passing had merited detailed attention. Zoë Wicomb and Achmat Dangor come immediately to mind. But these omissions came to seem part of the fruitfulness of the current volume, committed as it is to exploring the "almost-times" of South Africa's historical incompletion.

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Postcolonial Biology: Psyche and Flesh after Empire
By DEEPIKA BAHRI
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In *Postcolonial Biology* Deepika Bahri sets out "to look beyond biologically deterministic conceptions of racialized difference to porous, pliable, and plastic bodies and psyches as critically embattled zones of conflict in the wake of imperial modernity" (viii). Postcolonial biology is thus defined in ways that repeatedly merge into the cultural, drawing our attention to the messy entanglements of nature and nurture that colonial thinking sought to police. Indeed, as Bahri's introduction makes clear, the driving force to her argument is a sense that these "zones" and entanglements must be revisited in order to address both scholarly and social challenges that we face today. Bahri argues: "We [in the humanities] are inured to surrendering not only the word but also the concept of 'biology' to science, thus instating a false divide between biology and culture on the one hand, and race and culture on the other, as if the former were the circumscribed preserve of science, and therefore objective and stable, while the latter was to be embraced as the legitimate province of the humanities, since it can be assumed to be less rigid, less catagorical …" (9). It is only fitting then that at the heart of Bahri's argument is the idea of hybridity. Hybridity emerges not only as a philosophical trope guiding discussion but also as a point of investigation in the three novels that serve as test cases for Bahri's argument.

Bahri opens with an extended discussion of her terms: "plasticity," "hybridity" and "postcolonial biology." This discussion is grounded as much in the traditions of the Frankfurt School as it is in postcolonial studies, with Adorno, Bhabha, Fanon, and Horkheimer as key coordinates in this mapping of her field. These coordinates also guide the ensuing critical readings of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Hari Kunzru's *The Impressionist*, and Julian Barnes's *Arthur and George.* Bahri explains that her choice of texts, with their focus on India and Indians enables her "to locate intercultural traffic within particular histories of race, class and chromatism," cognizant of the tendency of "references to *the* civilizing mission … to obscure its local variations" (33). Each chapter, then, focuses on a single text, to provide an account of how the hybrid bodies and psyches of the novels' protagonists navigate the (post)colonial worlds they move through, and how those hybrid bodies and psyches are read by those they encounter.

Bahri's skill as a critic is manifested in these chapters as she deftly unpacks for her readers the multiple layers of exclusion and exclusivity that emerge within these texts when we begin to focus on their (post)colonial hybrid bodies. In her discussion of *The Impressionist*, for example, Bahri draws attention, on the one hand, to how "hybrid communities police their borders and protect their proprietary lifeways" and, on the other, to the fact that where individuals and communities "pass" into the mainstream their diasporic status is erased, leaving them part of "an *invisible* diaspora" (66–67). These tensions, as Bahri explains, are also blurred boundaries: between visibility and invisibility, between inclusion and exclusion. In turn, what the (post)colonial hybrid body makes visible is the *a priori* instability of these boundaries, the fictions of distinction. Yet, in spite or indeed because of this instability these fictions are powerful forces, mobile and protean in their constraint of cultural, social, physical, and psychical bodies. As Bahri observes, ideas about race acquired their "power not only through pseudoscience but through the equally persuasive medium of *a good story*" (120).

Although the central chapters of *Postcolonial Biology* maintain a tight focus on the three novels, this focus is framed by prefatory, introductory, and concluding chapters that gesture to the larger scope of Bahri's thinking. In her sights is the nexus of postcolonial global capitalism, the "high noon" of globalization in which global citizenship demands "the suppression or privitization" of bodily and cultural difference in the pursuit of "sameness" (136). The body becomes a commercialized locus for the pursuit of sameness through newly commodified markers of difference: tattoos, yoga, slow food, and so on.

The value of *Postcolonial Biology* is thus as much in the thinking it prompts beyond its pages as the work it does within them. For example, Bahri's ideas are rich in implications for the queer and maternal hybrid bodies absent from her discussion. *Postcolonial Biology* likewise offers a useful model for examining other colonial and postcolonial contexts, and indeed for beginning to think these through comparatively. More broadly, Bahri reminds us that our work in unpacking and unpicking the narrative violence that underwrote colonialism still has a long way to go. *Postcolonial Biology* is a subtle yet vigorous prompt to continue the work.

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Writing Spatiality in West Africa: Colonial Legacies in the Anglophone/Francophone Novel
MADHU KRISHNAN
James Currey, 2018, 215 pp.
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Postcolonial studies has always been concerned with the production and regulation of space. As Madhu Krishnan notes in *Writing Spatiality in West Africa: Colonial Legacies in the Anglophone/Francophone Novel*, however, space has often been conceived in literary theory as "simply a presence" (2), an inert container against which history