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Fanon's 'Native Intellectual' in Doctor No
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"The greatest injury they have done to the country is that they have tightened the English grip. Do you think that it would be possible for the English to carry on their Government without law-courts?" (Gandhi 1908, 40)

In *Hind Swaraj,* Gandhi is particularly interested in the role of two distinct classes of the Indian elite—doctors and lawyers. To him, these British-educated Indians are instrumental in the consolidation of colonial rule: they serve as intermediary classes between the colonizer and the colonized, enabling colonial dominance through their local knowledge and their application of colonial skill sets. Fanon is also interested in this idea of a colonizer-educated intermediary class—in his *The Wretched of the Earth,* Fanon presents the reader with a description of the "native intellectual", a "native" whose mind is a " vigilant sentinel ready to defend the Greco-Latin pedestal." (Fanon 1961, 37)

These intermediary figures or local enablers of colonialism are ubiquitous in the history of empire. In Ian Fleming's *Doctor No,* however, this idea of an intermediary native class takes on interesting dimensions. It is clear that *Doctor No* permits a perhaps unintended colonial reading—set against the backdrop of Jamaican decolonization, *Doctor No* may be read as an assertion of British colonial power (via James Bond) in the face of newly attested sovereignty by the formerly colonized, represented by Doctor No. This sovereignty takes on a very physical manifestation—Doctor No literally controls an island independent of colonized Jamaica that James Bond is hellbent on bringing into control. If we assume such a mapping, where (at the risk of being reductionist) James Bond represents the forces of colonialism and Doctor No the colonized peoples, it becomes imperative to examine the positions of two key characters: Bond's

subservient love interest Honeychile Rider and his local right-hand man, Quarrel. This essay will argue that within a colonial mapping of Doctor No, it is possible to read the racial and intellectual positions of Quarrel and Rider as those of an intermediary class of "native intellectuals" who enable colonial domination. Through a close application of the frameworks developed by Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth*, this essay will argue that the unconditional, unwavering loyalty of Rider and Quarrel to Bond may be read as key factors leading to the eventual defeat of Doctor No, the colonized subject. Finally, this essay will also argue that *Doctor No* may be read as a parable highlighting the importance of *strategic essentialism* in the struggle against colonialism—without the strategic unity of different subgroups within the colonized, the struggle for liberation becomes difficult, if not impossible.

The mapping of Rider and Quarrel as an intermediary class in *Doctor No* is unique as it exists along racial lines, as opposed to financial or technological ones. When Bond first meets Quarrel at the airport, Quarrel is immediately described as having "dark grey eyes that showed descent from a Cromwellian soldier or a pirate of Morgan's time." (Fleming 1957, 535) This description leaves the reader in no doubt that Quarrel is racially different from the average native—he is clearly of mixed race. Significantly, however, Quarrel is no Chigroe—his racial description clearly and eagerly highlights his European blood and potential British descent. The first description the reader gets of Honeychile Rider is also structured in a similar manner. As Bond looks at Rider's naked figure for the first time on Crab Key, he immediately launches into a description of her skin colour. Rider's skin is first described as "a very light uniform *café au lait* with the sheen of dull satin." (Fleming 1957, 583) All ambiguity that this description might carry about Rider's race, however, is immediately dispelled when Bond examines Rider's feet.

He notes that "no pinkness showed under the [Rider's] slightly lifted left heel", reaching the conclusion that "she was not a coloured girl." (Fleming 1957, 584) Reading the initial descriptions of Rider and Quarrel in conjunction leads to an interesting observation: Bond seems to have a peculiar obsession with racialized descriptions and seems particularly eager to establish the whiteness (or semi-whiteness) of characters that are on his side. In contrast, the first description we get of Doctor No is not a racialized one—in Fleming's own words, "Bond's first impression was of thinness and erectness and height." (Fleming 1957, 664) Bond mentions No's skin colour in a very transitory manner, briefly mentioning that "the [Doctor No's] skin was of a deep almost translucent yellow." (Fleming 1957, 664) The reader later finds out that Doctor No too is of mixed-race—he was "the only son of a German Methodist missionary and a Chinese girl of good family." (Fleming 1957, 672) The fact that Bond does not allude to No's whiteness despite his being of mixed race is telling—it lends weight to the claim that to Bond, whiteness is somehow only relevant in those who are on the 'right' side. It is worth noting, however, that Doctor No completely disavows his German heritage throughout his life. He enters a life of crime, rationalizing that "they [the crimes] represented revolt against the father figure who had betrayed me." (Fleming 1957, 673) To Doctor No, then, a life of crime functions as a symbolic disavowal of his father figure, his German heritage and his whiteness. Additionally, while on Crab Key, Doctor No prefers to dress in kimonos and only employs Chinese or half-Chinese workers in his offices and guano mines. Thus it may be possible to position the key characters of Doctor No along a racial spectrum, where Bond and Doctor No occupy polar positions—Bond is the 'whitest', while Doctor No, by virtue of his disavowal of his German heritage, is the 'least white'. Quarrel and Honeychile, on the other hand, sit firmly in between these two poles by

virtue of their mixed racial status. Thus, assuming a colonial reading of Doctor No which positions Bond as the colonizer and Doctor No as the colonized, it is possible to position Honeychile and Quarrel as an intermediary class along racial lines.

What are the characteristics of the intermediary class in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*? Throughout the text, Fanon intermittently focuses on the characteristics and role of the 'native intellectuals', his conceptualization of the intermediary class. During decolonization, according to Fanon, these native intellectuals "have begun a dialogue with the bourgeoisie of the colonialist country", during the phase when the "indigenous population is discerned only as an indistinct mass." (Fanon 1961, 35) This is similar to the manner in which Quarrel and Honeychile make first contact with Bond—their first contact is when Doctor No (a symbol of the indigenous population) is still a mysterious figure, an "indistinct mass", of whose intentions and nature Bond knows very little. Additionally, to Fanon, the 'native intellectual' is characterized as "a vigilant sentinel ready to defend the Greco-Latin pedestal." (Fanon 1961, 37) This claim is mirrored in Quarrel's death, which occurs as he is literally defending Bond from Doctor No's dragon-like armored vehicle. Many such parallels can be drawn throughout *Doctor No*, lending weight to the claim that Quarrel and Rider are not just any intermediary class—they can be thought of as instantiations of Fanon's idea of the native intellectual.

Why is this positioning important? What is the importance of the 'native intellectual' in the struggle for decolonization?

To Fanon, the 'native intellectual' does in fact have an important role to play—their 'coming back' to their colonized peers in support of national liberation is crucial, particularly in the cultural arena. Fanon describes this coming "into touch again with his people" (Fanon 1961,

37) of the native intellectual as a "movement of withdrawal . . . a muscular reflex, a muscular contraction." (Fanon 1961, 177) To Fanon, this "tearing away, painful and difficult though it may be, is however necessary." (Fanon 1961, 176) Fanon clearly demarcates the importance of the native intellectual—in his analysis, "the recognition of a national culture and its right to exist represent their [the native intellectuals'] favorite stamping ground." (Fanon 1961, 169) Thus, to Fanon, the coming back of the 'native intellectual' to his people is necessary in the freedom struggle, particularly since these intellectuals bring about the recognition of a national culture.

Given that we can position Quarrel and Rider as an intermediary class, as 'native intellectuals', this begs the question—do Quarrel and Rider, like the native intellectual, 'come back'? Do we see Quarrel and Rider return to their people, in this case Doctor No? The answer to this question is clearly a resounding no. At no point in the novel is Rider's or Quarrel's allegiance ambiguous—Quarrel stays with Bond till death does them part, while Rider plays on as Bond's subservient love interest to the very end. It is interesting, then, that in a novel where the 'native intellectual' does not come "into touch again with his people" (Fanon 1961, 37) the "people" (in this case, Doctor No) go on to be defeated in the struggle for national liberation. Perhaps this relationship is of a causal nature—as a result of 'native intellectuals' such as Rider and Quarrel throwing their lot in with the colonizers, the colonized peoples (Doctor No) suffer defeat in their movement for national liberation. History provides evidence for this pattern—it is in part due to the Squantos and Mir Jafars of the world, the unreturned native intermediaries, that colonizers were historically able to gain such large footholds in unfamiliar geographies.

Doctor No may thus also be read as an allegory highlighting the importance of the *strategic essentialism* that theorist Gayatri Spivak advocates. Strategic essentialism, according to

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, is a tactic that acknowledges the "usefulness of essentialist formulations in many struggles for liberation from the effects of colonial and neo-colonial oppression." (Ashcroft et al. 2000, 79) The use of strategic essentialism is entirely absent in Doctor No—at no point do Quarrel, Rider and Doctor No identify their innate similarities and mobilize together in spite of their class differences. This lack of strategic essentialism, then, may be a key reason in the defeat of the national liberation movement represented by Doctor No's struggles. Although this was almost certainly not Ian Fleming's original intention, a colonial reading of *Doctor No* thus permits the novel to be read as an allegory of the importance of strategic essentialism in the struggle for national liberation.

In conclusion, a close analysis of the popular colonial mapping of *Doctor No* leads to interesting observations. Within this mapping, it is possible to position Quarrel and Rider as an intermediary class, mirroring Fanon's idea of a class of 'native intellectuals'. If we are to apply Fanon's theories of the role of 'native intellectuals' in the national liberation struggle to Quarrel and Rider in *Doctor No*, we may conclude that one of the potential causes for Doctor No's (the colonized peoples') defeat is the lack of support from the intermediary class. Finally, this idea links to the concept of strategic essentialism—*Doctor No* may be read as an allegory of strategic essentialism's importance in the decolonization struggle. Ironically, the ostensibly imperialist *Doctor No* seems to permit a very anti-imperial reading—one that serves as a caution sign, highlighting the potential pitfalls of anti-imperial resistance.

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