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**FROM BOMBAY TO BOSTON:
THE *LOCATION* OF HOMI K. BHABHA**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial
fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy*

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CERTIFICATE

July 20, 2004

This is to certify that the dissertation titled **From Bombay to Boston: The *Location* of Homi K. Bhabha**, submitted by **A. Q. M. A. Rahman Bhuiyan**, of the Centre of Linguistics and English, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, under my supervision for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is the candidate's original work and has not been previously submitted in part or full, for any other degree of this or any other university.

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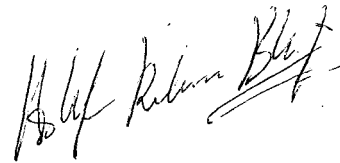
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This dissertation titled **From Bombay to Boston: The *Location* of Homi K. Bhabha** submitted to the Centre of Linguistics and English, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is a record of my *bona fide* work.

It has not been submitted in part or full, to any university for the award of any degree.



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For my Mother and Father
Who sacrificed much more for me than
what was already enough and whose love and strength
enabled this work and continues to enable me.

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PREFACE: A *PRIMARY* LOCATION

The word *location* has acquired a vogue of its own ever since Prof. Homi K. Bhabha chose it for the title of his seminal collection of articles. The word location suggests a place, a place of *origins, roots* or *space in time*. However the word location is not something as rigid as the word ‘origin’ or ‘roots’ connote. Neither is it as arbitrary as the word ‘space’ or ‘space in time’. However, it can suggest both the arbitrariness of the space and even the rigidity of roots, and thus becoming part of both, making it quite an ambivalent word. Location certainly demands a sense of temporality to its meaning. *The Location of Culture* as I read it, is not a search for the “place” or space of culture or the origin of culture. It is rather the place of cultural signification. It is a search for the place of cultural formation. Thus with temporality, there is also a sense of creation or the construction of culture. To ask where is the *location* of culture, or what is the *location* of culture in Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, would actually be futile. Rather, to ask how culture has been located would be more in line with Bhabha’s work.

To be able to contextualize the *location* of Bhabha is not a simplistic effort as the word location itself is pregnant with inherent ambivalences. He is located in one of the “center courts” of Western metropolitan academia, Harvard. From there he talks of “channa walla’s” under a tree outside of Delhi, Rushdie’s and his very own Bombay, and of course the formidable chappati. Thus *The “Location” of Homi Bhabha* can only ever be a “Location” and not a location of Bhabha. The ambivalence in the word constructs its meaning.

From Massachusetts, in a “location” adjacent to its port city capital, Boston, Bhabha harks at the port city capital of Maharashtra, his native Bombay – as it was called when he grew up there. “Bombay, most cosmopolitan, most Hybrid, most hotchpotch of Indian cities [...] nor is the West absent from Bombay, I was already a mongrel self, history’s bastard before London aggravated the condition”, and thus Bombay herself, harks at

the west, as told by another great mind of that city (Rushdie 404). To take the binary pair that is suggested by the title – Bombay/Boston – Bhabha is “located” in the hybrid moment of the two.

Technically speaking of course, Harvard is situated in Cambridge, *adjacent to Boston!* Then why the added ambiguity of Boston at all? Language has a certain capacity to construct reality. For the title of a work that may read somewhat like an ‘Intellectual Biography’, an alliteration of the “proper” name can “sound” valuable.

Bhabha’s critical project goes well beyond the conventional confines of the postcolonial. In a very significant way, Bhabha’s mediations, and meditations with the postcolonial ruptures the existing fixed parameters of critical perception. In this dissertation, I try to locate his work in the process of constructing an ‘Archeology of the Margins’ by tracing the treatment of the Other in the pre-colonial, colonial and the postcolonial era.

New Delhi

A.Q.M.A.R.B

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS FOR PRIMARY SOURCES

ODD – Oxford Universal Dictionary.

WS – “The White Stuff”.

AP – “Apologies for Poetry”.

AC – “Homi K. Bhabha: Academic and Critic”

LC – “*The Location of Culture*.”

MM – “Are you a Man or a Mouse?”

NN – *Nation and Narration*.

BB -- “Best of the ‘90s: Books”.

DDDC – “Difference, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism,”

HH – “Halfway House”.

DV – “Double Visions”.

IP – “Identities on Parade: A Conversation”

MMUN– “Minority Maneuvers and Unsettled Negotiations”.

RR – “Remembering Fanon”.

DAW – “Down Among the Writers”.

VC – “Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism”.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Bhabha's Location in the Postcolonial

The area of postcolonial studies in the past few decades has caused a tremendous impact in the academic circuits. If colonialism had forever reshaped the world in terms of language, culture, and national boundaries, postcolonial studies through its engagement with the latter, has forever shattered colonialism's sedimented self-appraisal by reflecting its gaze back onto itself. It has thereby taken the initial steps of theoretically and politically dislocating the junctures of power that had gone into constructing the colonial edifice. Postcolonialism is not only to be seen as the condition of the former colonized states and their inhabitants but rather as an effect as well as a process which is integral to the modern day state of affairs. Therefore, a postcolonial theorist, whose close interrogation of the structures and spaces within culture places him/her in a location from where they not only negotiate the position of the former colonized subjects but also articulate the location of the former colonial mother countries and their subjects. This field has drawn countless numbers of scholars from an equally countless number of backgrounds from around the world, and still continues to do so.

Professor Homi K. Bhabha, is one of the worlds leading postcolonial theorist. His work carries immense value in areas ranging from the Fine Arts and African-American studies to feminist theory and cultural studies. He occupies himself wholly in each of these areas, bringing to it his unique rigorously sustained critical gaze. He focuses on the microscopic "synapses" that take place in the construction of culture, and to an extent human knowledge, and more specifically in the colonial discourse. A pursuit similar

to and matched only by Foucault's analysis of the capillary circuits of the power relationship and his framing of the "microphysics of power" as an alternative method for its analysis. Although not a Foucauldian and certainly highly critical of him at times, Bhabha has nevertheless been influenced by the 20th century power philosopher.

The microscopic critical gaze that Bhabha brings to his work can be seen as a surgeon's gaze in an operation theatre, but not at the cost of a holistic view. This gaze, becomes a practice that can and has been used in other critical discourses, and is certainly a worthy strategy that should be developed by students of literary theory and criticism. By taking such a delicate perspective in interrogating the postcolonial subject, Bhabha's ideas have led to a paradigm shift in postcolonial theory and other contemporary critical thoughts. His overall project is anything but confined to the postcolonial subject position and has given him a cult-like status in which his overall range of work can be considered constructing an Archeology of the Margins. His concepts such as hybridity, fetishism, and so on behave like archeological tools – the brush and the scalpel. Using these "tools", Bhabha makes incisions in the "silt" that have percolated throughout history and have accumulated on the surface and hardened over time, muffling the voices that lay repressed and "fossilized" in the cracks and crevices beneath it. Bhabha further repositions himself in these crevices to see what other possibilities are exposed in the form of knowledge, and as an alternative mode of signification, from another place of enunciation (Olson 11).

So who really is this formidable theorist who has made words such as hybridity, ambivalence, fetish, dissemination, stereotype and many other words, staple to cultural studies? Who, speaks of the doubling of the subject by contradictory signs contesting for the same space, and what does he wish to explain through these words? One who brought psychoanalysis into post-colonial studies in a *powerful way* and at times is condemned for being on the wrong side of the post-colonial debate and speaking more for the "colonial" west, rather than the "colonized" east. One who, by his readings of Fanon, has practically led to a revival of the revolutionary theorist with greater emphasis

and with new impetus in post-colonial studies and the larger cosmopolitan academic space; so much so that a workshop on Fanon is never completed without Bhabha, who currently is, but naturally, editing the Franz Fanon Reader!

Bhabha brings a great deal of freshness and gusto into the field of postcolonial studies, beyond the process of de-colonization, and into other fields. In fact, he comes at a much-needed point where postcolonial studies, given the plethora of its work was at times becoming cumbersome and repetitive, not to mention, too metropolitan! Bhabha opens a new space in the area while, rather than keeping with the search for an end to the means, he shows definitively how the area is actually a study of a process in transition. Bhabha is always stretching out to grasp something different, something new, and something other than what already had been grasped. If Said was the progenitor of the postcolonial project, Bhabha's project becomes a funnel passage, not out of it, but along with it and beyond it, as if Bhabha adds another *post* to the already postcolonial.

In fact it is through the unity of (what I like to call) the "discourse of the margins" or the "Archeology of the Margins" it is possible to connect Bhabha's vast areas of interest. Even his angle of interrogation of these areas such as, the fine arts, feminist studies, African-American literature, fundamentalism and of course his approach to postcolonial studies, reflect his urgency to hear the muffled voices of history. And to create a procedure or tactics to ensure that they are heard, or are never repressed into extinction.

Today, many of these areas are seen as part of the metropolitan academic space while at the same time becoming an integral part of today's cosmopolitan academic space. Contrary to other critics who consider his works tangential to historical events, like the iconoclastic figure of Clifton in *Invisible Man* (Ellison 337), Bhabha's point of interrogation of these areas are clearly embedded at certain historical junctures, when they were not part of the cosmopolitan discourse. He tracks them and helps to write them back, into the cosmopolitan, dominant discourse of present day postcolonial studies. For

such an endeavour, a concept, especially like hybridity, becomes an intelligent deconstructive tool in destabilizing the rigid, ethnocentric structure that marks his commitment to postcolonialism. Even his specific engagement with critics such as Ranjit Guha, Ashish Nandi, G.C. Spivak, Fanon, Rusdie, and Said, shows his commitment to this discourse of the margins.

The marginal may always make compromises, but it is also important for them to *remember* that they *did make* the compromise towards the dominant, only because it was the dominant and they were compelled in doing so. By expressing even a murmur of frustration or some resentment of these choices, they will actually be enrolled in the negotiating process of keeping the marginal culture, customs, or ways, alive. This becomes a longing for an alternative way, manifested through the murmurs, frustrations, and dissatisfactions of the marginal community. It however should not be seen as similar to the nostalgic longing for an originary past. Total assimilation, will always annihilate variety, and only make the world monolithic and poorer. I feel Bhabha in his work tries to designate a space, which he terms the hybrid location, where the murmurs of the margins are articulated and can be heard for one who seeks to hear it.

Reading Bhabha.

Bhabha's continuing commitment to *marginality* has drawn him close to some of the greatest thinkers of our times. His work is evident of their influences and Bhabha never shies away in acknowledging them. Among the most important influential figures in Bhabha's work and his thoughts have been Fanon, Lacan, and Derrida. In an interview with a former colleague, W.J.T. Mitchell, at the University of Chicago, Bhabha also cites the names of Derek Walcott, Toni Morrison, Salman Rushdie, Anish Kapoor (the sculptor) and Edward W. Said, as other significant influences on his work (TT 110).

An area that has attracted undue attention and has almost led to an infamous reputation for Bhabha, is the perplexing characteristics of his writing

style. This has become “common knowledge” for even those who are slightly acquainted with Bhabha’s work. His language is extremely challenging at times, indeed even for those who are well equipped to take on the subject. It brings to mind Lacan’s endorsement of ambiguity, “suggesting that students of the unconscious mind, when they become writers, are somehow morally obliged to be difficult” (Bowie 3). The subconscious, and therefore psychoanalysis certainly plays an important part in Bhabha’s works, however, it would of course be grossly unfair to say that Bhabha who has been influenced by Lacan’s theories, may have taken the moral obligation to write in a *difficult* way, more than a little too seriously! This is probably why the consequence of an initial reading of Bhabha can range from a “grimace and a huh?” To a not so distant, “okay ... but what does he mean?”.

Flak drawn by his writing style, is criticism that Bhabha takes to heart. He once lamented “That a book should be impaired by a lack of clarity, so that people cannot respond to it and mediate on it and use it must be a major indictment of anybody who wants to do serious work” (TT 110). Bhabha deals with issues that are not only complex but require at times the “shattering” of language to see the idea through. In fact, he “shatters ideas” at times and “bends” language in order to convey his thought, like any proficient theorist or philosopher would.

Criticism on Bhabha can be seen to range from a pleasant interactive support and appraisal of his writings to a scathing attack, similar to the ways it has been with many postcolonial theorists. His work has been cited and continues to be cited by an inexhaustible number of scholars and critics in postcolonial studies and beyond it in areas independent of the discourse. This non-confining aspect of Bhabha’s work has allowed his ideas and strategies of criticism to flow into disparate areas of scholarship. As a result, it is the “discourse of the margins” which he helps to propound that progresses into these other areas of discourse.

From Bombay to Boston: The Location of Homi K. Bhabha, is not to be seen as a perfunctory survey on the complete life and works of Prof. Bhabha.

The breadth of such a task is much beyond the limits, set by this program and its intentions. The specific domain of this research project can instead be viewed as a sincere effort in tackling the relatively new concepts of a theorist from which one may feel that she or he has much to gain. The project strives to take a critical gaze into the most venerable aspects of Bhabha's works that has established him as a literary blazer in the broader realm of academic discussions and debates. The concern of this project is to illuminate Bhabha's position and his rigorous engagement with socio-psychological renderings in reference to the marginal subject position. The need to "locate" Bhabha's overall project, and the trajectory of his thoughts, and its effect in other fields and to identify the vast range of his work along with his assumptions as well as his contribution to the cosmopolitan academic circuit is also of utmost importance here. Consequently, some concepts of Bhabha's have been placed with emphasis, much more than others in order to show the overall stimulus of his project as constructing an Archeology of the Margins.

The concepts suggested by Bhabha allows one to continually destabilize the questionable loci of power in any field, and contain it from ascertaining a possible hegemonic or autocratic position. This is Derrida's deconstructive process that Bhabha utilizes in his own areas. However, unlike Derrida who is more involved in the actual theorizing and textualizing of the process, Bhabha makes much use of this process, in order to deal closely with historical references. He is more focused on the discourse that creates the marginal subject position, which he too considers himself to be a part. He is constantly re-digging historical accounts that may have been leafed through and left behind while interrogating it with a gaze alternative to the initial gaze it was given. These documents and historical accounts have become archaeological relics and cultural markers that have written marginal subjects into the peripheries. Bhabha's theories, assists to read these markers against their initial grain to *unearth* the writing of subjects into the peripheries.

Bhabha's theories have gained much relevance in the contemporary times especially with the changes in the state of world affairs in the last few years. Bhabha's efforts continually remind his readers how multiple identities

and plurality, becomes the very fabric or the only option for our existence. It identifies a medium through which the fissures in the existing power structures can be negotiated, through the fissures themselves. How effective this maybe to actually lead to a practical overthrow of any hegemonic power is anyone's guess. For those who scorn this idea of using theory to keep *talking back* to power and hoping that cracks will appear in the distant but wishful future, can only take comfort in the other alternative – of talking back to power – which is through terrorization, hit-and-run tactics, and the more shocking, suicide bombing. The ongoing debate between theory and its practical application that tends to favour activism over a more *passive* theoretical endeavour renders void the achievements of some of the most radical thinkers of our times. To say that theorists such as Naom Chomsky and the late Edward W. Said have not made a dent in society through their theorization's would be nothing more than revealing ones own incognizance.

From Bombay to Boston

Mapping Bhabha's movement from India to the UK and subsequently to the USA, parallels a mapping of his intellectual growth as well. Born in Bombay in 1949 to a Parsi family – a community of the Persian diaspora that had made India their home for centuries. Relegated to the posh “ghettos” of Bombay, the Parsi's are a close-knit merchant class community, who are strangely seen as anglicized settlers in India. Quite orthodox in their ways, and critical of change, the present day Parsi's migrated centuries ago to evade the Muslim wave that swept Central Asia. Cultural diversity knocked hard at their doors making the Parsi, ardent in their need to be closed and protected.

Bhabha, the son of a successful “Bombay attorney” was very much a part of this affluent diasporic community, and his work naturally reveals his embedded interests and anxieties while growing up as a migrant, diasporic, mercantile-class, and a Third World individual, whose early education took place in Bombay (MM 58). After completing his B.A with honors from Elphinstone College of the University of Bombay in 1970, he left his birthplace

to study at Oxford. There he received his M. Phil. in 1974, M. A. in 1977 and D. Phil. in 1990 from Christ Church, Oxford. This movement from Bombay to Britain takes took him from a “quasi” migrant position to a more “evident” migrant location.

From Britain onwards, Bhabha has practically dedicated his entire career to the teaching of literature, which he continues to do so. From 1976-1978 he was Tutor in Literary Theory and Modern Literature at Wadham and St. Annes College, Oxford. From 1977 to 1978 he was a part-time lecturer in Colonial Literature at the University of Warwick. For the next 16 years, from 1978 to 1994, he taught at Sussex University as Reader in English. In 1994 he again re-located himself in the US, at the University of Chicago from 1996 to 2000, where he was honored with the position of the Chester D. Tripp Distinguished Service Professor in the Humanities, for his lifetime achievement and serious and sustained commitment to literature and humanities. Like the fluidity of the theories he helped to propound, which flow within various fields of discourse, his ideas have given him the position of a popular Visiting Professor to various institutions around the world, such as the University College, in London and many more. Since 2001, he has held the Anne F. Rothenberg Chair as Professor of English and American Literature at Harvard University.

Bhabha’s distinguished academic career is studded with countless honors and honorary fellowships from diverse institutions. In 1976 to 1978, he received a British Council Scholarship and the Violet Vaghan-Morgan Graduate Fellowship at Oxford University. Over the years he has produced a great number of conference papers and has given countless lectures in both Britain and the United States, some of these include the Amnesty Human Rights Lecture at the University of Oxford in 1999 and the Stanford Presidential Lectures in the Humanities and Arts at Stanford University in 2000. He was also a member of the UNESCO Committee on Culture in the Third Millenium, 2002, and held the position of a faculty member in the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (DAVOS), and presented the highly esteemed Clarendon Lectures at the University of Oxford, both in 2003.

Today Bhabha resides in the advisory panels of key arts institutions, which include the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, the Whitney Museum of American Arts, New York and the Rockefeller Foundation. He has published widely in journals including 'New Formations', 'Artforum', 'October', 'Marxism Today', 'Oxford Literary Review', 'Critical Inquiry' and 'Screen' to just name a few. He also sits on the editorial board of some of these journals.

From books and journals to distinguished Chairs, to international forums on human rights and development, and part of the governing bodies of mammoth Foundations and institutions, and into the mass media – Bhabha's personal and public life becomes an integral part of his very work which in turn consigns his work. His journey from the local diasporic position in India to a migrant position in Britain and later to the US, shows the representative luggage of a diasporic individual that he has had to carry and continues to carry throughout his life. The dislocation of the ethnic tropes and fragmentation of identity are not platitudes in Bhabha but a part of a struggled out reality that he lives through. He embodies the delirium of ambivalence that creeps in the diasporic and migrant identities and has created an accreted niche for himself in the metropolitan art and academic locations. His work has taken him to a wide spread arena of the cosmopolitan, allowing him a platform in international agencies such as UNESCO and Amnesty International from where he can speak back from the position of his locality. From such platforms, he articulates the practical implications and applications of his theories while maintaining that theory is not divorced from society and that both can, and ought to cohabit.

Many of Bhabha's works have appeared in collections and anthologies of postcolonial studies, African-American studies and gender based studies. In fact no *Reader* of repute in Post-colonial studies can be found, that doesn't contain an article by Bhabha. Likewise, in anthologies of African-American critical studies, Bhabha's articles appear and are read along side those of bell hooks, James Snead, and Henry Louis Gates Jr (Ervin 268).

Two of Bhabha's most well known works are *Nation and Narration* (edited) (1990) and *The Location of Culture* (1994). *Nation and Narration* is a collection of articles by various critics and theorists. The articles contest the liberal notion of the nation state and nationalism. By exerting pressure on these loose but continually over used terms, it brings out the anxiety and the contradictions of the post world war era and explores "the Janus-faced ambivalence of language itself in the construction of the Janus-faced discourse of the nation" and therefore the modern concepts of national identity (NN 3). Bhabha writes a short introduction to the book and includes one of his most widely quoted articles, 'DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation'. This essay shows the construction of the nation in a play between the pedagogy and the performative, and also appears in his seminal work, *The Location of Culture*.

The Location of Culture is probably Bhabha's most powerful collection of writings ranging from the early 80's to the mid-90's. It contains most of his elaborate discussions on his theoretical perspectives. "The book has been praised by writers as diverse as Edward Said and Toni Morrison" (Mitchell 81). The well known W.T.J. Mitchell, his colleague at Chicago, in an interview with Bhabha, once commented that the book has been "characterized as too difficult, as too political as not political enough ...and as a danger to scientific thinking". According to Bhabha, one of his goals in writing the book was to show that "both the imperialist and the nationalist views of colonialism often missed the importance and complexity of the sociopolitical struggles being fought out on the cultural format [...] missed the daily struggles that were conducted over things like rice and bread" (Mitchell 81). Another goal for the book was to understand, in his own words, "from what sorts of positions do cultures relate to each other in different contexts? [...] and how various cultures coexist – what modes of accommodation they use so that they can articulate their differences yet be engaged in communal negotiations and have common pursuits" (Mitchell 110).

His other books include, *Anish Kapoor: Making Emptiness*, 1998, *The Right to Narrate* (forth coming, Columbia University Press). He has co-edited

Cosmopolitanism, Negotiating Raptures and *The Colonizer the Colonized*. Bhabha has also appeared in countless numbers of Television and Radio shows. He was profiled in 'Newsweek' on 17th April 1997 as one of the "100 Americans for the Next Century", and also in the New York Times November 17 2001, "Harvard's Prize Catch, a Delphic Postcolonialist". Homi Krishnan Bhabha is married to Jacqueline Bhabha, also a faculty member at Harvard, and is the father of two.

Fanon to Said and Beyond

Bhabha's early writings suggest that the colonial question in the postcolonial area has been of much concern to him, especially the ones written between 1983 and 1985, which appear in specific chapters in *The Location of Culture*¹. In these writings, Bhabha expands on, and qualifies, the analysis illustrated by Said in *Orientalism*, and shifts his perspective to focus on what goes on *within* "Orientalism" as in, *the specific gaze* of colonial rule. Said's seminal work took a Foucauldian approach of unmasking the links between knowledge and power in the colonizer's gaze – Orientalism. Although Franz Fanon's writing's discussed the racial encounter between the West and its colonies, prior to Said, while suggesting a replacement of Eurocentric binaries with a Manichean binary set – it is Said who brought the question to the modern arena of scholarly discourse. In fact the establishment of postcolonial studies and its present treatment can be appropriated to Edward W. Said – a point well accepted by most post-colonial critics including Bhabha himself, who has never fell short of saying that *Orientalism* "inaugurated the postcolonial field" (Moore-Gilbert 456). Said's adoption of the binary model in *Orientalism* and his assumption of the flow of power in a single direction from the colonizer to that of the colonized, where the role of those who are colonized, in the power play, becomes restricted to a Foucauldian form of resistance.

¹ Chapters Three, Four, Five and six.

It is here that Bhabha begins to part ways from Said, criticizing his theory of Orientalism for its reductive simplification from a postmodernist position. He says, "there is always in Said the suggestion that colonial power is possessed entirely by colonizers which is a historical and theoretical simplification" (LC 116). Bhabha more of a deconstructionist, is aware that the incessant play of words (suggested by Derrida) may slow down due to the "gravitational" forces of racism, stereotypes and intolerance of differences. These "forces" may gain momentum through an established power and acquire a manifestation on the non-dominant marginal groups. In other words, Bhabha's discomfort with a binary structure maybe a result of his assumptions that stereotypes and racism and such other perspectives, may always make, one part of the binary set tend towards domination at any given time. This thought will be followed in chapter II and III. Here however, disregarding Bhabha's divergence, I would like to suggest his closeness to both these theorists and show how he is not just indebted to them but also carries them along with him "all the way". Said had written that Orientalism is not a single homogenizing perspective but a polarity. It is a discipline of imperial power and yet on the other hand it is also a fantasy of the Other. 'This fantasy of the Other', and the space for negotiation and resistance (which Bhabha defines as stereotypes, differences and so on), is the place where Bhabha expands Said's line of reasoning and brings his own critical gaze on postcolonial studies, while propounding his own theory.

Thus, Bhabha undertakes a conscious cultural paradigmatic shift from the theoretical postulates legitimized by Fanon and Said. He then branches out to a position, which is experientially marginal, theoretically peripheral, and critical of being universalistic in order to remain local. Unlike both Fanon and Said, but rather like Derrida, Bhabha is tremendously disturbed by the ageless Eurocentric view of the Cartesian divide, which based its assumptions in binary sets. Fanon, switching the bad for good and the good for bad in his Manichean model deconstructs the Eurocentric perspective but not to the level of an effective *incessant play*, resulting in the naturally conceivable impression that a new "marginal" dominant will be inadvertently established. Said less of a deconstructionist, establishes a historical view of power and domination,

where a gaze is incongruous and erroneously constructed creating stereotypes and ill perspectives. In fact, Said radically dwells on the erroneous construction of the orient by the Orientalist, he mentions the harmful nature of stereotypes while not really interrogating the stereotypes per se and therefore missing the “interstitial gaps” within the colonizer and colonized divide, where discrimination and differences are articulated. It is the deconstructed treatment of this space in the specific postcolonial context that has given Bhabha his present position in academia.

These stereotypes, and the misconstrued perspectives for Bhabha, become the place of confrontation, the heath of a battlefield, the place of negotiation between the colonizer and the colonized. Said’s colonized lacks agency and endures the brunt of colonialism. This does not mean to say that the colonized in Bhabha’s view hits back at their colonial masters, and are therefore not just silent victims of colonialism. Such a view would tantamount to blanding the tinge in the postcolonialists tongue, for which many critics continue to condemned him. Bhabha rather, through these formulations of stereotypes, misconstrued perspectives, identifies the murmurs of the colonized in the colonial past which had built up to make the tremors of resistance, and led to the subsequent dismantling of the Crown.

Bhabha although a postcolonialist, his interrogation of the stereotype, fetish, and the hybrid location, has brought him over to a wider area of racism, discrimination and thus into studies of areas beyond the general discourse of postcolonial studies. Bhabha’s awareness that even the postcolonial maybe or eventually may become a part of the mainstream keeps him at the midriff of the postcolonial body politic. He in no manner, voices the cliched lyrics of the quintessential postcolonialist, that seem only to *want* to make the postcolonialist’s voice resonate louder and louder with not much effect. Critics such as G.C. Spivak and Abdul R. JanMohamed are among the graceful achievers of such a feat. However, Bhabha does not muffle the latter voices, in anyway. He becomes more of an advocate in guarding a “space”, which he will call the hybrid space where “newness enters the world”. Of course, “newness” is not simply the “avant-garde and the *avant la lettre*” (BB 136), as Bhabha

say, and therefore simply just the *new*. In fact, newness at times can even be that which is archaic! “Newness” in such a definition becomes a metaphor for the unfamiliar, that which is not part of the usual, or the mainstream, or in other words, that, which is not the dominant. *New*, can be what was previously unknown, and had been previously confined to the margins or the periphery, and therefore, was *never included*. Once such a “newness” begins its strategies, struggles and negotiations to enter into the world discourse, it raises a large number of eyebrows and at times causes a furor. Here Bhabha cites the Rushdie affair as an example.

Such is the newness of perspective that Bhabha brings to his endeavour, and unlike most postcolonialist, is not only ready to make the non-colonial, dominant, and therefore “writing back to the colonies”. A manichean endeavour of this kind which certainly was imperative to begin the discourse, has the possibility of slipping into hegemonic proportions of its own kind. Bhabha’s position is rather to ensure a location, a tolerant space, for the archaic or the unfamiliar, or that which has been relegated to the periphery. These, along with the avant-garde and the *avant la lettre* all become a part of the *new*, and Bhabha strives to ensure a location for such “newness” to continue to “enter the world”. Thus, the scholarship on Bhabha has reached a certain growth where we can branch out of the cosmopolitan location to situate ourselves at the “border post” of postcolonial studies, and probably at the “frontlines” of the next area to come....

The problematization of the marginal that he structures marks his overall project, in suggesting an alternative to multiculturalism and globalization. Under the paradoxical name of a “Vernacular Cosmopolitanism”, he strives to internationalize the local in order to present a secular subaltern discourse. This vernacular cosmopolitan space again becomes the location where “newness” can enter the “world order”. Through his course of questioning, one can place Bhabha in constructing a “discourse of the margins”, or an “Archeology of the Margins”. His identifying principle of the margin is through differences and discriminatory perspectives, or in other words, defines

the margins as those who are, or that which is, under the dominant fixities, or is “left out” while being included.

The trajectory of this project will try to plot Bhabha’s movement from his psychoanalytical interrogation of postcolonial studies, to the formulation of his theory of hybridity, where references to stereotypes and fetishism will be important. It will then move on while dealing with issues that are at the heart of Bhabha’s project, namely, culture, marginal identity, and cultural difference. Here, references to racism, discrimination, and the interrogation of these fixities within the hybrid moment, will be used as a link to show how Bhabha’s theories are used to move into areas beyond postcolonial studies, such as translation studies, feminist studies, African-American studies, and even Art criticism. This will entail Bhabha’s new conceptualization of his understanding of the marginal experience and marks a location, for the marginal voices in various fields, in order to ensure they are never suppressed into oblivion by the dominant and hegemonic forces that prevail. Thus touching upon how the marginal/local/“newness” can be internationalized, Bhabha ties his overall project, and as I have mentioned earlier, in the Archeology of the Margins.

CHAPTER II

HYBRIDITY: BABU'S COMPRADORS AND *TRANSWESTIZES*

Between the Postcolonial

The autobiographical account of Bhabha's journey and the growth of his work show how the two work hand-in-glove to delineate the wide range of areas the theorist Bhabha has come to be preoccupied with. His works tends towards a possible point of deviation from the early postcolonialist's namely Fanon and Said, and offers to speak something more than what postcolonialists like Spivak and JanMohamed strive to do.

Naturally, the question that now arises is that in his differences among other postcolonial stalwarts, how does Bhabha arrives at the *Archaeology of the Margins* and what is it about his own theoretical work that takes him to the locations outside of postcolonial studies? Whether he simply "salt and pepper's" his study of literary theory with elements from diverse disciplines or whether critics of those areas apply Bhabha's theories in their respective fields are questions that will be dealt with in this chapter. Another valuable question that maybe raised in this context is the aspect of Bhabha's theories that the postcolonial fraternity associates him with in their adulation's and their criticism of this theories. Another more general question maybe to what extent is theory in itself interdisciplinary or can be passed as being interdisciplinary?

It is the innumerable questions and the differing angles of interrogation that his work raises that has given Bhabha the cult-status he claims today. At the same time it has brought on a great deal of flak for himself. His deconstruction of colonialism, and the creation of a space where intricate relations of power and dominance take place between the colonizer and the

colonized; and his interrogation of this space using a psychoanalytical perspective may not be the first use of such gazes in the area. As I have mentioned earlier, Fanon and Said precede him in a right of their own.

The paradigm shift however, that Bhabha brings to this area is when he highlights the massive incongruity – not only in terms of a political agenda, or ideology, pioneered by Fanon and Said, which Bhabha never overlooks – that takes place when cultures unbalanced in political *might* interact. Bhabha formulates ways to dissect and read such signs of incongruity and how they are used and have been used *deliberately* by hegemonic powers as the building blocks of discrimination and intolerance that eventually lead to annihilation and genocide, of cultures, customs, practices, ways of life, beliefs, and of course people. For Bhabha, this interaction takes place in what he calls the Third Space or the Hybrid Space, although I prefer to call it the hybrid moment – as space seems to suggest a certain given position. Moment becomes a temporal spark, and is not to be seen as an identifiable historical moment.

Bhabha's concept of the hybrid moment is possibly the most cited among the terminology's that he has popularised specifically in the context of postcolonial studies. The hybrid space that Bhabha talks of, has been applied to other areas by him and also has been brought into various other disciplines by their own respective experts. It is possibly the single most common strand that binds his work to a large extent. Thus the purpose of the next few pages of this chapter will be to understand Bhabha's notion of hybridity and evaluate it as a tool within the discourse of the margins.

Hybrid and Hybridity

The simplicity in meaning that the word 'hybrid' conveys when viewed at a very basic level makes its use convenient in various disciplinary areas. However, this simplicity also makes it one of the most overused and wrongly used words in the postcolonial context and probably among the most misunderstood concepts of Bhabha. Of course, this may have a great deal to do

with the word hybridity itself, which derives from the commonly used word, hybrid. I eventually will make an appeal to use the word *hybrid* as it is used in the common sense of the word and *hybridity* to denote Bhabha's 'hybrid moment'. Here I would like to start the discussion with the word hybrid.

The word hybrid has come to be used in possibly every conceivable field. Its over/use wherever it happens to appear makes it close to impossible to refute its various usage's or sever it from its various contexts. Its excessive utility has actually made it a household word! The general understanding of the word hybrid has come to hover around its most commonly used meaning – as a single outcome of two things or a mixture or mixed state of something, which is other than its composite ingredients. Such a loose usage of a word can encompass the “outcome” or result of the grafting of seeds – hybrid seeds – to the collapsing of separate heavenly bodies – as in certain stellar objects, to even the “cross-fertilisation of words, including the ever-growing list hyphenated words. ‘Hybrid’ can be used conveniently to describe them all. It maybe worthy to also keep in mind that, if such usage of a word seems endless, it is probably a reflection of the world we live in – and even the *space* which exists outside of it! So much is a result of mixing and so little actually retains any elements of “homogeneity” authenticates that, a word like ‘purity’ only exists as a word in an ontological argument. This tends to suggest that *if* it is in the realm of the possible for the *pure* to exist, chances are that *pure* would be nothing more than the ‘monotony of form’ and certainly insignificant in itself. Not to mention that it may even be someone's desperate attempt to claim eminence for something or themselves. In fact in Bhabha's view, of the pure in terms of “racial purity, cultural priority – produced in relation to the colonial stereotype functions to ‘normalise’ the multiple beliefs and split subjects (like the mimic man) that constitutes colonial discourse” (LC 74).

It maybe interesting to note that references to the word hybrid, has even been used in literature for quite sometime. Bhaktin talks of the hybrid text as “cutting two other texts in a planned or random manner” (Hawthorn 159). Darwin allocates a whole chapter on hybridisation in *The Origin of Species*. W.E.B Du Bois uses the word in relation to race and ethnicity, as early as

1903, where he talks of the “double-consciousness” or ‘twoness’ of the American Negro (Brooker 127). This comes closest to what Bhabha has in mind when he uses the word hybridity himself.

The semantic fluidity of the term hybridity vis-à-vis the word hybrid, therefore requires a “definition” of the context before any serious interrogation can be made. Thus to reduce the “slipperiness” of the signifier ‘hybridity’, I will be attempting to locate my inquiry within the context of postcolonial studies. I will also show that this word when used in other contexts, which have been influenced by certain aspects of postcolonial studies, intends to use the word hybridity in the same way as it has been used in the postcolonial context. I also feel that any analysis of Bhabha’s project requires a detailed investigation into his concept of ‘hybridity’, and that hybridity actually *precedes* most of his other concepts and ideas. Although this may seem like an act of reduction – limiting an individual’s entire enterprise to one word, not to mention the entire academic enterprise of a *controversially exciting theorist!* It can perhaps be more positively regarded as a strategic approach that allows for a comprehensive consideration of Bhabha’s works and while pivoting the term’s semantic possibilities to the arena of the postcolonial.

There will be two basic premises that I will try to establish while placing hybridity in its postcolonial context. Firstly that, hybridity in postcolonial studies has to be seen through the role of power and domination and secondly that, a psychoanalytical position of hybridity that Bhabha takes up is crucial in understanding the actual word and its use in the postcolonial context. I will first begin discussing the second premise of how hybridity takes up a psychoanalytical position in Bhabha.

Bhabha and the Location of Hybridity

Peter Brooker when defining the term *Uncanny* in his glossary of literary terms, cites Freud’s essay ‘The Uncanny’ as its theoretical source, where Freud discusses the etymologies of the German terms, *unheimlich* and

heimlich. Freud suggests that a point comes when these binary pairs (opposite in meaning) come very close in meaning each other. For instance, *heimlich* – the homely or familiar – infers ‘belonging to the house’ which suggests concealment, clandestine, or out of sight, a meaning also suggested by the *unheimlich* – uncanny, unfamiliar or frightening. Therefore Freud suggests, *unheimlich* is in some way or another a subspecies of the *heimlich*, as both always already seem to be part of each other [1974th vol. 17: 226] (Brooker 257).

Bhabha deals with the binaries of his concern in a similar manner. Words like disavowel, fetish, mimicry, ambivalence are a part of a whole list of single words, made much use of by Bhabha, which split within themselves and articulate a sense of the binary within their single reference. For instance, the word ‘disavow’ is commonly used to mean a denial but also carries the sense of a latent affirmation in its denying act. Thus these words which contain a contradictory double meaning produce a back and forth movement in their meaning. While doing so, they create a sense of vacillation from both “ends of the poles”, both affirming and negating, while not quite “touching” or ‘accepting’ either but when looked into carefully, actually “hark” at their opposite meanings like Freuds *unheimlich* and *himlich*. These words seem to “pendulate” within themselves calling their opposites or brining reference from them and by doing so, their meaning ceases to remain static. Such words move closer to each other, while moving ‘beyond’ their own reference into the other, becoming “less” than what they “are” to convey, and yet conveying something more than itself and thus, *double*. This fluctuating moment – between these split words and binary sets of words – or this play in “generating” meaning, which Derrida described as the act of deconstruction of the binary sets – for Bhabha it constitutes the hybrid moment or hybridity. Therefore, hybridity, becomes a fluctuating signification between the binary divide, the loop in meaning which is not *a* meaning but a spin of meanings signifying meaning, or in the process of attaining or “becoming” meaning, in the Heideggerian sense.

However to continue to use Freud’s idea of the binary opposites “closing in” on each other, as an analogy for Bhabha’s treatment of his binary set would

actually be an oversimplification. For instance, binary opposites calling reference to each other or harking at each other as I like to say, is understandable, but not when the binary structures are not binary opposites to begin with. In fact, most of Bhabha's binary sets are not actually binary opposites terms, the way Freud's *unheimlich* or *heimlich* is, and therefore cannot be treated in the same manner. To illustrate this point, the binary set that is central to postcolonial studies, i.e. the colonizer/colonized divide, can be used. These are obviously not binary opposite words, as the antonym of colonizer would be one who does not colonize or anti/counter colonizer, suggesting one who is not a colonizer. Similarly, the opposite of the colonized would be "noncolonized" rather than colonizer. Therefore the question arises, what places the colonizer along with the colonized, so much so that they become a binary set?

The colonizer makes this actual placement of the colonized in a position that is diametrically opposed to its own, as the colonized never chooses its colonizer. In other words, there is already a force or a violence or a play of power perpetrated by the colonizer which actually chooses the colonized and at the same time keeps the colonized from "floating away", literally and metaphorically, making him part of the binary divide! In other words, there is already a play of power by the dominant signifier as it arrests or restrains the Other.

It is here that Bhabha's binary opposite play of words differ from Freud's to approximate a Lacanian model of a desire/lack archetype of binary pairs, which is a more "active" and intricate in its interrelation. Of course with Lacan, to locate the actual power play or which way the power flows in, lets say, the desire/lack binary may be problematic as it deals with the complexities of the human psyche. In the Lacanian model, the dominant signifier may constantly switch between the poles. Therefore a clear dominance of power may not be recognisable in a desire/lack binary other than momentarily. However, the binaries actively "select" its Other while the cross-referencing towards them take place. For instance, a lack stimulates a certain desire and desire (before it is ever fulfilled) harks upon or gestures back to its lack.



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Whether the lack precedes the desire or vice-versa is one of psychoanalysis aporia's. However, in a simple binary opposite model such as good/evil the relationship is not so intricate, and can be said to suggest that the 'good' gestures towards or harks at the 'evil', or vice-versa.

In the postcolonial context, Bhabha does something similar when he explains in detail how the colonizer and colonized divide is never in of themselves but rather a harking for the other. This however does not mean to infer that the colonized is as responsible for its state of being as much as the colonizer is for its. The harshest criticism against Bhabha is directed against these grounds. Critics have claimed that even if the latter remains true on the psychoanalytical level and therefore at a conceptual level, it equals a claim that the colonizer and the colonized are both entities, which do not possess any essential characteristics. And if each constructs the other, it would somewhere deny or at least ignore the very material reality of the process of colonization. Although Bhabha introduces the complexities of psychoanalysis in postcolonial studies while talking of a similar process of an ambivalent relationship taking place between the colonized and the colonizer. He is never deluded of the fact that the disbalanced power set up places the non-belligerent always at the receiving end of the colonial condition. His claim that "power and discourse is [not] possessed entirely by the colonizer" ought not to be read as an insinuation that each constructs the other and therefore is responsible of creating the other (DDDC 459)!

This is the basis of one of the points that I have claimed earlier, that Bhabha does not maintain the voice of the typical postcolonialists. He tries to explore the place where racism, discrimination and inequalities surface in society against the marginal and non-dominant human entities. Which is why his arguments at times seems to follow a separate path rather than the usual stance taken by most postcolonial critics, where power and domination leading to exploitation is taken as the main thrust. This again does not mean that the latter position is taken out of Bhabha's equation. Domination becomes a linchpin in leading to racial discrimination, which in turn is used to justify exploitation. It is here, in the formation of racism and discrimination that

power and discourse is not only in the hands of the colonizer. Rather, a two-way structuring takes place here along with the play of a dominant power. However, discrimination or racism that the dominant power exerts on the other, will always have a greater manifestation and will lead to more exploitation and an easier justification of that exploitation, than the racial discrimination that the colonized subjects may articulate against their colonial masters. This is one of the reasons why I prefer to link Bhabha's works, to a more general discourse of the margins, and not only specific to postcolonialism.

Therefore, hybridity can be seen as a subject position or an attitude that is held. It is a temporal determination and not a space or a place situated in between binaries. It is a continuous fluctuation a movement "hither/thither", "fort/da" which is generated. This fluctuation can be seen as a struggle to negotiate that ambivalent temporal moment which arises. It is a movement of the "fort" and a movement of the "da" but neither the "fort" nor the "da" per se. It is not an inward movement but a fluctuation in between binary poles but not more than "tangential" to either of the two poles but certainly *somewhat* of the two. Immediately, a sense of doubling can be sensed here which takes place within this area. Therefore hybridity maybe seen as a space of intervention; or an intervening space where interruptions or schisms takes place. Since its an attitude, it cannot be a middle space or even a third *space* which would then make it another alternative, or the 'other' that is not of the binary set which it is part of. Here the binary set may act as the range of possibilities where the dominant power is already in place. The binary view would be to either react against it or assimilate to it, or join it if you cannot beat it. Nevertheless, neither of the two is possible. The dominant power cannot be beaten, as it is too powerful. It cannot be joined or assimilated to due to discrimination and stereotypes – the black or the brown cannot be white.

There remains however, multiple possibilities in between the fluctuating range. Its rule can be embraced/accepted but not to be confused with 'joined' which would mean to "become" a colonizer for the crown. It can be hated and therefore defied or murmurs and voices can be raised against it, theories can be written against it, and a whole other range of possibilities can be maintained

that can be articulated. Thus, hybridity presumes a detachment from the two poles it situates itself in. Therefore, the word intervention becomes important as it suggests a concern with the two poles, making hybridity an intervention, and an involvement with binary poles. Thus hybridity cannot really be a Third Space as it is not an alternative possibility. It is the *various only possibility*, as Bhabha states, “hybridity has no such perspective of depth or truth to provide: it is not a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures, or the two scenes of the book, in a dialectical play of ‘recognition’. The displacement from symbol to sign creates a crisis for any concept of authority based on a system of recognition: colonial specularly, doubly inscribed, does not produce a mirror where the self apprehends itself; it is always the split screen of the self and its doubling, the hybrid” (LC 113). The function of hybridity becomes more clear when Bhabha takes this model to areas such as the postwar diaspora and the migrant condition.

So far I have tried to explain the concept of hybridity and placed it in the postcolonial context in which Bhabha makes specific use of it. Nicholas Thomas argues that Bhabha’s weakness lies in his “construction in universalized psychoanalytic terms... which conveys a truth about discourse as such rather than one about colonization” (Childs, 143). Thomas may be right to a certain extent, however, it is also important to remember that the course of hybridity in other contexts, and especially the discourses of the margins, is used in a way similar to that which Bhabha plots it in the postcolonial context.

In the postcolonial context, the fluctuating subject position that results in a hybrid state, the neither/both condition, is also as I have mentioned earlier, the outcome of a certain violence that takes place within the binary pole. In the colonizer/colonized divide, there is a clear domination of the colonizer over the colonized. Thus, the dominant power flows in only one direction until the other successfully resists. Hence, there is an observable point of aggression as the colonizer chooses/arrests its colonized. The colonized as mentioned before, naturally never chooses its colonizer. In fact history has records of concordat’s or agreements that have been reached at times between colonizers in their selection of colonies which was evident even in the carving out of

Spheres of Influences in China and the division of Africa to name just two broad instances in the history of the colonizing nations. Therefore the point of negotiation or compromise will always, incline to the more dominant discourse produced. Of course, the dominant discourse becomes a function of the temporal moment of history and the structures of power. Therefore, even if hybridity is used outside of the postcolonial context as Nicholas Thomas suggests, it will always be specific in its use for the discourse of the margins, and rightly anywhere else where a dominant power ruthlessly constructs another and suppresses it.

Therefore a certain hybrid *movement* arises at the time of colonial aggression which again may change with time. For instance, towards the end of the Nineteenth Century when the British empire was at the pinnacle of its power, its hegemonic domination over the colonies would have produced a "certain" hybrid subject position which would be different from the hybrid position that had arisen by the end of World War II. By that time the hegemony of the British Raj had experienced cracks and fissures in its power. And also, by that time, the nationalist movements which had "succeeded" in its resistance to the Raj would have made immense strides in its very own hegemonic appeal. Thus hybridity is a fluctuation between poles as I have said earlier and a function of historical temporalities which in turn are a function of the dominant power structure. A trace of this power structure would naturally continue to remain as the aftermath or aftershock of the violence carried out on the colonies their people and their culture. The greater the hegemonic power the deeper the trace of the dominator. Thus to make use of Spivak, out of her own context, if the subaltern really cannot speak, it's probably because of the shock of the domination that petrified it during its rule. But of course, the subaltern learns to go beyond these shocks as Bhabha shows.

Hybridity in the postcolonial context cannot be simply seen as a placid involvement within binary poles but deeply embedded in structures of power where an individual attitude vis-à-vis the dominant discourse is made. For instance in the migrant condition it becomes a conscious/subconscious "choice" (maneuver) that one takes whether to be more like the country of origin or like

the country of settlement. I use the word subconscious as it is not only a conscious choice which is made but also affected by the hegemonic appeal of one of the binary poles on an individual which in turn is a result of the desire stimulated by a lack and therefore creating a double within the subjects position, creating what is called an ethnographic split.

The Empire Bites Back: Attack of the Mimics

Bhabha's inspiration of the hybrid space clearly maybe a combination of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis and Derridian deconstruction however, his use of it in the postcolonial arena is unique even to that of Fanon's. I would now like to venture into what I had referred to as being a strategy in Bhabha that is unconventional among postcolonialists. This strategy is nothing but the "psychic intervention" that Bhabha locates as taking place between the colonizer and the colonized. At this point Bhabha's ideas follow an extremely treacherous path and if I have understood him to any extent, or assuming that I am on the *right path*, it is within the hybrid moment of the psychic intervention that the formation of the gaze of racial discrimination takes place in the colonial process. It further gains momentum with the effects of power and domination.

As I have repeatedly said, and add once again for my own benefit here, the colonizer arrests its colonized but not vice-versa. For the colonizer, this harking or desire of the "Other" is not only the desire of the colonized but also contains a desire to impose their *own desire* upon the colonized subjects. Whether the colonized subjects possess any desire or not, is never taken into any consideration by the colonial rulers. This becomes the moment of pedagogical constructions of the colonized, which Said talks of so eloquently in *Orientalism*. Thus the colonized is objectified, their right for subjectivity is stripped off by the colonizers gaze. This becomes the point of the psychic-intervention. It is the point of "belief" that "colonialism came to lighten their [natives] darkness" becoming a justification for the colonizer to dominate and suppress their colonized (Fanon 1963: 169). Thus the "psychic intervention"

couples itself with the power to suppress the other. Here according to Bhabha, the colonized becomes a fetish in the eyes of the colonizer. Through his descriptions of the fetish, Bhabha constructs something close to Fanon's "racial epidermal schema" but unlike the triple identity that Fanon talks of, Bhabha speaks of a "quadruple dialogue" between the colonizer and the colonized (Fanon 1952: 112). Here the colonizer not only desires the colonized in terms of their service, but also *wants* to be the colonized himself. At the same time, the colonized also *wants* to be like the colonizer and feels the desire to repress himself thus, resulting in an ethnographic split (LC 47).

A fetish is not just an obsessive sexual desire for something or anything. It is an obsessive sexual desire specifically for an Other, which is an object after its subjectivity has been stripped away. Therefore it is always a fantasy where the consent of the Other is missing. It is just about the one who desires. Therefore, a pattern of domination appears here which is tantamount to humiliation. For example, the colonizer only *feels* that he is helping the colonized and is controlling him. This fantasy becomes so concrete in the colonizer's gaze that he would never think of other possibilities. A rough analogy can be drawn here using the example of a transvestite. The transvestite's desire to wear woman's clothes is certainly not out of overt love and respect. The transvestite, who gratifies himself by wearing women's clothes fantasizes that he *is* the woman, also controlling the *idea of being woman* by doing so. In other words, he is making "her" which is himself (after the ethnographic split occurs), succumb to the *acts* of his own desires. Another way of viewing this, is by seeing it as a reduction of the idea of a woman to simply the stereotypical clothes such as long dresses, and specific undergarments like the brassier or lingerie. It therefore becomes an objectification of the idea of a woman.

This fetishization of a woman by the transvestite and the colonized by the colonizer becomes a mode of control but also a desire to be the Other. In both, they are dealing with fantasies in order to exercise their power and domination, whether they pamper, chastise, laugh at or reward the Other, the idea of both the woman and the colonized, while being objectified, is actually

being humiliated. Here, fetishizing becomes an act of aggression as it buries the other's desire. It is this exercise of domination that gives the colonizer the same fetishistic pleasure that the transvestite/"transwestise" experiences.

Thus the colonizer creates a non existing colonized which is actually part of his own caricature and narcissistic urge to *be* the colonized and with an inbreeding desire to look up to *himself*. Desiring to see himself as the greater of the two, he may mock the colonized subject's language, by mimicking his words. It is at this point that racial discrimination gains prominence as I will show very soon. This is committed at the realm of the symbolic along with the threat of annihilation of the other. In other words, like the man who dresses up in drag, the colonizer in the act of domination and desire to humiliate, only wishes to deal with the metonymic representation of the colonized that he has constructed himself, and naturally does not disturb, or challenge him. This is just like the transvestite who wears a bra or the part (object) "representing" the whole woman coupled with the desire to *be* the woman. But this is only something that takes place in the fantasy of the subject/object dichotomy of the dominator, which is doubled in being both colonizer and colonized, or like the transvestite, with the mind of a man and the body of a woman. In which case for the latter, being man, becomes woman at the same time or rather, "woman, but not quite".

Similarly, the colonized wants to be like the colonizer in the symbolic order or the "Lacanian schema of the Imaginary" (Parry, 728). The colonized doesn't simply want to dominate the dominator but according to Bhabha, the colonized subject also desires to *be* the colonizer and dominate upon his own (split) self. For the colonized this fetishistic desire is manifested in his act of mimicking his colonial oppressor. As Bhabha says amending Fanon, "...it is difficult to agree entirely with Fanon that the psychic choice is to turn white or disappear. There is the more ambivalent, third (*alternative possibilities*, in my own words) choice camouflage, mimicry, black skins/white masks" (LC 120). In other words, the colonized, in his fantasy, to be like his colonial "master", takes on the role of the "mimic man" – the B(*r*)abu or the com(*b*)rador or even that of the *transwestise*. "Almost [the colonial master], but not quite"

(Bhabha, LC 86). However, mimicry is not really a choice, no one *decides* to mimic. It is never an object of desire in itself. The colonized aspires to be like the colonizer but then falls short and becomes the mimic man. Therefore the colonizer, is the colonized subject's, object of desire, which also becomes the fetish. The mimic man is the result of an intervention between choices or possibilities within the binary poles, which inherently are the objects of desire. Thus at the very obvious level, mimicry becomes a tool in the hands of the colonial masters as Bhabha suggests quoting Grant's view, who in the proselytizing context of colonial India, "paradoxically implies that it is the partial diffusion of Christianity, and the 'partial' influence of moral improvements which will construct a particularly appropriate form of colonial subjectivity ..." (LC 119).

Thus the colonizer enthrones the mimic man in his own eyes, and at the same time purposively enslaves the colonial subject by doing so. Within these "happenings", there is also a latent form of resistance, where the murmurs from the repressed colonized, gains momentum to destabilize the dominant power. For instance, the mimic man, in his inability to be fully the colonizer – almost like but less than. This *less than* becomes a particular point of resistance as the mimic man, or this "peculiar 'replication' – terrorizes authority with the ruse of recognition" (LC 115). In continuing Grants observation, it can only become a *diffusion* of Christianity, and thus an adulteration of the Christian faith, an instance of the "empire biting back" at the colonizer.

Therefore, mimicry of the *powerful* probably becomes the closest possible, practical human manifestation of hybridity. The colonizer desires a "non-thinking" orient, the trans-vestite/westise man want's a "non-thinking" woman to fulfill his erotic desires. The colonized desires to play what he thinks is the role of the colonizer. Thus the fetishistic desires, the act of mimicking, the formation of the stereotype, in other words, the psychic interventions, are all part of the temporal moment of hybridity. It is a position of an ambivalent attitude, where the weaker struggles to negotiate a voice of their own even in the very act of mimicking, and the dominant continues to dominate. Therefore as Bhabha states,

“Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates it in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. For the colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire, making its objects at once disciplinary and disseminatory...” (Bhabha, LC 112).

In order to resist this symbolic order of discriminatory identity, which leads to the formation of racial domination and stereotypes, it is left to the colonized to deconstruct it and liberate himself. It is at this point I feel, that Bhabha locates the pinnacle of “colonial eminence”, the place which holds it together. And it is the hybrid moment that demands that the colonial power and the originary myth of colonial rule be unbounded (LC 115). It is this place, which is empowered to destabilize the colonial binary in order to undo the colonial hegemonic process. Bhabha says, “[...] 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 fixation and phantoms” (LC 115).

Many critics have attacked Bhabha at this point suggesting that he talks of an empowerment of the colonized within the colonial space where they have a choice to fight back. Benita Parry, surprisingly one of his strong critics, in this case, speaks in favour of him indicating that the “argument is not that the colonized possesses colonial power, but that its fracturing of the colonialist text by re-articulating it in broken English (mimicking), perverts the meaning and message [...] and therefore makes an absolute exercise of power

impossible” (Parry, PCT 730). Therefore, Bhabha in no way blunts the edges of the postcolonial sword. By showing the colonial obsession, leading to the fetishistic desire and showing the desecration of colonial rule in the hybrid moment, he has managed to sharpen the postcolonial “scalpel” and use it dexterously.

The purpose of this chapter was to explain Bhabha’s use of hybridity in the postcolonial context and to explore the psychic interventions that takes place in this area, and the incongruous, deliberations and negotiations that take place in the area as a result of the unbalanced power dynamics. Therefore, hybridity is not just a mixture of disparate objects. In the postcolonial context, it is the negotiation and incongruity at the moment of the exercise of domination over an Other. Further, by showing the intricacies of the psychic interventions, Bhabha shows both the colonizer and colonized as complex desiring subjects reacting to their lack. This in turn emphasises on the disparity in power between the two and shows how it leads to the incongruity and ambivalence – a struggle by the oppressed to negotiate a space for themselves – which becomes the moment of the production of stereotypes, racism and discrimination, which takes place at the hybrid moment. This also shows that in Bhabha’s view, hybridity is simply embedded in the inequalities of power. Hypothetically speaking, if binary sets exerted equal powers to dominate each other, there would be a mid-path to reach, or a unified decision, a line of demarcation or a cease-fire. The incongruity or an ambivalent “place” of negotiation, or a struggle would not really be evident by the weaker and a truce would be reached. Both parties would be satisfied knowing that both gave up a little to gain something more. A scenario of the past bipolar world setup can be seen in this light, where military might when thought of as being equal between two countries, with destruction being mutually assured, direct confrontation was reduced to a cold war. Even in genetics, where the word hybrid stems from, there is a mixing and matching of dominant and recessive genes! Somehow, two dominant genes are not found together in any formation. In the postcolonial context, such a balance was never reached either. In the hybrid moment where the psychic interventions take place, there is also an undercurrent murmur that gains momentum and threatens the colonial process

from within this space. Thus hybridity allows and ensures the possibility for “newness” to enter the world.

Through his theory of hybridity, it becomes possible for Bhabha to venture out of the postcolonial while investigating and interrogate other areas of disbalanced power. In these various other areas, the weak is either excluded from the center or is “rendered” voiceless, while the powerful takes the latter’s democratic right and constructs “their voice” the same way as the latter discussion follows. This eventually leads to stereotypes, discrimination, and racism, further ensuring a possibility of ethnic cleansing and even genocide. This can take place between people of different nations, cultures, creeds, ideologies, and sexual orientations. The hybrid moment, plays an important role in helping to locate the space where sense goes awry giving rise to discrimination and racism.

CHAPTER III

CULTURAL DIFFERENCE AND “HOW *DISCRIMINATION* ENTERS THE WORLD”.

Cultural Difference

There are two points of the previous chapter that I would like to highlight or continue to bring into this chapter. First, that through his concept of hybridity, Bhabha introduces a space or identifies a point, a temporal moment, where a dominant power establishes itself, and continues to prosper (or gain stature) by propagating itself, through the structures of discrimination and stereotype. Secondly, it is through the moment of hybridity that the repressed or the marginal continues to challenge and destabilize the dominant position. Thus, the hybrid moment becomes a “location” where contradictory forces contest and negotiate their position. This can be seen as a tug-of-war between the dominator and its repressed striving to gain access of this ambivalent space. It becomes a space for newness or the marginal to enter the “mainstream” tyrannized by the dominant and the dominants desire to thwart the threat of the marginal through a politics of discrimination, constructing an ideological hegemonic force as its defense. Of course, policing of the repressed through military might and naked power becomes a primary strategy in the context of imperialism, however, the justification to rule and subvert any guerilla activity comes out of the psychic interventions at the hybrid moment and precedes the brutal repression.

While the purpose of chapter II was to explain the theoretical concept of hybridity and its interrelated concepts. This chapter will further build the

theory and try to show some specific instances where Bhabha applies them. According to Bhabha, “hybridity intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity but to represent the unpredictability of its presence” (LC 114). Thus in one of his most influential essays, “Signs taken for wonders” Bhabha describes the Bible in the hands of the natives to be in a hybrid moment of ambivalence and disavowal. The natives, willing to conform to all Christian customs but not to the Sacrament, because the Europeans eat cows (LC 120). In their view, the flesh eating Christians cannot preach the word of God (LC 103). In the same moment, however frustrating it may be for the Christian missionaries in India, the English public take note only of the large number of Bibles being distributed among the native “pagans and infidels” and “expect to hear soon of a correspondent number of conversions” (LC 122).

This incongruity or the gap that has been created is not only a resonance of a modernistic lack in the desire to communicate or the inability of language to transfer meaning adequately. It is rather an impossibility that precedes the possibility to communicate or bridge the gap created by the difference in culture in such a situation. It becomes a question of translation, resulting in an impasse of translating culture. This becomes a moment of hybridity, a situation of neither/both. Here the colonizers words are penetrating the natives, but they are suspended in an inability to “cross-over” and make an impact. The good deeds and valuable words of the priests are simply annulled even before it is spoken “as flesh eaters cannot speak the words of God”, and yet the priests are welcomed, their books are read and revered and placed high on the mantle piece, and the demand for the Bible keeps increasing.

Through these examples, Bhabha identifies an altercation between the colonized and the colonizer that is actually taking place at distinctly separate levels. The above example is an instance of different cultures coming together, and the problems and struggles they possibly face. This becomes a problem of the diversity between cultures. However, it can be used to illustrate a much more complex and essential concept of Bhabha’s, which is cultural difference. For Bhabha this becomes one of the more simpler instances of the articulation

of cultural difference by two separate cultural entities. Bhabha refutes the notion that culture can be a homogenous entity, "as the function of culture is to render transparent the contradictory political transformations of history and society; to represent social change as cultural continuity" (AC 48). Essentializing the unity of any culture based on common roots, or customs and traditions followed by the individuals of the culture would be a dire simplification and an ignorance of the problems within a culture.

The concept of cultural difference is an integral part of Bhabha's work. As I had stated earlier, the formation of the margins takes place through a construction of racial discrimination by the dominant, but would now like to add that according to Bhabha, it is based on cultural difference. As a result of post-structuralism, which snatched the carpet under the Eurocentric and Ethnocentric world view. The fixture of a dominant gaze or the realignment of the dominators gaze has led to the awareness of other subject positions. Bhabha makes critical use of this view in interrogating the position of culture. He says, "what is theoretically innovative and politically crucial is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural difference" (LC 1). To state the obvious, cultural difference is not just the difference between cultures, as the earlier example implies. It is that and much more. The difference between disparate cultures is termed as cultural diversity by Bhabha. In his article, "The Commitment to Theory" he differentiates the two as:

"Cultural diversity is an epistemological object-culture as an object of empirical knowledge – whereas cultural difference is the process of the *enunciation* of culture as 'knowledgeable', authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification. If cultural diversity is a category of comparative ethics, aesthetics, or ethnology, 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” (LC 34).

Thus cultural difference is the difference that can be seen even within a specific cultural entity. It is the difference between the pedagogically constructed entity of any specific culture and its performative. In an interview with Gary A. Olson and Lynn Worsham, Bhabha explains:

“Through the concept of cultural difference I want to draw attention to the common ground and lost territory of contemporary critical debates. For they all recognize that the problem of cultural interaction emerges only at the signifying boundaries of cultures, where meanings and values are (mis)read or signs are misappropriated. Culture only emerges as a problem, or a problematic, at the point at where there is a loss of meaning in the contestation and articulation of everyday life, between classes, genders, races, and nations. Yet the reality of the limit or limit-text of culture is rarely theorized outside of well-intentioned moralist polemics against prejudice and stereotype, or the blanket assertion of individual or institutional racism – that describes the effect rather than the structure of the problem. The need to think the limit of culture as a problem of the enunciation of cultural difference is disavowed (Olson 16).

Thus through this discussion of cultural difference, Bhabha is striving to find out how the marginal or the discourses outside of the dominant

“mainstream” can find their own representation or *can speak*. Therefore, how the discourse of the margins can be articulated. He identifies the difference between lifestyles, ways, ideologies and so on among communities become an impediment or a barrier that are used by the dominating forces to either patronize or “look down” at the other. When such differences are taken to be a threat to the dominant discourse or the ways of the mainstream public, it becomes a site of “contestation, abuse, insult, and discrimination” as Bhabha puts it (Olson 16). In fact, the threat becomes a reaction to the psychic fantasy, which further constructs stereotypes and creates a much more organized and systematic discrimination, which becomes “reasonable and even logical”. Thus the struggle which ensues, that takes place at the hybrid moment where the interaction and negotiation takes place between separate communities becomes a struggle against the psychic fantasies of the dominant, manifested in the form of racism and discrimination. This cannot be said to be a result of the diversity among cultures but rather the difference within cultures interacting and disbalanced through power. It takes place at that moment of negotiation, which Bhabha terms as the hybrid moment.

For instance, with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in recent years, Muslim migrants in Britain are being targeted as potential terrorist recruits. The Muslims, mainly of Turkish, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin, who have not been able to assimilate to “British ways” and have gathered in communal enclaves spread over the British Isles, locations that are now being marked as potential terrorist recruitment zones. The “truth” behind the allegations may or may not be concrete and subject to debate, however the rationality that goes into constructing the “truth” is stunning. The “factual evidence” against them has an almost unshatterable logic behind it. The illiteracy of these people leading to the lack of career prospects and the frustration that lurks among the youth, all supposedly makes it a hotbed for “careers in terrorism”. The welfare state of Britain, after decades, has only now begun to take measures to reduce literacy and increase employment after the terrorist threat has crept in, post “9/11, 2001”. Islam has “logically” become the target of racial discrimination in the eyes of the dominant communities in recent years, as the perpetrators were themselves part of the Muslim communities. Gareth Peirce, one of

Britain's most respected and high-profile human rights lawyers recently commented, "I have never known such venom and such hatred and such constant, unchecked, fascistic expression of daily appalling, often fabricated, always imagined, always exaggerated verbiage as there has been against the Muslim community... we have entered a new dark age of injustice and it is frightening that we are over-whelmed by it" (Suroor 16).

Without going further into any serious debate on whether theory can in anyway be effective in dealing with such issues, or whether Western domination or the orthodoxy of the Muslim community is to be blamed, I would like to revert back to Bhabha's discussion of cultural difference. My main concern for bringing in this illustration is that the "challenge to a dominant power or authority" by a marginal group and the reaction of the "threat" it poses to the dominant power, creates a nebulous and problematic situation, a perplexity in reasoning (Olson 16). From the perspective of racial discrimination, and the construction of "logic/reason" which is stereotypical, any "blanket condemnation" of entire communities which are heterogeneous within themselves "start making sense" in terms of the dominant power structure.

This can be seen as the hybrid moment where cultural difference is produced and discrimination leads to, what Bhabha terms, "the politics of difference". If the threat is considered real, than the domination must also be considered real and the discrimination that results becomes a danger to the entire society. It is through this politics of difference that racism and discrimination gain might. This illustration shows a power politics of struggle that precedes the construction of cultural difference, and goes further in constructing social marginality. Therefore, unlike cultural diversity, cultural difference becomes a politically embedded act. It can be considered to be the most observable or readily felt manifestation of hybridity. Bhabha states in the same interview:

"Cultural difference is a particular constructed discourse at a time when something is being

challenged about power or authority. At that point, a particular cultural trait or tradition [...] becomes the site of contestation, abuse, insult, and discrimination. Cultural difference is not a natural emanation of the fact that there are different cultures in the world. It's a much more problematic and sophisticated reproduction of a ritual, a habit, a trait, a characteristic. That reproduction has to bear a whole set of signification's, tensions, anxieties. And it becomes the sign of those tensions and anxieties. [... Cultural difference is there] because there is some particular issue about the redistribution of goods between cultures, or the funding of cultures, or the emergence of minorities or immigrants in a situation of resources – where resource allocation has to go – or the construction of schools and the decision about whether the school should be bilingual or trilingual or whatever. It is at that point that the problem of cultural difference is produced. So it's really an argument against the naturalization of the notion of culture.” (Olson 16).

Thus, Bhabha locates the formation of cultural difference at the hybrid moment where stereotypes, racism and discrimination is produced. This is carried through even in the building of the nation-state, or the construction or narrativization of the nation-state as he calls it (NN 4).

Migrant Identities and Homelands

This marks more or less, a half way point of this project. I would like to remind myself here that I have tried to balance this project in two halves. The second chapter and the first parts of the third chapter present what I feel are the most important theoretical concepts of Bhabha that are possible to discuss

in a specific project such as this. The theory of hybridity finds a more “tangible representation” in the form of cultural difference and I feel that the crux of Bhabhaism is contained within these important concepts. The remaining parts of this chapter will deal with issues of how cultural difference as the moment of hybridity, plays a pivotal role in the discourse of the margins. It is through his identification of cultural difference that I have decided to argue that his overall project is creating an Archeology of the Margins. I defer this point for now and hope to come back to it in the conclusion.

The play of power by the dominant, at the moment of hybridity or that ambivalent moment of struggle and negotiation, becomes a manifestation of cultural difference that along with power goes in the construction of stereotypes and racial discrimination. This in turn tries to legitimize the psychic intervention of only the dominant power. This also indicates that any claim to cultural supremacy is simply a result of a psychic pathology backed by a dominant discourse or a power structure.

As I have mentioned before, and have partially demonstrated that from interrogating colonial history, Bhabha moves on to the postwar diaspora and the migrant population mainly of the former colonies, which became a part of the margins or the subalterns in the former colonial mother countries. Although this continues to be in the realm of the postcolonial, it is nevertheless a shift in perspective from the marginality of the colonized to the marginality of the “aftermath” of colonization and therefore the migrant population.

The moment of gathering that Bhabha talks of in the first few lines of “Dissemination: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation”, he recognizes our time to be in a moment of transit, where people are in that point of “settling down”. One of Bhabha’s main concerns in this area is to search for ways on “how can culture be preserved without becoming ossified” (Rushdie 17).

Although my previous illustration touches upon the question of the marginality of the migrant, its purpose was to understand Bhabha’s view of

cultural difference and the complexity that it is involved with. However, it touched upon a very sensitive questions of how much does a migrant individual “need to” or “ought to” assimilate to the ways of the country of immigration, or is there a space for him/her within the center and away from the periphery? For instance, the dominating center of a settler’s country may asseverate an attitude somewhat like the proverbial statement, ‘to be like the Romans if one wishes to stay in Rome’. To expect the migrant to either be like the rest of the community and “pledge allegiance” to it or be considered against it, and therefore ask him to leave it, becomes part of a densely loaded rhetoric and at the same time articulates what Bhabha means by cultural difference and the site of contestation and abuse.

From a migrant individuals perspective, the country of origin and the country of settlement both hark at the migrant or within the migrant position hark at each other. The migrant is not tore apart or split in the tug between the two poles but using an analogy of a textual position, the migrant position vacillates or vibrates within the divide similar to the pendulum words which I have described earlier in Chapter II. The migrant is neither just *of* the country of origin nor just *of* the country of settlement nor is s/he of both and neither is he of non. Again this hybrid fluctuating condition is described by Bhabha to be double and yet less than one. In fact its like a double-mimicry role that the migrant condition plays – not quite of the country of origin and not quite of he country of settlement. In both places, he would have to play two separate roles and thus the double mimicry. Salman Rushdie in his *Imaginary Homelands* eulogizes this position in terms of the migrant writers ability to write “from a kind of double perspective because they, we, are at one and the same time insiders and outsiders in this society. This stereoscopic vision is perhaps what we can offer in place of ‘whole sight’ (Rushdie 19).

Salman Rushdie in his *Imaginary Homelands* describes this migrant position that straddles different cultures as the quintessential figure of the Twentieth Century (Brooker 256). Bhabha goes further while basing his argument on a range of contemporary critical theory, to suggest that “it is from those who have suffered the sentence of history – subjugation, domination,

diaspora, displacement – that we learn our most enduring lesson's for living and thinking" (LC 172). Said in the opening few pages of *The World the Text and the Critic*, describes the special position of the exile (Said 8) and Spivak is perturbed by questions of roots and tradition (Spivak 58). They all, at the same time, warn against the adoption of a "ghetto mentality [...] to forget that there is a world beyond the community to which we belong, to confine ourselves within narrowly defined cultural frontiers' (Rushdie 19). However, while allegations by cultures in the dominant positions, backed through a hegemonic drive, still continue to spew vitriol venom against marginal communities for being "outdated", "archaic", and "incompatible" to "modern" thought and life and knowledge, the fight against ghettoization maybe a little to hasty. Bhabha however qualifies this position with something less "ghettoized" – given its connotations – but more communal in terms of keeping cultural identities intact through his views of advocating the local.

"Nativists" have condemned these theorists and others for either, exoticizing or romanticizing the position of the migrant and for working back into the hands of the dominant cultural forces before doing any "good" for the marginal communities. They argue that the marginal are still subjected to a "politics of discrimination", by the dominant discourse and continue to be "seen" as "marginal" and not at "par" with the "mainstream". These nativists however ought to acknowledge that the above theorists and their ilk are probably among the strongest voices fighting for the voices of the margins and are much more effective than those who condemn them. The Marxist critic Aijaz Ahmad goes a step further to criticize many of these postcolonial theorists for "ignoring class and caste" claiming that many of postcolonialism's "jargons" such as Bhabha's hybridity "applies more aptly to privileged postcolonial intellectuals who have gained success in the Western world, [...] than those in colonial situations" (Leitch 2378). Whether or not these critics have a vested interest in trying to show the migrant situation as a special position simply on the personal grounds that they happen to be a part of it, not to mention the fortune that they have accumulated out of it, it nevertheless remains that the migrant position *is* a problematic position and at

many a times a challenging one too which require the polemics and the politics of literary and cultural theory for its interrogation.

Human migration, from the rural to the center where opportunities and dreams always thrive, is probably as old as human history itself. The simple fact that before opportunities ever even being to swell in the centers and are expected to gradually spread out or “overflow” to the neighboring areas, it becomes much easier for “mobile man” to flock to those places even before the first ripples of opportunities appear at the doorsteps of the places outside the centers. Of course the borderlines of the centers maybe spreading further with each day. This spread is at times welcomed by many as well as thwarted by those who wish to save the “sanctity” of the earlier ways. A new breed of migration is taking place, with software professionals from around the world beelining towards strategic silicon hives. Also the outsourcing of manufacturing and services to “Third World” countries, media giants with their journalists, multinational corporations, job transfers in the foreign services to the ones that take place in international organizations are all leading to a somewhat migrant breed of individuals. However miniscule the number of these “new breed” of these migrant workers may be in comparison to the whole percentage of the world population, they nevertheless exert pressure on the definition of migration. What may have started, as a postwar phenomenon, has become part of the natural evolutionary process and possibly of the present world order.

In other words, whether it is encouraged or prevented, migration has nevertheless has become a fact of today’s existence, so much so that the performative of heterogeneity actually cracks the pedagogical homogeneity that the nation-state has based its fundamental principles on. It is this ambivalent quality of the migrant hybrid for which Bhabha speaks of narrating the nation. The migrants position becomes part of what Benedict Anderson terms as “sub-nationalism’s” which problematize the nation-state (Anderson 3). The problems and struggles that emerge with this new economical, corporate and diplomacy funded migrant “class”, their treatment and reactions, have become an object of concern to many postcolonial theorists and others.

Many of Bhabha's theories gain prominence in interrogating this area – from his theories of hybridity and cultural difference to the realignment of the definition of the nation-state. However, Bhabha continues to remain faithful to the discourse of the margins as his subject of interrogation.

Narrating the Nation

Bhabha's view of narrating the nation, or viewing the nation as a narrative construct has been greatly influenced by Benedict Anderson's seminal work *Imagined Communities*. However, Bhabha states clearly that he is not concerned with the discourse of nationalism. "In some ways it is the historical certainty and settled nature of that term against which he [I am] is attempting to write of the Western nation as an obscure and ubiquitous form of living the *locality* of culture" (LC 140). Like culture, the modern nation-state is a heterogeneous entity consisting of various and disparate voices. Through Bhabha's notion of cultural difference and the psychic interventions of fantasies and stereotypes which establishes difference, an analogy can be drawn for the construction of a nation in terms of a homogenous "national goal". However, Bhabha is more concerned with the marginal voices that are repressed by this "homogenous goal" within the constructs of the nation-state. Similar to the play of power that structures and maintains the colonial discourse, the "majority discourse" that goes in the construction of the nation-state, to a great extent hegemonizes the minority discourses and its diverse and disparate voices which in turn may or may not pose a threat to the dominant discourse. Thus, Bhabha writes, "we are confronted with the nation split within itself, articulating the heterogeneity of its population. The barred nation it/self, alienated from its eternal self-generation, becomes a liminal signifying space that is *internally* marked by the *discourses of minorities*. The heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense locations out of cultural differences" (LC 148).

To subject the modern nation-state to such a rigorous deconstructive pursuit, it maybe worthwhile to ask, whether it corrupts the sanctity of the

nation-state. Derrida had already disturbed the sanctity of the Word and the sanctity of origins, (Logocentrism, Eurocentrism, phallogocentrism). The narrativization of the nation, and the suggestion of its construction by dominant groups within the community again challenges the pedagogy of the nation-state. If “nothing is sacred” except for the arena of discourse, the place where the struggle of languages can be acted out, then the act of deconstructing the nation becomes a sacred human pursuit in itself (Rushdie 416).

Hybridity, cultural difference, and the nation as a narration are probably three of the most fundamental concepts in Bhabha’s work that have established him as a postcolonial and cultural theorist. These concepts even become an integral part of his later articles, which appear much after the publication of *The Location of Cultural*. I believe any serious and sincere attempt to understand Bhabha rests a great deal in understanding these concepts of his. I have in no way reduced Bhabha to only the concept of hybridity, as I had said in opening of my second chapter, or the “sum total” of the other two concepts of cultural difference and narrating the nation. All I would like to suggest is that these three concepts are “recurring” thoughts that run throughout Bhabha’s works, and have led to the paradigm shift, which I mentioned in the first chapter that his work has brought about in postcolonial studies. These concepts at the same time situate Bhabha out of the postcolonial field while making him become a part of a larger more wider discourse of the margins. Also I would like to add here that the lengths of my discussion of these concepts should not be seen as a comprehensive analysis of these discussions and leaving out other “non important” concepts of his. For instance, an important idea that many critics including Robert Young, have thoroughly discussed is Bhabha’s concept of ‘ambivalence’. However, I feel the concept of ambivalence in Bhabha’s works, can be read as a never ending struggle to determine that which is indeterminate, and can be seen in conjunction with, and becoming a part of the moment of fluctuation that takes place in hybridity.

It is after the establishment of these well thought out concepts of his in the postcolonial context, that Bhabha gains in confidence and conviction to move on to other fields and interrogate the play of the dominant powers and its

effects on other marginal discourses in a relatively similar manner. Thus he continues with the setting up of the archeology of the margins. The next chapter deals with some of the areas outside the postcolonial. Although it may not be an exhaustive list of the range of work that Bhabha has covered so far in his intellectual career, it will nevertheless mark the major areas which are of his interest and those which have found new leads through the influence of his works.

CHAPTER IV

IN ART, TRANSLATION, FANON AND RACE

Marginal Art

The hybridity position of the marginal becomes a convenient location where the restructuring of the dominant discourse can take place and keep an open space for the migrant individual to articulate themselves. Chapter III has tried to show how stereotypes and discrimination based on cultural difference, in the hybrid moment, creates a hegemonic force that sustains the powers of the dominators. I will now show how Bhabha makes use of his theories of hybridity and cultural difference in his interrogation of disparate areas where a dominant discourse muffles the voices of that which lays at the periphery. It is from this concept of hybridity, and cultural difference, that I now move into areas namely art appreciation, translation and race studies, as examples to show how Bhabha interrogates these areas in a similar manner to postcolonial studies.

He is able to accomplish this, not because questions of art, race studies or translation are specific to postcolonialism. It is because tools such as hybridity and concepts such cultural difference are well adept to take on a power imbalance between a giver and a taker or the victimizer and the victimized. Therefore, Bhabha's postcolonial interrogation does not become the epicenter of Bhabha's work. It certainly is a very important part of his work and definitely the point of entry into his field of work. However, postcolonialism, becomes a part of the larger, discourse of the margins that he constructs through his work. Race studies, translation, gender studies,

Aboriginal Art, all hyphenated studies – by which I mean the likes of – African-American studies, Jewish-American studies, Chicana-Chicano studies, and many other areas can all be subjected with Bhabha's "critical gaze" in order to identify their dominant power structures. Due to my time constraints, I have limited myself to discussing only a few of these areas.

Although some may wish to suggest that most other postcolonialists such as Said and even Spivak have also branched out of the specific postcolonial arena and like Bhabha have entered similar areas of the discourse of the margins. Or even that these other areas such as race and identity studies are a natural extension of the postcolonial franchise. Such views are possibly true to a large extent, as most postcolonialists concern themselves a great deal with the socio-historical renderings of events. Bhabha however, goes a step further to present a formula for deciphering, and assessing what I called the microscopic synapses that take place between an unbalanced power structure. This becomes a focal point and a consolidating feat in the construction of the archeology of the margins.

This chapter will show Bhabha's projection in areas of marginal discourse outside of postcolonialism. However, his interrogation of these areas will be similar to what he attains in the area of postcolonial studies. He examines the hybrid position and the composition of cultural difference in these alternative discourses and identifies the point of contention, ambiguity, and the moment where discrimination and stereotypes are constructed.

For instance Bhabha's critical appreciation of the fine arts, and his stance as a critic of the fine arts is an area which has been grievously neglected by many who prefer to read him only in the context of postcolonialism. Bhabha's close involvement with the journal "ArtForum" a publication of the Chicago University Press, where many of his works on fine arts appears, is not a journal well known outside the Western academic sphere and certainly unaware of in our Sub-continent. His books such as *Anish Kapoor: Making Emptiness*, 1998, on the Indian sculptor is close to impossible to locate in their native India not to mention the pricey tag which convinces most librarians in

this part of the world to let it remain with its publishers. However, Bhabha's position as an advisor to central art institutions in the US and Britain, such as the Whitney Museum of American Arts, New York, the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, and the Rockefeller Foundation affirms his towering expertise and the respect that he commands in the area.

Enclosed in his critique of the fine arts, Bhabha searches for the "cultural contradictions, disjunctive historical spaces, and identifications created on the crossroads – these are the issues that the arts of cultural hybridization seek to embody and enact rather than "transcend" ... it is an art that is no less valuable because it takes what is in the work, underlining that struggle for translation" (HH 125). In his article "Double Visions", he writes of the structural transformation that certain objects of arts, undergo, while being displayed in the National Art Gallery. He describes an ostrich egg of ancient times from North Africa placed in a cabinet of late medieval treasures and turned into a gold jug in the 14th century (DV 85). The translocation of a North African valuable as a part of the medieval European accessory, not only loses the ambiguity of its North African significance, but is sabotaged with a new import from a dissimilar master discourse.

Similarly, a Rock-crystal elephant carved in India in the 15th century caparisoned with gold and enamel mounts somewhere in Europe during the 16th century (85). A romantic view may imply the once free but wild, and therefore savage, Indian elephant is reigned down and domesticated and made a part of the capital machinery to fund a colonial revolution on the verge of commencement. These are read by Bhabha as an "exotic transformation [over] wide geographical distances conjure cunningly with historical circumstances ... a fantasy of cultural expansion" (85). Consequently, by subjecting the monolithic perspectives of the objects of art to a process of deconstruction and liberating the multiple visions embedded in them, Bhabha realigns the works of art to the historical positionality. Like the historical document from the archives, the art works become a platform of struggle that articulates cultural difference, revealing works of the psychic interventions at the moment of hybridity.

Furthermore, in describing Leonardo da Vinci's *Portrait of a Lady with an Ermine*, Bhabha reflects on the lady's gaze away from the frame while at the same time restricting the Armenian mouse's sight in the direction of her own gaze. Bhabha imagines that the lady's distracted gaze falls upon the portrait of a black man which is placed a few feet from the Leonardo, in the same gallery and a part of the same exhibition, and speculates the intention of the Lady's mind. Like the Intended in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, she cannot endure the sight of the iron rods that cracks the savage native into civil order. Consequently Bhabha's main concern here lies in explicating how the "histories of the master comes to be reinscribed in terms of or in contention with, the enslaved or the colonized" (88).

As a result, Bhabha's rendering of various mediums of aesthetic expressions with his critical gaze of cultural difference, locates and at the same time dismantles the discriminatory and stereotypical formulations that in turn sustain the colonial glare. Bhabha's deconstructive gaze of the art expressions, like the colonial archives discussed earlier, are embedded in a violence perpetrated through power and a fantasy of the Other both grossly insensitive and based on a thirst for capital to sustain the process of empire building. On these grounds, he contests post-enlightenment's universal appeal to humanism and high serious canonical art expressions which have always, attempted to embellish the unbounded claims of Western cultural supremacy.

Thus the breadth of Bhabha's growth beyond the colonial and postcolonial text to the colonial and postcolonial expressions of fine arts not only charts his movement from the liberal arts to the fine arts but also reveals his *archeological tools* – such as the sustained critical gaze of hybridity and the concept of cultural difference – to be effective in interrogating this area. The necessity of a poststructuralist reading of these aesthetic forms within the confounded moment of cultural difference becomes evident. The *Midas-gaze* of the Orientalists in fixing the colonized in every possible field of arts and aesthetics requires the extrapolation or at least an identification of the stereotypes constructed by the dominance of power. This demonstrates how the fine arts capture the historicity of a past/present colonial world, and like

the historical document, it too becomes part of the archive of coloniality. Therefore the deconstruction of these cultural artifacts, and the question of how these ought to be translated for display in other cultures without committing them to a violence becomes a predicament of serious deliberation in Bhabha's works.

Translation and Beyond the Translator

Translation becomes an integral part of marginal discourse for Bhabha and most other postcolonialists. It is not the linguistical translation or the syntactical transference of meaning from one language to another that attracts Bhabha's attention, as he is not a translator. The problems of translation and specifically translating culture is the focus of Bhabha's inquiry. It also takes the discussion back to Bhabha's concept of cultural difference. "... the impossibility of naming the difference of colonial culture alienates, in its very form of articulation, the colonialist cultural ideals of progress, piety, rationality and order ... it is heard in the central paradox of missionary education and conversion, in Alexander Duff's monumental *India and India Missions* (1839): 'Do not send men of compassion here for you will soon break their hearts; do send men of compassion here, where millions perish for lack of knowledge' (LC 129). This becomes part of the parcel-tongued rhetoric that Bhabha identifies to be a result of the misbalance of power between the colonizer and the colonized. The other part of this paradox lies in the inability of the colonizer to understand the colonized subject for himself, and is close to the epistemological questions of knowledge, and is proportionate to the problems of cultural translation.

Alexander's statement correctly poses the problem of translation and may seem *understandable* within colonial authority. The contradiction becomes a result of the confusion and the indecisiveness – 'what must be done' and 'how must it be accomplished', to send the compassionate or not to send the compassionate. What is clear however is only the colonialists desired goal: the need to dominate, and keep the colonized dependant. This is the colonial

contradiction and part of the colonial Babel – to be father and the judge – in J. S. Mills words, “I as a liberal, democratic, individually autonomous Englishmen, am in a very invidious position, because I am a democrat at home and a despot abroad” (IP 27). Bhabha depicts both the colonizer as well as the colonized to be wedged in the impasse of tackling cultural difference with a “sly civility” – a consequence of the incongruity of translation. Thus, translation becomes part of the hybrid moment of cultural difference. It is what Adela Quest experienced in the nonsense of the Marabar Caves. It is not the additional knowledge of culture that she gains, “it is the momentous, if momentary, extinction of the recognizable object of culture in the disturbed artifice of its signification, at the edge of experience ... where the implausibility of conversation and commensurability; *there* the enactment of an undecidable, uncanny colonial present, an Anglo-Indian difficulty, which repeats but is never itself fully represented” (LC 126).

According to Bhabha, “cultural contradictions, disjunctive historical spaces, identifications created on the crossroads – these are the issues that ... cultural hybridization seeks to embody and enact rather than “transcend”. It is an art that is no less valuable because it takes what is unresolved, ambivalent, even antagonistic, and performs it in the work, underlining the struggle for translation” (HH 125). Translation therefore becomes a temporal process in negotiation between dissimilar power structures. Bhabha cites two advantages for this view, first that it recognizes the historical linkage between the subject and the object of critique or the entities with dissimilar power structures that are to be *translated*, so that the violence in juxtaposing the two is never lost to a simplistic, essentialist and superficial rendering of ideological misapprehension. The translation may not be clear or available however, the struggle in the process of attaining the translation will actually assist in breaking stereotypes and eliminating discrimination. Secondly, translation comments on the function of theory within the political process as double edged, showing that, “political referents and priorities ... are not there in some primordial, naturalistic sense. Nor do they reflect a unitary or homogeneous political object” (LC 26). They are symptomatic of society and are therefore bound in the temporalities of history.

Hence, even the liminality of the migrant experience for Bhabha is no less a transitional phenomenon than a translational one. He cites Walter Benjamin's description of the "irresolution, or liminality, of 'translation', the *element of resistance* in the process of transformation, 'that element which does not lend itself to translation' (LC 224). This does not mean however that Bhabha renders the process of translation as futile or ineffective. Instead, he sees translation as an imperative struggle for negotiation, which becomes a requirement of cultural difference.

The hybrid migrant culture, and the minority position, "dramatizes the activity of culture's untranslatability; and in so doing, it moves the question of culture's appropriation beyond the assimilationist's dream, or the racist's nightmare, of a 'full transmissal of subject-matter', and towards an encounter with the ambivalent process of splitting and hybridity that marks the identification with culture's difference" (LC 224). Therefore, like hybridity, translation becomes a tool to destabilize the monolith of culture and the unitary vision of cultural supremacy. Again showing the irrational constructive nature of stereotypes and discrimination. Consequently, the activity of translation becomes an important part of the discourse of the margins, that draws attention to the resistant element, the residue that cannot be translated in such a transaction. Acquiring a condition of hybridity, a position that is neither singular and unified nor multiform and pluralist, neither located in one place nor homeless. "This indeterminate place of translation describes the migrant individual and a transitional, ambivalent culture, caught in-between a "nativist", even nationalist, atavism and a postcolonial metropolitan assimilation (1994: 224)" (Brooker 256-7).

It should be kept in mind that when Bhabha talks of the untranslatability of culture, he is not talking of an inability of a syntactical or linguistic translation, nor does he wish to show translation as a dismal and impossible activity. Translation becomes a part of the articulation of human thought, a way of reasoning with the self and the *non-self*. He is identifying and destabilizing the rigidity of the dominant cultural transference onto the marginal and deconstructing the embedded power structure. He has shown a

dire need to problematize this power structure which is molded with Western universal concepts of modernity asserting its ambivalence and its incongruity in trying to fix the location of the linguistic and cultural other – the margins.

In translation studies today, a whole new perspective has emerged with the advent of postcolonial studies. Bhabha who has caused a paradigm shift in the area of postcoloniality, which I have tried to suggest, has naturally caused waves in areas influenced by postcolonial analysis – here translation becomes a poignant illustration. Bhabha's cross-examination in the area of translating culture has re-determined the approach taken by scholars of translation like Itamar, Zohar, Gideon Toury, and Andre Lefevere. These scholars using the polysystem approach strive to negotiate the values of one culture in terms of the values of the other. In the postcolonial context however, this is no longer so palatable as Bhabha's problematisation of the divide in the power disparities between two cultures has effectively delineated the untranslatability of cultures. Therefore, a mere semantic transfer of a text, results in the disempowerment of an indigenous nation and "triumphantly inaugurates a literature of empire" (Tymoczko, Gentzler 119).

Thus, Bhabha's view of translation as the site for cultural production, has become an important insertion in the discourse of translation. Translation has now become understood to be a mode of "nation-building, as a means of creating ever stronger and more unified national cultures, and with an understanding of exchange as complicated by the instabilities of cultural identity, of the historical wakening of the nation-state and of the importance of the multitude of cultural influences" (138). Hence translation which Bhabha distinguished as being a negotiation at the moment of hybridity, is now being accepted by translators and scholars of the field. This has redefined the location of the translator and the place from which they articulate their translation. The translator is no longer to be seen as an impartial participant with linguistic and cultural skills. Like language which is embedded in the rubrics of power, the translator too have their own politics, ideology and agenda and are subjected to the socio-historical symptoms of their time. As a result, present-day translators have not only heightened their sensitivity to

their own worldviews but have also accept how their own perspective and view points may actually distort the translation process. This increased sensitivity has led to the awareness of the translators involvement in the process of textual production. Many authors like Nicole Brossard, author of *Le Desert Mauve* (1987), consider their translators as co-authors who actively participate in the actual production and staging of the translated text, making poststructural translation a creative act (Tymoczko, Gentzler 216). This process of “staging translation is a process of gathering and creating *new information* that can be turned to powerful political ends, including resistance, self determination and rebellion” (220).

Bhabha’s work in the area of cultural translation, and the problematisation of the transference of cultural difference, has forever changed contemporary translation theory. To revert to the practice of an uncritical transfer between languages without any consideration of the power disparity among them is no long possible. Complex encounters with new situations, words, and ambiguity, have persuaded translators to make increasing use of intertextuality, and the mixing of languages, and materials (217). Therefore a intelligible probe into contemporary practices of translation and translation theory discloses the large extent to which Bhabha’s works have shifted the gaze of the translator not only to the *object of translation*, but also on to the ethnographic subject of translation – the translator herself. To take such a trajectory equips the task of translation to rupture the silent monotones that bind cultural stereotypes and lead a great deal to discriminatory practices.

Bhabha’s influence on translation studies is imperative and can be seen as part of his overall project of establishing a discourse of the margins. This *active translation* that his works have assisted to bring forth, allows a technique to peer into migrant texts and other works which have been previously lost to the periphery or have been interpreted with no sensitivity to the power disparities and stereotypes embedded within them. However, i have yet to see a translator who tries to dwell into the *psychic interventions* of a text and strive to translate it while considering the stereotypes that actually lose or gain in meaning in the transfer. A messy project of colossal proportions no

doubt and probably beyond the purpose of translating a particular object, where the translator's comments would easily outnumber the pages of the actual translated text. However, such an endeavour does seem meaningful in order to *fish out* the rigid idiosyncrasies that have plagued the transfer of language since time immemorial.

On Fanon and Race

Bhabha's intellectual growth from his very first published article by Jawaharlal Nehru University – “Apologies for Poetry” – to the culmination of his theories in *The Location of Culture* and his subsequent branching out from the area of postcolonial studies to areas such as gender and race studies and so on, is anything but erratic. Bhabha has always remained embedded in the discourse of the margins and has made extensive use of the psychoanalytical mode of structuring reality. Even in his “Apologies for Poetry”, he comments on J. S. Mill, who “wanted to humanize or enlarge Utilitarianism” in art and I. A. Richards for wanting to “scienticize Literary art”. He concurrently suggests poetry to acquire a psychological reality, that sets up a “dialectic between instinct and environment a psyche and history (Reason, Utilitarianism, Scientific Knowledge) which is what he felt neither Mill nor Richards could accommodate into their theories (AP 73).

The human conscience has always had an important place in Bhabha's ideas and subsequently his works. The works of Lacan have no doubt influenced him in this area, however, the psychic rendering of questions of race and discrimination and its consequence in violence, is an area that Bhabha – as I have mentioned earlier and only reiterate now – advanced with his close association with the works of Franz Fanon.

One of the most valuable contributions and an area where Bhabha has and continues to leave a firm imprint is the sphere of Fanon studies. Bhabha's contribution is vast and inexhaustible in this field. However, in a study which strives to graph Bhabha's intellectual growth while making claims to an overall

project as constructing a discourse of the margins or an Archeology of the Margins, Bhabha's work on Fanon can only be a chapter. His overall project becomes more important than the specific projects that he takes up. Therefore, due to the limit of my scope, I have criminally restricted Bhabha's enterprise on reviving Fanon with gusto in the postcolonial academic sphere to much less than a chapter. In fact my inclusion of Fanon studies with respect to Bhabha is not only to be seen strictly as a branching out from the area of postcolonialism and into race studies particular. Here I am more concerned with his sustained interest in this area, the skillful manner in which he has braided his own schema of thoughts into the field, for which too he has been criticized.

Franz Fanon's works means a great deal to Bhabha. The imbalances of power and the psychic pathology that affixed the "bipolar antagonism between colonizer and the colonized", is influenced by the "reinstated global theorist" as Gates Jr. says (Read 189).

In his much cited forward to *Black Skin, White Masks* in 1986, Bhabha wrote, "there has been no substantial work on Fanon", given a few moderate exceptions he laments "in Britain today Fanon's ideas are effectively out of print" (RF 112-3). He writes Fanon in a lineage of intellectual stalwarts, from Toussaint and Senghor to Nietzsche, Freud and Sartre, calling him the "purveyor of the transgressive and transitional truth" (113). For Bhabha, Fanon speaks from the hybrid moment of historical temporalities and within the area of race and sexuality, "out of an unresolved contradiction between culture and class from deep within the struggle of psychic representation and social reality" (113). He feels Fanon's work is split between a Hegelian-Marxist dialectic from mastery to servitude and therefore a phenomenological affirmation of Self and Other to a psychoanalytic ambivalence of the Unconscious, turning from love to hate. While affirming his "psychoanalytic framework [that] illuminates the 'madness' of racism, the pleasure of pain, the agonistic fantasy of political power", Bhabha breaks off from the former binary association described by Fanon (114). Henry Louis Gates, Jr. feels that "Bhabha's reading requires a model of self-division, of 'alienation within identity", and he has enlisted Lacanian psychoanalysis to this end:

[Minority discourse] is not simply the attempt to invert the balance of power within an unchanged order of discourse, but to redefine the symbolic process through which the social Imaginary – nation, Culture, or Community – become “subjects” of discourse and “objects” of psychic identification” (DDDC 200) (Gates Jr. 460).

Bhabha critiques Fanon for falling back too hastily onto Sartrean and Hegelian grounds, and for being too driven by the demand for “more insurgent answers, more immediate identifications”, too hungry for an “existential humanism” (Read 25). He nevertheless situates himself within these two *poles* in Fanon – the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic, and the psychoanalytic ambivalence of the unconscious – while trying to make him more poststructural than he appears and less universal than he claims and rewriting him into the area of the *local*.

Bhabha’s reading of Fanon has brought a plethora of responses from various critics. The South African radical critic Benita Parry feels Bhabha annexes Fanon to his own theory while formulating a reading that “rescues Fanon as a theorist of the ideology of cultural representation as well as retrieving his radical insights into the politics of race/sexuality and the ‘complexity of psychic projections in the pathological colonial relationship (XX)” (Parry 718). Between Parry and Bhabha, their major point of contention is Fanon’s historicism. Parry holds the view that Fanon historicizes the colonial experience to a *certain moment* in colonial history, and where his paradigm of the colonial condition becomes “one of implacable enmity between native and invader, making armed opposition both a cathartic and pragmatic necessity”. She criticizes Bhabha’s attempt to dehistoricise Fanon’s work from the colonial experience, and privileging the agonism and uncertainty of the colonial relationship over Fanon’s specifications of relentless conflict. In other words, she feels Bhabha, *Bhabhaizes* Fanon while offering him as a “premature poststructuralist” to his reader’s (719).

Bhabha on the other hand feels “If the order of Western historicism is disturbed in the colonial state of emergency, even more deeply disturbed is the social and psychic representation of the human subject” (RF 114). He therefore places more attention to the psychic pathology and interventions that he feels is more striking in Fanon’s work.

“Fanon’s question is not addressed to such a unified notion of history nor such a unitary concept of Man. It is one of the original and disturbing qualities of *Black Skin, White Masks* that it rarely historicizes the colonial experience. There is no master narrative or realist perspective that provide a background of social and historical facts against which emerge the problems of the individual or collective psyche ...the colonial subject is always ‘overdetermined from without’, Fanon writes, It is through image and fantasy – those orders that figure transgressively on the borders of history and the unconscious – that Fanon most profoundly evokes that colonial condition” (115).

He continues this argument in his article “Day by Day ... With Franz Fanon”, where he states, the *emergent everyday* breaks down any utopian or ‘essentialist’ notion of a linear, continual development from a colonized person to a self governing citizen” (Read 189).

The critic and theorist, Alan Read, on the other hand seems to have located the crux of Bhabha’s endeavour with Fanon. It reads as an even more befitting answer to Benita Parry’s *rebuke*. He feels that the issues Fanon tries to deal with in *Black Skin, White Masks* and even later in *The Wretched of the Earth*, “poses issues and raises questions in ways which cannot be adequately addressed within the conceptual framework into which Fanon seeks often to resolve them; and that a more satisfactory and complex ‘logic’ is often implicitly threaded through the interstice of his text which he does not always

follow through but which we can discover by reading him 'against the grain'" (24-5).

Consequently, Bhabha's reading of Fanon, takes the point of convergence away from the politics of nationalism to a politics of narcissism. "Fanon opens up a margin of interrogation that causes a subversive slippage of identity and authority" (122). It is this margin of interrogation that Bhabha incorporates as part of his own agenda. This in no way means to suggest that he is transfixed to a project of *Fanonization* or Fanonizing contemporary marginal discourses. Neither is it a strict adherence to a modernist Fanonism. His rewriting of Fanon into the postcolonial, is a result of his close and critical reading of Fanon. It is a dialogue between the two theorists – Bhabha's poststructuralism and Fanon's psychoanalytic tradition. Thus Bhabha's use of Fanon becomes an integral part of the process of the archeology of the margins.

Another critic who has vehemently attacked Bhabha's reading of Fanon is Abdul JanMohamed. He accuses Bhabha of underplaying the "negativity" of the colonial process, and for rejecting Said's assertion that only the colonizer possess colonial power and discourse, without providing any explanation on the "unity of the colonial subject (both colonizer and colonized)" (JanMohamed 1055). Surprisingly, Benita Parry charges JanMohamed for a misreading of Bhabha as Gates Jr. points out that "it is unlikely that he posits a unity of the colonial subject in the way JanMohamed construes it, for Bhabha's account denies the unity of either subject in the first place (462).

In a more imposing attack, JanMohamed asks, what Bhabha means "in practice, to imply ... that the native, whose entire economy and culture are destroyed, is somehow in "possession" of "colonial power?" (1056). Although this may seem to become an essentialist view that JanMohamed rightfully holds to his own respect, tantamount to the question of what it means to *be colonized*, it becomes the *locus classicus* of many nativist arguments against Bhabha. For Jan Mohamed, Bhabha "privileges ambivalence" and, thereby, implies that its "authority" is genuinely and innocently *confused*, unable to

choose between two equally valid meanings and representations” calling it a naïve “intention” to colonialist discourse (1056). He presents his own notion that colonialist discourse can be better understood “through an analysis that maps its ideological function relation to actual imperialist practices”. That “such an examination reveals that any evident “ambivalence” is in fact a product of deliberate, if at times subconscious, imperialist duplicity, operating very efficiently through the economy of its central trope, the manichean allegory” (1056). This becomes part of JanMohamed’s own readings of Fanon, and again to an extent of his misreadings of Bhabha. As I have mentioned in my second chapter, that according to Bhabha, ambivalence is a result of the power disparity between the colonizer and the colonized and therefore is suggested by Bhabha to be deliberate to a large extent.

Gates Jr. sums up Bhabha’s *hybrid* position among his two most powerful critics as:

“you can empower discursively the native, and open yourself to charges of downplaying the epistemic (and literal) violence of colonialism; or play up the absolute nature of colonial domination, and be open to charges of negating the subjectivity and agency of the colonized, thus textually replicating the repressive operations of colonialism” (Gates Jr. 426).

It is this serious interrogation of Fanon as well as his referral to old historical documents such as J.S. Mill’s ambivalent account of colonial authority, mentioned earlier, for which Fanon offers Bhabha a shift in gaze away from the historical and into the psycho-pathological renderings of colonial authority. It is in this psycho-pathological rendering that I feel Bhabha is trying to locate the epistemes of discrimination and racism came into play in the national discourse. Thus locating the colonial administration and bureaucratic authority in history and trying to identify the psychic interventions of the first voices of dissent that were articulated which led to the

nationalist movements, 1857 Sepoy Mutiny. Amie Ceasar's, works become the first voices in the modern epistemes in the form of literature, where "Caliban speaks back at Prospero". However Fanon can be identified as the centrally planned and focused voice in literary criticism that began any forceful interrogation of racism and discrimination. Fanon erupts into the modern literary scene as the most vociferous and originary voice that "talks back" to the colonizers.

Rushdie's Affair

The Rushdie affair was a consequential event for writers and critics around the world. Issues like what an artist or critic should or ought not to deal with in their work, became paramount and part of heated discussions in all parts of the world. The fine lines separating the freedom of speech and the right to verbal abuse became a highly contested issue. Bhabha, very much a part of these debates in the literary circuits sided with the view of privileging artistic freedom. "In between times, we realize how powerful is the appeal to religious orthodoxy; how insecure our sense of the secular; how fragile any idea of global cultural understanding; how the politics of art rarely lies in the artifice itself" (BB 136). Bhabha's position however was not only restricted to the latter point of view.

Bhabha's critical engagement with the Rushdie affair problematized the notion of how newness is to enter the world. Newness for Bhabha at a certain level becomes the outcome of hybridity, while at another, it is the thrust of that very same hybrid space from where it appears. Newness becomes subjected to the rigors of being translated and or mistranslated into the incongruous location of cultural difference, as he writes in *The Rushdie File*, "in the attempt to mediate between different cultures, language and societies, there is always the threat of mistranslation, confusion and fear" (Appignanesi Maitland 114). It is this possibility of mistranslation, confusion and fear that the Rushdie affair has come to highlight.

It is not that newness is tossed between the western liberal assumptions of secularism and modernity and Islamic fundamentalism, from the perspective of *The Satanic Verses* issue. Rather, it occupies a marginal position from which it tries to articulate. In its articulation according to Bhabha, it is not that “*The Satanic Verses* dared to utter: How does newness enter the world? Not without what some call offense, others originality, still others quackery” but through the reactions to its articulation, it revealed how “judgment is most anxious and nervous when it speaks loudest” (BB 136). Using the Rushdie issue as an example, Bhabha shows how the entry point of newness, in its act of translation can at times overwhelm and alienate a cultural tradition. This happens when cultural tradition is viewed not as difference but rather in a pure and unitary sense. As a result, *The Satanic Verses*, can be seen to provide a whole replay of the problem of incommensurability – the impossibility of comparison – of different kinds of cultural positions” (IP 25).

Rushdie’s work and the reaction to it became another standing example of the anxieties that Bhabha had shown cultural difference to be laden with. Bhabha feels that for Rushdie, “the construction of cultural difference is that moment when social forces are conjoined in an unequal and unresolved relationship within *public* culture (DAW 39). Bhabha’s concern with the affair foments the need to interrogate the problems of culture as he writes, “we’re challenged by *The Satanic Verses* crisis to face something very deep: that perhaps our models of the social contract, or of harmonious or organic society, should be rethought in terms of the reality of contestation and challenge within co-existing cultural systems” (IP 26).

Thus Bhabha’s theories allow and equip him to branch out of the area of postcolonial studies and allows him to engage these theories in other areas of critical discourse.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: ARCHEOLOGY OF THE MARGINS

Clash of the “Titans”

Samuel Huntington’s bi-polar colonial obsession enabled him to viewing the “clash of civilization” as only taking place between two powerfully established adversaries that are capable of bruising and inflicting some sufferings on to each other. This is nothing less than a sportsman’s fixation of a *good competition*, before a tournament – a gladiatorial pursuit – and quite ignorant of the recent strides of postcolonial studies. The clash of civilization can only be against a grand adversary for a sportsman, competing against minnows is never satisfactory. A large disparity between opponents is always known to take out the competitiveness of the game. In *Paradise Lost* it was therefore important for Milton to present Satan as a befitting adversary against God.

Civilization can be seen as belonging to this same grand scale of meaning. A civilization of *their own* would imply a separate ideology, a separate science and so on. It is a failure on Huntington’s part to see that the trace of an individual also brings in a civilization of its own. Therefore, the clash of civilization actually began against the so-called minnows in the way the clash among civilization is described by Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* – and where the centre could not hold. The clash of civilization hence began with the aftermath of the colonial inception. Not Gengish Khan’s conquering pursuits or the crusades, or what Huntington believes has begun with the end of the Cold War era.

Postcolonial studies is the area that interrogates the clash of civilizations. Postcolonial literature, from Aime Cesaire's *Notebook* (1939) and even the earlier colonial documents of the Nineteenth Century read against its grain naturally become a part of this field. Colonialism becomes the *mise en scene* of postcolonial studies with an agenda to write out non-colonial cultural relics from the position of marginality, a position which it was tagged onto these relics by the dominant discourse. Postcolonial studies does not, and neither does it make any claims of, writing for the entire gamete of literature that was made marginal by cultural powers that established canonical texts. Gay literature and even gender studies which may be tangential to coloniality are part of the non postcolonial discourse which have been written off to the margins by discourses in contraposition to them. Therefore, what started off as the colonized subjects pursuit to write back their own cultural texts, has now advanced into writing back texts from all spheres which have been dismissed to the margins. Therefore, a *discourse of the "margins"* becomes a field of study that strives to reinstate areas which have been repelled out of the mainstream by value judgements based on structures of power. It is a deconstructive process that includes postcolonial studies as well as gender and sex studies and is open to include others.

The pejorativeness of the term *margins* can have quite a disturbing effect. The impasse of the using a terms to categorize not only delimits the expanse of the words meaning, but also adds additional meaning to it. For instance, the Third World, also carries a certain "*third ratedness*" to its significance, conveying a quasi *haven't been able to get "there" yet*, sense. When the "*there*" means achieving a basic level of literacy, healthcare and the eradication of poverty, it tends to receive quite a few nods. However, backing these latter achievements, are the monotones: turn modern, open markets, restrictions on technological transfers, text-book democracy and sanctions *if you don't do as you're told*. Therefore the Word which labels, not only limits but also continually reinscribes meaning and a hegemonic compulsion to it. Similarly, the particular label of marginal literature, makes it *less than* or *lacking* what the majority has – and not *quite* up to the marker. It seems to suggest, the "major literature" got "*there*" first, making marginal literature a

Third World/Ratedness Literature. There is no hint upon the actuality that the “Majority literature” was rather *made* to take first place.

Therefore, marginal discourse instead of being of a marginal stature must be seen as that which had been blotted previously by an insensitivity and a disregard for the other. That which was coupled with a narcissistic obsession with a dominant self along with a steadfast bliss resulting from an egotistical ignorance. The *rediscovery* of that which is marginal therefore gives it a newness, while making it *heimlich* as well as *unheimlich* in its treatment. To talk of the Archeology of the Margins becomes imperative as it suggests a requirement for a revision of that which was termed marginal. It demands a deconstruction of the disregard as well as the narcissistic obsession of the dominant that consigns the margins to its status of marginality.

I therefore prefer to use the term Archeology of the Margins, as a discourse of the margins, that does not maintain a protocol to save endangered marginal writings. It is rather that which actively deconstructs the centralizing powers that instates certain texts (art, culture) to a canonical level and through its sheer labeling leaves out tons of Others. An archeology is a construction and a reconstruction of temporalities in a never-ending process. Postcolonial studies, Gender studies, African-American studies, Sex studies and so on which are now part of marginality, due to their previous subversion, may quite naturally become part of the canonical order in the far [sic] future after they have completely received their due position. The deconstruction of those fields to liberate non represented voices would also becomes part of the Archeology of the Margins.

Throughout this research, I have been trying to create a space to show how Bhabha articulates the discourse of the margins and suggests that his overall project is to establish an archeology of the margins without giving much support or testimonial proof. I am aware of the liberty I have taken while requesting_a great deal of patience on the reader’s part. I hope this chapter will conjoin the necessary strand, which I have been emphasizing on right from the first chapter. I have been continuously deferring what I fully

mean by the Archeology of the Margins, for the simple fact that I wanted first present Bhabha's work as sincerely as possible and his major concepts and theories that I will be using to construct this point of mine. I will also be presenting my reasons for why the works of Bhabha and specially the theories propounded by him to be crucial in establishing this point. It is now, that I will devote this concluding chapter for discussing this point fully, and further the argument with some of the problems in the study of the margins in recent years.

Archaeology is no doubt a term both popularized and familiarized by the earlier works of Michel Foucault: *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1970); *The Archaeology of Knowledge: and the Discourse on Language* (1972) and *The Birth of The Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (1973). In order to eliminate any notion of the word *archaeology* to convey a search for dilapidated ruins of the past, Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge: and the Discourse on Language*, lays down four principle qualities of archaeological analysis.

First,

“Archaeology tries to define not the thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations that are concealed or revealed in discourses; but those discourse themselves, those discourses as practices obeying certain rules ... whose unfortunate opacity must often be pierced if one is to reach at last the depth of the essential in the place in which it is held in reserve; it is concerned with discourse in its own volume, as a *monument*. It is not an interpretative discipline: it does not seek another, better-hidden discourse. It refuses to be ‘allegorical’.”

Second,

“Archaeology does not seek to rediscover the continuous, insensible transition that relates discourses, on a gentle slope, to what precedes them, surrounds them, or follows them ... its problem is to define discourses in their specificity; to show in what way the set of rules that they put into operation is irreducible to any other; to follow them the whole length of their exterior ridges, in order to underline them the better ... [it is] a differential analysis of the modalities of discourse”.

Third,

“Archaeology is not ordered in accordance with the sovereign figure of the *oeuvres*; it does not try to grasp the moment in which the *oeuvre* emerges on the anonymous horizon. It does not wish to rediscover the enigmatic point at which the individual and the social are inverted into one another. ...it defines types of rules for discursive practices that run through individual *oeuvres*, sometimes govern them entirely, and dominate them to such an extent that nothing eludes them; but which sometimes, too, govern only part of it. The authority of the creative subject, as the *raison d'être* of an *oeuvre* and the principle of its unity, is quite alien to it”.

And finally,

Archaeology does not try to restore what has been thought, wished, aimed at, experienced, desired by men in the very moment at which they expressed

it in discourse ... In other words, it does not try to repeat what has been said by reaching it in its very identity. It does not claim to efface itself in the ambiguous modesty of a reading that would bring back, in all its purity, the distant, precarious, almost effaced light of the origin. It is nothing more than a rewriting: that is, in the preserved form of exteriority, a regulated transformation of what has already been written. It is not a return to the innermost secret of the origin; it is the systematic description of a discourse-object" (Foucault 138-140).

Foucault's endeavour was to pierce the assumptions, and ways of acquiring knowledge which not only works their way into constructing a truth, but also how that truth is allowed to prevail. His archaeology therefore becomes a search for the rules or the Archive, through which discursive practices characterize a domain of knowledge or a discourse and how these discourses are assembled and further modified (Brooker 10). Although it is still debated in the literary circuits of whether Foucault's archaeological analysis is a little too rigid to be consider a poststructuralist pursuit, what he proposes in his analysis' and especially in his first principle, which I have quoted in length, is nothing short of a deconstructive rendering of a monolithic power structure. Even the second principle, is described as the deconstruction of the set of rules that are put into operation by the archives that construct the discourse. Here the discourse becomes the dominant treatises, which blots out other possibilities and are made to appear *irreducible* to any other set of rules.

Similarly, in the archaeology of the margins, the role of the archaeology would be to analyze the archives: rules and regulations that go into structuring the margins. It is apparent to me here that an archaeology may appear redundant as any discourse of the margins or any deconstructive reading of marginalization that takes place in subaltern and postcolonial studies already strives to identify the dominant structures of power that establishes the

Orientalists perspectives. If that may be so, question may arise now, as why a new label in the form of an archaeology?

The archaeology of the margins which I am trying to suggest that Bhabha's works constructs, may not seem as totalising as what Foucault's archaeology implies and has been criticized for. It can be seen as a deconstructive process that strives to review the colonial episteme, or suggest "a regulated transformation of what already has been written" (see above) through a psychoanalytical perspective of the treatment of the Other during the colonial as well as the pre-colonial and postcolonial epistemes. This will show how concepts of human psychology are part of a colonial archive that writes discrimination into the colonial discourse. It gives insight to the process that structures marginality into the world.

A strong psychoanalytic impulse or psychic interventions are built in the establishing of what is to be considered as being marginal. It is this *location* of the margins or structuring of it that has disturbed Fanon and has been elaborated upon by Bhabha, while advancing to hold a pivotal position in his work. As mentioned much earlier, Bhabha's appeal to psychoanalysis has always been condemned to be part of a "universal impulse" making his work and especially his concepts like hybridity, non specific to a colonial impulse and a general comment on discourse in particular. As if humankind will always "look up" to or "look down" upon what is different than themselves. Such a view simply essentializes human nature and human psychoanalysis and remains forever ignorant of the anthro-historical epistemes of the times that have gone into building human psychology. I add "anthro" to *my* "historical" in order to emphasize the psychological and the human agency upon the shaping and reshaping, the writing and the rewriting, creating and the reconstitution of historical events and even catastrophes.

By taking a Foucauldian perspective to realign Bhabha's works, *the treatment of the Other* in a pre-colonial, colonial, and the postcolonial era can help to identify the structures of power that have gone to form stereotypes, and which have proceeded on to the formulation of discrimination, and what

Bhabha calls cultural difference. Here Bhabha's concept of hybridity becomes the paramount tool that allows the observation of the micro-synapses between separate entities while revealing the treatment of the Other. But more importantly it allows a perspective on how psychic interventions undergo a change with the epistemic order. This may further Bhabha's endeavour of peering through the formations of psychic interventions, coupled with the structures of hegemonic power which then go into "choosing" what should or should not be part of the margins. Therefore to see the treatment of the Other in these three separate epistemic orders, will not only show what has gone into the construction of the Other and how it has changed over the eras. It will present an alternative perspective on the archives that have gone into constructing stereotypes and discrimination that have entered the world to establish cultural difference, commensurate to a deconstruction of stereotypes, discrimination and marginality.

For instance, in pre-colonial times, conquering geography was a barrier that could not be efficiently dealt with for centuries. Distance was a drag that made time a factor of concern. Consequently, interactions between communities were limited. The Other was relatively *unknown*. It was seen as the guardians of vast treasures that could only be captured through buccaneerian pursuits and hence needed to be conquered by land or sea. The Other was at times the unknown heathen adversary who had to be thwarted for the "greater good of mankind", as in the pursuits of the Crusades. Thus a primitive passion for domination and ideological glory were part of the archives that constituted the epistemes of the pre-colonial discourse. Therefore due to the lack of interaction, there was neither an exoticisation of the Other, nor was there much concern for it. However, this unknown quality or the veil which concealed the Other resulted in a note of inquiry and openness for a possibility to learn from it, even during and after the Crusades and the time of the ancient conquerors. In the gamut of literature, the popularity of Marco Polo and his travel documents also corroborates this point.

In the colonial era, and more certainly with the advent of industrialization, the distance between with the Other reduced tremendously,

and thus, interaction with it also increased. The Other was no longer *thought* to be unknown, it was already at the doorsteps of the colonial Self. But rapid industrialization along with the accumulation of wealth also had its effect. Not only was there an increased demand for raw materials, but the pursuit for ideological glory of the pre-colonial was replaced more or less by a more specific personal glory. Closer interaction with the Other led to the notion of a “free” virgin territory which would rightfully fill the demand for industrialization.

What can be seen as a closer interaction with the Other as compared to the pre-colonial epoch – coupled with the structures of industrial demand and the accumulation of wealth – stripped bare the Other, leaving no possibility of the secrets concealed by the veil. Therefore, “proximity becomes agonistic ... where the tryst of the self and the other results in both less and more than either one ... in a kind of heightened repetition, at once to each and exclusively to neither” (MMUN 439). Hence, in the colonial episteme, all was thought to have been known about the Other. It was thought to be fully exposed with no possibility of any further need to learn or inquire about it and certainly, nothing to learn from it. This hasty conclusion, was again part of the rapid industrialization and the greed that accompanied it, while emphasizing the need to use the Other to fulfill the needs of only the self. It was a time of inbreeding of the Self with the Self. Therefore, if the psychic interventions between the colonial Self and the colonized Other, has led to hatred and superiority complexes between the two, it also becomes a part of the archives of the colonial establishment. This has redefined the colonial discourses and had then gone on to the structuring of stereotypes, leading to the manifestation of discrimination, relegating the ways of the Other to the peripheries, and thus constructing marginality.

If the knowledge pertaining to the Other was thought to be unknown in the pre-colonial times, and known in the colonial times. The knowledge of the Other claimed in the colonial times is contested in the postcolonial episteme. Whether the Other can be known or how much of it can be known becomes the subject of dispute in this present epoch. The identification of the disparity

between power that goes in constructing knowledge becomes a part of the archeological analysis of the archives of power in this episteme. The fallacies of the treatment of the Other during the previous episteme are therefore now being rewritten. Thus in the postcolonial episteme, the dominant discourse becomes the deconstruction of the previous colonial episteme. Postcolonial writer's critics and theorists are at the forefront of this reformation. However, even beyond the postcolonial, there are the areas of the Gender, Race, Translation and Sex studies that are being effected by the archives of the postcolonial episteme, as these archives also go into the structuring these latter studies. Homi K. Bhabha engaging the concepts of hybridity and cultural difference, has been able to present an archeological analysis that analyzes these archives through a deconstructive method in the postcolonial episteme and therefore also includes the rereading of those latter studies. It is this particular aspect of his work that I feel, becomes part of his overall project of constructing the Archaeology of the Margins.

To reiterate, Bhabha's work traces how discrimination and psychic identifications become a foundation for the establishment of colonialism. The desire of a need to accumulate wealth and a superiority complex led by a narcissistic obsession of the self, becomes a sustained interrogation of the dominant colonial episteme of the time. It goes to show how the colonizers greed of wealth and ego has established hatred towards the Other. The reaction of the colonized subject has either been one of awe towards the colonizers' or their ways (science, industry, or ideology) and or hatred towards them. The second chapter of this project that discusses the fluctuations in the moment of hybridity and the third chapter, which shows the play of cultural difference both have tried to ascertain and build these points. The colonial documents that Bhabha refers to describes the ambivalence of coloniality and the sly civility that proceeds in the reaction against colonial domination, which established the regularity in forms of knowledge and human psychology over the entire epoch of colonialism, and continued to do so, until change is reached with the commencement of the postcolonial episteme.

Although Foucault's epistemes do not reveal the internal dynamics that prompts a change from one epistime to another, Bhabha's interrogation of colonialism through hybridity suggests how the psychic agency of the colonized accumulates to begin the drift. Also with the subsequent demise of imperialism, and the attainment of the status of a free-state by most of the colonized countries, the shift from the colonial to the postcolonial epoch was advanced. Bhabha's description of the circulation of the *humble chapati* preceding the 1857 Sepoy mutiny identifies the murmurs of discontent that were so necessary for the nationalistic struggles. The third principle of Foucault's archaeology that spoke of the artistic and historical production both being a part of and continue to write the dominant episteme, is evident in this inquiry. These colonial documents and their subsequent readings are not tangential, but rather embedded in the historical events that structure and are structured by the dominant discourse as Foucault would suggest through is archeological analysis.

Therefore, by tracing the treatment of the Other in the pre-colonial, colonial and the postcolonial epistemes, the Archaeology of the Margins, gives indication of the structuring of cultural difference, and marginality in human history. It warrants against the considering of psychoanalysis as a universal, non-disjunctive, innate human capacity that also undergoes a discursive formulation in the latter discourses. Along with this, it deconstructs the self-contradictory history of universal concepts like Liberalism (VC 49). It also goes to show how the colonial endeavour becomes a "means through which capitalism achieved its global expansion", and was probably the most oppressive event in human history (Loomba 124). An archetype of castism, colonialism, led to the narcissistic obsession of one race to live off an Other through the establishment of stereotypes and a subsequent manifestation of discrimination. Colonialism was based on an originary search for purity and a call to retain the sanctity of the mother country and the domination of *that* Self.

The Exotic

The tremendous impact that Bhabha's writings have had in the recent past simply needs no accreditation. He is well aware of the fact that his own theoretical enterprise maybe bracketed in the space carved out by the Western academic sphere to accommodate voices of the Third World intellectual. This uncertainty he shares even with Spivak and other postcolonialists as he says,

“what does demand further discussion is whether the ‘new’ languages of theoretical critique (semiotic, poststructuralist, deconstructionist and the rest) simply reflect those geopolitical divisions and their spheres of influence. Are the interests of “western” theory necessarily collusive with the hegemonic role of the West as a power bloc? Is the language of theory merely another play of the culturally privileged western elite to produce a discourse of the Other that reinforces its own power knowledge equation?” (LC 20).

These are questions continue to be contested, as Bhabha continues to be condemned for diluting the effects of colonization on the colonized. He is criticized for towing a Western line of thought, and for not concretely explaining his position or taking a *stand* on either side of the East/West divide. Such condemnation comes from critics who view his work as containing a neo-colonial impulse. However, Bhabha's position is clear as he takes his stand “on the shifting margins of cultural displacement that confounds any profound or “authentic” sense of a ‘national’ culture or an ‘organic’ intellectual – and ask what the function of a committed theoretical perspective might be, once the culture and historical hybridity of the post-colonial world is taken as the paradigmatic place of departure” (LC 21). And therefore I have tried to locate him in the act of constructing an archaeology of the margins.

Bhabha does not offer a tool to fight back the violence that the dominant exerts on the repressed, unfortunately, guerilla tactics may still be the only

possible way. From the first pages of *The Location of Culture* and the articles which appear in an unrevised form as early as 1983, till the end of the last essays that have been consulted in this project, such as ‘Unsatisfied Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism’ and all the discussions that take place “inbetween”, the dominant remains all powerful and the subaltern or the margins, continue to be marginal in their repressed state. Apart from making Bhabha and a handful of other postcolonial theorists very wealthy and “wise”, questions maybe placed as to how much the marginal or the subaltern – the migrant individual in the ghettos of Britain, or even the channawallas on the streets of Bombay – benefit by these theories for whom so much is voiced. In fact Benita Parry protests against postcolonial theorists for not being able to listen to the voices of the natives while they maintain a level of marginality for themselves. To this remonstrance, Spivak promptly reminds Parry that “we (Bhabha, JanMohamed and Spivak) are “natives’ too. We talk like Defoe’s Friday, only much better” (Spivak 60). However, great deal has still been achieved through Bhabha and the postcolonial enterprise as he says, the “theory of ideology makes contribution to those embedded political ideas and principles that inform the right to strike” (LC 22).

His discussion of the hybrid moment does strive to locate the point where and how the dominant articulates its power and the form of the power which is articulated. It is possible to come back to the point of the hybrid moment, identify the moment where cultural difference in the hands of the powerful creates racism and discrimination and constructs the Margins. This is a radical step further into Said’s view of orientalism. By showing the psychic intervention, he decimates the superiority or the high cultural position of the dominators. Bhabha’s colonized are not the “repressed-to-obedience” savages who hold the colonizer and their ways in high esteem. The lack of agency in Said’s colonized subjects was a dangerous assumption, as it had to solicit a higher humanistic sense of morality while at the same time remained at the mercy of their dominators. From that location, the colonized could only appeal to their dominators sense of humanism, liberalism and democracy for all – both strong and weak. They accepted from the altruistic father chastisement only when they wronged against themselves. This in itself further empowered the

position of the dominant. That a pledge for democracy, impeccable knowledge, higher human ideals and mercy to be shown to the weak should be in the hands of the powerful is a privilege that Bhabha's colonized subject strips off from those who held the reins of power. Powerful, in Bhabha's point of view, are those who retain knowledge of the differences between the cultures. Also, Bhabha's colonized unlike Spivak's speaks with the same tongue that the colonizer lashes out at them. They may not have the media time or even the dominant language to get their message across but they have their own messages for anyone willing to hear.

At the psychic position of cultural difference, Bhabha shows how the colonizer, and now non-migrant/native may be repulsed by the smells exuding out of the clothes of the colonized or now the migrant without knowing that it is probably be a result of their spicy food or the frankincense used in their daily prayers. The bland food of the European may seem simply boiled and "fit" only for the sick, or even worse, cattle, and seen to be sacrificing the fun and enjoyment of eating. Using *only* paper in the toilet could be a horrendous thought for a pious sage living in the tropics. Skits and jokes which thrive on stereotypes, in the hands of power can quickly become part of an illogical fantasy toward the other and get articulated as racism and discrimination as clearly shown by Bhabha's writings and as I have tried to detail in this project.

Bhabha's diasporic identity of being a Parsi in India to his stay in Britain for many years before moving on to the United States, parallels his intellectual growth and his intellectual agenda. His status of always being a migrant and his position of writing from that point of view, maybe at times seen as a privileging of the migrant position. Man can talk best of what he is – however, Bhabha's work reveals how incongruous, indeterminate and anxiety ridden the location of the migrant happens to be. The fluctuating moment of hybridity, ambivalence, a neither here nor there situation, becomes a position that the migrant individual continuously negotiates and tackles the temporalities of cultural difference as part of its strategy of survival. Still however, the hybridity of the migrant is at times exoticised. This very exoticization further highlights its anxiety.

What is once demonized and brutalized until its last remnants are about to be obliterated, tend to be exoticised, as Graham Huggan stated. In recent years, there is an evident exoticization of all that which is deemed marginal. Unfortunately, its obscurity and its extinctive attribute has at times given it a “retro” or noble savage appeal and therefore drawing a cheap snob appeal. The rare image of that which is marginal is ostensibly cashed in by the patronizations of social butterflies as they miss out the point of why they were marginalised in the first place. There is no inquiry into the power structure that went in condemning it to the periphery in the first place. The level of obliteration that those marginal elements reach even before they become part of the marginal and later exoticized, becomes quite a disturbing factor as it draws attention to the violence that tames, and threatened into the possibility of total annihilation. It leaves one searching for a secure location to be promulgated for the marginal that is crucial for its survival. This is an area that Bhabha has shown no tardiness in approaching.

The Vernacular and the Cosmopolitan

In an article titled: “The White Stuff” published in the literary journal *ArtForum* in May 1998, Bhabha, in a new area of study, tries to search for what can be considered a satisfied location for the marginal subject position. A place where the “marginal” would not be relegated to the margins or continue to be seen as marginal but will be able to articulate their *own ways* without being hegemonized into assimilating to the dominant discourse. The bankrupt notion of the melting pot and the salad bowl are now to be replaced by “a model that is more germane to the times, that of the *menudo chowder*. According to this model, most of the ingredients do melt, but some stubborn chunks are condemned merely to float,” (LC 218-219). And therefore, the “hyphenated hybridized cultural conditions” of the migrant individual forms a “vernacular cosmopolitanism that emerges in multicultural societies and explicitly exceeds a particular national location” (WS 22). Through the paradoxical phrase “vernacular cosmopolitanism” Bhabha seems to be

suggesting a national local-location, which at the same time would exceed the very national location as a desirable, and new world order.

This concept of vernacular cosmopolitanism is later presented with a much more concrete explanation in an article published in 2001 titled: "Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism", where Bhabha builds his views on the latter and presents the advantages which he sees in it. Through his notion of the vernacular cosmopolitanism, Bhabha is not appealing to a universal globalization where the scarcity of resources and the commonalities of science and knowledge brings communities together to solve problems of the day to day.

Bhabha cites Martha Nussbaum who wrote, "The task of the citizen of the world ... lies in making human beings more like our "fellow city dwellers," basing or deliberations on "that interlocking commonality". According to Bhabha, Nussbaum embraces a "universalism" that is profoundly provincial in a specific, early imperial sense (VC 41). He feels, such a provincial universalism would again leave out the 18 or 19 million refugees who lead their unhomey lives in borrowed and barricaded dwellings. The 100 million migrants, of whom over half are women, fleeing poverty and forming part of an invisible, illegal workforce. The 20 million who have fled health and ecological disasters (VC 41). He asks whether the "stoic values of a respect for human dignity and the opportunity for each person to pursue happiness adequate cosmopolitan proposals for this scale of global economical and ecological disjuncture?" (VC 41).

Bhabha is not suggesting a match against the local against the global, or a "materialism of ever-increasing specificity against ever inflating generality" as he says "I am interested in cosmopolitan community envisaged in a marginality", (VC 42). Here he invokes

Anthony Appiah's vision of a certain postcolonialist translation of the relation between the patriotic and the cosmopolitan, the home and the world who feels "it is because humans live best on a smaller scale that we should defend not just the state, but the country, the town, the street the business, the

craft, the profession ... as circles among the many circles narrower than the human horizon, that are the appropriate spheres of moral concern" (VC 42). It is this sphere that constitutes vernacular cosmopolitanism for Bhabha which he sees as stopping short but not falling short "of the transcendent human universal, and for that very reason provides an ethical entitlement to and enactment of the sense of community" (VC 42). The need to maintain and adequately manifest differences of cultures is important to Bhabha. To be able to do so with respect from the "Other" is paramount, as he feels "we become unrecognizable strangers to ourselves in the very act of assuming a more worldly, or what is now termed "global," responsibility" (VC 43).

From Boston to Bombay: The *Location of the Voice*

The ardency with which Bhabha voices the need to write out what are considered to be marginal places him at the helms of marginal discourses. His own position as a somewhat more privileged migrant has not made him wither in his desperation to accost the problems and anxieties of the marginal. In his search for a more egalitarian world order he feels: "what we need is a "subaltern" secularism that emerges form the limitations of "liberal" secularism and "keeps faith" with those communities and individuals who have been denied and excluded from the egalitarian and tolerant values of liberal individualism [and]. ... oppressed minority groups whose presence was crucial to the self-definition of the majority groups" (VC 50). It is for this reason that he appears to straddle the course of a Vernacular Cosmopolitanism.

Vernacular with its roots tied to the "language of the home-born slave" (OUD 2348) not only becomes a fluctuating moment in relation to the cosmopolitan, but also comments upon the location of its subjects. Is this vernacular, the language and culture of the channawallah in Bombay that is to be "cosmopolitanized" and brought into the metropolis, or is the location of the channawallah's dwelling that is to become part of the metropolitan space. This cosmopolitanism that Bhabha evokes seems to privilege the "migrants" who can write back to the centre while remaining in the sphere of the metropolitan

location. In addition, the millions of dislocated refugees that Bhabha speaks of, for whom migration becomes a curse, are promised very little through this vernacular cosmopolitanism. Again, it seems to be meant only for the postcolonial intellectuals for whom migration becomes quite a profitable and a rewarding enterprise.

There is always the fear that the cosmopolitanism, which Bhabha evokes, may tend to be camouflaged by a metropolitan materiality, which in turn may overshadow the legitimacy of the vernacular that Bhabha tries to structure. According to Aijaz Ahmad, Bhabha's own theoretical enterprise becomes incommensurate with his own privileged location in one of the richest institutions of one of the most powerful countries and holding a Chair of great repute (Ahmad 68-69). From such a location how much does he or can he offer to people like the channawallah whose location he theorizes.

To theorize a space outside the metropolis that may empower even the discourse of the channawallah would tantamount to a movement *from Boston to Bombay*. As things remain today, such a movement to a non-metropolitan location (Bombay itself is a metropolitan base but I use it here, as I have been doing so, metaphorically as a contrast to Boston) may also lead to a position of dis-empowerment. Questions may even be posed as whether the impact of Bhabha's works would have been the same had he written them from his very own, Bombay University! The brand, the value and respect his institution has come to command makes the voices from within those locations resonate louder. Therefore the location itself becomes part of the politics of an upward mobility leaving only a space empty to patronize and reward the down trodden which has an immense marketability in today's world.

Even in my own readings of Bhabha, I now realize that I read him not for his "vernacularism" and certainly not in my vernacular tongue but rather from a quasi metropolitan location. By this, I am in no way undermining his achievements and annulling my entire project but rather problematizing both his location as well as mine. *Location* is problematic and symptomatic of the ways in which knowledge arrives to us and is presented. Like the translator

whose agenda becomes a part of his translation, a dialogue erupts between the location of the theorist, the location of the Voice that the theory takes on and its effect on its readers and students, and their own subsequent locations, all become a problem of much concern. If this becomes a secondary concern in mapping the intellectual growth of Bhabha it becomes of primary concern in the critique of his work.

And finally

As I look back and try to assess my own work, I realize that the reigning methodology that I have followed is one of textual analysis and contextual discussions. For my project, I have concentrated a great deal on Bhabha's writings which have formulated his theories. I have mentioned the range of his work and tried to present it as constructing an Archeology of the Margins. While remaining theoretically grounded in this area, I have also shown how Bhabha searches for a possible new world order where the marginal or the minority is not seen as one, few in numbers, or archaic in ways and methods and incapable of being "secular" and "modern". With the deconstruction of such ethnocentric and Eurocentric liberal humanistic terms, he presents the possibility of a global culture that would strive to preserve the sanctity of the local. It is this local or vernacular cosmopolitanism through which I have tried to show how his own *location* raises some pertinent questions for postcolonial studies. Still much more is desired from Bhabha the theorist, and much more is yet to come. As his work continues to be among the most widely "circulated" materials – quite unlike the "humble chappati" – in postcolonial theory and now the Archaeology of the Margins.

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