

I

COLONIAL STUDIES AND THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY

There are several possible ways to think about a colonial reading of Foucault. And at one level, anthropologists and historians have been doing such readings for some time. No single analytic framework has saturated the field of colonial studies so completely over the last decade as that of Foucault. His claims for the discursive construction of regimes of power have prompted us to explore both the production of colonial discourses and their effects;¹ inspired, in part, by Edward Said's forceful lead, students of colonialism have tracked the ties that bound the production of anthropological knowledge to colonial authority, to trace the disciplinary regimes that have produced subjugated bodies and the sorts of identities created by them. Some have sought to describe how discourses on hygiene, education, confession, architecture, and urbanism have shaped the social geography of colonies and specific strategies of rule.²

1. I use "us" and "we" throughout this book to identify students of colonialism, whether they be anthropologists, historians, specialists in comparative literature or none of the above. Differences in profession and geopolitical locale are less central to my analysis than the fact of an overwhelming response that Foucault has elicited from those in a wide range of political locations. Where appropriate, I identify the "we" as Euro-American scholars although some of my generalizations about the nature of colonial studies apply to a wider shared community of scholarship than those who would identify themselves with that which is Euro-American.

2. Among those studies of colonial history and historiography that draw on various Foucauldian concepts to different (and varying critical) degrees see, for example, Jean Comaroff, *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and history of a South African People* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1985); Ann Laura Stoler, *Capitalism and Confrontation in Sumatra's Plantation Belt, 1870-1987* (New Haven, Yale UP, 1985); Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987); Aihwa Ong, *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline* (Binghamton: SUNY Press, 1987); Vincente Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988); Guari Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study*

Nor have we done so in blind faith. Our ethnographic sensibilities have pushed us to challenge the limits of Foucault's discursive emphasis and his diffuse conceptions of power, to flesh out the localized, quotidian practices of people who authorized and resisted European authority, to expose the tensions of that project and its inherent vulnerabilities.³ These readings, for the most part, have been of a particular kind: by and large, applying the general principles of a Foucauldian frame to specific ethnographic time and place, drawing on the conceptual apparatus more than engaging the historical content of his analysis.⁴

This sort of passion for Foucault's general strategies is apparent in readings of his specific texts as well—particularly in treatments of volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality*. His book engages a disarmingly simple thesis: if in nineteenth-century Europe sexuality was indeed something to be silenced, hidden, and repressed, why was there such a proliferating dis-

and *British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia UP, 1989); Lamont Lindstrom, *Knowledge and Power in a South Pacific Society* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990); Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1991); Tim Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1991); Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1991); David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1993); Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for the 'Indian' Past?" *Representations* 37 (Winter 1992): 1–26. Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994); David Scott, *Formations of Ritual: Colonial and Anthropological Discourses on the Sinhala Yaktovil* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1994).

3. See Megan Vaughan, *Curing their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (London: Polity Press, 1991)

x. Vaughan makes an explicit effort "to explore the limitations of a Foucauldian account of 'biopower'" with respect to the discourse of colonial medicine.

4. In addition to the citations above see, for example, Ranjait Guha and Gayatri Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York: Oxford UP, 1988), where the final two articles by Partha Chatterjee and David Arnold are grouped under the rubric "Developing Foucault." Chatterjee's otherwise excellent piece makes only implicit reference to Foucault, while Arnold's Foucauldian impulse is defined by his attention to bodies, discourse, and power. The engagement is conceptual, not historical, while the "development" of Foucault is unclear. Arnold's analysis of the distinctive response of the Indian middle-classes to the plague for example makes no effort to address how "cultivation" of an Indian bourgeois identity did or did not conform to Foucault's European model.

An important exception is Paul Rabinow's *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge: MIT, 1989), that "continues the exploration, in its own way, of some of the contours of modern power and knowledge Foucault had begun to map" on colonial terrain (8–9).

course about it? Foucault argues that we have gotten the story wrong: that the "image of the imperial prude . . . emblazoned on our restrained, mute and hypocritical sexuality" (HS:3) misses what that regime of sexuality was all about: not restriction of a biological instinct, a "stubborn drive" to be overcome, nor an "exterior domain to which power is applied" (HS:152). Sexuality was "a result and an instrument of power's design," a social construction of a historical moment (HS:152).

For Foucault, sexuality is not opposed to and subversive of power. On the contrary, sexuality is a "dense transfer point" of power, charged with "instrumentality" (HS:103). Thus, "far from being repressed in [nineteenth-century] society [sexuality] was constantly aroused" (HS:148). This is no dismissal of repression as a "ruse" of the nineteenth-century bourgeois order or a denial that sex was prohibited and masked, as critics and followers have sometimes claimed (HS:12). Foucault rejected, not the fact of repression, but the notion that it was the organizing principle of sexual discourse, that repression could account for its silences and prolific emanations. At the heart of his enquiry are neither sexual practices nor the moral codes that have given rise to them. Foucault's questions are of a very different order. Why has there been such a protracted search for the "truth" about sex? Why should an identification and assessment of our real and hidden selves be sought in our sexual desires, fantasies, and behavior? Not least why did that search become such a riveting obsession of the nineteenth-century bourgeois order, and why does it remain so tenacious today?

His answer is one that reconceives both the notion of power and how sexuality is tied to it. For Foucault, the history of sexuality is defined, not as a Freudian account of Victorian prudery would have it, by injunctions against talk about sex and specific sexual couplings in the bourgeois family, but by patterned discursive incitements and stimulations that facilitated the penetration of social and self-disciplinary regimes into the most intimate domains of modern life. Nor was that discourse initially designed to sublimate the sexual energy of exploited classes into productive labor, but first and foremost to set out the distinctions of bourgeois identity rooted in the sexual politics of the home. Central to Foucault's account of proliferating sexualities and discourses about them is the emergence of "biopower," a political technology that "brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge/power an agent of transformation of human life" (HS:143). In its specific nineteenth-

century form, the disciplining of individual bodies and the regulations of the life processes of aggregate human populations “constituted the two poles around which the organization of power over life was deployed” (HS:139). Within this schema, technologies of sex played a critical role; sex occupied the discursive interface, linking the life of the individual to the life of the species as a whole (HS:146).

While we have caught the gist of that message well—that discourses of sexuality and specific forms of power are inextricably bound, engagement with *The History of Sexuality* has been more formal than substantive, more suggestive than concrete. This is not to say that the parallels between the management of sexuality and the management of empire have been left unexplored.⁵ Many students of colonialism have been quick to note that another crucial “Victorian” project—ruling colonies—entailed colonizing both bodies and minds. A number of studies, including my own, have turned on a similar premise that the discursive management of the sexual practices of colonizer and colonized was fundamental to the colonial order of things. We have been able to show how discourses of sexuality at once classified colonial subjects into distinct human kinds, while policing the domestic recesses of imperial rule.⁶ But again, such readings take seriously the fact of a relationship between colonial power and the discourses of sexuality, without confirming or seriously challenging the specific chronologies Foucault offers, his critique of the repressive hypothesis, or the selective genealogical maps that his work suggests.

In taking up each of these themes, this book both draws on Foucault

5. See, for example, John Kelly, *Politics of Virtue: Hinduism, Sexuality, and Countercolonial Discourse in Fiji* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1991); Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1990); Vron Ware, *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History* (London: Verso, 1992); Luise White, *Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1990); and my own work on the sexual politics of Europeans in colonial Southeast Asia, “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race and Morality in Colonial Asia” in Micaela di Leonardo, ed., *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in a Postmodern Era* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1991): 51–101, and “Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34.2 (July 1992): 514–51.

6. Also see Asuncion Lavrin, ed., *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1989); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992) esp. chapter 5; and Vincente Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988) that deals specifically with sexuality and confession in the Philippines under Spanish rule.

and extends his analysis.⁷ On the one hand, I look to how his insights play out in a colonial setting; on the other, I suggest that a wider imperial context resituates the work of racial thinking in the making of European bourgeois identity in a number of specific ways. While many historians have dismissed Foucault's empirical work as hopelessly wrong, and anthropologists, as well as other social analysts, taken with his theoretical insights have tended to treat his specific historical claims as less relevant, I question whether issues of historiography and theory can be so neatly disengaged. I pursue here a critique of Foucault's chronologies, a species of the empirical, not to quibble over dates but rather to argue that the discursive and practical field in which nineteenth-century bourgeois sexuality emerged was situated on an imperial landscape where the cultural accoutrements of bourgeois distinction were partially shaped through contrasts forged in the politics and language of race. I trace how certain colonial prefigurings contest and force a reconceptualizing of Foucault's sexual history of the Occident and, more generally, a rethinking of the historiographic conventions that have bracketed histories of “the West.”

Clearly the latter is not my venture alone. A collective impulse of the last decade of post-colonial scholarship has been precisely to disassemble the neat divisions that could imagine a European history and its unified collectivities apart from the externalized Others on whom it was founded and which it produced. And Foucault's metatheory has played no small part in that project, animating a critique of how specific and competing forms of knowledge have carved out the exclusionary principles of imperial power in the first place. What is striking is how consistently Foucault's own framing of the European bourgeois order has been exempt from the very sorts of criticism that his insistence on the fused regimes of knowledge/power would seem to encourage and allow.⁸ Why have we been so willing to

7. While more clarity might have been achieved by separating out these efforts, I have chosen to treat them simultaneously throughout this book, signaling where appropriate my different stances vis-à-vis Foucault's analysis: where I think his analysis opens or precludes a discussion of racism, where he allows for it but does not pursue it himself, and where my analysis challenges his own.

8. Although Edward Said, for example, notes that “Foucault ignores the imperial context of his own theories,” his critique of Foucault's “imagination of power” and its “minimization of resistance” takes on the theoretical imbalances of the work less than the historical skewing of his European-bound frame. See “Foucault and the Imagination of Power,” *Foucault: A Critical Reader*,

accept his story of a nineteenth-century sexual order that systematically excludes and/or subsumes the fact of colonialism within it? To say that Foucault was a product of his discipline, his locale, his time may be generous, but beside the point. Colonial studies in the 1970s in England, the U.S., and France may have had little as yet to say about the relationship between colonial power and sexuality, but it had a lot to say about western imperial expansion, culture, and the production of disciplinary knowledge.⁹

Several basic questions remain. What happens to Foucault's chronologies when the technologies of sexuality are refigured in an imperial field? Was the obsessive search for the "truth about sex" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries directly culled from earlier confessional models, as Foucault claims, or was this "truth about sex" recast around the invention of other truth claims, specifically those working through the language of race? While we might comfortably concur with Foucault that a discourse of sexuality was incited and activated as an instrument of power in the nineteenth century, we might still raise a basic question: a discourse about whom? His answer is clear: it was a discourse that produced four "objects of knowledge that were also targets and anchorage points of the ventures of knowledge" (HS:105), with specific technologies around them: the masturbating child of the bourgeois family, the "hysterical woman," the Malthusian couple, and the perverse adult. But students of empire would surely add at least one more. Did any of these figures exist as objects of knowledge and discourse in the nineteenth century without a racially erotic counterpoint, without reference to the libidinal energies of

ed. David C. Hoy (London: Basil Blackwell, 1986). Similarly, Robert Young's carefully argued assault on "white mythologies" of the West graciously lets Foucault off the hook by suggesting that his "position on the relations of Western humanism to colonialism would no doubt be similar to that outlined in his discussion of the relation of ethnography to colonialism in *The Order of Things*" (376-7). Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 1990) 195. For others who draw on Foucault's discursive analysis for treating empire and its discourses of sexuality without querying the specific historicity assumed for those discourses see Lisa Lowe, *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991); Sara Mills, *Discourses of Differences: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991); and Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexual Opportunity* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1991).

9. See, among others, Dell Hymes, ed. *Reinventing Anthropology* (New York: Random House, 1969); Talal Asad, ed. *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (New York: Humanities Press, 1973); Gerard LeClerc, *Anthropologie et Colonialisme* (Paris: Fayard, 1972); and Gerald Berreman, *The Politics of Truth: Essays in Critical Anthropology* (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1981), especially chapter 2, written in 1970.

the savage, the primitive, the colonized—reference points of difference, critique, and desire? At one level, these are clearly contrapuntal as well as indexical referents, serving to bolster Europe's bourgeois society and to underscore what might befall it in moral decline. But they were not that alone. The sexual discourse of empire and of the biopolitical state in Europe were mutually constitutive: their "targets" were broadly imperial, their regimes of power synthetically bound.

My rereading of *The History of Sexuality* thus rests on two basic contentions, central to much recent work in colonial studies. First, that Europe's eighteenth- and nineteenth-century discourses on sexuality, like other cultural, political, or economic assertions, cannot be charted in Europe alone. In short-circuiting empire, Foucault's history of European sexuality misses key sites in the production of that discourse, discounts the practices that racialized bodies, and thus elides a field of knowledge that provided the contrasts for what a "healthy, vigorous, bourgeois body" was all about. Europe's eighteenth-century discourses on sexuality can—indeed must—be traced along a more circuitous imperial route that leads to nineteenth-century technologies of sex. They were refracted through the discourses of empire and its exigencies, by men and women whose affirmations of a bourgeois self, and the racialized contexts in which those confidences were built, could not be disentangled. I thus approach *The History of Sexuality* through several venues by comparing its chronologies and strategic ruptures to those in the colonies and by looking at these inflections on a racially charged ground. But, as importantly, I argue that a "comparison" between these two seemingly dispersed technologies of sex in colony and in metropole may miss the extent to which these technologies were bound.

My second contention is that the racial obsessions and refractions of imperial discourses on sexuality have not been restricted to bourgeois culture in the colonies alone. By bringing the discursive anxieties and practical struggles over citizenship and national identities in the nineteenth century back more squarely within Foucault's frame, bourgeois identities in both metropole and colony emerge tacitly and emphatically coded by race. Discourses of sexuality do more than define the distinctions of the bourgeois self; in identifying marginal members of the body politic, they have mapped the moral parameters of European nations. These deeply sedimented discourses on sexual morality could redraw the "interior frontiers" of national communities, frontiers that were secured through—and

sometimes in collision with—the boundaries of race. These nationalist discourses were predicated on exclusionary cultural principles that did more than divide the middle class from the poor. They marked out those whose claims to property rights, citizenship, and public relief were worthy of recognition and whose were not.

Nationalist discourse drew on and gave force to a wider politics of exclusion. This version was not concerned solely with the visual markers of difference, but with the relationship between visible characteristics and invisible properties, outer form and inner essence. Assessment of these untraceable identity markers could seal economic, political, and social fates. Imperial discourses that divided colonizer from colonized, metropolitan observers from colonial agents, and bourgeois colonizers from their subaltern compatriots designated certain cultural competencies, sexual proclivities, psychological dispositions, and cultivated habits. These in turn defined the hidden fault lines—both fixed and fluid—along which gendered assessments of class and racial membership were drawn. Within the lexicon of bourgeois civility, self-control, self-discipline, and self-determination were defining features of bourgeois selves in the colonies. These features, affirmed in the ideal family milieu, were often transgressed by sexual, moral, and racial contaminations in those same European colonial homes. Repression was clearly part of this story, but as Foucault argues, it was subsumed by something more. These discourses on self-mastery were productive of racial distinctions, of clarified notions of “whiteness” and what it meant to be truly European. These discourses provided the working categories in which an imperial division of labor was clarified, legitimated, and—when under threat—restored.

If this rerouting of the history of sexuality through the history of empire makes analytic sense, then we must ask whether the racial configurations of that imperial world, rather than being peripheral to the cultivation of the nineteenth-century bourgeois self, were not constitutive of it. In this perspective, racism in the nineteenth century may not have been “anchored” in European technologies of sex as Foucault claims. If sexuality and the social taxonomies of race were mutually built out of a “more comprehensive history of exclusive biological categories,”¹⁰ as Tom Laqueur

10. Tom Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990) 155. Also see Collette Guillaumin's “The Idea of Race and its Elevation to Autonomous Scientific and Legal Status,” *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (Paris: UNESCO, 1980), which makes a

claims, then we should see race and sexuality as ordering mechanisms that shared their emergence with the bourgeois order of the early nineteenth century, “that beginning of the modern age.”¹¹ Such a perspective figures race, racism, and its representations as structured entailments of post-enlightenment universals, as formative features of modernity, as deeply embedded in bourgeois liberalism, not as aberrant offshoots of them.¹² My concern here is not to isolate racism's originary moment, much less to claim that all racisms are fundamentally the same. On the contrary, I grant slippage among the projects that modernity, the enlightenment and bourgeois liberalism embraced to make another sort of point, one that appreciates both how racial thinking harnesses itself to varied progressive projects and shapes the social taxonomies defining who will be excluded from them.

My colonial reading is of a particular kind, neither definitive nor comprehensive. It is not a reading of alternative cultural conceptions of sexuality, nor an encyclopedic account of how colonized bodies were shaped by the sexual policies of colonial states. It does not track the subversive ways in which different segments of colonized populations have appropriated the civilities imposed upon them and reread those moral injunctions against their European grain, a task that others have done so well.¹³ My

similar point while arguing more generally that the historical rise of legal individuality gave rise to the legal notion of race, see esp. 46–49.

11. Foucault, *The Order of Things* xxii.

12. See Henry Louis Gates, Jr., introduction, “Race,” *Writing, and Difference* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1986) 3; Michael Banton, *The Idea of Race* (London: Tavistock, 1977) esp. chapter 2, “The intellectual inheritance,” 12–26; Collette Guillaumin, “Idea of Race”; George Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1978); Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe* (London: Heineman, 1974); Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989). Many of these arguments have been recently synthesized by David Goldberg in *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

13. While in this project colonialism is seen through a European optic but not determined by it, it is still a limitation imposed by the particular circuits I have set out to view. For a different treatment that more fully explores imperial taxonomies and their colonized appropriations see my introduction with Frederick Cooper, “Between metropole and colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda,” *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, eds. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: U of California P, forthcoming) and Ann Stoler, “In Cold Blood: Hierarchies of Credibility and the Politics of Colonial Narratives,” *Representations* 37 (1992): 151–189. It is important to underscore that I am making no claim that Foucault's history of European

task is more specifically focused and constrained. It is an effort to see what Foucault's work adds to our understanding of the bourgeois casting of European colonials and their categories of rule and in turn what ways the political configurations of European colonial cultures might bring a new understanding to *The History of Sexuality*.

In exploring the making of a European colonial bourgeois order, I draw primarily on a colonial context with which I am most familiar: the Dutch East Indies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But Dutch colonial anxieties over the meanings of "Dutchness" and its bourgeois underpinnings also provide a touchstone for wider claims. Well aware of the peculiarities that distinguish Dutch, French, and British notions of what it meant to be bourgeois, I am nevertheless convinced that the construction of bourgeois sensibilities in these varied contexts are comparable in some fundamental ways. In chapter 4, I argue that each defined their unique civilities through a language of difference that drew on images of racial purity and sexual virtue. That language of difference conjured up the supposed moral bankruptcy of culturally dissonant populations, distinguishing them from the interests of those who ruled. For each, bourgeois morality was strategically allied with the moral authority of nineteenth-century liberal states. European bourgeois orders produced a multiplicity of discourses that turned on the dangers of "internal enemies," of class, sexual and racial origin, an argument that Foucault will also make as he traces the genealogy of racism in his Collège de France lectures. As Geoff Eley notes, in nineteenth-century Europe's bourgeois discourse

bourgeois sexuality nor my reworking of his genealogy of that history is generalizable to other cultural contexts, or could be mapped on to the histories of sexuality, power, and truth claims about the self among specific subjugated populations in the nineteenth-century colonized world. Those histories cannot be "read off" European ones. This does not mean, however, that consideration of these imperial articulations are irrelevant to these other cultural and political configurations. On the contrary, the particular distribution of differences that helped construct what was dominant and bourgeois for imperial Europe may be important for understanding how colonized populations claimed entitlements and strategically moved against the colonial state. It is not these imperial framings that are mirrored but the ways that concepts are organized within them that become available for oppositional political projects. Partha Chatterjee's analyses of such appropriations in *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (London: Zed, 1986) and *The Nation and Its Fragments* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993) are obvious and exemplary cases in point.

citizenship was "a faculty to be learned and a privilege to be earned."¹⁴ These discourses were peopled with surreptitious invaders in the body politic, "fictive" Frenchmen, "fabricated" Dutchmen, anglicized but not "true" British citizens who threatened to traverse both the colonial and metropolitan "interior frontiers" of nation-states.¹⁵ In short, that discourse on bourgeois selves was founded on what Foucault would call a particular "grid of intelligibility," a hierarchy of distinctions in perception and practice that conflated, substituted, and collapsed the categories of racial, class and sexual Others strategically and at different times. Nor is this attention to the working of race through the language of class as dissonant with Foucault's project as his published legacy of writings might suggest. In his Collège de France lectures discussed in chapter 3, Foucault traces the derivation of a nineteenth-century language of class from an earlier discourse of races as a key element in the changing historiography of Europe itself.

In outlining some of the genealogical shifts eclipsed in Foucault's tunnel vision of the West, I focus on certain specific domains in which a discourse of sexuality articulated with the politics of race. I use the Indies to illustrate—and really only to hint at here—how a cultivation of the European self (and specifically a Dutch bourgeois identity) was affirmed in the proliferating discourses around pedagogy, parenting, children's sexuality, servants, and tropical hygiene: micro-sites where designations of racial membership were subject to gendered appraisals and where "character," "good breeding," and proper rearing were implicitly raced. These discourses do more than prescribe suitable behavior; they locate how fundamentally bourgeois identity has been tied to notions of being "European" and being "white" and how sexual prescriptions served to secure and delineate the authentic, first-class citizens of the nation-state. Crucial to my argument, and distinct from Foucault's self-referential conception

14. See Geoff Eley's "Liberalism, Europe, and the Bourgeoisie" in David Blackburn and Richard Evans, eds., *The German Bourgeoisie* (London: Routledge, 1991) 300.

15. See Etienne Balibar, "Paradoxes of Universality" in David Goldberg, ed., *Anatomy of Racism* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1990), where he discusses how racism "embarks on the obsessive quest for a [national] 'core,' based largely on "criteria of social class," 284–5. Also see Balibar, "Fichte and the Internal Border: On Addresses to the German Nation," in *Masses, Classes, Ideas: Studies on Politics and Philosophy before and after Marx* (London: Routledge, 1994) 61–86 where the political ambiguities of Fichte's notion of an "interior frontier" are spelled out.

of bourgeois identity, I stress the *relational* terms in which bourgeois selves have been conceived.

In short, I make three sorts of arguments. The first concerns chronology: why Foucault situates "the birth of racism" in the late nineteenth century and what the consequences of that placement are. Part of the answer can be found in *The History of Sexuality*, but more of it in the lectures delivered in 1976 at the Collège de France when that volume was in press. Second, I argue that an implicit racial grammar underwrote the sexual regimes of bourgeois culture in more ways than Foucault explored and at an earlier date. Here, I cast a wide net drawing on an emergent post-colonial scholarship whose forays into what were once construed as the margins of Western historiography have begun to unravel its core. I draw my argument in part from the Dutch colonial archival record. In that record, the ambiguities of racial categories and the uncertainties of Dutch identity in the nineteenth-century Indies were explicitly debated in terms setting out the racial dangers of desire, the class coordinates of "true" Europeans, and the cultural competencies which the conferral of European status required.

Third, in attending to "tensions of empire" that cut across the dichotomies of colonizer and colonized, colony and core, I reconnect a range of domains that have been treated discretely in colonial scripts, divisions that students of colonialism have often subscribed to themselves. How, for example, have Dutch historians come to think that the racial mapping of state-funded relief for poor whites in the Indies is irrelevant to liberal discourse on poor relief in nineteenth-century Holland? What allows French historians to dissect the anxieties over French national identity at the turn of the century without tackling the heated debates waged over the legal category of mixed-bloods in French Indochina in the same period? Why have both students of European and colonial histories treated bourgeois "civilizing missions" in metropole and colony as though they were independent projects for so long?

One might argue, as Robert Young does, that the collective vision in Euro-American scholarship has been blurred by "white mythologies" of history writing in the West.¹⁶ But what would constitute a successful effort to write against those mythologies is not self-evident. It could not, for example, merely "compare" metropolitan and colonial reform to show that

16. Young, *White Mythologies*.

their political meanings are the same. It would not be to assume that the discourse on paternity suits in Haiphong and Paris and the debates over "child abandonment" in Amsterdam and Batavia have the same political valence. Rather, I think we should ask, as Foucault did in other contexts, how seemingly shared vocabularies of sexual and social reform may sometimes remain the same and sometimes diverge and/or transpose into distinct and oppositional political meanings. Foucault turns to this process in *The History of Sexuality* with respect to the discourses of sexuality and again even more boldly as he traces the strategic mobility of racial discourses in his lectures. In each of these projects, Foucault offers ways to rethink the colonial order of things, ways that challenge—and sometimes derive from—him.

Tracking Empire in The History of Sexuality

For a long time, the story goes, we supported a Victorian regime, and we continue to be dominated by it even today. Thus the image of the imperial prude is emblazoned on our restrained, mute, and hypocritical sexuality. (HS:3)

Students of empire have shown little interest in the historical ruptures and periodicities in which new technologies of sex develop and in Foucault's rejection of Freud's repressive hypothesis. If anything, as I show later, we have had contradictory allegiances on the one hand, to a Foucauldian perspective on power, and on the other, to implicit Freudian assumptions about the psychodynamics of empire, the sexual energies "released," and the ways such regimes extend and work. We have been profoundly silent on the "four strategic unities" that Foucault placed at the core of eighteenth-century technologies of sex: the hysterizing of women's bodies, the pedagogic expertise applied to children's sexuality, the socialization of procreative life, and the psychiatric analytics of perverse pleasure (HS:104–105). Are these intense sites of power relevant to imperial history or beside the point? And, if they are relevant, why has so little been said about them? More strikingly, in a thematic close to the ethnological turf of kinship, Foucault identifies an eighteenth-century shift from a "deployment of alliance" to a "deployment of sexuality" that marks the modern character of power. Yet this too has fallen quietly and nearly without comment on an anthropological audience.

Some of the problems reside in Foucault's work, some are lodged in our

own. The *History of Sexuality* at one level seems to impede such a venture. Foucault explicitly traces the deployment of sexuality within an analytic field confined to the metropole—to “modern western sexuality.” We are offered a distinction between “erotic art” (*ars erotica*) of the Orient, and a “science of sexuality” (*scientia sexualis*) of the West. (HS:70–71) The image of the “imperial prude” in the opening paragraph, cited earlier, of volume 1, is the first and only reference to the fact of empire. For Foucault, the image of the prude is a mainstay of our misguided reading of nineteenth-century sexuality. Empire is a backdrop of Victorian ideology, and contemporary stories about it, easily dismissed and not further discussed.¹⁷ The “prude” is replaced; empire disappears along with its caricature. The incitement to sexual discourse in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe historicizes a European matter *tout court*. Foucault traces the biopolitics that emerged in the early 1700s and flourished in nineteenth-century Europe along axes that are *sui generis* to Europe, what Gayatri Spivak rightly has dismissed as a self-contained version of history, only about the West.¹⁸ James Clifford’s observation that Foucault was “scrupulously ethnocentric”¹⁹ might give some confidence that he assiduously confined himself to the epistemic field of Europe, but when dealing with the issue of race, such careful containment should give us pause. His genealogies of nineteenth-century bourgeois identity are not only deeply rooted in a self-referential western culture but bounded by Europe’s geographic parameters.²⁰

Such origin myths of European culture are less credible today, as the bracketed domain of European history has been pried open, its sources reassessed, its boundaries blurred. Nearly two decades after *The History of Sexuality* first appeared, as colonial studies has moved from a delimited concern with colonialism’s consequences for the colonized to tensions

17. See Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993) where he explores this presence/absence of empire in European literature.

18. Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak” in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1988).

19. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1988) 265.

20. It is not only that empire is excluded, but Europe itself is defined by those powerfully situated within it, i.e. by its northern European parameters. Thus Spain and Portugal are sometimes eclipsed while Europe largely refers to England, Germany and France. See Fernando Coronil’s “Beyond Occidentalism: Towards Non-Imperial Geohistorical Categories” *Cultural Anthropology* (forthcoming) where he deals with the skewed geopolitics that has constituted what we conceive of as “Europe” and the proper domain of European history. Also see Deny Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1957).

that cut across metropolitan and colonial sites of imperial rule, we are prompted to query whether the shaping of nineteenth-century bourgeois subjects can be located outside those force fields in which imperial knowledge was promoted and desiring subjects were made. It was after all Foucault who placed the connections among the production of specific knowledges, forms of power, and expressions of desire at the center of his work.²¹ Armed with Foucault’s impulse to write a history of Western desire that rejects desire as biological instinct or as a response to repressive prohibitions, we should be pushed to ask what other desires are excluded from his account, to question how shifts in the imperial distributions of desiring male subjects and desired female objects might reshape that story as well.²²

As we have begun to explore the colonies as more than sites of exploitation but as “laboratories of modernity,” the genealogical trajectories mapping what constitutes metropolitan versus colonial inventions have precipitously shifted course.²³ With this redirection, the hallmarks of European cultural production have been sighted in earlier ventures of empire and sometimes in the colonies first. Thus, Sidney Mintz has suggested that the disciplinary strategies of large-scale industrial production may have been worked out in the colonies before they were tried out in European contexts.²⁴ Timothy Mitchell has placed the panopticon, that supreme model institution of disciplinary power, as a colonial invention that first appeared in the Ottoman Empire, not Northern Europe.²⁵ French

21. As Arnold Davidson notes in “Sex and the Emergence of Sexuality,” *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1987): 16–48.

22. Feminist critics of Foucault have posed this question more generally, but without specific reference to empire. See, for example, Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1987); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (London: Routledge, 1990); Bidy Martin, “Feminism, Criticism, and Foucault,” *New German Critique* 27 (Fall 1987): 3–30; Edith Kurzweil, “Michel Foucault’s History of Sexuality as Interpreted by Feminists and Marxists,” *Social Research* 53.4 (Winter 1986): 647–63; Caroline Ramazanoglu, ed., *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions between Foucault and Feminism* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Lois McNay, *Foucault and Feminism* (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1992); Jana Sawicki, *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, Power and the Body* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

23. See Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1991) and Paul Rabinow’s *French Modern* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1989) for different elaborations of this notion.

24. Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power* (New York: Viking, 1985).

25. Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1991) 35.

policies on urban planning were certainly experimented with in Paris and Toulouse, but as both Gwendolyn Wright and Paul Rabinow have each so artfully shown, probably in Rabat and Haiphong first.²⁶ Mary Louise Pratt stretches back further and argues that modes of social discipline taken to be quintessentially European may have been inspired by seventeenth-century imperial ventures and only then refashioned for the eighteenth-century bourgeois order.²⁷ Nicholas Dirks has raised the possibility that the very concept of "culture is a colonial formation."²⁸ These reconfigured histories have pushed us to rethink European cultural genealogies across the board and to question whether the key symbols of modern western societies—liberalism, nationalism, state welfare, citizenship, culture, and "Europeanness" itself—were not clarified among Europe's colonial exiles and by those colonized classes caught in their pedagogic net in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and only then brought "home."²⁹ In sorting out these colonial etiologies of Western culture and its reformist gestures, one cannot help but ask whether Foucault's genealogy of bourgeois identity and its biopolitics might also be traced through imperial maps of wider breadth that locate racial thinking and notions of "whiteness" as formative and formidable coordinates of them.

In an interview in 1976, responding to a question posed by the Italian journalist, Duccio Trombadori, as to whether he saw his books as a set of "teachings," as a "discourse that prescribes," Foucault answered:

In my case it's another matter entirely; my books don't have this kind of value. They function as invitations, as public gestures, for those

26. Wright, *The Politics of Design*; Rabinow, *French Modern*.

27. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*: 36.

28. Nicholas Dirks, *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1991) 3.

29. On liberalism and British India see Uday Mehta's "Liberal Strategies of Exclusion," *Politics and Society* 18.4 (Dec. 1990): 427-454; on "culture as a colonial formation" see Nicholas Dirks, "Introduction: Colonialism and Culture" in *Colonialism and Culture*; on urban planning see Rabinow, *French Modern* and Wright, *Politics of Design*; on empire, citizenship and emergent welfare politics see my "Sexual Allfronts and Racial Frontiers," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34.2 (July 1992): 514-51 and "The Politics of Mothercare: Poor Whites and the Subversion of the Colonial State," Chapter 5 of *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Bourgeois Civilities and the Cultivation of Racial Categories in Colonial Southeast Asia* (Berkeley: U of California P, forthcoming); on nationalism see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983) and "Fax Nationalism" (manuscript); on Europeanness see Stoler, "Rethinking Colonial Categories," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13.1 (1989): 134-61 and Daniel Segal, "The European: Allegories of Racial

who may want eventually to do the same thing, or something like it, or, in any case, who intend to slip into this kind of experience.³⁰

The History of Sexuality is a schematic blueprint for what Foucault had intended to write but chose not to complete. Thus even more than *The Order of Things* which Foucault hoped would be read as an "open site," in volume 1 he extends that invitation for openness more explicitly than in many of his other works.³¹ However prescriptive that may be, it leaves us with more provocations than closely crafted arguments and a surprising number of conventions to wade through should we accept his invitation. My own response to Foucault's "public gesture" has been to do "something like it," something which, as he might have anticipated, would not come out at all the same. In rereading *The History of Sexuality* in an unexplored colonial light, "off center court" as Ben Anderson once put it, I suppose there is some implicit desire to cast this book as an opening, as a provocation, as an invitation of my own.³²

In that spirit, I turn in the beginning of chapter 2, to the proliferation of sexualities and racisms that underwrote Europe's nineteenth-century bourgeois orders in an effort to address a basic question: how Foucault could write an effective history of sexuality, one that earmarks racism as one of its crucial products, but that has had so little resonance for theorizing racial formations today. The bulk of that chapter attends to the place of racism in volume 1 and offers a colonial mapping of it. Chapter 3 focuses almost exclusively on his 1976 lectures on race at the Collège de France. I look at how the lectures inform his treatment of racism in *The History of Sexuality* and in what unexpected ways they allow a rethinking of his broader analytic project. Chapter 4 takes up one of Foucault's central concerns in *The History of Sexuality*; namely, his claim that technologies of sexuality were a core component in the making and cultivation of the bourgeois self. I question less that assumption than the racialized making of it.³³ Chap-

Purity," *Anthropology Today* 7.5 (Oct. 1991): 7-9. On the flattened histories that "occidentalism" has produced (with Sidney Mintz's and Eric Wolf's work offered as striking examples) see Fernando Coronil, "Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Non-Imperial Geohistorical Categories," *Cultural Anthropology*, (forthcoming).

30. Foucault, *Remarks on Marx* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991) 40.

31. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xii.

32. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

33. Foucault uses the term "bourgeoisie," "bourgeois class," and "bourgeois affirmation of self"

ter 5 expands on a theme to which Foucault had planned to devote an entire volume; namely, the discourse on masturbating children and why it so concerned the bourgeoisie. I take up the discourse on masturbation with a different emphasis than Foucault's that in turn leads my discussion toward another end. The colonial variant of that discourse on children and their sexual desires was more about the cultural transgressions of women servants and native mothers than about children themselves, less about the pedagogy surrounding children's sexuality than the racialization of it. Chapter 6 engages Foucault and colonial studies on a subject which at once underwrites *The History of Sexuality* and is absent from it: namely, the production of desire. My interest is in the distributions of desire, an issue which Foucault's apparent dismissal of Freud's focus on sexual desire would seem to preclude. In the concluding chapter, I pose two sorts of questions: first, how *The History of Sexuality* and the lectures on race might be differently located within Foucault's broader projects, and second, how such locations inform new ways we might write "effective histories of the present" in colonial studies today.

throughout volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality* without ever defining what he means by those terms. I use these terms as well but resist the impulse to fill in for Foucault or provide a fixed alternative definition on the argument that what constituted the "bourgeois self" and its "self affirmation" was relational and tied to historically specific notions of gender, nation, and race, not class alone. This book may be seen as an effort to identify the changing parameters of a bourgeois self that were contingent on a racially, sexually, and morally distinct range of other human kinds. While this may be frustrating to the reader, it serves to underscore the mobile discourses of dominance in which bourgeois priorities were defined and defended and in which cultural and economic vulnerabilities were perceived.

II

PLACING RACE IN THE HISTORY OF SEXUALITY

An inducement for students of colonialism to work out Foucault's genealogies on a broader imperial map should be spurred simply by their glaring absence. It is even more disturbing that such a crucial element of *The History of Sexuality* that does speak directly to the nineteenth-century imperial world has been so conspicuously ignored. This is Foucault's strategic linking of the history of sexuality to the construction of race. The omission is not that by students of colonialism alone. While references to racism appear in virtually every chapter, few of Foucault's interlocutors have considered them for comment or review.¹ None of the three recent

1. Among the many well-argued reviews and articles that deal critically with volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality* but with no reference to its treatment of race see, for example, Eloise Buker, "Hidden Desires and Missing Persons: A Feminist Deconstruction of Sexuality," *Western Political Quarterly* 43 (1990): 811-32; Manthia Diawara, "Reading Africa through Foucault: Mudimbe's Reaffirmation of the Subject," *October* 55 (1990): 79-92; Lucette Finas, "Michel Foucault: Les Rapport de pouvoir passent à l'intérieur des corps," *La Quinzaine Littéraire* 247 (1977): 4-6; Althar Hussain, "Foucault's History of Sexuality," *M/F* 5 (1981): 169-91; Edith Kurzweil, "Michel Foucault's History of Sexuality as Interpreted by Feminists and Marxists," *Social Research* 53.4 (Winter 1986): 647-63; Bernard-Henry Levy, "Non au sexe roi," interview with Foucault, *Nouvel Observateur* 644 (1977); Biddy Martin, "Feminism, Criticism, and Foucault," *New German Critique* 27 (Fall 1987): 3-30; Alec McHoul, "The Getting of Sexuality: Foucault, Garfinkel and the Analysis of Sexual Discourse," *Theory, Culture and Society* 3.2 (1986): 65-79; Allan Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1987); Claire O'Farrell, *Foucault: Historian or Philosopher* (London: Macmillan, 1989); Robert Padgug, "Sexual Matters: On Conceptualizing Sexuality in History," *Passion and Power: Sexuality in History*, eds. Kathy Peiss and Christina Simmons with Robert Padgug (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1989); Carol A. Pollis, "The Apparatus of Sexuality: Reflections on Foucault's Contributions to the Study of Sex in History," *Adversaria* 23.3 (1987): 401-14; Roy Porter, "Is Foucault Useful for Understanding Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Sexuality?" *Contention* 1 (1991): 61-82; Mark Poster, *Foucault, Marxism and History: Made of*