

Introduction

Capitalism qua Development

Traditional geography steals space just as the imperial economy steals wealth, official history steals memory, and formal culture steals the word.

Eduardo Galeano (2000: 315)

In its brief history, global capitalism has created a world of such intense inequalities that one can only conclude, to borrow Galeano's words, that the world is governed by an imperial economy designed to steal wealth from the poor. Consider: in 2001 the gross net income (GNI) for the entire world was 31.4 trillion US dollars.¹ If this vast sum was distributed equally among the world's 6.1 billion people, it would amount to \$5,120 per person. But the vast majority of people in the world received considerably less. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for instance, the GNI per capita was \$3,280; in South Asia, \$460; in Sub-Saharan Africa, only \$450. Such regional averages are deceptive, however, because each of these regions is in turn divided by inequalities that parallel the global pattern, and the subaltern majorities do not own (let alone earn) even these modest sums. Thus, in a world with a per capita GNI of more than \$5,000, there are 2.8 billion people – almost half of the world – who live on less than \$700 a year. Of these, 1.2 billion people earn less than \$1 a day. This is much worse than it was a generation ago. The average GNI of the richest 20 countries today is 37 times that of the poorest 20, a degree of inequality that has roughly doubled in the past 40 years.²

The irony is that this historic expansion of inequality occurred during a period known as the “age of development,” a time when “development

decades” came and went and scores of states built their hegemony, along with multilateral institutions and NGOs for that matter, upon one mandate: *accelerating development*. A truly global consensus emerged concerning political-economic management – a form of hegemony in Gramsci’s sense³ – that the world’s poor should enjoy the fruits of development. The fact that global capitalism has increased inequality without substantially reducing poverty raises stark questions: what is it that makes some areas of the world rich and others poor? How is it that capitalism reproduces inequality in the name of *development*? Indeed, how is it that the deepening of capitalist social relations comes to be taken *as* development?

Contesting Development

This book clears space to answer these questions by investigating colonialism and development through the lens of a postcolonial Marxism and by considering the colonization and development of the region known today as southern Belize. This area, also called the Toledo District, is the poorest in the country and among the poorest regions in Central America. The 2002 GNI for Belize was \$2,960.⁴ The greatest poverty is concentrated in the rural Maya communities in the Toledo District, where 41 percent of the households earned less than \$720 per year.⁵ For the World Bank as much as the local farmers who experience the existential effects of this poverty, the solution to this situation is economic development via neoliberal policy and loans of financial capital.⁶

The 1990s were a tumultuous decade in the Toledo District of southern Belize as export-oriented neoliberalism became Belize’s *de facto* development strategy. State spending had been governed by a strict austerity and the state privatized public assets at a rate that left it with little left to sell.⁷ This complemented a vigorous search for new exports, which have led to an expansion of resource extraction, particularly in fisheries, timber, and agriculture. When the Ministry of Natural Resources sold a number of new logging concessions in Toledo in the mid-1990s, the neoliberal development model collided with an indigenous movement that was gaining ground throughout southern Belize.⁸ This social movement – called simply “the Maya movement” in Belize – was led by the late Julian Cho, a schoolteacher who was elected to the chairmanship of the movements’ central organization, the Toledo Maya Cultural Council (TMCC), in 1995. Julian and the TMCC struggled to organize Mopan and Q’eqchi’ Maya-speaking people,

whose livelihoods are based on corn and rice production in the forests of Toledo, to win secure rights to the lands that were threatened by the logging concessions.⁹ This Maya movement used the logging concessions as a way to articulate claims about land rights and the marginality of the Mayas in Belizean development on national and international scales.¹⁰

The drive to expand logging exports and the rise of the Maya movement collided in September 1995 when a logging concession was granted to a multinational firm to cut timber in the Columbia River Forest, an area used by a number of Maya communities for hunting, farming, and collecting other non-timber forest products. Demonstrations by Mayas and their allies called for an end to foreign logging operations, secure land rights, and a new investment by the state in a development project in the region (called "CARD": see chapter 2). To map their territory and present an alternative vision of development, the leaders of the Maya movement organized a project to map all of the Maya communities in southern Belize (I discuss this project in chapter 6).¹¹ The maps and the logging concessions were two key pieces of evidence in a lawsuit drawn up against the state and brought before the Supreme Court of Belize in 1997. The Maya movement won some of its demands. Logging operations were cancelled in the Columbia River Forest in mid-1996. Maya leaders were invited to assist in designing a new development project, funded by the state with loans from regional development banks, that aimed at improving incomes in rural communities. After the 1998 election of the progressive People's United Party (or PUP) government of Said Musa, "friendly settlement talks" were established between Maya leaders and state representatives to resolve the land issue.

But the Maya did not win all that they had struggled for. Julian Cho died under mysterious circumstances in December 1998. As the movement fractured, the Musa government found that there was no unified leadership and no substantive proposals to negotiate. The settlement talks on the land issue soon dissolved. Today, the same logging company is at work in Toledo's forests; CARD, the development program, has come and gone, leaving Belize with more debt, and poverty has only deepened in the Maya communities. As for the lawsuit, in 2003 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (the IACHR, part of the inter-American system of international law) ruled in favor of the Maya, but as of September 2007 the practical effects of this ruling have been nil.¹²

This story resounds with those from many parts of the world today. It is a cliché to say that development projects often hurt the poor, women,

or other subaltern social groups. The literature cataloging the hybrid ways that neoliberal capitalism has seized and reformed the political sphere (only to be met by new forms of resistance) is vast. As in southern Belize, a common narrative involves environmental threats and conflicts between different social groups and the state that are resolved through a shift from political and legal to developmental policies.¹³ Today, threats to hegemony that emerge through such conflict are always already negotiated and resolved in terms of *national development*, a political surface that expands and contracts as hegemony is reworked in struggles over capital accumulation, identity, territorialization, and social power. Though this book examines the politics of development in contemporary Belize, my aim is not simply to document neoliberalism's effects – nor to write an ethnography of the Maya or their resistance.¹⁴ Rather, this is a study of the history and politics of development as a form of power, one with a truly global sway. In the wake of formal, political decolonization, development became the central mission or justification for Third World states. These states faced the enormous challenge of reconfiguring long-standing economic patterns and processes that were immiserating much of the world.¹⁵ The promise of development has gone unfulfilled for most of the world, and we must criticize the development policies that have failed to create the conditions for local capital accumulation, social investment, or sustainable livelihoods.

This task has been made more urgent in the past twenty years. The disastrous consequences of neoliberalism and structural adjustment, consolidated as the *de facto* development project for the world, led many to suggest a relationship between imperialism and development.¹⁶ The authority of the Bretton Woods institutions – the IMF, the World Bank, and the GATT/WTO – is vast and plainly rooted in colonialism. For Belize, the transition from colonial rule to neoliberalism was seamless: the government gained formal independence from Britain only in 1981, and in the face of a growing balance-of-payments crisis adopted its first agreement with the IMF in 1985.¹⁷

Just as there can be no doubt that neoliberalism holds sway in discourses about development and economic management today, there is a parallel strength to the enframing of development issues as the property of nation-states.¹⁸ For instance, the balance of accounts and trade deficit are understood as *Belizean* problems, notwithstanding the facts that the economic life of Belizeans exceeds the territorial extent of the state, and that Belize's elites are increasingly transnational. That the constellation of issues that are thematized as "economic" is defined vis-à-vis the territory of the nation-state is neither innocent nor particularly old. The

very identification of “the economy” as having an essentially national character dates from the early twentieth century.¹⁹ At both the local and global scales, the economy has been constituted as a sphere of economic flows regulated by national policies. This formulation of the economic as a geographical object is rooted in the colonial period.

Although this book concerns development in Belize, I do not treat Belize as an unproblematic site of analysis. If we begin by simply assuming that Belize is *there*, if we presume that the ontology of “Belize” is fixed in advance, we stand to miss a crucial effect of colonial power. The iterative production of Belize as a territorial nation-state works through practices that are thoroughly colonial. This is one of the lessons of the Maya land rights movement – what we call “Belize” today is an object produced through Spanish and British colonialism. This process of becoming Belize cannot be disassociated from primitive accumulation and the production of essentialist forms of national and racial forms of subjectivity. These effects are reiterated in the colonial present through the very act of taking Belize as an unproblematic object.²⁰ Like much of the world, the processes that have played the greatest role in shaping the political economy and social life in Belize are both colonial and capitalist; therefore I focus on these relations. To interpret them effectively requires an engagement between development and the Marxist and postcolonial traditions.

Nature/Development

In *Keywords*, Raymond Williams argues that “nature” is “perhaps the most complex word in the [English] language”²¹ because it gathers three radically different meanings under one sign. “Nature” can refer, first, to the essential quality of some thing. If we ask after the nature of a thing, we are asking after its essence. Second, “nature” can refer to an “inherent force which directs either the world or human beings or both”; third, “nature” can also refer to the world itself, environment, the space in which things live. These meanings are frequently conflated when some thing is described as being “natural.” An affiliation between essence, direction, and environment is thus woven through our language. Williams explains of “nature”:

What can be seen as an uncertainty was also a tension: nature was at once innocent, unprovided, sure, unsure, fruitful, destructive, a pure force and tainted and cursed. The real complexity of natural processes had been

rendered by a complexity within the singular term. . . . The emphasis on discoverable laws . . . led to a common identification of Natural with Reason: the object of observation with the mode of observation. . . . Each of these conceptions of Nature was essentially static: a set of laws – the constitution of the world, or an inherent, universal, primary but also recurrent force . . . teaching a singular goodness.²²

Fruitful yet destructive, a pure force and yet tainted: synonyms of “development,” an equally difficult keyword that Williams, alas, did not define for us in *Keywords*. Our inherited concept of “development” shares much in common with “nature.” Like nature and culture, development is one of those words that first described “a quality or process, immediately defined by a specific reference, but later became independent nouns.” Also like nature, development carries multiple and radically divergent meanings. The first is the *unfolding* of something essential, as in “plant development” or “child development.” This is the older meaning – older even than the English word “development.” The verb “to develop,” from which “development” is derived, has Latin roots that carry the connotation of “disentangling.” “Development” thus refers to a particular ontological quality that is expressed through the process of unfolding.²³ Aristotle in *Physics* uses the illustration of the seed to speak of the essence that is expressed in the totality of its unfolding. Here is Aristotle in Book IV of *Physics*, chapter 1:

We also speak of a thing’s nature as being exhibited in the process of growth by which its nature is attained. [This is “development” as ontology, i.e., unfolding of (the) latent.] . . . But it is not in this way that nature (in the one sense) is related to nature (in the other). What grows *qua* growing grows from something into something. Into what then does it grow? Not into that from which it arose but into that to which it tends. *The shape is then nature.*²⁴

Thus the essence of nature as essence is given in what – today – we would call development. That term was not available to Aristotle, or, for that matter, anyone before the 1800s. Not before the rise of the nation-state-capital trinity: a clue to our inquiry. The modern usage enters Western philosophy via Hegel, who defines development with the example of the seed developing into a plant in his *Encyclopedia*. Hegel usually uses “development” in the ontological sense, i.e., to refer to the self-unfolding of life toward the divine or of “the divine in the world.”²⁵

Second, “development” also refers to an intention to create or change something.²⁶ In this sense, “development” refers to a force that tutors a

change in something or a course of events. This meaning always carries the sense of *will*: development in this second sense implies an intervention – to make something move in a direction that is *not* given in advance, essential, or required. The object of development is changed, moved, or improved, by some willful power applied from above and outside of it.

Our concepts of “development” and “nature” share this problematic conflation for a common reason: they are two of our most entrenched, inherited, ontological signs for indicating essence. In Western metaphysics “nature” and “development” both express essence by proposing a relationship between temporality, spatiality, and ontology. As with nature, development is sometimes defined as an inherent force which directs human beings. Nature binds temporality and ontology by joining worldliness as totality with interior, substantial essence. The substantiality of nature articulates interiority and becoming: for instance, again, in Aristotle’s *Physics*, Book II, we read: “nature is a source or cause of being moved and of being at rest in that to which it belongs primarily, in virtue of itself and not in virtue of a concomitant attribute.”²⁷ Nature is perhaps an older concept than development, but we can see its relation to development in Aristotle’s claim that nature is a “cause of being moved . . . in virtue of itself.” The essence of nature is expressed through development. Development thus binds temporality and ontology via the *rational unfolding of presence*.

The distinct meanings of development are frequently conflated in ways that have important effects. When we refer to “national economic development,” for instance, we at once refer to something that is desirable, that requires willful intervention, and also is a “natural” thing for the nation to do. This conflation is not due to a choice made by the speaker. It is an effect of language – and one of great significance. To consider the implications of this, we need only add two additional comments. First: it was precisely the promise of “national economic development” that every state promised its people on the eve of independence, and it is the global and structural failure to deliver on this promise that animates all our discussions of development today. Yet though we may recognize the globality of this failure, everywhere it remains the remit of the *nation-state* to resolve. Second comment: today, “national economic development” always refers to the deepening of *capitalist* social relations, even when it is not named as such. This affiliation between capitalism and the compound sign “development” has fundamental political effects. The unfolding of capitalism on an ever-wider scale – a process driven by the contradictions of capitalism

as a mode of production – is inscribed with an undeserved sense of *directionality*. This directionality may be historical (in the sense of “inevitability”), spatial (in the sense that it produces spatial relations that are taken for granted), or ethical (by implying guidance towards ends desired by liberal-humanist values).²⁸ Very often these are combined in ways that make the worldliness of the world seem like a “natural development.”²⁹ When capitalism is treated *as* development, the violent effects of the capitalist social relations are normalized and unjust geographies become hegemonic. The “historical identity between Reason and capital” assumes its epistemic and ontological privileges when the extension of capitalist social relations is taken *as* development. Thus of development we could say what Adorno once wrote of “progress”: “one cannot employ the concept roughly enough.”³⁰

The Post-Development Challenge

The failing of the best-known Marxist approach to destroy development conceptually – I am speaking of the political economy of development tradition³¹ – led to the rise of the “post-development” school. This group argues that development cannot be understood outside of, or prior to, its operation through discursive practices.³² To its credit, this move reopens *the* fundamental question of development studies: *what is development?*

Within this literature, the general answer that has been provided is that “development” is a discursive formation exported via global institutions in the mid-twentieth century, extending from centers of power through the Global South via development projects. In a widely read case study, James Ferguson argues:

“Development” institutions generate their own form of discourse, and this discourse simultaneously constructs Lesotho as a particular kind of object of knowledge, and creates a structure of knowledge around that object. Interventions are then organized on the basis of this structure of knowledge, which, while “failing” in their own terms, nonetheless have regular effects . . . [including] the entrenchment of bureaucratic state power, side by side with the projection of a representation of economic and social life which denies “politics” and . . . suspends its effects.³³

Because development’s gravitational pull on politics encourages centralized forms of leadership and favors the “developed” over the “underdeveloped,” uneven power relations and the authority of the bureaucratic state are deepened in the name of development.³⁴

Numerous criticisms have been leveled against the post-development literature.³⁵ Two are especially pertinent. First, “development” has often been reduced to a singular, monolithic discourse, devoid of any contingency.³⁶ Ironically, in their effort to displace “development,” the post-development critics have often implied that development is essentially singular, and that it has been so since its inception (“in the early post-World War II period” according to Arturo Escobar).³⁷ That is, for a project that aims at showing, again in Escobar’s words, “how the “Third World has been produced by the discourses and practices of development,”³⁸ the work treats development as monolithic. Yet as Vinay Gidwani writes:

To proceed, as post-development scholars do, on the assumption that “development” is a self-evident process, everywhere the same and always tainted by its progressivist European provenance . . . is to succumb to the same kind of epistemological universalism that post-development theorists . . . are at such pains to reject.³⁹

Second, critics have shown that there is a notable weakness within the literature that I would call, following Gramsci, the “analysis of situations”: careful studies of class formations, production and consumption, and state-society relations. On this point, Michael Watts argues that post-development is weakest where it matters most. Escobar and colleagues fail to adequately analyze how development discourse is articulated through concrete socioeconomic practices; Escobar’s work, Watts once remarked, is insufficiently dialectical.⁴⁰ To capture the subtleties of that dialectic, Watts called not for post-development but rather “development ethnographies.”⁴¹ Yet our challenge is not ethnographic. Certainly, discerning the effects of development practices presupposes a rich understanding of state-society relations, and we must examine the sedimented effects of the historical-geographical processes that have shaped the particularities of capitalism qua development and its hegemony. But that is where the similarities with ethnography should end. If we wish to carry out that work under the sign, “ethnography” – surely one of the signature colonial disciplines – we will only introduce more confusion and epistemic violence.⁴²

We should therefore leave the term “post-development” behind. The “post-” before development serves only to draw us off the path of the inquiry. Unlike postcolonialism, which is a concept that I will take up and argue for, in the end, “post-development” amounts to little more than the facile negation of the object it criticizes.⁴³ Instead of “post-development,” we need a fundamental critique of development: one

that examines its power, its sway, as an aporetic totality. What is needed, I argue, is a specifically *postcolonial* Marxist critique of development. It is notable that post-development failed to incorporate Marx's critique of capitalism and failed to incorporate postcolonialism. Yet a postcolonial Marxism that rethought development would retain two key points from the post-development literature. First: a critique of capitalism must have the theoretical tools to take apart "development" on discursive and ontological grounds. This clarifies how we can leverage what counts as "development" away from its historical moorings as *trusteeship*.⁴⁴ Second: the reading that produces this critique cannot assume an *a priori* alternative (so-called "real development" or "true development") that stands apart from the critique. The latter distinguishes post-development from earlier anthropological critiques of development that rested on the argument that capitalism's failure was to displace holistic cultural systems that were the only real basis for "true development."

Development as Aporia

In the wake of formal, political decolonization, development became the central mission of and justification for Third World states. These states faced the enormous challenge of reconfiguring longstanding economic patterns and processes that were immiserating much of the world. The promise of development has gone unfulfilled for most of the world, and we should criticize the policies that have failed to create the conditions for local capital accumulation, social investment, and sustainable livelihoods, not to mention healthy, long lives – in the name of *development*.

This reading, inspired by an unholy alliance of post-Enlightenment critics (Marx, Derrida, Spivak, and others) aims at doing something other than *rejecting* development. We cannot *not* desire development.⁴⁵ Development remains an absolutely necessary concept *and also* absolutely inadequate to its task. In this way – insofar as development is a necessary but impossible concept for understanding capitalism – development constitutes an *aporia* for postcolonial Marxism. Spivak distinguishes aporias from dilemmas and paradoxes by the way they are "known in the experience of being passed through, although they are non-passages; they are thus disclosed in effacement, [as the] experience of the impossible." An example, which in fact closely parallels the aporia of development, is liberal law: "‘Law is not justice, [although] it is just that there be law,’ says [Derrida in his essay] ‘Force of Law’ . . . Justice cannot pass in a direct line to law; that line is a non-passage, an

aporia.”⁴⁶ I add that aporias, in their impossible passage, may be productive in ways that paradox and dilemma are not.

To be precise, the aporia here consists in the radical doubt encountered by all those who would wish to criticize development. On one hand, “development” is a site of great epistemic violence; on the other, development remains absolutely necessary for us – since it is, in Spivak’s words, “the dominant global denomination of responsibility.” Spivak wrote these lines in the late 1990s, when neoliberalism was the global development strategy. As the denomination of responsibility, development is *undignified*. She continues: “The story is that the rich nations collectively hear the call of the ethical and collect to help the poor nations by giving skill and money.”⁴⁷ It is a “story,” indeed, produced and told at the cost of considerable labor. Yet insofar as we should in fact solicit the call of the other, we need to somehow transform the “dominant global denomination of responsibility.” The problem is that the denomination, the currency, is no good. We cannot pay the debts of our responsibility with development dollars. In *The gift of death*, Derrida writes:

Such is the aporia of responsibility: one always risks not managing to accede to the concept of responsibility in the process of *framing* it. For responsibility...demands on the one hand an accounting, a general answering-for-oneself with respect to the general...and, on the other hand, uniqueness, absolute singularity, hence nonsubstitution, nonrepetition, silence, and secrecy.⁴⁸

But why do we have responsibility at all? Quite simply because of the abject facts of poverty and inequality. We live in a world where billions of people do not have sufficient food and clean water. *Rejecting* “development” – the hegemonic denomination for our responsibility – is neither morally possible nor desirable. Thus there can be no simple negation or rejection of development. Not because development is good (it is not), but because a rejection still turns within the analytic space opened and shaped by development discourses. Development marks the site of a fundamental doubt that must be struggled through in order to produce stronger positions and concepts. Our challenge is to do so without being seduced into its sway, where in the face of injustice, inequality, and expropriation of value we simply ask how to “improve” or “accelerate” development. Insofar as capitalism qua development cannot change the basic conditions of inequality and the extraction of surplus value from labor, its embrace should be rendered impossible, that is, impassable.

Within this view, what must be examined and explained is the articulation of capitalism with development in its dual sense. This articulation

is neither transhistorical, nor aspatial, nor apolitical; it emerges during the period of industrialization in Northern Europe, and – contrary to an argument made by Arturo Escobar, that “development” was “constructed” after World War II – I argue, in concert with Timothy Mitchell, that “development” (as it emerged in the early nineteenth century) was extended through European colonial practices, which, I suggest, called for capitalism to take up an ontological attachment with development. The theoretical difficulty for us is that development consequently became, via imperialism, not *dialectically* but *aporetically*, both inside and outside of capitalism. Development, again, is capitalism; yet it also exceeds capitalism and names a surplus necessary to the correction of mere capitalism. For Cowen and Shenton, this is what constitutes doctrines of development, the need to solder these two conceptions together in historically specific ways. But their logic does not go far enough. To borrow an expression from Jacques Derrida, development is a *supplement* to capitalism – it is a historical-geographical process taken to be *outside* of capitalism, and yet something always already *included*, to make it whole, to allow capital to assume a sense of historical purpose and directionality. Consequently it was only development – not civilization, not modernity, not progress – that was universally taken up after the end of colonialism to define and organize the nation-state-capital triad everywhere. Only development enjoys this degree of epistemic-ontological privilege.

I argue that this aporia – development as denomination of responsibility – has its roots in the very formation of capitalism on a planetary scale through the imperial experience. This clarifies our challenge: to think through this aporia without being seduced by it. But how do we reserve our critique of capitalism without falling into the trap of “post-development,” that is, of supposing that we can escape this totalizing structure? How can we at once highlight and undermine the conceptual work that development does for capital? How do we reserve analytic clarity that we are speaking of capitalism when we invoke “development,” and open development to a more fundamental critique, yet without abandoning the question of development *in toto*?

Capitalism qua Development

My answer to this challenge is to propose the concept of capitalism qua development. The sublime absorption of capitalism into the concept of development has created the effect that capitalism *is* development.

This condition is, I repeat, neither transhistorical nor aspatial; its articulation occurred at a specific time and place; its roots fed by Enlightenment philosophy; its consolidation as one of the fundamental discourses for speaking of and producing the world is a product of European colonialism. Capitalism qua development has proven to be fundamental to the very ordering of the world. The thematization of the world around categories of “development” – spaces divided by nation-states that are “developed,” “developing,” and “least developed” – is grounded by its settlement as a means of describing the work of capital, i.e., “capitalist development,” the concept that capitalism qua development would replace.

Although development is a form of power that works at the scale of the global, it works through particular institutions and practices in ways that are differentiated. Indeed, capitalism qua development could only achieve its world hegemony because the practices through which it has been constituted are historically and spatially contingent. Colonialism solicited development as a way of organizing a form of hegemony appropriate to the expansion of capitalism beyond Europe as well as struggles over the process of territorialization. To put it baldly: development emerged as a global alibi for the imperial extension of specifically Western modes of economy, spatiality, and being. This event occurred when European colonial practices called for capitalism to take up its ontological attachment with development – essentially soliciting capitalism to become development. While this process seems to have started in the mid-nineteenth century during the age of empire, the *possibility* of this attachment was already in Europe’s theoretical repertoire, since its roots lie in Enlightenment philosophy and the desire to see an abstract and unsituated reason applied to direct the movement of History towards the good of humanity. “Development” and “reason” are two watchwords of that philosophical event. Criticizing capitalism qua development requires that we call into question these underlying categories – in order to better understand the work of development in reproducing an imperial, and hegemonic, form of power that governs the world.⁴⁹

Insofar as capitalism qua development cannot change the basic conditions of capitalism – the extraction of surplus value by the hegemonic social class, expanding inequality and concentrations of power – its embrace must be *rendered impossible*. Adorno once wrote of progress, “it occurs where it ends.” So too development.

Postcolonialism

As a growing literature has demonstrated, the postcolonial problematic is unavoidable for those who wish to understand development.⁵⁰ Yet students of development who turn to the postcolonial literature for answers are often disappointed, because postcolonial theory offers no particular development theory or strategy. Indeed, the literature on postcolonial theory is roiled by debates about the term “postcolonial” itself, as well as the nature of its problematic.⁵¹ Though it is beyond the scope of this introduction to survey these debates, I stress that it is postcolonialism, more than poststructuralism or any other post-, that allows us to extend the Marxist critique of capitalism qua development. I therefore underscore my agreement with Qadri Ismail that “the current epistemological or disciplinary moment” is better characterized as postcolonial than poststructuralist, and partly for this reason, the theoretical arguments wrought by postcolonialism must be “(de)fended: fostered, nurtured . . . *consolidated*.”⁵² In this light, this book may be read as an attempt to consolidate, affirm, and abide by postcolonialism’s teachings in order to critique capitalism qua development.

In perhaps over-formulaic and didactic terms, let me briefly sketch four of the lessons of the postcolonial literature that have guided this research, and to indicate how these shape the book. The first lesson is that the achievement and perpetuation of colonial rule required the production of particular forms of knowledge. More: colonialism required the production of forms of knowledge which in turn constituted forms of subjectivity and worldliness that facilitated colonial rule. Colonial forms of knowledge, for instance, may produce the other qua *ethnos* (through representational practices that may well not present themselves as representing practices) that justify racial exclusion and the extraction of value from the colonial periphery.⁵³ Moreover, postcolonial studies show that colonial knowledges have outlasted formal colonialism and live on in the present, constitute the present as such, and have ongoing political effects (cf. the US invasion of Iraq: among other things, a product of the legacy of ways of representing the “Middle East” as a place of mystery and irrationality, to be subdued).⁵⁴

This argument is rightly associated with the work of Edward Said, who relentlessly pursued the effects of colonialism on cultural practices. In *Orientalism* and related essays Said shows how orientalism works as both a discipline of study about “the Orient” and a name for a mode of colonial knowledge that *produces* Europe’s other. Said’s argument has its

limitations, and it is not obvious what it implies for capitalism qua development – Said, after all, was no Marxist. In Part I, “Colonizing the Maya,” I extend the Saidian problematic (a product of the thought of Gramsci and Foucault, who figure prominently in chapters 1 and 2) to consider the ways that Mayanism contributed to the colonization of the Maya. But unlike Said’s critique of orientalism, my critique of Mayanism focuses explicitly upon its dynamic relation with the unfolding of capitalist social relations. I think that this is imperative given the imbrications of colonial discourse with imperialism as a capitalist venture. In this way may we discern capitalism qua development as an object for postcolonial Marxism.

A second lesson is that nationalism, as a response to the problems caused by colonial knowledges and discourses, has proven to be insufficient to the task of decolonizing the world.⁵⁵ This may seem inconsistent with certain strands of postcolonial thought; after all, the postcolonial tradition draws inspiration from Fanon, who once argued that the first task in the struggle against colonialism is “the liberation of the *national territory*.”⁵⁶ I will return to territory in a moment; here, I only note that whereas Marxism could be said to have been founded as a critique of capital as a social relation, postcolonialism emerges from the ruins of national territorialization. As Chatterjee explains: “Nowhere in the world has nationalism qua nationalism challenged the legitimacy of the marriage between Reason and capital. Nationalist thought... does not possess the ideological means to make this challenge.”⁵⁷ An ideology that speaks in terms of an essential link between territory and nation/people/race (i.e., what the Greeks called *ἔθνος*, transliterated “ethnos”) and territory, nationalism cannot cut the link between reason and capital at the core of imperialism.⁵⁸ Chatterjee’s analysis draws out the crucial argument here: the contradiction between metropolitan capital and the “people-nation” is not resolved, but only *suspended*, by the hegemony of *national development* – which is nothing except the promise of the capitalist state to justly transform society through an immanent process *taken to be equivalent with historical progress itself*. For every capitalist state reconstituting its hegemony (i.e., seeking to establish a rationality of capitalist state power) in the wake of colonialism, “the marriage between Reason and capital” has taken the form of capitalism qua development; after colonialism, every capitalist state promises development as the balm for the violence of colonialism and the anticolonial struggle. Again in Chatterjee’s lapidary terms: “the historical identity between Reason and capital has taken on the form of an epistemic privilege, namely, ‘development’ as dictated by the advances of modern

science and technology.”⁵⁹ The very globality of this pattern reflects a profound epistemic authority.

One implication of this second lesson is that we should not place great hope in resistance articulated in nationalist terms. Moreover, in this study I draw the implication that we must examine *how* ethnos becomes mobilized by and for capitalism qua development, in order to destructure the epistemic authority of development as “historical identity between Reason and capital.” Again, this should clarify why this book is not a “development ethnography,” nor another ethnography of the Maya. I rather see it as a Marxist-postcolonial critique of the sustaining power of these concepts (development, ethnos) and their interdigitation as national development.

The third argument that I take from the postcolonial literature concerns subalternity. Postcolonialism teaches us to read with a persistent skepticism towards practices that represent subaltern voices.⁶⁰ This skepticism is not so much scientific or empirical as it is political and ethical. The challenge is to become open to subaltern histories and geographies without *speaking for* or contributing otherwise to epistemic violence. Premesh Lalu crystallizes the problem with subaltern-voice retrieval: “to claim that subaltern consciousness, voice, or agency can be retrieved through colonial texts is to ignore the organization and representation of colonized subjects as a subordinate proposition within primary discourses.”⁶¹ Therefore, although I analyze colonial power in this book, which has always been resisted by the Maya, I do not attempt to define and analyze Maya resistance as such, or even to use the tools of empiricism to prove the existence of such a thing. Indeed, like Casteñeda in his study of Mayanism and tourism in the Yucatan, this study must “suspend designation of the Maya and resist the seduction to define who or what is Maya, since it is precisely my task to critique and contest how this has been done.”⁶² Casteñeda argues that the work of the category “Maya culture” is “a function of the complicitous history of discursive practices in which Maya alterity has been appropriated for use in Western construction of what it is to be ‘civilized’ as measured against non-European-derived social forms.”⁶³ I share this argument and contribute to this project by extending the critique of Mayanism as a form of orientalism.⁶⁴ But, again, this is not the same as attempting to correctly represent subaltern Maya resistance. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak explains, “‘being made to unspeak’ is also a species of silencing.”⁶⁵ The postcolonial critique here is directed at forms of historicism and empiricist social science that aim to retrieve a silenced subject.

Alternatively, Spivak teaches us to analyze the aporias of the colonial present without recourse to essentialism. And this, in short, is the aim of Part II: to investigate in a post-empiricist manner the aporias of capitalism qua development. Following Spivak's readings of Derrida, I argue that the postcolonial condition is one in which capitalism qua development is aporetic. The three chapters of Part II comprise readings of distinct aporia.

The fourth argument that I extend from postcolonialism is more of an extrapolation than a direct borrowing of a clear theme. My argument here is that we must call into question the essential congruence of the trinity that structures the very worldliness of modernity, i.e., the state-nation-territory complex. This argument is a modification and extension of arguments made by several postcolonial scholars who have criticized the orientations ("West and the rest"; "North-South divide"; "Europe and its others") that constitute the modern world as such. Again, colonialism has called for hegemonic commitments to the way we see the world: divided and opposed between Europe/colony and the rest/metropole. The problem is not only that our worldliness is bifurcated, but that this bifurcation reflects one view, and in a way that is represented as a universal one. In this operation, hegemony is doubly geographical: it is constituted on the basis of spatial relations, and such relations become hegemonic as geographies are naturalized and sedimented as common sense through political and cultural practices.

It is somewhat ironic, given the emphasis that Said places on *Orientalism* as a form of imagined geography, that postcolonial scholarship has focused so extensively on the *histories* and not the *geographies* of colonial discourses, nationalism, and the like.⁶⁶ Postcolonial scholarship called into question the European subject of "History" and "Anthropology" that ground colonial knowledge. But I would argue that this scholarship still needs to think through the becoming-space of the territorial nation-state. Such ontological analysis is needed to think differently about capitalism qua development. The world that has been presented for knowledge is one divided by spatial units separated into different stages of development; the world is figured as a space neatly separated into nation-states that are moving through a common time at different speeds. In this particular way of framing the world – which requires the Cartesian view of space and time that Heidegger criticizes in *Being and time* – there is no space outside of development.⁶⁷ The argument here is not necessarily a Heideggerian one, however. In one of his prison notebooks, Gramsci discusses the problem of the

naturalization of spatial relations as part of a discussion on the “so-called reality of the real world”:

In order to understand exactly the possible significance of the problem of the reality of the external world, it may be useful to develop the example of the notions of “East” and “West” which do not stop being “objectively real” even if on analysis they prove to be nothing but conventions, i.e. “historico-cultural constructions.” . . . It is evident that East and West are arbitrary, conventional, i.e. historical, constructions, because outside real history any point on the earth is East and West at the same time. We can see this more clearly from the fact that these terms have been crystallized not from the point of view of man in general but from the point of view of the cultured European classes who, through their world hegemony, have made the terms evolved by themselves accepted everywhere.⁶⁸

Note that the claim is emphatically not that the real world does not exist. Gramsci accepts, of course, that East and West stand in a material relation to the diurnal rotation of the Earth vis-à-vis the sun. But even these celestial relations are always already received through signs that only make sense through geographies that reflect the hegemony of “the cultured European classes.” The broader point is that there are no geographical concepts, terms, or metrics – including territory, scale, nature, or place – that stand outside of language, history, and politics. And therefore questions about exactly *where* some thing *is*, or what a space *is*, can only be perpetually negotiated, deferred, and contested. In this sense, Gramsci’s expression “world hegemony” has a double meaning: in producing colonial hegemony on a global scale, the West reproduces a hegemonic worldliness.

This argument works within a postcolonial purview only if we bracket the suggestion, implicit in Gramsci’s argument, that our aim is to build a “point of view of man in general.” I take it that there is no space from which the humanist subject can see the world in such a universal or geographically objective position. Rather than writing spaces for a point of view of “man in general,” what is called for by postcolonial geography is the permanent critique of the practices that stabilize the singular worldliness of the modern world. The critique of orientalism is therefore a challenge to all fixed orientations, a critique of the argument that the world can be known adequately through empiricism. The problem is not simply the particular geography that unfairly represents the East – though that is of course of immense importance – but rather the very distinction between East and West, between Europe and its others. The roots of orientalism lie in this orientation.

Absent fixed, empirical orientations as reference points, how is it that some thing like “Belize” comes to be recognized as both a place and a territorial nation-state? This question is urgent for the study of development, since the territorial nation-state is the hegemonic scale and frame of analysis. To think through the ontological qualities of the capitalist nation-state and its adherence to capitalism qua development, we need a Marxist-postcolonial conception of territory.

Territorialization

The colonial policy of the capitalist countries has *completed* the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet. For the first time the world is completely divided up, so that in the future *only* redivision is possible.

Lenin (1997: 76; italics original)

A group of people living on a few acres of land will set up boundaries between their land and its immediate surroundings and the territory beyond, which they call “the land of the barbarians.” In other words, this universal practice of designing in one’s mind a familiar space which is “ours” and an unfamiliar space beyond “ours” which is “theirs” is a way of making geographical distinctions that *can be* entirely arbitrary. I use the word “arbitrary” here because the imaginative geography of the “our land-barbarian land” variety does not require that the barbarians recognize our distinction. It is enough for “us” to set up these boundaries in our own minds; “they” become “they” accordingly, and both their territory and their mentality are designated as different from “ours.”

Said (1979: 54; italics original)

A Marxist and postcolonial theory of territory is possible because of the radically different theoretical contributions of Lenin and Said, for whom imperialism and the division of territory are always interrelated processes, and also because of those Marxist geographers who, reading the texts of Henri Lefebvre, have provided a vocabulary to analyze the production of space at the center of political-economic analysis. In his 1978 text, *De l’Etat IV*, Lefebvre argues that the state “binds itself to space” in three ways. The first of these moments is

the production of a space, *the national territory*, a physical space, mapped, modified, transformed by the networks, circuits, and flows that are established within it. . . . Thus this space is a material – natural – space in which

the actions of human generations, of classes, and of political forces have left their mark, as producers of durable objects and realities.⁶⁹

I join other political geographers in following Lefebvre's lead to investigate how the national territory is produced. The challenge here is to decolonize the realist framework that simply presupposes the natural existence of territory, without asking after its ontological basis.⁷⁰ In this view, territory is "the spatial organization of persons and social groups" within the boundaries of the modern nation-state.⁷¹ But the concept of territory (understood as the coordinate space occupied by a nation-state) is a historical-geographical phenomenon of recent foundations.⁷²

Postcolonial theory provides an opening for us to radically rethink territory. Consider the epigram by Said,⁷³ where he uses territory as an example of an object that is created through colonial discourse. Said asserts that the geographical or spatial "fix" of territory must involve the production of sociospatial difference. Yet Said often seems to suggest that the production of territorial difference is transcultural and transhistorical (see the passage quoted at the introduction to this section, describing the demarcation of territory as a "universal process"), a view that runs counter to his thought. Said also suggests that the production of subjects through nationalism – that is, the making of the "us" and "them" of national identity – stands in a close relation to the production of territorial geographies (albeit one that is ultimately arbitrary). While this constitutes a postcolonial entry to a discussion of territory, we must acknowledge that they do not yet explain how territory is materialized, or how exactly these crucial objects (national territories) get made "in our own minds," as Said says.

A postcolonial reading of territory should begin with the presupposition that territory is not simply the space that is occupied by a nation; nor is it the area demarcated by, or contained within, state boundaries. This is not to deny the existence of territory. Territory clearly exists. Its concrete effects are apparent everywhere. Rather, it is to ask after its production. How is it that territory comes to have an apparently "natural" association with the nation-state? What explains the apparent completeness of the territorial division of the world – as Lenin put it, "the world is completely divided up" – despite the fact that redivisions and redefinitions of space continue? What makes that space I have referred to as "southern Belize" Belizean space? As opposed to, for instance, Guatemalan space? Or Maya space? Or something other entirely?

To answer these questions, we must accept that territory is an effect of the practices that constitute it as such, that is, as the becoming-space that articulates the nation with its state. Territory, in short, is the fundamental spatial ontology of the modern nation-state. Territory is therefore not simply the spatial extent of a nation-state, but the spatial conditions that allow it to be: the spatiality that is required for it to have its natural character (hence, in Braun's terms, territory is "the state's 'nature'").⁷⁴ To say this differently, and to stress the iterative quality of this process, we should say that *territory is an effect of territorialization*, where territorialization can be defined as the production of the space of the nation-state. Territorialization is the iterative process whereby states produce the effect of a spatial-ontological separation between its space and the other's. Territorialization is the name for the process of the working-out of the "spatial relations" that make a given state-society ensemble hegemonic.

To the extent that this definition of territorialization is tautological, the tautology lies in the fact that the very meanings of "state," "nation," and "territory" have been interwoven and naturalized in language. It is, therefore, a necessary tautology, one that indicates something profound about the worldliness of the "modern world." The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines "territory" as: "the land or country belonging to or under the dominion of a ruler or state."⁷⁵ Territory is the state's space. But, then, what is a state, and how does it come to have its space? The state is usually taken to refer to that constellation of institutions and bodies that constitute the government. For instance, the OED defines state as "the body politic as organized for supreme civil rule and government." The state can also refer to "a body of people occupying a *defined territory* and organized under a sovereign government," and even "the territory ruled by a particular sovereign."⁷⁶ A nation is "an extensive aggregate of persons, so closely associated with each other by common descent, language, or history, as to form a distinct race or people, *usually organized as a separate political state and occupying a definite territory*."⁷⁷ The very language of nations, states, and territory – in English – presupposes this network of self-referential concepts: nations tend towards states; states are defined by their territories; and territory is the space occupied by the nation-state. What is clear through the examination of these terms – in English, at least, but also in the Western tradition that is under examination here – is a theory of the seemingly natural organization of the world into collective units that bind together race, space, and order. The link between state, territory, and nation is further indicated in the twofold meaning of "country,"

which first referred to an undefined open space, but is now taken to be equivalent to a territorialized nation-state. Today the world is said to be made up of “countries,” but the meaning has shifted: the space of “the country” is no longer open. Lenin was correct: the world’s space has been completely seized, territorialized. But the story, of course, does not end there.

As we know from the experiences of refugees, borders, and colonialism, territorialization is not simply an abstract or ideological process. Territory must be constantly *materialized* through the myriad socio-spatial practices that successfully bifurcate “us” from “others,” in Said’s terms – more precisely, that define the nation-state as spatially coherent. This work always involves the unequal manifestation of power in spatial form. Practices of territorialization work not only at the physical margins of a solid “territory” – for instance with boundaries around sovereign space – and not only in cases of border disputes. Territorialization works “internally” to fill in state-space, unevenly.⁷⁸ In fact, we could define territorialization by its effect on the production of space “inside” the nation-state as much as anything. The relative strength of its effects could be measured by the evenness and completeness of the sense that a nation-state is spatially bound, settled, and contained.

Territorialization is not a process that only works for or with reference to the state, since it is the spatiality of the *nation* that is so much at stake. Territory as a fixed, concrete spatial formation is never fully present for the subject of nationalism, that is, the subject that is interpellated (recognizes herself to be) within national-territorial space. This is because the subject’s entry into the field of language – for example, through the signs that ensure the subject a place, or national space, in the world – is always split.⁷⁹ The territorialization of nationhood is dependent on the successful capture (or interpellation) of “a nation” by a given state-society relation. The relation must not only be spatial – it must have the elements of a spatial relation: orientation, directionality, extent, dimension, etc. – but also of a political character. The space must exhibit a substantial correspondence between territory, nation, and the state.⁸⁰

This suggests that there is no necessary relationship between the nation, territory, and the state. There may be some tendencies towards certain configurations, but any hope of defining these would find that they are fraught with the contingent politics and strategies that prevent the completion of the capture and thematization of the world. This opens space for a different way of reading maps. The defining

quality of such a reading would be to call into question the nationalism-territorialization relation. We must recognize that the seemingly *natural* association of territory with nation-states presupposes a prior congruence between nationalism, territorialization, and the state. The triad has been constructed through the forms of writing that distinguish modern statecraft – treaties and constitutions – but also through the techniques of representation that constituted colonial governmentality: the census, map, and museum.⁸¹ The naturalness of this triad is exploited when nations or peoples that do not qualify (legally or discursively) to speak as subjects of a territorial state produce maps that produce these effects.

As many geographers have noted, cartography has been essential to the production of the national-territorial identity of modern spatiality. Maps do not merely express spatial patterns. Maps are texts that naturalize certain spatial representations of the world as real, present, and bounded; national maps do so in ways that articulate the naturalness of this worldliness with the nation-state. The map is crucial to the production of hegemony through coordinating land (territory), a people (nation), and governmental order (state). While maps are clearly not the *only* way of writing the state into or on a national space, it is clear that cartography plays a crucial role in naturalizing the experiencing of space in terms of territory, by weaving the state into the hegemonic orientation of spatial existence. Maps produce particular kinds of space in ways that refract the conditions of their own production (including nationalism) but cannot be reduced to ideology.⁸² As Gramsci argues, hegemony is never completely captured by the state or any single ensemble; there is always some space for maneuver. The state is itself partly an effect of discursive practices which require a certain play. Moreover, what is at stake in contesting the making and reading of maps is not merely “the symbolic constitution” of mapped space qua territory, but the very *materialization* of territory in both the sense of a “concrete text” (a map in one’s hands) and also concrete sociospatial practices (orientation, directionality). Therefore, an inquiry into territorialization may open productive ways to interpret the relations between colonialism, spatiality, and development.

Spacing

Let me briefly recapitulate my argument to this point. As a consequence of the expansion of capitalism through European colonialism, today capitalism qua development shapes politics, subjectivities, and the

worldliness of the world. Attempts to critique development through Marxist approaches to development economics and state theory, while essential for attacking the imperial character of capital and the state, are insufficient in themselves to explain the dynamic forms of colonial hegemony as they have been articulated through neoliberal capitalism. Postcolonial theory provides a crucial extension and modification of the Marxist problematic by confronting nationalism and calling into question the forms of knowledge and power constituted by colonialism. But with its focus on the question of the possibility and politics of subaltern *historiography*, the postcolonial literature has avoided the question of how the state produces its space – i.e., territorialization – that has always been at the heart of colonial capitalism. I therefore hope to read the political effects of capitalism qua development in the colonial present in a way that simultaneously investigates the spatial-ontological basis of the nation-state, namely territory. In so doing I hope to extend the Marxist and postcolonial theoretical purview to consider the colonialism-development problematic within a stronger philosophical register. The object of research is therefore not development discourses, but capitalism qua development.

Borrowing and shifting a term from Derrida's commentaries on Western philosophy, I refer to this practice of reading as *spacing*.⁸³ I employ spacing as a name for a mode of reading that calls into question the spatial-ontological thematization of the objects or elements that define a text or discourse. This mode of reading is one that examines the constitution of spaces and highlights the ways spatiality makes possible the work of a text; in other words, it calls into question the ontological productivity of the text's particular spatiality.

One way to understand the implications of this practice is through the postcolonial critique of Foucault. In his archaeologies and genealogies of discursive formations, Foucault demonstrated that spatiality was always already involved with the "historical" production of subjectivity and social power. By demonstrating that "space itself, in the Western experience, has a history,"⁸⁴ Foucault's spatial histories of the medical gaze⁸⁵ and the prison⁸⁶ opened new ways of investigating the constitution of power and subjectivity. This approach helped to inspire the postcolonial project,⁸⁷ yet many scholars have criticized his approach on the grounds that Foucault did not consider the conditions of possibility for this category "Western experience" that frames (sometimes in its absence) all of his studies. Ironically, the radical spatialization of history that Foucault's work produces "only reinforces our sense that the place of modernity is to be taken for granted."⁸⁸ Though his texts

spatialize modernity and raise the question of the constitution of “the West” in a radical way, Foucault does not pursue the becoming-space of European modernity. The colonial and imperial processes fundamental to its condition are left unexamined. For Spivak, this is reason for calling into question Foucault’s approach: “Foucault is a brilliant thinker of power-in-spacing, but the awareness of the topographical reinscription of imperialism does not inform his presuppositions. He is taken in by the restricted version of the West produced by that reinscription and thus helps to consolidate its effects.”⁸⁹ By spacing I mean a reading that questions this “self-contained version of the West” produced through colonialism and capitalism.⁹⁰ A postcolonial reading of Foucault takes up the responsibility to map the colonial spaces that make possible the distinction between European and non-European. Development practices have proven especially effective in producing such becoming-spaces of “Europe” and its others.

I consider Spivak’s critique of Foucault an exemplar for what I refer to as spacing. Spacing is a mode of reading that calls into question the ground of geographical arguments that rest on spatial empiricism; it challenges geographies – texts that write (of) the world – that begin with location, region, and position, in a way that uncritically takes the texts of the world as they are, without *reading* them. Making room for non-empiricist readings, spacing introduces into the texts that constitute the world space for a productive rearranging – rearrangements that stress the becoming-spaces of particular colonial discourses, and readings that connect distinct points, such as those between imperialism, colonial territorialization, and capitalism qua development.⁹¹

Spacing makes possible a critical reading of capitalism qua development in the Americas, which are always already related to colonial discourses. In Belize and elsewhere, the ideology of anticolonial nationalist movements coupled development, territory, and nationalism in such a way that indigenous claims – claims to indigeneity, and indigenous land claims – often bring out great ambivalences. Consider figure 0.1: George Price, the leader of the anticolonial, nationalist movement in Belize, is shown teaching a class of young Maya students in a rural village in southern Belize.⁹² The photo portrays Price as a caring leader, willing to travel any length to assist in the development of the nation. In the space between Price and the Maya students the drama of postcolonial development unfolds: the development of the nation – of these rural Maya students – depends on the careful trusteeship of the postcolonial state.⁹³ To read this space, we should notice what frames



Figure 0.1 George Price teaching a class of Maya students, ca. 1964

Source: Ion Media, 2000. *George Price: father of the nation Belize* (ION Media: Belize), no page. Photograph by Norris Hall.

the engagement between Price and the Maya students. On the blackboard behind Price, drawn by him for the edification of the Mayas, is a map of the new country. It is divided into political districts and marked with resources (“sugar”; “citrus”; “lobster”). Here development leads the nationalist state to teach the Mayas where they are, where they fit politically, and the nature of their resources. In this image, we can read the hegemony of post-colonial development, which articulates capitalism and territorialization. Price’s map does not recognize the indigeneity of the Mayas; it does not offer multiple interpretations of development or political rights; it does not speak to Maya land rights. It is a map drawn by England and Spain in the course of colonial territorialization and primitive accumulation, carried forward in borrowed terms even as it aims to replace them.

In the course of colonizing Guatemala and Belize, both the Spanish and the British tried to compel the Maya to live in formal communities. While their ways of justifying and attempting this process varied, both were supported by a common belief that the indigenous people would be more manageable, more developable, if congregated into towns (the Spanish colonial term for this was *reducción*). Like Price’s map, the

colonial practices that have territorialized Maya spaces bind together political identity with *development* and *settlement*. This practice stems from an old affiliation in Western thought between politics, citizenship, and the quality of being spatially fixed, or settled. Colonial power materialized a longstanding alignment of the concepts of city, citizen, and state. It is through this alignment that the centered ontology of the state is justified. It is not only the outsider who is excluded from the *polis*, and therefore politics and citizenship; it is the unsettled subject – the one who threatens nature by moving, by refusing to settle down, by refusing to be a subject of a state.⁹⁴ This tradition calls for spacing.

Although spacing is an abstract practice, it is also a purposeful work and an intervention into development politics. What is at stake in spacing Belize is the way we pose the question of the status of the category “Maya” in relation to the modern nation-state. Rather than asking what the status of the “Maya” people is in Belize – are they indigenous? Are they refugees? Are they peasants? – we should ask what constitutes Belize, such that it is a territorialized nation-state in a particular relation vis-à-vis the Maya.⁹⁵ This implies a deconstructive reading of the inherited concepts of development, territory, and Mayanism. To confront the latter implies that we reject that part of the Mayanist tradition that seeks to define Maya culture and find, in its essence, cultural resources that are to be preserved and developed. The Maya have been figured in colonial discourse as a scattered, unsettled, fallen race, an epitaph for the failure of civilization. The solution, proposed in different ways across four centuries by Spanish, British, German, and American rulers, has been *settlement* and *development*. In the last few decades, we have entered a new phase of this process, where Maya culture has become figured as a resource *for* development. Before trying to accelerate capitalism qua development on this basis, one should ask how this ensemble of concepts came to have such sway. That is my aim.

Plan of the Book

By now it should be clear that the title of this book is not the name of something that has already happened (“how development was decolonized”), nor something that will take place in this text (“buy this book to learn how development should be decolonized”). Rather, the title names

a problem – one that has solicited me, but is not mine: the task of decolonizing capitalism qua development.

Colonial development practices are ubiquitous today, but we often fail to name them and criticize them as such. It is as though they are so pervasive that they become thematically, and therefore politically, impossible to grasp. But from Belize to Iraq, we must recognize that it is through the work of imperial capitalism qua development that the modern world has been constituted as such.⁹⁶ Following Timothy Mitchell, I argue that what is at stake in colonialism and development is the very constitution of modernity as the dominant mode of enframing the world. My reading of the colonization and development of southern Belize is not, therefore, an exercise in offering a social history of a place. Rather, I aim to call into question the enframing of development and Belize that have made it possible to think of these things as having a proper, empirical historical geography – one that solicits neoliberal development *and also* silences Maya resistance to these practices because their geographies do not match ours. This is what I mean by “spacing Belize.”

So this book is not about the geography of Belize, but rather an intervention into what Edward Said called “the struggle over geography.”⁹⁷ As the etymology of “geography” suggests, geographers should aspire to world-writing. The work of a geographer should question and unsettle the presuppositions about space and geography that underlie the hegemonies of an unjust world.⁹⁸ I understand geography here in an anti-disciplinary sense, as a hermeneutic practice that aims at interpreting the practices that constitute the worldliness of the world.

I attempt to do so in Part I by reading texts in the subaltern history of southern Belize (chapter 1) and by examining the discourse of the Maya farm system (chapter 2) and its place in the broader archaeology of Mayanism (chapter 3). Part II examines aporias of development by investigating the works of A. C. S. Wright, a colonial soil scientist whose works were instrumental to transforming colonial discourse into a discipline of development (chapter 4), of two development projects that aimed at “settling” Maya agriculture (chapter 5), and of a counter-mapping project, the *Maya Atlas* (chapter 6). This may suggest a chronological development, and so I repeat, the colonial period has not ended. No. Since my argument is that colonialism solicited development as a form of power appropriate to winning hegemony for capitalism, there are no clear lines separating a colonial past from the development present.

Notes

- 1 World Bank (2003). Downloaded from www.worldbank.org, July 2003. The statistics that follow are also from this source. GNI calculated by the Atlas method. Africa and Latin America data are from 2002.
- 2 For a review of the data on global inequality, see Wade (2004). Any meaningful definition of poverty must consider relatively inequality.
- 3 Gramsci (1992, 1996).
- 4 World Bank (2003). Belize's GNI per capita is comparable to Botswana (\$2,980) and Brazil (\$2,850). Belize compares unfavorably with other countries in its income group in terms of education and level of industrialization, but very favorably with respect to health care and environmental conditions. For instance, the life expectancy in Belize (73 years) is seven years longer than the world average, and the under-five mortality rate is only half of the world average. Yet these relatively strong indicators do not apply to the rural south.
- 5 Data calculated from Belize Census 2000. "Maya communities" are defined here as census communities of more than 30 people where more than two-thirds speak a Maya language (mainly Q'eqchi' and Mopan, but also occasionally Yukatek) as their first language.
- 6 The Bank's views matter intensely because it is at the center of a cluster of institutions that shape development discourse on a planetary scale. This is not the place to review all the criticisms of the Bank (but see Caufield 1996). Most of the Bank's loans support large projects – particularly dams and energy projects – that produce modest returns. Loans must be repaid to the Bank regardless of whether the projects create economic growth or improve the quality of life for the poor; according to the Bank's own estimates, about half of the projects they have funded have failed in their own terms. This contributes in a minor way to the steady net flow of capital from the Third World to the core industrial economies. This flow has not only led to a steady growth in the capital stock of the Bank itself, but allows the Bank to employ "some 10,000 development professionals from nearly every country in the world" (World Bank 2003, cited at www.worldbank.org, July 2003).
- 7 The following sectors have been privatized since the early 1990s: water, energy, port and dock services, telecommunications, and airport services. Hundreds of government positions were eliminated in a sweeping "retrenchment" before Christmas in 1995.
- 8 These concessions to the forests of Toledo attracted capital from Mexico, the US, and China, to expand logging and sawmill operations (see chapter 4).
- 9 Like Casteñeda in his study of Mayanism and tourism in the Yucatan, this book "must necessarily suspend designation of the Maya and resist the seduction to define who or what is Maya, since it is precisely my task to critique and contest how this has been done" (Casteñeda 1996: 13). See also Montejo (2005).

- 10 As Julian Cho, leader of the movement between 1995 and 1998, explained: "Indigenous people have been very passive; we have always been taken for granted, that we should sit down and we should not voice our opinions.... [W]e are one people and we are going to speak as one people" (1995).
- 11 These maps were published in TMCC and TAA (1997).
- 12 I am involved in the struggle to materialize the IACHR ruling as a member of the advisory council of the Julian Cho Society (JCS), an indigenous-rights NGO in southern Belize; as an "expert adviser" to lawyers collaborating with Maya communities to win a case against the Government in the Supreme Court of Belize; as an assistant to an ongoing counter-mapping project; and in other roles (see Wainwright 2007).
- 13 This has been a matter taken up in the literature on political ecology. This book could be read as political ecology if we define this field as an anti-disciplinary project aimed at calling into question the nature of politics and the politics of nature (see Wainwright 2005).
- 14 I consider Mayanism in Part I and ethnography in chapter 5. Apart from the critique, I see no need for more ethnographic studies of the Mayas of Belize, since that work has been done (for the best of it, see Wilk 1997). There is a massive literature on Maya archaeology and history. According to a search of dissertations, between 1996 and 2003 there were 58 theses written with the keywords "Belize" and "Maya" in the title or abstract. Of these, 45 (78 percent) are archaeological; six concern forestry or political ecology (8 percent); five are ethnographies of living Mayas (6 percent). Similar statistics could be compiled for Guatemala and southern Mexico. The Maya are perhaps the most intensely studied ethnos in the world.
- 15 If we define "success" narrowly – in terms of articulated, growing, economies – we could say that colonialism did not create the conditions for successful capitalist development. Colonialism did sometimes create conditions for rapid economic growth, such as in Taiwan and South Korea, but these are exceptional cases, not least for the subsidies received from the US (market access, capital investment), which had an interest in seeing these economies grow rapidly (see Chibber 2006).
- 16 For four distinct views from the Marxist left on the question of imperialism and global capitalism, see Amin (1989); Hardt and Negri (2000); Smith (2003); Karatani (2005).
- 17 The experiment with neoliberalism in Belize has produced effects that are all too well-known elsewhere: privatization of state properties, class stratification, and uneven development. For a study of the effects of neoliberal policies in Belize, see Gabb (1992); for a theoretical critique of structural adjustment, see Carmody (2001). Unlike Zimbabwe (Carmody's case study), Belize had little industry to lose through neoliberalism, but structural adjustment has encouraged disinvestment in agriculture and what industry exists.

- 18 “Property” is of course an extraordinarily complex concept. The sign “property” weaves together belonging, responsibility, ordering force, and correctness. Development is properly of the territorial capitalist state.
- 19 See Mitchell (2003).
- 20 As with the other nation-states of the Americas, Belize was forged through slavery, the decimation of indigenous peoples, primitive accumulation, ecological destruction, forced displacements, and territorialization – the original, foundational violence that cleared the way for contemporary forms of hegemony. For subaltern histories of these processes, see Bolland (1977, 1997); Shoman (1995).
- 21 Williams (1983: 184).
- 22 Ibid., p. 188.
- 23 These words stem from an earlier English form, “disvelop,” closely related to the modern Italian *viluppare*, meaning “to enwrap, to bundle” (OED, Vol. 4, p. 562). This sense became coupled with the Darwinian notion of “evolution” in the nineteenth century, and today this meaning of “to develop” is almost synonymous with “to evolve.” Here too the parallel with nature holds (see Williams 1985: 189).
- 24 Aristotle (1941: *Physics*, p. 238); my italics.
- 25 Howard (1992: 79). In the Introduction to his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* Hegel argues that “the history of philosophy is the history of . . . reason”; tracing this history, Hegel writes, requires defining three elements: thought, concept, and idea. Hegel characterizes the movement between these three elements as “development”: “The Idea as development must first make itself into what it is. For the Understanding, this seems to be a contradiction, but the essence of philosophy consists precisely in resolving the contradictions of the Understanding” (1985: 71). This gives rise to the distinction between potential and existence. As with Aristotle, Hegel uses the metaphor of the development of the seed into a plant for the former.
- 26 I am paraphrasing Cowen and Shenton’s (1996) thesis here. Cowen and Shenton name the coalition of the immanent process with an intention to develop as a “doctrine of development.” While their broad analytic history of development doctrines is important and useful, the task remains to specify the relation between colonialism, capitalism, and development.
- 27 Aristotle (1941: *Physics* II: 1, p. 26).
- 28 For instance, the value of Adam Smith’s argument about the so-called “invisible hand” was to show that the free movement of capital and commodities, guided by the pursuit of self-interest by rational individuals, leads national communities towards good ends. One could write a genealogy of the processes that have produced this attachment (in which Smith’s texts would be one accomplice).
- 29 On the “worldliness of the world” see Heidegger (1996: section I.III).
- 30 Adorno (1998 [1962]: 143). On this “historical identity,” see Chatterjee (2001: 169) and below.

- 31 On the political economy school of development geography, see Samatar (1989, 1999); Glassman (2004); Carmody (2001).
- 32 See especially Ferguson (1990); Escobar (1994); Crush (1995); and Rist (1997). Post-development is comprised of a diverse collection readings of development practices, all of which suggest some poststructural influences, particularly Foucault. But these influences are applied unevenly and often in a simplified, functionalist way by post-development writers.
- 33 Ferguson (1990: xvi).
- 34 Ferguson concludes that development is an “anti-politics machine.” But we must reject this formula. Development is of course political, albeit in a way that does not necessarily produce liberal democratic spaces, and very often today development projects and discourses frankly admit this. Indeed, few things are as productive of political spaces and subjects as capitalist development. The question, then, is not whether development stifles politics, but rather how and why certain political surfaces are produced and contested under the hegemony of development.
- 35 Cf. Watts (1993, 1999, 2001a); Lehmann (1997); Corbridge (1998); Blaikie (2000); Pieterse (2000).
- 36 Lehmann (1997: 572).
- 37 Escobar (1994: 4).
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Gidwani (2002: 5–6). Following Ajay Skaria, Gidwani proposes that development be thought as “a placeholder concept that denotes regulatory ideas about a “better life” that varies in space and time and always carries “multiple accents.” At least in his 2005 essay, Gidwani does not explain how development has come to be not a placeholder, but a synonym, for capitalism.
- 40 For Watts’ critique of post-development, see Watts (1999).
- 41 Watts (2001a).
- 42 See Derrida (1978 [1966]); Ismail (2006). I discuss ethnography in chapters 3 and 5.
- 43 Some post-development writers have suggested that the Age of Empire gave way to the Age of Development (Escobar 1994), but late nineteenth-century European colonialism was typically justified in terms of “development.” At its best, post-development draws our attention to the discursive effects of capitalism qua development. But this makes it something other than “post-development” – “cultural studies of development” is a more appropriate name – since we are after all still living in a world defined largely through capitalism qua development.
- 44 Cowen and Shenton define trusteeship as “the intent which is expressed, by one source of agency, to develop the capacities of another” (1996: x).
- 45 “Cannot not desire” is one of Spivak’s formulas for the deconstructive scenario.
- 46 Spivak (1999: 426–7).

- 47 Spivak (1994: 52).
- 48 Derrida (1995: 61).
- 49 I emphasize “and” because capitalist states do not choose between imperial rule and hegemony; empire and hegemony are not mutually exclusive (see chapter 3).
- 50 See especially Spivak (1994); Gupta (1998); Gidwani (2002, forthcoming); Mitchell (2003); Kothari (2005); Moore (2005). On development geography research that draws upon postcolonialism, see Sidaway (2000); Radcliffe (2005); Gidwani (forthcoming).
- 51 Cf. Shohat (1992); McClintock (1992); Mowitt (2005). Part of the challenge is that postcolonialism resists reduction as a framework, which is the organization of knowledge that development studies typically seeks.
- 52 Ismail (2006: xvi); also Mowitt (2005: xxvi–xxix).
- 53 This Heideggerian argument has been advanced by Mitchell, who posits that modernity is constituted as “an effect we recognize as reality by organizing the world endlessly to represent it” (2000) In this view, what becomes extended through colonialism is a set of practices for representing the world: “Representation does not refer here simply to the making of images or meanings. It refers to forms of social practice that set up in the social architecture and lived experience of the world what seems to be an absolute distinction between image (or meaning, or structure) and reality, and thus a distinctive imagination of the real” (2000: 17).
- 54 One of the reasons that postcolonialism is not simply a project of subaltern historical research is that the practices that constitute the present have shaped the very conception of history (cf. Lalu 2005). To put this differently, postcolonialism concerns the colonial *present*. On postcolonialism and subaltern historiography, see Chaturvedi (2000).
- 55 See Ismail (2006).
- 56 Fanon (1998: 235), my italics.
- 57 Chatterjee (2001: 168).
- 58 The expression “nationalism qua nationalism” is the key to this argument. What could nationalism be *except* nationalism? Can we imagine a politics that moves in the space of nationalism that could challenge the legitimacy of Reason and capital – in a way that “mere nationalism” cannot? The thrust of Chatterjee’s argument (which opposes the distinction between “good” and “bad” nationalisms) suggests that the answer is no. This is part of what distinguishes postcolonialism from anticolonialism. Postcolonialism struggles against colonialism and nationalism, which only “produces exclusivist notions of community and might be understood as a structure in dominance” (Ismail 2006). In this study I use *ethnos* in lieu of race and nation not simply to draw out the connection with ethnography, but because the ambiguity between *ethnos*’ “positive” troping (as healthy nationalism) and “negative” (ugly racism) in the tradition of liberal thought is problematized by postcolonialism.

- 59 Chatterjee (2001: 169). Chatterjee comes close to Heidegger's position here. I see no justification for reducing this dynamic to a question of science and technology. Finance is fundamental.
- 60 See Spivak (1988, 1999). Spivak's original argument was an intervention in debates of the Subaltern Studies group on the question of the very possibility of reclaiming subaltern histories (cf. Guha 1982, in Chaturvedi 2000), but it applies equally to subaltern geographies.
- 61 Lalu (2000: 68).
- 62 Casteñeda (1996: 13).
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 On pan-Mayanism, see Casteñeda (1996); Warren (1998, 2001); Montejó (2005). On the construction of "the Maya" and "Maya tradition," see Hervik (1999) and Greene (2003). This subsection of the Introduction uses language previously published in Wainwright (2005). I thank Pion Limited (London) for permission to use these revised extracts.
- 65 Spivak (1999: 408–9).
- 66 Cf. Chakrabarty (2000).
- 67 Heidegger (1996). One illustration of the power of this way of viewing the world comes from the World Bank. The (wholly appropriate) sign for the Bank is the world itself: a portrait of the world made up of latitude and longitude lines, signs of abstract space *par excellence*.
- 68 Gramsci (1957: 198–9). Gramsci argues that the debate about the "so-called reality of the real world" demonstrates the power of Judeo-Christian theology on "common sense": the apparent "realness" of the "real world" is self-evident, since it is God's creation. To doubt its realness – or even question the relationship between the real and the thought of the real – is to doubt not only the Creation story but God's existence, since the grounding myth of Judeo-Christian metaphysics is that God created the world (see the discussion of Las Casas in chapter 3). Gramsci's argument that the "problem of the reality of the real world" cannot be posed within popular philosophical terms closely parallels Heidegger's argument, made at roughly the same time: "With respect to the problem of an ontological analysis of the worldliness of the world, traditional ontology is at a dead-end – if it sees the problem at all" (1996: 61).
- 69 Lefebvre (2002: 84). The other two moments that Lefebvre specifies are "the production of a social space" and "a mental space." A postcolonial reading of territorialization should reject Lefebvre's trifurcation of mental, social, and physical, and also his inference that production of the national territory, by virtue of its concreteness, is therefore natural. This assumption recapitulates the Western metaphysical propensity to equate materiality, nature, and substantiality.
- 70 Cf. Agnew and Corbridge (1995).
- 71 Johnston (1995: 620).

- 72 Brenner argues that the Westphalian model of the nation-state-territory coupling did not become hegemonic until the twentieth century, when “the notions of state, society, economy, culture, and community . . . had come to presuppose this territorialization of social relations within a parcelized, fixed, and essentially timeless geographical space” (1999: 47).
- 73 See Said (1979: *passim*).
- 74 Braun (2000: 28).
- 75 OED, Vol. 17, p. 819. While the etymology is said to be “unsettled,” it seems that territory shares a root with *terrere*, to frighten, from which we have “terror.” Territory would thus be something like a space “from which people are warned off” (*ibid.*). Territorialization is the process whereby the nation-state warns off the other. In fact the OED defines the verb “to territorialize” (from which territorialization is derived) as “to place upon a territorial basis; to associate with or restrict to a particular territory or district.”
- 76 *Ibid.*
- 77 OED, Vol. 10, p. 231. Italics mine.
- 78 For another treatment of internal territorialization, see Vandergeest and Peluso (2001).
- 79 Althusser’s scene of interpellation is already spatial: the policeman’s hail says “hey, you *there*”; the friend’s saying “It’s me” occurs with a knock on a familiar door; etc. These scenarios not only presuppose an ideological environment in which interpellation can produce subjects, but a particular spatiality in which the subject exists. Interpellation, for Althusser, produces spatial subjects.
- 80 Kojin Karatani proposed a similar problematic with the central trinity of his transcritical Marxism: nation-state-capital (2005: 13–16). In my view the key trinity is (nation–state)—capital—territory. It is the spatial, especially territorial relations of power that makes particular nation-state-capital couplings possible.
- 81 Anderson (1983). “Development” has played an equally critical role in binding the modern nation-state. Development not only refers to the evolution of the nation under the guidance of the state; it solicits the very thought of such evolutionary improvement as a way of figuring the temporality of the nation-state. Capitalism qua development calls for trusteeship on the terrain of the nation-state-territory complex.
- 82 Doing so would put one in the position of searching out the ways that ideology has “distorted” the “correct” representation of the world in a map.
- 83 I stress *shifting* because my use here cannot but flatten Derrida’s complex uses of the term *espacement*, or “spacing,” in many of his most important works from the 1960s (see “Différance”; “Ousia and gramme”; “Freud and the scene of writing”; see also *Of grammatology*, and the interviews in *Positions*). Spacing is not a neologism in English. It is the verbal substantive of the verb “to space.” The OED defines spacing as “the action of the verb

[to space], in various senses, or the result of this action" (OED Vol. 16, p. 93).

84 Foucault (1998: 176).

85 Foucault (1973). Foucault finds that in nineteenth-century France "a quite new form, virtually unknown in the eighteenth century, of institutional spatialization of disease, makes its appearance. The medicine of spaces disappears" (20). See also Foucault (2003 [1976]: 103).

86 Foucault (1979).

87 Cf. Said (1979). In *Culture and imperialism* Said says of Foucault and Raymond Williams: "I am in considerable sympathy with the genealogical discoveries of these two formidable scholars, and greatly indebted to them. Yet for both the imperial experience is quite irrelevant, a theoretical oversight that is the norm in Western cultural and scientific disciplines" (1993: 41).

88 Mitchell (2000: 5). Mitchell's work attends to this problem by drawing from Heidegger and Derrida to examine colonial power. His work suggests that "it was in the building of slave-factories in Martinique, prisons in the Crimea, and schools in Calcutta that the decisive nature of the distinction between European and non-European was fixed" (3). To this list we may add the Indian reservations of British Honduras (see chapter 1).

89 Spivak, cited in Mitchell (2000: 29).

90 These are Spivak's words, but the tone is Lenin's. The revised version of this essay in *Critique of postcolonial reason* concludes by quoting Lenin to the effect that "Capitalism has been transformed into imperialism" (1999: 311).

91 Consider the ruins of Lubaantun near the village of San Pedro Columbia in southern Belize. Geographers have had a strong language for talking about where Lubaantun is, at least since 1928, when Lubantuun was located by surveying techniques: "[The] character of the expedition...was partly geographical, partly archaeological. In its origin it was archaeological. That is, the British Museum had the opportunity of sending out an expedition to investigate something of the archaeology of British Honduras, and the Royal Geographical Society took the opportunity of sending Mr. Laws attached the expedition to make such geographical exploration as was possible. That was, I think, mutually advantageous. It was helpful to our party to have Mr. Laws with it. He fixed the position of Lubaantun and, I hope, has established in your minds the fact that it does really exist, and he was also able to contribute something to the geography of the surrounding country" (Laws 1928: 236). What does it mean that Laws "fixed" the position of Lubaantun? In Kenyon's text, Lubaantun is fixed by Laws because he correctly identified its position in a universal and objective spatial grid. The space in which it is identified belongs to the becoming-space of presencing, is the spatiality of the Cartesian coordinate system, although this particular worlding of the world is unquestionably the

hegemonic one today (see Heidegger 1996). That there are other ways of worlding the world is fundamental to the concept of *spacing*. Fixing, or settling, names the operations of positioning the Cartesian subject *in* a world that already “is” spatial – which the subject merely fills with a body.

From this example it may seem that spacing is a mode of reading that applies only to visual and “spatial” texts. Yet consider Glenn Gould’s interpretation of the music of J. S. Bach. Gould’s recordings and critical writings offer a radical mode of reading and performing Bach, a mode that Edward Said has described as “contrapuntal.” I would emphasize the way that Gould brings out the contrapuntal elements of Bach – i.e., plays the notes “out of time.” In Gould’s approach we may hear spacing being put to work. Gould’s favored practices – total abstention from the sustain pedal; the heightened shifts in tempo; the arpeggiation of chords – increase the severity and contrapuntal sound of his playing. Through this productive “misreading” of Bach’s scores, Gould brings out tones, combinations, and potential lines that would not otherwise exist. Although Gould’s is a practiced reading, it is more a habit than a conscious technique. Consider Gould’s comment from a 1976 interview with Bruno Monsaingeon, inserting ourselves when they are discussing Gould’s practice of eliminating sforzandos. Monsaingeon suggest that sforzandos “represent a disruption of counterpoint,” and that Gould’s relentless “search for counterpoint compels [him] to change or to ‘correct’ voice leading.” Gould affirms: “I very often arpeggiate chords which are written conventionally . . . and I read quite often the gentlemen of the press assume this is some sort of parlormusic mannerism. In fact, it’s quite the opposite. It may or may not be justified, but the habit originates in a desire to keep the contrapuntal spirit alive, to emphasize every possible connection between linear events. . . . The nature of the contrapuntal experience is that every note has to have a past and a future on the horizontal plane” (Gould 1984: 36). Gould’s practice (or “habit” as he says) is a powerful illustration of spacing. By “emphasiz[ing] every possible connection between linear events,” space can be thought as something other than the inert and discrete container of being as presence. Agamben says as much when he writes of Gould: “even though every pianist necessarily has the potential to play and the potential to not-play, Glenn Gould is, however, the only one who can *not* not-play, and, directing his potentiality not only to the act but to his own impotence, he plays, so to speak, *with his potential to not-play*” (Agamben 2005: 36, my italics).

92 Anon. (2000).

93 I use the terms “post-colonial,” “postcolonial,” and “anticolonial” to refer to distinct phenomena. Post-colonial is always used as an adjective to describe a nation-state in the time after the end of formal colonial rule. For example, “the post-colonial Belizean state” is the one that governs Belize after September 1981. This term is not to be confused or conflated

with postcolonial, which refers to a project of challenging and undoing colonial thought and politics. Postcolonialism troubles the notion of the post-colonial insofar as it undermines the thought that states or time periods that occur after the end of colonialism have broken from colonialism. I know of no way around this terminological difficulty.

- 94 See Agamben (1998). Notably, in the famous passage from the first book of *Politics* where Aristotle defines man as a “political animal,” Aristotle argues that the category “citizen” is reserved for those who live in the *polis*: “The final association, formed of several villages, is the city or state . . . [which is] a perfectly natural form of association, as the earlier associations from which it sprang were natural. . . . It follows that the state belongs to a class of objects which exist in nature, and that man is by nature a political animal; it is his nature to live in a state” (1979: 28–9). The Western political tradition since Aristotle has carried forward, in some fashion, this affiliation between settlement as politico-spatial fixing (to live *in a state*, i.e., be territorial) and state-citizen agreement (contract as natural form of association).
- 95 This implies a critique of Maya ethnography, the literature that has been most responsible for specifying who the Maya are and how they fit “in Belize.”
- 96 I do not mean “modern” in the sense of “contemporary,” but as that which is made by the worlding of a vulgar time that posits temporality as a common, evolutionary horizon of human development – in which “the West” is ontologically separated from, and ahead of, “the rest.” See Mitchell (1988, 2000).
- 97 Said (1993: 7).
- 98 No climate will be found in this book, nor descriptions of soils, roads, population, or cultural groups. I know these might be confused with the geography of Belize. For such data, see: www.cia.gov/cia/publications/fact-book/geos/bh.html#/Intro. What does it mean for geographers that the CIA “does geography” (as this practice is widely understood) as well as anyone? There is still much work ahead in remaking geography as something other than an imperial and empiricist science.