroneously

understood to have ended, precisely as dreams: forms of imagining shaped by the peculiar timespace of memory, fantasy, and desire and structured, as Freud intuited, by a curiously double logic of signification. Writing in his 1918 case history, "From the History of an Infantile Neurosis," Freud observes how his patient's dream "puts an imaginary and desirable converse in the place of the historical truth." "These phantasies, therefore, corresponded exactly to the legends by means of which a nation that has become great and proud tries to conceal the insignificance and failure of its beginnings."<sup>11</sup> Nations, like subjects, say what they wish were true (a glorious past, a childhood in which they reigned supreme), not what is or was true. Following Freud's injunction to interpret dreamwork by opposites, we might trace the futurity that haunts the nation's pastness, the differences that subtend the discourses of national unity, and the global affiliations that puncture national borders, not just under late twentieth-century globalization but over the course of the nation form. This is not an account of some universal structure (*all* nations, *all* subjects) but rather an exploration of changing articulations of the logics of interiorization and exteriorization, subjectivity and nationality at distinct moments in the history of imperialism, decolonization, and postcolonialism. Such relational, conjunctural, and double reading charts a middle ground through postcolonial studies, which has often split between those whose postnationalist and postmodernist orientations lead them to privilege cosmopolitanism, diaspora, migration, and hybrid forms of subjectivity, culture, and textuality, and those who voice an oppositional investment in the nation and other besieged particularisms, such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality, operating within and against global capital.<sup>12</sup> To recover the nation in its global forms and through its subjective and narrative modes is to engage both these traditions. Finding the different times and spaces, modes and meanings of what has passed as *global*, whether empire's sway, anti-imperialism's Third World, or postcolonial diaspora's flows into former imperial centers, helps to chart ideologies of nationhood across what I will call, with debts to Giovanni Arrighi, the long postcolonial twentieth century.

Defined as "the basic temporal unit in the analysis of world-scale processes of capital accumulation," Arrighi's long century names a place and time characterized by three common factors: continuity, change,

and flow.<sup>13</sup> The four century-cycles of his thesis (fifteenth- to early seventeenth-century Venice, late sixteenth- to eighteenth-century Amsterdam, mid-eighteenth- to early twentieth-century London, and late nineteenth-century to present-day New York) are each distinguished by (1) a continuity between capitalism and the state; (2) a change born of the fact that each successive state was larger and more powerful than its predecessor; and (3) the structuring flows of capital passing from declining to rising centers. In this accumulative and expansionist mode, Ian Baucom argues, the past finds itself not simply succeeded by the present but incorporated into it, rendered curiously contiguous and contemporaneous in the style of Benjaminian history or Freudian melancholia. Capitalism's modernity thus becomes a movement in which accumulation and accretion, speculation and melancholy, exchange and repetition provide, in Baucom's words, "plot and counterplot of the long twentieth century."<sup>14</sup> Elsewhere Baucom defines global form as a "strictly regulated flow dynamics that balances the relentless centrifugal distributions of capital with their inevitable centripetal return to a seat of high finance."<sup>15</sup> In Arrighi's account of successive rise and decline, Baucom discerns "an end of history that happens not once but serially" and a "spectral counternarrative of the global" formulated as the following law: "expansion contracts . . . contraction enriches . . . and enrichment haunts" (162). This haunting effect is as visible in global finance capital, whose "spaces of flows" find their "dematerializing, dedifferentiating logic of exchange" troubled by the return of cultural, spatial, and temporal difference, as in genre. Glossing Fredric Jameson's foundational argument in *The Political Unconscious* (1981), Baucom casts genre as a "cognitive space of flow": "an epistemological structure that, as it achieves a (generally metropolitan) hegemony, is capable of expanding its range of address and subordinating virtually every corner of the globe to its designs but that, when it does so, and so helps to define the specifically historical ideology of its age, finds its articulations haunted by a ghost language that subordinates its ideology of the present age to the ideology 'of all the dead generations'" (163). Baucom understands Jameson's historicism, like Derrida's deconstruction and globalization theory, to function as critical instances of the law of global/generic form, according to which conceptual coinages first expand, then contract, and finally haunt, with the end result of crafting global literary studies themselves in the style of

finance capital. With debts to each of these critical models, in this book I attempt to trace a form of being global and thinking globally in which it is the idea of the nation that expands, contracts, and haunts, and in which the ghost language of both nation and genre invites the practice of comparative postcolonial studies.

Premised on the interrelation of continuity, change, and flow over a block of time, as well as on an internal logic of return, the long postcolonial twentieth century I envision is predicated on a certain continuity between capitalism, the state, and *the nation* across the periods of imperialism, anticolonialism and decolonization, neocolonialism, and postcolonial diaspora. Such a century necessarily also describes a change in the nature, reach, and imagined character of the nation form—expanding for empire, aligning for anticolonialism, emerging for decolonization, decaying for neocolonialism, disembodying for postcolonial diaspora. Seen thus, the long postcolonial twentieth century would have to be conceived as a swath of space and time structured by flows. These are flows not just of persons (colonials and revolutionaries, ex-colonials and cosmopolitans) and of capital, but also of ideas, of desires, and of expressive forms, the novel in particular, that combine to create, sustain, and represent nations. To think the nation as a spectralized flow is to go against the grain of its modern ideal, understood as a spirit of collective identity and zone of governmentality bonded to a bounded space, a linearized historical time, and a singular citizen-self. It is also to contest the notion that we are, in the era of globalization, entirely beyond nations and national identifications. Like ghosts, they keep *coming back* in the course of the still unfinished long twentieth century.

As Anne McClintock has observed, the category of *the postcolonial* too often works by first compressing the distinct historical events of colonialism, imperialism, decolonization, neocolonialism, and neoimperialism; and second, prematurely announcing their collective passing.<sup>16</sup> This terminological sleight of hand stages an implicit contest between the past and the post in which the latter, with its emblematic late twentieth-century diasporic movements, hybrid cosmopolises, and global cities, displaces the former, with its national spaces and global capitalist structures. It is certainly true that the postwar influx of racialized and ethnicized immigrants into formerly imperial centers has rendered false the homogeneity,

always fictive, of the metropole. But as we explore these increasingly diverse societies, it is equally important to resist the temptation to simplify temporality so that Black Britain, Turkish Germany, Beur France, and the multiethnic United States banish on the terrain of a newly pluralized diasporic culture the harsh, seemingly anterior binarisms of First World and Third World, and their similarly obsolete analytic categories of nations and nationalisms. As Neil Lazarus has aptly pointed out, the nationalism of the First World is often seen as “modernizing, unifying, democratizing,” while the “still unfolding nationalisms” of the Third World connote “atavism, anarchy, irrationality, and power-mongering.”<sup>17</sup> Both versions of nationalism are regularly taken to be over, finished, done in the context of globalization (even when they return). I would rather think about the post in postcolonial as a realm in which, as in the Hegelian synthesis or the Freudian case history, the past exists as at once the historical condition, residual trace, and conceptual foil of the present. We can conceive of that past as national and that present as global, but we can also more fruitfully see both times as marked by both spaces. Any reading of the profound historical break between imperialism and postcolonialism also becomes a reading of the continuities between them, particularly their mutual dependence on a notion of nationhood wedded to some version of globalism. From this convergence, an oppositional force emerges.

Frantz Fanon, Martinican native, Algerian nationalist, and perhaps postcolonial studies’ most iconic thinker, was both a passionate advocate of national self-determination and the canny observer of the fact that “it is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness establishes itself and comes to life.”<sup>18</sup> The revolutionary nationalism often twinned with Fanon’s name has more recently seemed to be displaced by the migration, hybridity, and global cosmopolitanism of which Fanon is also an example. Lazarus calls this postcolonial criticism’s reading of Fanon “back to front,” from the call for liberation in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) to the presciently poststructuralist sense of antiracial, non-particularist identity in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952).<sup>19</sup> So enamored have we become with global flows, whether the flows of global capital, the deterritorializing flows of desire, nomadic movement, and rhizomatic branching with which Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari propose to counter the ontology of territoriality, the diasporic flows of migrancy, or



the espousal of a saving planetary consciousness, that we sometimes forget that nations too are spaces of flows and movement.<sup>20</sup> So too do we seem in this era of resurgent national aggressions, of theocratic states, ethnic violence, and new imperialism, to sometimes forget that, absent global institutions with real power, nation-states remain a vital container for the politics of liberation: the right of self-determination; the pursuit of liberty, and the extension of civic equality and fair protection regardless of natality, ethnic origin, religious affiliation, gender, or sexual orientation. This is, as Peter Hallward has termed it, a “strictly political” concept of the nation, grounded in a discourse of rights and claims rather than of origins and particularized identities.<sup>21</sup> But its history has not been incompatible with the politics of identity and has indeed often arisen from particularist projects, such as the racial nationalism of a Du Bois or the antiracial nationalism of a Fanon. As the history of those projects shows, the espousal of a certain kind of national subject fuels a new kind of claim to national politics (race equality, decolonization, socialism) alongside global affiliations (Pan-Africanism, Marxism, anticolonial internationalism). When the nation is linked to the ideology of subject formation, it does often turn to particularizing practices. Hence Hallward’s call for a postcolonial theory whose sense of the nation (a sense he deems crucial for oppositional theory) “does not rely upon *any* notion of community, any kind of *cultural* proximity, any cultural criteria of sharing or belonging” (126) and whose sense of the subject is a Deleuzian post-subject. But the nation’s linking to subject and culture has also sometimes broken the isomorphic equivalence of identity and territory, natality and nationality. These breaks construct the concept of the nation as much as nationalism’s violent unifications, just as Fanon’s interrogation of psychoanalysis from the place of the racialized colonial subject constructs the concept of psychoanalysis. Against the portrait in *A Thousand Plateaus* of a psychoanalysis that reduces all desire to Oedipus, all direction to the unconscious, all meaning to the “despotic signifier” of the phallus, and all multiplicities to “the dismal unity of an object declared lost,” Slavoj Žižek asks, “Is the Freudian Oedipus complex (especially in terms of its Lacanian interpretive appropriation) not the exact *opposite* of the reduction of the multitude of social intensities onto the mother-father-and-me matrix: the matrix of the explosive *opening up* of the subject onto the social space?”<sup>22</sup> Where psychoanalysis for Deleuze

and Guattari mirrors the linear codings and territorializing ambitions that render the nation and state the agents of “collective subjectification” and “subjection” (456), and where psychoanalysis often seems even less capable than the nation or state of opening itself to potentially deterritorializing flows contained within it, Žižek argues for “Oedipus, the operator of deterritorialization.” Both the nation and the subject, particularly in the ways that psychoanalysis has allowed us to rethink them, need to remain central in postcolonial criticism. This means tracing the history of their various forms, flows, and articulations. A history *of* change is necessary to make change.

Commenting on Hannah Arendt’s call in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) for an end of the nation-state as a structure that repeatedly expels its minority populations, Judith Butler reminds us that while Arendt’s view of the nation is “singular and homogeneous, or at least, it becomes so in order to comply with the requirements of the state,” there are nonetheless other complex and heterogeneous modes of national belonging, modes articulated in the figure of a “wanting one” or a national subject of desire who performs her entry into the national compact.<sup>23</sup> This book explores the nation’s “wanting one” and further places the nation alongside the impulse toward global connection, understood both as the expansion and standardizing of core capitalist-imperialist structures and as the oppositional alignment against those hegemonies, Fanon’s international or Du Bois’s dark world. Alongside the elaboration of such nonstatist, subnational, transnational, and antinational alternatives as, to cite only a few, Paul Gilroy’s Black Atlantic, Saskia Sassen’s global city, and Arjun Appadurai’s transnation,<sup>24</sup> I suggest the possibility of returning to the nation-state, subsequently distinguishing the imaginary, psychic, and representational work of nation formation from the juridical, political, and territorial discourses of the state; exploring nationalism’s frequent articulation to and break from the politics of race; and finally considering the nation, as much as its alternatives, as the product of moving modes across the long postcolonial twentieth century. These are perhaps old categories, but I would like to think them anew and again, recognizing their persistence in the sphere of contemporary politics and imagining the possibility of a discourse of nationhood that opens itself to a range of possible differences.