AlterityとColonial Discourse

Alterity in Colonial Discourse

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It may be a truism that the self cannot be maintained without much vigilance and without being swept away by overwhelming others unless it is constituted of an extremely stable, autonomous and independent subject. The case may be particularly pronounced if the self that is to be preserved is under control by a formidable opponent, both militarily and otherwise. Now when we focus our attention on those who have been under subjugation for a prolonged period of time the status of the self becomes a particularly knotty issue, that is, even after the nominal status of those former colonies has undergone a tremendous change and those old-time colonies are officially released from the systemic constrains they had been under for generations. Understandably, the colonial discourse echoed in the title did not come about until after the disappearance of former empires and thus is a relatively a recent phenomenon. What it implies, as it has entered and almost past the academic mainstream and has by now almost worn out its original well-defined signification, is freedom from oppression, unchecked arbitrary will, return to indigenous cultures, reassertion of traditional mores and all those that valorize the things that have been deemed inferior and retrograde during the period of colonialism. However, what seems like a reemergence of the old autonomous self is not exactly as straightforward and uncomplicated as one assumes. It may be a trivial point but, for instance, the forays the former colonial writers and those keen on making an issue out of old imperialism join in do not necessarily converge on one point, which in a way complicates the relationship between the Other and the Self even more, obfuscating the clear demarcations as to what constitutes Alterity and the viewing Subject which in a way determines the former in relation to itself. In fact, the status of the self that emerges from the discourse we are interested in is very much fluid. As in the days when assertion of a truly independent self was well-nigh impossible, even today when, as I already noted above, such autonomous self is expected to emerge as a natural process as it is indeed encouraged to evolve as a kind of spontaneous development, self-assertion does not seem an entirely uncomplicated business in which the former Colonized self can say this is who and what I am,

independent and even possibly apart from the dominant, defining Subject that was of essence and sine qua non in the old days of empires for it to maintain its existence. The fluidity of the self, if I may dare say so, seems all the more pronounced, the more academic the discourse becomes. Now admittedly I am bringing the thrust of my argument *in toto* back to the specialized category called colonial discourse, which I have already encapsulated in my title, in which contemporary scholars of the class, if I dare say so once again, I mentioned above are fond of participating and with much success. In this paper I would like to examine the various manifestations of the self in colonial discourse such academicians engage in and endeavor to define and at least grasp the reliable and tangible status of the self they express and delineate through such engagement, if it is at all manageable and capable of being condensated into such a concrete status.

Preservation of a secure self seems so matter-of-fact that it does not even deserve to be looked into. But when it comes to the self of a colonized people a whole different picture emerges. It may just be a coincidence but discursive rights to create and maintain an autonomous subject establishes only after struggle when one is placed in a tangled network of imperialism (or, to be more exact, in a sate that is equivalent to former imperialism in its various relational manifestations that seem to occur between the people in hierarchical positionalities). It is because one obtains that precious status only through inscription (mind that I am arguing mainly from a discursive perspective that tries to beat out or assimilate heterogeneous views into the one hopefully the person engaged in that very discourse upholds) countering the equivalent act on the part of whoever adversary happens to be at the time—an act that seems a concomitant part of reporting and controlling and checking each other in a relationship colonialism gives rise to and directly and indirectly contributes to in the wake of its nominal demise. The diachronic overview of the Colonial situation may be quite instructive in that it tends to place the two adversarial sides on an equal footing, each responding and affecting the other in a similar manner, not necessarily in degree but certainly in kind; however, in a relation that defines the population on one side of the equation as the "natives" to be exploited and maximally turned into labor force, which by the way was indeed what actually happened in the heyday of Colonialism up to the mid 20th century, it may perhaps be more fruitful to argue that one side of the lopsided equation, pardon my oxymoron, abrogated the right of the others to define themselves through the very efficient means available to the former at the time of their rapid expansion by looking at and reporting of the Other, through inscribing and making the Other the subject of journals, novels and other literary production. Because discursive

acts tend to increase the momentum they have created in the first place they contribute to further entrenchment of the idea of the Other, viewed and defined from the perspective of the dominant Subject of course, facilitating generation of opus, of which colonial discourse is merely a comprehensive framework, that securely fixes the hierarchical relationship between the viewer and the viewed, or the reporter and the reported, that is implicitly embedded in the reportage of the Other. No wonder some people find a simple act of looking and speaking about the Other, in other words inscribing about them, is a step toward establishing an "economy of an essentially colonial situation, in which one race holds, however provisionally and uneasily, authority over another."[1]

At the time when European powers were dividing up the whole continent of Africa and a large portion of Asia, portrayal of the other was in fact tantamount to constructing "a coherent representation out of the strange" (op. cit., p. 3) and making sense of often incomprehensible realities through the central focal consciousness of the reporter/writer. Seeing and eyeing the other, without much stretch of imagination, then becomes an activity essential to comprehend the other and drawing the other closer to his own mental sphere. That seemingly benign organizational operation becomes quite confrontational when it obtrudes into the relations between the ruled and the ruler and is embroiled in the discursive power play in which one-sided view becomes a pervasive and entrenched one to the detriment of the other. Because of the tendency to establish this lopsided view, such putatively scientific or pseudo-scientific endeavors as anthropology and scientific exploration that partly coincided with the heyday or latter part of Colonialism are imputed to be nothing but another way of branding the other as the object of observation and building blocks out of which systematic description of the unknown is attained. Jacques Derrida, for instance, calls Claude Levi-Strauss's studies of the Indians of Western Brazil virtually an extension of the anthropological war, or a "confrontation that opens communication between peoples and cultures, even when that communication is not practiced under the banner of colonial or military oppression."[2] Open-ended, or rather double-edged, which is somehow expected from a deconstructivist such as Derrida, as it may seem, the observation just

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[1] The quote is from *The Rhetoric of Empire* by David Spurr, as appears on page 14. The book contains many incisive comments and observations and from here on I will be referring to it frequently. David Spurr, associated professor at the University of Illinois as of 1993, has been a staff correspondent for United Press International in France and in Eastern Europe.

[2] This quote is from Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, as appears on page 107.

quoted becomes a little clearer when we incorporate it in a context where Derrida argues the nature of discursive writing emanating from a unilateral evaluative consciousness. To Derrida any academic discourse entails "violence of the letter," which necessarily imposes on the other, that is the object of the academic lucubration and examination, the system of classification, appellation, and differentiation that is uniquely attached to and perspectivized from the ascendant observer. Of course, there is no such entity as a value-free center of consciousness, as the term itself implies judgment and evaluative perspective without which no report of the other would be possible, and such act as writing about and reporting on the other inevitably implies "violence" and imposition of dominant system on the dominated. As Spurr perceptively observes, writing about other cultures, the act Levi-Strauss certainly engages in when he "describes" the natives in various parts of the "newly discovered" sections of the world, is interpretation, representation, and as such by further extension, domination of the other (op. cit. p. 4). Such act, by further extension, shares a similar colonialist sentiment that is mirrored by and transposed to "imaginative literature, journalism, travel writing, ethnographic description, historiography, political speeches, administrative documents, and statues of law" (op. cit. pp. 4-5). If one is tempted to object to Spurr's too sweeping generalization and diversification of colonial violence, it may be worth remembering that, which is by the way again the same author's addendum though the gist Spurr conveys in connection with this theme is such a truism that I might as well go without acknowledging him here, culture and colonization both derive from the Latin *colere*, "to cultivate, to inhabit, to take care of a place," in other words, both occupying a land and inculcating the population there in the manner colonizer sees fit.

But rather than poking through the nooks and crannies of common truisms, we had better go back to the issue of the consequences of putting someone under surveillance or for that matter under watchful eyes. Reporting, or more appropriately these days broadcasting, a certain cross-section of reality implies the gaze I just referred to. Any arbitrarily carved out moment and time and place in historic flow does necessarily entail and involve the discretionary judgment that is contingent upon exclusion in favor of inclusion of the elements that, rather tautologically, constitute the resultant reality. And at the same time, since the purely unaffected viewing eye is a factitious and almost theoretical construct, it also implies a privileged position free from any compromising effects such focal point in reality is likely to be surrounded with and exposed to. So in this scheme, which is totally artificial and yet somewhat implicitly covenantal, such viewing consciousness on the dominant camp and the viewed on the

other tend to constitute the dichotomous condition for subject formation in a discourse that arises from it. It is indeed this very relationship which James Agee seizes and comments that looking and speaking, which takes place between the two, generates an economy of a colonial situation, "in which one race holds, however provisionally and uneasily, authority over another."[3] Reporting, that is both writing and speaking to and of the other, transforms itself into an act that establishes the very essence of domination by inserting the colonizer/reporter into the lopsided relationship where the initiator of the discourse by default molds and shapes the other. The inequality of subject positions between the two can be compared to the concept of Panopticon Foucault introduces in his *Discipline and Punish*. A circular prison conceived by Jeremy Bentham, as the name indicates, allows full view of the entire prison, with each inmates in compartmentalized cells, to the guard standing at a vantage position, and is indeed the ultimate of the control of the gaze by granting scopic authority to the watchful eye. And since the central eye, because of the design feature of the Panopticon, remains unperceived from the others in the cells it can pretend to be the unadulterated enforcing subject that, as in the case of the discursive subject noted above, renders those who are under his surveillance as the others who are tantamount to those under the gaze of the reporting Subject in the scheme of the viewer and the viewed, or the ruler and the ruled. In fact it is quite apropos for Foucault to connect the Panopticon with a machinery of dissymmetry, disequilibrium, and difference (see *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 195-228).

The eye of the dominant and constituent viewer also comes to the fore when the dominated geography becomes established in the eyes of the subject-forming master consciousness. One example that is apropos in this context is the manner in which the colonized landscape becomes assimilated and constituted in the consciousness of the West. I will cite a passage from Livingstone's expedition to the African interior, which not coincidentally is the one Spurr draws on heavily in his book. Standing on a rocky hill, Livingstone observes that

> ...if you look west, you will see Unyamwezi recede into the far, blue, mysterious distance in a succession of blue waves of noble forest, rising and subsiding like the blue waves of an ocean....Hills of syenite are seen dotting the vast prospect, like islands in a sea, presenting in their external appearance, to an imaginative eye, rude imitations of castellated fortresses and embattled towers. (1970 edition of *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, p. 36)

As the dominant consciousness that is centered on the reporter tackles the unfamiliar

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[3] This particular quote is from Spurr. The original comments by Agee can be found in his *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, published by Houghton Mifflin.

landscape, it automatically resorts to the best analogy it can find in his accumulated experiential detritus. But at the same time this very process becomes unilateral formation of the other as the viewing subject abrogates the voice and representative right of the malleable subject with its transmogrified manifestation as a rude landscape that happens to lie before the awe-struck or contemptuous missionary. Since the supreme prototype ineluctably resides in the land where the missionary hails from the best he can try, even while he invests the naked subject with the "pristine nomenclatural vestment," is to endow the landscape with a spurious and epigonous status that is only and always second to the West. The irony of the matter is that the land that has been "dormant" for centuries until the arrival of the Europeans needs to be created and recreated through "an imaginative eye" but it is never going to be purely non-evaluative and humble as, for instance, the naming acts that purportedly took place in the prelapsarian days.

The all-seeing and all-engulfing eyes of the West must necessarily devour and seize the object of their observation from a subjective perspective that is not completely value-free even when the seeming objective for which the reportage is done is putatively academic or scientific. As Torgovnick notes in her *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives*, the pseudo-anthropological (or would it be more fair to regard the discipline itself is not completely independent of the possible contaminations she accuses of the famed scholar?) endeavor of Malinowski is just a disguised attempt to locate and gloat upon the erotic loci simply rendered through a sublimated façade of anthropology (p. 231). As the gazed did not possess the representative power, as it were, when all the nooks and crannies of the uncharted territories were begun to be discovered by the West, the eye of the subjective reportage devoured everything under its gaze and control for maximum pleasance and arbitrary constitution of the other in the name of science. The tradition of eroticized object and subject formation in fact dates back to the days when the encounter between the West and the "backward races" of the world became precipitated by the ever knowledge- and power-hungry West during the days of great expedition in the 19th century. The following is a quote from Henry Morton Stanley's record of his expedition to Africa, entitled *In Darkest Africa*.

> She is of a light brown complexion, with broad round face, large eyes, and small but full lips. She had a quiet modest demeanour, though her dress was but a narrow fork clout of bark cloth....I notice when here arms are held against the light, a whitey-brown fell on them. Her skin has not that silky smoothness of touch common to the Zanzibaris, but altogether she is a very pleasing little creature. (p. 368)

At a cursory glance the subjective nature of what is purportedly the scientific depiction

of the natives comes out of the report. Sensory and sensuous measurement of the other, somehow tantamount to visual rape, blatantly develops before the readers' eyes except that the report in this particular form is presumably necessary to convey the vivid picture of the other. What is meant to be a scientific observation is as if turned into an object of possession and completely, at least for the moment, denuded of its subjectivity under the Western gaze. The thing, the body of the other, is there to be enjoyed and perused upon by the dominant subject because in the process of mental groping and fondling by the constitutive subject the little pygmy woman is only given a chance to be pinned down and sampled and enjoyed to fill the gap and desire of the explorer who is there to inscribe his wishes upon the terra and corpus incognita. The more obsequious and subservient the other is to the dominant (with a quiet modest demeanour and pleasing manners), the better accepted she is likely to be because it is the foremost burthen of the colonizers to acculturate and formulate the other who can hardly be said to possess the autonomous subject until she is granted one by the former. I cannot resist quoting Spurr again because his observation is so apt. "The eye treats the body as a landscape: it proceeds systematically from part to part, quantifying and spatializing, noting color and texture, and finally passing an aesthetic judgment which stressed the body's role as object to be viewed" (*The Rhetoric of Empire*, p. 23).

The fixated and devouring eyes of the West signify nothing more or less than, as already suggested above, the possessive desires for the other manifested in reportage. A more explicit manifestation of the dominant, transformative Western subject is not hard to find, even without trying so hard. What is the noble thought an English explorer of the great expansionist days happens to have when he sweeps over the vast "empty land" with his eyes that lies before him as if begging to be possessed? A salivating wish to transform in the image he deems aesthetically pleasing and that conforms to the God's design. Without much ado let me quote from Stanley's excited coverage of the country of Ukawendi near Lake Tanganyika that is now published as *Stanley's Despatches to The New York Herald*.

> What a settlement one could have in this valley! See, it is broad enough to support a large population! Fancy a church spire rising where that tamarind rears its dark crown of foliage, and think how well a score or so of pretty cottages would look instead of those thorn clumps and gum trees! Fancy this lovely valley teeming with herds of cattle and fields of corn, spreading to the right and left of this stream! How much better would such a state become this valley, rather than its present wild and deserted aspect! (pp. 75-76)

It is fairly easy to discern a number of things that are taking place simultaneous here.

First, the subject supplants the land with something totally alien and reconstitutes it with values that are purely European, to be more exact those prevalent in the viewer's home country. As the eye sweeps over the valley the preexisting conditions are unconditionally obliterated and all that remains and emerges in the subject's consciousness is a new reality which is as far removed as the present reality is to the concurrent consciousness of the viewer. As the re-constitutive consciousness starts with razing and voiding the intrusive geographical features with all their "ugly" factitious adjuncts, the land is immediately denuded of its native population as the viewing subject imagines the new and eugenicized influx from Europe fill the promised valley to the brim. Of course, true to "colonization" the older and familiar belief system will form the center of the traditional idyllic setup with a church spire soaring to heaven, eclipsing and supplanting the native tamarind "with its dark crown of foliage." The valley will be dotted with simple yet bucolic cottages that are, needless to say, aesthetically much more pleasing than the "thorn clumps and gum trees," which merely infest the landscape and will do nothing to contribute to the pleasures of the new and more entitled settlers. However, that is not enough. The picture is simply not complete without the herds of cattle and fields of corn—the images that are the exact replica of those bucolic rural scenes that epitomized idealized English countryside. The series of thought process that is manifested here is suggestive because as the viewing consciousness watches the "empty" and "deserted" space that opens before his eyes he automatically rejects the layers that are inscribed with the native values and systems reified as seemingly unutilized vacant land and unconditionally begin to restructure it and the other as if they were tabla rasa and dismountable or even worse non-existent as a subject. Once this thought process is entrenched usurpation of land and the (nonexistent or at lest dismountable) other as a means to achieve the dominant subject's will goes unfettered.

The incorporation of the other into the body of the dominant whole could take various forms. However, one step that seems to be ubiquitous in the dominant and dominated dichotomy is foregrounding of difference in tandem with effacement of difference. It may be appropriate to cite Queen Victoria as the epitome of the voice of colonial forces as she advised Lord Salisbury on a appropriate candidate for a viceroy in India.

> He must be more independent, must hear for himself what the feelings of the Natives really are, and do what he thinks right and not be guided by the snobbish and vulgar, over-bearing and offensive behaviour of our Civil and Political Agents, if we are to go on peacefully and happily in India, and to be liked and beloved by high and low—as

well as respected as we ought to be—and not trying to trample on the people and continually reminding them and making them feel that they are a conquered people. They must of course feel that we are maters, but it should be done kindly and not offensively.[4]

For someone who stands atop and beyond the conflicting political maneuverings it is somehow expected that she is circumspect and pleasantly polite. Her appeal to the conscience of one's own, whoever may hold that very important position in the Indian subcontinent, rings so benevolent that one, those who are in the dominant and the dominated camps as well, is understandably moved by the seemingly overwhelming generosity implied in her remark as she distances herself from the "snobbish and vulgar, over-bearing and offensive behaviour" manifested by the ill-mannered "Civil and Political Agents." But of course the underlying intent, on a certain level of scrutiny, is to go peacefully about their (that is, Great Britain's and Queen's simultaneously) daily business of governing India. Once again it is admirable to coexist with the natives, avoiding all the potential conflicts, which seem somewhat unavoidable when two heterogeneous cultures come face to face without true mutual consent. But what is the underlying motive that is more convincing and deeper than one cursory look at Queen's political/polite preamble seems to indicate? Is it not respect from the natives—the kind that deservedly arise from those who are deferentially moved by a pittance kind deed by what they deem as entrenched masters and thus need to be tolerated one way or another—that Queen is actually after by differentiating herself and others approaching her caliber of wisdom and discretion from her compatriots who are far inferior and coarser in their education and accomplishment, the kind of civil servants who do not know who to coexists with the natives simply because they are superior in force, which Queen obviously does not negate. If her subjects treat the natives rudely and do not earn respect, which is reified in such barbarous acts as trampling on the people, possibly both literally and figuratively, then, her logic goes, they will be constantly reminding the natives that they are conquered people, which needless to say gives rise to resentment. Now the deep undercurrent that has remained hidden under the well-managed rhetoric comes to the surface. Queen does not encourage overweening arrogance toward the natives because the true intent on the part of the dominant, which she in this particular letter tries to camouflage so meticulously, would be immediately brought to the open if such ill-advised behavior were to be encouraged

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[4] The quote is from *The Letters of Queen Victoria* in three volumes, edited by Earle Buckle and published by John Murray of London in 1932. The passage appears on page 251, volume 3 of the same title.

among her subjects. The best strategy she and others of her comprehensive view can do under the circumstances, is to efface the differences, which in fact are ever present, between the ruler and the ruled and at the same time inscribe the unbridgeable crevice in the subconscious of the ruled so that whenever a cue is given, either those that are more in the nature of enforcement or encouragement, order is restored between the parties concerned. Of course, the order or normalcy Queen envisages is the unilateral kind that is securely entrenched in colonialism. If I draw upon Foucault, the natives can never escape the power structure that is built by the dominant other even when they think they are perfectly free and on their own.

The other usually manifested as the politically convenient partner cum inferior object of exploitation, which has sunk in the case of the queen's observation, for instance, to the level of foundational ethos upon which bilateral/unilateral partnership becomes a matter-of-fact subconscious mechanism in daily lives, often is subjected to the object of aestheticization, as Spurr puts it. Something that is deemed exotic as well as definitely not of "our" norm is transformed into a product on which the consuming Western world gloats as befitting their viewing/reading pleasures. In Spurr's words, the other (understandably read as the Third World), "continually provides what writers call 'material' of a special nature: the exotic, the grotesque, the bizarre, the elemental" (*The Rhetoric of Empire*, p. 46). Whatever is deemed different, in other words, is processed through the fertile imagination of the Western writers and reporters as entertaining, and all the more so, if the objects reported are the things that fall under the categories just quoted from Spurr. Needless to say, if the objects portrayed impinge upon the lives of the Western societies with too much immediacy, then, the viewers are rendered vulnerable to the images that come out of the stories. Therefore, in order for the West to feel superior and feel safe in their absorption of the heterogeneous materials, distance becomes an essential concept as it enables the status quo to be preserved that has exists for centuries between the two partners in the past. All the ideologies (if I may resort to a rather facile Marxist term here for convenience sake) that try to surface despite and because of Queen's genteel remarks are therefore partly the result of the safe distance, in fact in many senses which of course includes geographical, that intervene between the two concatenated yet subserviently defined worlds. This idea of aesthetically objectified world that is safely linked to the dominant Western World is quite matter-of-factly described by Barthes in a manner more less identical to the one I just quoted above from Spurr. The Africans (he specifically chooses Africans more likely because French ties to the Northern Africa and beyond through its colonial days) have no real autonomy—economically, socially and in various microscopic and

metaphysical senses as well—and they are just "a bizarre object, reduced to a parasitical function, that of diverting the white man by his vaguely threatening *baroque*."[5] Obviously, objectification/aestheticization the other suffers is not limited to the Africans, nor, for that matter, typified by the blacks. That partly explains the activism Edward Said manifested while he was alive both in the Middle East and perhaps its polar opposite, in geography and its septic and intellectual purity, in the East Coast of the United States. But without making an expansive foray into his caustic diatribe against the exploitational West, in his case needless to say the people and place that is made an object of Western stories is Palestinians and Palestine, suffice us to reiterate the observation Said makes on the caterers of Third World stories to the West. The group, which by the way includes both the Western and formerly colonized writers such as Conrad, Graham Greene, V.S. Naipual, Robert Stone, and Hannah Arendt (admittedly the list is quite dated and reflects Said's intellectual and literary tastes)—all of them specialize in delivering "the non-European world either for analysis and judgement or for satisfying the exotic tastes of European and North American audiences."[6] Is it a mere coincidence that his view chimes so well with the one expressed by Barthes? Hardly.

Aestheticization of the other is prominently exemplified in *National Geographic*, as Spurr points out. The objects treated and framed through the lenses of the West are invariably colorful, pleasing and yet exotic, those that can hardly claim to genuinely belong to the dominant but somehow tamed and objectified and potentially existing there and turned into objects d'art by dint of the secure distance one observing the photograph, for instance, always feel. Even the people portrayed are invariably, and almost blandly, cheerful and genial, befitting the land that almost comes out as a virgin land free for the Western readers to inscribe and decipher whatever significance that pops up in their entertained and fertile minds. Of course, the rough-edged reality with all its concomitant confrontations, contradictions and grime, sweat and smell do not reach the attention of the Western audiences simply because the ideology of catering the other to the dominant, the Western consumerist public, filters out all the unseemly elements the editors and photographers and travel journalists deem redundant as well

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[5] The quote is from *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies* by Roland Barthes, translated by Richard Howard. The particular passage given here appears on page 37. The mordantly platitudinous remark manifested in this instance subtly and yet all the more clearly adumbrates the state of objectification the other is still subjected to on the Western side of the divide.

[6] The quote is from Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, a book aimed at vindicating the people and views of the former colonies all around the world, packaged as a literary ratiocination. The particular passage cited here appears on page xviii.

as unmarketable. People presented through the images have to be "quaint" and the land and customs introduced need to be colorful and exotic. That much is taken for granted and the rest are simply excesses judged from the time-honored tradition of photojournalism, of which National Geographic is an epitome. Actually, it is better to say that the process of smoothing out the sordid social reality and use of photography each helped the other to grasp the Other and put them on a idealized plane more effectively. It may sound a rather old concept but what photography accomplishes is to defamilialize any common mundane details into something strange and new. In that terse and definitional encapsulation the term sounds might exclusively evoke the heydays of Russian Formalism. But it is not strictly a proprietary concept of the Russian formalists alone. It is reiterated and amplified by the great German cultural philosopher Walter Benjamin as he elaborates on the way photography distorts and alienates us from reality. The following is a quote from Susan Sontag's *On Photography*, published in 1973.

> [The camera] is now incapable of photographing a tenement or a rubbish heap without transforming it. Not to mention a rive dam or an electric cable factory: in front of these, photographs can only say, "How beautiful."...It has succeeded in turning abject poverty itself, by handling it in a modish, technically perfect way, into an object of enjoyment. (p. 107)

By transforming even ridiculously petty objects into something worth watching and interesting, photography indeed accomplish in changing reality as people perceive it, not necessarily the hard, earthy, tangible reality as such but the image of it as people think it is and it ought to be. In that sense photography, and journalism and mass media as a whole, intervenes between the perceiver and the perceived and plays a trick on the distance between the two, be it in an abstract or concrete metric sense, as it were, and turn the way things are perceived in any way possible. Simply put, this is analogous to the way the other is aestheticized and turned into objects d'art—materials Western audiences derive pleasures from and feel securely consumerists about at a safe distance. Needless to say, the key to success of journalism-cum-entertainment is the hiatus and safe distance that separates the two end of the consumer economy. The danger of obliterating the border and importance of maintaining the safe distance is elaborated upon by none other than a deconstructive behemoth Jacques Derrida in his discussion of ethics in Rousseau.

> That is why the imagination, the reflection, and the judgment that arouse pity also limit its power and hold the suffering of the other at a certain distance. One know this suffering for what it is, one pities others, but one protects oneself, and holds the

evil at arm's length.[7]

The otherness of the other, in other words, has to be maintained in order for the consuming nations to feel safe and secure in devouring the presentations of the other through various forms. And the crux in bridging the two in this scheme, paradoxically enough, is the insurmountable wall and hiatus that conveniently lies and laid down between the two parties.

What confirms and contributes to the break between the two worlds, among others, is a system of reasoning that prevails in dominant discourse. As Spurrs notes in Foucault we must do violence to the chaotic reality, which is nothing other than the tangible and visible universe we daily face, in order to make sense of it. The things that surround us do not easily yield the hidden secret in a manner we understand it and can be made use of readily. In Spurr's encapsulation, "[e]very discourse orders itself both externally and internally," meaning, "it marks itself off against the kind of language it excludes, while it establishes within its own limits a system of classification, arrangement, and distribution" (*The Rhetoric of Empire*, p. 62). Any discourse, be it history, photojournalism, colonial travelogue and so on, must necessarily entail organization of the other and the divisive barrier that is founded upon the presence and establishment of the viewing and descriptive central point. Once it is secured--albeit the process needs to be self-perpetuated in order to create the ideology of the other--or rather in conjunction with that discursive hierarchicalization takes place, separating what the prevalent ideology considers less desirable from the mainstream values and subsuming the former under the latter. Whenever there is a chance what is considered anomalous and eccentric is discarded and chased out of the boundaries of the dominant discourse and relegated to the category of the other and inferior. This policing/classificatory function of discourse is apparent in many writings penned by men and women who came to encounter the world that eventually became labeled as the Other, not coincidentally and not to a small degree due to their own reportage. One of the first instances cited by Spurr, interestingly enough for the work's purported scientific slant, is from Darwin's *Journal of Researches*, written during his journey to South America. Note how the supposedly objective discourse is manifested here. Observing a number of natives near Tierra del Fuego, Darwin cannot resist remarking, "[they are] stunted in their growth, their hideous faces bedaubed with white paint, their skins filthy and greasy, their voices discordant, their gestures violent and without

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[7] The quote is from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's translation of *Of Grammatology*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 1976. The passage appears on page 190 of the same book.

dignity" (p. 235). It is obvious here that beneath all his supposed scientific remarks a certain fixed centrifying view is implied as Darwin makes such value judgment as "stunted," "hideous," "greasy," "discordant," etc. What is interesting is that the observer here almost comically forgets he is bringing concomitant partial values into his speech. As Foucault notes, exclusion necessarily connotes foregrounding of those dominant perspectives that are necessary to demarcate the other from the reporting subject "I"—an agency without which no description of the other can be accomplished. By contrasting and classifying the other according to the dominant nomenclature the Western subject, here represented as Darwin, safely as well as rationally assigns the peg order of the Fuego natives through a medium that sounds as benign and nefarious as the matter of fact tone of the report cited above indicates.

I may be just slowing down the argument if I brought out the perspective lynchpins on which Darwin seems to base his evaluative criteria. Here too is Spurr quite helpful as he minutely analyzes the pattern of the renowned explorer/biologist/journalist we also are dealing with at this point. Spurr notes that Darwin is no different than others of his kind in the great days of European exploration of the uncharted corners of the world. He first observes the visible curiosities of the people and objects as he travels and tries to deduce from them something that only corroborates the dominant view of the West. In other words, discursive dominance that leaves no ideologically untouched corners of the world autonomically independent, as Foucault's theory demonstrates, once again prevails. If the Fuegans are so subhuman as characterized by the epithets Darwin uses in his descriptions of the people, then what the Europeans considered as attributes that indubitably constituted a man as a civilized being can and should hardly be found among the Fuegans, or so Spurr interprets Darwin's argument. It may be due to quote a passage Spurr uses from the *Journal* to gauge the extent of dominant discourse that is already embedded and Spurr points out as the sign of the bipolar discourse Darwin employs.

> How little can the higher powers of the mind be brought into play? What is there for imagination to picture, for reason to compare, for judgement to decide upon? (*Journal of Researches,* p. 235)

How could the rational tradition of the humanistic Europe be more starkly contrasted with the values that are what the Occident regarded as diametrically and diabolically opposed to what is inherently theirs? The idea of the mind constantly engaged in rational work, producing something literary and aesthetically pleasing, and making rational decisions may not constitute an absolute and reliable criterion on which to base a degree of advancement a people has made on their path to evolutionary perfection,

especially when we consider the values involved to judge the people with are in fact relative to the culture and people with which they are associated with. But Darwin's argument turns out a mere reflection of the dominant and ubiquitous discourse Foucault points out. As he asserts the Western view, the other one here exemplified by the Fuegan is blotted out. Not only that. As he reports his observations the dominant ideology is once again corroborated and an attitude to belittle the other valuation system permeates throughout a society that consumes such journals in tandem with another that is more aggressive and inherently more violent and corrosive—such as the Nietzschean will to impose your own dictates.

As I pointed out in connection with Darwin, he and his opinions on the other races were mere a mere reflection of his time and ethos. As an example of its pan-European phenomenon, Spurr draws upon the example of a French intellectual and diplomat named Joseph-Arthur, Comte de Gobineau. In his *Essai sur l'Inegalite des Races Humaines* published in 1854, he matter-of-factly develops an argument that the races other than the white are destined to be guided by those who are naturally positioned above them in all conceivable respects. Blacks, Gobineau goes, are marked by those violent and carnal traits that are akin to the animals that live among and by them. Being so mentally circumscribed genetically they can by no means hope to attain the degree of technological development the Europeans even at the dawn of their civilization had already enjoyed. The yellow race does not fare well either, albeit granted a position slightly higher up the technological ladder compared to the blacks, as they are hopelessly hampered by such degenerative attributes as lassitude, feebleness of desire, and passivity. Surpassing of them all, as expected from the preceding arguments, are the European race who are ideally endowed with the sense of order, creative energy, intelligence, and love of freedom, without which the preceding two races hopelessly try to aspire to the level they are not capable of achieving. For Gobineau the Europeans and the other "inferior" races do not even share the common evolutionary heritage. The break is absolute. All the traits that are associated with the former are not the kind that can be eventually shared by the other races simply because the hiatus separating the two are unbridgeable and the evolutionary trajectories assigned to them are alien to each other and non-interchangeable. Suffice it to reiterate, although the racial bigotry I have delineated so far would be enough to suggest the kind of remarks Bobineau might make, that to an intellectuals of the days, of which Gobineau might as well be considered a representative, the blacks with "the animal character imprinted in the shape of the hip-girdle" are destined from the moment of their births that they "will never develop beyond the narrowest range of

mental powers" (*Essai sur l'Inegalite des Races Humaines*, I, p. 215).

Gobineau, as I already implied, is only a manifestation of the spirit of the age. It is not difficult to find his counterparts in Britain. Not surprisingly, because of his vituperative and boisterous argument, Carlyle, that bastion of Victorian confidence and moralism, is not free of the racist tinge we have been covering here. (Not that the slanted view here discussed was taken up as a moral issue in those days. The perspective shown here is nothing more than retrospective.) As once gain shown by Spurr, the biological and thus evolutionary hiatus that separates the superior race and the inferior ones, which include in the manner of Gobineau Africans and Asiatics, is insurmountable and it is strictly for the benefit of the latter and in the order of things that the less capable ones should follow the order of the more biologically competent ones to fulfill their own destiny and achieve the bliss that is circumscribed within their appropriate ken. Carlyle's point is quite dictatorial and doesn't allow any latitude for co0unterarugment, if it is at all hinted at. The order of species as corroborated by Darwin and contemporary science was as such that single-mindedness to pursue the world order that is naturally derived form all he empirically observes and logically establishes is resoundingly authoritative free of any misgivings that might suggest of any other possibilities. The following is a quote from Carlyle's "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question," published in the December 1849 issue of *Fraser's Magazine*, here indirectly lifted from Spurr's *The Rhetoric of Empire*. The unswerving conviction of Carlyle's in his own racist view comes across as straight and dictatorially even after generations of ideological vicissitudes.

> If precisely the Wisest Man were at the top of society, and the next-wisest next, and so on until we reached the Demerara Nigger (from whom downwards, through the horse, etc., there is no question), then were this a perfect world, the extreme maximum of wisdom produced in it. (p. 66)

I may be blamed for diverting the reader's attention from the main argument but, as I may repeat what I just mentioned above, even after generations of ideological vicissitudes Carlyle's observation smarts the sensibilities of an average civilized man as being so sure of the rude hierarchy, which once again in retrospect, is a mere artificial construct that merely leaves out the other, "inferior," colored races out of the scheme, relegating them to near the bottom of the evolutionary ladder, and insolently getting away with it with a mere flippant remark in the nature of an addendum, "there is no question." And in contrast to the sniggering nonchalance of the matter-of-fact argument about the hierarchy of races, the dictatorial aphoristic ploy Carlyle employs in the mainframe of the sentence structure is simply hard to conceive other than as a

well-calculated "reportage" the first-world intellectuals use to sever the whatever tenuous and possible chances of ties there exist between the Us and Them. The advantage Carlyle and his French ideological contemporary had over others who came in later years was that the act of "reportage" was one of the few means to create the images of the other and spread them, as average people lacked means to establishing any sort of contact or access with the ever alienated Other.

Although by no means as authoritarian as Carlyle, John Stuart Mill is nonetheless a man of is age in that he also share the pseudo-rational view on the relationship between the Western and other less advantaged people over the world. As is well-known he was a far advanced man in his days when it came to grasping socio-economic conditions of his contemporaries. In fact some of his treatises in humanitarian fields sound still bracingly insightful after lapse of many generations. However, if we focus on his view on the nature of man and particularly the position of the other as the Europeans penetrated into various corners of the world and ruled people who were completely governed by different sets of cultural ethos and moral conventions, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate him from the rest of the intellectuals of his days as he expresses sentiments that are more akin to those felt by Carlyle and Gobineau as they formulated, semi-scientifically I might add once again, the essential discrepancies between the White and the Colored. What distinguishes between Mill and the latter two is Mill's less essentializing attitude as he concedes the "natural rights" to the black race, attributing the current disadvantaged position of the latter to the phase of civilizational achievement that happened to be backward in the case of the non-Europeans. As Spurr notes, Mill does not theorize an absolute difference at the origin of the two races but rather blames all the contingencies that intervened between then and now for the vast technological and other achievemental differences he registers in his contemporary world. He is in fact a rationalist enough to give equal weights both to the original potential and the multitudinous circumstantial variables that arose as the two races evolved the way they did and resulted in the manner as he saw in his days. (Of course, he does not forget to add that the fortuitous circumstances that befell the Europeans brought about the civilization that is far advanced and far superior to any that had been developed in any parts of the world.) Actually, giving equal weights to the notion of essential differences between the White and the Colored races and to the evolutionary possibilities the original state left to both parties may be slightly misleading. Although Mill argues that historical temporal progression could contribute to the vast discrepancies in the way different races developed, he could not quite desist from hierarchicalizing races in the manner Carlyle

and others were wont to do in their facile attempt to assert the special status of the European race in contradistinction to the abject state of the colored counterparts. It follows that all the seeming rational talk by Mill about the conditions of the Africans derives from the entrenched position of the Europeans in the hierarchy of the species and its subcategories.

The hiatus embedded into the anthropo-socio hierarchy directly and indirectly delineated by the great thinkers of the Western world in the previous centuries is confirmed again and again in multifarious forms that contribute to the creation of Otherness in their general thrust. Phobia of the unknown and unfamiliar leads to denigration and devaluation of the people and the cultures they represent and sets in motion a process that in essence both quarantines and differentiates one's group from the Other that is deemed to cause, to the minds and hearts of the We in the civilized West, all sorts of corruption, dehumanization, and, to use the term Spurr seems to focus on in his book, abjection. Once again, as Spurr notes, the process I referred to is nothing new. It is in fact biblical in the Judeo-Christian context. In the Old Testament the vengeful God unfailingly warns His people not to pollute themselves by commingling with the unholy foreigners and defiling the temple with the food and offerings that are not consecrated in a manner prescribed by the Law. Needless to say, the price for nonconformity is the terrible wrath of God that falls upon the people on a moment's notice and as often happens the reason for such retribution is beyond human comprehension. However, one thing seems certain, at least from an anthropological point of view, that exclusion of the foreigners and their customs coincide with objectification of anomalies directly and indirectly derivable from the Other. It is, as I already mentioned, a defense mechanism to protect one's integrity by generating a necessity to sever one's ties with the Other as completely as possible because at this point the Other is automatically identified with abjection, or something that represents almost pathologically undesirable in idea and their physical reality. In this light an observation made by a French colonial administrator reveals a lot of insight into the minds of the ideology forming subject, read the representative psyche of the colonial West, as he distances and anathematizes the Other as being totally dangerous and self-destructive, which then leads to the idea of entitlement for the West to patronizingly bring the hopeless populations under their control, although in the case of the latter excerpt the sheer will to rule comes to the fore and the anathematization percolates through the interstices of the arrogant assertion.

> Epidemics, massive endemic diseases, and famine would continue to decimate them; infant morality would still wipe out half their offspring; petty kings and corrupt chiefs

would still sacrifice them to vicious caprice; their minds would still be degraded by the practice o base superstition and barbarous custom...[8]

What is curious and more productive in the long run as we engage ourselves with colonial discourse is the surreptitious way in which the objectification of the bugbear cum corruption/abjection is generated and promulgated. On the surface, the French administrator's observation, as coming from the actual administrator, is a description of the state of the degenerate as it is. But on close scrutiny one is surprised, or not so surprised perhaps, that what the administrator is actually accomplishing is generation of an ideology which conveniently enough needs both the completely different, preferably heterogeneous, Other and a simultaneously abhorrent and malleable target of (colonial) rule. In other words, the absence of a wise and parental subject makes it essential for the abject objectified Other to see administration and governance of the former. Without proper guidance of the master the already helpless and fated Other would just fall off the edge of the limbo never to be redeemed.

The dangerous menacing Other can be also described as an undifferentiated, inchoate source of evils. With full of puns and abstract arguments, once pervasive Kristeva defined the relationship between the self-integrative and cautious subject and its polar opposite as they are brought to bear upon the concept just introduced above, which not incidentally also represents what the subject needs to guard against.

The abject...represents the crisis of the subject...insofar as it would not yet be, or would no longer be separated from the object. Its limits would no longer be established. It would be constantly menaced by its possible collapse into the object. It would lose definition. It is a question, then, of a precarious state in which the subject is menaced by the possibility of collapsing into a chaos of indifference.[9]

This seeming abstruse theorizing about the confrontation between the defensive subject and chaotic abject-contaminated object in its transposition to colonial discourse aptly foregrounds the West's fear about dealing with the unknown, strange and contagious/contaminated. The indefinable Other is constantly there to encroach upon the integral territory, in its multifarious senses, of the West. Absorbing it, or rather allowing it penetrate the perimeters that traditionally divided "Us" from "them" means

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[8] The quote, which is introduced in Spurr's dealing with the term *abjection*, is taken out of Albert Sarraut's *Grandeur et Servitude Coloniales*, published in Paris in 1931, as it appears on page 117. The sentiments expressed here, as I commented a number of times above, were ubiquitous among the European intellectuals and actual administrators who came in direct contact with the Other.

[9] The quote is from Julia Kristeva's Interview in *All Area* 2, published in 1983, as it appears on page 39. The version given here is drawn upon Spurr as he uses Kristeva's argument to support his concept of subject-object tug-of-war.

loss of self or at least crisis of the subject. What is truly dangerous for allowing that process to continue, the implication being it has been going on as long as history of colonialism has been part of Western psyche, is that one day there will be no diving line between the subject and the object, as the boundaries between the two are infinitely obfuscated, rendering subjective integrity all but oxymoronic. As Kristeva sees it, granted that the argument is developed on the level of colonial discourse, the battle between the two are eventually one-sided. Abjection, through its indefinable power to contaminate and confound anything that is orderly, differentiated and associated with civilization, corrupts the very foundation of Western civilization. What results is once again is chaos, a sate in which no refinement is possible, giving rise to, in other words, the subject that is indistinguishable from its polar opposite. At this point collapse of the civilization that is fulcrumed by Judeo-Christian values is at an end. The heart of darkness, if I borrow Conrad's phrase, is everywhere.

From another perspective the kind of interpretation given to the passage from Krieteva is merely based on the defense mechanism that sets in motion a tendency in us for group cohesion when faced with the overwhelmingly large inscrutable mass that in turn gives rise to hatred and undesirability of the Other, something to be avoided and deserves to be shunned, which again in turn redounds to reinforced cohesion, or preservation of their own values, on the part of the subject group. If we look at journals and memos left by early adventurers and colonial administrators *in situ* we can glimpse at what actually constituted of this subject's hatred of the unenlightened "subhumans." The following is Stanley's observation of the natives at Sierra Leone as he sailed to join a British expedition engaged in subduing "rebellious" tribes.

> Through some strange caprice the English have permitted a colony of semi-civilized Africans to grow up in order to experiment, perhaps, how wild and rank a colony of negroes can become when left to their own sinful and wicked devices, unchecked and uncurbed by the hand of law. The English will, perhaps, plead as an excuse that the climate is against the exercise of strong will; that no matter how valiant a man be in his intentions when he sets out to govern the blatant woolly-headed rabble of this colony, he will be prostrated before the unconquerable lassitude which the climate quickly engenders in him as soon as he sets foot on its shores.[10]

The ambivalent attitude of the Europeans toward the degenerate Colored race is obvious here even to a causal reader. While it is more or less expected of "them" to be

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[10] This extensive quote is from a reprinted version of Stanley's *Coomassie and Magdala: The Story of Two British Campaigns in Africa*, originally published in 1874. The passage quoted here appears in the 1971 version of the original on pages between 6-7.

indolent and abject, if I dare use the much too loosely used word in Spurr's book one more time, what is truly threatening to the superior race is a possible contamination of the sinful and wicked morality Africans and their climate poses to the whites once they come in contact with them. Needless to say, shunning the kind of contact here envisaged is not a practical option from the perspective of a colonial administrator as the very concept of rule automatically entails their physical presence in the land where those dangerous, nefarious values prevail. On one level, the dilemma the rulers face in this scheme is two-faced as the Africans are simultaneously viewed as menacing and hopeless an object that needs to be tamed and held under European protection and custody, as if the former were an underdeveloped half-man who knows no better than cling to his puerile manners and customs. Of course, what Stanley and those whom he represents fear most is the dire effects the contagion has on the innocent Europeans. As far as they are concerned, there is no contest once they are exposed to the heat of the blackest continent. Once a white man becomes attuned to the climate it the inevitable happens. If I excerpt from the quote above, "he will be prostrated before the unconquerable lassitude which the climate quickly engenders in him." Here some exploration into *Conrad's Heart of Darkness* seems apt. Kurtz sets sail to the heart of the darkest of the continent and with over-zealous ambitions exploits the natives to gather ivories for him and his company, which may as well be read as Europe.[11] But what seems like an irony of the displaced cultural topoi, a slave owner is himself turned into a minion of the spirit of the land. As he turns out he is reduced to a shadow of the powers he held over the Africans and without much self-awareness, obviously, he is compelled to act out the inverted image of his former self, with greed, arrogance, and incorrigible superiority complex, which turns out in the end just his delusion. Stanley actually echoes this inversion of agency once European is put in a different climatic context. Put it in a Kristevean critical purview, the plight Kurtz falls into and which Stanley warns his European audience against is obfuscation of differentiation, introduction of chaos represented by the rabble of the anonymous barbarians, and collapse of the wall that separates between us and them. In this sense, an interpretation Spurr offers in his book as to the undesirable dynamic confluence between the European civilization and Other civilization is to the point. He maintains that "the obsessive debasement of the Other in colonial discourse arises not simply from

[11] Pan-European interpretation, of course, is nothing fanciful. As generations of readers have noticed, Conrad's book yields layers of literary treasure troves, not least of which is metaphorical clash between the haves and have-nots, advanced and under-developed, black and white, and all those circumscribed within the confines of the ego and those that lie beyond them—perhaps comprehensively referred to as the Other.

fear and the recognition of difference but also, on another level, from a desire for and identification with the Other which must be resisted" (p. 80). Nothing is terrifying than finding yourself the very accessory to the contamination which you think are trying to prevent. That is exactly the situation Conrad's character finds himself in, although, as I already noted, the state he is in completely escapes the subject as a true agency of the act he perpetrates in the story. The harder he drives the "slaves" to do the work for him and what he considers what he stands for, the deeper he entraps himself in the quagmire the metaphorical Continent of Africa sets up for him. It is in a way a vicious circle he cannot break without physically removing his presence from the environment he puts himself into. But to control the continent and what it contains he needs, or any other agent who represents his mother country, to actually reside there even with the knowledge that by doing so he is risking his moral and civilizational integrity. It is a predicament every Kurtz fall into without much chance of a success of finding his way out.

This perverted attraction and resistance to the barbaric Other is a constant theme of the Western intellectuals in recently centuries. As I have already indicated Darwin is one, who intoned the natural order of the races of the homo sapiens with the Europeans, and particularly those who reside in the northern climes, at the top of the list. Once again, the same idea runs through writings of many prominent intellectuals, including political thinkers like Churchill. He is an interesting case because of his presence in modern Western European history from the very beginning of the previous centuries and well into the twentieth century. I am sure there are plenty of people who will be tempted to rethink his status and what he was when they come face to face with what he has actually written as a journalist at the beginning of his career. Although his observations tend to merely reflect the racial ideology of his days, the fact such blatantly naked racial bias coming out of his mouth in such a fervent and yet matter-of-fact way nonetheless jars many of today's sensibilities. The following is a report of what the ruling British considered the gratuitous brutalities committed by the uncivilized Indians on the fallen solders who bravely fought for the bringers of the light.

> Their intelligence only enables them to be more cruel, more dangerous, more destructive than the wild beasts. Their religion—fanatic though they are, is only respected when it incites to bloodshed and murder. Their habits are filthy; their morals cannot be alluded to. With every feeling of respect for that wide sentiment of human sympathy which characterises a Christian civilisation, I find it impossible to come to any other conclusion than that, in proportion as these valleys are purged from the pernicious vermin that infest them, so will the happiness of humanity be

increased, and the progress of mankind accelerated.[12]

On a cursory glance at the above excerpt two things should strike the readers as the sentiments that echo the ethos of the colonial ideology that has been repeatedly introduced in this paper. One is the fear of the Other that is semi-scientifically underpinned as in the case of Darwin. Note the comparison the author makes between the most despicable creatures on the earth and the wild beasts. The strategy, as I time again mentioned, is to bring down those colored races to the level of the non-intelligent creatures where civilization is as relevant as Einsteinian theory of relativity. If I may argue from a slightly different angle, the author is smugly content with starting his thesis from the premise that the despicable creatures are and quite legitimately equal to the beasts of the wild and even casting slightest doubts on that supposition is heretical. The racial ideology employed here gives no chances for heretical skeptics to break into this "air-tight" scientific theorem and say nay to the tack apotheosis of European civilization takes here. The second phase of the argument, once again if I may risk getting a bit verbose, that underhandedly and yet in broad daylight, as it were, malign the Other is to expatiate on the function of religion in their culture (only that the author would not allow that value-encrusted term to be associated with the Other, of course) and re-evaluate and reintroduce it and its office in the Western context, a move that may not be totally fair because as the author defines religion, it already is linked to the narrowly defined kind he and literary West is wont to identify with Christianity. So the argument circles around a pre-defined path without giving any real concessions that may be used to salvage and raise the Other above the bestial status the author pushes him into in the beginning. Despite the self-assured confidence the author tries to convey to the potential audience, he betrays the real source of hatred, which is the basis of the psychological distance he artificially creates between his people and Them, as he resorts to the pathological trope in reference to the potential contamination intermingling of the two, at various levels, brings to the White race. It turns out hatred and fear existing side by side that compels the author and his kind to shun as much contact with the Other because they are no different from vermin that are good for nothing except for being got rid of. That very need leads to justification of control over the pernicious creatures in order to protect one's sanity and integrity. So at this juncture the ambivalent argument our author has been developing converges into one

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[12] The quote is from *Young Winston's Wars: The Original Despatches of Winston S. Churchill, War Correspondent, 1897-1900*, edited by Frederick Woods, published in 1972. The excerpt listed here is taken from Spurr's The Rhetoric of Empire. As with many other quotes that are derived from hard-to-find books, at least here, I must acknowledge my heavy indebtedness to Spurr and his book.

and the same colonial discursive sophistry that has been used to justify the ways of the mighty, regardless of the consequences on the native people.

This ambivalent pull and rejection the West feels toward the Other is exactly the sentiment that crops up in various literary and other writings that appeared since colonial discourse became refined as a form of entertainment and pastime for many intellectuals in the West. One of the modern colonial writings that specifically deals with the East-West relations, appropriately named *A Passage to India*, sheds plenty of light on the issue of fear and attraction we are addressing here. From the inception the novel is focused on the difference between the West, or more specifically bucolic and civilized England, and the East with its mysterious enigmas and earthiness, perhaps with its full literary connotations. Dusty roads, overcrowded streets, dirt walls, a river with occasional corpse floating downstream if the creatures of the water allow that to happen—all these undifferentiated, teeming images are crowded into a tiny space of a few pages as Forster wrings what he considers the essences of the Orient and convey them to the English audience. The corpus of the mishmash of these imageries constitute the unapproachable, terrible Other that needs to be resisted, which echoes the exact sentiment Stanley and other expressed in their reportage, but at the same time ineluctably remain in the consciousness of the consuming Subject that is safely perusing the packaged products of what the East is supposed to mean and be. It is, at least in the form that is usually presented to the Western public via the genius of various authors, never a simple this or that but comprehends various contradictory sentiments and ideas that at once cause and elicit a multitude of reactions from the audience. That is why the protagonist doctor of the Forster's story finds it extremely difficult to portray himself in a unadulterated consistent manner that paradoxically enough seems to be required of him from the Conquerors' point of view. The doctor knows the role he needs to play is chameleon like that shifts according to the contingencies that arise as he faces the European masters. Although he hates being a mere subservient minion of the system and network that binds him all the more tightly as he tries to untangle himself from it, he keeps the wheels of the system running by resisting it and tries to be consistent and simultaneously transmogrifying continuously despite and because of his self-awareness of the very Foucaultian power he is involved in. At once angry at the role he has to play and comedic about the way he cringes before the European "guests" to the Subcontinent all he can do is to go about his business as if they were nothing more than a necessary evil India has to put up with. But there are occasions he needs to assume a definite stance before his European friends/adversaries. When he gets a call from the ladies is an instance. The doctor is

angry at the puerile machinations the ladies are hatching and he is fully aware of the nature of the request cum order. But he does not have the courage and determination to just ignore it, being wracked with the idea that consequences of such blatant disregard of a request from English ladies might be graver than his petty anger warrants. So he plays the role of a buffoon, which in turn causes much internal turmoil in the doctor. Buffoonery pleases the ladies for the obvious reason that it is what they expect from a native, despite his status as an intellectual and doctor, and what the doctor surmises and instinctively and empirically knows what is expected of him. Phantasmagoric and opportunistic, although it may be interpreted as flexible, his behavior toward the English ladies may be, compliance to the situation proper protocols always entails psychic contractions in a sensitive and intelligent mind as the doctor's. In a novel that is based on European Colonialism revelation of such human inner struggle in a native is quite rare and that in itself should be judged as a conscientious portrayal of the Other on the part of Forster. However, that does not mean he is totally detached and apart from the prejudices and traditional expectations that are usually placed on an author bent on reporting the East to the European audience. (I may have to remark, to be fair to the author who might have been producing his work just to please his English audience, that what he depicts merely reflects the ideas and mores of the day when Colonialism was somehow accepted and from the political thinkers perspective even necessary to sustain the prosperity and capitalism that pushed Britain to the prominence that it had enjoyed in the first place.) As Said was wont to say, there are many instances in which the slanted ideology of the West crops up rather conspicuously in the story Forester wrote. One such obvious scene is the party, facetiously called the bridge party, which even the initiators of the parties cannot help but chuckle even at the idea of English and Indians commingling, as if such bridge to connect the two cultures were possible, which they obviously doubt. As it turns out, the gathering invites all sorts of derogatory comments and faux pas, at least from the English point of view, resulting in a disaster and manifestations of audacious and comedic violation of cultural protocols that is only possible, according to the author, in India and by Indians. Those who dare to speak the fancy language, which is suitable only for properly acculturated English ladies, make fools of themselves to the delight of the Europeans who happen to be present at the party. The natives who try to overreach their station by dressing in a manner that only befits true Europeans render themselves ridiculous nondescript clowns only English manage to find incredibly appropriate for Indians. The protagonist doctor in *A Passage to India* is no exception. He pays a visit to his English friend cum schoolmaster only to find his collar button lacking. The doctor, being a good

natured, accommodating man, as any Indians were supposed to be (after all they were subservient ones who had to obey the ultimate rules of the Colonizers), he gladly takes off his and hands it to his English "friend," to the expected delight of the schoolmaster. As a result, he makes himself somehow dowdy (which in fact turns out to be the case later on when he comes to face other English men who judge him as a mere Indian—unpunctual, slow, and somehow obtuse buffoon who is not going to make much of himself) and just like the rabble of Indians. The doctor corroborates this line of argument, again obviously made from the English perspective of which Forster is a mere representative, if I may jog your memory, when he interacts with the English new comers in an increasingly awkward way, which in the end dooms his fate. Initially an indubitably a solid intellectual, who even shows signs of becoming an intellectual lynchpin of new India, he takes a definite turn for the worse and ridiculous as he meets the English women, and by extension England and what is contemporaneously brewing on the home front, the doctor is objectified as what India is and is going to be when he/Other is contrapuntally juxtaposed hierarchically with the English at its most mediocre. The only commonality that comes across the story is the distance, unbridgeable one at that, that separates the two cultures and races. The issue of hiatus brings us back one more to the question of ambivalent valuation that prevails even in the reporting subject's psyche. It is a hiatus that is both welcomed by the ruling English, as it continually keeps them separate and uncontaminated from the rabble of the natives (which should remind a lot of readers of the scene in which Mrs. Moore exotically encounters the doctor at a religious setup only later to elicit ire from her own son who rebuke her for violating the protocols that pertain to the interracial behaviors) and, paradoxically enough, by the natives themselves, as they fear gratuitous complications that result from contact with the White, not to say that they (especially those who are educated like the doctor) in fact resent encroachment on their spheres by the intruding English. The distance/rejection that is manifested by the two is, or tried to be, all the more strictly adhered to because the "contamination" and attraction each finds in the other, however implicitly expressed the desire may be, is always there. In fact, the desire is all the more pronounced, the more carefully each guards their own integrity by withdrawing to their own values and people. The seemingly nonchalant observation Kipling makes in his writing may not be totally irrelevant to quote here as the native aspirant for European culture and manners is scathingly reduced to an overreaching cad, who can never hope to attain the real status Europeans naturally enjoy without any attempt for cultural refinement, as they are, Kipling almost suggests, innately endowed with the qualities that are the object of envy

for the citizens of the colored race.

> Pyramus carries a walking-stick with imitation silver straps upon it, and there are cloth tops to his boots; but his collar has been two days worn. Thisbe crowns her dark head with a blue velvet tam-o'-shanter; but one of her boots lacks a button, and there is a tear in the left-hand gloves.[13]

Kipling's strategy here is obvious. As he draws upon the best Western civilization has to offer, such as Greek myth and its derivative literatures that have spread out throughout Europe, he aims to bring the superficial epigonous mannerisms that characterize the upstarts whom he sees springing up in the Asian Subcontinent. No matter how hard the Asian counterparts try to copy the customs and accoutrements, which they think make them the equals of their Occidental counterparts, their attempt miserably fails because they cannot but be themselves after all. The impressive looking walking stick betrays itself and its owner as well for announcing to the whole world, well in this case to the discerning eye of our author, that it is not what it seems to be. The arrogant, although this part is just left to the reader's imagination but amply implied, pretentious native "gentleman" thinks he is dressed up impeccably from toe to head but on close inspection the collar he is wearing turns out to be not so clean, befitting, to the readers of Kipling and the author himself, the natives of the Subcontinent and betraying the superficiality of the owner of the much ornamented stick. Pyramus's native partner is no different than himself in sloppiness. There is always something lacking when they pretend to be perfection itself, just as the doctor in Forester's story cannot help betraying his Indian self by being full of shortfalls. In other words, the difference—almost in the sense old Deconstructionist School was fond of prevaricating/obfuscating/overcharging by investing a multitude of etymologically [un]related meanings into it—is always there between the consciousness of the West, if I let the authors of reportage, both creative and presumably straightforward, take the lead in shaping the views of the consuming West, and the Other, the entity that both is and needs to occupy the positionality of the antithesis to whatever the Subject deems appropriate because the Subject needs the Other to keep itself alive and prosperous, just as in the olds days when physical occupation of the colonies kept the economies of the European powers vibrant and strong. Those of blatantly exploitative days may be over but the structure that kept the old system alive is still there, at least in the form I just delineated. The inevitable distance, with simultaneously working forces that both pull and repel the Other from the Subject, is ineluctably embedded in the scheme to

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[13] The quote is from *Collected Works*, published by AMS Press in 1970, and appears on page 186, volume 18.

keep the lopsided relations dynamically intact (did you notice the paradoxical phrase, perhaps?) so that the constant product of the seemingly bi-directional forces is always the same, working in favor of the consuming West to render the Other in the image and the object that suits the will of the commanding Subject. Then what is the Other? Is it merely the opposite of the Subject, in not being the Subject? Or is it something else? The defining answer lies in the nature of the oppositional relations the two keep in order to maintain their integrity that is only possible in the existence of the reliable Other, which must necessarily resides both within and apart from oneself. The creation of abjectness and mysterious attractions and fears the Subject invests in the Other may all be related to this ambiguity it feels toward the Other. No matter what the cost, although as I time again mentioned the cost inevitably falls on the Other, the dynamism involved in churning out the bi-directional forces invariably self-propagates because the Subject is also dependent upon the same energy that gives rise to the Other as the object of its undifferentiated inchoate image it needs to propel itself on its path to the next "evolutionary phase," if I may borrow Darwin's term with a little twist, and assure its own survival, as it were. Again, the Other is not quite a reverse or observe of the Subject but they are interlinked in that both, well perhaps the Other more needed for its other than the other way round, somehow coexist and must necessarily go side by side as the Subject explores all channels to ascertain its dominance in this age of globalization and information age. That brings us to a different kind of exploitation than the one prevalent in the late 19th and early and mid 20th centuries. But because of the ramifications and complexities the new schema present to the students of neo-Colonial discourse, as it were, it has to be done somewhere else. For now let us part with the understanding that alteriority is something like a force a la Foucault that permeates the nooks and crannies of that space which comprehends almost all human activities such as economic, political, aesthetic, cultural, etc. and that must necessarily entail ambiguous, bi-directional relations, in which the ruling Subject puts it at a certain distance although ever so close to itself for its own very survival; but at the same time alteriority occupies the space that also comprehends the active spheres that become conducive to control over the Other. The tandem relational structure with all the subtle, complex hierarchical nuances—that is indeed the closest I can attain to defining what alteriority is all about at this point.

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Alterity と Colonial Discourse

Alterity—他者的存在—というのは Colonial Discourse において重要な概念であるが、この論文ではその概念が歴史的にいかに記述する側の Subject により一（そしてまた皮肉にも）双方向的に定義、形成されてきたかを具体例をもとに分析、考察してみた。