From her erudite postcolonial perspective, Ann Laura Stoler invites historians, social scientists, and scholars from the humanities to look at the racializations and the intimacies generated by empires in the cores, the United States in particular, and to avoid privileging strategies emanating from the metropoles over circuits of people and ideas. She engages scholars not to read the nineteenth century by its state- and nation-building projects alone but to look also at people and their intimate lives. To heed Stoler's call, I will emphasize imperial centers and the circulation of ideas and policies between the masters of the national narrative and subaltern men, women, and children. I divide the argument into two parts. The first, autobiographical, addresses the intimate lives and the circulation of ideas that shape historians' subconscious frames of reference. The second, a series of brief historical case studies, looks at the intimate lives of people on the margins, the social construction of their bodies, and the way they asserted their centrality and thereby undermined the traditional histories of nations. In contrast to an older form of social history, this essay is not primarily concerned with global processes, demographic shifts, or local communities. I turn instead to the "tense and tender ties" that shaped individuals, groups, and nations.

Like the Dutch East India Company men in Java, republican North American ideologists constructed subalterns. Their new republic cum empire colonized African and, for example, Iroquois men, as well as women regardless of culture and color. The self-liberation of the latter and their entry into the ranks of that nation-state's historians have made us aware—as international scholarly exchange has—that we as historians succumb to particular national, class, and gender strategies to present our arguments. Even with the best of
intentions, our ways of thinking follow national traditions of the Western world; no Javanese, Chinese, Yoruba, Tupi, Kwakiutl, or Navajo perspectives are part of our modes of expression.

As a first step, I suggest that we remind ourselves that the intimate frontiers of cultural space and power relationships, to which Stoler refers, have an equivalent in the intimacies of our craft. Before teaching at a school, a junior college, or a prestigious university, all historians began in the intimate setting of some kind of cradle sucking their mother's milk or infant formula and, more often than not, seeing little of their fathers. This first and most important combination of the personal and societal—socialization—establishes the hegemony of one generation over the next, circulates one generation's experiences and ideas as fairy tales, stories, knowledge, or master narratives to the next. It occurs within a family, a particular region, a metropolis, and in a larger national discourse and statewide institutional frame. Scholars of childhood and of individual identity formation inform us that by the age of five our ways of organizing emotions, knowledge, and aspirations are formatted but hidden in the *sub*-conscious. By the time future historians enter first grade, not to speak of their freshman (freshwoman?) year in college, they file new information into mind-sets already formed.

Thus, when a white, or European-origin, urban North American mother in the 1970s conveyed to her child that their black Caribbean nanny stood way below white people, she perpetuated colonialism and racism in the mind of a child who intellectually and emotionally could not counter the mother's authority. Aware of an emotional contradiction and with the mother out of sight, the child asked the nanny why she was inferior—the child trusted the nanny would permit her charge to ask a question without threat of punishment. Such attachments explain why the propagandists of hegemonic paradigms, who arrogate to themselves the power of definition, the nation's gatekeepers, reject caregiver's of other conceptualizations, creeds, and complexions. Will postcolonial circuits of people and bi- or multicultural parenthood change such narrow national socialization of children, future historians among them?

If students of individual mind-sets (psychoanalysts) have to undergo an analysis themselves before approaching others, should students of collective mind-sets, including historians (socioanalysts), also first undergo an analysis of their preconceptions? Such "positioning" has been demanded by feminist and postcolonial historians. Thus, let me insert a reflection on my own childhood-framed mind. I was born in 1943, the tenth of the publicly announced thousand years of the Third Reich in Germany—with no input of my own, I was a German and also an Aryan. That the Nazi empire was already in its waning years was certainly not indicated in official rhetoric, but babies such as myself sensed danger when mothers clutched them in fear as Allied bombers passed overhead. I had been born into a bourgeois (French concept)/middle-class (American concept)/educated-citizen (German concept) nuclear family. Since my father was absent—serving as a soldier in this second war for empire, holding a job in a different city, later having a job in the same city that left no time for family—the two-parent-family ideology I imbibed never fit my
As a middle-class standard of living, the nation-state had destroyed it: there was the previous war for empire (1914–1918) in which the two grandfathers had perished, one inflation, one (worldwide) depression, and another war for domination of the German nation over neighboring—assumedly lesser or totally inferior—peoples. Whatever I imbibed as middle-class aspirations did not square with my experiences. But working-class children were worse off. Of the fifty-some pupils in my sixth grade in a proletarian neighborhood, only the sons of a doctor and of a judge made their way to higher education. None of the others would ever have a chance to write history.

As for the nation-state ideology that had appropriated the old Roman formula *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori* (it is agreeable and proper to die for one's fatherland)—my widowed grandmothers never conveyed to me that it was much of a workable principle. Since roughly 20 million Europeans died in the first, 60 million in the second of those wars, my experience was not singular. In the circuits of people of the late 1940s, armed men shaped fears and intimacies; since my childhood I have remained fearful of masses of military trucks. In contrast, the mutual admiration of young U.S. soldier men and young, often undernourished German women undercut the nonfraternization rhetoric. Their intimate relations cut across national victor-vanquished hierarchies while also incorporating them. "My" state and nation changed faster than a child could keep track. By age twelve, I had lived in the Nazi empire, the British zone with the adults around me uncertain whether this was occupation or liberation, and a truncated state called West Germany. By 1955, that state was about to enter the new military empire of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), to fend off—in the name of (manly?) individualist-capitalist principles—the threat of the collectivist-socialist empire in Eastern Europe, where, according to some male Western ideologues, individual women's bodies had been collectivized by men. A nation or an empire is said to share a past, but in my nation's schools, most teachers never mentioned the fascist past and others felt that "our" achievements had always been eclipsed by American self-sell. While one history teacher taught us everything about the Third Reich, his unrepentant Nazi brother, who happened to be our neighbor, conveyed a different story. I consider myself fortunate that what I imbibed and was taught never fit what I experienced. I lived in a decentered center.

My desire to escape from the "I did not know/we could do nothing" litany of the Nazi empire's fellow travelers so prevalent in West Germany in the 1950s and 1960s made me a historian. I began to look at antifascist resistance—only to realize that historians peddled partial truths: They elevated the resistance of elites and students to center stage and marginalized or concealed that of trade unionists, Communists, and simple workers. The words from the professors' mouths were contradicted by books written from society's margins. As authors of the unitary national heritage paradigm, many historians could not distinguish center and margins. My interest in history became a quest for the agency of common people. (Much later this quest led me back to my parents' history. As subjects of an empire, they could not only conceive me but also feed me, while in the subjugated countries of the East, children of the "subhuman" Slavs died of hunger. I also discovered what under nationalist mind settings had never been part of the private memory of our family: At his birth my maternal grandfather had been a Kohn until his parents joined the imperial majority by
changing a single letter of the name—yielding Koch.) My personal history had taught me to question the national one, and the national one taught me to question family memory.

Did the new approaches to the orthodoxies or half-truths of national history develop at the margins? They came from people, whether political activists or historians, whose experiences (and data) about their society did not fit the masters', the gatekeepers', the self-positioned centrists' narrative. They come from where gatekeepers' pronouncements ring hollow or even demented, from women and men who are their own centers yet live in segments of societies relegated by ideologues to the periphery. Stoler is concerned with how imperial ideologues and officials circulated ideas across empires to shape the intimate desires of the colonial subjects and with how they projected what they considered "natural" onto "others" whom they could then find less than natural. I suggest that we remind ourselves of how gatekeepers' biopolitics of nation and empire also focus on the internally colonized—the working classes, women, children, and all persons with one particular trait of the body, a skin color other than white.

The master narrative, much missed by some of our craft, imposes the view of the masters (and less often of the mistresses) on all other human beings. This *pars pro toto* view smothers the memory of the majority of men, women, and children; it is deadly. People have only one life to live—even if one believes in reincarnation, it is the actual life that is experienced. This one life is a person's master or mistress narrative, and only the sum of those life stories yields the story of a whole society. Out of the intimacies of one generation (not out of average number of children per woman in the fertility bracket), the next generation emerges. Out of the power to impose discourses and racial-social classifications and out of the defiance by those thus imposed upon, as Stoler argues, the dialectic of the next generation's discourse emerges.

Thus, in a second step, I will turn to subordinated, subaltern peoples in the Americas and in the European empires to suggest how a recounting of complex, individual, and intimate lives challenges and undermines national narratives. Like Ann Stoler I will illustrate my argument with short examples: How do *métis*—children fit into homogeneous narratives of national culture? Why are women and working-class men defined by parts of their bodies rather than as citizens of the particular nation's state? Why are some members of imperial populations, considered economic liabilities, simply transferred to other societies? Finally, is not inclusion in and exclusion from the "body politique" (in German: *Volkskörper*) defined by bodies rather than by political agency? Underlying narratives of intimate and bodily lives seem to circulate and to be of more relevance than discourses of citizenship.

My first case refers to the "mixed" children of imperial circuits who have until recently remained outside both national histories, which are predicated on one culture, and imperial histories, which are predicated on the superiority of the colonizers. In the eighteenth century fur empires emerged in Scandinavia, Siberia, and North America in response to demand for a certain kind of hat in colonizer cores such as Paris, London, and Amsterdam. That demand provided income-generating jobs a continent off for men willing to migrate. They formed
unions with local women who knew the terrain, were part of resident cultures, and had access to social and economic networks. Core-driven global economics determined who conceived children with whom in the raw material–providing regions. Métis children were born, Scots-Métis, French-Métis, many-métis the European input was and is denominated and dominant while that of the locals, Cree, Huron, Similkameen, or other, did not enter hegemonic terminology. It thus remains hidden from memory. In the next phase, missionaries circulated to western Canadian societies ideas of "hardy backwoodsmen, wholesome women and steady families." Further south, in the plantation empires, most métissage occurred from imbalanced power relations or outright rape. All of these children became part of North American ethnogenesis. While métissage (a term without the negative connotations of "miscegenation" or Blutschande, that is, a heinous crime against the bloodstream) was common to all imperial/colonial regions of the world, what differed were particular hierarchies expressed in societal patterns, legal forms, and economic regimes. By introducing the children of imperial circuits into the narrative, we dismantle concepts of "pure" bloodline nations.

A second case, the process of constructing the United States as nation and empire, seems well known. While the Englishmen in Britain were completing their empire in India, the Englishmen of the postcolonial United States renamed themselves Americans. Their concept of nation-state eschewed equality before the law and creation of one national culture out of many, E pluribus unum. The master narrative emphasized difference: frontier manliness, urban home–based "true" womanhood, racialization of the people of the Black Atlantic and of Latin American cultures. Transatlantic, trans-European, and trans-American republicanism would have made all of them citizens of equal standing. Birth conferred but a right to reside on the nation-state's territory, not to participate in many of its affairs. This "lesser" majority might be proud of being part of Manifest Destiny but received fewer material benefits. Many of them, often nonenfranchised, were not even considered full persons but were classified by body parts: hired "hands" or, in a later phase, "arms" ("braceros"). Gatekeeper-imposed codes, the male work ethic and female chastity, defined men by muscles, women by reproductive organs. As to whole bodies, dominant ideology (or the male gaze) taught women to wear bodices to achieve a figure considered "feminine" and turned men into a fraction of horsepower by suggesting harnesslike mechanical contraptions to ensure maximum usage of male workers' arms, legs, and even weight. The power relations between colonizers and colonized workers were stated explicitly in 1909, when Japanese working families in Hawai'i struck for better wages and to join "the body politique." A planter commented, "They'll make intelligent citizens all right enough, but not plantation laborers—and that's what we want." His class imposed the definition. In the marketplace of political opinion, where this statement has been available for long, historians shop only very selectively and it took a Japanese-surnamed historian to take this record from the shelf. A third case suggests that white skin and imperial belonging did not prevent people whom imperial ideologues considered liabilities from being excluded from their own society and transferred to another. We discover tense relations within the imperial majority. Thus France, for example, traded off French-speaking North Americans to the British Empire in 1763. The oft-cited
conquest pitting the male heroes James Wolfe and Louis Joseph de Montcalm against each other did not cause the transfer; the economics of empire indicated that the immigrants in the St. Lawrence Valley replicating France's culture were less profitable than the vastly different métis French-speaking planters on Caribbean islands exploiting their African-speaking slaves' bodies. Imperial strategists ceded the French Canadians and kept the planter-"Negro" economy. From the 1880s on, British imperial gatekeepers—philanthropists, doctors, and population planners—pursued an economic-demographic logic to rid the core of orphaned or poor children; of "surplus women," that is, those who would not find husbands; and of men partially invalidated by wartime disabilities. Styled "empire settlement" to suggest a superiority of those participating, the program was to provide sick men with outdoor work and women with an opportunity to find white-colony-born husbands and to bear children for the empire. Orphans or children considered to be in need of morality-providing homes were sent out as usually unpaid farm help. Some imperial men and, in the philanthropic organizations, some women decided on where weaker members of society were to labor and form attachments: Canada, Australia, South Africa. Who was to consort with whom, who was to look with what kind of gaze at whom, who was to use social space how or not at all, were eminent matters of state. I argue, as Stoler does, that the colonizer-colonized dichotomy is not a geographic one but a state of mind acted out in policies and in private homes in the cores as well as in what from a core perspective is the periphery. Many inhabitants of the center had their lives decentered by the gatekeepers of the core—and were aware of this.

A final example illustrates the interrelatedness of state and nation with birth and death, of societies with race. In Canada in the late 1940s, the House of Commons—with only one woman member—debated readmitting immigrants from China. Members of Parliament from British Columbia, where only a century earlier the Hudson's Bay Company's fur traders and First Peoples' women had formed "tender ties" and whose first governor, the son of a "free colored woman" and a Scottish West Indies trader, had married a Pacific Coast métis woman, opposed the bill. The government proposed to permit men, after nearly a quarter century of closed gates, to bring in wives and children, perhaps some 7–8,000 persons. The opponents inflated the number of women to 30,000 and commented on intimate relations, on the consequence of sexuality. Each woman would give birth to three children, and thus, out of their wombs, another 90,000 Chinese would crowd in. This might be called the "life-giving" clause for women's exclusion. Parliament also discussed the change from generic British imperial to specific national Canadian citizenship. While for many decades most newcomers had developed a sense of Canadian belonging, the debate was triggered by discovery of non-British names on Canadian soldiers' tombstones in French war cemeteries: If such "others" had died for the country, their descendants deserved citizenship. This might be termed the "death-in-war" clause for men's inclusion. Wartime young male emigrants from the United States to Canada intended to avoid such coffin-citizenship. They valued their lives above some gatekeepers' notions of a colonial or postcolonial war in Vietnam. Others, as soldier-migrants on U.S. bases in Asia, either used local women's bodies for sexual gratification or opted for tender ties. Whatever the personal strategies of the "war brides," return of these families to the United States contributed to a new phase in the
ethnogenesis of the U.S. population. Tender ties resulted in inclusion, a new narrative of nation. Tense ties, in contrast, exclude, prevent people from circulating and ideas from being shaped by all members of society. To paraphrase Stoler, the technologists of rule made the imperial U.S. body politic out of sexualized and racialized bodies and body parts. In the 1840s, the United States by conquest (violence of the state) incorporated territory in the Southwest and the imperial republic's gatekeepers constructed "Mexican greasers"—the analogue of the "effeminate Bengali." After the end of Reconstruction, racialization, sexualization, and lynch law (violence of a sociocultural regime) kept a labor force of a different kind of skin color in submission, reduced human beings to pawns in "structures of dominance."\(^\text{17}\) A partisan historiography, law, and literature (violence of intellectuals) excluded "nonwhite" male and female residents of the Republic from participation, memory, and the circulation of ideas.\(^\text{18}\)

The four examples and the questions they raise indicate the exclusion as well as inclusion-by-discrimination strategy of traditional national historiographies. Postcolonial ways of approaching complex histories and of including the history of the internally and externally colonized finally commit to writing and analysis what past masters of nationhood never wanted to know. Postcolonial historians are in the process of liberating themselves from national or imperial stories stored in childhood or learned from gatekeepers. Center and periphery, decentered centers and self-centering margins provide fascinating perspectives. The intimate frontiers of empire are imprinted into our minds as well as lived in our homes and classrooms—and they challenge the traditional narrative of nation-centered history.

Notes

Dirk Hoerder is professor of history at the University of Bremen where he teaches North American history and the history of migration.

Readers may contact Hoerder at <hoerder@uni-bremen.de>.

\(^1\) In 1996 the Organization of American Historians (OAH) and New York University initiated a project, under the direction of Thomas Bender, to explore internationalizing U.S. history. The working group's report was distributed to OAH members in early 2001: La Pietra Report: Project on Internationalizing the Study of American History ([New York], 2000). Some contributions to the project appear in Thomas Bender, ed., Rethinking American History in a Global Age (Berkeley, 2001).

\(^2\) See, in particular, the writings of Jean Piaget and, more recently, Ernst von Glasersfeld, Radical Constructivism: A Way of Knowing and Learning (London, 1995); and Gerhard Roth, "Die Bedeutung der Gehirnforschung für die philosophische Erkenntnistheorie und für das Leib-Seele-Problem" (The significance of research on the brain for the philosophical theory of cognition and for the mind-body problem), in Die Natur ist unser Modell von ihr (Nature is only the model we construct of her), ed. Valentin Braitenberg and Inga Hosp (Reinbek, 1996), 87–109.

\(^3\) Joyce C. Fraser, Cry of the Illegal Immigrant (Toronto, 1980), 9.


8. Under a changed global economic regime, a new type of human migration came to be called "brain drain." In the Museum of Man in San Diego, even in May 2001, a pelvis bone refers to women, a brain-protecting cranium to men. An Austrian socialist who worked in the U.S. from 1910 to 1923 called the brutal treatment of male workers by employers or of less powerful peoples by imperial ones "rape"—the German term *Vergewaltigung* means to subject someone to violence that takes away agency. Dirk Hoerder, ed., *Josef N. Jodlbauer, Dreizehn Jahre in Amerika, 1910–1923: Die Autobiographie eines österreichischen Sozialisten* (Josef N. Jodlbauer, thirteen years in America, 1910–1923: The autobiography of an Austrian socialist) (Vienna, 1996), 121, 143, 200.


11. It was also British imperial practice to hide insane colonizing personnel in India in special


16 The ambiguous attitude to nation and warfare is reflected in the elevated status of the U.S. Veterans Administration and the marginalized position of disabled surviving soldiers.

17 Given historians' national upbringings, it is not common to compare the slave and post-Reconstruction South with a German political regime. But in the name of racial purity, the Nazis' Aryan Nuremberg laws of 1935 imposed on Germans of Jewish faith a segregation that southern white Jim Crow laws had imposed on Americans of dark skin.

18 Hispanic Americans contest hegemonic public memory. Settlers from New Spain established the first permanent European settlement in the territory of the future United States at Santa Fe, predating the first permanent English settlement, Jamestown, by almost a decade.