Introduction

1. Tagore, *Ghare Baire* (1915, Bengali), was published in England as *The Home and the World* in 1919—the same year in which Tagore renounced his knighthood to protest the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh.


8. Akhmatova’s “Lot’s Wife” (1922, Russian) constructs a remarkably similar map of memory and space in asserting the value of looking back.

9. Throughout this book, I use “subjectivity” and “subject position” to signify how capitalist society constructs individuals in an *objective* sense, that is, through the state, through institutions, and through structural hierarchies of class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, national status, and so on. The Foucauldian and Althusserian concepts of “subjects” as those who are “subjected” to society are being invoked here, but without the extremely limited space for agency that is implied by those theories. “Identity” is a symptom of subjectivity as it is expressed on the level of the individual—but it is not concomitant with pure volition or agency. Rather, following Patrick Hogan’s useful formulation in *Empire and Poetic Voice* and elsewhere, identity itself represents a dynamic and dialectical movement between “categorial identity” (how we think of ourselves through the categories society mandates) and “practical identity” (what we do and learn to do in day-to-day life). Hogan’s recognition of both social constructions of identity and its dynamic aspects can be integrated with classical Marxist theories about the relationship between capitalist structures, the workings of ideology and consciousness, and the possibilities of change and transformation. See chapter 6 of Anjali Prabhu’s *Hybridity* for a nuanced discussion of identity in relation to concepts of totality.

11. I thank my anonymous reviewers for this formulation.

12. This terminology is taken from narrative theory. The “implied author” is the intelligence that we derive from the text, the one who organizes the relationship between the narrator and characters, the plot, the setting, the themes, the resolutions, and so forth. As a function of the text, the implied author is distinct from the real, or “flesh-and-blood,” author. The “implied audience,” alternatively called the “ideal audience” or “authorial audience,” refers to the reader(s) that the text imagines for itself, a structural position that is more limited than the flesh-and-blood reader (who could be anyone).

“Concordant” relations between the elements of the narrative do not imply a lack of irony or drama or humor; they merely describe a text whose overall effort is to put the elements together and to move toward cohesion. “Discordant” relations actively force the reader to pull things together—and often highlight the impossibility of doing so.

13. This phrase alludes to P. Chatterjee’s influential essay, “The Nationalist Resolution to the Women’s Question.”

14. Two recent texts offer a useful comparison. See B. Ghosh, *When Borne Across*, for astute readings of post-Emergency texts that disentangle their global celebrity status from their literary and political achievements. *When Borne Across* tests on a very different concept of cosmopolitanism from mine—employing the category “cosmopolitics,” minimizing the contribution of pre-Emergency writers, and assuming that cosmopolitan identity itself produces progressive or radical postnational politics. Another approach can be seen in T. Khair, *Babu Fictions*, a Marxist account that finds Indian English novels, early and contemporary, as so many expressions of the alienation of Westernized, elite, urban, high-caste Indians.

15. See Rushdie’s *Step Across This Line* and his 2005 interview with Bill O’Reilly of Fox News.

**Chapter 1**

1. See http://www.themanbookerprize.com/news/stories/1099. Rushdie’s global celebrity can be attributed to the controversy around *The Satanic Verses*, but as the popularity of *Midnight’s Children* shows, it is incorrect to suggest that Rushdie was unknown until the fatwa (e.g., Dabashi 172).

2. This is not to suggest that Said, Anderson, or Guha can be neatly aligned with the various postmodernisms of theorists such as Derrida, Foucault, Baudrilliard, and Lyotard. Said’s humanism and defense of national liberation, Anderson’s Marxist paradigm in investigating the modality of the nation, and Guha’s materialist approach to questions of subaltern subjectivity and consciousness do not allow for the complete rejection of Enlightenment legacies. That said, the tensions in these texts between materialist and poststructuralist methods of understanding consciousness have often been deemphasized. Little is made of the difference between Anderson’s “imagined nations” and Rushdie’s “imaginary homelands.”

3. See Meenakshi Mukherjee, “Interrogating Post-Colonialism.”

4. I explain this term further below.

5. Aldama and Markels offer provocative discussions of the limits and the possibilities of literature and art.
6. Compare Rushdie’s portrayals of Islam in *Step Across This Line* with Ali’s in *The Clash of Fundamentalisms* for two very different positions on 9/11 and its aftermath, both from secular intellectuals with South Asian and Muslim backgrounds.

7. See A. Ahmad, *In Theory*, chapter 7, and *Lineages of the Present*, chapter 5, for unique discussions on Indian literature. G. Kumar and K. Kumar argue for the inclusion of what they call “native voices” in locating a “new tradition” of postcolonial writing and theory.


9. Meenakshi Mukherjee warns fellow Indian intellectuals about the “trendy label” that “catapults us into the center-stage of an international academic arena” when, as scholars of “Commonwealth Literature” they had been “furtive creatures, lurking in the margins of English Departments” (“Interrogating” 7).

10. For a discussion of state capitalism in the Soviet Union, see Arnove et al. The links between the Soviet Union, China, and Communist parties in the global South are complex, but “while [Russian and Chinese] tactics may have been different, their strategy was ultimately geared toward the same end—consolidating strong national states, with top-down, bureaucratic regimes in control. In other words, they tried to remake Asia in their own image” (N. Rao, Introduction 28).

11. See Jani and Sreenivas for a brief overview of the elite/subaltern dynamic during the anticolonial struggle in British India.

12. The phrase even had a nickname: TINA.

13. Debates around Stalinist “socialist realism” haunt studies of the PWA. See Gopal’s discussion about the Communist Party of India’s relationship to the PWA, as well as the explicit attempts of Anand, as a founding member, to assert the PWA’s support for political heterogeneity. Contrast with others’ description of the PWA as a front group for the Communist Party (e.g., Hogan, *Colonialism* 265).

14. Many contemporary theorists think otherwise. See Bhabha, Spivak, Chakrabarty, Appadurai, P. Chatterjee, and Ismail, for instance, for their different critiques of nationalism. My views align more with those of Lazarus, A. Ahmad, Chrisman, Sivanandan, Said, and Brennan.

15. See Tarlo and B. Chandra, *In the Name of Democracy*, for studies that situate the Emergency more centrally. Whereas Tarlo offers a critique of the Emergency through the eyes of subalterns victimized by it, Chandra attempts to analyze how it arose in relationship to the “Total Revolution” movement around Jayaprakash Narayan.


17. Hogan uses “competence,” a term from Noam Chomsky’s theories of language, to describe the process by which an individual outside of a given community can become intimately linked to it, restructuring her/his “practical identity” (*Empire* 245).


19. We see the same ambiguities and hesitations in Said’s theoretical treatments of the category of “exile” in “Reflections on Exile.”

20. See, for instance, Hogan’s discussion of Atia Hosain (Colonialism 265–72).

21. Compare with Rushdie’s comment: “English literature has its Indian branch [. . .] This literature is also Indian literature. There is no incompatibility here” (“Commonwealth” 65)

22. Paranjape allows that the Emergency was a “major exception” to this general lack of commitment because it “threatened [. . .] bourgeois freedoms” for the first time (“Inside and Outside” 216).

24. See Steingass, p. 1427. *Namak-halaal* is “Faithful, loyal, true,” while *namak-haraam* is “Untrue to salt eaten together, i.e. ungrateful, faithless, perfidious, disloyal; disobedient; evil, wicked.”

25. Lelyveld and Devji provide broader contexts for S. A. Khan’s thoughts on the rebellion and modernity. Thanks to Shahzad Bashir, Stephen Dale, Priya Gopal, and David Lelyveld for their communications and references on this topic.

26. See also Pliny, *Natural History*, 31.41. Thanks to Dan Seward for this reference.

27. Thanks to V. Sreenivas for the Kannada proverbs in this section.

28. Thanks to Vandana Jani for this proverb.


30. Even the film *Namak-Halaal* can now be reread. Beneath its dogged commitment to reactionary paradigms of class, gender, and sexuality, the film registers a deep political and moral conflict. Arjun is caught between being faithful to Raja, as he has been instructed to do, and being loyal to his “rural” and “Indian” values by confronting his boss’s Westernized, womanizing ways. Amitabh Bachchan also performed in an older film, *Namak-Haraam* (1973), in which “loyalty” once again drives the dramatic tension. The son of a factory boss (Bachchan) must decide whether to crush a workers’ strike—and break his friendship with his childhood friend, the union leader (Rajesh Khanna).

31. See S. Roy, especially the Introduction.

32. Recent work being done on secularism points to a more promising end, neither embracing nor rejecting the Nehruvian legacy out of hand. See Needham and Sunder Rajan.

Chapter 2


2. The “national-popular” is a much-debated concept. As Hall explains, the national-popular is a site of contestation that can be directed toward progressive or reactionary ends (439). See Pearmain’s explanation and application of the term.

3. “Disavowing Decolonization” is the title of the second chapter in Neil Lazarus’s *Nationalism and Cultural Practice in the Postcolonial World*, featuring a comprehensive study of this orientation in postcolonial theory.

4. The “constitutionalist” bent and communal orientation of the Ceylon National Congress provides a counterexample as an anticolonial nationalism that remained fairly detached from popular pressures. See Russell and A. Wilson.

5. Harris argues in *The End of the Third World* that the discourses of populism and internationalism in mainstream nationalism were responses to the socioeconomic necessities of new nation-states. Leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement such as Nehru could legitimately claim, in the aftermath of independence, that they represented the united voice of working and poor masses of the world who had been robbed by the rich, imperialist countries. But their “vision of an independent state and of the creation of a national power” had “much appeal for those likely to inherit what the foreigners left behind—whether land, business or official positions” (Harris 177).

6. This aside from Khushwant Singh’s obvious nationalism as expressed in his essays and work outside of fiction.
7. See Menon and Bhasin.

8. Bhatnagar approvingly reads all of Sahgal’s texts, in fact, as being Gandhian, considering her cosmopolitan proclivities and her emphasis on women’s equality to be simply an internal critique of it (e.g., Political 107–18). But Sahgal’s secularism and acceptance of nontraditional cultural practices is more in line with Nehru’s departure from Gandhian traditionalism and religiosity.

9. Such reclamation of lost space is central to my reading of The God of Small Things in chapter 5. See Sinha on the centrality of such clubs to British rule in terms of fashioning ideals of racial and national identity. George Orwell’s Burmese Days (1936) portrays debates among the British about the exclusiveness of the clubs after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919.

10. Less central than Harish and Girish but memorable nonetheless is the businessman Sir Harilal Mathur, who was knighted in 1942 for donating 6 lakhs of rupees (Rs. 600,000) to the war effort. At one point, this “black Englishman,” as the English call him, donates a large sum to the Sharanpur Club for the building of a swimming pool—one that Indians could not use. “No doubt,” our narrator adds, “it pleased him to contribute to a cause that excluded [Indians], even though it excluded him too” (A Time 159).


13. Bhattacharya’s Shadow directly addresses the conflict between steel towns and rural India. For a historical perspective on Nehruvian steel towns, see S. Roy, chapter 4.

14. Cohn employs these terms to study the British use of South Asian languages in consolidating power.

15. See Trotsky, History of the Russian Revolution: “The privilege of historic backwardness [sic]—and such a privilege exists—permits, or rather compels, the adoption of whatever is ready in advance of a specified date, skipping a whole set of intermediary stages” (26–27).

Chapter 3

1. Indira Gandhi herself was assassinated by one of her Sikh bodyguards in 1984, a victim of the communalism that she had helped invoke.

2. For accounts of this period I have relied primarily on Bose and Jalal, R. Gopal, Jalal, and Vanaik.

3. The economic success of the Green Revolution—due to a combination of high-yield seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation methods based on tube-wells and widespread electrification—vastly increased grain production and staved off the severity of 1960s food shortages. But the Green Revolution also “exacerbated social tensions everywhere in the subcontinent” since only wealthy farmers could keep affording new crops, poorer peasants were drawn into wage labor, and high crop yields were offset by crop instability (Stein 387). See Vandana Shiva, The Violence of the Green Revolution.

4. By “state capitalism” I mean the direct use of the state in capitalist accumulation, not only the protection of capitalist interests through laws, police, foreign policy, and so on. “State capitalism” is often mistaken for “socialism.” In fact, given the weakness of the Indian bourgeoisie after independence, it was “the industrialists themselves [who]
favored a larger, direct role for the State in many of their activities” in the early years of Indian planning (Vaidyanathan 16).

5. See both Tarlo and Perry on Emergency violence and resistance. From a different angle, B. Chandra in *In the Name of Democracy* does not exonerate the Emergency and the excesses carried out “in the name of democracy,” but also points to the right-wing tendencies of the JP movement. M. Keith Booker goes much further, defending the Emergency and criticizing Rushdie’s negative representation of it in *Midnight’s Children* (305–7).

6. Like many texts critical of the Emergency, Sahgal’s could be published only after it ended. Upon returning to power in 1980, Indira Gandhi immediately revoked Sahgal’s status as ambassador to Italy.

7. Highlights include the Naxalist uprising in rural Bengal (1967); the Shahada movement of landless laborers in Maharashtra (1972–73); the Chipko movement against deforestation in Uttar Pradesh (1973); the student-based Nav Nirman movement in Gujarat (1972–74); the massive, twenty-day, all-India Railways strike (1974); and the Bihar movement for “Total Revolution,” headed by J. P. Narayan (1974–75).

8. See Jayawardena and West for nuanced studies of the relationship between women’s movements and nationalist movements. P. Bose also demonstrates the usefulness of the category of “feminist-nationalism.”

9. This was not unique in and of itself, as women built the feminist movement of the 1920s and participated in the nationalist and radical struggles leading up to independence. See R. Kumar, *History of Doing*, Kannabiran and Lalitha, and Stree Shakti Sanghatana. The leadership of women often shifted the ideological orientation of specific struggles from traditional to radical approaches (R. Kumar, *History* 101–2).


11. In 1977–78 a vigorous campaign centered in Delhi won important legal reforms against dowry deaths. In 1979–80 mass anger against the Supreme Court’s acquittal of three policemen who had raped a teenage girl in their custody in Mathura made rape a public issue. It forced the Supreme Court to reverse its decision and support the passage of antirape laws. In the 1980s and 1990s, feminists took up a variety of issues including denial of inheritance, misuse of contraceptives and sex-determination tests, sati, forced prostitution, undernourishment and excessive childbearing, inadequate divorce rights, and child marriage.

12. The nationalist movement had similarly provided women writers in the regional languages a larger arena for their practice (Natarajan 12).

13. It is worth emphasizing that while all but the wealthiest women bore the unequal burden of housework, child-rearing, and family obligations, it is mainly elite, middle-class women who experienced the severe cloistering in the home that many novels portray. See Agarwal; R. Kumar, “Family and Factory”; and Mukul Mukherjee.

14. See readings of *The Day in Shadow* in Bhatnagar (both works), Iyengar, and Jain (both works), and analyses of *Clear Light of Day* in Afzal-Khan, Banerjee, and Dhawan.

15. See Phelan on the ethics of character narration.

16. Following Abbott, I distinguish between free indirect style and interior monologue on the basis of how long it is sustained. Like Abbott, I realize that the terms may overlap at some point (70–72, 192).

17. “Reporting, interpreting, evaluating” is Phelan’s more readable gloss of classical narrative theory’s categories of “reporting, reading, regarding” (50).

18. *Relationship* is a published collection of love letters that Sahgal exchanged with E. N. Mangat Rai in the aftermath of her divorce from Gautam Sahgal, apparently an irrepressible Panjabi businessman very much like Som. See Harish and S. Narayan.
19. Divorce under the Hindu Code Bill ostensibly existed to give equal rights to women, but the restrictions imposed by both the law and societal custom actually made a husband’s divorce of his wife far more common (Parashar 115–19). Indeed, women had not even received absolute property and inheritance rights by the 1950s, which exacerbated their economic dependence (118).

20. Ignoring this “Christian” element, Khair misreads Raj’s discourse about national emasculation as a sign of the text’s affiliation with Hindu-fundamentalist paradigms (190).

21. Nehru held progressive views on women’s equality, but the nationalist movement as a whole could be quite reactionary. While women’s equality was official Congress policy, women themselves were treated as separate and inferior, which even led to a (failed) call for a separate women’s Congress (Forbes 142–43). Gandhi’s own position on women’s equality was quite problematic, as he called on women to emulate Sita, the mythic, ideal wife (Forbes 129) and claimed that women were more suited for nonviolence because of their spirit of self-sacrifice (Jayawardena 97).

22. Afzal-Khan consistently takes this position.

23. Compare with Parekh’s reading of Bim and Tara.

24. The NRI is the “Non-Resident Indian,” an official designation for those who are Indian by race, ethnicity, or birth but who live abroad. It has a negative cultural reference (“Not Really Indian,” “Not Reliable Indian”) that I’m ironically accessing here (since I am myself an NRI).


26. Amitav Ghosh’s The Shadow Lines, similarly, divides the novel into two parts—“Going Away” and “Coming Home”—in order to employ this powerful rubric for investigating cosmopolitanism and nationalism.

27. There are undoubtedly instances in the context of Western prejudice and racism in which a member of a non-Western diaspora might emphasize the positives as opposed to the negatives of his or her country. But the sort of representation that Bakul offers is not only a poor response to Orientalism (which also cites the Bhagavad-Gita and Taj Mahal) but also the mark of someone who has little to say about day-to-day Indian life in the first place.

28. I thank the graduate students in my spring 2008 seminar on postcolonial women’s writing for providing a rich intellectual forum for my thoughts on the conclusion of Clear Light of Day.

29. Later articles such as “The Virtuous Woman” (The Tribune, 24 December 1988) are a bit more inventive, speaking of “re-writing” the myths of passive heroines such as Sita and Savitri in the “search for identity and emancipation” (Point of View 33).

30. The left/progressive discourse that marks Indira Gandhi’s speeches gives a sense of the ideological complexity of the times.

Chapter 4

1. In terms of plot, the Emergency is referred to only toward the end of Midnight’s Children. But its impact on the first-person narrator, retelling the story after the Emergency, makes it central to the text on multiple levels.


3. See Jani, review article on Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial.
5. See Guha, “Nationalism.”
7. Some readers, like Robbins, have mistakenly read this novel as a cosmopolitan critique of nationalism because of its unrelenting opposition to the specific form of Hindu-communalist nationalism that emerged in the Bengali Swadeshi movement of the early twentieth century (*Feeling Global* 161–63). But Said, whose model of cosmopolitanism Robbins finds attractive, places Tagore first on his list of cosmopolitan-elites who supported national liberation while being critical of existing nationalist formations (Lazarus, *Nationalism* 141).
8. See Eagleton, “Nationalism: Irony and Commitment.”
9. Contrast this model with Kincaid’s lines about tourism from *A Small Place*. The first line of the passage I am considering sounds like an idealist vision of borders—“Every native of every place is a potential tourist, and every tourist is a native of somewhere” (18)—but is actually about situating border-crossing within specific spaces. This dimension is furthered by the end of the passage: “But some natives—most natives in the world—cannot go anywhere. They are too poor [. . . ] They are too poor to escape the reality of their lives” (19).
10. This trajectory also parallels the changing fortunes of the “Third World” as a political idea. See Prashad and Harris.
11. Contrast my view of Rushdie’s turn away from the nation with Hogan’s discussion of Rushdie and Gandhism in “Midnight’s Children.” Also see Rege, who argues that this novel gave Indian writers “the courage to tell their own stories as Indian stories” and to “be ironic and ambivalent about their relationship to the nation state” (274).
12. See P. Chatterjee’s implicit critique of universalism itself in “Community in the East.”
13. The U.S. war on Afghanistan in 2001, for instance, was launched by George W. Bush and backed by liberal groups such as the Feminist Majority.
14. Thanks to Leo Coleman for his comments on my reading of Padma.
15. While the Sanskrit word *pankaj*, a synonym for *padma* (“lotus”), etymologically means “born in the mud,” neither *padma* nor *lakshmi* has such a meaning.
17. See Tharoor, *India: From Midnight to Millennium* and *The Elephant, the Tiger, and the Cell Phone*.
18. This is a reference to the shadowy production of the Maruti car by Sanjay Gandhi, Indira Gandhi’s son. According to the report of the Maruti Commission (31 May 1979), every transaction having to do with the car was influenced by governmental pressure (R. Gopal 83–86).
20. S. Sarkar, *Modern India*, is the classic text here; compare with B. Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism*.
21. There is more than a little romanticization of the British working class here, particularly in relation to the World War II bombing of London. Compare with the similar representation of the London bombing in A. Ghosh, *The Shadow Lines*.
22. The larger context is important, as Marxism itself (in this period, in which the Soviet Union supported Indira Gandhi) is represented as little more than book knowledge. Ravi, Sonali’s ex-boyfriend, was a great reader of *The Communist Manifesto* while in
Notes to Chapter 5

school in England but, for most of the novel, becomes merely a tool for the Emergency when in India.

23. Sita was married to the god-king Ram, which is also the name of Rose’s husband. Sita provides the Hindu-scriptural model for the “good woman” that is often championed by conservative Hindus and critiqued by feminists.


25. The Indian Communists’ position, which Lenin opposed, can be characterized by the following letter they sent to the British Communists on August 9, 1920—just two days after the Second Congress (July 19–Aug. 7)—requesting that they send organizers and agitators to “take the leadership of the masses away from the nationalist politicians and passive resisters and . . . organize the Indian workers on class lines for political freedom and economic and social liberation” (Persits 174). The massive Non Co-Operation movement led by those “passive resisters” exploded in September, launching a new era of rebellion in the anticolonial struggle.

26. In Inhuman Conditions, Cheah cites The Communist Manifesto against Lenin’s theses defending anti-imperialist national liberation struggles in order to oppose Marx and Lenin on the national question (26–29). See Lewis for an opposing view. In “Karl Marx, Eurocentrism, and the 1857 Revolt in British India,” I contend that the Revolt started to shift Marx’s ideas about anticolonial struggle, a movement that led him to theoretically and practically rally around Irish national self-determination in the late 1860s.

Chapter 5

1. Cited in “EMS Attacks Literary Content of Arundhati Roy’s Novel.” The Rediff piece reports on, and presumably translates, an article that E. M. S. published in Deshabhimani, the CPI(M)’s Malayali newspaper. The audience for the article, in other words, would be a CPI(M)-friendly one that 1) has a direct interest in Roy’s portrayals (The God of Small Things is set in a town in Kerala), and 2) is susceptible to cultural-nationalist critiques of “the West” and English-language texts given the politics of language and location in postcolonial India.

2. I call Frontline CPI(M)-friendly not only because it has regularly featured articles and columns by CPI(M) leaders and intellectuals but also because even its journalistic articles—usually very thorough—rarely interrogate CPI(M) policies and positions.

3. See the Web page of the Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save the Narmada Movement) at http://www.narmada.org.

4. Frontline favorably covered Roy’s work with Dalit literacy and writing workshops in the late 1990s and has continued to publish articles by and about Roy. For instance, see R. M. Nair on Roy’s support of Dalit literary programs, and “A Novel Gesture.”

5. See N. Rao, “Politics of Genre,” on the popularity of The God of Small Things as a “safe” text in the Western academy versus the virtual avoidance of Roy’s hard-hitting essays.

6. A. Ahmad seeks to differentiate between his critique of the novel’s political ideology and his reading of the novel as fiction, but the distinction between the two is lost throughout.

7. See my discussion in the conclusion of Charlie Rose’s interview with Rushdie and Roy on 14 August 1997.

8. Head’s metaphor for the effects of postcolonial development is exceedingly poi-
gnant to me, as my seventeen-year-old cousin, Tapan Malay Dave, was crushed to death by a rampaging truck on a highway in India in June 2001.

9. A. Ghosh’s *The Glass Palace* (2000) provides an intriguing comparison, for it too aims to chart out spaces for survival, resilience, and rebellion in the midst of cataloguing the atrocities of colonialism and failed anticolonial struggles.

10. Wilson’s article appears in *Liberation*, a publication of CPI (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation, a party that is critical of the CPI(M). While this political context is important to consider, the paper is so deeply engaged with the novel on a textual level that it deserves consideration on literary-critical grounds.

11. “Dalit,” meaning “the oppressed,” is how politically conscious members of the group often known as “untouchables” and “harijans” have referred to themselves since the 1960s and 1970s.

12. This is not to minimize the impact of Sophie Mol’s death on the children; we are told that “The Loss of Sophie Mol grew robust and alive. Like a fruit in season. Every season” (*The God of Small Things* 17).

13. Rahel’s feelings of loss and confusion at Sophie Mol’s funeral can be reread in this light, for it is only after Estha sees Velutha’s broken body 300 pages later (“blood spilled from his skull like a secret” [*The God of Small Things* 303]) that we understand what Rahel saw when her fantasy painter fell (“dark blood spilling from his skull like a secret” [8]).

14. The twins are born during the India–China war of 1962—which some historians regard as the beginning of the demise of Nehruvian India.

15. Paravans are the specific Dalit caste group identified in the novel.

16. “The Greater Common Good,” similarly, reports that it is difficult to find facts and figures about how many were displaced in past development projects, but its function is to invert the truths that it finds: “where there’s no press, no NBA, no court case, there are no records. The displaced leave no trail at all” (52).

17. E. M. S. Namboodiripad claims that “the two most effective means” in literature for diverting people from “surging forward against capitalism” are the valorization of sexual deviance and anti-Communist politics, and Roy’s text contains both (“EMS Attacks”). There is little to distinguish E. M. S.’s concern for the rise of “literature that in recent years has been tickling the senses and exerted a bad influence on the younger generation” (“EMS Attacks”) from the position of Sabu Thomas, the conservative Syrian Christian lawyer who tried to sue Roy because “the sexual deeds described in the book will corrupt readers’ minds” (qtd. in Sreedharan).

18. Herman’s essay, written in spring 2008 for my graduate seminar, is unpublished. I reference the essay when citing Herman, but refer to quotations from Nixon’s and Said’s original work directly.

19. A. Ahmad remarks that “Naxalite” becomes “somewhat of an all-purpose term in Roy’s fiction,” the mark of the “truly revolutionary” (“Reading” 104). The fleeting references to Naxalites are significant in that they signify a Left voice that challenged the CPI(M) in the 1960s and 1970s.

20. Omvedt also misreads Roy’s work as an expression of the postmodernist rejection of development: from “an Enlightenment faith in progress and rational human planning, we have come to a post-modernist questioning of development itself” (“Dams and Bombs-I”). But Omvedt’s leftist championing of development is not sufficiently critical of it as capitalist development.


22. See the debate between Patnaik and S. Sarkar/T. Sarkar.

24. See especially chapter 1, “Rebellious Aesthetic Acts,” which aims to specify the change that “magical realism” can and cannot effect in the real world.

Conclusion

1. Said reads Karl Marx’s writings on India to show that nineteenth-century European writers on Asia were Orientalist despite differences in ideology (Orientalism 153–57). See A. Ahmad, In Theory, chapter 6, and Jani, “Karl Marx,” for alternative views on Marx’s India articles.

2. The entire interview can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com.

3. See chapter 3.

4. In “When the Negro Was in Vogue,” Hughes reflects back on the 1920s and the phenomenon of whites enjoying the work of Black jazz musicians—in segregated Harlem clubs.