

## Subjects of modernity: an introduction

This book explores modernity, the disciplines, and their interplay by drawing in critical considerations of time, space, and their enmeshments. Based in anthropology and history, and drawing on social-political theory (as well as other, complementary, critical perspectives), it focuses on socio-spatial/disciplinary subjects and hierarchical-coeval tousel temporalities. My effort is to carefully consider the oppositions and enchantments, the contradictions and contentions, and the identities and ambivalences spawned under modernity. At the same time, rather than approach such antinomies, enticements, and ambiguities as analytical errors or historical lacks, which await their (eventual) correction or (inexorable) overcoming, *Subjects of Modernity* attempts to critically yet cautiously unfold these elements as constitutive of modern worlds. The work's affiliation with distinct borderlands and its acknowledgment of the production of time and space by subjects, social and disciplinary, play a crucial role here.

To adopt such an apparently oblique, ostensibly elliptical, perspective on modernity is not only to interrupt the long-standing, straightforward storylines of the phenomenon, it is also to query routine portrayals of homogeneous time (that are yet founded on inaugural, spatial ruptures) and antinomian blueprints of social space (which nonetheless entail a singular temporal hierarchy), each one binding the other. Needless to say, such projections undergird the frequently formalist and often a priori representations of modernity which abound in our present. Together at stake in this book are efforts to explore modernity as a contradictory and checkered historical-cultural entity and category as well as a contingent and contended process and condition. That is to say, on offer is

an understanding of modernity as acutely construed by social-spatial/disciplinary subjects *and* as crucially defined by heterogeneous-coeval hierarchically ordered temporalities. As we shall see, all of this shores up, as well, what the work might contribute to discussions of modernity after so much has been said and written about the subject.

## Primary matters

It warrants emphasis that the conditions of possibility for this work lie in a series of critical questions concerning modernity, history, and the West/Europe, which have been raised by distinct perspectives in recent decades.<sup>1</sup> I indicate three such sets of queries here.<sup>2</sup> The first set concerns vigorous challenges to univocal conceptions of universal history under the terms of modernity. Imaginatively exploring distinct pasts that were forged within wider intermeshed matrices of power, such emphases have questioned pervasive imperatives of historical progress and the very nature of the historical archive, both intimately linked to aggrandizing representations of a reified (yet palpable) Europe/West.<sup>3</sup>

Second, for some time now, critical scholarship has contested the enduring oppositions – for example, binaries between tradition and modernity, ritual and rationality, myth and history, and East and West – that have shaped influential understandings of the past, key conceptions of culture(s). On the one hand, such theoretical interventions have derived support from critiques of a subject-centered reason and a meaning-legislating rationality, critiques that have thought through the dualisms of Western thought and post-Enlightenment traditions. On the other, critical discussions of cultures and pasts have equally challenged the analytical antinomies of modern disciplines, interrogating essentialized representations of otherness and querying abiding projections of progress, which are variously tied to the totalizing templates of universal history and ideological images of Western modernity.<sup>4</sup>

Third, close to our times, dominant designs of a singular modernity have been increasingly interrogated by contending intimations of heterogeneous moderns. Such explorations have critically considered

the divergent articulations and discrete representations of the modern and modernity, which have structured and sutured empire, nation, and globalization. As a result, modernity/modernities have been themselves revealed as contradictory and contingent processes of culture and control, as checkered, contested histories of meaning and mastery in their sedimentation, formation, and elaboration. It follows, too, that questions of modernity today increasingly often escape the limits of sociological formalism and exceed the binds of a priori abstraction, emerging instead as matters of particular pasts and attributes of concrete histories and defined by projects of power and molded by provisos of progress.<sup>5</sup>

### Key questions

Engaging and extending such inquiries and emphases, this book explores modernity, the disciplines, and time-space in specific ways, precisely through its location in the disciplinary borderlands of anthropology and history, articulating from their margins areal knowledge(s), including of South Asia as envisioned from Latin America. Of particular significance here is my thinking through of the place and play in influential scholarship of the face-off between portrayals of community, subaltern, tradition, and difference with projections of state, West, modernity, and power. On the one hand, these presumptions reveal linkages with enduring oppositions between “enchanted spaces” and “modern places,” which themselves rest upon pervasive procedures of the temporalization of space and the spatialization of time. On the other hand, I do not cast the recent writings and protocols under discussion as distant enemies which can then be easily interrogated and banished forthwith. Rather, such scholarship is acknowledged to be lying closer to home, informing the present inquiry.

Here the crucial questions turn on the unsteady oppositions – as well as their productive ambiguities – concerning temporal/spatial distinctions of the modern and the non-modern/trans-modern that have characterized South Asian subaltern studies, Latin American

scholarship on coloniality/decoloniality, and postcolonial perspectives at large. The critical concerns extend to the tangible presence yet ambivalent articulations of time/space – turning on “culture” and “tradition” – in formations of history, anthropology, and historical anthropology. On offer are intellectual articulations of hegemonic and critical representations of the temporal and the spatial; at stake also are epistemic productions, strange and familiar, of space and time. Several of these considerations will emerge through a rather personal narrative in the following chapter.

Next I explore how the developmental idea of a surpassing of the past is central to modern imaginaries, of academic and everyday natures as well as their entwined expressions. At the same time, the work highlights that such segregation of the past from the present, although assumed to be principally temporal, nonetheless embodies profoundly spatial attributes. Thus, the place-holding presumption of a homogeneous history allows an imaginary yet palpable West – its singular temporal trajectory working in tandem with its exclusive spatial location – to become the horizon for the present and posterity of other cultures, which are seen as succeeding or failing to meet their destiny. Yet historical ruptures also insinuate stubborn knots, which once again irreducibly braid the temporal and the spatial. This is to say that prior places/times, at once anachronistic yet entirely coeval, appear enmeshed with contemporary stages/spaces, thus intimating the tangles, tatters, and textures of the past and the present, the spatial and the temporal.

Taken together, these overlapping measures reveal that routine representations of historical temporal ruptures alongside their hierarchical, spatial distinctions under discussion, underlie homologous oppositions between tradition and modernity, ritual and rationality, myth and history, the magical/medieval and the modern, community and state, and East and West. This is true of the distinctions yet overlaps between modernity, modernization, and modernism. Now, such matrices require understanding as the enduring enticements of modernity. But here are exactly found narratives, oppositions, and enchantments that should not be treated as mere objects of knowledge which can then

be readily discarded or easily overcome. Rather, these stories, antinomies, and seductions need to be approached as key conditions of knowing under modernity.

Further, I track the interplay between disciplines, focusing on the relationship between anthropology and history. Here, my effort is to discuss formations of modern knowledge as themselves insinuating crucial attributes of procedures of modernity, especially the antinomian articulations of time-space that shore up disciplinary subjects. On the one hand, I explore the mutual reinforcements of time (in the form of history and temporality) and space (in the guise of tradition and culture) as simultaneously separating yet holding together these knowledge formations, whose disciplinary configurations have wide implications in social worlds. On the other, I consider the terms and textures of ambiguity and ambivalence in the recent renovations of anthropology and history, including in the making of historical anthropology. Under discussion throughout are distinct contradictions and contentions of modernity: from the formidable interleaving of analytical and hermeneutic orientations – especially, their competing conceptions of the relationship between knowing/explication and place/location – as underpinning modern knowledge(s) through to the ongoing presence of “heroic histories” in explanations of disciplines and their makeovers, where such projections often overlook their own presuppositions regarding temporal location, spatial locution, and historical progress. Unsurprisingly, it is also the larger undoing, often implicit, of hierarchical mappings of space and time that have revealed the critical possibilities of historical anthropology.

As the next step, the work explores issues of identity under modernity. Here, through their essential association with particular places, bounded spaces, identities are frequently rendered as a means of negotiating or overcoming modernity, which in turn is apprehended as an unbound yet homogeneous entity, seeking to remake the world in its temporal and spatial image. Staying with and thinking through such portrayals of identities as preceding modernity and/or as antidotes to it, I focus on the simultaneity of spatial imaginings, temporal schemes, and developmental sequences in these arenas. This makes it

possible to register that, across the past few decades, the increasing inflation of identities – one that is, unsurprisingly, accompanied by the constant clamor over them – forms part of the spatial segregations, developmental distinctions, and historicist hierarchies of modernity.

At the same time, these measures offer an opportunity to propose a distinct perspective on identity, one that holds up a mirror to modernity. Drawing upon historical anthropology, subaltern studies, postcolonial perspectives, and social-political theory, I make a case for the enmeshed productions of modernity and identity, formed and transformed within spatial/temporal processes. Here are to be found entangled procedures of empire and Enlightenment, race and reason, colony and nation, history and community, power and meaning, and authority and alterity, which stretch across while they equally construe continents and epochs, space and time.

Finally, the thematic fabrics and critical motifs outlined above are unraveled and sutured through interpretive threads and analytical stitches of time and space. Considering that both these conceptual entities are often apprehended as being not only amorphous but also abstract, a few clarifications are in order at the outset. Recognizing that space and time have each found varied salient expressions in the disciplines studying physical worlds, my concern in this book is with the social dimensions of these categories and processes. Intimately enmeshed, the one with the other, social space and social time are far from being merely passive contexts, readily given backdrops, and already received conduits for human action. Rather, under consideration is the incessant interplay between routine cultural understandings, dominant ideological representations, and fraught everyday productions of space and time as constitutive of – shoring up as well as shaped by – social conventions and historical practices. Put differently, time and space, elaborated in tandem by social subjects, are at once critical constituents and active outcomes, formative attributes and key consequences of meaning and power, alterity and authority, and practice and process that define our worlds and their divisions.<sup>6</sup> In this book, I will attend to the active interchanges between the usual understandings, the hegemonic representations, and the quotidian constructions of space

and time, principally focusing on their elaborations in modern social imaginaries, especially of scholarly persuasions.

## Critical concerns

A handful of common concerns joins these critical considerations together.<sup>7</sup> Let us begin with my notion of *subjects of modernity*, which shores up the study. Now, the category-entity refers to historical actors who have been active participants in processes of modernity: social-spatial actors who have been *subject to* (shaped by) these processes, but also *subjects of* (themselves shaping) these processes.<sup>8</sup> Unsurprisingly, these temporal/spatial subjects have registered within their measures and meanings the formative contradictions, contentions, and contingencies of modernity. Clearly, these propositions rescue modernity and its subjects from their ready connotations with exclusive images of the (Euro-American, often male) *modern subject*, a point that becomes especially evident in my discussion of historical identities as shaped by global processes of empire, nation, community, and modernity. At the same time, there is rather more to the picture. For, under the rubric of subjects of modernity, I equally include *subject* as implying branch of learning and area of study, topic and theme, question and matter, and issue and business. Such *subjects* appear no less formed and transformed by spatial imperatives and temporal stipulations. Taken together, my articulation of subjects of modernity can productively widen the range of address of modernity and its participants, not only in an empirical manner but, saliently, in conceptual, critical ways, including the entangled productions of time and space in these arenas.

Moreover, there is a persuasive reason for conjoining these distinct registers of *subjects of modernity*. Arguably, disciplinary formations of modern knowledge often sharply separate academic arenas from everyday worlds. Here, the unsullied arrangements of the former are assumed as readily understanding the murky manifestations of the latter. Indeed, on offer often is the privileged view from nowhere that becomes the

compelling vista for everywhere. Thinking through such pervasive supposition and its formidable scholasticism, this book is acutely aware instead of the mutual constitution of the academic and the everyday (as well as of the analytical and the affective, the rational and the embodied, and the hermeneutical and the experiential), especially vigilant of how these terrains simultaneously come together yet fall apart. Here, I unravel academic knowledge(s) and disciplinary protocol(s) as insinuated in wider social worlds and their constitutive conceits, each shaping and sheltering the other, and I register how analytical and scholarly procedures split yet suture embodied and everyday arenas of affect and identity under modernity, ever attentive to the spatial/temporal imperatives in these arenas.

Further, it only follows that *Subjects of Modernity* is held together by overlapping critical dispositions. Here are to be found orientations that refuse to render the worlds of modernity and its subjects as mere objects of knowledge awaiting their ineluctable endorsement, inevitable refinement, or irrevocable exorcism at the hands of prescient knowledge(s). Instead, the work crucially acknowledges and approaches these arenas and subjects as acutely intimating *conditions of knowing*. Indeed, such prudent avowal becomes the means to explore the generative meanings and practices of spatial/temporal/disciplinary subjects of modernity as key coordinates that shore up our worlds.

Lastly, the study is premised upon the recognition that the practices and meanings under discussion demand not only *critical articulation*, but also *careful affirmation*. Such procedures of the simultaneous querying and affirmation of historical/contemporary worlds and socio-spatial/disciplinary subjects of modernity entwine hermeneutic impulses and critical considerations. This is to say that they imply protocols entailing the interplay of prudent questionings of cultural worlds and their academic apprehensions *with* close attention to the diversity and distinction of these terrains. Here, there is neither an excision of the details by their being assimilated to the endless analytics of unpicking and unmasking, principally unhinged from temporal/spatial matrices, nor is there a privileging of particulars by their being



presented as innate embodiments of alterity and locality, difference and place.

Having outlined the broad lineaments of the endeavor ahead, before proceeding any further it is only appropriate that I now introduce the key tendencies that both influence my wider work and carry key implications for this Theory for a Global Age series.<sup>9</sup> Here are to be found bodies of writing that have been deeply contentious and that I read critically in *Subjects of Modernity*. For these reasons, it is only after presenting their emphases and attending to the protocols of their arguments – rather than assimilating them to my purposes, as is often the case with readings of these tendencies – that I filter this corpus through its own conceits, especially through the means of a personal narrative in the next chapter. (Those readers who are already very familiar with postcolonial perspectives and subaltern studies can, of course, skip the ensuing section and move to the one that follows.)

## Unraveling orientations: the postcolonial and the subaltern

Around four decades ago, Edward Said's seminal study, *Orientalism*, crucially underscored the mutual entailments of European colonialism and empire with Western knowledge and power.<sup>10</sup> Of course, long before the appearance of this work there existed several studies of European images of non-European peoples which identified various stereotypes, especially surrounding the identities of the "self" and the "other." However, such work tended to be "documentary rather than critical or analytical," so that an intriguing array of examples of European representations was presented, but their "discursive affiliations and underlying epistemologies" were frequently underplayed.<sup>11</sup> Intervening in this field, *Orientalism* made a persuasive case for the discursive fabrication – at once ideological and material – of the Orient as an object and identity through the profound dynamic of knowledge and power constitutive of Western empires.

Now, it is not only that anticolonial thinking has a longer past than Said's study – a question to which I will return – but that, exactly at the time of the first publication and early receptions of *Orientalism*, there were other writings expressing related concerns.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, it is equally the case that Said's arguments had an unprecedented ripple effect on scholarship. On the one hand, *Orientalism* had shifted the terms of debate and discussion on metropolitan representations of non-European peoples and their historical identities. Here was a shift from uncovering the singular biases of determinate depictions to unraveling the deeper domains of discursive domination, a move that further highlighted the complicity between earlier imperial imaginings and contemporary academic renderings of the Orient. On the other hand, Said's work came to crystallize the key emphases – and critical tensions – of an emergent academic arena, one entailing explorations of colonial discourses and imperial representations.

In this terrain, the implications and weaknesses of prior critical work on colonial writing, including *Orientalism*, were elaborated, extended, and exceeded by studies bearing distinct orientations. Especially important were Homi Bhabha's explorations of the inherent "ambivalence" of colonial discourse<sup>13</sup> – as well as the disruptive "hybrid" identities of colonized subjects – in order to challenge singular conceptions of colonial cultural writings.<sup>14</sup> Such endeavors further intersected with other ongoing struggles around issues of identity and history, especially those undertaken by minorities and feminists.<sup>15</sup> They also acutely elaborated post-structuralist theory, expressly endorsing antihumanist perspectives.<sup>16</sup> Taken together, from the early 1980s, discussions and debates on Western representations of non-Western worlds, as part of the wider elaboration of critical theories of colonial discourse, led to the gradual emergence of the field (now even considered a discipline) of postcolonial studies, not solely in metropolitan academic arenas but gradually also in provincial scholarly terrains.<sup>17</sup>

Over the past two decades, important interventions by postcolonial critics – as well as by scholars of anthropology, history, and religion – have gone on to access yet exceed colonial discourse theory. Exploring the "idea," "invention," and "imagination" of diverse subordinate,

geopolitical terrains, histories, and identities across the globe,<sup>18</sup> such endeavors have further seized upon the contradictory, contingent, and contested dynamics of empire and nation. These dynamics were driven by interlocking identities of class, gender, race, and sexuality. As we shall see, such writings have focused on projects of power as shaped by the acute entanglements of the dominant and the subaltern, the colonizer and the colonized, and the metropolis and the margins. They have variously questioned thereby the unchallenged efficacy accorded to authoritative agendas of empire, nation, modernity, and globalization. Indeed, such scholarship has drawn upon historical, ethnographic, and literary materials to trace the interplay between the construction and institutionalization of emergent articulations of time and space, entailing key conjunctions of racial and sexual boundaries and gender and class divisions as constitutive of colonial cultures, postcolonial locations, and Western orders.<sup>19</sup>

Accompanying these developments, from the end of the 1970s critical departures were afoot in the history writing of the Indian subcontinent. Reassessments of nationalism in South Asia were often central to such endeavors.<sup>20</sup> Here an important role was played by the formation of the subaltern studies project, based on meetings between a small set of enthusiastic younger historians of India, most of them then in England, with a distinguished senior scholar of colonial India, Ranajit Guha, who taught history at the University of Sussex. The protagonists were separated by a generation, yet shared a mutual political and ethical sensibility.<sup>21</sup> The purpose of their discussions in England and India was to thrash out a new agenda for the historiography of the subcontinent, an agenda that recognized the centrality of subordinate groups – rightful, but disinherited, protagonists – in the making of the past, and thereby redressed the elitist imbalance of much of the writing on the subject. Thus the subaltern studies project was born.<sup>22</sup>

Drawing on yet departing from wider traditions of “histories from below,” especially its British variants, an opening programmatic statement defined the aim of the endeavor as an effort “to promote a systematic and informed discussion of subaltern themes in the field of South Asian Studies to rectify the elitist bias of much research and

academic work.”<sup>23</sup> Here, the category of the subaltern, derived from the writings of Italian socialist Antonio Gramsci, was used as a metaphor for the general attribute of subordination in South Asia, whether such subordination was expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender, race, or office.

It follows that the earlier exercises within the endeavor reconstructed the varied trajectories and the modes of consciousness of the movements of subordinate groups in India, in order to emphasize the autonomy and agency of these communities.<sup>24</sup> Such articulations of historical action within subaltern studies had a dual dimension: for one part, the notion of subaltern could acquire the attributes of a singular and homogeneous entity; at the same time, expressed as a critical category, the subaltern held possibilities of sustaining analyses that elaborated the articulation of distinct identities, of community and class, caste and race, and gender and nation.

Not surprisingly, as part of the extended development of the subaltern studies project, the articulations of the subaltern – as a category and an entity – have found ever varied and ever wider manifestations. On the one hand, more recent writings within the project have discussed the multiple mediations and diverse modalities – social and epistemic in nature, cultural and discursive in character – that shore up the production of subaltern subjects and their mutating identities. Here especially significant are the ways in which the notion of the subaltern has served to interrogate dominant knowledge(s) of empire and nation, state and modernity.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, with the original impulse of subaltern studies finding varied appropriations and extensions across different continents from at least the 1990s, there have arisen debates and discussions that have been animated by broader considerations of colonial knowledge and postcolonial difference, multicultural politics and cultural identities.<sup>26</sup> Especially influential in these arenas are the writings of Gayatri Spivak, for instance, that harness “deconstructionist” readings and “strategic” sensibilities to fashion against-the-grain readings of subaltern subjects.<sup>27</sup> All of this has further underscored the question of the convergences between subaltern and postcolonial studies.

Now it warrants emphasis that postcolonial and subaltern approaches are often elided. Yet, as the discussion so far has indicated, the two should not be simply collapsed together. Thus, while postcolonial orientations emerged under the sign of the colony, the subaltern studies project was born under the mark of the nation. This is to say that, whereas postcolonial understandings privileged colonialism as a historical departure in the making of the modern world, subaltern studies project took as its starting point the requirements of examining “the failure of the nation to come into its own.”<sup>28</sup>

It is also the case, however, that from the beginning critical engagements both with colony and nation have characterized these two approaches, at the very least implicitly. This should not be surprising. To start with, the ideological antecedents not only of postcolonial perspectives but also of subaltern studies lay in long and critical traditions of anticolonial thought and decolonizing practice. Here, the writings and politics of Frantz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, and Aimé Césaire could acutely influence the very formations of postcolonial scholarship. At the same time, the terms and textures of subaltern studies – in a manner convergent with postcolonial perspectives – emerged equally informed by wider anti-imperial sensibilities. Such sensibilities extended from the diverse politics of counter-colonialism and decolonization that began in the 1940s through to the events of the 1960s entailing critiques of imperialism and racism – embodied, for example, in the dramatic moment of 1968 – and the continuation of these struggles into the 1970s across different parts of the world.

Together, postcolonial and subaltern studies were preceded and shaped by these wider developments and the extension of their spirit into academic arenas, especially the emergent critiques of reigning paradigms within the disciplines as well as formations of new perspectives on the Left, including combative social sciences, “world systems” theory, radical peasant studies, and critical revisions of Marxism.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, having registered the limitations of readily collapsing subaltern and postcolonial perspectives, it is worth noting the key intersections between these inquiries, which have also influenced the terms

and textures of historical anthropology, another important tendency undergirding this book.

## Historical anthropology

This book is located on the cusp of anthropology and history. Now, if the association between these two disciplines has been checkered and contradictory, the alliance between them has also been passionate and productive.<sup>30</sup> Displaying limited comprehension and lingering mistrust of each other, history and anthropology have often talked past one another.<sup>31</sup> Conversely, at different times and in distinct locations, important practitioners of these bodies of knowledge have underscored their key convergences, highlighting the necessity of crossing borders and straddling the boundaries that separate them. However, over the last four decades, the interchanges between these inquiries have acquired fresh purposes in theoretical and empirical studies. The conjunctions have been accompanied by key considerations of the history of anthropology and the anthropology of history. At stake has been a serious rethinking of the status of the two disciplines.<sup>32</sup>

How are we to understand historical anthropology? Is it a form of knowledge principally entailing archival research *and* fieldwork, themselves framed as prefigured and already known procedures that subsequently find productive combination in this interdisciplinary terrain? Is historical anthropology, then, only an inquiry that conjoins the methodologies and techniques of two taken-for-granted disciplines? As Brian Axel has argued: “In all the bustle to try and figure out how history and anthropology can use each other’s techniques (and thus, supposedly, constitute a historical anthropology), what most often goes without comment is the presumption that history and anthropology are whole and complete in themselves. Here, we regard such a presumption as a problem – one leading to the very common way of speaking about historical anthropology as exemplifying the dialogue between history and anthropology.”<sup>33</sup>

My own attempts involve approaching historical anthropology in a manner that rethinks its constituent disciplines and their wider interplay. To do this is to look beyond merely tracing the “dialogue” between anthropology and history, in order to attend instead to their critical makeovers and mutual renovations, which signal convergent dispositions yet divergent articulations.<sup>34</sup> This is also to say that the shared entailments of history and anthropology are grounded in common assumptions and mutual denials, disciplinary genealogies that have deep provenance and wide implications in social worlds. Examining such reciprocal principles, turning on space and time, which prop up history and anthropology, I seek to probe the business-as-usual of anthropology and history as well as to present the consequences at large of the meeting and mating of these inquiries.<sup>35</sup>

In more recent years, as anthropologists and historians have rethought theory, method, and perspective, archival materials have been read through anthropological filters and fieldwork has been harnessed to the historical imagination. All this has significantly opened up questions of the nature of the “archive” and the “field” as well as of time and space, albeit often implicitly. Anthropological agendas have been yoked to historical accounts of the interleaving of meaning and practice. Historical sensibilities have informed ethnographic explorations of the interplay between culture and power. Such blending has produced hybrid narratives, rendering the strange as familiar and accessing the familiar as strange, the better to unsettle our notions of strangeness and familiarity regarding historical worlds and contemporary ones. While such developments have not been all of a piece, the critical possibilities they suggest intimately inform the account ahead.

## Pathways

Rather more than a conventional monograph, *Subjects of Modernity* is better understood as an extended essay in the sense of an argument in six parts. It draws together the past and the present as well as

theory and narrative by sowing the empirical, the historical, the ethnographic, and the methodological deep into its critical procedures. Thus the work straddles the standard splits between the contemporary and the historical as well as the theoretical and the empirical: indeed, their conjunctions spell the spirit and substance of the study from this introductory endeavor, through its distinct chapters, and on to an eventual epilogue.

Chapter 2 is cast as something of a personal narrative. It recounts how I arrived at inklings and intimations of space and time – in tandem with understandings of disciplines and subjects, modernity and identity – beginning with my pre-apprentice days in Delhi through to my apprenticeship at Cambridge, moving on to my journeyman sojourns in Mexico and to my artisanal concerns in the present. At stake especially are encounters and entanglements with time and space as folded within the creases of subaltern studies, decolonial understandings, and postcolonial perspectives. On the one hand, I explore how these shifting orientations have drawn upon hegemonic representations as well as non-certified imaginations of time and space, to now press familiar associations and unravel unusual enunciations of these concepts and processes. On the other, I track the active construal, the exact production, of space and time *within* the epistemic practice of these critical perspectives.

Chapter 3 draws on social theory, political philosophy, and other scholarship in the critical humanities in order to make its claims concerning the mutual binds between everyday oppositions, routine enchantments, temporal ruptures, and spatial hierarchies of a modern provenance. My reference is to productions of space and time, antinomies and enticements, as hegemonic representation and quotidian presumption. Laboring together, these have split, sutured, and shaped modernity by intimately informing the meanings and practices of its socio-spatial disciplinary subjects. The spatial/temporal templates under discussion not only clarify the distinctions and overlaps between modernity, modernization, and modernism, but also reveal how modern enticements and antinomies, far from being analytical abstractions, intimate instead ontological attributes and experiential dimensions



of the worlds in which we live, and the spaces and times that we inhabit and articulate.

Chapter 4 charts its course through a large, varied corpus of anthropologies and histories, produced principally in the twentieth century. On the one hand, I elaborate the incessant interplay of temporality and tradition, spatiality and history, and place and culture by tracking the formidable presence and acute articulations of hegemonic representations of time and space, of the modern and the non-modern, in these disciplines. On the other, I register that these arenas are equally shot through with an unstable entwining of hermeneutical and analytical assumption. Now, the focus on the braiding of the analytical and the hermeneutical, each entailing a distinct relationship between knowledge and place, knowing and location, has critical consequences. It helps to unravel the unstable production of space and time precisely as part of disciplinary practice, which now instated and now interrogated dominant blueprints. Such measures, in turn, serve to think through temporal ruptures and to scabble spatial hierarchies, revealing wider antipodal modalities at the core of different critical traditions.

My deliberations include the work on time-reckoning and historical dynamics – implicitly insinuating *particular places* and *abstract spaces* respectively – in the writings of “masters” such as Franz Boas, E. E. Evans-Pritchard, and Pierre Bourdieu. They extend to mid-twentieth-century social-scientific considerations, located on the cusp of colony and nation, alongside older and more recent writings in history and anthropology across different parts of the world. Here are to be found tacit assumptions concerning space, time, and progress that hold a mirror up to the ambiguities and ambivalences of modernity and its disciplines. Yet also encountered are possibilities of other imaginings and critical expressions of socio-spatial and hetero-temporal disciplinary subjects and cultural terrains, past and present.

Chapter 5 turns to issues of identity and modernity. Based on rather particular readings of an array of historical and anthropological writings, it critically conjoins these with salient emphases of subaltern studies, postcolonial scholarship, and social theory, which are also configured in newer ways. Specifically, I render these understandings,

including against their own assumptions, as bearing distinctive expressions of space and time. Thus, I approach identities as referring to broad-ranging temporal-spatial processes of formations of subjects, intimating at once particular personhoods and collective groupings. Here, identities comprise a crucial means through which such processes are perceived, experienced, and articulated. Indeed, defined within cultural-temporal and socio-spatial relationships of production and reproduction, appropriation and approbation, and power and difference, cultural identities (and their mutations) appear as essential elements in the quotidian constitution (and routine transformations) of social worlds. Following these propositions, historical anthropologies, postcolonial perspectives, and subaltern studies – when unraveled along *and* against the grain of their claims and conceits – have a broad purchase. They untangle cultural/historical identities, grounded in space/time, as constitutive of colony and empire, history and community, and nation and modernity across the continents. Such critical and processual, theoretical and empirical, understandings not only militate against the attribution of an inescapable a priori particularity to identity, but they actively uncover the spatial segregations and temporal hierarchies that attend mappings of modernity.

Chapter 6, an extended epilogue, weaves together the different strands of the study by exploring the terms of modernism on the Indian subcontinent. I focus first on critical modernist moments, cutting across aesthetic forms and the twentieth century, in South Asia. Self-conscious breaks with prior artistic traditions within the subcontinental aesthetic landscape – alongside engagements with wider modernist imaginaries – have instilled these tendencies with rather specific energies, twists, and textures. Alongside, however, are claims of a surpassing of the past that appear variously inflected by empire and nation, communitarianism and nationalism, memory and history, the mythic and the primitive, a fractured independence and violent Partition, the political and the postcolonial, gender and sexuality, body and pain, and the epic and the contemporary.

Taken together, the discussion suggests the salience of tracking heterogeneous, yet overlaying, temporalities of modernisms in South

Asia, including the creation of time and space within aesthetic practices of modern subjects. Indeed, these considerations are further clarified through the formidable images and fragmentary texts of Savindra Sawarkar, an expressionist and Dalit artist. Central to his unsettling iconography and imagination are distinctive representations of history and the here and now working in tandem, which evoke and create space and time, past places and present tempos, in order to reveal their immanent frames while pointing toward other futures. Here the claims, contentions, and contradictions of a rather particular modern subject, his twisted times and places, bring to life the anxieties, ambivalences, and identities spawned by modernity and its subjects, who construe temporal-spatial matrices even as they are shaped by snarled spaces and tangled times.

## Notes

- 1 Before proceeding any further, it requires registering that an acute irony surrounds the fact that over the past three decades abiding articulations of these critical dispositions in academic terrains, and intellectual arenas more broadly, have been accompanied by the consolidation of an entirely predatory capitalist order in the world at large.
- 2 These theoretical orientations have been expressed in a variety of ways, constituting an enormous corpus. Keeping this in mind, I provide in the notes below a few representative examples, especially writings that early on intimated to me each of these tendencies throughout the long 1990s. At the same time, it warrants emphasis that distinct disciplines reveal different textures of the orientations under discussion. On the one hand, critical histories, construed from methodological margins, might have acutely interrogated familiar frames for approaching the past and the present, but dominant disciplinary dispositions suggest otherwise, often persisting with the reproduction of dead certainties. On the other hand, disciplines such as sociology, at the very least in the Euro-American academe, have only rarely recently engaged with postcolonial perspectives (and decolonial departures). Upon taking such steps, they have often

intersected – critically and conceptually – with work in historical sociology that articulates colonial pasts, also putting a distinct spin on sociological writings that offer critical elaborations of Western modernity. For a sustained engagement with postcolonial (and decolonial) perspectives within sociology, see Gurminder Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) and *Connected Sociologies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014). On a historical sociology of colonial pasts, see George Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007). See also George Steinmetz (ed.), *Sociology and Empire: The Imperial Entanglements of a Discipline* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013); Edgardo Lander (ed.), *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas* (Buenos Aires: UNESCO/CLACSO, 2000).

- 3 Johannes Fabian, *Out of Our Minds: Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Central Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscripting the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995); Saidiya H. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Kerwin Lee Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America, 1890–1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); Richard Price, *Alabi's World* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); Joanne Rappaport, *Cumbe Reborn: An Andean Ethnography of History* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922–1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Ishita Banerjee-Dube, “Taming traditions: legalities and histories in eastern India,” in Gautam Bhadra et al. (eds.), *Subaltern Studies X: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 98–125; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Saurabh Dube, *Untouchable*

- Pasts: Religion, Identity, and Power among a Central Indian Community, 1780–1950* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998); and Ajay Skaria, *Hybrid Histories: Forests, Frontiers, and Wildness in Western India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999). See also Brian K. Axel, *The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "Diaspora"* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999); and Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995).
- 4 Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992); John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff (eds.), *Modernity and its Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Shelly Errington, *The Death of Authentic Primitive Art and Other Tales of Progress* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges and Border Thinking* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978); Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Laurie J. Sears, *Shadows of Empire: Colonial Discourse and Javanese Tales* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); Michael Taussig, *The Magic of the State* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997). See also Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd (eds.), *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); and David Scott, *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- 5 Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: The Dialectics of Modernity on the South African Frontier*, vol. 2 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Fernando Coronil, *The Magical State: Nature,*

*Money, and Modernity in Venezuela* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Saurabh Dube, *Stitches on Time: Colonial Textures and Postcolonial Tangles* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2004); James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Akhil Gupta, *Postcolonial Developments: Agriculture in the Making of Modern India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Richard Price, *The Convict and the Colonel: A Story of Colonialism and Resistance in the Caribbean* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1998); and Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987). See also Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Charles Piot, *Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999); and Lisa Rofel, *Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China after Socialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

- 6 These understandings of time and space – and their elaboration across *Subjects of Modernity* – draw upon and bring together the key emphases of a range of critical scholarship, which unravel the production of space, especially under capitalism, critiques of disciplinary uses of time, and everyday articulations of space and time across cultures, societies, and histories. I provide very few indicative references here, registering that a discussion of the ways these analyses differ from one another – and the ways in which I set their emphases to work in my arguments – would well require another chapter, maybe even a book. Henri Lefebvre, *The*

*Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989); Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*; Nancy Munn, "The cultural anthropology of time: a critical essay," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 21 (1992): 93–123; Nancy Munn, *The Fame of Gawa: A Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) Society* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992). See also Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, trans. Todd Samuel Presner (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002); and Nicholas Thomas, *Out of Time: History and Evolution in Anthropological Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

- 7 The concerns and considerations being discussed have been developed, in conversation with the relevant scholarly literature, in my work over the last decade. Rather than recall and rehearse that theoretical apparatus, allow me only to point to some of those writings: Dube, *Stitches on Time*; Saurabh Dube, *After Conversion: Cultural Histories of Modern India* (New Delhi: Yoda Press, 2010); and Saurabh Dube, *Modernidad e historia*, trans. Adrián Muñoz (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2011).
- 8 Over the past few centuries, the subjects of modernity (and globalization) have included, to take just a few instances, peasants, artisans, and workers in South Asia that have diversely articulated processes of colony and post-colony; indigenous communities in the Americas under colonial and national rule; peoples of African descent not only on that continent but in different diasporas across the world; and, indeed, subaltern, marginal, and elite women and men in non-Western and Western theaters. For a wider discussion, see Dube, *Stitches on Time*.
- 9 This is clarified, for instance, by recent work in critical sociology that engages postcolonial perspectives and subaltern studies, two of the orientations discussed below. See, for instance, Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity and Connected Sociologies*.

- 10 Said, *Orientalism*.
- 11 Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).
- 12 Alain Grosrichard, *The Sultan's Court: European Fantasies of the East*, trans. Liz Heron (London: Verso, 1998); Fabian, *Time and the Other*; Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of the Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982); Anouar Abdel-Malek, "Orientalism in crisis," *Diogenes*, 44 (1963): 104–12; Abdul R. JanMohamed, *Manichean Aesthetics: The Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1983).
- 13 Homi K. Bhabha, *Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).
- 14 Other critical assessments of Said's text within cultural literary studies include Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics* (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 34–73; Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 119–40. See also Meyda Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Constructive critical engagements with *Orientalism* within anthropology and history include James Clifford, "On *Orientalism*," in James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, pp. 5–7, 21–7. See also Carol Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (eds.), *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993).
- 15 For example, Abdul R. JanMohamed and David Lloyd (eds.), *The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Subaltern studies: deconstructing historiography," in Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 330–63.
- 16 See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the subaltern speak?," in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 271–313; and Bhabha, *Location of Culture*.



- 17 Writings introducing postcolonial theory are an academic industry. Here I refer the interested reader to the following texts: Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001); Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and also Young, *White Mythologies*; John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998); Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory*; Padmini Mongia (ed.), *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (London: Hodder Arnold, 1996); and Neil Lazarus (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
- 18 Valentin Yves Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Valentin Yves Mudimbe, *The Idea of Africa* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1994); Ronald B. Inden, *Imagining India* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990); José Rabasa, *Inventing America: Spanish Historiography and the Formation of Eurocentrism* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).
- 19 For wider discussions, see Dube, *Stitches on Time*; Saurabh Dube, "Terms that bind: colony, nation, modernity," in Saurabh Dube (ed.), *Postcolonial Passages: Contemporary History-Writing on India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 1–37; Saurabh Dube, "Anthropology, history, historical anthropology: an introduction," in Saurabh Dube (ed.), *Historical Anthropology: Oxford in India Readings in Sociology and Social Anthropology* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 1–73; Saurabh Dube, *Historias esparcidas*, trans. Gabriela Uranga Grijalva (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2007).
- 20 Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India: 1885–1947* (New Delhi: Macmillan, 1983); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
- 21 Gyan Prakash, "Subaltern studies as postcolonial criticism," *American Historical Review*, 99 (1994): 1475–90.
- 22 For details, see Dube, *Stitches on Time*.

- 23 Ranajit Guha, "Preface," in Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. viii.
- 24 Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies I–VI: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982–89).
- 25 Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory*; Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*; Partha Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*; Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity*; Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Gyanendra Pandey, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006); Prakash, *Another Reason*.
- 26 A single example should suffice, concerning the impact of the (South Asian) subaltern studies project on writings on Latin America. Not only was there the formation of a wide-ranging Latin American subaltern studies project in the US, but the work of the South Asian collective has equally found wide discussion in Latin America itself. For the former tendency, see José Rabasa et al. (eds.), *Subaltern Studies in the Americas*, special issue of *dispositio/n: American Journal of Cultural Histories and Theories*, 46 (1994 [published 1996]); Ileana Rodríguez (ed.), *A Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); John Beverley, *Subalternity and Representation: Arguments in Cultural Theory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999). On the latter initiatives, see Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui and Rossana Barragan (eds.), *Debates post coloniales: una introducción a los estudios de la subalternidad* (La Paz: Sierpe, 1997); John Kraniuskas and Guillermo Zermeño (eds.), "Historia y subalternidad," special issue of *Historia y Grafía*, 12 (1999): 7–176; Saurabh Dube (ed.), *Pasados poscoloniales: colección de ensayos sobre la nueva historia y etnografía de la India*, trans. Germán Franco (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1999). Consider also Florencia E. Mallon, "The promise and dilemma of subaltern studies: perspectives from Latin American histories," *American Historical Review*, 99 (1994): 1491–515; and my own authored quintet in historical anthropology in the

- Spanish language comprising: *Sujetos subalternos: capítulos de una-historia antropológica*, trans. Germán Franco and Ari Bartra (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2001); *Genealogías del presente: conversión, colonialismo, cultura*, trans. Ari Bartra and Gilberto Conde (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2003); *Historias esparcidas; Modernidad e historia*; and *Formaciones de lo contemporáneo*, trans. Lucía Cirianni (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, forthcoming 2017).
- 27 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (London: Methuen, 1987); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (eds.), *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- 28 Guha, "Preface," p. ix.
- 29 Talal Asad (ed.), *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (London: Ithaca Press, 1973); Joan Vincent, *Anthropology and Politics: Visions, Traditions, and Trends* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1990), pp. 225–9, 308–14; Patrick Wolfe, "History and imperialism: a century of theory, from Marx to postcolonialism," *American Historical Review*, 102 (1997): 380–420.
- 30 I use the term "anthropology" to refer to social and cultural anthropology in their widest sense, also including those writings in sociology that are shored up by ethnographic sensibilities. "Ethnography" is used as shorthand for practices constituting social and cultural anthropology.
- 31 This is especially reflected in the manner in which certain stark statements concerning history and anthropology become leitmotifs for discussing one's own and the other discipline. Such statements include Maitland's comment that "by and by anthropology will have the choice of becoming history or nothing"; Radcliffe-Brown's assertion that, for the most part, history "does not explain anything at all"; and Trevor-Roper's dismissal of the history of Africa, except for the European presence there, and of pre-Columbian America as "largely darkness" that never could be "a subject of history." For the difficulties of conducting discussions by invoking such statements, usually quoted out of context, see Shepard Krech III, "The state of ethnohistory," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 20 (1991): 345–6.

- 32 This includes the cautious questioning of contemporary celebrations of interdisciplinary departures – of the “anthropological turn” in history and of the “historical turn” in anthropology – as being insufficiently conceptualized.
- 33 Brian K. Axel, “Introduction: historical anthropology and its vicissitudes,” in Brian K. Axel (ed.), *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and its Futures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 13.
- 34 This means that my efforts engage yet extend the emphases of several influential discussions of the interplay between anthropology and history. Axel, “Introduction: historical anthropology”; Saloni Mathur, “History and anthropology in South Asia: rethinking the archive,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 29 (2000): 89–106; John Kelly and Martha Kaplan, “History, structure, and ritual,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 19 (1990): 119–50; Peter Pels, “The anthropology of colonialism: culture, history, and the emergence of Western governmentality,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 26 (1997): 163–83; Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, “Between metropole and colony: rethinking a research agenda,” in Cooper and Stoler, *Tensions of Empire*, pp. 1–56; James D. Faubion, “History in anthropology,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 22 (1993): 35–54; Krech, “The state of ethnohistory”; and John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992).
- 35 In terms of the organization of disciplines concerning South Asia, what I am calling “historical anthropology,” arguably my main “area” of study, remains only an uncertainly demarcated form of scholarly inquiry, especially in the subcontinent. This fact itself has its genealogies, turning on disciplinary specializations and unsteady articulations of space-time, issues to which I will return.