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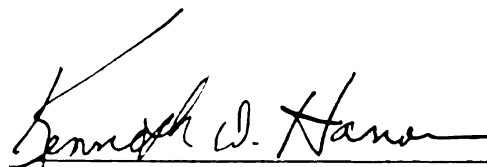
Hybridity and Discursive Unrest in
Late Colonial Anglophone Prose of South Asia (1880-1950)

presented by

Eric John Grekowicz

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

PhD degree in English



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Hybridity and Discursive Unrest in Late Colonial Anglophone
Prose of South Asia (1880-1950)

By

Eric Grekowitz

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

2001

Professor Kenneth Harrow

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ABSTRACT

HYBRIDITY AND DISCURSIVE UNREST IN LATE COLONIAL ANGLOPHONE PROSE OF SOUTH ASIA

By

Eric Grekowitz

This dissertation represents the first extended exploration of Homi Bhabha's notions about hybridity in relation to various subject positions in South Asian Anglophone prose of the late colonial period. The main argument is that the hybrid's race and gender inflect the ways in which enunciations could be performed in imperial discourse, and that these elements also impact the ways in which they could be received by contemporaries. By exploring subject positions with a recognition of their race and gender status within the overlapping discourses of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century India, this study finds that Homi Bhabha's theorizations represent only the beginning of study into the nature and impact of hybridity. Although there are commonalities among all of the writings discussed in this dissertation, the writings emerging from Bhabha's "Third Space" vary greatly in their destabilizing or supporting of discourses. In this project, the four race-gender

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coordinates are represented by Rudyard Kipling, Mohandas Gandhi, Annie Besant, and Pandita Ramabai.

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For Rachel,
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My debts to the English faculty at Michigan State University are deep and multi-faceted. I feel especially honored to have had the opportunity to work with my dissertation committee members: Drs. Surjit Dulai, Clint Goodson, Salah Hassan, and Judith Stoddart, and especially my chair, Ken Harrow. In a very real sense, this dissertation is a testament to them, their intellectual rigor, and their support.

I am also grateful to the College of Arts and Letters and the Graduate School of Michigan State University for the support I have received. In particular, I could not have carried out large portions of this project without the Dissertation Completion Fellowship and the Traveling Scholar Awards.

Finally, I thank my family. My children have been a blessing, giving me an evolving and more clearly defined sense of purpose. In addition, they have had to undergo a great deal of sacrifice in both material comfort and time with Daddy for this dissertation to see the light of day. My wife, Rachel, has been my inspiration throughout my studies and without her this dissertation could never have been written.

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IMPERIAL HYPER-
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CHAPTER 1
IMPERIAL HYBRIDITY, POSTCOLONIAL THEORY,
AND IMPERIAL DISCOURSE

[T]he space of the adversarial...
is never entirely on the outside or
implacably oppositional. (Bhabha 109)

PROBLEMS OF COLONIAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In Maps of Englishness, Simon Gikandi calls for a new approach to the study of empire and imperial discourse--one that is able to incorporate the identities and subjectivities of both the colonizer and the colonized, because as he queries,

How can we advocate a diachronic approach to, let's say, English and Indian cultures, and at the same time argue that the imperial experience that created these cultures in the modern period was a synchronic event? (7)

What Gikandi laments most is the fact that explorations of the colonizer's hybridity and subjectivity in colonial environments have rarely been performed and as a result, current understandings of the colonized are also incomplete. This is because, as Gikandi implies, the colonizer and the colonized represent parts of the same synchronic event. Of course, both positions are true to a certain extent; English and Indian cultures operate both diachronically and synchronically--only at different limits of the discursive matrices that make them

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recognizable as separate entities. It is becoming more apparent as research into the nature of imperial discourse evolves that only an incomplete picture of the colonized or the "home" culture of the colonizer can be obtained without considering the impact of imperial discourses upon each individually and both together.

Edward Said, the foremost representative of Colonial Discourse Analysis, has charted imperial discourse in Orientalism and Culture and Imperialism, and his work represents the foundation upon which virtually all inquiries into imperial discourse rest. However, the voice of the colonized in these studies is profoundly absent, which, while perhaps unnecessary to understanding the economics of colonialism, effectively elides a significant amount of imperialism's discursive functioning. In effect, Said's approach silences both the imperial agent abroad and the colonized through an overly monolithic approach to discourse. It is this type of approach that, as D. R. Nagaraj states, has had an undue predominance in studies of colonialism as well as in the development of Postcolonialism. Nagaraj labels such an approach a "theory of total conquest" and asserts that a methodology that "assumes that all the constructions, cultural and intellectual included, of the phase of colonization work towards the consolidation of the master's hegemonic grip." As a result, he indicates that such a methodology disingenuously and falsely

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constructs "colonialism [as] an omnipotent presence" from which there is effectively no escape or even resistance (xiii-xiv).

As such, Said's modified Foucauldian¹ approach represents only a partial explanation of the workings of

¹ Said's ignoring of Foucault's distinctions between discourses and Foucault's explanation of discontinuities leads him to claim that "Orientalism" has an essential unity dating back to the Greeks, and exists in basically the same form. In fact, Said does everything that Foucault says one should not do when performing an analysis. Foucault explains that discourse is

not organized as progressively deductive structures, nor as an enormous book that is being gradually and continuously written, nor as the *œuvre* of a collective subject...One cannot discern a regularity: an order in their successive appearance, correlations in their simultaneity, assignable positions in a common space, a reciprocal functioning, linked and hierarchized transformations.

Foucault later indicates that a methodology which followed his guidelines

would not try to isolate small islands of coherence in order to describe their internal structure; it would not try to suspect and to

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imperial discourse, while eliding the subjectivity and agency of both the colonizer and the colonized. Even more significantly, this methodology obscures parts of imperial discourse itself because it fails to realize that discourses of the colonized are also interlaced throughout the discursive field of imperialism. Ashis Nandy explains,

colonialism [is] a shared culture which may not always begin with the establishment of alien rule in a society and end with the departure of the alien rulers from the colony...disjunctions between politics and culture became possible because it is only partly true that a colonial situation produces a theory of imperialism to justify itself. Colonialism is also a psychological state rooted in earlier forms of social consciousness in both the colonizers and the colonized. It represents a certain cultural continuity and carries a certain cultural baggage. (Nandy Intimate 2)

However, Said is in good company because these same shortcomings occur in virtually all theorists--from Fanon, Césaire, and Memmi to JanMohammed--dealing with imperial discourse. This failure to notice the position

reveal latent conflicts; it would study forms of division. (37)

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of the colonizer within imperial discourse, and the partially artificial binary it creates, thus represents one of the most global and debilitating problems of Postcolonial theory and practice.

The hegemonic character of imperial discourse that Said explores is a function of enunciation² and reception in the colonial context and is dependent on the subjectivities of the participants. This fact partially accounts for the as yet perplexing problem of the uneven impact that hegemonic discourses display within the cultures of both the colonizers and colonized. Because these discourses come out of the crucible of dispersion (enunciation and reception),³ we need to be able to

² Bhabha's explanation of "enunciation" illustrates why Said's notion of a unitary and stable Oriental discourse is an impossibility. While enunciation of "cultural difference is a process of signification through which statements of culture or on culture differentiate, discriminate and authorize the production of fields of force, reference, applicability and capacity" (34), "the place of utterance--is crossed by the *différance* of writing." Therefore, "meaning is never simply mimetic and transparent" (36).

³ Foucault's "system of dispersion" implies both a sender and a receiver--not necessarily as subjective entities--but as "rules" that indicate not only what can be "said"

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recognize which elements are being enacted and whether or not they are actually received. Since each individual is called into being by various and sundry discourses, the production of a discourse is also as varied as the subjectivities that produce it. The unevenness of impact is then not simply a cultural or geographical phenomenon, but rather a representation of the ways in which the strength of various discourses (and their attendant ideological frameworks) compete within individual loci of enunciation and reception. Obviously, those enunciating subjectivities that share elements with the largest number will have a greater opportunity to be "heard."⁴

TRADITION AND MODERNITY

In this context, discursive dispersion proceeds, as Bhabha indicates, from the liminal space of hybridity where the "enunciative process introduces a split in the performative present of cultural identification" (35). Bhabha claims that the split occurs between "the traditional culturalist demand for a model, a tradition, a community" and "new cultural demands, meanings,

but also what can be "heard" (cf. Archeology Chapter 2: Discursive Formations).

⁴ Applying the dialectic of sender/receiver (cf. Footnote 3) to Bhabha's third space, one would necessarily have to recognize that corresponding to the split of enunciation is another splitting--the splitting of reception.

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strategies" (35). However, Bhabha overstates his case when he claims that the "enunciative process introduces a split in the performative present of cultural identification" between the opposing forces of "traditionalism" and "historical politics"⁵ of modernization (cf. 35). In fact, it is often the absence of a splitting between tradition and modernization that creates "a practice of domination" (35). In order to understand that "tradition" and "modernization" are not even necessarily oppositional within imperial discourse, it must be recognized that these ways of thinking are mutually imbricating, and exist on a continuum where it is difficult, or impossible, to disassociate (or split) one from the other.

Recognizing that tradition and modernization are not necessarily oppositional, or even separable, Aijaz Ahmad explains that the

saffron yuppies who are opening the Bombay Stock Exchange--organize their own lives around the fetishism of commodities bequeathed to them

⁵ Bhabha is implying that "history" takes place within the framework of "modernization." He states that the "enunciation of cultural difference problematized the binary division of past and present, tradition and modernity, at the level of cultural representation and its authoritative address" (35).

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Even earlier, Octave Mannoni noticed a similar fusion of "tradition" and "modern" in Gallicized colonials of Madagascar. He states that the fiercest defender of tradition is also the individual who conscientiously works toward modernization:

Paradoxically...in spite of himself he is helping to demolish what remains of the traditional structure...and advocates a return to the old ways...so in fact he is undermining what is left standing of the edifice he longs to preserve. (130)

In both of these instances, it is the direct heir of imperial privilege, the Europeanized elite class, that fuses the traditional and the modern. This class represents not only cultural, but socio-economic and political authority as well. This possibility of oppressive and coercive action in the field of enunciation is largely overlooked by Bhabha because he ignores the possibility that a discursive disruption in the performative present may not be a mandatory element of enunciation. We have to agree with Bhabha when he states that "enunciation...problematizes the binary division of past and present, tradition and modernity,"

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but we have to stop short of his assertion that it necessarily "undermines our sense of the homogenizing effects of cultural symbols and icons, by questioning our sense of the authority of cultural synthesis in general" (35).

Just as tradition and modernity are not necessarily opposed or even separate within the discourses of the "colonized," it is incorrect, in the imperial context, to treat British and Indian cultures and discourses as inherently binate. As with the "saffron yuppies," we cannot assume that the fusion of Britishness and Indianness into a third category (even if it is the unclassifiable "hybrid" Bhabha formulates) is necessarily resistant or even destabilizing to imperial authority. In fact, as it is with the culturally dominant saffron yuppies, the lack of a binary opposition is oppression and domination. Ashis Nandy explains this mutual imbrication of imported and exported discourse is far from liberatory and often represents the functioning of imperialism itself:

[colonial consciousness] includes codes which both the rulers and the ruled can share. The main function of these codes is to alter the original cultural priorities on both sides...[this] explains why colonialism never seems to end with formal political freedom. As a state of mind, colonialism is an indigenous

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process released by external forces. Its sources lie deep in the minds of the rulers and the ruled. (Intimate 2-3)

Nandy's reminder that colonization does not institute a complete break from the pasts of either culture is a useful one. It indicates that hegemony is more than an imposition of a powerful group's discursive and ideological agendas onto a weaker group. Hegemony is constructed by both (or more) groups, and is not simply a question of total victimization, because participation by weaker groups/discourses represents an inflection of the stronger. This indicates that discourse is both more fractured and composite, and more unified and hybrid, than most theorists are willing to accept.

In the imperial field, the situation is even more fragmented because imperial discourse rises out of the conjunction of both cultures and necessarily uses aspects from each. Only a radical break, a complete ideological conquest of one society over another would produce an absolute binary between tradition and modernity on one hand, and between colonizer and colonized on the other. Since there is no radical break of the kind that Said presupposes (and Bhabha hints at), it is incorrect to assume that imperial discourse is simply imposed upon one culture by another, although force is certainly a major factor. Similarly, it must also be recognized that imperial discourse cannot be reduced to a deployment of

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absolute binaries. If either were the case, ideological hegemony would be impossible unless in the context of total amalgamation or with the erasure of all previously existing colonized cultures. Of course, questions of power arise in the type of hegemony I have mapped out following Nandy, but the point is that, although dominant groups have a preponderance of power, it is neither total nor complete. Therefore, resistance, even when participating in dominant discursive structures, is not only possible, but may also represent a dramatic restructuring of the elements that make up dominant discourses.

SPEAKING AND HEARING

Homi Bhabha's explanation of the enunciative process bears out this point. If, as Bhabha indicates, discourse is already hybridized in the act of enunciation, it is a mistake to disregard the individuals who, in their distinctive ideological positionalities, re-compose and re-inscribe discourse out of the elements at their disposal. I think that it is important to recognize that the individual's position is the locus of many discourses, many of which are intersecting. Since not all discourses present themselves evenly to all members of a society, it is also important for a critique not only to proceed from a familiarity with the culture of the time, but also to consider aspects of the

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individual's ideological positioning in relation to any given discourse.

Keeping in mind that discourse is relatively stable at any given time and space, but still evolves over time, it will be necessary to understand, to a greater extent than Foucault provides, how the individual as locus participates in the maintenance and evolution of discourse. Since every subject is positioned differently within discourse, every enunciation, as Foucault shows, is unique and unrepeatable.⁶ Thus, not all statements can be said to be in keeping with the overall framework of a discursive formation at any given time. Here is where Bhabha's notion of hybridity plays an important role for my work. Every statement is inherently hybrid,⁷

⁶ Foucault indicates that "[a] statement exists outside any possibility of reappearing; and the relation that it possesses with what it states is not identical with a group of rules of use...in fact, exactly the same sentence...is not necessarily the same statement" (89). Thus, Said's notion that discourse, as with his presentation of Orientalism, is unitary with stable subject-object identities, and unambiguous binate distinctions is untenable.

⁷ "The production of meaning requires that [subject-object identities] be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions

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thus allowing for change in the overall discourse, or at the very least, destabilizing aspects of the current formation. However, as all statements proceed from this hybrid space, the concept of enunciation is not enough in itself because not all enunciations are destabilizing; many in fact support the current discursive formation or modify it so little as to be more complicit in its propagation than destructive of it.

In order for an enunciation to be destabilizing to the overall discursive formation, it must first have aspects within it that are contrary to the current configuration and it must be capable of being received by other individuals who participate in the discourse. Thus, a concept of reception within discourse is a necessary corollary of enunciation. A hybrid statement must be received and "recognized" as such in order for it to be destabilizing to the overall discourse. All statements with the potential of disrupting a discursive formation therefore must be not only "spoken" or performed but also "heard." Indeed, "discourse" implies a dialectic between at least two positions and cannot be understood as a transcendent monolithic entity.

of language and the specific implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy" (Bhabha 36).

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Recognition of the speaking/hearing dialectic allows for explorations into agency, which is significant in its absence in Bhabha's work because he posits discursive instability to be a function of the discourse itself.⁸ Of course, Foucault's concept of dispersion implies both speaking and hearing, not just the enunciation--as discourse analysis often assumes. Agency, from this understanding of the dialectic, rests not just in the ability to speak or act, but in the way in which such action or speaking is, or can be, received.⁹ Equally important is the fact that the enunciation/reception dialectic, when such a dialectic exists, allows for a more thorough investigation into the mutual construction of identity construction because it places an emphasis on the ideological positionalities of the enunciator and the receiver. Seen from this angle, identity construction is both a function of, and the enabling condition for, discourse.

⁸ This is best seen in Bhabha's discussion of the mimic. He claims that discourse through its own ambivalence renders the mimic a threat; it is not the mimic's agency that produces discursive instability: "in 'normalizing' the colonial state or subject, the dream of post-Enlightenment civility alienates its own language" (86).

⁹ Cf. Footnote 3.

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Ashis Nandy indicates that "colonialism is first of all a matter of consciousness and needs to be defeated in the mind" (Nandy Intimate 63). This assertion that colonialism is part of human consciousness is important because it affirms that such discourse cannot adequately be understood without recognizing the specific position of the individual within discourse, and of the various subjective experiences and ideological tendencies that come from the subject's specific positioning. Discourse is not a completely transcendent entity in and of itself; it can only exist in and through human beings.¹⁰

Said, however, approaches his topic with the assumption that, in the operation of imperialism, the only salient factor was difference between colonizer and colonized.¹¹ He also assumes that, within imperial discourse, differences were understood only in terms of strictly binaristic conceptualizations of self and other,

¹⁰ For Bhabha, speaking is the most significant form of agency because it represents a "seizure of the sign" which "is neither dialectical sublation nor the empty signifier." It is instead a direct "contestation of the given symbols of authority" (193).

¹¹ Said states that "Orientalism aided and was aided by general cultural pressures that tended to make more rigid the sense of difference between the European and Asiatic parts of the world" (Orientalism 204).

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where individual subjectivity was absent or minimal.¹² It is for this reason that he is able to make sweeping generalizations regarding both colonizers and colonized.

Additionally, Said and many other investigators into the workings of imperial discourse ignore many of the ways in which race and gender play out in the space I've been describing. While Said does deal with the ways in which race is constructed by the various discourses he treats generically as "Orientalist discourse," he has little concern for how "Orientals" find themselves placed within this discourse or how gender operates in the contact zone. Similarly, Said pays no attention to how these individuals work within their positions in these discourses. However, this is not the only limitation because he does not investigate the ways in which the colonizer is interpellated by imperial discourse nor does he ask if or how European subjects respond to their racial placement. He assumes that their positioning, if conscious, is unambiguous and welcomed.

¹² Said claims that "because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action" (Orientalism 3) and "[i]t is therefore correct that every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric" (Orientalism 204).

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As an example, it would be beneficial to see how his assumptions operate in regards to a colonizer. In the following quotation, Said explicitly discusses Rudyard Kipling's racial assumptions, but he is implicitly claiming that these were also held absolutely and unambiguously by all British colonialists throughout the globe:¹³

The division between white and non-white, in India and elsewhere, was absolute, and is alluded to throughout *Kim* as well as the rest of Kipling's work; a Sahib is a Sahib, and no amount of friendship or camaraderie can change the rudiments of racial difference. Kipling would no more have questioned that difference, and the right of the white European to rule,

¹³ My point here is to illustrate the weakness of Said's claims concerning the nature of discourse on several fronts. According to Said, the "Orient" is a category where free thought is impossible. It is because of this idea that he says all Westerners are (must be) consequently racist. If this is the case, "Occidentalism" as a discourse would necessarily take the same form. Since the "Occident" is the polar opposite of the "Orient," all non-Europeans consequently must have the same ideas and opinions--paralleling the discursive determinism that obtains within "Orientalism."

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Although on the same page, Said contradicts his assertion that there was an unbreachable division between white and non-white,¹⁴ he is addressing a particular individual not a discursive framework.¹⁵ For now, what is most

¹⁴ Said states that "'White' colonies like Ireland and Australia too were considered made up of inferior humans" (Said Culture 134). Not only does this statement question Said's assumption that white and black were conceived as necessarily oppositional in imperial discourse, it also indicates that there was not necessarily a rigid division which *completely* separated them. Otherwise, "white" colonies could not have been "inferior" since they were "white colonies."

¹⁵ Cf. Chapter 2, for my discussion of Kim, which indicates that Kipling's work denies and attacks, on a fundamental level, many of the claims Said makes in relation to Kipling and his work. It is also worthy of note that in Kim imperial discourse is conscientiously shot through by other discourses (religious, caste, educational, etc.) which are non-British in origin. This not only questions the absolute supremacy of imperial or even Orientalist discourse, but also explicitly shows that other discourses have both opportunity and force to

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interesting about Said's generalizations is not that they are either right or wrong, but that they tend to have little or no evidence supporting them. The above quotation comes from "The Pleasures of Imperialism," originally published as the introduction to the Oxford World Classics edition of Kim¹⁶ (more on this topic in Chapter 2). Though it is less apparent in the version contained within Culture and Imperialism, readers familiar with Kipling's work, who peruse the piece that served as the introduction to Kim quickly realize that Said's reading is far too simplistic to come to grips with such a highly complex and ambivalent novel.

Because Said is even less concerned with the racialization of the colonized, he leaves this aspect of imperial discourse wholly unanalyzed. However, the virtual absence of race in Said's work is not the only oversight. Discussions of gender, of either the colonizer or the colonized, never appear in Said's work. In essence, not dealing with race and gender within discourse serves as a brake on the engine of understanding. This dissertation, as should already be apparent, seeks to serve as a partial corrective to these

inflect, or even erase, the impact of imperial discourse's ideological coercion.

¹⁶ Cf. Said, Edward. Introduction. Kim. London: Penguin, 1987.

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problems--problems that result in heavily binaristic and reductive readings of imperial and Postcolonial literatures and discourses.

The continual reliance on binarisms is therefore disturbing because it shows that Said's approach, and not necessarily the items under consideration, relies on binary oppositions conceptually; a strategy that is at best misplaced. As many of his critics have pointed out, Said, and the peculiarly-modified Foucauldian methods of reading that he initiated with Orientalism,¹⁷ perform the same conceptual strategies as the discourses he claims operate monolithically. As Aijaz Ahmad indicates, this idea of a unitary discourse, regardless of subject matter, "posit[s] stable subject-object identities, as well as ontological and epistemological distinctions between the two" and essentializes "the West" into a "unified, self-identical, transhistorical, textual [Europe]" (183). Said's modifications of Foucault's ideas have been powerful in the masking of British

¹⁷ Said is not even properly Foucauldian in this sense because Foucault at least was able to recognize that change occurred over time and that distinctive discursive subgroups exist. This is one of the reasons that Said ultimately rejects some of the ramifications of Foucault's work, denigrating Foucault's methodology to "mere textualism" (cf. Said "Problem").

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subjectivities, resistance, and agency both within and against imperial discourse; if "the West" is such a stable cognitive schema, there can be no counter-hegemonic position within any European subject.

Homi Bhabha's notion of hybridity represents a potential corrective to these problems with Said's methods because Bhabha eschews any reliance on simplistic binate constructions.¹⁸ In large part, the popularity of Bhabha's ideas stems from the fact that practitioners in the field have long felt the need to go beyond the inherently limited perspective offered by Said's restructuring of Foucault's ideas into simple polar

¹⁸ It is my intention to update Bhabha's work to address many of the shortcomings I have underlined in Said's oeuvre. Bhabha's theorization of hybrid space allows me an angle from which I can continue to ask, and in many ways begin to answer, these questions about the workings of race and gender within imperial hybrid space. By recognizing that race and gender constructions continue to make themselves felt in the hybrid space, I map various coordinates within Bhabha's Third Space. In essence, I find that race and gender, by continuing to operate within hybridized positions, produce varied results in the ways in which they inflect, modify, destabilize, or support imperial discourses.

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oppositions between colonizer and colonized.¹⁹ Bhabha formulates his notion of hybridity through his investigation into the "disjunctive present of utterance" (193). In other words, his investigation probes the "performative present," "performance," "enunciation," etc., which allows him to explore what Said calls the latent and manifest aspects of imperial discourse without collapsing them into a unified intention to dominate.²⁰

¹⁹ Bhabha himself takes up this shortcoming in Said, indicating that "[Said] contains the threat" of ambivalence within Orientalist discourse

by introducing a binarism within the argument which, in initially setting up an opposition between these two discursive scenes, finally allows them to be correlated as a congruent system of representation that is unified through a political-ideological *intention* which, in his words, enables Europe to advance securely and *unmetaphorically* upon the Orient.

(71)

²⁰ Bhabha indicates that the tension between Said's latent and manifest Orientalisms "restrict[s] the effectivity of both power and knowledge" and that "it is not possible to see how power functions productively as incitement and interdiction" (72). Bhabha solves this dilemma by

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He does so in order to open up a space for subaltern agency within poststructuralist theory, while indicating the inherently unstable nature of imperial discourse. This agency need not entail active resistance, and he posits such non-active agency through his use of mimicry, where the discourse of colonialism itself

becomes hybrid--neither the one thing nor the other. The incalculable colonized subject--half acquiescent, half oppositional, always untrustworthy--produces an unresolvable problem of cultural difference for the very address of colonial cultural authority. (33)

Thus, the mimic is an inherently ambivalent entity for imperial discourse because "*mimicry*--a difference that is almost nothing but not quite" becomes a "*menace*--a difference that is almost total but not quite" (Bhabha 91). The space of "subaltern agency," then, "emerges" out of the "ambivalence" of the "master's language" as "relocation and reinscription" where there is "neither dialectical sublation nor the empty signifier" (33, 193). As Robert Young indicates, Bhabha's understanding of imperial discourse allows us to see that any enunciation potentially and "simultaneously stabilizes and destabilizes the position of the colonizer" (Young White

understanding the Orientalist stereotype as both "phobia and fetish" (cf. 73-75).

148). However, Bhabha's formulation relies on the mental incertitude within the colonizer--created by mimicry--to explain the effects of enunciation. Therefore, mimicry is not active resistance so much as an ambivalence within the colonizer's unconscious.

For Bhabha, in the act of enunciation, the subject opens up a

Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew. (37)

Despite its emphasis on migrancy and other forms of radical hybridity, Bhabha's work demonstrates that the conditions for "speaking" within a discourse are a function of the hybridity of any subject participating in the re-construction of that discourse, not just the more obvious types of hybrid like the mimic. As a result, Bhabha rarely attempts to ground the concept; however he does in his analogy of the stairwell:

The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and

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thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. (4)

This image is inadequate to the task of representing hybridity--largely because cellar and attic are fixed in physical space and also because the idea of a building's levels carries with it a hierarchical conceptualization, but one can roughly see what Bhabha is thinking. The space of the stairwell represents the overlap between, and therefore exhibits the relationality of, different levels of the building, while not belonging to any.²¹ If

²¹ Therefore, the space of the stairwell (the hybrid) allows for the recognition of difference between floors of a building. It is important to recognize that the hybrid, because it positions entities relationally, constructs the difference. To continue with Bhabha's architectural metaphor, a single step up from the kitchen to the dining room would not constitute a distinction between floor one and floor two. Thus, actual elevation is not the determining factor between floor one and floor two. Similarly, it is not simply the vertical space

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discourses can be conceived as floors of a building, the stairwell or liminal hybrid space exists outside of, yet in-between, the spaces (discourses) that compose it. Bhabha characterizes this liminal hybrid space as being one of enormous critiquing power, and this is how it tends to be employed within literary theory and practice.

There is a significant problem with this idea of liminal space, however, because one can see that the "disjunctive present" produces the perception of difference that Bhabha intends for liminality to critique; without the stairwell, the hierarchy of building levels cannot exist. The in-between space exists in the present and "constructs" the poles of the cellar/attic (colonizer/colonized) binary. It is for this reason that Bhabha calls the in-between "the connective tissue" because without the in-between, the binary between cellar and attic does not exist--

which allows for recognition of difference, because a chimney can occupy the same "space" as a stairwell but it cannot of itself allow for perception of difference between floor one and floor two. Therefore, it is the relation (the overlap, the similarity, the shared characteristics) between the two floors, which the stairwell represents, that produces meaning and "constructs the difference between upper and lower."

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difference does not exist (ontologically)²² prior to its perception in the in-between space. Thus, hybridity represents not only potential destabilization within an authoritarian discourse, but also its enabling moment because the hybrid space allows difference to assume relational meanings.²³ Although his concept of

²² Because difference is recognized through the shared aspects (or space of the stairwell), difference is rendered meaningful only when elements are experienced within the same system. Also, without such a connection, objects are not seen as part of the same system, the same dialectic. The stairwell may give meaning to the difference between floor one and floor two, but it does not allow the differences between the garage and the doghouse to be meaningful. Since floor one and floor two are part of the same system (their relationality is understood only in the stairwell) meaning is simultaneously ascribed to each, but not to the dog house or the garage. Thus, although Bhabha overlooks it, the binary is constructed in the in-between, even as, he says, that binary is questioned and destabilized.

²³ Given Bhabha's characterization of enunciation, the same could be said for an act of resistance. It is enabled and dis-abled simultaneously in the hybrid space. Therefore, following Bhabha's logic, nothing is "pure";

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"enunciation" does not appear in his stairwell analogy, it is integral to his theory because it is at the moment of enunciation that difference is constructed in the in-between space of hybridity. It is also at the point of enunciation that "the ambivalence of cultural authority: the attempt to dominate in the name of cultural supremacy" appears because this ambivalence is "itself produced only in the moment of differentiation" (34).²⁴ Therefore,

[t]he enunciative process introduces a split in the performative present...between the traditional culturalist demand for a model, a tradition, a community, a stable system of reference, and...new cultural demands, meanings [and] strategies in the political present, as a practice of domination or resistance. (35)

After the split, says Bhabha, the "historical politics of negotiation" occurs (36). It is for this reason that

all enunciations must be simultaneously collaborative and resistant.

²⁴ This raises the question of Ahmad's "saffron yuppies." If "tradition" and the "Bombay Stock Exchange" are not differentiated for subject positions, tradition and advanced capitalism are therefore also not perceived as relational. Therefore, the "difference" between tradition and the Exchange neither obtains nor means.

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Bhabha states that "by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves" (39). He believes that it is possible to "explore" this (liminal) space in-between the poles of binaries so that when difference is perceived, it will be recognized "without an assumed or imposed hierarchy."

However, Bhabha's "politics of negotiation" presupposes that all positions a discursive formation allows to be enunciated can be equally received. Such is also the assumption of "Signs Taken for Wonders" where he claims that the "problematic [of imperial discourse]...reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority" (Bhabha 114). This explanation of hybrid space, rather than simply positing a discursive instability inherent to imperial discourse, supplies the idea that in the interstice "other denied knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse." The recognition that other discourses (knowledges) interact, at a fundamental level, within imperial discourse allows for the mimic. It is not simply the mimic's presence that is destabilizing, but rather the incorporation of other discourses and knowledges into imperial discourse. The threat to the colonizers' identity occurs not because imperial discourse is simply unstable, but rather because it is actively being modified at its own limits by the

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By taking Bhabha's idea of liminal space as a starting point, of course keeping in mind that it can also be used to create the hierarchies which, he claims, it simultaneously attempts to subvert, it is possible to begin to understand how imperial discourse operates and why it holds so much power over the imaginations of both colonizer and colonized. First and foremost, we must recognize the plural nature of discourse, the overlapping of divergent *knowledges* in what we tend to refer to as a *singular* imperial discourse, and the importance of the subject's position within these discursive formations.

In other words, each hybrid is positioned on different limits of these formations, even if the words they employ seem to refer to the same concepts or cultural ideals. Recognizing this fact makes the necessity of adding "race" and "gender" to Bhabha's theorization of hybridity obvious.²⁵ By taking account of

²⁵ Equally obvious is the fact that taking other categories into consideration (i.e. sexual preference, caste, clan, etc.) will provide ever richer results. However, given the limits of this particular project, I have chosen to focus on race and gender as they appear to me to have the greatest impact on how subjectivities operate in imperial hybrid space.

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race and gender in the "in-between," we may be able to gain both a clearer understanding of what the hybrid space's potentiality is, and a fuller appreciation of the workings and overlappings of discourses in the imperial domain. Gikandi laments that scholarship has largely ignored the ways in which the colonizer is interpellated and exploited by imperial discourse at the same time that imperialism wreaks destruction on the colonized--despite the fact that Fanon, Mannoni, Memmi, and Césaire all discuss this phenomenon. It is, as Gikandi states, a largely unexplored aspect of imperial discourse, and perpetuates a confusion of identities and differences between colonized and colonizer:²⁶

while a sizable body of theory exists to affirm this dialectic [of identity and difference], a dialectic that could be said to be an enabling condition for the project of postcolonial studies, it has never been clear where the identity between the colonizer and the colonized ends and the difference between them begins. (2)

²⁶ I might add that although Gikandi is aware of the problems involving a lack of attention to racial components in imperial discourse, he does not seem fully to realize that gender has the same kinds of influence.

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By focusing on subject positions (particularly their racial and gender coded elements) within the Third Space, it is possible to track the ways in which the colonizer and colonized are imbricated with each other in the colonial context, thus allowing for a fuller understanding of colonial cultures and discourses.

Corinne McCutchan similarly faults Edward Said for his narrow field of vision. Extending her criticism to the broad spectrum of Postcolonial practitioners and theoreticians, McCutchan states that Said's "views are typical because the models...put forward by Western critics are always Western books" and that when reading colonial fiction, they "take it for granted that [the] author learned everything he knows from Europeans and Americans"; however, when "we look to the East [for source material], we find what we should have expected" (132). McCutchan goes on to demonstrate that not only Indian source material but also cultural priorities and ideals radically change the meanings of colonial texts, and therefore imperial discourse itself.

Imperial discourse is not simply an imposition on the colonized, although clearly it is also that. The colonized and their worldviews become incorporated into the discursive structures of imperialism, often to a very large extent as a function of their own participation in the discourse of empire. It must be recognized that the limit of any given discourse is already within the

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boundaries of another. Thus at the edges of a discourse, a significant overlap exists between it and another (for example between Britishness and Welshness). Welshness and Britishness can overlap because they share traits at each of their edges even if they are also separate national discourses. It is for this reason that, as Gikandi notes,²⁷ any participation in discourse, because all enunciations take place within the overlap of discourses, is both collaborative and oppositional; however, individual enunciations tend to be either collaborative or oppositional but not simultaneously to both discourses.

The idea of a total conquest by European discourse posited by many Western critics is therefore not only erroneous, it also silences an important aspect of imperial discourse--that part that is constructed on the boundaries of other discourses--and simultaneously elides the ways in which the colonized and their ways of knowing inflect imported discourses. As Gikandi implies, the differences and identities of the colonizer and the colonized are so closely intertwined in imperial

²⁷ Gikandi indicates that all participants in imperial discourse are simultaneously collaborators and resisters because they are "both oppositional-marginal and dominant-central" as imperial discourse itself is a "conflation of centers and margins" (41).

discourse that the writing back (or influence of the colonized's own discourses) are as integral to understanding the colonizer as vice versa.²⁸ In this sense, the discontinuities within discourse that Foucault tracks are not divergences within a single discourse *per se*, but rather the impact of discrete discourses transforming and modifying each other within the overlap represented by enunciation within the hybrid space. Therefore, at the time that the colonizer crosses the ambiguous limit that separates imperial discourses from his/her native discourses, the colonized is likewise crossing the limit of imperial discourse, but from another direction. Both are fundamentally modifying the limits of imperial discourse, de- and re-centering its norms, and extending or contracting its boundaries. Far

²⁸ As a result of this imbrication, Bhabha's claims for the mimic's destabilizing action ring true. However, as this dissertation seeks to elucidate, the destabilization that the mimic produces is not necessarily directed at *imperial* discourse. Depending on the positioning of the mimic-subject within the various discourses of what Pratt calls the contact zone (i.e. imperial, nationalist, gender, and racial discourses), the mimic may actually bolster imperial discourse while destabilizing another (cf. Pratt, Mary Louise. Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing And Transculturation. New York: Routledge, 1992).

from the implicit claims of Said, resistance to imperial discourses from outside their origin in Europe had a profound impact on the particular formations they became in the colonies. Similarly, Bhabha's claim that it is simply the colonized mimic's presence which is subverting to the colonizer's identity captures only part of the dialectic because it is the colonized's participation--mimic or not--which transforms the very structure of imperial discourse.

Thus, the hybrid is not necessarily only a function of the inherent instability of imperial discourse; it is also the result of a fusion of difference through the amalgamation of discourses that intersect in the loci of hybrid space during colonial contact. Gikandi corroborates this point in his discussion of the colonized's relation to imperial discourses. He states that

even when the culture of colonialism appears to be absolute and its totality unquestionable, its narratives have to contend with the colonized locality as not simply a space of transgression and resistance but one in which metropolitan identities are made and remade.

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Therefore, says Gikandi, the colonized "even within the hegemonic discourse of empire, must be read as both collaborative and oppositional" (47).

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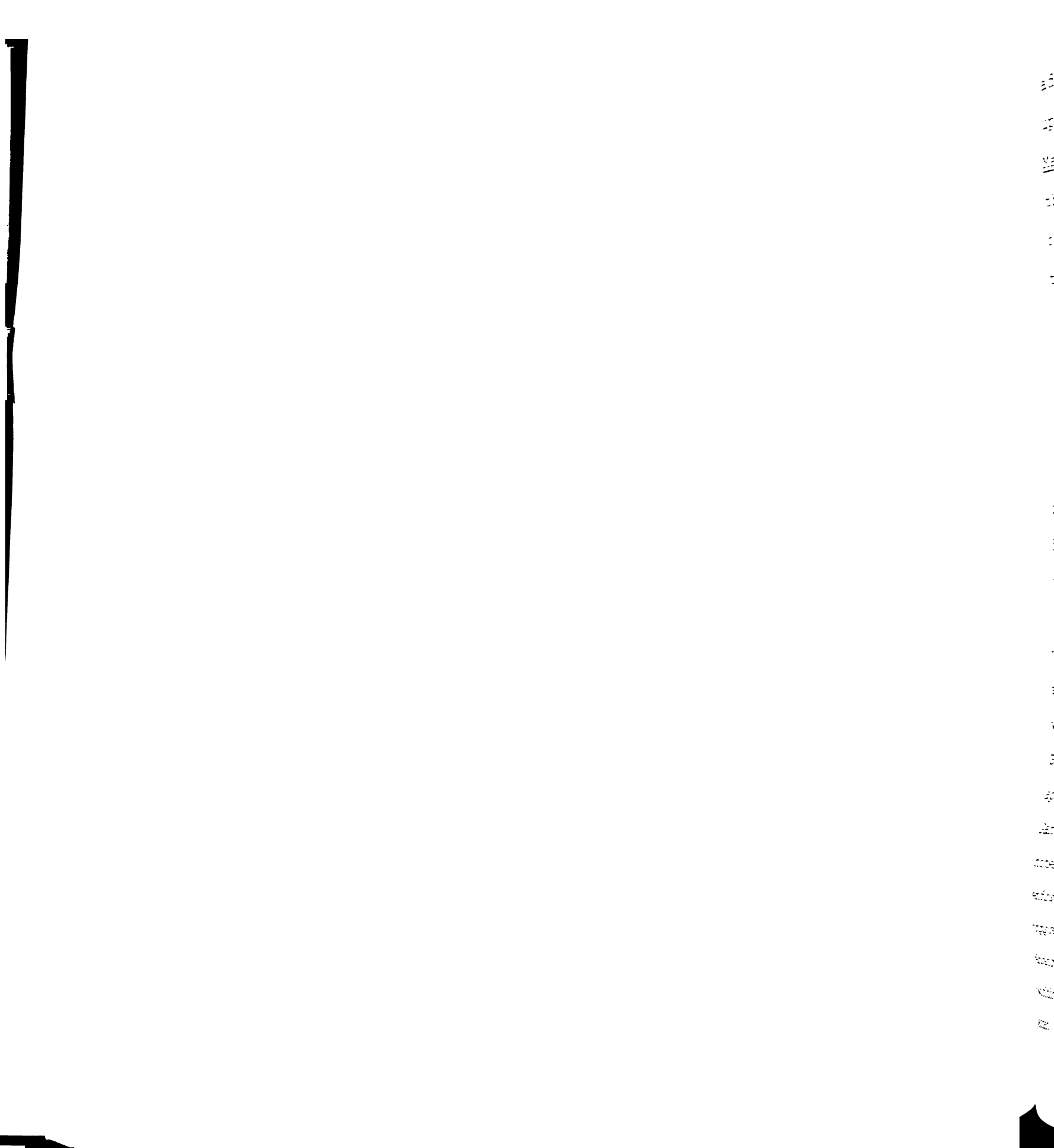
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In my effort to elucidate the ways in which various subject positions operate in the hybrid space, in order better to understand how and why they are "both collaborative and oppositional," I have looked specifically at race and gender in the following chapters. I maintain that hybrid space can be understood as being roughly divided into four quadrants because of the ways in which race and gender continue to operate even under the conditions Bhabha has discerned in the Third Space. In addition, I find that these four subject positions²⁹ each have their own species of impact on the discourses they engage and within which they are partially contained.

Chapter 2, "Gone Native: The Indic Kipling, Britishness, And Imperial Identity" continues the discussion of the male British hybrid-subject in imperial India. The central text for the chapter is Kim. I have chosen Kim because both the characters within it, and Kipling himself, are examples of identity crisis that results from colonial culture in the contact zone. In

²⁹ I make no claims that these are the only possible subject positions within the Third Space nor do I claim that these subject positions remain stable. In essence, I am taking several snapshots of these positions as they interact with various macro-discourses like imperialism and nationalism.



addition to Bhabha's formulation of hybridity, I draw upon Ashis Nandy's Exiled at Home, and Simon Gikandi's Maps of Englishness, because both of these works stress the importance of the colonies on British constructions of self and the realization that "imperialism messes with the identity of both the colonizer and the colonized" (Gikandi 31).

Chapter 3, "Going English: Gandhi, the Other Colonizer and Colonial Consciousness", turns specifically to the hybrid and "mimic" types that Bhabha presupposes in his work: the high-caste, British-educated Indian man--in the case of this particular chapter, Gandhi and his early career. I observe how, while Gandhi does seem to destabilize imperial discourse as Bhabha indicates, surprisingly he also explicitly attacks foundational values within Indian cultures, particularly the caste system, so that India could "modernize." The ways in which he discusses "Indian degeneration" indicates that Said's understanding of "Orientalism" might well be applied to "indigenous hybrids" (many of whom, like Gandhi, are explicitly nationalist). In this chapter, I note how the hybrid can function as the propagator and enforcer of Western discourse, even when seemingly in opposition to it. I track the ways in which the "hybrid" absorbs and re-emphasizes British imperial practices within discourse, particularly in relation to the Indian woman. My major argument in this chapter revolves around

the question of resistance to and disruption of imperial discourse. I am also concerned with the ways that aspects of the hybrid function oppressively in colonized and postcolonial cultures.

Chapter 4, "Coming Home: Annie Besant, India, Empire, and the Indian Nationalist Movement," confirms that the hybrid space exists over prior subordinations and can only maintain its power of critique while retaining an essentialized base. The British-born Annie Besant, a leader in the Indian Nationalist movement, ascended in Indian politics because she was able to naturalize the subordination of high-caste women. Through this move, she was able to argue for Indian independence as well as for a much greater imperial involvement for Indian men in the colonial project. Although her enunciations from between the poles of colonizer and colonized at first appear to threaten the unity of imperial discourse, as Homi Bhabha claims, closer inspection reveals that she radically threatened conceptions of Englishness by separating Englishness from imperialism. In fact, not only does her hybrid status and involvement in Indian National politics reinforce imperial discourse, she was also conscious that her positionings confirmed and extended the imperial enterprise. This chapter ultimately concludes that hybridity, as a subject position, and imperial discourse,

with its attendant ideologies, require an essentialized base from which they draw their discursive power.

The final chapter, "Pundita Ramabai: Christianity, Nationalism, and the Hindu Woman," explores the subjectivity of Pundita Ramabai. Ramabai represents the voice upon which the subjectivities explored previously depend (the Indian woman), but only on the condition that the subject position from which it proceeds is silent. This chapter investigates the ramifications of the Indian woman making her voice heard in the space between colonizer and colonized. Contrary to Bhabha's assertions that the hybrid destabilizes imperial discourse, Ramabai's enunciations tend to threaten traditional and national ideologies in favor of a "modernizing" imperial ideal. In fact, like Besant, Ramabai's subject position represents a continuation and expansion of the imperial enterprise, not an invalidation or destabilization of it. Unlike Besant, however, Ramabai epitomizes liberation rather than a continued subjection under either native or foreign authority. Concluding this chapter, I take stock of the ground that the dissertation has covered in order to stress that the "hybrid," rather than being a unitary category, has several distinct significations where race and gender of the subject serve as markers within the discourse.

CHAPTER 2

GONE NATIVE: THE INDIC KIPLING, BRITISHNESS, AND IMPERIAL IDENTITY

But there is neither East nor West,
Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face,
tho' they come from the ends of the earth!³⁰

Hybridity, as Homi Bhabha formulates it, is less nebulous than followers of Bhabha's work tend to demonstrate in their work. Hybridity can be subdivided into a number of smaller categories based on the hybrid's, or mimic's, positioning and subjectivity within the discursive frameworks of imperialism. The particular aspect of hybridity I am concerned with in this chapter is the space in which a male member of the colonizing culture "goes native." I am, for the purposes of this essay, defining "gone native" as the significant absorption of non-Western ideologies, specifically Indian. This chapter seeks to elucidate, partially through Homi Bhabha's notion of "hybridity," these aspects of "imperial discourse" which have been consistently overlooked, downplayed, or left unexplained in the Saidian tradition of Postcolonial Studies.

As one of the foremost scholars in the field, Edward Said's assumptions, despite their usefulness in mapping

³⁰ From Rudyard Kipling's "The Ballad of East and West."

generalizations in imperial discourse, continue to influence Postcolonial Studies and have obscured some of the more specific ways in which imperial discourses operate. Because of his unwillingness to come to terms with the ways in which imperial discourse functions dialogically with other discursive formations, and because his approach tends to view colonialism as a monolithic and unified structure, many approaches which employ similar Foucauldian paradigms follow, and therefore also miss, important aspects of the functioning of these discourses as played out in hybrid space.

WHO IS KIPLING?

Since hybridity in Bhabha's understanding is cultural and subjective rather than necessarily biological, the first step in tracking hybridity is to demonstrate at least the possibility of a subject's (multi)cultural interpellation.³¹ Thus, since understanding Kipling's work involves some understanding of British India and the context out of which his work

³¹ Although Bhabha's work implies that all subjects, because of their ability to enunciate within discourse, are always already hybrid, few Postcolonial scholars seem willing to grant this status to members of the imperializing culture.

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comes,³² it is necessary to rehearse some of the interstitial features of his life and times.

Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay in 1865, but was sent to England with his sister in 1871 because he could not speak English properly. As Zoreh Sullivan indicates, the Indian subcontinent brought Kipling the child into being, but almost immediately upon attaining the age of reason, he was sent off to England to learn English (16). Kipling explains his situation in a similar manner, "[I] spoke 'English,' haltingly translated out of the vernacular idiom [i.e. Hindi] that [I] thought and dreamed in" (Kipling Something 4).³³ In England, the foreign environment and culture of England were an "almost unremitting experience of hell" (Pinney ix) for Kipling, which ended only when he returned to India as a journalist when he was 16 years old for a "joyous home-coming" to India (Kipling Something 25).

The rest of Kipling's life was also characterized by perpetual exile and migration. As a young man, he

³² I make this claim in the face of a historically generalized assumption that *Anglo-Indian* culture and discourse can be unambiguously equated with *British* culture and discursive practices.

³³ Significantly, Kipling finds it difficult to call the language he was expected to speak "English" in his parents' presence.

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returns to India, but after a few years is again forced to leave, because of health problems. He attempts to settle down in the United States, but is obliged to depart because of the oppressive nature of the media and his in-laws. The rest of his life is spent migrating to and from his remote homes in Burwash and South Africa.

Thus, when Said exclaims that "Kipling himself could not merely have happened; the same is true of his White Man" (Orientalism 227), one must agree with the statement--even though Said implicitly assumes an unambivalently British identity for Kipling. However, when Said states that "in reading a text, one must open it out both to what went into it and to what its author excluded" (Said Culture 67), we have to ask him to provide a fuller explanation, this time without ignoring the voice of the Kipling that India brought into being. The Kipling who was never at home in England, the "Indic Kipling," which explicitly and intentionally, as Roy's work makes clear, excludes Westerners both ideologically and in the narrative techniques which draw heavily on Indic discourses, traditions, and ideologies. In other words, it is imperative to question Said, who uses Kipling as a master-trope throughout the third section of Orientalism, and other "contemporary criticism, which invariably places [Kipling] at the untroubled center" of British imperial discourse (Arata 7). Particularly since "[t]he response in England to Kipling's early work

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in fact betrayed a deep ambivalence" (Arata 8, cf. Parry), any critic claiming that Kipling is "'a spokesman for the age,' a 'profoundly representative consciousness' who gave 'expression to a whole range of national experience'" (Arata 7) is him/herself greatly mistaken.

I find that it is often the case with Said, as Said himself states of Kipling, that he is "blinded by his own insights" (Culture 162). For example, Said claims that "[t]he novel is thus a concretely historical narrative shaped by the real history of real nations" (Said Culture 77). The problem that Said misses is the question of which "real history" and which "real nations."³⁴ After all, Said himself realizes that "Kipling not only wrote about India, but was of it" (Said Culture 133, original emphasis). Temporarily setting aside the fact that Said has already claimed that both "the real" in general, and the specifics of the "Orient" in particular, are inaccessible to any Westerner, I would like to entertain this idea that Kipling, putatively British, was "of India." According to Said, this should in itself be impossible because, as he claims in Orientalism, the Westerner's relationship is solely with

³⁴ This is assuming that one accepts the idea that there is something out there that is "real," rather than imagined or constructed, about either history or nations.

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Western texts and not with any non-discursive or non-Western "reality."

The only way to get around this impasse is to claim that Kipling's primary socio-cultural relationship was Indian ("of it"). But this nullifies his ability to operate on many of the levels of Britishness; he cannot be unambivalently a native of Great Britain in the Orientalist-textual sense that Said intends. Being "of India," of course also drains any Orientalist status from the author. In other words, as Said indicates elsewhere: "the 'what' and 'how' in the representation of 'things,' while allowing for considerable individual freedom, are circumscribed and socially regulated" (Said Culture 80); but as we have just seen regarding Kipling's relationship with India (via Said's own words), the question of *which* society socially regulated Kipling's enunciations must be raised. Clearly, if Kipling was "of India," his relationship to what he wrote about was different from that of an Orientalist who was solely "of Great Britain."

Thus, when discussing imperial discourse, we should be making distinctions based on audience (reception), context (author's relationship with his topic), and the larger rules that govern discourse in that context (the surrounding cultures). As such, it will be imperative for Postcolonial and Imperial studies to recognize that writing in (and for) domestic British space and in (and for) Imperial space sometimes yield radically different

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results. Such a recognition makes the kinds of homogenizations one finds in Said's work impossible to justify.

A corollary to this situation is that Empire as an ideological construct receives its being from the interactions and relations of those in the field, the "gone natives." Having gone native, these individuals then become the centers of their discourses, replacing London and causing a tension between periphery as center and metropole as center.

When the discourse of Empire claims the colonizer as an imperial rather than British subject, that subject is required to relinquish his/her British identity and assume an Other Imperial identity. It is then from this identity conflict, created by competing discourses of Imperial mission, British civility, and the brutality that these produce in the colonial enterprise, that the "ambivalence" and "destabilization" of discourse, that Bhabha traces, is produced.³⁵

Historically and theoretically, Colonial Discourse Analysis and Postcolonial Studies have been in a difficult position in regards to the "gone native." In Culture and Imperialism, for example, Edward Said

³⁵ Cf. Introduction for a fuller treatment of Bhabha's ideas around personal hybridity and its impact on discourse.

explains that interpretations of Kipling's work which see India as "a timeless, unchanging, and 'essential' locale...[are] radical misreading[s] of his works" (134).³⁶ Said then shows how "Kipling dismisses...academics [whom he] lampooned as 'worse than

³⁶ Sullivan also notices that Kipling refuses to participate in the kind of Orientalism that Said tracks. She indicates that the "problem in reading Kipling after we break away from received ideas, which interestingly enough we inherit from the far right, of his 'absolute barbarism' and 'Hooliganism'" (52)

is understanding the complexity of his attitude towards imperialism and the unified individual subject as agent...he mocks and fragments the idea of either India or of colonial identity as fixed, while recognizing the importance of fixity in imperial mythology...his authorial stance towards that Other is self-conscious in its recognition of the narrator as constructed by a system whose unitary racist voice he often mindlessly echoes. Yet that same narrator leads us towards a diversity of cultural experiences that is frequently forbidden, dangerous, otherworldly or exotic. (52)

the pestilence'" (Said Culture 149).³⁷ One notices that Said explicitly characterizes Kipling's work as non-Orientalist,³⁸ if we use Said's own characterization of the discourse: "Orientalism assumed an unchanging Orient" (Orientalism 96). Thus, if reading Kipling's presentation of India as static is a "radical misreading," Kipling's work, according to Said's own definition, cannot be Orientalist. However, Said runs into a problem here because he has already claimed that "Orientalism imposed limits upon thought about the Orient. Even the most imaginative writers...were constrained in what they could either experience of or say about the Orient" "since the time of Homer"

³⁷ This observation by Said would seem to disprove his assertion that the discursive knowledge of Orientalism is necessarily academic-text-based and Western. Furthermore, colonial education and policing in this novel provide only an occasional and inconsistent master voice at war with the other voices that resist, ignore, and disprove, but rarely confirm its authority (164).

³⁸ In Orientalism, Said states that the "otherness" of the Orient that Orientalism constructs must be "of an essentialist character" and is "customary, passive...[and] above all, non-active...within its inalienable and non-evolutive specificity" (97), "fixed in time and place" (108-09).

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(Orientalism 43, 11). Similarly, since there is no way, according to Said, for a "Western" writer like Kipling to experience the "Orient" outside of Orientalist discourse,³⁹ "the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action" (Orientalism 3). If Kipling does not present the "Orient" in fixed terms, he is breaking the unspoken discursive contract of Orientalist discourse: "what the Orientalist does is to *confirm* the Orient in his readers' eyes; he neither tries nor wants to unsettle already firm convictions" (Orientalism 65, original emphasis).⁴⁰ But hasn't Said already shown that Kipling refuses to fix or essentialize "the unchanging Orient"?

In White Skins, Black Masks, Gail Ching-Liang Low recognizes that Kipling consistently constructs an "Orientalist division" which he then destroys when he
throws open the question of colonial authority
in its suggestion that a state exists outside

³⁹ "The Orientalist vision...[is] *the common possession of all who have thought* about the Orient in the West" (Said Orientalism 69, emphasis mine).

⁴⁰ Countering Said, Sullivan indicates that Kipling's commitment to such an inquiry was a critique of Western ethnocentrism and a willingness to construct (in opposition to Orientalism) India as a "circus of competing systems of meanings" (3).

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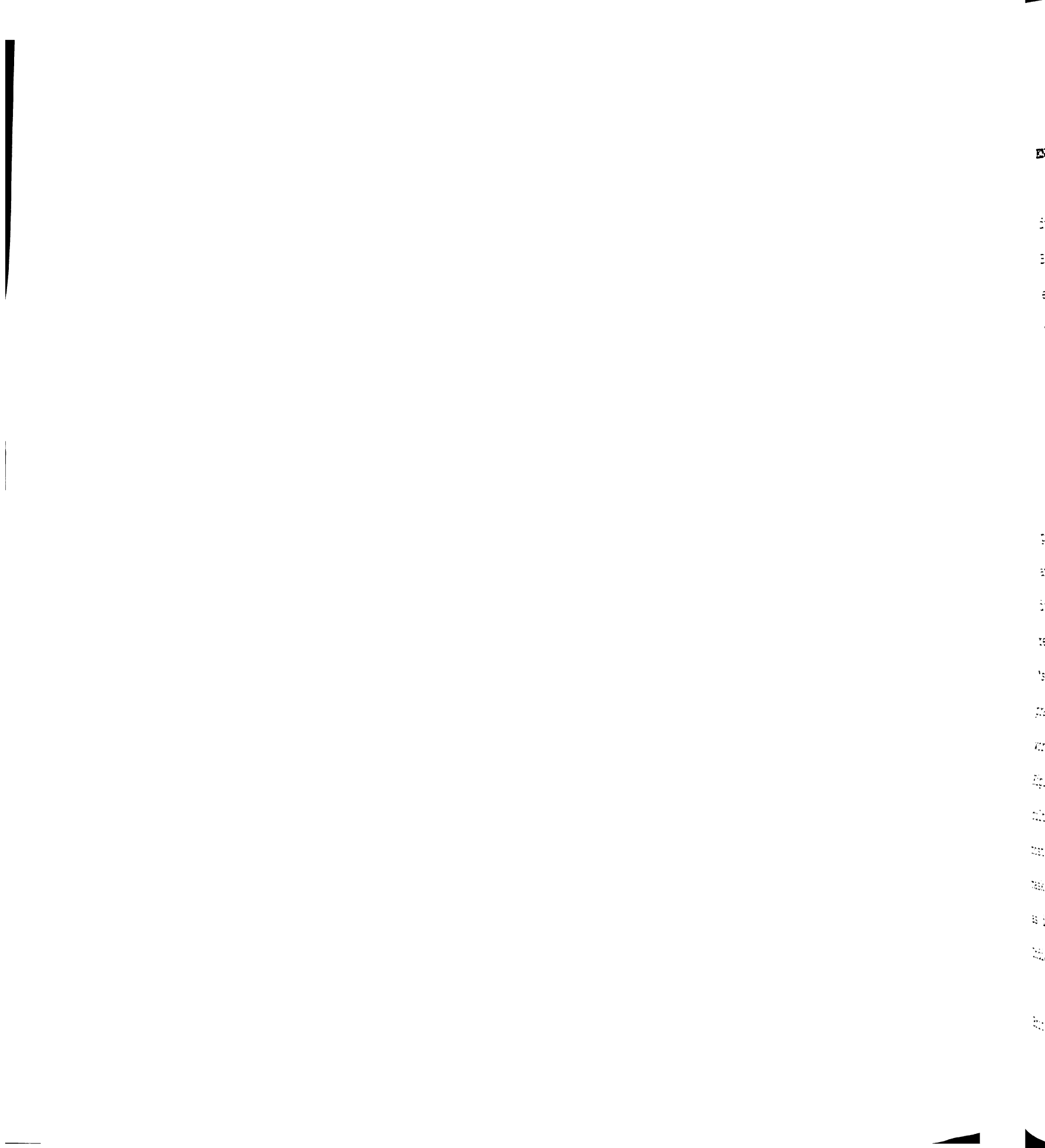
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Western explanatory structures of rationality...[and] even to pose this question is contrary to a Western system of interpretation whose status depends on the universality of its application. (Low 126-27)

Therefore, she states, Kipling is continually "mocking the ideals of Empire by interrogating the so-called civilising process which marks the white colonialist as superior" (Low 129).⁴¹ Low also indicates that when one refuses to read through the limiting lens Said provides, one finds that Kipling "exposes the contingency and relative nature" of Western thought (130).

⁴¹ Sullivan agrees to some extent with Low. She indicates that Kipling's stories "challenge the authority that gives birth to them by taking a grim pleasure in witnessing the world's greatest imperial power collapse at its human joints" because while "Kipling's narrator is the imperium--[he is also] constrained and ironized [and therefore] resist[s the] official imperial stance by the limitations of its worn and often weary language its clichés that alternate with bitter cynicism." She claims that the result "invert[s] the order of imperial hierarchy." Sullivan goes on to indicate that Kipling's tactics open "up new spaces for knowing and representing colonial ways--as if he were an ethnographer recording the breakdown of a tribe" (80).



ENUNCIATING A DYNAMIC INDIA AND QUESTIONING BRITISHNESS

Kipling's representations of India emphasize the dynamic and evolving nature of Indian society, but as Bruce Shaw indicates, along with this focus on evolutionary aspects in Indian cultures, Kipling also continually highlights "his great respect for South Asian culture" (12). Assuming that Kipling's perspective is imperial, the fusion, or hybridization, of traditional and "modern" in Kipling's work represents an integral aspect of Imperial Discourse.

Kim in particular is flooded with the socio-political changes produced by interaction between Indians and the British. In fact, Kipling's work is partially a documentary of this evolution. However, since this representation of Indian reality is so different from the "standard" (which Said traces in his work) in Orientalist practice, it would seem to be necessary to view such works in a different light. Quite obviously, if Kipling's India is consistently presented as a dynamic cultural process, the simplistic Orientalist approach most often taken to his work will only continue to elide, mask, or ignore an important aspect of imperial discourse as it plays out in the space between Britishness and Indianness.

A major tactic of Kipling's work is to present the British colonizers to themselves through a perspective

that charts their characteristics and evaluates, categorizes, and delimits them in ways similar to what Said calls Orientalism. In Kipling's "Occidentalism," Western readers are forced into a hybrid space where they gaze at themselves from (an)other perspective. The text attacks "Britishness," forcing British readers to see that the stereotypical categories in which they place themselves (such as racial superiority) are not necessarily shared by others.

Kipling's writings are highly subversive to Britishness and its sensibilities. However, as Nandy implies, the conflict between Feudal-Imperial and British National discourses isolated "cognition from affect" (Intimate 34). Although Kipling certainly got on the British reading public's nerves, his writing may not have been intellectually destabilizing. Readers of Kipling exhibit what Islam calls "hysteria" but refuse (à la Said) to engage intellectually with the ideas of his texts. Many other commentators have tracked similar effects. David Stewart states that

the unique vehemence of [the intelligentsia's] repudiation suggests that something in Kipling triggers extraordinary responses...[Kipling] breaks into our consciousness in ways that prevent our keeping the text at arm's length.

(49)

In many ways, even after the end of formal rule, critics manifest this "unique vehemence," or, as W.J. Lohman calls it, "defensive posturing," (187) by forcing Kipling to be the representative voice of his time. In each case, critics, as with Kipling's contemporaries who attacked the writer's "ethics," do so in order "to defend their own threatened world-view" (Lohman 187).

This world-view, indicates Hilton Brown, is the place of the West in relation to the Rest; Kipling, unlike his contemporaries, refuses to privilege Britishness as a concept in relation to the rest of the world (105). In other words, Kipling attacks his contemporaries' idealized conceptions of Britishness because "'Natives' often hold positions of respect in his stories [and] Kipling frankly recognizes their superiority over the English" (Islam 16). Thus, the explicit comparisons between the colonizer and the colonized tend to reinforce these feelings in the Western reader that the stable and comfortable identities of self and other are under attack.⁴²

⁴² Sullivan explains that Kipling's stories

give voice to the rebels of the system, unsettling because their effect is to disconnect readers from the social norms whose presiding surveillance they expect to encounter--angry protest--alien to literati

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Because the project of defamiliarizing the readers' self-conceptions is intimately tied to Kipling's other theme of disguise, the feelings of disorientation are reinforced. Cohn implies that all spaces in British India were scripted and that most behavior was elaborately scripted as if in India all "spaces" were separate "theaters" (10).⁴³ In this case, Kipling's cross(cultural)-dressing (both his own and his characters') represents a "threat to an assumed homogeneity of British culture" (Cohn 106). Throughout the nineteenth century, the type of "Sahib" that Kipling represented had become increasingly distasteful. In fact, even as early as 1830 "[t]he wearing of Indian

minor literature giving voice and agency to marginalized figures of empire; subalterns, builders, vagabonds, engineers, dreamers and fallen men and women. (115)

⁴³ Sullivan, supporting this idea, cites Kipling's awareness that much, if not all, of human discourse is scripted: "every nation like every individual walks in a vain show else it could not live with itself" (qtd. 41). This view of nationness suggests to Sullivan that Kipling was aware of the "imagined" nature of community and the closeness of "savageness" and "civilization." Also, Roy states that "Englishness in India must be en-acted as spectacle" (34).

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dress in public functions by employees of the [East Indian] Company was officially banned" (Cohn 112). The thrust of defining separate spaces in the colonies was not simply, as Bhabha would have it, the creation of "the colonized as a social reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible" (70-71), but also creation of the colonizer as just such a knowable social reality.

Kipling's transgression of these two spaces, then, represents something like Bhabha's third space, which splits and doubles both of the other spaces. However, in this case, instead of shaking the foundations of imperial discourse, Kipling's hybrid space threatens the entire concept of self (British) identity.

Rudyard Kipling's work is riddled not only with Indicisms but also with virulent attacks on Britishness. My argument is essentially that individuals like Rudyard Kipling, in "going native" to various degrees, took on an (Imperial) identity conflicting with most English conceptions of Britishness. In essence, what Kipling does is unlink Britishness from imperialism, and to favor the latter term. While this may not itself be extraordinary, even for the end of the nineteenth century, individuals who refused to credit the idea that Britishness and imperialism were identical tended to

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privilege Britishness over the other concept.⁴⁴ Contrary to current understandings of Kipling, I hope to show that while they promote the imperial enterprise, the author's enunciations of Imperial space decenter Britishness and the British nation.

The discourse of Britishness, which also has a reductive tendency in the name of national primacy and security, operates on a more strictly binaristic basis of self/Other, while the discourses of imperialism posit imperial space as greater than national. The articulation of many of imperial discourse's ideologies causes Empire to supercede national spaces, and therefore also tempers, and even contradicts, the strict binarism of nationalism in general. The tension between the discourse of national self-interest and expediency and the imperial discourse of obligation, which presupposes a greater authority than that of the British nation, is obvious and is often mistaken as a contradiction within imperial discourse itself.

There were at least two distinct strains of imperial discourse, which, though sharing some overlapping elements, were almost completely mutually exclusive. The "Orientalism" tracked by Edward Said was a product of and contributor to metropolitan nationalisms, and in turn

⁴⁴ A case in point would be J.A. Hobson's Imperialism.

London: G. Allen & Unwin ltd. [1938]

helped to spawn nationalisms in the colonized areas of empire. Thus, as Hubel points out, Orientalism and nationalism are sister discourses arising from the same source. Each produces a kind of monolithic impulse and each serves as a legitimating factor for the other (cf. 16-19). Imperialism operated under the assumption that empire was itself an end, and therefore greater than the individual components of which it was composed--including the metropole. This older imperial discourse stressed cultural transfer in both directions, which is why the self-proclaimed imperialists were the most vehement critics of actually existing imperialism and often directed concerted attacks against the *local* government of Great Britain. Edward Said, does, however, recognize that imperialists were often radically unlike their home compatriots. Said notices that "self-described imperialists," particularly those in the field, were "remorselessly severe about the abuses and cruelties of the system" (Said Culture 241). However, Said refuses to explore why these imperialists tended to be the system's most passionate critics. As colonizing individuals had other pressures inflecting their identities, my assumption is that the imperial discourse in which they were immersed was different from that emanating from the metropole.

As J. Mukherjee notes, most of Kipling's Anglo-Indian fiction seeks to establish his difference from the

rest of British and Anglo-Indian societies (41), which, in the case of the latter, was since 1857 becoming increasingly more Anglo and less Indian. A significant part of this distancing from the overly (in Kipling's view) Anglo emphasis in the Anglo-Indian community is his questioning of the term "Sahib." This particular move may not have a great deal of impact on today's reader because it no longer has the same connotations in India, but in colonial India of the late nineteenth century, "sahib" was virtually restricted to male members of the Anglo-Indian community. However, Kipling extends this term to the old woman who adopts Kim and Teshoo Lama, calling her "Sahiba" (सहबा).⁴⁵ This is an important move because at his time, Rani (रानी), Srimati (श्रीमती), or even Memsahib (मेमसहब) would have been more appropriate forms of address for such an individual, although this last term was usually reserved for Englishwomen. In fact, when Kim interacts with her after the encounter with the Russian spies, Kim reverts to the more familiar "Mother" (माता, or more likely माँ) when speaking to her.⁴⁶

Similarly, many of the students at the madrissah are explicitly identified as "Sahibs." However, these students are not Anglo-Indians, as the British living in

⁴⁵ Translations of Hindi words and phrases to and from English are mine unless otherwise noted.

⁴⁶ Mata and man.

India called themselves, but rather are of mixed heritage.⁴⁷ This indicates that Kipling is attempting to sever the status of "sahib" from its racial-cultural moorings in British and British Anglo-Indian cultures. Instead of the term being an inheritance of the "pure Briton," by looking at its usage in Kim we can see that Kipling is reappropriating the word in an attempt to give "Sahib" a radically different meaning. In fact, of the individuals labeled "Sahib" in Kim very few are unambiguously British. In St. Xavier's, Kim's school, the boys, although labeled "young Sahibs," are really "half-caste": "Their eyes are blued and their nails are blackened with low-caste blood" (Kim 144). Colonel

⁴⁷ For some reason critics have a tendency to read over such racial and cultural information in Kipling's work. Often in spite of explicit characterization to the contrary, the heroic figures of Kipling's work are almost always discussed as "white" or "British" by readers of Kipling's fiction. For instance, although the schoolboys of St. Xavier's are explicitly stated to be "half-caste," Roy reads over this information and claims that they are part of the ruling elite of the Anglo-Indian community (cf. 85, 86). Even more amazingly, she claims that their empathetic treatment is in direct contrast to the "denigrated half-castes of the novel" (of whom there are none) (cf. 87).

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Creighton confirms that, as Kim notes, "Their mothers were bazar-women" (Kim 119). This fact indicates that for Kipling, as opposed to his contemporaries, "Sahibness" is less an inborn European trait than an interpellation within the context of Empire.

Similarly, one of the main trainers and players in the game is Lurgan Sahib. Interestingly enough few commentators of Kim seem to recognize that Lurgan Sahib is non-European.⁴⁸ In other words, Lurgan Sahib is not like Kim an Indicized European; he is an Anglicized Asian:

Kim looked him over out of the corners of his eyes. He was a Sahib in that he wore Sahib's clothes; the accent of his Urdu, the intonation of his English, showed that he was anything but a Sahib. (Kim 151)

Here, because I have intentionally taken the passage out of its context, Lurgan Sahib is clearly what Bhabha identifies as the colonial mimic. In Kim, Lurgan is unambiguously understood to be an Anglo-Sahib by all but

⁴⁸ Another example of readers of Kipling's work altering the race and ethnicity of characters to "show" preferential treatment of "whites" to "natives" would be Roy's understanding of Lurgan Sahib as a "white man" (86) and Zoreh Sullivan claiming that Mowgli (of the Jungle Books) is English (cf. 117).

Kim. It is only Kim's own cultural hybridity that enables the boy to notice an accent. In fact, almost no critic who writes about this character recognizes that he is not in fact "white."

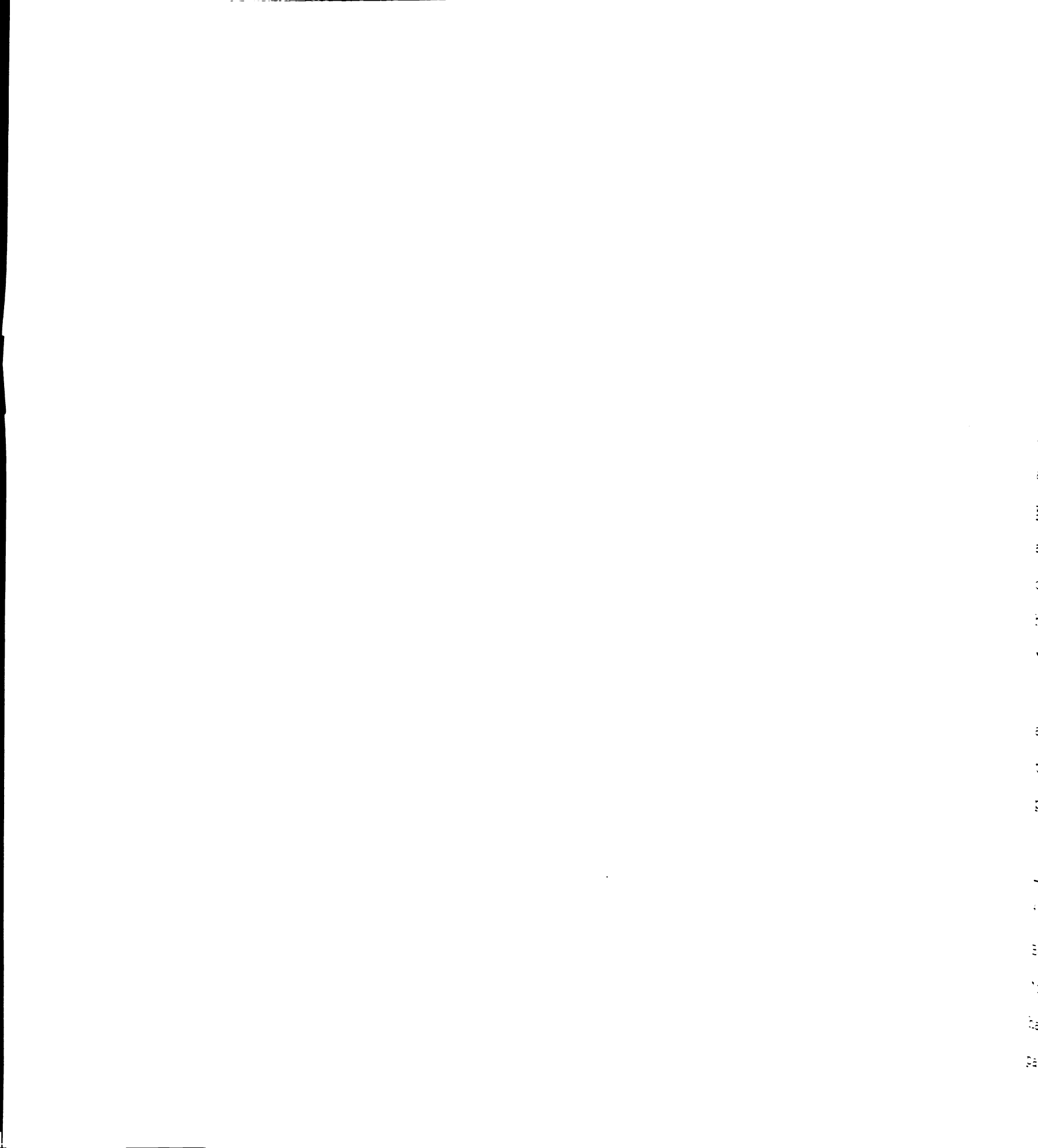
Virtually every critic recognizes that his place in imperial space is critical to the maintenance of Empire, and as such, he is a privileged character in Kipling's universe. Since this is the case, Kipling demonstrates that hybridity was an integral part of the functioning of the Imperial.

Each of these characteristics of the hybrid/mimic, however do significantly disrupt the narrative of Britishness in Kipling's writing, even as it supports imperialism. In addition to this questioning of British superiority, the narrative also often establishes the British as stupid, filthy, or otherwise disgusting from the perspective of the hybrid and of the "native." For example, the disgust of the "nativeborn, who in his heart considers the Englishman rather dirty" (Kim 123). Similarly, Kipling makes it quite clear that Kim prefers "the even, passionless voice of the native-born...[with] turns of speech that showed they had been that instant translated from the vernacular" over "the insipid, single-word talk of the [English] drummer-boys" (Kim 124).

To further complicate the ways in which Kipling undermines the "superiority" of Europeans to subject

peoples, I would like to track the use of Hindi proverbs, which Kim and other more unambiguously Indian characters employ in an attempt to understand inexplicable British behavior. It is of note that Kim is often the one who expresses these proverbs in the text, but even when he does not, neither he nor the narrator qualify or contradict them. These Hindi proverbs, like similar proverbs and the narrative frameworks in his short fiction (cf. Moore-Gilbert 15), call into question the dominant discourses predicated on ideas of European racial superiority. In the case of Kim, virtually all of these proverbs characterize British behavioral patterns in terms of the essentializing, yet inexplicable, features of appetite or madness. Thus, "They [whites] do no harm except when they are drunk" (Kim 79); one should "'Never speak to a white man till he is fed,' said Kim, quoting a well-known proverb" (Kim 82); "Only the devils and the English walk to and fro without reason" (Kim 78); and "we walk as though we were mad--or English" (Kim 231).

In such passages, Kipling, through the "native perspective" Kim offers, seems to be holding up Lacan's mirror for the British reading audience. As Belsey indicates in her presentation of the mirror stage, "The Lacanian subject is constructed on the basis of a splitting which is irreversible. The jubilation of the mirror-phase is also an alienation, the moment of



division between the *I* which perceives and the perceived (imagined) *I*" (123). However, in Kipling, and particularly in Kim where the reader is asked to identify unambiguously with the title-character, the "jubilation" of recognition is far outweighed by the "alienation" that such observations elicit. Kipling's presentation of his imperial ideal is thus at odds with most of what has been called "imperial discourse."

A significant aspect of Kipling's imperial ideal is a rejection of color as a determining factor in the advance and propagation of imperial civilization. In Kim, Teshoo Lama, whom even Said recognizes as a powerful authority in the text (Culture 139), explains to his chela (चेल़ा; disciple, student), Kim, that "The Sahibs have not all this world's wisdom" (Kim 192) and that "there is neither black nor white" (Kim 212).

Interestingly enough, not only does Kipling's work, as Orwell noted,⁴⁹ bitterly criticize the British and their ways of being, but Kipling also significantly places these criticisms in the mouths of non-Europeans:

⁴⁹ Orwell expressed his concern about Kipling's anti-British tendencies and indicated that he thought that "few people who have criticised England from the inside have said bitterer things about her than this gutter patriot" (79).

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a Tibetan in the case of the Lama above, and North Indians in the case of the men of Shamlegh.

Similarly, Mahbub Ali, who, along with Teshoo Lama, represents paternal authority in the novel, explains to Kim that Indians are not completely taken in by the self-assumed posture of British superiority. In explaining how he came to understand how far from their own ideal the British were, Ali tells Kim that: "I did not know how greatly they were fools, and this made me wroth...Now I see, however...that it is with them as with all men--in certain matters they are wise, and in others most foolish" (Kim 143). In this explanation, Ali indicates that there is a fundamental equality of "all men" in which none can claim supremacy. In addition, this represents for the British a major undercutting of their ideas concerning their own superiority, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of the ruled.

Kipling again indicates the need for non-European expertise in the propagation of empire when he shows Hurree Babu to be the single-most important component in the Raj's spy-network. Explaining to Kim how he has aided the "Ethnological Survey" without the higher echelons of the bureaucracy even realizing, Hurree Babu indicates that he is responsible for the mechanism by which agents can recognize and aid each other in their work to secure the perpetuation of the Raj: "it was me [who] invented all this...Colonel Creighton he does not

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know. He is European" (Kim 182). The significance of this passage should not be lost on the reader, because, as the head of the Ethnological Survey, Creighton is both the foremost Orientalist and the leader of the Raj's espionage agency. Thus, Hurree Babu's supplement to "the Game" questions not only Orientalist scholarship in general, but also Creighton's competency as director, because he is unaware of what happens within his own department, a particularly severe problem for the head of an intelligence agency. It is also significant that this questioning of Creighton's authority and expertise proceeds from his lack of hybridity: "He is European" while Kim, although also "European" resides in the hybrid space and therefore has access to a greater part of imperial knowledge.

THE ESSENTIAL ORIENTAL AND THE BENGALI STEREOTYPE

As we saw in Chapter 1, in Bhabha's formulation, the in-between space of hybridity enables the construction of binaristic poles. As a result, hybridity serves a double function in imperial discourse; it is the enabling moment of the binary while also representing the potential destabilization not only of the binary it creates, but also of the discourse as a whole. However, it is the positioning of the subject that determines whether the poles of the "binary" are rendered oppositional or are

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equated. For Bhabha, the way out of the dilemma of oppression and subservience in representation is to remain "inbetween." This move, although it is meant to "elude the politics of polarity [to] emerge as the others of ourselves" (39), must initially rely on a relatively stable opposition between the two terms in order to "explore" the space between.

For Bhabha, exploring the inbetween allows for radical critique because it resists a final solidification of the binaristic poles with which it begins. However, as I will point out in this chapter and in Chapter 3, this technique is not as new as Bhabha would have us believe; existing "inbetween" is the mode of thought with an accompanying emphasis on cultural transfer from within which the leading imperialist thinkers of the Empire operated.

Virtually all commentators of Kipling's work claim that "oriental" characteristics are presented in essentialist terms and come to the same conclusion as Said regarding them: "knowledge of subject races or Orientals is what makes their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power..." (Orientalism 36). However, careful reading of Kipling's texts indicates that the essentialisms attributed to oriental characters are really part of a complex presentation of cultural difference that upsets the basis upon which these commonplace essentialisms rest. In fact, far from

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propagating the idea of the essential oriental, Kipling's work attacks the very notion by providing cultural information which contextualizes the characteristics that, when left decontextualized, could produce the idea that he traffics in essentialisms.

In fact, Kipling's work seems to raise stereotypes in order to "unspeak" them. What I am calling unspeaking is a process by which Kipling's narratives draw attention to stereotypes in order to demonstrate their falsity. However, Kipling's unspeaking refuses to replace these stereotypes with newer ones; instead, he illustrates the hybridity of colonial subjects thereby leaving an evaluation of their abilities and characteristics indeterminable.

This aspect of Kipling's work stands in direct contrast to Said's assertion about the ways in which Orientalist discourse necessarily "places" the Orient and its inhabitants:

Every work on the Orient...tries to characterize the place, of course, but what is of greater interest is the extent to which the work's internal structure is in some measure synonymous with a comprehensive *interpretation* (or an attempt at it) of the Orient.
(Orientalism 158)

As Kim is obviously an imperialist text, imperial and Orientalist discourses may, as they do in this instance,

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operate separately and mutually exclusively. Therefore, the widespread assumption inspired by Said's work, that they are necessarily reinforcing because they *always* operate in tandem, is incorrect. While it *may* often be the case that they work together as virtually a single unit, to assume that it is necessarily the case is a mistake.

Reading Kim in this way indicates that a major theme throughout the narrative is the explosion of Eurocentric mythologies that attempt to explain, confine, and codify Indian groups into types, which can then be used to predict behaviors. The stereotype of the "cowardly Bengali," a derivative of the older, pre-Mutiny "gentle Hindoo," is a case in point. A major preoccupation of Kim is the tearing down of such cultural stereotypes; but at the same time, Kipling is careful not to replace one stereotype with another. In doing so, Kipling leaves the reader with indeterminacy--with no real way to categorize most of the characters. Kipling therefore consistently disrupts the categories upon which knowledge is formed. Instead, Kipling ensures that the actual characteristics and abilities of the principal players in the novel are hidden beneath layers of disguise and posturing.

Kipling's unspooking the Bengali stereotype occurs as Kim and his master travel through the mountains in search of the River of the Arrow. A mountain storm tears through and

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As usual, the lama had led Kim by cow-track and byroad, far from the main route along which Hurree Babu, that "fearful man," had bucketed three days before through a storm to which nine Englishmen out of ten would have given full right of way. (Kim 234)

As with the stereotype of the "deceitful Indian," Kipling's representations of the Bengali Hurree Babu question not only the stereotype of the "fearful, effeminate Bengali" but also use this explosion of these stereotypes to question British superiority. Kipling also compares the Babu's behavior to that of Englishmen and finds that far from inherent superiority, the English are found wanting in the comparison.

Similarly engaging the stereotype of the Bengali, Kipling's narrative attacks those who apply global condemnations to whole groups of peoples: "He does not care to travel after dusk; but his days' marches--there is none to enter them in a book--would astonish folk who mock at his race" (Kim 268). As with the previous example, this observation indicates that the stereotype of the "fearful Bengali" is wholly inadequate as an explanation of the Babu and explicitly extends it to the "race" of Bengalis. However, as I mentioned before, while it attacks the stereotype itself, it explicitly refrains from adding controlling knowledge ("there is

none to enter them in a book") and leaves any evaluation of actual capabilities or characteristics indeterminate.

Perhaps more important to contemporary theory is the fact that Kipling explicitly links the denunciation of stereotypes to what Bhabha calls "hybridity," "mimicry," and "sly civility" through his themes of disguising and posing. In Hurree Babu's dealings in the spy trade, it is important that he always be able to alter his character and appearance. In so doing, he uses the stereotypes to his own benefit. The stereotype itself becomes a powerful disguise. In fact, never in the course of the narrative, can one be sure of the Babu's identity.

Towards the end of the novel, Hurree Babu's rapid shifts in identity are spectacular in their completeness and abruptness--he literally becomes another person in the flash of an eye:

He shook hands twice--a Babu to his boot-heels
--and opened the door. With the fall of the
sunlight upon his still triumphant face he
returned to [being] the humble Dacca quack.
"He robbed them...He tricked them. He lied to
them...They give him a *chit* (a testimonial).
He makes them a mock at the risk of his life--I
never would have gone down to them after the
pistol-shots--and then he says he is a fearful
man." (Kim 281, original emphasis)

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As Bhabha implies, the hybrid exists in an unspeakable space where authenticity has no meaning. The hybrid, here Hurree Babu, is able to shift personality, and even appearance. This is truly disruptive to any attempt to pin down who, what, and how he is because he defies categorization. But more importantly, Kipling makes it clear that, while "a Babu to his boot-heels," Hurree Babu's compatibility with the stereotype of the Babu is also a disguise because he is able to erase completely all of the stereotypical traits associated with "the Babu." The narrator of Kim sits enthralled at Hurree Babu's ability to put on and take off stereotypes at will--even his, as many would call "essential self," the Babu. To ensure that these transformations retain their full effect, the narrator calls to the reader to "Watch him, all Babudom laid aside" (Kim 268). Thus, at the same time he indicates that even conformity to the stereotype is a disguise, Kipling refuses to show the limits of Hurree Babu's hybridity; thus while unspeaking the stereotype the author refuses to speak another.

Of course, what Kipling is demonstrating is Bhabha's "sly civility" of the "mimic":⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Bhabha explains that

The metonymic strategy produces the signifier of colonial *mimicry* as the affect of hybridity--at once a mode of appropriation and of

He became thickly treasonous, and spoke in terms of sweeping indecency of a Government which had forced upon him a white man's education and neglected to supply him with a white man's salary. He babbled tales of oppression and wrong till the tears ran down his cheeks for the miseries of his land...Never was so unfortunate a product of English rule in India. (Kim 237)

In reading this kind of passage, Said and many others have attempted to understand why there seems to be no "conflict between Kim's colonial service and loyalty to his Indian companions" (Said Culture 146). According to

resistance, from the disciplined to the desiring. As the discriminated object, the metonym of presence becomes the support of an authoritarian voyeurism, all the better to exhibit the eye of power. Then, as discrimination turns into the assertion of the hybrid, the insignia of authority becomes a mask, a mockery. After our experience of the native interrogation, it is difficult to agree entirely with Fanon that the psychic choice is to "turn white or disappear." There is the more ambivalent, third choice: camouflage, mimicry, black skins/white masks. (120)

Said, this conflict between Indian nationalism of both the Mutiny and Kipling's own time "is unresolved...because for Kipling *there was no conflict*" since Kipling, unlike Indians, was incapable of imagining an independent India (Said Culture 146). Said then goes on to attack Kipling for presenting what nationalism there is in the novel in terms of "simpering" materialism, as opposed to all-out resistance to colonial rule. He states that

to be an Indian would have meant to feel natural solidarity with the victims of [the] British...For an Indian, *not* to have had those feelings would have been to belong to a very small minority...To reduce Indian resentment, Indian resistance (as it might have been called) to British insensitivity to "madness"...are not merely innocent reductions of the nationalist Indian case but tendentious ones. (Said Culture 147-48, original emphasis)

Said then, in a typically binaristic move which totalizes Indian opinion, claims that Indians were "more likely nationalist" and that it is ridiculous for Kipling to portray a Pathan (Mahbub Ali) "as happy with British rule, even a collaborator with it" because the Pathans were "historically in a state of unpacified insurrection against the British" (Culture 147-48).

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In fact, Said is again showing a lack of research into Indian opinion and history of the time in which Kipling was writing. Not only, as Cohn states, did official post-1857 recruiting policy guarantee that 8% of the Indian army consist of Pathans (123), but Kipling's presentation of Indian Nationalist discourse is also unfortunately a fair one for the time during which Kim was published (1901).⁵¹ This is of course, not to say that the common people had no misgivings about British rule, but that these discontents did not take the form that Said claims.

No one however seems disposed to ask why Kipling, if he really did accept the status quo, even bothers to insert material which raises issues of resistance to binaristic constructions, or why his work seems

⁵¹ Although the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885, the first twenty years of the INC were taken up almost exclusively with issues dealing with the status of upper class, upper-caste Indian intellectuals in the bureaucracy, and with the amelioration of abuses by the Government of India. In fact, contrary to Said's optimistic re-writing of history, as late as 1915, the INC as an organization still largely resisted the idea of Swaraj, and as Hubel points out, the INC was an oppressive and reactionary force in Indian politics both before and after Independence (201).

continually to attack Britishness and its ideologies of superiority. In Kipling's work, hybridity and its attendant variations like the pose, mimicry, and the disguise, are not only liberating for the individual but are also essential to the maintenance of empire. For Kipling, the hybrid is the imperial.

CHAPTER 3

GOING ENGLISH: GANDHI, THE OTHER COLONIZER AND COLONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

It is a reversion to barbarity
and the beginning of the end.

In trying to ride the horse that man rides,
she brings herself and him down.⁵²

A great deal has been written about Mohandas Gandhi and his contributions to Indian and to world history. Studies analyze his impact on race relations in South Africa, the influence of satyagraha (सत्याग्रह, passive resistance), and his relationship to the British Empire in India during the nationalist movements of the early twentieth century, particularly his involvement in the "Quit India" movement. Several analysts even discuss his particular notion of brahmacharya (ब्रह्मचर्य, generally translated as "celibacy," but its meaning is closer to "fusion of male and female in one individual"). However, many of these studies make their biases explicit by referring to him by the traditional honorific "ji" (जी, i.e. Gandhiji). This unanalyzed and often unconscious veneration for the individual tends to lead to an emphasis on Gandhi's "originality," "personality," or "spirit." Homer Jack, for example, obsesses over how "Gandhi was one of the great men not only of our time,

⁵² From Gandhi's To the Women page 27.

but of all history" (v). S. Radhakrishnan affirms that Gandhi is "one of the greatest figures of history" (xvi). And Babu Prasad presents Gandhi as single-handedly "rousing" India in its striving for independence (cf. lx-lxiii).

Another trend in Gandhian studies is to explore the relationship between Western and Eastern thought in Gandhi's work and publications. Gianni Sofri presents an exhaustive historically-based perspective and explains how, through the various amalgamations of cultural items from each, the Gandhi-phenomenon was able to capture the minds of so many individuals both in the West and in the colonized world. Rudrangshu Mukherjee's emphasizes the ways in which Gandhi constructed alternative "political ideals" to both "modern civilization" and "archaic" Indian traditions by consciously fusing the two--thus creating a viable alternative which did not have to prefigure a wholesale relinquishment of either (cf. xi-xviii).

However, attempting to understand Gandhi and his impact has largely not been done from an approach deriving from Homi Bhabha's notion of hybridity. This concept provides a useful alternative because it already presupposes the radical critique of both "tradition" and

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"modern" civilization imposed by colonialism.⁵³ Allowing for a potentially more dynamic understanding of the ways discourses interacted and modified each other through Gandhi's enunciations, this approach also allows us to reach beyond simply tracking various influences to a place where we can also begin, inversely, to see what aspects of these discourses are retained and/or strengthened.

Mohandas Gandhi was born in Gujarat to a Bania family. As members of the merchant class/caste, Gandhi's

⁵³ Anne McClintock explains how "tradition" and "modern" are gendered constructs in imperial and nationalistic discourses. She goes on to state that gender roles and the conception of a dichotomy between tradition and modernity reinforce each other so as to be almost indistinguishable:

Women are represented as the atavistic and authentic body of national tradition (inert, backward-looking, and natural), embodying nationalism's conservative principle of continuity. Men, by contrast, represent the progressive agent of national modernity (forward-thrusting, potent, and historic), embodying nationalism's progressive, or revolutionary, principle of discontinuity.

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family was interested in providing him with an education that would fit him for the modern business world. As such Gandhi's early life was a mixture of traditional rites and expectations, but without religious instruction or explanations of the meanings behind these rites, and Western education (cf. Gandhi Autobiography 10-31). This scenario caused Gandhi to feel alienated in the presence of other Indians and led him to see "himself as a citizen of the British Empire: he wanted to be a citizen of the British Empire. He dressed like a perfect English gentleman, he studied, he even took dancing and violin lessons" (Sofri 53, original emphasis). As such, Gandhi "made efforts to become an accomplished English gentleman. He dressed himself fashionably and took instructions and took instructions in French language, elocution, dancing and violin" (Patil 11-12).

This brief biography of Gandhi's early life indicates that Bhabha's notion of hybridity can be easily applied to the Mahatma. As Parekh indicates, "the very fact that he could not be fitted into any of the traditional Hindu categories baffled his countrymen"; "Hindus instinctively knew who he was not, but could not figure out who he was" because of the profound integration of East and West in his psyche (16). Furthermore, Gandhi

was convinced that Hindu society needed moral regeneration, a "new system of ethics," a new

yugadharma. He was certain that the new yugadharma could not be developed out of the available resources of Hindu tradition alone. Some of its fundamental values were sound and represented its great contribution to mankind. However, they had been traditionally defined in negative, passive and asocial terms and required reinterpretation and reform. Hinduism could, therefore, greatly benefit from the moral 'insights' and 'truths' discovered by other religious traditions including Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Islam and, especially, Christianity. (Parekh 23)⁵⁴

By putting various traditions, both consciously and unconsciously, on an even footing, Gandhi effectively unseated the various hierarchies of East/West that his cultures tended to support and endorse. Speaking from this position between British and Indian cultures, Gandhi disallowed an equation of either with absolute cultural

⁵⁴ Yugadharma (युगाधर्मा) is best translated as "duty or religion of the era." This concept assumes that the fundamental makeup of Hinduism undergoes radical changes at various, but infrequent, times in human evolution. Thus, Gandhi believed that the advent of the British in India signaled a shift from a "passive" yuga to an active one.

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or moral superiority. Additionally, Gandhi denied the dichotomy between "Western science" and "Indian tradition." Parekh states that "[f]ar from being antithetical, tradition and science were cousins" in Gandhian thought (24). Similarly, according to Parel, Gandhi's version of "swaraj," unlike many other notions of independence or "self-rule," "is a complex one...for he drew from both Indian and Western sources" (Parel Gandhi 1). This redefinition of swaraj then helped to create a "modern India [that] did not see any radical opposition between the ancient and the modern" (Parel Gandhi 4).⁵⁵

Gandhi reached this hybridization of thought through what Parekh calls a "double conversion." Parekh explains that Gandhi essentially reached his conception of the modern world's yugadharma through a "Christianisation of a Hindu category [ahimsa] after suitably Hinduising its Christian components [caritas], [to yield] the novel concept of an active and positive but detached and non-

⁵⁵ McClintock indicates that tradition and modernity were virtually unchallenged as a set of notions, within modernism's normalizing framework, about national and "cultural time" because "Women were seen not as inhabiting history proper but as existing, like colonized peoples, in a permanently anterior time within the modern nation" (Dangerous 93).

emotive love" (Parekh 26). Gandhi himself explained that such an approach was a necessity, particularly in the modern world because

Indian culture of our times is in the making. Many of us are striving to produce a blend of all the cultures which seem to-day to be in clash with one another. No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive. There is no such thing as pure Aryan culture in existence to-day in India. Whether the Aryans were indigenous to India or were unwelcome intruders, does not interest me much. What does interest me is the fact that my remote ancestors blended with one another with the utmost freedom, and we of the present generation are a result of that blend. (Modern 101-02)

While he believed that a "pure Aryan culture" had existed in the past, Gandhi was well aware that there could be no return to such origins nor could any culture remain isolated and static. Although Gandhi recognized that cultures naturally evolve and blend over time, he also was aware that such radical integration represented a destabilization of both, hence his word "clash." However, the agony of this hybridizing action of cultures was necessary unless a culture were to have "no future."

Not uncoincidentally, Gandhi believed that the India of the past and present was dying and that the only way for Indian cultures to survive was consciously to form a new and dynamic civilization from past traditions and compatible elements from the West. As Parekh explains, Gandhi felt that for

the past few centuries, India had become "static," "asleep," "inert." Thanks to its welcome contact with the West, it had both "awakened" and gained access to the scientific spirit of inquiry. It must now turn inward, identify and critically reinterpret the central principles of its civilisation in the light of modern needs and use them as the basis of its carefully planned programme of self-purification. A dialogue with another civilisation should "follow, never precede, an appreciation and assimilation into our own."

(91)

Thus, according to Gandhi, because of the contact with European colonialism, Indian cultures were able to shake off the sleep of centuries and realize that they had become shadows of their former glory. Having imbibed "scientific culture," Indian traditions were in a position to do something they apparently were unable to do without Western influence--turn inward in order to evolve to their next stage of development. Oddly enough,

this "self-purification" can only take place after contact with the West has significantly modified cultural patterns. Also interesting is Gandhi's insistence that the "dialog" with the West can only take place after the West has been incorporated ("assimilated") into Indian cultures. This tautology, that India can only return to itself through the intervention of the West, is a theme that runs throughout Gandhi's work--including his later work, which soundly condemns most of Western (or "modern") culture.

In order to make this tautology less obvious, Gandhi rejected the notion of a

science-tradition dichotomy and insisted that all traditions, especially the Indian, were based on science. There was no other way to arrive at valid knowledge than the method of "rigorous research," "experience" and experiment, and that is what both science and tradition did. (Parekh 96)

By denying the dichotomy of science and tradition, Gandhi was able to posit a "circular" and "open relationship" between East and West (Sofri 55) that would allow India to develop "an updated conception of dharma that would fit them for life in the modern world" (Parel Introduction xvi). By making this move, Gandhi was then able to offer critiques of Western "modern" civilization while at the same time attacking its shortcomings from a

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"traditional" Indian perspective. As he states in Ancient vs. Modern,

[t]here is no impassable barrier between East and West. There is no such thing as Western or European civilization, but there is a modern civilization which is purely material. The people of Europe, before they were touched by modern civilization, had much in common with the people of the East, anyhow the people of India; and even to-day Europeans, who are not touched by modern civilization, are far better able to mix with Indians than the offspring of that civilization. It is not the British people who are ruling India, but it is modern civilization, through its railways, telegraph, telephone, and almost every invention which has been claimed to be a triumph of civilization.

(26)

By making these distinctions between modern and tradition but denying any difference between science and tradition, Gandhi was able to take aspects of Eastern and Western cultures that he found palatable while attacking those he did not. This scenario also allowed him to venerate those Britons he found acceptable, and their ways of understanding the world, while roundly condemning those whose values had been "seduced" by modern technology.

As can be readily seen from the above discussion, Gandhi's relationship with the West was an extremely ambivalent one. Gandhi was a nationalist with not only a deep admiration for the British (which was common among early nationalists) but was also very outspoken in this admiration (which was more and more uncommon as the twentieth century progressed). Most anglophile Indians striving for the nationalist cause found it expedient to avoid praise of the British in order to make their case for swaraj more strident. Gandhi however felt it necessary to praise the British, particularly individual Britons, because so much of his program depended upon ideological components borrowed from them. Sofri indicates that Gandhi exploited the tension between British idealism and the awkward ways in which their dominion of India was both a result of and a challenge to those ideals. As he states, since "they were supposed to represent the vanguard of European liberalism" it was "very difficult for the British to found their dominion on repressive violence alone" (Sofri 43). This allowed Gandhi and some of his contemporaries the ability to point out beneficent instances of British rule while condemning others through the Britisher's own yardstick.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Bhabha explains that it was possible for the colonized to destabilize imperial discourses because of the contradictions between imperial practices and the

Additionally, Gandhi had a considerable investment in the empire itself. This investment was so intense during the first half of his life that he claimed imperial citizenship superceded Indianness. Sofri states that Gandhi saw himself primarily "as a citizen of the British Empire" (53).

This high regard for Britishness is really not very surprising given the fact that even his Indian identity came largely from Britain rather than Gujarat. Patil indicates that it was through the intervention of several

rhetoric of the civilizing mission. He states that "[t]he recognition of authority, however, requires a validation of its source that must be immediately, even intuitively, apparent. . . and held in common (rules of recognition)" (112). Because the rules of recognition were fundamentally based in the rhetoric rather than the actions of the colonizers, the hybrid consistently reminded imperialists of the incongruity of their beliefs in the field:

The paranoid threat from the hybrid is finally uncontainable because it breaks down the symmetry and duality of self/other, inside/outside. In the productivity of power, the boundaries of authority--its reality effects--are always besieged by 'the other scene' of fixations and phantoms. (Bhabha 116)

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British theosophists that Gandhi "discovered" Hindu literature, a field in which he had only minimal knowledge prior to his course of study in London. After being convinced of Hindu literature's worth, he "took keen interest in the Geeta...which made deep impression on the mind of this receptive young man" (Patil 12). Sofri also describes this series of incidents with the theosophists, explicitly recognizing that it was through these Westerners that Gandhi acquired a sense of Indianness and the value of Indian heritage:

They [the theosophists] introduced him to the Bhagavad Gita, an ancient text most highly venerated by Hinduism; it would become Gandhi's favorite book. And here we observe a curious paradox: when the eighteen-year-old Gandhi left for England, he was virtually an atheist...culturally, he felt more at ease as a citizen of the British Empire than he did as an Indian. (54)

Interestingly enough, it was also through these Britons that Gandhi first began to understand the value that could be obtained by hybridizing British and Indian cultures. Once the theosophists had sparked Gandhi's interest in Hinduism and Christianity, they directed his reading to

texts of Indian philosophy [beginning] with *The Song Celestial*--Sir Edwin Arnold's translation

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of the *Gita*. This was followed with books relevant to religions associated with India: *The Light of Asia*, the biography of the Buddha, also by Sir Edwin Arnold, *Life of Mahomet and His Successors* by Washington Irving, Carlyle's life of the Prophet in *Heroes and Hero Worship*, and a book of the Parsee religion, *The Sayings of Zarathustra*. (Parel Introduction xlviii)

Given such circumstances, it is not surprising that Gandhi would continue to cultivate his respect for Britishness, particularly that aspect of British culture that encouraged these kinds of discussions. Along with this bestowal of Indian identity through individual Britons, many of whom were Said's execrable "Orientalists," many of Gandhi's ideas about Indian nationalism derived from either British parliamentary institutions or Britons living in India. In particular, the founders of the Indian National Congress found great favor in Gandhi's eyes, despite the fact that the organization was originally founded for the purposes of maintaining and extending British control over India.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Sofri explains that the history of the INC is very different from the mythology that it has been careful to foster about itself. For example, Sofri explains that the Indian National Congress

gathered for the first time in 1885, under the auspices of the viceroy and with the participation of several Englishmen. Its president, W.C. Benerjea, spoke of the "sentiments of national unity born during the reign of our beloved viceroy, Lord Ripon." Two British men, a Scottish merchant from Calcutta and an ex-functionary of the famous Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, presided over the Congresses of 1888 and 1889. During its first years of life, the Congress represented a meeting place for the furtherance of interests which were no less British than they were Indian. On one hand the British were interested in providing the burgeoning nationalist movement with a forum where activities and debates could take place under the more or less direct control of government authorities. Furthermore, they wished to speed up the formation of an Indian administrative class that would be willing to collaborate with the government in managing an empire too vast and complex for the numerically small forces of the British bureaucracy and the British military. The rulers' needs in such cases coincided with those of an upper middle class,

This worship of Britishness comes out clearly in Hind Swaraj where Gandhi, in the position of an enlightened newspaper editor, seeks to educate an ignorant nationalist about the good that many Britons have done, and may continue to do, in the subcontinent.⁵⁸ Of course, the book also provides some scathing attacks against both Indian and Western cultures, but early in the book, the emphasis is on justifying and praising the British in India generally--and this only partially because later in the book some of Gandhi's ideas for national liberation obviously stem from Western culture.

an Indian elite made up of intellectuals, merchants, and entrepreneurs asking to perform a more active role in administration. This elite did not challenge British sovereignty in India, but asked the rulers to be consistent with the ideas that they professed in their homeland. (44)

⁵⁸ Gandhi indicated to his traditionalist critics that

Under the British aegis we have learnt much...We can profit by that connection only if we keep our civilization, and our morals straight, i.e., if, instead of boasting of the glorious past, we express the ancient moral glory in our own lives and let our lives bear witness to our boast. (Gandhi Modern 41)

Also, the fact that both Gandhi and the majority of his followers viewed, and continue to view, Hind Swaraj as his manifesto for national liberation gives the short volume a particular weight.

Hume in particular, but also William Wedderburn, garners favorable attention from Gandhi in the early part of Hind Swaraj. In fact, Hume and Wedderburn are presented as being the primary force behind the "awakening" of nationalist India. Gandhi calls the men two of the many important "well-wishers of India" and ridicules the "Reader" for his insistence that mentioning English names is the equivalent of "discussing foreign rule." Gandhi asks his unenlightened Reader:

How can we forget what Mr. Hume has written, how he has lashed us into action, and with what effort he has awakened us, in order to achieve the objects of the Congress? Sir William Wedderburn has given his body, mind and money to the same cause. His writings are worthy of perusal to this day...Similarly, in Bengal Madras, the Punjab and other places, there have been lovers of India and members of the Congress, both Indian and English. (Hind Swaraj 14)

Significantly, the narrative of the early Indian National Congress at this point in Hind Swaraj omits to mention any involvement of Indians but focuses solely on the

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deeds of the two Britons. Gandhi's "Reader" is quick to notice the fact that the "editor" implies that Indians were overly passive and required British intervention before the nationalist cause could be put in motion. This Reader notices that Gandhi's editor not only ignores early Indian nationalist leaders but also states that it was necessary for Britons to "lash us into action," sacrifice for the country, and "awaken" Indians before forward progress could take place. When the Reader reacts to this glorification of British officials in India by saying that the Editor's worship of these men is "beyond comprehension," the Editor responds by saying,

I can never subscribe to the statement that all Englishmen are bad. Many Englishmen desire Home Rule for India...We who seek justice will have to do justice to others. Sir William does not wish ill to India--that should be enough for us. As we proceed, you will see that, if we act justly, India will be sooner free. You will see, too, that, if we shun every Englishman as an enemy, Home Rule will be delayed. But if we are just to them, we shall receive their support in our progress towards the goal. (Hind Swaraj 17)

In fact, when the Reader indicates that British rule is causing discontent and should therefore be eliminated, the Editor responds by referring to Hume's repeated

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statements in Congress meetings that discontent would lead to Indian patriotism: "Mr. Hume always said that the spread of discontent in India was necessary. This discontent is a very useful thing" (Hind Swaraj 24). When the question of this "patriotism" comes up later in Hind Swaraj, the Editor clarifies that his conception of it is the same as Hume's "welfare of the whole people" and that "if I [the Editor] could secure it at the hands of the English, I should bow down my head to them" (Hind Swaraj 77).

This attitude toward British "benevolence" was not limited to Gandhi however. Most early nationalist leaders shared Gandhi's belief that British rule represented the opportunity to rejuvenate India by incorporating elements of the colonizer's culture. In fact, many of these leaders even went further than Gandhi in their esteem of the British and felt that the rulers were correct in postponing more substantial reforms:

The bulk of Hindu leaders, including Dwarkanath Tagore, the early Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Ranade, Tilak, Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Banerjee, B.C. Pal, Ravindranath Tagore, Lala Lajput Rai, Aurobindo, the later Narmada Shankar, Tilak, Motilal Nehru and the early Gandhi, thought that British rule was both a consequence of India's degenerate state and an opportunity to turn the corner. Like their

rulers, they too conceptualised the colonial encounter in pedagogical terms. Indians needed to "improve" themselves, "sit at the feet" of their rulers and "learn" all the skills and virtues necessary for their regeneration. (Parekh 57)

In fact, as late as World War I, Gandhi consistently privileged the Moderates in the Indian National Congress who favored the gradualist approach to independence. Parel indicates that his rejection of other nationalist agendas was so stark that there was

little doubt where Gandhi's sympathies lay. The Moderates stood for swaraj defined as self-government within the empire, achieved through the constitutional means of gradual reform 'granted' by the imperial parliament. This was [also] the attitude taken by the early leaders of the Congress--Allan Octavian Hume, [and] Sir William Wedderburn. (Parel Introduction xxx)

Since Gandhi did not stray far from these ideals promulgated by the two Englishmen until relatively late in his career, he tended to support the imperial enterprise even when it directly conflicted with his own ideals.

Sofri indicates that Gandhi was willing to sacrifice his own ideals because he "consider[ed] himself a loyalist, convinced as he was that, all in all, the

actions of the British Empire were for the 'good of India and humanity'" (Sofri 61). In the face of his repeated calls for non-violence, he actively supported Indian enlistment in the army during three separate wars--even in the midst of some of his satyagraha campaigns. In fact, because he not only encouraged involvement in the war efforts, but also organized and actively participated in ambulance squads, he knowingly opened himself up to criticism from pacifist parties. However, his allegiance to empire was such that he was willing to risk his own credibility:

In London, where he arrived two days after the start of the First World War, he dedicated himself to organizing an ambulance squad, as he had already done in South Africa, made up of Indian students. Later, in 1918, he would accept the viceroy's request to publicize the war effort in order to recruit Indians. The war of 1914-1918 was the last occasion on which Gandhi pushed his loyalty to the Empire that far (in so doing, he attracted the criticism of several important exponents of international pacifism--then, and later on as well). (Sofri 77)

Gandhi's response to these critiques, interestingly enough, answered them by reinforcing the charges against him in the minds of his opponents. When attacked for

promoting the British Empire, Gandhi responded that if he "demanded rights as a British citizen, it was also [his] duty, as such, to participate in the defence of the British Empire" (Reddy 72). And again, when his critics questioned his allegiance to the same empire that drained India of its resources, he responded that he felt deeply about three "greater" ideals: "[to truth], to India, and to the Empire to which I own allegiance" (Hind Swaraj 7).

Undoubtedly, this commitment to empire stemmed from his perception that the principles of the empire had caused a profound beneficial change in the Indian social and cultural landscape. Reddy confirms that "Gandhi, at this time, had great faith in the principles professed by the British Empire...[and] sought to persuade the Europeans that Indians were a civilised people entitled to equal rights under solemn commitments by Britain" (Reddy 4). Of course, Gandhi felt that the only way to prove Indians were civilized enough to be entitled to equal rights was to engage in the activities of civilization--including the vicious wars carried out in the name of that same civilization.

Additionally, Gandhi saw the empire as a conduit through which India could benefit not only itself but other nations as well. After reaching the amalgamation of East and West and recreating the Indian past from this hybrid, Gandhi believed that India would be "able to make

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a proper use of our connection with the British nation, and make it beneficial to ourselves, to them and to the whole world" (Gandhi Modern 46). If India did not pursue this route, he prophesied that India would become a cultural wasteland: "We shall disgrace our heritage, and our connection with the British nation will be vain" (Modern 45). However, if his program were to be carried out, the empire, not just Britain and India, would become a more humane entity and India would have helped the imperial project purge itself of its abuses: "If we could but restore that faith in the supremacy of moral force, we shall have made a priceless contribution to the British Empire" (Gandhi Modern 50).

Of course, before being able to re-civilize imperialism, it was first necessary for Indians to finish civilizing themselves. The corollary to his often, but not always, positive portrayal of British culture and ideals is his repeated and frequently vehement attacks on various Indian--particularly Hindu--traditions. Not surprisingly both of these impulses came from the same source--a suspicion that Indians were not, in fact, as "civilized" as they pretended. Because of Gandhi's deep immersion into British culture early in his life, he continued to equate social practices with "civilization." From the beginning of his public career until his death, Gandhi consistently denounced "Hindu religious and social practices, the Indian lack of punctuality, the habit of

not answering letters" and attempted to bring these elements of civilized behavior to the attention of the Indian people through "pamphlets, books, extensive private and public correspondence and especially in his weekly papers whose crucial pedagogical importance he was one of the first Indian leaders to realise" (Parekh 96).

Parel indicates that Gandhi's pedagogical and civilizing moves were intended to "give Indians a practical philosophy, an updated conception of dharma that would fit them for life in the modern world" (Parel Introduction xvi). Apparently however, this updated dharma included elements which were explicitly intended to make Indians more acceptable to Europeans. Parekh explains that "a sense of racial inferiority" and the hope that he could make Indians into "energetic, courageous and disciplined people" drove Gandhi to

advis[e] his countrymen on matters of personal and public hygiene, social, civic and political morality, the best way to educate and bring up children, how to walk, talk, sit, sleep and behave in public and even on why it was wrong to burp and to break wind in public. (95-96)

For Gandhi, such behaviors like public flatulence were apparently indications that Indians were not refined enough in manners and social forms to be considered "fully civilized." Thus, while opposing what he called "class legislation," the early Gandhi at least sought to

educate Indians so that they would gain the same privileges as Europeans through a "long process in which they advanced to European standards" (Reddy 70).

Apparently, the kind of standards Gandhi has in mind deal largely with the ways in which gender is constructed in the British, Indian, and imperial spaces. Notwithstanding his attempts to reach brahmacharya, Gandhi exhibited many of the major features of phallocentric thinking.⁵⁹ In particular, he compulsively returned to the theme of Indian masculinity. In his view of the then current state of Indian affairs, the colonial government had "emasculated" the Indian male. The "effeminacy" of Indian men that he thought he saw in relation to the British was not confined simply to politics, but reached into every aspect of the colonized

⁵⁹ The phallocentric thinking I refer to here is the predisposition of men from both Indian and British cultures to conceptualize the nation as female, thus reinforcing oppressive characteristics of their societies toward women. McClintock calls this the "unthinkingly male" nature of decolonization where "the Manichaeon agon of decolonization is waged over the territoriality of female domestic space" (Dangerous 90). Thus, in spite of Gandhi's attempts to reach ब्रह्मचर्य, he in fact, as we will see later in this chapter, actively participates in the continued oppression of the Indian woman.

male's life, rendering him "less of a man." Thus, in Ancient vs. Modern, Gandhi attacked the reliance on the British court system for settling disputes: "Truly, men were less unmanly when they settled their disputes either by fighting or by asking their relatives to decide for them. They became more unmanly and cowardly when they resorted to the courts of law" (Gandhi Modern 12). In essence, although Gandhi is a proponent of pacificism, he views violence as a "masculine" trait. Since "unmanliness" and "cowardice" are negative characteristics, the inverse of what has been lost under the British, one must assume that Gandhi understands brute strength and violence to be desirable in "men."

Although Gandhi's constructions of masculinity and Indian effeminacy very much resemble similar values in British imperial discourse, his explanation for the decline of Indian manhood, rather than assuming cultural or innate elements in the Indic gene pool, postulates interference from the British to be the reason. In essence, the British systems of law and medicine have sapped the will of the Indian people (especially Indian men) and rendered them less than they should be. Thus, he claims that Western medicine has caused Indian men to "become deprived of self-control and have become effeminate. In these circumstances, we are unfit to serve the country" (Gandhi Modern 15). This fact, he argues, has softened the already weakened social

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structure and continued the "degeneration" of the Hindu nation.

As these systems have apparently not reduced the British to the same state as their Indian counterparts, Gandhi concludes that the lack of violent tendencies in the Indian male has lead to this depressing state. The British have been able to retain their "manliness" in spite of their participation in their "effeminizing" systems because they have recourse to aggressive outlets. This is, of course, one of the reasons behind Gandhi's endorsement of army enlistment discussed earlier in this chapter. Provided Indians have access to arms and the opportunity to wage war in the name of empire, this effeminizing trend could be reversed (cf. Parel Gandhi 6). Hind Swaraj argues that, although satyagraha is the most appropriate form of resistance, it is better for Indian men to commit violence than allow themselves to be shielded from it:

we have become emasculated and cowardly. We are not to assume that the English have changed the nature of the Pindaris and the Bhils.⁶⁰ It

⁶⁰ Throughout Indian history, these tribal peoples were considered to be inherently savage and warlike. Part of this attitude toward them likely came from their "failure" to be incorporated into the Hindu structures of

is, therefore, better to suffer the Pindari peril than that someone else should protect us from it, and thus render us effeminate...to seek unmanly protection. (Gandhi Hind Swaraj 44)

Considering the fact that most of Gandhi's writings concern themselves with questions of masculinity in the imperial framework, it is not surprising that gendered metaphors are frequent in his work. Apparently tempering his veneration for the British and their ways, Gandhi offers a critique of British governmental systems to his Reader in Hind Swaraj. Because the republican system of the British legislative branch contradicts his own view that a loose federation of villages is the best way for India to be governed, Gandhi attacks the British Parliament by accusing it of being like a woman (of ill repute):

the Mother of Parliaments [the British Parliament] is like a sterile woman and a prostitute...Parliament has not yet of its own accord done a single good thing, hence I have compared it to a sterile woman. The natural condition of that Parliament is such that, without outside pressure, it can do nothing.

"civilized" India because of their animist belief systems.

It is like a prostitute because it is under the control of ministers who change from time to time. (Hind Swaraj 30)

This analogy between "bad" women and British Parliament betrays one of Gandhi's prevalent attitudes toward women. I am less interested in the analogy between the governmental body and women, than the content of the analogies themselves. Obviously, Gandhi compares Parliament to these "types" of woman because he disapproves of both.⁶¹ His view rests almost exclusively on a conception of women as reproductive machines.⁶² The

⁶¹ McClintock, speaking about the defensive tactics of Boer culture following the Boer War, indicates that "[s]pecial opprobrium fell on 'nonproductive' women (prostitutes, unmarried mothers, spinsters)..." (Imperial 47). While she is not specifically speaking about colonial India, her observation holds true for most of Indian culture, particularly within high-caste Hindu circles.

⁶² McClintock states that this scenario is common among men in all cultures as a result of the fact that the male "has no visible proof that the child is his." She further explains how this uncertain "gestative status" produces oppression of women by men: "To compensate for this, men diminish women's contribution (which, as Irigaray notes, can hardly be questioned) by reducing

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"sterile woman" not only lacks the ability to bear children, but she "has not of [her] own accord done a single good thing." Not only does he make it explicit that he thinks childless women perform no beneficial (good) service to society, but such a statement also implies that sterile women *refuse*, rather than are unable, to reproduce. As this denial of the reproductive obligation is also apparently "of her own accord," the implication is that she must be forced to reproduce, presumably by a manly, and potentially violent male, whom he sees as being able to "impregnate people with good"--something which women, in his view, cannot do of their own freewill (Hind Swaraj 47).⁶³

Likewise, when Gandhi continues with his analogy, he states that "The Parliament is without a real master. Under the Prime Minister, its movement is not steady, but it is buffeted about like a prostitute" (Hind Swaraj 32). Again, this image of the violent man "buffeting" a woman appears. Presumably because many women resort to prostitution out of desperation, prostitutes must also be forced to engage in their "natural" and "rightful" activities. Parekh, tracking this kind of attitude throughout Gandhi's work, remarks that "strange as it may

them to vessels and machines--mere bearers--without creative agency or the power to name" (Imperial 29).

⁶³ Cf. footnote 55.

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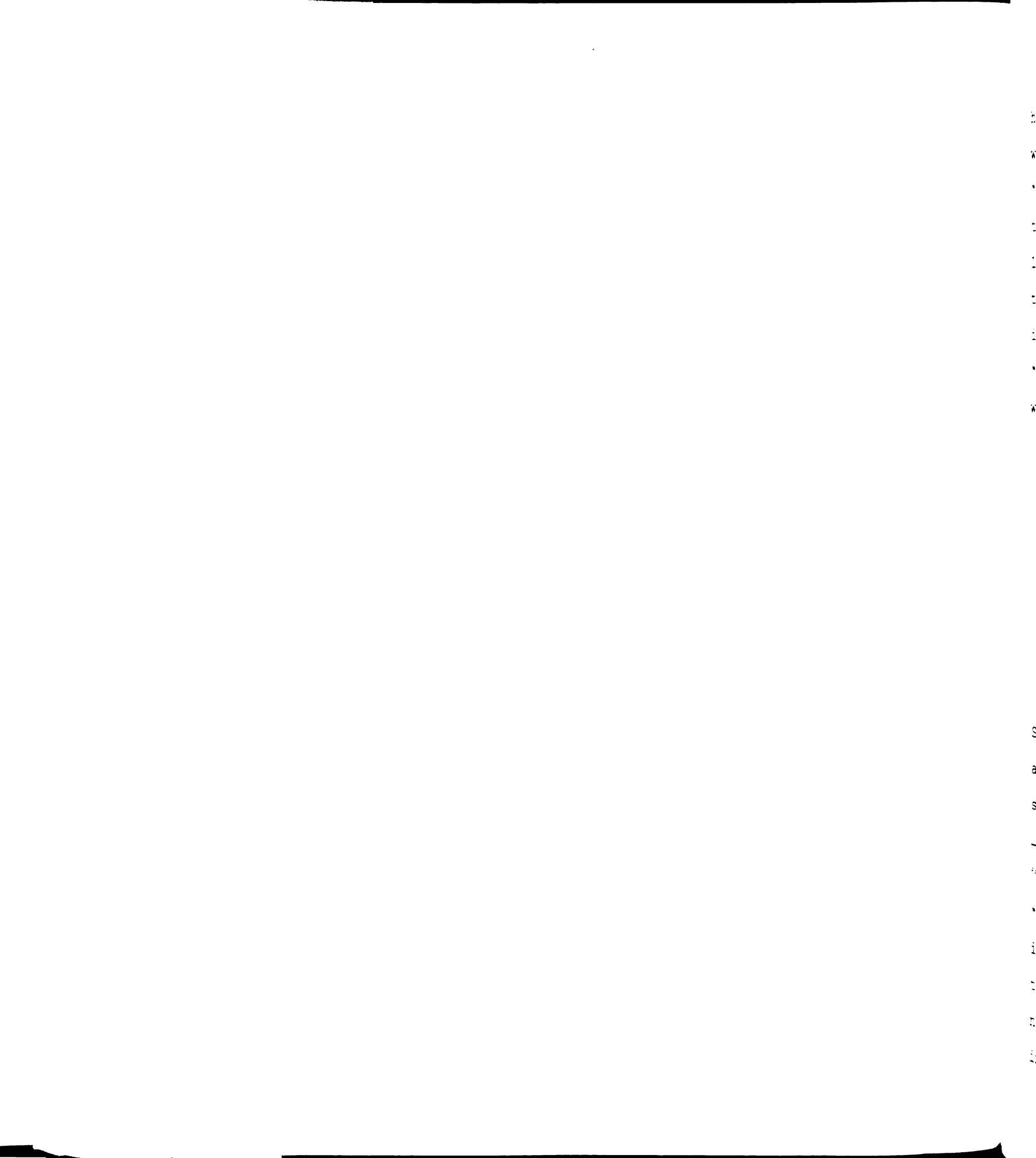
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seem in someone who aimed to unite man and woman, he discussed sexuality almost entirely from the masculine point of view" (202). This masculinist point of view is certainly readily apparent, as is the complete lack of any woman's perspective on being forced to engage in intercourse. In fact, what Gandhi's analogies represent is an underlying rapist mentality embedded within his enunciations. Parekh indicates that Gandhi expected that "men should act like animals" but that women should be "one hundred per cent pure" (202-03). However, it goes deeper than that because this idea of purity requires "spoilage of feminine innocence" in the name of reproduction. As such, Gandhi's discourse promotes the victimization of women. Furthermore, Gandhi's analogies also bolster his arguments that women, although he simultaneously claims that men and women are equal, have a designated place in the scheme of things and that they cannot step out of these bounds into male spaces.

The subject on which Gandhi seems to have lectured most was the role of women, especially their duties to family and nation. Of course, these two topics often merge because both rested on foundations which assumed that woman is fundamentally property and serves primarily as a reproductive apparatus. Hence, "Gandhiji did not give importance to the right of inheritance to the woman. If the woman does not get a share in her father's property, she gets her share in the property of her



husband" (Patil 53). Inheritance is "unimportant" to women because they have no need to be independent of men: "Nature has made men and women different, it is necessary to maintain [this] difference" (Gandhi Gandhi on Women 14). The difference between men and women for Gandhi was that they each had their sacred duties and "rights" imposed by nature.⁶⁴ He claimed that nature imposed "basic principles" by which "the fullest life of man and woman" (Gandhi Gandhi on Women 20) could be developed:

It is a woman's right to rule the home. Man is master outside it. Man is the earner, woman saves and spends. Woman looks after the feeding of the child. She shapes its future. She is responsible for building its character. She is her children's educator, and hence, mother to the Nation. (Gandhi Gandhi on Women 14)

Since "management" of the household is woman's "right" and "duty," Gandhi felt that the entire educational system should be overhauled so that girls would better

⁶⁴ Again, McClintock indicates how common this trope of "natural" gender rights/duties based on "the family" was in imperial and nationalistic discourses: "The family trope...offers a 'natural' figure for sanctioning national *hierarchy* within a putative organic *unity* of interests" (Dangerous 91).

fit into their place: "They should be taught the management of the home, the things they should or should not do during pregnancy, and the nursing and care of children" (Gandhi Gandhi on Women 15).

As "mother to the Nation," Gandhi expected them not only to "bring up the infants of the race" (Gandhi To the Women 27), but also to participate in the regeneration of India. However, Gandhi allowed them few areas of activity because, as he said, "She [woman] is passive, he [man] is active" (To the Women 27). Thus, Gandhi emphasizes "duty" (धर्मा, dharma) when he speaks to women, and of "manliness" when he speaks to men. Because of his perceived dichotomy between man's and woman's worlds, he exhorts women to keep duty as constant companion to make up for the lack of this virtue in men: "[t]he protection of dharma is in the hands of woman as men, being too much engrossed in worldly cares, often forget it and sometimes neglect it" (Gandhi on Women 31). By making up for the lack in men, women will be able to protect the virtue of future generations because of their nature as care-giving conduits: "Dharma has always been preserved through women. Nations have won their independence because women had brave men for sons" (Gandhi on Women 59). Although Gandhi seems to make them the active agents of change in this formulation, it must be noted that dharmic preservation occurs "through women" and not "by women." The actual benefit to the nation

comes about by "her sons." When all is said and done, it is again man who actively engages the world and makes the changes for the better (or worse), while woman, duty-bound, must remain in the home washing dishes and feeding children.

Despite the fact that, in the West, understandings of Gandhi and his place in the history of ideas tend to focus on his ideas of passive-resistance, Gandhi was himself far less of an exclusively Hindu mystic than he was an amalgam of British and Indian cultural traditions. Although in his later years Gandhi engaged in serious critiques of Western "modern" civilization, a recognition of his cultural hybridity yields an understanding that his programs and agendas rested squarely on the foundation of British ideals and cultural practices--as much if not more so than on their Indian counterparts. Essentially, the way this hybridity plays out, the amalgamation of British and Indian that was Gandhi worked because it fused the two cultures at the point where they overlapped with each other: the Indian woman's place in society. Both cultures have a tendency to view women only as objects of desire and to apprehend women as the primary carriers of culture, and as such, relegate them almost exclusively to the home--a practice which essentially elides conceptions of "women's rights" in either tradition. Thus, although Bhabha's hybrid fits Gandhi's historical role in the colonial relationship

between British and Indian cultures, and is obviously destabilizing to British authority in India, the same could be said of his relationship to Indian culture and tradition. More importantly however, is the fact that these destabilizations are only possible for Gandhi by defining woman as the origin--an unchanging starting point for cultural integrity. Therefore, Gandhi's programs and agendas, when they succeeded, did so at women's expense.

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CHAPTER 4

COMING HOME: ANNIE BESANT, INDIA, EMPIRE, AND THE INDIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

Empire requires a contented, strong
self-dependent and armed India.⁶⁵

Annie Besant's involvement in early twentieth-century Indian politics has been understudied and even ignored in Postcolonial Studies. I hope to begin what could largely be called a retrieval of her work because of its ramifications to the current state of the field. In this chapter, I read Besant's work in order to elucidate many of the shortcomings in the field, especially those that derive either directly or indirectly from Edward Said's Orientalism and Culture and Imperialism. I find that Besant's ideological positionings within imperial discourse are actually radically non-Eurocentric and that she mounts major critiques against Britishness. These attacks on British identity typically stem from extremely unflattering comparisons with Indian cultures and represent an indicization of imperial discourse in her work. Essentially, Besant disengages British identity from the imperial and replaces it with an Indian one. Thus, her work represents not only a serious destabilization of

⁶⁵ From Annie Besant, Builder of India page 79.

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Britishness, but also a simultaneous strengthening of imperial discourse. I find, however, that this redeployment of imperial ideological structures is not ultimately liberating for all Indian subjects as her formulation presupposes the perpetual subalterneity of the Indian woman.

The proper place to begin an analysis of Besant's destabilizing enunciations would seem to be her triumphant coup in Indian politics, which lead to the 1917 Indian National Congress. Traditionally, scholars seeking to understand the progress of nationalist sentiment in India assume that the "Indian" history behind this extraordinary meeting of the Indian National Congress dates back to the founding of the movement in 1885; however, the more immediate events prior to the election of the President of the Congress are unaccountable using the current paradigms and emphases of Postcolonial Studies. Consequently, the field misunderstands or ignores both the British response to the growing nationalism of the region and the perspectives of Indian subjects during this remarkable time. As discussed earlier in this dissertation, the aspect of hybridity with which Postcolonial Studies has the most difficulty is the figure and subjectivity of the "gone native." In fact, although this important figure recurs in the literature of imperialism from the founding

of the East India Company until the present,⁶⁶ few studies, and virtually no theory, even recognize the existence of this subject position in the imperial domain.

The events of 1917 have a history dating back to the very beginnings of the imperial enterprise, culminating in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century concept of Britishness and the way it played itself out in the colonial sphere. As long as no attempt is made to locate the position of the gone native, aspects of the functioning of imperialism will continue to elude scholarship. Despite the work of many scholars, sometimes in spite of themselves, even the most subtle and meticulous thinkers manifest a tendency to ignore complexity even as they tease out elements of it.

Working from the now traditional opposition between colonizer and colonized, British imperialism and colonial anti-imperialism, Postcolonial Studies tends to follow Edward Said's dichotomy between the two. It is also important to note that according to Said, the colonizer's perceptions of the colonized reside only in his

⁶⁶ For example, the gone native appears in Paul Scott's work, most notably the Raj Quartet, and in the 1996 Booker Prize winning The Siege of Krishnapur by J. G. Farrell.

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fantasies,⁶⁷ where no amount of contact or influence can alter the discursive institution that binds his thought. In Said's thought there is a sharp fissure separating colonizer from colonized which disallows both individual agency and the ability to understand one another across the divide.

Attempting to overcome this limited view, Homi Bhabha formulates the notion of hybrid subject position which is capable of destabilizing this binary through a "not white, not quite" existence where Macaulay's dream has come true--"English in all things except skin." However, according to Bhabha this end is something which imperial discourse cannot handle because it must maintain its own (British) cultural superiority in order to justify itself and its own existence. Finding that it has succeeded in its goal to "civilize the natives," it shrinks inward in a kind of self-defensiveness rather than triumph in the completion of its task.⁶⁸ In order to

⁶⁷ For Said the colonizer is always the European male.

⁶⁸ Bhabha explains that

colonial difference...is the effect of uncertainty that afflicts the discourse of power, an uncertainty that estranges the familiar symbol of English "national" authority and emerges from its colonial appropriation as the side of its difference. Hybridity is the

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apply Bhabha's insights to the gone native British woman, it is necessary to explore the ways in which imperial, Indian, and British identities interact. This chapter focuses on the rise of Annie Besant to the Presidency of the Indian National Congress, and the circumstances surrounding her ascendance into ever-greater positions of power in Indian politics at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Annie Besant is better known in the West for her socio-political reformist and feminist work in Britain, including the founding of the Matchworkers' Union in 1888 (Williams 177). However, she emigrated permanently to India in 1894 where her conversion to Hinduism became complete. Through the auspices of the Theosophical Society, she founded a number of religiously based schools throughout the subcontinent. As her involvement in Indian life progressed and deepened, she began to

name of this displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative. Hybridity represents that ambivalent "turn" of the discriminated subject into the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification--a disturbing questioning of the images and presences of authority. (Bhabha 113)

demand more equality for Indians from the British Government in India and eventually persuaded the Indian National Congress to adopt Swaraj (स्वराज, self-rule, independence) as an ultimate goal. All of these actions were steadfastly in defiance of British anti-sedition legislation in India. Her arrest by the (British) Indian Government on charges of sedition boosted her into the Presidency of the Indian National Congress in 1917. Besant continued to be a high-profile figure in Indian politics until the massacre at Amritsar under Dyer altered the face of Indian politics by completely discrediting the British and polarizing the struggle for independence. However, her cultural work was the inspiration for many reformers, and as I. Chirol explains: "no Hindu has done so much to organize and consolidate the [independence] movement as Mrs. Annie Besant" (qtd. in Bevir 220). Because Besant created a bridge "out to the masses through pamphlets and lectures in vernacular languages in a way the moderates [in the INC] had shunned" (Bevir 224), Gandhi was forced in 1915 to concede that he was not, in fact, the soul of the Swaraj movement.⁶⁹ Besant and her position in between

⁶⁹ Gandhi, not one to abdicate credit for successful campaigns, admitted that Besant, not himself, was the inspiration for India's demands for home rule: "She has made Home Rule a mantram in every cottage" (India 157).

Indianness and Britishness raises an interesting impasse for Postcolonial Studies since her subjectivity clearly falls within what Bhabha calls "hybrid space."⁷⁰ While Besant was an integral component in the nationalist movement in India, in Great Britain, her activities, although continually under censure by the British administrators in the Indian Government, were not understood as threatening either to the British state or to its empire.⁷¹

The fact that many Britons at Home and abroad perceived Besant's Swaraj movement and her fuelling of Indian nationalism in extremely different lights would seem to indicate either that there was no monolithic and

⁷⁰ Bhabha indicates that the hybrid "breaks down the symmetry and duality of self/other, inside/outside" (116). As such, Besant's breakdown of England/India, nationalism/imperialism represents a hybrid positionality.

⁷¹ McClintock explains that because of the fusion of temporal and spatial elements in modern discourses hybridity does not automatically produce destabilizing effects on the discourses of imperialism or nationalism: "the slippage between difference and identity is rendered non-contradictory by being projected onto the axis of time as a natural function of imperial progress" (Imperial 66). Cf. also footnote 57.

universal imperial discourse or that the location in which reception takes place helps to determine the meaning of enunciations.

While Besant's enunciations were clearly disruptive within the confines of the Raj, her work is not unambiguously anti-authoritarian. In fact her work consciously supports Empire. Of the critics who take up this fascinating figure, most confine their readings to her pre-emigration life, using the form of biography to laud her feminist work and principles. Of those that stray from this very limited presentation of Besant, Mark Bevir focuses on "the cultural challenge [she posed] to the legitimacy of the Raj" (211); Nancy Paxton elucidates the "gynephobia" embedded in Besant's "rebellion rather than complicity" stance in relation to the Raj (339). Both of these readings, and the handful of biographies, however, attempt to present Besant's resistance to the Raj in India as anti-imperial. Quite the opposite in fact is the case.⁷² Besant saw all of her actions as being securely in the service of Empire.

⁷² According to McClintock, the assumption that a female voice must necessarily upset the balance of power in the predominantly male-oriented discourse of empire is naïve because "gender dynamics were, from the outset, fundamental to the securing and maintenance of the imperial enterprise" (Imperial 7).

To ignore the specific perspectives from which Besant's interventions in questions of Empire and nationhood were received is to only understand part of the dynamics, which operate under the totalizing term "imperial discourse." In "going native," Besant took on a hybridized identity that was in conflict with most Western conceptions of Britishness--but not necessarily of Empire.⁷³

⁷³ Edward Said's claim that a "...static notion of *identity*...has been the core of cultural thought during the era of imperialism" is simply false because of the existence of the hybrid in imperial discourse. Given the amount of anxiety shown in imperial writings for the figure of the gone native, Said's assertions ignore a remarkably durable and central facet of imperial discourse. What causes Said's confusion is his misunderstanding of the distinction between imperial and national discourses:

Throughout the exchange between Europeans and their "others" that began systematically half a millennium ago, the idea that has scarcely varied is that there is an 'us' and a 'them,' each quite settled, clear, unassailably, self-evident...by the nineteenth century it had become the hallmark of imperialist cultures as

Besant's conceptions of Imperial space, unlike those of many of her contemporaries, repudiates the Anglo(Euro)-centric component of imperial discursive constructions. In other words, for Besant neither Britishness nor the British nation could be considered as center, or even normative, to any definitions of "human," "civilized," or even "imperial." Thus, her enunciations on not only Indian nationalism, but also empire itself, were, as Bhabha would have it, extremely ominous to the British in India. However, since her Swaraj movement also involved large numbers of British at Home, and seemingly was in direct opposition to the imperial establishment, it would seem to be a mistake to include the metropole and the Government of India under the same umbrella of "imperial discourse," particularly in relation to non-white colonies.

Contrary to popular understandings of imperial ideologies, "imperial discourse" does not actually exist as a single unit. Rather, nationalism and imperialism are discrete entities that overlap at various ideological points. Discussions of "imperial discourse" often

well as those cultures trying to resist the encroachments of Europe. (Culture xxv)

What Said notices in the Nineteenth Century is in fact the nascent nationalism that operates along a binaristic conceptualization where a hybrid is no longer possible.

mistake or confuse only partially congruent, but certainly, and for the same reason competing, ideological formulations--that of British nationalism and that of Empire.

In order to take stock of the kind of problem that Besant represents, I will use Edward Said as a kind of shorthand for now and look at more complicated understandings as the chapter progresses. Attempting to account for what he sees as the fundamental consistency and hold over the Western imagination that "Orientalism" has, Said imports Gramsci's notion of hegemony as a "form of...cultural leadership" where "certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others" (7). Having defined such a cultural leadership, Said claims that "Orientalism [is] a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (3). However, Said, drifting from Gramsci's formulation of hegemony, reconfigures it as completely absolutist. He explains that this "style" is so durable that it has remained "unchanged as teachable wisdom" from the 1840s to the present (6). Said even goes so far as to claim that "because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action" (Orientalism 3). If as Said indicates, no Western writer gave any thought to the subjectivities, reactions, or possible input "natives"

might have,⁷⁴ Besant's work cannot have existed. However, since this is not the case, it is apparent that our

⁷⁴ Seemingly unaware of Western writers like Besant, Sister Nivedita, Mira Behn, C.F. Andrews, or even Kipling--despite the fact that Said mentions several of them in his works, Said writes that

...Western writers until the middle of the twentieth century, whether Dickens and Austen, Flaubert or Camus, wrote with an exclusively Western audience in mind, even when they wrote of characters, places, or situations that referred to, made use of, overseas territories held by Europeans. But just because Austen referred to Antigua in *Mansfield Park* or to realms visited by the British navy in *Persuasion* without any thought of possible responses by the Caribbean or Indian natives resident there is no reason for us to do the same. We now know that these, non-European peoples did not accept with indifference the authority projected over them, or the general silence on which their presence in variously attenuated forms is predicated. We must therefore read the great canonical texts, and perhaps also the entire archive of modern and pre-modern European and American culture, with

conceptions of both Orientalist and imperial discourses must be reevaluated.

One reason for this discrepancy is that Said steps away from Gramsci's idea of the hegemonic and reformulates it into a monolithic and unchanging posture which not only rigidly refuses to evolve, but also actively and completely restricts thought within the dominant structures. In so doing, he necessarily must ignore any communication or collaboration between any aspect--including subjects--of the Orient or Occident.

Said of course does not explain how, while imperial discourse imposes rigid and specific thought patterns upon all members of a population, the most self-conscious and outspokenly imperial-minded could critique its fundamental assumptions about racial or cultural inferiority. It is interesting to note, for example, that although Said claims that "the 'what' and 'how' in the representation of 'things'...are circumscribed and socially regulated" (Said Culture 80), he also recognizes that "self-described imperialists...[were] remorselessly severe about the abuses and cruelties of

an effort to draw out, extend, give emphasis and voice to what is silent or marginally present or ideologically representing (I have in mind Kipling's Indian characters) in such works. (Culture 66)

the system" (Said Culture 241). Not only does this not seem to make sense in the context of brutally restrictive nature of the discourse Said paints, but it also overlooks the fact that British at home and British abroad were not necessarily identical. If in fact, as B.J. Moore-Gilbert indicates, it is a "mistake to assume that Anglo-Indians were simply the British abroad" (6). Britishness, Orientalism, and empire operate from different discursive frameworks--are not the same discourses--and unified in the ways that Said claims. In other words, when one discusses the British Empire one must recognize that one is dealing with more than one British culture.

Furthermore, if, as Said claims, "what can be said is socially regulated," domestic culture and imperial cultures would not necessarily be identical. The parameters of what could be said would also look different. With this understanding in mind, we can see that Orientalism by Anglo-Indians and Orientalism by Britons at Home would also be distinctive. Said is of course unwilling to admit that what he calls Orientalism was not in fact a single or even unified discourse. Said claims that "the Orientalist vision [authority over Asia and domination, oppression, stereotyping, etc.], a vision by no means confined to the professional scholar, but rather the *common possession of all who have thought about the Orient in the West*" (Orientalism 69, emphasis

mine). By insisting that this vision belongs to "all who have thought," he erases significant distinctions in the various conceptualizations embedded in these non-identical discursive formations. This totalization moves his description of Orientalist discourse from being simply dominant to being totally monolithic.

At times, Said hedges slightly when he discusses the foundations of the hegemonic discursive framework he builds in other places: "the imaginative examination of things Oriental was based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness out of whose unchallenged centrality an Oriental world emerged" (8). The middle section of this quotation, "based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness," is an extremely important part of this quotation. If in fact Orientalist discourse was wholly an imposition, and completely inaccurate at that, as he claims elsewhere, Said should not have to qualify this particular "exclusively" with a "more or less." What this sleight of hand hides is the fact that neither Orientalism nor imperialism was wholly imposed from without, but that following a more Gramscian definition of hegemony, one can see that they were at least partially co-constructed and voluntary. In other words, the way Postcolonial Studies understands imperial discourse, because it follows Said's lead, significantly elides the co-

operative elements which are necessarily an entailment of any hegemonic construction.

Said claims that "Centrality is identity, what is powerful, important, and ours" (Said Culture 324, original emphasis). He indicates that any Western subject must be a creation, manifestation, and propagator of "Orientalism" and "imperialism" as he defines them (cf. Culture 135).⁷⁵ However, the word "ours" for an individual like Annie Besant, a subjectivity which is simultaneously interpellated by the multiple cultures of Great Britain, Anglo-India, and India, manifests itself as a multi-signifying and almost undefinable concept. As president of the Indian Nationalist Congress and the Indian Home Rule Movement, Besant was clearly "a prominent actor" in colonial society. Annie Besant was the creator and a main protagonist in the Swaraj (स्वराज, Home Rule) movement during the first three decades of the twentieth century.

Contrary to all of Said's assertions that all Westerners must view "Orientals" as inferior, when Annie Besant reviews the histories of Britain and India, she

⁷⁵ Said defines Orientalism and imperialism as discursive formations which establish and maintain control of colonized areas by "disregarding, essentializing, [and] denuding the humanity of another culture, people, or geographical region" (Orientalism 108-9).

makes an unflattering comparison that not only questions Western superiority but also implies that it is inferior to the Orient:

Let Indian history be set side by side with European history...century by century...Take but the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth centuries...Compare Akbar's tolerance with the persecution of Protestants by Mary, of Roman Catholics by Elizabeth, and of the Puritans by James and Charles. Read the Penal Laws against Roman Catholics in Ireland, and ask if the English who enacted and enforced them, were fit for Self-Government. (How India introduction)

Furthermore, she writes, in contrast to the "5,000 years" of India's successful civilization (How India introduction), the Great War demolished any claim the West had to the title of "civilization." This display--a display in which the West actively invited participation by its colonies--was carried on with

...frank brutality and cruelty...the laying waste of cultivated lands, the bombing from the air of cities full of non-combatants...the slaughter of the defenseless, the destruction of magnificent buildings...(India 180)

These acts of barbarity showed to the world that there was only a "thin veneer of civilization over the savagery of [Europe]" (India 180). Thus in comparison with India,

Europe and Britain evidence a lack of social evolution and stability--two of the most important aspects of the civilizing mission's justification for the imperial enterprise.

However much this sounds like a condemnation of European civilization and imperialism, it is paramount that one recognize that this critique of the West and its heritage proceeds from a staunchly imperialist position. As Besant indicates, in her vision, empire is "the future not only of Great Britain [and] India...but of the World" (Builder 59). Besant's critiques of European civilization, therefore, far from questioning the legitimacy of the imperial enterprise, act as a buttress to support global colonization. However, the focus has changed dramatically from the export of European values to the export of imperial values that are not, according to her, simply a result of a European manifest destiny.

Besant's ideological objectives also raise questions about Postcolonial verities concerning the smothering effects of discursive formations. While attempting to make his point that Orientalist discourse was so pervasive that no European could help but take its terms for granted, Said turns to one of the most influential anti-imperialists of the late nineteenth century. He explains that "for an anti-imperialist like J.A. Hobson the Oriental like the African, is a member of a subject race and not exclusively an inhabitant of a geographical

area" (Orientalism 92). Here Said points out that often skin color is the determining factor in the classification of peoples and carries with it an evaluative judgment of individuals under that classification. He shows that, regardless of an individual's history, skin color was seen as an indication of "race," and for non-Europeans, this also indicated inferiority in Orientalist discourse. However, as Young points out in Colonial Desire, race was, even early in the nineteenth century, an ambiguous and contested terrain,⁷⁶ nowhere nearly as simple a concept as Said makes it appear. Besant, a staunch imperialist, and very much unlike Hobson in political perspective, should, according to Said's presentation of discourse, concur with the implications of Hobson's racial and evaluative demarcations--or at least disagree with him based on another understanding of "race." She seems, however, in ways that Said claims are impossible, to have resisted the ideological and definitional force of much of Orientalist discourse since she consistently denied any correlation between innate capabilities and characteristics associated with inherited melanin count. In fact, Besant's defense of Indian independence consistently points to the falsity of Oriental stereotypes. More importantly, however, her argument

⁷⁶ Cf. Especially Chapter 1, "Hybridity and Diaspora."

extends beyond making a case for equality between West and East to one that flirts with the idea of Oriental superiority. Justifying demands for Swaraj, she breaks down the major grounds for both the holding of India and the imperial project: color, the legislative incompetence of Indians, and Asian inefficiency.

In a speech on the "Coloured Races," she indicates that pigmentation is not a marker of superiority nor is it even an appropriate marker of race or nationality:

What is colour? The Kashmiri is fairer than the Italian or the Spaniard. In our Central Hindu College the headmaster, who is a Kashmiri, is far whiter than many an Englishman. He has a fairer skin. Colour is nothing. (Speeches 267)

Significantly, the speech from which this excerpt comes is directed towards an Indian Home Rule League audience in London--a British audience that had committed itself ideologically to the philosophy that British and Indians were fundamentally equals.

However, for Besant, because her vision of the future encompasses an expanded and significantly less British empire, simply proclaiming the equality of British and Indian is not enough. Because her program includes self-government and administration of the empire, she takes the imperial bureaucracy to task for not adhering to the ideals of democracy toward which it

claims to progress. In comparing indigenous systems of government to the imported system, Besant finds the British heritage deficient when contrasted to the Indian. Researching pre-British methods of government, she finds that the virtually universal village system (Panchayat, council of five, पंचायत) in India operated from the assumption that direct suffrage coincided with local concerns and was self-interested. This system ensured that all individuals understood the issues and policies at hand, while aggregating at ever-higher levels. She explains that direct "Self-Government [existed only] in the Village." Villages elected representatives to the "groups of villages--the Taluka; the aggregation of these into larger areas--the District; the grouping of the Districts into Provinces; of the Provinces into a Realm" (Shall 111). Under this bottom-up system, all voters were intimately knowledgeable of both issues and candidates for office and because of this she indicated that for her, "call it by what name you choose, [the village system] seems to me to be the only real and satisfactory form of Democracy" because

Self-Government, can only be carried on over an area where the people who compose the governing body understand the questions with which they have to deal...[in what the West calls] Democracy...the people who govern know practically nothing, for the most part, about

the questions as to which they have to elect their representatives...the great danger of what is called Democracy to-day is that...you bid them [those in power] vote out of the plenitude of their ignorance, instead of out of the plenitude of their knowledge...And yet we learnt in our school days that if you took a nought to begin with, and multiplied it by any figure, however large, you get but a nought in the end. (Shall 112)

In fact, Besant continues, democracy in the West, in her opinion, pales so greatly when compared to the Indian village system that she calls it an "absurdity" unworthy to be "called the Government of the people by the people" (Shall 111).

Besant's comparison of the two conceptions of democracy lays bare the extreme top-down nature of Western democracies--a philosophy that was imported into imperial administrative structures. The result of attempting to govern within this kind of hierarchy is to render local administrators relatively autonomous of their constituencies. For Besant, this is a major flaw in the Western conception of government: "'Paid by Government,' instead of appointed by the Village. There lies the secret of the ruin" (Shall 125). On the other hand, the traditional Indian village system, which maintains a considerable amount of localized autonomy

even in the administration's highest reaches, presents an enticing alternative to her Fabian sensibilities. With such an understanding of the two modes of government, Besant argues that Swaraj "...is not a question of blaming men, or of substituting Indians for Englishmen, but of changing the system itself" (Shall 9). The real world effects of her comparisons between Indians and the British were felt more forcefully by Anglo-Indians than they were in Britain because she directed her critiques more directly at the Government of India.

Actually, this was an elegant move because it partially distanced Britons from the way things operated in India, and they could dissociate themselves from what she was saying. The Anglo-Indians, of course, could not so easily escape the barbs she leveled against the West. Thus, when Besant presents damning information from the historical records of either the East India Company or from the Indian Government under the Crown, the "West" becomes understood not so much as the colonizing world, but rather as the specific makeup of imperial administration *as separate from Great Britain*. One can see how she weaves the unBritishness of Anglo-India into the struggle for Swaraj when she indicates that:

The ridiculous claim to "Trusteeship" [only exists] to camouflage the black treachery and intrigue by which men like Clive and Hastings dishonored the name of Britain, and imposed on

India a system of looting and oppression...

(Shall 34)

By linking the practices of Anglo-Indian rulers with corruption and evil, Besant effectively questions both the legitimacy of the Raj and the Britishness of the administrators in the Indian Government. This move of separating government administrators from Britishness exploits a distinction that was already current in Anglo-Indians' self-definitions. For example, when she condemns the "sahab-log" for imposing the idea that they are "our natural superiors" (Shall 31), Besant employs the honorific Sahib-log (सहिव लोग, lordly people, superiors) by which Anglo-Indians expected and demanded to be addressed. Also, in employing the first-person possessive (our natural superiors) in her works, Besant includes both intended audiences: the British at Home, and the Indian populace. By attacking Anglo-Indian claims of legitimacy, Besant effectively renders them "unfit...to continue to govern India" (Shall 88) without jeopardizing her support-base in Britain itself.

Anticipating objections to the traditional system by the kind of Orientalist that Said evokes in Orientalism, Besant goes on to cite evidence that seems to prove that this form of government still meets the approval of the people even after they were introduced to Western forms of democracy. In one instance where the Indian Government tested the old methods and allowed several

test villages to manage their own affairs, Besant finds that a Panchayat raised taxes without any disturbances whereas the central authority met with armed resistance when it attempted to do so earlier (Shall 132-34).

Similarly, Besant finds that the unBritish inefficiency of Anglo-Indian administrators and their imprudent reliance on pre-modern English history as a basis of comparison with India would make restoring the time-honored Panchayat a difficult proposition. She points out that British views toward land, views dating back to the enclosure of public lands, render local government a virtual impossibility in an agriculturally based region. She claims that the conversion of public or open lands is:

a danger in [Great Britain], where the landless classes...see the great wrong inflicted on all who are born into a land where the soil is owned by a section of the population...The "Permanent Settlement of Bengal" has created the analogue of the British landlord, with his unjust privileges and "vested interests."
(Shall 138-139)

Furthermore, Besant condemns the ways in which pre-British India, an extremely wealthy region, was drained of many of its resources first under the East India Company and then under the Crown. The self-interests of the Anglo-Indian overlords, in both cases, far outweighed

the needs of the people: "The present rule, while efficient in less important matters and in those which concern British interests, is inefficient in greater matters on which the healthy life and happiness of the people depend" (Shall 7). Unlike Besant's scheme to reintroduce the Panchayat as the main system of government, under British rule by either Company or Crown, the people have no recourse or input into the ways in which taxation is effected or trade rules are established. Because of this circumstance, she feels that she can

...prove the inefficiency of British Rule in India in matters on which the Life of the Nation depends...The exhausting nature of their rule is well shewn by the brutally cynical advice of Lord Salisbury to apply the lancet to parts not already bled white. (Shall from the Foreword)

Since Indian expertise represents one of the most essential devices by which the empire could be sustained, Besant explains that the refusal to allow Swaraj for India is a "short-sighted...criminally short-sighted [policy]" (Builder 83). The discrepancy between Anglo-Indian ideas of civilizational superiority and actual Western inefficiency represents a threat to successful management of the empire. Like Kipling (cf. Chapter 2), Besant finds Indian hybridity to be not only a corrective

to Western pomposity, but also a useful tool for promotion of empire. However, in her case, the hybrid assumes a static nature where it can be used as a point from which to define new binaries. The idea that Swaraj was necessary did not become a serious consideration within the INC until 1906 when Besant became a central figure in Indian politics, and Swaraj did not reach beyond her immediate circle in the INC until 1914 when she began the All-India Home Rule League because the moderate majority in the INC was resistant to taking this step (cf. Archibald 224-26). However, one can see the effect of Besant's influence in the INC as early as 1903 when the perennial complaint against mistreatment of Indian immigrants in other colonies changes to a demand for an assurance that Indians abroad share "all the rights and privileges of British citizenship in common with the European subjects of His Majesty" (How India 387). This demand for equal rights under empire, under the influence of Besant, expanded in INC Resolution IX,⁷⁷

⁷⁷ The Indian National Congress included verbatim the following text in its petitions to the British colonial government in India for the greater part of its pre-independence existence. Under Besant's influence, the Indian National Congress began the well-known boycotts and agitation--much of which is incorrectly attributed to Gandhi.

1907, to a demand to allow Indians to share in the exploitation of other colonies:

 this Congress protests against the declaration
 ...allowing the Self-Governing Colonies in the
 British Empire to monopolise vast
 underdeveloped territories for exclusive white
 settlement, and deems it its duty to point out
 that the policy of shutting the door in these
 territories...to Asiatic subjects...is fraught
 with grave mischief to the Empire and is as
 unwise as it is unrighteous. (How India 505)

Thus, we can see that the concern not only of Besant but also of the INC as an organization with discrimination in empire rests firmly on the fact that the colonial color-line as it currently stands is dangerous to imperialism, with "human rights" as a secondary matter. The INC's resolution states not that Empire is in itself wrong, but that the spoils (particularly in Africa) need to be shared more equally. It is also the case that the INC feels that India needs to have a greater share in colonization for the empire's own good because "exclusive white settlement" is an inefficient means of exploiting territory (especially in South Africa, to which Resolution IX explicitly refers). This inefficiency is a threat to empire itself because the empire can only continue if Britain and India are fused into a hybrid

colonizing force: "we will triumph with her, or we will go down with her in a world ruin" (Builder 61-2).

Although, as I said, Resolution IX only refers to the opening of South Africa to Indian imperialism, Besant's vision is much larger. She also has an eye out for the other parts of empire. A major plank in her platform for Swaraj is the necessity for an Indian Imperial presence throughout empire because of its potential military force:

Empire requires a contented, strong, self-dependent and armed India, able to hold her own and to aid the Dominions, especially Australia, with her small population and immensely unoccupied and undefended area. India alone has the man-power which can effectively maintain the Empire in Asia. (Builder 79)

In essence, Besant's ideal of Empire is nothing short of a complete eradication of the particularly British aspects of Empire with a subsequent fusion of Britishness and Indianness into a joint Imperial identity where India is "an equal partner in a great Indo-British Commonwealth" (India 26). This effectively severs the link between British and imperial identities while uniting imperial and Indian ideals in the discourse of empire.

As appealing as this erasure of notions of Western superiority are, there is a significant parallel between

Besant's imperial and British-nationalist discourses on the status of women within Empire. Besant indicates that the woman's place is an integral element in the maintenance of both the Indian nation and empire. Even though Swaraj within Empire is "a question of manhood, a question of National dignity" (Builder 65), it is predicated upon "the honour of your mothers, wives and daughters" (Builder 555). Significantly, the conceptual link between "the honour of [Indian women]" and the Nation and liberty reinforces the necessity of a clearly defined place for the Indian female within national and imperial space.⁷⁸ Besant calls on Indian men to:

⁷⁸ Typically, says McClintock, these gender roles are operative in nationalistic discourses because

[e]xcluded from direct action as national citizens, women are subsumed symbolically into the national body politic as its boundary and metaphoric limit...Women are typically constructed as the symbolic bearers of the nation but are denied any direct relation to national agency (Dangerous 90).

Besant, however, because of her still operative European racial identity, is free of these confines. This scenario allows her to speak with something of a male Indian voice.

think of liberty day after day, meditate on her, long for her, feel her absence as you would feel the absence of the one dearest to you...and liberty will come into your arms.

(Builder 54-5)

Thus while Indian men are fighting for their nation they are also fighting to keep Indian woman's place in society secure because with the woman behind him the man protects the future of "his" way of life.⁷⁹ As Besant states, "No Nation is made of men alone. The wives of a Nation give courage to their husbands, the mothers of a Nation train the generation that will inherit our work" (Builder

⁷⁹ Borrowing from Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias, McClintock identifies five ways that women are situated within nationalistic discourse as national/cultural supports: "biological reproducers of the members of national collectivities"; "reproducers of the boundaries of national groups (through restrictions on sexual or marital relations)"; "active transmitters and producers of the national culture"; "symbolic signifiers of national difference"; and "active participants in national struggles" (Dangerous 90). However, by far the most uncommon of these activities was the last because, even when women were allowed to participate actively, it was typically in a very limited or circumscribed fashion.

360). Of course, this work is the battle for control over one's own life, one's own home, and one's own nation. This need for a safe place in empire will "nerve our men to fight and our women to sacrifice" (Builder 518).

The logic behind this safe place which allows men to fight and be manly while women sacrifice is the same as in the Anglo-imperial ideal; the woman is the conduit through which the nation's children either thrive or founder. These children are then in turn the muscle behind the imperial project. Thus,

The wife inspires or retards the husband; the mother makes or mars the child...The power of woman to uplift or debase man is practically unlimited...[so] leave the Hindu woman untouched by Western thought...We have women enough who are brilliantly intellectual and competent; let us leave unmarred the one type which is the incarnation of spiritual beauty. The world cannot afford to lose the pure, lofty, tender, and yet strong, type of Indian womanhood. (Builder 546)

In other words, the Indian woman must not be allowed any form of hybridity ("untouched by Western thought") because she must remain the essential(ized) scaffold ("pure, lofty...type") upon which the hybrid Indo-British Empire will rest. Besant is here reproducing what Diana

Archibald calls the "holiness of home" in Anglo-imperial and Victorian discourse (228). In the idea of the sacred space of "home," "Women were held up almost as icons of the civilizing mission of the British Empire" (Bevir 217). Cohn concurs with the point that British women in India represent "home" because they were "restricted" to "areas defined as British space" and were rarely seen outside of their homes or other domestic contexts (137). In this capacity, women were able to create a "safe place" in colonized space for the colonizing British male:

By faithfully reproducing the cherished cultural practices of England--no matter how nonsensical such practices appeared under the Southern Cross--women, in a sense, "exported" England to their new country to assist them in constructing a "real" home...since home is England, and the essence of England is its culture, then one can have a home outside England if only one can properly maintain British cultural practices. (Archibald 233, original emphasis)

As we have already seen, Besant's quest for a colonizing India reproduces, if with a significant difference, the imperial logic of colonization. Thus, instead of the British female assuming the role of cultural guardian in the form of "the angel of the home," it is the Indian

woman (or in Besant's ideology, the Brahman [Hindu] woman) who can better fulfill this role for nation and Empire:

[The National Movement] must see in the woman the mother and the wife...It cannot see in her the rival and competitor of man in all forms of outside and public employment, as woman...is coming to be more, and more, in the West...[T]he national movement for the education of girls must be one which meets the national needs, and India needs nobly trained wives and mothers, wise and tender rulers of the household...helpful counsellors of their husbands...rather than girl-graduates, educated for the learned professions. (Speeches 73)

For Empire to succeed, Indian women must renounce any social function that might seem to be a male domain. Interestingly enough, Besant's logic is such because, to her, Western women have already proven themselves unfit for the task of colonization and are absolved from their colonial duties as icons for the civilizing mission. However, since Indian women, and their place in Indian cultures and society, are closer to the needs of imperialism, their training in household duties will

prove adequate to the needs of the young daughters of India, and would train them up into useful and cultured women, heads of happy

households, "lights of the home." (Speeches
79)

Certainly, the correlation between Manu's ideal of woman and the "light of the home" and the Victorian ideal of the "angel of the house" indicates the centrality of woman's place in the imperial enterprise as the carrier of imperial culture.⁸⁰ Significantly, and, to me, disturbingly, for today's critics as well as her contemporaries, Besant is best known for her feminist activities and female-uplift programs in Britain before her emigration to India. This is the case even though her ideas concerning the advancement of women in British society do not have a correspondence to her ideas regarding the Indian woman's place in nation and Empire, or to "savage" women like Africans (काफ़ीरी), whom she saw as little more than advanced animals!

As we have seen, Besant's conception of race is more complicated than simply a matter of color and is further influenced by the notion of caste status as a marker of

⁸⁰ Anne McClintock traces the ways in which woman represents both the nation and its culture in the decolonization process. She indicates that "both colonizer and colonized are here unthinkingly male, and the Manichaeon agon of decolonization is waged over the territoriality of female, domestic space" (Dangerous 90).

worth. If we look at her attitudes toward "Kaffirs" and out-castes (सुद्रा) we find that "race" is actually conceived in bio-cultural-religious terms (Speeches 84) where what we would usually consider to be race and class are fused under the category of "caste." The four traditional castes (वर्णा), as opposed to the jatis (जाती) or social divisions by occupation, are not so much "race" as levels of spiritual purity, at least theoretically. For Besant then, the Kaffirs (काफीरी, meaning "unbelievers") and the Sudra (सुद्रा) are similarly "out-caste" (spiritually impure), or, more derogatorily, "hubshis" (हुब्शी) or, only slightly less insulting, "black people or black men" (काले लोग या काले आदमी). This is the sense in which Besant uses these terms, and in which she places her ideal of imperial womanhood. In the caste system, Brahman is the highest caste because of its hypothetical closeness to primal Aryanness and spiritual purity. It is here that she positions herself:

Besant used Hindu teachings to structure her daily life. She began to perform *puja* (daily worship) as would an orthodox Brahman; she adhered meticulously to the various Hindu rituals that surround eating and ablutions; she wore traditional Indian clothes--showing a clear preference for a dramatic all-white sari...There could be no greater contrast with

the official British stance toward Hinduism.

(Bevir 218)

Although Bevir's description clearly provides the details of Besant's self-placement within the context of Brahmanism, his explanation of the "dramatic" effect of the all-white sari mistakes what she is enunciating in her choice of dress. Because white is a symbol of holiness and spirituality, Besant equates these traits with her struggle for an imperial-nationalism. Also significant is the fact that she places herself in the position of a Hindu widow (the other signification of a white sari), despite the fact that she was divorced and not widowed. Hence, the white (British) woman, who is cut off from her true imperial self, is dead to the duties of the household and instead dedicates herself to holiness-nationalism-imperialism. This is the logic that allows her to displace the burden of carrier-of-culture onto the idealized Indian woman while justifying the deviation from the "angel of the house" stereotype for British women. It is in this context that Besant is able to state convincingly that "[w]e have women enough who are brilliantly intellectual and competent." Since we cannot all be widows, British women then have agency outside the home without having to be "marred" in the same way that an Indian woman would be. Thus still enabling British women to acquire hybrid subjectivities

within Imperial culture, Besant's reclassification denies a similar opportunity for Indian women.⁸¹

However much this redefinition of Indian woman rather than British woman as center and carrier of imperial virtue seems complicit in the Anglo-imperial project, it was extremely destabilizing to the framework of British-colonial identity because "[c]entrality is identity" (Said Culture 324). As Bevir indicates, this redefinition of Imperial identity "challenged the cultural basis of the Raj" (220) because

the Raj institutionalized public identities based on a Christian discourse. Because British rule in India relied on a form of Christianity for its legitimacy, to renounce Christianity and to champion Indian religions...was to challenge the legitimacy of British rule. (Bevir 213)

By placing the Indian (Brahman) woman at the center of cultural identity instead of the British middle-class

⁸¹ Critiquing some Western feminisms, McClintock warns that "[f]eminism is imperialist when it puts the interest and needs of privileged women in imperialist countries above the local needs of disempowered women and men, borrowing from patriarchal privilege" (Dangerous 109). This characterization of Western feminism clearly applies to Besant's work in India.

woman, Besant enacted a reversal of British imperial policy, which had obtained since Macaulay's "Minute on Indian Education": "there was near universal agreement that the point of the Raj was to bring the British way of life to the Indians, not the other way around" (Bevir 217).

As we have already seen, color *per se* is no longer a factor for Besant's imperial vision. However, the hybrid culture which empire represents becomes a static category that does not simply destabilize or question binarisms, but eradicates and replaces both poles (British/Indian) in favor of homogenization of the two (Indo-British, or Aryan, civilization).⁸² Once this is accomplished, this new third space is immediately positioned against "savagery." She states that the imperial hybrid exists "for the sake of humanity at large" (India 198) because imperial hybridity represents a knitting of "East and West together for the welfare of the whole world" (Builder 58). Unlike Kipling's unspeaking, Besant's hybridity allows for the creation of new binaries that justify imperialism. The hybridity that Besant lauds

⁸² Also, it is important to notice that, although Besant breaks down the binary opposition between India and Britain, she must necessarily relocate it between "civilized" Britain/India and "savage" Africa.

allows the empire to reunite the previously severed "branches" of the "Aryan race":

We must meet him [the Indian] on equal terms, and not as if we belonged to a higher race. We are all the same race, the Aryans...Colour is nothing; race means a great deal. This is one thing I ask you to remember, that race does matter, colour does not. Colour is superficial, but race governs the building of the body. (Speeches 267-68)

Clearly, Besant's invocation of the mythic origins of the Aryan "race" allows her to argue that Indians deserve to be seen as equals in the imperial project because of the joint pre-historic heritage Britons and Indians share. Such a vision, one shared by the Indian National Congress at the time, clearly undermines the idea of British-cultural supremacy and places both India and Great Britain as essentially imperial, rather than simply national powers, where both are "branches" of a single "mighty and imperial race" (How India lii).

It is here that Kipling's de-essentializing of "Orientals," and his attendant glorification of "hybridity," and Besant's conception of an "imperial Aryan race" coincide. In both Kipling and Besant's visions of Empire, color holds secondary importance while the hybridity of East and West (specifically of India and Britain) represents a re-fusion of the temporarily

separated unity of Aryan-imperial identities; or in Besant's words, a reuniting of the branches of the "mighty and imperial race." The threat to Britishness as a category of either culture or identity is significant. In fact, in both of these ideals of empire, Britishness is rendered secondary to the greater Imperial identity because Britain represents the "younger branch" of the imperial race, and is ultimately only supplemental to the greater strength and continuity of India, hence Besant's vision of an *Indo-British* rather than *Anglo-Indo* Empire. Taking this vision to its logical conclusion, Besant reworks Disraeli's argument for Victoria's assumption of the title Empress. Although the context for Disraeli's comments had radically changed by 1908, Besant seizes on this earlier image of imperial instead of national identity to argue that India, rather than simply being an equal or integral component of Empire, is or will be the center--thus completely displacing Britain and British identity in favor of an Indo-Imperial one:

it might be that the centre of the Empire might shift from the unruly West to the loyal East, when the Monarch of the Empire might be enthroned in the great continent of India, instead of in the little Island of the northern seas...Only among such citizens, only in an India peopled by such men, could the centre of

the Empire be established. (qtd. in Builder 500)

Besant's vision of "India's place among the free and civilized Nations of the Empire and the outside world" (India 176) within the context of an over-arching Imperial identity (How India 580) gives us a better understanding of the Indian National Congress's demands to recognize India as the major colonizing force within empire. As Besant indicates, India will proceed along and improve the techniques of Anglo-colonialism: "Where England [or India] has to do with savage peoples her path is comparatively simple" (Speeches 132), because:

We have [in] the Colonies...mostly people of a very low type, both intellectually and morally, people, who are almost savages. Take for instance, South Africa, where we have Kaffirs. We are dealing there with people who are practically children, and need to be treated as children, because they are fit for nothing else...They ought never to have any share in the Government, or be regarded in any sense as citizens. They are only fit to be taught, trained, and helped, and the cruelest thing to do is to give them liberty, for they only abuse it. (Speeches 258)

This chilling statement reminds us of how seriously implicated the nationalist projects of decolonizing

countries are in imperial ways of knowing. The nationalist ideologies of Besant and the early Indian National Congress simply redefine many of the empire's own categories, even if radically destabilizing British nationalism in the process. The early Indian nationalist project keeps a hierarchy of peoples and types--even if less color-based than the Anglo-racist imperial categories tended to be. This obvious fit between imperial and nationalist thinking calls for an exploration into other redefinitions and tangents between the two supposedly distinct discourses of empire and colonial nationalism.

What Besant's thought finally represents is a series of stark contradictions stemming from her position in hybrid space. Like Bhabha's stairwell, Besant is only able to mount her destabilizing attacks on Britishness by reconstructing polar oppositions from the space of hybridity. Of course, this is not what Bhabha theorizes, but by applying his concept of hybridity to Besant, we can see that when we move from theoretical formulations of the Third Space to actual instances of it, the result is that we must necessarily become disillusioned. Undoubtedly, this is the reason that Bhabha has consistently refrained from grounding the concept. However, I might point out that even though it does not work as flawlessly as Bhabha would have us believe, without this concept an analysis of Besant's role in

Indian politics would be difficult, if not impossible, to perform.

CHAPTER 5

PUNDITA RAMABAI: CHRISTIANITY, NATIONALISM, AND THE HINDU WOMAN

[W]e see all around us in India
a generation of men least deserving
that exalted appellation.⁸³

Within Indian national culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Annie Besant wielded immense power and influence. Although later national historiography attempts to minimize her position within the National Movement and her impact on Indian thought of this period, still she virtually always finds mention in national histories--even if her contributions tend consistently to be downplayed. Pundita Ramabai's life, work, and contributions, however, have been wiped away by a much more thorough eraser. Likely, the reason behind this erasure of Ramabai is the fact that, unlike Besant, her strategies and contributions to Indian nationalism were out of sync with the particularities of nationalist ideology of the twentieth century.⁸⁴

⁸³ From Pandita Ramabai's The High Caste Hindu Woman (96).

⁸⁴ Uma Chakravarti indicates that "Ramabai's absence from dominant history is not a case of forgotten history but a case of suppression...[because] Annie Besant's life was a counterpoint to that of Ramabai and was probably

Both Besant and Ramabai conspicuously and consciously assumed the role of high-caste (Brahman) widow. Both women chose the white sari of holy purity, and observed many of the rituals of Brahmanic tradition--avoiding the consumption of animal products, observing ritualized washing, and devoting themselves to holiness and physical and spiritual purity, etc. Both were concerned with the state of the "Hindu nation" and Indian nationalism under the British Raj, couching their concerns in similar ways, which seemed to carry patriarchal and gender biases (i.e. the "feminization of the Indian male," "lost manhood," and "effeminization" of Indian culture). And both were recognized as important social and spiritual authorities of their time; Ramabai, when bestowed the title of पंडिता (Pandita)⁸⁵ had been

perceived as such" (viii) and that "unlike Ramabai...the controversies around Annie Besant were not of the kind incapable of being accommodated within the dominant nationalist discourse in history, whereas in the case of Ramabai this appears to have been impossible" (ix).

⁸⁵ This term is derived from पंडित (Pandit, a learned man). पंडिता was not actually in general usage either during the time this title was bestowed on Ramabai nor is it currently in use; it has been, however, re-coined several times over the course of the last three millennia for a

declared to be an incarnation of सरस्वती (Sarasvati, the goddess of wisdom), while Besant's triumphant conversion to Hinduism and her devotion to the Eastern section of the Theosophical Society also positioned her in the role of guru.

However, despite these marked similarities, Besant and Ramabai's ideological positions operated oppositionally to each other. Ramabai's conversion to Christianity⁸⁶ in the face of tremendous hostility within Brahmanic--and Indian--culture in general is but the most obvious. This conversion, by a traditionally and highly-

few women who have demonstrated considerable learning in the Vedas and Shastras.

⁸⁶ Prior to her departure for England, Ramabai declared that "Nothing would induce me to embrace Christianity" (Ramabai Pandita 103). However, within 5 months of landing on British soil, Ramabai officially entered the Church of England through her and her daughter's baptisms. In response to insinuations that she converted for material gain, Ramabai refused to attempt to justify her conversion, but would simply reply, "It is indeed too true that I never believed in Christianity and its teachings until the time I left India" (Ramabai Pandita 111).

educated Brahman⁸⁷ no less, seemed to imply that the future of Indian social reform--as well as Indian society itself--lay in wholesale Westernization.⁸⁸ Similarly, as the linkages between British colonialism and Christianity were not lost on the early nationalists, Ramabai's conversion and continual efforts at proselytization and evangelization raised the spectre of perpetual servitude

⁸⁷ Of course, the Brahmanic education Ramabai received was highly unusual for a woman. In general Vedic and Shastric learning is reserved exclusively for Brahman men. This, of course, is one of the reasons that the title of पंडिता has so rarely been given in Indian history; females are traditionally barred from this kind of education.

⁸⁸ In 1918, she received the Kaisir-i-Hind medal from the British Indian Government for her services to India (cf. Heroes 31). In actuality, the results of Ramabai's work bear a striking similarity to the reformist activities of other nationalists of this time. The greatest difference is that Ramabai made no attempt to hide the Western influences on her thought whereas other groups were consciously cloaked their rhetoric by employing more indigenous metaphors and methodologies to disguise the Anglo-centric aspects of their dealings.

under the authority of British Empire.⁸⁹ Hence, because her approach, enunciated by someone from one of the most subaltern groups in British India, was a viable alternative to Brahmanic nationalism, Ramabai represented a serious threat to the nascent national movement.⁹⁰ Whereas Besant vigorously endorsed imperialism--even further expansion and conquest--Ramabai's efforts toward indicization of Empire mirrored the aims and goals of many early nationalists (virtually all of whom were high-caste), particularly those involved in the Indian

⁸⁹ Chakravarti explains that the uninterrupted linkage between Christianity and imperialism, which continues into today's time, is part of the reason that reformists in general and Ramabai in particular have been erased from national history in India: "historical writing in both the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as now indicates that there has been an easy conflation not only of nationalism with Hinduism but more importantly of Christianity with colonialism" (ix).

⁹⁰ Chakravarti also states that "Ramabai's critique of Brahmanical patriarchy and her decisive break with its oppressive structure through her conversion to Christianity were too much for those riding the high tide of history and for whom nationalism was synonymous with Hinduism" (vii).

National Congress and the Home Rule League, both of which were deeply indebted to Besant.

In many ways, thus, Besant and Ramabai exist on opposite ends of the political, social, and cultural spectrums. As such, Besant's agendas were much more easily incorporable into the national consciousness of the dominant and elite classes and castes of Indian society. Also, as indicated throughout this dissertation, the ways in which one is positioned within discourse--and therefore within the hybridized spaces of discourse as well--play a pivotal role in how and why certain voices enter and are received into discourse. As with Chapter 4, this chapter seeks to understand what happens when a woman enters into imperial and nationalist discursive structures; however, this final chapter looks at how the challenges to, and ambivalences of, the discourses operate when enunciated by a high-caste convert, rather than when undertaken by an Indicized British woman.

Few characters of the past embody Bhabha's articulation of hybridity as well as Pandita Ramabai's positionality in Indian national and imperial history. Bhabha indicates that hybridity exists when the subject inhabits the position of the "interstitial passage between fixed identifications...that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (4). Ramabai's own existence in the spaces between Britishness

and Indianness, maleness and femaleness, Christianity and Hinduism, where the privilege perpetually shifts from one pole to the other without finally resting in either location, matches Bhabha's understanding of the hybrid space in ways that no other of the individuals examined in this dissertation are able to accomplish. My argument is that, because Ramabai's position (the Indian woman) is the shared ideological structure of all discursive structures in the imperial domain, her enunciations are the only ones capable of fully producing the effects that Bhabha theorizes. Only subaltern positionality is capable of truly disrupting hegemonic discursive structures on both sides of the imperial equation because

[t]he paranoid threat from the hybrid is finally uncontainable because it breaks down the symmetry and duality of self/other, inside/outside. In the productivity of power, the boundaries of authority--its reality effects--are always besieged by 'the other scene' of fixations and phantoms. (Bhabha 116)

Although acknowledged by Hindu authorities as an incarnation of सरस्वती because of her demonstrable understanding and expertise in Vedic and Shastric learning, she later married a सुद्रा man, a match which was by no means socially acceptable for a Brahman woman, and after his death, turned to Western education and Christianity in her quest to form and transform Indian

nationalism. However, even after her baptism in the Church of England, she continued to observe many Brahmanic forms and rituals in her daily life--including the traditional role of Hindu widow, via the tonsuring of her hair, rejection of ornamentation, and the wearing of the white sari. Along with her continued vegetarianism, the forms of widowhood paradoxically declared her to be, within the Hindu community, not only a non-person of ill-omen, but also the symbolization of purity and holiness.⁹¹ In fact, Ramabai so vehemently believed that the basis of the Indian nation was, indeed must be, Hinduism that she rejected the idea that conversion of an Indian should be, or even could be, ever total. Such a scenario, she felt, constituted the denationalization of the person--disqualifying one's own Indianness in favor of wholesale Westernization.⁹²

⁹¹ Traditionally, Hindu widows are expected to devote themselves to purity and holiness following their husband's death. As a consequence, high-caste widows were unable to remarry. Also, although they were devoted to a holy life, they were considered to be person's of ill-omen for somehow causing their husband's death, and were therefore shunned.

⁹² Dyer indicates that Ramabai felt that "total conversion," renouncing Indian culture *in toto* with one's conversion to Christianity, denationalized the convert.

Ramabai's ideas concerning personal and national identity engage in, and critique, both sides of the imperial equation, which made it difficult for her contemporaries to comprehend her agenda. In fact, from the 1880s through the 1930s, it was almost impossible for her contemporaries to fit her into a pre-existing category. For Hindus, she appeared to be both Hindu and foreign (depending upon class and caste of the observer), while to Indian Christians, she didn't quite seem to be one of the "redeemed." However, when observers felt that they had to place her in a familiar category, it tended to be that of the traditional high-caste widow, a definition that nonetheless was continually haunted by her Christianity. Adhav indicates that

This, she felt, effectively alienated the convert from not only Indian heritage but also the ability to survive in India (cf. Dyer 41). However, writes Dyer, Ramabai

...realizing that Christianity was an Asiatic religion, and as such ought to be adaptable to India without any Western additions, she wisely determined to maintain her Indian habits in all customs of food and dress. She would show her country people, on her return to India, that to become Christians, it was not necessary to denationalise themselves. (Dyer 25)

to many, Pandita Ramabai remained a greatly misunderstood personality both within the Christian and the Hindu community. She did not care to clarify her position even when she was wrongly criticised. While speaking at several public meetings in India and abroad, she maintained: "I am a Hindu." (Adhav 41)

In essence, Ramabai's insistence on a Hindu identity despite her allegiance to Christian doctrines, along with her maintenance of the outward forms of high-caste Marathi Hinduism, places her in a position where her Christianity was so infused with Hinduism and its world-views that her contemporaries found it impossible to place her in a pre-existing cognitive category. Continuing with her description of Ramabai and her reception in Victorian India, Adhav explains that

[o]n her return from her foreign sojourn and after her baptism, Pandita Ramabai did not appear to many Hindus that she was a Christian at all. And to many Christians also she did not appear to be such...Pandita Ramabai...preach[ed] in Hindu temples. Preaching in the temples is called narration of the Purana and she did go to the temple and narrate the Purana from the Hindu scriptures. This...went a long way to convince many pioneer Christians...that she was not a real

Christian...[In spite of this, she continued to] discours[e] from several non-Christian platforms. All her actions then were alien to the then Christian community...She was, in fact, processing the orientation while her community was yet unprepared for such an untimely change. (Adhav 42)

Because religious conversion did not also imply a change in cultural allegiance as it did to so many other Hindu converts and missionaries, Ramabai never renounced her own Hinduism after her conversion to Christianity. She felt that there was no incongruence in her syncretism in such instances as narrating the Purana and similar actions. In fact, she states that "I do not understand what was blasphemous about my giving a *Purana* meant for Hindu ladies in the Hindu temple" (Ramabai Pandita 188). Because she never relinquished her Hindu identity, Ramabai saw no inconsistency in preaching from Hindu religious texts in a Hindu temple, although it appears that she would not have been comfortable preaching Hinduism in a Christian church. Similarly, preaching Christian doctrines in a Hindu temple seemed sacrilegious to her. In essence, for Ramabai, blasphemy, like identity or religion, is contextual.

Even the process of her conversion to Christianity bears the stamp of hybridity. Ramabai found herself accepting Christianity because of, rather than in spite

of, Hinduism. She explains that it was because of another convert, Father Goreh, that she began to perceive that her particular "Hindu" beliefs⁹³ were more clearly expressed in the ideologies and doctrines of the Christian bible and protestant tradition:

[Fr. Goreh] wrote a book...to answer my questions, and so I got to know the difference between Christianity and other religions, and it seemed plain, Christianity was the mother of the Theism of India. I had previously argued with missionaries, but they could not answer my questions, because they did not know the Hindu religion and philosophy. (Ramabai Pandita 108)

It was because of Father Goreh's own deep understanding of Hinduism that he was able to demonstrate to Ramabai, herself an authority on Hinduism, that her personal understanding of the godhead was more similar to a Christian iteration than ancient Hinduism:

I must say for the sake of truth that [the Sisters'] life was not the cause of my accepting the faith of Christ. It was Father Goreh's letter that proved that the faith which

⁹³ Or more accurately, Ramabai recognized that her Brahmoist, theistic beliefs seemed to be more fully expressed in the Christianity to which she was exposed in both Britain and in Fr. Goreh's letters.

I professed (I mean the Brahmo-faith) was not taught by our Vedas as I had thought, but it was the Christian faith, which was brought before me by my friends disguised under the name of Brahmo religion. (Ramabai Pandita 136)

Because her conversion represented not necessarily an embracing of Christianity for itself, but rather a formal change of faith in order better to conform with (as she understood them) the dictates of Hinduism, Ramabai's spiritual existence within the spaces of overlap between Christianity and Hinduism were perplexing, and threatening, to Western (European) Christians and Indians alike. In an exchange of letters, Sister Geraldine, claiming her right as Godmother to correct Ramabai's transgressions against the "law of the Church" writes

We [Sister Geraldine, the other Religious of Wantage, and the Church of England in general] respect in you the aversion with which you have grown up, to taking the life of any animal for food; but the matter of eating a pudding made with an egg, or the fruit out of a tart, I look upon in quite another light. I have often felt that little clings to caste prejudices which ought to have been thrown to the winds when you embraced Christianity, have been a fostering of pride which has held you back from accepting

the full teaching of the Gospel. (Ramabai
Pandita 142)

Thus, with a change in faith, the Church of England fully expected a change in not only belief, but also a total rejection of previous practices as well as the assumption of a new set of prejudices that were more in line with Western thought patterns.⁹⁴

Apparently, Ramabai's diet, because of its continuity and similarity to Brahmanic asceticism, represents something like backsliding to the Church of England and its representatives--including Ramabai's Godmother, Sr. Geraldine. What this indicates is that many missionaries during Ramabai's life had expectations that converts to Christianity would fully renounce any tradition, form, or observance appearing to have any link to Hinduism. In essence, Sr. Geraldine's rebuke indicates that conversion was intended (by the missionaries and other church authorities) to be a total rejection of Indian culture, understood as "caste

⁹⁴ By prejudice, my meaning is the same as Sr. Geraldine's, food taboos, etc. Her prejudice is against Indian culinary patterns and she assumes that if one is Christian, one will eat exactly as the British (Christians) do. One will not eat as Hindus do. Because one is a Christian, one cannot be a vegetarian.

prejudices," rather than a simple change in faith-allegiance.

Ramabai's stance in regards to her personal religion, as well as her politics, was to remain firmly in between the competing discourses of Christianity and Hinduism--accepting or rejecting neither of them *in toto*. As Bhabha indicates, this represents a serious destabilization of hegemonic discourse, but in the case of Ramabai, this destabilization operates not simply on imperial discourse, but also within religious and nationalist discourses. While Bhabha explicitly links the hybrid's discursive destabilizing features with imperialism, he understates its potential to disrupt other discursive formations, implying rather than emphasizing that this potential exists. Similarly, Ramabai's oppositionality took the form of active resistance rather than the passive "being" that Bhabha explicates in "Of Mimicry and Man." In her reply to Sr. Geraldine's indictment, Ramabai counters her Godmother's condemnation of her "non-Christian" behaviors by telling the nun that she may

...trace my pride in pies and puddings, butter and milk, water and rice, shoes and stockings, and even in the enormous quantity of coals that I daily burn. I confess I am not free from all my caste prejudices, as you are pleased to call them. I like to be called a Hindu, for I am

one, and also keep all the customs of my forefathers as far as I can. (Ramabai Pandita 142)

Dyer explains that this tactic, the maintenance of Hindu traditions and socio-cultural forms despite formal conversion, served as a powerful example of personal power (through hybridity) in the face of hegemonic and normalizing discourses.⁹⁵ Continuing with her praise of Ramabai, Dyer lauds Ramabai for being able to break from the trend within the converted population of India who adopted Western customs wholesale with the change in their religion:

Among converts to Christianity in India, especially those of the older Missions, there is a frequent trend towards a European style of living, fostered...by the life in Christian boarding-schools, conducted after European plans. This, by setting Western ideals of life before the Indian Christian, leads to discontent with the simple native customs of food and dress. Their incomes will not support them in Western luxuries; and, in consequence,

⁹⁵ Dyer indicates that "Ramabai persevered in her determination, and returned to India as much of a Brahmin in food and habits, save as to their religious aspects, as she left it" (25).

the converts find themselves frequently in debt and difficulty. (Dyer 24)⁹⁶

For Ramabai, the way out of this problem was to remain Hindu in all outward appearances, habits, and to continue with the forms of Hinduism, if not necessarily in its religious inclinations. Such a scenario allows the convert to exist both within the Hindu way of life and outside of the hegemonic structures of its cultural and moral practices and enforcement.⁹⁷

Significantly, such maneuvering between the two religious spaces while retaining adherence to Hindu proscriptions allowed not less freedom to impact Indian society, but more. By outwardly conforming to Hindu expectations, Ramabai was able to advance her own agenda

⁹⁶ Dyer explains that this kind of dramatic change in lifestyle represents a source of great misunderstanding in India during this time. She says that "This aspect of conversion to Christianity is looked upon with great disfavour by the Hindu community; and by its more ignorant members is regarded as part of the Christian religion" (24).

⁹⁷ Interestingly enough, Ramabai was anti-missionary for the same reasons. Adhav states that "She apparently did not believe in the missionary method of direct evangelization which she considered not only harmful but detrimental to the interests of all concerned" (26).

in even some of the most conservative world-views because her conformity to proscribed rituals and practices both reduced the *perceived* oppositionality of her interventions and, at the same time, represented a lowering of psychological defenses on the part of would-be patrons and supporters (and even to some degree, of her opponents). An example of this tactic would be the way in which she presented Christianity and its forms, doctrines, and practices to others. Through composing Christian hymns for converts, Ramabai sought to uncouple the ideologies of Christianity from their Western expression. In order to do so, she found it necessary to dissociate "traditional" Christian lyrics from their musical accompaniments. In translating, and even in writing, hymns, Ramabai sought to replace the logical structures of Western hymnology with "vernacular" rhythms and patterns--not just replacing the words. She sifted through the Hindu repertoire to find melodies that matched the expressive characteristics of the lyrics--in Marathi--because the patterning of religious ideas functioned differently in a Hindu-based society than in a traditionally Christian culture. By appropriating Hindu hymn-melodies and forms, she was able to make singing the praises of Jehovah more comfortable to hesitant converts, outsiders, and would-be converts alike (cf. Ramabai Pandita). In this way, she was able to evangelize without a wholesale imposition of Western values. This

kind of indirect evangelization, as opposed to the direct evangelization of missionaries who saw cultural transformation as a prerequisite to religious conversion, did not appear to Ramabai, her converts, or to many in the Hindu community as proselytization at all.

As this process duplicated her own spiritual journey, Ramabai was able to make Indo-Christianity look particularly attractive, therefore paving the way for others to follow easily. As with her own conversion, Ramabai's approach to evangelization was to use Hinduism to convert others to Christianity (cf. Ramabai Pandita). Describing her own journey into Christianity, Ramabai explains to Miss Beale, one of her friends in London, that it was Hinduism that led her to accept the verities of Christianity--not the "self-evident truth" of Christianity itself:

According to certain Hindu philosophy, god is said to be omnipotent, omnipresent, eternal, not subject to birth and death, and because all wisdom, all truth, all power, all fullness are the substance of His essence, He never parts with them. He is One, not subject to division, etc. But when He pleases He suffers Himself to be subjected to Maya, He becomes either incarnate, or becomes One but into many persons, (just as you [Sr. Geraldine] told me of the Trinity that they are one), but as the

air being one fills up different rooms, so the three persons being one fill three persons, yet they are one, and that at last these different vessels or bodies will be broken up and the whole essence will be again united. (qtd. in Adhav 153-54)

As this explanation indicates, Ramabai found herself attracted to Christianity because she felt it was a fuller expression of ancient Hindu teachings than those of her contemporaries. The couching of Christian doctrines in Hindu terminology also seems to be the way in which Ramabai's former religious commitment approached issues of social, religious, and cultural reform. The Brahmo Samaj, a Hindu sect which sought to "purify" Hinduism by covertly incorporating Christian ideological structures into South Asian religion so that Hinduism would take on characteristics of the more "modern" religion, Christianity, of the British, consciously inscribed itself as an outwardly Hindu sect, but with the important characteristic of a submerged Christian ideological structure operating in all of its interventions and discursive structures. While one could argue that Brahmoism was an outgrowth of Hinduism, and this would be true, it is also the case that the movement was a product of the merging of Hindu and Christian

religious thought which resulted in the particular type of theism it promoted and to some degree popularized.⁹⁸

That Ramabai reproduced the religious and cultural hybridity of the Brahmo Samaj in her own positionality after her conversion to Christianity is relatively self-evident; however, the important difference is that this conversion placed her farther out of the reach of enforcement practices of patriarchal Hinduism than the Brahmo Samaj was able to achieve.⁹⁹ By choosing to conform to ritualistic and cultural practices, yet being outside the reach of mechanisms of social coercion embedded within Hinduism, Ramabai was able to reach a

⁹⁸ The Brahmo Samaj was heavily influenced by Christianity and one of the society's major goals was the fusion of Hinduism and Christianity. According to an official publication of the Samaj, the Indian people "have now landed in a place in which knowledge and faith, letter and spirit, history and inner light, the past and the future, the East and West, harmonize" (Ramabai Pandita 9).

⁹⁹ Ramabai once characterized the Brahmo Samaj in this manner: "There are a few heterodox Hindus who deny all this; they are pure theists in their belief, and disregard all idolatrous customs. These Bramos, as they are called, are doing much good by purifying the national religion" (Ramabai High 4).

space in which her reform agenda could be understood as still being Hindu while she herself, as a reformer, was exempt from the retaliatory mechanisms built into the caste structures of Hinduism. Such a scenario led to her argument against denationalization, the complete shedding of Indian habits and traditions, because of the impoverishment such a change in lifestyle invariably caused.

Despite this seemingly strident commitment to Hinduism and a singular Indian nationalism, however, Ramabai never ceased in her reverence for England and Englishness. In fact, in her view, it was necessary to westernize rapidly because without the influence of Western paradigms and practices neither Hinduism nor the Hindu nation could long survive. In discussing Ramabai's progression as a social reformist, Adhav indicates that, in attempting to put her ideas into practice, Ramabai felt that all of her traditional Brahmanic learning "was not sufficient. She found herself educationally not equal to the task and in order to acquire higher knowledge of English and other sciences, she planned to go to England" (80). Thus, in order to effect reform in India, it is necessary for one to obtain a high degree of proficiency in the English language and in English ways of knowing. Ramabai's own reference to her choice to go to England reflects the supremacy of Englishness in her own mind, not just that of her biographer. Ramabai

indicates that "[her] wish was to come to England and thus fit myself for a life of usefulness, in order to benefit my countrywomen" (Ramabai Pandita 60). Considering her staunchly activist stance in favor of maintaining traditional practices and learning, it seems strange that she would find that without an English education, she would be effectively rendered "useless" and incapable of aiding other Indian women.¹⁰⁰ Years after her own quest for Englishness, Ramabai continued to send her most promising pupils from the Sadan out of the country for Western educations because she felt that to be truly useful for the uplift of both India's women and India itself young women must be sent to England or America for education (cf. Dyer 68).

¹⁰⁰ This is a frequent refrain in the literature on Ramabai. In fact, all references to this period of Ramabai's life emphasize the impossibility of her ability to make a difference without an English education. Dyer indicates that the reformist's feelings on the matter were that being "unacquainted with the English language, although so well versed in those of India," she could not hope to impact woman's position in the subcontinent. Therefore, "the idea that she should go to England for study and training forced itself again and again upon her mind" (Dyer 20-21).

In fact, Ramabai's commitment to Englishness as the salvation of not only Indian women but also of the nation can be seen as early as 1882, less than a year before her own departure for London. Quoting Ramabai's responses to the British Commission on Education in India, Rachel Bodley, writing the introduction to the third American edition of High Caste Hindu Woman, quotes some of Ramabai's statements indicating that Western education, and the English language in particular, are integral to the advancement of women in India:

It appears to me evident that the women who are to become teachers of others should have a special training for that work. Besides having a correct knowledge of their own language, they ought to acquire English...Mere [traditional Hindu] learning is not enough. (xvii)

However, Ramabai found Westerners to be wholly incompetent in the teaching of values to youth--especially girls. Therefore, she added that "the conduct and morals" following Indian standards "should be attended to" (Bodley xvii). So, although Indian education is inadequate, Hindu morality far exceeds that of the West and should not be sacrificed just to gain an English education. In addition to the maintenance of Hindu values in an English-styled education, Ramabai's rhetoric continually emphasized authenticity and the

natural growth of culture from within.¹⁰¹ For example, she explains to her American readers that they have to support her because

[a]ll experience in the past history of mankind has shown that the efforts for the elevation of a nation must come from within and work outward to be effectual. (Ramabai High 106)

In other words, Ramabai clearly understood why the empire, particularly in India, worked and the reasons behind any action of the British government in India. In writing to her American supporters about the fantastic odds against women's advancement in the subcontinent, she explains that

...the mighty British government, the one hundred and twenty-nine million men and the three hundred and thirty million gods of the Hindus, all these having conspired together to crush her into nothingness. We cannot blame the English government for not defending a helpless woman; it is only fulfilling its

¹⁰¹ Ramabai's stance represents a significant tautology. Basically, she claims that in order for India to develop on its own, it needs both the initiation of reform and its continued support from the West. In this way, the outside influence of the West is a prerequisite to the internal and independent growth of the East.

agreement made with the male population of India. How very true are the words of the Saviour, 'Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.' Should England serve God by protecting a helpless woman against the powers and principalities of ancient institutions, Mammon would surely be displeased, and British profit and rule in India might be endangered thereby. Let us wish it success, no matter if that success be achieved at the sacrifice of the rights and the comfort of over one hundred million women. (Ramabai High 67-68)

However, even though Ramabai clearly saw behind the veil of imperial rhetoric to its predatory and opportunistic core, she clearly also believed in the burden of social, material, and moral advancement, which comprises the twentieth century's understanding of the "White Man's Burden." Ramabai simply discounts the ability of government, particularly a government ruled by men, to be able to make the difference that the ideology touts. Western women, however, are integral to the advancement of both their "Oriental sisters" and of the Indian nation as a whole. Ramabai explains that "[h]aving thus far endeavored to bring to the notice of Western women the condition of a class of their oriental sisters, I now desire to direct their attention definitely to our chief needs" (Ramabai High 100). By drawing attention to the

financial, educational, and material "needs" of Indian women, Ramabai implies that the Western women listening to her call are in a position that Indian women themselves are not--the ability to fulfill those needs. In other words, in order for Indian women to progress in their work for the bettering of themselves and of their nation, it is necessary that Western women provide the foundation upon which the Indians will build.

In fact, Ramabai indicates that Westernization and direct intervention by Western women are not only necessities but also the duty of the West because "it is idle to hope that the condition of my country-women will ever improve without individual self-reliance; therefore, is it not the duty of our Western sisters to teach them how they may become self-reliant?" (Ramabai High 101). This iteration of the "White Woman's Burden" is interesting for several reasons. First, it indicates that she clearly understood that empire's main purpose was not for the advancement of imperial subjects. Secondly, it suggests that she did believe that this advancement could only come through the intercession of the West. Finally, her enunciation of the West's duty toward its imperial subjects undercuts both the idea of the civilizing mission, because the core of Indian civilization will remain Hindu in structure and ideology in her conception, as well as the predominant Brahmanic nationalism of her time.

Of perhaps even greater importance is the fact that this understanding of the West's role in the return of India to itself extends beyond the status of women. Ramabai's position on all socio-cultural matters indicates that this kind of hybridized Indianism, where the West serves as the catalyst for India's glorious return to its past, is in her view the answer to all of India's current problems: social, cultural, and economic. A particularly poignant example of this need for the West's intervention to "save" Indian culture is in Ramabai's plea to the Oriental Conference. Ramabai was invited as one of two Indian representatives to the conference, which took place in September 1881 in Berlin and focused on Sanskrit literature and language. Although she was unable to attend, Ramabai sent the delegates a long poem, now known as "The Sanskrit Ode," and asked the men to consider the status of Sanskrit in India and seek solutions to the dilemma the language faced on its native ground. The Ode, itself written in Sanskrit, begins:

Noble-minded and learned Sirs! May health and prosperity be ever present with you! Kindly receive the expression of my homage and devotion. O men of knowledge, the ancient Sanskrit language is at present times like an aged mother shorn of her beauty and bereft of her ornaments. For a long time, alas! she has

remained unhonoured; and now flees to you well-disposed scholars for protection. In the sharpness of her grief, she laments with a heart-rending cry of pain. Listen attentively, that her feeble cry of suffering may enter your ears. (qtd. in Sengupta 344)

This poem takes the traditional form of beginning with a panegyric to the addressee. In Sanskrit literature, such praise would normally have been directed to the gods or a king who had the power to grant the request that the rest of the poem contains. Regardless, the panegyric form here indicates that only the addressee is capable of performing or enacting the requested boon. As this poem is directed to Western Sanskrit scholars,¹⁰² the implication of the poem is that these men, all of whom except one were European, are the only entities capable of reinvigorating Sanskrit and returning it to its former grandeur in India.

Adhav explains that the next section of the poem traces the history of Sanskrit's fall from grace in the Indian subcontinent. Interestingly enough, Ramabai does not point to the British educational practices which sought to undermine Indian languages in favor of English,

¹⁰² To my knowledge, Ramabai never wrote a similar plea to Indian Sanskrit scholars, most of whom not uncoincidentally would have been Brahman.

or to the denigration of Indian literatures in order to introduce English literature and its values, as being the chief causes for the decline of Sanskrit's status in India. Instead, Ramabai couches this decline in terms of Indians themselves having been "undutiful children." As Adhav indicates, Ramabai

compares the Sanskrit language to the "most beautiful woman in the world" and had therefore secured a place and rank that commanded the highest respect and honour...Then...this youthful vigorous and beautiful Sanskrit Queen-mother, is condemned...because of the neglect on the part of her own sons and daughters, [who] treated [her] carelessly and with indifference. Pandita Ramabai continues, "And, now they wish to tear away the divine Nagari characters--dear to me as my very soul--from their home and replace them by the Roman letters. If their intention be carried out, will not then a great disaster befall me? If my own children seek in this manner to expurgate all marks of my existence on the earth, who will be my guardians?" (32-33)

Apparently, Ramabai felt that the way to resurrect Sanskrit, an important ingredient in her recipe for returning India to its ancient state through the intervention of the West, was to turn to the Western

Orientalists (those same scholars that Edward Said attacks in his influential Orientalism). Without the Western Orientalists acting to essentially Westernize the Indian educational system so that Sanskrit would be taught in schools, rather than under the jurisdiction of the priests, the ancient language would effectively vanish. In other words, in order to save the language from not only the indifference of, but also the attacks by, educated Indians ("careless children"), it is necessary to have the West, whose Roman alphabet is being used to replace Nagari, show the value of their own culture to the Indians who are rapidly adopting Western customs, education, and language. The irony is that these Western intellectuals being petitioned, the only exception being the delegate from India, to help return India to its precolonial antiquity are products of the same policies that have led to the "modern degradation" of India, as Ramabai calls it.

Ramabai ends her passionate "Sanskrit Ode" with an assurance that these ignorant and thoughtless Indians/children will appreciate and reward the West for its work on behalf of salvaging the subcontinent's heritage:

If you noble-minded men, assembled this day in the Congress, will look with favour on the miserable condition of the Sanskrit language, and restore her by your efforts to her former

exalted position, the people of India will be forever grateful to you. We will ever sing the praises of your noble qualities, and offer up prayers to the Father of the Universe for your prosperity as long as our hearts throb with life. (Adhav 33)

What the closing of the poem indicates is that, although it is the people of India who have apparently discarded Sanskrit, they will be thankful for the restoration of what they have already devalued and therefore have discarded. This scenario indicates one of two things: either Indians are unable of making their own intelligent decisions regarding their own heritage, or else any cultural transformation must not only be carried out through an initiation by the West but also that, in order for socio-cultural changes to be accepted by Indians, they need to have already been sanctioned by the West. In other words, Ramabai implies that Indians are incapable of making intelligent socio-cultural decisions on their own--a stand which is remarkably in line with the ideological underpinnings of British civilizing and educational missions in India and throughout the empire.

Consistent with Brahmanic nationalist discourse of this time, Ramabai consistently referred to the Indian subcontinent in general as Hindustan (हिंदुस्तान, land of the Hindus). Even though she recognizes that, although certainly the largest religious group on the

subcontinent, Hindus comprise the majority, her listing of the various other groups is already erased by her description of India as a "Hindu nation" (हिंदुस्तान). For example, as she describes the demographics of "the Hindu nation" she states that

[t]he population of Hindustan numbers two hundred and fifty millions, and is made up of Hindus, Mahometans, Eurasians, Europeans and Jews; more than three-fifths of this vast population are professors of [Hinduism].

(Ramabai High 1)

This list of groups Ramabai puts together not only shows a predisposition to an Orientalist gaze but also shows that like many other early nationalist British-educated Brahmans, she did not readily see distinctions among the categories of race, caste, and religion; instead, she conceptualized them all as being more or less on the same categorical level. Therefore, because the majority of Indians are religiously affiliated through their subscription to Hindu tenets and values, the "nation" to which all Indians belong is "the Hindu nation," or more specifically, the Brahman nation. It is for this reason that she can so easily erase other "religious groups" like Eurasians, Europeans, and Muslims from her construction of हिंदुस्तान.

Perhaps not coincidentally, Ramabai's categorization of Indian peoples places her in a position of

considerable strength. Because she refuses to abandon her Hindu identity, she can claim Indian citizenship for herself; however, even though she has converted to Christianity, she is also clearly not "European." In this way, she is able to enfranchise herself, make herself completely an insider, and yet remain free of many of the constraints of Hinduism itself. Also, in constructing हिंदुस्तान thus she is able to advance her equation of family and nation from a position of considerable strength.

One of Ramabai's Western admirers explicates Ramabai's conception of both Indian citizenship and of herself as a citizen of that nation. In this conception of citizenship, there is a dramatic conflation of familial and national structures making the two terms virtually synonymous: "Pandita Ramabai loved her own country--India and her Indian brothers and sisters. As a citizen she gave to her country her utmost loyalty" (Ramabai Pandita 38).

Thus, while sharing considerable cognitive and ideological strains with Brahmanic nationalists, while at the same time retaining the outward forms and appearances of orthodoxy, Ramabai's activities threatened the structure of Brahmanic Hindu nationalism. Bodley explains that although her engagement with social and national issues were perceived by other Brahman nationalists as extremely disruptive of the spirit of

Hindu values and customs, Ramabai sought to mitigate the aspects of these traditions that were most out of keeping with her conception of India as evolving towards becoming a Western nation with a Hindu core:

She is not by nature an iconoclast. She loves her nation with a pure, strong love. But her love has reached the height where it is akin to the motive of the skillful surgeon: she dares to inflict pain because she regards pain as affording the only sure means of relief. She is satisfied, moreover, that India cannot arise and take her place among the nations of the earth until she, too, has mothers; until the Hindu zenana is transformed into the Hindu home, where the united family can have "pleasant times together." (viii)

The implication here is that currently the structure of Indian society has developed into a cancer that must be excised before India can mature into the adulthood of the Western nation. As India exists at the beginning of the twentieth century, Ramabai implies, the structure of the Hindu family is less than a caricature of the Western home. She claims that in the traditional Hindu household unity of mind within the family is impossible, and because nationness is a direct result of maternal training, any real national feeling is fundamentally unattainable. Since, as she claims, India does not have,

cannot have, "mothers," India cannot be a nation any more than Hindu domesticity can be made to resemble a European family. The zenana is not a "home"; only a Westernized household is a "home." India is not a nation; only a Westernized country is a nation.

Clearly, in Ramabai's conception, the nation is a natural outgrowth of, and development from family life rather than a necessarily preset formation based on religious preference, as it appeared earlier. However, it is still important to note that this is the Hindu home, which creates a tautology especially since the "Hindu family" does not exist, and had never existed, as "Hindu." This conception of family life, and therefore national life, rests firmly on a Westernized conception of nation and family, not one that is indigenous to the subcontinent or to Hinduism. The emphasis on pleasure is also particularly Western, whereas duty and place are, or were, preeminent in the Hindu conception of household life, as is often the case in societies where reproduction is placed in the context of social, rather than purely personal, prerogatives.¹⁰³

Understanding that familial and national discourses operated in tandem for the suppression of women's

¹⁰³ I.e. in cultures where marriages are generally arranged without regard to, or consultation with, the parties for whom the marriage contract is made.

potentialities, Ramabai's critiques focused on the ways in which women were interpellated by social and environmental pressures. Because family and nation not only had significant overlapping but also largely depended on each other's functioning to remain hegemonic, Ramabai consistently sought to elucidate how the suppression of high-caste female potential inflects national "progress." In making the nation the emphasis of her critiques of patriarchal culture she is able to disguise her moves toward female liberation by pointing not to the inherent wrongness of purdah but rather to the effeminization of men. This tactic places the dominant high-caste man in the difficult position of having to defend his own manhood on her terms (status of the nation) rather than on the discursive field through which they would normally defend their privileges (religious decree). In fact, by moving the discussion of women's position out of the tradition of humanism (in both its Western and Indian forms), traditions which are relatively easily incorporable into male-centered religious world-views, Ramabai's dissociation of family from religion, and her replacement of nation for religion in this equation, shifts the entire trajectory of discussions of woman's status in society.¹⁰⁴ Since nation

¹⁰⁴ While women are more like property of the husband and his family in traditional religious discourse, woman as

and national consciousness are dependant on the mother figure in this scheme, the hegemonic male is placed in a position where he must defend his own manhood, but cannot adequately do so.¹⁰⁵ In every instance, the link between national life and domestic ideologies leads her to indict the current paternalistic and hierarchic cultural systems for the way in which they damage nationalism and national consciousness. Thus, she states, the suppression of women ultimately leads to a degradation of the nation and all that entails:

To appease her uncultivated, low kind of desire by giving her ornaments to adorn her person, and by giving her dainty food together with an occasional bow which costs nothing, are the highest honors to which a Hindu woman is entitled. She, the loving mother of the nation, the devoted wife, the tender sister and

creator/lactator of the nation yields fantastically different results here.

¹⁰⁵ This method of attributing non-masculine gender traits to Indian men is also consistent with British imperial discourse which linked not only "Oriental" men, but also Eastern cultures, with effeminacy. Of course, Britishness in this discursive matrix is therefore necessarily rendered as "manly," which furthers the justification of the entire imperial enterprise.

affectionate daughter is never fit for independence, and is "as impure as falsehood itself." She is never to be trusted; matters of importance are never to be committed to her.

(Ramabai High 55-56)

Similarly, Ramabai finds that the corollary to this vision of woman as petty, selfish, and false--if beautiful and desirable--is the cultural practice of denying education to women and girls. Particularly important to Ramabai's sense of educational impact on national consciousness is the fact that for most women, the ability to read was not only frowned upon, but also actively suppressed. She finds that women being

[s]hut in from the world and destitute of the ability to engage in newspaper and useful book-reading...have little or no knowledge of common things around them, and of the most important events that are daily occurring in their own or foreign lands. Ignorant, unpatriotic, selfish and uncultivated, they drag the men down with them into the dark abyss where they dwell together without hope, without ambition to be something or to do something in the world.

(Ramabai High 104-05)

Essentially, because there is no way to escape women in either social or familial settings, it is a necessity for both national growth and the stability of the family that

women be educated adequately enough to ensure their male offspring will be able to engage in both arenas. In essence, marital duty includes the free exercise of female intellectual capacities because without such female education, male education is itself crippled. Thus, although female subservience is necessary to the maintenance of male privilege, excessive submissiveness and ignorance of females is counterproductive to that end.

As the nation is a composite of various Hinduisms, it is also an amalgamation of male and female potentialities and expertise. As long as women are "trapped" behind purdah society itself is crippled. Although women are not equal to men in Ramabai's construct, without women and men working together to form a whole, the nation is crippled and only able to utilize a fraction of its resources: "[w]omen and men must work together, for man needs the help of woman. If women were intelligent and educated, they would make more useful citizens" (qtd. in Adhav 23).

However, at the same time, Ramabai makes no attempt to disguise the fact that she understands a "Western" conception of womanhood and nation to be the way in which India will progress into national adulthood. Thus, in order for India to remain a Hindu nation, Indian nationalism requires full entry into the hybrid space between "traditional" Indian practice and full-fledged

Westernization. In essence, Ramabai's social critiques and reforms work simultaneously to maintain and alter the fabric of Hinduism through the use of Western thought-patterns and ideologies. In so doing, it places an emphasis on Westernization (which is of course synonymous with science in this way of thinking) and adoption of Western paradigms. The West, whose goodness is self-evident in Ramabai's stance, is the "generous civilization," that has provided the tools to counter the corruption of Indian social life while also leading India into the modern world by freely providing its technological and scientific expertise for the benefit of the Indian people. By contrast, traditional Hindu wisdom is regarded as so many "nonsenses" which the West has already destroyed both ideologically and "scientifically":

Those who have done their best to keep women in a state of complete dependence and ignorance, vehemently deny that this has anything to do with the present degradation of the Hindu nation. I pass over the hundreds of nonsenses which are brought forward as the strongest reasons for keeping women in ignorance and dependence. They have already been forced out into the broad day-light of a generous civilization, and have been put to the fiery

proof of science and found wanting. (Ramabai
High 94)

According to Ramabai, the argument that the status of women in Indian society specious in light of Western "enlightenment." However, at the same time, she accuses Indian men who claim otherwise to be either idiots or liars:

[I]t is our duty to take the matter into serious consideration, and to put forth our best endeavors to hasten the glad day for India's daughters, aye, and for her sons also; because in spite of the proud assertions of our brethren that they have not suffered from the degradation of women, their own condition betrays but too plainly the contrary. (Ramabai
High 95)

For Ramabai, as was also the case for many of the suffragettes and feminists in Britain at this time, a conceptual link between the low status of womanhood within the strata of social relations and the degeneration, or effeminization, of men within the nation was a lever by which they could argue for greater liberty and opportunity. Like Annie Besant's investment in the Woman Question in Britain prior to her indicization in the 1880s, Ramabai felt that the enclosure of women and their lack of access to education and movement outside the home had a direct consequence not only for women

themselves, but also for men. In discussing woman's position in Indian society, Ramabai always tied the building up of women's opportunity bases with the advancement of national interest. Thus, her argument worked by touching on the national pragmatics of female uplift rather than on female liberation as a human rights issue or as a question of human equality.

In discussing how women are interpellated by the discursive structures of upper-caste Hindu culture, she makes clear that the qualities (selfishness, vanity, gossip, etc.) that are attributed to them are in fact true. However, she says, this is not the case because these qualities are intrinsic to the Hindu female, but rather that their socialization trains them to be so:

[t]hus fettered, in ninety cases out of a hundred, at the least calculation, they grow to be selfish slaves to their petty individual interest, indifferent to the welfare of their own immediate neighbors, much more to their nation's well-being. How could these imprisoned mothers be expected to bring forth children better than themselves, for as the tree and soil are, so shall the fruit be. Consequently we see all around us in India a generation of men least deserving that exalted appellation. (Ramabai High 96)

Thus, far from attacking the structure because of its virtual imprisonment of women, Ramabai's critique claims to stem from a concern for the patriarchal and paternalistic "nation" that has produced these effects. According to her reasoning, manhood, and therefore, nationness, suffers from a lack of initial education by mothers.

Continuing on with this line of thought, Ramabai indicates that the only way to develop nationalism in men is to make sure that their mothers have been interpellated in such a way that the primary lessons of life are in duty to others, pride of heritage, and service to country.¹⁰⁶ In making this connection, she alters the training of young men from that of an educational paradigm to a biological one. Therefore, mothers do not necessarily teach their sons to be good patriots, they lactate these qualities:

The men of Hindustan do not when babes, suck
from the mother's breast, true patriotism, and

¹⁰⁶ This argument is getting similar to Besant's in many ways. Besant needed high-caste women to stay in their place for imperialism to work. Ramabai wants women's liberation so that the nation can work. Thus, while they are working towards absolutely opposite goals, their underlying reasoning and linking of women and national consciousness (or lack of it) stem from the same source.

in their boyhood, the mother, poor woman, is unable to develop that divine faculty in them owing to her utter ignorance of the past and present condition of her native land. (Ramabai High 97)

Since women are not portrayed as actively engaging issues, despite the fact that, in this scenario, they would have been educated to do so, this conception of nationalism through lactation places women in the position of conduits where information passes unchanged rather than as teachers who themselves have processed information prior to dissemination.

For Ramabai, the obstruction of the female conduit has resulted in the fall of Hinduism from its golden age to where it is now. Thus, the historical position of woman serves as an explanation for the fall of the Hindu people from their apex as recorded in the Vedas and Shastras. In effect, the conquest of India by various and sundry invaders is the direct result of the position of women (because it is bio-cultural).

Again, how does it come to pass that each succeeding generation grows weaker than the one preceding it, if not because the progenitors of each generation lack the mental and physical strength which children are destined to inherit? The father may have been free and healthy in mind, as well as in body, but the

mother was not; she undoubtedly has bequeathed the fatal legacy of weakness and dullness to her children. (Ramabai High 97)

Although British imperial discourse also positioned Indians as effeminate and progressively degenerating, this discourse tended to attribute the degradation of the "Indian nation" to other factors than the position of women. In general, the despotic character of the Oriental mind was the most agreed upon factor leading to Oriental degeneracy. Ramabai, despite the similarities of her rhetoric to that of imperial discourse, does not claim that the answer to the dilemma lies in scrapping Indian heritage wholesale, but rather to reverse the trend in which women have been positioned in society. She implies that once the tide has turned, Indians will be reinvigorated, and no longer need outsiders to help them with their own business:

The complete submission of women...converted [Hindus] into slavery-loving creatures. They are glad to lean upon any one and be altogether dependent, and thus it has come to pass that their sons as a race, desire to depend upon some other nation, and not upon themselves. The seclusion, complete dependence and the absolute ignorance forced upon the mothers of our nation have been gradually and fatally telling upon the mental and physical health of

the men, and in these last times they have borne the poisonous fruit that will compel the Hindu nation to die a miserable and prolonged death if a timely remedy is not taken to them.

(Ramabai High 97-98)

Hence, the apocalypse of the Hindu nation can only be averted by making sure that Hindu women are fully incorporated into its structure. Also, as mentioned before, Ramabai is careful to imply that the degeneration of men is directly proportional to the limited opportunities of women to engage in education and to develop independence of mind.

This continual shift from westernization to re-indicization in Ramabai's rhetoric produces, as Bhabha's indicates, an interstitial space where neither Britishness nor Indianness can clearly be separated from each other. Thus, it is possible, in Ramabai's thought, to remain Hindu only by Christianizing; to be a Hindu nation only through westernization; to westernize only by being better Indians. In other words, for Ramabai there is no clear distinction between Britishness and Indianness, between Hindu and Christian, or between nation and empire. In only Ramabai's case does a hybridized enunciation yield a disruption in the binary. Unlike Besant's agenda, which revolved around the solidification of Hindu discursive and social structures (most notably of maintaining the Indian woman's status),

Ramabai's does not finally subscribe to either the imperial or nationalistic myths of her time. While Besant saw Indian nationalism as vital to the maintenance and expansion of empire, thus combining national and imperial mythic structures, Ramabai argues only that a people's strength comes from within all of the people. Of course, even though finally disruptive of imperial and nationalistic discourses, Ramabai must rely on her defence of patriarchal structures for the advancement of women within Hinduism, which is itself left unquestioned.

Pandita Ramabai, as well as the other hybrids discussed in this dissertation, seems to indicate that while the Third Space does have tremendous critiquing power, this power is not only transient, but also rarely successful. While the destabilizations produced by the positions these individuals occupied were serious, they were also very uneven. Also, many of the destabilizations they produced were done so only by employing essentializing or totalizing tactics. Finally, at least in the case of Ramabai, the chameleon-like nature of hybridity effectively allowed for a wholesale erasure of not only the critiques and destabilizations of hybridity, but also for the individual in that space as well. Thus, while the notion of hybridity is a complex and powerful tool, it would be unwise to assume that its

real-world power matches the way it appears in
theoretical formulations.

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