

Leseprobe

Dirk Göttsche / Axel Dunker (Eds.)

(Post-) Colonialism across Europe

Transcultural History and National Memory



AISTHESIS VERLAG

Bielefeld 2014

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

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Postfach 10 04 27, D-33504 Bielefeld

Umschlaggestaltung: Nina Stössinger

Satz: Germano Wallmann, www.geisterwort.de

Druck: docupoint GmbH, Magdeburg

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ISBN 978-3-8498-1073-3

www.aisthesis.de

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
I. Theorizing Postcolonialism(s) across Europe	
Monika Albrecht	
German Multiculturalism and Postcolonialism in Comparative Perspective. Prolegomenon for the Framework for a Postcolonial Germany	33
Isabel Hoving	
Dutch Postcolonialism, Multiculturalism and National Identity. Society, Theory, Literature	57
Sarah De Mul	
The Role of Subnational Identity in Belgian (Post-) Colonialism	87
Kirsten Thisted	
Imperial Ghosts in the North Atlantic. Old and New Narratives about the Colonial Relations Between Greenland and Denmark	107
Yves Clavaron	
<i>La Francophone</i> and Beyond	135
Paulo de Medeiros	
Post-Imperial Europe. First Definitions	149
II. European Literature and Culture in Postcolonial Perspective	
Florian Krobb	
Defining Germanness Overseas. Colonialism and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany	167
Heike Bartel	
Colonial Myths – Classical Texts in (Post-) Colonial Perspective. The Example of the Medea Myth in German Literature	187

Liesbeth Minnaard	
Of a Chinese Merchant and a Chinese Monster.	
Functions of Exoticism in Dutch Fin-de-Siècle Literature	209
Axel Dunker	
Recent German Novels on Colonialism	
in International Perspective	231
Dirk Göttsche	
Memory and Critique of Colonialism in Contemporary German	
and English Historical Novels about Africa	249
III. Conceptualizing Internal European (Post-) Colonialisms	
Iulia-Karin Patrut	
Conceptualizing German Colonialisms within Europe	279
Marijan Bobinac	
Cultural Transfer in the Habsburg Empire.	
Croatia and German-Language Culture	
from a Postcolonial Perspective	305
Milka Car	
Literary Legacies of the Habsburg Empire	
in a Postcolonial Perspective.	
The Example of Miroslav Krleža	321
Anneli Saro	
Superimposed Soviet Colonialism.	
The Processing of Soviet Memories in Estonian Literature,	
Theatre and Film	343
Epp Annus	
Layers of Colonial Rule in the Baltics.	
Nation-Building, the Soviet Rule and the Affectivity of a Nation ...	359
Notes on the Contributors	385

Introduction

European colonialism since the early modern period was by definition a transnational process with increasingly global implications; citizens of all European nations were involved in Europe's colonial expansion, regardless of whether their countries had overseas colonies of their own or how long they maintained them. European individuals from across the continent went out overseas as, for example, merchants, seamen, missionaries, explorers, adventurers, slave traders, diplomats, administrators or settlers, while at home colonial thought, trade and culture swept across Europe. European colonialism is today seen as a first phase in the history of globalisation, and the modern repercussions of colonial imperialism since formal decolonisation, including postcolonial immigration, have affected all of Europe, albeit in different ways and along different historical trajectories producing regional or national variations. At the same time the 'Scramble for Africa' in the late nineteenth century is only the most obvious instance of the defining synergy between the rise of the modern European nation state and imperial colonialism, indicating both common ground and also national refractions of colonial history not just overseas, but also within Europe. Different colonial histories reflect and interact with different regional or national histories and identity debates that account for the different shapes and functions of postcolonial discourse and memory across Europe today. There is thus clearly a need to take Postcolonial Studies beyond the confines of national history and beyond the traditionally national (or language-based) boundaries of individual disciplines in order to account more fully for the transnational and transcultural dynamic of colonial history and its legacies. Developing Comparative Postcolonial Studies is crucial for a proper understanding of both the interconnectedness and the specificity of colonial and postcolonial histories and cultures in the different language areas and nations of Europe.

Postcolonial Studies is thus an interdisciplinary and international field of research with an intrinsic need for comparative study, for international and interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration. Despite the shared reference to the established canon of Anglophone and Francophone postcolonial theory and research there is, however, far too little dialogue and knowledge exchange from door to door, as it were, between postcolonial literary and cultural research across the different disciplines within individual language areas (e.g. between German *Germanistik*, English Studies, History and

Romance Studies) and across borders – e.g. between postcolonial inquiry in German *Germanistik* and in Dutch Dutch Studies, in Danish Scandinavian Studies and Portuguese Lusophone Studies, in British English Studies and French Francophone Studies, in other words, in a truly comparative, preferably multi-polar perspective. Very few scholars have expertise in more than two languages, histories and cultures. The systematic development of Comparative Postcolonial Studies therefore requires international and interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration along with the need to move beyond the Anglo-American origin and engine of established international Postcolonial Studies.

In one of the defining publications that helped to establish international Postcolonial Studies, *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin already saw one of the “strength[s] of post-colonial theory” in “its inherently comparative methodology”,¹ as Sarah De Mul notes in her essay in this volume. While Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin probably had the comparative study of postcolonial histories and literatures outside Europe in mind, which has indeed become an integral part of relevant scholarship, comparison between European colonialisms beyond the Anglophone and Francophone universes has only much more recently gained momentum (see below). Going further than the preferred method of comparing (literary engagement with) colonial and postcolonial histories in two or three countries, *(Post-) Colonialism across Europe* aims to help develop a framework and platform for Comparative Postcolonial Studies across Europe through theoretical inquiry, as well as a series of case studies that explore the cultural history of colonialism and its contemporary legacies in a wide range of European language areas and cultures. It seeks to reconfigure Postcolonial Studies through comparative, transnational inquiry into European cultural history, memory and identity from the nineteenth century to the present day. Moving beyond Britain, the United States, and France, the traditional focus of postcolonial inquiry, the essays make original contributions to international Postcolonial Studies by considering the cross-cultural dynamic of colonialism and postcolonial migration in countries that have often remained at the margins of international Postcolonial Studies, such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, Germany, Austria, Estonia and Croatia, along

1 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin: *The Empire Writes Back. Theory and Practice of Post-Colonial Literatures*. London, New York: Routledge 1989, p. 36.

with Britain and France. Combining inquiry into the repercussions of overseas colonialism with postcolonial readings of intra-European colonialism in the Baltics, in the countries of the former Habsburg Empire and in the shape of German settlement in Eastern Europe, the volume also inter-relates the methodologies of Postcolonial Studies with Memory Studies in order to develop a more consistent account of the striking synergy between colonialism and nation building, colonial discourse and national identity discourse in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the legacy of this synergy in the role of distinct postcolonial memory discourses in European countries today. Examining public discourse, journalism, scholarship, literature, theatre, and film, the volume explores how involvement in and critique of colonialism has transformed European identities and cultures, combining global impact with regional diversity, and how (post-) colonial memory, intersecting with other (national) memory discourses, shapes European identities today. Focusing on Europe rather than on postcolonialism(s) in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the volume also rethinks aspects of international Anglophone postcolonial theory from the perspective of European societies and cultures.

Reviewing and developing critical concepts is clearly an integral part of developing Comparative Postcolonial Studies. One of the key challenges facing Comparative Postcolonial Studies with regard to Europe is to account for the balance between the common European ground and the national profiles of colonial history and postcolonial memory. There is a need for a conceptual framework for comparative analysis which puts national historiography in perspective while also exploring the role of transnational exchange and transcultural memory in the historical connectivity of colonial and postcolonial histories and discourses. Bringing Postcolonial Studies together with Memory Studies has proved highly productive in recent years, and the subtitle of our volume – “transcultural history and national memory” – ties in with this development. Michael Rothberg’s study of *Multidirectional Memory*, for example, which explores the connections between Holocaust memory and decolonisation in America, Europe and Africa during the decades after World War II, recently raised awareness of the multiple links and productive interactions between different memory themes as well as national and transnational memory discourses.² The range of cases studies and perspectives in

2 See Michael Rothberg: *Multidirectional Memory. Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2009.

our volume is meant further to map out and explain the complex interaction between national, regional, transnational and global structures and processes that defines the history of European colonialism and its aftermath. Looking across Europe, there are good reasons to use the terms ‘colonialism’ and ‘post-colonialism’ in the plural, and yet there are equally striking connections and similarities at various levels which deserve much closer analysis than have been published to date.

Comparative analysis is of course never without its risks, and recent theory of comparative literary and cultural studies has seen a number of publications that highlight the limits of comparability and translatability.³ In the case of Comparative Postcolonial Studies the obvious dangers lie in exaggerating commonality by over-stressing the unifying force of Europe’s colonial history and discourse, and, conversely, in claiming that each national or regional variation of (post-) colonialism is singular and unique. Rereading colonial histories and postcolonial memory discourses in a wider European context should, however, safeguard against stereotypical shortcuts in historical argument, such as, in the German context, the notion of a German “Sonderweg” (special path) deviating from a supposed Western norm, typically associated with Britain or France. Recent publications in the emerging field of Comparative Postcolonial Studies indicate very clearly the multiplicity and interconnectedness of national (post-) colonial histories, subverting the notion of the British or French model as the standard that sets the norm, from which other countries and cultures merely deviate. A number of recently edited volumes and conferences with comparative themes, and the establishment of research networks, such as the Postcolonial Europe Network based at Utrecht,⁴ indicate that the development of Comparative Postcolonial Studies, moving beyond established national and disciplinary boundaries, is beginning to gain momentum. Examples on which the volume in hand builds, and with which the essays presented here interact, include comparative studies of British and German (post-) colonial history and

3 See for example Nathalie Melas: *All the Difference in the World. Postcoloniality and the Ends of Comparison*. New York: Stanford University Press 2007; Emily Apter: *Against World Literature. On the Politics of Untranslatability*. London: Verso 2013.

4 See <http://www.postcolonialeurope.eu/> (accessed 17 January 2014).

culture,⁵ Dutch and German cultures of postcolonial memory,⁶ multiculturalism in the Low Countries and in Scandinavia,⁷ inquiry into the history and profile of Scandinavian and Nordic colonialisms,⁸ (post-) colonial discourse about Africa in German, Russian and Polish culture,⁹ and (post-) colonial discourse in French, German, Spanish and Italian literature.¹⁰ In the introduction to their volume *The Postcolonial Low Countries*, Elleke Boehmer and Sarah De Mul give a very useful overview of the state of research with regard to a range of national colonial histories.¹¹ As Monika Albrecht points out in her essay below, there is also significant research of postcolonial relevance not published under this methodological heading; scholars interested in Comparative Postcolonial Studies would be ill advised to ignore the findings of researchers working in adjacent fields such as the study of exoticism, crosscultural literary studies, transcultural and comparative cultural studies, Memory Studies, or diaspora studies.¹²

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- 5 See Ulrike Lindner/Maren Möhring/Mark Stein/Silke Stroh (eds.): *Hybrid Cultures – Nervous States. Britain and Germany in a (Post) Colonial World*. Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi 2010.
 - 6 See Selma Lutz and Kathrin Gawarecki (eds.): *Kolonialismus und Erinnerungskultur. Die Kolonialvergangenheit im kollektiven Gedächtnis der deutschen und niederländischen Einwanderungsgesellschaft*. Münster, New York: Waxmann 2005.
 - 7 See Wolfgang Behschnitt/Sarah De Mul/Liesbeth Minnaard (eds.): *Literature, Culture and Multiculturalism in Scandinavia and the Low Countries*. Amsterdam: Rodopi 2013.
 - 8 See Magdalena Naum/Jonas M. Nordin (eds.): *Scandinavian Colonialism and the Rise of Modernity*. New York: Springer 2013; Suvi Keskinen/Salla Tuori/Sari Irni/Diana Mulinari (eds.): *Complying with Colonialism. Gender, Race and Ethnicity in the Nordic Region*. Farnham: Ashgate 2009.
 - 9 See Jana Domdey et al. (eds.): *Another Africa? (Post-) Koloniale Afrikaimaginationen in der russischen, polnischen und deutschen Literatur*. Publication in preparation.
 - 10 See Françoise Aubès et al. (eds.): *Interprétations postcoloniales et mondialisation. Littératures de langues allemande, anglaise, espagnole, française, italienne et portugaise*. Bern: Peter Lang 2014 (at press).
 - 11 See Elleke Boehmer and Sarah De Mul (eds.): *The Postcolonial Low Countries. Literature, Colonialism, and Multiculturalism*. Lanham, Plymouth: Lexington 2012.
 - 12 See for example Michelle Keown, David Murphy and James Procter (eds.): *Comparing Postcolonial Diasporas*. London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2009; Lucy Bond and Jessica Repson (eds.): *Transcultural Memory. The*

(Post-) Colonialism across Europe begins with a section that focuses on overseas colonialism and its European repercussions in order to develop a conceptual framework for theorizing colonial and postcolonial conditions across Europe as a range of interconnected but distinct colonial and postcolonial histories (“I. Theorizing Postcolonialism(s) across Europe”). The essays in this section consider to what extent postcolonial immigration defines contemporary multiculturalism and how postcolonial and multicultural discourses interact in various European countries; they explore the complex relationship between postcolonialism, multiculturalism and national identity, research different trajectories from the colonial past to the postcolonial present, and rethink postcolonial theory from various European perspectives, including critical theory developed outside Anglophone academia.

Although designed specifically as “prolegomenon for the framework for a postcolonial Germany”, Monika Albrecht’s first chapter effectively maps out a panorama of interlinking and yet diverse European postcolonial conditions by discussing “German multiculturalism and postcolonialism in comparative perspective”. During the 1990s and into the early 2000s the engagement with international Postcolonial Studies in European scholarship was marked by the critical (re-)discovery of national colonial histories and the need to demonstrate the relevance of this new international and interdisciplinary approach to the study of the histories, cultures and literatures of countries in which the link between the colonial past and the present may be less obvious than in the case of the UK and France. Recent major publications in European Postcolonial Studies, for example on the Netherlands, Scandinavia and Switzerland,¹³ demonstrate that there is still a lot of research potential in evidencing how European countries that did not have colonies of their own, or whose history of colonial imperialism was comparatively brief, were nevertheless involved in the system of European colonial expansion and discourse and are today also part of the postcolonial world of colonial legacies, accelerated global mobility and increased cross-cultural exchange despite

Transcultural Turn – Interrogating Memory Between and Beyond Borders. Berlin: de Gruyter 2014.

13 See Boehmer/De Mul (eds.): *The Postcolonial Low Countries* (note 11); Naum/Nordin (eds.): *Scandinavian Colonialism* (note 8); Keskinen et al. (eds.): *Complying with Colonialism* (note 8); Patricia Purtschert/Barbara Lüthi/Francesca Falk (eds.): *Postkoloniale Schweiz. Formen und Folgen eines Kolonialismus ohne Kolonien*. Bielefeld: transcript 2012.

continuing global as well as regional imbalances in participation, power and wealth. The concept of “colonial complicity”, for example, was developed to theorize the postcolonial in a Nordic context, where “participation in the hegemonic discourses, involvement in the promotion of universal thinking and practices of domination”¹⁴ are part of a “situation in which a country has neither been historically situated as one of the colonial centres of Europe, nor has it been an innocent victim of, or stood outside of, the colonial project”¹⁵ – a condition that applies not only to Finland or Sweden. At the same time, however, such a politics of postcolonial theory tends to privilege a reading of colonial and postcolonial histories that risks overstating the universal reach of (post-) colonialism as defined by the Anglo-American paradigm; to conceive of colonialism and postcoloniality as one overarching global system neglects the complexity and diversity both of the colonial pasts and the postcolonial presents across the continent at national, (supra-national) regional and sub-national levels.

As Albrecht shows in her chapter, Germany is a case in point. Albrecht deliberately shifts attention from the common framework of European colonialism and its legacies to the differences between postcolonial conditions in Germany and those in major long-standing colonial powers such as Britain and France. By also considering recent scholarship on the Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Scandinavia and Italy, Albrecht provides a first outline of the diversity of postcolonial conditions across Europe. German multiculturalism, for example, is largely defined by labour immigration from Southern Europe and Turkey rather than from Germany’s and Europe’s former colonies overseas, significantly reducing the political and social resonance of colonial legacies and postcolonial memory. A comparative assessment of defining events which mark the postcolonial politics of memory across Europe also illustrates that Germany’s “postcolonialism without postcolonial subjects” extends to the absence of those Western expatriates and ‘invisible’ returnees who play a crucial role in the politics of countries such as France or Portugal but have in Germany, due to the early end of her empire, now largely passed away. Moreover, the dominance of non-colonial labour immigration among

14 Ulla Vuorela: Colonial Complicity. The ‘Postcolonial’ in a Nordic Context. In: Keskinen et al. (eds): *Complying with Colonialism* (note 8), pp. 19-33 (p. 20).

15 Diana Mulinan/Suvi Keskinen/Sari Irni/Salla Tuori: Introduction: Postcolonialism and the Nordic Model of Welfare and Gender. In: Keskinen et al. (eds.): *Complying with Colonialism* (note 8), pp. 1-16 (p. 9).

Germany's minorities means that the immigrants do not share a colonial history with their new country of residence and do not therefore contribute to the postcolonial memory discourse that has emerged since the 1990s. Theorizing (post-) colonialism across Europe in comparative perspective needs to take account of such differences.

Echoing Albrecht's call to consider postcolonial concerns with regard to their specific political and social contexts, Isabel Hoving continues this exploration of similarities and differences in European colonial and postcolonial histories by outlining the fraught relationship between "postcolonialism, multiculturalism and national identity" in the Netherlands, as reflected in "society, theory and literature". Defining postcoloniality as the contested process of working through the tenacious effects of colonisation and decolonisation, Hoving considers the public controversy about, and denial of, racism in Dutch society as an example of the social and political resonance of colonial legacies. The journalist Chris Buur's discussion of suspected racism in the popular French film *Intouchables* (2012) and the public debate about a 2012 study of ethnic discrimination in the Dutch labour market are used to show how the Dutch preference for compromise and consensus rather than diversity and contradiction, together with the unequal representation of black and migrant perspectives, make it difficult to address colonial legacies. The fact that most of the post-war labour immigration did not originate from the Netherlands' former colonies is another factor in the specific socio-political context for the emergence of Postcolonial Studies in the Netherlands and one that partially echoes German conditions. Hoving shows that the critical perspectives, developed since the 1980s, are primarily the achievements of scholars working outside the academic mainstream in areas such as critical race studies, gender studies and cultural analysis, often inspired by Anglophone theory, such as Paul Gilroy's analysis of "postcolonial melancholia".¹⁶ At the same time the Dutch case, like the German case, requires and inspires modification and development of Anglophone postcolonial theory. Hoving argues, for example, that language-based concepts of postcolonial hybridization need rethinking because they do not fit with the fact that the former Dutch colonies did not generally retain Dutch as their main language. Interestingly she notes in recent Dutch scholarship a similar

16 Paul Gilroy: *Postcolonial Melancholia*. New York: Columbia University Press 2005.

rapprochement of more traditional and postcolonial approaches as seen recently between intercultural and postcolonial literary studies in Germany.

The pillarization of society, which Hoving notes in the Netherlands, is also an issue in the related but distinct case of Belgium, which Sara De Mul explores in her essay “The role of subnational identity in Belgian (post-) colonialism”. The Belgian case complicates comparative postcolonial inquiry based on nations or language areas because of the co-existence of two separate literary traditions – Flemish literature and Belgian Francophone literature – combined with the absence of a unified national space of public discourse. As De Mul points out, Belgian sub-nationalism requires transnational inquiry, while in relation to France and the Netherlands respectively both literary fields can be seen as examples of minority literature. Complementing Hoving’s chapter, her overview of postcolonial Low Countries studies, or Neerlandophone Postcolonial Studies, therefore insists on the need for comparative inquiry and the development of postcolonial theory that avoids Anglocentricism along with language-specific methodology and terminology. As an example she then moves on to a literary case study, analysing intersections of Flemish identity and Belgian colonial discourse in the novella *De zwarte kost* (The Black Meal, 1898) by modernist writer Cyriel Buysse, an example of “Africanist discourse” which addresses the “Congo Question” of the time along similarly dystopian lines as Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Reading Buysse’s novella in the context of the increasingly critical debate about the Congo Free State, De Mul shows how the author weaves the public controversy into the framework of his narrative and criticizes narrow Flemish provincialism and professed domestic ignorance of colonial violence in ways which echo his polemical essays of the time about the nationalist Flemish Movement. As in the previous two chapters postcolonial or, in this case, colonial concerns are thus again shown to be part of wider social and political issues debated at national as well as transnational levels.

The atrocities in colonial Congo are a prime example of wider European colonial violence and therefore continue to have transnational resonance in the postcolonial politics of memory across European literatures today. By contrast, Danish colonialism in Greenland and Greenlandic resistance hardly featured at all in international postcolonial awareness until competition for oil and other natural resources recently put the Arctic, including Greenland, on the map of international politics. Asking how “imperial ghosts in the North Atlantic” continue to haunt the postcolonial present, Kirsten Thisted’s inquiry into “old and new narratives about colonial relations

between Greenland and Denmark” brings out a degree of ambivalence in the relationship that challenges conventional notions of colonial rule. She argues that in the Danish version the empire is a shared project between coloniser and colonised, based on bonds and consent rather than imperial power and supremacy. Nevertheless Denmark’s rule in Greenland also came with the European colonial discourse of cultural superiority and the mission to civilize the colonial subjects, and the silences and taboos in today’s politics of reconciliation indicate a similar need to work through the colonial past as in the Netherlands and Belgium. The two opposing narratives of oppressive Danish paternalism and selfless Danish support for Greenlandic development are both shown to be obsolete, because both continue to see Danes as the sole agents of history and Greenlanders as passive. Thisted therefore turns to archival sources, including neglected sources in Greenlandic, in order to promote a critical rereading of Danish and Greenlandic history. Her case study considers the libel suit which the former Danish inspector of North Greenland, Harald Lindow, filed in 1925 against two Greenlandic members of the Provincial Council for allegedly presenting false grievances in their criticism of his administration. Thisted is able to illustrate in detail how the effective failure of this law suit reflects the complicated power structures of Danish colonial rule, the significance of Greenlandic agency and the significance of translation and translators in the interaction. There is thus in the Danish case not a clear caesura between imperialism and postcolonialism but rather a protracted process that eventually shifts the balance in Greenland from a language of subordination and resistance to a language of governance. This complicated process puts both the old colonial narrative and the new narrative of independence in perspective.

A very different vision of bonds and shared histories is associated with the French discourse of *Francophonie*, first conceived at the height of French imperialism, as Yves Clavaron points out in his essay “*La Francophonie* and beyond”. Like the Commonwealth, but very different in structure and outlook, *Francophonie* emerged as a geopolitical organisation and an institutionalised policy during the era of decolonisation in the 1960s and continues to inform the study of Francophone literature and culture even today. In France the reception of Anglophone postcolonial theory was thus complicated and delayed by the prior existence of a competing paradigm and discipline closely aligned with key aspects of French national identity, such as the centrality of the French language and French republicanism and universalism, which conflict with the perceived focus on ethnic diversity, political antagonism

and cultural division in Anglophone postcolonial theory. Moving beyond Clavaron's analysis, it is worth noting that similar delays can also be observed in other European countries, although for different reasons: in the Netherlands Hoving notes the prior existence of established research into literary multiculturalism, linked to the Dutch polder model of society; in Germany the prior existence of *Interkulturelle Germanistik/Literaturwissenschaft* (cross-cultural literary studies), based on the epistemology of Hermeneutics and the ethics of cross-cultural dialogue, links to the marginalization of Germany's colonial past in its post-war historical awareness;¹⁷ in Scandinavia postcolonial inquiry was delayed as a result of the self-image of benign colonialism and global developmental partnership, leading to the denial of participation in Europe's colonial history.¹⁸ In retrospect, however, such delays have turned out to be productive for international Postcolonial Studies because the need to confront and enter into dialogue with competing methodological paradigms also opens up avenues for the innovation of postcolonial theory from comparative perspectives.

In his case study of French and Francophone discourse Clavaron outlines some of the deeper historical reasons behind the French resistance to Postcolonial Studies and the hostile response to French historians, such as Blanchard, Bancel and Bonnaire, who embraced postcolonial methodology: the universalist project of cultural assimilation in French colonial politics; violent resistance to decolonisation (see Algeria); and a degree of variety within French colonial practice that does not lend itself easily to a unified analysis of (post-) colonial conditions. Turning to literary studies, Clavaron argues that the transnationalism suggested by Anglophone Postcolonial Studies conflicts with the continuing reference to the nation in Francophone Studies and that there is suspicion that French critical theory has been (mis) appropriated by American Postcolonial Studies. Like Hoving with regard to Dutch academia, however, he also believes that the past ten years have seen increased dialogue and interaction between Francophone Studies and Postcolonial Studies. Clavaron concludes with the new departure marked by the

17 See Dirk Göttsche: Remembering Africa. The Rediscovery of Colonialism in Contemporary German Literature. Rochester, NY: Camden House 2013, pp. 21-44.

18 See Magdalena Naum and Jones M. Nordin: Introduction. Situating Scandinavian Colonialism. In: Naum/Nordin (eds.): Scandinavian Colonialism (note 8), pp. 3-16 (pp. 3-4).

2007 *Manifeste pour une littérature-monde* (manifesto for a world literature), which challenges the traditional centre, Paris, as much as the postcolonial critic Dipesh Chakrabarty sought to “provincialise Europe” in his book of the same year.¹⁹ This new literary cosmopolitanism moves beyond the discourse of *Francophonie* and its Francocentrism; it could also be seen as part of a wider reconfiguration of postcolonial and multicultural (‘world’) literatures that redefines the relationship between the national and the international, as discussed widely in recent comparative literary studies.²⁰

At the same time the French discourses of *Francophonie* and *littérature-monde* are examples of competing theories and concepts that can help to critically develop a differentiated framework for theorizing postcolonialisms across Europe. Clavaron’s analysis also draws attention to the fact that postcolonialism is itself a historical phenomenon. Both in literature and in scholarship the postcolonial paradigm is more than likely to give way eventually to new departures for underlying historical and cultural reasons which are very different from the politics of theory behind the premature announcement of the death of Postcolonial Studies in the *PMLA* issue of May 2007. For the time being, however, the need for Europe to fully confront its imperial past and colonial history continues, and postcolonial analysis has an important contribution to make to the reconceptualization of Europe necessitated by the fundamental crisis that the continent is facing today, as Paulo de Medeiros suggests in his essay “Post-Imperial Europe: first definitions”. Arguing that this crisis is political rather than just economic, de Medeiros develops his concept of post-imperialism as a critical extension and revision of postcolonialism. This concept is designed to address the political and identity crisis of contemporary Europe, which sees its self-professed ideals eroded by new global challenges, along with the crisis of Anglophone postcolonial theory as it struggles to adjust its critical tools to the diversity of (post-) colonial histories and realizes that “postcolonialism remains” despite all critical intervention, as de Medeiros notes with Robert Young. De Medeiros’s notion of post-imperialism combines an historical level – decolonisation, the move of the imperial ‘centre’ to the USA, and the persistence of imperialist sentiments and attitudes – with the awareness that since the days of the Roman Empire

19 Dipesh Chakrabarty: *Provincialising Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2007.

20 See for example David Damrosch (ed.): *World Literature in Theory*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell 2014; Apter: *Against World Literature* (note 3).

large parts of Europe have been marked by imperialism in one way or another. Post-imperialism as conceived by de Medeiros includes the political commitment to a radical break with this tradition. Echoing the previous chapters in the need to differentiate European colonial and postcolonial conditions, de Medeiros considers the two very different cases of Ireland and Portugal: Ireland as the example of a British colony within Europe – there is of course a tradition of reading Ireland in postcolonial perspective²¹ – and Portugal as the European country with the longest history of colonialism, the initiator of modern imperialism, whose national identity was for centuries closely intertwined with imperialism, and which was the last to see its empire dissolved as a result of the democratic revolution of 1974. De Medeiros then turns to literature as a crucial medium of post-imperial critique, in particular in Portugal where violent decolonisation was followed by effective colonial amnesia in the public sphere. The chapter shows how the works of writers such as Lídia Jorge and António Lobo Antunes address Portugal's imperial history with its lingering personal and collective traumas. Late and violent decolonisation, resulting in historical trauma, places Portugal at the opposite end to Denmark on the historical map of transitions from the colonial past to the postcolonial present, and yet both cases highlight the benefits of rethinking (post-) colonialism from a range of European perspectives that question established tropes of Anglophone postcolonial theory.

The second part of the volume presents a number of case studies on literary and cultural engagement with colonialism and postcolonial memory discourses across Europe from the later nineteenth century to the present day (“II. European literature and culture in postcolonial perspective”). The studies foreground German and Dutch literature, but also consider British, French, American, Canadian, Caribbean and Italian literature, theatre and film in comparative perspective, so as to investigate the role of European literatures and cultures in colonial and anti-colonial discourse as well as in postcolonial debate and memory since the period of decolonisation. This includes inquiry into the way in which the transnational and transcultural histories of colonialism inform domestic nation-building during the nineteenth century and different national cultures of memory today. Indeed, the

21 See for example Clare Carroll and Patricia King (eds.): *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*. Cork: Cork University Press 2003; Jean Ryan and Michael Hayes: *Postcolonial Identities. Constructing the “New Irish”*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press 2006.

essays in this section anticipate those in section III by exploring the defining links between colonial discourse and nation-building, in particular in the nineteenth century.

German colonial history is very much a case in point in this context, as Florian Krobb shows in his study “Defining Germanness overseas: colonialism and nationhood in nineteenth-century Germany”. Considering two nodal points of colonial debate from the mid and late nineteenth century, he draws attention to the interaction between nation-building, the dynamics of modernization, and colonial expansion, arguing that notions of German identity and the German nation were conceived within a global matrix that combined self-demarkation against a range of ‘others’ with competition in colonial space (with Britain in particular) and (imaginary or real) interaction with non-European communities overseas. Krobb’s first example is from the 1850s/60s, when colonial discourse and the overseas became increasingly popular and German unification was as yet unachieved: the resounding resonance of the disappearance of the young African explorer Eduard Vogel in the Sudanese sultanate of Wadai, and the 1860 mission to find and save him, for the first time galvanised public interest in colonial matters while also acting as a catalyst for national sentiment. Citing a veteran of the 1848 revolution, Krobb shows how the debate set the scene for Germany’s imperial aspirations, combining a vision of German nationhood projected into Africa with Anglo-German rivalry and the criticism of African-Oriental despotism and slavery. These discursive parameters return some thirty years later, when the German Reich had established its colonial empire after 1884, in the equally popular fascination with retrieving Eduard Schnitzer alias Emin Pasha, the German governor of the Egyptian province of Southern Sudan, who went missing in the wake of the Mahdi uprising. Analysing a popular colonial adventure story on the theme and its emblematic illustrations, Krobb highlights the way in which Emin is transformed into a model of German virtues and beneficial German colonial rule, contrasted sharply with the despotism of the Muslim insurgents of the Mahdi state and the ineffective and authoritarian British. The German self-image is thus projected into colonial space, and the colonial imagination in turn reinforces an idealized domestic order. Krobb suggests that legacies of the discursive patterns of German relations to the overseas as defined during the colonial period continue to haunt German involvement with the overseas even today.

Krobb’s case study demonstrates the comparative dimension in identity formation even at the height of European nationalism and imperialism. Heike

Bartel's chapter "Colonial myths – classical texts in (post)colonial perspective: the example of the Medea myth in German literature" maps out a field of literary traditions that is transnational by definition and that historically acted as one of the springboards for comparative literary and cultural studies: the reception of ancient myth in modern European literature and culture. The Medea myth is particularly open to critical postcolonial rereading because both of its constituent stories – the Argonauts' quest for the golden fleece and the fate of the exotic Colchian princess Medea as Jason's wife in Greece, to which Euripides added the theme of infanticide – suggest colonial settings: the Argonauts' voyage reflects Greece's colonisation of the Black Sea region, and ancient sources already portray Medea as a black woman of African heritage, making the couple Jason and Medea a model of colonial encounter and conflict. Bartel considers two German adaptations from the imperial and post-imperial periods: the novella *Medea* (1896) by the prominent nineteenth-century writer Paul Heyse resonates with the colonial discourse of the day, confirming entrenched stereotypes about blacks as highly sexualized, uncontrollable and violent. By contrast, Hans Henny Jahn's Expressionist drama *Medea* (1924/1926) reflects the author's criticism of racism, slavery and colonialism, as seen particularly when Jason and Medea's sons are called "bastards" – a term that at that time, during the 1920s, clearly resonated with the hate campaign against the so-called 'Rhineland Bastards', the children of relationships between white German women and black African soldiers from the colonial troops deployed by France for the occupation of the Rhineland. Bartel also points out, however, that Jahn's portrayal of colonised individuals who fight back, and his association of blackness with sexuality and extreme violence, again draw on persistent stereotypes, effectively endorsing the racist discourse that he means to criticise. Such complicity in colonial discourse even in anti-colonial literature of the eighteenth to twentieth century is a recurrent phenomenon which, although widely recognized as such, still warrants further exploration.

The ambivalences in the literary engagement with cross-cultural experience at the height of European imperialism, as seen in Bartel's two contrasting case studies, are clearly transnational even where the sources engage with specific national contexts, such as Germany's late acquisition of African colonies in the case of Heyse or the political controversy about the use of African troops in the French occupation of the Rhineland in the case of Jahn. Despite the focus on the representation of Chinese as emblems of otherness, rather than Africans, a very similar pattern emerges in Liesbeth Minnaard's

study of two Dutch sources from the same period in her essay “Of a Chinese merchant and a Chinese monster: functions of exoticism in Dutch fin-de-siècle literature”. Her comparative analysis of Lodewijk van Deysssel’s naturalist novel *Blank en geel* (White and Yellow, 1894) and Jacob Israël de Haan’s short story *Het monster van China* (The monster of China, 1907) contrasts two very different uses of exoticism during the colonial era, even though both authors belong to the modernist movement in Dutch literature. Presenting the Colonial Exhibition and trade fair at Amsterdam in 1883 as a prism of cross-cultural encounter and exoticist fascination, Deysssel’s novel uses the love story and marriage of a young Dutch woman and a Chinese merchant, whose portrayal reflects the typical exoticist dynamic of attraction and repulsion, to stage a cultural transgression that is ultimately rejected; the Chinese character is little more than a random projection screen of exoticist desire used to censor the ‘mixing of races’ as unnatural, very much as in Heyse’s *Medea* story. Like Jahnn’s *Medea* drama, de Haan’s short story goes much further in bending and breaking accepted cultural boundaries, and like Jahnn it operates with the blending of cultural and sexual difference, colonial and sexual violence. The Chinese monster in question turns out to be a substitute for an impossible homosexual love affair that the story’s Dutch parvenu had in the Dutch East Indies, giving the short story an emancipatory twist in the context of Dutch bourgeois society around 1900. The appreciation of the supposedly radically different Chinese sense of beauty in the creation of human monsters, however, subscribes to the negative stereotype of Chinese cruelty; in its fascination with primitivism De Haan’s cultural criticism, like Jahnn’s, effectively reinstates the stereotypical perception of non-European cultures that it set out to disrupt.

The next two chapters move on from the colonial period to the postcolonial present, exploring how contemporary German literature engages with colonial history and considering French, American and British novels in comparative perspective. In “Recent German novels on colonialism in international perspective”, Axel Dunker draws attention to the wave of recent fiction by prominent German and Swiss writers who remember German colonialism and surprisingly all use single-word titles: Gerhard Seyfried’s *Herero* (2003), Thomas von Steinaecker’s *Schutzgebiet* (2009) and Christian Kracht’s *Imperium* (2012). While different in themselves, the literary approach of these novelists to the colonial theme also breaks with their apparent forerunner, Uwe Timm’s seminal historical novel *Morenga* (1978) about the Nama uprising in the German colony South-West Africa, whose

postcolonial poetics are defined by radical criticism of colonialism, self-reflexive polyperspectivism and the author's deliberate decision not to represent and appropriate the other, African perspective. Dunker notes the difference in approach compared with Thomas Pynchon's novels *V* and *Gravity's Rainbow*, which predate more recent German literary engagement with German colonialism, and also with relevant French novels, such as Le Clézio's *L'Africain* and Didier Daeninckx's *Cannibale*, which include the voices of the colonised and direct memory of (French) colonialism. By contrast recent German novels reconstruct or devise their own colonial histories: through questionable mimicry of colonial discourse (such as Seyfried), by using adventure stories to portray colonialism as a phantasm (such as Steinaecker), or, most interestingly, through the postmodern use of pastiche, as in Kracht's *Imperium*, whose very cover cites an award-winning French cartoon that in turn cites Hergé's *Tintin*. Dunker notes the surprising connections between the new interest in colonialism, authors of German pop literature (such as Steinaecker and Kracht) and fascination with the comic strip (in both of these and in Seyfried, who made his name as a cartoonist). He concludes by suggesting that Kracht's pastiche of colonialism may indicate the transition from postcolonial novels to a new literary discourse on the theme – one, however, that would be very different from the Francophone *littérature monde* discussed by Clavaron, which offers another potential pathway into post-postcolonial writing.

Dirk Götttsche's essay "Memory and critique of colonialism in contemporary German and English historical novels about Africa" places Dunker's German sources into their wider context by beginning with an overview of the rediscovery of overseas colonialism in German, Austrian and Swiss literature since the later 1990s. Returning to some of the questions in Albrecht's chapter, this overview also includes comparative analysis of German postcolonial memory with relevant memory discourses in countries such as Britain and France. Götttsche then presents a comparative case study of postcolonial memory in British author Giles Foden's novel *Mimi and Toutou Go Forth: The Bizarre Battle of Lake Tanganyika* (2004) and Swiss writer Alex Capus's novel *Eine Frage der Zeit* (A matter of time, 2007), which both engage with the same theme: British-German imperial rivalry in central Africa at the onset of World War I, reflected in the story of the German steamer Graf Götzen and the British counter-action, the Naval Africa Expedition of 1915. Although both novelists use some of the same sources, clearly write from very similar postcolonial perspectives and use advanced forms of

postmodern poetics, their novels also differ in interesting ways. Alternating between a German and a British strand to convey a critique of European imperialism more widely, Capus's narrative, which includes humour, irony, the use of the grotesque and (again) cartoon-style caricature, is designed to expose, in the author's words, "the absurdity of the colonial world". By contrast Foden's novel focuses on the British strand, on military history and on a deconstruction of the myth of imperial heroism. Like Dunker's French sources its more openly metafictional narrative also includes explicit engagement with the African perspective and memory of World War I in Central Africa. Götttsche argues, however, that these differences are largely a matter of individual author choice within shared postcolonial and aesthetic frames of reference. A comparative reading therefore has to consider the different socio-political and literary contexts of the novels and their reception, such as the lack of postcolonial immigration and the prominence of intercultural rather than postcolonial discourse in the German language area. While Capus's and Foden's novels coincide in the European dimension of their postcolonial critique, they operate differently in their respective cultural contexts: *Eine Frage der Zeit* promotes the rediscovery of neglected German imperial involvement, albeit from a detached Swiss perspective, while *Mimi and Toutou* reconsiders the evidence in the UK's ongoing post-imperial and postcolonial debate about the colonial past. Combining the methodologies of Postcolonial Studies and Memory Studies, the case study thus illustrates the balance of similarities and differences between British and German post-colonial discourses.

Expanding such methodological cross-mapping of postcolonial and memory theory, the third and final part of the volume turns to the debate about internal European colonialism that emerged in the early 2000s and pushes inquiry well beyond the established boundaries of Anglophone Postcolonial Studies ("III. Conceptualizing internal European (post-) colonialisms"). The section aims to critically reassess and develop the potential for postcolonial readings of colonial conditions in the Baltics and the states of the former Habsburg Empire, and to explore postcolonial readings of German settlement in Eastern Europe, in other words, German intra-European colonialism, which is only just beginning to be considered in postcolonial terms. The essays in question include case studies on literary and cultural engagement with these three inter-relating aspects of colonialism and post-colonialism across Central and Eastern Europe, as well as consideration of

colonial discourse and power structures outside territorial colonies and formal empires. They also turn to geographical, political and cultural spaces that complicate the relationship between colonialism, the nation and language-specific cultural discourses even further than the Belgian case considered above.

This intra-European extension of the traditional field of Postcolonial Studies begins with Iulia-Karin Patrut's inquiry into the neglected case of German colonial involvement in Central and Eastern Europe and its wider significance for a postcolonial theory of intra-European colonialisms ("Conceptualizing German colonialisms within Europe"). Her analysis starts with the reconceptualization of German cultural discourse about the German presence in Eastern Europe during the eighteenth century and its racial turn during the nineteenth century, which, underpinned by asymmetrical power relations, produced colonial conditions along with the colonialist othering of non-German ethnicities. Very much like Krobb in his discussion of German colonial involvement overseas, Patrut also notes the defining synergy between the emergence of German national or nationalist discourse and colonial discourse. Prominent eighteenth-century critics already legitimize German colonial settlement in Eastern Europe by conceiving of the Germans as the superior harbingers of culture, charged by history to civilise the half-savages of Eastern Europe. During the nineteenth century such 'Germanization' of the East becomes a national project justifying German and Austrian domination. Patrut argues that, despite Albrecht's analysis of the stark differences between postcolonial conditions in Germany, Britain, France or Portugal, there is thus a structural analogy between white colonial returnees in those countries and the recent migration of East European Germans to Germany. Patrut then turns to the representation of Eastern European Jews and 'Gypsies' which German colonial discourse groups together as even more 'Oriental' and inferior than other ethnicities in Eastern Europe. By the end of the nineteenth century a typical colonialist pattern dominates which constructs the 'Gypsies' either as noble savages or as a dangerous threat to German culture and community. This shift to colonial and racialised discourse in the perception of the Romanies is reflected critically in Herta Müller's literary work, which questions German colonialist self-conceptions in Eastern Europe. Patrut's chosen example is the novella *Die große schwarze Achse* (The great black axle, 1984/87), which is set in a Banat Swabian village in socialist Romania and deconstructs the ethnic Germans' claims to cultural superiority. Patrut concludes with a call to redefine colonialism to account more

fully for intra-European colonialism, which, despite the Austrian-Hungarian empire, did not always go along with formal imperialism.

The next two essays are further steps in this direction. They focus on the postcolonial rereading of the Habsburg Empire as a complex historical and cultural space in which political, economic and cultural asymmetries marked by German-Austrian hegemony interact with multiple micro-colonialisms and increasingly disintegrative nationalist movements, as Marijan Bobinac explains in the introduction to his study of “Cultural transfer in the Habsburg Empire: Croatia and German-language culture from a post-colonial perspective”. Arguing that the merit of a postcolonial analysis of the history of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire lies primarily in a more differentiated account of *cultural* colonialism in the area, he draws attention to the case of Croatia during the mid nineteenth century, which is another example of how nation-building and colonial discourse interact. His case study explores the rise of Croatian national theatre during the years between 1840, when Zagreb saw the first theatre performance in the newly established Croatian language, and 1860, when protests disrupted the last German-language performance. Bobinac discusses stage history along with theatre criticism to illustrate how Croatian nationalism eventually broke with the established German theatre in Zagreb, which, as elsewhere across the Habsburg Empire, was increasingly seen as an outpost of the hegemonic Austrian centre. However, he also outlines the crucial role of cooperation between German troupes and Croatian theatre activists in the transitional process, citing as an example an intriguing bilingual performance in 1841 of the German Romantic writer Theodor Körner’s patriotic play *Zriny* (1812) about the Turkish siege of a South-Hungarian fortress in 1566. The fact that the Hungarian-Croatian troops spoke Croatian in this performance, while the Turkish characters spoke German, epitomizes the colonial dimension perceived in the relationship between the German-speaking ‘centre’ of the Austrian empire and its cultural ‘periphery’ at the point of Croatia’s own national emancipation.

Milka Car’s essay on “Literary legacies of the Habsburg Empire in a post-colonial perspective: the example of Miroslav Krleža” follows the postcolonial rereading of cultural history in the wake of the Austrian-Hungarian empire through to the final years of the monarchy and its legacy in Croatia after 1918. Car argues that the value of postcolonial analysis lies in the questioning of essentialist oppositions between colonial ‘master’ and colonised ‘subject’, ‘centre’ and ‘periphery’, which are blurred by the doubly peripheral position of the Croats in relation to the Hungarian crown and to the centre

Vienna, and by the role of the polemical distinction between ‘Europe’ and the ‘Balkans’ for the period’s discourse about Croatian identity. Returning to Patrut’s analysis of Orientalism with regard to Eastern Europe and drawing on Alexander Kiossev’s concept of “self-colonizing cultures,”²² Car argues that Croats in the early twentieth century found themselves in an indefinable space between West and East, modernity and backwardness, in which they were stereotyped as Europe’s ‘internal others.’ Krleža’s essayism of the 1920s and 1930s provides ample evidence of the continued role of colonial discourse in Croatian cultural criticism after 1918, while also illustrating how the author’s critical engagement with Habsburg legacies and Croatian self-colonisation anticipates modern postcolonial analysis.

Extending the scope of analysing intra-European colonialisms from the South-East to the North-East, the final two chapters turn to the postcolonial rereading of Baltic history, which is marked by equally complex and superimposed colonialisms as the Habsburg area. Patrut’s discussion of the cultural impact of German colonial settlement and hegemony in Eastern Europe remains relevant for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, while the area’s history since the eighteenth century also raises the difficult question of how to assess Russian and Soviet imperialism in postcolonial perspective. While the postcolonial rereading of Habsburg history since the turn of the millennium was a joint project by critics on both side of the former imperial power divide, the postcolonial reassessment of Baltic history appears to be primarily a Baltic and Nordic enterprise, embraced only cautiously by scholars working within Russia, although the intriguing and multi-faceted cases of Russian and Soviet imperialism offer rich material for the expansion and rethinking of postcolonial theory in conjunction with memory theory.²³

In her essay “Superimposed Soviet colonialism: the processing of Soviet memories in Estonian literature, theatre and film” Anneli Saro suggests a blending of Postcolonial Studies with Memory Studies to address imperial history in the region and the working through of its continuing legacies.

22 Alexander Kiossev: The Self-Colonizing Metaphor. In: <http://monument-to-transformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/s/self-colonization/the-self-colonizing-metaphor-alexander-kiossev.html> (accessed 26.10.2012).

23 See Johannes Feichtinger/Ursula Prutsch/Moritz Csáky (eds.): Habsburg postcolonial. Machtstrukturen und kollektives Gedächtnis. Innsbruck: StudienVerlag 2003; Violeta Kelertas (ed.): Baltic Postcolonialism. Amsterdam: Rodopi 2005.

Focusing on the memory of the Soviet period (1939-1991) rather than earlier German, Danish, Swedish, Polish and tsarist-Russian colonisation, she notes how the turbulent history of World War II and the trauma of re-colonisation, reflected most prominently in the Stalinist mass deportations of 1941 and 1949, have attracted significant attention in Estonian culture since the 1980s, while every-day life in Soviet Estonia after Stalin has only more recently become the subject of more depoliticised representation. Typical story-lines of war memory in plays by Estonian authors such as Jaan Kruusvall and Rein Salun and the novel *Purge* (2008) by Finnish writer Sofi Oksanen portray Estonians as victims of history, having to fight on different sides of the war or being subject or witness to the mass deportations. Where recent Estonian theatre and film remember every-day life during Soviet times, often again including the memory of the war and deportation, writers either work with documentary techniques or with stark irony, comedy and fantasy, giving recent productions a lighter tone. Saro argues that there is a shift from the tragic mode favoured by older-generation authors to the playful work of some younger writers. She also notes the continued need to work through the memory of Soviet colonialism in the Baltics.

The final chapter in this volume places Saro's case study in its wider context and also uses Baltic and Russian history more systematically to underline the need for international Postcolonial Studies to further develop the field in multidimensional and comparative perspectives. Epp Annus's study of "Layers of colonial rule in the Baltics: nation-building, the Soviet rule and the affectivity of a nation" begins with a theoretical discussion of the role of postcolonial criticism in Baltic and Russian Studies and with an overview of existing research. Postcolonial readings of Soviet rule face the problem that there was no Soviet colonialism in the singular; conditions differed significantly, for example, between Central Asia and the Baltics, which saw mass deportations, bloody executions and totalitarian rule after annexation in 1940. Annus then turns to the multiple layers of colonial rule that make the area unique: thirteenth-century invasions by German and Danish crusaders, Polish-Lithuanian and Swedish rule, Russian rule from the eighteenth century to 1918, which combined relative autonomy with the continuing hegemony of the Baltic German nobility. Complementing Krobb's, Patrut's and Bobinac's inquiries into the relationship between nineteenth-century colonialism and the emergence of the modern European nation states, Annus finds that it was the Baltic Germans and their self-perception as colonisers, rather than the Russian tsarist empire, that played the typical role of the

colonial master against whom the Estonian and Latvian national movements turned during the 1850s to 1880s. Echoing Bobinac's Croatian case study, Annus shows how Estonian and Latvian intellectuals used German cultural models to break with colonial conditions and 'invent' the modern Estonian and Latvian nations. She goes on to retrace the further development of Estonian and Latvian national narratives up to the violent return of colonial rule after 1940, when Soviet imperialism began to rewrite history and reshape society, placing Estonia and Latvia in very specific postcolonial conditions when independence was regained in 1991.

The Baltic colonial experience is thus the most recent considered in this volume, and like that of Ireland and Croatia it is one which saw a European country colonised by a superior European power, undercutting the conventional colonial opposition of European superiority and overseas inferiority, the European self and the colonial 'other'. There are thus discursive similarities to the treatment of Europe's internal others discussed in Patrut's study, but in this case the use of colonial discourse for nation-building relates to the colonised, as it did during decolonisation in Europe's former colonies overseas, rather than the colonisers, such as the Germans or, in the more recent Soviet context, hegemonic Russians. Moreover, in the Baltic case such intra-European colonisation occurred repeatedly, making the trauma of colonial experience, if anything, even more central to national identity and memory today. In the more general perspective of Comparative Postcolonial Studies the complexities of Russian and Soviet imperialism and the superimposed layers of colonial rule and hegemony in the Baltic and Habsburg areas warrant the further development of postcolonial theory and the need to move beyond neat and facile distinctions between perpetrators and victims. Collaboration in the Baltics, 'colonial complicity' in Scandinavia and the manifest links between German colonial expansion into Eastern Europe and overseas are just some of the examples of the multi-faceted interactions, connections and differences that define European colonial history and that are not accounted for in traditional Anglophone postcolonial theory.

The essays in section III thus underline the fact that postcolonial inquiry is far from exhausted; it suggests that further research into other European countries and nations will further enrich our understanding of the diversity and interconnectedness of colonial histories and postcolonial memory discourses across Europe. The editors are well aware that the volume in hand is far from comprehensive, failing to include, for example, case studies on the colonial histories and postcolonial memory discourses of Spain, Italy,

Sweden or Poland. Comparative Postcolonial Studies should be seen as a project which this volume aims to promote through international, interdisciplinary and multi-polar inquiry and dialogue.

Our book is based on the conference “(Post-) Colonialism across Europe: Transcultural History and National Memory”, which was hosted by the University of Bremen’s “Institut für Postkoloniale und Transkulturelle Studien” (Institute for Postcolonial and Transcultural Studies, INPUTS) in collaboration with the University of Nottingham on 13-15 September 2012. The editors would like to thank the German Research Council DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) for their generous funding of the conference and INPUTS for their support, both of the conference and of this volume. We also thank the Universities of Nottingham and Bremen for additional funding both of the conference and the book. Very special thanks go to Brian Corns for carefully editing the English of all authors, and to David Norris for checking translations from the Croatian. We also thank all those who made the conference such a lively and inspirational event and helped to secure the publication of this volume. This includes, last but not least, our contributors, to whom we owe a special debt for their intellectual curiosity and their commitment throughout the project.

Dirk Götsche