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Are postcolonies haunted more by criminal violence than other nation-states? The usual answer is yes. In *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*, Jean and John Comaroff and a group of respected theorists show that the question is misplaced: that the predicament of postcolonies arises from their place in a world order dominated by new modes of governance, new sorts of empires, new species of wealth—an order that criminalizes poverty and race, entraps the "south" in relations of corruption, and displaces politics into the realms of the market, criminal economies, and the courts.

As these essays make plain, however, there is another side to postcoloniality: while postcolonies live in states of endemic disorder, many of them fetishize the law, its ways and its means. How is the coincidence of disorder with a fixation on legalities to be explained? *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony* addresses this question, entering into critical dialogue with such theorists as Benjamin, Agamben, and Bayart. In the process, it also demonstrates how postcolonies have become crucial sites for the production of contemporary theory, not least because they are harbingers of a global future under construction.