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Introduction

I find myself with the anxiety-inducing task of opening this book with a conundrum due largely, but not exclusively, to the title I have settled on. The literary objects of study within this book certainly led me to it, but defining the terms contained in the title without the crutch of these texts poses significant challenges. Firstly, any attempt to cognitively pin down the contours of imperialism is painstakingly like trying to grasp an oily yet viscous liquid. Although I will endeavor to do so here in the introduction, the totality of this project will hopefully provide a more complete answer. Nonetheless, and perhaps as a disclaimer, discussing imperial power often leads to the fallacy of designating its limits. Western imperialism, as I shall consider, has very much constructed its own world, in the Heideggerian sense, and therefore, establishing its limits – where or when it exists – is an exercise in futility. If I can think of a phrase that unites the texts I will explore in relation to imperial power it would be something to the effect of: ‘Empire is here and now, let’s tackle it.’ The texts, though, do in fact offer nuanced insights into how imperial power has arrived at its present moment, all the while imagining ways out of it. The broadly encompassing nature of imperial power, however, renders any study of it incomplete.

For the sake of semantic and conceptual clarity, it is important to distinguish the existence of western imperial power from European national imperial projects. As I shall discuss, imperial power resides in and reproduces a particular field of meaning to which national imperial projects have contributed. The literary texts to be studied here share both experiences of imperial power and of a particular national imperial endeavor – Portuguese colonialism. Like other national empires, Portuguese expansion brought with it its own textual fabric, overlapping with and contributing to broader imperial power and the construction of the West. To be clear about a contentious topic to be discussed further on in this introduction, no specificity or particularity concerning Portuguese expansion and Portugal’s

more than 500-year imperial story disrupts imperial power, but rather reproduces it.

One of the first European nations to take to the sea, Portugal's expansion began with the conquest of Ceuta in 1415. What notably accompanied Portuguese overseas conquests was an adjacent historicizing project embodied by the kingdom's appointment of chroniclers, beginning with Fernão Lopes. Chroniclers like Lopes provided a politically driven historiography to the nation and nascent empire, one which would legitimate and normalize the power of the kingdom over its subjects at home and abroad. The work of such chroniclers articulated racial, religious, sexual, and economic otherness during both the Iberian Reconquest against Islamic presence and the claiming of markets along the western and eastern coasts of Africa, throughout the Indian Ocean, and as far as Southeast Asia and Japan. Gomes Eanes de Zurara's *Chronica do Descobrimento e Conquista da Guiné* [*Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*], completed in 1453, for instance, offers an early example of the exoticization of African bodies and their placement into European intercontinental narratives under the sign of otherness. The same can be said of South American indigenous bodies in the best-known work of another chronicler, Pero Vaz de Caminha's *Carta do Achamento do Brasil* ['Letter on the Discovery of Brazil'] of 1500.

As Portugal's expansion across the southern hemisphere progressed, so too did its textual existence and that of the West more broadly, simultaneously subsuming time, space, and bodies into their overlapping fields of meaning. Some examples of these will be discussed in different chapters of *Anti-Empire*. Throughout the more than five centuries of imperial endeavor, complex discursive maneuvers and phenomena accompanied political, economic, and cultural dominance, even when it was most fleeting.

The current project therefore places Portuguese imperialism within a geopolitically broader understanding of imperial power in order to examine the repercussions of the former for the latter, and vice versa. In this sense, the disciplinary goal here is twofold: exploring what the development of the Portuguese imperial project can teach us about imperial power and meanings while, more importantly, offering a study of Portuguese imperialism – and resistance to it – through a broader framework beyond its own contexts. The literary texts implore us to recognize that Portuguese imperialism cannot be separated from the formation of a matrix of power and concomitant discursive field that has impacted humanity from the early modern period and slave-based capitalism to industrialism and late capitalism. The postcolonial poetics of these works call our attention and critical eye to both Portuguese imperial endeavors and a global order of power (at different historical stages), and to the relationship between the

two. While the framework of this project is geopolitically broader, going beyond Portuguese imperialism, the conceptualization of Empire through which literary works and history are analyzed here ultimately serves to dig deeper into Portuguese imperial history by pinpointing and examining the inner workings, substrata, and micro levels of power (always intimately bonded to the macro) – namely desire, subjectivation, and different layers of narrativization such as the relationship between dominant historiographies and colonial discourse.¹ By the same token, the literary interlocutors of this undertaking offer valuable responses, questions, and additions that enrich the study of these topics.

More than writing in a common language and thus being part of *Lusofonia*, what truly unites these writers and their works is the dialogue on the intricacies behind Portuguese imperial history ensnared in wider imperial Western history and late capitalism in addition to the impulse to move beyond language-centered and imperial-national conceptualizations of political engagement and cultural production. In this regard, the term ‘Lusophone literatures’ in the title is, more than anything, a placeholder for emergent perceptions and taxonomies of the postcolonial global present in order to understand and grapple with the contemporary formulations of Western imperial power which, more than ever, elude national and linguistic categories. Many of the postcolonial and anti-imperial voices contained in the texts studied here convey their experiences and address imperial power on a global scale rather than one limited to the acts, policies, and discourses of Portuguese imperial presence.

In other words, the effects of Portuguese imperialism were often felt by subaltern identities through more than the purview of Portuguese power and its specific narratives, but rather in its relationship to other imperial powers and the set of meanings, objectives of domination, and modes of violence (physical and epistemic) which they together espoused and carried out. This sort of collaboration is what Laura Doyle calls ‘inter-imperiality’ (see ‘Inter-Imperiality’). The history of East Timor, which both Fernando Sylvan and Luís Cardoso touch upon, offers an important example of this with the intermingling of Portuguese, Dutch, English, Japanese, Australian, and later Indonesian (and by extension US) imperial ambitions. The African slave trade was, moreover, arguably the largest inter-imperial enterprise in terms of humanitarian implications, labor and surplus value, the development of capitalism, the ‘coloniality of power’ in the Americas (more on this below),

1 Several scholars in the field of Lusophone studies have tackled these machinations of imperial power, notably Luís Madureira, Phillip Rothwell, and Ana Paula Ferreira.

and the discursive content articulating the discardability and violability of, as well as the need to police, black bodies to this very day. At the heart of this collaboration, one that fomented and cemented the power and economic success of many empires, one can find the Portuguese.²

The approach taken to Empire in this project thus considers inter-imperial relations to be more than economic and political, but also as contributing to dominant narratives of time, space, bodies, and objects. Portuguese imperial endeavor contributed in myriad ways, for instance, to the formation of what Dipesh Chakrabarty has termed the ‘artifice of history’ in which “Europe” remains the theoretical subject of all histories, including the ones we call “Indian,” “Chinese,” “Kenyan,” and so on’ (263). Chakrabarty goes on to point out the ‘peculiar way in which all these other histories tend to become variations on a master narrative that could be called “the history of Europe”’ (263). The political/military and signification operations of Empire intersect most notably at the silencing of colonized voices (dialectically colonized because silenced, and silenced because colonized) and the production of a dominant historicizing gaze. In this sense, the Portuguese imperial mission, including its role in the slave trade, contributed immensely to this systemic silencing and concomitant formation of Europe’s right to signify. The Portuguese imperial agents that emerge in the works studied here exercise power and privilege not only for and within Portuguese imperial objectives, but also for the existence of imperial power more broadly. On a related note, the works examined in chapters 1 and 2 chart the historical development of Brazil as both colony and nation-sign constructed by broader imperial forces including Portuguese colonialism, as well as the post-independence maintenance of slavery, the role of the eugenics movement as an imperial mode of knowledge, and the relationship between industrialism in Brazil and global economic power.

Subaltern experiences of imperial power were seldom limited to the direct effects of one particular imperial project. As a result, imperial power and subalternity cannot be understood or conveyed through the prism of one imperial project alone, in this case, Portuguese imperialism. Similarly, the effects of Portuguese imperialism cannot be fully understood without examining how it interacted with other imperial projects. The social realities and hierarchies constructed through the ideology of Empire made it so that taxonomies of human life translated across imperial/national boundaries.

2 Herbert S. Klein’s *The Atlantic Slave Trade* intricately fleshes out inter-imperial relations that undergirded the slave trade, including the central role played by the Portuguese empire.

Intersecting imperial notions of race, gender identity, labor, and sexuality enabled bodies and spaces across the colonized world to be understood through similar lenses. These taxonomies became criteria for individual movement, pleasure, and profit on the one hand and, on the other, violence, suffering, displacement, and erasure. The examples of colonial Dili in chapters 3 and 4 illustrate how colonial space, under the political control of one imperial nation (Portugal) is nonetheless open to other privileged identities within Empire while subaltern identities, namely women of color, are objects of the aforementioned pleasure and profit – an example of what Elleke Boehmer considers the ‘history of intersecting patriarchies that was part of colonialism’ (7). As a result of a broader theoretical framework, we can better pinpoint the intersectional nature of imperial power, privilege and subalternity being formulated through the intermingling of race, gender, sexuality, labor, (dis)ability, age, ethnicity, and location. In this sense, the current study contributes to both decolonial and postcolonial studies a sustained exploration of intersectionality and the intersectionally created subject positions constituting Empire’s signifying chain.

The fact that experiences of colonization and Empire are such visceral and recurring themes not only in the texts studied here, but also in many others written in Portuguese, speaks to the impact of imperialism as more than a historical period; as a reality-constituting entity, past and present, formulated by varying forces from imperial networks. The very language chosen by many of these writers – Portuguese (many are natively multilingual) – stands as a reminder of this global reality. The decision to write in Portuguese for postcolonial writers in the Lusophone sphere speaks to disparities in cultural capital and circulation between imperial and non-imperial languages.

In a similar vein, the insights offered by these works written in inter-imperial Lusophone contexts represent important additions to broader approaches to imperialism, decolonial studies, and postcolonial theory. This is not because Lusophone contexts are inherently different, though they imply variations on imperial forms presented by other imperial endeavors. Some of these theoretically helpful variations pertain to grappling with ‘post-race’ narratives, hybridity, and exceptionalist re-historicization of imperial pasts. More importantly, the works studied offer revised blueprints and theorizations of decolonial knowledge, subaltern collaboration, revolutionary internationalism, and anti-imperial culture.

Empire, Postcoloniality, and Decolonial Politics

Before going any further into the topic of imperialism, the analyses drawn here in relation to the literary and historical objects of study operate under a particular conceptualization of Empire. The term is often used in critical theory circles as a sort of umbrella word for Western political, economic, and cultural hegemony; as both a period of history inaugurated by European colonial expansion and the means of establishing and maintaining – politically, economically, and militarily – such a global form of power and status quo. The attempt to locate the West, tracing its geographic parameters, is a task fraught with ambiguities. After all, the West is, to quote Édouard Glissant, ‘a project, not a place’ (2). The same can be said of other related geographical configurations of global power, such as North/South and the Cold War divisions of First, Second, and Third Worlds. It is upon Glissant’s premise that I think through Empire as a project of power spawned from a particular time and place – European expansion circa the fifteenth century – but whose discursive grounds began to take shape centuries earlier through notions of normativity, universality, and racial/ethnic otherness especially in regard to the cultural and political formation of Europe.

In *America’s Shadow: An Anatomy of Empire*, William Spanos traces Western imperialist endeavors to ancient Rome, while Amílcar Cabral conceptualizes imperialism through production, the search for labor, and modes of transportation that ‘eliminat[ed] the isolation of human groups within one area, of areas within one continent, and between continents’ (94). In this regard, the foundations of Empire were ‘evident at the time of the Punic voyages and in the Greek colonization, and was accentuated by maritime discoveries, the invention of the steam engine and the discovery of electricity’ (94). Though many theorists and thinkers of Western imperialism have attempted it, pinpointing an exact moment of the dawn of Empire, or even arguing for one, is beyond the scope of this project and outside of my conceptualization of Empire.

Approaching Empire as a web of global power rather than a locatable entity avoids taking the aforementioned divisions of East/West, North/South, First World/Third World as social and cultural essences. Rather, Empire speaks to a practice of social order that informs local (as in the social compartmentalization of cities), national (i.e. *de jure* and *de facto* disenfranchisement), and transnational (flow of capital, commodities, and people) power. In other words, Empire here also concerns the formation of postcolonial nationhood regardless of geographic location as much as it does complicity in the contemporary global economy.

The aspects of Empire most central to the current project concern the aforementioned discursive bases and byproducts of contemporary power. Empire is approached throughout this project as a 'global practice of power' in the words of Partha Chatterjee (*Black Hole* 1). Empire is, moreover, a field of meaning within which such a practice is couched, potentiated, and reproduced through signifiers and notions of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability. The literary works examined here prompt us to think of these as imperial categories of normativity and alterity that converge to form Empire's field of power and subalternity as, more specifically, a spectrum of subject positions. As such, Empire can be thought of, moreover, as both a subject-constituted, and subject-constituting, field. Empire, in its ideological existence, necessarily formulates its subjects through a particular economy of desire in which Empire's desire for reproduction is circuited to that of its interpellated subjects. To speak of the ideological core of Empire is, furthermore, to speak of its historicizing function, its narration of global time and space according to the aforementioned categories of life and geographies, thus forming an imperial realm of knowledge that classifies and places individuals as subject positions within Empire's system of meaning and power.

The term 'Empire' is merely one piece of the theoretical nomenclature constituting this project's framework. The majority of literary works discussed here can be considered postcolonial, in the strict temporal sense of a time period following formal decolonization. More than simply couched in a temporal space, these works are postcolonial as they reflect on the legacies and discursive foundations of colonial power. In this regard, through characters and/or narrative missions, they target the signifying field of Empire as one that has been reproduced for centuries up to the present. In other words, as Paulo de Medeiros succinctly puts it: 'Postcolonial time is always already unhinged, the postcolonial is not a condition of independence, it does not come after, as its prefix would suggest, but rather is always there from the beginning of colonialism and as such marks the colonizer as much as the colonized' (44). In this sense, the postcolonial is first and foremost a space of critical reflection regarding the means by which Empire is experienced and reproduced. To be clear, the 'post' in 'postcolonial' is not, to quote Kwame Anthony Appiah, a 'ground-clearing motion' ('Is the Post- ?') but rather a critical distance, a space from which to interrogate Empire and its continued ramifications.

This has informed the history of postcolonial theory, as a theoretically eclectic mode of inquiry into the reproduction of Western imperial power, of which colonialism was merely a part. The term 'postcolonial' does not, therefore, suggest a temporal break, but a call to interrogate and

challenge the continuities of Empire. The theoretical scope of the project at hand looks to unite various schools of anti-imperial thought, especially postcolonial theory and decolonial studies. Despite supposed differences in historical frameworks regarding Western expansion and modernity, as well as in nomenclature, both have profoundly informed my conceptualization of Empire. Both, moreover, share crucial insights, through different critical lexicons, into the reproduction of and resistance to imperial power. Following the cues offered by the literary texts under consideration here, theoretical work from both schools pertaining to the subject within imperial signification will be of particular import. Although many of the issues related to Empire have been interrogated by other theorists and scholars, my framework of Empire also seeks to bring them together under a theoretical heading that also serves to identify a common target of critique, analysis, and resistance.

The texts studied in this volume are thus postcolonial both in the sense of being produced after formal decolonization and in their critical engagement with Empire. To be clear, the authors examined do not offer economic or military modes of reversing imperial power. Instead, they grapple with Empire's field of meaning and knowledge; offering new ways of theorizing how this field is reproduced while also imagining non-imperial means of signifying self, time, space, bodies, and objects.

This stance taken by the authors studied, which the title calls 'anti-Empire,' is deeply related to another theoretical term referenced in the title – 'decoloniality,' which in many ways names both the grappling with Empire as well as the gesture and struggle to move beyond and dismantle it. As a branch of critical theory, decoloniality/decolonial studies has been most developed, among others, by Walter D. Mignolo, beginning in his *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (2000). As the title of the present volume indicates, decoloniality articulates a political stance and site of knowledge against the modern, colonially constructed concentration of political, economic, and epistemological power. Decoloniality thus serves as response to what Aníbal Quijano called the 'coloniality of power' (532), mainly in regard to the race-based Eurocentric structure of power (the maintenance of a small white elite) in Latin America, stemming from Eurocentric epistemologies operating in tandem with the early modern elaborations of global capitalism. In this regard, the theoretical foundations of decolonial thought have largely diverged from the nomenclature of postcolonial theory, arguing that the Americas continue to be colonial.

Beginning roughly in the early 1990s (although his work in previous decades led up to it), Quijano's conception of coloniality as the structuring

force of Latin American societies³ underscored the continuity of colonial forms of power based on race-derived divisions of labor within the post-independent nation and the relationship between these divisions and Latin America's place on the periphery of global systems of capital. This divergence is due less to an incomplete understanding of the postcolonial theoretical approach as a historical fallacy than to a concentrated laboring toward non-imperial modes of knowledge and signifying of time and space. In dialoguing across the work of Quijano and that of Enrique Dussel, Mignolo expands the concept of 'coloniality of power' in his 2001 essay 'Coloniality of Power and Subalternity' in *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*, in order to understand the transitions from colonial occupation to late capitalism.

Dialoguing heavily with the work of Ranajit Guha, a founding member of the Subaltern Studies Collective, Mignolo qualifies coloniality as 'a structure of power in the (modern/colonial) interstate system' ('Coloniality' 430). In the case of Latin America, its peripheral role in the interstate system of capitalism, both colonial and contemporary, is predicated on the concentration of power among a small white elite benefitting from and serving the interests of capital. As the title of his aforementioned book suggests, coloniality is both global and constructed locally under overlapping structures of power. Due to the continuity of coloniality in the racialized division of labor and knowledge, the term 'postcolonial' is often rejected as an adjective for Latin American nation-states, in favor of the term 'colonial' in order to more emphatically convey Latin America's un-emancipated place in late capitalism.

In many ways, Mignolo's postulated relationship between Latin America's nation-states and global power echoes Chatterjee's concerns regarding 'an inherent contradictoriness in nationalist thinking, because it reasons within a framework of knowledge whose representational structure corresponds to the very structure of power nationalist thought seeks to repudiate' (*Nationalist Thought* 38). Beyond the nation, and in relation to it, Chatterjee later warns: 'the framework of global modernity will, it seems to me, inevitably structure the world according to a pattern that is profoundly colonial' (*Empire and Nation* 177). The term neo-imperial is still relevant to both decolonial and postcolonial critiques, pointing to relations of power

3 See Quijano's articles 'Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad,' 'Colonialidad, poder, cultura y conocimiento en América Latina,' and 'Colonialidad y clasificación social.' One can find a concern with these topics in his work leading up to the coining of the term 'coloniality,' namely in *Nacionalismo, neoimperialismo y militarismo en el Perú* and *Imperialismo y marginalidad en América Latina*.

beyond national societies and states, namely the relationship between these and global economic and political forces.

The current project is not interested, moreover, in one of the fundamental debates between decolonial scholars and mainstream postcolonial thought, namely the temporal precedence given to the coloniality/decoloniality theoretical paradigm over what is understood to be a postcolonial analysis. The crux of this argument among decolonial scholars concerns a reading of anglophone and francophone theorists – Edward Said being the most common target – as positing the Enlightenment and the eighteenth century as a starting point of European colonial discourse on otherness, namely the advent of orientalism as an imperial area of study, cultural production, and projection of power. In response, Mignolo argues that it was the colonization of what became known as the Americas, especially that of Latin America by the Spanish and the Portuguese, which provided the discursive foundations for post-Enlightenment imperial epistemology. In this regard, Mignolo posits ‘Occidentalism as the overarching imaginary of the modern/colonial world system’ (*Local Histories* 20). Like the theoretical and historical pitfall mentioned above, which I have chosen to sidestep, this argument looks to pinpoint a moment in which Western imperial power is structurally consolidated and ushered in through the positing of European/Western knowledge and signification as the monological voice of time and space. My own conceptualization of Empire is much less concerned with reaching the end (or beginning) of the genealogy of imperial power and meaning. Empire, as a theoretical concept, operates under the awareness that the imperial field of meaning, and especially the discourses of otherness that undergird it, have been reproduced throughout the numerous sequences of territorial conquest, movements of bodies and commodities, and corporal oppression that have marked human history.

This current project is far more interested in decoloniality’s focus on the coloniality of power, namely the realm of knowledge that undergirds it. Drawing on Quijano, Nelson Maldonado-Torres offers a succinct definition of coloniality as referring to ‘long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration’ (243). These parameters of coloniality are inevitably similar to those of the conceptualization of Empire at work in the current volume. Maldonado-Torres especially has taken decoloniality and the study of coloniality in new directions, examining how coloniality constitutes different forms of being within its matrix of power. This, interestingly, leads Maldonado-Torres to examine coloniality through a Heideggerian lens. My conceptualization of Empire implies, rather, a materialist approach

to imperial power, focusing on its core psychic relationship between signification and subjectivation.

In this sense, the conceptualization of Empire as a signifying field constitutive of subjectivity is, in many ways, akin to Antonio Gramsci's tracing of cultural hegemony as the fabric of social constructs and norms into which capitalist exploitation is embedded. This is, of course, Gramsci's revision of Marx and Engels's base and superstructure relationship. Interrogating and delinking the psychic workings of ideology inevitably leads to a dialogue with the theoretical work of Jacques Lacan, Louis Althusser, and Slavoj Žižek, as well as Jacques Derrida's problematizations of hegemonic signification. From here, the decolonial stances offered by the literary texts analyzed are interfaced with, and enriched by, the contributions of numerous theorists of colonial discourse, race, gender, and sexuality.

The concern with modes of knowledge at the heart of decolonial studies and the focus on signification within postcolonial theory are particularly relevant to the scope of this project and to the writers studied. An important precursor to the development of decolonial studies, over the decades, even prior to what would be considered its foundational texts (i.e. C. L. R. James's *The Black Jacobins*, Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* and Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized*), postcolonial theory has provided a much-needed critical idiom through which to grapple with the inner workings of Western imperialism and its modus operandi in different locales and over diverse bodies. This includes not only the legacies of this history but also how the discourses of imperialism regarding time, space, bodies, and objects continue to inform today's realities. This critical task became evident, of course, far before the term 'postcolonial studies' was officialized in academic parlance. Dissecting and challenging Empire from varying subaltern subject positions has been evident throughout the centuries of imperial power leading up to the founding voices of anti-colonial inquiry being subsumed into postcolonial studies as an academic inter- and multidisciplinary lexicon.

As its own critical idiom and mode of delinking, in my mind decolonial studies emerges not in opposition to postcolonial theory, despite some divergent historical and geographic understandings, but from the critical and radical spirit of postcolonial thinkers. This is more than evident in the dialogues that decolonial scholars have engendered with the likes of Frantz Fanon, Édouard Glissant, and Abdelkebir Khatibi, among others. The urgency behind the birth of decolonial studies comes, moreover, from the dearth of critical approaches to the relationship between the present-day Americas (especially Latin America), the history of European expansion, modernity, and late capitalism.

Since the authors and literary works constituting the study at hand labor

toward knowledges and forms of meaning that both challenge and move beyond Empire, it is important to interface these contributions with those of thinkers that have also dealt with the relationships between struggle and signification. In this regard, the pioneering theoretical work of the Subaltern Studies Collective, for instance, paramount to what would become postcolonial studies/theory, is of particular importance to the conceptualization of this project and to the anti-Empire approach. The examinations of sign-systems and power undertaken by Partha Chatterjee, Ranajit Guha, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and several others provide both crucial inroads into the study of colonial discourse and a crucial theoretical lexicon with which to understand Empire through the central relationship between power and historiography.

Through her frequent collaborations and dialogues with the collective, Gayatri Spivak brings forth a deconstructionist approach to imperial historiography as a sign-system – a field of meanings constructed by and for the objectives of domination. This focus on meanings and imperial power also undergirds Edward Said's *Orientalism*, published in 1978, four years prior to the first volume of *Subaltern Studies*, albeit through a more consistently Foucauldian lens. In many ways, the collective understood the realm of meaning as a starting point for a shift in social order to be brought on by a simultaneous challenging of dominant historiography and a recovering of subaltern historicizing voices and texts, which could interrupt hegemony.

Spivak further elaborates on the relationships between shifts in sign-function and existent hegemony: 'The change in signification-function supplements the previous function' (*In Other Worlds* 197–98). Theoretically stranded in the reproductive circle of hegemony, it is no wonder Spivak looked to subaltern studies for 'a theory of change' in addition to 'a theory of consciousness' (198). The reading of Empire proposed here looks deeper into the production of signs, at the level of desire where subjectivation and power are tied together.

It is precisely the relationship between signification and subjectivation that the texts examined here further deconstruct while also gesturing toward an ethics of signification (the production of meaning) that eludes imperial forms of signifying time, space, bodies, and objects. In this regard, the current project operates as a follow-up to my first book, *Subjectivity and the Reproduction of Imperial Power: Empire's Individuals* (2015). Where the latter looked to offer in-depth analysis of the reproduction of Western hegemony via the repeated formation of the subject, *Anti-Empire* fills a gap in the previous project by exploring how particular writers have imagined modes of combatting Empire and of living outside of it. Many of the writers studied here offer new ways of knowing, political and epistemological stances that dovetail with Mignolo's

interest in decolonial forms of knowledge. In this regard, the literary texts prompt us to dialogue with Mignolo's theoretical development and locations of decolonial epistemologies, from 'border gnosis' in *Local Histories/Global Designs* to his calls for delinking from imperial knowledge and 'unlearning' in his *Darker Side of Modernity* and *Learning to Unlearn: Decolonial Reflections from Eurasia and the Americas* (co-written with Madina V. Tlostanova).

This points to the larger contributions to decoloniality offered by the texts: intricate performances of delinking in the sense of a political stance against imperial knowledge as well as that of deconstructing the ideological and epistemological links which allow Empire to reproduce itself. In doing so, it is worth noting here at the outset that the political richness of the texts operates through largely poststructuralist leanings. These, however, lead us to dialogues across critical theories that allow us, in turn, to take decoloniality in new directions. In other words, the texts examined here offer new theoretical perspectives and contributions to decolonial studies by making a claim for a materialist and poststructuralist thread to the field, centering on the subject and the textualities of Empire and coloniality. In response to Empire's signifying field, the writers studied here point out modes of disrupting Empire's dialectic of subjectivity and signification while also interrogating it, engendering sites of counter-imperial knowledge and scenes of writing that emerge as a consequence of Empire, and subsequently chart modes of decolonial signification and selfhood.

Such an enunciation of a decolonial sign-system furthers the underlying epistemological mission of decolonial studies – decentering Eurocentric knowledge while gesturing toward global understandings through non-Western and/or subaltern modes of knowledge and postcolonial experiences. It is worth noting that numerous scholars and thinkers who identify with decolonial studies have enriched this field of inquiry by consistently opening important dialogues with postcolonial theorists, such as those mentioned above, and anti-colonial thinkers across disciplines, such as scholars of late capitalism (like Immanuel Wallerstein and Boaventura de Sousa Santos) and European philosophy (such as Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Etienne Balibar). Such dialogues underscore the transdisciplinary nature of the field and the need to interrogate coloniality as the intersectional product of the formation of modern capitalism, postcolonial dependency, Western forms of knowledge, and subsequent notions of human superiority and inferiority. The current project follows a similar trajectory while focusing particularly on the geopolitics of knowledge in relation to Western historicization. In other words, the chapters that follow explore the possibilities of non-hegemonic historicities – and, by extension, non-imperial subjectivations – rooted in subaltern knowledges. To be clear,

these are not precolonial knowledges, but rather sites of knowing produced by the imperial processes of exploitation and signification. They are, in other words, scenes of writing and knowing that aim to counter, reformulate, or reorder the episteme and field of meaning into which they have been inserted. In short, we can think of the decolonial/anti-imperial works studied here (with the exceptions of those in chapters 5 and 6), as examples of what Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls ‘epistemologies of the South,’ which he defined as:

non-Western understandings of the world, for example, decisive cultural and political experiences and initiatives in the countries of the global South. This is the case of movements or grammars of resistance that have been emerging against oppression, marginalization, and exclusion. (*Epistemologies* 21)

It is in this regard – namely in terms of his call for non-Western understandings of time, space, and bodies – that Santos’s work overlaps with that of many decolonial scholars. Ramón Grosfoguel, for instance, highlights Santos’s gesture toward ‘descolonizar las ciencias sociales de su sesgo eurocentrico’ [‘decolonizing the social sciences from their Eurocentric bias’] (104). Revising the social sciences would mean centering the experiences and sites of knowledge of those that have been systemically marginalized through the epistemic, economic, and political processes of Empire.

Antropofagia [‘anthropophagy, cannibalism’], the avant-garde Brazilian cultural movement of the 1920s, examined in chapters 1 and 2, offers an early yet limited example of the aforementioned decolonial prerogative. The mission of formulating a decolonial scene of writing (and knowing) through which to resignify the nation, and beyond, was very much a point of heated debate among the movement’s participants. Part of Brazilian modernism, members of the group, through different artistic mediums, developed nuanced reflections on Brazil’s place in industrial global capitalism in connection with its colonial history and imperial European discourses on Latin American otherness and Western selfhood. The name of the movement, ‘anthropophagy,’ served as a metaphor for the appropriation and alteration of European cultural forms and philosophy through which particular tenets of modernity would also be revised.

As we shall explore in chapters 1 and 2, some participants, or indeed a faction of the movement, equated a precolonial fantasy of non-Europeanness and indigeneity – the case of the *Tupi* or the *Anta* – as the fulcrum of a postcolonial, non-European, national identity. Others, though, such as Mário and Oswald de Andrade (especially the former), disagreed with the

search for a precolonial site of knowledge that was, in itself, only knowable through European exoticized narratives of South American indigeneity. In the postcolonial projects of both Mário and Oswald there is (perhaps to varying degrees), I argue, a refusal to appropriate such exoticist tropes and thus reproduce the same cultural silencing of indigenous peoples of Latin America. Doing so would once again reduce a site of knowledge (which is inaccessible to them) to an object of imperial knowledge. In their stance, we can grasp the argument that decolonial and anti-imperial modes of knowledge must not come from cultural elites. It is in this respect that I disagree with a common, but not completely unjustified reading of Antropofagia as reproducing Eurocentric consumption and articulation of indigenous otherness.

As different chapters will propose, decolonial knowledges and sites of signification emerge and interact dialogically with other forms of knowing. This is what Santos refers to as ‘interknowledge’ (188), a product of the circulation of sites of knowing within ‘the ecology of knowledges confront[ing] the logic of the monoculture of scientific knowledge’ (188). For writers such as Fernando Sylvan (Chapter 3), Luís Cardoso (Chapter 4), Olinda Beja (Chapter 7), and Mário Lúcio Sousa (Chapter 8), decolonial knowledge and signification is a persistent project beyond monocultural limitations such as those of nation, language, and locale. For them, the struggle against monoculturalism and monologism, the philosophical foundations of Empire, must be perpetually fought. Although chapters 5 and 6 discuss literary works that have become part of a metropolitan literature, they too combat monologism and some of the dominant narratives of Empire. The writers involved, Isabela Figueiredo and António Lobo Antunes, tackle Empire while having both benefitted and suffered particular traumas from their implication and participation in the reproduction of imperial power. Borrowing Santos’s terminology, the writers and works explored here form an ecology of experiences within Empire, and offer different vantage points within the spectrum of privilege and subalternity. The fundamental commonality that brings them together is the experience of Empire, as different and multifaceted as such experiences are.

What follows is by no means intended to be an exhaustive exploration of decolonial possibilities. Rather, the literary works under examination present a diverse collection of experiences of Empire, including former colonists, current members of the African diaspora, and those displaced as a result of Empire-driven conflicts. At another level, some texts gauge Empire through elements of the fantastic, as is the case with Mário de Andrade’s *Macunaíma: o Herói sem Nenhum Caráter* [‘Macunaíma: A Hero without a Character’] and Mário Lúcio Sousa’s *O Novíssimo Testamento* [‘The Newest

Testament’]. The common thread, I argue, is a shared interest in devising new modes of meaning-production that emerge through experiences of exile, diaspora, colonization, and the consumption of otherness. These modes simultaneously reveal the gaps and voids of Empire and imperial historicization while also proposing decolonial modes of knowledge and signification of time, space, bodies, and objects.

Decolonizing ‘Lusophone’: An Attempt at Moving Past a Problematic Signifier

The final key term of the title and scope of the project is ‘Lusophone literatures.’ Such a cultural-linguistic heading inevitably carries significant historical weight. As far as possible, the literary exploration carried out here does not interrogate these works as part of a collective entity sharing a phantasmatic cultural commonality. Such a problematic prerogative has been central to contemporary retracings of Portugal’s colonial map under the guise of language and history, as is the case with ‘Lusofonia,’ Boaventura de Sousa Santos’s ‘time-space of official Portuguese language’ (‘Between’ 71), and João Pina-Cabral’s ‘Lusotopia’ (‘Lusotopia como Ecumene’). Santos’s essay is arguably well-intentioned, calling for a subaltern globalization and emancipatory counter-narrative in which Portuguese-speaking identities may participate; not only those identities of former colonies, but even those of the metropolis due to Portugal’s imperial subalternity *vis-à-vis* northwestern Europe, especially England.

Ana Paula Ferreira cogently points out Santos’s incomplete historicization of the ‘time-space of official Portugal language,’ – the failure to recognize the imbalances in subalternity and power contained within this ‘time-space’ as well as the erasure of non-white resistance from counter-hegemonic proposals such as that of Santos: ‘It is the same subtle racism that lurks behind and continues to support the idea that there is such a thing as a common, somewhat fixed ground of language, Portuguese, bringing together a myriad of temporally and locally diverse colonizers and colonized’ (‘Specificity’ 37). Ferreira’s rebuttal to Santos also underscores the role of racism that is both occulted by and propels such language-based narratives. The fact that such global propositions emanate from the former metropolis, speaking for former colonized spaces and identities, reveals the continued metropolitan centrality (especially in terms of knowledge) and its understanding of former colonies as appropriable others. These calls for transnational collectivities are, in other words, often grounded in imperial meanings pertaining to racial and cultural difference, in addition to metropolitan imperial nostalgia.

At the same time, both the texts analyzed and the current volume itself go beyond – and in doing so, refute – any particularities of Portuguese colonialism; particularities that have become integral to the aforementioned metropolitan cartographies. The decolonial projects undertaken by the writers examined here apply to the reproductive logic of Empire within which European national imperial projects are couched. These literary works further problematize such postcolonial transnational Lusophone entities in different ways, by focusing on the violent power dynamics of Empire that have spawned such neocolonial cartographies as well as the interrelated forces of signification that foment them. These forces include the role of academia not only in the propagation of carving the world, cultural production, and sociological issues into geo-linguistic slices, but also in studying these persistently articulated fragments through uncritical lenses.

The geographic scope of the project and its exploration of Lusophone literatures nonetheless reproduce what I aim to refute – a postcolonial collective and narrative of diverse geographic spaces and identities that share a common historical thread of having been colonized by a particular European nation. What is more, as a member of academia situated in the global North, I – and my work – circulate within a division of academic disciplines (namely those pertaining to the study of languages and cultural production) that also retrace imperial maps. This may be a moment to spark, once more, a discussion on the rethinking of academic disciplines, so deeply intertwined with the development of imperial forms of knowledge. While the case of anthropology, for instance, is well known, the geo-linguistic categories within area studies and language departments in higher education also demand critical attention. Although such departments are increasingly interdisciplinary and their members utilize a diverse array of analytical approaches, disciplinary focus and critical frameworks are often filtered, if not compromised, by rigid geo-cultural and linguistic boundaries.

What I hope to communicate by placing this project within what we may call ‘Lusophone cultural studies,’ but dialoguing with theorists and thinkers of non-Lusophone social and cultural backgrounds, is that postcolonial experiences in former Portuguese colonies, and indeed the metropolis, are not always particular to these locations. This inclination, or prerogative even, is very much prompted by many of the writers under analysis, as they go beyond nation and Lusophone spaces, although some of the themes and issues raised, such as intersectionality, offer new ways of understanding the Portuguese imperial project. Part of their decolonial positions, I argue, is the search and elaboration of new collective identitarian terrains that elude the centrality of nation, postcolony, and language. With some writers examined here, there is an overlap between being decolonial and being postnational.

This subsequent dialogue between experiences of Empire also leads us away from situating specificities of Portuguese colonialism as central to notions of what some may call Lusophone postcolonialism. Indeed, the reproduction of Portuguese imperial power and the coloniality of power in Lusophone postcolonies often hinged on particular exceptionalist narratives based on discourses of race, gender, sexuality, and class. Lusotropicalism and the myths of racial democracy and the three races immediately come to mind. As Edward Said reminds us, ‘every empire [...] tells itself and the world that it is unlike all other empires, that its mission is not to plunder but to educate and liberate’ (*Los Angeles Times*). In other words, Lusotropicalism and the myth of racial democracy, like the ‘white man’s burden’ and the United States as ‘exporter of democracy,’ are fundamentally examples of the stories which the coloniality of power/Empire tells of itself. Such stories that impact how power and subalternity are interpreted and experienced in Lusophone geographies offer important theoretical insights into the study of imperial modes of power. These particular exceptionalist narratives, so often posited as the ‘difference’ of Portuguese colonialism, should not, as Luís Madureira crucially warns us, become the ‘difference’ of Lusophone or Portuguese postcolonialism (‘Difference’ 135–41). It is equally important to avoid making these particularities emblematic of a ‘Lusophone world,’ while being cognizant of the role of these exceptionalist narratives in the conceptualization of problematic neocolonial transnational headings such as *Lusofonia* and the ‘Lusophone world.’ Exceptionalist myths such as those mentioned above have been challenged by subject positions that have experienced their repercussions. Scholars, intellectuals, organizers, and activists from across Portuguese-speaking spaces, such as Alda Espírito Santo, Abdias do Nascimento, Fernando Sylvan, Amílcar Cabral, and João Paulo N’Ganga, have often contested these myths by tackling Lusophone expressions of power in dialogue with other locales and as part of a larger order of power. As Ferreira argues regarding some of these names, ‘their symptomatic absence from academic circulation, even or first and foremost that presented under the explicit or implied brand of Postcolonial Studies (in Portuguese)’ (‘Specificity’ 37) represents an example of the aforementioned ‘subtle racism.’

Angolan journalist, scholar, and activist João Paulo N’Ganga, for instance, has dedicated much of his work to challenging dominant narratives of power – Portuguese, Angolan, and global. He notably founded the Portuguese chapter of SOS Racisme in 1998, and his book *Preto no branco: a regra e a exceção* (1995) explores systemic and cultural racism in contemporary Portuguese society in light of its past and present colonial ideologies. The book also discusses diversity and inequity in Portugal often in dialogue with

international contexts such as Brazil and the United States, making clear for broad audiences, for instance, that a

sociedade multiracial, não é por si só, sinónimo de uma sociedade anti-racista. Tanto o Brasil como os E.U.A. são sociedades multirraciais, mas como se sabe, são sociedades culturalmente racistas, onde apesar da legislação estabelecer a igualdade de todos os cidadãos uns continuam, parafraseando George Orwell, a ser mais iguais do que outros.

[multiracial society is not in itself synonymous with an anti-racist society. Both Brazil and the United States are multiracial societies but, as we know, are culturally racist societies where some continue, to paraphrase George Orwell, to be more equal than others, despite legislation establishing the equality of all citizens.]⁴ (93)

Vinício de Sousa, in his aptly titled *Racismo, opressão dos povos: Elementos para uma análise sócio-histórica em Portugal e no mundo* [Racism and the Oppression of Peoples: Elements toward a Socio-Historical Analysis in Portugal and the World], offers perspectives on revolutionary internationalism as a mode of combatting not only Portuguese colonial forms of racism, but the larger artifice of Empire. In a similar, yet more radical expression, in one of his many anti-imperialist/anticapitalist songs, the Portuguese rapper of São Toméan descent, Valete (Keidje Lima), calls for a global subaltern movement:

Nós vestimos a farda de Xanana
 E levamos drama do terceiro mundo à casa branca
 Desfilamos com a mesma gana de tropas em Havana
 E com a resistência sobre-humana dessa convicção cubana
 Toma esta ira psicopata deste filho de Zapata
 Activismo de vanguarda.

[We wear Xanana's uniform
 and take Third World drama to the White House
 we march with the same vigor of troops in Havana
 and with the superhuman resistance of that Cuban conviction
 feel this psychopathic ire of this son of Zapata
 vanguardist activism.] ('Anti-Herói')

This particular passage, and the song 'Anti-Herói' ['Anti-Hero'] as a whole, enacts precisely what several of the literary works examined here propose: not only a call to action, but an anti-imperial sign-system, played out

4 All translations in this volume are my own unless otherwise indicated.

by Valette through a collection of subaltern anti-imperial historical signs. These include symbols and agents from Portuguese-speaking locales (i.e. Xanana Gusmão, founding member of East Timor's independence movement Fretilin) integrated with Emiliano Zapata, Fidel Castro, Patrice Lumumba, and Martin Luther King, among others, all directed toward challenging the current global matrix of power.

To this end, the diverse theoretical frameworks deployed in *Anti-Empire* ensure that the experiences brought forth by the literary works analyzed are not strictly confined to a narrative of Lusophone postcolonialism. I prefer to highlight, instead, how they offer new understandings and contestations of the broader concentration and reproduction of power based on race, gender, class, sexuality, and (dis)ability. In this sense, one can argue that the project surreptitiously develops or operates under a theory of Lusophone postcolonialism – one that looks to complicate its own existence by urging us think of Lusophone (post)colonialism as more than just ‘Lusophone’ and refusing to foment divisions of postcoloniality based on European imperial maps. For Madureira, stubborn discussions on the particularities of Portuguese colonialism *vis-à-vis* Anglo-Saxon colonialism (at the heart of debates regarding the parameters of Lusophone postcolonialism) often obfuscate the fundamental focus of Postcolonial Studies as a discourse and field of inquiry. This would be to ‘reconsider the history of slavery, racism, and colonization from the standpoint of those who endured its effects’ (‘Difference’ 141). As Madureira explains in his response to the formulation of Portuguese postcolonialism by Boaventura de Sousa Santos and furthered by Paulo de Medeiros and Anthony Soares,

the differences in colonial history and administration were of scarce importance to anti-colonial revolutionaries for whom imperialism looked very much the same everywhere. Postcolonial critique tends to adopt a similar point of view because it identifies with the subject position of anti-colonial activists, not because it willfully ignores the heterogeneity of colonial history from the colonizer's perspective. (‘Difference’ 141)

Following Madureira's arguments, this project, inevitably tied to the intellectual heading ‘Lusophone postcolonialism,’ is grounded in experiences of subalternity within imperial spectrums of power primarily, and, secondarily, the narratives that emanated from and sustained this power. In a similar sense, the particularities of Portugal's imperialist narratives must be understood as ‘commonalities that Portugal's peculiarly brutal colonial enterprise shares with those of the so-called

Super-Prosperos' (Madureira 'Difference' 141). It is these commonalities, Madureira continues, that 'should underpin the elaboration of a Lusophone postcolonial theory positioned in and oriented toward the South' (141). In posing such an argument, Madureira was already calling for a Lusophone postcolonial theory that goes beyond the 'Lusophone.' As several historians have noted, the exceptionalist narratives of Portuguese colonialism, such as that of amicable colonial relations, aside from being part of other imperial projects, were not realities 'on the ground.'⁵ In this regard, this is precisely what the works analyzed in chapters 5 and 6 underscore through nuanced considerations on the role of exceptionalist imperial narratives and their relation to dominant historicities.

Taking a cue from the writers examined here, this study of Empire approaches the particular in order to imagine collectivities and terrains of resistance beyond the linguistic/historical particular. For many of these writers, such an approach is paramount to undoing Empire's signifying field. As such, the common ground I wish to establish among the diversity of literary works here is not the fact they are written in Portuguese as a consequence of Portuguese colonialism (as the title would suggest). Rather, the central element, that which is shared by the writers, is their engagement with Empire, their questioning of its discursive underpinnings, and their impetus toward de-silencing and de-marginalizing subaltern voices. Therefore, the guiding connection between these texts and writers is that which must remain the focus of both postcolonial studies and decolonial studies.

The Decoloniality of Postnationalism

As mentioned above, the works under analysis reveal, to varying degrees, postnational inclinations in their engagement with Empire. These works have nonetheless entered the market of literary consumption through the filtering and categorization of national literatures written in Portuguese. For some of the writers included here, especially those of East Timor and São Tomé and Príncipe, their liminal presence in such a market so heavily

5 To mention only a few notable historians and their works, Gerald Butler's *Angola under the Portuguese: Myth and Reality* (1978) arguably initiated the inquiries that have been carried on in different directions by, among others, Cláudia Castelo in her *O Modo Português de Estar no Mundo: O Lusotropicalismo e a Ideologia Colonial Portuguesa* (1933–1961), Miguel Jerónimo Bandeira's *Livros Brancos Almas Negras: A 'Missão Civilizadora' do Colonialismo Português* (1870–1930), and Roquinaldo Ferreira's *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade*.

concentrated on metropolitan and (increasingly) Brazilian readership and scholarship, resembles the marginalization which their respective postcolonies experienced during Portuguese colonialism. Within the space of production, circulation, consumption, and canonization of literatures written in Portuguese, some writers of former colonies have enjoyed greater visibility than others.

The importance of postcolonial national literatures seems to follow the importance and primacy of the then colonies in the Portuguese imperial imaginary and economic profile. In this sense, the greater degree of political and economic importance given to Angola and Mozambique during the twentieth century by the Portuguese state is arguably reflected in the contemporary predominance of Angolan and Mozambican writers on the bookshelves of metropolitan bookstores, physical or electronic. As I have argued elsewhere (in *Subjectivity*), literary celebration and canonization of postcolonial writers (working in Portuguese) occurs primarily through metropolitan and, increasingly, Brazilian readership. The flipside of this is the relative dearth of writers who identify, to varying degrees and in different ways, as East Timorese, São Toméan, Guinea-Bissauan, Goan, Macanese, and, to a lesser extent, Cape-Verdean. Race and gender play an equally important and related role in the metropolitan consumption of postcolonial literatures, as evidenced by consistently bestselling authors such as Mia Couto and José Eduardo Agualusa, children of white colonists of Mozambique and Angola, respectively. Black female writers such as Lília Momplé and Paulina Chiziane have had varying degrees of success and critical acclaim, but not comparable to Couto and Agualusa.⁶ Luís Cardoso, a contemporary writer from East Timor whose work is studied here, is by far the most acclaimed writer from his country.

The visibility of postcolonial writers in the metropolitan space of literary reproduction and consumption is, of course, contingent upon their subjective existence within colonial and neocolonial spectrums of privilege and subalternity. Education and literacy in the imperial language certainly speaks volumes in this regard, as schooling in Portuguese (primary through higher education) was and continues to be limited to a few socioeconomically privileged members of postcolonial societies. Writing in Portuguese reflects far more, however, such as the level of investment in education by the Portuguese state during colonialism, 'native' access to education, and the ideological content entailed by such an education, especially in terms of engendering and interpellating subjects of Empire, from colonists to *assimilados* [assimilated natives]. It is in this sense that the dearth of

6 For more on this discussion, see Silva, *Subjectivity*.

writers (working in Portuguese) from some postcolonies reflects the sort of investment from the metropolis. Those former colonies that were most peripheral to Portuguese economic and political interests lacked state investment in education to even greater degrees. Subsequently, literacy in Portuguese in East Timor was limited to an elite even smaller than those of Mozambique and Angola. To be absolutely clear, this is not to lament the lack of colonial education. For formerly colonized peoples, this is always a double-edged sword. The 'weak' presence of an imperial language, and thus greater space afforded to local languages, comes with other challenges. In the literary sphere, success is measured by the consumption of the cultural product. Writing in a non-imperial language is unfortunately seen as less viable due to the smaller projected readership. This dilemma speaks to the unavoidable ubiquity of Empire in which cultural production and consumption continue to be profoundly impacted by the economic, ethnic, and linguistic structures of European expansion.

Despite marginal presences of Portuguese as an official and obligatory language during Portuguese colonialism, its presence (spoken or written) is now central to cultural reformulations of Portuguese imperialism, as in the case of *Lusofonia*. The prerogative of materially enriching the metropolis is now reformulated into the mission of enriching the Portuguese language, and Portuguese-speaking patrimony, through increasing the mechanical reproduction and consumption of global literatures written in Portuguese.

As a result, postcolonial national literatures written in Portuguese are placed by publishers, bookstores, and academic departments into narratives such as *Lusofonia*. Subsequently, once ensnared into such a narrative, the literary works in question gain visibility and acclaim through *Lusofonia* while also reproducing it. This also prompts the question of the desire behind metropolitan readership. Is the 'Literatura Lusófona' section of Portuguese bookstores, or publisher Caminho's series of postcolonial literatures 'Outras Margens' ('Other Margins'), sought after by readers interested in the global presence of the Portuguese language? Or are such readers interested in other nuances which these works may offer? Regardless of intent, the pleasure of metropolitan and global Northern readerships that fuels the transnational circulation of literary products continues to be problematic and, in many ways, compromises artistic freedom and freedom of artistic dissemination. In other words, within postcolonial late capitalism, global Northern consumption continues to have a deep impact on global Southern production.

In this sense, as imperial discourses and concentrations of power continue to be central to *Lusofonia* and transnational markets of cultural production and consumption, the postnational decolonial stances taken

by some of the writers here become increasingly important. Such gestures beyond nation, especially in the cases of Fernando Sylvan, Luís Cardoso, and Olinda Beja, mark a different kind of postcolonial literary enunciation. Significant scholarly attention has been paid to how postcolonial Lusophone writers have participated in the cultural process of nation-building and national identity. In the spirit of Robert Stam and Ella Shohat's assessment that 'nation-state-based analyses, in sum, are inadequate to the multidirectional traffic of ideas' (293), the texts examined here mark a shift that targets the political limitations of national frameworks for community *vis-à-vis* Empire while looking to forge decolonial modes of consciousness beyond nation.

Like the goal of many anti-colonial and anticapitalist cultural movements, the engendering of new modes of transnational consciousness implies the formation of a postnational/decolonial readership that can be perpetuated in parallel with decolonial production. This is precisely what some writers read here envision through the construction of a decolonial sign-system, a signification field that conceptualizes new collectivities based on diverse subaltern experiences while interrogating the foundations of Empire. For artistic production to circulate within the proposed (and utopian) decolonial subject-constituting field, the desire behind production must match the decolonial desire behind consumption to some degree.

In some cases, this imperative is already underway at the level of the postcolony, where modes of mechanical cultural reproduction and consumption are tentatively stripped from the former metropolis. An example of this would be *Kusimon*, the first private Guinea-Bissauan press of national and international literature, publishing works in Portuguese and Guinea-Bissauan *Kriol*. Although limited to the nation, *Kusimon* represents a step toward autonomous, anti-imperial cultural production. It has, of course, followed in the footsteps of other private or state-owned publishers across postcolonial geographies. Nonetheless, the postnational mission brought forth by the writers and texts here would demand us to go further, arguing, as did Said, that the nation is merely a step toward autonomy that must also be thoroughly questioned.

Chapter Breakdown

The volume begins with an exploration of the decolonial possibilities in works produced by the Brazilian Modernist movement of the early twentieth century, *Antropofagia* – namely key works by its most acclaimed writers, Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade. The first chapter, 'Decolonizing Consumption and Postcoloniality: A Theory of Allegory in

Oswald de Andrade's *Antropofagia*,⁷ interrogates what I argue to be a central aspect of the works and political project of the movement – the deployment of a particular mode of allegory, one of consumption. I explore this allegory of consumption beyond canonical readings of the movement's cannibal metaphor in relation to Oswald de Andrade's poetry collection *Pau Brasil* ['Brazilwood'], in addition to his seminal 'Manifesto Antropófago' ['Cannibal Manifesto'] (1928).

The cultural goal of this avant-garde movement has been largely read as a proposed blueprint for cultural production within the postcolonial periphery in the industrial/postindustrial capitalist world-system; a call for cultural production to metaphorically 'consume' European models, digest them, and reformulate them. I seek to go further, however, by interrogating the decolonial potential of such a self-conscious cultural project. In order to do so, the chapter proposes to read some of the movement's most important literary works in relation to the European texts and historicization to which they refer. This chapter is thus grounded in an analysis of the European historicization of Brazil and a theorization of *Antropofagia*'s deployment of allegories of consumption as a response to European consumption and signification of otherness applied to Brazilian spaces and bodies.

I argue that, in utilizing allegories of consumption, or performing it themselves, these works by Oswald de Andrade have implications far beyond the re-evaluation of national identity. In this sense, I propose a reading that surpasses the scope of the nation in order to flesh out the parameters of what I argue to be a decolonial site of consumption from which delinking can take place. While anthropophagic consumption itself can potentially destabilize Western meaning, I trace out these works' call for a destabilized site of consumption that does not foreclose the emergence of other sites. This chapter also seeks to demonstrate how Oswald de Andrade put this brand of consumption into practice through his work during the lifetime of the *Antropofagia* movement (1922–30), starting with his own critical consumption of imperial history and exploring the implications of this consumption for thinking outside of Empire.

The following chapter, 'Mário de Andrade's *Antropofagia* and *Macunaíma* as Anti-Imperial Scene of Writing,' follows up on the first, exploring Mário's own deployment of the cannibal allegory in his novel *Macunaíma* (1928), and then offering a rereading of the relationship between a particular chapter of the novel, titled 'Carta pras Icamiabas' ['Letter to the Icamiabas'], and the novel as a whole. This particular section of the novel stands out from the rest for a variety of reasons. Firstly, its prose, utilizing a Renaissance European register of Portuguese, is markedly different from the rest of the

novel and its use of a strategically colloquial speech – one that supposedly reflected the everyday speech of Brazilian non-elites. Equally relevant is the fact that it is the only part of the novel narrated by Macunaíma. The letter comes after he reaches São Paulo following his journey from the Amazon to the industrialized mega-city, and is addressed to the all-woman tribe of the Icamiabas, detailing what he finds in São Paulo.

Readings of Macunaíma's letter have largely centered on its prose, analyzing it as an ironic critique of the distance between written and spoken Portuguese. This is certainly a component of the novel's cultural politics taken into account here. This chapter reads the 'Letter to the Icamiabas' as an act of decolonial historicization, pertaining to an established realm of meaning that governs socioeconomic life in the industrialized city. In doing so, from a critical distance embodied by his ironic and meta-linguistic prose, Macunaíma narrates the ethnic and social compartmentalization of the city, the exploitation of labor, and the Eurocentrism of bourgeois life. The act of consumption, and Antropofagia's use thereof, thus comes full circle. Through the letter, and Macunaíma's complex voice, Mário de Andrade offers a scene of writing from which to read the imperial spectrum of power. Through a dialogue across schools of critical theory, this chapter explores the contours and radical possibilities (and the shortcomings) of this proposed place of historicization.

At the same time, I argue that the letter provides an internal critique of the very Antropofagia movement of which Mário de Andrade was part, thus underscoring once more his own ambiguous relationship with the artistic collective. The tale of a subaltern that attains whiteness – with all its social implications – and becomes the signifying voice speaks all too well to the limitations of a group of cultural elites in expressing the contours of postcoloniality and postcolonial nationhood. In a similar vein of foreseeing the shortcomings of Antropofagia in terms of decolonial historicization, this chapter also reads the letter as a foretelling or warning of power's appropriation of the movement's cultural project, namely Getúlio Vargas's state-driven narrative of national multiracial hybridity, Gilberto Freyre's myth of racial democracy, and Plínio Salgado's right-wing Verde-Amarelismo movement.

The third chapter, 'Toward a Multicultural Ethics and Decolonial Meta-Identity in the Work of Fernando Sylvan,' reads different facets of one of East Timor's most prolific and impactful, yet understudied, writers. A poet and essayist, the writings of Fernando Sylvan (1917–93) contain deep ambiguities; at times openly anti-imperial, as is the case of his poem *Mensagem do Terceiro Mundo* ['Message from the Third World'] (1971) and essay collection *O Racismo da Europa e a Paz no Mundo* ['The Racism of

Europe and World Peace’] (1964). On the other hand, another portion of his essayist production reveals an adherence to Portugal’s late imperial narrative of a pluri-continental, multiracial nation. This is the case with *Comunidade Pluri-Racial* [‘Pluri-Racial Community’] (1962) and *Perspectiva de Nação Portuguesa* [‘Concept of the Portuguese Nation’] (1965).

In attempting to make sense of this seeming contradiction, this chapter seeks to flesh out Sylvan’s stance against Empire by interfacing his essayistic production with his poetry. For instance, in his *O Racismo da Europa e a Paz no Mundo*, written during the period of heightened anticolonial struggle in Africa and Asia, Sylvan offers a theorization and cursory genealogy of European and European-American global hegemony, ranging from Europe’s historicization of itself as ‘the standard civilization,’ the fantasy of European superiority, and its resignification of difference in order to retain the balance of global power. This chapter thus contextualizes Sylvan’s anti-imperial thought with that of postcolonial and decolonial thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, and Enrique Dussel, in addition to elaborating the points where Sylvan’s thought further problematizes and contributes to the theorization of contemporary global power.

In a related gesture, he lays out a particular call to action for ‘os povos que viveram sujeitos a regimes coloniais’ [‘the peoples that have lived under colonial rule’] to break Empire’s monologism and forge new possibilities for humanity, especially to engender an alternative field of meaning with a dialogic mode of signifying bodies and spaces. It is in his poetry, I argue, that Sylvan puts into practice his path toward decolonizing intercultural meaning – freeing the way people come to know themselves and each other from Eurocentric discourses of difference. The chapter thus explores his interrogation of the possibilities of decolonial intercultural meaning by unpacking his tropes of global movement. Here one can find an articulation of what I call ‘meta-identity’: an experiment in the inauguration of a nascent anti-imperial subject, one that is in perpetual flux, thus avoiding notions of center and origin. The chapter explores the parameters of this centerless reality and origin-less journey through space by drawing on the works of Gayatri Spivak, Jacques Derrida, Rey Chow, and Jean-François Lyotard.

Chapter 4, ‘Untranslatable Subalternity and Historicizing Empire’s Enjoyment in Luís Cardoso’s *Requiem para o Navegador Solitário*,’ follows up on Sylvan’s expository indictment of Empire’s monologism with an exploration of contemporary East Timorese writer Luís Cardoso’s contributions to decolonial tropes of movement and meaning-making. Following a brief overview of Cardoso’s larger *œuvre*, the chapter examines his 2007 novel, *Requiem para o Navegador Solitário* [‘Requiem for the Solitary

Sailor’], particularly the actions and experiences of its narrator, known only as Catarina. Born in Batavia, Dutch East Indies, to a Chinese father and Batavian mother, her arranged teenage marriage to a Portuguese port administrator of Dili leads her to move to the then colonial capital of Portuguese Timor. The novel’s story unfolds between the mid-1930s and the Japanese invasion of the island of Timor during World War II in 1941, while Catarina is ensnared by imperial actions both local and global.

As narrator, though, she is able to historicize the actions around her and, most interestingly, the modes through which dominant historicization is carried out by imperial subjects in power. This chapter analyzes the critical reflections offered by Catarina’s text on the ideological mechanisms at work behind the acts of violence which she endures. Following her rape at the hands of her fiancé, for example, she pinpoints the discursive underpinnings of interracial sex sanctioned for European men. The chapter takes this reflection further by deconstructing the gendered function of fantasy within Empire as well as the role of *jouissance* (Jacques Lacan’s term for enjoyment beyond the explicit laws of the social realm) in the formation of masculine heteronormative identity.

A further and related component of this chapter resides in how Catarina conceptualizes her ability to produce meaning within and against Empire. Her reflections on her own experience as object of imperial knowledge leads her, I argue, toward a quest for what I call ‘untranslatability.’ The chapter develops this concept not in reference to a shift from one language to another, but to refer to an initiative that would impede Empire’s production of knowledge – the way in which participants of Empire (such as port administrators, in this case) shift one signifier to another. Working with the term *trasladar*, the Portuguese and Spanish word for moving or shifting, I argue that Catarina’s act of writing aims to prevent her being shifted from historicizing subject to object of imperial knowledge and fantasy. In this regard, the novel urges us to engage with the way in which power repeatedly produces meaning pertaining to othered bodies and through acts of violence perpetrated on them. The tension between writing against forces of power and being written by them is, I argue, central to the novel.

Chapter 5, ‘Imperial Cryptonomy: Colonial Specters and Portuguese Exceptionalism in Isabela Figueiredo’s *Caderno de Memórias Coloniais*,’ turns attention to how contemporary metropolitan writers recollect colonial experiences in ways that challenge the reproduction of Empire while also offering new modes of understanding this reproduction. Many writers have interrogated the violence and different experiences contained within the five centuries of Portugal’s imperial project. In Figueiredo’s memoir one encounters a critical confrontation with mainstream metropolitan

historicization. In opposition to a right-wing multicultural narrative of amicable Portuguese colonial relations supposedly devoid of racism, which is disseminated through visual media, sports journalism, and popular literature, Figueiredo relates her experience as a colonist in Mozambique, where she was born (in 1963) and resided until decolonization in 1974.

In opposing this mainstream narrative, she retells many of her traumatic experiences growing up in the colony, beginning with her formation as a gendered and racialized subject and the teaching of desire by her social and familial circles. In other words, she utilizes her own placement in Empire's discursive field to contest the metropolis's dominant post-imperial narrative regarding its colonial past. Of the different characters that emerge from her memoir, her father is undoubtedly the most prevalent. Figueiredo notably equates her father with colonialism, as the embodiment and voice of race-, gender-, and class-based power. The ubiquity of the father in her narrating of the past urges us to think of him as a specter, one that repeatedly destabilizes the present, both Figueiredo's and that of the former metropolis. This chapter utilizes Jacques Derrida's concept of spectrality in dialogue with his engagement with Maria Torok and Nicholas Abraham's notion of cryptonymy. The goal of this particular inquiry is to understand the ideological relationship between the fields of racial, socioeconomic, and sexual meaning experienced by Figueiredo as a colonist and the official political narrative of pluri-continentality and amicable colonialism promoted during and after the final three decades of Portuguese imperialism.

Through this approach, this chapter also attempts to better understand the impact of Figueiredo's memoir in the metropolitan public sphere and how she negotiates her own identity in relation to the racializing and gendering demands of imperial power. Through the aforementioned theoretical frameworks of cryptonymy and spectrality, in addition to interfaces with Walter Mignolo, Michel de Certeau, Judith Butler, Dana Luciano, and Jacques Lacan, this chapter maps Figueiredo's political project as the disentangling of the various layers of imperial narrativization regarding race, gender, sexuality, class, and metropolitan privilege.

Chapter 6, 'Spectrality as Decolonial Narrative Device for Colonial Experience in António Lobo Antunes's *O Esplendor de Portugal*,' continues the theoretical groundwork set by Chapter 5 in order to examine the anti-imperial function of spectrality in the work of acclaimed contemporary Portuguese writer António Lobo Antunes, particularly his 1997 novel *O Esplendor de Portugal* [*The Splendor of Portugal*]. Alongside José Saramago, Antunes is arguably the most revered Portuguese writer of the period following colonialism. A former military physician and conscript during

Portugal's reactionary fight to counter anticolonial movements in Angola, Antunes's *œuvre* has offered scathing interrogations of the depths of Portuguese imperial ideology, Portugal's fascist/corporatist past, and the many forms of hate and violence that have undergirded particular views of Portuguese national identity, including racism and homophobia.

In relation to Antunes's earlier novels focused on Portugal's imperial past, such as *Os Cus de Judas* [*South of Nowhere*] (1979) and *As Naus* [*The Return of the Caravels*] (1988), *O Esplendor de Portugal* is, I argue, the earliest of Antunes's works that deploys spectrality as a consistent and developed narrative device – an aesthetic mode of narrating colonial experience and subjectivities ensnared within imperial discourses. At the heart of the novel is a colonial settler family's tri-generational experience in Angola. The novel is divided into three parts each centering on a different sibling, children of Isilda, a Portuguese colonist born and raised in Malanje, Angola, who resides there until her death. Each part contains ten chapters: five narrated by one of the now adult children residing in Portugal alternating with five narrated by Isilda. Each chapter begins with the date on which it is being articulated. All the chapters narrated by Isilda's children (Carlos, Rui, and Clarisse) are dated December 24, 1995, whereas Isilda's 15 chapters span two decades from Angolan independence up to the present. We soon come to learn that Isilda's chapters are actually letters she wrote to Carlos, with the possible exception of her last chapter, also the last of the book, which is dated December 24, 1995.

The narration of each chapter is, moreover, constantly interrupted by voices from the past that participated in the colonist experience, which incessantly interrupt the process of writing and the production of meaning. *O Esplendor de Portugal* demands that we engage with spectrality at both the level of writing and historicization – producing meaning in relation to particular events – and at the level of identity formation. In this regard, the novel offers profound reflections on the externality by which identity and subjectivity are formed within Empire. This leads the chapter to a theoretical exploration of the relationship between specters and the Freudian/Lacanian specular image or ideal ego through which an individual becomes a subject within ideology. From here, the novel also guides this chapter to yet another rethinking of Empire's different layers of meaning and power.

Chapter 7, 'Decolonizing Hybridity through Intersectionality and Diaspora in the Poetry of Olinda Beja,' explores how Beja, born in 1946 in the African archipelago of São Tomé and Príncipe, seeks to produce a signifying chain that emerges from the centuries-long impact of imperial power on the world, particularly on disenfranchised peoples and spaces. Beja goes a step further by reflecting on ways to enunciate identity and collective struggle

in a decolonial fashion. The chapter reads select poems from three of her collections spanning her poetic trajectory and *œuvre*: *Bô Tendê?* ['Do You Understand?'] (1992), *No País do Tchiloli* [In the Country of Tchiloli] (1996), and *Aromas de Cajamanga* [Aromas of Ambarella] (2009). In doing so, we shall examine what we may call a decolonial remapping; one that Beja carries out, I argue, in a poetic narrating/signifying of movement through time and space that reorders imperial signifiers.

Beja notably begins this poetic exploration by reflecting on her interpellation as an African woman raised in the metropolis and the product of an interracial sexual union. From here, Beja gestures toward a decolonial consciousness that is explored by means of theoretically interfacing W. E. B. Du Bois's 'double-consciousness' with Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw's notion of 'intersectionality' speaking to the confluences of imperial categories of race, class, gender, sexuality, and international movement that impact experience within the modern spectrum of power. This decolonial consciousness forged intersectionally, as a mode of living and signifying the world while the signifying forces of Empire also do so, forces us to rethink a key, if not polemical, concept within postcolonial theory: hybridity. Drawing on Crenshaw and Du Bois, as well as Mignolo's dialogue with Du Bois, this chapter shifts the theoretical focus from interstices and interspaces between imperial categories to overlapping spaces of consciousness that permit their own postponement of meaning and subsequent ability to resignify time, space, and bodies in a decolonial fashion.

As I argue, Beja attempts to carry this out in her work in different ways, such as articulating time and space over and against historical markings of imperial violence. She does so, for instance, by evoking such signifiers in order to combat the imperial forces of historical erasure while also engendering a system of postcolonial meaning. Although her poetry contains profound explorations of national identity, for her such a project is not isolated from global forces. While she may be considered a São Toméan poet, Beja's poetry reveals her own diasporic experience through a broader form of political consciousness that attempts to connect different decolonial paths, projects, and forms of consciousness.

The final chapter, 'Transgendering Jesus: Mário Lúcio's *O Novíssimo Testamento* and the Dismantling of Imperial Categories,' examines how the novel combines the religious with elements of the fantastic in staging the reincarnation of Jesus Christ. The narrated events of the novel, taking place in the remote village of Lém on the island of Santiago, Cabo Verde during the early 1970s (the last years of Portuguese colonial rule), unfold when a devout Catholic elderly woman on her deathbed requests that a photograph be taken of her instead of summoning a medical professional.

At the moment the photograph is taken, her body is transported into the camera. After developing the film, local residents witness the (Eurocentric) image of Christ superimposed upon her body, and the elderly woman, now known to be Jesus, is brought back to physical life. Jesus Christ, in other words, is reincarnated as an elderly African woman who has lived her life as such within Empire.

Placed within an existing field of global meanings, especially pertaining to notions of morality and propriety underpinned by racial and sexual discourses, Jesus confronts a world of stigma and suffering. As millions of people flock to Lém to seek out the messiah, many of them requesting miracles, Jesus comes face to face with imperial categorizations of bodies in terms not only of race and gender, but also of disease and disability. In doing so, she is forced to grapple with the construction and lived consequences of particular notions of normativity – of corporal ability, skin color, and gender – that inform privilege within Empire. The resolutions she seeks reveal a mission against what Michel Foucault and Gayatri Spivak call the epistemic violence of power, namely that of Empire.

Jesus in this Newest Testament is also repeatedly made aware of the ideological role which her position, as Christian messiah, has played in the current state of global power. She thus offers the reader a critical reflection of the economy of desire in which she must now maneuver. Her life as Jesus is above all a confrontation with hegemonic meanings: how she has been written in the Scriptures, as well as how the individuals with whom she comes into contact have been interpellated and placed within the existing power spectrum. Her interactions with the meanings imposed upon her, individuals, and spaces ultimately chart a decolonial path that is interrogated here. This entails a critical open-endedness against epistemic impositions and a gesture toward the undoing of imperial categories of otherness and normativity, as well as a questioning of gender binaries and the often violent performance of masculinity.

Each chapter thus examines works emerging from different locations and periods across the last century – a century that saw drastic political shifts tied to formal decolonization while also bearing witness to the insistence of Empire under new guises. What the works share, far more importantly than the language in which they are written, is a political impetus toward grappling with Empire, particularly its relationship between signification and subjectivation, while also imagining modes of contestation and decolonial forms of producing meaning and knowledge. These texts, and this project, thus contribute to an existing language of decoloniality, a lexicon through which to tackle Empire and to think toward anti-imperial signification, knowledge, and subjectivity.