We hope you have gone through the articles published in the winter 2006 issue of the Journal devoted to the topic “Actually Existing Colonialisms,” edited by Gaurav Desai from Tulane University, New Orleans, USA, and have appreciated their relevance to the debate academics all over the world are engaged with on the question of American involvement in the affairs of other countries. The editor and the authors of the articles have voiced their concern at the spread of new colonialism across the world in various forms. Thus the postcolonial debates are getting charged with new meanings in the changing contexts of world politics. We hope you too will reflect critically on this situation and let us have your responses to the topic so that we publish them later in our Journal. We are happy that this issue has carried John Oliver Perry’s response to the issues raised in the special number of the Journal and Gaurav Desai’s answer to that response. We would encourage such critical exchanges in the pages of the Journal.

This issue has included some papers presented at the ninth international conference held in Udaipur in December 2006. Since the conference theme was on Indian knowledge-systems we thought that by publishing a few articles on this theme here we would be able to move into areas of critical praxis from high theory. So a transition has been made here from our earlier preoccupation with theory to our present concern with praxis, although it is not always possible to separate the one from the other. Moreover, Theory qua theory does not seem to have much relevance to our time now; in order to become useful as knowledge it must engage with the experiential reality of our every-day life by closing the gap between academic knowledge and worldliness of ideas. The Forum’s events will try to reflect this change in perspective. We have identified three broad areas for our future concern. They are: (i) Democracy and Human Rights; (ii) Gender and Cultural Studies; and (iii) Nature of Violence. Our workshops, courses, conferences, and publications will try to address issues related to these areas directly or indirectly. The support accorded by the Ford Foundation through the renewal of the grant for three more years will help us in a major way to carry on our activities for the benefit of scholars across disciplines throughout South Asia.

Editors

William P. Franke

The Ethical Posture of Post-Colonial Discourse in Said and in Gandhi

What are the ethical premises of a postcolonial literary criticism and theory? The fundamental problem of ethics is how to relate to and respect other persons. There is thus an ethical problem at the source of purportedly postcolonial criticism, that of how to speak of the other, not to mention to the other or for the other. And then we must turn it around and ask: Can the subaltern speak? But perhaps that is not for us to say. If we feel compelled to ask the question, at least we should have the sensitivity and restraint not to answer it, since then the subaltern really will have been preempted and not have been given a chance to speak for him or herself. But how can we comport ourselves in such a way that he or she might be free to do so? How can the subaltern be given a chance to speak? And then to further refocus not on answering for someone else, but on interrogating ourselves, we should concentrate rather on the question, Can we hear the subaltern speak?

Edward Said has been incomparably important for establishing postcolonial criticism as a discourse. And the ethical thrust of this critical discourse can hardly be conceived without reference to the penetrating analyses and piercing disclosures of his works. Yet ethically I believe Said’s discourse is problematic. In order to free the powerful ethical message of this type of criticism from an ethically inappropriate posture, I wish to isolate what I see as the shortcomings of Said’s approach and rhetoric—at least in the particularly influential form they took in his landmark book, Orientalism. Said’s mission is too important to be compromised by a polemical form of address. A hyperbolic style was undoubtedly necessary and was in fact fabulously effective in its time, yet it risks becoming something of a liability as time moves on. For an ethical perspective that can foster a postcolonial discourse of a radically different, yet truly revolutionary kind I propose to reconsider the vision of Mahatma Gandhi.

I. On Reading Said: Do We Need to be Shamed into Changing?

The writings of Edward Said have become enormously influential in
The Ethical Position of Post-Ceolrman Discourse in Spain and in England

[Text continues on the page]
purportedly been unmasked as simply lies because guilty of complicity in colonialism. Again, Said himself anticipates the charge he provokes and warns, “One ought never to assume that the structure of Orientalism is nothing more than a structure of lies or of myths which, were the truth about them to be told, would simply blow away” (p. 6). Yet, in decisive ways at many junctures, that is exactly what is insinuated. What is unquestionably persuasive in Said’s analysis of “the knitted-together strength of Orientalist discourse” is that the power of a paradigm is startlingly revealed by piecing together its disparate elements and expressions. But this too is nothing other than what Orientalists, good ones, as well as other analysts of societies, do. Such analyses tend to produce unified, monolithic significances that they pin to the living, changing, self-contradictory objects of their analysis. My contention is that Said’s critical discourse has done just that concerning the West, and grandly.

Said’s revisionist narrative of world history is in many ways just as “orientalizing” as are the imperialist versions of this history. It is their reversal—somewhat as in a mirror image. As Said recounts it, there is one universal sense of history in every instance across the planet: imperialist exploitation of non-Western peoples, in the service of which orientalizing misrepresentation is deployed. Said is critically sophisticated enough to explicitly deny that this can be his intention. But it tends inexorably to be the drift of his analyses, which he himself acknowledges are inextricably “political.” Said’s supposedly critical interpretations are steered by ideology and employ exactly the same sort of propagandaistic means that they expose and deplore. His very attempt to represent “the West” and its history in its fundamental motivations inevitably “orientalizes” this region and history by attributing it one, constant significance.

In the first chapter of Orientalism, Said investigates first the relation to the East as essentially one of knowing it, and as such this is also automatically a power relationship. In the second section of the chapter, he describes how the East is imagined in the culture of Orientalism, how it is thus defamiliarized and made unreal. The third section examines the “project” whereby the West makes connection with the East in order to control it, as it did with the Suez canal in 1869 (until 1956). This is the logical—and practical—conclusion of the Orientalist idea. It exalts a “true, classical Orient that could be used to judge and rule the modern Orient” (p. 72). The fourth section discusses how “crisis” occurs because the intellectual construction of Orientalism meets with resistance from the actual Orient after World War I. This results in a growing rift between East and West.

It is, of course, true of anything and anybody that being represented means being put in a passive role of being manipulated by something or someone alien and external. Likewise Said’s own representations put Orientalism in a passive role; they generalize about it and flatten it out. It is given a single sense, one which condemns a whole amorphous, incoherent, inconsistent corpus. Here is a very average sort of statement about Orientalism “in general” in Said’s discourse, following up Isaiah Berlin’s remarks about its “anti-empirical” attitude:

And so, indeed, is the Orientalist attitude in general. It shares with magic and with mythology the self-containing, self-reinforcing character of a closed system, in which objects are what they are because they are what they are, for once, for all time, for ontological reasons that no empirical material can either dislodge or alter (p. 70).

Said’s discourse, despite all its detailed differentiation and analysis, creates this monolith “Orientalism”: it is valuable and fascinating for showing lines of coherence between radically different types of Orientalist discourse. But he does still attempt to assign it a single significance as a whole. This is exactly what he condemns Orientalism for having done to the Orient. For him, everything written and represented about the East aims at dominating it. This is to some extent true of representations of anything: knowledge is inevitably in some sense an effort to master and control. And rational discourse invariably tends to homogenize what it is about and to turn it into a system. Certainly Said has attempted to dominate and even undo Orientalism by representing and analyzing it in his book of that title.

Forms of Western representation, not least in the arena of philosophical discourse, have also gone to great lengths to counteract these inherent propensities of rational discourse. In a spirit of criticism, reactive counter-discourses develop a certain capacity to negate themselves and to attempt to open towards the Other rather than subjugate it. This same self-critical movement is what makes Said’s own critical discourse possible. It is a negation of Western orientalizing representation. It can be persuasive because critical discourse as practiced in the West and in Europe has valorized what it cannot itself attain and control. There is precisely in
Western, at least in avant-garde critical discourse, an acute appreciation, arguably even an overestimation of and fascination with otherness. The Other is recognized as what cannot be comprehended or said.

Said emphasizes only the West’s domination of the East, not because this is all there is in discourses about the East, but for political reasons of his own. That is all he wants to see because he thinks there is an imbalance in history that ought somehow to be redressed. This is understandable as part of the struggle for power. It may even be necessary and serve by some compensatory logic in the struggle for justice. He resorts to a strategy of using shame rather than directly opposing power with power. But this does involve Said in presenting his discourse as factual—in the rhetorical trappings of telling it the way it really is—and thereby occulting the way in which the facts he divulges are also shaped as the products of his analysis itself. And this is at bottom a self-misrepresentation and mystification of the same sort as he accuses Orientalism of resorting to when he charges, “Orientalism is involved in worldly, historical circumstances which it has tried to conceal behind an often pompous scientism and appeals to rationalism” (p. 10).

We must, then, be a little suspicious of Said’s assuming a posture of scholarly detachment: “What interests me most as a scholar is not the gross political verity but the detail . . . ” (p. 10). He knows he cannot assert that there is a single, simple truth to this story and that he is telling it. Yet under the guise of a negative rhetoric and saying that this is not what really interests him—“not the gross political verity”—he has nevertheless given his reader to conceive of a macroscopic Verity: he does not even say what it is, but we know exactly what he means, and also that it is for him “gross” not only in a literal sense of magnitude but also in a strongly judgmental, pejorative sense that is indirectly, even subliminally insinuated.

Said writes of Orientalism in his original introduction, “nor is it representative and expressive of some nefarious ‘Western’ imperialist plot to hold down the ‘Oriental’ world” (p. 12). Yet the arguments of the book are not disciplined by such general acknowledgments. They argue rather for incriminating a whole civilization or group of civilizations as imperialist and therefore guilty of the most heinous crimes of systematically and mercilessly oppressing whole peoples out of wholly selfish, exploitative and inhuman motives, while mendaciously masquerading as something wholly benign. This accusation is written into the whole texture of Said’s representations and generally speaks up shrilly at a crucial point in every specific discussion. Empire, as synonymous with oppression, constitutes without exception the “worldly, historical circumstances” that Orientalism has tried to conceal. Imperial domination is “the big dominating fact” that governs every detail of everyday life and its representations (p. 11). And that imperial fact, we are led to believe, has the same essential meaning always and everywhere: oppression, nothing else, however various its forms and manifestations.

Said’s analyses have polemical bite to them, and this is crucial to motivate certain kinds of change. But they do not present the whole truth objectively. Indeed how could they on Said’s own stated premises, including the premise that all knowledge, however academic or impartial, is “political”? Thus they themselves call for critique and counter-argument. I would like to think that Said would recognize this sort of response as an indication of the success, at least rhetorically if not politically, of his writing. It shows that he has been heard, even if not completely believed and embraced. To the extent his arguments attempt to enlist adherence to a cause through purportedly coercive logic, they are themselves complicit in the sort of regime they decry and seek to depose.

Said’s case against empire, I submit, is based on an essentializing identification of a system and indeed a whole civilization with certain agents, or simply with “the West.” But the system is not one and the same, self-identical, no matter from where and by whom it is viewed, and it is not the simple result of these agents’ will, as if by divine fiat. Certainly we can agree that these agents are objects of history too, and this means that they too are reacting even before they are acting in order to impose their will, which will is in fact many, oftentimes contradictory wills. That some of them sometimes possess certain decisive privileges and powers is not to be gainsaid. But neither are the ambiguities of these “advantages.” That Westerners living within the “empires” of Britain, France, and the United States are interested and self-interested is surely true. But it is no less true of others living elsewhere. As the object of Said’s discourse, colonizing countries and their diverse motivations and contradictory actions are flattened out into a single history of oppression. Though he differentiates between Orientalisms, he writes as if he holds the key to interpreting the real character and motives of them all.

Although Said treats Orientalism in its varied historical transformations,
Orientalism’s “failures, its lamentable jargon, its scarcely concealed racism, its paper-thin intellectual apparatus” (p. 322). Moreover, Said’s discourse itself indulges in broad generalizations, for example, where it begins a sentence about “the Western consumer” with “always”:

Always there lurks the assumption that although the Western consumer belongs to a numerical minority, he is entitled either to own or to expend (or both) the majority of the world resources. Why? Because he, unlike the Oriental, is a true human being. No better instance exists today of what Anwar Abdel Malek calls ‘the hegemonism of possessing minorities’ and anthropocentrism allied with Eurocentrism: a white middle-class Westerner believes it his human prerogative not only to manage the nonwhite world but also to own it, just because by definition ‘it’ is not quite as human as ‘we’ are. There is no purer example than this of dehumanized thought. (p. 108)

Now the horrible thing is that there is some truth to this stereotype. It may even serve a purpose to shove it crudely into view in this way. Still, we should not take this as more than a caricature. It has all too much validity at that level. My point is how similar Said’s description is to the methods of representation against which he is protesting. Granted, his account is historically differentiated and nuanced, but that only makes it all the richer as caricature, since one overarching sense still controls the meaning of every detail of the representation.

The great 19th century Orientalists themselves knew and sometimes acknowledged or hinted that their portraits were a little inaccurate or caricatural, but they maintained that this was necessary and justified for practical purposes and for teaching how to manage these otherwise ungovernable masses. Orientalist representations too can be very detailed and differentiated and are so increasingly as knowledge of any given region or people grows. The problem is that these differences are presented only as variations on a theme and become the way of confirming a general rule, and this is to treat those who are represented as unfree and as fixed by their significance for us and in our interpretation. But this is eminently the case too with Said’s interpretation of Orientalism.

Said complains that the Orient is debased by being made an object of study and turned into a text, but his own anti-imperialist discourse is also based almost entirely on texts. Furthermore, just the indignant tone of Said’s treatment tends to augment the difficulty of opening up complex histories to analysis of their paradoxes. This tone is not
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The modern world has witnessed a shift in the balance of power among nations. The United States, once a dominant economic and military force, now faces challenges from emerging powers such as China and Russia. This shift has led to a reevaluation of the rules governing international relations, with a greater emphasis on cultural and ethical considerations. In this context, the concept of post-colonial discourse becomes increasingly relevant.

Post-colonial discourse refers to the scholarly study of the relationships between former colonies and their former colonial powers. This field emerged in the 1970s as a response to the limitations of traditional colonial studies, which tended to focus on the political and economic aspects of colonialism. Post-colonial discourse, on the other hand, emphasizes the cultural, ethical, and social impacts of colonialism.

One of the key concepts in post-colonial discourse is the notion of decolonization. Decolonization is the process of摆脱殖民统治, achieving autonomy, and establishing a new identity. This process is not just political or economic, but also cultural and ethical. It involves the reevaluation of traditional values and the adoption of new ones that reflect the needs and aspirations of the local population.

Another important element of post-colonial discourse is the role of identity. In a post-colonial context, identity is not just a matter of belonging to a particular race or nation, but also of embracing a shared cultural heritage. This is particularly relevant in a world where globalization has led to the homogenization of cultures and the loss of unique local identities.

In conclusion, post-colonial discourse is a powerful tool for understanding the complexities of the modern world. It challenges traditional ways of thinking about power dynamics and encourages a more nuanced and empathetic approach to international relations.
that 'big' facts like imperial domination can be applied mechanically and
deterministically to such complex matters as culture and ideas, then we will
begin to approach an interesting kind of study” (p. 12). Said eloquently
rejects generalizing arguments. He puts us on our guard against the
tendency of discourse to treat its objects as stable by defining them.
This is exactly what he objects to in Orientalist discourse: “Orientalism
assumed an unchanging Orient, absolutely different (the reasons change
from epoch to epoch) from the West” (p. 96). Yet, paradoxically, his own
argument, for all its specific detail, is powerfully generalizing: it always
comes round to the same simple, inevitable conclusion about the absolute
evil perpetrated by agents of empire. This is the frame that enables so
much more complex and polyvalent analyses all to hang together. Their
overall meaning is clear and powerfully general, though the details on
their own would defy pat answers to questions of causation and blame.
This sort of layered structure is not illegitimate, but it does contradict the
repudiation of generalization that Said theoretically espouses.

Besides, a generalized attack on generalization is much too general.
Generalities are wrong and offensive when the subject under discussion
is an individual human being. In an individual case, respect for a person’s
uniqueness is the first imperative. But we do not discuss only individuals.
Even if we hold, at the metaphysical level, that only individuals exist
(a position called Nominalism), still we must talk, and talk a lot, about
the formal structures that organize individuals into a world. Although
these forms and structures are not ultimate realities, they are the basis
for any relative coherence in our experience and action, and we must
discuss them in general terms. In fact, all language is general: words
are significant because they can be reiterated again and again, with
something of the same meaning, in different concrete instances. This is
epistemologically inescapable.

Western culture is totalizing not because “it” believes in generalizations
any more than Said does. Western cultural masterpieces have intervened
effectively and ingeniously upon their own historical situations.
Western theory has developed probably the highest degree of critical
consciousness of the historical contingency of interpretation. Said too
generalizes in order to argue against the monolith of Orientalism—which
his own interpretation actually constitutes as a totality. This may be
justified as necessary to counter a hegemonic universalistic discourse,
but generalization can be justified similarly by strategic motives for
canonical authors too. We cannot go on attributing complacent, self-
congratulatory assumptions of universality indiscriminately to any
traditional or canonical voice within Western literature. It is much more
often just the opposite: those authors who are profoundly disturbed and
disturbing have tended to be held up as “great.”

Said’s analyses and critiques at their deepest level are not really about
Orientalism specifically but apply to all disciplinary knowledge and even
to representation in general. Said’s book is a detailed demonstration of
how pervasive prejudice is in the discourse of Orientalism. But this is
hardly the case only, or perhaps even to an exceptional, excessive degree,
in discourse about the Orient. Said’s argument essentializes a tendency of
discourses about other people or places or systems and suggests that
the tendency to derogatory generalization and prejudice is peculiarly
Western and Orientalist.

It is the very nature of representation to be self-enclosed, theatrical,
narcissistic, self-referential. Representation per se is “orientalizing”: it is
an appropriation and falsifying familiarization of the other. Representing
even strangeness inevitably domesticates it, projecting ineluctably one’s
own perceptions and preoccupations onto it. Knowledge necessarily
treats its object qua object as non-active—non-autonomous and non-
sovereign. Said’s argument has not so much a geographical as an
epistemological purport. And this tends to undercut its force as a
complaint about the abuses in any specific region or on the part of specific
political powers, since it is exactly the same story anywhere else, indeed
everywhere else.

Said’s discourse is historically circumscribed and rich in detail, so
much so that we are apt to forget that it is an argument about the general
structures of distortion inherent to any representation of other cultures.
In the overall context of Said’s indictments, these observations read as
accusations leveled specifically against Orientalism. We receive the
impression that it alone is guilty of gravely mendacious misrepresentation
rather than simply exemplifying the structural distortions of representation
as such. Said lets the general epistemological drift towards objectifying
whatever discourse is about be confounded with his historical theses
concerning specific regions and agents of discourse—“the West”—so
that we no longer perceive the difference and are persuaded to blame
one guilty party for the fact that representation is distortion and that
the world is not just. In this regard, Said’s style of argument may well
This may be true in a postmodern age, but this difference will help check the different types of truth at stake. Different, this difference is intrinsic to the construction of work and this is another.

If this is done, the world is open to the self, and this one's power to direct effect is the absolute, 'productive' power of the world.

This is necessary to construction of the self, the reader. The 'reading' of the text is constructing the self, the reader. This is necessary to construction of the self, the reader. The 'reading' of the text is constructing the self, the reader. This is necessary to construction of the self, the reader. The 'reading' of the text is constructing the self, the reader.


no such self can be individuated and made present as any positive sort of existence, nevertheless, it can be a principle effectively determining action based on it as a moral postulate and ideal: it is real in proportion to the faith and commitment of those who act upon it. It is not a matter of concepts; it cannot be adequately conceptualized, but must rather be enacted. Only thus can it escape from the inevitable dilemmas of conceptualization, which is always compromised by the struggle for defining others and for gaining power over them.

This force coming from within, as if from nowhere, is necessary in order not to respond to aggression or exploitation simply from within the dynamic of retaliation and the dialectic of reciprocal violence. By passive resistance one is passive, absolutely passive, with respect to the oppressions befalling one from without. By completely withdrawing from all relation to the oppressor, including all will to retaliate, one is no longer ruled by this unjust government that lacks the consent of the governed. One is no longer induced by the aggression of the other to take up in consequence a symmetrically correlative position as combative and at war. One may be abused in one’s outward being, but not ruled in one’s true or inner being. In this inner sphere of self-determination, one is free to will oneself free. This is in fact the nature of human freedom as a genuine source of novelty. Here the self is the spontaneous origin of itself. This sort of freedom is not simply given in the nature of things, but human beings can believe in this freedom of self-rule and thereby actually realize and experience it.

Passive resistance is infinite and unlimited resistance that resists even being drawn into a violent relation of push-and-shove with oppression because it is absolute in its resistance to oppression and therefore to violence. It refuses to be provoked by oppression into abandoning itself and its own intrinsic peace, refuses to be contaminated by the mentality of war and oppression that threatens and endeavors to intimidate it from without. In this sense, it is not just passive but rather proactive. This is a passivity that is not the opposite of any activity, not a reaction, but an absolute, positive, creative, productive, originary force of peace. Like passivity in Levinas, it is prior to any agency of ego and its conditions of possibility. For Gandhi it comes from the Self rather than from the Other, but really, by complete self-abnegation and detachment, it is altogether outside the dialectic of self and other. It recognizes such invidious dichotomies as illusory and thereby escapes the prison of the self that construes itself through opposition to others.

To blame the colonialists and to want to take away from them what they took or in any case acquired is to credit and accept their version of history as the triumph of their will. Gandhi rather reads victory and domination as a defeat for the colonizers own freedom, worsted by their greed and arrogance. It is for him stronger and also truer to pity them than to blame them. Blaming colonizers is predicated on acceptance of their interpretation of their own values as superior; followed by lamenting that they have the power they do, rather than seeing their position of domination as in itself already a perversion and an enslavement. Only when the colonized have already accepted the values and standards of the colonizers do the acts of the latter appear as successful and as working to their advantage as aggressors. Only then can the colonized be moved to imitate the colonizers actions in the attempt to reverse the subjugation and regain the advantage for themselves.

Gandhi shows that the tragedy and crime of colonization is not the imposition by force of superior might, but rather the weakness of the old civilization in accommodating itself to the invader and accepting the apparently stronger order of the colonizer as dominant and thereby relinquishing their own inalienable command and sovereignty over themselves. Indians became subject to English rule because of a failure of their own self-rule. “The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them” (p. 39). Gandhi therefore enjoins his fellow Indians to “cease to blame the English. They rather deserve our sympathy. They are a shrewd nation and I, therefore, believe that they will cast off the evil” (p. 38).

Gandhi’s teaching on Home Rule as self-mastery is every bit as true now as it was when he first articulated it in 1908. He is saying “be free” here and now. If home rule does not start at home, within each individual Indian and each individual anywhere, no one will ever be free. For Gandhi, “Parliaments are really emblems of slavery” (p. 38). They mean delegating oneself, relying on someone else to exercise one’s freedom, rather than becoming and remaining free in and for oneself.

III. Conclusion: Critical Consciousness, Non-Retaliation, and Escape from the Syndrome of Revenge

More often than not, those who are most desirous to possess certain
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Notes

Particular Violence and Oppression

of Other, Reaction against the System of Oppression, lends itself inherently to...

The struggle to extract force over direction by becoming good ourselves. The struggle to extract force over direction by becoming good ourselves. We can only influence them in this way.

It is impossible to force others to be good. We can only influence them in this way. If we are not morally elevated by anything we come to consider the other, and we are not good ourselves, then we are not able to...

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...
discourse without becoming entangled in the intrigue of these detractions and promotions.

2. For some good work of Orientalists that is left out of account by Said, see Goldziher and Snouck on Islamic colonialism, and Arberry and Hourani on French and British imperial colonialism.

Works Cited


“...there is a paradox at the heart of the historian's practice: the reality to which the historian's interpretation is produced by that interpretation, yet the legitimacy of the interpretation is said to rest on its faithfulness to a reality that lies outside, or exists prior to, interpretation. History functions through an inextricable connection between reality and interpretation as separate and separable entities. The historian's inevitable dilemma consists in the need simultaneously to avow interpretation and to disavow the productive role interpretation plays in the construction of knowledge. This dilemma is not a new discovery, neither the product of the ravings of radical relativists nor the by-product of some nihilistic 'deconstructionism'; it inheres in the practice of history itself.” (Scott 2001: 86)

Where do our present discourses about most commonplace issues in applied linguistics come from? What have been the various articulations (Hall 1996) and assemblages in the past and how does probing some of their (semi)sealed boundaries allow us to cast analytic attention on the interpretive operations of the discipline, to the various ways in which it achieves its authority, its reality effect (Barthes 1986: 131)? Why is it important that Applied Linguistics attempt to come to terms with its present by reaching back into the 'past,' and what do we begin to uncover when we cross-question our current interpretations of key debates in the field? As Joan Scott above points out, all historical endeavours are interpretations and all interpretations should always remain open to disavowal. Implicit in her statements is the idea that stepping into “history,” “the past” (singularities which we must contest) is like stepping into quicksand—there is really no “firm base” from which to proceed, only an assemblage of images, documents, speeches, figures, relatives, artifacts, recordings, and photographs that have entered our consciousness and that we have to sift through as we attempt to make sense of our present. These fragments, on which we impose a coherence and linearity, emerge in prescribed forms in most every aspect of the ELT domain of applied linguistics (including language attitudes, world Englishes, pedagogic practices, language policies, pedagogic tools) and get articulated and