



ROUTLEDGE

# NARRATIVE GLOBAL POLITICS

THEORY, HISTORY AND THE PERSONAL IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INTERVENTIONS

Edited by NAEEM INAYATULLAH  
AND ELIZABETH DAUPHINEE

# **Narrative Global Politics**

Theory, history and the personal in  
International Relations

**Edited by**  
**Naeem Inayatullah and**  
**Elizabeth Dauphinee**

First published 2016  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge  
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

© 2016 selection and editorial material, Naeem Inayatullah and Elizabeth Dauphinee; individual chapters, the contributors

The right of Naeem Inayatullah and Elizabeth Dauphinee to be identified as authors of the editorial material, and of the individual authors as authors of their contributions, has been asserted by them in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

*Trademark notice:* Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Names: Dauphinee, Elizabeth, editor. | Inayatullah, Naeem, editor.

Title: Narrative global politics: theory, history and the personal

in International Relations/edited by Elizabeth Dauphinee and

Naeem Inayatullah.

Description: Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY:

Routledge, [2016] |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016002034 | ISBN 9781138182660 (hardback) |

ISBN 9781315646282 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: International relations – Philosophy. | International relations – History. | Identity politics | World politics. | Globalization.

Classification: LCC JZ1305.N337 2016 | DDC 327.101 – dc23

LC record available at <http://lcn.loc.gov/2016002034>

ISBN: 978-1-138-18266-0 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-31564-628-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman  
by Florence Production Ltd, Stoodleigh, Devon, UK



Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

Elizabeth Dauphinee dedicates this book to Véronique Pin-Fat and Peter J. Lawler, with gratitude for the shelter of their friendship during the Manchester years.

Naeem Inayatullah dedicates this book to his great teachers: Ian Makay, Bruce Longden, Milton Toubkin, Judith Turner, John Denison, Gordon Lindsay, Stu Young, Louis Dupree, Nancy Hatch Dupree, William McKee, Ruth Hamilton, Akhtar Hameed Khan, Subbiah Kannappan, Peter Van Ness, Rona Wilensky, David Levine, and James Caporaso.

# Contributors

**Donnell Alexander** is a storyteller and editor whose work brings forth facets of American life too often relegated to the margins. A multi-platform content creator, the Ohio native authored the memoir *Ghetto Celebrity* (Crown, 2003) as a personal, elongated addendum to the 1997 *Might* essay, “Cool Like Me: Are Black People Cooler than White People?” Alexander has served as a staff writer at *LA Citybeat*, *ESPN: The Magazine*, *LA Weekly*, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, and the *Chico News & Review*. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

**Cory Brown** is the author of four books of poems. His poems have appeared in *Bomb*, *Nimrod International*, and *Postmodern Culture*, among others. He also publishes essays: “Notes on the Role of the Arts in a Technocratic Culture” is in the *International Journal of Technology, Knowledge, and Society*; “On Thinking” is in the literary magazine *Diner*; “Compliance” is in the most recent issue of *South Loop Review*; and “Thoughts on the Metaphysics of American White Racism” is in the latest issue of the (online) *Journal of Narrative Politics*. He grew up raising cattle in Oklahoma, took an MFA. from Cornell University in 1984, and now teaches writing, literary theory, and intellectual history at Ithaca College.

**Charmaine Chua** is Visiting Instructor at Macalester College, MN, and a Ph.D. Candidate in Political Science at the University of Minnesota. Her research interests are primarily related to critical political economy, global supply chains, postcolonialism and the production of difference. Her current research maps the embodied politics of living and laboring under logistics capitalism through an ethnography of transpacific maritime shipping. Recent and forthcoming publications include articles in *Journal of Narrative Politics*, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *Historical Materialism*, and *Political Geography*.

**Elizabeth Dauphinee** is Professor in the Department of Political Science at York University in Toronto, Canada, where she teaches, researches, and writes on experimental approaches to the study of international politics. She is the author of *The Politics of Exile* (Routledge, 2013) and the founding editor of *Journal of Narrative Politics*.

**Kevin C. Dunn** is Professor in the Department of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY. His recent works include *Inside African Politics* (with Pierre Englebert; 2013), *The Politics of Origin in Africa* (with Morten Bøås; 2013) and *Global Punk: Resistance and Rebellion in Everyday Life* (2016).

**Jenny Edkins** is Professor of International Politics at Aberystwyth University. She is author of *Face Politics* (2015); *Missing: Persons and Politics* (2011); *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* (2003); *Whose Hunger? Concepts of Famine, Practices of Aid* (2008). She convenes the Gregynog Ideas Lab, an annual summer gathering now in its fifth year that focuses, among other things, on aesthetic politics and storytelling. She is currently working on Landscapes of Detention, a project that maps contemporary and historical sites of confinement without trial by British governments, and a new book provisionally entitled *Memory, Security, Politics: Essays in International Politics*.

**Aida A. Hozic** is Associate Professor of International Relations and Colonel Allan R. and Margaret G. Crow Professor, College of Liberal Arts and Science, University of Florida. She is the author of *Hollyworld: Space, Power and Fantasy in the American Economy* (Cornell University Press, 2002) and editor (with Jacqui True) of *Scandalous Economics: The Spectre of Gender after Financial Crisis* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming, 2016). A recipient of several Fulbright grants, John D. and Katherine T. MacArthur Fellowship in international security, Open Society Fellowship and other research and program grants, she has published widely at the intersection of international political economy, cultural studies and international security.

**Naeem Inayatullah** is Professor of Politics at Ithaca College. His work locates the Third World in international relations and global political economy. With David Blaney, he is the co-author of *Savage Economics* (2010) and *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (2004). He is the editor of *Autobiographical International Relations* (2011). Forthcoming work includes: "A Problem with Levels: Engaging a Diverse IPE" in *Contexto Internacional* (2015) and "Gigging on the World Stage: Bossa Nova and Afrobeat after De-Reification" in *Contexto Internacional* (2016). He is associate editor of the *Journal of Narrative Politics*.

**Paul Kirby** teaches at the University of Sussex. His research interests are primarily related to gender violence, the politics of war, and international political theory, on which he has published a handful of articles. This is his first attempt at autobiographical narrative.

**Richa Nagar**'s intellectual, pedagogical and creative labor has focused on writing and translating lives and struggles across the borders of languages, genres,

disciplines, and geographical locations. She is Professor of the College and holds the Bennett Chair in Excellence and the Fink Professorship in Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota. Her most recent book, *Muddying the Waters: Coauthoring Feminisms across Scholarship and Activism* (2014), builds on over a decade of lessons in collaborative building of dreams and worlds, chiefly with Sangtin Writers with whom she coauthored *Playing with Fire: Feminist Thought and Activism through Seven Lives in India* (2006).

**Dan Öberg** is a senior lecturer of war studies at the Swedish Defense University, Stockholm. He finished his Ph.D. in international relations at Yokohama National University, Japan in 2005. His current research focuses on understanding war and violence from a critical perspective. Recent publications include articles in *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, *Journal of Narrative Politics*, and *International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*.

**Nicholas Onuf** is Professor Emeritus, Florida International University, Miami, and Professor Asociado, Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro. His latest book, *Making Sense, Making Worlds: Constructivism in Social Theory and International Relations* (2013) was published in conjunction with the republication of *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (1989).

**Sam Okoth Opondo** is an Assistant Professor in Comparative Politics and Africana Studies at Vassar College, NY. His research is guided by an interest in colonialism, race, and the mediation of estrangement. With an emphasis on violence, ethics, aesthetics, and diplomacies of everyday life, he engages the problematics of humanitarianism, the politics of redemption, and popular culture in urban Africa.

**Randolph B. Persaud** is Associate Professor, School of International Service, American University, Washington, DC. His research interests are in the areas of race, identity, and gender in international relations, critical political economy, and postcolonialism. Recent publications include (Guest Editor) "Race, De-coloniality and International Relations" a Special Issue of *Alternatives* (May–July 2015); "Colonial Violence: Race and Gender on the Sugar Plantations of British Guiana," in *Race and Racism in International Relations* (Routledge, 2015); "From Sexation to Sexualization: Dispersed Submission in the Racialized Global Sex Industry," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Fall 2015 (co-authored with Christine B.N. Chin); and, "Neo-Gramscian Theory and Third World Violence: A Time for Broadening," *Globalizations* (2016).

**Manuela L. Picq** is Professor of International Relations at Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ), Ecuador. Her research explores international politics from peripheries like indigeneity, sexuality, and extractivism in Latin America. She has been a Member at the Institute for Advanced Study (2014), and a



Lowenstein Fellow at Amherst College (2011). She writes for scholarly journals like *Latin American Politics and Society* and media venues like Al Jazeera English. She is co-editor of *Sexualities in World Politics* with Markus Thiel (Routledge, 2015) and *Queering Narratives of Modernity* with María Amelia Viteri (Peter Lang, 2015).

**Véronique Pin-Fat** is Senior Lecturer in International Politics at the University of Manchester. Her research explores the relationship between language, ethics, and global politics. She is the author of *Universality, Ethics and International Relations: A Grammatical Reading* (Routledge, 2010), is co-editor with Jenny Edkins and Michael J. Shapiro of *Sovereign Lives: Power in Global Politics* (Routledge, 2007) and is co-editor with Jenny Edkins and Nalini Persram of *Sovereignty and Subjectivity* (Lynne Rienner, 1999). She has also published numerous articles on ethics, global politics, and non-foundational cosmopolitanism.

**Paulo Ravecca** holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from York University and is Assistant Professor at the Political Science Department of *Universidad de la República* (Uruguay). He researches epistemology and the history of political science; critical theories (queer, neo-marxist, postcolonial, and poststructural approaches); political economy and international relations; state, public policy and development; and critical epistemology, gender, and sexuality.

**Ruth Halaj Reitan** (Ph.D., International Relations, American University's School of International Service) is a Lecturer in Women's and Gender Studies and Cinema and Interactive Media at the University of Miami (UM), while also holding a Graduate MFA Fellowship in the latter department. She grew into filmmaking and creative writing after two decades as a transnational social movement scholar-activist, and taught for a decade in UM's International Studies Department while overseeing their graduate curriculum in International Relations. Her current foci are screenwriting, film production, and Lacanian and gender film theory. She currently teaches courses on the History of World Cinema and Gender and American Cinema, and is developing courses on Italian cinema (including a study abroad to Rome co-listed with Urban Studies) and Cuban cinema. She is also founding director of the Student Film Festival and Competition within the Humphrey Bogart Film Festival in Key Largo, FL, and executive director of the not-for-profit South Florida Film Education Foundation.



# Acknowledgements

Elizabeth thanks John Andrews for his labor of love that sustains our home and raises our children, without which I could not read, think, and write.

Naeem thanks Sorayya Khan, Kamal Naeem, and Shahid Naeem for their inspiration, nurturance, and love.

Elizabeth and Naeem thank the authors in this volume for their faith, courage, and resolve.

# Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	xi
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xvii
<b>1 Permitted urgency: a prologue</b>	<b>1</b>
NAEEM INAYATULLAH AND ELIZABETH DAUPHINEE	
<b>2 The reluctant immigrant and modernity</b>	<b>5</b>
RANDOLPH B. PERSAUD	
<b>3 Dissolutions of the self</b>	<b>25</b>
VÉRONIQUE PIN-FAT	
<b>4 Simultaneous translation: finding my core in the periphery</b>	<b>35</b>
MANUELA L. PICQ	
<b>5 The intimate architecture of academia</b>	<b>51</b>
PAULO RAVECCA	
<b>6 The banality of survival</b>	<b>64</b>
AIDA A. HOZIĆ	
<b>7 Letters to Yvonne: words and/as worlds</b>	<b>73</b>
SAM OKOTH OPONDO	
<b>8 Your East Africa, my Pacific Northwest: a commercial view of Tanzania from an unfamiliar vantage</b>	<b>87</b>
DONNELL ALEXANDER	
<b>9 Loss of a loss: Ground Zero, Spring 2014</b>	<b>97</b>
JENNY EDKINS	

<b>10 Contradictions</b>	<b>104</b>
NICHOLAS ONUF	
<b>11 “Was will das Weib?” Politics, film, desire</b>	<b>122</b>
RUTH HALAJ REITAN	
<b>12 What might still sputter forth</b>	<b>139</b>
KEVIN C. DUNN	
<b>13 auto/bio/graph</b>	<b>153</b>
PAUL KIRBY	
<b>14 The smell of wood: recuperating loss in a country of forgetting</b>	<b>159</b>
CHARMAINE CHUA	
<b>15 Immobility, intimacy, movement: translating death, life, and border crossings</b>	<b>171</b>
RICH A NAGAR	
<b>16 Suicide, the only politically worthy act</b>	<b>191</b>
DAN ÖBERG	
<b>17 Dancing modernity: an epilogue</b>	<b>200</b>
CORY BROWN	
 <i>Index</i>	 <b>207</b>

# Figures

6.1	Sonja Savić, 1986	65
11.3	Anyu, still image from <i>Hard Corn</i> (2014)	128
11.2	Title card, still image from <i>Hard Corn</i> (2014)	128
11.3	Pimp, still image from <i>Hard Corn</i> (2014)	129
11.4	Phallic symbolism in <i>Hard Corn</i>	134
11.5	Phallic symbolism in <i>Hard Corn</i>	134
11.6	Phallic symbolism in <i>Hard Corn</i>	134
11.7	Phallic symbolism in <i>Hard Corn</i>	135
11.8	Phallic symbolism in <i>Hard Corn</i>	135
11.9	Phallic symbolism in <i>Hard Corn</i>	135

# 1 Permitted urgency

## A prologue

*Naeem Inayatullah and Elizabeth Dauphinee*

“Art,” says philosopher R.G. Collingwood, “makes for itself two claims.” First, that it is the “activity of pure imagination.” And, second, that it “somehow reveals the truth concerning the ultimate nature of the real world” (Collingwood, 1963: 87).

Like fiction, we may read these essays, initially, for pleasure. Our writers attend to the shape of their prose because they recognize that form also delivers content. They are not indifferent to their aesthetic decisions; they know that it matters how they tell their story—it matters to the reader, to the writer, and especially to the innermost needs of the story (Collingwood, 1963: 253). Change the form, move it toward fiction, and suddenly the writer too becomes a reader, a receiver of her own subtle pedagogy. Change the form and the reader can feel, think, and experience the story. Elizabeth Dauphinee executes this strategy in her *The Politics of Exile* (2013). She is undone by her own pedagogy.

The overlap with fiction, however, does not quite draw the fuller sketch. Whether we call it autobiography, autoethnography, or narrative, the forms presented here cannot be reduced to fiction. Even if we worship at fiction’s altar, deeming it superior to academic production, we may still secretly assess it as an ideographic portrait, as “mere” fiction. Fiction’s insights are not, we might assume, transferable to our actual world. These essays rupture that secret assessment.

How so? How is it that these essays do their work? Our most honest answer is that we are not sure—even if Naeem Inayatullah has tried to formulate this *how* (Inayatullah 2013a; 2013b). This prologue allows us another chance to respond. These essays do their work by addressing theoretical problems as autobiography. They probe questions that are central to the academic vocation: How do racism, sexism, classism express themselves not merely as abstract forces but as exact moments and precise movements in actors’ lives? If structures exist by dint of memory traces that trigger repetitive actor actions, what are those memory traces? How do those traces emerge as action? How exactly do structures and institutional patterns make our actions complicit? What counts as an act when a retrospective look at a life produces a sense mainly of compliance to abstract forces? Does knowledge of structures, institutions, and our complicity in them allow for change? If during encounters something is always lost in translation, what is communicated

and what miscommunicated? If the violence of the nation is homologous to violence between individuals, what moves between and across levels to reproduce violence? How do we make a meaningful life? Do institutions learn? Do individuals? What might such learning look like? In what ways do aesthetics and politics overlap?

The curved trajectories by which our authors aim their stories at these questions are, we submit, a kind of directness. In every essay, what is addressed is pain—pain at injustice, pain at loss, pain at an inability to redress and repair, pain resulting from the simultaneous dread and awe the world produces in us. The arcs of their storytelling address this aching not as the product of a fictive world, but what each story regards as an actual one. They do not allow either the easy jettisoning of a fictive world, nor the distance-induced catatonia of our usual academic prose. Instead, we receive something that overlaps with both: academic probing with the storytelling's tangential arcs.

These arcs are best seen as modes of travel. If academic prose moves in conventional Euclidian lines, then narratives bend and are bent by space-time. Gravity re-asserts itself. Travelers, theorists, and storytellers, who are one and the same, must move. Logically, they first move outward to then move inward. One builds a bridge to oneself via the world at large; one knows and heals oneself by means of knowing and healing others. One distances oneself from oneself as but a moment in which one grasps the larger world outside. We might say that these encounters are, as Levinas (1991) posed, *first philosophy*. We travel to encounter others and, in so doing, we encounter ourselves.

What the distancing moment of our usual academic posture tends to forget is the next leg in the route, the return trip. We grasp the outer world with the precise tools of science, *in order to return to intimacy*. An intimacy now infused with a broader and more encompassing interpretation than if one had never left at all. The world is a wound and yet filled also with tragic beauty. Our travels, our theories, our stories, bring this awareness home to us. Here, we find theory's fuller purpose realized—constructing and embodying an extensive architecture of understanding. Inside, outside, inside/outside.

We can read these chapters for pleasure. And then we can read them for the academic questions they pose and "solve." Read this way, we may find that these narratives combine the strengths of fiction with those of academic prose.

\* \* \*

The settings for these essays are wide-ranging. They include cities such as New York, Toronto, Vancouver, Stockholm, Portland, Nairobi, Lucknow, Singapore, and Jacksonville, Florida. They include larger entities such as Tanzania, China, USA, UK, Canada, Bosnia, India, Sweden, Japan, Egypt, Kenya, Guyana, Brazil, Ecuador, and Uruguay. They take on race relations, fear of one's own repudiated racism, the uncovering of one's own orientalism; the use of art to move beyond orientalist tropes; the violence at the heart of family; the pain of not finding traces

of your lineage in the archives of the state; the loss of a politics of immediacy after trauma; the loss of aesthetic resolve produced by formal politics and by everyday life; the fear of losing culture and language across generations; the elusive and unwilling slips into modernity; assessments of intellectual lives and careers; the complex overlap between sexual identity, politics, and building social science in the periphery; and the value of traveling ever more directly toward the world's remotest corners, and to the remote corners of ourselves.

\* \* \*

We have come some distance in the five years since the field of international relations embarked on a journey to integrate narrative. For example, as a result of working on their chapters a number of authors in this collection have expressed their desire to produce book-length manuscripts. These imagined longer manuscripts, it seems, are not something they can do without. They are eager to find the time, space, and support by which they can be realized. Such firmness of desire makes us wonder if others have already buried in their desk drawers completed but hidden manuscripts. Or, perhaps there are those who would embark on such projects if only they could find something they could interpret as permission.

In addition, in producing this volume as well as three issues of *Journal of Narrative Politics*, we found that submissions were not limited to academics, to those in the fields of political science or international relations, or to those with steady academic jobs. Instead we received and published materials from those more situated in anthropology, geography, writing, languages, comparative religions, gender studies, philosophy, Indigenous studies, poetry, and popular culture, as well as from professional artists and those from outside academia. We have published materials by non-academics, undergraduates, graduates, and junior faculty as well as established scholars.

This inclusiveness results, we believe, from our project's call: that writing be clear with a penchant for the artful and theoretically informed use of everyday language. In serving as writers and editors for the last five years, we have learned that responding to this call requires no less effort but a different kind of skill than writing the usual academic article. We remain convinced that everyone possesses such skills. Everyday language is, after all, our daily bread and butter. However, it takes work—almost always in collaboration—to assess and hone such skills. In this way, our project, like any intervention, contains a pedagogical component. We learn and teach our way through this process even without steady markers or sure parameters.

The most important lesson we have learned is that permission is the necessary component in evoking and instituting this project. We take it to be true that everyone is striving to say something—something they need to say. Something that can express itself as narrative *and* as theory. This permitted urgency is the hallmark of these remarkable essays.



## References

- Collingwood, R.G. (1963) *Speculum Mentis*. London: Oxford.
- Dauphinee, E. (2013) *The Politics of Exile*. New York: Routledge.
- Inayatullah, N. (2013a) "Distance and intimacy: Forms of writing and worlding," in A. Tickner and D. Blaney (eds), *Claiming the International*, Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 194–213.
- Inayatullah, N. (2013b) "Pulling threads: Intimate systematicity in *The Politics of Exile*," *Security Dialogue*, 44 (4): 331–345.
- Levinas, E. (1991) *Totality and Infinity*, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.

## 2 The reluctant immigrant and modernity<sup>1</sup>

*Randolph B. Persaud*

It is the present that *thinks* the past; that *makes* this past whole. We are but bits and pieces of raw material, disparate and unconnected minutiae of everyday life made available, and only then, woven into some recognizable structured totality called I. Thoughts, feelings, ideas, experiences, all hatched long ago can be embraced or disavowed. I exist somewhere between the voices of my education and the burden of history. What follows, therefore, is, and can only be, a kind of negotiated settlement.

The village Cornelia Ida is about ten miles up the Atlantic Coast, on the West Coast of the Demerara River.<sup>2</sup> It is bounded by limitless water to the north and sugarcane fields far into the deep distant south. I grew up there and next door at Anna Catherina until I left for Canada in a routine act of what academics call labor migration. After 20 years in Canada I moved to the United States, exactly in the heart of the global *panopticon*, Washington, DC.<sup>3</sup> A long journey indeed, especially when I include the bit that my fore-parents were from India.<sup>4</sup>

I begin with a confession of sorts—that you may leave the village in the Third World, but you are never forever gone.<sup>5</sup> And even after decades of trying to fall into the rhythms of the new world, the unconscious won't allow it because the stamp of the village is stubborn and strong, and will not leave me alone. There is just too much deep in that soil, like in the graveyard that now keeps family, villagers, and my mother.<sup>6</sup> Like the trees I planted with these same hands with which I now write; like the two-bedroom flat-house I painted blue when I was barely 11.<sup>7</sup> And also, too many entanglements of laughter, of hopes, of watching the rush of flames and smoke rise from the burning sugarcane fields in the distance, signaling that all is well, that men are at work, the factory is grinding, girls are buying frocks and books, men are cocked behind pool cues after a cold sip of El Dorado rum, and then in the moments between play, dance to a tune from *Ek Phool Do Mali*, winding low, looking like Bollywood's Sanjay Khan, handkerchief flared around the neck.<sup>8</sup>

This is the place where on hot tropical nights you touch the moon with your bare indentured slave-descended hands, watch the shooting stars with your own brown eyes, where you may look deep into the night, and now and again, well into the crimson platform of dawn. Night laughter never dies. And then the rhythm