

Hermann Hesse's Colonial Uncanny: Robert Aghion, 1913

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From early twentieth-century Orient enthusiasts to 1970s hippies to contemporary scholars, Hermann Hesse's readers associate him with the "East" yet generally ignore his earliest writings on the topic. We all know *Siddartha*, the "Indian" conclusion to *The Glass-Bead Game*, and *The Journey to the East* (with Timothy Leary's introduction), but what about the peculiar book from 1913—*Aus Indien (Out of India)*—that set the stage for all of this? Inspired by Hesse's only, 1911 trip to Southeast Asia, *Out of India* is a collection of reportage, poetry, and diary entries that culminates in the mixed-genre masterpiece *Robert Aghion*.¹ *Aghion* begins as an essay, reciting a brief history of colonialism and missionarism, then transforms abruptly, in mid-paragraph, into a novella, telling us the story of Robert Aghion: a young pastor who voyages eagerly to India as a missionary and exoticist, only to become disillusioned with the "East" and give up his calling.

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1. The original 1913 version of *Robert Aghion* is published together with the original texts from *Aus Indien* and some India-related additions (including Hesse's 1911 diaries) in *Aus Indien: Aufzeichnungen, Tagebücher, Gedichte, Betrachtungen und Erzählungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1982). Hesse's later, slightly revised version of *Robert Aghion* is published in *Sämtliche Werke in zwanzig Bänden und einem Registerband*, ed. Volker Michels, vol. 8 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003), 26–58. I cite from this latter volume (abbreviated as *SW*) except when referring to original passages from the *Aus Indien* text that were later deleted.

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The few critics to pay attention to *Aghion* have disregarded its colonial Indian setting. Eugene Stelzig, for example, includes *Aghion* among Hesse's prewar "domestic" fictions, as if India were part of the fictional Swabian town, Gerbersau, that was the setting for many of Hesse's contemporaneous stories. According to Stelzig, *Aghion* echoes the Gerbersau stories' universal themes of developing self-will and reconciling "conscious and unconscious desires."² Joseph Mileck exceptionally discusses *Aghion*'s Indian backdrop but does not consider the colonial realities so central to *Aghion*. For Mileck, India is important as the catalyst for Hesse's/*Aghion*'s discovery of religious pluralism, a theme that, Mileck claims, is wrongly overshadowed by *Aghion*'s focus on "imperialist colonialism."³ But if *Aghion* explicitly foregrounds imperialism, as Mileck admits, then why should the reader disregard this? This peculiar silence around *Aghion*'s colonial politics was broken only by an East German critic, Fritz Böttger, who argues in Marxist-Leninist terms that *Aghion* depicts the "exploitation and oppression of colonial peoples" through a "typical representative of the colonial exploiter-class": *Aghion*'s brutish host, Mister Bradley.⁴

Although I agree with Böttger that *Aghion* criticizes colonialism, it is not because of *Aghion*'s negative depiction of Bradley, which issues, Böttger forgets, from a fictional character's perspective (*Aghion*'s)—not Hesse's. *Aghion* is not a straightforward exploitation narrative but a systemic critique of colonialism in which no one is innocent, not even the "anticolonial" hero *Aghion*. Hesse's critique of *Aghion* begins with the latter's reasons for abhorring British colonialism, as embodied by Bradley. *Aghion* despises Bradley because he Europeanizes India, which *Aghion*, like Hesse, originally reveres as "authentic" (*wahr*) and pure.⁵ Like Hesse, *Aghion* dreams of India's exotic flora, fauna, and "foreign nature-folk" (*fremdes Naturvolk*).⁶ And, like Hesse, *Aghion* quickly becomes disenchanted with what Hesse called India's "brutal Europeanization."⁷ Through his self-fictionalization as *Aghion*, Hesse casts a critical light on his own anticolonial exoticism.⁸ *Aghion*, like the young Hesse, hates colo-

2. Eugene L. Stelzig, *Hermann Hesse's Fictions of the Self: Autobiography and the Confessional Imagination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 114, 117.

3. Joseph Mileck, *Hermann Hesse: Between the Perils of Politics and the Allure of the Orient* (New York: Lang, 2003), 142.

4. Fritz Böttger, *Hermann Hesse: Leben, Werk, Zeit* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1974), 169, 170.

5. Hesse, "Besuch aus Indien," in *SW*, 13:422–23.

6. Hesse, *Robert Aghion*, in *SW*, 8:34.

7. Hesse, "Tagebuch der Indonesienreise," in *SW*, 11:336.

8. What I call "anticolonial exoticism" is similar to the "anti-conquest narrative" that Mary Louise Pratt discovered in eighteenth-century travel writing (*Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* [New York: Routledge, 1992], 7; see also 38–85). Because the anticonquest narrative developed before the full-blown colonialism of Hesse's era, however, it does not share anticolonial exoticism's anxieties around global sameness.

nialism for disturbing India's purity and creating what Aghion experiences as a frighteningly "uncanny" (*unheimlich*) mixture of India and Europe (*SW*, 8:58).

By referring to India as disturbingly *unheimlich*, Hesse connects his story to a burgeoning early twentieth-century psychoanalytic discussion more apt for understanding *Aghion* than postcolonial theory,⁹ which either neglects unconscious motivations (Edward Said's *Orientalism*) or examines these primarily through the lens of "difference" (Homi Bhabha).¹⁰ Bhabha's theory is, at first glance, fitting for Hesse's story because Bhabha, too, claims that the colonial world's "hybridity" disturbs the colonialists. But Bhabha, unlike Hesse, concentrates on hybridity's residue of "difference," which, he claims, the colonizer fears and so tries to "disavow."¹¹ Unsettling in Hesse's hybrid India is, conversely, the continual appearance of the hauntingly similar—what Freud called the *unheimlich* "long familiar"—where the colonizer does not expect it.¹²

Why does Hesse see what postcolonial hybridity theorists do not?¹³ One reason is that Hesse, unlike the British authors (Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad) who inspired much postcolonial theory, comes from a belated colonial country.¹⁴ By the time Hesse's Germany entered the imperial race, the colonial

9. The discourse on the uncanny preceding Freud's 1919 essay includes Ernst Jentsch's 1906 "On the Psychology of the Uncanny," Otto Rank's 1914 "The Doppelgänger," and Rudolf Otto's 1917 *The Idea of the Holy*; Freud cites Jentsch and Rank several times in *The Uncanny*. See Anneleen Masschelein, *The Unconcept: The Freudian Uncanny in Late Twentieth-Century Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011), 50–52.

10. On Bhabha's criticism of Said for missing the significance of psychoanalysis in colonial "ambivalence," and on psychoanalysis's importance for Bhabha, see Robert J. C. Young, *White Mythologies* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 184–86, 194–96.

11. Bhabha claims that the colonialist's desire for pure origins is "threatened by the differences of race, color, and culture," differences that the colonialist (unsuccessfully) attempts to "disavow." At the historical moments when these differences appear "almost total," colonial power becomes frenzied through the "twin figures of narcissism and paranoia that repeat furiously, uncontrollably" ("The Other Question" [1983] and "Of Mimicry and Man" [1984], both repr. in *The Location of Culture* [New York: Routledge, 1994], 74–75, 91).

12. Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny* (1919), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works*, ed. Anna Freud, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, 1966), 17:220. Freud's writings are hereafter cited as *SE*. The absence of the term *uncanny* from most of Bhabha's work is striking, especially in "Of Mimicry and Man," where he reformulates Samuel Weber's phrase from an essay about the uncanny: the colonial mimic is "almost the same, but not quite" (*Location of Culture*, 86).

13. *Hybridity* is repeatedly used in postcolonial studies without relating this to the uncanny; see Bhabha's landmark 1985 "Signs Taken for Wonders," followed by the early 1990s work by Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Gayatri Spivak, and Paul Gilroy. For a critical overview (which also does not mention the uncanny), see Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

14. On "belated," second-generation British and French travelers, see Ali Behdad, *Belated Travelers* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994).

world was already teeming with Europeans, as Hesse repeatedly notices during his 1911 journey and, later, in *Aghion*.¹⁵ This experience of an already Europeanized colonial world moves Hesse past Bhabha's typical tensions between colonizer and colonized and toward internal ones among the Europeans themselves; specifically, between the belated Germans and their English "cousins," whom the Germans both feared and desired on the colonial stage.¹⁶ This uncanny incestuous trafficking among Europeans leads, in *Aghion*, to a breakdown of categories that exceeds Bhabha's hybridity, which rests still on the "difference" that the colonizer must disavow. Hesse presents us instead with a universe so full of hybrid "natives" and European doppelgängers that Aghion can barely discover the difference that he would, in Bhabha's model, have to deny. Mirror images are everywhere, troubling Aghion with the very returns that Freud describes six years later: of ancient narcissisms, primitive beliefs, and repressed infantile ideas.

Aghion's India prefigures the Freudian uncanny with astonishing exactness: it is haunted by doubles, especially during sexual adventures and especially in mirrors; these doubles appear as both image and reality, such that Aghion cannot distinguish between the two; repressed infantile material recurs, primarily as homosexual desire and the fear of castration; and, in the narratological pendant to these sexual crises, genres and voices collapse, until even the safe "ironic" distance between the narrator and the character disappears (Freud, *SE*, 17:252). These sexual mirrorings, returns of the repressed, and narrative breakdowns do more than simply illustrate *Aghion*'s thoroughgoing uncanniness. They also present a vital psycho-narratological underpinning to postcolonial hybridity. In this way, Hesse—often misunderstood as a romanticizer of the East—intervenes in the postcolonial debate *avant la lettre*. He understands colonial contradictions in ways that Kipling and Conrad do not and, in so doing, presents today's still British-focused postcolonial theory with an essential term—uncanniness—that especially helps us comprehend colo-

15. The peculiarities of the German case open questions that test the center-periphery assumptions of most postcolonial theory, which uses British and French culture as models (cf. *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, ed. Bill Ashcroft et al. [London: Routledge, 1995]). How, for example, do Prussia's and Austria's long traditions of internal colonialism unsettle postcolonialism's understanding about what is "European" and what is "other"? Moreover, what was the effect of Germans' sense of being both colonizers and colonized (first by Napoléon and then, after World War I, by French troops in the Rheinland)? See Russell Berman, "German Colonialism: Another *Sonderweg*?" and Marcia Klotz, "Global Visions: From the Colonial to the National Socialist World," *European Studies Journal* 16, no. 2 (1999): 25–36, 37–68.

16. Emil Nolde, *Welt und Heimat: Die Südseereise* (1913–14) (Cologne: DuMont Literatur und Kunst Verlag, 2002), 119.

nialism during its pre–World War I zenith, when the foreign world was becoming more frighteningly familiar every day.

Because *Aghion* begins in the same style as do some of the preceding essays in *Out of India*, the first-time reader has no reason to expect anything other than another piece of nonfiction. In this case, the topic is colonialism and missionaryism—presented from a critical, historical perspective. In the Age of Discovery, we learn, Europeans pursued their commercial goals “narrow-mindedly and violently”; “Enlightened Christian Europeans behaved like foxes in chicken coops throughout America, Africa, and India”; and they “hunted and shot dead terrified natives as if they were vermin,” acting “abominably”—“crudely and swinishly thieving” wherever they could. This critical tone diminishes on *Aghion*’s second page, where we learn that Europeans felt “shame and indignation” at their crimes during the eighteenth century, leading them to establish an “orderly and respectable colonialism.” Missionarism, despite its many flaws, was part of this Enlightened attempt to create a kinder, gentler colonialism; it, too, aimed to bring something “better and nobler” to the lives of the natives (SW, 8:26).¹⁷

As tempting as it is to view this apologia as Hesse’s own—proving that he was trapped in “the liberal ideas of his day”¹⁸—to do so would be to ignore *Aghion*’s most striking formal point: that its genre shifts abruptly at the end of the second page. The exclamation “That’s enough of introductions!”¹⁹ is followed by a turn from essay to what appears to be fiction: the story of *Aghion*, told from the perspective of what we assume is a fictional narrator, not Hesse. What is the purpose of this awkward change from essay to novella? If Hesse was primarily interested in pointing out colonialism’s crimes and their partial reduction during the Enlightenment, why did he not continue with the essay format otherwise common in *Out of India*? Why did he instead interrupt this and begin telling a story? Perhaps Hesse realized, as did Conrad a decade earlier, that colonialism’s murky, unconscious contradictions surfaced more powerfully in imaginative writing than in nonfiction. But if this were so, why did he not simply delete the essayistic introduction? Or at least attribute these opening declamations, as Conrad does in *Heart of Darkness*, to a garrulous narrator—not to what seems to be Hesse himself? The fact that Hesse left this

17. The penultimate quotation in this paragraph (“orderly and respectable colonialism”) was deleted from the revised version of *Robert Aghion*; it can be found in *Aus Indien*, 279.

18. Böttger, *Hermann Hesse*, 169.

19. This exclamation was later deleted; it can be found in *Aus Indien*, 279.

introduction intact even in a later revised version suggests that he found this genre blurring essential to *Aghion*. It is as if Hesse realizes that his topic—colonialism's uncanny homogenization of the world—demands an equally uncanny form. Just as *Robert Aghion* tells a story about Europe and Asia becoming uncannily similar, it also shows us that a theoretical essay on this topic cannot maintain its form.

Before investigating more thoroughly how this formal blurring relates to *Aghion*'s content, let us turn to that content, which, inspired by Kipling, is straightforward: young Aghion falls in love with a native woman, only to decide in the end, for mysterious reasons, that he neither wants to marry her nor proselytize anymore, choosing instead to become a coffee plantation manager. Like Hesse before his own trip to Asia, Aghion begins with dreams of an exotic India filled with tigers, monkeys, enormous snakes, and fabulous butterflies (*SW*, 8:29, 31). But he discovers on arrival that India has already been thoroughly Europeanized, primarily by Englishmen such as the domineering businessman Bradley, who is intent on re-creating English customs in India.

Because such contact with “European sailors and businessmen” has “corrupt[ed]” the Indians, Aghion decides midway through the story to head for the hinterlands, pressing deeper into the wilderness in search of unspoiled “simple country people” (*SW*, 8:43). Riding his horse far into the palm-treed hills, he finally arrives in a peaceful valley that contains a single-room clay hut. Inside is an Indian family with a beautiful teenage daughter, Naissa. Aghion repeats here Hesse's own ogling of pubescent girls in 1911 Sumatra by staring at Naissa's “smooth bare shoulders,” “young mouth,” and naked breasts, then running his fingers through her “soft, sleek hair.”²⁰ Aghion gives Naissa a present of metal cosmetic scissors. In gratitude, she presses her “flowerlike lips” against his hand, causing him sexual excitement. When he asks her how old she is, she says, “I don't know” (45–46). Uneducated, virtually mute, and living far from European traders, Naissa becomes the perfect combination of virgin girl and virgin territory that Hesse himself had been unable to find. Aghion seems to have discovered the paradisiacal “joy” and “true, natural, self-sufficient way of life” that had eluded his author (45).

But here Aghion's troubles begin. That same night, after returning to the home he shares with Bradley, Aghion senses that this “bachelors' house” has become “uncanny” (*unheimlich*) (*SW*, 8:47). He has a strange dream about

20. From his boat Hesse stares at “naked children, the girls pixyishly ashamed,” then debarks to pursue the “young, pretty girl who had waved at us” (“Tagebuch der Indonesienreise,” in *SW*, 11:357).

Bradley and about Naissa, where, in the end, Aghion kisses Naissa on the mouth. Confusing “all his emotions and urges [*Triebe*],” this dream creates in Aghion the “half-conscious impulse” and “instinctive need” (*triebhaft[e/s] Bedürfnis*) to get up and walk toward Bradley’s bedroom (50). He creeps quietly across the veranda, pushes open Bradley’s door, and tiptoes toward his bed. After opening the mosquito netting and preparing to whisper Bradley’s name, Aghion realizes that Bradley, wearing only a thin silk nightdress, is not alone. Next to him lies a Hindu woman. Aghion flees the room, but, too “excited” to sleep, he stays up for the rest of the night reading his Bible (51). The following morning, Aghion confronts Bradley on moral-religious grounds. Bradley is enraged at this invasion of his privacy and orders Aghion out of his house. Aghion agrees to depart, claiming that he can no longer live in this house anyway, especially considering what he vaguely terms his “unsatisfied desires” (52).

The story continues later that day with Bradley and Aghion sitting down and reconciling, feeling “closer to one another” than ever before (*SW*, 8:54). But Aghion nonetheless decides to leave Bradley, resign as a missionary, and propose marriage to Naissa. Bradley finds the idea of marrying Indians—who resemble “little animals”—absurd, but Aghion is unfazed (*SW*, 8:56). He returns resolutely to Naissa’s hut to propose, and, just outside the hut, he sees a girl whom he recognizes as Naissa. But she does not acknowledge him, even tries to avoid him until he offers her another present: this time an enamel tin, which he opens for her, revealing a mirror inside. As before, he begins stroking her hair and bare arm and imagines what it will be like to kiss her on the mouth. Suddenly, however, Aghion becomes “terrified” by another, “spook-like” apparition emerging from the hut. It is “a second Naissa, a mirror image [*Spiegelbild*] of the first, and the mirror image smiled at him.” Doubly identified by Aghion as a mirror image, this *Spiegelbild* now gestures to Aghion by lifting his metal scissors high above her head. Instead of simply going to this second Naissa—who turns out to be the “real” one, the sister of the first—and proposing to her, Aghion stands still. Shocked, he watches as his “love” for Naissa eerily breaks apart and disintegrates “into two halves just like the image of the girl [*Mädchenbild*], which had doubled so unexpectedly and uncannily [*unheimlich*] before his eyes” (*SW*, 8:58). Aghion now leaves Naissa behind, never to return. This hallucinatory scene in the story’s penultimate paragraph leaves us with Aghion’s main question: Why is this image—*Spiegelbild* and *Mädchenbild*—so terrifyingly *unheimlich* that it causes Aghion to run away from the woman he claims to love?

On the surface, Naissa and her sister appear to be absolutely exotic and therefore lacking the whiff of familiarity (“*Heim*”) necessary for *Unheimlichkeit* in the Freudian sense. But it is ultimately this absolute exoticism that renders them uncannily familiar. Dark, young, deerlike, and barely able to speak English, they embody what Aghion calls a Western “prejudice”—a cliché—about Indian girls. “They” all look alike; their “pretty” faces are impossible to tell apart. Always the politically correct counterpart to Bradley, who has “a good deal of respect for prejudices,” Aghion originally spoke out against them, claiming that Naissa was unique. But Bradley’s discourse has had a greater effect on Aghion than he knows. After the frightening moment of mistaken identity, Aghion could have sorted out the differences between the girls and still proposed to Naissa; he indeed “gradually recognizes” the “real Naissa.” But it is already too late. The shock of the *Spiegelbild* awakened in Aghion a belief that he did not know he held: that Indian girls are “barely distinguishable from one another.” He goes so far as to unwittingly repeat Bradley’s own metaphor for the girls: they are, Bradley claims, like “pretty deer [*Rehe*]” (SW, 8:56). Originally “rebell[ing]” against this comparison, Aghion, just one day later, remarks that “two deer [*Rehe*] could not look more alike” (58).

By having Aghion repeat these stereotypes, Hesse presents us with a “belated,” typically German form of colonial stereotyping. It occurs after the encounter described by Bhabha, in which the colonialist arrived in time to see the native’s difference (both from other natives and from the colonialist) and then to “disavow” this difference through the “fetish” of stereotype.²¹ Aghion, conversely, arrives in a colonial world already so fully stereotyped that the subtle distinctions within the “other” culture have long been effaced. This produces an anxiety beyond the fear of difference and so demands a conceptual tool other than fetishism. Whereas Bhabha’s (Freudian) fetishist ambivalently disavows a difference that he knows to be true (the mother’s genitalia, the colonized person’s culture), the belated traveler to the world of established stereotypes sees no original truth, just an endless series of confusingly similar images. He arrives in an *unheimlich* world that can be best comprehended through this analytic lens.

Instead of fearing difference within sameness, as Bhabha would have it, Aghion fears the *unheimlich* confusion created by too-similar images and, with this, a confusion of representation with reality. The “image of the girl” (*Mädchenbild*) is uncanny not because it splits in two but because this splitting ren-

21. Bhabha, “The Other Question,” 74.

ders it at once actual and spectral: it blurs the line, as in Ernst Jentsch's theory, between the animate and the inanimate. The "spook-like" second Naissa (who is actually the first) has the same effect as the doll Freud describes in E. T. A. Hoffmann's story "The Sandman": she makes the hero wonder whether he is in love with a woman or with a puppet, a human or an image of a human. Far from creating a stereotype to disavow the truth and stabilize his world, Aghion enters a world already so satiated with stereotyped images that he cannot, even if he wanted to, discover a truth to disavow. He cannot even distinguish an original from a copy. First, he calls Naissa, not her sister, the *Spiegelbild*. Then, after apparently distinguishing the one from the other, he insists that there is no "first": it is not the *Mädchen* (Naissa) who splits in two but rather the *Mädchenbild*, suggesting that the starting point all along was the image (*Bild*), not the person. Aghion's colonial/sexual crisis is a crisis of representation. The image preempts reality, questioning, as in Jentsch's and Freud's theories, the primacy of the real over the imaginary. On a conceptual level, this muddying emphasizes the *unheimlich* nature of "stereotypes" in general: they are images that appear, like ghosts, to become frighteningly "solid" (*stereós*) in space.

This stereotyping proves contagious when it catalyzes a second uncanny doubling: this time, of Aghion's own male image. When the Indian girl becomes the same within her difference, producing a solidified image that seems to come to life, her suitor likewise congeals into a stereotypical *Bild*. "They" all look alike, but so do "we." When Aghion shows the "wrong" Naissa how to open the enamel tin, he inevitably sees in its mirror more than just her (already a *Spiegelbild* of her sister). He also sees himself, a white-suited European in the tropics. As in Freud's experience with the mirrored door in his *wagon-lit* from *The Uncanny*, Aghion sees here his *doppelgänger*. This sight returns Aghion, like Freud, to the memory of the "archaic" superstition that civilized Europeans claim to have surmounted: that every double is an "uncanny harbinger of death" (*SE*, 17:248n1, 235).²²

Aghion's mirror image is uncanny not only within the story but also within its historical context. When Aghion looks in the mirror, he sees more than just a man in a tropical suit. He also sees this man touching a destitute Indian girl who is willing to do nearly anything for gifts. As such, Aghion sees himself here as Bradley, the stereotypical phallic European in the colonies: the "domineering-looking" man with "tan dark-haired hands" and "white tropical

22. Cf. Freud's reference in the preceding section of *The Uncanny* to the film *The Student of Prague* (1913), where the protagonist's mirror image walks out of the mirror and performs deeds that the protagonist claims to renounce (*SE*, 17:236n1).

clothing” who has his way with Indian concubines (*SW*, 8:33). Aghion even adopts Bradley’s diction for these “pretty” Indian girls; for Aghion, too, they now resemble deer (58). By discovering his own uncanny resemblance to the phallic European on tour, Aghion again echoes Hesse, who stopped in Port Said on his way back from Indonesia to visit a brothel where he realized that he was a comic “Don Juan” among comic Don Juans.²³ Hesse’s observation of his own doubling in an exotic brothel reveals another prefiguring of Freud, who, not long after Hesse visited Port Said, chose a foreign red-light district to illustrate the production of “uncanny” feelings. As Freud and Hesse well knew, the foreign brothel was already a site of sex tourism by the early twentieth century.²⁴ It was, as Freud claimed, *the* example of that “same place” to which “we,” in delight and horror, always return: to the female genitalia and to death (*The Uncanny*, *Se*, 17:237). This horrific return helps explain, together with the spook-like doubling of the *Mädchenbild*, Aghion’s “unheimlich” crisis.

A third doubling further elucidates why Aghion flees the final scene with Naissa: the doubling of his “love” (*Liebe*), which “disintegrated into two halves just like the image of the girl [*Mädchenbild*]” and in so doing recalls the split in Aghion’s desire between heterosexuality and homosexuality. When Aghion crept into Bradley’s bedroom and discovered him sleeping half-naked with the Hindu woman, Aghion claimed to be “excited” by the woman and “disgusted” by Bradley. But beneath this professed heterophilia lurks a strong homo-longing: a desire to “make a friend” of Bradley, as Aghion said to himself a few minutes earlier (*SW*, 8:51, 50). This desire repeatedly creates in Aghion the “instinctive need” to be close to Bradley, explaining why he always has “unsatisfied desires” in Bradley’s home (50, 52). Because this desire doubles his “love”—as “homo” and “hetero”—it is no surprise that Aghion uses the same word to describe his “bachelors’ household” with Bradley as he did to describe his divided love at the end: both are “*unheimlich*” (47). Aghion’s homosexuality becomes the distorted double of his heterosexuality, eerily almost the same but not quite.

23. Hesse, “Tagebuch der Indonesienreise,” in *SW*, 11:386.

24. Considering only prominent literary examples from the decade immediately preceding Hesse’s publication of *Aus Indien*, we see, in addition to Hesse (Singapore and Port Said) and Freud (Italy), Waldemar Bonsels (Bombay, 1903), Bernhard Kellermann (Tokyo, 1907), Hanns Heinz Ewers (Igatpuri, 1910), Franz Kafka and Max Brod (Milan, Paris, 1911), Hermann Keyserling (Kyoto, 1912), and Ernst Jünger’s autobiographical hero from *Afrikanische Spiele* (Bel-Abbès, 1913). For the brothel visit as a trope of fin de siècle exotic travel, see Wolfgang Reif, *Der Reisebericht: Die Entwicklung einer Gattung in der deutschen Literatur*, ed. Peter J. Brenner (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 445. For further examples, see my *Uncanny Encounters: Literature, Psychoanalysis, and the End of Alterity* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, forthcoming).

This bachelor's desire is uncanny also for cultural-political reasons: Aghion's longing for the "same"—*homós*—threatens his dreamed-of Indian heterotopia in the same way that Bradley's colonial homogenizing had. Aghion professes desire for a dark *heimlich* (mysterious) feminized Indian subcontinent but harbors a longing for a *heimisch* (homey) European man. To penetrate the former, he must suppress the latter, and this is what leads to the "painful confusion" of his urges and the "confusion of all his affairs" (*SW*, 8:50, 53). It also explains why, immediately after feeling "closer" to Bradley than ever before, he inexplicably and abruptly decides to marry Naissa at all costs. Aghion hopes that marrying Naissa will protect his heterophilia against his secret desire for what Bradley calls "*meinesgleichen*" (the "likes of me"; lit. "my same ones") (56). But Aghion undermines this hope when he returns, after each of his meetings with Naissa, to Bradley's "leathery English mug" (*Engländerkopf*) (58).

This resonance of Aghion's doublings (Naissa/sister; Aghion/Bradley; hetero/homo) beyond Hesse's text illustrates the two fears of sameness—homosexuality and race mixing—at the heart of fin de siècle exoticism. At first glance, Aghion's desires for Bradley and for Naissa seem opposed. With Bradley, Aghion longs for his European brother; with Naissa, his Indian other. But because intermarriage with Naissa could end up producing a homoracial—mulatto—universe, it, like homosexuality, threatens Aghion's proclaimed heterophilia. Aghion's vague reference to "unpermitted contact" (*unerlaubter Umgang*) calls to mind the imperial German parliament's 1912 discussion about prohibiting interracial marriages in the colonies, and it reveals the ultimate paradox in Aghion's anticolonial exoticism (*SW*, 8:52).²⁵ Aghion hates colonialism because it homogenizes the world, undermining his capacity to "conceive otherwise."²⁶ But Aghion's final scene demonstrates how this capacity is uncomfortably bound up with the colonial ideology it claims to resist.

25. Discussions about prohibiting interracial marriages in the colonies began in individual German colonial administrations in 1905; a prohibition was enacted in German Samoa in 1912. The debate in the German Reichstag later that year resulted in no concrete consequences, only the resolve to monitor the "validity" of interracial marriages in "all of the German protectorates." *Verhandlungen des Reichstags: Stenographische Berichte*, vol. 285 (Berlin: Verl. der Buchdr. der Nordtdt. Allg. Zeitung, 1912), 1648ff., 1734ff., 1747. See Thomas Schwarz, "Bastards," in *Mit Deutschland um die Welt*, ed. Alexander Honold and Klaus Scherpe (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2004), 377–78. For the first legal moves against mixed marriages in 1905 German Southwest Africa, see John Noyes, "Hottentotts, Bastards, and Dead Mothers," in *Kultur, Sprache, Macht*, ed. John Noyes et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2000), 327.

26. Victor Segalen championed "Universal Exoticism" as that which produces the ability to "conceive otherwise" in his 1904–18 *Essai sur l'exotisme* (published posthumously in 1955).

Sexual mixing with Naissa would confound Aghion's wishes, because he, like the anti-"hybridity" racists of his day, needs to maintain a pure other (a "foreign nature-folk") to satisfy his desire for difference.²⁷

Within this sexual crucible, we see the political ambivalence in the wider discourse of fin de siècle exoticism: the exoticist's hatred of colonialism sometimes coincides with his vision of racial purity. The exoticist needs to stay away from his European brother *and* his Indian other. And although this heterophilic nonengagement policy might sound peaceful, it covers a deeper desire to thrust away violently all forms of similarity: first the Indian girl, whose eroticism threatens Aghion with the end of difference, and then the Englishman, who has beaten him to India and taken from him his virginal "place in the sun." Psychoanalytically, we have here the bridge between Freud's "uncanny" and Jacques Lacan's "mirror stage," a connection that Lacan never mentioned: the uncanniness of the distorted image in the mirror—its foreign familiarity—spawns the subject's aggression.²⁸

Returning now to my earlier formal question: How do these exoticist sexual and political contradictions connect to *Aghion's* structure, especially to the slips in narrative perspective that start with the opening's shift in genres? If Hesse indeed realizes in the big picture that a text about the uncanny homogenization of the world cannot maintain a discrete genre, how does he understand the smaller formal blurrings that occur throughout *Aghion*? Just as *Aghion's* beginning moves uneasily from what seemed to be Hesse's authorial voice to his fictional narratorial one, this new narratorial third-person perspective becomes remarkably labile throughout *Aghion*, slipping back and forth between omniscience and focalization. Omniscience dominates the story's first half, when the narrator uses epithets to remind us of his ironic detachment from his protagonist (Aghion is the "young theologian," the "Indian candidate," the "drowsy apostle," etc.), but, during Aghion's erotically charged meeting with Naissa, the perspective shifts, for the first significant time, to focalization (SW, 8:28, 30). This occurs strikingly in midsentence when Aghion first

27. On the significance of sex in late nineteenth-century antihybridity racial theories, which set the ideological stage for the German parliament's 1912 debate, see Young, *Colonial Desire*.

28. Lacan never uses the term *unheimlich* in "The Mirror Stage" (1949) or the closely related "Aggression in Psychoanalysis" (1948). He discusses it only in his seminar on anxiety, where he hints at a connection between uncanniness and aggression through the anxiogenic *hôte* (both "host" and "guest") who is "not the *Heimlich*" and has "already passed into the hostile" (Cet hôte, c'est déjà ce qui était passé dans l'hostile) (*Le Séminaire livre X: L'angoisse*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller [Paris: Seuil, 2004], 91). Bhabha likewise surprisingly never connects his "almost the same, but not quite" to Freud's *unheimlich* even though Bhabha uses the self-(mis)recognition of the Lacanian mirror stage to explain some colonial aggression ("The Other Question," 77; see also n. 12 above).

sees Naissa: “The Englishman set his hand gently and embarrassedly on [her head] and pronounced a greeting, and, while he felt the soft sleek hair alive in his fingers, she lifted her face to him and smiled friendly at him out of her lovely eyes” (Der Engländer legte freundlich und befangen seine Hand darauf und sprach einen Gruß, und während er das weiche geschmeidige Haar lebendig in seinen Fingern fühlte, hob sie das Gesicht zu ihm auf und lächelte freundlich aus wunderschönen Augen). The narrator’s initial detachment from Aghion—“the Englishman”—disappears by the sentence’s midpoint, when the narrator describes from Aghion’s perspective how Naissa’s soft hair feels in his hand: “alive in his fingers.” The narrator then loses all distance by reporting Aghion’s sentimental judgment of Naissa’s “lovely” (*wunderschönen*) eyes smiling on him—without any irony or attribution (46).

As abruptly as this focalization appears, it now disappears. Just two sentences later, the narrator detaches himself again from Aghion and, as in *Aghion*’s first half, epithetically: “Thus she stood in her simple beauty before the astonished stranger.” But by the very next sentence, narrative proximity returns again: “The moist fragrance of her hair and the sight of her bare shoulders and breasts confused him such that he soon cast his eyes down from her innocent gaze [*vor ihrem unschuldigem Blick*]” (SW, 8:46). By unironically relating Aghion’s judgment of “innocence,” the narrator loses critical distance from Aghion; the narrative and figural perspectives collapse.

It is tempting to attribute these slips to Hesse’s lack of perspectival control, until we notice that they occur primarily when, as in this first meeting with Naissa, Aghion is erotically excited; that is, when his “half-conscious impulses,” “instinctive needs,” and “unsatisfied desires” come to the fore. Later in the story, for example, when Aghion visits Bradley’s bedroom and falls into confusion, the narrator again abruptly drops all epithets and zooms in, once more inhabiting Aghion’s viewpoint: “He almost wanted to curse all of India or at least his curiosity and wanderlust, which had led him to this impasse.” The same perspectival collapse occurs when Aghion mistakes Naissa’s sister for his beloved: “The gulf between him and her suddenly seemed monstrous.” As further evidence of Hesse’s deliberateness, these sexually catalyzed focalizations are followed immediately, as in the scene when Aghion first met Naissa, by returns to omniscience and irony: the narrator describes Aghion as “the missionary” and “the smitten Aghion,” respectively (SW, 8:51, 58). That all these scenes follow the same narrative pattern suggests a literary strategy: stable narrative omniscience gives way in libidinally charged scenes to focalization, which is followed by a return to omniscience, and so on.

Returning to *Aghion's* large-scale formal movement (from stable omniscient narration in the first half to focalization and lability in the second), we likewise see a mirroring of psychological states: both Aghion's and the narrator's, whom we must consider now also as a character in the story.²⁹ Aghion begins the tale as an observing anthropologist or, in literary terms, a distanced narrator: noting from a safe remove the natives' religious rituals, their language, and the beauty of their flora and fauna. During this section, the narrator, likewise, plays the role of a detached literary anthropologist, whose object of study is not India but Aghion himself. When Aghion meets Naissa and becomes an actor, not an observer, the narrator also loses his distance from his object (Aghion). By leaping onto the erotic stage, Aghion becomes uncannily "theatrical": a subject and an object at once.³⁰ And he takes his narrator with him. From Aghion's first meeting with Naissa, when Aghion ostentatiously caresses her in front of her observing family, the narrator, too, moves from being an observer of Aghion to an object whose shared touching of Naissa we watch. This loss of the narrator's implied "I" (*Ich*) within the perspective of Aghion's "he" (*Er*) is strongest in the story's final half, but it continues a trajectory of ego loss that is already suggested in *Aghion's* opening pages. What at first seemed to be the "I" of the author, Hesse, dissolved into the implied, fictional "I" of a narrator, which eventually also lost itself within the "he" of the character.

Samuel Weber correctly views such narratological confoundings of the first- and third-person as "uncannily" illustrative of psychoanalysis's first-person ego's (*Ich* or "I") entanglement within the third-person id (*Es* or "it").³¹ But Weber's point must be expanded from psychoanalysis to ethnography—writing about (other) people—in the broadest sense. The narrator's/anthropologist's/analyst's "I" needs to get close to "him" to understand him, but this very closeness destabilizes the "I." Because this uncanny confusion of observer and object is a problem of *perspective*, it is no coincidence that Freud describes it in literary terms: "ironical" stories, regardless of their content, never strike us as uncanny because we, as readers, are safely ensconced in the "superior" position of the narrator. Like the narrator's ironic "I," we, too, know more than

29. In this sense he resembles the apparently unobtrusive narrator of Thomas Mann's contemporaneous *Death in Venice* (1912), who likewise turns out to be a character himself—an essential point for understanding the story. See Dorrit Cohn, "The Second Author of *Death in Venice*," in *Death in Venice*, ed. Clayton Koelb (New York: Norton, 1994), 178–95.

30. On theatricality as "uncanny," see Samuel Weber, *The Legend of Freud*, exp. ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 7.

31. *Ibid.*, 17.

the third-person character; we “do not share his error.” Uncanniness occurs only when, as in *Aghion*, the narrator/anthropologist drops this ironic distance and, in Freud’s words, puts himself in the “place” of the character (or the native or the patient, in anthropology and psychoanalysis) (*SE*, 17:252). As I have shown in *Aghion*, the stakes of this uncanny removal of distance are high: the narrator’s “I” destabilizes such that the whole process of observation seems impossible.

If uncanniness also implies a fear of castration—and Freud insists that it does—then we must understand this, too, in narrative terms: as a story told by the male subject (by “little Hans,” by Freud himself, by *Aghion*) to protect himself from dissolution.³² Like Freud’s little Hans, *Aghion* generates his castration horror—Naissa “triumphantly” raising the scissors over her head—out of a fear of becoming the same as her, both sexually and culturally. But Hesse supplies a twist to Freud’s narrative. Whereas little Hans began with an assumption of sameness (his sister once had a penis too), *Aghion*, the true exoticist, begins with a presupposition of difference: Naissa has always been absolutely different from him, and he needs desperately to preserve this (marking *Aghion* again as distinct from Bhabha’s difference-fearing colonialist). When Naissa shows the scissors triumphantly, wanting to identify herself as the “real” one whom *Aghion* plans to marry, he becomes afraid. It is precisely this claim to conjugal rights that causes his crisis: she becomes a “spook” who “frightens” him (*SW*, 8:58). He now sees in her not only the hallucinatory double of her sister but also the future bearer, through “unpermitted contact,” of an uncanny race;³³ not surprisingly, he views her brother with “displeasure” at the thought of becoming his “brother in law” (57). Unlike the usual *vagina dentata*, Naissa’s threatening femininity is here racialized as the *vagina nigera*. Its darkness threatens the whiteness of *Aghion*’s penis. More important, through its promise of mixed offspring, it endangers the darkness of India itself, which *Aghion*, the unrepentant exoticist, wants to preserve at all costs.

This looming slice through *Aghion*’s identity corresponds to the final cut in the text, when, after *Aghion*’s *unheimlich* hallucination with Naissa and her sister, the text, too, suffers a blackout. During a paragraph break, *Aghion* is somehow transferred back to Bradley’s home. When the story resumes, *Aghion*’s already fractured perspective is completely gone. We discover

32. Weber correctly notes that this story is, for Freud, told by children of both sexes (from the boy’s point of view) (*ibid.*, 5). But only the male child experiences the story’s full anxiogenic threat to identity.

33. On the centrality of offspring to activating “hybridity”-based racism, see Young, *Colonial Desire*, xi–xii.

nothing of his emotions after his fateful encounter because the narrator has again distanced himself from Aghion (“the departing one”). Aghion prepares quietly to leave for the coffee plantation he will manage. For the first time in the text, the narrator is perspectively now slightly closer to Bradley, whose own perspective opens this paragraph: “Bradley learned nothing of this incident [Aghion’s second meeting with Naissa], and he asked no questions.” By the end of this final paragraph, the narrator’s own increasingly unstable perspective vanishes, too, and he hands over the final word to Bradley. As if to emphasize Bradley’s complete narrative usurpation, the narrator grants Bradley the immediacy of direct speech. Bradley seems to be talking not only with Aghion but also directly with us: “Bon voyage, my boy! A time will come later when you will be dying with longing to see an honest leathery English mug [*Engländerkopf*] again instead of those sweet Hindu snouts! Then you will come to me, and we will agree [*werden . . . einig sein*] about all the things we still see so differently today” (SW, 8:58).

This final sentence may seem to reassure Aghion of the absolute exotic difference between “us” and “them,” but, beneath the surface, this image of the *Engländerkopf* likely troubles Aghion with further uncanniness. If Aghion is indeed a thinly disguised version of Hesse, as most critics agree,³⁴ then the English Bradley disturbs Aghion not only because he ruins Aghion’s fantasy of a pure India. As an Englishman, Bradley is also Aghion’s “relative”: uncannily almost the same but not quite. The German expressionist painter Emil Nolde once called the British he met in Southeast Asia “our cousins.”³⁵ But it would be more accurate to consider them “our grandparents.” British travelers to Southeast Asia preceded the fin de siècle Germans by at least two generations. More literally, their Hanoverian queen Victoria—the empress of India—was Kaiser Wilhelm’s grandmother. This family romance adds a national-psychological twist to Aghion’s final hallucinations. When a fin de siècle German traveler feels his longing for an Englishman, he remembers not only his homosexual but also his incestuous desires. If, as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari claim, our relation to our grandparents tends toward “psycho[sis]” (and toward neurosis with our parents), then we can begin to explain Aghion’s erotic sleepwalking in Bradley’s bedroom, his blackout when seeing himself

34. Even Aghion’s earliest critics made this assumption, beginning with Albrecht Oepke in *Moderne Indienfahrer und Weltreligionen* (Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1921), 14. For later similar claims, see Böttger, *Hesse*, 169, 172; Mileck, *Hesse*, 142–43; and Mark Boulby, *Hermann Hesse: His Mind and Art* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), 70.

35. Nolde, *Welt und Heimat*, 119.

as Bradley in the mirror, and his repeated returns to Bradley after each visit to Naissa.³⁶ The Englishman is what the German traveler vehemently wants and does not want. The German longs to be near to these grandparents yet resists them, not least because he still harbors a more correct, “straighter” fantasy: of an undeveloped, absolutely exotic “virgin territory” that he still might be the first to penetrate.

As Freud writes thirteen years later, the “dark continent” should be the site of *female* sexuality (“The Question of Lay Analysis,” *SE*, 20:212). But this becomes impossible when the British phallus is always already there, preceding the Germans and so despoiling their dreamed-of feminized “place in the sun.” The historical result was the Germans’ erratic game of attraction and repulsion with the British. This game’s most public player, the number one German himself—the “traveling Kaiser” Wilhelm II—alternatively fawned before and bombastically challenged his Hanoverian-British ancestors throughout the colonies in the decades preceding the Great War.³⁷

Because *Robert Aghion*’s colonial master gets the final word, Hesse’s story might be seen as a cynical defense of colonialism, reminding us of the apologia from the narrator’s opening peroration; the lesson here would be that even sensitive travelers like Aghion, who initially love the natives, inevitably learn to despise them and long for good old Europeans. But, as in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, where the megalomaniac Kurtz’s words—“Exterminate the brutes!”—ring in our ears after we finish reading, a closer examination of *Aghion* suggests a more complex message. For *Aghion* is not only about the relation between Europeans and non-Europeans but also about an uncanniness that extends to intra-European relations and, what is more, an intertextual realm. Hesse’s *Aghion* goes into the hinterlands only to find there a version of the same brutal European we already know from other adventure books, both “high” and “low.” A relative of Conrad’s Kurtz and Kafka’s contemporaneous officer from *In the Penal Colony*, Bradley knows the best way

36. Psychotics often escape the neurotic oedipal apparatus through their generational “extension” toward the grandparents (Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983], 94).

37. As Thomas Kohut writes, this frenetically traveling “*Reisekaiser*” is a “narcissistic extension” of the German people; he needs “to appear to be everywhere,” perhaps to locate what Wilhelm’s foreign minister Bülow called Germany’s “place in the sun” (*Wilhelm II and the Germans: A Study in Leadership* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1991], 165, 299n82, 172). For more on the *Reisekaiser*’s apparent “omnipresence,” see Nicolaus Sombart, “The Kaiser in His Epoch: Some Reflections on Wilhelmian Society, Sexuality, and Culture,” in *Kaiser Wilhelm II: New Interpretations*, ed. John Roehl and Nicolaus Sombart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 287–311.

to deal with “Hindu snouts”: with a gun. This violent European in the tropics is himself uncannily familiar. Like Kafka’s officer, whose uniform reminds us of “home” (*Heimat*), this historical figure is “uniform”: disturbingly like “us.”³⁸ Such “uncanny white men” run through modernist and popular culture in the pre–World War I era; like the replicating sex tourists that Aghion sees in the mirror, they are everywhere.³⁹ My point is not that Aghion becomes one of them, although he does (ultimately deciding to “conquer this land for himself”),⁴⁰ but that this becoming “uniform” haunts him and the entire colonial project, leading to the text’s hallucinatory breakdown in its final pages (SW, 8:53).

By creating yet another uncanny white man, Hesse asks: If “we” go to the exotic world looking for savages but instead find this doubled, “uniform” European who reminds us of ourselves, are we even going to the right place? If yes, are we going there to conquer ourselves? Our cousins? Our grandparents? Aghion’s experience suggests as much. At the far end of the world, next to the hut of a beautiful half-naked Indian girl, he looks in a mirror and sees a European in a white tropical suit: himself, but also Germany’s British grandparents, who both attract and repel him. And Germany will of course fight these grandparents only one year later for control not only of Europe but also of the colonial world.

This turning inward of colonialism’s crisis reveals the conceptual value of uncanniness for understanding both *Aghion* and the colonial theater around 1900. Like Bhabha’s *hybridity*, *uncanniness* describes a world that is frightening in its almost sameness. But the horror of uncanniness, unlike that of hybridity, results primarily from a surfeit of the “long familiar” (not the residue of “difference”). This surplus of foreign familiarity allows us better to comprehend why *Aghion*’s “European sailors and businessmen,” including Bradley, haunt Aghion. In the broader context, Bradley represents a series of “uniform” *doppelgängers* appearing in the colonial world (and in books about it). When such uncanny white men meet, they experience not only the horror of

38. Franz Kafka, *Drucke zu Lebzeiten*, ed. Wolf Kittler, Hans-Gerd Koch, and Gerhard Neumann (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1994), 204.

39. The term “uncanny white man” (*der unheimliche Weisse*) stems from Captain Maximilian Bayer’s popular account of the German massacre of the Herero in 1904 (*Im Kampfe gegen die Hereros: Bilder aus dem Feldzug in Südwest*, ed. Nicolaus Henningsen [Cologne: Schaffstein, 1911], 78). On the omnipresence of these uncanny white men in “high” and “low” culture, see my forthcoming *Uncanny Encounters*.

40. Perhaps in an attempt to make *Robert Aghion* (and Hesse) politically defensible in East Germany, Böttger wishfully claims that Aghion chooses to manage the coffee plantation “in the interests of the natives”—even though Hesse’s text explicitly states otherwise (*Hesse*, 171).

doubling but also, as in *Aghion* and Freud's *Uncanny*, existential unmooring: images blur with reality; repressed infantile desires and fears return; and perspectival differences collapse until there is no safe "ironic" position.

By thus matching thematic uncanniness with perspectival instability—an authorial essay voice gives way to a fictional-narrative *Ich* that gives way to a figural *Er*—Hesse hints at an ethnographic uncanniness that Freud will discover only six years later: every subject is always in danger of becoming the object of someone else's gaze.⁴¹ Uncanniness is thus the predicament of culture itself, with the crises of colonialism rendering this predicament most visible.⁴² *Aghion*, the sovereign European observer of the Indian girls, is also the narrator's ironic plaything ("the drowsy apostle," "the new arrival") (*SW*, 8:30, 33). But this narrator, too, exposes himself to his readers by losing himself, with *Aghion*, on the sexual stage. By *Aghion*'s end, the narrator suffers a castration anxiety equivalent to *Aghion*'s: just as *Aghion* upsettingly becomes almost the same as Bradley and every other colonist, the narrator becomes almost the same as the doubled character whom he has been observing.⁴³ Having lost his distance from *Aghion*, the narrator, too, becomes a mirror image, a doubled "spook."

Aghion's complex ethnography shows us how any observing *Ich* is never far from becoming the observed *Er*. This threatens the reader, too, especially if we consider him a male German in 1913, who, like Ernst Jünger's protagonist from *African Games* (*Afrikanische Spiele*, 1913), reads books about "adventurers" to inspire his own travels.⁴⁴ When reading *Aghion*, this

41. On Freud's ethnography and his invention of the "uncanny method," see my "Savage Science: Primitives, War Neurotics, and Freud's Uncanny Method," *American Imago* 70, no. 3 (2013): 461–86.

42. After ignoring the uncanny in his 1980s work on the "almost the same but not quite" of colonial culture, Bhabha briefly discovers uncanniness in "Articulating the Archaic" (1990), using it aptly to describe "culture's double bind"—even if he bases this on a false binary: whereas Freud insisted that *unheimlich* was a "sub-species" of *heimlich*, Bhabha opposes the "homologous" *heimlich* (which he mistakes for *heimisch*) to the "differentiated" *unheimlich* (Freud, *SE*, 17:226; Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 136–37). Bhabha later makes passing mention of the uncanny in "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation" (*Location of Culture*, 143–44) and in "The World and the Home," *Social Text*, nos. 31–32 (1992): 146–47 (in revised form in the introduction to *Location of Culture*).

43. In *The Uncanny* Freud equates the "doubling or multiplying"—not lack—of the phallus with castration anxiety (*SE*, 17:235). Freud's young castration theorist, "little Hans," likewise never expresses anxiety about having his penis cut off but rather about the plethora of "widdlers" around him, especially the horses', whose size exposes the smallness of his own ("Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy," in *SE*, 10:34). Following Freud, Lacan claims that castration fear is "uncanny" because it raises the specter of doubling: not the "lack" is frightening but the "lack of a lack" (*Le Séminaire livre X*, 53).

44. Ernst Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele* (Munich: DTV, 1987), 9.

future adventurer senses the risk of becoming someone else's object and even a victim of that person's violence. By depicting such an uncanny colonial world, Hesse unsettles mainstream exotic fantasies. If all virgin territories are breached and all travelers are threatened by homo-genization, then the traditional penetration narrative could reverse itself. It could turn against the European, in the forms of war and sexual violence, as hinted by Bradley's "powerful" handshake at the end, which guarantees that Aghion will someday "die with longing" in relation to this *Engländerkopf*. When Hesse ends his story about India with this compelling attraction and repulsion between an Englishman and a German just one year before war begins, he is telling us about more than just colonialism. He is describing the fate of exotic desire during the swan song of the "first globalization,"⁴⁵ when the concentric circles of homogenization fears grew ever tighter—leading Europeans to thrust away all forms of similarity in the desperate chase for difference. This *unheimlich* dread of similarity, which Hesse presents as the key to understanding his own global world, adds an even greater threat to Bradley's apparently peaceful final promise to Aghion: You will one day "come to me," Bradley assures him, and we will then be "united" (*einig*) about all the things over which we now "differ" (SW, 8:58).

45. Although scholars trace globalization as far back as the third millennium BCE (Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998]), John Maynard Keynes already made the classical, convincing argument for the pre-World War I era in his 1919 *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (Charleston, SC: BiblioBazaar, 2007), 16–17. See Paul Krugman on this "First Global Economy" in "Government vs. the Market," *Washington Monthly*, March 1998, 39.