

O
n
Jameson

FROM POSTMODERNISM
TO GLOBALIZATION

Edited by
Caren Irr and Ian Buchanan

On Jameson

This page intentionally left blank.

On Jameson

*From Postmodernism
to Globalization*

Edited by
Caren Irr
and
Ian Buchanan

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS

Published by
State University of New York Press, Albany

© 2006 State University of New York

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

No part of this book may be used or reproduced
in any manner whatsoever without written permission.
No part of this book may be stored in a retrieval system
or transmitted in any form or by any means including
electronic, electrostatic, magnetic tape, mechanical,
photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior
permission in writing of the publisher.

For information, address State University of New York Press,
194 Washington Avenue, Suite 305, Albany, NY 12210-2384

Production by Michael Haggett
Marketing by Michael Campochiaro

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

On Jameson : from postmodernism to globalization / edited by Caren Irr and Ian
Buchanan.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-7914-6591-8 (hardcover : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-7914-6592-6 (pbk. : alk.
paper)

1. Jameson, Fredric—Criticism and interpretation. I. Irr, Caren. II. Buchanan, Ian,
1969—

PN75.J3605 2005

801'.95'092—dc22

2004030458

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

Introduction	
<i>Caren Irr and Ian Buchanan</i>	1

PART I. CENTRAL CONCEPTS

1. Generally Historicizing	
<i>Evan Watkins</i>	15
2. History, Narrative, and Realism: Jameson's Search for a Method	
<i>Carolyn Lesjak</i>	27
3. A Level Playing Field? Metacommentary and Marxism	
<i>Roland Boer</i>	51
4. Narratives of History, Narratives of Time	
<i>Sean Homer</i>	71

PART II. REACTIONS AND READINGS AROUND THE WORLD

5. Cultural Revolution, the Discourse of Intellectuals, and Other Folk Tales	
<i>Robert Seguin</i>	95
6. Construction Work: Theory, Migration, and Labor in the Age of Globalization	
<i>Michael Rothberg</i>	117

7. Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Postcommunism?
The Cultures of the Former Soviet Bloc Encounter Jameson
Vitaly Chernetsky 143

PART III.

TOWARD GLOBALIZATION

8. National Allegory Today: A Return to Jameson
Ian Buchanan 173
9. Who's Afraid of National Allegory? Jameson, Literary Criticism,
Globalization
Imre Szeman 189
10. The American Grounds of Globalization: Jameson's Return
to Hegel
Caren Irr 213
11. Periodizing Jameson, or, Notes toward a Cultural Logic
of Globalization
Philip E. Wegner 241
- Contributors 281
- Index 285

Introduction

Caren Irr and Ian Buchanan

To understand is to change, to go beyond oneself.
—Jean-Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method*

Globalization creates two major problems for the humanities today, each of which threatens the interlinked disciplines of literary study, philosophy, and history with obsolescence or—what amounts to the same thing—stasis. First, since the end of World War II and the weakening of the philosophical and political underpinnings of the European concept of humanity that followed the war, the humanistic disciplines appear to lack a distinctive object of study. Taking seriously, as one certainly must, the expansion of the category of the human to include not only the so-called civilized nations and people of the world but also those who seemed barbarous or primitive to the civilized has led to a situation in which all peoples, at least in principle, count as human. All are eligible for human rights, for example. This slow drive toward fulfillment of the universalist project of the Enlightenment has had a paradoxical effect for the humanities, however. Expanding the category of “the human” so that it more completely corresponds to the full range of human cultures suggests, on the one hand, a greater need for humanists as interpreters and analysts of culture. Yet, on the other hand, despite the arguably greater need for humanists with multilingual and cultural knowledge, in the context of the canon debate, for example, the expansion of the number and variety of objects of study has also (and perhaps rightly) been perceived as diminishing an earlier preservationist practice of the humanities. Multiplying the potential objects of study, on this account, effectively destroys the ideologically charged understanding of the humanistic disciplines as museums of genius, even though this destruction is and should not be total. The multiplication of objects of study in the humanities at present produces a lack of objects, because the task of attacking the old canonical practices must be ritually repeated. In the context of a global multiculturalism, humanists on both sides of the canon wars repeatedly exhume their antagonists in order to slay them over and over. The multiplication of objects of study in the humanities produces a necessary lack.

For related reasons, in many places, the humanities today are also characterized by a tremendous methodological diversity. This is in part the result of the fact that, with the postwar acceleration of global flows of communication and migrants, humanists now have much greater difficulty anchoring their projects in self-evidently national traditions. Limiting the set of objects with which one works by isolating a single national culture, and then further restricting inquiry to a single historical slice of the national tradition, increasingly seems to many students of culture an artificially narrow enterprise. Surely, if public discussion of globalization means anything, it means that we cannot simply assume the autonomy of distinct national cultures in the present—or in the recent and distant past. Yet, despite our ability to pose this methodological problem in the abstract, humanists have not attained the genuinely global perspective that would provide the necessary corrective. Under the influence of the new transdiscipline of Theory, many have examined cross-national themes—language or gender, for instance. This work has released powerful jolts of energy in the humanities, but many of these enterprises have also met their limits and revealed their own continuing assumption of a national or cultural home. The well-known discussion of the limited racial imagination in first-world feminism might serve as an instructive example here. Rather than obviating the search for postnational methods of study, theoretical approaches tend to revive the problem. “Theory” is one name for a methodological crisis in the humanities, not its resolution.

In this context, methods of analysis have continued to proliferate. Old historicists routinely sit across the conference table from new ones, while literary historians and “deconstructionists” argue over which “ism” should be added next to the hodge-podge list of “methods” studied in introductory courses. The grand promise of Theory as a meta-discourse that would unite and reposition the concerns of the humanistic disciplines has not utterly exhausted itself, but the wave of enthusiasm it inspired in the 1970s and 1980s does seem to many observers to have crested. We now find any number of so-called philosophical reactions—in the name of ethics, beauty, and so on—appealing to the logic of capitalist triumphalism and claiming to have won the day now that the period of struggle is over. Without some renewed commitment to identifying definite objects and methods of study, a drift into disorganized and unreflective pluralism can easily be imagined as the destiny of the humanities.

To this crisis, however, four solutions propose themselves. In the spirit of Samuel Huntington, for example, humanists might insist on preserving the categories of both “the human” and “the nation.” Or, they might accept the political and philosophical critiques of the insufficiency of the category of “humanity” but retain, like Richard Rorty or Jürgen Habermas, some elements of the national tradition. Arguing for an essentially social democratic reform within the context of the nation, both Rorty and Habermas urge humanists

toward finishing the project of modern nation-building in their academic forms. Alternately, we might remove “the nation” but retain a concept of “the human” as, arguably, Elaine Scarry has done in her well-known work on bodies in pain. Martha Nussbaum’s neo-Aristotelian approach to emotions and human capabilities as universals might be understood in a similar vein. Finally, humanists might opt to revel in the uncertainty of a less charted alternative, operating with reference to neither the human nor the nation, inventing instead new provisional concepts from project to project, as need be. Each of these options has its benefits and promises to rebuild the humanities according to its own logic, but—faced with all of them—humanists still have the difficult task of sorting, ordering, and interpreting these options for our own enterprise.

It is for this vital task that the work of Fredric Jameson has been so immensely useful. Widely regarded as one of America’s most important critics, and frequently described as America’s most important Marxist thinker, Fredric Jameson has been at the forefront of the field of literary and cultural studies since the early 1970s. Author of such landmark texts as *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* and *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, books that have literally transformed the critical landscape, Jameson is without doubt one of the leading humanistic intellectuals of our time. He is also one of the most eclectic—in the most positive sense of that term; he has written about philosophy, novelists from Proust to Stephen King, but also on drama, several different national cinemas, video art, easel painting, rock music, architecture and urban planning, as well as utopia and science fiction. In the process, Jameson’s writing has produced an enormous map of cultural objects and theoretical schools, granting each some validity in its sector and coordinating each in relation to the others. Repeatedly throughout his career, Jameson has produced strong rewritings of major traditions with the explicitly pedagogical purpose of reinvigorating the humanistic or interpretive disciplines.

JAMESON’S CAREER

Perry Anderson explains what has made Jameson’s scholarship so important and impossible to ignore during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Speaking of “Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” the landmark 1984 *New Left Review* essay that would culminate in an award-winning book of the same title, Anderson wrote that it “redrew the whole map of the postmodern at one stroke—a prodigious inaugural gesture that has commanded the field ever since.”¹ Here Anderson underlines the element most crucial to an understanding of both Jameson’s career and the reception of his work: its essential boldness. In a similar vein, Colin McCabe also

draws attention to Jameson's intellectual ambition; in the preface to *The Geopolitical Aesthetic*, he remarks that "it can truly be said that nothing cultural is alien to him."² Indeed, any thorough review of Jameson's work cannot but marvel at its range. It uses materials in many languages, relies on familiarity with literally dozens of national histories, and exhibits knowledge of cultural texts that extends from urban planning and architecture through film and literature (in its many permutations) to contemporary video art. What distinguishes Jameson's work, then, is his ability to draw together this multiplicity of disparate strands, or straws in the wind as he put it, and reveal their integration. This totalizing impulse at once fascinates and infuriates his critics, but it is also what makes his writing so vital. By boldly and broadly synthesizing, Jameson has become one of those humanists who sets the agenda for critical discussion in our time.

For this reason, we can understand the history of Jameson's career as a sequence of *Zeitgeist* statements and the history of the reception of his work as a sequence of responses to those statements. To put it another way, the reception of Jameson's work can be divided between those who reset their compasses according to his successive mappings of the critical landscape and those who continue to use a preexisting map or propose their own. Critics in the first category do not necessarily accept Jameson's work uncritically; on the contrary, their work tends to be the most questioning. For instance, while in broad agreement with the general proposition that postmodernism is a left problem, Perry Anderson does not hesitate to offer his own criticism of its formulation. In the second category, we generally find critics who reject Jameson's totalizing view of history and (more important) historiography and therefore recoil from his paradigm shifting pronouncements. Critics of this orientation tend, for instance, to treat Jameson's work on postmodernism purely as style criticism and ignore its wider world-historical implications. What they ignore, in other words, is Jameson's central point: the idea that postmodernism is symptomatic of a deep historical undercurrent and therefore needs to be interrogated for what it can tell us about the new state of social and political organization. Instead, they approach it as an exposition on a certain moment in literary history and worry that Jameson has neglected particular exceptional texts.

This field-specific critical reception of Jameson's work on postmodernism is also instructive to consider because it reminds us of another crucial facet of his career—the fact that with each new book he speaks to a new audience and intervenes into a new field. This does not mean he ceases speaking to his current or past readers, only that he does not make a habit of preaching to the converted. In this sense, it could be said that with each new book Jameson builds an ever more complexly constituted audience. To summarize the nature of Jameson's relationship to his audience, we might turn to his remarks on Simmel in *The Cultural Turn*: "Simmel's subterranean influence

on a variety of twentieth-century thought currents is incalculable, partly because he resisted coining his complex thinking into an identifiable system; meanwhile, the complicated articulations of what is essentially a non-Hegelian or decentred dialectic are often smothered by his heavy prose.”³ With the exception of the remark about Simmel being non-Hegelian, the main thrusts of this comment—the resistance to coining a brand-name system and the burying of ideas in heavy prose—clearly apply to Jameson himself, the former by his own admission and the latter by common consent. Perhaps most important, this quotation reminds us that Jameson’s work, like Simmel’s, has had an incalculable influence on a generation of scholars in a sometimes subterranean fashion.

In part this influence is due to Jameson’s extraordinary work as a teacher of undergraduate and graduate students and his mentoring of junior scholars literally from all over the world. In interviews, Jameson has stated quite frankly that he understands the training of students as his essential task—that is, the task he can actually do, as opposed to those he might urge on others. What he invariably does as a pedagogue is give them the tools to carry out their own researches; thus, his students tend to work tangentially to his own oeuvre, though all the while retaining it as a touchstone. It would be an instructive, albeit difficult exercise to map the lines of flight Jameson’s teaching has spawned, to see where his pedagogy has taken his students.⁴ The essays brought together for this volume give a taste of that influence in just a few of the fields in which Jameson’s work has been important.

Most consistently, Jameson’s influence has been methodological. These methods of reading have been in evidence his first book, *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*. Although published at the height of the Cold War when a book on a Marxist was provocative in a way no longer properly recognizable to contemporary readers, the Sartre book has often been described by its critics as insufficiently political, or at least not *as* overtly political as its subject matter. And indeed it is true that Jameson does not dwell on the political content of Sartre’s philosophy, but rather emphasizes the latter’s style. This essential emphasis on the “unconscious” politics of style is developed further in his next book published a decade later, namely *Marxism and Form*. The second book is obviously political in both intent and content; it also changes the scale of the question of politics. While the first book concentrates on parts of the sentence, words, punctuation, and so forth, the next book tackles the sentence formation itself. In light of *Marxism and Form*, we can see that *Sartre* anticipates much of Jameson’s later work in the way it analyzes style not as a problem of content, but rather as a problem of form.

This emphasis on form has been Jameson’s principal means of politicizing the apparently non-political ever since. As he would put it in a later interview, “the form of the work of art—and I would include the form of the mass cultural product—is a place in which one can observe social conditioning and

thus the social situation. And sometimes form is a place where one can observe that concrete social context more adequately than in the flow of daily events and immediate historical happenings.”⁵ In this sense, formal criticism provides the basis for his unique brand of dialectical criticism. In constructing this method, Jameson draws on a great many sources—Sartre, Adorno, Benjamin, and Lukács, to list only a few of the more notable—but none in so decisive a manner that we could resort to the shorthand of speaking in terms of direct influences. Jameson’s work is no more Sartrean than it is Lukácsian, yet neither is it non-Sartrean or non-Lukácsian. Rather, in the best tradition of the dialectic, it is both at once, and of course it is also Adornian and non-Adornian, and so on. This is a long-winded way of saying that to simply describe it as Marxist-Hegelian lacks the subtlety, but more important the provocative ambivalence of Jameson’s complex position. Caren Irr’s essay in this volume addresses these questions further. And, as Roland Boer reminds us in his essay, Jameson coined the term “metacommentary” for a prize-winning MLA talk in 1971 to describe his method. Although in more recent years this term seems to have fallen into disuse, it has not ever been repudiated. The metacommentary’s basic move is to conceive of the theory as a code, with its own rules of discursive production and its own logic of thematic closure. With the operating logic of the code in hand, Jameson then seeks to uncover the ideological pressures that are at work in this conception of text and textuality.

After *Marxism and Form*, *The Political Unconscious* was the next book to bring genuinely international attention to Jameson’s work. *The Political Unconscious* was what contemporary publishers call a crossover book; it found readers on both sides of the Atlantic and in English Departments as well as Comparative Literature. The first of Jameson’s published interviews were given in this period; likewise the first of many special issues of journals were dedicated to his work at this time. *The Political Unconscious* struck a chord in many quarters, as is obvious from its huge sales, but perhaps nowhere more so than in the then emergent field of cultural studies (in its Anglo-Australian permutation, rather than the American), which was establishing itself in the tradition of Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, and Stuart Hall. Cultural studies welcomed *The Political Unconscious*’s sophisticated method, which by synthesizing a number of concepts already familiar to the field, especially from the structuralist applications of Althusser and Lévi-Strauss, gave its early practitioners a means of exploring and articulating the ideological underpinnings of the popular and mass cultural texts they were engaging with.

Even as *The Political Unconscious* was being written, however, Jameson was already formulating his next major work. For many readers, this is the book that defines his work, although as Jameson himself has remarked it is rather peculiar to be associated with what one has criticized. This is of course the book on postmodernism, which began life as a lecture given at the Whitney Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1981.⁶ The subsequent decade

between the appearance of *The Political Unconscious* and its successor *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* was in many respects turbulent for Jameson: he moved from the French Department at Yale to the History of Consciousness program at U.C. Santa Cruz and from there to the Literature Program at Duke, with a short sojourn teaching in China as well. This restlessness was to a certain extent reflected in his work. His writing became more experimental in this period in that it branched into new areas and topics; in particular, he began to write more frequently and more directly on film. Until this point, he had only published two essays on film, one on *Zardoz* and the other on *Dog Day Afternoon*, but by the end of the decade he had two books on film.⁷ He accepted a commission from Colin McCabe at the British Film Institute that resulted in a series of lectures given at the National Film Theatre in London in May 1990. This work was later published under the title *The Geopolitical Aesthetic*; in the same year, he also brought together a series of occasional essays on film and wrote a long piece on art deco to produce *Signatures of the Visible*. More interesting, though, and lending weight to the subterranean image previously given, he had at least four other substantial but ultimately unfinished projects ongoing throughout this period.

At the start of the decade, Jameson seems to have been preoccupied with completing or at least advancing a study of science fiction and utopias begun in a fairly ad hoc fashion in the previous decade. This preoccupation is visible in the conclusion to *The Political Unconscious*, but a short time after it seemed to stall, or else give way to newer or more urgent projects. At a conference held in Jameson's honor in 2003 it was announced that this project had at last reached the conclusion stage and that a book was imminent.⁸ That more urgent project interrupting the science fiction and utopias book seems to have been a desire to write a kind of cultural history of the 1960s, which was begun but not completed—it did result, however, in three very important essays: “Periodizing the 1960s,” “Wallace Stevens,” and “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism.” The last of these three sparked a considerable furor, which Buchanan and Szeman examine in more detail in their contributions to this volume. Although Jameson himself designates “Periodizing the 1960s” and “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism” as companion pieces to the program essay on postmodernism, that relationship has not yet been fully explored. By the same token, the Wallace Stevens essay has yet to be seen in its proper perspective as the first draft of an extended work on the birth and death of what Jameson calls “theoretical discourse.” Not the least reason for this, of course, is that that extended work has not yet been published, although portions of it have been delivered under titles such as “What’s Left of Theory?”

Other works in progress include one on Asian literature; in addition to the essay on third-world literature, which deals with Chinese and Indian writers as well as African writers, there are two other essays dealing with Asian

authors.⁹ Jameson also remains interested in rethinking modernist texts, particularly those with a postcolonial provenance or pertinence such as works by Joyce, Flaubert, and Rimbaud.¹⁰ With regards to the latter, the 2002 publication of *A Singular Modernity* should not be seen as the conclusion to this project, but rather a late introduction that will perhaps hasten the project along.¹¹ Common to Jameson's most recent projects is the attempt to theorize a successor to modernism that is not yet properly a postmodernism; in this way they preface the postmodernism project in the typically Jamesonian manner of being "failures." What is curious about them is the fact that they followed the inaugural presentation of what Jameson himself describes as the program essay on postmodernism—it is almost as if having put forward that formulation, he had to then work around the edges of it, considering it from several different angles to see whether it really did hold up to scrutiny.

Since the mid-1990s, beginning with the last essays of *The Cultural Turn*, Jameson has begun to theorize the coming—some say achieved—transformation to the world-historical known as "globalization." In summary, Jameson's argument is that it may be useful to think of the concept of "globalization" as a "libidinalization of the market," by which he means that cultural production today increasingly aims to make the market itself desirable. There is, Jameson argues, no enclave left, aesthetic or otherwise, in which the commodity cannot reign supreme. Owing to the almost complete collapse of actually existing socialism and the generalized discrediting of Soviet communism that has followed, capitalism now imagines no actually existing alternatives. Indeed, Jameson fears that the very idea that there is or could be an alternative to capitalism has withered and died. As he puts it, today we find it easier to imagine the end of the world itself than an alternative to capitalism. Thus, more urgently than ever before, we are called on to uncover the inherent contradictions in the system and the ideological means by which they are papered over. In this respect, the Jamesonian project will always be, in the best sense of the word, an incomplete one.

CONCLUSION

It is to address the range, influence, and continuations of Jameson's work—especially the less widely considered work published since the celebrated *Postmodernism* book—that the essays collected here were assembled. These essays explore some of Jameson's central tenets, even as they reinterpret some of his legacy, turn some of his core concepts in other directions, and move out into worlds not necessarily encompassed by his own writings. These essays explore what his project can do and push the envelopes available in several of the humanistic fields influenced by Jameson's work—from Slavic studies, film criticism, literary history, to postcolonial studies and biblical criticism. These are

also the essays of scholars who have come to Jameson's work because they are students of various corners of the Western Marxist tradition, and it might be best to describe this work as that of the "next generation" of the eclectic Western Marxist tradition. Centrally concerned with culture, politically disengaged from the Soviet experience, critically aware of the third worldist strains of the New Lefts of the 1960s, and deeply ambivalent about American claims to imperial authority, the contributors to this volume are, for the most part, members of a new generation of politically minded scholars of culture. This is a generation in the process of inventing its own predecessors and selecting its traditions from the arrays available in the so-called Supermarket of Theory. Having come intellectually of age at a time when poststructuralism was already a major institutional presence in the academy, this generation borrows and accepts some premises thereof, considering it as a *fait accompli*, a battle already fought and concluded, having left the usual detritus of battle strewn about. The essential act, then, for this intellectual generation is not the recovery of the materiality of the texts of culture or the affirmation of the so-called identities of the mid-twentieth century but rather the discovery, through the rich archives everywhere available, of the material operations of the present.

In short, the essays in *On Jameson* build on Jameson's central premises in hopes of addressing the contemporary crisis in the humanities with a reinvigorated version of critique: this Jamesonian critique is dialectical in character, rigorously conceptual and unafraid of polemic, materialist, and grounded (by various techniques) in the contradictory demands of particular discussions and national situations, while still reaching out toward global and fundamental questions. Together, these essays illustrate how and why politically conscious scholars think about global cultures today, how we teach, what objects we select, who we claim as methodological progenitors, and which future initiatives capture our imaginations.

With such big questions at issue, it should not be surprising that this collection ranges over Jameson's entire corpus and includes essays that consider everything from his early work on Sartre to his most recent on globalization, even though it focuses on the latter, newer material. This volume is especially concerned with reflecting on Jameson's most current work and demonstrating its potential to shape the emerging study of globalization. Furthermore, it treats Jameson's work as a complicated and interconnected whole. As the essays in this volume reveal in their aggregate, integrating these concerns is Jameson's emerging project of producing a critical theory of contemporary global cultures.

Following this introduction, the first set of essays is concerned with articulating four of Jameson's central concepts. Each essay in this section identifies the situation, tensions, and consequences of a core idea. Evan Watkins's essay situates Jameson's distinctive style of generalizing in relation to contemporary pragmatist assertions of the inconsequentiality of theory, arguing

that Jameson's "generalization" operates as a distinctive form of historical abstraction. In her essay, Carolyn Lesjak contests a pro-praxis criticism of Jameson's work and underscores instead his distinctive form of socialist pedagogy. Roland Boer takes up the questions of interpretive method and outlines the derivation of Jamesonian exegesis, focusing on the crucial topic of "metacommentary." In his reconsideration of an argument made earlier in his monograph on Jameson, Sean Homer finds in *The Political Unconscious* in particular a concept of history and historicism especially suitable for the political situation of the new millennium.

The essays in the second part of this collection test particular Jamesonian concepts and hypotheses in readings of global cultures. Robert Seguin's essay considers a theory of cultural revolution latent within Jameson's work and outlines its consequences for an account of the work of intellectuals in the transition from an essentially feudal to a primarily industrial mode of production in the American South. Taking up the well-considered concept of cognitive mapping, Michael Rothberg reads a contemporary German documentary as a partial map of the transnational crisis of labor in newly integrated Europe. Taking the problem further east, Vitaly Chernetsky investigates the stalled encounter with Jameson's work and theories of postmodernism more generally in the post-Soviet sphere—especially Russia, the Ukraine, and the former Yugoslavia.

The third section turns most explicitly to the problems of globalization. It begins with a pair of essays reconsidering—from different directions and locations—Jameson's controversial discussion of third-world literature as national allegory. From Australia, Ian Buchanan situates these concepts in relation to the problem of the nation in contemporary theories of culture. From Canada, Imre Szeman traces the concept of national allegory through Jameson's work, arguing that both culture and "the nation" operate for Jameson as mediating categories; the nation in particular, Szeman argues, serves as an imagined alternative utopian space within globalization. Taking up the problem of utopianism, Caren Irr's essay reads Jameson's call for a return to Hegel not so much as a methodological regression but rather as a figure for his relationship to his American situation. These themes come together in Phil Wegner's synthesizing account of the twin drives of Jameson's work: historicization and totalization; Wegner aims to periodize Jameson's *oeuvre* to date and argue for the emergence of globalization as a new and central problem in his on-going meditation on the possibilities of the future.

Overall, it is the aim of this collection to consider Jameson's work, insofar as this is possible, in its own terms and with an eye to its pertinence for a problem likely to dominate the study of culture for some time to come: how to register simultaneously the commonalities and frictions that together have moved our present past a cultural condition we have sometimes called postmodernism and toward a political situation we are learning to describe as globalization.

NOTES

1. Anderson.
2. McCabe.
3. Fredric Jameson.
4. In a tantalizing couple of pages on the formation of the Marxist Literary Group, Sean Homer gives us the briefest of glimpses of what such a map might look like and in doing so demonstrates how useful a more comprehensive mapping would be. Sean Homer, *Fredric Jameson: Marxism, Hermeneutics, Postmodernism* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998), 27–31.
5. Jameson, “Marxism and the Historicity of Theory: An Interview with Fredric Jameson,” *New Literary History* 29 (3) (1998): 360.
6. In private conversation, Jameson has suggested that, contrary to the public record, as set in place by Perry Anderson, the first airing of this piece actually took place in Germany. But this cannot be confirmed.
7. See McCabe, x.
8. See Jameson, “Nostalgia for the Present,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 88/2 (1929a): 517–537; “The Space of Science Fiction: Narrative in Van Vogt,” *Polygraph* 2/3 (1989b): 52–65; “Science Fiction as a Spatial Genre: Generic Discontinuities and the Problem of Figuration in Vonda McIntyre’s *The Exile Waiting*,” *Science Fiction Studies* 14/1 (March 1987a): 44–59.; “Shifting Contexts of Science-Fiction Theory,” *Science Fiction Studies* 14/2 (1987b): 241–47; “Science Fiction and the German Democratic Republic,” *Science Fiction Studies* 11/2 (33) (1984b): 194–99; “Progress Versus Utopia; or, Can We Imagine the Future?,” *Science Fiction Studies* 9/2 (27) (1982a): 147–58; “Towards a New Awareness of Genre,” *Science Fiction Studies* 9/3 (28) (1982b): 322–24; “Futuristic Visions that Tell Us About Right Now,” *In These Times* 6 (May 1982c): 17; “SF Novel/SF Film,” *Science Fiction Studies* 7/3 (22) (1980): 319–22.
9. See Jameson, “Soseki and Western Modernization,” *Boundary 2* 18 (3) (1991): 123–41; “Literary Innovation and Modes of Production: A Commentary,” *Modern Chinese Literature* 1 (1) (1984): 67–77.
10. Jameson, “Modernization and Imperialism,” *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature (Field Day Pamphlet 14)*, Derry, 1988; “Flaubert’s Libidinal Historicism: *Trois Contos*,” *Flaubert and Postmodernism*, eds. N. Schor and H. Majewski (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984a), 76–83; “Rimbaud and the Spatial Text,” *Rewriting Literary History*, eds. T. Wong and M. A. Abbas (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1984d), 126–41.
11. See Jameson, “Flaubert’s Libidinal Historicism: *Trois Contos*,” 76–83; “Wallace Stevens,” *New Orleans Review* 11 (1) 1984c): 10–19; “Rimbaud and the Spatial Text,” *Rewriting Literary History*, eds. T. Wong and M. A. Abbas (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1984d), 66–93; “Ulysses’ in History,” 126–41.

This page intentionally left blank.

Part I

Central Concepts