

Cross-Mirrorings of Alterity: The Colonial Scenario and its Psychological Legacy

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I have lived that moment of the scattering of the people that in other times and other places, in the nations of others, becomes a time of gathering. Gatherings of exiles and émigrés and refugees; gathering at the edge of “foreign cultures”; gathering at the frontiers; gathering in the ghettos or cafés of city centres; gathering in the half-life, half-light of foreign tongues, or in the uncanny fluency of another’s language; gathering the signs of approval and acceptance, degrees, discourse, disciplines; gathering the memories of underdevelopment, of other worlds lived retroactively; gathering the past in a ritual of revival; gathering the present. Also the gathering of people in the diaspora: indentured, migrant, interned; the gathering of incriminatory statistics, educational performance, legal statutes, immigration status.

HOMI BHABHA, *The Location of Culture*

ALTHOUGH POSTCOLONIAL ISSUES and terminology form the frame of my analysis, I am concerned in this article with defining transferential projections of stereotypes within a fairly traditional imagological framework. Imagological research has for the most part concentrated on the portrayal of foreigners — the image of the German in English literature, the image of the Englishman in national European literatures. These heterostereotypes traced in the various national literatures of Europe are part of a long imagological tradition,¹ in which several key characteristics of the national character have become attached to the national stereotype: the drunken German, the proud Spaniard, the stingy Scotsman.² Autostereotypes, by contrast, are rarely discussed, and the complex transfer between projections that one finds under the conditions of colonial

oppression or, more complicated still, in the circumstances of migration, exile, and cultural hybridity has not had much attention from the discipline of imagology.³ It is no coincidence that poststructuralist approaches have flourished in postcolonial studies that deal precisely with this murky realm of dislocated and displaced identities, whether in the area of racially tinged colonialism (as portrayed in Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*⁴), with regard to the gender-oriented inflection of colonial oppression (Spivak 197-221, 241-68), or concerning the state of intercultural homelessness,⁵ a situation that is portrayed in numerous texts by expatriate Indian writers.

If my analysis initially skirts some of the famous recent studies in postcolonial theory such as Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994), the reason for this temporary neglect is not hostility but a strategic bracketing of the poststructuralist framework. By putting Lacanian and Derridean formulations of the circulation and displacement of transferential images under erasure, I want to ensure that the more traditional imagological toolbox is exhausted for its full conceptual potential before turning to different methodological frameworks. Rather than, as yet, indulging in "reading between the lines" (Bhabha, *Location* 188) or employing "catachrestic gesture[s] of interpretation" (184), I will map out the iteration and circulation of autostereotypes and heterostereotypes in the double bind of colonial and postcolonial constitutions of the self and discuss the social displacements that these projections of alterity regularly undergo. My examples come from a small number of fairly well-known works by Indian expatriates, among which Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird* (1985) will receive the most detailed attention since it covers nearly the full range of possible combinations of image projections. I present five scenarios which define typical constellations of image transfer: colony, exoticism/orientalism, exile, globalization/cosmopolitanism, and third party. Each of these has specific parameters that are relevant to the scenario. It will appear from the discussion that the last three categories deploy parameters from the first two in strategic ways to serve their own political ends.

I. The Colonial Scenario

The colonial scenario is characterized by the appropriation on the part of the colonial subject of the negative heterostereotype imposed on him⁶ as his very own autostereotype. This goes hand in hand with the wish to become white, to exchange places with the colonizer and therefore induce a positive heterostereotype projected on the colonizer (which corresponds with the colonizer's flattering autostereotype). The colonial scenario lends itself to psycho-analytic analyses such as those proffered by Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi. The colonized subject flounders in self-hatred, whereas — despite the native's admiration for the colonizer — the colonizer in turn feels threatened by the glance of the oppressed. Fanon's and Memmi's delineation of the deliberately inculcated inferiority complex that afflicts blacks is as much part of the colonial scenario as the sweeper Bakha's adoration of things British in Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Untouchable* (1935). It can be pointed out that this lethal acceptance of white superiority as portrayed in the Indian texts I will be looking at could be extended in its application to other contexts of discrimination in which the deprived connive at their own victimization by the system. Much of the nineteenth-century discourse about the working-class poor reiterates the structures that Fanon, and more radically still, Bhabha have outlined for colonial discourse; indeed the same stereotypes of laziness, stupidity, and sly servility were projected on the working class, with a corresponding attempt to create the worker in one's own (middle-class) image⁷ (the "Educate our masters" slogan), and the same emergence of the fear of retaliation from the workers can be observed.⁸ The scenario can be traced additionally in contemporary discourses that marginalize the poor, whether in the American social security debates (invariably recipients of welfare are blamed for their social ineptitude) or in the patronizing first-world attitudes about third-world economic disabilities. Not only is there a consistent strategy of blaming the victims, with a familiar set of derogatory stereotypes that also show up in anti-foreigner discourse (see Essed); there additionally exists the quite evident fear of aggression which is projected from the bad conscience of those that "have," thereby legitimating repressive

measures against the have-nots that are meant to ensure the preservation of the unequal status quo. Here, too, the poor, the homeless, and the marginalized will frequently cooperate with the strategies designed to contain the threat that they represent to the privileged classes. Having internalized the contempt directed at them (which is but an exaggerated image of the fear their just demands inspire), they in fact behave as the deserving poor by blaming themselves, by aspiring to the idealized status of the moneyed, and by seriously making way for those whom they believe to be "better." (Sympathy for, and rescue at the hands of, potentially dangerous "low elements" is also a recurring theme in Victorian literature.) In the West, this scenario is increasingly played out in the daily confrontation with the homeless in the streets, whereas, in Third World countries, one encounters ghosts of the Victorian scene. Thus, in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's notorious play *Ngaahika Ndeenda* (*I Will Marry When I Want* [prod. 1977]) the "good" worker Kiguunda has much sympathy for his exploitative superiors, and they in turn deride the stupidity of those like him, but are really afraid of the workers' retaliation. In a scene of Sunetra Gupta's *Memories of Rain* (1992), the female protagonist Moni remembers train rides with her parents and outlines the perpetual bad conscience of middle-class Indians towards their social inferiors:

the rancid layers of the child's rags bit into her senses, she refused food, her mother shrugged and doled out puffed bread and potato curry to her brother and her father, she watched the family eat, their gaze fastened upon their food to avoid the million hungry eyes . . . and so it had been and would ever be, on every journey, except those they took in the insulated comfort of air-conditioned sleepers, famished eyes would fall upon them, the food would turn to cinder in her mouth, she would shrink from the diseased hands that stretched in through the train window . . . she would watch the hungry eyes pass, empty cups would be flung out of the window, crash against the rail tracks, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. (86)

It is therefore quite intriguing to trace the interpenetration of economic deprivation and political discrimination on the basis of the specifically colonial make-up of the primal scene in Fanon or Bhabha. The colonial scenario seems to intensify the interplay of transferential images because the political and economic

oppression is part of a calculated strategy of the instrumentalization and disciplining of the oriental and racial Other. Bhabha's formulations indeed are more pertinent to the African scene: Indian self-derogation never reached the abysses sounded by the black man; in India, adulation of things British was excessive with a wide segment of the population.⁹

Another aspect can here be noted that relates to the conspicuous presence of Foucault in postcolonial studies. (Bhabha, for instance, frequently resorts to Foucauldian formulations.) The connection between the workings of colonial power and the general archaeology of the imperial age (automatization, normalization, depersonalization, disciplining) suggests itself as a matter of course. It should be noted, however, that the structures of the colonial scenario are not replicated in the relationship between prisoners and their wardens. Significantly, Foucault's prototypical emblem for the strategies of disciplining, the panopticon, forbids incorporation into postcolonial parameters. Although the colonial subject is "known" and "surveyed" (Bhabha, "Difference" 199), this surveillance is not panoptic in terms of Bentham's model penitentiary because the colonial subject turns his look back on the colonizer and thereby retains access to subversive counter-colonial agency. Bentham's prisoners, by contrast, are entrapped within a gaze they cannot return. The psychological consequences of Bentham's carceral scheme is debilitating to the point of annihilating prisoners' self-determination. Scarry's descriptions of the complex bond tying victims to their torturers is much more appropriate to the panoptic scenario than the colonial landscape of manipulation and strategic insurgency.¹⁰ The colonial subject may come to love the master, but jailers or torturers never thus endear themselves to their victims. Moreover, penal intimacy and immediacy are to be contrasted with colonialism's mediacy through discourse and through institutional delegation. Bhabha's point about the conspicuous presence of British colonial institutions (the barracks next to the church and the bazaar)¹¹ can therefore be fruitfully contrasted with the secrecy of penitentiary surveillance and disciplining which are shielded from the public gaze. In the colonies, it is only the government that remains invisible, behind

the scenes, in Delhi or in England; the tools of colonial subjugation are in clear view of all and sundry. It is this comparative relaxation of the colonial apparatus of power that, according to Bhabha, facilitates the enactment of contestual claims and affects the colonial discourse with splitting and differencing.

In addition to the autostereotypes and heterostereotypes in the prototypical colonial scenario, there are two complementary scenes located, so to speak, on the other side of the colonial medal. In the first of these, the colonial scenario is attacked and inverted in nationalistic counter-colonial discourse. In the second, effects of hybridity are produced in the subject who comes to situate himself between the colonial scenario and its nativist inversion, or finds himself implicated with both.

Nationalist counter-colonial discourse is a reaction to the effects of colonization, not an *original* "natural" state of affairs. Since indigenous cultures have for the most part not been of the colonizing type, they have not themselves as *colonizers* participated in a colonial scenario and have therefore failed to engage in the discriminating processes of knowledge and power towards their political enemies. They have therefore tended to have a pragmatic or even positive attitude towards Europeans, rather than an attitude of typical colonial superiority with its attendant psychological effects (blaming the victim, exaggerating the abjection or the magic powers of the Other). This was no doubt due to the actual military superiority of the Europeans which at once induced respect and a desire to be like the conqueror — a desire motivated also by the wish to oust eventually the colonial regime from its seat of power.¹²

It is therefore worth noting that the nationalist scenario is no mere instantiation of a negative heterostereotype for the Other, this time the invader; both the colonial scenario and the nationalist reaction to it are qualitatively different from the imagological framework underlying the image of the Englishman in German literature. The main reason for that disparity between colonial and non-colonial images lies in the operations of power exercised over the colonial subject (but not over, or by, the individual Englishman entering Germany during his Grand Tour),¹³ a power that is again qualitatively different from social discrimi-

nation, as we have seen. The poststructuralist approaches in postcolonial studies are therefore correct in pointing to the secondariness of transferential processes in the colonial scenario, and we can now extend this insight to apply also to the reactive nature of nationalist inversions of the already inverted image structure of the colonial situation.

Besides a characteristic celebration of native culture as a political move against the potent colonial adversary, one can additionally posit a recurring scenario of hybridity attaching to the state of colonial subjugation. I am here using the term hybridity to denote both an intermingling of cultures — as in the irredeemably compromised native culture¹⁴ propagated by nationalist counterforce — and in the more specifically psychoanalytic sense in which Bhabha defines the term: the colonial subject becomes hybridized as a consequence of the confrontation with the psychological effects of the colonial scenario and so does the retaliatory but inevitably secondary nationalistic counterculture. Bhabha's recurring use of the term *ambivalence*¹⁵ relates precisely to this complex interplay of transferential images which cannot be resolved in the plenitude of a subjective identification but constrains the colonial subject to hover between exchangeable positions of stereotypes whose fixations prove difficult to escape.

The trajectory traced here from colonial to anti-colonial to hybrid identifications emerges both from Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* (1935) and from R. K. Narayan's *The Guide* (1958). In *Untouchable*, Bakha starts out with an unmitigated admiration for the British (and also a qualified respect for the Brahmins)¹⁶ only to lapse into a rejection of the Western model (the failed conversion), a brief nationalistic enthusiasm (the Gandhi interlude), and to end up with the hope for the introduction of the Western contraption of the toilet. That invention, in its social consequences for Untouchables, constitutes a typical site of cultural hybridity. Likewise, in Narayan's *The Guide*, Raju's erstwhile adoption of Western forms of enterprise (Raju as tourist guide, Raju as manager) and of subservience (Raju as a model prisoner of "sly civility") gives way to a spurious self-immersion in the native tradition of the holy man, an enactment of holy ways that —

from mimicry and simulation — turns into deadly seriousness. The hybridity attaching to the final moments of the novel relates to the unintended refunctionalization of Raju's publicity stunt — rescuing the village from drought by his sacrificial fast — in terms of both the traditional culture (the open ending makes it possible to read as prophetic Raju's final words) and of the foreign media culture in which Raju's craving for respect from his fellow villagers is cruelly displaced in the glare of the sensationalist requirements of television reporting.¹⁷

The colonial scenario describes the effects of colonialism on the colonized; the second scenario — the exoticist/orientalist scenario — defines the same situation from the perspective of the colonizer. Before dealing with the issue of exoticism, however, I want to introduce briefly a topic that centrally affects exoticist discourse, the parameter of gender. The prototypical colonial subject is male, and so is the colonizer — another proof of the imaginary¹⁸ relationship subsisting between the two. In the exoticist scenario, on the other hand, the colonized territory is frequently pictured as female, to be conquered and penetrated. Moreover, the colonial woman with her characteristic allure plays a prominent role in the cultural imaginary, symbolizing both the attractions of the colonized land and the treachery and danger of its seductive charm. (This of course echoes stereotypical views about women prevalent in the West.)

It is also quite significant to observe the types of women that *do* get inscribed into the colonial discourse. Fascination with the Hindu practice of suttee, for instance, betokens a clearly sensationalist and voyeuristic attitude on the part of the witnessing Englishmen, as the recent literature on suttee amply illustrates, (see Mani; Fludernik, "Suttee Revisited") and the topos of the blood-thirsty princess — another recurrent figure in the colonial novel — likewise caters to the seamy side of the colonizers' fantasies. In portrayals of British womanhood, too, the "primal scene" is that of a gang rape of British wives and daughters by rioting Indian barbarians (Sharpe), and the inverse negative image of Western women emerges in the prototype of feminine cruelty, the *memsahib* (Ghose). In typical orientalist fashion, one

therefore has two complementary (and contradictory) stereotypes about women — the victim and the monster — and these are applied both to Indian and to British subjects.¹⁹

The implication of womenfolk in the colonial economy of power is always present on the sidelines in the recent theoretical discussion but rarely thematized in the classic texts. Spivak, of course, started a trend in the opposite direction (see also Minh-ha; Mani; and Mohanty). For example, Bhabha treats two “primal” scenes in Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* as constitutive of hybridization and splitting, and both crucially implicate women in the colonial system. In the first scene the black man is pointed at by the child,²⁰ who says “Look, a Negro . . . Mama, see the Negro. I’m frightened!” (111-12) — a confrontation in which the discrimination of the black man is enacted by means of verbal execration by mother and daughter. In the continuation of this encounter (Fanon’s second scene), a little boy identifies this fear of the black man as the primeval trauma that the black man is going to eat him up:

The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly; look, a nigger, it’s cold, the nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy [!] is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, that cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy [!] is trembling because he thinks that the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy [!] throws himself into his mother’s arms: Mama, the nigger’s going to eat me up. (113-14)

Again, the child seeks refuge with the mother, fleeing from the black man.

Two observations suggest themselves in connection with these scenes. One concerns Fanon’s situating of the white woman within the colonial and racial power structure; the other, Bhabha’s complete silence about the issue of gender in his two key citations from Fanon. In Fanon’s text, the story continues by relating how the black man fights back:²¹

“Kiss the handsome Negro’s ass, Madame!” [says the black man]. Shame flooded her face. At last I was set free from any rumination. At the same time I accomplished two things: I identified my enemies and I made a scene. A grand slam. Now one would be able to laugh.

(114)

What exactly does Fanon want? By locating racism in the triangle between mother, child, and black man, he not only draws the production of racist stereotypes into the sphere of the family at its most intimate core; he also makes women responsible for the racist education of their offspring. In both cases the woman provides a bulwark of whiteness, a refuge for the frightened child. The enemy of the black man, the story implies, is not the white man, but the white woman. By shaming the white woman into admitting her sexual interest in him, the black man turns the colonial rhetoric back on her: the colonial system had reduced the black man to an animal precisely because he was said to desire white women. And that attribution of guilt to the black man, Fanon implies, is a projection of the white man's knowledge (or fear) of (white) women's lust for the "Negro" — a desire that whites consider to be animalistic and therefore has to be denied, projected on the black man, and traced to the black man's mythically exaggerated sexual prowess. The inferiority complex inculcated into black men is thus the projection of white males' feeling of sexual inferiority (Fanon 141-69). Fanon's analysis therefore shifts the entire blame of racial discrimination onto white women, "blaspheming" against the so-called civilizing powers of womanhood *qua* motherhood and thereby transgressing against one of the most cherished myths of colonial society.

To present-day ears, Fanon's entire schema sounds entirely gynophobic and fixated on the male perspective. Whereas Fanon is perfectly capable of recognizing that ascriptions of abnormal sexual prowess are constructions designed to reduce the black man to a conceptual position of sheer animality, the ascription to white women of sexual desire for the black man, which is as much of a construct — motivated by a sexual inferiority complex and sexual jealousy²² (with a good measure of misogyny on the part of white males) — is swallowed by him as the truth pure and simple. Here are two of the most scandalous passages:

I understand this extra-fragile woman: At bottom what she wants most is to have the powerful Negro bruise her frail shoulders. (167)

Are we not now observing a complete inversion? Basically, does this fear of rape not itself cry out for rape? Just as there are faces that ask to be slapped, can one not speak of women who ask to be raped?
(156)

Of course, Fanon tries to “rescue” these lamentably misogynic statements by linking them to psychoanalytic theories about women’s sexuality (178-79), thereby subscribing to the view that masochism is natural to the female psychic development.²³ In fact, he ends up explaining women’s rape fantasies as the displacement of an unconscious wish for aggression which they turn back on themselves by locating it in the aggressive male. As Vergès explains,

The fantasy “A Negro is raping me” is thus the conjunction of two desires: to disembowel the mother and to be beaten/penetrated by the father’s penis. Both desires are fulfilled through the fantasy of being raped by the Negro. The Negro occupies both the position of the father fulfilling the wish to be hurt and the wish to attack the mother. There is a conflation between the little girl [i.e., Marie Bonaparte’s/Freud’s little girl from their “A Child is Being Beaten” essays] and the Negro, and the latter becomes the aggressor of the female/maternal body. The Negro can occupy this place because culture has constructed him as violent and murderous. In the Freudian fantasy, beating also means to the child an affirmation of the father’s love. The negro would then give the white woman a masochistic affirmation of love. (“Creole Skin” 592)

Since the black man’s threat has been fixated on his genitals (Fanon 162-63), he comes to serve as the primal phantom of the aggressive male.²⁴ This is tantamount to blaming women for evoking justified sexual jealousy in their husbands and therefore making them responsible for the subsequent discriminatory treatment of black men at the hands of white men.

Indeed, one can easily turn the tables on Fanon. For instance, it can be noted that he is quite willing to leave Freudian psychoanalysis behind if this serves his own purposes. Thus, in Mozambique, dreams about cruel black men are no longer to be explained in terms of Freudian neuroses; they simply relate to the massacres and torturings of one in five of every Malagasy by the Sengalese troops conquering Mozambique (100-04). One is therefore perfectly justified to start with Fanon’s own admis-

sion of the black man's desire for white women, a desire that is ultimately not sexual but *symbolic* of the wish to become purely white, an after-effect of the black man's constitutive abandonment neurosis under colonialism (76-79). Since in this hypothetical scenario the black man wants to be loved by the white woman, it is therefore only logical that he should fantasize about white women's sexual desires for black men.

It needs to be observed, however, that such fantasies refuse any real understanding of women and their sexual vulnerability. This is the more shameful on Fanon's part because he is quite clearly aware of black men's vulnerability in their sexual organs, pointing out that blacks have traditionally been threatened with castration (162). It should therefore have been possible for him to acknowledge the fact that for women too the site of their greatest intimacy is precisely the space that is maximally vulnerable to aggressive invasion, and that such penetration threatens to destroy their very ego. Fanon not only refuses to engage with the female experience of vulnerability but also implicitly subscribes to a version of Freudian psycho-analysis that defines women's sexual pleasure as synonymous with a masochistic desire for aggressive penetration — a male fantasy *par excellence* since this projects the very parameters of male sexual pleasure onto female desire.

The screw can in fact be turned one bit further on Fanon by noting that his text in general gives ample evidence of misogyny, and that it particularly focuses on his hatred of black women who spurned him for white(r) men. Black women are accused of social climbing, snobbism, and downright cruelty. Fanon's most egregious case is the mulatto who nearly has her dark black lover prosecuted for his impertinence of writing her a letter (56-57). A very personal touch to this criticism of black women enters the picture in the chapter "The Fact of Blackness":

Shame. Shame and self-contempt. Nausea. When people like me, they tell me it is in spite of my color. When they dislike me, they point out that it is not because of my color. Either way, I am locked into the infernal circle.

I turn away from these inspectors of the Ark before the Flood and I attach myself to my brothers, Negroes like myself. To my horror,

they too reject me. They are almost white. And besides they are about to marry white women. They will have children faintly tinged with brown: Who knows, perhaps little by little . . . (116-17)

There is also the woman that jumps at him for being called a Negress and the black "girl" who keeps a list of dance halls "where-there-was-no-chance-of-running-into-niggers" (50). This should be read against an earlier passage:

It is always essential to avoid falling back into the pit of niggerhood, and every woman in the Antilles . . . is determined to select the least black of the men. . . . I know a great number of girls from Martinique, students in France, who admitted to me with complete candor . . . that they would find it impossible to marry black men. (Get out of that and then deliberately go back to it? Thank you, no). (47-48)

One can therefore, reading between the lines, uncover a great hurt, the wound of hurt pride, the wound of rejection by women black or white and a subsequent unconscious need for revenge by means of projection. Suitably so for someone whose vision of love is articulated in terms of ego rather than the giving or receiving of tenderness and respect: "The person I love will strengthen me by endorsing my assumption of my manhood" (41).

To return from Fanon's text to Bhabha's creative reading of Fanon. Bhabha's silence on the gender factor in Fanon is extremely odd because his theory of splitting literally and explicitly bases itself on a correlation between power and desire ("Difference" 194), the combination of which is crucial to Bhabha's explication of differencing in the field of colonial oppression and rebellion. Surely, it is significant that the Law of the Father is here represented by the mother, and that Bhabha's remark about the self-assurance of the "white girl" (76) by an exchange of glances with the mother never points out that this would need to be read as the girl's reassurance of her *gender status*. Whereas, in Fanon, it is precisely the *difference* in gender that produces racial tension.

Bhabha's unconcern for gender becomes, indeed, even more disquieting when one looks at Fanon's text to establish the precise quality of this exchange of glances between the "white girl" and her mother. Neither the English translation *nor* the *French*

original bear any trace of femininity. No gender indication is provided the first time we read “Look a Negro! . . . Mama, see the Negro! I’m frightened!” (111-12). Nor can such genderization be detected in the second passage a page and a half later (“Look at the nigger! . . . Mama, a Negro!” [113]), except in the sentence “Take no notice, sir, he does not know that you are as civilized as we,” which needs to be interpreted as the mother’s address to Fanon-the-character and hence the “he” must refer to the “handsome little boy” (114) of the next page. If there is explicit gendering, it is therefore male. Since in the original “I’m frightened” reads as “j’ai peur” (*Peau noire* 115), a gender-non-specific formula,²⁵ no “girl” can be said to show up in Fanon’s text.²⁶ Bhabha’s odd and incorrect imposition of female gender on Fanon’s child protagonist therefore betrays a blind spot in his own analysis and constitutes an unconscious projection of Fanon’s misogyny onto the critical postcolonial discourse.

As a consequence of Bhabha’s gender blindness he also fails to discuss the crucial psychoanalytic significance of the little boy. Surely, the scenario reverberates with the boy’s relationship to the mother — in Freudian terms, he must by now have noted her lack of the male organ. In this line of interpretation, the black man’s penis acquires more than symbolic overtones since the black man comes to embody the threat of replacing *the absent father* — the white man — in *pars pro toto* fashion. In this implicit scenario the small boy comes to compete for his mother with the black man (instead of his real father) for the desire of the mother (in both readings of the genitive).²⁷ In this symbolic contest, the “handsome little boy” seems to have an advantage over the “Negro,” since his competitor has been discredited by the set of contemptuous attributes applied to him in the text. As Bergner notes perceptively, Fanon’s earlier self experiences the abasement of a “‘feminine’ position” (80), that of being subjected to scopic determination by the colonizer. This humiliation is aggravated by the fact that scopic violence is performed by a woman since in the traditional scopic regimes women end up being subjected to the male gaze (79-80). However, since the black man’s insult to the woman exposes the mother’s supposed desire for the “Negro,” the little boy in fact loses the competition in proper Oedipal fashion.

Beyond Bhabha's silence on the gender issue and beyond the curious absence of the white man from Fanon's primal scene, the gendering of the colonial scenario remains of crucial importance elsewhere. Memmi's description of the master/slave typology of the colonial bond(ing) carries remarkably explicit homosocial tones: the identification of the colonial subject with the colonizer is quite openly one with his virility — the desire to "become" the colonizer being tantamount to a desire to regain one's virility lost in the emasculating defeat by the white man.²⁸ In other contexts, too, it is always the sly servant, the peasant, the warrior, the oriental prince in his harem who confront the Western government: power relations are by definition *between men*. Subaltern studies, by foregrounding the family and the village community, have contributed significantly to the colonial debate since they helped to revise the classic colour-blind analyses of colonial history. That traditional scenario, by viewing women as mere appendages to the men, denied them political agency. As Fanon's anecdote shows, however, even within postcolonial theory gender issues are indeed constitutive of the colonial situation, and women are still unwittingly forced to function as the neuralgic point in a system of racial discrimination. The historical implication of women in the colonial power structure thus leaves traces in the cultural episteme whose reverberations, as we have seen, re-emerge in odd moments of Bhabha's poststructuralist discourse.

II. The Exoticist Scenario

India has been an exceptionally fruitful ground for exoticist discourses. A number of typically exotic elements combine in the Indian experience, echoing topoi with which the English were familiar since William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786). There is, first of all, the sublimity of the Indian landscape in an ideal combination of the Himalayas (the sublime in mountain scenery) with the deserts and the majestic course of the river Ganga, examples of the oriental sublime. Among stereotypes of the sublime, only the arctic regions cannot be supplied by India. Other features

of Indian society also lend themselves to orientalist stereotyping: the harem, suttee, and Moghul valour in warfare are all welcome extensions of the exoticist fantasy. (It is particularly interesting to observe, incidentally, how the orientalist typing of India concentrates on the Moghul empire with otherwise peaceful Hindus coming in for consideration only when suttee or the "monstrosities"²⁹ of the Hindu plastic arts are being noted.)

These fairly alluring pictures of India are flanked by a depiction of the Indian landscape as hell, with an emphasis on the oppressive heat, the hordes of vermin,³⁰ hellish religious rites (suttee), and the monstrosity of its architecture. Since these descriptions center on the very elements that lend themselves to an exotic reading, the exotic can be argued to be intrinsically ambivalent. The sensual allure of the sublime has an inherent dark undercurrent, with sexual connotations given prominence in the imagery.

This exoticist scenario needs to be considered alongside its inverse counterpart, the set of stereotypes describing Indians' views of England. Here, on the positive side, England's green valleys with their Wordsworthian echoes are contrasted with the negative features of England's coldness and dreariness, its continual rainfall and lack of human warmth. Whereas the positive features correspond to a picturesque view of the English landscape which the British themselves used to articulate with relief, contrasting India's excessive heat, drought and expansiveness with their own country of homely and manageable proportions, the *negative* stereotypes of the British Isles are of external (Indian) origin — with the exception of the rain, perhaps: the one point that the English themselves would concede to be rather a nuisance. All these views of England are thematized at great length in Nirad Chaudhuri's voluble and cliché-ridden account of his trip to England. In stereotypical fashion, Chaudhuri contrasts the picturesqueness of the English landscape in its harmony, moderation, and benignity with the Indian scenario, its disparity, excessivity, and monstrosity. In Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird* (1985), it is Dev's epiphany in the countryside in which he experiences the "real" Wordsworthian England (168-72) that aptly illustrates these correlations. Dev has been imbued with

English poetry, and this is what he wants to find in England. Adit, who has been much more realistic in his attitude towards England — no Wordsworthian illusions for him when he observes the discontent of Sarah's parents (Dev's in-laws) in their country home — by contrast succumbs to exoticist fantasies about his home country, thereby enacting a typical reaction to his prolonged exile from home.

When he had leaned over the bridge and gazed down at the river Test and laughed at the downy cygnets following their regal parent under the silver-leaved willows, the insane spectacles on his eyes had actually shown him the rivers of India — the shameful little Jumna, so unworthy of its mythical glory; the mud and slush of the Ganges with its temples and yogis, its jackals and alligators lining the banks; the murderous Mahanadi, each year going berserk like an elephant, trampling those who sought to pacify it, in riverside temples, with marigolds and oil lamps; the uncivilised, mosquito-ridden Brahmaputra swirling through the jungles; the fine silver fingers of Punjab's rivers raking the scorched earth . . .

The long, lingering twilight of the English summer trembling over the garden had seemed to him like an invalid stricken with anaemia, had aroused in him a sudden clamour, like a child's tantrum, to see again an Indian sunset, its wild conflagration, rose and orange, flamingo pink and lemon, scattering into a million sparks in the night sky. (177-78)

Adit's nostalgia for India does not start out with a craving for the sublime. His initial view of Indian rivers concentrates not on their grandeur (which is in fact explicitly rejected as a mythical mystification of an inglorious reality), but on the messiness and squalor of Indian watercourses in contrast to the idyllic neatness of English river scenes. However, by the end of the cited passage, Adit has managed to transform the Wordsworthian pastoral into an emotional desert and has acceded to his violent longings for Indian sunsets with their aggressive onslaught of colours. Such a "wild conflagration," like the earlier depiction of Indian riverscapes in terms of contemptible squalor, ironically mirrors *English* attitudes towards the oriental sublime and its uncivilized counterpart, the object.

The exoticist paradigm, one can therefore conclude, constitutes an escapist fantasy, with Westerners thrilling to the allure of the sublime and Indians basking in the neatness and pictur-

esqueness of the English scene — for which they have acquired a taste from reading English pastoral romantic poetry where that landscape served the escapist fantasy of frustrated city dwellers.

III. The Exile: Criticism of Self and Other

The condition of exile combines a number of recurring features: a nostalgia for the home country which results in an idealization of India's positive features and an indulgence in fond memories that tend to acquire gilded overtones; an attempt to create a genuine replica of home in the foreign environment, thereby producing a false imitation that resembles exoticist simulacra of Indian culture; an increasing distance from the host culture, with a tendency to move from open criticism of the colonial past and of Britain's current patronizing stance towards Indian immigrants to fantasies of counter-colonization and the assumption of national superiority over the British. In addition to these parameters, one can observe a tendency to displace the experience of racial discrimination in England onto other immigrant groups, transposing racial epithets into descriptors of class membership or religious affiliation.

This last point has to do with the Indians' self-image in London rather than with their views about India or England. British racism against coloured immigrants is experienced by both Dev and Adit in the novel. Adit has simply stopped paying attention, whereas Dev is deeply bothered by the inscriptions of "Wog" slogans on the underground and by racist remarks in general (16). Both Dev and Adit, however, immediately agree to label the Sikh family in the same house as low-class, and to look down upon them because they live in over-crowded lodgings and are supposedly dirty (28). The matriarch once corners Dev, who has caught a cold, and tends to his medical needs, even offering to get a job and a wife for him. As transpires from her remarks, her sons have not shied at the most menial jobs and are now engaged in profitable business, whereas Dev, who is looking for a white-collar job only, has been unemployed since his arrival in England. In Dev's feelings of disgust towards the Sikhs, there is therefore a good measure of guilty conscience and they help disguise his concern over his own inferiority in relation to his

neighbours' success story. Such a displacement of the racial stereotype onto lower-class Indians serves a double function: it deflects the feelings of inferiority generated by racial remarks onto the already despised Sikhs, and it pretends that British racist clichés are class-related, that they do (correctly) apply to the lower-class Sikhs but are inappropriate to the upper-class Hindus. By means of this double strategy, respect for the English and a positive (class-related) self-image can be preserved, circumventing serious puncturing of Brahmin self-respect.

In connection with the class issue, it also becomes apparent that the colonial inferiority complex is still at work in these Indian exiles. Dev, it is claimed, would be more than lucky to marry the shopgirl whom he woos at the end of the story, and Adit has of course made a huge step up the social ladder by marrying Sarah. Neither man would ever have dreamed of taking a wife from the working class in India,³¹ and Sarah's own choice of an Indian husband is conspicuously fraught with family scandal, rejection, and loneliness. Sarah is ashamed of her husband (ch.2) and has lost all her friends as a consequence of the marriage, her relationship to her parents has suffered, and she refuses to address these problems, repressing them carefully. Her forlorn look as Adit happens to observe her getting down from the bus (31) tells of the emotional price she is paying for her mixed marriage, and it can even be argued that her headlong plunge into motherhood and expatriation to India is yet another futile attempt to suppress the British side of herself.

The condition of exile is characterized, as I have noted first and foremost, by nostalgia for the home country. Indian food in retrospect acquires a lusciousness much exaggerated — as Dev notes when Adit enthuses about *halwa*, which one merely takes for granted in India (15-16). This attitude is part of a complex immersion in nostalgia. The thing to do is to go out to an Indian restaurant that evokes the Raj period in its decor, a kind of museum of times past.

Here [at Veeraswamy's] you have the real thing — the very essence of the Raj, of the role of the *sahib log* — in its fullest bloom.

Sarah, listening to a rather drunken Dev's flamboyant words, looked about her again and thought she saw what he meant. Through his

eyes, she saw that essence, that living bloom in these halls — brilliant, exotic, gold-dusted, rose-tinted. Here were the tiger skins and the gold leaf elephants, the chandeliers and rainbow-coloured Jaipur furniture, the crimson carpets and the starched turbans of another age, another world — all a bit outsize, more brilliant than they had been in real life, in India, for here there was no clammy tropical heat, no insidious dust, no insecurity, no shadow of history to shake or darken or wilt them. Here was only that essence, that rose bloom, transported to a climate that touched more gently on human dreams; here it could flower and shed its perfume in the safety of mirror-lined, carpet laid hallucination. Even the grace and good manners of the Indian servants were a little more theatrical than they would have been in India. Everyone seemed to be playing a part in a technicoloured film about the East — even I, thought Sarah, fingering the gold chain at her neck. (195)

Nostalgia for the home country therefore apparently evokes artificial recreations of a past that never existed in such an idealized form, a nativeness born of postcoloniality. Likewise, at another point in the novel, bad music comes to be accepted for a good performance (96) simply because rarity and nostalgia combine to make the fake article precious, to value it as the real thing. These simulacra of India (which correspond to Western imports from India — particularly in the case of the decor of the restaurant, a collection of colonialist plunder from the sub-continent) are appropriated by expatriate Indians as their own heritage.

Negative images of India are either completely repressed or subjected to nostalgic interpretation. Adit, as we have seen, feels affection for the Indian rivers although they are much less grand than in the mythical shape in which they have loomed in his mind (177-78), and he enthuses over the glorious Indian sunsets and the Indian landscape in terms of its “wild, wide grandeur, its supreme grandeur, its loneliness and black, glittering enchantment” (180). This exotic picture, too, is a cliché of Western provenance, as is its negative underside which Adit has to face later, again in a film. Adit and Sarah are watching videos of Indian movies set in Indian landscapes, “. . . feeling Bengal, feeling India sweep into their room like a flooded river, drowning it all and replacing it with the emptiness and sorrow, the despair and rage, the flat grey melancholy and the black glamour of

India" (224). In all of these instances, the exotic orientalist cliché of India comes to serve as a substitute for expatriates' real experience of their home country, memories of which have become warped by nostalgia and desire. It is only when Adit thinks of taking Sarah back with the baby that he recalls with a pang the poverty, crowding and lack of sanitary facilities and what this might mean to his wife. Adit bases his appreciation of England on his material living standard in London (the appliances he can afford, the freedom, the privacy) — a view that is manifestly imbricated with British attitudes of superiority and condescension — and he is realistic in his description of the Indian situation: not only was he unable to get a job there, had he remained but he also would have had to live on the brink of destitution (17-18).

Expatriates are therefore caught in a web of false images of India since the experience of the source has been lost to them. Moreover, they become embroiled in an orientalist discourse about their home country and are unable to extricate themselves from the West and the categories it imposes on them and their culture. This leads to a schizophrenia of sorts, such as the one Dev experiences soon after his arrival in England when he tries to decide whether to stay or not:

There are days in which the life of an alien appears enthrallingly rich and beautiful to him, and that of a homebody too dull, too stale to return to ever. Then he hears a word in the tube or notices an expression on an English face that overturns his latest decision and, drawing himself together, he feels he can never bear to be the unwanted immigrant but must return to his own land, however abject or dull, where he has, at least, a place in the sun, security, status and freedom. (86)

England appears to him as either exotically attractive ("enthrallingly rich and beautiful") or as hostile, and India has been turned into a familiar but unloved bogeyman.

To extricate oneself from these colonial bonds, one has to strike back. The exile scenario therefore includes criticism of the British colonialist past as a typical reaction of the expatriate: Dev, for instance, refuses to like St. Paul's Cathedral because it symbolizes Britain's imperial grandeur (67-68). There also is the attempt at aggressive retaliation under the aegis of a cul-

tural and economic counter-colonization of England. Thus, Dev is delighted to find an Indian bazaar in London which evokes in him fantasies of an Indian takeover of the British Isles (thereby, one can note bemusedly, realizing the worst Western fears of “Balkanization”):

“It seems to me the East India Company has come to take over England now.”

Dev is delighted with the idea. He is exhilarated by the rowdy, libertine Indian atmosphere about him. His guard is lowered and “Topping!” he shouts, remembering the phrase from some school-boy comic and finding it appropriate. “Let history turn the tables now. Let the Indian traders come to England — the Sikhs and Sindhis with their brass elephants and boxes of spice and tea. Let them take over the City, to begin with — let them move into Cheapside and Leadenhall and Cornhill. Let them move into Threadneedle Street and take over the Bank, the Royal Exchange and Guildhall. Then let them spread over the country — the Sikhs with their turbans and swords and the Sindhis with their gold bars and bangles. Let them build their forts along the coast, in Brighton and Bristol and Bath. Then let our army come across, our Gurkhas and our Rajputs with the camel corps and elephants of Rajasthan.”

(61)

This rather carnivalesque scenario is complemented by Adit’s and Dev’s talk about Indian ambassadorship in England. Indian hospitality and “gentlemanliness” are cited by Adit in order to reject accusations of Indian inferiority. Adit wants to “[show] the English what a gentleman an Indian can be . . . dazzling everyone with [his] Oriental wit and fluency” (154). This rather half-hearted attempt — Adit has to *prove* Indian worth against Western allegations of *unworth* — contrasts with Dev’s markedly more combative attitude:

I am showing these damn imperialists with their lost colonies complex that we are free people now, with our own personalities that this veneer of an English education has not obscured, and not afraid to match ours with theirs. I am here, he proselytized, to interpret my country to them, to conquer England as they once conquered India, to show them, to show them . . . (123)

Such a turning of the tables, however, remains sheer fantasy. Nobody is going to take either Dev or Adit seriously, so even their attempts to break through the inhibiting straitjacket of

Western stereotyping founders on their hopeless enmeshment with orientalist discourse: the subaltern can never speak but in the language of the oppressor. The two options outlined above parallel the nationalist reactions within the colonial scenario. In the colonial context, however, agency is a distinct opportunity; in the context of diasporic homelessness, aggressive discourse peters out in ineffective posturing and utopian wish-fulfilment.

The scenario of expatriate self-definition most clearly illustrates the cross-mirrorings of alterity apostrophized in my title: exile is a condition of *inherent and ineluctable inauthenticity* in which several types of Western stereotyping are adopted in the attempt to constitute a sort of Indian self-identification even if at second remove. There is no attempt to *become*, simply, British. Such a project would not merely founder on the patent impossibility of a visible minority becoming invisible (like Ellison's invisible man), but it additionally presupposes the utopian scenario of a complete elimination of one's past. Thus Bharati Mukherjee's claim of an American identity (much more convincing in the melting pot scenario of *American* immigration) has elicited a vigorous antagonism within the Indian expatriate community. Her claim to be "American" is seen as a treachery to inherited cultural values.³² There is, however, more than one way in which to become "British." One such option is delineated in the following discussion of globalization.

IV. Globalization

In the scenario of globalization, the emigré is part of a cosmopolitan "scene" in a major cultural centre in the West. He or she participates in, say British culture at the upper level, has a professional, usually academic, job, and the privilege to choose eclectically between cultures and between identities. On the negative side, this position frequently entails an inability to feel at home anywhere at all, a cultural rootlessness: one is part of the global elite but no longer Indian or fully British. On the positive side, the class privilege afforded by the status within a global professional elite allows expatriates to avoid both racial discrimination and contact with their poorer country-folk who suffer from

it. It is this role of a cosmopolitan subject that is frequently celebrated in postcolonial work on migrancy and hybridity (Krishnaswamy), a role that no doubt yields quite noticeable advantages to those able to claim it, despite the fact that exile itself even in the best of conditions induces nostalgia, homesickness, or a loss of orientation.

The scenario of globalization becomes particularly important in the handling of cultural clichés. We noted earlier that traveling Indians project romanticized visions of England (imported into India by means of British education) on their exotic “occidental” other, thereby inverting the orientalist gaze and subjecting England to an inauthentic stereotyping. This inversion of the colonial paradigm is, however, still rooted in colonial education and does not significantly escape the clutches of Western discourse. In a globalized context, however, clichés of Britain lose their counter-colonial specificity since they now come to be situated on the same level as clichés about France, the US, Japan, or India itself. From a cosmopolitan vantage point these different countries and their cultural products become exchangeable within an economy of tourism and international migrancy. Moreover, these symbolic nationalist simulacra allow the cosmopolitan subject to exercise power over the image-making process by selecting, combining, and exploiting the clichés for his or her own purposes.

These processes of appropriation and exploitation can be illustrated by a passage from Sunetra Gupta’s *The Glassblower’s Breath* (1993):

Turning for a last farewell glance, he [Avishek] had been hit by the pastry texture of the snow-dusted spires, and this gentle vision had resurrected his desire to craft in cake flesh the spires of Oxford, his first dream, his last dream, his one enduring fantasy, Balliol in bakemeat, a gingerbread Christchurch. (59)

Avishek the baker not only fantasizes about the architecture of colleges but he also exploits these clichés for his own industry, producing simulacra of Christchurch and Balliol in the shape of quite literally consumable bakery. Avishek therefore commodifies British culture for his own profit in the same way as souvenir factories bank on the popularity of cultural symbols

like the Taj Mahal, the Eiffel Tower, or Big Ben. Avishek's commodification of Christchurch and Balliol is therefore situated within a global culture of tourism and trade that converts any marketable symbol into simulacra which are then distributed in the global consumer culture.

The ascendancy of the global elite over the native culture of the host country can be signalled in a different manner too. In Gupta's novels the Indian expatriates frequently have a higher social status than the British characters, and some of the Westerners can even be said to possess the traits typically ascribed to the native from the arrogant colonial perspective. Thus, in *The Glassblower's Breath*, Daniel the butcher is the one Englishman among the major protagonists of the novel, and he is inferior to the Indian and Persian expatriates in terms of education, intelligence, elegance, and of course social status. (Besides Daniel, the only other memorable British character is a pervert who organizes alphabetical dinners.) The American good-for-nothing Sparrow, on the other hand, epitomizes the figure of the *shlemiel*. He is a lazy, drifting character, a promiscuous, carnivalesque figure, whose actions are haphazard and therefore indeterminable, and who engages in all sorts of tricks (pretending to be the butler simply because he is intrigued with the purloined diary of the gourmet fanatic). In this manner, it could be argued, Sparrow instantiates precisely those characteristics of laziness, inefficiency, and slyness typically projected on the colonial subject. Indeed, the parallel can be extended to Daniel the butcher who evokes images of the native devil; by enticing the passions of the female protagonist, he eventually is responsible for her death. Allusions to death prevail in the novel and are particularly centred on Daniel. Daniel's coitus with the female protagonist also inverts the colonial pattern as regards the sexual parameters of colonialism: here it is the expatriate Indian woman who sleeps with the white male native, and not the other way round. That intercourse in *The Glassblower's Breath* is linked with death — a fairly standard *male topos* — can moreover be treated as yet another inversion on the gender line — this time female passion is figured as loss and transcendence,

relegating the male lover to a position of passivity and lack of articulation. We never get an insight into Daniel's mind, so the woman's "penetration" of him in the sexual act corresponds precisely to the epistemological metaphor of penetrating to the truth with which we are so familiar from the Western male tradition.

In Gupta's novel, the suppressed national and cultural origins of the protagonist return, however, with a vengeance. In the final scene of the book, the protagonist's husband Alexander (who is of Persian background) kills all three lovers and suitors of his wife. Whatever freedom from her gender-related cultural anchorings the protagonist may have enjoyed, this freedom is abruptly nullified by the eruption of patriarchal jealousy and "Eastern" cruelty. Since most of the novel renders the perceptions of the unnamed heroine through the eyes of her husband and three suitors, the text moreover fails to liberate the female figure from the male gaze and ultimately, through the actions of her husband, ends up catching and entrapping her in traditional marital possessiveness.

Globalization, it could therefore be suggested, provides a measure of relief from the colonial trauma but there is also one's nationalist tradition to reckon with which may be equally lethal to the subject's free development. Whereas the colonial subject used to be always in the position of a victim of external forces, in the globalization scenario expatriates have begun to participate in the processes of cultural dominance — a constellation that is elsewhere described only in relation to the third world elite's implication with neocolonial regimes.³³ When the native culture, in its nationalist (and patriarchal) excrescences, catches up with those that have removed themselves from their victimization, guilt is expiated in a bloodbath of major proportions.³⁴

V. The Third Party

There is one other blind spot in many studies of imagological relevance: the complication of the scenario by means of a third term in the image/counter-image relation. I do not mean a Lacanian third term in the sense in which both Fanon and Bhabha utilize it, but — in a more pedestrian way — the deflec-

tion and doubling of images through a third party which functions as a catalyst or point of comparison with the basic scenario of the self and the other in their multi-level mirrorings.

The third party, in most texts, is a figure or group of people that contrast with the Indian self or the British other. In Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, for instance, the Sikhs function as a third party, and their treatment by Dev and Adit significantly affects the extent of Indian self-identification in the novel. In Desai's *Baumgartner's Bombay* (1988), Jews, Germans, and Indians are contrasted, and the Germans certainly fare the worst in this comparison. In Gupta's *The Glassblower's Breath*, the scenario is complicated by the globetrotter Sparrow from the US, the Russian Vladimir Jovanovitch, and the Persian husband, Alexander. In comparison with these, Daniel, the British protagonist, pales into insignificance.

Baumgartner's Bombay is particularly sophisticated in complicating the Indian relationship to the West by means of the vantage point of a third party or a third term. For instance, this is not a simple situation of Jewish Baumgartner coming to Bombay, the city of the exotic East. On his way to Bombay, he passes through Venice which he experiences in all its exotic splendour and allure. India, where he finally settles down, turns out to be a home much like the Germany he has left — a country torn by civil war, a country which allows him only an existence among the masses of the poor, and a country in which he is finally killed by a German after all, even though this does not happen in a concentration camp. In his own experiences in India Baumgartner thus repeats the decline of his family's fortunes and victimization by the Nazis. His possessions are as little worth robbing as were his family's by the time they were killed in the camps. Although the German tourist turned robber represents "white trash" at its most despicable, the book leaves no doubt that for the Indian pub owner, himself certainly not well off, Baumgartner and his girlfriend Lotte are the dregs of Western society. Yet that evaluation needs to be measured against the pub owner's (but also Baumgartner's) inevitable callousness towards the homeless squatter family on the pavement outside Baumgartner's execrable hole of a flat.

Stereotypes about the colonized are therefore, in the final analysis, stereotypes about the downtrodden, and the introduction of third and fourth positions into the central binary constellation of colonizer versus colonized helps to foreground precisely the class-related underpinnings of recurrent cultural clichés. These resurrect colonial epithets for the bad native in order to recirculate them as racist or classist language against the poor, the marginal, or the disadvantaged. Very little “national” content is transported in these stereotypes and attitudes against immigrants, a new set of others who are not conveniently housed far away in India but encroach upon the very centre of the (Westerners’) home country. Thinking through the functions of the third party therefore reveals this textual ploy as a strategy to outline the dark underside of the globalization scenario. Some former victims of marginalization and (cultural) oppression have been enabled to turn the tables on the West, but they thus become implicated in a general Western economy that continues to exclude and discriminate. The move to the global elite is a move to domination, and domination in turn inevitably produces discrimination against the lower social classes. The cross-mirrorings of alterity have shifted from a colonial to a postcolonial scenario and from the safe distance of the empire’s furthest reaches to the immediate vicinity of Western urban environment. Likewise, the former colonial subject has either sunk to the low level of a postcolonial subject in a neocolonial state or to the uneasy position of an unwanted immigrant. In both places, he or she must face not merely the continuing presence of the former colonial master but also the new faces of the neocolonial and cosmopolitan elites, those among his own that have “made” it to the enviable position of postmodernity. Yet the guilt-ridden vision of their native alter egos continues to haunt these lucky ones in the very web of cultural hybridity that both sustains them and ultimately threatens to give way, to drop them back into the abyss from which they had escaped with such heroic endeavour. The assumption of Western superiority remains an unstable and risky, even hazardous achievement that compounds the miseries of the colonial inferiority complex with the acquisition of the guilt suffered by the rich. Indeed, the

expatriate elite re-enacts the colonial scenario with a vengeance, clinging to the proven colonial strategies of marginalization of the other as a means of exorcizing their own selves in the place of that other. After all, the colonizer always felt superior or pretended to feel superior against manifest evidence of his physical and moral degeneration in the colonies.³⁵ The former colonial subject, by contrast, has to repress the knowledge of his (erst-while) inferiority and therefore needs to re-enact colonialist strategies of discrimination, expropriation, and victimization to secure the still shaky new position at the top of the social or global scale. Cross-mirrorings of alterity, one can conclude, constitute unending processes of projection that apparently never get resolved,³⁶ they merely intensify the doubling by yet one more turn of the screw.³⁷

NOTES

- 1 See "maps" of national stereotypes such as, for example, the one referred to in Stanzel ("National Character"; *Europäer*). See also the essays in Zacharasiewicz. Perhaps the best two contributions to imagology are Bleicher and Dyserink.
- 2 It is mainly the *male* representative of a European culture that is thus figured.
- 3 A laudable exception is Godzich in his article "Emergent Literature," in which he applies imagological research to a South African context.
- 4 Fanon's text from 1952 (*Peau noire, masques blancs*) is used strategically in Bhabha's post- or para-Lacanian readings in the colonial deployment of the economy of desire and power. See Bhabha ("Difference" and *Location*).
- 5 This condition of cultural hybridity, in the theoretical literature, is frequently portrayed in celebratory terms, ignoring the plight of exiles in the contexts of forced emigration and refugee existence, or that of bonded labourers belonging to a migrant workforce. (For a criticism of the "sweet sorrows of exile" suffered by the self-exiled intellectual, see Krishnaswamy's "Mythologies of Migrancy.")
- 6 See below for a problematization of the gender issue which remains off limits in most "classic" accounts.
- 7 The figure of Stephen Blackpool in Dickens's *Hard Times* (1854) is a typical example of the meek and self-deprecatory ideal from the factory owners' point of view.
- 8 See Isaac for a discussion of the representation of the working class in political writings of the period. Middle-class conceptualizations of the poor reach back to formulae about the deserving and undeserving poor, the lazy apprentice, wholesome beer versus debilitating gin (Hogarth), which had been in currency since the Renaissance vagrancy laws.
- 9 One can still measure this excessive admiration for British culture in Chaudhuri's aptly named *A Passage to England* (1971). Responsible for Indian anglophilia was of course the thorough indoctrination of Indians with British culture in the colonial educational system, whose influence did not apply to the same extent in either the African colonies or the Caribbean.

- 10 I am thinking of Bhabha's sly natives in "Signs Taken for Wonders" (*Location* 102-22).
- 11 See Bhabha's "Difference": "Such visibility of the institutions and apparatuses of power is possible because the exercise of colonial power makes their relationship obscure, produces them as fetishes, spectacles of a "natural"/racial pre-eminence. Only the seat of government is always elsewhere — alien and separate by that distance upon which surveillance depends for its strategies of objectification, normalization and discipline" (209).
- 12 See Fanon (99) on the natives' welcoming even shipwrecked Europeans as "honorable stranger[s]." The white man is either "deified or devoured" (92; qtd. in Mannoni).
- 13 Note that the typical scenes of imagological study treat the experience of the tourist abroad, in both directions: the tourist in a strange environment, being judged by the natives, or the tourist judging the indigenous culture in its natural habitat. The situation becomes more "colonial," however, in the study of antisemitic clichés and, even more so, in the analysis of Anglo-Irish relationships in Ireland.
- 14 Note too that all nationalistic propaganda *constructs* an image of a nativist culture that was never in existence in such a form, first, because native culture never tended to see itself as a unitary field of reference before its confrontation with the colonizer's Other, and, second, because by the time of the national countermovement, native culture has already been irremediably changed — some practices have been lost, some have become modified through the contact with the colonizer, some have acquired new functions, and foreign ways have been adopted in other areas. (Cf. Appiah's apt remarks on African art in *Critical Inquiry*.)
- 15 Bhabha's commitment to never defining his terminology in a consistent manner — no doubt a deliberate poststructuralist ploy — makes this somewhat frustrating to pin down in precise terms. The term *ambivalence* of course originally refers to Freud's theories, where it denotes a simultaneous presence of contradictory affects (love and hate, trust, and distrust) towards the object of desire.
- 16 Note also that Bakha's treatment by the Brahmins is charged by the same proto-colonial affects that we have earlier observed to apply in nineteenth-century attitudes towards the working-class poor.
- 17 For a much more extensive analysis of hybridity in these novels and for a distinction between different kinds of hybridity see my "Colonial vs. Cosmopolitan Hybridity," in *Hybridity and Postcolonialism*.
- 18 This, naturally, is here used in a Lacanian sense, and is so used by Bhabha. Cf. also Fanon (161, n.25).
- 19 I am of course aware of the fact that the heroism of the *sati* or *suttee* does not entirely "fit" the role of the victim, but female heroism also sometimes occurs on the British side in the colonial novel — so the parallelism does hold true.
- 20 I come back to the fact that Bhabha later calls this child "the girl."
- 21 Bhabha never mentions this conclusion to the trauma.
- 22 Cf. "Projecting his own desires onto the Negro, the white man behaves 'as if' the Negro really had them [i.e., the white women]" (Fanon 165).
- 23 Fanon's problematic gynophobic discourse has recently been the subject of work by Diana Fuss, Gwen Bergner, Lola Young (89-97), and Françoise Vergès ("Heritage" and "Creole Skin"). See, for example, Bergner's critique of this line of argument: "Bhabha's ostensibly ameliorative observation that Fanon, in a later chapter, 'attempts a somewhat more complex reading of masochism' leaves disturbingly intact *Black Skin, White Masks's* equation of (white) women's sexuality with masochism" (85).

- 24 As Fuss notes, it "is, however, important to recall at this juncture that Fanon elaborates his reading of this particular fantasy during a period when fabricated charges of rape were used as powerful colonial instruments of fear and intimidation against black men. Fanon's deeply troubling comments on white women and rape are formulated within a historical context in which the phobically charged stereotype of the violent, lawless, and oversexed Negro put all black men at perpetual risk. What we might call Fanon's myth of white women's rape fantasies is offered as a counternarrative to 'the myth of the black rapist'" (31).
- 25 Other syntagms might have enforced obligatory gender agreement (e.g., *je suis epouvantée*).
- 26 The oddity of this mistranslation has been noted by Bergner (86, n.14): "In discussing this scene Bhabha makes a telling slip. He writes that 'a white girl fixes Fanon in a look and word as she turns to *identify with her mother*.' . . . But nowhere does Fanon say that the child is a girl. Moreover, he seems to refer to the child's gender on the next page: 'the handsome little *boy* . . . le beau petit *garçon*.' . . . Bhabha's slip suggests that preconceptions of how race, gender, and sexuality intersect run deep."
- 27 Cf. also Chow's claim about Fanon's oedipal construction of the native: "The native (the black man) is thus imagined to be an angry son who wants to displace the white man, the father" (125).
- 28 Thus, Suleri in *The Rhetoric of English India* traces strong homoerotic reverberations in key Anglo-Indian texts.
- 29 See Mitter for a history of Western representations of Indian sculpture.
- 30 See, for instance, the travel accounts which Ghose quotes.
- 31 Dev teases Adit for trying "to show Sarah what a sahib a *babu* can be" (28). Compare Adit's words to Dev, "I predict that in six months — no, three months from now, it will be Dev himself who will be rolling in the grass in Hyde Park with some blonde landlady's daughter" (66).
- 32 Recently Mukherjee has thrown further oil on the firebrand by repeating her unpopular standpoint in an article in *Mother Jones*.
- 33 This theme is of course particularly prominent in the African novel (for example, in Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* or Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*), but can also be observed in the Indian novel, particularly in the work of Nayantara Sahgal.
- 34 Gupta's work is the only example of celebratory globalization. All the other texts about cosmopolitan migrants that I am aware of are fraught with ambivalence, nostalgia for the home country, unhappiness, the problems of expatriation and exile. Adib Khan's superb novel *Seasonal Adjustments* (1994) provides particularly subtle delineations of these problems.
- 35 See Orwell's clear-headed delineation of this process in *Burmese Days* (1934).
- 36 For a similar argument in relation to the deadlock in which postcolonial criticism finds itself in its dependence on the colonial scenario, see my "The Hybridity of Discourses about Hybridity."
- 37 This paper, in its original shorter version, was first read at the GNEL conference at Konstanz, in September 1996. The research is part of a larger project on expatriate Indian writing funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) in the context of an interdisciplinary study group (Sonderforschungsbereich 541) on "Identities and Alterities" at Freiburg University.

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