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English 118
Winter 1993

"The other question: difference, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism," Homi Bhabha: *Bhabha*

--Bhabha begins by arguing that racial and cultural difference cannot simply be explained through preexisting analyses of class and gender.

--Discussions of racial/ cultural otherness have been marginalized or misappropriated by poststructuralist theories. Bhabha's purpose is to bring these discussions to the forefront.

--In thinking about colonialism, we need to recognize not only how the other is represented, but how these discourses characterize the West. The presence/ whiteness of the West depends on the absence/ lack/ blackness of the colonized subject (151). Think about how Desdemona's whiteness becomes an issue in *Othello* because of the Moor's blackness.

--*Orientalism* (a term coined by Edward Said): "the habit for dealing with questions, objects, qualities and regions deemed Oriental, will designate, name, point to, fix what he is talking or thinking about with a word or phrase, which is then considered to have acquired, or more simply to be, reality" (Said, 72). In other words, the use of essentialist stereotypes to characterize the other.

--The *stereotype*: is dangerous not because it mischaracterizes the other but because it assumes a totalized fixity of the image (162). The problem of difference is essentialized, seen as 'natural,' preconditioned, a historical. At the same time, the colonial subject is contained by a power apparatus that denies him/ her the knowledge that these stereotypes are constructed. According to Bhabha, colonialist discourse needs to shift from recognizing certain images as positive or negative (Cleopatra is constructed as exotic, sensuous, immoral, fascinating, seductive) to looking at the process whereby such images are made (why/ how did the Romans need to construct Cleopatra in this manner?).

--The *fetish*: reactivation of anxieties about castration and sexual difference that stem from the initial discovery that the mother has no penis. The subject then seeks to normalize these anxieties by substituting them with a fetish object. Sexuality and race are intimately connected in the apparatus of colonial power (161). The fetish/ stereotype has as much to do with pleasure and desire as fear and anxiety. Unlike a sexual fetish, however, the colonial fetish is overt, articulated, recognized as common, public knowledge.

--General ambivalence of the colonial project: on the one hand, belief that under certain conditions of domination the native can be reformed. On the other, the native is characterized as essentially other and separate, incapable of reform. This "lends authority to the official version and mission of colonial power" (171).

--Colonial discourse is an apparatus of power that depends on the recognition and disavowal of racial/ cultural/ historical differences. It constitutes the colonized as degenerate to justify conquering them and establishing its own system of power. There is a paradoxical visibility/ invisibility about colonial power: at once a recognition of the difference of race/ culture/ history that allows for the institution of a variety of prejudicial, discriminatory political practices and legitimates the "civilizing mission" of colonial governmental authority, the *visible* necessity of such rule; and the institution of forms of power that come from hidden/ *invisible* surveillance. Government/ cultural institutions are visible but the ideology behind them (deeply rooted in fantasy, fetish, stereotype) is concealed. Colonial power depends on this unseen surveillance (think about the gaze) to carry out its "strategies of objectification, normalization and discipline" (172).