

Narrative and Cosmopolitan Mobility: Teju Cole's *Open City*, Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland* and Global Fiction

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Teju Cole's *Open City* (2011) and Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland* (2008) deluge readers with images of the urban landscapes their narrator-protagonists explore. The narration of each novel painstakingly lists consumer goods, traits of neighborhoods, street names, subway lines, and monuments these characters encounter as they travel around New York and other major cities. Cole and O'Neill have their narrators begin active exploration of New York in early chapters, and their movement around the city and the globe triggers narrative leaps to memories of each migrant-narrator's homeland, other places they have lived or locations they visit, as well as ones they imaginatively construct. The texts root their fictive protagonists in actual streets and buildings in New York and elsewhere, then consistently connect their diegetic locales to other places or times.

Both born outside the U.S., highly mobile within New York and around the globe, highly educated and culturally sophisticated, Cole's Julius and O'Neill's Hans also lost fathers young, have complex relationships with their mothers, write a substantial amount about birds, and seem quite good at and insistent upon figuring out people's nationalities by looking at them.¹ This last feature lets each narrator linger on the diversity of New York and the other global cities they inhabit, calling attention to the "intense flow of human traffic across all and any territories" that Zygmunt Bauman says is characteristic of "liquid modernity" (8). Hans grew up in

The Hague, spends time in India, and lives in London before and after his time in New York; Julius spends four weeks in Brussels and narrates passages regarding his upbringing in Lagos. The places they visit contain large numbers of people like them, individuals who have come from elsewhere and might be reasonably expected to live somewhere else eventually.

Because each novel has this international range of reference, as well as deploying metaphorical figures of flight and devoting attention to population shifts, *Open City* and *Netherland* conjure a feeling of global reach and awareness. These characteristics indicate that these texts belong to the category of global fiction, a genre enjoying both critical and cultural prestige as well as insistent redefinition, despite each featuring first-person narration. Both O'Neill and Cole seem intent on working within the novel's limitations to produce a narrative sensation of a large, complex, interconnected world. They sidestep one of this ambition's potential pitfalls—simply affirming the banal idea that humans are all linked²—by making their cosmopolitan narrators, the very figures offering this sophisticated vision of the world, objects of critique. As Nasia Anam and Simon Gikandi have noted, globalization's preferred face is the white-color cosmopolitan, but refugees or migrants seeking economic opportunity or safe haven account for a far greater proportion of the global shifts in human population (Anam, "Nervous Condition"; Gikandi 22–35). Each author's decision to situate cosmopolitan figures like Hans and Julius as our guides into this shifting landscape might seem to blunt the texts' ability to comment critically on the globalized present. Yet each novel makes the contrast between their cosmopolitan narrator's immersion in and movement across inegalitarian environments, filled with less mobile and less privileged individuals, a manifest component of each work.

Bauman writes that the collapse of "the structuring centers" of the postwar, midcentury Western consensus "seem[s] to run parallel with the emergent centrality of the orphaned self" as a common form of subjectivity (14). Cole and O'Neill give us orphaned narrators, isolated individuals physically separated from their origins and from their families, but whose isolation means they do not feel constrained by a sense of authority to which they must submit. While Bauman imagines fluid modernity's orphans as lacking structure and foundation, the symbolic orphaning of Hans and Julius also grants a freedom from physical and intellectual

boundaries, which yields to wide play with narrative space and time. The instability of each narrator's life is paralleled by the instability of his narration, instabilities further complicated by the lapses in memory we see operating in each text—Hans's historical, Julius's personal—that undermine these narrators' claims to an ethical subject-position. In what follows, I trace how O'Neill and Cole thematize geographic movement in line with how they utilize narrative movement to create wide-ranging, critical visions that are undermined by the blind spots in each narrator's perspective. I am thus extending the argument of Madigan Haley, who has written that *Open City* and other global fictions root their ethical basis in the fictional "referenc[ing of] a collective horizon that [the texts] nonetheless do not fully delineate" (116).³ The productive tension Haley locates as part of the genre emerges from my reading of these two works, which will highlight the ambition of global fiction and the limits of the novel as a vehicle for that ambition.

Granting that "all literary worlds are incomplete," Eric Hayot suggests that narrative-driven criticism "can focus on the way a given text manages incompleteness—whether it, for instance, assumes it, dramatizes it, ignores it, and so on. A work's relation (usually rhetorical or narratological) to the problem of incompleteness constitutes [a] variable in its world-orientedness," a term Hayot uses to refer to a text's "theory of reality and social space" (61, 60). *Open City* and *Netherland* feature diegetic landscapes that overwhelm with objects and people worthy of attention. Their very *fullness* might seem to suggest a more complete fictional world. But these documentary efforts paradoxically seem to indicate the impossibility of their completion. They generate a feeling of a world that goes beyond their attempts to catalog it. If global fictions, per Haley, gesture toward a horizon they do not or cannot fully represent, we can imagine a generic complication observable in this management of incompleteness—an incompleteness made even more apparent by the obviously subjective position of the first-person narrator.

What critics have called world literature, world-systems literature, American literary globalism, or global fiction seems to respond to and deepen what Hayot calls the "prominent reification" of a "more general world-oriented discourse" since globalization became a buzzword, generating and reflecting a post-1990 sense of time and space (38). As Bruce Robbins, Rachel Adams, Leerom Medovoi, Caren Irr, and others have sug-

gested, ambitious writers of the last two decades have often attempted to represent the world-picture conjured by terms like globalization or liquid modernity. Consider the globetrotting novels of David Mitchell, or texts like Jennifer Egan's *A Visit from the Goon Squad*, Roberto Bolaño's *2666* or William Vollman's *Europe Central*, which use wide casts of characters with complex, often international connections between them. Sharae Deckard has written that texts within this genre move across vast spaces in order to reveal the inequality baked into the current capitalist world-system (Deckard 97–9). Deckard and Medovoi, whom Deckard cites as an influence, assert that global fictions like these can provide a cognitive map of the confusing contemporary landscape (Deckard 97–9, Medovoi 653–54).

While *Open City* and *Netherland* do provide a critical framing of the global map in the way Deckard applauds, they are equally interesting for their failure to provide a consistent sense of orientation, in spite of their documenting efforts. As I have suggested above, they do reveal the ways global history and geopolitical power distribution influence the seemingly local and personal, a narrative trait Bimbisar Irom has written about in the context of other post-9/11 fictions and which Deckard highlights as an important political element of the genre.⁴ Yet unlike the utopian aim of the global novel, which Rita Barnard has suggested is “a desire for agency and global responsibility” (214), *Netherland* and *Open City* cast doubt upon any progressive utility inherent in registering or mapping global connect-edness. They confront the dispiriting truth of Gikandi's statement that “globalization does not demand that we engage with the Other in any substantive sense” by staging interactions between their cosmopolitan narrators and less privileged individuals that frustrate our expectations that they will become revelatory or ethically meaningful (31). Cole and O'Neill make these confrontations possible through the characterization of their first-person narrators, who for all their observatory powers and sophistication consistently reveal a lack of self-knowledge or a refusal to let new knowledge alter their problematic behavior. These ethical lapses prove the limits of their ways of seeing. These limitations combine in compelling ways with their shared sense of an overfullness in their social environment that overwhelms their narrative capacity; these two characteristics together suggest (or perhaps remind us) that the globalized world overwhelms any individual's—or any work of fiction's—grasp on it. As Haley has written

of global fictions, including *Open City*, both narrators “do not complete the picture” they present to readers, “radically insisting on their own partial, disjunctive nature” (116).

O’Neill and Cole thematize the tension between the densely populated portions of the narrative map the narrators explore and the obvious limitations of their narrative attention. The texts establish this disjunction by utilizing a first-person narrator operating in the realist mode, and each makes sure to contextualize their plots and character movements in recognizable recent history. Both discuss the invasion of Iraq that followed 9/11; Hans recalls the Monica Lewinsky scandal of 1998 and the 2003 blackout in the U.S. Northeast, as well as a prominent baseball player (Pedro Martinez, referred to only by his first name). Julius talks about the closing of Tower Records, just as Hans reviews the collapse of the Blockbuster video chain; Julius also goes to see *The Last King of Scotland* when it would have appeared in theaters; he registers the 2006–2007 rising incidence of bedbugs in New York. Such gestures mean each text produces “collision[s] between fictional storylines and nonfictional events” as a legitimating operation, a tool that Alexander Manshel notes is characteristic of what he calls the “recent historical novel.” Manshel suggests this trend of fictional representation of “the near past” reveals a “reinvigorated belief in its ability to be both comprehended and retold.”

For all the emphasis on recreating that recent past, these narrators, with their significant sophistication and acculturation, hardly leave readers with a greater sense of purchase on the historical events that both works conjure. Consider their treatment of 9/11 and its aftermath, which, as Arin Keeble has pointed out regarding *Netherland*, aligns with the templates laid out by Richard Gray and Michael Rothberg for politicized fiction about these attacks.⁵ They avoid the Manichean frame that the U.S. government utilized for the event, and they show a firm commitment to revealing hybridity within the U.S. population and an unproblematic porosity of borders (in contrast to resurgent nativism after the attacks, which Gray and Rothberg praise *Netherland* for rejecting). Still, both Hans and Julius explicitly hesitate to take a stance on the U.S.’s hegemonic position or military action, and each at times declares his political paralysis a virtue. Given the opportunity to denounce the U.S.’s invasion of Iraq or Afghanistan, or the socioeconomic or political conditions that might produce terrorism, our main characters retreat.

I contend that these two books become far more compelling if we read them via the tension between the broad canvas each character offers, the perceptible limits of those canvases, and the personal shortcomings each exhibits. The laudatory characteristics of the narrators and narration reflect common hopes for figures and stories that can intervene in our understanding of globalized, liquid-modernity and its significant moments like 9/11. Nonetheless, Hans remains immersed in his personal concerns and arguably co-opts, rather than ethically welcoming, otherness. Julius is socially and politically withdrawn and, near the novel's end, introduces a stunning criminal act he had forgotten in his past. Because Julius's means of letting down audiences inclined to learn from him is so much more dramatic, Pieter Vermeulen and Rebecca Clark, among others, have argued that *Open City* uses Julius as a figure of critique. Far fewer readers have noted that Hans is also established as a figure of critique by O'Neill, who confers upon Hans a serious lack of self-awareness and a staggeringly ahistorical understanding of the U.S.'s past.⁶ The depiction of these individuals limns ambiguous elements of the globalized present, revealing the mediation that complicates the aims of global fictions.

When critics have praised *Netherland*, the applause has focused on the way Hans presents New York and presents himself in the world. After September 11, 2001 dislocates them from their apartment and generates severe anxiety, Hans's wife Rachel takes their son and departs to London, and Hans enters a period of transition. He spends a winter playing "the part of flâneur" (O'Neill 91) and, in the summer of 2002, joins a cricketing team composed primarily of teammates originally from Caribbean or South Asian countries. We hear repeatedly that he is the only white member of the league they play in. In a minor subplot, Hans travels around New York with a restaurant critic friend named Vinay, whose beat is 'ethnic food.' His participation in the cricketing club and his visits to restaurants with Vinay bring him out of the largely white, European-descended landscape he seems to have inhabited prior to 9/11. His friendship with Chuck Ramkissoon, a Trinidadian-born cricket fanatic and small-time gangster, further moves Hans away from Caucasian-dominated landscapes: under the guise of giving Hans driving lessons, Chuck takes his friend around the ungentrified outer boroughs of New York, making business-related stops (legitimate and otherwise) while helping Hans deal with his involuntary separation from his family.

Hans's movement around New York is thus an important component of the plot and an area of focus for favorable political readings of *Netherland*, most notably the ones by Gray and Rothberg. O'Neill's narrator-protagonist spends much of the middle third of the text going to different parts of the New York metro area for games, cricket-related events, and drives with Chuck. Counterposed to the first batch of 9/11 novels, which were heavily criticized for focusing on the trauma visited upon Caucasian, Manhattan-dwelling, native-born families, O'Neill's focus on nonwhite communities in other boroughs of New York was for many readers a welcome new direction.

Hans does not, however, travel exclusively in New York during his narration. He flies regularly back and forth from London once Rachel leaves him. He explains that his business specialty—he is wealthy, a gifted analyst of oil and gas stocks of companies worth more than \$10 billion dollars (he uses the shorthand “large-cap” [26])—allows him to comment on the quality of “kebabs in Baku” or “the disgustingness of the Volga” (180). He goes to India with his family for a trip as part of their reunification. He has a pivotal moment of self-realization in Las Vegas, where he attends a business conference; he mentions trips to other American cities as well (33). The novel also spends considerable time discussing his idyllic childhood in The Hague, “where,” Hans says, “Dutch bourgeois snobbishness and Dutch cricket are, not unrelatedly, most concentrated” (42). That he has moved from The Hague to London to New York and then back to London, punctuated by work travel and family vacations, indicates that he enjoys the flexibility that comes from his economic and birthplace privilege. Walter Benn Michaels and Claire Westall argue that Hans does not explicitly comment on his privileges or the economic insecurity or reduced mobility of people around him (Michaels 28-34, Westall, “Cricket, Capital” 73; Westall, “Cricket and the world-system” 290). Nonetheless, the narrative contains comparisons and juxtapositions that dramatize the gaps between what global elites like Hans experience and what those less economically fortunate enjoy.

The most noticeable comparison emerges from a self-conscious anecdote Hans provides about his driving instructor, Carl. When he enters the narrative, Carl has been waiting two years for his fingerprints to show up in order to complete his citizenship application. Hearing Carl's frustration, Hans meekly tells him, “I guess you have to persist” (O'Neill 118). Carl

offers a “hilarious” grin in reply, and he throws Hans’s unintentionally condescending statement back to him when Hans fails his driver’s test (123). We see the unwieldy comparison here: Hans’s driver’s test versus Carl’s citizenship application. Given the post-9/11 atmosphere of heightened xenophobia, that Carl is Guyanese and not yet a citizen matters here far more than increasing Hans’s access to even more mobility. John Duvall has complained that the novel fails to include any scenes where Hans’s teammates face racial profiling or other effects of the heightened security state, but Hans’s inclusion of incidents like this reflect the ways his cluster of privileges ensure his safe passage wherever he goes, while others do not have the same security (Duvall 349).

Hans’s relationship with Chuck also produces a comparison of this kind. During their last extended conversation, Chuck launches into a harrowing story about his past in Trinidad. He tells a story of running away from two machete-armed marijuana growers whose product he happens to see. This story adds to the quick glimpses Chuck has provided of his home earlier: he “grew up in a shack [. . .] not far from the international airport” (149); he worked in the cane field as a young man (151); his mother never recovers from his brother’s death at an early age (241); his stern father keeps Chuck away from the colonizer’s cricket but also disdains native or Black traditions and nicknames (150, 158, 242). Each of these characterizations stand in stark contrast to the paper routes and sweater vests of Hans’s childhood Hague. Halfway through the narrative of his escape, Chuck asks Hans a question about himself:

“Let me ask you this: have you ever run for your life?
[. . .] I mean, a real do-or-die situation?”
I didn’t humor him with an answer. But we didn’t
have too many do-or-die situations in The Hague.
(245–46)

The term “humor” indicates Hans’s sense that answering the question would have been indulging Chuck, who Hans suspects is using the story to produce sympathy in Hans because of their different childhood circumstances. His next sentence, however, acknowledges that Chuck’s guess is right. Hans has not been close to violent situations similar to what Chuck faces in this anecdote. In the narrating present, Hans makes the retrospec-

tive admission that he has never run for his life, while during the actual conversation, he does not want to give Chuck the satisfaction of stating this aloud. The difference, it seems, is that the narrating Hans is influenced by his awareness that Chuck was murdered and tossed into the Gowanus Canal not long after this difficult conversation.

Hans believes Chuck offers this story as a sort of apology for an over-reaction: Hans caustically shoots down a particularly utopian statement from Chuck about the prospects of professional cricket occurring in the United States, and Chuck then leads Hans into a scene where he and his partner assault a third party and break apart his office. Seeing the violence leads Hans to nearly throw up: afterwards, he comments, “violence produces reactions of this kind, apparently” (215). The “apparently” appended to the sentence suggests Hans’s distance from violence of this sort, making it clear he is speculating about violence’s effects. Chuck, on the other hand, is often proximate to violence in the text, an association between the primary Black character and criminality that Westall has critiqued (“Cricket, Capital” 76). The comparison that Chuck’s question introduces makes even more obvious the distinction between migrants like Hans and ones like Chuck. Chuck left Trinidad because of his desire for economic mobility; Hans came to New York, as we learn on the novel’s first page, because it would be fun for him and his wife.

O’Neill makes the comparison available to readers implicitly. The same goes for Chuck’s work and Hans’s. While Hans sees Chuck engage in brutal behavior and distances himself from its criminality, he offers no caveats about his own work. He describes his task as sharing “reliable opinions about the current and future valuation of certain oil and gas stocks” (51), yet at times he feels he is “cooking up myths from scraps and peels of fact” (53). Perhaps Hans is playing modest, but if we line up his statements about his career in speculation with the other claims he makes about his predictive skills, we get a disquieting picture about the heavy financial investment in large-cap oil speculation. Hans pleads that he could not make clear predictions about the human consequences of the Iraq invasion, yet he “could take a guess at the oil production capacity of an American-occupied Iraq and in fact was pressed at work about this issue daily, and stupidly” (99). Estimates about future oil production in Iraq can fuel investments made through his bank, presumably, as long as they look trustworthy. He offers a stupid question of this sort in a parenthetical—

“What are you saying, two and a half million barrels or three million? Which one is it?” (99)—so that we understand why they are so misguided: he can only guess at post-invasion oil production, and the specificity of his estimate should matter less than its status as an estimate. Still, the brokers in his bank can leverage that guess, as it comes from an expert. O’Neill ensures that readers see the guessing part of this very important game and the masking of its gambling elements by charm. Hans explains how this works to a young London colleague: “I clue him in to the little tricks that go into holding oneself out as an augur in the matter of world affairs [. . .] voice a firsthand opinion about the kebabs of Baku, and people will buy almost anything you follow up with” (180). You prove you are an augur via the display of cosmopolitanism, not by pointing to accurate calculations.

Critics have griped that neither Hans nor O’Neill explicitly connect Hans’s profession to dangerous economic speculation. In the quotes above, we see Hans’s co-workers getting ready to monetize the invasion of Iraq; we see the guesses that the industry relies on; we see the performances that cover up the guesswork. We ought to consider, too, the authorial decision to make Hans an analyst of oil and gas companies working for big investment banks during the dark years of the second U.S.-Iraq war, as a signal of the problematic associations of Hans’s profession—ones that put him into relation to industries central to the rigged game of neoliberalism, ones whose behavior is riskier and more socially costly than the local, illegal lottery that Chuck runs. O’Neill’s design provides this context through the pairing of Chuck and Hans as well as Hans and Carl.

In the conversation with Chuck that I have cited above, Hans states that he was “not interested” in connecting Chuck’s story of his past to his present (248). This occasional dismissal of context is an interesting characteristic of O’Neill’s narrator. He exhibits it during a puzzling moment later in the text when Hans, reunited with his wife Rachel, attends a dinner party in London in what is likely 2004 or 2005. A friend of Rachel’s named Matt speaks in a cavalier way about the events of 9/11, comparing the number of casualties in Iraq and the historically small loss of life in the Twin Towers attacks to other historical disasters. He says, “Not such a big deal [. . .] when you think of everything that’s happened since” (181). These are points Hans accepts, stating, “I indeed understand his argument, and indeed must admit it.” A page later, Hans emphatically affirms the significance of 9/11, which after all devastated New York while he lived there;

nonetheless, Hans tells us that his proximity to the event is not motivating his defense of it. He offers no rationalization for his proclamation at all—only saying, quite simply, “I think it was a big deal” (182). To make sure Matt accepts this point, he says it twice.

Hans asserts the significance of the event, decontextualized. Politically-minded critics would argue that this sort of affirmation replicates the U.S. media and state’s focus on the spectacular event itself (*contra* Gray and Rothberg). Hans implicitly effaces the historical conditions that produced 9/11 and divorces the American loss of life from the war on terror that followed.⁷ Yet it is not so much *Netherland* that rejects this context—Hans and Rachel have an argument about the significance of the Bush administration’s relentless drive toward war in Iraq—but *Hans* eschewing Matt’s framing for these assertions of the event’s significance.

This dismissal of or ignorance about context also emerges in two moments when Chuck calls upon Hans to think of the Dutch colonial presence in New York. Chuck has become an American citizen, and he displays American jingoistic patriotism in part through his adoration of the American past. He aligns himself with the United States; when Hans asks where he is from, Chuck replies, “Here” (17). Hans describes Chuck’s car as “a patriotic automobile aflutter and aglitter with banners and stickers of the Stars and Stripes and yellow ribbons in support of the troops” (74). Readings of the novel that disavow its political critique often seize upon Chuck’s role in the narrative as a sign of the text’s adoption of colonialist ideology. Chuck’s great frustration with the U.S. is that it has forgotten its relationship with cricket, the game Chuck actively idealizes and consistently praises for its civilizing qualities. As Anker, Westall, and others have indicated, O’Neill’s decision to make Chuck a mouthpiece for the colonial propaganda associated with cricket looks like a straightforward adoption of imperialist propaganda (Anker 468, Westall, “Cricket, Capital” 76). He does not just love cricket: he loves cricket for the qualities that made its spread an important part of British colonial education. Pointing backward to cricket’s presence in eighteenth-century America, Chuck insists “cricket is already in the American DNA” (102). His reasons for so strongly desiring cricket’s return to American significance are both abstract (“Americans cannot really see the world”) and pragmatic (“we want to have something in common with Hindus and Muslims”) (211). Chuck wants the U.S. to rediscover a component of its DNA in order to recognize and realize itself—

“the U.S. is not complete, the U.S. has not fulfilled its destiny [. . .] until it has embraced the game of cricket” (210).

Chuck’s desire to sanitize cricket of its imperial origins and double down on its ideological claims is related to the strong assimilationist tendencies he exhibits. He wants to deploy a historical factoid to validate the narrative that legitimizes his passion, which in turn legitimizes him. If the U.S. does not love cricket the way he does, then his identification with the U.S. is incomplete. The irrationality of his demands speaks not to cricket’s transcendent values but instead the way its association with ideological signifiers like colonial privilege might impact an ambitious young man desiring legitimacy in the global North. Katherine Snyder’s rich discussion of the role of cricket in the novel affirms that Chuck’s understanding of cricket “is part of his extravagantly romantic vision of the world and of his rightful place in it as a cosmopolitan citizen,” but she asserts that this romantic vision cannot be disaggregated from the colonial violence of the past and present (472).

In this dependent relationship with history, he contrasts with Hans, who seems to have little sense of history at all, besides the aesthetic and cultural references of which he is fond. Early in their friendship, Chuck sends Hans a reprint entitled *Dutch Nursery Rhymes in Colonial Times* with this inscription: “Dear Hans, You know you are a member of the first tribe of New York, excepting of course the Red Indians” (58). The bracketing of the First Indians fails to register as particularly troublesome for Hans or Chuck. Hans reads old Dutch songs about “all the slaves” and “all the Indian braves” attending a Christmas race, placed alongside “hymns, spinning songs, cradle songs, and churning songs” (61). The latter songs make him think of his relationship to his son, whom he enjoys bouncing on his knee (62). Later in the novel, visiting an old Dutch church and burial ground, Chuck tells Hans about Dutch settlers “repel[ling] the Canarsie and Rockaway Indians” in the process of “clear[ing] dense history and oak forests” as they established New Amsterdam (154). Chuck acts as Hans’s guide, trying to give him a sense of wonder at his relation to colonial progress. Nonetheless, the scene does not resonate with Hans:

I practically heard clogs ringing on the flagstones. But then what? What was one supposed to do with such information? I had no idea what to feel or what to think, no idea, in

short, of what I might do to discharge the obligation of remembrance that fixed itself to one in this anomalous place[.] (154)

For Chuck, this historical lesson should be meaningful because the success of the colonial adventure should be a source of pride in one's ancestry. This framing means, of course, that the emphasis is not on the atrocities Europeans wrought upon the original inhabitants—it's on what Hans, parroting Chuck, calls the victory of "Brooklyn's original settlers and their descendants" (154).

Hans's final reflection on the Dutch colonial past comes when he sees a set of Dutch-named places (Cortlandt and Verplanck) and Native ones (Mohegan and Ossining) on a drive to upstate New York. Hans explains that the mixture conjures not "mature historical reflection" but instead a "cinematic" picture:

a bonneted girl in an ankle-length dress waiting in a log cabin for Sinterklaas, and redskins pushing through ferns, and a little graveyard filled with Dutch names [. . .] and skaters on a natural rink, and slaves singing in Dutch[.] (239)

Dangerous Indians lurking, waiting to attack an innocent Dutch settler, with slave songs not disrupting the image's focus on the girl or the skaters: Hans can really be this blithely ignorant, filling in history with cinematic, racist clichés such as this emphasis on innocent whites under threat. Thus, we see that Hans ignores history selectively or populates it with colonial fantasies. Chuck, on the other hand, has a less elective relationship to the history that has marginalized him; thus he instead tries to side with history's winners and bracket atrocity. Readers ought to confront this ahistoricism as a character trait of each, not a form of advocacy on O'Neill's part. The rhyme O'Neill chose to have Hans share aloud explicitly mentions "braves" and slaves, and Hans's bonneted-girl example includes Native Americans and slaves as well.

The body of evidence I have offered above suggests that O'Neill positions Hans as a shortsighted if well-intentioned figure, one who cannot see the privilege that makes his form of living seem legitimate and the histori-

cal violence that has propped up those narratives of legitimacy. Although Hans does reflect on the past, as we see in the example above, his reflections tend to emphasize the one historical context that truly does matter to him: his own past, which he revisits often and in sometimes dizzying ways. The complexity of the narration in *Netherland* emerges mostly from this nesting of Hans's personal reflections. In an insightful reading of the modernist and postmodernist gestures in *Netherland*, Stanley van der Ziel observes that "the narrative moves back and forth through time between different periods of the narrator's life without warning, making the chronology of events notoriously difficult to follow even on a third or fourth reading" (208). The text's very structure is nested: the narration begins when Hans receives a phone call about Chuck's death, which then leads to him reminiscing about his time in New York before he knew Chuck. The novel moves through several temporal settings: 2006, when Hans receives the phone call about Chuck's death; 1998–2001, Hans's time in New York before Rachel leaves him; 2002–2003, when Hans's New York cricketing period begins. It also returns regularly to Hans's childhood and his courtship of Rachel. O'Neill's chapters are sometimes 80-plus pages, moving between the narrative present and these earlier periods.

The chapter that begins with Hans's assertion of 9/11's decontextualized significance, for instance, features a long sequence about the New York blackout in August 2003. That night, Hans attends an impromptu rooftop party at his hotel, during which an eccentric neighbor whom Hans has befriended jumps over the edge of the building. Hans finds him safe on the roof of a shorter nearby building, and as they await the police, they sit looking at the stars. The incident reminds Hans of a fishing trip he took when he was twelve. Narrating the trip makes him recall Rachel's own recollection just after Jake's birth (in 1999) that, upon first hearing him tell this story during their courting days (in the mid-1990s), she fell in love with him. Once he finishes that particular memory, along with the story of the twelve-year-old self, we return to August 2003, where the jumping neighbor has disappeared. Yet we have to recall that August 2003 is itself a memory in the story, the past-tense setting that the narration most often moves through. These transitions occur across a mere three pages. Such movement is characteristic of the narration throughout *Netherland*, as van der Ziel rightly notes (207–22).

What O'Neill establishes, then, is Hans's stately-seeming narration, with the rich vocabulary and observing eye that reviewers wildly praised, as compulsively providing personal context in ways that can be dizzying. O'Neill gives Hans a complicated, self-reflexive subjectivity that has as its clear limit his inability to understand context's significance to other people and historical situations. The novel offers an opportunity to see that Hans's rich interiority is nevertheless marked by clear biases and blind spots. The relation of these blind spots to the virtues of the text—Hans's attention to New York's polyglot nature and, as Sarah Wasserman has suggested, in "a new visual order" that does not dwell on 9/11's damage to New York—grow more compelling because of the tension between that visual breadth and the person doing the viewing (251). The design of the narrative promotes a readerly awareness of one person's complexity as it shows him developing an increasingly variegated (but nonetheless limited) understanding of the endlessly complex world around him. As I have argued elsewhere, Hans has a truly stunning ability to encounter the diversity of New York.⁸ For instance, not only does he spend time with Indian-born Vinay, Trinidadian Chuck, and Guyanese Carl, he finds out that his limo driver is Kyrgyz, his hotel's maid is from Panama, and the couple who run his favorite diner are Corfiotes (131, 31, 105). Beyond simply observing all this diversity, he tries to explain to a skeptical Rachel that he developed a real friendship with Chuck, despite their obvious differences. He forms a caring community with the individuals from his cricket team, who hail from all over the globe. Still, it is incumbent upon the reader to think through the socioeconomic differences between Hans and most of his teammates and to consider the different motivations for their migration. Hans's gift for observation and detail do hail a global vision even while he is not himself able to engage historically or think intersectionally about difference beyond national origin. O'Neill, then, provides a narrating figure who is quite good at "holding [himself] out as an augur in the matter of world affairs," but rather than taking on or interpreting world affairs, Hans settles for providing dazzling views. Hans's limitations are not the same as *Netherland's*, but the gap pushes us to think about the problem of mediation, the limits of global fiction, and indeed the limitations of the novel as a genre, to do the political or diagnostic work that the genre of global fiction seems aimed to do.

Open City's Julius has a historical consciousness that far exceeds Hans's. Julius, who narrates from New York in the late 2000s while finishing a psychiatry residence, thinks about 9/11 in far more complex ways than *Netherland*'s narrator, for instance, and he shows a less mercenary understanding of contemporary events and the recent past than Hans. Consider a story Julius unfolds during his trip to Belgium that both shows his grasp on history and his willingness to acknowledge its limitations. He explains that he "had arrived in Brussels with the idea that all Africans in the city were from the Congo," a belief that came from knowing "the colonial relationship" and having "a basic understanding of the history of the slave state" (Cole 138). At a nightclub dominated by dark-skinned people, Julius shares his assumption that all the Black people he sees are Congolese with a bartender, who corrects him and says "everyone [is] Rwandan" (139). The correction causes a dizzying reorientation: "it was as though the space had suddenly become heavy with all the stories these people were carrying. What losses, I wondered, lay behind their laughter and flirting? [. . .] Who, among those present, I asked myself, had killed or witnessed killing?" (139). Julius here makes the moves that Hans does not, explicitly considering the painful histories that often, if not usually, generate migration, as well as the history of colonization that structures current relationships between former colonies and metropolises. While Hans also points us to moments where he is unsure of people's background, he never follows them up in such an interesting way. Here we see Julius as understandably confident in making educated guesses, but eventually understanding himself as wrong.

Yet this rich, intersectional, self-correcting perspective is massively undermined by an element of Julius's past that emerges late in the novel: a teenage acquaintance from Lagos whom Julius re-encounters as an adult in New York tells him that he sexually assaulted her. Julius's failure to respond at all to the allegations of Moji, the woman he attacked, is perhaps equally appalling. For all that he can understand the painful histories of other people, he does not recall his own participation in someone's victimization.

Cole puts Moji's revelation near the tail end of the story, which retroactively generates "an imaginary and unarticulated narrative that overlays the one that exists in the pages" readers have just finished, as Sam Reese and Alexandra Kingston-Reese have argued (117). They suggest that Cole

pushes readers to re-think their grasp on this character, which, as they observe, forces the realization that what we look at is not always what is there. Adding these failures and crimes to Julius's characterization mimics the way Julius himself adds often-buried historical context to the areas of New York and Brussels that he visits. This latter characteristic was hailed as the most significant component of the text in early, laudatory readings of the novel.⁹

In one oft-cited scene, Julius is walking in the area of lower Manhattan where the Twin Towers stood in 2006, when he sees “a great empty space,” then “immediately [thinks] of the obvious” (53). Here, Julius associates the skyline with what is absent from it, just as the tourists around him ask “how to get to 9/11: not the site of the events of 9/11 but to 9/11 itself” (52). They are looking for a thing that is not there, but in seeing that absence, they see something. Julius, however, sees even more, tracing “the erasure[s] on the site” where the World Trade Center stood:

Robinson Street, Laurens Street, College Place: all of them had been obliterated in the 1960s to make way for the World Trade Center buildings, and all were forgotten now. Gone, too, was the old Washington Market, the active piers, the fishwives, the Christian Syrian enclave that was established here in the late 1800s. The Syrians, the Lebanese, and other people from the Levant had been pushed across the river to Brooklyn [. . .] And, before that? What Lenape paths lay buried beneath the rubble? The site was a palimpsest, as was all the city, written, erased, re-written. (59)

Julius charts a historical course backwards. He goes from looking at an absence and thinking the obvious thing about it to drawing up erasures the absence has pushed further into the void of historical memory. The revelations of this history can only lead to a rewriting after an erasure. We do not move to a clearer picture but instead one that layers our old perspective with the new one. The move here is to treat an absence as a presence that must be registered, adding to, not simply revealing, a palimpsest—a move that repeats when Julius sees that the Africans in front of him were driven by a different atrocity than the one he imagined.

Julius regularly displays this rich sense of history throughout the narrative, calling up, for instance, the history of birds colliding into the Statue of Liberty while it remained a functioning lighthouse (258-59) as he goes past the monument. Earlier, Julius sees the Statue and Ellis Island, and he thinks, “it had been built too late for those Africans—who weren’t immigrants in any case—and it had been closed to soon to mean anything” to recent immigrants like himself (54-5). He counterposes these reflections to the “many myths” about Ellis Island that, one imagines, are like the “obvious” thought that occurs to Julius before diving into the history of lower Manhattan’s Western end.¹⁰ Julius also provides readers with historical supplements from characters he encounters, such as V., an academic historian with Native American ancestry who suffers depression at least partly because of her work on the Indian genocide in New Amsterdam (26-7). She tells Julius, whom she sees in his capacity as a psychiatrist, “It’s a difficult thing to live in a country that has erased your past [. . .] It isn’t right that people are not terrified by this because it’s a terrifying thing that happened to a vast population” (27). V. asserts an ethical imperative to recall the very atrocities that O’Neill’s Hans has forgotten. While Julius draws attention to V.’s point and the ethical perspective it reflects, he nevertheless forgets the terrible thing he has done to Moji.

At several points in the novel, Julius presents himself as a potential node for connecting these histories and spaces. “I wanted to find the line that connected me to my own part in these stories,” he says, after reciting the stories of neighborhoods that pre-existed the Lower Manhattan of September 2001 (59). Thinking about his mother’s childhood in 1940s Germany and the trauma that would have followed the Red Army’s invasion, Julius tries to recall the one time his mother spoke of her youth but cannot: “It was an entire vanished world of people, experiences, sensations, desires, a world that, in some odd way, I was the unaware continuation of” (80). His own part in the stories he tells of Lower Manhattan’s often shameful history is less personal than the connection he has to his mother’s devastated Magdeburg, but he sees himself as a necessary extension of the latter while he craves a clearer relationship to the former. The impulse he has to tell stories connecting points across temporal and spatial gaps is, then, in some ways a disorienting way of orienting himself. In so doing, Julius shows the alienation of Bauman’s orphaned self but capitalizes on the opportunity to invent connections, placing himself in the center

of the de-centered world and creating networks of relation almost compulsively.

We see the compulsion to produce connections on display regularly in the novel. After first arriving in Brussels, Julius connects several friends (Dr. Maillotte, a Belgian woman he meets on the plane; Dr. Saito, a former professor who had been interned during World War II) and family members in a fantasy vision that stretches across the globe. Looking out a window, he explains that

[I]n my mind's eye, I began to rove into the landscape, recalling my overnight conversation with Dr. Maillotte. I saw her at fifteen, in September 1944, sitting on a rampart in the Brussels sun, delirious with happiness at the invaders' retreat. I saw Junichiro Saito on the same day, aged thirty-one or thirty-two, unhappy, in the internment, in an arid room in a fenced compound in Idaho, far away from his books. Out there on that day, also, were all four of my own grandparents: the Nigerians, the Germans [. . .] I saw them all, even the ones I had never seen in real life, saw all of them in the middle of that day in September sixty-two years ago, with their eyes open as if shut, mercifully seeing nothing of the brutal half century ahead and, better yet, hardly anything at all of what was happening in their world, the corpse-filled cities, camps, beaches, and fields, the unspeakable worldwide disorder of that very moment. (96)

Julius's uses of "rove" to label this imaginative process indicates the wandering movement of his gaze, able to move from Brussels to Idaho to Nigeria to Germany. He moves backwards in time as well: the roving is temporal, geographical and interpersonal; he can even intimately access Maillotte and Saito's emotions. The perceptual tools Julius uses—"I saw" appears three times in the paragraph—contrasts with the limited seeing available to Maillotte, Saito, and his grandparents. Their version of seeing is not his, for their eyes are "open as if shut." Julius's eyes can look out a window in winter 2006 and see September 1944. He sees not simply the personal histories of the people he knows but the global atrocities that are a component of the "worldwide disaster" that he, with his gift of and inclination toward perceptual breadth, can apprehend. He uses visual

metaphors but provides a historical dimension to the landscape, offering a transected perspective that, in comparison, shows the superficiality of Hans's.

The impulse to make these connections parallels Julius's impulse to simply move: Julius's narrative begins with him recalling the fall of 2006, when he began a period of "aimless wandering" around New York City (5). The exploration of New York is only part of Julius's mobility. He moves within the U.S. after college, within Nigeria during his teenage years; the travel to Brussels occupies nearly a quarter of the book. The connections that Julius makes while walking and traveling become the occasion for sharing more narratives, stretching farther out across time and space, as Alike Varvogli has noted (240).

Cole structures *Open City's* remarkable fifth chapter around two conversations between Julius and other migrants to New York, each of which introduce implicit contrasts to Julius's mobility. In this way, it resembles the technique O'Neill uses throughout *Netherland*, and the chapter's structure, while nested only in its first section, jumps across time, space, and perhaps even ontologies. It begins with a gesture back from the narrative present, as Julius realizes a similarity between his ex-girlfriend Nadege and a girl he knew as a child: "the echo that was like John the Baptist's echo of Elijah, two individuals separated in time and vibrating on a similar frequency" (61). The chapter then generates a different echo in the two stories that follow: while visiting an immigration detention facility in South Jamaica, Queens with Nadege (which is when he realizes the similarity to the young girl he knew), he meets a migrant from Liberia named Saidu, who has been detained for two years, his application for asylum denied. Julius narrates Saidu's attempt to escape Liberia's civil war in rich detail, following him from Liberia to Guinea to Mali, through Mauritania to Tangiers, Spain to Portugal to JFK Terminal Four. Yet we hear that Saidu's asylum case has been denied; coming through uncertain refugee circuits, he cannot achieve the feeling of permanence he desires despite the remarkable travel path he follows.

The second section of the chapter features a Haitian shoe shiner that Julius meets in Penn Station, an undetermined amount of time later. Two paragraphs into his story, we realize (or may not) that Pierre is either very, very old, delusional, or a figment of Julius's imagination: as Michael Walonen has recently pointed out, readers expect that Pierre leaves Haiti

with the diaspora fleeing during or after the Duvalier dictatorship, but Pierre is clearly not a product of the present—his references are to Bonaparte and Boukman and yellow fever, not Papa Doc and natural disasters (Walonen 120). Julius offers his story without comment and never mentions Pierre (or Saidu) again. Julius ends the chapter by narrating a mistaken vision, when he incorrectly registers a canvas sheet on a scaffold for a lynched Black man.

My analysis of this chapter aims at illustrating Cole's techniques: juxtaposition, abrupt transitions, layering stories and perhaps realities. Julius ends the chapter by saying he "flitted in and out of [him]self" and that "time became elastic and voices cut out of the past into the present" (74). This sentence replicates the narrative experience readers have just had, where three voices with varying degrees of viability all take center stage. All this narrative movement is rooted in a post-9/11 New York where a Nigerian-born man could easily encounter a Haitian one after seeing a migrant from Liberia. Understanding the presence of migrants from these disparate backgrounds is possible only if one grasps the histories that make migration necessary and/or desirable; the differences between Julius and these two less privileged figures is clear throughout the chapter. We must also attend to their similarities: all migrants from other places, all understood as homogeneously Black in the United States, all fluent in English and willing to converse with each other.¹¹ All are driven by different histories that, in one way or the other, are marked by atrocity. All, too, could quickly run into racially-driven violence akin to the lynching Julius briefly imagines.

Still, the claims I am making about this chapter's method of making connections rely on a reading of its form; Julius does not draw attention to distinctions in privilege (or the similarities across those differences) in his narration. He does not draw a verbal parallel between Saidu and Pierre; they are juxtaposed formally to each other and to Julius, which allows us to think critically about their positions relative to each other. When he does make explicit criticisms, he primarily focuses on historical memory, as in the scene where he reviews the communities in Southern Manhattan prior to 9/11. Vermeulen and Clark have derided Cole's prose in these history-recounting sections: the tone and vocabulary in these sections are monotone, as if Julius were observing neutrally—just as he often seizes the position of the true seer in that Brussels window (Vermeulen 50, Clark

189). He arrogates the position of organizer, assuming a centrality (his “line” to these stories) to his position. These characteristics, in some ways, make him simply a narrator, upon whom convention confers the right to talk about whatever comes to mind. Like Hans, Julius utilizes his observational gifts to expand the diegetic canvas in such dramatic ways that, for instance, he reports a mistaken vision that Saidu has while trying to escape Liberia. The detail serves no obvious function besides expanding the feeling of “completeness” in the narrative; we must be hearing what Saidu told Julius, yet such an inclusion simultaneously reminds us of all the details Julius has left out (why this detail, rather than another?). What he decides to record is what we encounter, and like Hans he generates a wide narrative frame, one wide enough that it could only be incomplete.

Rebecca Clark writes that Julius’s narration “seems to mimic a bird’s-eye view, a privileged perspective that can pan out to see, read, and map the whole, from a subject position of disinterested omniscience” (186). For Clark, “Moji’s rape temporally and ethically alters the text in a way in which the other episodes that a surface reading of the novel might slot into the same pattern do not” (183). Julius is narrating from a time after he has heard Moji’s accusation, and that accusation does not seem to trouble the “privileged perspective” he speaks from at all. His assault of Moji is occluded from Julius’s memory, and after he hears her demand a response from him, Julius fails to reply.

Earlier articles about *Open City* variously characterized Julius as a *flâneur* or a *fuguer*, but Clark opts for calling him a parasite or a bedbug (consider the way Saidu’s and Pierre’s stories become Julius’s). I agree with Clark, Reese and Kingston-Reese that we cannot overlook the significance of Julius’s assault of Moji. Critics have also made much of Julius’s brusque way of responding to a Black cab driver and his boredom in conversation with an African security guard; these incidents compromise evidence critics have used to suggest Julius lacks a sufficient connection to his Black identity.¹²

These readings overlook that Julius’s closest friend—a professor he meets in New York who fails to get tenure—is also Black; Julius tells us the quite moving story of a Black patient of Julius’s expressing his emotional satisfaction at seeing a Black therapist. Julius finds himself the only Black person at an opera he attends at the novel’s end (and engages in interesting speculation about why that is). He is sensitive to the racial poli-

tics in *The Last King of Scotland*. He sympathizes, to a certain extent, with the deep resentment toward Belgian and European society felt by two Moroccan migrants he meets during his visit to Brussels. These show that we cannot represent Julius's interaction with Blackness or with other people as one-dimensional or exclusively parasitic. Pieter Vermeulen rightly observes that "the novel chronicles Julius's difficulty managing his distances from and attractions to the lives of others" (50). Vermeulen has persuasively argued that *Open City* rejects the utopian promises of cosmopolitanism: the historical and spatial connections that Julius makes do not make him a better person (nor do they make him a worse one); his deep love for and knowledge of art, music, and literature from all over the world fail to convert him into a fully sympathetic subject—and any real attempt at sympathy is of course undermined in the ways other critics have observed.

Still, I cannot quite credit the idea in Clark's persuasive argument that Julius's narration of other people's stories is "a violation of their otherness" (192), insofar as any first-person novel featuring other characters' narratives would be guilty of the same offense, making it less a bug than a feature of first-person narration. For without Julius's sharing of Saidu's story or those of the Moroccan men he meets in Belgium, we would have a less rich and variegated picture—a less global work of global fiction. If there is a value in the aims of global fiction, as per Bernard, one of them must be sympathy across distance and the drawing of connections across space and time. Yet the conduit of that sympathy and the sharer of those stories, here as in *Netherland*, is compromised. In many ways, the revelations about history and erasure that Julius offers are further cemented by his amnesia: the worldly horizon *Open City* is wide and full of pain and victimization and loss, so full that no individual or text could document it.

In *What Was Enlightenment?* Foucault writes: "[t]o be modern is not to accept oneself as one is in the flux of the passing moments; it is to take oneself as object of a complex and difficult elaboration" (41). For the Baudelarian *flâneur*, Foucault's stand-in for the modern figure, he writes, "the high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping what it is" (41). *Open City* and *Netherland* both use Foucauldian migrant *flâneurs* in an attempt to grasp the present: they move through space and time, engaging in rich, thick description;

they reveal explicitly and implicitly how and why people move in fluid modernity; they present themselves as “complex elaborations” historically and socially. In their very attempt to catalogue the world around them, however, they contribute to, rather than transforming, the paradoxical density and breadth of the landscape they present to us. The formal display of these complex relations, the causal chains the characters produce, and the problem with our mediating figures generate more disorientation rather than less, more density rather than clarity. While the utopian hope of a cosmopolitan or worldly novel is to “imagine [the world] otherwise than what it is,” these texts cannot escape representation’s fallibility and in fact thematize it: despite their efforts to catalogue the spaces around them and account for their own place within it, both Cole and O’Neill highlight their narrators’ limitations. While Hans, as Sarah Wasserman has indicated, often tries to see like a satellite and Julius “wishes he were a bird” (Clark 186), each is only a fictional figure created by real figures who themselves sit in a disorienting time and place. Here, we should see a generic contradiction that the decision to narrate global fictions in the first person highlights. The novel, like the narrator, cannot be a bird or a satellite; the novel, to echo Hayot, is a medium that can only manage its incompleteness, despite presenting itself as a totality.

Anna Kornbluh’s recent argument that novels themselves can serve as forms of critique when they exhibit the particularly literary “truth of inevitable mediation” (402) recalls the Madigan Haley points I referenced earlier. For Haley, what makes global fictions interesting is their insistence on their “their own partial, disjunctive nature.” Haley’s claim about the genre’s necessary mediation maps onto Kornbluh’s about the novel itself. Thus we might see the genre’s inevitable failure to live up to its mapping or revealing ambitions as a reminder that the realist orientation of the larger genre of the novel of course fail at mimesis. Yet these failures are occasions for considering the ways of seeing and representing available to fiction writers and readers. *Open City* and *Netherland* are, as most readers believe, excellent works of fiction. Academic readers continue to return to them. Their incredible strengths attest to their authors’ engagement with complexity of globality but also point to the limits of any representation of this complexity through their play with their narrators and their narration. They produce a vast narrative canvas to provide a cognitive map of fluid modernity but simultaneously use fiction’s resources to show novelistic

mapping as always in process and always mediated. In so doing they mark important cases limning the contours of the genre they participate in, texts whose limits point to the limits of global fiction and the broader category of the novel.

Notes

1. While Caren Irr and Karolina Golimowska include both works in surveys of recent political and 9/11 novels, neither comments on the uncanny similarities between the central figures.
2. I borrow the wording of this sentence from Andrew Strombeck, who claims that Rachel Kushner's *The Flamethrowers* also finds a compelling way to query the networking of the globalized present. Strombeck attributes his own phrasing to Sianne Ngai (470).
3. I depart from Haley, however, in considering the ethical problematics of the narrator in relation to the broader questions that *Open City* asks and in seeing *Netherland's* similarities as part of a generic problem. Pieter Vermeulen has also written that *Open City* articulates "the limits of aesthetic cosmopolitanism," and in many ways what Vermeulen has argued about that text aligns with what I will argue about *Netherland*. Yet I extend these points to a larger set of literary and generic questions, rather than the specific questions about cosmopolitan identity explored by Vermeulen.
4. Hammish Dalley makes this point specifically about *Open City*: "the territorial is overwritten by the global and the present is haunted by temporalities that exceed it" (26).
5. Arin Keeble has referred to *Netherland* as a second-generation 9/11 text for seeming to respond to the complaints about the first batch of 9/11 novels (see 139-64). For the initial responses that established the groundwork for 9/11 literary criticism, see Gray and Rothberg.
6. I make a similar point about O'Neill's treatment of Hans in "Realism, Racial Preoccupations, and Elite Perspective in Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland*"; in that essay, I focus on Hans's racialized perspective, rather than the issues I am confronting in this piece.
7. See Anker for a valuable overview of fictional treatments that decontextualize the attacks; she includes *Netherland* among the problematic treatments (463-82). See Smith (61-76) for an argument about the problems with an emphasis on personal feelings about the attack that Hans displays here. Bimbisar Irom offers a fascinating argument

- about a nation-bound way of thinking limiting Hans's capability of offering a fully worldly critique ("Towards").
8. In "Racial Preoccupations," I review Hans's complicated relation to ethnicity and race, and I explore Hans's obsession with noting heritages in detail.
 9. See Hartwiger for a useful example.
 10. See Nasia Anam's excellent article for more about the role of the Statue of Liberty in Cole's novel and his photography.
 11. See Varvogli for an in-depth discussion of the way Julius's status as an "Afropolitan" places him in interesting relation to other black-skinned New Yorkers. See Walonen for more on the urban city as a "contact zone" where individuals dislocated or relocating because of neoliberal capital wind up interacting (with *Open City* as a key example).
 12. See Irr or Varvogli.

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