

Cultures and Imperialisms 2013

ABSTRACTS

Stefania Basset (Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia)

Snapshots of Caliban: Suniti Namjoshi's Lesbian Feminist and Postcolonial Revision of *The Tempest*

Countless appropriations of *The Tempest* have tried to solve the conundrum of colonial and patriarchal implications inherent in the text, moving away from an imperialist and androcentric vision of culture. Indian-born writer Suniti Namjoshi's cycle of poems "Snapshots of Caliban" (1984) is perhaps unique in recasting Caliban as a lesbian woman in a (post)colonial situation. For a lesbian writer like Namjoshi, the yokes of colonialism and patriarchy are contiguous to the violence of heteronormativity, and even to the male-centred point of view in recent gay writing. Namjoshi's text conjures up a Caliban who, by virtue of being a woman, allies herself with Miranda against Prospero's patriarchal power, but who also feels that Miranda is complicit with colonialism. In order to show the tension of allegiances of the "Third-world lesbian woman", the overlapping territories a writer like Namjoshi is forced to walk on, the author makes the personae of her poems – Prospero, Caliban or Miranda – hard to distinguish. The implied speaker and the supposedly passive object of a poem, Namjoshi highlights, are markers of the violence of multiple, interlocked forms of cultural imperialism. Edward Said suggests that Caliban should see his history as part of the history of *all* subjugated people, yet he dedicates little space to resistance to heteronormativity in his study. Here and in her later work "Sycorax" (2006), Suniti Namjoshi avoids the chauvinistic, homophobic and xenophobic degenerations of some anti-imperialist stances, of which Said is also preoccupied with, by offering a multi-fold "cultural resistance" that is at the same time postcolonial, lesbian and feminist. Being at a crossroad of at least three variables, Suniti Namjoshi has a vantage point, giving a fresh and alternative kind of "contrapuntal reading", or rather "contrapuntal re-writing", that fosters new developments and possibilities in postcolonial studies.

Shaul Bassi (Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia)

The Vision and Mission of Kenyan Literatures

This paper analyzes the current situation of Kenyan literature at a time of great creative ferment. In a society where religious, motivational and educational writings obtain the lion's share, a close look at the local literary scene shows how the concerns of the contemporary writers are intertwined with those of the international literary market, the prize circuit, the cultural fashions of the West; concurrently, both old and young authors seem remarkably distant from our academic understanding of postcolonial literatures, from the influence of the British tradition, and from the Saidian postulations. In particular, in a richly polyglot society, most writers continue to favor English as a literary language, unconvinced by their literary godhead Ngugi's axiom that they should write in the other languages. A telling example comes from the key role played by the Kenya Institute of Education; having a book approved by the KIE and inserted in a predominantly national school curriculum may imply, more than any external recognition, a major economic gain. The average Kenyan writer is thus very self-conscious about the publishing and marketing implications of her/his work. This paper will also examine the competing approaches of the journal *Kwani?*, that privileges more experimental writing aimed at a sophisticated audience, and the publishing house Storymoja, that seeks to expand Kenyan readership alternating high-brow titles and general interest books. The potential of new technologies will also be addressed, since e-publishing and e-books offer new important tools for writers and readers alike. Fifty years after independence, in a young postcolonial nation where memory of colonialism and decolonization seem to be fading away, where the business rhetoric of "vision" and "mission" is ubiquitous, where deep concerns exist about the forthcoming elections in 2013, literature remains a formidable compass to make sense of a rapidly changing and invariably interesting African society.

Nicoletta Brazzelli (Università degli Studi di Milano)

Memory of the Empire of Ice: Postcolonial Antarctica

In 2012 the anniversary of Robert Falcon Scott's arrival at the South Pole (and of his death in the ice on his return voyage – the last entry of his journal is dated 12 March 1912) has prompted new light and research on Scott and the Antarctic continent: the iconic figure of "Scott of the Antarctic" as the British imperial hero has given way to the image of Scott as an amateur explorer defeated by Amundsen and his Norwegian team, much more experienced and capable of coping with ice, low temperatures, blizzards. In any case, the renaissance of Antarctic interests in the last years shows that Antarctica continues to be a source of fascination for the Western world as well as a place for the expression of individual bravery and endurance.

In my paper, I would like to focus – at first – on Antarctica as an imperial space in the British cultural imagination as well as on its contemporary status of postcolonial territory owned both by the former imperial nations and by postcolonial countries such as New Zealand or India. The 1959 Antarctic Treaty recognized to Great Britain an influential role in the international agreements that enabled territorial strife to be replaced by international cooperation promoting the value of scientific activity in Antarctica. At the same time, many other countries are directly involved in the project of maintaining the "white continent" a natural reserve entirely devoted to peace and science.

Secondly, one of the most important institutions supporting contemporary scientific, cultural and historical research on the Antarctic is the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge: founded in 1920, it is now a completely rejuvenated structure, including the polar museum, the polar library and the historical archives, representing the memory of Scott's enterprise but mostly his cultural heritage in postcolonial Britain. Scott himself did emphasize the crucial role of science in Antarctic exploration, and today environmental issues such as climate change are at the centre of the activity of the institute.

My paper will be grounded on an interdisciplinary approach, involving history and geography, but also geopolitics, cultural studies and postcolonial studies: I am convinced that contemporary postcolonial perspectives should take into consideration the role of Antarctica both in myth and memory and in the contemporary interpretation of the connection between culture and imperialism.

Norbert Bugeja (University of Kent)

Post-Imperial Culture and its Melancholies – the case of Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul – Memories and the City*

This paper addresses the affective fallout of the demise of the Ottoman empire on its principal metropolis, Istanbul, as represented in Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul – Memories and the City*. There, Pamuk attempts to forge a system of belief that suggests itself as a counternarrative to the ideological discourses that took over the city, as its urban, ethnic and religious reconfiguration through the new Republican politics began in earnest. This affect, a form of melancholy that Pamuk terms *hüzün*, may be perceived as operating through a Saidian model of "intertwined constructions" – a series of dialectical exchanges that allow the author both to narrate his own privileged experience in a consistent relation with the history of those hailing from the city's decrepit suburbs, as well as to evince a profound affective relation between the narrating subject and the deteriorating Istanbul post-imperial urban landscape. The paper argues that the memoirist distils from *hüzün* the qualities of a communal faith that enshrines or sacralizes the "black mood" resulting from the long historical loss of imperial power even as it relates to the professed secularism of the new Turkish state. The city's *hüzün* translates as a way of living that implicates the entire community, and that is registered both within its psychical *and* its spiritual ontologies.

Interestingly, however, this highly intimate and localized affect is not represented as the unmediated legacy of the early post-imperial writers, who were the first to express it in Turkish. Instead, Pamuk locates *hüzün* – as well as his very own conception of Istanbul – as a direct bequeathal of the nineteenth-century French diarists, foremost amongst them Théophile Gautier, Gustave Flaubert and Gerard de Nerval. The paper will argue that such a fraught gesture significantly complicates Said's contrapuntal model as expressed in *Culture and Imperialism*, as well as his unilateral argument on the French diarists in *Orientalism*. It finally considers Said's claims and Pamuk's specific gesture in the context of historical insights such as David Abulafia's and others' – ones that insist that late Ottoman cultural exponents actively sought and desired contact with and the influence of French representational models as catalysts for their most elaborate expressions of their own psychical and urban landscapes.

Marta Cariello (Seconda Università di Napoli)

The Struggle Over Geography: Borders, Home, and Palestine in Nathalie Handal and Suheir Hammad

This paper focuses on the poetry of Nathalie Handal, a poet of Palestinian descent who is currently based in the US, and on Suheir Hammad, a Palestinian-American spoken-word poet. Through the use of multilingualism and a poetics of distance and separation, both poets expand and disseminate Palestinian identity through a very specific, contemporary drive that becomes a panethnic narrative of a transnational exilic condition. The paradoxical borders of a non-nation – such as Palestine – are thus re-written inside a cosmopolitan community of voices encompassing at once distance, estrangement, foreignness and belonging.

In the works of these two diasporic poets, the mournful interruption in the linearity of Palestinian history explodes in a – still mournful, undoubtedly – dissemination of interruptions and subversions across cultural and material borders. Palestine suddenly becomes more than the negated nation and leaks outside its walled up borders, astray from road maps and corridors, and brings its own excess to the West.

In Handal and Hammad, the Palestinian question shows itself loudly for what it is: the excess of the West, the paradox of the democracy-bearing nations that allow and fuel the negation of another nation, at its very frontiers. Palestine stands at the edge of Europe, marking alterity, marking the threshold to things (so far) untold in the West, in the complex cartography of nationalism, imperialism, and ongoing colonialism.

Luigi Cazzato (Università di Bari)

Global South (in Theory)

At the beginning of the 1990s, a few years after the fall of the Berlin wall, in search of an alternative both to the politics of blame and of hostility, Edward Said wrote: "the old divisions between colonizer and colonized have re-emerged in what is often referred to as the North-South" (*Culture and Imperialism* 1994: 18). With the end of the Cold War, he sensed that the world divide was not West/East anymore, but North/South. Unlike many statesmen of that time, eager to construct the new world order after the collapse of the Soviet Empire, he also sensed that this new partition might have been dangerous, in that it might have triggered devastating wars. He was probably alluding to the Gulf War in 1991.

Twenty years have passed since then and, as the AISCLI call says, the complex global dynamics have reframed our ideas of hegemonic centres and subaltern peripheries. Said was right in foreseeing devastating new wars, but he could not foresee the present global trend, where according to Jean and John Comaroff (*Theory from the South* 2012), Euro-America, or the global North, is "evolving" toward Africa. And, perhaps, the Global South (the Mediterranean included) is "involving" toward Euro-America. Is this so? Are the multiple trajectories of postcolonial sub-continentals (Brasil, India, South Africa...) converging into the old single modernity of capitalism? And what about the East? Russia, China? Does China belong to the global South? Is Western liberalism "evolving" toward Confucian capitalism and colonialism? Lastly, what about "southern thought" as zero degree of power, as Franco Cassano puts it ("Pianeta Sud", 2009)?

Roberta Cimarosti (Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia)

Grading Cultural Imperialism in English Language Theory and Practice

"The British Empire is now gone [...] what remains [...] is the English language, a gift to the globe, to people who would not be able to express themselves if not for English." This is an excerpt from an essay contained in *The Handbook of World Englishes* (2006) edited by the main exponents in the Kachruvian school of World Englishes, since the 80s based on the pioneering research of Braj Kachru and to these days committed to diffuse the technical reasons why the acculturated varieties of English stemming from the ex-colonial territories require official acknowledgement in the discipline of English language studies. While Kachru's revolutionary theories have deeply influenced postcolonial theory, they have been isolated from linguistics and applied linguistics theorizations and progressively absorbed into the sub-discipline of Global English, which has repositioned them back to colonial marginalities and even tainted them with various degrees of exoticism.

Global English elaborates on a colonising rhetoric that re-establishes strong hierarchical affiliations between national identities and related traditions while dismissing standard forms of postcolonial Englishes by using conservative parameters of language proficiency based on British nativism. This tendency is connected to principles of structuralist and generative linguistics, whose approaches to language either exclude post-

structuralist conceptualizations and any relation to contexts, or box the worldliness of the English language in limited socio-linguistic considerations.

As a response to these practices, this paper presents levels of cultural imperialism as embedded in English language course books, academic studies and curricula, and points out possible adjustments based on postcolonial linguistics and criticism whose research has not yet been taken into due consideration.

Denise deCaires Narain (University of Sussex)

Close Encounters and the Politics of the Personal: Reading *Culture and Imperialism* alongside *Out of Place*

"There is no Archimedean point beyond the question from which to answer it; there is no vantage outside the actuality of relationships among cultures, among unequal imperial and non-imperial powers, among us and others; no one has the epistemological privilege of somehow judging, evaluating, and interpreting the world free from the encumbering interests and engagements of the ongoing relationships themselves. *We are, so to speak, of the connections, not outside and beyond them*" (Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 1994, p. 65, my emphasis).

This paper explores Said's arguments about the interconnectedness of imperial and non-imperial cultures in relation to his reflections on homeland and home in his memoir *Out of Place*. I argue that although Said's work seldom foregrounds gender, feminist interrogations of the supposed opposition of the personal and political can usefully inform a re-evaluation of Said's oeuvre. The paper will focus on the way that servants are represented in Said's memoir as embodying an idea of both 'the local' and a lost past that resonates uneasily with the wider connectedness of cultures he avows elsewhere in his writing. Drawing on recent feminist theories of affect and intimacy (including those of Berlant, Ahmed and Halberstam), I argue for a re-reading of Said's work that might allow it to be more actively affiliated to feminist scholarship than has thus far obtained.

Paola Della Valle (Università di Torino)

Robert Louis Stevenson in the South Seas: a Problematic View of Cultures and Imperialisms

In the first half of *Culture and Imperialism* Said examines the relationship between the grand narratives of the classic European novel of the 18th and 19th centuries and the growth and maintenance of the European colonial empires, showing how the realist novel indirectly supported colonialism. However, the fictional genre that probably most promoted imperial ideology is the adventure novel or *romance*, with its triumphant view of European pioneers and the epics of their deeds. Robert Louis Stevenson was celebrated as one of its undisputed masters and advocates. Actually, from his very beginnings with *Treasure Island*, he did not follow the traditional pattern of the romance but problematized the notion of adventure itself. He also questioned Western man's superiority by unleashing Dr Jekyll's "primitive" self and showing how Mr Hyde was as much part of his identity as his "respectable" side. The most critical Stevenson is however to be found in his late South Seas fiction — set in the Pacific, where he lived for six years and died at forty-four — in which he anticipated the "subversive imperial fiction" that will be one of the main topics of Joseph Conrad's works. Stevenson's novella "The Beach of Falesà" and the novel *The Ebb-Tide* reject the glamour of the *romance* or the South Seas idyll, conveying the writer's skepticism on imperial ideology and undermining the myth of the rectitude of the imperial adventurer, who appears no better than the "savage" he seeks to subjugate. Stevenson's problematic attitude towards the imperial enterprise is also evidenced by his non-fictional works: his anthropological study *In the South Seas* and his essay *A Footnote to History*, on Samoan political events. My paper will offer a postcolonial reading of Stevenson's South Seas production, whose value has often been underestimated in the past and needs to be seen from a new perspective.

Pier Paolo Frassinelli (Monash University) and **David Watson** (Uppsala University)

Heading South

Published in the immediate aftermath of the first Gulf War (1990-91), Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) ends with a passionate denunciation of American global ascendancy as well as of the exclusivist and exceptionalist ideologies on which its legitimization was premised. Although these ideologies are of course still very much in circulation, their instability – to use Said's own term – has in the meantime been exacerbated both by the decline of the US Empire – which according to Immanuel Wallerstein started in the 1970s – and, in

relation to this, by what Jean and John Comaroff describe in their recent book, *Theory from the South*, as Euro-America's evolution towards Africa. According to them, some of the social, political and cultural phenomena that have long been associated with the African continent – “rising tides of ethnic conflict, racism, and xenophobia, of violent criminality, social exclusion, and alienation, of rampant corruption in government and business, of shrinking, insecure labor markets, afflicted middle classes, of *lumpen* youth, of executive authoritarianism, popular punitiveness, and much more besides” – are now “becoming a global condition”. Reciprocally, then, events such as Hurricane Katrina have been viewed both critically and in the popular media through a lens usually reserved for colonial and postcolonial states.

Our presentation will be divided in two parts, which will speak to each other contrapuntally: in the first we will look at examples of contemporary theory and literary production that articulate and make visible the decline of the imperial geopolitical configuration outlined by the last section of Said's text. The focus here will fall on texts such as Dave Eggers' *Hologram for the King* and William Gaddis' *Carpenter's Gothic*, which are concerned with both the precariousness of US imperialism, and the consequences of this precarious imperialism for US culture and its position vis-à-vis the South. In the second part, we will move on to the “becoming global” of the South with reference to both the body of theory that has recently addressed this issue and to some of its possible aesthetic representations – we are thinking, for instance, about recent internationally acclaimed films such as *District 9* or *Viva Riva*, which appropriate the conventions of Hollywood blockbusters to reconfigure African metropolitan landscapes as something that might be perceived as dystopian versions of the global present. Through this contrapuntal strategy this paper will, among other things, interrogate how dystopian fantasies circulate globally and are implicated in complex attempts to represent and make sense of a changing global landscape.

Sam Gates (University of Louisville, USA)

Clashing with *Clash of Civilizations*: Said's Paradoxical Representations of Heterogeneity

Edward Said's critiques of orientalism have been crucial to the disenchantment of humanists and anthropologists across western academia. In my—and many others'—intellectual development, he was the initial source of questions about representation, the transparency of the Western lens, and the Other. Therefore, it is all the more surprising that Said's response to Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* was so weak.

I believe that the weakness of Said's response is implicit to his initial argument in *Orientalism*. Said constructs his criticism on discourse and power analysis (Foucault) with a superstructure of Marxist critiques (usually Gramsci). But Foucault did not perform the kind of critique into which Said tried to fit him. While Foucault might provide powerful tools for intra-societal analysis, his methods are ineffectual when applied to international problems.

Said sought to assert heterogeneity and deny the clash of civilizations. The oppositional intellectual must, however, more stridently affirm the reality of the latter, so as to more effectively engage it. As Gramsci said in another context, the intellectual must both create and critique the myth.

Therefore, examining *Orientalism*, *Culture and Imperialism*, and Said's criticisms of Huntington, I propose to explore what a Gramscian recalibration of Said's arguments might look like. Rather than simply asserting a rival interpretive lens, and throwing the baby out with the bath water, I intend to build my argument from the internal consistency of Said's own work. The problem is a question of emphasis. How can we continue to battle “essentialization” in the humanities while maintaining an affirmative political stance? Through my research, I intend to prove the possibility of a viable reading of Said that can, all the same, answer questions Said could not. Only then can we lay Huntington to rest.

Claudia Gualtieri (Università di Milano)

Bodies in Transit: the Imperial Mechanism of Biopolitics

Said's reflection on the complicities between cultures and imperialisms suggests possible readings of discourses of power in transit through history. The discursive body of the empire moves and evolves applying the mechanism of biopolitics as a way of ordering bodies, with the meaning of applying a rational, regulatory, and monitoring order. This imperial mechanism of biopolitics will be examined in action as a means of controlling life and death through the enumeration of bodies in transit: the colonised and the immigrant. This will be done reading two quite different texts: J.M. Coetzee's *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee* (a novel, 1976) and Marco Martinelli's *Rumore di acque* (a play, 2010). The applicability of Said's theory to bodies in transit will

not only show the relevance of the ambiguous alliance between culture and empire, but it will also alert on the complex articulations of forms of necropolitics in the late modernity, as Achille Mbembe and others have underlined.

Serena Guarracino (Università dell'Aquila)

Performing Postcolonial Theory: Literatures in English after *Culture and Imperialism*

This paper aims at exploring the role of postcolonial theory as descriptive but also prescriptive for postcolonial literature. In particular, it will focus on how Edward Said's work, while bringing to the fore the existence of distinctive postcolonial writing practices, has also exposed them to consumption by the Western cultural market. This critique, first elaborated by Aijaz Ahmad in his *In Theory* (1994), has led to scholarly work such as Graham Huggan's *The Postcolonial Exotic* (2001), where the tight relationship between postcolonial research and literature is discussed alongside the appropriation of the postcolonial 'rhetoric of resistance' by the global editorial market.

Postcolonial writing, in its turn, has been inevitably influenced by the debate, an element emerging with peculiar clarity if literature is experienced, in Derek Attridge's formulation, as an *event* emerging from the interaction among the many and diverse agencies which allow the postcolonial literary work to come into being. This formulation both highlights the repetition of tropes in postcolonial literature and the variations to the tropes themselves, which can become ethically and politically relevant by creating an interruption in accepted notions of what a postcolonial work should sound like. Following this lead, the paper will outline a methodological approach which interprets the literary work as a performative act in the complex nexus of discourses constituting the postcolonial writer as a figure of the global collective imaginary by looking at recent works of fiction in English by Caryl Phillips (*Dancing in the Dark*, 2005), J.M. Coetzee (*Summertime*, 2009), and Ahdaf Soueif (*Cairo: My City, Our Revolution*, 2012).

John C. Hawley (Santa Clara University)

Chattering Classes/Twittering Revolutionaries: Journalism, Social Media, and the Arab Spring

Jonathan Rée notes that "nationhood is a device. . . [that] cajoles us into participating in global systems of antagonism and tells us that we are only expressing ourselves when we do so," whereas "the task of a history of internationality should be the exposure of this delusion." He writes that "the logic of internationality precedes the formation of nations" because "in the same way that individual texts can function only within a field of general intertextuality, so individual nations arise only within a field of general internationality." Benedict Anderson's notion of imagined communities is thus both bolstered by nationalism, and supersedes it—with immigrants identifying in varying degrees both with the land of their ancestors and their adopted homeland. And, as Said writes in *Culture and Imperialism*, "it is not only tired, harassed, and dispossessed refugees who cross borders and try to become acculturated in new environments; it is also the whole gigantic system of the mass media that is ubiquitous, slipping by most barriers and settling in nearly everywhere" (374). That was certainly true in 1993, and one sees now the increasingly resonant relevance of Marshall McLuhan's 1964 dictum, "the medium is the message": social media are overtaking even the border-crossing power of the mass media of Said's day, with Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and the others helping spark and maintain revolutions that heretofore would have withered on the vine. When Said wrote, the fear was that "all departments of culture, not just news broadcasting, have been invaded by or enclosed within an ever-expanding circle of privately held corporations." My paper will explore the extent to which the individual has found a way to circumvent control by such corporate imperialism, and will note how such populist enthusiasm can be dissipated or manipulated by words like "terrorist."

Lars Jensen (Roskilde University, Denmark)

***Culture and Imperialism's* implications for thinking about the lives and identities of contemporary post-imperial Europe**

Edward Said has been perhaps the most important influence on my own work in postcolonial studies. Three things have struck me in my deliberations over how to engage with *Culture and Imperialism* twenty years after it was first published; a) what new scholarship has brought new light on the thematic areas explored in *C&I*; b) what is the relationship between the world as historically and contemporarily constructed in *C&I* and how its

disciples, such as myself, read the world twenty years on; c) in what ways have new theoretical insights evolved, which build upon insights similar to Said's, yet also develop a new approach better equipped to deal with the reality of 2012. In my paper I wish to interconnect these three points to my own current research on postcolonial/post-imperial Europe, which builds upon Said's insistence on relating the European presence in the non-European world to the very core of the formation of a European identity – in the past as well as in the present.

Fabio Luppi (Università Roma Tre)

Culture and Identity in Yeats' People's Theatre (according to Raymond Williams and/or Edward Said)

In order to develop their own theories both Raymond Williams and Edward Said start their studies with the preparation of solid statements, namely accurate definitions of their keywords, such as 'Culture', 'Tradition' and 'Identity'. The role played by Yeats in the Irish National Theatre can be used as a perfect example to show the difficulties imposed by the definition of certain words which have often been confronted with expressions as 'dichotomy', 'opposition', 'binary', 'ambivalence', 'binomial', 'antinomy'. All of these expressions here mentioned consist in an operation based on a binary numeral system.

Many postcolonial studies raised this issue and the related problem of a classification leading to stereotypes and false representations. However this is not the only mystification Said and Williams fought against (or tried to fight against). They both realised that a classification is not needed, rather a definition or redefinition of certain keywords is necessary. Yeats with his theatre tried to identify and to describe the notion of cultural identity in relation with popular culture and, with a possible definition of 'a people's theatre'. Yet, he proposed a people's theatre which eventually became a privileged experience for an elite. How could this happen?

Many issues are at stake: is the need of classification / simplification acceptable when we deal with complex cultural systems? Is it really possible to argue on open-ended identities and hybrid cultures in macro contexts in opposition with micro contexts represented by cultural elites? If it is so, do these definitions succeed / fail to find a coherent way of representation of reality? And, in the case of Ireland, do we have a univocal and proper way to represent reality? Finally, can we decline the word culture without any distinction of class, thus implying a concept of people as a single, unitary subject?

Tiziana Morosetti (University of Oxford)

Sara Baartman and the Archive

Through the examination of an infamous case study, that of the 'Hottentot Venus', and following Edward Said's defence of his own humanist vision in *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, my paper will discuss the concept and role of the archive in postcolonial criticism. The debate arising out of *Orientalism*, and Robert Young's warning, in particular, not to 'repeat the structures that are being criticized' (*White Mythologies* 168), are well known, as is Said's subsequent call for a reappraisal of a *true* humanism that – *including*, rather than being limited to, those structures – will be able to 'excavate the silences, [...] the kind of testimony that doesn't make it onto the reports' (81). The effectiveness of the 'contrapuntal historiography' that is at the core of his *Culture and Imperialism* is only just reaffirmed by Said in his last book, in which he reasserts the advisability of an approach that is able to learn from its sources rather than 'condemning or ignoring their participation in what was an unquestioned reality in their societies' (*Culture and Imperialism*, xv). I will therefore suggest that Young's and Said's arguments reflect two conflicting views of the past that are revealing of a more general attitude towards the history and testimony of the West, best illustrated by the treatment and/or challenging of the traditional archive in some recent criticism on the life of Sara Baartman (1790?-1815/6). Far from applying only to the fortune of *Orientalism* and/or the thought of Said, Young's position can be seen as a continuity of a Fanonian challenging of the authority of the Western archive. Such challenging, however, as evident for example in the volume *Representation and Black Womanhood: The Legacy of Sarah Baartman* (Gordon-Chipembere 2011), is not always put to good use, with a dismissal of the traditional (British) archive resulting in a misuse of important testimony. To this aim my paper will contrast the highly innovative *Sara Baartman and the Hottentot Venus: A Ghost Story and a Biography* (Scully and Crais 2009), where the discovery of new (South African) sources for the 'Hottentot Venus' is representative, in my reading, of the Saidean appeal for a 'philological' approach: one able to *integrate*, rather than *dismiss*, the traditional archive.

Maria Olausson (Linnaeus University, Sweden)

“Overlapping Territories, Intertwined Histories:” Reading Said in the Context of Indian Ocean Cosmopolitanism

This paper attempts to engage with the plurality of cultures and imperialisms suggested in the conference title by offering a reading of Said against the backdrop of present day literary representations of Africa’s Indian Ocean connections. What these texts have in common is a preoccupation with issues of freedom and enslavement within narratives which call attention to what Said terms “forms of knowledge affiliated with domination” (8). The structures of intervention that Said discusses in Chapter One of *Culture and Imperialism*, whereby the European powers displace Indian Ocean empires in the name of Enlightenment and freedom are present in different ways in texts by Yvette Christiansë, Mia Couto, Amitav Ghosh, Abdulrazak Gurnah and Rayda Jacobs. This reading suggests that Indian Ocean forms of cosmopolitanism within complex structures of dependence and subordination was replaced by a notion of individual freedom based on a deeply racialised, Atlantic notion of global movement.

Francesca Romana Paci (Università del Piemonte Orientale)

Shifting Statuses and Lasting Codes in Janice Kulyk Keefer ‘s Writings

In most of her writings, mainly in the novel *The Green Library* (1996) and in her more recently published collection of poetry *Foreign Relations* (2009), the Ukrainian-Canadian writer Janice Kulyk Keefer offers what can be seen as an anthology of case-studies of the forming, dissolving and re-forming in colonial and post-colonial history (even very recent history, and lacking better historical adjectives) of the basically imperialistic binary pattern *we/they // us / them* that Said discusses at the very beginning of *Culture and Imperialism*. While Kulyk Keefer, challenging the position of other Canadian intellectuals, defines herself a hyphenated writer, her multiple representations of the opposition *we / they* suggest not only the movements and changes due to the passing of time, the forming of new nations and the massive migration from country to country (including the deceptive themes of national identity and culture) but also discloses deeply embedded, albeit perhaps partly unconscious, elements of a thorny image of class belonging. Kulyk Keefer deploys the concept of a basically both narcissistic and upsetting class consciousness by dissecting it into its dynamic components, digging out even some spurious elements in them, thus reaching back through her characters to representations of class belonging and of class perception as different as those to be found in E. M. Forster’s *Passage to India* and in Amílcar Cabral’s political writings.

Edvige Pucciarelli (Università del Piemonte Orientale)

A Contemporary Reading of the Imperial Theme in Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra*

Borrowing the title *Imperial Theme* from Wilson Knight’s famous book on Shakespeare and re-contextualising it in the light of Said’s discourse in *Culture and Imperialism*, the purpose of this paper is to focus on the political representation of Colonialism in *Antony and Cleopatra*. While *The Tempest* has received much critical attention in Post-Colonial Studies, *Antony and Cleopatra* has been underestimated as a text offering a clear and poignant picture of the new imperialistic ambitions of Jacobean England which were, at the time, emerging with the public image of James I, who embodied both Pater Patriae and a new Caesar, the new Rex Pacificus, thus implying, and foreshadowing, England’s role and destiny as agent of civilization. The parallel powerfully drawn in *Antony and Cleopatra* between the Roman Empire and the new mentality of Stuart England, perceived and re-read through Said’s methods of inquiry in *Culture and Imperialism*, can shed a new light on some aspects of contemporary critical debates, especially the concept of subalternity and that of metropolitan culture. The English imperialistic rhetoric and the power of its historical and political discourse emerge in all their cultural activity of the period, or, as Said puts it considering and examining Verdi’s *Aida*, they can show yet again that “Egypt ... an antique place” is in fact an invented place where “Europeans can mount certain shows of force”.

Michaela Quadraro (Università degli Studi di Napoli “L’Orientale”)

“Overlapping territories, intertwined histories” in Postcolonial Art

Visuality as a cultural practice is extremely important in Cultural and Postcolonial Studies. The field of the visual is elaborated by Nicholas Mirzoeff as an interdisciplinary and challenging place of social interaction and

definition in terms of class, gender, sexual and racialized identities. Exploring ambivalences and interstices, visibility could be developed as a problematic place, where it is also possible to re-think the consolidation of power and the question of representation. This presentation will be inspired by art, in particular cinematic and artistic productions that re-elaborate the colonisation, defined as “part of an essentially transnational and transcultural global process” (Hall, 1996, p. 247). The focus will be on the very specificity of the images that confront the new and emerging conditions of contemporary society. Art suggests a compelling way to test and reconfigure theories: we can expect from it not only practical outcomes, but also expanded and more critical thought. Specifically, some trans-local art practices deal with the complex and contradictory meanings of modernity and the contemporary world. Moreover, they become interventions on the ethical and aesthetic strategies and develop a critical evaluation of the diasporic space. Between cinema and art, Trinh T. Minh-ha’s digital images, for example, express the overlapping territories and intertwined histories that produce heterogeneous spaces. This paper will explore some artworks that work on the issues of borders, migration, and the legacy of colonialism. However, postcolonial art is not a genre to be fixed in a taxonomy. Artistic production is not the object of a political and social analysis, but the site where previous statements are questioned. What is important is how art engages with history, subjectivity, and the political ramifications of all of these. In this way, the ‘post-colonial’ marks a critical interruption into the historiographical narrative told within European parameters.

Caterina Romeo (Università “La Sapienza”, Roma)

Questioning Imperialism through Culture: Italian Postcolonial Literature

If 2013 marks the twentieth anniversary of Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, 2010 also marked the twentieth anniversary of another event – in many ways related to Said's theorization – of profound relevance for Italian culture: the beginning of Italian migrant and postcolonial literature (1990).

My starting point follows Said's intuition that colonial imperialism for the British Empire was relevant not only in shaping the countries' economic and political relationships with other countries, but rather it was determinant also in the process of shaping the British culture at large, and that culture and imperialism were mutually supportive in constructing and strengthening each other. As it has been argued, the term "postcolonial" does not mark what comes after, rather it signals – among other things – a shift in existing power relations and transnational balances also in terms of cultural production, presenting new subjects who produce new epistemologies, thus rewriting the sense of national identity, history, literature, and culture.

In this paper I want to argue that a postcolonial reading of Italian history and culture is necessary to analyze the formation of Italian contemporary culture and society and that Italian postcolonial literature is strongly contributing to rewrite Italian national identity. Reading Italian literature in a postcolonial perspective creates a sense of temporal as well as spatial continuity, highlighting a connection between Italian past and present as well as the fact that Italy shares its postcolonial condition with most European countries. If Italian postcolonial literature signals a shift in the subjects who produce epistemology, postcolonial authors conjure up plural identities within the Italian national space (the way in which postcolonial writers have done in other European countries) and contribute to open a breach in the national collective imaginary, thus making possible new conceptions of Italianness.

Vincenzo Salvatore (Università di Bari)

Philology and Career

Starting from Said's return to philology, I will linger upon the epistemological and ontological values of text and career considered as “sites” of power and resistance. In *Beginnings* Said underlines how modernity has transformed the relationship between text and writing: the text became a simulacrum of the incessant writer's struggle to live up to his career, and the writing began to be considered as an effort of individual realization according to an ontological becoming. The issue is how to understand the actual rules of coherence and enactment of this desire of self-edification: it is the “interplay” between “real life” and “writing life” that has to attract critical attention, because it concretely represents the ethical elaboration of the creative act and the ontological nature of the author as a determined subject.

Said's critical-philological readings in *Culture and Imperialism* recover the traces of the historical process in particular “sites” revealing the existence of a more general imperial cultural model. I will focus on the modalities of this approach: writers' texts and careers become sites when Said engaged the “Gramsci factor” on his Foucauldian structuralism. Said's “inventory” of these traces is more a human than an intellectual need:

he entangles his philological assumptions of Vico, Auerbach and Gramsci with his traditional humanistic *Bildung* and his exilic biography. The final result is a personal dimension which radically characterizes Said's *praxis* as a secular intellectual attitude, a philological method of inquiry and a genuine vocation to criticism.

John A Stotesbury (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)

Locating a Post-Saidean Cultural Identity through Contemporary Gibraltar Anglophone Literary Discourse

For understandable reasons, Anglophone Gibraltar literary culture has (evidently) attracted no previous sustained attention. Where academic and popular attention has been paid previously to Gibraltar, it has focused overwhelmingly on the imperial military history and status of the Rock. In addition, Stephen Constantine (2009) has examined in depth the socio-cultural formation of the present-day community, while several studies have revealed a keen awareness of the complex linguistic identity of Gibraltar's ethnically "Mediterranean" population. Until recently, however, only a marginal Gibraltar literary voice was detectable, part Spanish, part English, along with numerous allusions to Gibraltar in literary works by outsiders. Since the turn of the new millennium, however, a handful of local fiction writers have been publishing in English: Sam Benady and Mary Chiappe have produced several popular, historical detective fiction titles, all co-written, while Francisco Javier Silva, a local journalist, has published a volume of magical realist stories.

In addition, however, M. G. [Mark Gerard] Sanchez has produced two volumes of short fiction with an explicitly local literary-cultural agenda. In a recent interview he made a startling claim on behalf of the post/colony: "We don't have our own stories." Drawing on an extensive academic education in postcolonial studies, Sanchez is nevertheless achieving a credible Gibraltar literary presence, including a forthcoming full-length novel that may help him to further his perception that a community with no stories of its own may be considered a community with no identity of its own.

Given this post/colonial context, the intention of this paper will be to explore the present small surge in Anglophone Gibraltar literary discourse with a view to establishing a post-Saidean understanding of its significance and direction.

Nicoletta Vallorani (Università di Milano)

In Times of Peace. Postcolonial Crime in *Tokyo Year Zero*, by David Peace

Conceived as the first novel in a planned trilogy about Tokyo, *Tokyo Year Zero* (2007) is set in 1946 and portrays Japan under siege, defeated by the Allies, invaded by the American occupying forces, and shrouded in fear of a third wave of destruction. The story is a real (the murders of four prostitutes by a sex maniac, who is eventually captured and executed), and the investigation develops on the backdrop of a nation that has willingly decided to lose its identity. Two different types of crime – the private, individual killing of women and the imperialist invasion of a whole country - coalesce in the profile of the protagonist: Detective Minami of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department is a complex character who, in a context where everyone has changed his identity to avoid recrimination, is obsessed by the feeling that nothing is as it seems. His frantic search for a new identity combines with his investigation on the dead, anonymous prostitutes and refracts on a Japanese world where the body of women becomes the most effective icon of the violence and cultural rape implied in the USA invasion. Memory is willingly removed, producing a condition of chaos and uprooting that is felt as the most outstanding and sorrowful result of the Western impact on the Japanese world.

In this context, the violated body of the Japanese women is symbolically reported through a microphysics of power, and it literally *becomes* the body of the victim, that is the hub of a multilayered interpretation of the social, political and military evil produced by the Japanese defeat. Replicating - in a narrative form - Foucault's statement that "Power does not function in the form of a chain. It circulates", Peace erodes the distinctions between the criminal and the invaders, the killer and his victim, and he shows how "Truth isn't outside power (...) Truth is a thing of this world; it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraints. And it induces regular effects of power" (Foucault).