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Colonial Cultural Conceptualizations and World Englishes

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1. Introduction

Our chapter will explore texts written during the colonial period from a cognitive-cultural and cognitive-sociolinguistic perspective. Not only are the respective texts a window into the underlying mindset of the colonizers, but they also provide insights into the historical intellectual superstructure in which certain world Englishes developed. The contexts that will be addressed are India and sub-Saharan Africa. The text types chosen for analysis include key programmatic texts outlining the principles and objectives of colonial policies, for instance Lugard's *Dual Mandate*, League of Nations documents, reports commissioned by colonial authorities and legal texts.

In the first part of the chapter (Section 2), we will outline cultural conceptualizations and ideologies underlying British colonial policy at large with a particular focus on the conceptual construction of the "colonial subject," the local cultures and local languages. In this respect, India and sub-Saharan Africa represent quite different cases: while Indian "high culture" and Indian spirituality were generally held in high esteem by the British colonizers—at least in the academic circles—and orientalist (in the sense of Saïd) cultural conceptualizations were thriving, African spirituality and societal organization were regarded as downright "primitive." Since in both contexts many cultural practices were felt to be "disturbing" by the colonizers, the next part of this chapter (Section 3) will focus on some specific aspects of the local cultures and the way they were construed. The cultural notions we will address come from the domains of societal organization and religion/spirituality, more precisely the realms of (homo-) sexuality and witchcraft. In these realms, colonial conceptualizations drove legal regulations and efforts at cultural engineering by the colonizers, efforts which had lasting effects on some of the respective local patterns and practices.

The impact of colonial cultural conceptualizations, however, is not only one-sided but bidirectional. One straightforward linguistic manifestation of the other direction is borrowing from local languages to the so-called "common core" of English. The prime domains of borrowing and the absence of borrowing in others as well as the specific semantics of the loanwords readily reflect the colonial cultural conceptualizations

under investigation. This point is addressed in Section 4. Section 5 provides some tentative conclusions.

With this scope, this chapter wishes to contribute a cognitive-sociolinguistic perspective on colonial contact situations and their repercussions in the settings and varieties of English involved.

2. The Metaphoric Construction of the Colonial Subject

It is a commonplace that there was no such thing as a unified philosophy or vision in Britain's attitude towards "her colonies." What we find instead is a diffuse set of various currents, some of them mutually incompatible, others reinforcing each other, and significant shifts with respect to the dominance and impact of individual currents over time. Likewise, there was no such thing as a unified stance towards all colonies; instead, the attitudes differed sharply depending on the individual context, for example India and Africa. However, a central common denominator of these attitudes and currents is the conceptual construction of the constellation between colonizer and colonized in terms of a more or less rigid *US VERSUS THEM* schema. This schema was spelled out in numerous dichotomies and oppositions, for instance in terms of rigid biological otherness (race, skin color), societal organization (civilized versus primitive) or moral qualities (Christian versus pagan), to name just a few. There is a wealth of studies on this colonial discourse of *othering* and on how it contributed to the construction of identity as *COLONIZER* and *COLONIZED*. The early classics in the field include Fanon (1952, 1961) and Saïd (1979). The latter, in particular, has shown that the way the *OTHER* is conceptualized is far more revealing about the conceptualizer than it is about the *other*. This literature has also stressed that the *US VERSUS THEM* schema was conceived, across the various domains, along a vertical axis, the colonizer (*US*) being *UP* (i.e., superior) and the colonized (*THEM*) being *DOWN* (i.e., inferior). However, we will argue that there was also a horizontal axis, namely with the colonizer conceptualized as *AHEAD* and the colonial subject as *BEHIND*.

In the following discussion, we will look into some of the ways this common conceptual base, that is *US VERSUS THEM*, combined with the image schemas *UP VERSUS DOWN* and *AHEAD* and *BEHIND*, was spelled out in terms of specific metaphoric conceptualizations that run through colonial discourse. In fact, the various currents and colonial attitudes can be straightforwardly characterized as different elaborations and interpretations of such conceptual metaphors.

One of our foci will be on metaphors that frame the relation between colonizer and colonized as constellations between *PARENT (FATHER)* and *CHILD*, *ADULT* and *CHILD*, or *TEACHER* and *PUPIL*. These abound in colonial discourse; below are some random illustrations from three centuries. The instantiations of the metaphors are highlighted in italics. Some of these quotes will also appear for further analysis in later sections.

Knowing as we do the falsehood and impiety of idolatrous polytheistic superstitions, knowing the cruelties, the immoralities, the degrading extravagancies and impositions of the Hindoo system, we shall silently and calmly leave them in all the

fulness of their operation, without telling *our subjects, who ought to be our children*, that they are wrong, that they are deluded, and hence plunged into many miseries?

Grant 1796: 88

Wherever I look upon anyone connected with Africa, no matter how black his face, *I regards [sic] him or her as my own son or daughter.*

Robert Moffat, 1840, missionary in southern Africa, quoted in Cleall 2012: 6

He [the African] is an apt *pupil*.

Lugard 1922: 70

In brief, the virtues and the defects of this race-type are those of attractive *children*, whose confidence when once it has been won is given ungrudgingly as to an older and wiser superior, without question and without envy.

Lugard 1922: 70

The same sentiments also transpired in Article 22 of the covenant of the League of Nations, which was written around the same time as Lugard's text. It "expressed concern—as 'a sacred trust of civilization'—for the 'well-being and development' of 'peoples not yet able *to stand by themselves* under the strenuous conditions of the modern world'" (Wolf 2008: 556, italics added).

This quote at the same time points to conceptualizations of linearity sustained by a SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema and coupled with the EVENT STRUCTURE metaphor (see, e.g., Peña Cervel 2005), with STATES ARE LOCATIONS as one particular metaphor. Such conceptualizations are also evident in the colonial documents and will be discussed below.

The metaphors we will highlight are special in several respects. First of all, they frame the US VERSUS THEM constellation as a temporal condition; over time and given a proper "investment" on the side of the metaphoric PARENT, ADULT, TEACHER, the distance to the OTHER will reduce and eventually disappear: the CHILD will develop into an ADULT and into a PARENT; the PUPIL will reach eye level with the TEACHER, though the PARENT-CHILD relationship, as a logical entailment of the metaphor, will never cease to exist, of course.¹ Furthermore, the direction is fixed: it is a one-way route of "development," fostered by educational measures on the side of the colonizers and other agents such as missions. Moreover, these metaphors all entail the notions of a "responsibility," the PARENT OR ADULT towards the CHILD, the TEACHER towards the PUPIL. Generally speaking, this metaphor system is intimately tied to and partly taken from Christian discourse, the FAMILY conceptualization in particular, evoking the notion of "family of man." US VERSUS THEM also underlies a set of cultural categories which does not allow for a reduction of distance, namely that of racial categories.

With their inherent features, or meaning foci (in the sense of Kövecses [2002] 2010), these conceptual structures are important access points to analyze the ambivalence and schizophrenia of colonial visions. They are also excellent cases in point to show the different attitudes of the colonizers towards specific colonial regions, for instance India and sub-Saharan Africa.

2.1 Flipped Roles Restored: The Case of India

As Trautmann (1997) aptly put it, British attitudes towards India oscillated between Indomania and Indophobia. Historically speaking, Indomania is first and foremost a product and ingredient of the early so-called New Orientalist school. The rise of New Orientalists in the second half of the eighteenth century is closely tied to the advent of Sanskrit studies at that time. Through Sanskrit, the European scholars got access to and explored the ancient Vedic literature as well as the ancient Indian texts on astronomy/astrology, geometry, geography, and philosophy. The Orientalists' fascination with these texts was enormous. They put the ancient "Indian wisdom" and knowledge on a par with (if not above, at times) the ultimate reference points of the time, more precisely ancient Greek and Arabic scholarship, thus constructing a triad at the origin of Western culture and science. Here is how the Orientalist mathematician John Playfair concludes his comparative analysis of ancient Indian, Arab, Greek and modern Western astronomy:²

That observations made in India when all Europe was barbarous or uninhabited, and investigations into the most subtle effects of gravitation made in Europe, near five thousand years afterwards, should thus come in mutual support of one another, is perhaps the most striking example of the progress and vicissitudes of science, which the history of mankind has yet exhibited.

Playfair [1822] 2011: 128

In the same vein, the Orientalists' general account of Hinduism was highly favorable. As Trautmann (1997: 65) summarizes: "The main features, which are more or less the same in all the renderings, are two: that Hinduism is basically monotheistic [and hence constructed as being congenial to the Christian system; our addition], and that the benevolence of its religion and laws made India a prosperous and peaceful country before foreign conquest."

What was stressed was again the ancient origin of Hinduism and the associated societal organization, far outdating the Christian belief system and Western European "civilization." Many everyday practices and the colorful imagery of mundane Hinduism were certainly felt to be "disturbing" also by the Orientalists, but they were dismissed as later appropriations of the original spirit to the vulgar masses.

The Orientalist portrait of a perfect Indian high culture was completed, last but not least, with their admirable account of Sanskrit. Sanskrit studies were instrumental to the rise of comparative historical linguistics, with the Orientalist William Jones as its early most prominent exponent. His major achievement was a thorough account of the relatedness of Sanskrit (and Old Persian) with modern European languages of the various branches now classified as belonging to the Indo-European family.³ Jones' view of Sanskrit could hardly be more enthusiastic: "The Sanscrit [*sic*] language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either" (Jones 1786: n.p.).

What is important for our present concern is that the Orientalist construction of Indian high culture inevitably flipped the roles in the metaphor system sketched at the beginning of the section: if Indian civilization is far older than the British one, if Indian

science predates the European one, if Sanskrit is the ancestral language (or close to it) of the European ones, including English, it is India that is superior and in the metaphoric role of the PARENT/ADULT while Britain is the CHILD. If ancient “Indian wisdom” is something Britain can learn from, it is India who is the TEACHER and Britain who is the metaphoric PUPIL. Hence, the Orientalist position ultimately challenges the very basics of the conceptual construction of the colonial self and the colonial subject.

Not surprisingly, the response to Orientalist positions was fierce in Britain, and within a few decades they were “killed off,” as Trautmann (1997: 99) puts it. The anti-Orientalists launched a wholesale attack on virtually every aspect of Indian culture. The ideal(istic) Orientalist portrait of Indian high culture was countered with accounts of atrocities witnessed in ordinary Indian society, including practices such as child marriage, female child murder, widow burning (*sati*), or corporal punishments.⁴ The following extracts from Charles Grant’s ([1796] 1853)⁵ *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain* provide a representative illustration of this discourse:

The first that shall be mentioned is the shocking barbarity of their punishments. The cutting off legs, hands, noses, and ears, putting out of eyes, and other penal inflictions of a similar kind, all performed in the coarsest manner, abundantly justify our argument.

Grant [1792] 1853: 23

But in Hindostan, mothers of families are taken from the midst of their children, who have just lost their father also, and by a most diabolical complication of force and fraud, are driven into the flames.

Grant [1796] 1853: 59

Added to such lists of actual atrocities are accounts of “immoral” practices in Indian society, including and highlighting those linked to sexuality. Again, Grant’s report provides ample illustration thereof, covering the full “disturbing” range from polygamy, promiscuity, prostitution to homosexuality:⁶

Polygamy, which is tolerated among the Hindoos, tends still more to destroy all rational domestic society. . . . As to the men, they are under little restraint from moral considerations. The laws of caste impose restrictions and fines for offences of the nature in question, so far as that distinction is concerned, but leave great scope for new connections, and for promiscuous intercourse, which is matter of little scruple or observation. Receptacles for women of infamous character are every where licensed, and the women themselves have a place in society. The female dancers, who are of this order, make the principal figure in the entertainments of ceremony given by the great. Indecency is the basis of their exhibitions; yet children and young persons of both sexes are permitted to be present at these shows, which have admittance even into the principal zenanas [‘harem’]. Licentious connections are therefore most common, though subsisting apparently without that intoxication of passion which hurries on the mind against conviction, and

carried on without much concealment, nay almost with the insensibility of brutes. On such points, the Hindoos seem to advert to no rule except what the law enjoins; there is no sentiment diffused at large through society, which attaches shame to criminality. Wide and fatal are the effects of this corruption of manners; a corruption not stopping here, but extending even to the unnatural practices of the ancient Heathens, though in these the Mahomedans are still more abandoned.

Grant [1796] 1853: 23–4⁷

The next target of Grant's attack is ordinary Hinduism, depicted by him as a conglomerate of "ridiculous," "scandalous," "filthy," "wicked" practices and imagery:

The character of the whole multitude of hindoo deities, male and female, is another source of immorality. The legends and histories of their actions are innumerable, and in the highest degree extravagant, absurd, ridiculous, and incredible. But the feature by which they are, above all, distinguished, is the abandoned wickedness of their divinities, Brahma, Vishnow, Mahadeo, (who are held to be respectively the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer of the world,) and of all the rest, in their several subordinate capacities. The most enormous and strange impurities, the most villanous frauds and impostures, the most detestable cruelties and injustice, the most filthy and abominable conceits, every corrupt excess and indulgence, are presented to us in their histories, varied in a thousand forms. These scandalous legends are more or less known among all the millions of Hindostan; they form an immense series of adventures, which fill the imagination of a weak and credulous people; very many of them are perpetuated by images, temples, and ceremonies, and those of such a nature as it were pollution to describe.

Grant [1796] 1853: 50

Grant is unambiguous about the overall objectives of his report: it is to counter what "has suited the views of some philosophers" (Grant [1796] 1853: 20) and to make clear that their idealistic portrait of India has little to do with the Indian realities, and it is to assign to the Indian natives "their true place in the moral scale" (Grant [1796] 1853: 25). The colonial metaphoric system is firmly in place again: no flipped roles; the European is UP; the colonial subject is DOWN; the British are the ADULTS; the Indians are the metaphoric CHILDREN. Grant makes that very explicit in the following passage:

Whilst an [*sic*] European, deriving a *superiority* from his race, or from the station he is appointed to fill, regards only in a distant speculative way the effeminate exterior, adulatory address, and submissive demeanor of the Hindoos, he naturally enough conceives them to be a people in whom the mild and gentle qualities predominate. He is apt to consider them with a mixture of complacency and contempt; and even the bad dispositions towards each other, which he soon discovers to exist in them, *he may view with feelings analogous to those which the petty malignity of children, or of beings of a diminutive species, might excite.*

Grant [1796] 1853: 24, italics added

Grant is a fairly early proponent of a strict Anglicist position towards India, coupled with a strict Christianization stance. His *Observations* even predate Jones' major publications. The final blow in the so-called Orientalist–Anglicist debate in favor of the Anglicists came four decades later, in the 1830s. It is linked to a key text in British colonial history, Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* (1835). Since Grant's *Observations*, the general view of India had shifted from the romanticist picture of the New Orientalists to a pronounced Indophobia, at least with regard to the realities of the Indian colony. Macaulay could rely on this shift in public perception and could direct his decisive blow towards the very core of the Orientalist stance that was still maintained in academic circles, i.e., the great esteem held for Indian high culture. And this is what he did:

I am quite ready to take the oriental learning at the valuation of the orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is indeed fully admitted by those members of the committee who support the oriental plan of education.

It will hardly be disputed, I suppose, that the department of literature in which the Eastern writers stand highest is poetry. And I certainly never met with any orientalist who ventured to maintain that the Arabic and Sanscrit [*sic*] poetry could be compared to that of the great European nations. But when we pass from works of imagination to works in which facts are recorded and general principles investigated, the superiority of the Europeans becomes absolutely immeasurable. It is, I believe, no exaggeration to say that all the historical information which has been collected from all the books written in the Sanscrit [*sic*] language is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgments used at preparatory schools in England. In every branch of physical or moral philosophy, the relative position of the two nations is nearly the same.

The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language, we shall teach languages in which, by universal confession, there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own, whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, wherever they differ from those of Europe differ for the worse, and whether, when we can patronize sound philosophy and true history, we shall countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made of seas of treacle and seas of butter.

Macaulay 1835: n.p.

His own colonial vision, which he derives from this line of argument, is well-known:

I feel with them that it is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern,—a class of

persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.

Macaulay 1835: n.p.

With this vision, Macaulay set the scene for the doctrine of indirect rule that subsequently guided British colonial policy up to the break-down of the Empire.

The debate sketched above was quite unique to the Indian case. In particular, there was no parallel hesitation about the role and position of the colonizer in the context of sub-Saharan Africa. Lugard (1922: 46), for instance, is very explicit on this point: "India's ancient civilisation and social organisation, based on and an integral part of its religions, and the culture and high intelligence of its educated classes, all combine to differentiate the problems of its vast population from those of other tropical regions of the Empire."

In the eyes of the colonizers, Africa south of the Sahara had no pre-colonial intellectual or societal achievements worth of scholarly attention. This perception prevailed well up to the middle of the twentieth century, as famously expressed in the stance of the British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper (1963: 871) that pre-colonial sub-Saharan Africa "had no history prior to European exploration and colonization, that there is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness." What was reported at length was the activities and "achievements" of the colonizers.

The attitudes towards traditional African belief systems were the same as for India. They were scarcely regarded as worthy of being treated as "religion" (but see below). Again, Lugard's account is representative of this mindset.

Through the ages the African has evolved no organised religious creed, and though some tribes appear to believe in a deity, the religious sense seldom rises above pantheistic animism, and seems more often to take the form of a vague dread of the supernatural. It is curious that whereas in East Africa Sir C. Eliot observes that prayers are always addressed to a benevolent deity, in the West the prevalent idea seems to be the propitiation of a malevolent spirit. Belief in the power of the witch and wizard, and of the Juju-priest and witch-doctor, in charms and fetish, and in the ability of individuals to assume at will the form of wild beasts, are also common among many tribes.

Lugard 1922: 69

This perception started to change only in the 1930s, following the work of anthropologists such as Bronisław Malinowski.⁸ Malinowski was not opposed to Lugard's vision of "indirect rule";⁹ however, he disagreed with Lugard's outright dismissive view of African magic beliefs and practices. Rather than placing them merely in the realm of superstition that had to be eradicated, as it is done in Lugard's *Dual Mandate*, Malinowski found the magic belief systems to be crucial factors in societal organization and instrumental for social coherence, in particular

the resolution of conflicts and maintenance of balance (see Foks 2018 for a discussion). He was hence opposed to Lugard's position that, as Foks (2018: 38) puts it, "law-making, as state-making, was reserved for white Europeans, with a hard line between customary and colonial courts."¹⁰ Instead, Malinowski proposed that "the law itself was to be indirectly generated as a fusion of African and European customs" (Foks 2018: 39).

2.2 Distance Restored

As noted above, the metaphor system under analysis is special in that it presents the distance between the colonizer and the colonial subject as a temporary condition. The state of equality is postponed, its achievement a matter of natural development. Eventually, the metaphorical CHILD will evolve into a mature adult; the PUPIL will rise to the level of the TEACHER, provided that there is appropriate guidance. This metaphor system was rooted in the Christian notion of the "family of man."

Colonial discourse abounds in the programmatic commitment to the "rising of the natives" and hence to the reduction of the distance between colonizer and colonial subject (see below). At the same time, the colonizers had always been at unease with or even opposed to the very idea that they would find themselves on equal terms with their colonial subjects. Thus, although propagating the reduction of the distance to the natives, they were eager to preserve and firmly establish this distance.¹¹ The two stances are obviously incompatible. In the colonial discourse, we see two patterns of how this condition was dealt with.

The first pattern stays entirely within the logic of the metaphor system and insists on the distance between colonizer and colonial subject as well as on the long time-span needed to reduce and eventually close the gap. This way, the uncomfortable state of equality is postponed to the far future. Right from the start and across the centuries, colonial discourse is full of reports about the slow progress of the endeavors to "raise" the natives. Lugard (1922: 178–9), for instance, is very explicit on this point: "the era of complete independence is not as yet visible on the horizon of time. . . . The danger of going too fast with native races is even more likely to lead to disappointment, if not to disaster, than the danger of not going fast enough."

The notion of "the natives" lagging behind on an imagined path to Western civilization as the ultimate goal is also expressed in League of Nations documents:

[T]he gradual civilisation of the native populations as well as the economic development of the countries will be furthered in the best possible manner. The Commission therefore asks the Council to call the attention of all the Mandatory Powers to this system of education as being in its opinion particularly suitable to the conditions of life of backward peoples.

League of Nations 1924: 183, italics added

With social progress and material progress based on collective and individual property, and the development of products for exportation, I believe that we shall have attained the *second stage I have in view, the stage of material and social*

well-being. . . . As soon as the people of Togoland should have reached a civilised state of life, they would be able to stand by themselves.

League of Nations 1925: 23, italics added

In these quotes, the STATES ARE LOCATIONS metaphor is evident. The respective League of Nations documents recorded statements by the French representative on the Commission and colonial governor of Togo, Paul Auguste François Bonnacarrère. At least according to the French ideal of assimilation of the native, the US VERSUS THEM schema ceases to exist once the colonial subjects reaches the Western state of civilization; IDENTITY OF CULTURE IS IDENTITY OF LOCATION:

From the remarkable statement made by M. Bonnacarrère, it appeared that the present policy tended to the *development of the native in the direction of European civilisation. . . .* M. Bonnacarrère said he did not believe in the imperfectability of the native, in spite of the sceptics who thought that it was impossible to *convert him into a civilised man*. Nevertheless, the native was greatly handicapped by the nature of his country and surroundings. In his fight against nature, which was a hard task-master and sometimes no luxuriant—a neglected road might disappear within two months under bush—the native was not so sensitive as the European, and this was lucky for him, because his present offerings, caused by the rigours of the climate and by his destitution, were only too real. However, it resulted from this, that *his development was being retarded*, and he had to struggle continually against his surroundings, simply for his livelihood and the procreation of his race. *A long time must still elapse before he could be completely assimilated to the European.*

League of Nations 1925: 25, italics added

This quote brings into play dimensions of otherness beyond those provided by the metaphor system. One dimension that was frequently evoked in the early colonial discourse is the negative impact of the local climate on the nature of the colonial people, a view still held in the previous quote.¹² This belief is also referred to by Grant (although he thought it to be overrated): “The debilitating nature of the climate of our Eastern territories, and its unfavorable influence upon the human constitution, have been already mentioned, and by others represented in strong colours” (Grant [1796] 1853: 75), and “it is reasonable to believe, that were those evils corrected which do not arise from the climate, they would in time held a much higher place among the human species than they are now capable of maintaining” (Grant [1796] 1853: 31).

Climatic conditions are a dimension external to the colonial subjects. Their obvious physical features of otherness (most prominently skin color) were always highlighted as prime markers of them being different from the colonizers. Recall the earlier quote from the missionary Robert Moffat: “Wherever I look upon anyone connected with Africa, *no matter how black his face, I regards [sic] him or her as my own son or daughter*” (Robert Moffat, 1840, missionary in southern Africa, quoted in Cleall 2012: 6, italics added). Here, he evokes the notion of the “family of man,” but puts a reference to skin color in a no-matter construction that implies that it might indeed be taken to matter.

It is, however, important to notice that for colonial agents of this mold, the no-matter stance is meant to be truly *inclusive*, not *exclusive*: however different somebody (or a group of people) is from their implicit norm, everybody is a member of the family of man.¹³ There is no undertone of superior and inferior races in this stance. Grant's account of the Indians, harsh as it is, is guided by the same spirit:

If the character of the Hindoos proceeded only from a physical origin, there might be some foundation for thinking it unalterable; but nothing is more plain, than that it is formed chiefly by moral causes, adequate to the effect produced: if those causes therefore can be removed, their effect will cease, and new principles and motives will produce new conduct and a different character. It is unwarrantable to infer, that because the Hindoos, or to narrow the term, the Bengalese, are at present low in their sentiments, conduct, and aims, they must always remain so. . . . The history of many nations who have advanced from rudeness to refinement, contradicts this hypothesis; according to which, the Britons ought still to be going naked, to be feeding on acorns, and sacrificing human victims. . . . Let it however be again observed, that the argument maintained here supposes only a *gradual* change. If we bring into immediate contrast, the *present state* of the Hindoos, and the *full, general, accomplishment* of such a change, tacitly sinking in our comparison, a long series of years, and of slow progressive transitions, we shall indeed form to ourselves a picture of egregious contrarities, but it will not be a just representation. Nothing is contended for, which cannot be supported from the nature of man, and the experience of past ages.

Grant [1796] 1853: 63

From the vantage point of monogenetic theories of the human kind (including their Christian version of the "family of man"), the "distance" between the colonizer and the colonial subjects was hence primarily the product of culture and social institutions, i.e., forces *external* to man; the "gap" can be closed through gradual change. This view differs sharply from the stances taken by polygenetic theories that entered the scene in the nineteenth century. These theories were truly racist in design, assuming and propagating the fundamental otherness of the races, not only in terms of outward features (skin color or physical characteristics) but also in terms of inherent intellectual and social capacities. It was the most drastic attempt at "restoring the distance" between the European colonizers and the colonial subjects. This mindset became an integral part of colonial discourse. Again, Lugard provides explicit illustrations thereof:

It is essential to realise that tropical Africa is inhabited by races which differ as widely from each other as do the nations of Europe, and that some of the principal racial types present even greater divergence than those of Europe and parts of Asia. . . . All have been modified to a greater or less degree by admixture with negro blood, which has produced racial types differing from each other, and widely different from the negro type. They vary in their mental and physical characteristics according to the amount of negro blood in their veins, which has shown itself extremely potent in assimilating alien strains to its own type.

Lugard 1922: 67

The racist version of US VERSUS THEM also applied the linear idea of development, but with a separate trajectory for the colonial subject (cf., Dimier 2004: 286). Sir Donald C. Cameron, the second governor of the British mandate of Tanganyika (today Tanzania), is quoted as saying:

Everyone, whatever his opinion may be in regard to direct or indirect rule, will agree, I think, that it is our duty to do everything in our power to *develop the native on lines which will not Westernise him* and turn him into a bad imitation of a European—our whole education policy is directed to that end. We want to make him a good African.

League of Nations 1926: 137, italics added

This point, of course, begs the question of what “a good African” is supposed to be (cf., Wolf 2008: 567).¹⁴

A perennial problem for the colonial administrations was the so-called “half-castes,” who undermined the racial categories of US VERSUS THEM. The League of Nations documents bear numerous examples of how difficult it was for the colonial administrators to deal with this group (see Wolf 2008: 568). A quote by the Belgian representative on the Permanent Mandate Commission is representative of the prevailing view and clearly expresses the underlying conceptual schemas of UP VERSUS DOWN, SOURCE-PATH-GOAL and the STATES ARE LOCATIONS metaphor:

In the colonies, where there were two possibilities—European status and the status of a native subject to customary law—two half-castes sprung from the same mixture of blood *might follow entirely different paths in life* owing to circumstances over which they had no control, *one sinking to the position of a native, the other advancing to that of a European*—at any rate as far as his status was concerned.

League of Nations 1935: 21, italics added

2.3 (Re)Defining the Mission

The conceptualizations that transpire from the colonial texts are not fully consistent and at times contradictory. One would think that US VERSUS THEM in terms of racial categories—as in Lugard’s (1933) reference to “miscegenation” (quoted in Brutt-Griffler 2002: 58)—would not be compatible with PARENT-CHILDREN conceptualizations. Still both sets existed side by side in the colonial mind (at least in Lord Lugard’s). The notion of “responsibility” goes back to the metaphoric relation of PARENT/ADULT/TEACHER vis-à-vis CHILD/PUPIL and was the anchor point for the colonial key notion of the “civilizing mission.”¹⁵ In the present section, we will access this notion from some considerations on the metaphoric concept of the CHILD and the program of “educating the native.”

Lugard frames his picture of the “African native” explicitly along the lines of the CHILD metaphor:

He lacks power of organisation, and is conspicuously deficient in the management and control alike of men or of business. He loves the display of power, but fails to

realise its responsibility. His most universal natural ability lies in eloquence and oratory. He is by no means lacking in industry, and will work hard with a less incentive than most races.

He has the courage of the fighting animal—an instinct rather than a moral virtue. He is very prone to imitate anything new in dress or custom, whether it be the turban and flowing gown of the Moslem, or the straw hat and trousers of the European, however unsuited to his environment and conditions of life. He is an apt pupil, and a faithful and devoted friend. In brief, *the virtues and the defects of this race-type are those of attractive children*, whose confidence when once it has been won is given ungrudgingly as to an older and wiser superior, without question and without envy.

Lugard 1922: 69–70; italics added

Much of *The Dual Mandate* is a program of “educating the natives,” that is, the metaphorical child. The basic principles advocated by Lugard in this respect are reminiscent of the Rousseauian notions of the child and of education, cp.:

The danger of going too fast with native races is even more likely to lead to disappointment, if not to disaster, than the danger of not going fast enough.

Lugard 1922: 178–9

Nature wants children to be children before they are men. If we try to pervert this order we shall produce a forced fruit that will have neither ripeness nor flavor and that will soon spoil.

Rousseau [1762] 1979: 90

Lugard’s characterization of the role of the COLONIZER/TEACHER and his position relative to the NATIVE/PUPIL reads as follows:

But if the standard which the white man must set before him when dealing with uncivilised races must be a high one for the sake of his own moral and spiritual balance, it is not less imperative for the sake of the influence which he exercises upon those over whom he is set in authority. The white man’s prestige must stand high when a few score are responsible for the control and guidance of millions. His courage must be undoubted, his word and pledge absolutely inviolate, his sincerity transparent. There is no room for “mean whites” in tropical Africa. Nor is there room for those who, however high their motives, are content to place themselves on the same level as the uncivilised races. They lower the prestige by which alone the white races can hope to govern and to guide.

Lugard 1922: 59

It is reflective of the general *zeitgeist* in educational matters and again, in parts, reminiscent of the Rousseauian views:

Treat your pupil according to his age. Put him in his place from the first, and keep him there so well that he does not try to leave it. . . . He must know only that he is

weak and you are strong, that his condition and yours put him at your mercy. Let him know this, let him learn it, let him feel it.

Rousseau [1762] 1979: 90

In this section we considered, from a cognitive-linguistic perspective, colonial attitudes and the construction of the colonial subjects by the colonizers. The following section will highlight how colonial conceptions of morality and religion collided with local practices, how the colonizers tried to deal with such practices they perceived as disturbing, and how the measures taken by the colonizer might have impacted on the cultural conceptualizations expressed in Indian, respectively African English, today.

3. “Disturbing” Practices and Cultural Engineering

Various cultural practices the colonizers encountered in their colonies conflicted with their moral ideology and ideas of “civilization,” for example, the caste system in India and polygamy in Africa. In the following, we will focus on homosexuality and witchcraft as two fairly well-documented areas in which colonial conceptions and legal implementations left their traces on cultural conceptualizations evidenced in the Englishes in question today.

3.1 Homosexuality

While race was one aspect of colonial discourse that aided in justifying imperial supremacy, issues concerning sexuality (and, concomitantly, also gender) were another aspect. Industrialization and urbanization in Britain changed the concepts of *FAMILY* and *SEXUALITY* by emphasizing the role of reproduction for a stable society, in particular towards the end of the nineteenth century when the threat of the downfall of the British Empire was pervasive (see Weeks 1990). Scientific advancements in medicine and psychology and an increasing concern about public health additionally stimulated the debate. After the passing of the so-called Contagious Diseases Acts in 1864, 1866 and 1869 (cf., Bryder 1998), Acton (1870: 246), for instance, claims in a medical report on the regulation of prostitution:

If the race of the people is of no concern to the State, then has the State no interest in arresting its vitiation. But if this concern and this interest be admitted, then arises the necessity for depriving prostitution not only of its moral, but of its physical venom also.

She [the prostitute] is a woman with half the woman gone, and that half containing all that elevates her nature, leaving her a mere instrument of impurity; degraded and fallen she extracts from the sin of others the means of living, corrupt and dependent on corruption, and therefore interested directly in the increase of immorality—a social pest, carrying contamination and foulness to every quarter to which she has access.

Acton 1870: 166

Acton's statements quite explicitly plot that with medical progress and a rise in hygienic awareness, a close connection between morals and public health was drawn, in which MORAL CONTAGION was conceptualized as PHYSICAL CONTAGION. In an enterprise that Bashford (2004) calls "imperial hygiene," sanitary measures taken in the nineteenth and twentieth century represented and fostered the dichotomy between PURE VERSUS IMPURE/POLLUTED. This dichotomy was carried across the colonies and intersected with the understanding of race, sexuality, and gender. Hence, sexuality came to the fore as an issue of administrative concern, at home as well as in the colonies, with race as an ever co-present topic. As Stoler (1995: 179) put it, "in the name of British, French, and Dutch moralizing missions, colonial authority supposedly rested on the rigor with which its agents distinguished between desire and reason, native instinct and white self-discipline, native lust and white civility, native sensuality and white morality, subversive unproductive sexuality and productive patriotic sex."

Extra-marital and non-reproductive sexuality—or sex for pleasure—thus constituted a corrupting factor because, after all, sexuality and marriage were seen as a "way Europeans sought to maintain social distance and bolster their sense of innate superiority" (Bryder 1998: 808). Where extra-marital sexuality appeared to be unavoidable, particularly among the all-male armed forces abroad, prostitution was perceived as the lesser evil compared to same-sex sexual activities.¹⁶ Stoler (1995: 180) reports on the belief that if the common soldier were "thwarted from exercising his "natural" sexual urges, he would resort to "unnatural vices," "specifically to masturbation or sexual relations with other men" and remarks that "the dangers of a homosexual European rank and file were implicitly weighed against the medical hazards of rampant heterosexual prostitution: both were condemned as morally pernicious and a threat to racial survival." Levine's (1994: 596) account is in line inasmuch as "the constant haunting fear of homosexuality ... would undermine the manly adventure of imperial conquest" because "there was no room for even a hint of the effeminacy assumed to exist among subject men."

Two major logical strands fed into the colonizers' understanding of homosexuality in the nineteenth century: Firstly, the concept of MASCULINITY was structured according to a "hierarchy of manliness" (at least in the Indian context, see Hinchy 2014: 275), with British men as the ideal and the colonized men below them, sorted in descending order by religion, ethnicity, or class (for the latter, cf., Stoler 1995: 179f). Thus, hierarchizing men along an UP VERSUS DOWN image schema was crucial to maintaining masculinity as a social status with which superiority and colonial rule and expansion were justified (see Brady 2009).¹⁷ As Brady argues, this had further implications for the treatment of homosexual practices among British men inasmuch as these practices undermined masculinity and were therefore denied. In the then-scandalous trial of Boulton and Park—two London cross-dressers—the initial indictment (which was later dropped) read that they "feloniously wickedly and against the order of nature with each other did commit and perpetrate that detestable and abominable crime of buggery not to be named among Christians" (initial indictment of 1870 in the Central Criminal Court, quoted in Cohen 1996: 79). Aldrich (2003) observes that homosexual relationships between colonizers and colonized also posed a threat to the colonial agenda, since they potentially enabled equal relationships and subsequently produced anti-imperialist mindsets.

As is reflected in the Boulton-and-Park indictment, the conceptualization HOMOSEXUALITY IS AN UNNATURAL CONDITION was the second strand of logic upon which the understanding of homosexuality was built. While the term *homosexuality* itself was coined only in the second half of the nineteenth century, *buggery* and *sodomy* (which included a number of non-reproductive and thus impure sexual practices) had already been criminalized through precursory British law, for example in the mediaeval treatises *Fleta* and *Britton* and Henry VIII's Buggery Act of 1533 (see Gupta 2008; Weeks 1990: 11ff.). The conceptual link to SIN is obvious: "Buggery is a detestable, and abominable sin, amongst Christians not to be named, committed by carnall [*sic*] knowledge against the ordinance of the Creator, and order of nature" (Coke 1648: 58).

The understanding of HOMOSEXUALITY as UNNATURAL along religious lines blended well into the discourse on sexuality along medical lines that was prominent particularly in the nineteenth century (see Bleys 1995: 2), when colonialism was approaching its heyday. If British superiority stood and fell with the degree of masculinity, and if sexuality between men was corruptive to masculinity, then it is not surprising that homosexual practices had to be properly codified in law. Since "buggery" and "sodomy" were no unequivocal offences, a fact which complicated legal action,¹⁸ revising anti-sodomy laws was urgent and the colonies were an ideal testing ground for legislation at home (Gupta 2008). It was once more Macaulay who contributed to the Indian Penal Code that was installed in 1860. Clause 361 of the initial proposal for a law against homosexuality in 1837 read:

Whoever intending to gratify unnatural lust, touches for that purpose any person or any animal or is by his own consent touched by any person for the purpose of gratifying unnatural lust, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 14 years, and must not be less than two years.

Report of the Indian Law Commission on the Penal Code 1837; quoted in
Gupta 2006: 4822

It eventually found its expression in Section 377 of the 1860 final version, which maintained the notion of "unnaturalness":

Unnatural offences—Whoever voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 10 years, and shall be liable to fine.

Explanation—Penetration is sufficient to constitute the carnal intercourse necessary to the offence described in this section.

Indian Penal Code 1860; quoted in Gupta 2006: 4816¹⁹

Section 377 was overruled only in 2018—seventy-one years after India's independence—to decriminalize homosexual behavior among consenting adults.

Turning towards Nigeria, Section 214 of the Criminal Code, which was modeled after the Queensland Penal Code, was first introduced to the Northern parts in 1904

and is still in place in the Southern territories (see Mwalimu 2007); it reads all too familiar:

Any person who has carnal knowledge of any person against the order of nature or has carnal knowledge of an animal, or permits a male person to have carnal knowledge of him or her against the order of nature is guilty of a felony and liable upon conviction to 14 years imprisonment.

Nigerian Criminal Code 1904; quoted in Ayeni 2017: 216, original emphasis

The same can be said about Section 284 of the Penal Code, which was modeled after the Indian Penal Code and still operates in the Northern territories (complemented by Shari'a law): "Whoever has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man or woman is liable upon conviction to fine and imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years" (Nigerian Penal Code 1960; quoted in Ayeni 2017: 217).

It becomes clear that the conceptualization *HOMOSEXUALITY IS AN UNNATURAL CONDITION*, as still enshrined in contemporary legislation, was a colonial imposition based on a British fear, and as such it spread across the colonies (cf., Gupta 2008). As Gupta (2008: n.p.) furthermore argues, the implementation of anti-sodomy laws in the colonies "was a way of segregating the Christian, European self from alien entities that menaced it with infection."

Differing approaches existed in explaining the allegedly abnormal sexuality of the colonized, and arising discourses on *INNATE VERSUS ACQUIRED*, *OCCASIONAL VERSUS REAL* and *PATHOLOGICAL VERSUS NORMAL* challenged the notion of *UNNATURALNESS* (see Bleys 1993; Murray and Roscoe 2001). Burton, for instance, argued in his *Terminal essay* of 1885 that the climate was mainly responsible for homosexual practices, similar to Grant's observation outlined in Section 2.2. This argumentation was largely influenced by the conceptualization *HOMOSEXUALITY IS AN ACQUIRED CONDITION*, while at the same time suggesting that *HOMOSEXUALITY IS A NATURAL CONDITION*. Burton assumed an accumulation of such practices in the so-called Sotadic Zone, whereas "the races to the North and South of the limits here defined [obviously including the British] practise it only sporadically amid the opprobrium of their fellows who, as a rule, are physically incapable of performing the operation" (Burton 1885; quoted in White 1999: 145).

Notably to this chapter, he saw Hindus as opponents of "the Vice." Considering what was mentioned before, namely that particularly in the Indian colony the "hierarchy of manliness" was eagerly applied, this seems surprising. After all, ascribing unmanly homosexuality to the inferior races would aid in establishing a superior British masculinity. And in fact, according to Sinha (1995), homosexuality was part of this discourse, but astonishingly associated with the races that ranked higher on the hierarchy. Perhaps Burton's account, which is rather apologetic of homosexuality, should be considered as a late tribute to the Orientalist school. Burton furthermore deemed homosexuality a foreign import into West Africa—an idea he might have gotten from Gibbon's claim a century earlier that "the negroes, in their own country, were exempt from this moral pestilence" (Gibbon [1781] 1854: 324). The basis for this assumption was presumably the understanding of sub-Saharan African cultures

as primitive and therefore “close to nature, ruled by instinct, and culturally unsophisticated,” with their “sexual energies and outlets devoted exclusively to their ‘natural’ purpose: biological reproduction,” implying that they would be “the most heterosexual” (Murray and Roscoe 2001: xi).

Obviously, the image of the colonial subjects as constructed by the British often diverged from the actual circumstances; but whatever view on the colonized cultures, claiming that homosexuality is unnatural and likewise fearing “infection” points to a rather schizophrenic perspective. In any case, the “disturbing practices” found abroad must have constituted a danger to British superiority, respectability and normality, rendering legal controls and cultural engineering even more necessary. Their existence likewise justified the colonial mission to bring civilization to the uncivilized.

At this point it is worthwhile to briefly sketch out some pre-colonial conceptualizations of HOMOSEXUALITY in India and West Africa. They are attested in traditional texts and orature and in the existence of homosexual practices as described in the research literature.²⁰

In the Indian context, textual evidence in the form of scriptures from the Vedic period dates back until about 1500 BCE, followed by the emergence of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam which provide a plethora of texts. Although Hunt (2011) warns that the existence of homosexual practices in these texts should not be romanticized and that homophobia is part of Indian history, it is undeniable that same-sex love and homoerotic activities have been explicitly described throughout the centuries. Vanita and Kidwai (2001: xxiv) observe that such relationships were rarely subject to prosecution and not labelled as “abnormal,” “unnatural” or “unhealthy.” Instead, Hunt (2011) refers to the insemination ceremony *Garbhadan Sanskaar*, one of the Hindu rites of passage that gives advice on how not to conceive a homosexual child, or the ancient text *Rig Veda*, which says that *Vikruti evam prakriti* (‘what is unnatural is also natural’). These instances of HOMOSEXUALITY IS A NATURAL CONDITION are often used by Indian LGBTIQ activists to argue for their case and against conservative Hindus. The *Kamasutra* categorizes HOMOSEXUALITY as THIRD NATURE, and other medical texts describe it in terms of desire rather than behavior—long before this was considered in Western science (see Vanita and Kidwai 2001: xxi).

Vanita and Kidwai (2001) also assume conceptual links relating to FRIENDSHIP between conjugal and same-sex couplings, for instance with regard to the concept of the symbolic SEVEN STEPS: in traditional wedding ceremonies, the couple takes seven steps together and the last step signifies friendship. Vanita and Kidwai (2001: 7) show how the expression *saptapadam hi mitram* (‘seven steps/words taken together constitute friendship’) is repeatedly used in ancient texts about non-conjugal friendship, which suggests an egalitarian status of these bonds. Although the lack of procreation at first appears to be an impediment to same-sex friendships, the purity of such friendships is itself a source of (re)birth. In the epic *Mahabharata*, for example, Krishna (a Hindu god) evokes the creative power of his unspoiled friendship with Arjuna upon the stillbirth of his friend’s only grandchild: “Never hath a misunderstanding arisen between me and my friend Vijaya [Arjuna]. Let this dead child revive by that truth!” (*Mahabharata*, *Asvamedha Parva*; quoted in Vanita and Kidwai 2001: 8).

In fact, sexual intercourse as a necessity for procreation is conceptualized as a degeneration of humankind, underlining that “male friendship is the purest bond”:

In those days offspring were begotten by fiat of the will. In the age that followed, Treta, children were begotten by touch alone. The people of that age, even, O monarch, were above the necessity of sexual congress. It was in the next age, Dwapara, that the practice of sexual congress originated, O king, to prevail among men. In the Kali age, O monarch, men have come to marry and live in pairs.

Mahabharata, Santi Parva; quoted in Vanita and Kidwai 2001: 9

In other Indian myths, same-sex encounters may actually produce offspring, as is the case in some variants of the genesis of the gods Ganesha (‘born by two women’) or his brother Kartikeya (‘born by two men’). The *Krittivasa Ramayana* tells the story of King Dilipa, two of whose widows were *sampriti* (‘in extreme love’) and had a child named “Bhagiratha” (‘born of two vulvas’ [*bhaga*]; Vanita and Kidwai 2001: xix)

However, other, partly less benevolent, conceptualizations that emphasize the important role of reproduction also existed. Kakar and Kakar (2006: 103) describe the ancient Indian category of Sanskrit *KLIBA*. This category included all sorts of men: sterile, impotent, castrated, with mutilated or deficient genitalia, receivers of anal sex, performers of oral sex, fathers without sons, transvestites or hermaphrodites. Hence, men who could not or refused to perform satisfactorily in the reproductive process. Das Wilhelm (2008: 37) remarks that in dictionaries published in the West, *kliba* was translated as “impotent, emasculated, a eunuch, unmanly, timorous, weak, idle, a coward,” thus including the notion of *STRENGTH* as a component of *MASCULINITY*. As a final example, the *Narada-smṛiti* states that the so-called *mukhebhaga* (‘he who performs oral sex on men’) is “incurable” and “unmarriageable under all circumstances”—in contrast to the *paksha*, which refers in some regards to the Western concept of the *BISEXUAL* (Das Wilhelm 2008: 49).

In Africa, cultural knowledge is fixed to a lesser degree in written form, so it is somewhat more difficult to textually carve out pre-colonial conceptualizations of *HOMOSEXUALITY*. Early colonial accounts furthermore seem void of description, presumably, as Bleys (1995) argues, due to the focus on black masculinity necessitated by slave trade. Since African traditions are highly oral, folk beliefs, orature, and customary law can serve as a rich source of data for accessing cultural conceptualizations. The lack of descriptions in colonial texts can be complemented by research literature on contemporary and historical homosexual communities and patterns of same-sex relationships in Africa.

Appiah and Gates (2010) report on several examples from the West African context specifically: at the Asante courts in today’s Ghana during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, cross-dressing male slaves pleased their masters. Among the Igbo in the twentieth century, women could become female husbands and take wives in order to secure their independence. Homosexuals are seen as mediators between the spiritual and the human world by the Dagari in Burkina Faso:

Any person who is this link between this world and the other world experiences a state of vibrational consciousness which is far higher, and far different, from the

one that a normal person would experience. This is what makes a gay person gay. This kind of function is not one that society votes for certain people to fulfill. It is one that people are said to decide on prior to being born.

Somé 1993: 7; quoted in Murray and Roscoe 2001: 92

This quote proves that the conceptualization of HOMOSEXUALITY AS AN INNATE AND NATURAL CONDITION is not alien to the African context. It also relates, in a wider sense, to African cosmology per se, which is discussed from a cognitive-sociolinguistic perspective in much more detail in Wolf and Polzenhagen (2009).

Furthermore, members of the *yan daudu*, a gay community among the Muslim Hausa in Nigeria, take the role of mediators between men and women where prostitution is concerned. While sometimes living in rather marginalized communities, this role secures them an economically stable position within the larger society. Although the prospect of financial security seemed to be the main reason for a self-identification as *yan daudu* in a study by Besmer in 1983 (referenced in Murray and Roscoe 2001), 7 percent of the informants still named “nature” as the reason for identification, yet another attestation of the conceptualization of HOMOSEXUALITY AS A NATURAL CONDITION in the West African context.

There are yet more instances of same-sex relationships that the British colonizers encountered. Ayeni (2017) mentions records of woman-to-woman marriage among the Igbo and the people of Mbaise that go back until at least the eighteenth century. Such unions may include the payment of a bride price and their main purpose is the assurance of the family line, with the female husbands usually receiving high status and male privileges. Documents of court decisions based on customary law demonstrate their cultural rootedness.

The Yoruba, a predominantly Christian community, often claim that homosexuality is not part of their culture. While this might apply to the contemporary “Western” concept of HOMOSEXUALITY, there are various examples of traditional same-sex relationships. Aina (1991), for instance, found that HOMOSEXUAL INTERCOURSE was conceived of as a SOURCE OF POWER for otherwise heterosexually oriented men. Furthermore, Ajibade (2013) analyzed the existence of same-sex relationships in Yoruba orature. An Ifa priest he interviewed related the genesis of Orunmila, the *orisha* of wisdom, who was begotten through the intercourse of two females. Though perceived as an unsanctioned union (therefore, Orunmila is boneless), it is again the mere existence of same-sex relationships in orature which proves their cultural embedding. The same can be said about rituals in which priests (male or female) known as *iyawo orisa* (‘brides of the deities’) dress like women while becoming possessed by male gods. An example of an unfavorable judgment of homosexuality in Yoruba tradition is given in the following piece of orature:

If a man is having sexual intercourse with another man
It results into lumps, boils and yaws
It results into various diseases
If a woman is having sexual intercourse with another woman
It results into murk and fowl [*sic*] odour,
It results into mud and dirt.

Ajibade 2013: 975; translated there from Yoruba

Here, MALE HOMOSEXUALITY is conceptualized as DISEASE and FEMALE HOMOSEXUALITY as POLLUTION. Ajibade in fact notes that these practices, perceived as evils that affect the whole society, align with further findings in the Yoruba context that conceptualize HOMOSEXUALITY as UNNATURAL, PATHOLOGICAL and A RESULT OF OCCULT ACTIVITY. He continues to point out that sexual intercourse which results in procreation is favorable, for which he gives several examples. For lesbianism specifically, the conceptualization of A FEMALE GENITAL NOT USED FOR PROCREATION IS A DEAD GENITAL emerges, as expressed in the following passage:

Any woman who engages in sexual intercourse with fellow woman
 Don't you know she is (only) gazing at a dead genital?
 Had it been that is [sic] the way we administer the community
 The community would be unbearable for the people?

Ajibade 2013: 978

The genital of a heterosexual female metonymically stands for life and the continuation of society. In turn, a logical entailment of this line of reasoning is that (FEMALE) HOMOSEXUALITY means DEATH OF SOCIETY.

All the given examples offer, of course, not even a fragmentary view into the pre-colonial understanding of HOMOSEXUALITY in India and West Africa. However, they illustrate that same-sex practices formed part of the local cultures at the time colonial conceptualizations were implemented, implying that the understanding as UNNATURAL can be attributed to the colonial influence. Evidently, both cultures were not completely free from homophobia before, but the new conceptual framework changed cultural cognition with lasting effects.

These discourses are nowadays still prevalent and indeed have cross-cultural resemblance with regard to the “un-Indianness” or “un-Africanness.” In both contexts, opponents consider homosexuality an import from the West that corrupts local values and traditions. This view bizarrely turns colonial laws into defenders of these values and traditions (see, for instance, Gupta 2008; Vanita and Kidwai 2001 on India; Ayeni 2017 on Nigeria).

In India, Section 377 has only recently ceased to be applied to homosexual practices between two consenting adults. Several scholars have noted that the stance on homosexuality is somewhat ambiguous in public discourse as well as in people's mindsets (e.g., Boyce 2006; Kirpal 2016). While some tolerate it, others condemn it as a “disease” (Vanita and Kidwai 2001: xxiv), as “unnatural . . . acts not designed for human beings” (Hunt 2011: 322) or as “immoral” and “abysmal, absurd” (Hunt 2011: 324).

The public opinion in Nigeria, the setting where missionaries “poured their fire-and-brimstone sermons against Sodom and Gomorrha over their first converts” (Zabus 2013: 80 on the colonization of Africa), appears to be less ambivalent. The overall negative tenor is often coined in Christian and Islamic terms, that is with Western religious beliefs entering the debate, for instance when then President Olusegun Obasanjo declared homosexuality “un-Biblical, unnatural and un-African” in 2004 (“Obasanjo backs bishops” 2004). Archbishop Peter Akinola is infamously known for statements such as the following:

Same sex marriage, apart from being ungodly, is unscriptural, unnatural, unprofitable, unhealthy, un-cultural, un-African and un-Nigerian. It is a perversion, a deviation and an aberration that is capable of engendering moral and social holocaust in this country. It is also capable of existncting [sic] mankind and as such should never be allowed to take root in Nigeria. Outlawing it is to ensure the continued existence of this nation.

Brown 2009: n.p.

A number of the conceptualizations described earlier are contained in the quote: from *SIN* to *UNNATURAL*, homosexuality is seen to embody a variety of vices proclaimed in the Bible. This includes the inhibition of procreation, which might tap into previously existing cultural conceptualizations. Colonial legislation as introduced by the British is still effective in Nigeria and was even reinforced in 2013 through the Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act.

The ambivalence of attitudes in India and the dismissiveness in Nigeria are mirrored in the results presented in Finzel (forthcoming). In this study, data collected through sociolinguistic interviews with Indian English and Nigerian English speakers was analyzed with regard to conceptualizations of *HOMOSEXUALITY*. Of all the conceptualizations in the Indian English data, around 43 percent were found to echo a negative stance and 48 percent a positive one. In the Nigerian English data in contrast, the share was 12 percent for a favorable position and 68 percent for an adverse one. It seems thus that cultural engineering in terms of *HOMOSEXUALITY* was successfully accomplished in both colonies, but in Nigeria with presumed sustainability—possibly because religion functioned as an implementation tool.

3.2 Witchcraft

Another disturbing practice in the colonies, specifically the African colonies and mandate territories (on the historical background, see Wolf 2008) was fetishism or, relatedly, witchcraft. Discussions in the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission bear ample evidence of how “disturbing” such practices were perceived to be despite the fact that fetishism was, perhaps hesitantly, awarded the status of a religion (see above):

M. PALACIOS [the Spanish representative] asked for information regarding the fetishism practiced by the natives and the dangers of such a religion; he also wished to have information regarding the practices observed which were contrary to public order and good morals.

M. BONNECARRÈRE stated that fetishism was a danger, as it was based on obscurantism and on the action of certain men who exploited their contemporaries. . . . He respected native customs and realised it was impossible to suppress fetishism; but he was endeavouring to diminish its importance, particularly by exercising supervision over the fetish groups, which were submitted to the ordinary law.

League of Nations 1925: 34

Another source of dispute was the practice followed by the Animists of holding certain religious (Ju-Ju) ceremonies in the village street, which they closed for the purpose.

League of Nations 1925: 152

Lord LUGARD ... remarked that there were twenty cases of witchcraft, with nineteen sentences of imprisonment. The African, as they all knew, attributed any unusual case of sickness or death to the agency of witchcraft, and he looked upon the person who could detect the witch who had worked the spell as a benefactor and killed the man pointed out as a witch, in order to save, as he thought, the lives of others. Though it was, of course, necessary to stamp out those so-called "murders," the imprisonment or execution of the person who detected the witch was, from the native point of view, unjust, and even an encouragement to the practice of witchcraft. The subject was one of extreme difficulty ...

Mr. Hunt [acting district officer in the British Cameroons] personally had had a good deal of experience of witchcraft cases and witch-doctors in the Cameroon Province, and he fully appreciated how deeply that superstition was ingrained in the native mind. But so serious was the consequence of any leniency in that matter that he was persuaded that native susceptibilities should be overridden and severe punishment meted out to all concerned, including the witch-doctor.

League of Nations 1934: 19–20

Nevertheless, a comment made by Lugard regarding the eradication of witchcraft suggests that universal reason was also attributed to the colonial subjects: "Are any steps taken to endeavour to convince the people present at the trial of the error of their belief—for example, by pointing to the lucrative nature of the witch-doctor's profession, or by showing the true cause of death by post-mortem examination?" (League of Nations 1934: 53).

The case of witchcraft as the last example in this article once more shows how colonial engineering impacted upon local structures and perceptions: witchcraft or being a witch nowadays is a punishable offense in Nigeria (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990) and other African countries. In other words, the idea of *WITCHCRAFT* as a *PUNISHABLE OFFENSE*, as expressed in the League of Nations documents, was carried over to the legal system after independence. This "Westernization" through law may result in cognitive-cultural effects, as is for instance suggested in Finzel and Wolf (2019) and Wolf (2021). There, the semantics of *witch* and *witchcraft* in African Englishes were found to be predominantly female gendered and negatively connoted, while this was or is not the case in a traditional African context.

4. (Post)colonial Impact on the English Language

In the previous sections, we shed light on colonial mindsets and structures from a cultural-cognitive perspective and discussed possible consequences on how these factors might have influenced conceptualizations found in Indian and African Englishes.

However, as we stated in the introduction, the influence has not been a one-way street. Linguistic material from the formerly subjugated parts of the British empire has found its way into the common core of English, reflecting the title of Ashcroft et al.'s (1989) collective volume *The Empire writes back* (also see Wolf and Polzenhagen 2009: 26f.).

An analysis of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2020) revealed around 850 entries from sub-Saharan Africa, ranging from *abakwetha* (of or relating to the traditional initiation period or ritual symbolizing passage into manhood among Xhosas) to *Zuluize* (to make into a Zulu). In terms of lexical domains relevant to the topics discussed above, thirty-seven items stem from "religion, tradition, ritual," with *Babalawo* (originally in West Africa: a traditional healer in the Ifa system of divination); *juju* (an object of any kind superstitiously venerated by West African native peoples, and used as a charm, amulet, or means of protection; a fetish); *malombo* (a Venda rite of exorcism and healing conducted by a diviner, accompanied by drumming, singing, and dancing, which causes a high state of nervous excitement) as representative examples. Thirty-one items are categorized as "witchcraft, superstition, mythology." Amongst these thirty-seven items, one finds, for example, *abatagati* (esp. among the Nguni peoples: witches or wizards as a class; practitioners of evil magic); *baloi* (in southern Africa (in Sotho and Tswana society): practitioners of magic or witchcraft); *mafufunya* (the evil spirits which are believed to possess a person suffering from this disorder); *mganga* (in East Africa: a doctor whose traditional functions include exorcism, prophecy, and the removal of spells); *moloi* (in southern Africa (in Sotho and Tswana society): a practitioner of magic; a wizard, a witch) and *muti* (medicine as traditionally practiced among the black peoples of Africa, usually in the form of charms or other objects to which healing or magical powers are ascribed, incorporating herbs and parts of animals and (occasionally) of human bodies).

For Indian items in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2020), our search turned up around 780 items, ranging from *aal* (the noni or Indian mulberry) to *zho* (a hybrid bovine animal, bred from a yak bull and a common cow, used for domestic purposes in Northern India). One item pertains to "philosophy," twenty-nine items to "religion, tradition, ritual," and three to "witchcraft, superstition, mythology." Beyond these categories, two items found for Indian English relate to issues discussed above, namely *dancing girl* (a girl who dances in public; a female professional dancer; esp. in India, a nautch-girl), which insinuates prostitution, and *half-caste* (a person of mixed descent; esp. (in India) one born or descended from a European father and Indian mother).

The words mentioned in this section show at least a lexical influence of the (former) colonies on the English language. This influence can lead to further investigating the way these items were contextualized by the colonizers, i.e., to see whether conceptual influences occurred concurrently. Obvious examples of conceptual influence and cultural appropriation come from the realm of spirituality highlighted earlier in the chapter. The Western meanings of items such as *karma* or *juju*, for instance, are necessarily reduced versions of the original highly complex notions, seen through the lens of the Western observer and charged with a long history of orientalist conceptions. Rather than looking into such complex notions, we will briefly discuss a more mundane example from the Indian context, i.e., *bungalow*. The OED defines *bungalow* as follows:

“Originally: a one-storied house (or temporary building, e.g., a summer-house), lightly built, usually with a thatched roof. In modern use: any one-storied house.”

The term derives from Hindi or Marathi *bangla*, meaning ‘of Bengal’. A thorough analysis of the cultural history related to this item is given by King (1982), and the short account given here is based on his investigation. The early recorded mentions of the term come from the mid-seventeenth century, and they refer to quickly-built shelters in the style of Bengali huts. These *banglas*, as they were called, were set up temporarily for specific purposes (e.g., for wedding celebrations or meetings) rather than for permanent dwelling. We also find the term *banggol/banggolo* applied to common indigenous huts for permanent housing, e.g., in the following account from 1810:

The style of private edifice that is proper and peculiar to Bengal, consists of a hut with a pent roof constructed of two sloping sides which meet in a ridge forming the segment of a circle so that it has a resemblance to a boat when overturned ... This kind of hut, it is said, from being peculiar to Bengal, is called by the native Banggol ... Among the natives, the poor man has one hut for himself and cattle, the richer men increase the number without altering the plan of the building.

quoted in King 1982: 44

Modeled on this and other types of indigenous houses, the colonizers developed the fairly distinct type of cottage-type dwelling characteristic of Anglo-Indian colonial life style, preserving the term *bungalow*. The following account comes from J. Lockwood Kipling, the father of Rudyard Kipling:

Our early residents in India, engaged in military, administrative or trading duties, lived a nomadic life for the greater part of the year in tents, and since there was nothing in the indigenous buildings of Bengal suited to their requirements, their first dwelling houses, designed by themselves and built of materials at site, are naturally planned on the model of the Indian service tents to which they were accustomed, i.e., a large and lofty room surrounded by double walls of canvas enclosing space between them, with partitions at two or more corners for bath or store rooms. It is probable, indeed, that in the beginning the tent itself was occasionally covered with the sun-proof thatch or ‘bangla’. The name and the thatch were all we took’.

quoted in King 1982: 56

This form of dwelling was reserved for the European colonizers. In its explicit opposition to the “native town,” it is a prominent materialization of colonial culture; as King rightly notes:

The spatial separation of the district officer or army subaltern from the native town expressed a social and political divide. It was also explained on cultural grounds, European beliefs leading them to perceive the ‘native city’ as a source of illness and disease.

King 1982: 63

The bungalow-centered compound was also a materialization of other ingredients of the respective zeitgeist, in particular the desire to be close to nature.

In the nineteenth and twentieth century, the bungalow spread from India to virtually all parts of the world, as a type of dwelling in other tropical colonies (e.g., in Africa), as a country house in rural areas (e.g., as a competitor to the traditional English cottage in Britain), often as a place primarily for vacations, and, finally, as a dominant dwelling-style in the emerging suburbs (e.g., in the US and Australia). The bungalow has become a global phenomenon. In each of its manifestations it has not only been physically adapted to the respective contexts and functions, but it has also become a central element and prime marker of a particular life-style, e.g., suburban US middle-class culture (for detailed analyses, see King 1982). In other words., the notion of a 'bungalow' has been culturally appropriated and imbued with, in this case, Western middle-class values.

A parallel, though less prominent, example of such a cultural appropriation is the item *teapoy*. It is derived from Hindi *tipāi*, meaning 'three-legged' and originally referring to an Indian-style small three-legged table. *Tea-* in *teapoy* thus is a folk-etymologic interpretation of the Indian element meaning 'three', and at the same time the product of the cultural appropriation of this furniture to English tea culture, i.e., a table used to serve tea. Contemporary teapoys more often than not have four legs and they come in a wide range of styles other than Indian.

We hope to have shown with this brief discussion that loan words are a fruitful anchor and starting point for the investigation of conceptual influences, not only with the non-native varieties at the receiving end (the traditional perspective in Kachruvian research of contextualization) but also with the Western varieties as a target.

5. Conclusion

To the best of our knowledge, this chapter constitutes the first attempt in the field of World Englishes to consider the cultural-conceptual framework during the colonial period, or to use a different term, the zeitgeist in which second language varieties of English emerged. Our cases in point were the Indian and African contexts. First, we discussed the general philosophical and biological outlook of intellectuals and administrators towards the indigenous colonial populations. Secondly, we looked at social practices by the colonial subjects that collided with the prevalent moral beliefs (at least in theory) of the colonizers. These practices were perceived as "disturbances" that needed to be fenced in and regulated, if not eradicated. Hence, colonial policy not only created administrative and legal structures, but superimposed ideological mindsets whose traces can be witnessed in cultural conceptualizations expressed in the respective varieties of English. We tried to sketch some of these traces effected by colonialism.

For the very reason that this process of socio-cultural influence started during the colonial period—and not post-independence—alongside the, albeit restrictive (see Wolf 2008), implantation of English in the territories under British rule, we deem the term *Postcolonial English(es)*, that is gaining currency (see, e.g., Schneider 2007), highly

misleading. Our examples came from the domains of marriage, (homo)sexuality, and witchcraft; others, such as polygamy, could have been included as well but were not considered for reasons of space. We argued, however, that influence was not a one-way street. In the last part of this chapter, we briefly pointed to lexical influences from the colonies on the English language per se. Interestingly enough, many of the lexical items stem from the lexical fields that represent the domains related to the socio-moral “disturbances” perceived by the colonizers. To what extent a conceptual flow from the colonies to Britain took place remains yet to be explored.

Notes

- 1 The ongoing parent-child relationship can well be observed in the relation of France to its former colonies, especially in Africa, where the francophone countries until recently did not enjoy monetary sovereignty (cf., e.g., Samba Sylla et al. 2019; Maclean 2019). The British, on the other hand, *neglected their children* and eventually *abandoned* them after independence; quite literally so, if the educational system is considered (see Wolf 1999, 2001, 2008).
- 2 For a detailed account, see Trautmann (1997: 84–93).
- 3 Other than some linguists of the time who thought Sanskrit to be the *Ursprache*, that is the common ancestral language they were eagerly searching for, Jones regarded Sanskrit as one of the offsprings of this original language.
- 4 It is plain that these are atrocities, and it is a merit of many agents in the otherwise also atrocious colonial enterprise to have named them as what they are, i.e., atrocities covered up by cultural rules designed to preserve local power structures, and to have worked against them with a truly altruistic mindset. Colonial administration, however, was very hesitant to prohibit such practices. Even when legal regulations were issued to this effect (e.g., the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929/30 in India), they came late, were half-hearted and were reluctantly reinforced.
- 5 Grant was an Evangelical, with a long career as a missionary in India and strong ties to the East India Company. He was an ardent proponent of the abolition of slavery. For a more detailed discussion of his positions, see Trautmann (1997: 117).
- 6 Here, we are obviously in the realm of double standards. In Western societies, prostitution, for instance, has always been more or less tolerated, if not institutionalized (brothels). In most time frames, successive polygamy (e.g., re-marriage) was not regarded as problematic, and promiscuity (after all, a version of simultaneous polygamy) was more or less accepted, at least when performed by men. With the issue of homosexuality, we are in the realm of overt oppression in Western societies. Note, however, that Grant is writing from the perspective of an Evangelical, i.e., against the background of a specific system of beliefs and morals.
- 7 We assume that the reference to “the unnatural practices of the ancient Heathens” refers to homosexuality (cf., Clark 2009).
- 8 An indicator of this change and of the increasing anthropological interest in Africa is the renaming of the *School of Oriental Studies* to *School of Oriental and African Studies* (SOAS) in 1938.
- 9 In fact, he was promoted by Lugard, who thought anthropological work necessary for the development of colonial policy and saw much of Malinowski’s work as supportive of his own colonial vision. Lugard was a co-founder of the International Institute of

- African Languages and Cultures (IALC) in 1926 that also funded Malinowski's work. For a discussion of the relationship between Lugard and Malinowski, see Foks (2018).
- 10 Compare: "The right to legislate is reserved. That this should remain in the hands of the Central Government—itsself limited by the control of the Colonial Office, as I have described cannot be questioned" (Lugard 1922: 206).
 - 11 This point is highlighted in the work of Homi Bhabha (e.g., 1994).
 - 12 Climate-related "explanations" of differences between nations were thriving at the time. They were also an integral part of the discourse on the *génie de la langue*, meant to account for the specific "character" of languages. Such explanations persisted well into the twentieth century; a prominent example is Otto Herdel's account of the German consonant shifts, commonly referred to as *Hauch- und Schnauftheorie*, in which he famously relates this sound change to the new environmental conditions in the more mountainous regions the German people moved to.
 - 13 There was a parallel rhetoric of "Indian sisters" in the context of colonial India; see Cleall (2012: 29ff.) for a discussion.
 - 14 Racial segregation was also evident in the segregation of schools in East Africa into "three separate main racial educational systems," with different schools for Europeans, Indians and natives (Tanganyika. Administering Authority 1958: 32).
 - 15 To be clear, we are talking of ideology here; the colonial practice on the ground can hardly be described as "responsible," at least on the side of the British (for a thorough discussion and exemplification, see Wolf 1999, Wolf 2001: 64–99, Wolf 2008).
 - 16 However, as Weeks (1990) notes, prostitution and homosexuality were conceptually linked, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century.
 - 17 Bleys (1993: 168) refers to a "hierarchy of civilisations," a term which is equally applicable but addresses to a lesser degree the patriarchal nature of colonization.
 - 18 For instance, there had to be proof of penetration and emission of semen for a conviction prior to 1826, when Robert Peel loosened this requirement (Weeks 1990: 12).
 - 19 This quote seems to slightly deviate in few very minor points (irrelevant to the present argumentation) from the actual original text (cf., <https://web.archive.org/web/20070114135350/http://chddistrictcourts.gov.in/THE%20INDIAN%20PENAL%20CODE.pdf>).
 - 20 Undoubtedly, such concepts of HOMOSEXUALITY cannot be equaled with modern (let alone colonial) Western concepts. Investigations in world Englishes are therefore problematic and beneficial at the same time: problematic since English lexemes usually diverge from variety to variety in terms of the associated concepts due to contact with local concepts and may thus have different meanings; beneficial since the study of world Englishes facilitates the analysis of the cognitive concepts associated with these lexemes.

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