

# Introduction

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. . . topographies of the rural—have obscured and concealed that which sustains them—the topographies of power.

—Jonathan Murdoch and Andy Pratt, *Contested Countryside Cultures*

Materiality, representation and imagination are not separate worlds.

—David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*

These chapters emerged from a symposium held at Duke University in March 2015.<sup>1</sup> They seek to bring to the forefront questions of rurality concerning indigenous peoples, blacks, and other people of color—centering them in a dialogue that investigates the outcomes of globalization and development in its various effects, namely cultural, social, economical, ecological, and political.

From multiple viewpoints, these studies propose ways of understanding how processes of making space and place configure rurality in a globalizing world economy, and how these processes are articulated through optics of raciality that are shaped by and performed through, its intersections with class, gender, identity, land, and environment (Cloke and Little 1996; Cloke 2006a, 2006b; Dupuis 2006; Sibley 2006; Dupuis and Vandergeest 1996; Duncan et al. 2004). In a sense, the chapters in this volume seek to understand rurality through raciality, and its converse. Underlying the “topographies of the rural,” as Murdoch and Pratt (1997) argue, are of course, the “topographies of power” that operate to map, obscure, and manage

rurality and raciality through projects of citizenship and statecraft, governance and development (Pratt 1996; Murdoch and Pratt 1997; Cloke 2006a; Halfacre 2006; Goldberg 2002). Accordingly, these processes, working through overlapping spatial zones and temporalities of globalization, will differentially incorporate and mark *places* (as well as bodies and states) in racialized relations of power, governmentality, and conflict, as well as creolizing ambivalences tracing both tactics of resistance and accommodation (see Amin 2011; Crichlow and Northover 2009a, 2009b; Trouillot 2002; Perry and Mauer 2003; Cohen 1999). In examining these processes, the geographies covered in this collection include, Asia, notably Thailand, as well as Africa and the Americas, including the United States and the Caribbean. However, as Massey (1995) reminds us:

The description, definition and identification of a place is . . . always inevitably an intervention not only into geography, but also, at least implicitly, into the (re)telling of the historical constitution of the present. It is another move into the continuing struggle over the delineation and characterization of space time . . . it may be useful to think of places, not as areas on maps, but as constantly shifting articulations of social relations through time . . . the identity of places, indeed the very identification of places *as* particular places, is always in a sense temporary, uncertain, and in process. (Massey 1995: 188–190)

Through provocative readings and analyses of these areas, emphasis is therefore placed on the different spatial, scalar, and temporal registers of relational historical formation, as highlighted in the methodological approach of key analysts of processes of globalization and development, such as Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1988, 2002, 2003),<sup>2</sup> Doreen Massey<sup>3</sup> (2005), Philip McMichael (1990), and Tania Murray Li (2001). Perspectives gathered in this volume range from the complex historical conjunctures punctuating Braudel's *longue durée* amidst contesting global formations, to the strategy and tactics of more recent vintages of neoliberal capitalist development impacting on nation-states, local communities, and regions; and from postcolonial governmentality projects for producing new identities of place and citizenry, to the micro-politics of dynamic space-making through fluid subjectivities and the complex relations between places, people, and things. In tackling the dynamics of place, the chapters also consider the heightened risks and multiple states of insecurity in the global economy;<sup>4</sup> the logics of expulsion and primitive

accumulation dynamics shaping a new “savage sorting” (Sassen 2010); resistance and transformation in the face of globalization and political and environmental change; plus the steady decline in the livelihoods of people of color globally, their deepened vulnerabilities, and the complex reconstitution of systemic and lived racialization within these processes.

## Interrogating Race and Rurality in the Time-Spaces of Globalization and Development

While these essays are concerned with the themes of race and rurality, it would be wrong to suggest that any unified concept of race or rurality animates our discourse.<sup>5</sup> Taking a cue from Du Bois in *Dusk of Dawn*, these terms tend to operate as signifiers of a complex set of “contradictory forces, facts and tendencies.”<sup>6</sup> Race and rurality moreover seem to overlap as heirs of a history of analysis that has both privileged (and indeed fetishized) them as explanatory categories and then denied their very relevance to understanding (social) spaces and the lived experiences within them. This tendency is reflected in the many calls to do away with the “rural,” most notably Hoggart (1990), and of course, to eschew notions of race, most notably by Paul Gilroy (2002), and other pronouncements on its death, as John Jackson (2005) remarks. However, as the *Handbook of Rural Studies* (Cloke et al. 2006), *Critical Rural Theory* (Thomas et al. 2011), and the continued discourse on race attest, the complex terrains of the social, body-political, and temporal, as mapped through constructs of race and rurality, and their hegemonic politics of othering, continue to animate and demand our attention, investigation, and indeed our theoretical efforts to make sense of the globalizing spaces of modern capitalism and development.<sup>7</sup>

The chapters in this volume therefore view race and rurality as signifiers anchored to complex material, symbolic-political, bodily, and socio-spatial realities. For example, as the epigraph quoted from David Harvey (1996) intimates, and as Paul Cloke (2006: 24) notes, “rather than understanding material, imaginative and practiced ruralities as somehow separate, it is possible—indeed strongly advisable—to see them as intrinsically and dynamically intertwined and embodied with ‘flesh and blood’ culture and with real life relationships.” Similarly, Murdoch and Pratt dispute the existence of an essential rural or urban condition distinct from power relations:

[T]here is no essential rural condition, no point of reference against which rurality can be measured. Each practice of dividing and distinguishing the rural is saturated with assumptions and presuppositions. It is, of course, impossible to step outside of these; the only alternative, we believe is to adopt a reflexive approach . . . one that takes account of the ways in which we do the dividing and distinguishing, and that considers the ways in which our categories and concepts, the very accounts we write, perform power relations, so that these might become more visible and contestable. (Murdoch and Pratt 1997: 56)

Accordingly, Murdoch and Pratt consider that the rural is an inherently relational, unstable category that is

contingent, fluid, detached from any necessary, stable socio-spatial reference point. Its meanings are asserted relationally (most notably in contradistinction to the urban) and are situationally specific; that is, we can know the rural only from and through particular socio-spatial positions. (Murdoch and Pratt 1997: 58)

In line with this analytical positioning, the chapters herein by and large have sought to identify and explore “the topological suppositions which frame the performance of difference” (ibid: 58) with the intention of revealing or questioning the sets of power relations that inhere in the topographies *producing* the rural, or rather, as Cloke (2006a) emphasizes, the “hybridities of rural spaces,” as well as the racial. In other words, this text addresses rurality as a politics of (social) space and offers to examine the imbricated relations between the production of space, race, and rurality. Or perhaps, in keeping with an emphasis on *processes of formation*—material, representational and imaginary—it is more revealing to flag the *racialization*<sup>8</sup> of (social and political) spaces, as well as bodies, as Didier Fassin (2011) emphasizes, that leads to fractured and fractious states of be/longing and un-be/longing. Indeed, as Hortense Spillers (1987) also reminds us, such bodies inhabiting processes of racialization have been problematically rendered (un)gendered and differentially abjected as “flesh,” in the grotesque violence and most peculiar temporalities of the modern world, as interrogated most notably by W. E. B. Du Bois (1903), Frantz Fanon (1967), Stuart Hall (1980), Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (1991), Ann Laura Stoler (1995), Sylvia Wynter (1995),

Paul Gilroy (1987, 2002), Robert Miles (1989), Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994), Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (1997), and Charles Mills (1997).

Anchored by a sensitivity to historical experiences, the chapters promote a critical-studies approach to the social history of development—one that shifts the focus from historicist modernization (or proletarianization) mantras that assume linear rapid change from agrarian to urban/industrial status; and from peasant or rural frameworks that tend to underestimate the extent of temporal and relational complexity in historical transformations. Of course, linear perspectives have also been rendered deeply problematic by the positivistic and dichotomous methodologies that underlie them. In contrast then, the chapters gathered here probe the various relational fields generating contested mappings, and the competing imaginaries of urban-rural spatialization processes that unsettle typical narratives of development or modern transformational forces. This means that they set out to critically examine the constitution and dynamic formation of historically contingent yet structurally constrained *productions* of rural and urban spaces through the optics of race, land, and rurality; question the nature of the development experience within hegemonic processes of capitalist formations and its rhetorical promises of progress; and finally, try to better understand the comparative racialization of hi/stories (human identity stories)<sup>9</sup> and spaces, as well as the fissures, or fault lines, they provoke within projects of development, or rather, the *haunted* quest for sustainability in the management of global spaces. This intervention we felt would thus enable a better engagement with the vital issues related to the well-being and political futures of diverse populations of color facing existential threats from globalization, development, and climate change, as Naomi Klein (2014) forcefully reminds us in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*.

We posit that such an approach to the dual dilemmas of displacement and dispossession, and the sorts of reactions and resistances that tend to be associated with the experiences of racialized subjects being increasingly divested of land and livelihood, requires exploring the continuity between the spaces of the rural and the urban and their mutual, historical constitution. From Africa to Asia, and the rest of the world, the rise of emergent middle classes alongside widening racialized dispossession and informalization processes driven by neoliberal governmentality have generated new rural-urban relationships as well as deeper and more complex socioeconomic pressures.<sup>10</sup> This present rural-urban conjuncture is further complicated by the fact that climate change has added its own pivotal weight upon the growing pressure on the global food supply, and has breathed new life into

large-scale agrarian production models through the phenomena of “land grabbing,” or large-scale land acquisitions for food and non-food uses (White et al. 2012). Moreover, as we discussed at the symposium, cities have become home not only to the recently urbanized—displaced rural communities—but cities, in turn, reflect changing patterns in the rural-urban continuum in which the countryside is increasingly given over to industrialization while many urban areas are “ruralized,” with significant back-and-forth movement that further complicates past distinctions. To the degree this is the case then, “land” and “the countryside”—perceived as spaces of belonging as well as sites for resource conflicts and struggles for place as well as development projects—are being increasingly reshaped as a *central problem field signaling* not just the changing fates of former agrarians, minorities, and marginals (generally), but also *a new spatial politics* rooted, as Michael Levien (2013) argues, less in a “politics of exploitation,” and more deeply in a “politics of dispossession.” In particular, informed by his own analytical and research effort on India to go beyond Harvey’s (2003) recent discussion rethinking Marx’s concept of “primitive accumulation” through the lens of “Accumulation by Dispossession,” Levien is asking us *to further probe the nature of the political* inhabiting capitalist processes of accumulation.

Contextualized more generally then by the aforementioned critical lens, the discourses assembled here approached our entangled global spaces, through which world economic processes of development are articulated, as being formed through both relational histories and geographies. This method when applied to specific geographies and sociocultural phenomena promises to highlight more clearly the covality of disparate development patterns constituting rural and urban spaces and their blurring. Thus, it offers a more nuanced mapping of world-making, whereby the intersectionality of seemingly far-flung geographies, cultural practices, and economic and political processes can be more clearly apprehended.

Overall, the essays included in this volume shed light on the complex production of fluid rural spaces through analyses of particular transformations and racializations. For example, Ray Kea in “Global Economies and Historical Change: Rethinking Social Struggles and Transformations in Africa’s Zones of Rurality (1500–1800)” offers a *longue durée* frame for this volume through his broad historical sweep analyzing the regional social processes and contested zones of rurality within African historicity that became complexly imbricated in modes of Western economic globalization and its own racialized mode of modern world-making. Drawing upon a Marxist-inflected materialist perspective, Kea deeply scrutinizes the social and

political dynamics of West African social formations over the period between 1500 and 1800 in Western/Atlantic history and argues for a *rethinking* of the nature of these processes to highlight their intrinsic and relational logics.

Accordingly, Kea calls for examining African social formations' "own systemic logics and dynamics, rationalities, oppressions, crises, practices and capacities." This he provides through a much closer examination of the agencies, classes, institutional-organizational complexes, and contesting Islamic and non-Islamic ideologies that shaped the shifting terrain of regional economic and political ties. By interrupting the hegemonic narratives of a singular globalization event, Kea highlights the older global and regional economies at work in African historicity, which drew upon largely tributary modes of accumulation that became strategically articulated but eventually dominated by Western modes of commodity capitalist accumulation. Guided by two principal hypotheses on the forms of the social and material contradictions characterizing what he describes as the late imperial and post-imperial period, Kea highlights the important role of rural spaces in fueling a universal and revolutionary ethos that became unsettled by the pressures for securing dominant political rule through the appropriation and exploitation of slave economies.

Complementing this wide sweep of Afro-Atlantic history offered by Kea, the other chapters offer close studies of particular events, singularly or comparatively, investigating the enactment of particular development projects occurring during the hopeful postcolonial moments, when states attempted to engineer socialist technologies of rule, as James Giblin in his essay discusses, highlighting the role of the developmentalist state in the *ujamaa* villagization project in Tanzania. Here, in contrast to James Scott's treatment in his book *Seeing like a State*, which focuses on the ways that "high modernist projects" flatten and make legible local sociocultural practices in order to shape, condition, and bring into being new ways of thinking and doing (technologies of governing, as Foucault would say), Giblin offers a more nuanced reading. His approach begins from the ground up to examine actual people's responses to these homogenizing development projects, which displaced them physically and psychologically.

In "Making Development through Rural Initiative 'Unthinkable': Tanzania in the Time of *Ujamaa*," Giblin focuses on the villagization project in Tanzania where the socialist government of Julius Nyerere embarked upon the resettlement of most of the country's rural population into government-created villages. While much of the literature has focused on the merits of governmental efforts toward this end, Giblin offers a people-based account of these efforts. He captures the

active engagement with memories of particular traditions that these villagization projects erased, perhaps unwittingly, given the urgency and unbounded socialist enthusiasm with which they attempted to drag Tanzanians into a future unknown, but one in which state officials were formally invested. Rather than resulting in a raising of aspirations and morale, these projects served instead to distance their intended clients. Threading his argument through Michel-Rolph Trouillot's notion of "unthinkability," Giblin argues that Tanzanian officials could not think the possibility of rural development outside of state direction—a position shared by many decolonizing elites in the Global South. Yet the imagination of state officials remained firmly and contradictorily wedded to racialized Western notions of modernization and progress. To implement these ideas of centralization the villagization program silenced older histories, leading to resistance and foot-dragging against state agendas. Giblin argues that ironically this resistance was spurred by unsavory memories of colonialism's own racialized despotisms, which villagers felt resembled the edicts and demands of such state projects. Precolonial cultural practices were mobilized in opposition to undercut the new subjectivities and territorial reorganization that *ujamaa* villagization aimed to produce.

This attempt by states to remake place and populations, and to redesignate spaces through racializing practices, is the focus of Daniel B. Ahlquist and Amanda Flaim in their discussion of state/society reconfiguration of territorial space in Thailand. In their textured essay, "Racialization and the Historical Production of Contemporary Land Rights Inequalities in Upland Northern Thailand," the authors patently show the biopolitical drive to reengineer space for the privileging of ethnic Thais over uplanders. Here the projects of state building are fully invested in projects of othering associated with the division of territories. This state racialization project has fundamentally replaced earlier, more fluid ethno-spatial differences. Racialization takes on its usual trajectory of hierarchizing spaces and bodies among non-Western peoples themselves, in order to entrench unequal access to rights generally—a phenomenon witnessed in land rights. Ahlquist and Flaim argue that this racialized project underwrites the disparities between uplanders and ethnic Thais in terms not reminiscent of Western practices of racialization. Their adoption of the lens of race in a situation where no visible phenotypical difference exists between the populations under scrutiny speaks compellingly to the bio-rationales of racial constructions and reminds us that any body is open to racialization, since the underlying project really concerns power and the complex ordering of spaces of be/longing or un-be/longing. Thus, the essay demonstrates forcefully the technologies and organizational logics of such a project,

and the enduring consequences of the “vulnerabilization” of the uplander population even as they share space with ethnic Thais from the “civilized” lowlands who have been relocating upland.

This ground-level scrutiny is also seen in the essay by Olivia Maria Gomes da Cunha, which focuses on Maroon women as they seek to rebuild places of comfort. Indeed, in “Making Things for Living, and Living a Life with Things,” Gomes da Cunha reveals how Ndyuka women in Moengo (eastern Surinam) created gardens that transformed a former industrial landscape in ways that combine urban and rural socio-spatial logics. Moengo is a company town formed in the early twentieth century around the large Suralco bauxite operation. During civil war in the 1980s, Ndyuka who lived on the outskirts of the town, and who were largely involved in forest clearing, fled Moengo with their families to refugee camps further in the interior. Upon their return in the early 1990s, they occupied the land of the bauxite installations and transformed them into a settlement where dwellings are surrounded by gardens planted with bananas, plantains, mangos, ackee and calabash trees, medicinal bushes, and crops. Activities such as clearing the fields to selling food produce, medicinal herbs, and processed food in the cities mobilize and reinforce a set of work, kinship, and neighbourhood relations, as well as ecological and spiritual ties. In this new configuration, relations infused with social and cultural meaning linked to long-standing ties to the territory—and its gods and spirits—that increasingly involve the Cottica Ndyuka with non-Maroon interlocutors, connect life inside and outside the villages. Here one witnesses the intimacies between place and things up close as these Ndyuka families forced by circumstance adapt in innovative ways, unsettling the spatio-temporalities of the urban and rural. In Tanzania, subject/citizens resisted “ruralization,” or the form that it took; here a ruralized sort of urbanization enacts a form of resistance.

In other entanglements with development, Wazir Mohamed, in his chapter, “Race and Class Marginalization in the Globalization of the Rice Industry,” examines different practices of modulating the pressures of globalization (expressed in the effects of agricultural commodification on lives and landscapes) to reveal the historical depth and cultural impact of food cultures based on small-scale rural livelihoods. Yet despite the long duration of these counter-plantation-scapes, his contribution highlights the brutal reorganization of the rural and the changing dynamics of a racializing displacement, expressed in lost livelihoods and the emergence of different agents, during the onset of the neoliberal era marked by the implementation of myriad structural adjustment policies in the Global South. In

particular, Mohamed discusses the recalibration of a racial-social class structure in Guyana along a seemingly intransigent Afro/Indo divide (a subject that Brackette Williams [1991] has provocatively discussed in her book, *Stains on My Name: War in My Veins*),<sup>11</sup> which is replicated in the politics of neoliberalism playing itself out in the rice sector. That sector seems to have experienced a series of intra-racial social-class displacements, first of Afro-Guyanese and now of the Indo-Guyanese small holders, leading to the consolidation of properties of considerable acreages.

These neoliberal shifts in globalization allowed for the unequal dismantlement of the protectionist political economy of preferential trade agreements, leaving small farmers, states, and other vulnerable constituencies economically overwhelmed by the larger hegemonic economies in the West. Left behind, also, were deeper inter- and intra-national socioeconomic asymmetries—often with devastating effects on the rural nonwhite populations of the Global South. These outcomes, captured vividly in Abderrahame Sissako’s film *Bamako* and the documentary *Life and Debt* by Stephanie Black, underscore the lament and charges of Africans (Mali) and Caribbean people (Jamaicans) respectively in the face of such economic and political onslaught from neoliberal development projects. In these films, what is palpably clear is the damaging impact that these policies have inflicted on people’s lives, particularly those who relied on primary agricultural products for export, by the undercutting of state authority.

Yet as Gabriela Valdivia’s chapter on Ecuador’s *Revolución Ciudadana* (Citizen’s Revolution) discusses, even in ostensibly inclusionary political maneuvers, imaginaries of development fed by globalization processes also embolden states to engage in practices of inclusionary exclusion given spatial projects designed to effect governmentality regimes for making modern citizens and subjects. In this chapter, “At the Margins of Citizenship: Oil, Poverty, and Race in Esmeraldas, Ecuador,” Valdivia shows how that country’s political process unfolds in uneven ways in rural and urban milieu even though stronger “citizenship” is presumed to be its overarching goal. Esmeraldas, a mostly urban region, is strategically important to the *Revolución Ciudadana*, as it is home to Ecuador’s largest oil refinery and a key thermoelectric plant (that is expected to facilitate transition to greater use of hydroelectric power) as well as to an Afro-Ecuadorean population with divergent political loyalties.

In Ecuador, a differentiated construction of citizenship simultaneously reconstructs urban/rural space via a political project ostensibly revolutionary in its claims. Through an ethnographic comparison of 15 de Marzo and Tabete—an urban and

a rural community, respectively—the study pays attention to the political economy that ushers in the revolutionary project, and its effects on everyday life. Valdivia especially focuses on Ecuador Estratégico, a government program of mega public works that aims to connect isolated spaces to the larger economy and infrastructural grid, and to provide basic services in health and housing. Valdivia concludes, however, that the rhetoric of transformation of the *Revolución Ciudadana* made the unevenness of the process invisible and thus silenced the significance and role of the economic and social divide in electoral or political capital existing between rural and urban communities, especially given that government projects ran through established clientele networks. The resulting paradox of the *Revolución Ciudadana* was a deepening of social inequality. Moreover, a heavy-crude pipeline was run through the space of rural Tabete, apparently provoking a deadly landslide resulting in the community being scheduled for removal. In comparison, the urban space of 15 de Marzo, though relatively better off, hardly escaped the precarity or toxic consequences of its large oil facilities.

As Arturo Escobar ([1995] 2012) and the late Michel-Rolph Trouillot (2003) have argued, the idea of development is borne from an imaginary that produces a temporal axis which situates people and spaces along a trajectory of backward and modern, or even outside of any location in modern space-time as *problems unassimilable* to the terms of a modern political imaginary of place, society, and its rightful others. Those cast into relations of “inclusive exclusion,” as Giorgio Agamben (1998, 2005) highlights, or who discover themselves outside of a “place in time,” becoming “flesh” as Hortense Spillers (1987) argues, or thrust into the non-place of “abject blackness” as Patricia Northover (2012) avers, become grist for diverse practices of a racializing governmentality that marks particular bodies, spaces, and places in zones of radical difference (“shitholes,” to use the widely debated racialized language attributed to the current US president).<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the development project mobilizes a complex ensemble of desires and antinomies, imaginaries and materialities that are sutured into topographies of power that compose, transpose, and reconfigure rural landscapes and livelihoods as witnessed again in our final set of contributions.

The last three chapters on the United States reflect on the country’s inner, as well as intrinsic, colonial spaces. They underscore the ways in which questions of race and rurality encompass the imperial metropole itself and confirm the internal relationality of the global yet differentiated character of these processes. Indeed, it may be that it is within the imperial metropole where these processes of coloniality appear with greatest clarity, as shown by the persistence of the old and new Jim

Crowism,<sup>13</sup> the racialized allotment of Indian lands, and the hot spots of resonant cultural transformation—all possessing a specific historical quality and a revealing formal political density of their own.

These chapters emphasize questions of race and class, culture and politics, in which rurality offers the analytical space for going beyond the issues of poverty, self-government, and civil rights that typically envelop discussion of these inner colonial spaces. Relevant issues raised include the wide-ranging impact of transformations in ecology and labor; the importance of cultural/legal dimensions in racist practices; and the role of cultural resistance and transformation, as framed by discussions on “creolization” that largely originated in research on the Caribbean but have gained much wider coinage and some oversimplification.

In “Racing the Reservation: Rethinking Resistance and Development in the Navajo Nation,” for example, Dana E. Powell examines the complex terrain of development struggles in one American Indian reservation, the Navajo (Diné) nation in the US Southwest, that is caught in the liminal space of a sovereign autonomy embedded in an imperial power structured by a history of racial rule and convoluted forms of postcolonialism. In her analysis, Powell highlights the multiple and contradictory interests at work in the “will to improve” the space of the reservation, from the US government, the Navajo state agencies, globally active extractive industrialists, environmentalists, to the elder women of the Navajo nation. She argues for understanding the struggles for space and place within the context of multiple modes of racialization that serve to displace the interests of the indigenous community members, or silence the actual “structures of feeling and imagination,” to borrow a concept from Raymond Williams (1971), that members of the Navajo Diné community have invested in livelihoods and landscapes. Powell highlights the way in which US state practices, such as the census, try to depoliticize place by reducing indigenous political identities to fictive racial categories of belonging (thus silencing the history of violent appropriation and displacement through a mode of racial governmentality). She also reveals other kinds of racialization tactics as deployed by environmental activists such as the instrumental appropriation and overwriting of indigenous cultural difference for battles against the global natural resource extraction economy. Pushing against simple caricatures of the subjects of development as either victims or resisters, Powell offers a case study of elder females’ activism that is critical yet accommodative of natural resource extraction activity, even as they pursue their own construal and defense of rural space, local place, and historical identity against the tide of other discourses of indigeneity.

Juan Giusti-Cordero's comparative survey also examines complex strategies of resistance/accommodation in the US internal periphery, focusing on cultural creation in the "internal colony" of the post-Civil War Mississippi Delta and in Loíza, Puerto Rico, under Spanish colonial rule (though increasingly subject to Anglo-American economic imperatives). Giusti-Cordero explores the environmental and labor history of the Delta and Loíza in order to understand why these sites became known as "hot spots," respectively, for the rise of the blues and of the Santiago Apóstol festivities (which also contributed to the *bomba* music tradition). These are major place-related icons of African American and Afro-Puerto Rican culture.

Giusti-Cordero provocatively connects two zones that on first impression appear disparate, but which share the status of cultural hot spots and occupy, with the Navajo (Diné) nation, a common position under US postcolonial colonialism today. The study draws connections (too infrequently made) between the US South and the Caribbean but inflects the exercise further by comparing the Mississippi Delta, which had far more swamp forest than plantations before the Civil War, with a similarly "atypical" Caribbean locale that was *not* dominated by plantation slavery in Spanish colonial times and where a free, colored population predominated. These prior histories of weak plantation presence were followed by significant periods of expanded freedom in both locations (1790–1830 in Puerto Rico, 1865–1875 in the Reconstruction Delta), which were then ended by intensified plantation dominance. The results were forceful, and sometimes violent, involving struggles over land occupation as well as innovative cultural expressions such as the Delta blues and the Santiago festivities, with far-reaching resonance.

In her chapter on race relations in the twentieth-century South, Jeannie Wayne traces the evolution of the Southern question in connection with the modernization of capitalist agriculture. Whether as peons caught up in the labor-intensive sharecropping system of the early twentieth century or as underemployed wage laborers in the capital-intensive portfolio plantations of a hundred years later, African Americans had little economic or political clout. As the nature of farming operations evolved in this period, African American farmers "freed" from plantation landlords were no longer necessary and were forced to migrate, or if they stayed, continued to endure staggering exploitation. Wayne's chapter focuses on those who stayed behind, and who continue to find their way—long after the civil rights movement—under persistent poverty, a toxic disease environment, renewed educational segregation, new challenges to their voting franchise, and racist attitudes expressed in subtle and sometimes violent ways.

These discussions on race and rurality serve to open up further inquiry into the way in which divisions such as urban and rural are constructed and the interplay between their overlapping sociocultural practices and the social relations reproducing certain topographies of power. The forays into these emergent particularities stress that we pay attention to the play of power, including the biopolitical movements through which place and spaces are produced and experienced. And they reinforce the idea of the enduring contestations that mark the relationship between various populations and states as each struggles to gain a foothold over the conditions and possibilities of development projects. In this general “will to improve,” the ubiquity of these struggles underscores the ways in which locales are being undone and redone in the wake of the demands of capital in its continuing drive to accumulate and in the interplay of power among different kinds of authorities broadly interpreted.

The instances captured here in these essays signal Marx’s observation about the political economic tendencies of global capital. But these are tendencies, always unfinished or rather always becoming, always unstable, always more or less contentious considering the diverse responses to exclusions, dispossessions, and dislocations. Indeed, the powers of capital are mediated by the modalities of power (as weaved through, notably, the dynamic fields of race and rurality), leaving the character of capital accumulation in historical flux, and more or less in a contingent process of transformation. Yet, precisely because these interwoven tendencies exist within globalization processes, they point in the direction of a method that would allow us to treat emergent socioeconomic phenomena as nodal points that, in spite of their differences, can be suitably compared within a broader world economy generative of a politics of race, space, and place.

## Notes

1. In writing this introduction, we would like to thank the conference’s main sponsor, the Department of African and African American Studies at Duke, especially its former chair, Tommy Defrantz; and its cosponsors, Duke Human Rights Center at the Kenan Institute for Ethics, through its director, Suzanne Shanahan; Duke’s former dean of the social sciences, Linda Burton; Duke’s Department of Sociology; the Duke University Center for International Studies; Office of the Provost at Duke; Duke’s Franklin Humanities Institute; and the director of the Institute of African American Research at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Karla Slocum.

2. Worthy of note here is Vanessa Agard-Jones’s (2013) work on the French island—the Overseas Department of Martinique—that draws inspiration from Trouillot but pushes his

methodological frame to encompass how globally articulated systems of racialized environments/spaces affect the bodies inhabiting them.

3. We lament the passing of the brilliant geographer Doreen Massey, whose work on space and place especially has been so influential to our thinking about such issues.

4. Despite what Tania Murray Li (2007) refers to as the “will to improve”—a will that is paradoxically implicated in the dynamic of the modernity/coloniality relation analyzed by Walter Mignolo (2000) and others.

5. See, however, several important efforts to guide the analytical engagement with these key and problematic concepts, notably Cloke’s (2006c) essay seeking to assemble a method for “conceptualizing rurality,” Da Silva’s (2007) text theorizing a “Global Idea of Race,” and Melissa Weiner’s (2012) more tactical and pragmatic offering of a conceptual guide for research on “Critical Global Race theory.”

6. As W. E. B. Dubois stated, “Perhaps it is wrong to speak of race at all as ‘a concept’ rather than a group of contradictory forces, facts and tendencies” ([1940] 2007: 67).

7. See especially, in this regard, the work of Tania Li Murray (2007) and the recent calls for engaging more forcefully (at a critical and analytical level) with the legacies of race in the field of development studies, Northover (2012), Kothari (2006), and McCarthy (2009).

8. For a discussion of the genealogy of the concept of racialization, see Barot and Bird (2001). David Theo Goldberg (2002) in a footnote comment on racialization also reminds us that while this multivalent concept has often been deployed to identify attributions of racial meaning to social groups, or to explore exclusionary, contradictory, or contesting standpoints that tend to rely on sociological, cultural, or biological reductions on race, Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* understood “to racialize” in contrast with “to humanize” (2002: 12). Thus one needs to address not just 1) the *historical situatedness* of processes/practices of racialization within specific milieus of the human/“man” as indeed stressed by Sylvia Wynter (1995); one must also be sensitive to 2) their critical inflection points as articulated by the *imaginary of forms of being-in-the-world* within racialization projects, as highlighted by the cultural studies approach within Britain, discussed by Audrey Kobayashi (2004: 242–243); and finally it is essential to recognize 3) the ineluctable *comparative and temporal horizons* invoked in racialization experiences and practices as animated by the education of a subject’s desire and the social exercise of a will to power and place, see Fanon ([1967] 1986), Ann Stoler (1995), Shih Shu-Mei (2008), and Crichlow and Northover (2009, 2015).

9. “Human identity stories”—a term that we (Crichlow and Northover [2009]) have coined.

10. For a discussion of the tensions between modern “urbanites” and more “rural”-oriented mine workers given the unfulfilled dreams among copper miners in Zambia, see James Ferguson (1999), *Expectations of Modernity*. For an outline of the changing patterns of rural-urban social-economic formation in India, see Shah and Harris-White (2011); for an analysis of the effects of a politics of neoliberal racial dispossession in South Africa, see Arrighi et al. (2010). For a more general review of patterns of globalization and agrarian

change, see Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2009), and on the historical patterns of informalization involving rural spaces, see Tabak and Crichlow (2000).

11. See also the critique by Raymond T. Smith (1995), “‘Living in the Gun Mouth’: Race, Class, And Political Violence in Guyana.” *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 69 (3 & 4): 223–252.

12. See, in this regard, Tim Bunnell and Neil Coe (2005), “Re-fragmenting the Political: Globalization, Governmentality and Malaysia’s Multimedia Super Corridor.” *Political Geography* 24: 831–849.

13. See in particular the recent discussion on the nature of mass incarcerations in the United States as indicative of the rise of a new Jim Crow politics of racial oppression that is offered by Michelle Alexander (2011).

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