INTRODUCTION
Imagining development

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> Development occupies the centre of an incredibly powerful semantic constellation…at the same time, very few words are as feeble, as fragile and as incapable of giving substance and meaning to thought and behaviour.
>
> (Esteva 1992:8)

In March 1895, on his return from a tour of duty as Commissioner in British Central Africa (Malawi), Sir Harry Johnston spoke to the Royal Geographical Society about the changing character of British rule in Central Africa. Johnston drew a vivid picture for his audience of two contrasting landscapes:

> The Lower Shire district…was a marshy country, with only one European occasionally residing at a half-formed station, and with a native population scarcely exceeding one thousand. The country had become almost uninhabited through the raids of certain Mokololo chiefs and some powerful tribes north of the Zambesi…. In the Mlanje District there was practically chaos. The chiefs of the aggressive Yao tribes…had taken complete possession of this rich district, the few European planters were menaced in their lives and property, and the only mission station had to be abandoned…. In short, throughout all this country there was absolutely no security for life and property for natives, and not over-much for the Europeans…. Everything had got to be commenced; there was no proper postal service, there were no customs-houses, no roads suitable for wheeled traffic, very little labour in the coffee plantations; the forests of the land were being steadily destroyed year by year by bush fires, and the navigation of the Shire River was entirely at the mercy of evil-minded slave traders.
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> (Johnston 1895:194–6)

A mere three years later, according to Johnston, the visible landscape had been dramatically transformed under the benign influence of British rule:

> An increasing number of natives are able to read and write, and, above all, are trained to respect and to value a settled and civilized government …. Here will be seen clean broad level roads, bordered by handsome avenues of trees, and comely red brick houses with rose-covered verandahs peeping out behind clumps of ornamental shrubs. The natives who pass along are clothed in white calico, with some gaudy touch of colour superadded. A bell is ringing to call the children to the mission school. A planter gallops past on horseback, or a missionary trots in on a fat white donkey from a visit to an outlying station. Long rows of native carriers pass in Indian file, carrying loads of European goods, or a smart-looking policeman, in black fez, black jacket and breeches marches off on some errand. You will see a post-office, a court of justice, and possibly a prison, the occupants of which, however, will be out mending roads under the superintendence of some very business-like policeman of their own colour. The most interesting feature in the neighbourhood of these settlements at the present time is the coffee-plantation, which, to a great extent, is the cause and support of our prosperity.
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> (Johnston 1895:202, 211)

Johnston's was a highly stylized rendering of the reordering of space: the civilized, ordered, white, male, English landscape erases its unordered, savage, chaotic, dangerous, African predecessor. For Johnston, colonialism was about gaining control of disorderly territory and setting loose the redemptive powers of development. The African landscape is rewritten, figuratively and literally, to reflect the subsumption of one reality by another. Africans are incorporated into this landscape as garbed agents of a higher power. Their bodies and behaviours testify to the new order. The text smooths out incongruities and inconsistencies, and erases all oppositional voices and spaces of dissent. Africans become objects for the application of power rather than subjects experiencing and responding to the exercise of that power. This is the power of development: the power to transform old worlds, the power to imagine new ones.

   Johnston's audience knew exactly what these encouraging scenes meant. He was, after all, talking about the 'cause and support of our prosperity.' In contrast, as Michael Cowen and Robert Shenton point out in the first chapter of this volume, open almost any contemporary development text and all is confusion. Both the meaning and the purpose of development look rather like the Lower Shire in 1892; at best 'marshy,' more often 'practically chaos.' And yet, as an arena of study and practice, one of the basic impulses of those who write development is a desire to define, categorize and bring order to a heterogeneous and constantly multiplying field of meaning. In a recent spate of development dictionaries we sense an urgent, even desperate, attempt to stabilize development and bring order out of ambiguity (Eatwell *et al.* 1989; Welsh and Butorin 1990; Fry and Martin 1991; Sachs 1992; Hadjor 1993). These dictionaries merely confirm that development is a most elusive concept. Perhaps, as Sachs (1992:1–5) suggests, it

ought to be banned. But first it would be necessary to say what exactly should be banished. Thus, in the very call for banishment, Sachs implicitly suggests that it is possible to arrive at an unequivocal definition.

This book does not attempt to provide a more precise definition of 'development' and none of the contributors were asked to offer one. Nor is it about 'development theory'—the self-designated academic field which attempts to verbally model 'real world' processes of development—and its recurrent internal crises and impasses (Booth 1985; Binder 1986; Edwards 1989; Hunt 1989; Mathur 1989; Sutton 1989; Corbridge 1990; Hettne 1990; Slater 1990; Manzo 1991; Kay 1993; Schuurman 1993; Leys, forthcoming). Much continues to be written on the theme of what development is (or should be), what it does (or fails to do) and how it can be better implemented (Toye 1987; Kothari 1988; Norgaard 1992; Alvares 1992a; Pottier 1992; Hobart 1993; Moser 1993). Rather than asking what development is, or is not, or how it can be more accurately defined, better 'theorized,' or sustainably practised, the authors in this volume are generally more interested in a different kind of question. Here the primary focus is on the texts and words of development —on the ways that development is written, narrated and spoken; on the vocabularies deployed in development texts to construct the world as an unruly terrain requiring management and intervention; on their stylized and repetitive form and content, their spatial imagery and symbolism, their use (and abuse) of history, their modes of establishing expertise and authority and silencing alternative voices; on the forms of knowledge that development produces and assumes; and on the power relations it underwrites and reproduces.

The *discourse* of development, the forms in which it makes its arguments and establishes its authority, the manner in which it constructs the world, are usually seen as self-evident and unworthy of attention. This book's primary intention is to try and make the self-evident problematical. The concern with this issue is influenced by similar concerns in other disciplines and fields. Three connections, in particular, should be mentioned: first, there is the 'textual turn' in the social sciences and humanities which has focused attention on the conventions of writing and representation by which Western disciplines and institutions 'make sense' of the world (see, for example, Said 1983; McCloskey 1985, 1990; Clifford and Marcus 1986; White 1987; Atkinson 1990; Crush 1991; Barnes and Duncan 1992; Campbell 1992; Dalby 1992; Preston and Simpson-Housley 1994). Second, there is the impact of post-modern, post-colonial and feminist thought which have converged upon the truth claims of modernism and shown how the production of Western knowledge is inseparable from the exercise of Western power (for example, Said 1978, 1993; Minh-Ha 1989; Spivak 1990b; Young, R. 1990; Mohanty *et al.* 1991; Ahmad 1992; Norris 1992; Godlewska and Smith 1994). And third, there is the growing struggle within postcolonial thought to loosen the power of Western knowledge and reassert the value of alternative experiences and ways of knowing (for example, Fanon 1968; Thiong'o 1986; Spivak 1987, 1990b; Stauffer 1990; Nandy 1991; Long and Long 1992; Momsen and Kinnaird 1993;

Appiah 1992; Breckenridge and van der Veer 1993; Corbridge 1993; Sardar, Nandy and Davies 1993; Bhabha 1994; Crush 1994).

Perhaps, it might be objected, to subject development to such an inquisition is simply another form of faddish intellectualism destined, like all the others, to bloom and fade. Certainly it is true that the work and words of development will continue on pretty well regardless. However, this form of analysis does, I believe, offer new ways of understanding what development is and does, and why it seems so difficult to think beyond it. The idea that the texts of development might be analysed as a form of writing is not altogether new (Escobar 1984, 1988, 1994; Horesh 1985; Wood 1985; Apter 1987; Ferguson 1990; Apffel Marglin and Marglin 1990; Manzo 1991; Parajuli 1991; Pieterse 1991; Slater 1992a, 1992b). But what, it might be asked, is the point of literary pursuits in such a non-literary domain? The developer will say that there is no time for such esoterica. Surely the practical challenges of development are so pressing that we can scarcely afford to bother with this kind of armchair contemplation? By bringing together a selection of the work of scholars who are currently grappling with these issues, and trying to make it accessible to an interdisciplinary audience of students of development studies, this book will hopefully further the debate around the issue of whether it is possible to extricate ourselves from the development morass.

As most of us are aware, development rarely seems to 'work'—or at least with the consequences intended or the outcomes predicted. Why then, if it is so unworkable, does it not only persist but seem continuously to be expanding its reach and scope? Could it be that development does in fact work very well? It is just that what it says it is doing, and what we believe it to be doing, are simply not what is actually happening. And if this is so, then perhaps we need to understand not only why the language of development can be so evasive, even misleading, but also why so many people in so many parts of the world seem to need to believe it and have done so for so long.

Language is fundamental to the way in which we order, understand, intervene and justify those interventions into the natural and social world. Admittedly, most writing on development is prosaic in the extreme—leaden, jargon-ridden, hackneyed and exclusionary. In addition, the structure and form of the development text is highly stylized and repetitive. Nevertheless, for all their pedantry and pretension, the texts of development are, of necessity, also written in a representational language—a language of metaphor, image, allusion, fantasy, and rhetoric. These imagined worlds of development writing and speaking often appear to bear very little resemb lance to any commonsense reality. To find out about a country, one usually does not read its development plan. In a textual field so laden with evasion, misrepresentation, dissimulation and just plain humbug, language often seems to be profoundly misleading or, at best, have only limited referential value. How then does it have such staying power?

The texts of development have always been avowedly strategic and tactical — promoting, licensing and justifying certain interventions and practices, delegitimizing and excluding others. An interest in how the texts of development

write and represent the world is therefore, by extension, an interest in how they interact with the strategies and tactics of their authors and of those who lend them authority. What is expertise, after all? And why is there so much of it inside what James Ferguson (1990) aptly calls 'the development machine'? Why does expertise license certain forms of speech and not others? What do the texts of development not say? What do they suppress? Who do they silence—and why?

In identifying an object for analysis this book focuses first on the texts of development and only secondarily on its projects and practices. In generic terms, the objects of analysis are the reports, plans, analyses, evaluations, assessments, consultancies, papers, books, policies, speeches, discussions, debates, presentations and conversations that circulate within and through the apparatus of agencies and institutions of the development machine. The authors of these texts include the legions of planners, practitioners, consultants, experts, scholars, advocates, theorists and critics in the employ of or associated with this institutional and disciplinary nexus. Their names and individual identities are generally not that important, so stylized are their texts, though like any disciplinary field, development has its authority figures whose ideas prompt genuflection and ritual obeisance by others.

In arguing that more attention should be paid to the language of development, we need simultaneously to resist the submersion of the world by the words of development. Though development is fundamentally textual it is also fundamentally irreducible to a set of textual images and representations. Even as they explore facets of the rhetoric and language of development, the essays in this volume implicitly reject the conceit that language is all there is. The primary purpose of the development text (like most others) is to convince, to persuade, that this (and not that) is the way the world actually is and ought to be amended. But ideas about development do not arise in a social, institutional or literary vacuum. They are rather assembled within a vast hierarchical apparatus of knowledge production and consumption sometimes known, with metaphorical precision, as the 'development industry.' This industry is itself implicated in the operation of networks of power and domination that, in the twentieth century, have come to encompass the entire globe. As Claude Alvares (1992b:230) points out, 'knowledge is power, but power is also knowledge. Power decides what is knowledge and what is not knowledge.' A contextual reading of the literature of development therefore has a great deal to say about the apparatuses of power and domination within which those texts emerge, circulate and are consumed. The aim in this kind of approach is literary analysis as prelude to *critique*. As Said (1983: 221) has noted 'the fascinated description of exercised power is never a substitute for trying to change power relationships within society.'

Languages are never self-referential but are instead constructed within 'social fields of force, power and privilege' (Polier and Roseberry 1989). The challenge, therefore, is both to situate the texts of development in their historical and social context, and to decode 'the subtleties of contextual presences in texts' (Cunningham 1994:45). Many of the authors in this volume come out of a political

economy tradition that argues that politics and economics have a real existence that is not reducible to the texts that describe and represent them. Textual analysis is a dangerous activity if it succeeds in supplanting political engagement with poetical reflection, in 'reducing life to language and obliterating the relations of power, exploitation and inequality that order society and history' (Palmer 1990).

Development discourse promotes and justifies very real interventions and practices with very real (though invariably unintended) consequences. To incarcerate or confine these (often catastrophic) effects within the text is to embark on a dangerous 'descent into discourse' (Palmer 1990). In this volume, poetics and politics are generally envisioned as discrete, though interwoven, strands of social life. In this way, conceptual space is made for an exploration of the links between the discursive and the non-discursive; between the words, the practices and the institutional expressions of development; between the relations of power and domination that order the world and the words and images that represent those worlds.

Development discourse is constituted and reproduced within a set of material relationships, activities and powers—social, cultural and geopolitical. To comprehend the real power of development we cannot ignore either the immediate institutional or the broader historical and geographical context within which its texts are produced. The immediate context is provided by 'the development machine.' This machine is global in its reach, encompassing departments and bureaucracies in colonial and post-colonial states throughout the world, Western aid agencies, multilateral organizations, the sprawling global network of NGOs, experts and private consultants, private sector organizations such as banks and companies that marshall the rhetoric of development, and the plethora of development studies programmes in institutes of learning worldwide.

As Arturo Escobar (this volume) suggests, development can be seen as an apparatus 'that links forms of knowledge about the Third World with the deployment of forms of power and intervention, resulting in the mapping and production of Third World societies.' Development is thus fundamentally about mapping and making, about the spatial reach of power and the control and management of other peoples, territories, environments, and places. In their chapter, Cowen and Shenton argue that development at its birth involved the crafting of a set of managerial strategies (what they call trusteeship) to cope with the disruptions of social disorder within Europe and, later, the colonial and post-colonial worlds. But, as they imply, development is not simply a closed system of 'arrogant interventionism' (Sachs 1992:2)—an unproblematical set of instruments and justifications for the application of strategic Western power and domination and the subjugation of the dismissively labelled 'Third World.'

Power, as Said (1983:221) suggests, is analogous 'neither to a spider's web without the spider nor to a smoothly functioning flow diagram; a great deal of power remains in such coarse items as the relationships between rulers and ruled, wealth and privilege, monopolies of coercion, and the central state apparatus.' Power in the context of development is power *exercised,* power *over*. It has origins, objects,

purposes, consequences, agents, and, *contra* Foucault, much of this seems to lie quite patently within the realm of the economic and the political. There are also 'ascertainable changes stemming from who holds power and who dominates who' (Said 1983:221). The imaginary and practice of development are not static entities impervious to change. Development discourse, despite enormous continuity over time, also changes its language, strategies and practices. One of the reasons is its reciprocal relationship with shifts in 'who holds power and who dominates who.'

The work of Edward Said (1978, 1983, 1993) provides a useful point of departure for a volume of this nature. Said himself actually has remarkably little to say about development as a component of Orientalism. Possibly this is because he focuses more on the novelists, scholars, and travellers of empire than the prosaic managers of the imperial and post-colonial estate, amongst whom development was and is a recurrent obsession. Said provides a clear reminder of the need to situate all Western words within imperial worlds. To argue that development (like, say, the novels of Jane Austen) needs an imperial context may seem like a statement of the obvious. But the point is that within the texts of development themselves, this context is either ignored, downplayed or (as in much neo-Marxian 'development theory') made completely determining (Peet 1990).

Orientalism, in Said's (1978:3) oft-quoted definition, is a 'systematic discourse by which Europe was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively.' This definition—with appropriate substitutions ('the West' for 'Europe,' the 'Third World' for 'the Orient')—would serve for many as a working hypothesis about the power and purpose of development. But it fails in two respects inherent in the original conception. First, Said's critics point out that he has a great deal to say about the ideological, scientific and imaginative production of the Orient, but is rather less forthcoming about its economic and political production and their interrelationship (see Sprinker 1992; Breckenridge and van der Veer 1993). Though Said could hardly be accused of always privileging the text over the material context, some of his followers are not so subtle. Second, his critics charge that he draws the Orientalist web too tightly around the diffuse representational practices of the West. The result is an image of a homogenizing disciplinary power that is too tidy, too seamless, too unitary. In the case of development, it would be a mistake to view power as emanating exclusively from one space and being directed exclusively at another. Spatially, the power of development is far more diffuse, fragmented and reciprocal than this.

Development, for all its power to speak and to control the terms of speaking, has never been impervious to challenge and resistance, nor, in response, to reformulation and change. In a startling reversal, Fanon (1968) once argued that 'Europe is literally the creation of the Third World.' There is a great deal about the form and content of development that suggests that it is reactive as well as formative. As a set of ideas about the way the world works and should be ordered, understood and governed, development should also be glimpsed if not as 'the creation of the Third World,' then certainly as reflecting the responses, reactions

and resistance of the people who are its object. Without the possibility of reaction and resistance, there is no place for the agents and victims of development to exert their explicit and implicit influence on the ways in which it is constructed, thought, planned and implemented. Put simply, we simply do not yet know enough about the global, regional and especially local *historical geographies* of development— as an idea, discipline, strategy or site of resistance—to say much with any certainty about its complex past.

HISTORIES OF DEVELOPMENT

In his review chapter in this volume Michael Watts identifies many of the conflicting intellectual currents flowing through the contemporary academic domain of development studies. He concludes that in order to give development back its history, we need to pursue both an archaeology and a genealogy of development. Genealogy traces the recurrence of the idea, imagery and tropes of development across a range of nineteenth- and twentieth-century contexts. Archaeology attempts to uncover how and why development emerged as a problem 'grounded in the European experience of governability, disorder and disjuncture.' Only with this two-pronged approach can we begin to comprehend the power of development to make and remake the world (see Peet and Watts 1993).

Even a cursory glance at the basic liturgy of post-World War II develop ment discourse—the national development plan—will demonstrate contemporary development's almost overwhelming need to reinvent or erase the past. Most plans contain a formulaic bow to the previous plan period, a technocratic assessment of its failings designed as a prelude to the conclusion that this time 'it'll go much better.' But prior histories of the object of development—the people, country, region, sector or zone—are deemed irrelevant, best left to the ivory tower academic who has, by definition, no contribution to make to today's problems and tomorrow's solutions. Because development is prospective, forward-looking, gazing towards the achievement of as yet unrealized states, there seems little point in looking back. The technocratic language of contemporary plan writing—the models, the forecasts, the projections—all laud the idea of an unmade future which can be manipulated, with the right mix of inputs and indicators, into preordained ends. The past is impervious to change, untouchable and irredeemable. It is of no interest in and of itself. Occasionally it might have 'lessons to teach,' but not very often.

Not only are the objects of development stripped of their history, but they are then reinserted into implicit (and explicit) typologies which define a priori what they are, where they've been and where, with development as guide, they can go. Perhaps the best known of these formal typologies to students of development is Rostow's 'stages of growth model.' But the basic trope— that Europe shows the rest of the world the image of its own future—is of much broader and deeper purchase. Development, as Watts argues, has rarely broken free from linearity, from organic notions of growth and teleological views of history. With the idea of

an original steady state from which all evolves, 'it became possible to talk of societies being in a state of "frozen development".' Deeply embedded within development discourse, therefore, was a set of recurrent images of 'the traditional' which were fundamentally ahistorical and space-insensitive. Collectivities (groups, societies, territories, tribes, classes, communities) were assigned a set of characteristics which suggested not only a low place in the hierarchy of achievement but a terminal condition of stasis, forever becalmed until the healing winds of modernity and development began to blow.

What is the point of constructing the objects of development as existing outside, rather than as products of, the tide of modern history? Two of the chapters in this collection try to answer this question in specific contexts. In his analysis of the construction of Egypt in the development texts of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Timothy Mitchell argues that the Nile Valley is imagined as a site in which life has remained virtually unchanged for centuries, if not millennia. Rather than being a product of the political and economic transformations of the twentieth century, the Egyptian peasantry has always existed in its present state. 'The image of a traditional rural world' concludes Mitchell 'implies a system of agriculture that is static and therefore cannot change itself.' Unable to change, and no longer able to cope with the growing imbalance between population and resources, it must be changed by the injection of technology and expertise from outside. Only then can the primordial be dragged into the twentieth century.

'Traditional society,' though motionless and misrepresented, is not often overly-romanticized in the development text. To do this would be to run the risk of implying that there is no necessity for outside intervention and management. When Harry Johnston described the state of Mlanje before British rule, therefore, the language was traumatic not romantic—the area was practically in 'chaos,' virtually uninhabited and uninhabitable, racked by internal violence and insecurity. Development—the rebuilding of the landscape and the reclothing of its benighted inhabitants—is redemptive power. Without it, order cannot be restored, improvement is impossible. Johnston's imagery is replete with another recurrent trope in development— the idea that development works on a chaotic and disorderly terrain.

The language of 'crisis' and disintegration creates a logical need for external intervention and management. Accompanying the imagery of crisis is an implicit analysis of causation—sometimes external, more often internal. The causes are mostly endogenous—tribalism, primitivism and barbarism in older versions; ethnicity, illiteracy and ignorance in more modern incarnations. The reality of broader connections and causes is not always spurned, however. Development animates the static and manages the chaotic. It has a powerful habit of using history to apportion blame to its immediate predecessors for the disorder it attempts to amend. In industrializing Europe, as Cowen and Shenton suggest, development emerged to mitigate the disorder of progress. In Mlanje it is the 'evil-minded slave-traders,' the agents of a pre-modern era, who have created the

turmoil that now needs management. In the post-colonial era, the colonial inheritance (either the destructive colonial impact or the lack of a democratic culture, education, skills, expertise, and so on) can be blamed (Watts 1991b; Leys 1994). In the current era, misguided left-wing ideologies are culpable (Berman and Dutkiewicz 1993). In each case the aim, as Mitchell points out, is always to distance development from any complicity in chaos—development is always the cure, never the cause.

The chapters in this volume place slightly different emphases on development's own history. In the contemporary era, argue Cowen and Shenton in their chapter, the period of development is routinely assumed to be the span of history since 1945. They then turn this argument around by suggesting that there are really no predecessors—development was always implicated and from the first. The modern idea of development, they suggest, can be traced to where it was first invented, amidst the throes of early industrial capitalism in Europe. Development emerged to ameliorate the chaos apparently caused by progress, 'to create order out of the social disorder of rapid urbanization, poverty and unemployment.' In similar vein, Watts concludes that the trope of crisis was therefore built into development 'from the very beginning.' In the writings of a number of major nineteenth-century thinkers who grappled with the notion of development as an antidote to progress, Cowen and Shenton discern all of the central ideas of contemporary development. Development discourse is thus rooted in the rise of the West, in the history of capitalism, in modernity, and the globalization of Western state institutions, disciplines, cultures and mechanisms of exploitation. But this does not mean reducing all interpretation to 'superannuated nineteenth-century conceptions of political economy' (Said 1983) or filtering them through a functionalist master-narrative in which development is a mere instrument of Western domination, drained of ambiguity, complexity and contestation.

While not disputing the deep historical origins of development, some of the other chapters in this book have slightly different readings of its archaeology and genealogy. Escobar's position is perhaps the most distant from that of Cowen and Shenton, though elsewhere (Escobar 1992d:132) he has also argued that development is inextricably linked to 'the rise of Western modernity since the end of the 18th century.' While clearly cognizant of the need to situate development in its broader historical and imperial context, Escobar discerns a sea change in the institutions and discourses of development in the post-1945 period. Clearly there is, at the very least, a disjuncture here that needs to be explained. For Escobar, the essence of the change is that a threshold of internalization is crossed. People who were once simply the objects of development now came to see and define themselves in its terms. They began, to rework E.P.Thompson's felicitous phrase, to fight 'not against development, but about it.' Three other chapters—by Porter, Watts, and Manzo—are closer in spirit to Cowen and Shenton though they have slightly different perspectives on the origins of the imaginary of development. In his chapter, Doug Porter points to the profound effect of nineteenth-century natural science on the metaphorical language of development. Evolutionary science

provided a 'clutch of biological, organic and evolutionary' images while nineteenth-century physics donated a set of images about order, stability and constraint.

While Cowen and Shenton propose a reading that is part materialist, part theological, and emphatically Western and European, Watts chooses a cultural location for development under 'the broad arch of modernity.' One strand of development is rooted in the general normalizing practices of the modern state—the effort to produce and reproduce disciplined citizens and governable subjects. Another is rooted in fundamental points of difference between modern and pre-modern societies. The desire for accumulation—so central to modern society and its notions of development—only had meaning in a world where 'primitive economies' had no desire. Thus, development was 'neither *sui generis* nor simply imposed (subsequently) on the non-developed ("uncivilized") world, but rather… in an important way a product of the non-developed.' Development required non-development 'and to this extent the origins of modernity were not simply located in the West.' Finally, if development was a cultural reaction to progress 'generated from within the belly of capitalism,' it was also a point of connection with the non-developed realm, an ever-present reminder of a world lost and perhaps of impending doom.

Kate Manzo develops this point, both here and elsewhere (Manzo 1991), by tracking a set of modernist images first attributable to European thinkers who gazed upon the peoples of North America from the shores of Europe and constructed a set of dichotomous images contrasting the civilized European with the untutored, natural, childlike native American. Thus, it was that 'those defined solely by Europeans as inferior or "primitive" to themselves are presumed to advance in direct proportion to their acquisition of European traits, so that normal development entails becoming, figuratively, white.' Science and reason prevented European degeneration into 'a state of nature typified by brutality, poverty, evil and immanent death.' The labyrinthine task of tracing such tropes and images of development from their early modern origins through to the development machinery of the present day is very much in its infancy. These essays can make only an incremental contribution to this important task (see also Escobar 1994; Moore and Schmitz, forthcoming).

One historical method is suggested by Cowen and Shenton's chapter—a kind of comparative inventory of the rhetoric of early nineteenth- and late twentieth-century development writing. They do this in order to demonstrate not only the deep continuities in development thought and practice but to elucidate an important historical lesson—that development failed then even as it will fail now. A second method is suggested by the work of David Spurr (1993). Spurr's genealogy categorizes the recurrent tropes of colonial discourse—surveillance, aestheticization, classification, debasement, affirmation, naturalization, eroticization and appropriation—and then ransacks a wide variety of periods, places and texts for evidence of their presence.

While Cowen and Shenton reinvigorate the notion of trusteeship as a central trope in development writing, Manzo focuses on the related metaphor of guardianship. Following Nandy (1987), she argues that familiar dichotomies such as white/black, civilized/uncivilized, European/native are underpinned by a parent/child metaphor. Amongst the continuities between early and late-modern discourses of development, Manzo cites the idea of the modern West as a model of achievement, and the rest of the world as a childish derivative. The metaphor of adult and child 'continues to inform analysis of the "modern world" of development.' Manzo tracks this metaphor to nineteenth- and twentieth-century South Africa where, she argues, it constituted a fundamental metaphorical underpinning for segregation and apartheid.

Doug Porter also finds continuity and persistence in the underlying metaphors of development despite what he sees as apparent change in the 'fashion-conscious institutional language of development' since 1945. Porter solves this paradox by suggesting that there are three kinds of metaphors— organizing metaphors (those pertaining to post-1945 development), master metaphors (those which recur repeatedly independent of time and place) and metaphors of practice (those that arise in particular local contexts). The logic of Cowen and Shenton's argument is that everything is prefigured, that there are only master metaphors. But they would surely not disagree with the central role accorded by Porter to metaphors of order, stability and constraint. In his chapter, Porter traces the genealogy of several metaphors from this trilogy of types, and crucially highlights the very non-discursive implications of metaphor-making for development as practised.

In the ensuing discussion of a Philippines development project, Porter exemplifies a third method for tracking the history of development (see also Tennekoon 1988; Pigg 1992). Here the focus is primarily on the 'privileged particles' of the development process—the fragmented discourses that swirl around local projects and practices when general tropes are forced into direct engagement with the local histories and geographies of particular localities. By mapping these emergent local languages of development it is possible, suggests Porter, to work out both how universal master metaphors are mediated by the particularities of time and place, and how locality generates its own distinctive metaphors and tropes. That this is not an unproblematical task has been clearly demonstrated elsewhere by a vigorous debate between Beinart (1984) and Phimister (1986) over whether to give greater weight to universal explanation or local context in unveiling the vocabularies and practices of conservationism and development in southern Africa in the 1920s and 1930s.

In the same part of the world, Chris Tapscott's chapter in this volume shows the appeal of the comforting words of development to segregation and apartheid (see also Dubow 1989; Ashforth 1990b). Many of the central spatial and organic tropes of a broader development imaginary flowed smoothly into the apartheid strategy of separate development, rationalizing rather than challenging its basic precepts. In the 1970s, development was reinvented as part of a more general strategy to, in Stanley Greenberg's (1987) phrase, 'legitimate the illegitimate.' A vast

development machine was constructed in which a depoliticized, technocratic language of development, bearing all the old familiar trademarks, circulated. The failure of this project to buy consent and maintain order was all too apparent by the mid-1980s. It is ironic, but hardly surprising, that the new South African government is reinventing development for a third time to manage the ravages of past policies legitimated by development. The programme for reconstruction and development may be new but the purpose and the images conjured up harken back to a time long distant.

GEOGRAPHIES OF DEVELOPMENT

Development discourse can do without its history but not its geography for, without geography, it would lack a great deal of its conviction and coherence. Spatial and organic images and metaphors have always been used to define what development is and does. The language of development constantly visualizes landscape, territory, area, location, distance, boundary and situation (Slater 1993). Similarly, analogies from the natural world are used to picture the process through which development occurs (McCloskey 1990). Development writing constantly delineates and divides territory by means of a relentless dualistic logic. The binary oppositions between developed (territories that have) and the undeveloped (territories that lack) created by this cartographic exercise are very familiar. But development also needs geography to link these binary oppositions, a task performed through the language of spatial dispersion and diffusion.

In this way, it is possible to visualize how dominant, superior parcels of space can (and will) supersede their inferior other. In order to map this process, the static language of spatial demarcation needs the dynamism of historical narrative. As Emery Roe (1991) has recently suggested, it is sometimes helpful to see development as a form of story telling. Put this way, the idea of development as a narrative with stage, plot, characters, coherence, morality and an outcome has its appeal (White 1987). Roe concludes that by tinkering with the plot, more realistic narratives are possible and better development practice may result. That may be so, but what is of more interest in the context of this volume are the analytical possibilities opened up by viewing development as a form of writing amenable to narrative analysis in which geography is both stage and actor.

One of the primary elements in the development narrative is a setting of the geographical stage. Open almost any academic or development text dealing with the African country of Lesotho, for example, and you will find that it begins with the same textual ritual. 'Lesotho' we are always informed, 'is a small landlocked African country completely surrounded by South Africa.' Since anyone interested enough to pick up a learned text on the country probably already knows where it is, this incantation is hardly necessary to impart information. Is it therefore meaningless? Or is it an opening gambit by minds too hidebound to think of an original entrance? The significance of the ritual probably lies in the much broader cartographic anxiety that adheres to the imaginary of development (Porter 1991).

Indeed, one can often be forgiven for thinking that the country has no context at all — its boundaries mark the limits of its world.

What is happening, as Mitchell argues in his Egyptian case study, is the marking of boundaries, the designation of a nation-state as a 'free-standing unit, lined up in physical space alongside a series of similar units.' The consequences of this convention are twofold: first, it creates an illusion that the nation-state is a functional unit rather than the product of a larger constellation of forces. In the case of Lesotho, it is surely important to establish that the country is *completely surrounded* since this has important implications for its prospects of development. The problem is that in many of these same texts this location is subsequently ignored as a factor constraining or enabling the process of 'development.' Secondly, described as a self-contained, bounded object, the country is constructed as something apart from the discourse that describes it. Lesotho, Egypt, 'the developing country,' are all laid out as mapped objects of development, those who bring development are not in any sense part of that object's prior history and geography.

In demarcating, dividing and sealing territories as objects of outside intervention, development simultaneously assigns each territory a characteristic morphology. Sometimes, as in many development plans, geography is a largely inert spatial inventory of physical and social facts. But the language of development also brings a powerful set of landscape images into play. When Johnston described the changes wrought by three brief years of British rule, he visualized a transforming power literally remaking the landscape. The landscape before development was at best only 'half-formed,' but more accurately a blank landscape, a landscape of absences: 'uninhabited (with) no customs-houses, no roads suitable for wheeled traffic, very little labour in the coffee plantations.'

Onto this empty scene come 'clean broad level roads, bordered by handsome avenues of trees, and comely red brick houses with rose-covered verandahs…a post-office, a court of justice, [and] the coffee-plantation, which…is the cause and support of our prosperity.' The new landscape is a vital and living testimonial to the power that made it. Landscape description, the spreading out of a country or territory as a picture to be gazed upon from above, provides a powerful means of visualizing what it is that development does. As Gavin Williams argues in his chapter, development discourse represents whole countries or regions in 'standardized forms' as objects of development. This tendency finds fruition in the simplistic reaggregation of demarcated units into homogenous swathes of territory that span the globe— the 'developing world,' the 'Third World,' the 'South.' These global spaces are inhabited by generic populations, with generic characteristics and generic landscapes either requiring transformation or in the process of being transformed.

If the human landscape is both object of development and a testimonial to its power, so too is its physical counterpart. In Johnston's virtually un-inhabited pre-colonial landscape, natural forests are destroyed by bush fires set by the evil-minded. This image is given analytical substance by several of the chapters in this

volume. In her study of the silencing power of environmental discourse in colonial Kenya, for example, Fiona Mackenzie argues that Africans are constructed as 'unscientific exploiters' of the environment. Their knowledge of the local environment can then be disqualified as pre-modern and 'unscientific.' The peasant farmer, undifferentiated and ungendered, is established as the object in need of exogenous agricultural science and 'expertise.' In South Africa, the language of environmental mismanagement was also central to the idea of 'separate development' described by Tapscott. Betterment was premised on the notion that African cultivation and pastoral practices despoiled the environment. Only scientific management could redeem the environment and re-educate the despoilers. This notion resonates into the present. Development itself is never the disease, only the cure. It proceeds, Escobar suggests, by creating abnormalities which it can then treat or reform. Development discourse has a remarkable capacity for forgiving its own mistakes and reinventing itself as the remedy for the ills it causes. One of the primary mechanisms for this periodic reinvention is the appropriation of the language and imagery of other, related, modernist discourses.

In the nineteenth century, as a number of chapters in this volume point out, Christian theology and the natural sciences provided a rich well from which to draw metaphorical inspiration. In the secular late twentieth century environmental science continues to offer useful possibilities. Bill Adams, in his chapter, argues that the fashionable idea of 'sustainable development' needs to be located within 'Northern environmentalism' rather than the genealogy of development per *se*. Imported into development, the ideas and images of environmentalism are 'encoded invisibly…within the simplistic problem-solving spreadsheets' of development. In particular, reformist and technocratic images and strategies have worked their way into the idea of sustainability in development. Adams would, I think, agree with Cowen and Shenton's claim that this is certainly not something new for, as he argues, the environmental imagery of colonial environmental science and conservationism had earlier found its way into development, where it resides still. The metaphorical power of sustainability in contemporary development, however, lies in its promise of 'escape from the environmentally destructive record' of past practice. Like other (re)inventions this one too, argues Adams, will fail to be much more than a transient label on a set of power relations which are much deeper and more durable than the words used to describe them.

Ken Hewitt comes at the issue of writing the environment within the 'viewpoints of power' of Western hazards research. 'Natural' hazards are discussed within these managerial texts neither as the predicaments or crises of capitalist modernity nor as failures of policy and management. Rather, hazards are constructed as problems due to external factors beyond managerial control— natural extremes, impersonal forces of demography, accident and error. Hazards are situated, metaphorically, at the frontier, part of the 'unfinished business of modernization.' They are explained by 'extraordinary events to be combated by extraordinary measures.' Similarly, in development writing, 'natural hazards' (and even the environment more generally) are seen as being outside and in an

adversarial relationship to development. Ecology, climate, soils, water—the physical geography of the landscape—is temperamental and threatening, punishing mismanagement by its indigenous inhabitants, but ultimately amenable to the soothing touch of development.

Geography, argues Hewitt, is also quite central to the strategic thinking and inner logic of the dominant discourse of hazards. Maps of natural agents and their relative intensity and frequencies define the incidence and basic pattern of risk for natural disasters, cordoning off areas of disorder and disorganization. The 'bad geography' of hazards discourse is not confined, however, to that discourse. Similar geographies are imagined in such diverse arenas (with common roots) as colonial literature, Orientalism, travel writing and development. These are the 'the master texts of dominant views,' crafted by 'atlas-gazers and intelligence-gatherer's visions,' gazing down from the lofty heights of The Centre, the metropolis, the dominant states and institutions. But, as Hewitt goes on to argue, bad geographies are not simply mapping exercises. What the map makes invisible is just as interesting as what it includes for this says a great deal about those who compile the maps (Harley 1992; Pickles 1992). That the fruits of development practice may flow from rather than *to* the groups and areas 'targeted' is certainly not part of 'the map of development.' The 'interests of power' demand a rather different geography of development.

The final chapter in this volume, adopting an explicitly geographical purview, is Williams's analysis of the narrative strategies of recent World Bank reports on population and the environment. Williams argues that a basic rhetorical strategy of these texts is argument by 'common sense.' Rather than problematizing the association between population growth, land scarcity, environmental degradation and food shortage, the relationships are assumed to be axiomatic. The Bank's generalized analysis of African demography, he argues, 'ignores the complex and varied historical processes which have shaped the rise, fall, and age- and gender-distributions of populations, and their patterns of settlement and migration… history is replaced by stylized transition…geography is simply ignored.' Williams contests the stylized transitions and blank geographies with the litmus test of basic fact. Given the transparent superficiality and erroneousness of so much that passes for factual analysis, why, asks Williams, is there a depressing sameness and persistence to World Bank discourse? The answer is provided by Ferguson (1990) who has suggested that what is happening is not 'staggeringly bad scholarship' but something entirely different. The accuracy or plausibility of the argument to those who do not have to believe in it is irrelevant to those who do.

Ferguson's (1990) distinction between 'development discourse' and academic discourse on development is a useful one in this context, though the division is far from absolute. Another project, currently in progress, is exploring precisely this interface (Cooper and Packard 1992; Packard 1994). In this volume, Terry McGee's more contemplative chapter looks at the producers of geographical development texts on Asia. McGee charts the progress of his own personal enlightenment as a geographer caught within the conventions of representation of

a discipline—geography—that was not only a child of empire (Livingstone 1992; Gregory 1994; Godlewska and Smith 1994) but has never perceived a need to break with that past. The changing geographical representation of Asia is based on many of the same spatial tropes and images to be found within development discourse. Self-reflexivity now unfortunately tends to be viewed more as a means of establishing authority than visualizing how alternative worlds might be imagined and made (Geertz 1988a; van Maanen 1988). McGee, with characteristic honesty, tries to chart a personal and general route around the spatial dualism and teleological models that underlie western representations (both academic and non-academic) of the Asian city.

The commonsense histories and bad geographies of the development agency's text are constructions which license some forms of intervention (their own) and delegitimize others. As long as the interventions persist, so do the constructions irrespective of how 'right' or 'wrong' they may seem to everyone else. As MacCarney (1991) suggests, in an analysis of the interior of the World Bank, the images and ideas can change quite independent of any engagement with what is happening on the ground. Using the example of World Bank low-cost housing strategy, she argues that the internal bureaucracies within organizations such as the World Bank provide their own momentum to the rhetoric of development. Thus it is, that perfectly workable (and often quite effective) policies, even judged by the Bank's own stated aims, can be marginalized by the culture of careerism and competition within the organization itself. The same is undoubtedly true of the language and images through which those policies are spoken and justified.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Is there a way of writing (speaking or thinking) beyond the language of development? Can its hold on the imagination of both the powerful and the powerless be transcended? Can we get round, what Watts calls, the 'development gridlock'? Can, as Escobar puts it, the idea of 'catching up' with the West be drained of its appeal? Any contemporary volume of development-related essays can no longer afford to ignore these questions. One of the most damaging criticisms levelled against Said's (1978) notion of Orientalism is that it provides no basis for understanding how that discourse can be overcome. This book also, by definition, cannot stand outside the phenomenon being analysed. The text itself is made possible by the languages of development and, in a sense, it contributes to their perpetuation. To imagine that the Western scholar can gaze on development from above as a distanced and impartial observer, and formulate alternative ways of thinking and writing, is simply a conceit. To claim or adopt such a position is simply to replicate a basic rhetorical strategy of development itself. What we can do, as a first step, is to examine critically the rival claims of those who say that the language of development can, or is, being transcended.

To assert, like Esteva (1987:135), that 'development stinks' is all very well, but it is not that helpful if we have no idea about how the odour will be erased. The

authors in this volume are by no means agreed on whether the language of development (and its associated practices) is here to stay or whether it should, or could, be transcended. A number of them take issue with recent arguments that suggest that this is not only necessary but possible. Anti-capitalist discourses such as dependency and underdevelopment theory, for example, are sometimes represented as proffering a radically different discourse of anti-development. If this is so, no-one bothered to tell the developer. Even political movements that once drew spiritual inspiration from this 'alternative' discourse have increasingly found the development imaginary a far more appropriate and concrete vehicle for articulating their aspirations. The extraordinary metamorphosis of the African National Congress is only one case in point.

Watts, drawing on the work of various post-colonial scholars, suggests that the quest for an *alternative* development is in some sense misplaced. The radical anti-capitalism of the 1970s, which asserted that autonomy and delinking were the key to 'development,' looks decidedly threadbare in the face of a counter-critique that they are as guilty of 'Eurocentric universalism' as those they criticize. Cowen and Shenton are even harsher in their judgement of the proponents of (an)other development. Development, they argue, is criticized as Eurocentric, but how could it be anything else? That accepted, the idea of 'autonomous development,' 'development from within' or 'development from below' as *alternatives* to development is nonsensical. And, in any case, the argument that there are real alternatives between externally-managed and internally-generated 'development' is simply a reprise of an age-old image.

Deploying Derrida's concept of logocentrism, Manzo proceeds to argue that romantic images of indigenous societies and their authentic knowledges do not push beyond modern relations of domination and threaten to reinscribe them in their most violent form. Hence, 'efforts in the post-colonial world to reinvent a pre-colonial Eden that never existed in fact, have been no less violent in their scripting of identity than those that practise domination in the name of development.' This trap—the reinscription of modernist dualisms—is also inherent in any claim that there can be pristine counter-hegemonic discourses of anti-development which are implacably opposed and totally untainted by the language of development itself. Here Foucault's notion of the 'tactical polyvalence of discourses' seems particularly useful. He argues (Foucault 1990:100–1) that we should not imagine a world of dominant and dominated, or accepted and excluded, discourses. We should think instead of a 'complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy.'

Watts argues that alternative discursive strategies and frameworks have always constituted a 'pronounced undertow' within development discourse. There have always been oppositions and contestations in both centre and periphery which have structured, in complex ways, the very imagination of development itself. This would suggest that development discourse is not hermetically sealed, impervious to challenge or reformulation in the face of contest. As Adams argues, for example,

contemporary environmentalism (and its manifestation within the arena of development) is riven with contradictions and conflict between dominant and avowedly counter-hegemonic discourses. From this perspective, perhaps the most interesting task is to decipher exactly how deeply development (and the discourses that claim to reject it) are implicated within one another.

In this context, Watts puts a certain faith in the capacity of populism to articulate discontent and imagine alternative worlds although, as he points out, much of the language of *fin de siècle* populism is in some sense still contained within (and even a necessary part of) modernist development discourse. Manzo and Escobar are both much more optimistic about the possibility of articulating truly alternative visions in a post-modern world. Manzo finds, in the writings of dependency theory, liberation theology, feminist ecology and participatory action research, a strong counter-modernist impulse. Counter-modernism, through its rigorous questioning and relentless critique, begins, she suggests, to provide the basis for thinking (and writing) beyond development. Her chosen example is unusual: the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa. Manzo shows how the BCM vision echoed that of other counter-modernisms in Latin America. Whether this means that it truly transcended the development imaginary of modernism is a point for debate.

Arturo Escobar is more sceptical of the dependency theorists, arguing that they 'still functioned within the same discursive space of development' as those they criticized. He advances, instead, the claims of new social movements as the medium through which alternative discourses *to* (rather than *of*) development are being articulated in the contemporary world. In his essay in this volume, he continues to make the case for social movements as the best hope for 'a more radical imagining of alternative futures.' NSM (New Social Movement) discourses are, by definition, polyvalent, local, dispersed and fragmented. To attempt to generalize across this heterogeneity, to bring rigid classificatory order to this diversity, or to suggest that there are dominant tropes and images that are common to all, would be to compromise their status as anti-developmental. Escobar is prepared, nonetheless, to venture the following generalization about NSM discourse: it strives for 'analyses based not on structures but on social actors; the promotion of democratic, egalitarian and participatory styles of politics; and the search not for grand structural transformations but rather for the construction of identities and greater autonomy through modifications in everyday practices and beliefs.' Thus, social movements constitute a potential terrain in which 'the weakening of development and the displacement of certain categories of modernity… can be defined and explored.' Where the NSMs already err though is in representing themselves as a total break with the past. There are, as Escobar suggests, important continuities (not least, one supposes, their capacity to reinvent history as well as development itself as the complete antithesis of everything they stand for).

Escobar concludes that 'inordinate care' must be taken to safeguard the fragile discourses of the NSMs from the appropriating appetite of development. Notions

of 'sustainable development,' 'grassroots development,' 'women and development,' and so on perhaps exemplify the dangers most clearly. Why this should be so is a question that Jane Parpart addresses in her chapter on 'women in development' (WID). Parpart makes two basic arguments: first, that conventions of representation lodged deep within colonial discourse flowed easily into post-World War II development discourse. Where women were 'seen' at all, they were simply one more obstacle to modernization and progress. Second, she argues, the 'discovery' of women's voices might well have presaged a radical new challenge to the whole imaginary of development itself. Instead, claims Parpart (following Mohanty), Western feminism devised a new set of tropes in which women became 'benighted, overburdened beasts, helplessly entangled in the tentacles of regressive Third World patriarchy.' The imaginary of poverty, powerlessness and vulnerability was readily captured by development discourse. The very rubric of appropriation—women in development—carried the message that women's lives were now to be bounded by the power of development. They, like the colonial estate and post-colonial territory, would be managed by outside expertise. For Parpart, the way forward is through a reconstructed post-modern feminism which 'recognizes the connection between knowledge, language and power, and seeks to understand local knowledge(s), both as sites of resistance and power.'

Like Parpart, Mackenzie believes that the recovery of unheard voices and subjugated knowledges, as an act of critical scholarship, may undermine the power of development (see also Scott 1994). The place to start, perhaps, is by asking what development has meant for those spaces and peoples who it defines as its object. There is a large social science literature which tries to answer this question, primarily by examining the material and social impacts of development strategy and practice. By and large, there are three types of answer to the question: development has had a very negative impact; people would have been a lot worse off without it; or some benefit while the majority do not. All of these answers represent the recipients of development—either as victims or beneficiaries—as homogenized, voiceless subjects of outside forces. But those defined in development discourse as the subjects of development are also active agents who contest, resist and divert the will of the developer in greater or lesser ways.

Writings on protest and rebellion in the colonial and post-colonial periods, to which a number of the contributors in this volume have elsewhere contributed, have begun to unravel the ways in which development discourse and practice have been received, internalized and/or resisted on the ground. For the student of development discourse, there are at least two fruitful ways forward from this point. One, it seems to me, is to move backwards. We do not need, in other words, only to search in the present for visions of a future beyond development. The current obsession with Western representation of 'the other' is a field of rapidly diminishing returns. There are still large chapters of the story of development that need to be written and told in this mould. But these stories should be told, and heard, in concert with other stories—stories of what development meant for those whose visible and hidden lives it transformed. These stories at the very least

provide 'a hindrance' and 'a stumbling-block' to the discursive power of development. But they might also constitute 'a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy.' This is not a task which this particular book set out to achieve. However, it concludes with a short autobiography which represents one way this might be done. The power of development is the power to generalize, homogenize, objectify. One way to contest this homogenizing power, albeit in an incremental way, could be through the articulation of individual biographies and autobiographies of the development experience. Nanda Shrestha—in a chapter which can profitably be read in tandem with Pigg (1992)—casts a retrospective eye over a personal trajectory of dis-illusionment with what development has 'done' to Nepal. Yet, here lies the irony, for if that disillusionment had come sooner (as presumably it did for many of his confreres) then he would not now be in a position to stand outside it and cast a critical gaze over its social and profoundly personal effects. Shrestha also confirms—in his discussion of the meaning of *bikas*—the importance of Escobar's point about the 'internalization' of development. In the curious mix of modernity and pre-modernity that is *bikas* are traces of the truth that development is not only internalized but rescripted by those it most affects. In 'the hidden transcripts' and everyday resistances of the weak (Scott 1985, 1990; Beinart and Bundy 1987; Haynes and Prakash 1992; Kirby 1994) the power of development to remake the world according to the word is relentlessly contested. In that sense, Esteva's epigraph is correct. When confronted with the power of the ordinary, development discourse (as Sir Harry Johnston attests) is forced to assume the most fantastical forms. That is actually when it is at its most transparent, fragile and feeble.